

Thus Have I Heard

News from the Tallahassee Sangha

April 2005

Contents

News

Meditating for Peace

A Visitor from the U.K.

On The Road to Shambhala

The Ontul and The Ji Do Poep Sa Nim

Change Your Mind Day Changed

Family Dharma Day

Retreats

Grassroots Sitting Group Retreat, April 15th-17th

Noble Silence Retreat, April 23rd & 24th

Teachings with the Ontul Rinpoche, May 5th to May 11th

Cypress Tree Zen Group Kwan Um Retreat, May 6th-8th

Shambhala Warriorship Training, July 29, 30 & 31

Recent Events in The Tallahassee Buddhist Community

Meditating for Peace

On March 20, 2005 The Buddhist Peace Fellowship of Tallahassee organized an Interfaith Day of Meditation for Peace in front of the historic Old Florida Capitol on Monroe St. Members of the greater faith community of Tallahassee joined us in sharing a day of silence, meditation and prayer as we renewed our communal commitment to peace.

The format consisted of short periods of meditation or prayer interspersed with brief meditative walks. At the beginning of each meditation/prayer period we had a brief reading on the subject of peace from various traditions.

March 20th was Palm Sunday, a Christian holy day celebrating the arrival of the Prince of Peace in Jerusalem and this year it was also the first day of spring. Ironically, March 20th, 2005 also marked the second anniversary of the U.S. led invasion of Iraq. Our gathering, however, was not meant to be a protest against anything, but rather an affirmation of the Buddhist commitment to compassion and non-violence.

Pick up the April copy of the Apalachee Tortoise for a picture of the event.

Tallahassee Buddhist Peace Fellowship:
<http://webdharma.com/tbpf/index.html>

A Visitor from the U.K.

Rev. Prasada Caroline Brazier, an ordained member of the Amida Order, had a wonderful visit to Tallahassee the week of March 21-28. Rev. Brazier is a practicing psychotherapist, steeped in both Western and Buddhist traditions. She has worked in community development and women's health activism and is the author of the groundbreaking book *Buddhism on the Couch: From Analysis to Awakening*.

While she was here Rev. Brazier gave a talk on the relevance of Buddhism to today's world, spoke at the Cypress Tree Zen Group, gave a workshop on Engaged Buddhism at Lotus Lake, participated in several of the weekly discussion groups in Tallahassee, and traveled to Rollins College in Winter Park and the Bodhi Tree Dhamma Center in Tampa. Quite a busy week.

Pure Land, like other Buddhist traditions emphasizes the ideals of faith and compassion for all sentient beings. The Amida Order puts these beliefs into action and has been active in peace work, animal rights and helping the economically disadvantaged in India and other countries in Asia. Rev. Brazier seemed to be impressed by our local Buddhist community and the mutual support that the different Buddhist groups give each other. We are grateful for the time that she was able to spend with us.

The Amida Trust and The Amida Order: <http://www.amidatrust.com>

On The Road to Shambhala

The Tallahassee Shambhala Meditation Group has recently decided to stay in the space that they are renting on Oakland Ave., just south of the Capitol. The Siddha Yoga group, which used the space for ten years and shared the space with the Shambhala group for the past year, has moved on. This will give the Shambhala group full use of the two rooms in the space and will allow them to set aside one room to be used for meditation and as a shrine room. The other room will be used as an entrance room and meeting room.

The Shambhala Group will be holding an Open House on Wednesdays from 7:00 to 8:30 in the evening, running from April 20th - May 18th. The format will include meditation instruction, information about the Shambhala Tradition and sharing of

food and friendship. This is a chance for newcomers to the Shambhala Tradition to learn about this unique path founded by Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche and his followers including Pema Chödrön.

They will be offering Level I Warriorship Training in July. Details below under Retreats and Events.

Tallahassee Shambhala Meditation Group: <http://www.tfn.net/~tdsg/index.html>

The Ontul and The Ji Do Poep Sa Nim

In early May the Tallahassee community will have a unique chance to see a dialogue between a Tibetan *Rinpoche* and a Zen *Ji Do Poep Sa Nim* (Guide to the Way or Dharma Master). Both will be in town for teachings and retreats (see below) so members of the Lotus Lake Buddhist Community and the Cypress Tree Zen Center decided that it would be a great opportunity for the two men to meet and talk about the differences and similarities between their traditions. The two teachers both have strong backgrounds in Buddhist studies, so should it be an interesting discussion. The Ontul Rinpoche is well versed in the philosophies and traditions of Tibetan Buddhism, in particular Dzogchen and Mahamudra. Dharma Master Thom Pastor has been a practitioner of the Kwan Um School of Zen for over twenty years and teaches a course on Buddhism at the University of Nevada. The talk is set for Saturday afternoon, May 7th at the Lotus Lake Center in Railroad Square. An exact time has not been decided on yet, but we will send out that information as soon as it is available.

Change Your Mind Day Changed

The "Change Your Mind Day" Buddhist community celebration that had been scheduled for June has been rescheduled for the fall, with a tentative date of Saturday, Sept. 24th. This will give us more time to plan and we should be able to generate more interest in the event since it is a busier time in Tallahassee.

Family Dharma Day

The next Family Dharma Day will be Sunday, April 24 at the Lotus Lake Buddhist Center at 10 a.m. Please remember to bring something to share for the potluck lunch. Family Dharma Day is an event for the whole family. There will be activities for the kids and a chance to meet in fellowship with other Buddhists in the community.

Contact John Wark if you have any questions: jtwark@hotmail.com

Retreats

Grassroots Sitting Group Retreat, April 15th-17th

The Grassroots Sitting Group's spring "Silence as Teacher Mediation Retreat" will take place at the home of Jan Alovus from Friday evening, April 15 through Sunday noon, April 17. The retreat will start at 5 p.m. on Friday and will end at 12 noon on Sunday. The "Silence as Teacher" retreat has been providing a supportive weekend meditation in a garden setting to area meditators for several years.

Meditators are welcome to sit all or part of the retreat. As there are no expenses connected with importing a teacher/leader, there is no charge for this retreat beyond contributions of food and/or money from those who will be sharing our simple, vegetarian meals. Some indoor beds are available and camping is an option. Please e-mail or phone for retreat details and directions to Jan's home. Please express your interest and probable sitting times to Jan as soon as possible.

Contact info for Jan Alovous:
e-mail: jalovus@hotmail.com
phone: (850) 656-2239

Noble Silence Retreat, April 23rd & 24th

Venerable Ayya Sumana, a western Theravadin Nun ordained in Sri Lanka, who is currently residing in Central Florida, will be leading a Noble Silence Retreat on April 23rd-24th, 2005 at the Lotus Lake Center. Ayya Sumana offers profound and insightful teachings based on deep experience and practice. She has a wonderful sense of humor and a very earthy way of sharing the Dharma.

Teachings with the Ontul Rinpoche, May 5th to May 11th

The Venerable Drikung Ontul Rinpoche will be returning to Tallahassee from May 5th to May 11th, 2005 at the Lotus Lake Center. His previous teachings in Tallahassee have been well attended by members of the local Buddhist community as well as visitors from around the U.S. The Ontul Rinpoche is recognized as a reincarnation of the first Ontul, Kungsang Drodul. After his escape from Chinese occupied Tibet in 1959 he helped to found a monastery on Tsopadma, the original Lotus (Padma) Lake (Tso) in northern India.

Lotus Lake Center: <http://www.lotuslake.org>
If you want to be added to Lotus Lake's mailing list contact:
lotuslake@lotuslake.org

Cypress Tree Zen Group Kwan Um Retreat, May 6th-8th

The Cypress Tree Zen Group will have a Kwan Um Zen retreat led by Ji Do Poep Sa Nim (Dharma Master) Thom Pastor on the weekend of May 6th-8th, 2005. It will start at 6:30 p.m. on Friday and close with a circle talk at 12 noon on Sunday.

Kwan Um Retreats follow the traditional practices of monks and nuns in the Korean Chogye School of Zen. These retreats give us a chance to live as the monks and nuns of Asia have done for thousands of years, even if we can practice only for a weekend. For those who are interested, the Kwan Um school also offers longer retreats of a week or even months at different locations in the U.S.

Contact Bill Bodiford to sign up or for more information:
e-mail: bodifordb@dfs.state.fl.us
phone: 850-877-4663

Thom Pastor is a Ji Do Poep Sa Nim (Guide to the Way, or Dharma Master) and is the founder and abbot of the Great Bright Zen Center in Nevada:
<http://greatbrightzen.homestead.com>

Cypress Tree Zen Group: <http://webdharma.com/ctzg/>

Shambhala Warriorship Training, July

Experiencing the world as sacred and seeing basic goodness as your birthright.

Level I Warriorship Training, "The Art of Being Human," will be offered in July. The dates of the retreat will be announced soon.
Contact Adrienne at ace@hep.fsu.edu if you are interested in this retreat.

Shambhala Training: <http://sti.shambhala.org>

Links to Buddhist Groups in Tallahassee and Florida, a weekly schedule of Buddhist Practices in Tallahassee and a list of Buddhist retreats and events for 2005 can be found at: <http://webdharma.com>

If you have any comments on the contents of this newsletter, or if you would like to add anything on Buddhism in Tallahassee to the next newsletter send me an e-mail at kaplendi@fsu.edu

If you would like to receive an e-mail version of this newsletter, contact me at kaplendi@fsu.edu

Peace,
Konrad

"The man who raises a fist has run out of ideas."
--H.G.Wells