

**“ONE FEELS THE “SPECIALNESS” OF ARI BHÖD’S RETREAT LAND PEMA DRAWA ALMOST INSTANTLY UPON ARRIVING. IT IS HERE WHERE MY MIND AND HEART ARE AT EASE.** I want others to have this experience. That’s why I support the Lama Gyatso Memorial Fund. This fund helps insure Ari Bhöd will be available for generations to come.

You see, until I met Lama Gyatso Rinpoche my life didn’t make much sense to me. Actually, life in general was a big question mark. Through his remarkable teachings and limitless compassion, I came to know the Dharma. **KNOWING LAMA GYATSO WAS ONE OF THE GREATEST BLESSINGS IN MY LIFE.**” —LINDA LILLIE-ROSSON (VICTORVILLE)

**“I**n this life it is extraordinary to have had the good fortune to encounter the dharma in such a pure form. So it is up to each of us to give back something in appreciation of this very precious awakening to our own basic goodness and the possibility of creating an enlightened society.

I give to the Memorial Fund because it helps keep my connection to Lama Gyatso alive. He was and is my personal connection to the dharma — **A KIND, UNFAILINGLY GENEROUS FELLOW HUMAN WHO TAUGHT ME AND HIS OTHER STUDENTS THE SKILLS THAT HELP US MOVE BEYOND THE CONSTRAINTS OF SELF INTEREST.** Giving to the fund is a vital way to keep Lama Gyatso Rinpoche’s enlightened intentions alive as well as to continue to benefit as many people and other sentient beings as possible.” —TERRY RICH (ALBUQUERQUE)

**“B**eing born and baptized as a Roman Catholic, I have always been the spectator alongside my late husband Yujean’s path in search of Buddhism. I welcomed the philosophy of Buddhist teaching and enjoyed the times when he shared little moments of realizations. I remember going with Yujean to Lama Gyatso’s center in Los Feliz on auspicious days and receiving teachings, blessings and the happy feast at the end. I remember whenever he had doubt in worldly matters; he would ask Lama Gyatso for advice.

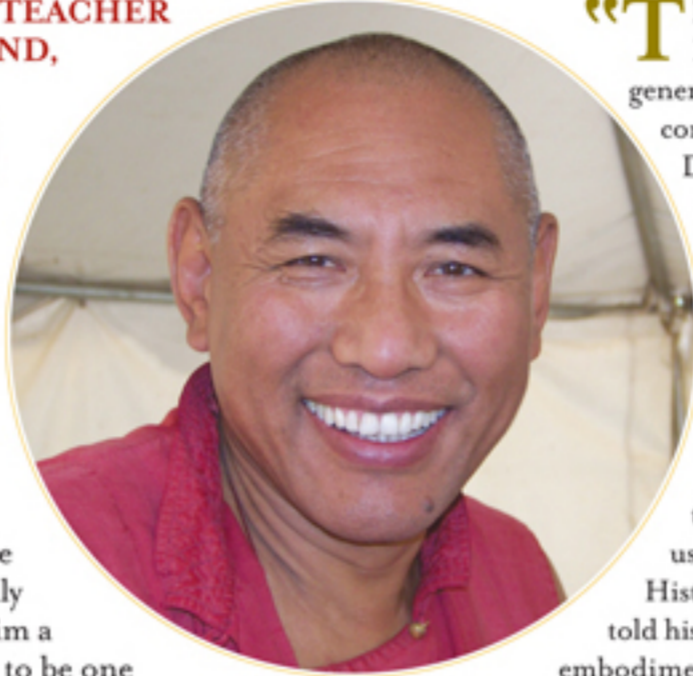
In the beginning, I asked Yujean how he learned all the complex details of the everyday practice and the pronunciation of each and every syllable of the prayer. **HIS ANSWER WAS: “LAMA GYATSO TOOK ME HAND IN HAND AND TAUGHT ME.”**

In Pema Drawa, the hands of Lama Gyatso are in every building, every road, and all the trees and mountains around it. It is a place he prepared for us to come and learn. **I FEEL VERY FORTUNATE TO HAVE FOUND PEMA DRAWA AND WISH MORE PEOPLE CAN BENEFIT FROM THIS RETREAT LAND.**” —YVONNE KANG (LA CRESENTA)

**“A**S A NEIGHBOR, TEACHER AND DEAR FRIEND, LAMA GYATSO WAS ALWAYS THERE FOR US AND OUR LOVED ONES.

When a dear despondent friend was dying of cancer, Lama Gyatso paid him a visit and told him not to hate his fate but embrace it. He used a brilliant metaphor saying that if you go to the ocean to surf and there are no waves you can’t really hate the ocean. He gave him a blessing and it turned out to be one of the most enthusiastic and courageous last weeks of our friend’s life. He passed with a smile and no fear. **LAMA GYATSO HAS AFFECTED OUR FAMILIES’ LIVES IN SUCH POSITIVE WAYS THAT WE FEEL CONTRIBUTING TO HIS MEMORY BY SUPPORTING ARI BHÖD IS THE LEAST WE COULD DO.**”

—JERRY & MARY DEWILDE (LOS FELIZ)



**“T**he quiet dignity of Lama Gyatso Rinpoche’s gentle spirit of generosity humbled all of us on a continual basis. To support Pema Drawa and the foundation that our master literally gave his life to bring into existence seems to be of vital importance in demonstrating our commitment to maintaining and preserving his legacy and the tradition of the Early Translation School Nyingma tradition. Lama Gyatso always used to tell us about how the Historical Buddha Shakyamuni told his disciples that after his physical embodiment demonstrated the truth of impermanence to rouse beings’ impervious minds to Dharma, Buddha would live on in the pages of his teachings, would manifest as the texts. To support the very edifice of Nyingma teachings and practice, the sacred space of Pema Drawa dedicated to the flourishing of Dharma, seems like a way to stay deeply connected to the undying eternal presence of Lama Gyatso Rinpoche’s Dharmakaya mind.”

—VANESSA TURNER—(CULVER CITY)

**“THE SUFFERING OF BEINGS IS INCOMPREHENSIBLE.**

Breathing in is precious and out a blessing. **TO HAVE ACCESS TO THE PRECIOUS BUDDHA DHARMA AND TO PRACTICE FOLLOWING IN THE FOOT STEPS OF OUR ROOT AND LINEAGE LAMAS, PROTECTING AND PRESERVING THE RITUAL ARTS AND TRADITIONS, SUCH AS OUR PRECIOUS LAMA GYATSO SET IN MOTION, THROUGH THE CREATION OF ARI BHÖD, PEMA DRAWA IS A BOON FOR ALL MOTHER SENTIENT BEINGS.** Prioritizing and setting some funds aside each year warms the heart knowing they are used as he intended, to benefit all beings.

The sangha members and visiting lama’s continue Lama Gyatso’s activities impeccably through thick and thin times. It is a rare opportunity to practice there in the sweet pine forests and to contribute

to the preservation of the precious holy Dharma and relies there.

One hears buzz words like *compassion fatigue* and *competing priorities* in the realm of daily life. At times there is more money, a change of circumstances, an illness, death, birth, the great display of impermanence. **LAMA GYATSO’S COMPASSION NEVER FATIGUED. HE EMBODIED WHAT HE TAUGHT AND SERVED ALL EQUALLY.**

Our sangha remembers Lama Gyatso’s instructions to us after a ten day stupa consecration ceremony, “When I create something, it is with an intention that it last for a minimum of one thousand years. I have done my work, now it is your responsibility to take care of this place. Do not regard this as an ordinary place, it is a special place on the planet, remember and dedicate the merit to all mother-sentient beings.”

—KATHY MORRISON—(BOUDHA STUPA, KATHMANDU)

**“P**ema Drawa is an amazing retreat land, preserving the very tradition of our precious lineage. The tradition stays very much alive at Pema Drawa and it is also to honor and help to come true the dreams and visions of our most precious teacher, Lama Chödak Gyatso Rinpoche. For the benefit of all sentient beings, without exception. Pema Drawa has actually been my home, whenever I visited my precious teacher and also after his passing. **PEMA DRAWA CERTAINLY IS WHAT IS KNOWN AS “A REMOTE RETREAT LAND” AND THEREFORE ONE OF THE GREATEST PLACES FOR A PRACTITIONER SEEKING A PLACE TO ENHANCE HIS/HER PRACTICE.** Great teachers have set their foot on that land and the blessings there are inconceivable.” —BIRGIT GERBER (ZURICH)

**“A**s an environmental science teacher, I have come to learn over the years that the only solution to our problems in the environment is a shift in our worldview. The worldview that will bring solutions to our environmental issues is the teaching of Mahayana Buddhism. **ARI BHÖD PRESERVES THIS PRECIOUS TEACHING THAT COULD BRING FORTH A BETTER WORLD.** Unfortunately, I have never met Lama Gyatso Rinpoche, yet I know the support of Ari Bhöd through the annual Lama Gyatso Memorial Fund is the support of a better world.”

—LING YUET (PASADENA)

**“E**very time I was in Lama Gyatso’s presence, upon making eye contact, we would exchange broad smiles, sometimes spilling into outright laughter. **HE WAS A MASTER OF BRIGHTENING THE MOMENT AND OFFERING PRECISELY WHAT EACH OF US NEEDED IN THE FORM OF GUIDANCE, ENCOURAGEMENT AND WISDOM.**

Attending the Ögyen Dzambhala Retreat, Lama Gyatso invited each of us to present our offerings, exchange ceremonial khatas and receive his tailored advice.

Placing the scarf over my head, he leaned forward and whispered, “Frank, don’t worry. You worry too much. Don’t worry. **DON’T WORRY.**” I am forever grateful that Lama Gyatso touched my life.”

—FRANK CODY (ALBUQUERQUE)

**“IN THE HISTORY OF WESTERN CULTURE, THE EXISTENCE OF THE BUDDHA-DHARMA IN A FORM, WHICH CAN FLOURISH AND BE PRACTICED AUTHENTICALLY IS TRULY**

**UNIQUE. I FEEL THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT IS HAPPENING AT PEMA DRAWA, LAMA GYATSO**

**RINPOCHE’S LEGACY TO ALL.** At Pema Drawa, whatever wisdom Lama imparted is woven into the way visitors and residents meditate, think, work, and form the organization in general.

In this way Lama’s qualities live on, as they are the mold in which the Ari Bhöd/Pema Drawa mandala is set. At this early stage there is no telling how profound an impact Ari Bhöd could have if we all continue our support.”

—JOEY DICK (GANGTOK, SIKKIM)



**“I** NEVER MET LAMA GYATSO RINPOCHE, YET HE WAS MY CONNECTION TO THE DHARMA. Without Lama Gyatso I would have never come to Pema Drawa. No matter that he had left his body behind, I have always felt his strong presence and guidance particularly at Ari Bhöd’s retreat land, Pema Drawa.

Through this connection I developed the understanding that Dharma includes every sentient being, so the importance of a retreat land like Pema Drawa that has been blessed and protected by many exalted beings existing in this fragile world becomes really important. Think about it, to know there is a place that is being kept in accordance with the Dharma, where anyone can go to practice. What a blessing!”

—CHRISTANE FRIESS (MT. WASHINGTON)

**“I**t isn’t easy for me to write about Lama Gyatso and Ari Bhöd as it is a deeply personal connection. What I can say about Pema Drawa, which is a kind of home to me, is **THERE IS A WONDERFUL HAPPINESS AND FREEDOM THERE. I THINK A LOT OF PEOPLE FEEL IT, IT’S SORT OF INTANGIBLE BUT YOU’RE SO LUCKY IF YOU GET TO HAVE SOME OF THAT IN YOUR LIFE.** I wish I could put into words the actual benefits one gets from going to a place like Pema Drawa including the smooth and quick advance in practice and understanding of meditation and spirituality.”

—MISHAL AZERAH (AMSTERDAM)

**“T**HE BOUNDLESS COMPASSION THAT MOTIVATED LAMA GYATSO RINPOCHE LIVES HERE IN THIS WILD, RUGGED, AND BEAUTIFUL RETREAT LAND OF PEMA DRAWA FOR US TO DRAW SPIRITUAL SUSTENANCE FROM.

To realize the enlightened vision of our late Lama, we need to support and sustain our retreat land and all the projects and activities that keep it vibrant.

We have so many ways to remember Lama Gyatso... in all our practices starting from our yoga upon arising every day; through our intense retreats at Ari Bhöd/Pema Drawa; in our precious visiting meditation masters whose connections to Lama Gyatso continue to benefit us; to the stories told and retold by our vajra brothers and sisters... **THESE ARE ALL GIFTS FROM LAMA GYATSO, THEY ARE OUR INHERITANCE.**

It is truly a joy to be able to express my gratitude with a return gift to the memorial fund on the occasion of Lama’s paranirvana.”

—RITA VALENCIA (SILVERLAKE)

**“T**his annual memorial fund time reminds me to take a moment to touch Lama Gyatso Rinpoche deep in my heart, and remember and redouble my commitments to my lama and all beings. **THERE IS NO QUESTION LAMA GYATSO RINPOCHE IMPACTED THE CHARITABLE WORK I DID WITH YOUNG PEOPLE, AND CONTINUES TO PROVIDE REFUGE FOR ME TO FEEL ‘SAFE’ IN VERY DIFFICULT TIMES.** I have always, and will always love bringing people to Pema Drawa. I have great faith in knowing they will benefit from the experience and blessings in ways they may never understand. I give and encourage others to support the Lama Gyatso memorial fund with the aspiration for the flourishing of Ari Bhöd/Pema Drawa and for all of Lama Gyatso’s enlightened activities. May it benefit all beings, just as he aspired.”

—LINDA MAXWELL (TEHACHAPI)