

July 17, 2008

## *Happy Summer to All!*

Amazing assistance blossomed in three months time for the blizzard-struck nomads of Kilung Community in Dzachuka. Winter into spring, the snow just kept coming. But with summer warmth, green has finally carpeted the rolling highlands of the Tibetan plateau, and the Kilung people are already settled into their summer camps.



## **3 Disaster Relief Programs Completed!**

*Thanks to your support:*

- ✓ 250+ animals were saved by emergency feed,
- ✓ 40 hungry families are being supported by a six-month supply of food, and
- ✓ the Winter Feed Kits pilot program will take place this fall!

*Read details below in an interview with Kilung Rinpoche...*



**Livestock replacement is still needed.** About 40 out of Kilung's 300 families lost all or most of their herds because of the snows.

*Wonderfully, the local government has stepped in to help and is providing about five yaks for each of these families.* They also received some animals from Kilung friends and family who fared well over the snowy months. How much more is needed? An average of 4 large animals (yaks/horses) and 13 small (goats/sheep). The Kilung Foundation would like to make a dent in this need.

**Our goal is to provide one milking yak for these 40 hardest-hit Kilung families.** One mature yak costs \$285. The total for 40 yaks is \$11,400. Generous donors have already sent \$1,055 toward animal replacement, leaving a remaining \$10,345 yet to raise...or, 36 more yaks.

If 36 families (or sets of friends) each contribute one yak, we can help these families reshape their herds and get going again! **We invite you to make a donation that will go toward buying a yak for a Dzachuka nomad family.** Any amount is welcome!

***Here is Kilung Rinpoche's report on the snow disaster, relief effort, and aftermath:***

*What are these 40 families doing this summer with diminished herds?*

Half of these families, chosen by lottery, received enough money from the government to buy 5 yaks; the other 20 families received a small grant for food, and will receive their money for animals later on. They also received other animals from friends and family. They all went to the summer grounds with the whole community. Those with very few animals are helping out other families, so each will benefit back and forth.

*How did the emergency feeding of animals go?*

We were able to feed and save the lives of over 250 animals with high-quality grain, mostly barley. We would have fed more, but so many animals died, and also many were already strong enough [to graze on the newly sprouting grasses]. Some rejected the grain because it was strange for them to eat like humans — from the hand.

This year the nomads had to go early to the summer grounds [end of June] to let the winter ground have more time to recover its grass. This was ordered by a new Tibetan leader for the three-community area of Gemang-Gegong-Kilung. So, everyone had to hurry up with the emergency feeding and preparing — so fast! We thought some of the animals might be too weak to make the trip, but they did fine. Now, the grass is amazingly great, even though it looked terrible at first. The animals did have a chance to eat before leaving, so many of them had the benefit of both grain and grass. When they left, families took the grain with them, and any leftovers can be kept for next winter. It was super-high quality, good for people, too.

*Kilung Monastery also has milking yaks, some of which died. How is that situation?*

Fine. The monastery purchased 150 sheep and 22 yaks. But this new leader said



everyone had to leave the winter grounds this year. [There are usually some families who stay in the winter grounds over the summer; they also look after the monastery yaks and bring milk, yogurt, and butter for the butterlamps.] Fortunately, we had already started the new life release farm, and those families stayed to take care of the liberated animals, the monastery animals, and provide milk for the monastery. But many of these new animals are young and not used to

providing milk, so it won't be so reliable this year.

*The Kilung Community had meetings this spring about the new land and the life release farm. How did that go?*

The farm area is up in the new Kilung land not far from the monastery. We saved 100 sheep in June, plus the monastery yaks, and other yaks. Then we chose five Kilung families to be the caretakers of these animals. They moved from a close-by Kilung area, maybe three days away by horse.

*What did the community leaders think of the pilot program to reintroduce fall harvesting of wild grass for winter animal feed?*

This was one of the subjects for the big community meetings this spring. The leaders decided the whole community will be required to participate in this. People will be leaving the summer grounds early to make sure they have enough time to collect the grasses.

*Wow! So the idea was embraced by the community leaders as very important. Kilung Foundation raised enough for 50 winter feed kits to help with this.*

The leaders think 50 kits will be enough for the first year, to see how useful they turn out to be. The local people think the kits are a lot of money, so the families will see if they have the kinds of materials for collecting and drying the grass. If it turns out everyone thinks the kits are really needed, then we can continue next year for more kits.

Click [here](#) for more photos of the life release process and ceremony this June.

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**Thank you!** For generously participating in the disaster relief effort, thanks go to Karen Anderson, Anonymous in the name of Shambhala-Boston, Barbara Berger, Sorrel Berger, Sharon Berlin, friends from Bornholm Island (Denmark), Margaret Bradford, Patty Breitman, Diane & Keith Brintzenhofe, friends from PProfChina, Dawn Collins, Grant & Eileen Dermody, Tracy Dickerson, Sharon Dunn, Robert Gex, Sally Goodwin, Ginny Green, Elizabeth Guss, Anne Haydn, Sarah Hood, Laurie Keith, Deborah Koff-Chapman, Lea Kouba, Myoshin & Edwin Kelley, Lucille Laurin, Shanti Loustaunou, Stuart, Jean & Meredith MacLeod, Mike & Kaori McAlister, Tom Metke, Microsoft Matching Grant Program, Lenny Moore, Phyllis Moses, Mully Mullally, Amy Olson, Wijnand Oomen, Cary Peterson, Marjorie Rogers, Odet Sleswijk, Joanne Terry, Carol Tierney, Csilla Torok, Karen van Genderen, Nancy Waddell, Lila Kate Wheeler, Marcia Wiley, Kathy Witteman, and Ruth Yeomans.

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## More Dzachuka News

**NEW MONKS' CABINS GOING UP.** Three cabins of different designs are under construction this summer for monastery monks. A large one will house a family of



monks— a very poor, widowed father and his three monk-sons; a second will be small and set apart from the other cabins for an older monk, a widower, who wants to live more of a quiet retreat life; and a third cabin similar to the original duplexes. The new metal roofs are currently being installed on last year's monks' cabins.

**Ancient Temple Restoration Continues.** Kilung's 260-year-old original temple will be crowned with its traditional golden clerestory roof this summer, completing this inspiration of Buddhist architecture. In 2-3 weeks, the copper sheeting will be going up over the wooden structure, and soon after, artisans will come for the specialized task of applying the gold leaf.

**Why gold? Rinpoche explained the significance of this.** *"Each temple in all the different kinds of Buddhism have golden roofs. It's the inspiration of the clearness of the higher energy, the shining of wisdom, the light energy of beings. These are never rusty. In samsara, enlightened beings are there still, and the expression is always clarity. This is at the highest level and so placed at the highest space. And, it represents the merit of offerings and materials for the benefit of all sentient beings."*

Carpenters are currently working on the interior upstairs walls, creating separate rooms for protector's practice, accommodations for a *gonla* (monastery keeper), head of monastery living rooms, lama guest rooms, and a *jankang* (sacred dance mask and costume storage). Upstairs and down, painters are covering wooden beams and posts with traditional Tibetan designs. Rinpoche says it looks like a very different place from one year ago.

The neighboring Kilung Nunnery, or *ani gonpa*, is also making progress. Base paint has been applied to the inner and outer walls of the temple, and construction has begun on homes for the ani's, about five cabins. For the last several years, this work has been sponsored by a prominent Thai woman, a world traveler and Buddhist who speaks Tibetan language.

**Tibetan Lamas Called On For Earthquake Relief.** Kilung Rinpoche was among the lamas drafted to collect funds for earthquake relief. All over Tibet, communities and monasteries have donated to the cause. Locally the Sershul County government has been leading the campaign, and the big monasteries in the area pledged from \$7,000 to \$16,000. As a smaller monastery, Kilung Rinpoche gave over \$3,500. Each monastery's donation was broadcast by local television at the prefecture level. Rinpoche said giving toward this relief effort is "really compassionate and kind. There are so many orphans now and there's a big need."



**Remember The Texts?** The new bookshelves in the shedra are filling in with...yes, the sacred texts, *pechas*, we donated for in 2003-04. Rinpoche said the collection includes additional texts purchased in the last four years, as well. It's great to see them in place. Click [here](#) for more photos of the shedra library and monks wrapping up and organizing the texts.

**The Weather's Fine.** Dzachuka had some heavy rain about a week ago, but nothing serious, no flooding. The roads have been okay. A new small bridge that Kilung and Gemang monasteries were jointly building is now useable, although still a bit unfinished. "It's been a big help," Rinpoche said. It's located on the road between Sershul and Dzachu Valley, and cuts the trip by at least 15 minutes over very difficult and possibly jeep-stopping terrain. Well, the whole road has treacherous spots, impassable with too much rain or snow. There's talk of the county government putting in a good road next year...with a phone line.

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### **New Office, Address, and Phone.**

In June, we moved our small Kilung Foundation office to Langley, a town on the south end of Whidbey Island. Any donations, correspondence, or phone calls should now go there.



Kilung Foundation  
PO Box 622  
Langley, WA 98260  
Phone: 360-221-8997

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919 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Suite 203, Langley.

*Best Wishes,*

*Diane*

Managing Director, Kilung Foundation