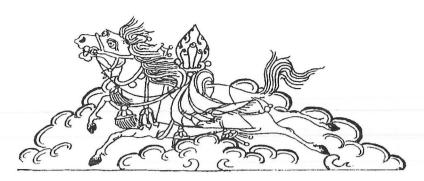
# The Wind Horse



# NEWSLETTER OF CHAGDUD GONPA

**WINTER 1999** 

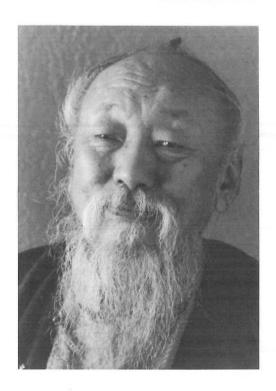
Dear Sangha,

This letter is written from Delhi, during a short break between a pilgrimage to the Buddhist holy places of India and its continuation in Nepal. I have been accompanied by about twenty sangha members, although at one time the group increased to thirty and included some monks from Nyarong, my area of Tibet. Together we have offered more than 200,000 butter lamps and candles, 100,000 in Bodhgaya alone. It was very inspiring to see the stupas and walkways ornamented with lamps.

This offering of lamps has fulfilled a long-held aspiration. In 1961, a group of thirty ngagpa yogis asked a high lama who was extremely accomplished in performing mirror divinations what would best support Buddhism, especially the Nyingmapa tradition of Vajrayana. Using a mirror and the mirror of his mind, he told us to offer butter lamps

at the various holy places. Since we had recently arrived from Tibet as refugees and were very poor, we set up photographs of sacred sites and offered lamps in front of them. Afterward, a second divination was performed, and the outlook for the propagation of dharma in our new land had indeed improved.

On this trip we offered in the actual places, where every atom has been sanctified by the presence of Lord Buddha, where he walked on the ground and sat in the shade of the trees, where his melodious voice carried the teachings of the dharma. The undiminished power of the Buddha's blessings was especially evident in Bodhgaya, where we all made prostrations around the Great Stupa that commemorates his enlightenment; at Vulture's Peak, where at sunset the echoes of his words have arisen in several modern languages; and at Shravasti, where he led retreats for twenty-five years and where we read aloud a sutra that he had spoken there.



In each place we made extensive prayers of aspiration and dedication. I prayed for all who have relied on me for guidance, teachings, and empowerments, that they may attain realization quickly and without obstacles.

In addition to the offering of prayers and lamps, a central purpose of this trip has been to enroll my grandson, Orgyen Tromge, and Max Sim, whom I recognized as the incarnation of Tulku Pema Dorje from Tromtar, in the unsurpassed Nyingma monastery of Mindrolling. Last June, at Katok Gonpa in Tibet, Orgyen was enthroned as the speech incarnation of His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche. As some of you know, two other Dudjom tulkus have been previously recognized, one by Dudjom Sangyum and one by the great rigdzin Chatral Sangye Dorje Rinpoche. However, it is not unusual for as many as five emana-

tions to arise from a supreme master of Dudjom Rinpoche's stature—emanations of body, speech, mind, qualities, and activities.

Since Orgyen has received this recognition and this renowned name, his training has become imperative. When a tulku somehow fails to be trained, it derails his own past life aspirations, thwarts his purpose in this life, and can even sap his vitality. Everyone in Orgyen's family and in Max's understands the necessity of training. However, both families are going through a painful process of cutting their attachment to the boys, who are precious on a worldly as well as a spiritual level. I know this myself—as our bus pulled away from Mindrolling Gonpa, I had to hide my face so the boys would not see my wet eyes.

The monastery made the installation easier by organizing the ceremonies very well. The boys were dressed in their robes; then at the monastery a big collar was placed around their necks and their heads were shaved except for a single tuft at the crown.

Chagdud Rinpoche and Chagdud Khadro in Brazil, July 1999

Then they were received by the head of the monastery, His Holiness Mindroling Trichen. He was quite cheerful and bumped each boy's head several times with his own—an honorific greeting. After he snipped their remaining tuft of hair as an acknowledgment of their vows of refuge, we went to the magnificent shrine room, where the monks, lamas, and tulkus were assembled. A short ceremony was performed, and offerings of support were distributed to each member of the Mindrolling sangha. Afterward we were given lunch. Max, who is small and has already been dubbed "Lama Chung Chung"—"Little Lama"—ate heartily, to the delight of the monastery's abbot, the Venerable Khochhen Rinpoche.

As we left a short time later, I rejoiced, even in my moment of sadness, that the boys will have the opportunity to experience the strong tradition and excellent training of Mindrolling. I deeply wish that both of them fulfill their highest potential, which is very high indeed, and I pray that no great obstacles arise. I ask you to add your prayers to mine, for the benefit of all beings.

I take pleasure in having seen so many of you in the United States recently, and pray that we meet again and again, beyond separation.

当じばじずできて In the dharma, Chagdud Tulku



Jinbep dancers at Katok Gonpa

# **Katok Monlam**

In June 1999 Chagdud Khadro represented H.E. Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche at an extensive aspiration prayer ceremony, called a monlam, at Katok Monastery, the mother monastery of Chagdud Gonpa. During a visit to Nepal in the fall of 1997, upon hearing that the shedra, or philosophical school, at Katok needed financial assistance, Chagdud Rinpoche established an endowment fund to provide ongoing support for it. Mogtza Rinpoche is the monastery's head lama.

The decision to travel to Eastern Tibet for the monlam ceremony at Katok Gonpa was made unexpectedly, during a telephone call with Rinpoche, when he told me, "Mogtza Rinpoche says Tulku Jigme, Orgyen, and I must go. Since I can't go, I think you should."

Rinpoche and I had discussed the idea of traveling to Katok months before, but all divinations, including Rinpoche's own, had indicated that the journey would put his health at risk.

"You might not have such a great opportunity to make offerings and dedication prayers in Tibet again," Rinpoche said. "Many high lamas and many monks and nuns will be gathered there."

After a moment's anxiety about organizing the trip on such short notice and in the middle of a teaching tour, I said yes enthusiastically. Many people helped us with the logistics, especially Candace Palmo, who also volunteered to go as a personal attendant and photographer.

Tulku Jigme Tromge knew and revered the distinguished lamas who attended the monlam, and he told us wonderful stories about them. These lamas in turn showed him utmost respect, as Chagdud Tulku's son and as a lama of obvious qualities. Adept in the formalities of such ceremonies, he skillfully orchestrated the presentation of large offerings from Rinpoche and rigorously tracked the smaller offerings made through the Mahakaruna Foundation and other private sources.

The high lamas of Katok had made a special request that Tulku Jigme's son, Orgyen Tromge, attend the ceremony because they intended to enthrone him as the speech incarnation of Dudjom. The Dudjom lineage has been held primarily at Katok for centuries—at Katok, Rigdzin Duddul Dorje, a previous incarnation of Dudjom Rinpoche, was the teacher of Terton Longsal Nyingpo, source of our p'howa practice—so the enthronement served as a powerful validation of the Dudjom, Katok, and Chagdud Gonpa connection. Meanwhile, not foreseeing that such an amazing mantle of recognition was about to descend, I often found myself trying to silence Orgyen's quick-silver commentary as we drove over the precipitous mountain passes.

"Well," he remarked, looking out the window at a sheer drop of thousands of feet, "it seems like we could die an extremely unpleasant death here. . . . ""Orgyen, *please* don't talk!"

The Katok lamas had arranged a sturdy vehicle with an excellent Chinese driver who had the face of a cherub, the temperament of an angel, and the stamina of an Olympic athlete. The journey took us up past Tromge Gonpa through the gorge of the

Yantze (Yellow) River, to Palyul (site of H.H. Penor Rinpoche's monastery), then, at an altitude of more than 13,000 feet, to Katok. Watching the awesome surge of the river through fascinating rock faces hundreds of feet high, I found myself absolutely thrilled to make this trip.

Katok Gonpa stands at the top of a mountain ridge, a huge complex partially destroyed during the years of conflict, but now wonderfully restored. Before arriving I could not believe that ten thousand monks and lamas could really gather for such a ceremony, but there they were, along with thousands more lay people. Just to see them all together moved me deeply.

As for foreigners, the Chinese government opened the region around Palyul and Katok to tourists in January 1999. We later learned that during the ceremony local officials summoned Mogtza Rinpoche and another Katok lama to ask about our presence and that of a group of Taiwanese practitioners. However, after the lamas pointed out that both the national and state governments had opened the area, the local officials let the matter drop.

The four of us stayed in one room of the shedra, a fine stone building.

Due to Chagdud Rinpoche's generosity and that of several of his students, the shedra is well endowed and supports 120 scholars, an elite corps of the monastery. Meeting the scholars and their khenpo, who is said to foster knowledge and good character "like a father with his own sons," was truly inspiring. After decades of suppression and duress, the living wisdom of the teachings flourishes in this new generation of khenpos after only a few years of concentrated attention, like dormant blooms of desert plants flowering vibrantly after rain. I fervently hope that a similar shedra can be established at Chagdud Gonpa Tibet, and wish Tulku Jigme every success in his guidance of this project.

The shedra lamas took care of our food and room—somewhat embarrassing given their stature—but Orgyen, undaunted, reciprocated by teaching them to yo-yo. The colorful array of yo-yos he had brought with him flashed in the dim corridor of the shedra, and the serious demeanors of the scholars gave way to laughter and play.

Offering prayers for the peace and prosperity of all beings was the purpose of the ten-day monlam ceremony, which was conducted in various shrine rooms for the first days, then outside around a huge courtyard so that lama dancing could be performed for the second half of the ceremony. On the first day, Tulku Jigme and Orgyen were ushered to thrones at the front while Candace and I stood at the door of the shrine room, not

knowing what to do next. Suddenly Mogtza Rinpoche appeared and led us to a back corner. Cushions were plopped down and we took our places, simultaneously taking in the stony looks of the monks sitting across the aisle and the fact that we were the *only* women officially seated in the assembly of probably two thousand monks.

Over the next few days other women would come and go, mainly from among a group of Taiwanese disciples of one of the Katok lamas, and the monks' stoniness would give way to a sense of camaraderie as we prayed together and shared food. Also, the Chagdud connection somehow became unveiled,

glossing with honor the anomaly of a blue-eyed female seated in their midst. Candace, with her brown eyes and dark hair, generally had a warmer reception, particularly from the lay people. I embodied the nightmares of small children. Once as I walked by, a mother seized her tot and held him up, obviously telling him that just such a demon would devour, steal, beat him-who knows?if he didn't behave. I looked straight at the howling child and said, "Om Mani Padme Hung!"

For one instant he stared back, puzzled. Then his



Orgyen teaching the monks to yo-yo

mother put him down and he fled.

The ritual dances performed during the second five days of the monlam were splendid, with costumes of the richest silk, a lineup of about thirty drums, twenty-foot-long horns, and perhaps 150 dancers in the Black Hat, more in other dances. Some of the dances were familiar from Rigdzin Ling and Khadro Ling, others were quite different from those we do. Whenever the crowd pushed too close to the dancers, it was merrily beaten back by masked clowns with large pillows and limitless energy. Even though a cold, dreary rain fell most days, the onlookers stood for hours to watch the performances. One had to admire their faith and endurance.

An opportunity to make the ceremonial offering to the monks and lamas arose during the first day of the dances. I wrote a dedication (see below), which Tulku Jigme translated verbally and one of the shedra khenpos had written in the traditional formal style. This was read aloud to the entire assembly, lay and ordained, including some of the most highly realized lamas of our time. The distribution of offerings required a tremendous effort by several lamas, because Chagdud Rinpoche wanted every monk and nun—all ten thousand or so—to receive an individual offering. This is not the custom at Katok, but it was done anyway out of respect for Rinpoche.

After the offering was made I felt a strong sense of relief,

both because I was divested of the responsibility for a huge amount of cash and because I felt I had not failed Rinpoche's purpose in sending me to Tibet. I also felt his pervasive, powerful blessing, his constant enrichment of my life on all levels. Afterward, any discomforts—and all pilgrimages should have them!—due to road travel, the altitude, and the primitive sanitary facilities dissipated completely. I was swept away by the wonder of actually having been in the presence of the incarnations of Khenpo Ngaga and Lungtok Tenpai Nyima, sources of some of our most precious Dzogchen transmissions. I can only begin to honor this rare, precious opportunity through guru devotion and pure practice.



Monks and lamas watching lama dancers at Katok

#### The Dedication

Through the interdependence of the Three Jewels and the Three Roots, and the prayers and pure intention of the holy and realized lamas gathered in this sacred place of Katok Gonpa on the auspicious occasion of this glorious monlam, and the pure intention of this offering:

May the precious Buddhadharma continuously expand and flourish throughout the nations of this earth, increasing the moral conduct, peace, merit, and prosperity of all beings.

May the vitality of the unsurpassed Ati lineage remain undiminished on this earth, and may the distilled nectar of the heart drop transmission continually overflow from the rigdzin lamas into the hearts and minds of qualified disciples.

May the vast array of superb methods available through the Nyingmapa lineages be powerfully and perfectly accomplished by generation after generation of practitioners.

May the longevity of Chagdud Tulku, Lord of the Dance, be sustained and may his old age be radiant with well-being, prosperity, and joy.

May Chagdud Tulku's activity continue to flourish beyond all limits of time and space.

May his disciples gain an increasingly profound understanding of his example and his teachings.

May the activities of his family lineage, particularly those of his son, Tulku Jigme Ngawang Norbu, and his grandson, Orgyen Jigme Lodro Dawa, flourish both in Asia and in the West. May they bring to fruition all the high aspirations of all their lifetimes.

May the longevity, prosperity, and activities of all the holy dharma masters assembled here on this glorious occasion—and of all who hold the Buddha's doctrine with pure intention—always increase, bestowing a rain of benefit for beings everywhere.

# Shi-Tro Mandala Project Update

With the blessings of H.E. Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche, and under the guidance of Lama Gyatso, construction of the Shi-Tro Mandala for Universal Peace will begin in Los Angeles in December. An article on the project, along with a teaching by Lama Gyatso, appeared in the summer issue of *Snow Lion*. A brochure describing the project is being enclosed with this issue of the *Windhorse*.

Over the next nine months, the Mandala of the One Hundred Peaceful and Wrathful Deities will be constructed within the grounds of Forest Lawn Memorial Park, a cemetery that occupies a swath of green hills overlooking Glendale. The mandala will be built in a high-ceilinged, skylit room adjacent to the Forest Lawn Museum, which houses an art collection and is open year-round. The public will be invited to view the construction, as well as to attend a number of dharma events related to the mandala.

Sangha members who work with at-risk youth will invite hundreds of children and youth to view the mandala, as well as to create their own mandalas on paper. A website dedicated to the Mandala Project is also being developed so that those who are interested will be able to follow the progress of the mandala's construction.

The mandala, once completed, will be available for display in appropriate venues. A number of museums, including the Art Institute of Chicago, have expressed interest in exhibiting the mandala. These exhibitions will enable many people to make a connection to the dharma by seeing, hearing about, or remembering the mandala. Ideally, individuals with sufficiently ripened mindstreams can attain liberation through such contact.

T'hondup Ling has held two fund-raising events, which have helped make the community aware of the project, have generated enthusiasm for it, and have raised nearly twenty percent of the amount required to build the mandala. We intend to have another fund-raising event in Santa Barbara this spring.

The Mandala Project is in urgent need of sponsors. Time is running short, and we have to raise at least \$100,000. Monetary donations in any amount are welcome, as are volunteers willing to contribute time to the project as docents or in other areas. We will need experienced woodworkers, as well as those skilled in clay molding, to assist the artists. Material donations are requested in the form of a photocopy machine or a used car for the artists' use.

The blessings arising from the Shi-Tro mandala are incalculable. The sacred circle of the mandala touches the hearts of beings, leading them toward the path of transformation, of compassion, of ultimate benefit. Please join us in making this enlightened vision a reality. To join the circle of the mandala please refer to our brochure. May all beings benefit!

Veronica Miller on behalf of the T'hondup Ling Mandala Committee

# **Lineage Holders of Inherent Truth**

This article continues the series by Lama Padma Drimed Norbu on the lineage holders of the profound path of the Great Perfection, particularly the Longchen Nyingtik lineage revealed by the great Rigdzin Jigme Lingpa.

Having mastered the teachings he received from Longchenpa, Jigme Lingpa began to guide others through this profound cycle. Eventually, he passed the lineage on to one of his close students—Jigme Gyalwai Nyugu. After studying for a

long time with Jigme Lingpa, Gyalwai Nyugu traveled to Kham in Eastern Tibet, where he renounced the comforts and amenities of ordinary life. Living on a windswept hillside, with only the bare essentials, he focused one-pointedly on practicing and accomplishing the teachings of the Longchen Nyingtik. As he practiced purely in this way, he became a great inspiration to others, and students began to gather around him.

One of these was Patrul Rinpoche, who had the good fortune to receive the Longchen Nyingtik teachings in their entirety. Patrul Rinpoche was the speech incarnation of Jigme Lingpa, and received teachings on the preliminary practices (ngondro) from Gyalwai Nyugu more than a dozen times. These became the basis for his book *Words of My Perfect Teacher*. The first Drodrubchen had entrusted Patrul Rinpoche with the lineage of the Great Perfection at an early age and gave

him the name Orgyen Jigme Chokyi Wangpo. He was also recognized as the tulku of Palge Samten P'huntsok. Although Patrul Rinpoche studied the sutras and tantras with many great masters, his root gurus were Gyalwai Nyugu and the first Drodrubchen's principal disciple, Do Khyentse.

Patrul lived at the residence of his previous incarnation, Palge Samten, until he was about twenty. After the head administrator died, he decided to close the residence, and inspired by his teacher's humble way of life, he wandered as a hermit, teaching many people as he traveled and meditating in caves and secluded forests. Once while he was meditating in a cave, he heard the familiar sound of the small bell that hung from the neck of Do Khyentse's horse, and he joyously awaited the arrival of his teacher. When Do Khyentse entered the cave and Patrul respectfully greeted him, Do Khyentse showed him the nature of mind in a very unconventional way. He grabbed Patrul by his long hair and began to throw him around. Patrul smelled alcohol on his lama's breath and thought, "My teacher must be drunk." Do Khyentse read his thoughts and dropped him, saying, "You people with ordinary mind have such negative thoughts. You old dog!" Completely taken by surprise, Patrul sat up and, as his negativity gave way, skylike awareness arose without obstruction.

Patrul Rinpoche had great love for Shantideva's work, Bodhisattvacaryavatara (The Entrance into a Bodhisattva's Way of Life). He taught it widely, inspiring many people to enter the bodhisattva path.

He lived for a time in a forest with a disciple who was to become his lineage holder, Lungtok Tenpai Nyima. They practiced and meditated there, and Patrul taught him a little of the *Bodhisattvacaryavatara* each day. Gradually other students gathered there, living very simply without possessions or much food. Understanding that desire creates obstacles to one's practice. Patrul wrote:



Lama Drimed

Suffering is good, happiness is not. Happiness inflames the five poisons of passion.

Suffering cleanses old karma.
Suffering is a blessing of the Lama.
Criticism is good, compliments
are not.

If I am complimented, I will swell with arrogance.

If criticized, my faults will be exposed. Poverty is good, prosperity is not. Prosperity causes the great pains of earning more and preserving it. Poverty causes dedication and accomplishment of the holy Dharma.

When people offered him food or money, even gold, Patrul Rinpoche would often leave it for others in greater need. During one pe-

riod in his life, he did accept offerings to complete an enormous wall made of stones on which many *Om Mani Padme Hung* mantras were carved. He had actually begun the construction of this wall in his previous incarnation as Palge Samten.

He had great equanimity, and taught and guided rich and poor people equally. His counsel was kind but always direct, exposing people's flaws without concern for social convention. In his later years he returned to the region of his birth. Finally, one morning, at the age of eighty-one, he sat naked, resting perfectly with hands on his knees and his mind one with the vast expanse of primordial purity.

"Do not wait another second to practice. Do something about it immediately, like a coward finding a snake in his lap or a dancing-girl whose hair has just caught fire. Totally abandon worldly activities and devote yourself to the practice of the Dharma right now. Otherwise you will never find the time—one worldly activity will follow another, endlessly like ripples on water. They will only stop when you decide once and for all to put an end to them. As the Omniscient Longchenpa says:

Worldly preoccupations never end until the moment we die. But they end when we drop them—such is their nature."

Patrul Rinpoche in The Words of My Perfect Teacher

# H.E. Chagdud Rinpoche's North American Visit: Fall 1999

Several North American centers had the precious opportunity to host Chagdud Rinpoche this fall. It had been almost two years since his last visit and not one of us was left untouched by the intense blessings of his presence, the momentum of which seemed to build long before he ever set foot in the United States and has continued long after his departure for pilgrimage in Asia.

Being in the presence of the lama allows us to see our practice as it is, without pretense, and to renew our commitment to following the spiritual path as he reveals it to us through his own dharma activity. What follows are photographs and pieces by a few of Rinpoche's students that convey the gratitude all of us feel for his kindness.

## **Song of Devotion**

This song of devotion was written and dedicated to H.E. Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche by Gatsal Lama on behalf of the Oregon sangha, during the Essence of Siddhi drubchen in October. It is based on a prayer found in the Dudjom Tersar Ngondro.

Palden tsawai lama rinpoche—Glorious root teacher, precious one: Precious teacher, knower of the three times, hear our plaintive call. From this noise and confusion, hear that which is our song of pure aspiration.

Stay with us, for we are too young to be taken from the milk of your great kindness.

Dag gi chi wor padmai den zhug la—Dwelling on the lotus seat on the crown of the head:

Precious teacher, you who are free of bias and deception, guide us this very moment.

We must be mindful not to be like butchers outside of Dudjom Lingpa's tent. View like the sky, action like grains of barley flour—through your kindness, may this be the mark of the children of Chagdudpa.

Ka drin chen poi go nay je zung te—Hold us with your great kindness: Precious teacher, who shows us the only path, the stamping dance of the path of nonattachment—

The thundering neigh of the horse-headed one at once shatters complacency and clears the arena of the endless crowd of emotions.

"Not pushing, not pulling—knowing ways has, this kind some doing." A la la; p'hat . . . p'hat . . . p'hat.

Ku sung thug kyi ngo drub tsal du sol—Bestow the accomplishments of body, speech, and mind:

Precious teacher, who shows the beginning, the middle, and the end of all dharmas to be nothing else but pure from the beginning—

Help us to follow in your footsteps, and help us to know what it is to remain inseparable from you.

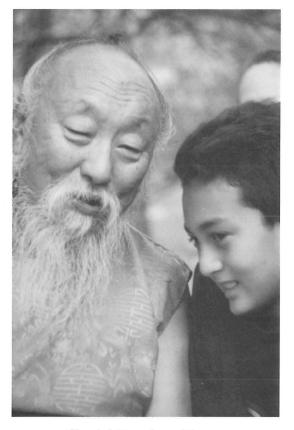
Through your unceasing kindness, may we all come to fully know what it is that you have given us. May we never part from true samaya.

Precious teacher, you who have known us for so many lifetimes, may your life be long and stable.

May your activities ever increase like the waxing moon,

And, borrowing the words of omnicient Longchenpa, may they ever dispel the darkness of unknowing and dry up the ocean of samsara; and

Through the merit of all that has been and will be accomplished, the island of freedom, thus coming into sight, may it extend into the ten directions for all beings.



Chagdud Rinpoche and Orgyen



Padma T'hutop Dorje (Max)

# **Comings and Goings at Iron Knot Ranch**

This article was excerpted from "Meanwhile, back at the ranch. . . " an occasional e-mail missive from Iron Knot Ranch.

Appearances arise and appearances dissolve. Things come and go. Back at the ranch a lot has come and some has gone since our last missive to you folks elsewhere, and as always one hardly knows where to begin.

Guru Rinpoche came, in all manner of ways, and now resides quite visibly two miles north of the county road, on a hill-side facing east over southern New Mexico. . . . As many of you know, it has always been the aspiration of Lama Shenpen to build a life-size statue of Guru Rinpoche on our little patch of nowhere. . . . It is said that to play even the slightest part in building such a statue is a source of inconceivable blessing and purification; the very environment in which a statue is completed becomes sacred and the beings there are brought into the sphere of Guru Rinpoche's compassionate intention. In short, the world in which such an image is created is forever changed.

Just the same, there's not a one of us who could tell you exactly how it came to pass, as up to the last moment it all seemed like such an impossibility. After months of preparation, after two incredibly generous visits by Tulku Jigme Rinpoche, who performed the preparatory ceremonies and consecrations, after hundreds and hundreds of hours of work by folks from all over, after all this, . . . H.E. Chagdud Rinpoche arrived and in five marathon days completed the first Guru Rinpoche statue in the Southwest. And the world is different because of it.

Working alongside Rinpoche was like entering a dream, experienced by most of us through various layers of exhaustion. Though one can record the external events, what happens in the mind is the heart of the story and is simply impossible to tell. There he was, four in the morning, carving in half-set concrete beneath kerosene lanterns on a hillside in rural New Mexico. Stars and moon and planets whirling above while Guru Rinpoche sculpts his own reflection.

Within hours of his arrival everyone was doing everything. Matt was creating a lotus throne out of sandstone, John was forming up an arching nimbus, Tom was casting vajras in Styrofoam cups, and Daisy, just arrived from Santa Fe, was manifesting a second armature with mortar and metal lath. If we didn't have it, whatever it was, Rinpoche invented it. The cooks ferried meals from a kitchen over three rocky miles away, visitors gathered crystals for the lotus throne from the surrounding ground, Lama Tenzin and her spontaneously arisen cadre carved flowing silk in Portland cement, people did things they didn't know how to do. And everyone kept on doing, sometimes 'round the clock, by daylight, by lantern light, by headlight, by flashlight, by moonlight. It wasn't so much five days as it was a single moment that lasted five days.

No one worked harder than Rinpoche and yet he hardly seemed to move. The activity wove in and around him. It arose from him, just as the statue did. In the clarity of his presence the dream of this life became apparent . . . to be there was to be enveloped by his compassion, wisdom, and skillful teaching.

We will never be able to repay his kindness, will never be able to describe how something that should have taken weeks, if not months, to complete was accomplished in five days. But we recommend to anyone, come and see for yourself. There is work yet to finish: the painting and a roof to build. But spend some days and nights in the presence of Guru Rinpoche and feel for yourself the imprint Rinpoche has left there.

Well, so much for what has come. Now on to what has gone. Many of you have already heard of the Great Dakini Day Fire of November 2nd. A mouse kicked over a butter lamp (perhaps) and started a bit of a blaze. Our L.A. freeway dog Yeshe woke those at the ranch just before midnight and alerted them to the smoke drifting down from the shrine room.

There wasn't much to do about it. Within minutes, the hundred-year-old headquarters, pretty as a picture and dry as a tinder box, was engulfed in flame. Our neighbor Larry and his nephew Slim, down from Montana for round-up, helped move the ranch trucks out of harm's way. Larry, never one to want for words, summed it up eloquently, "Yep, that's a fire." By the time a truckload of us arrived from Silver City about 3:30 a.m., it was all but over, a glowing pile of embers and tin beneath a clear and star-filled sky, a slender horn of a moon, and not a breath of wind.

No one was injured and miraculously the fire didn't spread beyond the confines of the yard. The flames did, however, leap to the adjacent mobile home, which had been serving as a bedroom, storage locker, and shower house. That went pretty quick too. It was a very hot fire, and quite effectively cleaned the slate

# Though one can record the external events, what happens in the mind is the heart of the story and is simply impossible to tell.

for us. We lost our shrine room, kitchen, and bathing facilities, as well as the personal effects of a number of ranch hands. . . . So we're back to beans and dirt baths. Yet the prevailing sentiment is that the loss bore great blessings. We will rebuild, of course, only this time in a much more auspicious location near Guru Rinpoche. And seeing that we are now somewhat seasoned *adobladeros*, we will rebuild with fire-retardant adobe.

Thanks to all of you who have sent food, clothes, and shrine articles to replace those lost in the blaze, and to those of you who continue to send donations to help us rebuild. Incidentally, Ben lost just about everything he owned, including a number of musical instruments and most of his clothes. We were sifting through the debris the morning after the fire when he remembered that he had stored a box of clothes down in the barn. He ran off to see what had been spared and returned with the news that the box was full of neckties. So please let everyone know, Ben has plenty of ties.

We reckon that's the long and short of it. As always, we hope this finds you well and good. Keep your boots out of trouble and the mice away from the butter lamps. And if impermanence doesn't intervene, we would simply love to see you all ... back at the ranch.

# The Stupa of Complete Victory



Rinpoche blessing the stupas

There was a sublime feeling of déjà vu when Chagdud Rinpoche suggested to John Swearingen that working on the stupas might generate more merit than sitting in the drubchen. The wheel of activity quickly shifted into high gear around the six remaining stupas as many of us were integrated into the project. Our goal was to set the bell form of the eighth stupa, the stupa of complete victory, fill it with concrete, as well as make and assemble

all of the spires in the remaining four days of the drubchen. Rinpoche's intention was that the blessings of the retreat and of all the lamas praying together would strengthen the stupas' consecration.

For those of us whose guru yoga seems inexorably linked with construction, we found ourselves in a familiar situation, at a familiar place, and among familiar practitioners. As all the pieces of the stupas came together, it again became clear to us how precious the sangha is as an extension of Rinpoche's precious body.

On the final full day of the drubchen, as sunlight faded, we considered the consequences of stopping work versus staging the lights and continuing on. It was a brief discussion. Just before midnight we sat on the forms around the top of the bell stupa and dedicated any merit our work had generated and prayed that Rinpoche may have a long, long life.

Mike McLaughlin

"In Tibet a lot of the stupas were built at crossroads on high mountain passes, places where nobody would ever go except on their way to somewhere else. Tibetans knew that no matter what stupas looked like on the outside, they contained incredible blessings. Just to see them was a blessing. To touch them was a blessing. To hear the sound of the wind blowing around them was a blessing. And that was why they built them—for the blessings, just the blessings."

Tulku Sang-ngag Rinpoche

# Sangha News

## **Khadro Ling**

Things are rolling along at high speed at Khadro Ling. The construction seems to never end. The retreat units, which are nestled in deep woods and cascade down the side of a mountain, are almost finished. Undaunted by such trivialities as the retreat cabins being incomplete, some yogis and yoginis have already begun retreats in various makeshift facilities.

The apartments are also nearly completed, but in keeping with tradition, they have leaky roofs, which is hampering the application of the final touches. Ten prayer wheel houses are presently under construction, and more apartments are being planned.

The basement of the lha khang is now home to our new dharma store and a cafe, which has become something of a local hotspot with frequent appearances by the sangha rock group "Os the Dharma Lovers."

The hospice project is gearing up and intensive planning is under way. A number of professionals have offered their time and expertise. The land is being cleared, and plans are being drawn up under Chagdud Khadro's close supervision. The names of people wishing to spend their last days in this blessed place have already been placed on a waiting list.

Palden, our visiting artist from Sikkim, is painting details on the ceiling and columns of the lha khang shrine room, and the walls are being prepared for the enormous murals he will paint on them.

The dog population seems to have stabilized, but Rinpoche and Khadro now have two cats, Dorje and Pema, living with them upstairs. Both are local bush cats that have somehow slipped into the guru's compassionate sphere.

During September and October, Khadro traveled throughout Brazil teaching and giving empowerments. In November, she joined Rinpoche on pilgrimage to India and Nepal. Lama Norbu remains in retreat, pounding out blessings to all beings on his gonla drum.



Lama Shenpen, Lama Dorje, and Lama T'hubten at Essence of Siddhi drubchen

# **Rigdzin Ling**

In August, Tulku Sang-ngag Rinpoche led a week of ceremonies as the sangha prepared sacred images and mantras to be consecrated and placed inside the six unfinished stupas. By week's end, the stupas' inner chambers had been filled and sealed. Tulku Sang-ngag was very pleased with the amount of work accomplished and the speed at which it was done.

On a September weekend, a group of local sangha members and visitors worked together to place straw bales into the newly framed walls of Lotus House, Rigdzin Ling's new building for

staff members and retreatants. Participants came from as far away as British Columbia. Within forty-eight hours about 500 bales were unloaded from a semi and then carefully placed into the walls. John Swearingen, a local sangha member, building contractor, and international expert on straw-bale structures, has been overseeing the project.

From October 8 to 29 Chagdud Rinpoche visited Rigdzin Ling for the first time in two years. He gave a weekend of teachings in Weaverville to 350 people on "The Way of the Bodhisattva." Rinpoche was also vajra master at the Essence of Siddhi drubchen. This was the twentyfirst and largest Chagdud Gonpa drubchen held in the United States, with 260 people participating. Guest lamas included Gyalse Tulku Rinpoche from Mindrolling Monastery, Tulku Jigme Tromge, Lama Padma Dorie, Lama Gyaltsen, Tulkus Orgyen and Max, and several other lamas.

The eight-day retreat culminated in Rigdzin Ling's annual lama dancing performance.

This year's drubchen included a traditional mendrub ceremony for the preparation of dutsi (sacred medicine). This detailed procedure involves the gathering of specific substances, including some very precious mother cultures that have been blessed by great lineage masters. They are combined in a prescribed manner, and then consecrated during the drubchen practice with the appropriate prayers. In addition to reciting the prayers, almost all of the participants took turns assisting in the final drying of the precious medicine. This may well have been the first time a mendrub has been performed in this country. At its completion Chagdud Rinpoche commented that there were clear signs that the ceremony had been successful.

During the drubchen, work on the stupas' exteriors continued, particularly that on the eighth, bell-shaped stupa, which required the most attention. The bell-shaped stupa of complete

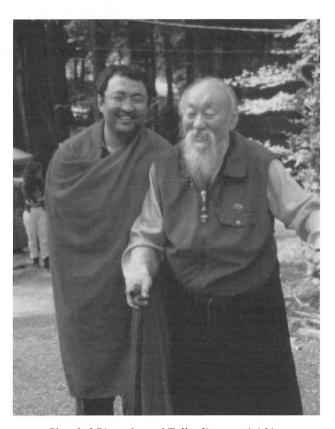
victory commemorates the Buddha's voluntary prolongation of his life span at Visali. On the final day, after opening the retreat boundaries, Chagdud Rinpoche reconsecrated all eight stupas.

Following the drubchen, Rinpoche announced that he would go on to India and Nepal for six weeks of pilgrimage, and extended an invitation to any sangha members who wished to join him. Twenty of his students took the precious opportunity to travel with him.

Before leaving, he and the sangha spent an afternoon picnicking along the Trinity River. Everyone relaxed, feasted, and told stories. There was something timeless about just sitting with

the lama, feeling the warm autumn breeze and watching the golden light on the river rocks. It was a welcome respite from the effort and activity of the previous weeks, an all too brief moment to settle before we moved on in our lives and our practice, to reflect on what being with Rinpoche again had meant to all of us.

Khenpo Chuga was a recent guest at Rigdzin Ling while recuperating from an illness. At Rinpoche's request he taught the Bodhisattvacaryavatara, Lama Chökyi Nyima translating, three days a week for more than a month. We were pleased that both he and Lama Padma Dorje attended our Thanksgiving meal, as did a neighbor and the parents of a few sangha members. Ingrid and Lance serenaded the guests with bluegrass tunes, and Khenpo sang the Seven Line Prayer, Praises to the Twenty-one Taras, and a prayer to Sarasvati to the accompaniment of banjo and fiddle.



Chagdud Rinpoche and Tulku Jigme at Ati Ling

## **Ati Ling**

The past six months have been wonderful for the Ati Ling/San Francisco Bay Area sangha. In May, Chagdud Khadro gave a public talk on the six bardos at the Swedenborgian Church in San Francisco, followed by a weekend of p'howa teachings at Ati Ling. In early August, Tulku Jigme gave a Medicine Buddha empowerment and led a weekend retreat at Ati Ling. The very next weekend Lama Tsering began an inspiring series of teachings in San Francisco and Sonoma on taming the mind. She also bestowed the Red Tara empowerment at the Rigpa Center in San Francisco. All of these dharma activities were well attended, and there were many new faces at each event.

We could not believe our good fortune when in September H.E. Chagdud Rinpoche gave a public talk on guru yoga and bestowed the One Hundred Peaceful and Wrathful Deities empowerment on more than 300 people at San Francisco's Fort

Mason Center. This was followed by a two-day teaching on the six bardos at Ati Ling. Lon Hill and Mike McLaughlin, along with some other hearty sangha members, quickly expanded the Ati Ling shrine room with a large porch addition, and a kind neighbor allowed us to park cars in his cow pasture. In this way, we were able to accommodate the large group who traveled from all over the Bay Area to spend this precious time with Rinpoche.

Following the drubchen at Rigdzin Ling, Rinpoche returned to Ati

Ling to celebrate the marriage of his daughter, Dawa Tromge, to James Zito. In their honor, a fire puja was performed and a Red Tara tsok was offered. Rinpoche also blessed the new meditation yurt at Yeshe Ling on Cara Landry's land in Oakville and gave an inspiring teaching to sangha members who had gathered there to offer tsok.

# **Dechhen Ling**

Lama Tsering's visit in August was a time of both teachings and meditation. She spoke to an enthusiastic gathering in Eugene, and then many of us came together for a special session of Tara practice during the solar eclipse. We wish to thank her for her compassionate presence, and hope she will return whenever she is in the United States.

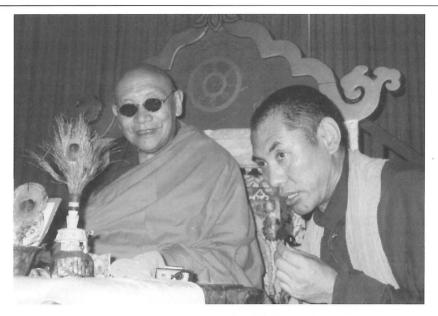
The nineteenth annual Tara Tsok was held Thanksgiving weekend, and we were honored by the presence of Venerable Tulku Jigme Tromge, along with Lama Sonam, Lama Gyaltsen, and Lama Jigme. We celebrated Thanksgiving with a Chenrezig practice followed by a potluck.

Lama Sonam would like to convert the third-floor apartment at River House into a self-contained retreat space. The funds for this project are slowly coming together. Anyone who wishes to make a contribution should contact Sharon at (541) 942-5258.

We offer our sincere gratitude to our supporters, to those who have helped us bring many projects to fruition and continue to do so.

## T'hondup Ling

Lama Gyatso led the sangha in a whirlwind of dharma activity through the spring, summer, and fall. In the spring, Lama Gyatso continued his public teachings at the Philosophical Research Society with a series devoted to the Six Perfections. On a sunny day in May, while reciting Jetsun prayers, we released thousands of bait fish into Santa Monica Bay. That same month we held the inaugural fund-raising dinner for the Shi-Tro



H.H. Trulshik Rinpoche and Lama Gyatso in L.A.

Mandala Project, during which we introduced many in the community to the project.

In the summer, Lama Gyatso led both a weekend Yeshe Tsogyal retreat and an Orgyen Zhambhala retreat. Throughout the summer we prepared a large number of statues that practitioners had sent to us for consecration. Many of us learned firsthand how labor-intensive this process is! We will begin to accept more statues for consecration in February. You can call the center for details.

On July 4th Lama Gyatso gave the inaugural blessing for the Tibetan Independence Festival, during which he spoke movingly about his family's escape from Tibet in 1959.

In August, T'hondup Ling welcomed H.E. Namkha Drimed Rinpoche as vajra master of the fifth annual T'hröma retreat, which included public healing ceremonies and ceremonies for the dead. Namkha Rinpoche also gave Medicine Buddha and Yeshe Tsogyal empowerments.

The day following the retreat brought the incomparable blessing of a visit from H.H. Trulshik Rinpoche, who bestowed a rare Dzogchen empowerment upon several hundred people.

Lama Gyatso flew to Switzerland for his annual teaching tour, returning just in time to welcome H.E. Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche to T'hondup Ling in October. Rinpoche rejoiced at the recent English publication of the Shi-Tro text and offered empowerment into this mandala of the One Hundred Peaceful and Wrathful Deities. We are grateful for the excellent English translation of the Shi-Tro text by Lama Chökyi Nyima, as well as for its publication by Padma Publishing, just in time for Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche's visit. Rinpoche led us for several days in our first retreat on the Shi-Tro cycle. At the time we were delighted to welcome Sogyal Rinpoche for two evenings of teachings, one of which was conducted jointly with Chagdud Rinpoche. The occasion was recorded on video, which can be ordered from T'hondup Ling.

On October 7, an extensive longevity ceremony was held for Chagdud Rinpoche by a gathering of Chagdud Gonpa lamas and sangha members. Many of Rinpoche's students throughout the world participated from afar by accumulating longevity practices and prayers for Rinpoche as well. Rinpoche had an auspicious dream following the ceremony, and the sangha rejoiced at the blessings his presence brought. We offer our thanks to those from other centers who made offerings toward this occasion and extend our deepest gratitude to the gemlike coterie of lamas in attendance.

That same day Chagdud Rinpoche presided over the joyful occasion of the marriage of Don Delaquil and Jennifer Chalmers, a lovely ceremony held in the center's garden.

Later in October, H.E. Khamtrul Rinpoche honored T'hondup Ling with an evening visit, during which we offered a *Shower of Blessings* tsok. The sangha briefly gathers its breath before December, when Tibetan artists will arrive to begin constructing the Shi-Tro Mandala.

# **Orgyen Ling**

Orgyen Ling was showered with blessings of a midsummer's Dream Yoga teaching and Red Tara empowerment given by Lama Tsering. Her kind generosity and compassion were inspirational, and rekindled a group of busy urbanites' commitment to their practice.

The retreat took place at beautiful and serene Bailey Farm in Ossining, New York. A large group attended, mostly from New York and the Philadelphia area, although a couple came from Vermont, and one made the trek all the way from far-off Mill Valley, California. We were all powerfully moved by Lama Tsering's ability to bring us together and to clarify the teachings. Words cannot express our gratitude.

We offer prayers for the long life of Chagdud Rinpoche and all his lamas. May our precious teacher's enlightened activity continue to thrive!

### **Padma Center**

Since H.E. Chagdud Rinpoche started our center in 1994, when he gave a week of teachings and empowerments and asked us to practice together regularly, he has been back to Chicago almost every year. Our tight-knit sangha has received gracious teachings from Tulku Jigme Rinpoche, Chagdud Khadro, Lama Drimed Norbu, H.E. Namkha Drimed Rinpoche, Lama Inge, Lama Tsering, and Lama Padma. Lama Inge's annual summer visits always help us strengthen our practice. We hope to have further visits and teachings from Chagdud Gonpa lamas and pray for Chagdud Rinpoche's continuous blessings and frequent teachings. We also hope to have more sangha members join us.

The highlight of this year was Rinpoche's compassionate and generous offering of the dharma in the form of a five-day Dzogchen retreat in September. The event was attended by vajra brothers and sisters from all over the country as well as the Yukon.

In response to a request for a few minutes of blessings for our new sangha members, Rinpoche gave five hours of empowerments and teachings. As a result of Rinpoche's recent visit, a number of sangha members have started to practice as a group in the Rockford area.

We pray for Rinpoche's long life, so that he may continue to turn the wheel of the dharma. It is our sincere hope that more sangha members, particularly those from the Midwest, will complete their ngondro practices.

# Sang Ngag Ling

Our small group has been meeting in the homes of a few sangha members who have kindly offered them as practice places. We recently welcomed Gloria and Edgardo Lopez of Marlborough and Ann Soulet of Cambridge to our group.

Some members of our sangha and other Buddhist practitioners met in October to begin planning for Buddhist co-housing in the Boston area. H.E. Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche suggested that we do this to promote spiritual practice and sangha interdependence and to create benefit for ourselves, our communities, and all beings. If anyone has expertise in co-housing or is interested in being part of the process, please contact Cheryl Conner at (617) 332-0327. All input and help is welcome!



Tulku Sang-ngag and Lama Gyatso at Rigdzin Ling

# The Spirit of Tibet: The Life and World of Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche

A newly released video, available from Tibetan Treasures, provides an intimate glimpse into the life and world of one of Tibet's most revered twentieth-century teachers, H.H. Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche (1910–1991).

A treasury of wisdom and a master of meditation, Khyentse Rinpoche was an inspiration to all who encountered him. His life was an endless offering to others: he gave teachings, bestowed blessings and empowerments, built monasteries, and aided all those who asked for help. Dazzling footage of rarely photographed parts of Tibet, Bhutan, and Nepal provides the backdrop for this moving tribute to Khyentse Rinpoche's life, which includes scenes of His Holiness giving teachings, encounters with other great teachers, such as H.H. Dalai Lama, H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche, and H.H. Karmapa, and his return to Tibet in the 1980s after thirty years of exile.

Produced and photographed by Matthieu Ricard and narrated by Richard Gere, the film concludes with the enthronement of Khyentse Rinpoche's rebirth, Urgyen Tendzin Jigme Llundrup.

To obtain a copy, call (877) 479-6129 (toll free) or (530) 623-2714.

#### PRACTICE BY THE DAYS OF THE MOON

\*Eclipse of the sun; practice is multiplied 10,000 times.

\*\*Eclipse of the moon; practice is multiplied 1,000 times.

The phases of the moon correspond to the subtle male and female energies of the body and increase the benefit of practice on certain days of the lunar month. Specific practices shown are done at Chagdud Gonpa centers, but other practices are appropriate as well. Even keeping a mantra commitment on these days generates powerful virtue.

#### January

New Moon: Vajrasattva First Quarter Moon: Tara Day

Tenth Day: Guru Rinpoche Day

20\*\*Full Moon: P'howa 27 Last Quarter Moon: Tara Day

Twenty-fifth Day: Dakini Day

#### February

New Moon: Vajrasattva Losar: Tibetan New Year (2127)

First Quarter Moon: Tara Day

Tenth Day: Guru Rinpoche Day

Full Moon: P'howa

Last Quarter Moon: Tara Day Twenty-fifth Day: Dakini Day

#### March

April

26

New Moon: Vajrasattva First Quarter Moon: Tara Day

Tenth Day: Guru Rinpoche Day

Full Moon: P'howa

Last Quarter Moon: Tara Day

Twenty-fifth Day: Dakini Day

New Moon: Vajrasattva First Quarter Moon: Tara Day

Tenth Day: Guru Rinpoche Day Full Moon: P'howa

Last Quarter Moon: Tara Day Twenty-fifth Day: Dakini Day

# May

New Moon: Vajrasattva

First Ouarter Moon: Tara Day

Tenth Day: Guru Rinpoche Day Full Moon: P'howa 12

Last Quarter Moon: Tara Day

Twenty-fifth Day: Dakini Day

#### June

New Moon: Vajrasattva First Quarter Moon: Tara Day

Tenth Day: Guru Rinpoche Day Full Moon: P'howa 10

16

Last Quarter Moon: Tara Day

Twenty-fifth Day: Dakini Day

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Contact Khadro Ling for additional information on Brazilian centers.

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