

Gaden Tashi
Choling Retreat
6425 Sproule
Creek Road
Nelson, B.C.
V116Y1
ph: 250.352.3423



Gaden for the West

Interpreting and Integrating Gelug Tibetan Buddhism
Spiritual Director ~ Zasep Tulku Rinpoche

Gaden for the
West Head Office
#605-3495
Cambie Street
Vancouver, B.C.
V5Z4R3
ph: 604.708.9081

So many people in this world don't know what they are missing. If you practice meditation everyday you will see the world better and safe place to be. Dharma practice makes our life more meaningful and we appreciate life more. Dharma practice helps to transform all obstacles into blessings. Dharma practice is your best friend. Without Dharma practice life is empty somehow. Your Dharma practice will always look after you in this life the bardo and next life. You have nothing to lose if you practice Dharma except your delusions and suffering. Why not practice meditation as much as possible? Happy Tibetan New Year on February 21st, the wood Monkey year. I wish you all the best and much blessings from the three Jewels.

--Zasep Tulku Rinpoche



Letter from the President

Greetings!

I hope this finds you all well and happy and enjoying many Dharma realizations!

All of us at Gaden for the West want to thank all of you for your generous efforts and contributions that have made this a very good year for Gaden Tashi Choling Retreat. Special thanks to Zasep Rinpoche for his tender guidance in the growth and maintenance of Gaden Tashi Choling Retreat and his adamantine teachings of the Dharma, to George Tilser for his endless generosity and support of Gaden Tashi Choling Retreat and Pamela Graham and Wayne Duncan for their warm, loving presence at Gaden Tashi Choling Retreat.

We have had a very good year at Gaden Tashi Choling Retreat with many people using GTCR for personal retreats as well as many beneficial offerings of teachings by Zasep Rinpoche and others.

Happily we were able to surpass our goal of paying back loans of \$10,000! We were able to pay back \$13,000 and two of our large loans were forgiven leaving us with only \$53,887 to pay back now. We are working towards establishing fundraising which will support the ongoing needs of Gaden Tashi Choling Retreat and hope that you can all find a way to contribute regularly to this purpose, (see article by Bob Kapitany,

"A Dollar A Day").

GTCR and Tashi Choling Society work very close together. Tashi Choling sangha celebrated the special days Losar, Wesac, Rinpoche's Birthday, Lama Tsongkhapa Day, and Vajrayogini Day together at GTCR. A good time was had by all participants, old and new. The photos show us happy faces celebrating indoors and out. Tashi Choling Society host teachings and initiations by Zasep Rinpoche and others as well holding teachings and practices three times a week at GTCR.

One of the big changes at Gaden Tashi Choling Retreat is that Pamela has finished her new home across the creek and moved there, so the Retreat has no permanent residents leaving all the rooms for retreatants. A few have done closed retreats in Milarepa's room right up at the top of the house. George Tilser in his generosity has completely outfitted this space with kettle, microwave and fridge, this and the fact that it has a bathroom attached makes it self-contained. So if you are ready for a closed retreat it is ready for you. (Contact Pamela Graham to reserve or for further information <individualretreats@gadenforthewest.org>.)

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WORK PARTIES

Did you know that you can attend a Gaden Tashi Choling Retreat scheduled work party and be accommodated and fed in exchange for work?

This year our summer and fall parties, cleaned up and began development of a little known part of our retreat property down at the lower end of our creek, below the waterfall. After surveying our property line we were surprised to find how much of this lovely wooded creek side belonged to us.

After truckloads of old refuse removal and the teardown of an defunct root cellar by two crowbar wielding yoginis from Idaho, truly enchanting little creek side picnic and contemplation areas have emerged.

Morning meditation and yoga become a



part of our work days this summer. Many thanks to those who attended. Our sangha retreat land is enriched by their endeavour.

Epic waterline work came together late this year and was finally finished four days into the Vajra Yogini retreat. Thank you to all our participants for their fine practice of Patience and Joyous Effort! Working on this giant project of-

ten reminded me of old photos that I have seen of BC pioneers hanging off of cliffs constructing early railroads through reluctant western terrain. This was the project that just grew and grew and grew. It felt like it would never have been finished if it wasn't for our American cousins, who answered the call, and came up from Idaho to help us string 900 meters of power cable and finish off the water pipe trench work. As the snow began to fall I watched dear Peter, Evan, Robbie and Mathew finish the final heat taping of that water box perched on top of a cliff high above our cozy warm retreat house. Bless them for their generous volunteer efforts.

You too could be part of this deep sangha building activity. Give it some thought for the coming year.

SKIING WITH VAJRA YOGINI by Nancy Harris

I had the remarkable good fortune to do the first annual Completion Stage Vajra Yogini retreat with Rinpoche in our fabulous Gaden Tashi Choling Retreat this November. I find that elements of this teaching are finding their way into my life in strange and interesting ways. This practice has more physical yoga involved with it than other deity practices. So, I find myself treasuring my body and, indeed, this 'precious human rebirth' more than I usually do. I've started doing hatha yoga again plus the exercises that Rinpoche taught us, then doing the practice. One of the things that we were encouraged to do was be confident about the possibility of transforming ourselves and working for the benefit of all sentient beings. Because I felt energized and newly aware that I must take care of my body, my samsaric baby buddha mind and the constellation of aggregates that I call myself, I decided to go cross country skiing. You know, be healthy, get stronger. Being raised in Tucson did not lead to my being trained at an early age to ski.

I am wobbly but joyous as I start my solo journey into the pasture in front of my house. I try to do this simple flat run every year as a first outing warm up. I am confident! The very thought of Vajra Yogini strengthens my back and steadies my ankles. Yes, confidence tells me, "you have lift-off for one big ski around the pasture". OK! I begin lounging forward with due respect for the rainbow flake iciness of the snow. Boy, I'm much stronger than I thought I was! I'm going: I'm progressing even minded and relatively steady. Numerous friends of mine, 'of a certain age', have fallen in the icy snow lately and I do not want a similar disaster. I am still up right and swooshing and still feeling more confident. I am so grateful that I can do this. The twinkling snow crystals wink at me as I coast

"One of the things that we were encouraged to do was be confident about the possibility of transforming ourselves and working for the benefit of all sentient beings."

by. I may not be fast yet, but boy this is fun! I carefully navigate some bush and gully obstacles and am again amazed at my ability. As I pull toward the end of my very large circle of the pasture my hard breathing subsides and I contemplate another go round. "No", I said "only one. But, heck everything seems to be working so well." As I start to push off - questioning the wisdom of another run, my legs go out from under me and I crash into the snow. The minute I questioned my action, I fell! The ensuing struggle to stand up again was quite enough to bring me back to my senses. Vajra Yogini is a wisdom practice, I think as I head home for a happy, safe retreat to my sofa.



DHARMA PRACTISE IN ACTION. A DOLLAR A DAY RINPOCHE IS THE WISH FULFILLING GEM

For nearly 30 years Zasep Rinpoche has worked to provide a place for Dharma students to grow and flourish. As gardener in the Mandala of the earth he has nurtured flower and weed equally, without thought for himself. Pilgrimage, teachings Dharma talks, retreats, every dollar has gone to pay the second mortgage at Gaden Choling in Toronto, Zuru Ling Vancouver and raise funds for Gaden Tashi Choling Retreat in Nelson.

Rinpoche worked very hard to establish Buddha Dharma Sangha in Canada last 25 years. He has been the wish fulfilling tree and wish fulfilling gem for us. Now is the time to make a commitment to our dearest teacher to fulfill his dream to support Buddha Dharma Sangha that we have been fortunate enough to have as the blessing

in this life.

IT IS SIMPLE- A DOLLAR A DAY, WHILE WE LIVE.

What is a dollar day to most of us? 30 tax deductible dollars a month.

It is coffee, a beer, junk food, that we did not consume, a cigarette we did not smoke, some expensive exotic health food that we think we cannot do without. We spend our dollars for movies cokes etc. Some piece of cloth to adorn our decaying bodies to pretend that sickness old age and death are not around the corner.

Zasep Rinpoche said that Gaden Tashi Choling Retreat will be the base and foundation for many retreats and teachings by him self and other high Lamas in the future.

Gaden Tashi Choling Retreat is in need of resources for growth and development. This growth and development is the Dharma activity that benefits each and every one of us and which is brought about by the beneficial and benevolent manifestation of the Dharmakaya named Zasep Rinpoche. We must remember it will be great and so helpful if our Guru has more time to do his own retreat practise and write the books that he wishes to write and translations that he wish to do instead of spending his precious time for fund raising for Dharma Centres all the time. It is time that we include a monthly financial commitment to enable our teacher to spread the Dharma. It is feasible I believe, for all of us to provide 12 checks to GFW Gaden Tashi Choling Retreat for at least 30 dollars a month renewed annually while we live.

Yours in the Dharma
Bob Kapitany

Chittamani Tara Retreat

The Chittamani Tara retreat began with the Sangha traveling to Nelson, B.C. from the four corners of North America. Little did we know that part of the Nelson retreat experience is the journey to get there. Castlegar is an unusual place for an airport, as it is frequently obscured by the heavy clouds that cloak the mountains. As the small plane bounced through the heavy white clouds that mirrored the state of our world-weary minds, it became evident that this trip was not going to be direct. The plane finally landed safely in Penitcton a 4 ½ hour bus ride away. As the bus wound its way, battered gears shuddering and grinding, through the high mountain passes, we gradually relaxed into the beautiful British Columbia scenery and began to unload the baggage of our busy lives.

By the time we reached Gaden Tashi Choling Retreat's ample wooden form, with its welcoming warm stained glass rose petalled windows spreading light like floating flowers in the night, we

were ready to begin our retreat. Gaden Tashi Choling Retreat became our haven for the next ten days. A peaceful place where we could take refuge and let our minds easily settle into the mandala of Chittamani Tara.

Bob, as retreat master, provided detailed meditation guidance and teachings that brought us closer to Chittamani Tara and to the heart of the Dharma: Lam Rim. The retreat experience was far more beautiful and precious than the mountainous landscape that surrounded us. Pamela and Wayne, as retreat attendants, were available to take care of any requests that we had, while Diane lovingly prepared our lunch and supper with an enthusiasm for the colourful blending of vegetables and a talent for grinding spelt and making fresh baked goods.

The days passed and blended into one

another at first slowly and then more quickly as we became accustomed to the long sits. The sweet energy of Tara sang through the house and echoed off the mountains as the retreat progressed. The weather outside mirrored our progress as we went from rainy days to crystal clear blue skies with the mountains rising like a pure land all around us.

"The retreat experience was far more beautiful and precious than the mountainous landscape that surrounded us."

We emerged from the retreat house to a world that spread out slowly and quietly in infinite detail. The power of the retreat began to unfold the moment we stepped out the front door; everything would never be quite the same again.

When it was time to say good-bye, the skies were as clear as our minds and we were able to take off to the four corners of North America from where we had started our journey, this time with Tara in our hearts.

Ruth Hansson Autumn 2003

Gompa News!!

The best part about the gompa is invisible, of course.

You notice it after you have already driven the steep curved driveway up to the impressive house with a bank of tall windows facing a pristine panorama of BC mountains and foothills. A gleaming golden Dharma wheel with kneeling deer fronting the second story windows simply and beautifully proclaims the purpose of this place.

Past the wet room and into the red tiled hallway you will see our open comfortable kitchen off to one side and the newly installed bathroom and shower off to the other side. Ahead of you is the gompa.

A serene Buddha with turquoise jewel gazes from a gold silk altar, narrow yellow posts support the roof and a

bank of windows to the sun stretch across the south wall. Soft carpet and maroon mats and sitting cushions are stacked and waiting.

The invisible becomes evident once



you are seated and start your meditation. Two years worth of intense Buddha dharma retreat and inquiry have charged this space.

Zasep Tulku Rinpoche watches from a photo on the altar flanked by Tara, Vajra Yogini, Vajrasattva and Medicine Buddha rupas. Large tankas of Shakyamuni Buddha, Tara, Medicine Buddha grace the altar wall. The stillness is lush.

tion. He is currently producing the Newsletter which we hope will come out two or three times a year as well as reworking our website and producing an updated brochure about our wonderful Retreat in Nelson. Bruce Heavenor took on the task of Treasurer for Gaden for the West and Bob Kapitany took on the task of Fundraising. We are growing and there is lots to be done and it is wonderful to have so many willing hands.

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We held two work parties one in July and one in Sept where much was accomplished. Everyone had a good time, it is a real treat to get to know people from other centers and to gather for work and fun in an atmosphere of "lots of talk". The deck got shored up, the garden got weeded, jam got made and the creek got exposed. Its true we can't swim in this lovely creek as our neighbours below us drink their water from it as we do, we can however when we are really wanting a dip take a short walk down the road to the swimming pool where Sproule Creek goes under the road just past my house. We now have places to sit and watch the creek, lovely shaded spots to keep cool during the summer heat.

Buried the Water Line & Created a New Septic System

Two very significant projects got done this fall. The water line was the first done mostly by volunteers. We did have a miniexcavator dig a trench from house to creek about 500 feet and we laid the water line in coming down to the house and a heat cable going up to the creek. A new tank was installed up

by the creek to hold water, Colin got us an inert plastic fish tank and Peter led the crew to get it down the mountain, over the creek and installed. This was a true adventure for all participants and almost as many were needed to keep them going with food and drink. Special thanks to all the tireless workers, Rinpoche, Nancy, Eric, Wayne, Peter, John, Gregwar, Brian, James, Sonny, Warren, Ivana, Margery, Evan, Robbie and Matthew, who came from far and wide to accomplish this task in the freezing cold and snowy November. A crew of very skilled workers led by George Perrier dug out the old septic and built two huge tanks then covered it all in again, taking care to save out all the big boulders for us to use for landscaping. This was an amazing feat done in wind and rain and sleet and snow by a very cheerful hard working crew.

It is a big relief to have both of these projects finished.

Gaden for the West Directors Meet at GTCR

In August Gaden for the West Directors met at GTCR, this meeting was very fruitful, our newest Director Bill Wells took on the task of Secretary and will focus his efforts on communica-

Teachings

Zasep Rinpoche closed the year with a awesome ten day Vajrayogini and Six Yogas of Naropa retreat. Jhampa Shaneman started the year off with a wonderful offering of Manjushri retreat, Bob Kapitany led a blissful Chittamani Tara retreat with fire puja and Jaime de la Barrera led a very focused Lam Rim retreat. All participants were deeply touched by the opportunity to meditate and study with such wonderful teachers in such beautiful surroundings accompanied by such devoted sangha.

Please let us have your requests for teachings at GTCR, and suggestions! All of this wonderful activity fills our hearts with joy and serves to create a fabulously vibrant Gaden Tashi Choling Retreat! We are making Rinpoche's dream come true!

Sincerely yours in the Dharma
Lots of love Sharon

Only in Canada

Zasep Tulku Rinpoche officially married two lesbian women Bridget MacKenzie and Daphne Marlatt during the lunch break of Hayagirva at Sharon Gretzinger's house with Kit Marlatt and Sharon Gretzinger as witnesses, and George Tilser, as photographer. Rinpoche did marry them eight years ago in a Buddhist ceremony and on this day made it legal.



Donation by Electronic Bank Deposits

Donations to Gaden for the West by electronic deposits to our account at Coast Capital Savings
Our Bank: Coast Capital Savings;
Georgia Branch, Address:
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So: Using the above information (about our bank, our account number, transit number and institution number), take this information to your bank and request their assistance to transfer money from your account to our account at the Coast Capital Savings. When you request the help of your bank in making these donations via electronic transfers, you will be requested by your bank to fill out a form authorizing the transaction and you will need to provide your bank with the above information.

Please know that if you would like Gaden for the West to issue a tax receipt for donations given via electronic deposit, **YOU MUST PROVIDE A PHOTO COPY OF YOUR BANKS AUTHORIZATION FORM TO BRUCE HEAVENOR, TREASURER, GADEN FOR THE WEST!!!!** We need proof of this unique transaction in our records: a simple bank statement from Coast Capital does not provide enough information for the auditors. Any questions may be addressed to: Bruce Heavenor, Treasurer, Gaden for the West
Box 605 3495 Cambie St.
Vancouver, B.C. V5Z 4R3
Canada
Ph. 604-871-1079
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treasurer@gadenforthewest.org

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EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2002

Please know that all donations to Gaden for the West are used for the support, development and maintenance of Gaden Tashi Choling Retreat.



The Lama from Tibet

Jamseng Tulku
Losang Tenzing Gyeltsan
Zasep Tulku Rinpoche

he comes in quietly
exuding sweetness
acknowledges everyone he sees

then bows reverently to the Buddhas
takes his place on the throne
sings us all into deep harmony

then blows our minds

touched by his wisdom
we open our hearts and minds
as he shows us a new view
a new way of seeing

then he teaches us new ideas
new concepts
that somehow feel old
that somehow feel familiar
that somehow ring true

he beams as he leaves us
knowing he is in our hearts forever
never far away

we leave
knowing we are changed
knowing we will drink deep
from this well of wisdom
whenever we can
that we will share this wisdom
however and wherever we can
knowing that what he tells us
of Buddha nature
is true
because we have felt it!

sharon g Nov 12/03



SCHEDULE 2004
GADEN FOR THE WEST — GADEN TASHI CHOLING RETREAT

- Feb. 21 ————— LOSAR Tibetan New Year
- May 7-12 ————— Work Party This week we will get the garden ready for planting!
- May 14 ————— Public talk with Jhampa Shaneman
- May 15, 16 ————— Commentary on the 21 Taras Retreat with Jhampa Shaneman++
- May 22-30 ————— GTCR Rented to Kootenay Shambala Meditation Centre for one week retreat. **
- June 4-12 ————— Three Yanas with Zasep Tulku Rinpoche (details below) +++
- July 1 ————— **Zasep Rinpoche's Birthday**
- July 6 ————— **HH Dalia Lama's Birthday**
- July 8-15 ————— Work Party Come join us!
- Aug. 6-13 ————— Lam Rim with Jhampa Shaneman++
- Oct. 2-10 ————— GTCR Rented to Kootenay Shambala Meditation Centre for one week retreat. **
- Oct. 15-24 ————— Yamantaka Retreat with Bob Kapitany (details below)++
- Nov. 13-27 ————— Vajrayogini Completion Stage and 6 Yogas of Naropa with Zasep Tulku Rinpoche.
(In order to qualify for this retreat participants must: 1. Have Vajrayogini Initiation from Gelug lineage.
2. Have received teachings on Vajrayogini generation stage. 3. Have done Vajrayogini Closed Retreat and accomplished 100,000 Vajrayogini mantras, 10,000 Vajrayogini Wisdom Shower mantras and Vajrayogini Fire Puja. 4. Have the personal permission of Zasep Rinpoche to do this retreat.)
- December ————— TsongKhappa Day

Feb. (2005) 1-22 Pilgrimage to India with Zasep Tulku Rinpoche for students of Zasep Rinpoche only.
For Registration and further information please contact Sharon Gretzinger, 1-604-708-9081 or registration@gadenforthewest.org

+++JUNE 4-12, 2004

ZASEP TULKU RINPOCHE WILL TEACH THE THREE YANAS

HINAYANA, MAHAYANA AND VAJRAYANA How to teach the Dharma in the West!

According to the GADEN LINEAGE —ADAPTED FOR THE WESTERN STUDENT

Zasep Tulku Rinpoche will present his vision of how to teach the Sutras so westerners can integrate them into their every day lives. Rinpoche's goal of presenting the Buddhas teachings so that all western students can relate to them will be achieved through his adapting and interpreting them, without the cultural barriers of the east. Rinpoche would like all of his students to come to these teachings, especially those who are currently teaching in the west. Rinpoche will follow the Gaden tradition and make it specifically for the western student. Those of you who have studied with Rinpoche know what this means as it is how he teaches.

1. HINAYANA - Rinpoche will teach The Four Noble Truths, Four Mindfulness Practice & Vipassana
2. MAHAYANA - Rinpoche will teach LoJong and Mahamudra
3. VAJRAYANA -Rinpoche will teach Diety Yoga

++**Yamantaka Retreat** with **Bob Kapitany** (Oct 15 -24) For Initiates only

Yamantaka is greatest compassion. Bob (www.dharma.ca) will lead a retreat into the Solitary Hero practice. The retreat will begin Friday Oct 15th and end Sunday Oct 24th. Those interested in the retreat should plan on being at Gaden Tashi Choling Retreat on Thursday Oct. 14. Departure from the retreat will take place Monday Oct 25. The retreat will be concluded with a Fire Burning practice to purify negativities.

++**Commentary on the 21 Taras Retreat** with **Jhampa Shaneman** (May 15th & 16th)

Praises to the 21 Taras. The teaching will review the 21 praises to Tara. Tara is the same enlightened female Buddha at all times. She works for the benefit of sentient beings. Tara's aspect changes as the needs of sentient beings change. The 21 traditional aspects of Tara help us understand her divine nature as a Buddha, helping sentient beings in a manner that best suits each individual being's situation. The weekend retreat will include the transmission of Tara's mantra, her meditation, and the recitation of her praises to expand our understanding of Tara's enlightened activity.

++ **Lam Rim with Jhampa Shaneman** (August 6th- 13th)

Graduated Path to Enlightenment. Although it is possible to become enlightened in a moment if one has the appropriate karmic imprints, it is always good to have something to do while we wait for that experience to arrive. The graduated path ensures our future enlightenment experience has all the proper prerequisites in place. Cultivating the path to enlightenment is practicing and developing the qualities that all Buddhas have spontaneously. Why not get ready for that experience now by familiarizing yourself with the activities of all enlightened beings?

re **Shambala If you are interested in attending these retreats contact Deryk Wenaus at 1-250-352-1101 / deryk@bluemandala.com /check their website at nelsonbuddha.com



Donations for Gaden for the West
can be sent to:

Gaden for the West
#605-3495 Cambie St, Vancouver
V5Z 4R3

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directors@gadenforthewest.org

GADEN FOR THE WEST
WILL SOON HAVE A NEW ADDRESS
ON THE WEB
WWW.GADENFORTHEWEST.ORG

A Mountain Retreat

Surrounded by nature
Smokey hills, mountains, changing leaves,
a vast sky,
clouds upon clouds,
the perfect setting for a spiritual retreat.
Rushing Samsara- distant
Lost behind the Vajra Mountain Wall of Tashi Choling Retreat

It was a blessing to make the autumn Chittamani Tara-retreat.
The many changes in nature preparing the land for winter
And we together
Purification, transformation.
Leaving behind our conventional lives,
Moving towards the mandala.
meditation seat, discursive mind, agitation, attachment
and always Tara!

The Gompa, its large windows,
A panorama of slate blue clouds on top of clouds,
darkness dancing with a lining of light,
the changing colors of the leaves brilliant against the winter sky.
Bear sign every where,
And finally, a child bear playing in the mandala of the forest.
What delight!

Sitting,
a sea of suffering,
a glimpse of emptiness.
And then - Over
The retreat had come to a close,
the leaves had mostly fallen from the trees
exposed in the cold open air.
Through our meditation - letting go,
transformed and open,
and again the Rushing Sound of Samsara.

Bob Kapitany / Megan Gruber Autumn 2003

HELP! HELP!

Building a worthy retreat centre is BIG! This year numerous advances have been made.

The water line that will give us plenty of continuous gravity feed water is a recent major accomplishment. But it was hoped that this would cost us \$3000/\$4000. By the time this much needed water flowed into the gompa our costs were at \$14,500. A combination of very challenging geography and having to install to proper building codes, in our area took us to these higher costs.

The septic field had to be fixed this year too! It was leaking and our neighbors where not happy with the smell. Our gompa formerly had a small home sized septic system. Our code, needs where much bigger and required \$14,500 worth of work, which was completed just as the Vajra Yogini retreat started.

So, we are flowing, now. Copious water in and you know what out. But the Big Flow has been money out!!! We are in deep need to continue operations. We suddenly find ourselves with no operations funds. Ways you can help are: Make ongoing contributions to Gaden for the West Gaden Tashi Choling Retreat project. (see article A Dollar A Day) Do a personal retreat at the centre. It costs \$20 per day and I remind us all that Rinpoche suggests that all his students do one retreat per year. (Call us at 1-250-352-3423 to set this up.) Do a fundraiser for the centre, ASAP, and send the funds to the Gaden address.

Thank you for your support. We here' on the ground' as the pioneers used to say, would really appreciate knowing that you are behind the creation of Rinpoche's dream retreat centre.