

CHICAGO

KARMA THEGSUM CHOLING

Bimonthly newsletter

January/February 2007

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 2 Director's Corner
- 3 New on the KTC Website
- 3 Karmapa at Kagyu Monlom
- 4-5 The Shrine
- 6-9 Dharma and Family Life – Q+A
Bardor Rinpoche Public Talk Sept 2005
- 10 Events
- 11 Calendar



A New Year

Cover: Bob Martinez dusts off the Buddha rupa before it is placed in the new shrine.



DIRECTOR'S CORNER

*Notes from
Marina*

Happy New Years' to All and Thank You Chicago KTC because...

it continuously makes available the clear Dharma of my precious teachers who've shown me Buddha, right here in Chicago where I live.

it continuously reminds me of the infinite blessings of being in the place of His Holiness 16th Karmapa's miraculous parinirvana.

even though we are a small group, we work hard and we try to teach each other what little we know...and then it feels like a lot.

it teaches me how to work through painful obstacles and aim to become resilient and someday fearless.

my family and friends, Buddhist or not, can come here and receive blessings.

one brilliant day it hosted the guru who gave me a glimpse of the sun so that I may notice the sun.

because I have to learn to open to impermanence and pain in my experience instead of clouding it with delusions and avoiding it with distractions, so true peace may dawn.

because I have to look squarely at myself without having to lie.

because in spite of my destructive ego, I am inevitably linked to all beings and my actions and their actions have a boomerang effect so that I must be diligent.

because it isn't just a building, an organization, a group of members that come and go but I can think of it as a place to fix, clean up and envision fixing and clarifying my mind.

....and

may the health of all our gurus benefit immensely from increased virtuous actions and may we create the conditions and causes for them to return again and again.

may all beings from the lowest realms to highest heaven benefit from the merit of those who made possible the existence of Chicago KTC and made a place for me to connect with the Buddha.

may Compassion always be found at Chicago KTC and in all those who in the past, present and future are linked here, who work hard to build a center of genuine spiritual significance, disguised in a modest looking unnoticeable dwelling, in a modest, unnoticeable town surrounded by ugly highways and factories.

may our practices be stronger because of this, may we be tough because of this, may we detach from delusions because of this so we can be true Bodhisattvas.

may it be a palace of crystal clear truth.

may our walls vibrate with the sound of mantras, may the sun beam rays through the clean windows of good karma.

may images of mandalas appear to all, may images of deities appear to all.

may all we do here be offered to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas for the benefit of all who have mind. ☸

It's Time to Renew Your Membership

If you haven't already done so, I would like to remind you to renew your membership or better, upgrade to a sustaining membership and be a pillar of the Dharma for the people of Chicago. Our membership dues support operation costs that keep the center open (mainly heat, electricity) to the public so sentient beings can come and find a true solution to suffering and a genuine way to happiness. Membership dues starting Jan 2007 are as follows:

Associate Member: Individual \$20/month, Family \$25 month.

Entitled to full KTC benefits, including subscription to KTC newsletter and participation in KTC elections, but does not include discounts at Karma Triyana Dharmachakra.

Full Member: Individual \$35/month, Family \$40/month.

Entitled to full membership benefits at Karma Triyana Dharmachakra and KTC, including discounts for KTD teachings and Namsebandzho bookstore, subscription to KTC bimonthly newsletter, and participation in KTC elections.

Sustaining Member: \$100/month (\$1200 year) or specified amount.

Free teachings at Chicago KTC, priority scheduling of interviews with visiting lamas. Entitled to full membership benefits at Karma Triyana Dharmachakra and KTC, including discounts for KTD teachings and Namsebandzho bookstore, subscription to KTC bimonthly newsletter, and participation in KTC elections.

Donations for building repairs are also crucial for sustaining a comfortable and clean environment for us to study and practice. Please consider making a donation to the building fund by sending a check to Chicago KTC and specify building fund. You may also **Donate Online!** Go to www.chicagoktc.org for more information. No donation is too small.



Garchen Rinpoche teaches at Chicago KTC (sponsored by Ratna Shri Sangha). Over 70 people attended the Christmas weekend teachings.

MAJOR CHANGES IN KTC WEBSITE

Thanks to our skilled webmaster, Sean Martinez, the Chicago KTC website has undergone many fantastic updates and changes:

1) It is now possible to view full, high quality, video teachings from anywhere in the world. Videos online include

Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche's **Dispelling The Darkness of Ignorance** one of the 9th Karmapa's great texts on Mahamudra, given at Chicago KTC on November 2003.

Traleq Kyabgon Rinpoche gave a Friday public talk on **The Meditative Experience** in October 2005. Rinpoche's public talk describes a variety of experiences that may be useful or could become obstacles to gaining true benefits from meditation. In this teaching he offers practical advice which is suitable for both the beginner and the experienced meditator.

2) Audio teachings. Many of the old teachings that were kept on cassette tape have now been digitized and are available for listening. Included is a teaching by H.E. Jamgon Kongtrul Rinpoche the 3rd on "**Loving Kindness and Compassion**"

3) Archived copies of the Chicago KTC newsletter, including transcripts of teachings that are now being published in the newsletters.

4) Photo gallery of activities at Chicago KTC and updates on the building renovations.

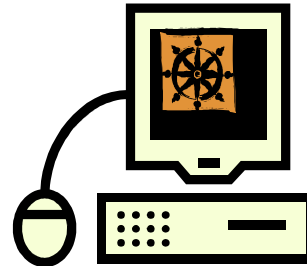
5) **PAYPAL!** You can now donate and/or pay dues online via PayPal for your convenience. Please note that a small amount goes to PayPal for its services. ❁

AT THE KAGYU MONLOM

A Letter from Holly Wilson to Mary Nistler

"Well, so much it seems has been happening here. The monlom ended last evening with a light ceremony in which the Karmapa, under the Bodhi tree sang prayers in Tibetan, Chinese, and English. It was so beautiful I was crying. And it's also because of what he told us yesterday. This seems important to share with his centers and I am sure you may hear from KTD about this at some point-- at least the Karmapas orders about vegetarianism at his centers. Anyway, yesterday the Karmapa talked for a long time on why not to eat meat or fish (he has been a vegetarian for a few years), he said it is not right for people on the bodhissattva path to eat meat because it's not fitting with the vows we take. In the middle of his talk he was very adamant, implying, by quoting the 8th Karmapa that we were not Karma Kagyu's if we continued to eat meat.

At the end he softened it by giving us choices of vows to take to at least greatly reduce or stop eating for a period of time (I took the 3 year vow yesterday)-- and it's because of what he said. The Karmapa told us yesterday when he was telling us not to eat meat that when he was young he had a dream in which a fortune teller appeared to him and asked to see his palm. The fortune teller told the Karmapa that his life would be in danger when he was 23 or 24 (he is now 21). Yesterday the Karmapa told us that recently he had a dream in which that same fortune teller appeared and reminded the Karmapa of this danger. The Karmapa said he awoke terrified, his heart pounding. A few moments later the Karmapa said that the best way to prolong the life of the lama is to save lives and the best way to do this is to not eat meat. He said that that is the best way to prolong the life of the Dalai Lama and Apo Gagga (he is referring to himself, his childhood name). This brought tears to our eyes I must say. It is clear what he is saying. He said he wants all Karma Kagyu centers around the world to stop serving meat (may be tricky at some as so many lamas eat meat)-- but, that is what he said. I took the 3 year vow to abstain because of this threat in 2-3 years that the Karmapa may face, and so did Yeshe. Yeshe also recommended devoting ourselves to reciting his long life prayer." ❁



SHRINE



DATES FOR SHRINE CONSECRATION SET FOR WEEKEND OF MARCH 2-4

With the completion of the shrine, the official consecration of the shrine is set for March 2-4. Both Khenpo Karthar Rinpoche and Bardor Tulku Rinpoche will come to Chicago KTC, each with a lama attendant and Lama Yeshe Gyamtso as translator. In addition, Lamas Collen Reed and Kathy Wesley will also be at Chicago KTC during that weekend to help with tormas for the shrine.

The weekend itinerary has yet to be determined, but our requests for the Medicine Buddha empowerment, Refuge ceremony, Ngondro lung, and Bodhisattva Vows have been accepted.

There is still much work to be done in preparation for the consecration ceremony and having many Lamas visit Chicago KTC at one time. Currently Don and Kirk have been renovating the kitchen. Other projects include updating the back stairwell, fixing the plumbing throughout the whole building for proper water pressure, renovating the downstairs public restroom, updating the building to meet with fire and safety codes. Please consider donating your time and/or money to expedite these projects for a smooth weekend. Contact Marina at Chicago KTC for more information. ❀



COMPLETE!



Clockwise from top left: the completed shrine cabinet; David and Paul lift the 4-ft Buddha rupa off the old shrine; a group places the Buddha rupa in the new cabinet; the new shrine filled with all 15 rupas and many blessings; shrine workers unite; Nancy, Tom, and David get their Shrinelifters' Union certificate from Marina; Kirk and Paul throw katas at the Buddha.



DHARMA AND FAMILY LIFE

QUESTIONS+ ANSWERS

BARDOR TULKU RINPOCHE

September 16, 2005

Translated by Lama Yeshe Gyamtso

Transcribed by Ginnie Vineyard

Question: *Rinpoche, would you say that if there is real animosity when in a couple, one is a practitioner of dharma and one is not, that the issue is not with dharma practice, but rather with the love in the relationship?*

Rinpoche: It's not impossible that sometimes when this happens it's because there is a lack of caring or lack of love, but it isn't necessarily that. It could actually be that the spouse who objects to the dharma practice of the other simply has a strong prejudice against dharma itself. But even in that situation, it's not an insoluble problem. If this problem arises, the most important thing for the spouse who is the practitioner to do, is to be patient and respectful and gentle and not rejecting the spouse, especially surrounding the situation and not to be confrontational or quarrelsome about it. The reason for this is that in a marriage in general, the spouses are always observing the behavior of the other. This is all the more true in a situation of conflict, like the one that you mentioned in your question. And in observing the behavior of your spouse you pay more attention to what they actually do, than you do to what they say they do. So if the spouse who objects to dharma practice observes that the spouse who is the practitioner is, in spite of their objections, becoming more and more gentle with them and more and more

caring, then eventually they're going to start to question their distrust of the dharma practice, because in spite of whatever they may believe, they will notice that the behavior of their spouse is improving. But the opposite is also true. If facing interference from your spouse you practice with a hard-headed, uncompromising attitude, and you openly quarrel with them about their attitude, then they're going to feel that in spite of the fact that you practice, or maybe since they dislike it because you practice, your mental afflictions, your anger and so on, are only increasing, which will only strengthen their objection to the practice. So in this situation, as in many, it's of the greatest importance that practitioners be patient and gentle.

It's generally true, in dharma it's said that the sign of having heard dharma is to be tranquil and subdued, but the sign of having meditated is to have fewer kleshas and mental afflictions. If the opposite happens, if the more someone hears or knows about dharma, the more rigid and aggressive they become, and if the more they meditate, the more angry and grouchy and uncooperative they become, then it's clear that something isn't working. It's like a medicine that is worsening rather than curing an ailment.

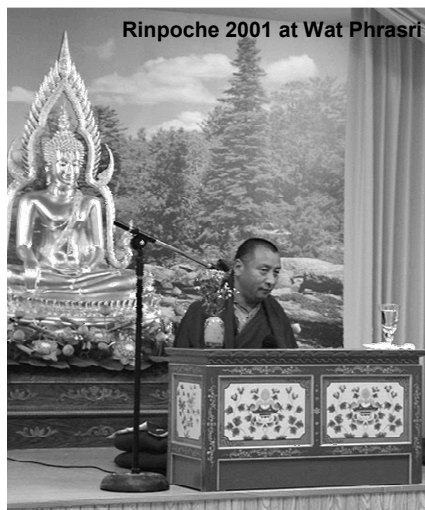
Question: *Rinpoche, did you say Milarepa was a householder?*

Rinpoche: He wasn't exactly a householder either, but he wasn't a monastic. He was a repa, which means cotton-clad yogi.

Question: *Rinpoche, could you say something as to offering the dharma to children and the obstacles that*

presents itself. Especially in the West, it's often not part of our culture. I know, for example, you at a young age had a tutor with you. There are so many other influences that our children have that sway them towards other lifestyles and other ways of thinking. How do we reconcile these issues?

Rinpoche: It's been my experience up to this point that in childhood we have a strong rebellious tendency. Which means that when a child is told don't do that, whatever it is, whether it's something they had any interest in doing before, the child's natural response is going to feel, at all costs, I must find a way. And if a child is told, you must do that, then the child is going to feel, at all costs, no matter what happens, I must find a way not to. And if neither instruction is given to the child, if the activity is not prescribed or forbidden, then they will watch the parents. Very attentively. Nobody is as good at watching and observing another person's behavior, as a child watching their parents. We see this because children pick up all their parents' habits. For example, if the parents are hard or rough in speech, the children will be. If the parents are soft spoken, the children will be as well. So if the parents practice meditation, the child or children will naturally notice this. And when they get to an age where they are curious about such things, they'll ask. They'll ask "what is this meditation, who is the Buddha, what is dharma." Well when the child asks such questions, you should answer their questions sincerely.



Which means tell them what it is, exactly what it is they're asking, not more than that, and also don't make it too hard for them to understand. This seems to be the best approach. The other approach where you attempt to force your opinion or indoctrinate your child into dharma practice does not seem to be successful. If you require your child to

meditate or you make them listen to explanations of things they are not interested in, they won't meditate and they'll develop an antipathy toward the dharma that will last beyond the period of your indoctrination. So the best approach seems to be if and when your child or children ask you about dharma, then tell them what it is they want to

know in a way that they can understand. And as long as they don't ask you, then allow them to observe what you are doing.

Question: *In a monastic situation a practitioner, I assume, would normally be celibate, and in a householder situation, they would engage in love making, and sometimes in my own experience, I sometimes wonder if that will interfere with my practice.*

Lama Yeshe: Celibacy or love making?

Question: *Love making. Because I've heard that sexual energy can be beneficial for the spiritual practice and so I am wondering how I can reconcile being a sexually active householder and practitioner.*

Rinpoche: It actually doesn't matter. Sexual activity does not in any way prevent or interfere with meditation,

because your mind is actually very powerful, and if a monastic who is celibate can rest their mind in a state of natural tranquility, then that's going to be very powerful. But if a householder can rest his or her mind in a state of natural tranquility, it's going to be even more powerful. Your mind is more powerful, and therefore beyond that distinction.

The problem lies with, if your mind becomes distracted and obsessively wanders, with the kleshas, then that's going to obstruct or interfere with meditation. If you're a



householder, and your kleshas or mental afflictions take over your mind, that will prevent meditation. But that can also happen to a monastic. In either case, that's the problem.

Question: *Following up on that, why do people take vows of celibacy?*

Rinpoche: Who are you asking? I don't know! (laughter)

The value of monastic vows is the independence that it gives someone who takes them for that reason. Because if you think about what being a householder entails, it entails a large number of responsibilities which simply have to be dealt with. You have to live somewhere and you have to take care of that place, the building, the lawn, you have to pay for it, so you have to work. You have children to take care of. You have a spouse who has to be constantly treated with diplomacy and so on. A monastic doesn't have any of these responsibilities. A

monastic is simply concerned with what are called the three wheels - study, meditation, and the work of working within the sangha. And they have no personal responsibilities. They have the shared responsibilities of the sangha, but they have no personal responsibilities. Which gives them a kind of independence and a great deal of time.

The idea is that the authentic monastic lifestyle is supposed to consist simply of these three wheels. The aspect of study is called, literally, it's the wheel of reading, which is study, which means actual study, textbook study, and instruction. Then the wheel of the abandonment, which is meditation, the abandonment of thought. And then the wheel of activity, which is the common work of the sangha. In other words, whatever administrative or clinical tasks that have to be engaged in to maintain the sangha. But, of even that, the wheel of activity, which is work, is different in that it's because it's part of the support of the sangha, it's also an aspect of dharma practice. So someone who's leading an authentic monastic lifestyle is never doing anything that is not dharma. But once you're a householder, you incur tremendous mundane responsibilities. Something goes wrong, there is always something going wrong, either something is going wrong with your house, or something is going wrong with your children, or something is going wrong with your spouse, or something else. You're constantly dealing with one crisis after another.

Question: *Going beyond the immediate family, we all have relatives, and relatives of spouses, many of whom follow religious traditions that are mostly only on certain dates, rather than doing a spiritual practice. So I try to explain what we're doing, what our practice is, to people in this situation. Do you have any suggestions about an easy way to do this? To relate what we're doing to their .*

Rinpoche: A way to explain this is by using a mundane example. Someone who starts a business and wants to make a success of it, is going to have to put some time into it. And in fact, generally speaking, people who start businesses have to work day and night. They work with ferocious vigor. If your approach to business were simply to lie at ease, dreaming about the businesses that you were to start, you'd never make any money. Well, if we have to put that much time and effort towards work, and it's a mundane business, which at the most

(DVD recording on next disk resumes during a discussion of Donald Trump.)

Rinpoche said is there anything else you want to know about Donald Trump? You can watch him on television.

Question: *How much time do you spend watching Donald?*

Rinpoche: No specific amount. It's just been my experience recently that whenever I turn it on, I see Donald Trump. (more discussion of Donald Trump, partially inaudible)

Question: *I have a question. If in family life you find yourself being short tempered, and you intend no to be, you resolved not to be. Mainly because you feel oppressed by*

all the responsibilities that Rinpoche outlined. So you resolve not to become angry and not to become impatient, and then you find that you are angry and impatient over and over again. What is a way to try to expand your patience and calmness?

Rinpoche: The most important thing is to continually and repeatedly reinforce your underlying intention to be patient and not to lose your temper. And you shouldn't be too discouraged by the fact that you will continue to lose your temper. Because when we're practicing patience, there is no question that at some point or another we're going to lose it. The problem is not when we lose our temper alone. The problem is also how we relate to what we've done. If you lose your temper, and having lost your temper you rejoice in it, you think, "Oh, I've really told him off," then that would reinforce the loss of temper. And it will make it that much easier for you to lose your temper the next time. But if after losing your temper, you think, "Well, I lost my temper, which is not what I want to do. I hope I don't do it again. I'm going to try no to," that would reinforce your underlying intention to be patient. Now the underlying intention to be patient is not an immediate or magical answer. It's not going to get rid of the habit of anger immediately. It will over time. If the wish to be patient and not to lose your temper is continually reinforced, then actually it will become more powerful than the habit of anger.

It seems we're done so we'll conclude with the dedication and aspiration. ❀



Chiara Nandapurkar, Lily Kendall, and Sofia Vincent with Kim Vincent

EVENTS AT KTC

SUNDAYS

9:30 AM GREEN TARA (SHORT)

10:00 AM SHINAY (SITTING MEDITATION)

11:00 AM CHENREZIG (CHANTING LITURGY)

WEDNESDAYS

7 PM SHINAY (SITTING MEDITATION)

7:30 PM DHARMA READINGS AND DISCUSSION

Discussion on Bokar Rinpoche's Book Chenrezig: The Lord of Love

MEDICINE BUDDHA PRACTICE

DATE: SUNDAY JANUARY 28

TIME: 10 AM SITTING MEDITATION, 10:30 PRACTICE

DATE: SUNDAY FEBRUARY 25

TIME: 10 AM SITTING MEDITATION, 10:30 PRACTICE

MOVIE NIGHT

DATE: FRIDAY JANUARY 12

TIME: 8 PM

'Living Buddha' by Clemens Kuby

LOSAR – LUNAR NEW YEAR'S CELEBRATION

DATE: SUNDAY FEBRUARY 18

TIME: 10 AM

Long Green Tara Sadhana + Tsok.

Bring some food offering!

CHICAGO KTC SHRINE CONSECRATION

FRIDAY MARCH 2

SATURDAY MARCH 3

SUNDAY MARCH 4

For the most current information on Chicago KTC activities, visit our web site:

www.chicagoktc.org



FOUR THOUGHTS CLASS AT CHICAGO KTC

David Kendall

A number of KTC members have expressed interest in beginning ngondro. As I have tried to do in the past, I would like to offer a course in the four thoughts which turn the mind toward Dharma for those beginning or in the middle of their ngondro.

The course will follow the same pattern as before: a one hour discussion where we walk through step by step each of the contemplations follow by a week's worth of practicing the four thoughts on your own. The purpose of contemplating the four thoughts is to develop the correct motivation for the practice of ngondro and encourage one to practice in a serious and stable manner.

Of course, anyone interested in deepening their commitment to practice is welcome to attend. I think we will start this course on the 10th of December on the precious human birth, continue on the 17th with impermanence. We can skip the 24th and 31st and resume on January 7 with the suffering of Karma. We can meet at noon on those days. Each class should take an hour or two. If popularity continues, we may repeat the cycle as well.

Reference books for the course are as follows:

Jamgon Kontrul's Torch of Certainty
Paltrul Rinpoche's Words of My Perfect Teacher
Gampopa's Jewel Ornament of Liberation ❁

MOVIE NIGHT

The KTC centers are circulating a film called **Living Buddha**, by a German director Clemens Kuby. About the 17th Karmapa and his predecessor's parinirvana here. Do we want to pick a Friday evening and make it a social event for us? We can keep it only for two weeks and then we need to pass it on. How about Friday January 12, 8:00 in the evening? Marina will bring food for us so we can have dinner and watch.



Beatrice helps Lily and Zach decorate a gingerbread house

Chicago KTC Calendar for January 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 <i>Full Moon</i> ☉ 7pm Meditation 7:30 Discussion	4	5	6
7 9:30 a.m. Green Tara 10 a.m. Meditation 11 am Chenrezig	8	9	10 7pm Meditation 7:30 Discussion	11	12 8 pm Movie Night	13 <i>Vajrayogini Day</i> ★
14 9:30 a.m. Green Tara 10:00 Meditation 11:00 Guided Chenrezig	15	16	17 7pm Meditation 7:30 Discussion	18	19 <i>New Moon</i> ●	20
21 9:30 a.m. Green Tara 10:00 Meditation 11:00 Chenrezig	22	23	24 7pm Meditation 7:30 Discussion	25	26 <i>Sangye Menla Day</i> ☼	27
28 <i>Guru Rinpoche Day</i> † 9:30 a.m. Green Tara 10:00 Meditation 10:30 Medicine Buddha	29	30	31 7pm Meditation 7:30 Discussion			

Chicago KTC Calendar for February 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2 <i>Full Moon</i> ☉	3
4 9:30 a.m. Green Tara 10:00 Meditation 11:00 Chenrezig	5	6	7 7pm Meditation 7:30 Discussion	8	9	10
11 9:30 a.m. Green Tara 10:00 Meditation 11:00 Chenrezig	12 <i>Vajrayogini Day</i> ★	13	14 7pm Meditation 7:30 Discussion	15	16	17 <i>New Moon</i> ●
18 <i>LOSAR</i> 10:00 Long Green Tara	19	20	21 7pm Meditation 7:30 Discussion	22	23	24 <i>Sangye Menla Day</i> ☼
25 9:30 a.m. Green Tara 10:00 Meditation 10:30 Medicine Buddha	26	27	28 7pm Meditation 7:30 Discussion	March 1	March 2 SHRINE CONSECRATION	March 3 SHRINE CONSECRA TION

Chicago Karma Thegsum Chloing Newsletter is a bimonthly publication. All photos and text copyright ©2006 Chicago KTC unless otherwise noted.

Membership Form

Use this form to become a member of KTC, update your membership, or to make a formal donation to KTC. Return the completed form with your donation or initial monthly dues to: Chicago KTC, c/o Treasurer, 2100 S. Central Ave., Cicero, IL 60804

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____ Phone: _____

E-Mail (optional): _____

- Associate Member Level : Individual \$20/month, Family \$25 month.** Entitled to full KTC benefits, subscription to KTC newsletter and participation in KTC elections.
- Full Member: Individual \$35/month, Family \$40/month.** Entitled to full KTC benefits above & discounts at Karma Triyana Dharmachakra teachings and bookstore.
- Sustaining Member: \$100/month or specified amount of \$_____ /month.** Entitled to full KTC benefits above & discounts at Karma Triyana Dharmachakra teachings and bookstore.



*Chicago Karma Thegsum Choling
2100 South Central Avenue
Cicero, IL 60804-2242*

To: