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Special Announcements Issue

Volume 12, Number 4 / August 2012



Letters from the Editors and the Director

Wonderful Summer Retreat, Happy 20th and Thank You Rinpoche!

Hi Everyone,

This issue of Voice of Clear Light is dedicated to Polly Turner, who is retiring as Ligmincha's Director of Communications (and associate editor of VOCL). Our gratitude for her leadership, teamwork and friendship is huge and continues to inspire us to work together in our shared devotion to the Bon teachings and our teacher, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. Thank you so much for your bright and shining light, Polly!



- Everyone at Ligmincha would like to thank all who contributed to or participated in our summer fundraising auction for their generosity. We shared a fun-filled afternoon together looking at and bidding on the many beautiful items offered, including calligraphy by Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, malas and other ritual items.

- Many international sangha coordinators attended the 20th Annual Summer Retreat at Serenity Ridge. What a beautiful and powerful sangha we all share! You can view images of a gathering for international members held during the retreat. [See photos](#)

- Serenity Ridge also saw celebrations, practices and offerings for the long life of H.H. the Dalai Lama in honor of his 77th birthday. [View photos](#)

- Khandro Tsering Wangmo, wife of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, became a U.S. citizen on July 4, 2012. Congratulations, Tsering! [View photos taken during the ceremony at Monticello and at the celebration at Serenity Ridge](#)

In Bon,

Aline and Jeff

* * *

With Gratitude to Polly Turner



I have had the privilege of working together with Polly Turner over the years on many projects at Ligmincha Institute. Polly stepped down as Director of Communications at the end of June but will continue to be actively involved in supporting Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and Ligmincha in numerous ways.

Always lending a helping hand, Polly officially came onto the Ligmincha Council as the volunteer Co-director of Communications (with Mary Ellen McCourt) in late 2006. When Mary Ellen stepped down in 2010, Polly led Ligmincha's communications in ways that have supported and continue to support Rinpoche, Ligmincha Institute and the worldwide sangha.

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Bookstore & Tibet Shop

Ligmincha's online store is **currently offline** because of staffing issues.

We hope it will return soon.

In the meantime, visit the Bookstore & Tibet Shop when you come to Serenity Ridge Retreat Center. Most books published through Sacred Sky Press, Ligmincha International's publishing arm which supports books on Bon teachings and translations of texts, are available through [lulu.com](#).

About Voice of Clear Light

Voice of Clear Light is a free email publication of Ligmincha International. Your suggestions and contributions to *Voice of Clear Light* are welcome. To contact us, send an email to: voiceofclearlight@ligmincha.org

For more information about Ligmincha International, the teachings of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, or retreats at Serenity Ridge or our other regional centers, please contact us at:

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Polly Turner

Polly's most visible and widely felt contribution has been setting up and supporting Rinpoche's worldwide live webcasts. Polly was determined to figure out a way to make this happen and continued to do the necessary research until it manifested. Now we all benefit from her ongoing efforts in our ability to watch live and recorded webcasts of Tenzin Rinpoche's teachings.

Other areas where we have felt Polly's presence are her volunteer work in creating and updating the Ligmincha Institute at Serenity Ridge Facebook page; overseeing and writing much of the editorial content on our current website; supporting the editors in the writing, editing and production of *Voice of Clear Light*; writing Ligmincha's ads; setting up and supporting our local email list; assisting in email announcements to retreat participants and our local sangha; conceiving and initiating a process for soliciting volunteers; and helping to coordinate Rinpoche's local public talks.

Although Polly is stepping down as director, her influence and style will continue to be felt. She has laid a strong foundation from which Ligmincha's communications will continue and grow.

With great thanks and appreciation to Polly for all that she has done,

Sue Davis-Dill
Executive Director, Ligmincha Institute



Follow Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche on



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Beginning the Transformation

A Letter From Gabriel Rocco, Chair, Ligmincha Board of Directors

During the first week of celebrating the 20th Anniversary of Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's Summer Retreats at Ligmincha Institute, we began the process of transforming the Institute into a sustainable and unified international organization. Representatives from many of Rinpoche's centers worldwide traveled to Serenity Ridge to offer their insights during dialogues about how best to achieve this goal.



As many of you know, during his more than 20 years of teaching, Rinpoche has traveled extensively outside the United States and established many centers of Bon teaching and meditation practice in Mexico, Europe and South America. Each of these centers depends on its individual relationship with Rinpoche for his guidance in study and practice, and on his ongoing support in creating and maintaining the organizational structure of each stand-alone group. The goal now is to bring all the centers into one international organization sustainable beyond the day-in, day-out dependence on Rinpoche.

Leading up to the retreat, Rinpoche enlisted my assistance in inviting representatives from all his worldwide centers to Serenity Ridge and in organizing and creating the agendas of social and organizational meetings. While not every center/country was able to respond to the invitation to attend the first week of this summer's retreat, we enjoyed the participation of representatives from Austria, Denmark, Costa Rica, Mexico, Italy, Netherlands, Hungary, Germany and Brazil, as well as Lishu Institute in India and Chamma Ling Retreat Center in Colorado in the United States.

Along with Rinpoche and members from the Ligmincha Institute Council, all representatives listened to each other share their experiences and express their views on successful organizational development and maintenance, growing and supporting a sangha of students, the challenges and opportunities of joining together in an international organization, and what supports each center/country will need from each other and from a future Ligmincha International.

To encourage candor and camaraderie at these important business meetings, we enjoyed a number of social gatherings, dinners together and shared entertainment by the representatives, council members and attendees at the summer retreat. The warmth and fun of family-like relationships began this summer and will be ongoing as we continue the process of establishing Ligmincha International.

Our next step in moving forward is to invite those centers/countries unable to attend these initial meetings to share their experiences and vision so we can add to the knowledge base accumulated at the summer retreat. In the near future, we will identify specific issues and action items, form teams to work on specific issues and establish ongoing intercommunication among centers/countries.

I am grateful to all the international representatives who traveled to Serenity Ridge and for their willingness to prepare presentations, work hard and work together so amicably in addition to maintaining

the retreat schedule for attending teachings and practice. And I would like to acknowledge the support of Sue Davis-Dill, Ada Wolfe and other members of the Ligmincha Institute Council for their assistance in helping make this international gathering a success.

In Bon,

Gabriel Rocco
Chair, Ligmincha Institute Board of Directors



The Dialog Begins

International Ligmincha Reps Share Perspectives From Summer Retreat

As Gabriel Rocco noted in his letter in this issue, Ligmincha Institute has begun the process of bringing all its worldwide centers and sanghas into a single sustainable organization. Many international Ligmincha representatives responded to Ligmincha's invitation to gather at the 2012 Summer Retreat at Serenity Ridge. Two international representatives—Lidia Castellano of Ligmincha Italy and Oliver Wirtz of Ligmincha Germany—share their perspectives and experiences surrounding this groundbreaking event.

'A Stronger Feeling of Belonging'



My first impression in arriving at Serenity Ridge has been one of being in a sacred place, the same feeling I have when I have visited our Bonpo monasteries of Menri or Triten Norbutse. Sacredness and the vibrant presence of the lineage amid the beautiful Virginia's forests! And I have felt excited at finally seeing our beloved Rinpoche's "home."

I have found a lot of warmth, not just the climatic one, and openness. In all this, the thrill of meeting face to face with people who had been only names or voices till then. It made the word "sangha" become substantial, warm, alive.

I have brought home with me a stronger feeling of belonging, and I really hope more people from my country will be able to share and feel the same.

—Lidia Castellano, Rome, Italy

'A Tremendous Shift'—an Interview With Oliver Wirtz, July 30, 2012



VOCL: What did you anticipate when Rinpoche invited you and other international Ligmincha representatives to come to Serenity Ridge?

Oliver Wirtz: I was happy to be invited and represent the German sangha and be in contact with all the other sanghas. My first impression on seeing the agenda was, this is going to be a very busy week. But there was no better way than to be busy, in order to reach the goals we reached. It was perfectly set up.

VOCL: Did you feel that you came away from this gathering with any new ideas?

Oliver: We have been having informal monthly Skype meetings in Europe to share experiences and ideas. So the meetings at Serenity Ridge were more of a confirmation rather than about finding out new things. However, I feel a tremendous shift is now coming from Ligmincha in its structure for communicating and networking. It is reconfirming that Ligmincha is setting protocols and assembling a contact list of all participants, for example. There is a sense of flow. I see that something is being well worked out that supports Rinpoche in a way that he can concentrate on giving teachings, instead of continually overseeing the development and management of worldwide centers and sanghas.

The value of this emphasis on networking is that different centers and sanghas no longer must find solutions on their own to the same types of challenges, again and again. It is very important for the future that we have a flexible system for supporting the varying levels of growth among different sanghas. For example, Costa Rica has more or less a practice group, whereas a single city in Mexico may have as big a sangha as in all of Germany.

VOCL: What are your hopes for the future, as a result of this initial dialog?

Oliver: My hope is that the use of the Internet will enhance our networking, not only through use of an international public website, but also through an internal password-protected area with opportunities for various coordinators, board members and council members to privately share and benefit from each

other. My biggest hope is definitely that we can come to support each other with no dependency on Rinpoche, so he can save his life energy for the teachings.

All of the international Ligmincha representatives will need to take responsibility not only for coming up with ideas for meeting these larger goals, but also for delivering some output. In my mind, a challenge will be for all of us to keep this larger vision in the forefront and to be patient, flexible and open-minded about solving our smaller day-to-day issues. If we can maintain our focus on the larger goals, I believe solutions for many of our smaller challenges will be found in the process.

VOCL: The annual Summer Retreat in Buchenau, Germany, has just concluded. How did it go?

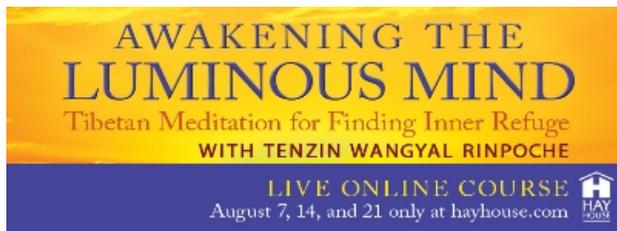
Oliver: We were very happy for Rinpoche's offering during those six days. Particularly remarkable was something that transpired as an extension of our previous international gathering. At Serenity Ridge, Rinpoche shared with us his thoughts about establishing a European retreat center, a home for Ligmincha in Europe. It will be a place for residential retreats, where we can host two resident lamas, and where we can support personal and spiritual development and also host training seminars of The Three Doors Program.

At Serenity Ridge, Rinpoche honored this European center with a formal gift of a thangka of Sherap Chamma and a Zhang Zhung Nyen Gyü text. I brought these back with me, and we placed them on the shrine at the Buchenau Summer Retreat. In response, the European sangha spontaneously gave financial contributions toward its own, formal gift of a Tapihritsa statue. This was a way for sangha members to express their gratitude and give something of their own toward the new center.



Two New Online Courses with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

Beginning August 7: "Awakening the Luminous Mind"



There's still time to register for this three-session online audio course with Tenzin Rinpoche, sponsored by Hay House Publishers: **"Awakening the Luminous Mind: Tibetan Meditation for Finding Inner Refuge."** The online course (now just \$49) takes place on three consecutive Tuesdays in August: 8/7, 8/14 and 8/21 from 4–5:30 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time (7–8:30 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time—New York City).

[Learn more/register](#)

"Tibetan Dream Yoga," a new online workshop with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche to be held Sept. 15–Oct. 14, 2012, is offered through GlideWing Productions. In this interactive four-week workshop, Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche guides you through each step of the practice of Tibetan Dream Yoga, providing continued support for the entire four weeks of the workshop.

[Learn more/register](#)



Transforming Your Life Through The Three Doors

Edited excerpts from Tenzin Rinpoche's Summer Retreat Teachings

My tradition of Tibetan Bon has much wisdom to offer to others. Over the years, I have witnessed teachers with so much to give but few able to receive the benefit of their teaching. This is sad to me. So I have lived with the question of how to bring these teachings to those who can benefit. In teaching and traveling throughout the world, I have met many people who are not interested in Bon particularly, but are very open to the core message of the teachings—connecting with the inner refuge and the power of naked awareness to transform their lives. As a result of my deep reflection, the vision of The Three Doors came. It has taken a long time to manifest, and now we have more than 100 people around the world

who have entered the three-year training that is offered. Everyone I have spoken to in this program is so enthusiastic and experiencing so many changes in their lives! They are committed to the practices, and I can clearly see the power and potential of this approach.



Can the core message of dzogchen play an important role transforming our society? Rather than dropping everything and going into seclusion, can those who are engaged with their lives and families benefit their families and their society through engaging the view, practice and behavior of these teachings? Many of us have had the experience of receiving wonderful teachings on emptiness and boundlessness and felt refreshed and peaceful during a retreat only to manifest as a terrible human being as soon as we enter traffic on the way home. The boundlessness is gone! We have not made the connection between our experience in meditation and the traffic jam. In my personal life I am discovering more and more opportunities to make these connections of the boundless view of dzogchen and the ordinary circumstances of life, and every time I make a connection it is like a light going on.

When I was growing up in the monastery, we were encouraged to make connections from one line of a text to another, and to make connections between texts, but we were never encouraged to make links to our ordinary life. Making these links is what is so exciting to me now, and is the core principle of the transformations participants are making through The Three Doors training.

I am now telling my students, if you are following me, I want to see actual changes in every aspect of your life—spiritual, psychological and in your ordinary behavior. Whether you start from a good place or a bad place is not the point. The point is to change, to get better all the time. We are not trying to value our current state of craziness; we are interested in improvement. Can you see that improvement? Can you see improvement in your life through the practices of dzogchen, through this beautiful unbounded view which encompasses every emotion and thought and theory of the whole universe, and this precious awareness, the infinite intelligence in each one of us? As you connect intimately with these teachings and acknowledge the power of nonconceptual awareness, try to make some changes in your life and bring benefit to others.

Tenzin Wangyal, July 2012

Spaces are available in the Three Doors Academy beginning October 4, 2012. Visit www.the3doors.org for more information and to apply.



Sept. 22–23 Tibetan Medicine Presentation and Consultations

Tibetan Doctor Amchi Thupten Tsering Visits Ligmincha for First Time

Ligmincha Institute is happy to welcome Tibetan medicine doctor and holistic health care practitioner Amchi Thupten Tsering to Serenity Ridge for the first time on Sept. 22–23, 2012.

Amchi Thupten, a certified Tibetan doctor and holistic health care practitioner, will present an introduction to Tibetan medicine on Sept. 22 from 10 a.m.–12:30 p.m. and will be available for individual consultations that afternoon and on Sept. 23.



During a consultation, Amchi Thupten will observe elements of your body and take pulse readings from both forearms. He also will ask questions about your diet, behavior, recent illnesses and any current symptoms. Along with prescribing traditional Tibetan herbal remedies, he might recommend a change in diet or lifestyle, positive thinking, meditation practice, or physical and breathing exercises.

Cost of the Sept. 22 lecture is \$25. The fee for an individual 40-minute consultation will be \$50, with an additional cost for herbal supplements if they are recommended. To make an appointment, [contact the Ligmincha office](#).

Amchi Thupten Tsering received his diploma of Tibetan Doctor in 1987 from the Tibetan Medical Institute established by H.H. the Dalai Lama in Dharamsala, Northern India. Currently living in Gaithersburg, Md., he holds a certificate for Holistic Health Care in Maryland and Washington, D.C., and is a member of the American Naturopathic and Holistic Association in Arlington, Va.

[Learn more/register](#)



Dalai Lama in Charlottesville During Fall Retreat

Retreat Participants Can Attend Dalai Lama Event Oct. 11

Those who attend Ligmincha Institute's annual fall retreat with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche will have an opportunity to travel to nearby Charlottesville, Va., on Oct. 11 to see the His Holiness the Dalai Lama during his visit to that city. Tickets go on sale Aug. 17 and are expected to sell out quickly.



Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche will lead the fall retreat, "Awakening the Luminous Mind," on Oct. 10–14 at Serenity Ridge in Nelson County, Va., about half an hour's drive from Charlottesville. Retreat teachings will be based on Rinpoche's newest book, *Awakening the Luminous Mind: Tibetan Meditation for Inner Peace and Joy*, published by Hay House and now available from [Ligmincha Institute's Bookstore](#)

Rinpoche will adjust his teaching schedule on Oct. 11 to accommodate the Dalai Lama's recently announced afternoon public speaking engagement at nTelos Wireless Pavilion on Charlottesville's historic downtown mall. The Dalai Lama will speak from 1:30–3 p.m. The talk will be preceded at 12:30 p.m. by a cultural demonstration of Tibetan singing, dancing and music. The Dalai Lama's talk will focus on his recent publication, *Beyond Religion: Ethics for a Whole World*. Carpooling is encouraged. If needed, transportation to and from the Charlottesville event will be provided for a fee.

Tickets for the Dalai Lama's Oct. 11 address will go on sale on Friday, Aug. 17. Ticket prices and venue seating will be made available just prior to those dates. You can purchase tickets through the link below. Check the Ligmincha website in the future for updated information.

[Register for the Fall Retreat](#)

[Ticket information for Dalai Lama event](#)



On Integrating Practice into Daily Life

View Videos of Rinpoche's Teaching Recorded During Summer Retreat



In a five-part video series, Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche explains how to integrate meditation practice into everyday life. Rinpoche's teaching took place on July 11, 2012, at Ligmincha Institute's Serenity Ridge Retreat Center, during Ligmincha's 20th Annual Summer Retreat. Thanks go to Chas Marsh for editing these videos for all of us to see, and so quickly! Parts 3 through 5 are still to come and will be posted on Ligmincha's website.

[Watch Parts 1 and 2](#)



Sangha Sharing

More Glimpses of Summer Retreat at Serenity Ridge

Students share some writings and photos inspired by this summer's retreat with Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche. Thanks everyone for sharing!

(Editors' Note: For those of you who haven't heard, a huge windstorm (derecho) swept across the Eastern U.S., including Serenity Ridge, at the end of the first week of summer retreat. There were power outages and felled trees all across seven states, and up on Serenity Ridge everyone pitched in afterward

to clean up trees and debris. The next morning, with bright blue cloudless skies outside the gompa, Rinpoche led us in the most amazing Refuge Ceremony!)

Beth Ross Johnson from Cullowhee, N.C., shares some photographs of the storm's aftermath.

Gerry Heikes from Crestone, Co., shares a photograph taken after the storm clean-up. (Gerry was a big part of the clean-up after the storm. Thanks from all of us, Gerry!)



Dorrie Ameen from New York shares two photographs from the second week. They were taken on the afternoon of July 4—first an incredible downpour, like the kind in old Japanese movies, and then the rainbow, just on the slope down from the right side of the gompa. Such magic.



Duncan Lewis from Rural Hall, N.C., shares a poem he wrote after the storm on the last day of week one. Duncan said that while in the pool gathering leaves and branches that had fallen, a big, beautiful bullfrog appeared in the pool. They tried to catch it multiple times, but to no avail. Then, suddenly, the bullfrog swam straight toward Duncan and settled calmly on his chest. They were then able to release it back into the woods.

"after the big wind"

the pool is covered with leaves
skimming clearing
pushing up dead leaves from below
clarity is revealed
a frog swims straight to the heart chakra:
RELEASE!

Rita Tamburrino from Philadelphia, Pa., shared these words about her experience at the summer retreat.

Thank you Rinpoche for your vision, dedication and heart.
Your instruction is clear:
If you're not experiencing the three kayas everywhere,
One of the Lamps is out.
Go back inside; Connect, Abide and Integrate!



Just Released!

Ligmincha Europe Magazine—Summer 2012 Issue



Highly recommended for downloading or online reading! Included in this issue: a biography of Khyung Tul Rinpoche (deemed to be Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's previous incarnation); an interview with physicist Scott Clearwater on the relationship between physical reality and the pith dzogchen teaching "The Fivefold Teaching of Dawa Gyaltzen"; news about Lishu Institute (slated to open October 2013); and much more.

[Read it online now](#)



View Recorded Webcast

Teaching and Guided Dzogchen Meditation With Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

Rinpoche gave a Dzogchen teaching on July 8 during the Summer Retreat that was broadcast live from Serenity Ridge Retreat Center.

[View this teaching](#)



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 registration@ligmincha.org or 434-263-6304.

Oct. 10–14, 2012

Awakening the Luminous Mind

Annual Fall Retreat

With Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

Registration now open! Dzogchen teachings based on Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche's newest book, *Awakening the Luminous Mind: Tibetan Meditation for Inner Peace and Joy*.

[Learn more or register](#)

Nov. 1–4, 2012

Tibetan Yoga, Part 2

With Alejandro Chaoul

Prerequisite: This retreat is open to students who have attended the Part 1 teachings of Trul Khor (*Zhang Zhung Nyen Gyu* cycle) at any time since Jan. 1, 2000.

[Learn more or register](#)

Nov. 10–11, 2012

Beginner's Mind—Starting a Meditation Practice

With John Jackson

A new, two-day beginner's meditation retreat with John Jackson.

[Learn more or register](#)

Dec. 27, 2012–Jan. 1, 2013

Winter Retreat 2012: Experiential Transmission, Part 5

Dzogchen Teachings With Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche

Online registration is now open! *Prerequisite:* Participants must have received the teachings for Parts 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the Experiential Transmission of Zhang Zhung in order to attend these Part 5 teachings.

[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 registration@ligmincha.org or 434-263-6304, or visit the [Ligmincha Institute website](#).

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