Venerable Metteyya honoured for role in developing Lumbini and spreading Buddha’s message of peace

Venerable Metteyya was honoured in Lumbini on the occasion of 2556th Birth Anniversary of Lord Buddha and Lumbini Day 2012. He was presented with his ‘metal letter’ or ‘plaque’ by the speaker of the house of Parliament of Sri Lanka.

In the letter of invitation to Ven. Metteyya to accept the award, the Lumbini Development Trust of Lumbini World Heritage Site wrote: “I would like to take this opportunity to extend our earnest gratitude to you for the support of developing Lumbini and spreading the message of Buddha for peace, non-violence and human solidarity. In this regard, Lumbini Development Trust has decided to recognize you on May 6, 2012 by providing a letter of appreciation. The government and people of Nepal, and Buddhists all over the world are immensely grateful to have your gracious presence on this pious day.”

The CEBA community is very pleased and also offer our hearty congratulations to our Spiritual Guide!

Meditation Curious?
Date: September 23rd
Time: 10 am - 1 pm.
Meet at the Main Building at 9:40
Location: Jackie Parker Park, 4540 - 50 Street, Edm.
Cost: by donation
Come out for a morning of sitting and walking meditations led by Ven. Metteyya. Bring a cushion for meditation, and a plate and utensils for a potluck provided by CEBA to follow. For more information contact Lisa @ 780-468-2644.

Monday night Meditation
Location: Garneau United Church
11148-84 Ave Edmonton
Time: 7-8:30 pm every Monday (holidays excluded)
Book Study will be on the 2nd Monday of each month at 5:45 to 6:45 pm prior to meditation class.

Nepal Night 2012
Location: Meridian Banquets
4820 – 76 Ave., Edmonton
Date: Friday, November 9th
Time: 6:00 – 9:30
Cost: $40
Tickets are on sale now! Click on ‘News and Events’ at our website, www.cebainfo.org. You can purchase tickets through Secure PayPal online (no account necessary), credit card or debit card at the CEBA website. The night will be sure to please with dinner, cultural and traditional folk dances of Nepal, silent auction of local and Asian wares, hand-henna painting, and a presentation of our education projects in Nepal.

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Message from CEBA’s Spiritual Guide, Venerable Metteyya

Dear Friends,

Many warm greetings to you all and I hope you had a lovely summer season! I am back in time to witness the fall and experience the Canadian winter again. Though many may not like the winter as much, I as a monastic, have a great admiration for the winter and snow. When I was a child growing up in Nepal, I often used to think of one day becoming a yogi and going to live in the Himalayas in the midst of the snow peaked mountains. When I first saw the snow everywhere in Edmonton it was such a beautiful experience. It was almost like being in a mythical land, so tranquil, beautiful and clean.

The past couple of months have been very productive for our work in Nepal. We are very glad to share that, finally, we have been granted a piece of land in the World Heritage Site of the Buddha’s birthplace in Nepal. Buddha’s birthplace draws hundreds of thousands from all around the world who come to visit the Buddha’s birthplace seeking peace and solace in his teachings. A master plan to develop it as a world peace city has been drafted and several monasteries and temples have been constructed. To date however, there is no coordinated approach to present all the facets of this spiritual site and provide an enriching and meaningful experience to the uninitiated who find themselves drawn here. Our planned Dharma Centre in Lumbini will provide the visitors with a comprehensive, integrated and coordinated means of Dharma study, meditation practice, pilgrimage and general perspective of Buddhism as a whole as well as the history and significance of Lumbini.

To create the Master Plan area the local villagers co-operated with the government and many even donated their land from 11 villages. Even though they were either not compensated (by choice) or ill-compensated by the government, they happily gave up their land for the spiritual benefit that this site represented, and because of the promise of improved quality of life that the prosperity of Lumbini would bring such as jobs, schools, medical facilities, etc. Other than labour jobs (construction, cooking and cleaning at the many monasteries, temples and hotels), improved services and the feeling that they are included have not yet materialized. It has been documented, too, that those families who were up-rooted to create the world heritage site have become the most poverty-stricken in the whole Lumbini area. Though, great change and development have been taking place in the Lumbini Master Plan area, the poor village communities living in Lumbini area have largely been excluded and given no means of awareness or any meaningful part to play in the modern development and so there is a widening rift growing between the local villagers and the Lumbini Development committee/world heritage site residents.

Our Dharma Centre aims to develop itself as a platform for mutual dialogue and understanding between the local communities, international monasteries and the government. Our centre will be built in collaboration with the local villagers and will offer various training and educational programs. Though our Dharma Centre project is in its initial phase and we have just managed to acquire the land, I see it as a great blessing that we have been allowed to make a big difference in such a significant place. This year about 9 hundred thousand people are expected to visit Lumbini as it is being promoted by Nepal tourism as ‘Visit Lumbini 2012’. This number is supposed to grow more as the new roads are being developed and travelling is becoming easier. Our library and information centre to be built here will be a great service to so many people seeking peace and solace in the Buddha’s teachings.

I am very grateful to all our friends who supported us in this meritorious project and all our friends and officials in Nepal who helped us to acquire this piece of land in the birthplace of the Buddha. In our modern troubled times, when we look in the world there are so many challenges facing humanity today. Rapid depletion of natural resources, financial crisis, terrorism and looming danger of wars; once we begin to think about it all, it seems too frightening and just the volume of the problems makes us feel helpless to do anything about it. But from the Buddhist perspective, one of the contributing elements to such problems is that man does not know how to live in peace. Lacking the peaceful art of living we do not know how to curb our greed and fear and thus perpetuate the cycle of suffering due to our ignorance.

By building this small Peace Education centre in Lumbini we do not expect to solve all the problems of humanity, but we may potentially be helping millions of people drawn to this sacred site find the peaceful art of living. I myself was born in Lumbini and have watched millions of people travelling to this place, and very often I found people who were aware of life’s chaos and conflict and seeking a peaceful way of existence. By supporting and enabling these seekers of peace we will be making a valuable contribution to humanity. I deeply thank all our friends who are helping us to make this valuable change.

With Love and Metta to all,

Venerable Metteyya
Update from Peace Grove Institute

We are very glad to share the news that this year we were able to admit four new girls to our little nunnery! They are such wonderful little gems! In the beginning when we started the nunnery, many parents were reluctant towards educating their girls, but just within 2.5 half years after seeing our nuns growing and learning many wonderful things at the nunnery, many parents have requested that we admit their daughters. So this was a wonderful change to see in the awareness of parents towards the need of education for girls. But due to limited rooms we couldn't accommodate new nuns. These little girls are from the villages around Lumbini and were on our waiting list since last year. We are very glad that due to construction of more rooms and new bathrooms, we were able to admit these wonderful little children with great possibilities.

These little ones were quickly adopted by our pioneer nuns and they are called, “Baby Nuns” by them. We wish all the best to these bright little change makers of their society! We look forward to educating them to the best of our resources and helping them grow into educated leaders of their society. We still have many girls on our waiting list that we look forward to being able to admit in future. We are trying our best to build additional rooms and are planning to add more bathrooms and expand our outgrown kitchen next year!

We are happy to report that Sudharmas’s ear surgery was a success! She needed the eardrum repaired (grafting from skin behind her ear) due to many ear, nose and or throat infections being left untreated which is a common problem in Nepal. Initially she needed both eardrums repaired, but upon wise advice we sought a second opinion and, with proper treatment, it has repaired itself. We also sponsored the same surgery for a young boy at Metta School who desperately required it or was going to be permanently deaf. We now educate the children to not let any coughs or sniffles go by for any length of time without seeking treatment.

We urgently need to build a new kitchen as the original one has long since surpassed its original intended capacity. It was originally designed for a ‘single family residence’, when Guruma Bodhi had it built for Ven. Metteyya’s retreat space and her personal residence. Our plan is to expand it to include the storage room next door (the original first nuns’ dormitory room!!) and build a proper roof as it is currently just a corrugated tin roof. To do this will require us to knock out the wall in between and redesign/configure the cooking, food preparation, washing up and food storage area. We recently had a friend and supporter from the UK/Africa visit and sponsored an update to the kitchen, including tiling the food preparation areas. Here is some of what she had to say “I expect you know that I was busy clearing, cleaning and painting the kitchen as a stop-gap measure until you make your new kitchen next year. It was a little like working in a sauna at times! Supriya became my right hand wo(men). I was teaching her how to paint properly, cutting in, how much to thin or not the paint, work the roller properly, etc. And as important, how to clean everything properly afterwards ready for the next use! She is a really hard worker. Sudatta also helped (and Saccha a little) with the cleaning. In fact Supriya and Sudatta finished up the painting. I think Sudatta had almost as much paint on herself as the wall but she seemed to be in her element: “

Some final Nunnery updates include: This past Vesak (Buddha’s enlightenment day, birthday and parinirvana day) our nunnery cat, Bagheera gave birth to 6 kittens. The nuns have taken great care of them and we are happy to report that four of them are healthy and strong. Two weaker ones couldn’t be helped, unfortunately. Also, we finished the new gate and sign at the front (main) entrance and added a new larger back gate that a tractor can get through. This year, after grade 10 exams our ‘elder’ nuns have all undertaken their second 10-day silent vipassana meditation retreats. The 3 younger grade 8 and 9 nuns completed their first 10 day retreats as well. Congratulations and Sadhu to them all!
Dharma Centre Land (Bodhi Institute)

We are making progress at the Dharma Centre project land thanks in large part to support from Venerables Metteyya, Kalyano and Mangalo and their generous supporters in Thailand. Some of the activities we’ve undertaken thus far are: constructing a small, low cost bamboo cottage and a small reading and meeting hut in the forest area behind our project site for resting from the intense sun; installing a water pump and a makeshift water tower with a 2200 litre tank; constructing a sign; beginning construction of the boundary wall around the site; and beginning construction of 3 rooms (residential quarters). We plan to do some landscaping around the site and are installing an irrigation system around the boundary to enable easy care of the plants. In the future we will collect rain water for the plants and nursery of our “Plant One Million Trees” campaign. As the entire Lumbini area is very dry in the hot season, we are also hoping to dig two small lotus ponds to provide drinking water for the animals and also help to cool the area.

Update from the Upcoming Girls College

As you are aware in March CEBA held a fundraiser to help get the roof on the Girls College before the monsoon season. We raised about 10% of what was needed and our good friends at OPAM e. V. in Bonn, Germany generously came up with the remainder of what was needed. The roof didn’t quite get finished before the monsoon, but we are a good 80% there. We still have to do the finishing construction inside and out and purchase furniture, but we are surely making steady progress.

We are hoping to have the Anatta Children’s Library at the College site finished by the time that some of us return in May or June 2013 and hope to have the grand opening at this time.

Garden of Harmony Tile Wall, Anatta Library, Lumbini

Anatta World Health and Education Outreach has been sponsoring building the Children’s Library at our Girls College site, and has now teamed up with ArtWare to help fill the library with books and cover a wall in tiles of children’s artwork. In a unique approach, they have created a package whereby $30 buys: a book (locally in Nepal in appropriate languages); a tile displaying the artwork of a local Nepali child; and a tile displaying the artwork of your own child or of a child you choose. The tiles will be installed on the wall, and the theme is “Garden of Harmony.” An old Nepali saying referred to the diversity of its people as “a garden of flowers” from different castes and ethnicities. Just as the variety of flowers add to the garden’s splendor, so our diversity makes us beautiful. This was a time-tested strategy that held the glue of this little country together for many generations. Currently, the benefit of community within diversity is not as clear in Nepali society. Sadly, children in Nepal are being educated in an unhealthy environment of ethnic conflict and separation. The Garden of Harmony is a project designed to help all participating children learn the true meaning of community: cooperation, acceptance and harmony. We need your support to make it a reality!

To get involved or for more information go to these sites:
http://www.anattayoutreach.org/innepal_sakyadhita.php
Not to commit any sin, to do good, and to purify one's mind, that is the teaching of all the Buddhas.

**CEBA in the Big Apple**
Ven. Metteyya and Guruma Bodhi visited New York in July and Ven. Metteyya gave Dharma talks at Bodhi Monastery in Lafayette NJ, Princeton Vihara in Princeton NJ, Community Meditation Center in Manhattan NY, and at NY Insight Meditation Center in Manhattan NY. He also gave a short teaching on ‘Addictions’ for 'Tricycle: The Buddhist Review' which can be viewed at: [http://www.tricycle.com/blog/video-teaching-venerable-metteyya-addiction](http://www.tricycle.com/blog/video-teaching-venerable-metteyya-addiction). As well, he was interviewed for the International Public Radio program for NPR (US’s National Public Radio). We had many nice meetings while we were there with several groups, friends and mentors. Some of these were with our very Venerable mentor, Bhikkhu Bodhi, Joan and David Grubin (producer of PBS' The Buddha), Mark Epstein (author/psychoanalyst), Allan Lokos (author of Patience and Pocket Peace) and Cornelia Santschi of Anatta World Health and Education Outreach to name a few. Additionally, we had a meeting with the Executive Director (Sabene Salasssie), meditation teacher/psychoanalyst/director/co-founder (Sandra Weinberg) and Deputy Director (Dalila Bothwell) all of NY Insight Meditation Centre. They are interested in being involved with our projects in Nepal in a meaningful way.

**Scientists Proclaim Animal and Human Consciousness the Same**
This is a giant leap forward for our animal friends and family. It has long been known by most pet owners, animal rights activists and others, but having it 'authenticated' by science will surely open the door for much more compassion and understanding extended to all creatures (and the environments they depend upon). Add to this that earlier in the year, at the American Association of the Advancement of Science annual conference, cetaceans (whales and dolphins) were extended ‘non-human persons’ status and a charter of rights and freedoms is being developed. It won’t be long until we all see the error in our ways and take action against the mass production, slaughter, mistreatment and inhumane confinement of animals, which has the added detriment of being one of the largest contributors to environmental degradation. Read more: [http://www.care2.com/causes/scientists-proclaim-animal-and-human-consciousness-the-same.html#ixzz259YrcOzA](http://www.care2.com/causes/scientists-proclaim-animal-and-human-consciousness-the-same.html#ixzz259YrcOzA)

**Can Meditation Make You Smarter?**
Haven’t we been telling you that? Find out more at: [http://healthland.time.com/2012/08/10/can-meditation-make-you-smarter/](http://healthland.time.com/2012/08/10/can-meditation-make-you-smarter/)

**Death Meditation**
In a couple of our meditation classes recently, we returned to the meditation on death that Buddha stressed was a very important reflection for us to do often. Perhaps you will find some time in your upcoming meditation sessions to reflect on death if you haven’t done so lately. Try and reflect daily on this so that you will value the preciousness of each moment of our life and use it wisely. Coming to terms with our mortality gives us some peace as well; from learning the art of dying we gain the art of living. Some important things to remember:

- Our death is certain - others before us have died, whether great, famous, intelligent, nobody is immune to death. The time, place and cause of our death is uncertain - we have no way of knowing when we will die as people of all ages from babies to seniors can die. We have no way of knowing where or how we will die, it could be: at home in our sleep, from an accident, during our commute, on holidays, in a hospital of a disease, at school or work, or from foul-play. We haven’t any foreknowledge.
- When we die we must leave everything behind - this includes all our loved ones, pets, our valued possessions, status, name and fame that we have worked so hard to acquire. These cannot go on the journey with us; we must go all alone. We should come to terms with this and be ready.
Clean-Up & Heritage Preservation Program at Gotihawa
Gotihawa is a sacred archeological site located near the ancient town of Kapilavastu (the place where Buddha grew up as Prince Siddhartha) in Nepal. It is the sacred birthplace of the Kakusandha Buddha and there is an ancient parinirvana stupa (final resting place) built here. Though it is one of the most ancient human settlements in Nepal, this historically valuable site was in great ruin and was being used by the villagers for dumping waste. In April, Ven. Metteyya and Peace Grove nuns along with the blessing and assistance of Lumbini Development Trust, organized a program to bring the villagers, local stakeholders and district officials together and generate awareness about this valuable cultural heritage site and how better to preserve it. They are in the process of creating a beautiful garden around the site and are working with the villagers to conserve the site. It will be easier for the pilgrims to travel and pay their respects, which in return will generate income for the villagers and will bring in development. A team of local youth, who participated in this program, is learning to cherish their lost cultural heritage to bring positive change to their village. They are employing a gardener from the local village and in the future aims to develop other facilities like toilets and a covered platform for shade in the hot season. This event was widely covered in national radio and newspapers in Nepal.

Edmonton Interfaith Centre for Education and Action
As part of CEBA’s commitment and mandate to inter-spiritual learning and dialogue, Guruma Bodhi was invited and accepted onto the board of directors of this non-profit organization. The Edmonton Interfaith Centre was founded by people from many faiths who realized that only by working together could we create a community dedicated to friendship, harmony and understanding. There are various events that the Centre organizes and attends throughout the year. To learn more visit their website at: http://www.edminterfaithcentre.ca/

Next Heavenly Himalayas Holiday
Plans for our next Heavenly Himalayas Holiday are taking shape and look to be happening around June 2013. Stay tuned if you or someone you know might be interested in joining us on one, two or three weeks pilgrimage to Buddha’s holy sites of India, our projects sites in Lumbini and for sightseeing in Nepal’s Himalayas and national parks.

All phenomena are impermanent, therefore Clinging and aversion only bring suffering. – Buddha

There are two mistakes one can make along the road to truth...not going all the way, and not starting. – Buddha
Ven. Metteyya and his disciples Venerables. Kalyano and Sumangalo led a pilgrimage to the Buddhist holy sites for the mothers of our nuns and mothers of some Metta school students. For many of these ladies it was the first time they had ever left their village of Lumbini, and they had a wonderful time. They visited Sarnath, Bodh Gaya, Rajgir, Nalanda, Sravasti, Vaishali, Vulture’s Peak, and Kushinagar. Is it any wonder nobody wanted it to end, and the final day they all slept over in the Dhamma Hall at the nunnery in Lumbini, rather than returning home immediately.

**Lumbini Mothers’ Dhamma Tour**

What are the Benefits of Group Meditation?

1. Shared intentions
Meditating as a group can bring us together with shared intentions for change. People strongly unified by a common intent can profoundly influence larger groups on a global scale. Great movements for peace, from Martin Luther King Jr. to Gandhi, began with people joining together for a common desire of peace and greater good.

2. Influence the greater population
Some people believe that a group meditating together can have a measurable effect on the greater population, despite that population being unaware of those meditating. For example, group meditations have been credited for decreased crime levels, reduced public unrest and even bringing rains to drought ridden areas. Even if you are skeptical of these claims, there is no doubt that the physical presence of a large group meditating in public will raise eyebrows and urge passers-by to ask ‘why?’, and with that question is planted the seeds of awareness and change.

3. Feel more connected
We live most of our lives separate from others. Although we may walk down a crowded street or work in a busy office building, we rarely connect with others beyond trivial interactions. But when we come together in group meditation and share an intention, or even simply share silence together, we discover a sense of connectedness that is very powerful. It is not unlike the camaraderie felt between fans who gather at a football game.

4. Still experience the same benefits as solo meditation
When you meditate as a group you still reap the same benefits that you would when sitting alone. You still de-clutter your mind, gain focus, reap health benefits and reduce stress.

For more about the benefits of meditation
CEBA hosts a group meditation on Monday evenings at Garneau Church. Anyone is welcome to attend. See page 1 of this newsletter or visit [www.cebainfo.org](http://www.cebainfo.org) for details.

- from [http://stopandbreathe.com](http://stopandbreathe.com)
UN International Day of Peace
On Friday, September 21st, 2012 the United Nations International Day of Peace will be celebrated worldwide and for the ninth year in Edmonton.
The Opening Celebration is at 10:30 a.m. inside City Hall and will be presented by The Mahatma Gandhi Canadian Foundation for World Peace in partnership with the Canadian Department of Peace Initiative. Ryan Jespersen, co-host of Breakfast Television at CityTV will MC the event and the Honourable Doug Roche will be the program’s Keynote Speaker. Student choirs from St. Boniface Elementary who placed 1st in the 2012 Provincial Music Festival will be performing. A Peace-Flag Raising Ceremony will take place at 12:00 Noon in the SW corner of South Plaza of City Hall. A moment of silence will be observed to honour the worldwide “Million Minutes for Peace Pledge”. A Proclamation from City of Edmonton will be read by a representative from City Council and there will be music. This year, the ceremony will be presented by the Edmonton Interfaith Center as well as others.

YOUCAN Music Festival Churchill Square from 5:00 - 9:00 p.m. will showcase local musicians. The event will be hosted by Step Up and Step In, an organization facilitated by YOUCAN that works to build peace with youth in Edmonton. Peace displays will be on view from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM in City Hall Main Room. They will include local groups and organizations that will display and hand out literature on peace, social justice, and human rights. CEBA will be participating in this event and we encourage you to come out in support of Peace.

Thank You …
Though we may not be able to mention every generous donation/help received here, please know that we greatly appreciate every gift, big and small alike, and that we remember you all in our Metta and dedicating merits. Many thanks to Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi, Mr. Basanta Bidari, Sam Mowe, NY Insight and Community Meditation Centres, Hermann Broeskamp, Harriet Astley and ArtWare, among many others.

Can You Help?
Our organization needs volunteers, Board Members and financial donations to continue our work in Nepal. Please come out to our Nepal Night fundraiser in November. If you would like to make a donation to our Silent Auction please contact us at cebabodhi@gmail.com.

CEBA’s Mission Statements Include:
- Advancing the practices of the Buddhist faith while promoting intra-Buddhist and inter-spiritual learning and dialogue in Canada and internationally
- Improving animal welfare and living standards of people in Nepal through education of both children and adults, provision of medical clinics, construction of wells and sewage maintenance systems, reforestation projects and literacy programs
- Providing, administering and maintaining a Dharma Centre for the community, pilgrims and other travelers in Lumbini, Nepal (the birthplace of the Buddha and a World Heritage Site)

CEBA Contact Information
CEBA is a Non-Profit Organization registered with Corporations Canada, but is not yet a registered Charity with Canada Revenue Agency and cannot issue tax receipts.
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