

## Special Announcements Issue

Volume 11, Number 1 / January 2011

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**Happy 2011!**

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### **A Few Special Dates for Your Calendar**

We may still be stuck in winter, but the groundhog has promised an early spring, and this year spring brings with it these special observances and events:

**Losar (Tibetan New Year) – March 5, 2011.**

This March marks the start of the year of the Iron Rabbit, 2138.

**Rinpoche's 50th Birthday Celebration in Kathmandu – March 6 and 7, 2011.**

Registrations are no longer being accepted for this occasion, but we can all celebrate by adding to the growing number of long-life mantra recitations in honor of the birthday of Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. [Learn more >](#)

**First Live Internet Broadcast of 2011 – April 17, 12 noon – 1:15 pm Eastern Time (New York time).**

A guided dzogchen practice with Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche.

[View the full schedule of live Webcasts >](#)

Now is the time to register for the **June 24 fundraising dinner with esteemed guest His Holiness Lungtok Tenpai Nyima Rinpoche,** who will be joined on the eve of the summer retreat by Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche during a special fundraising dinner to benefit orphans at Menri Monastery.

[More details >](#)

More schedule items will arrive with the next issue of *VOCL*, when we expect to have news about an upcoming retreat at Serenity Ridge with H.E. Menri Lopon Trinley Nyima Rinpoche, head instructor of Menri Monastery in India; and about the fall retreat with Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche (hint: See Rinpoche's book

[Healing With Form, Energy and Light](#)

).

All our best for a Happy Year of the Iron Rabbit!

Aline and Jeff Fisher  
Editors, *Voice of Clear Light*

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## Words of Appreciation

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### With Gratitude for Mary Ellen McCourt and Jan Cressman

As of December we've had some important changes in the Ligmincha Council, the group of dedicated volunteers who help make everything happen here at our retreat center. Mary Ellen McCourt stepped down from her position as Co-director of Communications, and Jan Cressman from her role as Director of Fundraising. I'd like to take this opportunity to express words of thanks to both Mary Ellen and Jan for their contributions to Ligmincha Institute.

\* \* \*



It all started in 2000, when Rinpoche came into the office in downtown Charlottesville and handed me an image Mary Ellen had made for him. She had taken a photograph of Rinpoche during his teachings at the Open Center in New York. Around the photo she'd added a border, so that it looked a bit like a thangka painting framed in brocade. At the time I was a volunteer with Ligmincha's Tibet Shop. In handing me the photo, Rinpoche simply said, "You and Marcy should talk with her."

Soon after, Mary Ellen attended a retreat with Rinpoche at Serenity Ridge. She arrived with a stack of images she had created, and donated them to the store so we could sell them to raise money for Ligmincha. During that same retreat I proposed that we create a Ligmincha wall calendar to sell through the store, and our creative working relationship began. Over the years

in collaboration with Marcy and Polly, and now most recently with Melissa, we have created a wide variety of calendars, deity cards, visualization supports, T-shirts, note cards, teaching transcripts, and other meditation practice supports. When I look around at the shop, Mary Ellen's impact is abundantly obvious. The shelves are filled with her beautiful designs. Mary Ellen truly taught me how to work creatively as a team member, holding a shared vision without attachment or ownership over a project. It has been a privilege to work with her for the nine years that she has been on the Council.

Importantly, Mary Ellen's efforts over the years have helped countless people know about the treasures Ligmincha offers in the form of wisdom teachings and practices, through her selfless and devoted actions in creating and designing print promotions for local and national media. Many people don't realize the role she has played in leading them to Serenity Ridge.

Mary Ellen has offered to continue volunteering her services as Ligmincha's Art Director. Here she will continue to create our yearly calendar, design our teaching transcripts and help bring them to publication, design ads for upcoming retreats, and help create new support materials for our store. We are fortunate to benefit from her passion to serve Ligmincha in this way.

\* \* \*



I have had the pleasure to get to know Jan through the many conversations we've had about fundraising over these past many months that she's served on Council, and have truly enjoyed discussing the ways in which Ligmincha can grow through a more cohesive fundraising effort. I deeply appreciate her questions and insights, and her valuable help in pointing out areas where we need clarification. Jan spent many hours pondering Ligmincha's needs and researching how fundraising is done at other non-profits. She outlined a plan that will serve Ligmincha well as she steps down from the Council position as Director of Fundraising. Jan holds a holistic and encompassing view in which she sees Ligmincha and its potential for growth. Although she is no longer on the Council, we will continue to benefit from Jan's insightful comments and suggestions.

With much appreciation for Mary Ellen and Jan,

Sue Davis-Dill  
Executive Director  
Ligmincha Institute



## Sangha Sharing

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### Retreatants Share Writings and Photo

*We invited sangha members to share their personal experiences from the recent winter retreat at Serenity Ridge. Here are four offerings.*



Photograph of Serenity Ridge by Jitka Polanská

Who ever could have imagined me like this, prostrating before sacred images,  
holding my hands in the gesture of a prayer?

And yet, now I know that I had been always looking for this, just for this.  
Since ever, there was something inside looking at me through this stream of  
consciousness,

something feeling imprisoned. Now, I am on the way to liberate this sacred, silent presence.

These are my teachers, this is my home, this is the source which had always been calling me.

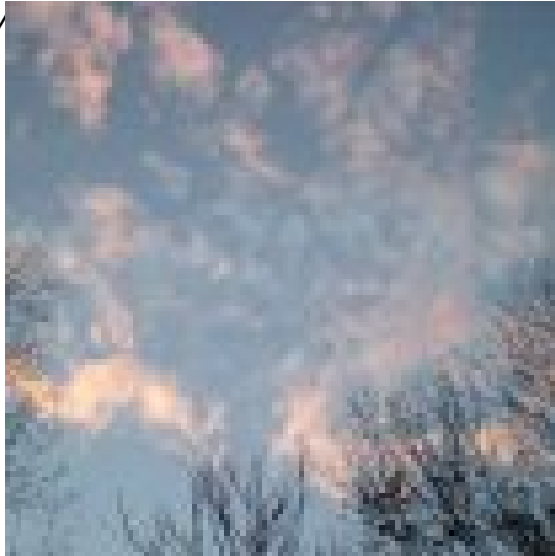
Now I know. And so I prostrate and bow to the one who brought me back.

— *Jitka Polanská*



Solid as a rock  
and wind blows  
through every cell  
of my body

*Virginia night sky*



The night is so calm  
with a sky pitch black  
and a thousand of sizzling stars  
The end & beginning of  
every single possibility

— *Poems and photographs by Floor van Orsouw*

\* \* \*

What ~not~ to say ... so precious! Rinpoche as usual addressed all of my potentially silly

concerns without me ever having to ask out loud — making for an even stronger commitment to the Teachings and Practice. Between the Teaching itself, Rinpoche's sweet words of encouragement, and the related texts available, I now know better what to ~do~ with the new experiential glasses I find myself with. In addition to all of this is the precious Sangha; connecting in a way that is indescribable, like family, only closer. I look forward to the transcript of this Winter's Retreat as well as the Root Texts and especially the day when registration for the next Winter Retreat is open.

— *Gerry Heikes*

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### **A Leap of Trust**

*By Scott Clearwater, Jan. 19, 2011*





<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gVDSWE5LdKw>



## Video Highlights Rinpoche's Latest Book

### A Brief Introduction to *Awakening the Sacred Body*

Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche introduces his newly released book, *Awakening the Sacred Body*, in a recent video.

[Watch >](#)

[Learn more / order the book >](#)



## A Glimpse of the Consecration of the Great Mexican Stupa

[Print this article](#) / [Print full issue](#) **Gabriel Rocco's Opening Remarks**

*On December 4, 2010, close to 1,000 people attended the celebration of the Internal Consecration of the Great Stupa for World Peace in Chamma Ling, Valle de Bravo, Mexico, with honored guests Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche, Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche, and Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. Gabriel Rocco, senior student of Tenzin Rinpoche and board chair of Ligmincha Institute, gave this short speech at the ceremony.*



It's an honor to be with all of you today here in front of this Great Bon Stupa for World Peace. Tenzin Rinpoche has asked me to say just a few words as a member of the Board of Directors of Ligmincha Institute, and on behalf of the growing number of Bon Garudas, and members of his International Sangha of students.

As all of us here well know, the form and structure of the Stupa symbolizes the enlightened mind and heart, and includes all the parts and paths of enlightenment. From the outer foundation of the five elements, to inner discovery of the Four Immeasurable qualities of Love, Compassion, Equanimity, and Joy, through to the attainment of the Ten Bhumis - this physical structure represents all the knowledge and wisdom to attain liberation from suffering.

The sacred energy radiating from this magnificent Bon Stupa is dedicated to World Peace, freedom from confusion, violence, and aggression — beginning here in Mexico and spreading from this forest at Valle de Bravo all around this earth. But we who are gathered here also know that what we joyfully celebrate today is the accomplishment of a long-held dream of Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche, to complete this Stupa dedicated to his and Tenzin Rinpoche's dzogchen master and teacher, Lopon Sangye Tenzin, here in Mexico, home to his reincarnation — Tulku Jorge Rene.

This Stupa is also the physical manifestation of the planning, years of labor, the selfless donations of energy and finances, peaceful resolutions of conflict, Bodhisattva-like perseverance, and in the end, the unceasing heartfelt devotion to the living Bon Tradition, to Yongdzin Rinpoche, to Tenzin Wangyal, Rinpoche, and all the Bon lineage holders, masters, and teachers all — who have shown us such priceless generosity.

When work on this Stupa began, I recall that Tenzin Rinpoche spoke to me not only about the outer physical manifestation, but how this project and the challenges it would bring, would come

to represent within the Mexican sangha and the worldwide sangha, whether seen or unseen, how internally we as practitioners of Bon have built some strength — a strength of purpose to liberate ourselves in order to support the liberation of all beings from unnecessary pain.

In closing, on behalf of our teachers and members of our international sangha of Bon practitioners, I want to acknowledge the board of directors and council members of Garuda Mexico, the leadership of Jorge Valle, and the devotion of every member of the Mexican sangha who have together brought to manifestation this Great Bon Stupa for World Peace. In this special case, thank you all, so much, for turning a dream into a reality!

— *Gabriel Rocco*

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## Properties on a Hilltop

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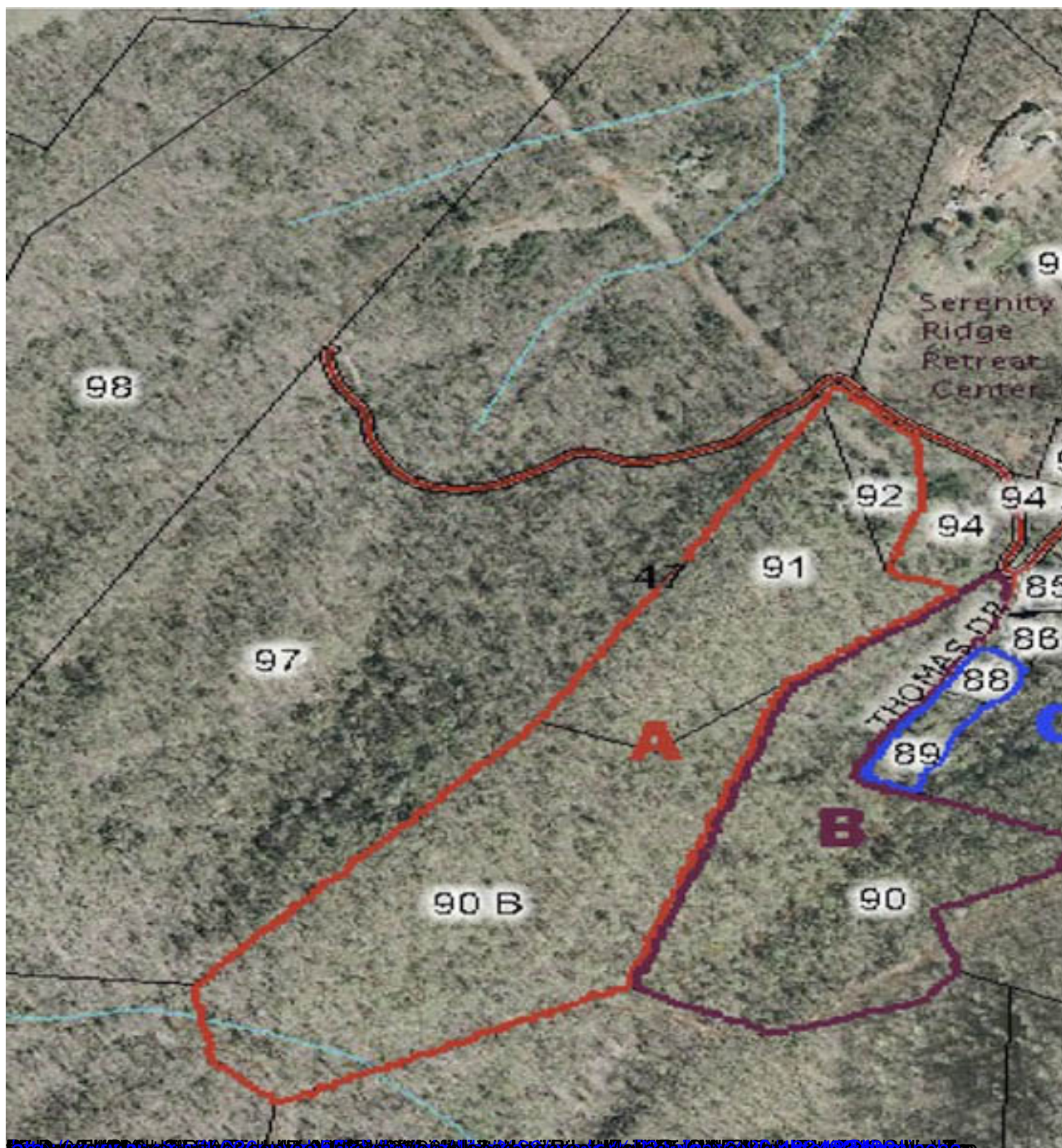
### Land and Homes for Sale Adjacent to Serenity Ridge

Do you love coming to Serenity Ridge Retreat Center for teachings? Would you like to be here more often? Would you like your own piece of Serenity?

We've come to learn of three properties now available for sale adjacent to Serenity Ridge, and thought we would let the greater sangha know in case someone is interested before they are all made known to the market at large.

Looking at the tax map displayed here:





## Upcoming Retreats

## Ligmincha's Serenity Ridge Retreat Center

The retreats described below will take place at Serenity Ridge, Ligmincha Institute's retreat center in Nelson County, Va. To register or for more information, click on the links below, or contact us at [Ligmincha@aol.com](mailto:Ligmincha@aol.com) or 434-263-6304.

**April 13 - 17, 2011**

**Living With Joy, Dying in Peace**

**Gaining Comfort and Intimacy With the Dying Process**

**Annual Spring Retreat With Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche**

Denying our own mortality not only separates us from the vibrancy of living in the moment, it also leaves us ill equipped for the critical moment when death comes to ourselves or to our loved ones. The Bon Buddhist tradition is rich with knowledge and methods for using this Great Moment wisely. Through teachings and guided meditations, in this five-day retreat Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche will help us to: recognize death as a doorway to opening the heart and achieving self-realization; prepare for our own death; and learn how to promote a more peaceful, uplifting dying process in others.

[Learn more or register >](#)

**May 18 - 22, 2011**

**Self-Purification Through the Five Enlightened Bodies**

**With Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche**

Please join us this May for these special teachings with [Khenpo Tenpa Yungdrung Rinpoche](#), abbot (khenpo) of Triten Norbutse Monastery in Kathmandu, Nepal. A powerful means of purifying oneself on all levels of experience, these teachings from the ancient

*Zhang Zhung Nyen Gyu*

cycle of dzogchen teachings have never before been offered at Ligmincha.

[Learn more or register >](#)

**June 11-24, 2011**

**Summer Work Retreat**

*Free of charge.* Whether you join us for one afternoon, one day, one week, or the entire two weeks, this is a wonderful time to share with sangha and to be of joyful service. Our work retreat includes vigorous work periods, daily meditation practice, and ample time for a swim in the pool or a walk along the Rockfish River. Participants are provided with free air-conditioned accommodations in Garuda House and free meals. For those who participate in one full week, there will be a 50 percent discount on one week of the summer retreat. If you participate in both full weeks of the work retreat, there will be a 50 percent discount on two weeks of the summer retreat.

**For more information or to register**, please email Ligmincha at [registration@ligmincha.org](mailto:registration@ligmincha.org) or call 434-263-6304.

**June 24, 2011 (Friday), 4-8 p.m.**

**Fundraising Dinner at Serenity Ridge**

**A special evening with His Holiness Lungtok Tenpai Nyima Rinpoche  
and Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche**

Proceeds from this dinner will benefit the orphans under the care of His Holiness at Menri Monastery in Dolanji, India.

[Learn more or register >](#)

**June 25 - July 15, 2011**

**A View From the Heart: Purifying Your Vision Through the Practice of the Six Lamps  
Annual Summer Retreat With Honored Guest H.H. Lungtok Tenpai Nyima Rinpoche  
and Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche**

*Online registration is now open!* Everyone is cordially invited to join us this summer for a rare and unique opportunity to receive teachings and transmissions from His Holiness Lungtok Tenpai Nyima Rinpoche, the 33rd Menri Trizen; and Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, founder and spiritual director of Ligmincha Institute. Ligmincha's annual Summer Retreat is open to newcomers and longtime students alike. You may attend one, two, or all three weeks of the retreat.

[Learn more or register >](#)

**To register for any of the above retreats,** or for more information about teachings in the Bon Buddhist tradition of Tibet, please contact us at

[mincha@aol.com](mailto:mincha@aol.com)

or 434-263-6304, or go to:

[Lig](#)

<https://www.ligmincha.org/retreats/retreats.html>