



MONTHLY GUIDE



International Buddhist Meditation Center

January 2010

928 S. New Hampshire L.A. CA. 90006

213.384.0850

Happy New Year!

International Buddhist Meditation Center wishes to extend its very best wishes and greetings for a happy and prosperous New Year to all of our friends and family.

May this year be filled with Metta, Mudita, Samadhi, and many virtuous Dharma Realizations.

New Years Eve Meditation! December 31, 10 Pm - 1 Am

Please join IBMC for our annual mid-night meditation on December 31 starting at 9 Pm.

We will begin our silent sitting meditation in the Zendo at 9 PM and end at 11:55 when we will go into our garden and ring our temple bell 108 times to signal the beginning of a new year filled with the wonderful sounds of Dharma!

After the ringing of the bell we will all share a toast to the new year with cider and snacks!

See you there!

IBMC Monthly Guide Update

During 2009, IBMC began to tighten our budget, update our mail list, and seek avenues to create a greener and more eco-responsible realm in which to practice the Buddha Dharma.

Many of you signed up to have our Monthly Guide delivered to your email, or began reading our new online version and asked to be removed from our mail list. We thank you.

The majority of our readers chose to continue to receive the Monthly Guide via land mail. We thank you for your continued support.

In 2010, we will continue in our efforts to use fewer trees and less of our postage budget by beginning to transition the Monthly Guide to a Quarterly Zine.

Therefore we would like to invite all of our readers and members to submit your writings, photos, art, musings, thoughts, questions, comments, and any other items you might like to have considered for publication in our quarterly newsletter.

We also welcome suggestions for columns or features you might like to see.

If possible, please send all submissions by Email to ibmc09@yahoo.com. Subject line "Monthly Guide."

Photos and artwork must be in JPEG. or GIF. format. All attachments must be in PC Compatible formats such as Microsoft Word or Text Files. If you do not have Email access, please submit all land mail writings either typewritten or printed.

[Please: no script hand writing].

Photos and art work sent by land mail should not be larger than 8.5 x 11. Photos and art will be returned only if requested. The New IBMC Quarterly Newsletter will begin as soon as we have enough material to create our first issue.

Land mail may be sent to IBMC at 928 S. New Hampshire Los Angeles CA. 90006. Please Mark "Attn: Monthly Guide"

IBMC's Bodhi Tree has been a source of joy and blessings for the 40 years of our continued service to the Buddhist community.

In 1976 a cutting of the blessed Bodhi tree was given to our temple. On that occasion this article appeared in the January 13 issue of the Los Angeles Times. Written by Kathleen Hendrix

AN AMERICAN GATHERING -Buddhist monks and representatives of other religions and countries joined Vietnamese Buddhists Sunday as they dedicated their first American temple.

The news release sent out by the International Buddhist Meditation Center announced, "The large numbers of Vietnamese who are beginning to settle down to normal life in our community are proud that the temple will be dedicated in the first month of the year celebrating the 200th birthday of the United States"

And although the procession and dedication ceremony Sunday was undeniably exotic as the Vietnamese established their first Buddhist temple in this country, and in Los Angeles, the event could not have been more American

The Buddhists and their friends a multiracial, ecumenical group of about 200, gathered at the center on S. New Hampshire St. and processed down the street and around the corner to the temple where the dedication took place in the courtyard of the two-story yellow stucco building, a former apartment house.

Rare Gift From Sri Lanka

The occasion was an important one to the world's Buddhist community and was marked by a rare gift from the government and Buddhists of Sri Lanka. The prime minister sent the Vietnamese a sapling from the sacred Bodhi tree. The original Bodhi tree under which the Buddha is said to have attained enlightenment some 2,500 years ago in India no longer exists. But Buddhist tradition holds that in the third century BC, a sapling from that tree was sent to Sri Lanka where it took root and is today a 2,200 year old tree. The sapling that was wait to America was to be presented to the Vietnamese by Dr. Ananda Nayake Theta, deputy chief of the Amarapura Sect of Sri Lanka.

LAPD officers cornered off the block on New Hampshire St. while the procession formed about 500 spectators some of them Vietnamese, lined the street, many of them waved paper Buddhist flags; the smell of incense from burning joss sticks filled the air; a magnified voice gave directions; in several languages for people to take their positions. The line up was a startling mixture of the sacred and the profane. Three young Vietnamese women in traditional dress, the sodai a long, slit-skirted dress over trousers headed the procession, carrying the American and Buddhist flags.

Two white American men in mauve robes followed with a flute and horn, the horn so long (at least seven feet) that a woman preceded them, letting the bell of the horn rest on her shoulder. She too was wearing a mauve robe that did not fully cover her jeans.

A pagoda borne by four men contained a figure of the Buddha, fresh fruit and flowers. Buddhist masters, monks and nuns followed, robed in black, yellow or yellow and red, or blue depending on their tradition, some of them were Americans, white and black. Among the monks were the two who had the most significant roles in the dedication, Dr. Thich Thien-An, supreme abbot of the new temple, and Dr. Ananda Nayake Thero who carried the sapling from the Bodhi tree in a small earthenware pot, resting on a tray.

An old black woman stood on the lawn of her house holding a Buddhist flag and searching the parade. "There's Kenny," she finally said to herself. Although he could not have heard her, Supervisor Kenneth Hahn (the temple is in his district) turned around at that moment, recognized her and smiled.

There were ceremonial dancers, men in black clerical garb with Roman collars, representing the Inter-Religious Council of Southern California, white robed and turbaned American Sikhs, any number of people in ordinary casual dress, coats and jackets over their arms as they proceeded under the hot sun, and a few people in ceremonial dress that appeared to be of their own design, like that of one American man in a gold plush hooded cape. The man wore a button that said Planetary Citizens.

Toward the rear were eight young women, Americans, in filmy evening gowns, rather heavily made up for daytime. They were, they said, from the John Robert Powers modeling school. One was studying at the meditation center with Dr. Thich Thien-An and, she said, "I think we're supposed to be yakshi, fertility symbols, which the Buddha left behind him," to which one of her companions blurted, "Oh, that's obscene

There were reminders, such as the unearthly sound of the horn, that the occasion was a solemn one. And there were reminders throughout the day of the immeasurable suffering that led the Buddhists of Vietnam to establish a temple in America.

One monk carried a portrait that most probably symbolizes Vietnamese Buddhists to Americans a monk sitting in the lotus position, his body all but hidden by the flames that were consuming it.

Later, at the dedication, the dead were remembered and Dr. Thien-An prayed, "May all who died in the Indochina war be reborn in heaven ... May hope, love and compassion be the nectar which will heal us and bring us together,"

He also called the day a new chapter in Vietnamese Buddhist history, and reminded everyone of the Vietnamese ability to adapt to new values while preserving the old traditions. The Vietnamese appeared to be doing just that, and despite the solemn rituals and singing, painful reminders and their own memories that could not have been very far from Vietnam,

the mood of the day was happy, full of anticipation and light-heartedness.

Their friends seemed very happy for them. Dr. Ananda presented the sapling, telling the Vietnamese the Bodhi tree was so much a part of his people "that it is considered to be almost human"; there were proclamations of welcome and messages from the mayor's office, the Board of Supervisors, the governor's office, state senators, city councilmen. Dr. Thich Thien-An apologized that all the masters and monks could not come up on the temporary platform where the ceremony was held, grinned and explained, "Cannot Stage too weak."

At the end some very American-looking balloons were released. Birds were to be released too, and Dr. Thien-An and an assistant opened a metal cage filled with doves. The birds, it turned out, weren't going anywhere. One refused to leave the back of the assistant, and two stayed in Dr. Thien-An's hands no matter how many times he flung his arms upward. Finally they left his hands and crawled up to his shoulders, sitting on his ceremonial garments and nuzzling him.

Others flew into the group and landed on the shaved heads of monks. And that is how the dedication ended, with a great deal of laughter and scurrying, and a delight-ed voice over a microphone inviting everyone to a free vegetarian lunch.

SAVE OUR BODHI TREE

Help transform our Bodhi Tree from...

This



To This

IBMC Bodhi Tree fund Raiser! Will you help?

IBMC would like to create a sacred space for meditation beneath our beautiful Bodhi Trees.

Many of our monastics, students and supporters have cared for the gardens surrounding our precious trees. This Year, to mark our 40th anniversary, the monks and residents of IBMC would like to renovate our garden to include a meditation space and altar similar to the one pictured on the opposite page.

Your tax-deductible donation will help us accomplish this this. Our goal is to have this completed by August of 2010 as a 40th anniversary present to Ven. Karuna Dharma in remembrance of Venerable Thien-An, and with gratitude for the years of commitment to the Dharma work they both have given



January Events

10 AM - 108 Bows
10:30 AM - Meditation

11 AM - Sunday Dharma Talks

1/3 - Ven. Havanpola Shanti
1/10 - Ven. Havanpola Shanti
1/17 - Ven. Karuna Dharma
1/24 - Ven. Chung Do Sunim
1/31 - Ven. Chitta Bhikshuni

Meditation Times

Friday: 7:30 PM Zendo - led by Ven. Kusala

Sunday: 10:30 AM & 7:30 PM Zendo - led by Ven. Kusala

IBMC Classes

Mon. 7 PM Tibetan Buddhism - Palmo Chöling Nunnery - Bhikshuni Chitta Karuna

Wed. 7:30 PM Everyday Buddhism - Zendo Ven. Kusala Bhikshu

IBMC eMail addresses

Ven. Karuna's eMail: karunadh@ca.rr.com

Ven. Shanti's eMail: hshanti1@yahoo.com

Rental office eMail: dougibmc@yahoo.com

IBMC temple eMail: ibmc09@yahoo.com

IBMC Web Pages:

www.ibmc.info

www.karunadharmainfo

www.urbandharma.org

<http://palmoling.tripod.com>

<http://bsila.tripod.com>

Prison Dharma, a column devoted IBMC's Prison Outreach Ministry.

Greetings to the Students of Ven. Karuna Dharma.

As you may have read, on the front page of the Guide, this year we will begin to transition the Monthly Guide in to a quarterly Zine.

IBMC will continue to have a special section devoted to Ven. Karuna's faithful students on the "inside."

Please send your writings, letters, art and photos to be considered for inclusion in our new publication.

We welcome letters from your study groups, photos of your groups, family and friends, questions, comments, musings, observations, cartoons, jokes etc.

Please submit any ideas you might like to see in the Guide for the Prison Dharma section.

Please begin to write and send your ideas now!

Send all letters to IBMC, 928 S. New Hampshire Ave., Los Angeles CA. 90006: "Attn. Monthly Guide"

If you have family or friends send anything through email, please remind them to mark the subject line as "Monthly Guide"

See You Along The Path...

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