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## Open Monastery and Anniversary

*Organized by Joan Wai, the president of Youth Buddhism Communication Inc., a hundred people, including Ven. Au-Ling and several other Abbots, visited us from New York City on July 14 and celebrated the Monastery's anniversary together. A week later, on July 22, fifty members of the Secular Buddhist Group of Philadelphia also visited the monastery.*

### Youth Buddhism Communication's Visit

Early in the morning, volunteers came from different directions to the temple. Miin-Ron worked on our sign for a better vision. Marsha cleaned many chairs indoors and outdoors to welcome our visitors. Charles and Larry arranged a lot of things to greet our most honored Dharma Masters from New York. Jeannie helped prepare the Buddha hall. Benny led a group of volunteers, including his wife, Jeannie's mother, Ying, Chung, Wilma, Shou-Ling and her friend. They worked very hard to prepare a delicious lunch for over a hundred people, including all our guests and volunteers.



Due to traffic, the members of Youth Buddhism Communication arrived at the temple around 12:00 PM. All volunteers welcomed them in front of

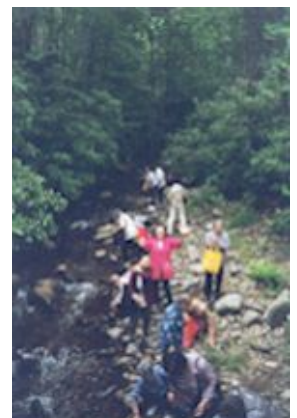
# AZBTL Newsletter

the temple. Among the visitors were about 10 Dharma Masters. Ven. Au-Ling is the Vice-President of the World Buddhist Sangha Council (USA), President of the American Buddhist Confederation and Eastern Buddhist Association and Abbot of East Dhyana Temple and Song-San Temple. Ven. Xiu-Jue is the President of the Buddhist Association of New York Pu-Chao Temple. Others are Ven. Lama Migmar from Boston, Ven. Ajan Nipen from Thailand and several Chinese Masters.



On this special occasion, Mahayana, Theravada and Vajrayana were joined together and we had a wonderful time discussing and sharing our Dharma practice. After the Food Offering, we invited all Dharma Masters to enjoy the delicious lunch in the Buddha hall. Other visitors were divided into three groups for lunch on the patio. All enjoyed the tasty food prepared by the volunteers and the beautiful view of the surroundings.

After lunch, Miin-Ron and other volunteers led our visitors to walk around the whole property. The natural beauty of the temple surprised them all.



October, 2001

They walked through the forest and listened to the birds singing in the trees. Some of them played in Paradise stream. After this visit, they gained a better understanding of the Vairocana Monastery's style and goals.

The worldly food only supports our physical health. For a practitioner, the Dharma-food gives us more energy in the spiritual and mental part. After being nurtured with the delicious food prepared by Ben and the cooking team, we need the supreme Dharma-food to help us develop our minds. We were fortunate to have many Dharma teachers. Ven. Lama Migmar, Ven. Xiu-Jue, Ven. Ajan Nipen, Ven. Ju-Kong, three Buddhist nuns and Ven. Ta-Yu each gave wonderful Dharma talks. All the teachers encouraged us to practice hard in Buddhism and to develop our Bodhi-Mind. Joan Wai did a wonderful translation of all the talks to Cantonese. Based on the expression of the audience, it was clear that the Dharma preaching was very successful.



The chanting of the Diamond Sutra was the last program. A hundred people chanted together. We could feel the magical energy filling the Buddha hall. We would like to dedicate the merit of the chanting toward the peace of the world. May the Triple Gems bless all of the beings to be free of suffering and to live with joy and delight.

Before the visitors left, we celebrated Vairocana Monastery's anniversary by sharing the cakes. The temple was established a year ago, on July 14, 2000. Throughout the past year, we have faced a lot of difficulties and examinations. But, we have always stood up steadily together. We will try our best to sow the Dharma-seed in the world. We would like to have the opportunity to celebrate Vairocana Monastery's

anniversary with everybody every year in the future.

All of our volunteers waved to say good-bye to the visitors around 4:00 PM. Even though our bodies might have been a little tired by then, our minds were happy. There were many thanks to all volunteers, especially Benny and his wife who came to the temple to prepare food every weekend. Their contribution helped the temple to make the Dharma-propagation possible.

## Activities Reviews

### Hiking at Delaware Water Gap

On June 16, 2001, led by Miin-Ron a group of associates met in Vairocana Monastery around 1 PM, then departed for the Delaware Water Gap for hiking.

The weather was a little cloudy and windy at the beginning. It took about 2 hours to climb from the bottom to the top of the mountain. Even though it started to rain half way up, Ven. Lama Migmar, Ven. Ta-Yu, Miin-Ron and several people reached the top of the mountain. When we stood on the top of the, we felt how small we are. There was a beautiful spot between New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The slightly dim-fog wove mystical gauze that covered the entire mountain like in paradise.

Hiking is a great exercise for both physical and mental training. "Overcome and dissolve self" is the most important basic practice in Buddhism. Our ego is as strong as the high mountain. We have to overcome and dissolve the ego mountain step by step. Only after we overcome and dissolve it, will we enjoy true happiness and peace.



### Dharma Mission

After establishing Vairocana monastery, we held a series of Dharma activities both in and out of temple.

### Heart Sutra

#### A Serial Teaching on Wisdom

Ven. Lama Migmar gave the consummate speech on different topics of Buddhist teaching, from "who is Buddha" to "the heart sutra". Under his teaching, we are constantly improving our concept of practice. On October 14, he is going to continue the teaching on the heart sutra, the heart of wisdom texts in Buddhism. You are more than welcome to join us.



### Mahasati Retreat

Mahasati is one of the important meditation techniques in Theravada Buddhism. It was our honor to have Ven. Luangpor Thong, who gave us a special lecture for how to practice Mahasati in our daily life on the morning on August 26. Mahasati includes sitting, walking and sleeping meditation. Every movement of the body can be Mahasati meditation. It is so powerful that between 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Ven. Luangpor Thong led us into an extraordinary state. Questions and answers followed. Many students shared their precious practice experience with each other. Ven. Liangpor Thong's compassion and wisdom made for a beautiful day.



### Spreading Dharma in Penn. State

The Buddhist Association of Central Pennsylvania is located at Penn State University. Many members joined the practice since the association was founded ten years ago. Ven. Ta-Yu has been invited by the association to give the Dharma talk since January 2001. There is a regular group practice every Saturday evening at State College. All are welcome to join the activities.



### Special Ceremony for July of Lunar Calendar

On September 2, 2001, there was a special ceremony held by Ven. Ta-Yu in Vairocana Monastery for beings that passed away. The ceremony started with chanting the Sutra of Earth-womb Bodhisattvas' vows at 10 a.m. From 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. was the Great Mong-Sam ceremony to deliver the sentient being in the god and ghost realm.

According to the Buddhist tradition, there are many different ceremonies held in July of the lunar calendar. Through the ceremonies, Buddhist disciples show the deep appreciation and respect to the Sangha and dedicate the merits to our ancestors and all sentient beings for the worldly peace.



### Sharing the Experience in Practicing Buddhism

Charles shared his experience in practicing Buddhism with us on September 16, 2001. Throughout the talk, he mentioned many times his master's teachings and the importance of having great masters. Buddhist practice helped him improve his memory. When he was in college he did not get good grades but now he has passed 8 examinations in half a year for Microsoft MCSE and Cisco CCNP certificates. He also shared his experience of meditation for 24 hours when he was a samanera at Lien-Yin Temple in Taiwan. Charles is an honest person and a true practitioner.



### Maintenance of the Stairs

Last year Ven. Heng-Yuan passed away in a car accident, on the way to purchase some building materials for the Buddha hall and stairs. Throughout the last year, we couldn't continue the repairing of the stairs because of our tight budget. Everytime, friends visited the temple, we worried about how dangerous these stairs were.

Finally, we got some donation from our supporters, mainly from the Youth Buddhism Communication's visit. We started to repair the stairs in July. After about 3 weeks, we had new and safe stairs. Thanks to all the donors. Next time you visit Vairocana Monastery, you will see how wonderful the stairs are.



## This Quarter's Events

**Every Tuesday**  
**7:30 p.m.**  
**Group Meditation**  
 Ven. Lama Migmar

**Sunday, October 14, 2001**  
**10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**  
**Heart Sutra**  
 Ven. Lama Migmar

**October 27 & 28, 2001**  
**10 a.m. – 6 p.m.**  
**Thousand-Buddha**  
**Confession Ceremony**  
 Ven. Ta-Yu

**Sunday, November 11, 2001**  
**10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**  
**Heart Sutra**  
 Ven. Lama Migmar

**November 21 - 25, 2001**  
**10 a.m. – 5 p.m.**  
**Liang-Hwang**  
**Confession Ceremony**  
 Ven. Ta-Yu

**Sunday, December 9, 2001**  
**10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**  
**Heart Sutra**  
 Ven. Lama Migmar

**December 23, 2001**  
**10 a.m. – 6 p.m.**  
**Amitabha Recitation**  
**Group Practice**  
 Ven. Ta-Yu

**Winter Break**  
**No Activities in January, 2002**

# The Buddhism

Jorge Luis Borges

Translated by Miin-Ron Lin

## The Dharma

He resolves to preach the Dharma. He rises, already he has been saved and he wants to save the rest. He preaches his first sermon in the Park of the Gazelles of Benares. Later another sermon, that of the fire, in that he says that everything is burning: the souls, the bodies, things are on fire.

His doctrine is not that of the asceticism, since to the Buddha the asceticism is an error. The man must not abandon himself to the carnal life because the carnal life is low, ignoble, shameful and painful; neither to the asceticism, which is also ignoble and painful. He preaches a middle way, already he has reached the nirvana and lives forty some years, which he dedicates to his preaching. He could have been immortal, but he chooses his moment of death when he already has many disciples.

He dies in the home of a blacksmith. His disciples surround him. They are desperate. What are they going to do without him? He tells them that he does not exist, that he is a man like them, as unreal and as mortal as them, but that he leaves them his Dharma. It means that he has put the wheel of the law in motion in his first sermon.

To me there are two kinds of Buddhism that are similar to each other, that are

almost identical. They are the one that the Buddha preached and the one that is taught in China and Japan, the Zen Buddhism. The rest are mythological incrustations, fables. Some of the fables are interesting. It is known that the Buddha can make miracles, but same as Jesus Christ, the miracles displease and the making of them displeases them. There is one story that I will tell: that of the bowl of the sandalwood.

A merchant, in a city of India, has a piece of sandalwood made into a shape of bowl. He puts it on top of a series of bamboo canes. He says that he will give the bowl to anyone who can reach it. There are many heretic masters that attempt it in vain. They bribe the merchant so that he may say that they have reached it. The merchant refuses and a lesser disciple of the Buddha arrive. The disciple elevates in the air, flies six times around the bowl, takes it and gives it to the merchant. When Buddha hears the story, he expels him from the order for having realized something so trifling.

But Buddha can make miracles, for example, a miracle of courtesy. Buddha has to cross a desert in the mid-day hour. The gods, from their thirty-three skies, each throw him a shadow. The Buddha, who does not want to slight any of the gods, multiplies himself into thirty-three Buddhas so that each of the gods sees, from above, a Buddha protected by the shadow that he has thrown.

Among the facts of the Buddha, there is an illuminating one: the parable of the arrow. A man has been hurt in a battle and does not want that they pull out the

arrow. He first wants to know the name of the archer, to which caste he belongs, the material of the arrow, where the archer was and what length of the arrow. While they are discussing these questions, he dies. "Instead", says Buddha, "I show how to pull the arrow out". What is the arrow? It is the universe. The arrow is the idea of I, of everything that we fix on. Buddha says that we must not lose time in useless questions. For example: is the universe finite or infinite? Will Buddha live after nirvana or not? All these are useless. The importance is that we pull out the arrow. It is a matter of an exorcism, of a law of salvation.

Buddha says: "Just as the ocean has only one taste, the taste of salt, the taste of the Dharma is the taste of salvation". The Dharma that he teaches is vast as the sea but has only one taste: the taste of salvation. Of course, some followers have lost themselves in, or have perhaps found too many, metaphysical digressions. That is not the aim of Buddhism. A Buddhist can profess whatever religion, as long as that he follows that law. What is important is the salvation and the four noble truths: the suffering, the origin of the suffering, the cessation of the suffering and the path to arrive the cessation. At the end is the nirvana. The order of the truth is not important. It has been said that they correspond to an antique medical tradition in that it deals with the illness, the diagnostics, the treatment and the cure. The cure, in this case, is the nirvana.

*(To be continued)*



## Dedication To World Trade Center and Pentagon Tragedy

At AZBTL's most recent Board Meeting, it was agreed that donations would be given in the name of Vairocana Monastery as a gesture of good will toward the community and those in need.

May the victims will be quickly born in the bondless-light Buddha realm. May all beings have happiness and the causes of happiness. May all be free from suffering and the causes of suffering. May all never be separated from the bliss that is without sorrow. May all live in equanimity, free from attachment and aversion.



