

# The Dharma Drum Beat

Newsletter of the Dharma Drum Mountain Buddhist Association—Chicago Chapter

## Upcoming Events in 2011

The year continues with more exciting and worthwhile happenings! Events are held at our 1234 N. River Road, Mount Prospect location, unless specified otherwise, and all are free unless noted. We are a bilingual organization, welcoming both English and Chinese speakers. Please check the Future Events page on our website for late-breaking news at: <http://www.ddmbachicago.org/futureevents>

### DDMBA Chicago Fundraising Dinner

Friday, May 6, 2011  
7:00pm

On this evening we will gather together to enjoy each others' company and support financially DDMBA's mission to Uplift the Human Character and Build a Pure Land on Earth. Venerable Chang Hwa will be our featured speaker for the evening, and a special sale will be held with 100% of the proceeds going to the disaster relief efforts in Japan.

The dinner will be held at our usual location, Szechwan Kingdom Restaurant, 545 Waukegan Road in Northbrook. For those who have never been to the event, the menu is Chinese vegetarian, and there is great food, more great food, and yet more great food! The price is \$90 per person, of which \$60 is tax deductible. Please register by April 30 by sending your check to the DDMBA center, or contacting Isabel Huang (847-910-3312) or Patty Chen (847-291-3683).

### Baby Buddha's Birthday Celebration

Saturday, May 7, 2011  
10:00am

Once again this year we will celebrate Buddha's birthday with a "Bathing the Baby Buddha" ceremony. Afterwards we will have share in a vegetarian potluck lunch. *See page 2 for more information on the ceremony.*

### Venerable Chang Hwa to Lecture

Saturday, May 7 & Sunday, May 8

Chang Hwa Fashi will be speaking on the following two topics during her visit:

Saturday at 1:30pm: "How to Know, Accept, Grow and Dissolve Oneself through Meditation" (Mandarin)

Sunday at 1:00pm: "The Practice of Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara (Kwan Yin)" (English)

Both talks promise to be interesting. Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, also revered as Guanyin or Kwan Yin represents Compassion. Guanyin became enlightened after "hearing the sounds of the world" – from where she got her name.

### Dr Jimmy Yu (Guogu): Silent Illumination Teaching & Retreat (English) June 3-6, 2011

Dr Jimmy Yu returns to lead a 2 day retreat on Saturday and Sunday, preceded by a lecture on Friday evening. Dr. Jimmy Yu was an attendant of Master Sheng-Yen, during his time as a monk. He now teaches Buddhism at Florida State University. *See page 3 for more information about the weekend's events.*

### Dragon Boat Race

June 11, 2011

Once again the mighty **Dharma Drum Boating Bodhisattvas** will be participating in the Dragon Boat Race in St. Charles. Last year they competed against an internationally ranked team and won...the Spirit Award! The team is seeking 20 enthusiastic members and many more super-enthusiastic cheerleaders and potluck lunch barbeque chefs. This race promises to be a fun, fulfilling, and filling (did we mention the barbeque?) time had by all. There is a practice session (TBA) sometime during the week before the event and rowers are encouraged to attend. The cost to join the team is \$30 and includes a team t-shirt. Sign up by contacting Donna ([donita713@aol.com](mailto:donita713@aol.com)) or Julia Hsia ([julhsia@yahoo.com](mailto:julhsia@yahoo.com)). Cheerleaders who want to show their spirit may purchase t-shirts for \$10 at the center. Watch your e-mail and the bulletin board at the center for the latest details. Paddles Up!



## Bathing the Baby Buddha Birthday Celebration

We will celebrate the birth of Shakyamuni Buddha on Saturday, May 7 at 10:00am with a special "Bathing the Baby Buddha" ceremony.

### The Origins of Bathing the Baby Buddha

The origin of the ceremony begins with the birth of Prince Siddhartha, later to be known as Shakyamuni Buddha. On the day the prince was born, his mother, Queen Maya, was on the way to her father's palace. She never arrived there, but instead stopped to give birth in Lumbini Garden, which today is in Nepal. After the prince was born, according to Buddhist scriptures, the king of dragons in heaven poured water over the shoulder to bathe the Buddha. This led to the custom of "Bathing the Baby Buddha." Since Buddha was born in the spring of a lush garden, we surround the baby Buddha in bouquets of flowers.

### The Meaning of Bathing the Buddha

Water fragrant with flower petals are poured over the shoulder of the baby Buddha to signify the purification of our body, language, and mind. While bathing the Buddha, we also pray to rid ourselves of the three poisons of greed, anger, and ignorance. With the fragrant water, we pray that the world will become a Pure Land with all people living in harmony and peace with their minds filled with compassion and kindness.

### What Should We Be Thinking While Bathing the Buddha?

While bathing the Buddha, we should first be thinking about the importance of cultivating our self-esteem and self-confidence. We can do this by remembering that Prince Siddhartha, like us, was born in this world. He later became the Buddha, the enlightened one, by practicing good thoughts and good deeds for many years. We can think about following his example and realizing the potential of our Buddha nature. Buddha nature is the belief that each person has the potential to reach the state where he or she is freed of suffering and is truly awakened to the truths of life.

Secondly, when bathing the Buddha, we should have a sincere and open mind. Even though Buddha is not here with us, the statue of the baby Buddha is here to motivate us to work hard to improve ourselves to benefit all sentient beings.

Thirdly, we should bathe the Buddha with "right mind". Right mind means that we pray not only for our own development but that we also pray for world peace and everyone's happiness.

Following the ceremony we will share in a vegetarian potluck lunch.





**Dr Jimmy Yu (Guogu):  
Silent Illumination Teaching & Retreat**

June 3—6, 2011

If you have never done a real retreat before – or are interested in attending another retreat with an accomplished master, then consider this event, offered the first weekend in June. Dr. Jimmy Yu (Dharma Name: Guogu) has been practicing Chan for 27 years under the late Master Sheng-Yen, who gave his seal of approval (inka) to Guogu in 1995. He is a teacher at Tallahassee Chan Group and an Assistant Professor of Buddhism at Florida State University .

Dr Yu's visit will start with a public talk on Friday evening, entitled: **Serene Reflection: Chan in Everyday Life**. This free talk, in English, is scheduled from 7-9 PM at our center and is independent of the retreat, which actually starts Saturday morning.

The retreat will focus on the traditional Chan (Chinese Zen) method called Silent Illumination. This method emphasizes putting aside all thoughts except the awareness of oneself "just sitting". It has sometimes been called the "method of no-method". Although the method is simple, the practice is subtle and profound, with the potential for ever subtler refinements, as the practitioner moves toward mastery. When fully penetrated, this radical form of emptying one's busy mind-stream leads to perception of the vast ocean of pure awareness. The meditation retreat will be conducted in English, and include lectures, sittings, walking meditation, light yoga, lunch, and dinner, and is appropriate for both new and advanced practitioners. Dr. Yu will provide Chinese translation when needed.

The retreat will last from 9 AM to 9 PM on Saturday and Sunday. Retreatants may come for one or both days. There is an optional third day of the retreat for those who wish to qualify for an extended retreat at Dharma Drum Retreat Center in NY. This third day will be led by our resident teacher, Iris Wang.

The retreat costs \$30 for Saturday, \$45 for the weekend, and \$55 for all three days. This fee includes lunch and dinner. You may register on-line at [www.ddmbachicago.org/specialevents](http://www.ddmbachicago.org/specialevents). Please contact Dan Baker at danbaker\_tech@yahoo.com.

### **Special Announcement**

#### **Chinese medicine and Acupuncture**

Free consultation will be offered by Wei Yan Liu every Sunday, from May 15 until the end of June, between 1-4 p.m. at our center, located at 1234 River Road in Mt. Prospect.

## Living Dharma: The Proper Feeding and Care of a Venerable

We had a long-distance interview with Venerable Chang-Hwa (NY) about providing care for a visiting Venerable (monk or nun). This is extremely important in Chicago, because Venerables visit and we need volunteers to help in caring for them. Here is what you must be concerned with if you volunteer to house or transport a Venerable.

### **If I volunteer to take house a venerable for their visit, what must I know?**

This really depends on traditions and lineage. I am speaking for Chinese Buddhist tradition and DDM lineage.

### **Do Venerables follow a specific daily schedule, as far as rising, meditation, and bedding are concerned?**

Each Venerable has their own way of adjusting their schedule and daily practice when outside the monastery. This is especially true when jetlag is involved.

We try not to sleep on Queen/King beds. When there is no choice or in a hotel, it is acceptable. However, some Venerables may find alternate ways to sleep. For example, sleep on the floor, etc.

### **Are there restrictions around meals?**

We eat Chinese Buddhist vegetarian meals. We do not eat any kind of meat. Nor do we eat onions, garlic, scallion, garlic chives, or leek.

### **What other home and transport restrictions exist?**

For room and transportation, the key is to not have the opposite gender be alone with the Venerable.

For homes that accommodate Venerables, please arrange a single room, which is not next to the room of someone of a different gender (monk's room not next to female's room, and nun's room not next to male's room).

It's better to have separate bathroom/restroom for Venerables, and again not to have different genders use the same bathroom.

For transportation, it is better to arrange for someone of the same gender as the Venerable to drive. If this is impossible, then please arrange for at least two persons (either female or male) to be present. If it is a nun, please try not to have two males provide the ride.

### **I can see that this will prevent problems that the Catholic Church is currently facing...**

### **If a lay Dharma teacher comes to visit, must I adhere to the same rules?**

The above rules do not apply to Lay Dharma Teachers. But please check with them for their personal room preference and diet restriction.



## Rochester College professor John Barton and His Students Visit DDMBA Chicago

On Saturday, April 9 Professor John Barton led 38 students of his World Religions class of Rochester College to make a visit to DDMBA Chicago Chapter. They arrived at 9:30 a.m. and were greeted by Iris Wang. Iris gave them a guided tour of the center and introduced them to the mission of DDMBA and our founder, Master Sheng-Yen. Upon their request, Iris also explained to them the basic concepts of Buddhism and answered many of their questions, including: "According to Buddhism, where do people go after their death?" "Why do we meditate?" "Who is Shakyamuni Buddha?" At 11 a.m. they observed the Great Compassion Repentance ceremony led by Winston Wen-Chang Drom. During the entire visit, the students showed tremendous interest and curiosity in the displays and artifacts at the center and took many pictures. When they departed at 11:15 a.m., each of the students received an English booklet "108 Dharma quotes by Master Shen-Yen" as a gift. Professor John Barton was very appreciative of the enthusiastic reception of our center and expressed the wish that he could bring another class of students to visit us again next year.



Rochester College Professor John Barton and students visit DDMBA Chicago in April

## Dharma Drum Mountain Chicago Chapter

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Visit us on the web:

<http://www.ddmbachicago.org/>

The DDMBA Chicago is part of the International Cultural and Educational Foundation of Dharma Drum Mountain, DDM, founded in Taiwan by Venerable Sheng Yen. DDM is dedicated to the spiritual and educational needs of people at all stages of their lives.

The regular activities that take place at our Center comprise of two main groups: practice activities and social/caring activities .

Practice activities include Chinese Dharma Study Group, English Dharma Study Group, Meditation, Chanting, Sutra Prostration, and Monthly Gatherings. In addition, the meditation hall is open to the public for self meditation every Sunday morning. Currently our English programs include monthly book discussion, weekly meditation, and other special events. New programs are added often.

In addition to our English newsletter, the Chicago Chapter publishes a monthly newsletter in Chinese. Both the English and Chinese newsletters are archived in the newsletters section of the DDMBA Chicago website.



Fun with the Boating Bodhisattvas in the Dragon Boat Race of 2010.  
Let's have a great turnout again this year and show them what we got!!