



# LOTUS ARROW

*Newsletter of the Kurukulla Center for Tibetan Buddhist Studies*

NUMBER 27, JUNE 2004

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## KHENSUR RINPOCHE VISITS KURUKULLA CENTER



Khensur Rinpoche in the Kurukulla Center Gompa. (photo:Vikrant)

by *Tsunma-la (Sue Macy)*

Venerable Sera Je Khensur Rinpoche Kangyur Lama Lobsang Thubten, the root guru of our beloved teacher Geshe Tsulga, kindly accepted an invitation to visit our center as part of his first trip to North America. From May 7–12, we were greatly blessed with the presence of this great, smiling, holy being, and were inspired by his wisdom and humility.

Khensur Rinpoche is one of the most eminent lamas in the Gelug tradition. “Kangyur Lama” in his title reflects his

selection by the Dalai Lama to give the oral transmission of all 108 volumes of the Kangyur, the teachings of the Buddha translated into Tibetan, at His Holiness’s temple in Dharamsala in 1973. This transmission was done thirteen years after he escaped from Tibet, and took six and a half months to complete. Additionally, he is a Lharampa Geshe, the former Abbot of Sera Je Monastery in South India (1982–86), and one of the first geshe to be invited in the early 80s by Lama Yeshe to reside at an FPMT center. Since 1988 Rinpoche has resided between Buddha House, in Australia, and Sera.

“nice statues. It makes a big difference.” Rinpoche went on to say that our center was a very blessed place because of His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s visit last September, noting, “Holy beings go to certain places and bless the place. Then when others go to these places, they receive the blessing.”

### A LIVING LINEAGE TREE

On Saturday, May 8, Khensur Rinpoche gave an overview of the *lamrim* to a packed house. He concluded this precious teaching with a concise, profound instruction on emptiness. To hear this



A farewell group shot with Julia Summers, Geshe-la, Khensur Rinpoche, Ngawang Tenley, Helen Lee, and Rinpoche’s attendant, Tenzin (photo: Damchoe)



Giving White Tara long-life initiation. (photo: Vikrant)

### A TRADITIONAL WELCOME

As is the custom when a great lama arrives at Sera, center members greeted Khensur Rinpoche in the gompa with a mandala ceremony, sweet rice, and tea. He was very pleased with our center, remarking we “have a very nice temple with very

teaching (and many others) go to [www.kurukulla.org/resources](http://www.kurukulla.org/resources).

For many of us, it was a rare occasion to see a living tree of actual and lineage gurus. It began with the image of His Holiness on the throne where he taught last September, and continued to his student, Khensur Rinpoche, and to his student, Geshe

(continued on page 2)

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Tsulga, and to his students, including Geshe Ngawang and Ven. Ngawang. A true merit field!

## A LONG-LIFE INITIATION AND PRAYER

The following day nearly two hundred Tibetan and Western students received a White Tara long-life initiation. The rain stopped promptly at the beginning of the two-hour ceremony, and the sun came out in full force. Afterward, we were presented with a long-life prayer for Geshe Tsulga, composed by Khensur Rinpoche at the request of Geshe-la's students in the West. The Tibetan version was hand-delivered to Geshe-la's students at Sera several days later—an English translation is in progress.

For all of us who had the good fortune to meet Khensur Rinpoche, we were truly blessed. And there is no doubt that all of those who come to our center in the future will also receive his blessings.

## Practicing the Perfection of Patience

Several Basic Program students submitted their end of module papers for chapter 6 of *A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*. Geshe-la particularly liked one student's short essay on patience, an excerpt from which we offer below.

The disadvantages of anger, as taught by Shantideva, are related to my karma. "A single flash of anger" (verse 1) shatters the merit of a thousand ages of generosity

or offerings. It may "cause future sorrows in infernal torment" (verse 73) and relegate me to the hell realms in future rebirths. Immediate deleterious effects in this life are legion.... Those around me are affected by my anger.... My anger contributed to a negative lifestyle, which estranged my wife and children. This was one reason for the divorce following 32 years of marriage! The family unit was diseased with my anger and substance abuse. My teaching career was threatened as I treated colleagues and students disrespectfully. Whole classrooms of kids may have held me in contempt, as I appeared to lack understanding and compassion by acting in frightening and angry ways. One door after another in my life was shut, and I became isolated, lonely, and physically, mentally, and emotionally ill.

"Patience can cleanse sins and purify negatives from the past" (verse 48).... It is a powerful balm that brings relief from the three poisons and trains me to renounce delusion, anger, and attachment, and to face future adversities with calm abiding and compassion. It earns merit for positive rebirths, as it pleases the buddhas and bodhisattvas.... Patience is a beautiful gate to a happy life. Quieting the raging elephant brings serenity so that the six perfections can be discovered and nurtured. All good things, light, fortitude, mindfulness, compassion, reliable intuition, acceptance of what is, and the buddha-nature can develop. Other sentient beings can discern patience in the practitioner and be encouraged to be kind and gentle and gather merit for themselves.

So the practice of patience can keep

me on the path to enlightenment and help other sentient beings to the path, where they will attain enlightenment in the infinity of time to come.

## Going the Extra Mile

Debra Thornburg

How much are the Buddhist teachings worth? Evidently quite a lot for several members of our center. Not to be deterred by mere distance, a few are willing to go the extra mile to get to Geshe Tsulga's teachings.

Mark Jackson, often accompanied by colleague Cindy Perry, makes the 240-mile drive (one way) once or twice a week from Bangor, Maine. On Sundays they leave at 5:30 A.M. and are back home by 5 P.M. On Wednesdays they leave at 1:30 P.M. and are back in Bangor by 2 A.M. They use the drive to discuss Buddhism, listen to Dharma tapes and recite mantras.

Jim McGurn drives alone from Colchester, Vermont every Wednesday to



Ken Dominic. (photo: David)

attend class. The trip takes 3 hours and 20 minutes to reach Medford. After class he turns around and begins the 216 mile drive home.

For Ken Dominic, Sundays are a good day to attend teachings when you live in central Massachusetts. With light traffic, he makes the 70-mile trip in 1 1/2 hours. Following class, he gets in his car to drive 70 miles home.

Well done Mark, Cindy, Jim, and Ken! You are a shining example of the perfection of enthusiastic effort.



The Kurukulla Center garden. (photo: David)

IN ADDITION TO CREATING the possibility for Kurukulla Center and Geshe Tsulga to continue to remain and thrive in Boston, your membership and donations come with additional benefits as an expression of thanks to you for your generosity and support. Different levels of membership are offered. You may become a member, or make a donation of any amount, by credit card on our website, by mailing a check, or by leaving it at the Center.

**Sustaining Member**

(\$100/month; \$1,000/year):

- Receive Mandala Magazine
- Attend all teachings & events at Kurukulla Center as our guest
- Receive a 15% bookstore discount

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Please make checks payable to Kurukulla Center. Contributions are tax deductible as allowed by law.  
 May your generosity contribute to the happiness of all beings everywhere!

*From the*  
**DIRECTOR**



Ngawang Tenley and Geshe-la in Toronto.

**I**n May, His Holiness the Dalai Lama gave the eleven-day Kalachakra Initiation in Toronto, and

Geshe-la, Damchoe, Geshe Ngawang, Ngawang Tenley, and more than twenty-five of Geshe-la's students made the trip for this special event. It was a wonderful experience to be in His Holiness's presence day after day, trying to keep up with the breadth and depth of his wisdom.

As I left Boston, I felt as though I was abandoning the Center, leaving hardly any "old hands" to host Ven. Rita, but after a few days reports starting coming in: "Everything's going great. Relax." Apparently Rita said many times how harmonious Kurukulla was. My husband Nick's reaction was to suggest that it was because all the trouble-makers had gone to Toronto! Geshe-la agreed! Seriously, though, it is an excellent reflection on the quality of our community that so many regulars can be away



Khensur Rinpoche blesses Wendy's mala.

without the program suffering one bit.

I don't usually thank people individually because

someone always gets overlooked, but with apologies for anyone I miss, I would like to thank Helen, Jeff, Askold, and Haim for cleaning the Center to get it ready for Khensur Rinpoche; Debra, Becky, Priscilla, Jean, Wendy K, Joanie, Michelle, and Brian for helping make Ven Rita's program a huge success; Robert, Karen, Eddie, and Glenn for their unmatched technical and practical skills; Vikrant for cooking many delicious meals; Dolores for taking care of phone messages; David for his talented newsletter design; Jen for constant behind-the-scenes support; and Julia and Cherrie for making the garden magical. For the endless hours of time you have all put in and for the dedication, openness, and friendliness of every person in the community, thank you so much.

*Wendy*



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## Treasurer's Report

*Jennifer Barlow*

**K**urukulla Center keeps growing steadily, and in so many wonderful ways. Every time I am able to visit the Center, I see new faces—not just curious visitors who have dropped in to check out a class but dedicated students who are becoming an integral part of our community. More and more of you are offering your time, your skills, and your resources to help keep the Center thriving.

As is typical for Kurukulla Center finances, we are always just a bit behind in keeping up with our monthly expenses. We make up these shortfalls with the occasional large donation that always seems to come in at just the right time. In the meantime, the generous support of our ever-growing membership (we are nearing 100!) and the donations made at teachings are what keeps the Center operating on a regular basis.

Below is a chart of our average

monthly expenses, based upon the first quarter of 2004. As you can see, so many of our expenses are not dependent upon the frequency of classes; they are expenses that are related to the building (excluding building fund projects) and the support of Geshe-la, Damchoe, and now Geshe-la's wonderful attendant, Ngawang Tenley. That is why it is so important to have the regular monthly support of our members. Without this steady base of support, we could not pay our monthly bills. Please consider becoming a member if you are not already one—see inside this newsletter for more details.

Mortgage	2290
Geshe and Translator support	1250
Utilities	1200
Admin/Prof/Stipends/Publicity	900
Bookstore	480
Household goods/small repairs	480
Liability/Bldg Insurance	400
Visiting Teachers	400
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,400</b>

KURUKULLA CENTER

is a member of the  
 Foundation for the  
 Preservation of the  
 Mahayana Tradition



(FPMT), a worldwide community of Buddhist centers dedicated to preserving the pure teachings of the Buddha as found in Tibetan Buddhism.

Founded by Lama Yeshe in 1975 and currently under the spiritual direction of his main disciple, Lama Zopa Rinpoche, the FPMT provides teachings, retreats, literature, hospice care, and social services in thirty countries. Kurukulla Center was founded by Lama Zopa Rinpoche in 1989 and is named for a wrathful emanation of Red Tara who manifests the buddhas' compassionate activity in the world.