



PIMC NEWS

PORTLAND INSIGHT MEDITATION COMMUNITY

www.portlandinsight.org

JUNE 2003

American Thai Forest Monk to Visit PIMC in June

By Robert Beatty



Ajahn Chandako

On the far Northeastern side of Thailand, just 60km from the Cambodian border, lies the town of Ubon Ratchathani. Farmlands and hundreds of kilometers of forest surround Thailand's fifth largest city. Leaving town on a dirt road, one finds a sign in English letting you know that just behind the rice fields is Wat Pa Nanachat. Nancy and I brought members of our Thai Pilgrimage to this secluded monastery last January. Ajahn Sumedo, the senior western monk of the Theravada Lineage established this International Forest Monastery under the guidance of the revered Thai monk, Ajahn Chah. Although the local Thai community supports the monks, English is the main language spoken. Jack Kornfield lived here as a monk for several years.

We were privileged to sit in the Dharma Hall with a monk named Ajahn Chandako. He is a tall, lanky fellow raised in Minnesota. Like most monks in the Ajahn Chah lineage, his demeanor is quiet, warm, and light hearted. He spoke with depth and humor about integrating his western background with his present life as a Buddhist monk.

In Thailand, once a monk is well established in his practice, some years after being ordained, he may choose to go on "tudong". This is a form of wandering around the countryside on foot, finding places that are conducive to meditation. Traveling with all his worldly possessions slung on his shoulder, he sleeps under a small umbrella covered by a mosquito net and a tarp. All of his daily needs are met by the generosity of nearby villagers when he walks on alms round each morning. The Dana of the villagers allows the monk to devote his life to meditation, and his generosity of spirit offers them dharma inspiration and teachings. It is a dynamic and interactive process that keeps the practice of the dharma flourishing.

This summer Ajahn Chandako will travel to the Czech Republic to do a three-month retreat. When we learned that he planned to visit his father in Salem en-route to Europe, we invited him to spend the month of June in a "Northwest tudong". We made arrangements with a friend of ours for Ajahn Chandako to camp on private land in a forest on Sauvie Island. During his month of tudong on the island, we will make arrangements for

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Reflections on a One Day Sit

By
James Peck

Dear Sangha,

In looking into the eyes of so many of you, I sense that you know what I am discovering - how miraculous is the present moment! When we give the moment our most tender attention it opens to us, releasing the perfection of whatever is required to heal, to open and to love in greater measure. A moment so nourished by mindful attention inevitably forms the basis for the next miraculous moment. And I have discovered this as well: when two or more gather together in devotion to this wonderful miracle of being, the conspiracy of mindful intent multiplies greatly the capacity of our singular efforts. It is the Buddha and the Dharma made manifest in the heart of the sangha. When I really begin to look deeply at this, the proximity of it makes me want to sing and cry at the same time.

The richness of our practice is a reflection of momentum built upon such mindful moments. It seems difficult, however, to turn over the engine, to get started, to maintain and to build momentum. After all, we have a lifetime of not-so-mindful moments that have their own not-so-helpful momentum. Our daily practice is, of course, our foundation. But nothing so empowers our practice as when we practice as a sangha. And nothing so empowers the sangha as when we practice together in retreat. What a blessing. What an incredible opportunity we have to have a teacher, each other, and the intersection of time and space such that we are offered a refuge in which to practice together.

On May 3rd we had just such an intersection when a dozen sangha members gathered committing themselves to mutual effort. Just seven hours together provides such wonderful nourishment. It enriches and recharges our individual practice. A simple day together, so accessible, so freely given right here in our midst, cannot fail to invigorate your practice with new joy, lighten your personal burdens and draw you into closer, loving affinity to fellow practitioners.

We gather in the morning and begin together in silent meditation, sitting and walking, sprinkled with opportunities to meet with Robert. All day. No worries. We settle, letting the comfort and completeness of the moment begin to soften us, wiping away the haze of mental distractions.

Continuing in noble silence, we sit in a circle and share lunch, placing some items to share in the middle. It seems so casual, this silent sharing of sustenance, yet so fundamental. In quietly opening the beautiful door of communion the naturalness of caring for one another emerges. Even without knowing it we nourish ourselves in nourishing each other. And the light begins to refract just a bit more brilliantly as dust falls away from the mirrors of self. Life in a house of such mirrors is quite amazing!

Again we sit and walk and let ourselves be touched by music and movement. Robert has such a beautiful way of slowly illuminating the landscape, expanding the sense of

single-self. Slowly we begin to explore the boundaries of self and sangha. Aware of the body, aware of the body moving in space, aware of other bodies moving in space drawing near then falling away. And, although the moment will pass, as we pass one another we can reach out, bowing to the beautiful Buddha in each one, wishing each one we meet the sweet fulfillment of all that is required for the journey. And we know also that we are blessed in return.

In ain't a bad way to spend a day, folks! And it's just a come-as-you-are party. So simple. And perhaps the most miraculous part of the whole experience is that out of this pot luck, each individual seems to draw forth just exactly what is required, the perfect balm of healing, the perfect refraction of light required to illuminate the next step on the path.

In closing, we sit for a few moments to share the experiences of the day. One is enriched by the simple act of giving and sharing a meal, another by touching love more deeply. For others there is the gentle lifting of the burdens of the daily effort to care for those who struggle to care for themselves. In all there is a certain clarity, a lightening of the step, a quickening not present when first we gathered just seven hours earlier. And again I am filled with wonder of this blessing. However much I may doubt my worthiness at times, I must acknowledge the incredibly good karma that provides this sanctuary to practice. We are, in this life, so protected and supported. And I can see that it does not end here; not in this single day or with these twelve practitioners. We will emerge and go out into the world with hearts that are more empowered. The inevitable result is the touching of our immediate circle - family, friends, co-workers - with just a little extra attention, kindness and love. And so it ripples out, this merit, this bounty, this formless planet-healing force will call sangha.

Perhaps you have heard the same voices that I have: "I cannot sit for that long; I have too much to do. I don't wanna!" Don't believe it! It is our birthright to sit in communion with our true nature - a birthright and, indeed, a prime directive.

Here is a thing that is amazing and true: locked in every moment lie the exact balance of love, compassion, joy and equanimity required to render the perfect gift to the world through your heart. It's not as difficult as we convince ourselves. It just takes practice and, yes, it takes a sangha.

Come dip into this dharma pool! Cool your senses and cares. It is good for you. It is good for the sangha. It is good for all sentient beings.

May all beings have peace.

May all beings know the comfort of the sangha.

May the sangha contain the world.



James Peck is a sangha member. This essay was written after a day retreat with Robert Beatty on May 3, 2003.

June 2003- PIMC Calendar of Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 * Children's Sangha 6:30-8:45 pm - PDC Robert Beatty * 5:30pm Newcomer Orientation & Instruction - PDC * 6:30-8:45pm Meditation and Dharma Talk - PDC	2	3 * 7-9pm Beaverton Sit - Dalton Home	4	5 * 7-9pm HeartSong Sangha - 2311 E. Burnside	6	7 *9-4 Day Retreat (see page 5 for details)
8 Robert Beatty * 6:30-8:45pm Meditation and Dharma Talk - PDC	9	10 * 7-9pm Beaverton Sit - Dalton Home	11 * 9am-Noon Meditation - PDC	12 * 7-9pm HeartSong Sangha - 2311 E. Burnside	13	14
15 Father's Day * Children's Sangha 6:30-8:45 pm - PDC * 6:30-8:45pm Meditation and Dharma Talk - PDC	16	17 * 7-9pm Beaverton Sit - Dalton Home	18	19 * 7-9pm HeartSong Sangha - 2311 E. Burnside	20 1 pm Newsletter Deadline	21 Sangha Hike (See page 5 for details)
22 Robert Beatty * 6:30-8:45pm Meditation and Dharma Talk - PDC	23	24 * 7-9pm Beaverton Sit - Dalton Home	25 * 9am-Noon Meditation - PDC	26 * 7-9pm HeartSong Sangha - 2311 E. Burnside	27	28 All Sangha Picnic (See page 5 for details)
29 Robert Beatty * 6:30-8:45pm Meditation and Dharma Talk - PDC	30					

* Sunday Evening and Wednesday Morning Events - Portland Dharma Center (PDC), 2514 SE Madison, Portland

* Tuesday Evening - Dalton Home: 11965 SW Foothill Drive, Beaverton. Call Jim at 503-641-8336 if you need directions.

* Thursday Evening - HeartSong Sangha led by Doug Pullin: 2311 E. Burnside on the 3rd floor, Portland. Reach Doug at 503-293-4177.

* Saturday Day Retreat with Doug Pullin, June 7th - Friends of the Dhamma Resource Center: 1701 NW Thurman St. (2nd Floor), Portland

Half Day

A great opportunity to come together for three hours of uninterrupted sitting and walking.

Sits Continue:

Wednesdays: June 11 and 25. From 9am - noon at PDC.

Residential Retreats With Robert Beatty

July 18-24th

Johnson's Landing Retreat Center
Kootenai, BC
www@johnsonslandingretreat.bc.ca
888-756-9929

October 14-20th

Hollyhock Holistic Learning Center
Cortes Island, BC
www.hollyhock.bc.ca
800-933-6339

December 5-12th

Cloud Mountain Retreat Center
Castle Rock, WA
www.cloudmountain.org
888-465-9118

July 25-28th

Marsh House
Whidbey Island, WA
patriciafulnecky@hotmail.com
206-789-1784

October 31-November 2nd

Breitenbush Hot Springs
Detroit, OR
www.breitenbush.com
503-854-3314





It is difficult to get the news from poetry,
yet men die miserably every day from
lack of what is found there.

—Unknown

*Source: Ron Matela's kitchen wall. Seen during the move
to his new home on May 10th. Pictured are most of the
moving crew, made up of generous Sangha members.*

Dharma For Dogs

It's as plain
As the nose on our faces,
Or what you call "faces."
We, who don't conceptualize;
We, who eat whatever's in our bowl;
We, who gladly scratch any itch;
We, who follow the faint path home.

— Dan Hannon

STOP

With every red light
as I am rushing
tension

comes from
living one step
ahead of now.

In these moments
wasted in impatience
could await an epiphany--

light's green.

— Paul Campbell

From the Service Committee

By Phil Harris

Your friendly neighborhood service committee would like to plant some wholesome seeds in your consciousness:

Sangha Picnic on June 28th

Sangha picnic: Saturday, June 28, from 2 p.m. on, to be held at Robert and Nancy's house, 7234 SW 21st/503-246-8940. We will also spill over across the street into Custer park for more expansive activities. This will be a potluck—and kids are very welcome!!! Contact Phil Harris to get involved.

Sangha Rummage Sale on July 26th

The Big Big Rummage Sale: Saturday, July 26, location likely to be the same as last year, SE 50th and Hawthorne. This year, we have advance storage space available for large items. To learn more, or to get involved, please contact Phil Harris. Summer fun, here we come!



Phil Harris of the PIMC Service Committee may be contacted at philboy@bevanet.com, 503-234-4810.



A Day Retreat

Saturday, June 7th

Lead by
Doug Pullin

Cultivating Wholeness of Heart in the face of Suffering is the theme of this day of guided and silent sitting in Vipassana meditation.

Held from 9 – 5 pm at Friends of the Dhamma Resource Center, located at 1701 NW Thurman St., second floor, Portland.

The focus of this day will be on deepening awareness and opening the heart to life in the present moment. We will explore the multitude of ways we shut down our hearts and refuse to feel as a way to protect ourselves. In addition to traditional practice, there will also be an opportunity for informal discussion and for questions related to practice.

The foundation of practice is based on the understanding that through being present for the ever-changing joys and sorrows of life we can be ultimately be free from the suffering that comes from our attachments. We will share a sack lunch for a mid-day meal.

In keeping with tradition, instruction is offered freely and supported by donations. The space is also being graciously offered on a Dana basis and we are invited to support Friends of the Dhamma with our gifts.

Please e-mail Theresa Friedline to register at tessie769@yahoo.com.



Hiking and Camping

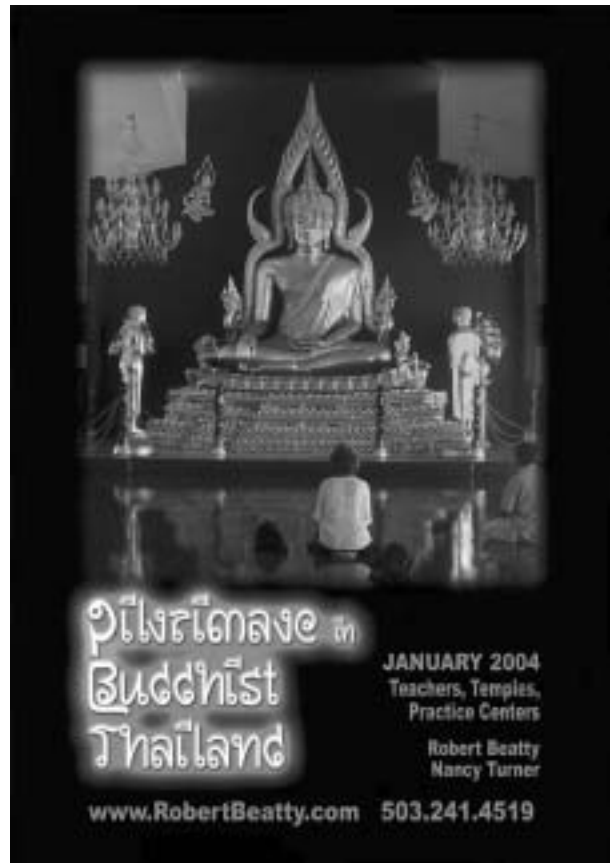
The hike for June will take place on Saturday, June 21st. Meet for breakfast before the hike at the Old Wives' Tales Restaurant, 1300 E. Burnside located at the intersection of East Burnside and Sandy at 9:00 am.

Bring a sack lunch and water. The hike will happen rain or shine and will not be canceled. Future hikes will be on the third Saturday of each month through September.

Are you interested in a Sangha campout? I'll plan a campout for the 15th and 16th of August if there is interest. I invite suggestions for good camp grounds. If you're interested, contact me by the end of June.



You may reach Paul Campbell, hike and camping organizer, at 360-694-2073, GardenerandPoet@aol.com.





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Connecting Online

The PIMC listserv is our community's online means of staying connected.

To join the listserv, send a blank email to **PIMC-forum-subscribe@yahoogroups.com**. When you receive a confirmation message, respond to it.

It's just as easy to get off the list. Send a blank email to **PIMC-forum-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com**.

For additional information contact Paul Gerhards, paulg@arcanet.com.

About This Newsletter

Thank you for donating to this newsletter. If you picked up this newsletter at Sangha, an orange sheet was included with information on subscribing. A \$25 donation is suggested for a one year newsletter subscription.

This newsletter is published bi-monthly in the summer and monthly throughout the rest of the year.

July/August Newsletter Deadline

The next newsletter will be a combined July / August summer newsletter. Deadline for submissions is Friday, June 20th, 1:00 pm.

Art, poetry, humor, articles and other submissions inspired by the dharma are welcome! Submit to: Karen H.

Thai Forest Monk Visiting PIMC in June *continued from page 1*

him to offer us teachings at PIMC on Sunday nights.

Having "our" monk on tudong so close to home presents us with a precious opportunity to practice Dana. According to their precepts, monks cannot store food or prepare meals. Ajahn Chandako will need a food delivery once each morning so that he has a meal by 10am. This will allow him to complete his single meal of the day before the sun reaches the zenith. If you would like to participate in this age-old ritual of preparing food and offering it to a monk, this is a golden opportunity. More details will be forthcoming, as we know them.