



International Tibet Independence Movement

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Rangzen Voice

Official Newsletter of ITIM

Summer/2004

The PeaceRide Is Over but the Fight Continues!!!

Doug Herman

When it was first considered it must have sounded pretty simple. The first press release must have been the same: "Picking up where Thubten Jigme Norbu, eldest brother of His Holiness The XIVth Dalai Lama, left off with His Peace Walks, His son-Jigme Norbu will lead a group of Tibetans living in exile on a bike journey from Washington, DC to Toronto in an effort to protest the illegal occupation of their country by their Chinese Communist neighbors, and exemplify alternative methods in resolving international disputes to cultivate World Peace." The PeaceRide04 for Tibet's Independence Bike Tour was born, but as they were all to discover the hard way, it was everything but simple.

Deep inside when they started the ride at The PRC Embassy in Washington, DC it had to be considered that only 605 miles stood between them and their goal of reclaiming Tibet's long awaited independence, but what the group encountered along the hard road to Toronto truly exemplified the drive, determination, and struggle of a people whose fight is yet to conclude. As they finally broke free from the winds of Lake Ontario and began to snake through the crowded streets of a Chinatown illuminated by a rising afternoon sun the PeaceRiders pressed on towards their nation's freedom.

Six million residing behind invisible bars, a hundred and thirty-thousand others forced to choose life outside, plus thousands locked in the eternal darkness of prison, mingled with the blood, sweat, and dirt on their proud shoulders. A crowd of excited Tibetans and supporters broke into frenzy as the final



Photo by Doug Herman for ITIM

In front of The PRC Consulate in Toronto, Canada on April 24, 2004. Left to right: Mohamed Tohti (Uyghur Canadian Association), YS Columbus (National Taiwanese-Canadian Association), Jigme Norbu (Tibetan Cultural Center), Urna Migmar (Mongolian Freedom Movement), Larry Gerstein (ITIM), and Rinpo Tenzin (Peace for Tibet, Minnesota).

revolutions of their weathered wheels were completed. "TIBET IS FREE! CHINA'S OUT OF TIBET! TIBET IS FREE!" screamed the crowd as they danced in the sun of a new era. After fifteen days of riding through driving rains, hail, sleet, bone cold temperatures, and occasional sunshine dominated by powerful stride-deflating winds didn't the PeaceRiders and Tibetans everywhere deserve that much? Although the fairy tale ending did not greet them at The PRC Consulate Finish Line on St. George Street in downtown Toronto, a great display of international solidarity made it clear that the Tibetans are not alone in their fight.

Representatives from several international organizations, including YS Columbus Leo (Secretary General of the National Taiwanese-Canadian Association), Urna Migmar (Mongolian Freedom Movement), and Mohamed Tohti (Uyghur Canadian Association) joined an extremely diverse crowd of supporters in praising the PeaceRider's dedication to nonviolent means for a peaceful end to the forty-five year Chinese occupation. Their presence reinforced words delivered by the PeaceRiders at numerous presentations along the Ride, which illuminated the widespread impact the actions of the
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Rangzen Voice

ITIM is a grassroots, volunteer, not for profit (501c3), educational organization co-founded on March 17, 1995 by Thubten Jigme Norbu and Larry Gerstein to achieve Tibet's independence through nonviolence.

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Rangzen House: Helping Tibetans & Sharing Tibetan Culture

Larry Gerstein, President, ITIM

Over the years, ITIM has noticed that there are many Tibetans in North America who are either underemployed or unemployed and also interested in improving their life. We concluded that Central Indiana might be an ideal place for such Tibetans to improve their lives as unemployment is very low, there are numerous job opportunities, and the cost of living is lower in Indianapolis than in other major cities. For example, for every dollar you spend in Indianapolis for some purchase, you would need to spend \$1.10 in Minneapolis, \$1.20 in Chicago, \$1.35 in Boston, \$1.40 in Los Angeles, and \$2.40 in New York City. Further, Indianapolis and Indiana have low taxes on purchases and income.

Given these characteristics of Central Indiana and the needs of the North American Tibetan community, approximately three years ago, ITIM formed Rangzen House to: 1) offer interested Tibetans an opportunity to further their education, enhance their vocational skills, and secure jobs and careers; 2) offer Tibetans a chance to earn more money due to the low cost of living in Indianapolis; 3) strengthen the Tibetan community in Indianapolis; 4) strengthen Tibetans' participation in the Tibet independence movement; 5) preserve and restore Tibetan culture; 6) share the Tibetan culture with the citizens of Central Indiana; and 7) coordinate activities with other Tibet relief agencies worldwide.

Since its inception, Rangzen House has successfully assisted, in some fashion, 24 Tibetans who relocated to Central Indiana. All of the Tibetans eligible to work were placed in jobs (e.g., three at a Hospital, two at Indiana University Law School in Indianapolis, one at a construction company) and seven enrolled at local universities. ITIM also helped network these individuals with various social, medical, and legal services and, in many instances, we provided them financial support to cover a portion of their living expenses. Needless to say, all of these Tibetans have benefited in some way from their connection to Rangzen House as has ITIM and the local Central Indiana community.

ITIM's hope is to expand the Rangzen House project to accommodate many more Tibetans and to further share the Tibetan culture with Central Indiana. We are confident we can place Tibetans in stable and rewarding jobs, help them to obtain education, and enhance their quality of life. Our "ten year vision" is to secure a large property with a big building, outdoor space, and parking lot. This property would provide temporary housing for Tibetans relocating to Indianapolis, serve as office

space for ITIM, and function as a focal point for Tibetan cultural, educational, religious, and political activities in Indianapolis. Our vision is that this property would also include a Tibetan restaurant, gift shop, library, and meditation hall, rendering it a highly unique facility in Indianapolis. Moreover, we envision this facility supporting and facilitating scholarship related to Tibet. Obviously, it will take a great deal of effort and resources to implement this vision.

In the next two years, we hope to take a step toward achieving this vision. Specifically, we want to secure a large home in Indianapolis to provide newly arriving Tibetans with temporary housing. We also want this house to serve as an office for ITIM and a place where we could offer cultural programs to the local community. Our dream is to acquire an abandoned or "fix it up" type house in Indianapolis and have Tibetans restore it under the direction of some experienced local contractors involved with ITIM. To accomplish this objective, we need help, for example, identifying such a house, raising the money for the down payment on the mortgage, and obtaining the necessary building materials. We welcome any assistance you are willing to offer on this project. While it is unclear how much money is needed to purchase and restore such a house, we anticipate needing at least \$20,000. Any amount of money you donate toward this project would be greatly appreciated and would be tax deductible to the extent permitted by U.S. law. Donations should be made to ITIM and sent to: ITIM, PO Box 592, Fishers, Indiana 46038, USA. Please indicate in a note that your donation is for Rangzen House.

Assisting a refugee community is time consuming, challenging, and also extremely rewarding. Therefore, if you are interested, we warmly invite you to assist with meeting the more immediate needs of the Tibetan community in Indianapolis. From time to time, we need people to drive Tibetans to various appointments. Some of the Tibetans could benefit from "one on one" english lessons or simply extended conversations. Lastly, many of the local Tibetans are looking for part time jobs (e.g., baby sitting, house cleaning, yard work, house painting, light construction). Along with helping the Indianapolis Tibetans, your life would be enriched by associating with these individuals.

If you are interested in helping with Rangzen House or attending our regular committee meetings, please contact either Gerry Baker (boolonj@aol.com) or Tenzin Namgyal (tdn98@hampshire.edu).

PeaceRide over but fight continues!!!

(Continued from page one)

Communist Chinese Government has had on the international community, including America and Canada. Larry Gerstein, President of the International Tibet Independence Movement, which cosponsored the PeaceRide, said, "The Chinese Government is afraid! They're afraid of His Holiness because they know that one day He will not only be in control of Lhasa, but Beijing as well. The Chinese are historically Buddhist, not Atheist Communists. It's in their genes, and one day they too will get the chance to openly revere their Spiritual Leader and live outside of this oppressive regime."

Not everyone who participated in the PeaceRide was able to hear these uplifting words or revel in the energized crowd. Three Riders, two of them Monks, who recited Tibetan Buddhist prayers at the Flight 93 9-11 crash site in Shanksville, Pa, were turned back at the border for insufficient travel documentation, which clarifies that the Tibetans do not have their own country. Those that completed the fifteen day journey spoke for their brothers who were not allowed to, and firmly gripped the implications of their actions. Tashi Dorjee, who had emerged as the spokesperson for the young riders from the Minneapolis area, felt that he had squandered many opportunities in previous years to utilize the rights and freedoms he had at his disposal by becoming a U.S. Citizen. He was inspired by Rinpo Tenzin's drive and determination to ride from St. Paul to Washington, DC on his own solo capital to capital Tibetan Freedom Bike Ride several years earlier, felt that it was finally time he assumed some responsibility, and hoped other youths would follow his example. He did something to help his country become independent again and feels good that those inside Tibet know that the Tibetans outside will never give up until they are all free.

The emotional day, which concluded at the Royal York Hotel where His Holiness The XIVth Dalai Lama was met by thousands, also included a protest outside the De Monk Center at the University of Toronto. The PRC Ambassador to Ottawa met with Canadian officials to discuss China-



Photo by Doug Herman for ITIM

In front of The PRC Embassy in DC on April 10, 2004. Taktser Tulku's three sons and Peace Riders.

Canada relations, but failed to entertain student groups who wanted Tibet to be discussed. The crowd erupted when two students inside the center stretched out a Tibetan Flag at the window, but police immediately escorted them out of the building, and no officials accepted the student's challenge to a discussion.

In stark contrast to these officials, people from small town America and big cities like Washington, DC, Pittsburgh, and Buffalo found it impossible to do anything but listen. Jigme Norbu said it best. "By 2010, China will be the most powerful economic and military nation in the world. Some day you may find yourselves under Chinese Communist control, and in fact, we are so economically dependent upon China it's as if we already are." Rider's individual stories of escape through the Himalayas, relatives who were burned to death with hot bars for reciting Buddhist mantras of Compassion, personal accounts of time in prison over writing "Free Tibet," and simply being denied access to their own families, emotionally ignited crowds in towns devastated by job outsourcing to China.

Their pleas for international help to release their second most important Spiritual Leader, The XIth Panchen Lama, the the world's youngest political prisoner who has been missing for nine years, and to stop the planned exe-

cution of Tenzin Delek Rinpoche, a Tibetan scholar and teacher, did not fall on deaf ears. They all made it clear that they were thankful for everyone's attention, but that their emotion was not enough. It was paramount to inform their government representatives about what they had learned as well as continuing to educate themselves on the Tibetan situation and the true impact that China is having in the world.

Although the ride came to its planned close on April 24th, none of the Riders and organizers felt like it was over. It seemed as if it had just begun. With several groups of Tibetan Buddhist Monks touring America on missions of political and cultural awareness; His Holiness' visits to Vancouver, Los Angeles, and finally Toronto to perform the Kalachakra Initiation; the Three Hunger Strikers outside the UN in New York throughout the month of April; talks of annual PeaceRides being planned; and Students for a Free Tibet Chapters popping up everywhere, the Tibetan fight for freedom has never been stronger. The world liberated South Africa, why not Tibet? The PeaceRide is over but the fight continues. The message is clear: Get involved! For reports and images about the Ride, visit www.rangzen.org.

**Buy Tibetan!
Boycott China's Goods!**

Thia Dillon: Rangzen House Advocate

Thia Dillon (TD) has been instrumental in ITIM's effort to help Tibetans relocate to Indianapolis. Behind the scene, she has actively contributed to the success of Rangzen House. On June 25, Larry Gerstein (LG) interviewed Thia about her background, and interest in Tibet and Rangzen House. A portion of this interview follows. ITIM is extremely grateful to Thia and her husband Tim for all they have done to support Tibetans and Tibet! The success of Rangzen House would have been impossible without your assistance.

LG: How did you get interested in Tibet?

TD: In 1999, I went to hear His Holiness The Dalai Lama speak at Market Square Arena in Indianapolis. Someone I knew was reading His Holiness' book called, "The Art of Happiness" and she told me about Him coming to Indiana....We decided to go and we were the first two people in line. This was my introduction to Tibet and The Dalai Lama.

LG: What were your impressions of the event at Market Square Arena?

TD: It was wonderful. When I saw Him, I thought this must be what people talk about when they see a holy person. The energy from Him and everyone in the room was incredible. I never had experienced anything like that.

LG: How many people were at Market Square for this event?

TD: 30,000

LG: What happened after this event?

TD: I read the book "The Art of Happiness" and then also read "Tibet is My Country." This is the autobiography of His Holiness' oldest brother Taktser Rinpoche. Rinpoche lives in Bloomington. I was totally blown away by His story and what had happened in Tibet.

LG: Was reading Rinpoche's book the first time you learned about the political situation in Tibet?

TD: I believe it was and after that I read His Holiness' autobiography, "Freedom In Exile." Before this, I did not even know Tibet existed.

LG: That is very interesting. Your first introduction to Tibet was through His Holiness and it focused on Tibetan philosophy and religion. And your second encounter was through His brother and this focused on the political situation.

TD: That's right.

LG: When you read about the political situation, what did you think?

TD: I thought it was appalling what happened to Tibet and the Tibetans. Such a situation should not happen to anyone. At the time, I did not know there were organizations and people trying to help Tibetans and

Tibet.

LG: What happened then?

TD: About six months later, I attended some events performed by Tibetan Monks. I was amazed by their kindness and happiness, especially after reading all they and their families had gone through. After this, in January 2000, my husband and I watched the movies, "Kundun" and "Seven Years in Tibet." This inspired us to sponsor some Drepung Loseling Monks.

LG: What have you learned from all these experiences?

TD: Looking at the Monks, His Holiness, and Rinpoche, they are all happy. I thought I was happy, but I realized that I complain about this and that, and they are not doing this. So there has to be something to how Tibetans live that works.

LG: When did you get involved in ITIM?

TD: I attended a "Spirit and Place" event in 2001 that was hosted by ITIM. There was a panel of alternative healers. At this event, I overheard there was a need to set the room up and since I worked at this facility, I called someone to do this. After the event, I picked up different literature including flyers from ITIM. About 9 to 12 months later, I visited the ITIM website and learned that ITIM was looking for jobs in Indianapolis for Tibetans. I thought my department hires a lot of people and perhaps Tibetans could do environmental services or transportation work at Clarian Health. I emailed ITIM saying these are the kinds of jobs we have and I also asked if anyone was interested. That's how I got started with ITIM.

LG: By emailing ITIM and inviting potential Tibetans to apply, you were putting your professional reputation on the line. What made you so certain that Tibetans would work out in your organization?

TD: We have a very diverse department already with a lot of nationalities and religions, so I thought this would help. But, the Tibetans I had come into contact with had such a commitment to whatever they had decided to do that I thought it could only be good.

LG: Did you attend any meetings of Rangzen House to help Tibetans or did you simply jump in?

TD: I jumped in from the website.

LG: What happened then?

TD: In May 2003 and then six months later, two Tibetan men were hired by Clarian Health in my department as housekeepers; an incredibly important job in a hospital. They were trained in the proper cleaning and sanitizing process, infection control and safety procedures. If the proper process is not followed, patient wellness and recovery can be compromised. Since being hired, one has been promoted to a carpet care position.

They are both doing great. Tsering Dhondup works at Riley Children's Hospital and Dorjee Damdoo works at Indiana University hospital.

LG: What is the potential for more Tibetans to be hired in your hospital?

TD: Great. The two Tibetans already working in the hospital have a really good reputation as they are dedicated, thorough in their work, have good attitudes, and good personalities. When you work in a hospital, you see sick people and this is hard, especially when you see children.

LG: Has your life changed at all since the Tibetans started working in your department?

TD: Yes, my life is a lot easier as I do not have to worry about the Tibetans doing their jobs. It is a huge hospital and some employees have trouble. But, the Tibetans can do things own their own and this makes things easier for me.

LG: What about your own lifestyle?

TD: The Tibetans are always very happy no matter what happens and this shifts me back to a more positive perspective.

LG: What does it mean to you now to have two Tibetans at Clarian Health and knowing more about Tibet?

TD: I certainly would like to help more. I think many people are not aware of Tibet. I wasn't. I am sure as people learn, they will want to help in whatever way they can. It is really terrific that the Tibetans are here in the hospital, doing a great job, and dealing with their own situation and their country's situation in a positive way. This will inspire more people to help.

LG: What would you like to see happen with the Rangzen House project?

TD: I would love to see it grow and see that Indianapolis is one of the first places that Tibetans consider if they relocate to the United States. I think there are many job opportunities here and it would be real good for Indiana. Tibetans are so giving and committed to what they do that this could really make a difference if more lived here as well. Tibetans could positively effect their neighborhoods, day care centers, and also their workplace. They are so willing to help others.

LG: Why are you interested in this cause as compared to others?

TD: My studies on Tibet and my interactions with Tibetans have helped me a lot. Learning how to deal with suffering in a positive way has changed my life.

LG: Do you have special message you would like to share with the people inside Tibet?

TD: Don't give up; just continue and keep the faith.

Help Free Tenzin Delek Rinpoche!

Why Tibet?

In the mid-1960's, I was fortunate enough to live in Cairo, Egypt, and travel throughout the Middle East for a period of nine months as the dependent of a Fulbright Program professor. During my stay in Cairo, I observed daily life under a communist regime in a predominantly Muslim society. I had my telephone calls actively monitored, my mail censored, my family's artwork confiscated or destroyed, and was frequently followed on routine errands around town. What happened to several of our Egyptian friends was much worse.

Several years later, it was the memory of that experience as well as the indignity of watching the Iranian hostage crisis on the evening news that motivated me to join the U.S. Air Force in the autumn of 1979. I felt it was my duty as an American to do what I could to counteract the spread of both Soviet-style communism and a perverse form of Islamic fundamentalism. After the collapse of the Soviet Union as a superpower, I felt comfortable enough to return to civilian life.

Many years later, while reading about Tibetan Buddhist philosophy, I became aware of the political situation in Tibet. It wasn't until then that I fully realized a large percentage of the world's population still suffered under the totalitarian scourge of communism. In the summer of 1995, I joined ITIM and have remained active in the organization.

So why should Americans care about Tibet? Aiding Tibet's struggle against Chinese communist oppression is a way of combating one of the true evils left in the world. If left unchallenged, Chinese communist hegemony will eventually undermine the freedom of an unwitting and complacent America that was won with the blood of our forefathers. Take it from someone who has witnessed communism "up close and personal"; as an American, you wouldn't like it. Tibet's struggle to be free is ultimately our struggle to remain free. Free Tibet! Po Rangzen!

--Charles Roach, ITIM Supporter

A Free Tibet!
A Free Tibet!
A Free Tibet!

An Encounter with The Dalai Lama

Carole J. Wilson

ITIM Advisory Board Member

In August 1999, my family had the honor of a private audience with His Holiness The Dalai Lama in New York. We were there to present Him with a documentary film my husband had just completed about His life and the plight of Tibet. His Holiness would be addressing over 40,000 people in Central Park, and security was tight. Upon arriving at our designated meeting place, we were whisked off for a security check by some serious security guys. Our boys, age 22 and 23, were in awe of this display, our 11 year old daughter was bewildered, and I found it ironic yet true that this great man of peace had to be protected against malevolent forces.

Finally, we were ushered into The Dalai Lama's room, where He greeted us and beckoned us to take a seat. The first thing He said was, "It is not enough to speak about non-violence. You have to implement it in your lives."

We were there for another fifteen minutes; His Holiness and my husband talked about the film and the subject for a next film; I remember the group photo and some parting blessings for the family. But that one sentence about

non-violence, which I recall verbatim, remains vividly imprinted in my mind, above all else.

I have never physically harmed another human being or even wished harm on anyone. But as I have reflected on this statement over the past five years, I have come to realize that nevertheless, violence remains in my mind: violence in the form of self-criticism, doubt at the possibility of human transformation, harsh judgments about the actions of others, defensive reactions at perceived slights, short-tempered outbursts at family members, and so forth.

While there is always the need to bring physical peace to war torn areas and to disarm those who wish to cause harm, there is also a much deeper need amongst us all. We must look at our own minds, the breeding ground from whence violence springs. When we can learn to treat our own inner being with loving kindness and radiate that beneficence to others, we will have implemented non-violence in our lives. Until then, we would do well to remember the words of His Holiness: "It is not enough to speak about non-violence. You have to implement it in your lives..."

Wake Up

--Gedun Rabsal

Wake up, wake up!

Open your eyes to see the killing.

The Sun is shaking and the Moon is crying.

A red ghost arrived at my home and kills my spirit.

A red snow may fall over the Potala Palace.

A bloody river may run into the Ganges River.

Wake up, wake up!

Open your ears to listen to the crying.

The Sun is shaking and the Moon is crying.

A red ghost arrived at my home and kills my spirit.

My people have been dying over fifty years.

We are on the run to seek some protection.

Like mice running when the cats come!

Why Tibet?

After hearing the story of a very young nun who had endured torture while imprisoned by the Chinese, I felt that I could not ignore what was happening. I had to do something. I had to get involved. I felt obligated. I have given a lot to the cause and received ten times as much in return.

--Benjamin Cox, ITIM Board Member

Around the International Tibet Independence Movement

Thanks for Service

Two of our long standing Board Members recently resigned for personal reasons. Thanks so much Jack Cain and Namgyal Shallung for giving so much to ITIM and the Tibet movement. Each of you invested many years and hours on our Board, and greatly helped to strengthen our organization, enriched our lives, and more importantly, contributed to furthering the effort to return Tibet to the Tibetans!

New Board Member

We are pleased to announce that Tsewang Rigzin of Oregon has joined the ITIM Board of Directors. Tsewang has a lengthy history of serving as a leader of the Tibetan Youth Congress both in India and the United States. Most recently, he was instrumental in helping to coordinate our "Peace Ride for Tibet's Independence." Tsewang is a tireless activist for Tibet's independence. His skills, dedication, and action by example will certainly contribute a lot to ITIM achieving its goals.

\$8,000 Donation Received

A local supporter of ITIM recently auctioned a violin bow online and donated the proceeds (\$8,000) to ITIM. Casa del Sol Violins (www.violincasa.com) and Singing Wire Designs (www.singing-wire.com) greatly assisted in this auction and we are thankful for their efforts. We are deeply appreciative of this generous contribution and we intend to develop a plan to effectively use these funds. We hope other individuals will consider auctioning items online and donating the proceeds to ITIM.

Support for Tibetan Community

ITIM donated funds to sponsor the publication costs of three issues of the **Tibet Times Newspaper**: July 10 (issue coinciding with His Holiness The Dalai Lama's Birthday on July 6); September 10 (issue coinciding with Tibet Democracy Day on September 2), and December 10 (issue coinciding with the Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and His Holiness The Dalai Lama receiving the Nobel Peace Prize). This newspaper is published in India and has the largest circulation of any independent, Tibetan language, newspaper.

This past June, **Students for a Free Tibet** held its annual Action Camp to train young individuals in principles of nonviolence and direct action. Historically, ITIM has supported this initiative, and in 2002, ITIM even hosted this camp in Needmore, Indiana. This year, ITIM contributed funds to pay the registration fees of three Tibetans who attended the camp. Each Tibetan was carefully selected and committed to Rangzen. Each reported learning a great deal at camp and becoming more inspired to participate in the effort to regain Tibet.

In 2000, a **Tibetan Nun** named Ani Kelsang Palmo helped lead our "March for Tibet's Independence" in California. Ani was born in Tibet. She served time in a Chinese prison for shouting "Free Tibet." She was severely beaten during her prison stay. Ani escaped to India where she resided for many years. This past June, ITIM contributed funds to help bring Ani to the United States. Ani hopes to improve her life here in the United States and also intends to assist her numerous family members who remain in Tibet. In the next year, ITIM plans to coordinate a speaking tour for Ani, so that she can share her story, edu-

cate people about the situation in Tibet, and inspire others as she has all of us. For information about Ani's speaking tour, email Larry Gerstein (rangzen@aol.com).

Those of you who have visited Dharamsala, or India for that matter, know that garbage removal can be a problem. To help clean up Dharamsala, ITIM's Board decided to initiate a project whereby we began paying the salary of a **Tibetan man** to pick up the trash around Namgyal Temple. This is the main Tibetan Buddhist Temple in Dharamsala and adjoins His Holiness The Dalai Lama's residence. Obviously, there is a need for more staff to help with this task. We welcome any financial contributions to this project.

New Meeting Place

ITIM has secured a new location to hold its general meetings. We are pleased to report that we are now meeting in a classroom (second floor) at the All Souls Unitarian Church (5805 East 56th Street, Indianapolis, Indiana). The Church is located between Emerson Way and I 465. It is situated on the South side of 56th Street. We meet from 7pm to 8:30pm the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month. Hope to see you there.

"March for Tibet's Independence" in Florida

September 20 to 22, 2004

ITIM will once again coordinate a "March for Tibet's Independence." This 55+ mile walk will begin on September 20 in Delray Beach, Florida and will end on September 22 in Miami, Florida. This March coincides with His Holiness The Dalai Lama's visit to South Florida. ITIM decided to organize this March as a way to continue the recent "Peace Ride for Tibet's Independence" from Washington, DC to Toronto and to further the vision of Taktser Tulku (Thubten Jigme Norbu) to return Tibet to the Tibetans. Given China's recent rejection of His Holiness The Dalai Lama's middle way approach to solving the Tibet-China conflict, ITIM also concluded it was imperative to walk to strengthen the worldwide effort to secure Tibet's inde-

pendence.

Jigme Norbu, the son of Taktser Tulku (Oldest Brother of His Holiness The Dalai Lama) will once again co-lead this March as a way to further His father's lifelong effort to regain Tibet's independence. Ani Kelsang Palmo (Tibetan Nun) will co-lead the March as well. Further details of this March can be found at www.rangzen.org. In the meantime, if your organization is interested in serving as a cosponsor, if you can make a financial donation, and/or if you can assist in any other way, please contact Larry Gerstein (rangzen@aol.com) immediately. If you are willing to make a donation, please make checks payable to ITIM. Donations are tax deductible to the extent permitted by U.S. law.

The Panchen Lama: Inspiration from a Child!

Paula Berbeco, ITIM Treasurer

There are many leaders in the world to which others look for inspiration and direction. Some draw inspiration from His Holiness The Dalai Lama. However, even fewer may look to a child. I would like to share how one child, Gendhun Choekyi Nyima, provides inspiration to me.



**Help Release
The Panchen Lama**
www.rangzen.org

As a non-Tibetan, I have recently learned the historical and somewhat academic view of The Panchen Lama. He is important to Tibet as He represents a force in Tibet's spiritual and political culture. He is responsible for protecting, liberating, and enlightening the Tibetan people. He is the second most important Tibetan Buddhist leader. And, if His Holiness The Dalai Lama is thought to be the "Sun," then The Panchen Lama is thought to be the "Moon." I have also learned The 11th Panchen Lama, His family, and an entourage were abducted by the Chinese on May 17, 1995. They have not been seen since. The abduction of Gendhun Choekyi Nyima, His family, Chadrel Rinpoche and His Secretary was the reason why I was drawn to advocating for Tibet and Tibetans.

How did I find out about The Panchen Lama? A few years ago, I knew very little about Tibet. A simple conversation about a backpack purchased from a Tibetan artisan led to a conversation about a local organization, ITIM. ITIM was sponsoring an event featuring a movie entitled "Tibet's Stolen Child." Being that I worked with children and families in the community, I was intrigued. After seeing the movie, I was heartsick and appalled that, Gendhun Choekyi Nyima, a six year old child, and His family could be taken from their home with no investigation or repercussion from authorities or other governing bodies. I thought about how I might feel if I was a family member, friend or neighbor in this situation. I felt an intense sadness for Tibetans who faced this threat on a daily basis and could not speak out without fear of imprisonment or harassment. I have

advocated for children and families in my community, and then I felt an obligation to do so for Tibet.

When ITIM was asked to assist with an international action plan to free The Panchen Lama, the opportunity presented itself for me to help with The Panchen Lama email campaign. Our ITIM President, Larry, provided a template letter to be sent to PRC Ambassadors and United Nations representatives around the world. From 2001-2002, I manually tallied the number of responses to this campaign and I tracked the countries from which they originated. I read messages of support and encouragement from many people around the world. The more I learned, the more solidified my commitment became. Now, thanks to some talented and committed people, ITIM's Panchen Lama email campaign continues from our website. Inspiration from our ITIM President, database/code ideas from supporters (thanks Skip and Sandor!), and fantastic assistance from our computer guys (thanks Benjamin and Bob!) made this happen.

Although my responsibilities for ITIM have changed from helping with The Panchen Lama email campaign to other projects, my commitment to Tibet has increased. I am thankful that I was exposed to Tibetan culture through artisans and local programs. I am glad that ITIM continues The Panchen Lama email campaign through our website. It allows for a collective voice to advocate for Tibet. Above all, without learning about Gendhun Choekyi Nyima, I would not have the pleasure of working with people around the world to advocate for His release. I keep His picture on my bulletin board at work. I hope that others will ask me about Him, so that I can expose them to the issues Tibet faces today. He represents how a child can provide inspiration to us and why I should advocate for Tibet. He represents how a child, now fifteen years old, provides leadership and inspiration and direction to not only His country, but to the world.

Why Tibet?



I got the above photograph from Doug Herman of a Tibetan woman prostrating by a Lake in Tibet. It is in our new family room under the Buddha Thangka from the Tashi Lhunpo Monks. I see it each day. I have realized that this is why I work to help Tibet. I see this figure, prostrate, supplicating, just one of many Tibetans who is asking the world listen to what is happening. They ask in peace, not through killing and violence.

Tibetans and Chinese shared cultures for centuries without one totally overpowering the other. In 1949 this changed. Old Tibet had its injustices, like there has been everywhere, but the effort to correct these injustices must be done by Tibetans. Tibetans will make some mistakes, but they will be their mistakes. The Chinese have their own problems to deal with, and every injustice their government does to Tibetans sends a message it can be done to the Chinese people.

The cause of Tibet asks the world to listen and help, not because there is violence or killing (although there is), but because it is right. I believe that by informing the world, people will do the right thing and work to help resolve this situation peacefully. So everyday when I see this picture, I know I need to keep working to get the word out. Yes, I believe the world will listen and justice will happen. I hope the person by the lake knows we are trying and that we care.

--Gail Henrie, ITIM Secretary

Please visit ITIM's website at www.rangzen.org to learn more about The Panchen Lama, the worldwide email campaign to release Him, and/or to find out others ways you can help. This email campaign occurs each month and takes only a few minutes to send a message to the targeted PRC Embassy or other representative. Please take a moment to participate in the next email campaign scheduled to correspond with Tibet Democracy Day on September 2 and ending on September 12. Thank you!

Rangzen House: A Hope and Promise

Gerry Baker, Vice President, ITIM

About three years ago, the Board of Directors of ITIM accepted the responsibility for a resettlement project, which has come to be known as Rangzen House. The idea for this program grew from our perception that many Tibetans living in the U.S. were struggling with limited job opportunities and high costs of living. Central Indiana has a reputation as an excellent place to raise a family, with good opportunities for work and a relatively low cost of living. Bloomington, forty minutes south of Indianapolis, has a thriving Tibetan community but opportunities for work are scarce there.

Indianapolis has a long history of welcoming immigrants, but prior to the effort of ITIM, few Tibetans were living here. With the success of those Tibetans that have come in the past years, the seed of this community has been planted. These Tibetans are true pioneers, the latest in a long history of people to come here looking for a new beginning. The difference between these modern day pioneers and those who have been coming this way for hundreds of years is that these people bring with them an ancient culture and the mandate to preserve it. The name

Rangzen House carries with it the hope and the promise of a people to be free. The mission of ITIM is Rangzen and its resettlement project supports this mission. It is not enough to help Tibetans relocate to our community, to assist in housing, job placement, training and social services. These services are available to anyone who seeks them out. The promise of Rangzen House is building community and the support that community provides with one eye towards a free Tibet.

Given the belief that Tibet will one day be free of Chinese occupation and the belief the toll of this colonial occupation will have been devastating to the Tibetan way of life, it will be the Tibetans of the Diaspora, having traveled to the far corners of the world to preserve their unique culture, who will be asked to return. These Tibetans will bring with them the light of their culture and a new knowledge gleaned from the modern world. Speaking all the languages of the world and with the understanding derived from immersion in myriad cultures, Tibet can take its rightful place in the community of nations and play its part in creating a better world for all. This is the hope and the promise.

Indiana Tibetan Centers

Tibetan Cultural Center

3655 Snoddy Road, Bloomington
www.tibetancc.com

Indiana Buddhist Center

263 North Madison Ave, Greenwood
www.enlightenedtree.com

Support

Tibetan Owned Indiana Restaurants

Anyetsang's Little Tibet

415 East 4th Street, Bloomington

Café Django

116 North Grant Street, Bloomington

Snow Lion Restaurant

113 South Grant, Bloomington

ITIM Committees and Meetings

The committees listed below meet on a regular basis in Indianapolis and also accomplish their missions through e-mail and phone correspondence. We welcome your participation in the work of these committees, even if you do not live in Indiana. Email rangzen@aol.com for further information about the work of these committees and about becoming a committee member and/or joining ITIM.

Program. Coordinates various educational, religious, and advocacy campaigns and programs including hosting monks and nuns.

Rangzen House. Coordinates vocational and educational training, employment and housing opportunities, and a host of social services for Tibetans who are interested in relocating or have already relocated to Central Indiana.

Tashi Lhunpo Monastery. Coordinates worldwide campaign to assist this Monastery and to secure the release of The Panchen Lama, Gendhun Choekyi Nyima.

General Meetings. ITIM meets 7pm on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at All Souls Unitarian Church (5805 E. 56th St., Indianapolis).

Support ITIM

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

email _____

Yes, I want to support ITIM! I have enclosed a check of:

- \$10
- \$20
- \$50
- \$100
- Other

Please make checks payable to **ITIM** and mail to:

ITIM

P.O. Box 592

Fishers, Indiana 46038 USA

ITIM is a 501c3 not for profit organization and donations are tax deductible to the extent permitted by U.S. law.