



WELCOME TO THE FIRST ISSUE OF SANGHA NEWS!

The intention of this newsletter is to increase our connection with each other as a community. Often, we see each other at teachings or pujas but may not really get to know each other outside of that contact. In addition, there are sangha members who don't come to pujas or teachings often because of family responsibilities or physical constraints. Hopefully, this newsletter will help us to get to know each other better and will bring us closer in ways that support our spiritual growth and the wellbeing of Tashi Chöling, too.

Sangha News will appear bi-monthly. I wrote all the articles in this issue and also did the layout. But I am happy to share!

You can write articles, take photos, send cartoons, and do layout too! Thanks to those who have already said they will contribute to future issues. Please email your suggestions or news for the June issue to gaea.laughing@gmail.com by May 15th.

--Gaea Yudron, editor

THOSE WONDERFUL RINPOCHE MOMENTS



As you may already know or have heard, Gyatrul Rinpoche is wonderful at making up new words, playing with words, imitating people, and of course popping the bubble of one's ego using a variety of means at his command.

I don't recall who told me this particular story. I think it was Ila Reitz. One day Rinpoche was walking with several women from the sangha. Turning to look at them, he announced,

"I don't know if these are dakinis or zucchinis."

Got a Rinpoche Moment you would like to share? Do send it along. And you can share your great photos of Rinpoche here, too.



CARTOON CORNER

Some of you have been around long enough to remember when our Tashi Chöling newsletter was printed and mailed out. Julie Rogers was the editor then, and she usually included a cartoon, which everyone loved. It seems likely that cartoons have not lost their charm. Please feel free to send along your favorites to share.



LOVINGKINDNESS

With many members of the sangha aging, we are naturally seeing more health related conditions arising. Let's keep our sangha brothers and sisters close to our hearts, check in with them, and help them when they need help.

As you may know, Antal Toth is getting treatment for cancer. Thanks to those who have helped Antal and Ullie Howard by driving them to Antal's medical appointments or for grocery shopping.

If you want to check in with them regarding providing help, coming to their place for a visit, or seeing what else they might need, give Ullie a call at 541-482-0683.



PROFILE: ANI YESHE

In 1987, Ani Yeshe arrived in Ashland as a young married woman named Stephanie Cole. The following year, she and her partner Steve decided to visit the big Vajrasattva statue at Tashi Chöling, something they had heard about from friends. They brought their infant son Daniel with them. Ani Yeshe recalled, "It felt like home, even before I really knew what Tashi Chöling was."

In 1991, the couple bought a downtown business called Soundpeace, which had been founded by a woman who later became a Tibetan Buddhist nun. "There was a rainbow across the valley when we were signing the papers for the store," Ani Yeshe said.

Taking over Soundpeace involved a big learning curve. The store contained a large inventory of books covering many

areas of spirituality and healing, as well as other related materials. “There were books in Sanskrit, khatas, a mandala offering set, a Guru Rinpoche statue, and thangkas—things I knew nothing about then. Richard Miller helped a lot in this stage. As I navigated my way through all the different sections of the store, the dharma section was the one that attracted me most,” she recalled.

“Then the sangha started coming into the store. I met Philip, Mahdu, Genkaku, Gaea, Nick O’Connor, and many others,” said Ani Yeshe. Ron and Michelle Fidler came in with prayer flags they made for the Tashi Chöling Prayer Flag Project, and the store began buying them. Then Steve and Stephanie decided to place a Peace Pole in front of the store. Lama Yeshe brought a long life arrow from Tashi Chöling and participated in a blessing, which also included native American wisdom holder Agnes Baker Pilgrim.

As time went on, it seemed a natural progression that Ani Yeshe began attending different dharma events. In addition, Soundpeace, which was a real gathering place for spiritual seekers in those days, hosted dharma events. Gyatrul Rinpoche taught in the store. Mitchell Frangadakis gave ngöndro instruction there, too.

Then Ani Yeshe began studying with Lama Bruce Newman, who was teaching classes in the railroad district. By this time, she had two children, Daniel and Susannah. Soon, she invited Lama Bruce to teach classes at her house in the Mill Pond area. “Studying with Lama Bruce was very helpful, especially during a

transitional time period,” she said.

When her marriage ended, Ani Yeshe was drawn to a deeper involvement with dharma. During this time, she grew closer to the Dorje family. “We lived in the same neighborhood, and slowly our friendship grew. Sonam Drolma has been like my mother, my teacher, my auntie. She is very grounded. She helped me to learn how to become more grounded and focused. That whole family, what they went through, and their devotion to Rinpoche and the dharma, inspired me. I wanted to be like them,” Ani Yeshe continued.

“I started to learn how to chöpen from Shashi and Ila. How to do my best, make mistakes, and let it be okay. Chöpening is serving, a way to let go of yourself, or go beyond yourself. It has helped me to develop that side of myself. And seeing the other ordained, I found I wanted to be like that,” she continued.

In 2009, Ani Yeshe traveled to the Palyul center in upstate New York with the intention of taking ordination vows. “I had talked with Gyatrul Rinpoche, and he told me it was fine to take novice vows,” she said. “The Dorje family really helped me a lot during this time.”

The year before she took ordination, she had an interview with Penor Rinpoche, who told her: “It is fine to take vows, but really important to learn how to keep them.” He told her that Karma Kuchen would give her the vows, which he did.

“I felt different after that somehow. It changed me,” Ani Yeshe said. “It has

allowed me to blossom without conventional constraints. It has given me a sacred structure to be of more benefit to others. I want to support Rinpoche's vision and aspirations."

OVER 50 PEOPLE ATTEND TRÖMA RETREAT LED BY SANGYE KHANDRO



Just a few weeks ago in March, 55 people gathered to practice Tröma for five days at Tashi Chöling. The retreat included four daily sessions and was led by Sangye Khandro. Participants came from the Yeshe Nyingpo center in Ensenada, Dorje Ling in Portland, Orgyen Dorje Den, and Pema Osal Ling, as well as from Florida, Colorado, New Mexico, Nepal, and other locales.

Lama Gyaltsen came from Corvallis with his wife Tsering and son Pema. "When Tsering talked about her Tröma retreat in freezing weather in tents, it punctured any complaining we were doing," said Carolyn Myers, who coordinated the retreat. "This retreat was a really wonderful coming together of Chöd practitioners," Carolyn added.

CELEBRATING THE EXPANSION OF SAUCE WHOLE FOODS CAFÉ



Tara Thomas Boucher and Brad Boucher just expanded their popular restaurant, Sauce Whole Foods Café in Ashland. It's a beautiful, welcoming space, thanks to Brad's design expertise. Brad chose sugar pine for its "sunshiny" feel, and he found ways to develop low-level lighting that warms and enhances the ambiance. The large lotus shaped ceiling fixture he created is very beautiful, and with other decorative elements it all adds up to an elegant, friendly atmosphere.

"It's satisfying to see people enjoying and using what you made," Brad said. The renovation took nine months and doubled both the dining area and kitchen space. Brad and other family members did most of the work.

Brad and Tara's restaurant adventure began in November 2011 when the couple took over the space in the Ashland Shopping Center from Hardip, who had been running an Indian restaurant there. "We started out thinking we would do a three-month trial, but then we took a leap of faith," Tara said.



Tara loves cooking, and she's good at it. "The kitchen is my happy place," she says. But she never wanted to have a restaurant. It was Brad, who took courses in restaurant management and worked at 20 restaurants during college and after, who always wanted to have one. "People think this is my restaurant," Tara said. "But it's actually Brad's. I had no faith in it, but he did."

One day before the restaurant opened, Brad, Tara, and others were busy painting its walls when Rinpoche walked in by surprise. A Ganesh statue had been given to the couple as a gift, and they had asked Ani Baba to fill it. Seeing the Ganesh statue in the restaurant-to-be, Rinpoche told Brad and Tara that it was a very good sign. "As long as you and Brad are harmonious," he said, "this will be successful," he said to Tara.

And so it has been, and is.

Sauce has benefitted from tremendous support from many family members. "We never could have done it without their help," Tara said. Philip and Teri Thomas, Roger and Barbara Boucher, Laurie Boucher, Sean and Rinchen Thomas, Sage, Chloe, and Jade Boucher all took part.

Sauce's menu developed from foods Tara prepared for her family. If we are lucky, Tara will write a cookbook someday, filled with recipes and colorful life stories, in which dharma and cooking are very related.

For now, let's go back to when she was 5 years old. She and her father Philip Thomas were at Odiyan, Tarthang Tulku's country center in California, during a visit from His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche. His Holiness invited Philip and Tara for lunch. (I want to know more too, but have no details about it, sorry.) Then when she was 10 or 11, she and

Philip were in Los Angeles to attend His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche's teachings there. His Holiness' granddaughter Lhantzey was part of the entourage. (Lhantzey was His Holiness' mother in a past life. Of course, this provided a special connection in this life, too.)

Gyatrul Rinpoche told Tara that she and Lhantzey would become good friends. Lhantzey was shy, but after a trip to Disneyland, the two girls became very close. Tara spent a great deal of time with the family and often ate with them.

"They ate their main meal at noon. The food was diverse and very delicious. Their cook, Karma, created Tibetan and Bhutanese style dishes that were amazing. Being able to eat with them and to watch Karma cook had an impact on me," Tara said.

"Later I helped in the Tashi Chöling temple residence." Tara said. "Ngawang (Sonam Drolma) and Thubrig were staying there then, and Ngawang was doing most of the cooking for Rinpoche's household. I would just go up and be her prep cook. I think I was 18 and she was 19 or 20. I learned so much from her," Tara recalled.

"One day, a group of us was standing in the kitchen making momos. Jigme Lama was there, I remember. I was making a momo, when Rinpoche, who was watching, said, 'No hold it this way, as if you are holding a baby.' He put the momo into his palm and demonstrated how to crimp its edges together," Tara continued.

"During Penor Rinpoche's second visit,

I started helping in the kitchen regularly. I just helped whoever was cooking—James and Melanie and others. Of course, I also learned from other family members—my Dad and Mom, Teri, and Brad's mom Barbara."

Sauce's wholesome Asian fusion cuisine appeals to a wide variety of diners, including those with special or limited diets such as paleo, vegan, or gluten free. You can build your own bowl, choosing from various healthy ingredients, or just select one of the many delicious bowls or plates offered. Congratulations to our sangha friends, Brad and Tara, and their families on creating this beautiful, nourishing space.

Restaurant Photos: Susan Goldberg

SANGHA CLASSIFIEDS:

Seeking Housing

Seeking studio or 1- 2-bedroom in Ashland-Talent area. Also open to house share. Work at home, no pets, nonsmoker. Both chemically-sensitive and electro-sensitive, so cannot tolerate wifi, cordless phones, or cell phones in the house, or fragranced household or body care products. If you have any leads or interest, please contact Christy Sloan, 541.488.1439 or text me at 541.622.4368.

Do you have something for the classified section? Send it by May 15th to gaea.laughing@gmail.com.