

December 12, 2010



Dear Friends of Tibet & the Kilung Foundation,

71 YAKS FOR EARTHQUAKE RELIEF

Thank you for the remarkable outpouring of support this year, in which the Kilung Foundation raised more money in the shortest time in our 12-year history. The unfortunate cause, though, was the terrible earthquake that devastated a large and vital Tibetan town, killing or injuring thousands of people there, and displacing basically its whole population. Kyegundo is still far from recovered, with 90% of buildings flattened in the April quake, and disagreement about how to rebuild stalling forward movement.

However, within five days of the quake, with your help, **a team from Kilung Foundation fed 2,000 people with local, nourishing, Tibetan food for 12 days; and the first delivery of food provided by our yak herd reached the town in September, nourishing 30 Kyegu families in extreme need.**



Tagging the yak herd as "never-to-be-slaughtered."

Since we last reported to you in June, funds for 11 more yaks were donated bringing the herd to 71 which will enable delivery over the next two to three years to expand to 40 families!

The amount raised for the entire relief effort was a whopping \$56,000. Our faithful Kilung donors were joined by scores of new supporters, as word of our unique relief efforts spread. **We thank you, one and all, for your quick action and support, which touched the hearts of Tibetans in Kyegundo and in communities of Dzachuka.**

The complete story of the [earthquake disaster relief effort](#). Three groups of photos [here](#), [here](#), and mostly recently, [here](#).

Kilung Rinpoche said, "So many people in Kyegundo deeply appreciate what we did. They said ours was the most thoughtful and nourishing food ever received, and also comfort food when most needed."

*At the annual summer tribal meetings of Kilung-Gegung-Gemang communities, leaders were so happy when they heard about our earthquake yak herd project. They said it was an amazing idea to help the people of Kyegundo while also strengthening genuine Tibetan nomad culture. Sample comments: "This is really positive. Providing dairy foods is something we know how to deal with. **It's helpful to support in this way, benefitting through the aspect of our own culture.**"*

EXCITING NEXT STEP FOR MONASTERY: THREE-YEAR RETREAT CENTER

Imagine this scene: A thousand feet uphill from Kilung Monastery a wind blows from mountaintop to mountaintop; the carpet of colorful wildflowers dances; a raptor soars on an updraft. A figure sits in inspiring posture, wrapped in maroon robes, tranquil eyes connecting with the vast view. From behind him emerges the sound of afternoon tea. Breaking his meditation, he walks toward the tiny temple and

small cluster of cabins, to join his seven companions. Experienced in meditation and Buddhist theology, they have come to this revered spot for the traditional three-year retreat, to expand their experiential understanding of the nature of mind, a step on the path toward the enlightened state.

This scene is imagined by Kilung Rinpoche as the next phase in restoring the monastery to its former health as a fully functioning Buddhist center. Long retreats like this are essential as part of Buddhist spiritual development, and a secluded retreat center smoothes the way. The mountaintop above Kilung Monastery has been a pilgrimage destination for centuries—it holds footprints in stone of a Buddhist saint, Rigdzin Jigme Lingpa. It is a quintessential place of inspiration of the kind Tibet is famous for, as if made for intensive retreat...and realization.



We are now seeking contributions to bring the center into reality with a target date of 2012. \$40,000 and local labor will build the tiny temple around the footprints, eight small retreat cabins and kitchen. Well-insulated against the winter elements, all will be built with natural materials and metal roofs. A perimeter wall will protect against wandering yaks and wild animals. Individual donations of any amount, or toward the Victorious Mountain Retreat Campaign, will be applied to this project. *Thank you for becoming a retreat center supporter and contributing to this fruition-level development of Kilung Monastery!*

Kilung Rinpoche says that building the retreat center at this time will be perfect: shedra (monastic college) is now in full swing, the ancient temple fully restored and in use, monks' housing occupied—life at Kilung Monastery is becoming settled down. Importantly, many monks are gaining the maturity, knowledge and spiritual experience needed for their next step: three-year retreat.

SPONSORS FLOCK TO SUPPORT NUNS, MONKS, STUDENTS & EARTHQUAKE SURVIVORS

When Kilung Rinpoche gave teachings and talks this fall, he also spoke about making a connection with individual Dzachukans while supporting Tibetan life in a variety of ways. People listened, and in great numbers took up sponsorships so that nearly all are filled! These include:

- Nuns from Kilung on long-term retreat in a remote encampment with an enlightened Buddhist master,
- Monks at Kilung Monastery, both general monks and students in monastic college,
- Students at Kilung Children's School (see below),
- One Ponru family who survived the Kyegundo earthquake. Their [photos and amazing story](#) here.

Immense thanks go to all the sponsors who have signed on! If you're interested in making a connection to an individual in Dzachuka, there are still elderly practitioners in need of sponsors. Send us an e-mail to: tibet AT kilung DOT org.



TIBETAN EDUCATION CONTINUES FOR KILUNG KIDS

A new crop of nomad kids has populated Kilung Children's School in our beautiful school building. The term began in September with Palo, a mature and wonderful Kilung monk, as teacher-headmaster. The twenty boarding students, all boys this time around, are being prepped for Kilung Monastic College. Subjects include Tibetan reading, writing, grammar, Buddhist studies, mathematics, and physical education, with history and Chinese planned for the future.

About one-third of the educational program is supported by student sponsorships. A local Tibetan lama is making up the difference, so the program is completely funded. Thank you to all! Education will make a world of difference for these young Tibetans, and for the future of Dzachuka.

PONRU STUDENTS ON TO NEW HORIZONS

Great news this summer! Six former Ponru School students graduated from Sereshul Middle School and have moved on to the next academic level. Looking back nine years, when these shy nomad kids joined our brand-



new school, and then watching them excel academically and personally, it's truly amazing. Kilung Rinpoche said, "I have so much confidence in them now. They know themselves as Tibetan, and will carry this with them wherever they go."

On scholarship from the government, they are in diverse cities in Sichuan Province, including Chengdu. The schools are combination high school-junior colleges spanning four years of education. The six, half boys and half girls, are still receiving family encouragement money from their long-time sponsors so that their absence from

family herding and agriculture won't be missed so much. Kilung Rinpoche has always promised these kids that for whoever goes on to university eventually, he will provide funding. Stayed tuned!

TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE HOUSE PURCHASED

Big news! After several years of planning and organizing to build a traditional Tibetan house in Sereshul, the perfect house suddenly became available, and Kilung Rinpoche snapped it up. This meant giving up plans to build from scratch, and selling the empty land meant for it. But there was much relief in this solution, and delight in the beauty, craftsmanship, and value of the newly found house! [Photos](#). To purchase the house



outright, which was a requirement of the previous owner, the Kilung Foundation needed an influx of funds. Generous Asian and western donors responded and sent over \$14,000. Thanks so much to those who responded quickly to our appeal in August! We're almost there. **If you'd like to contribute, the final amount needed to complete the purchase: only \$2,860.**

The Sershul House has great importance as a base in the county town, from where Kilung Rinpoche and monks, lay workers and volunteers will accomplish for the benefit of Buddhism in Tibet and work to strengthen the nomad culture of Dzachuka. It will also receive overnight guests, host community events and meetings, and hold pujas. In addition, as a beautiful example of original Tibetan architecture of high quality, it will inspire Tibetans with the integrity and aesthetic of their own culture. Kilung Rinpoche intends to improve the house with solar and other green technology.

Gratitude goes to the original group of visiting Tibetophiles who got the ball rolling with very generous contributions, and made this all possible.



2010 VICTORIOUS MT. RETREAT CAMPAIGN ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Victorious Mountain Retreat Campaign contributions in 2010 made possible essential, inspiring Kilung Foundation projects with the \$15,500 donated. Almost \$3,000 was spent on earthquake relief. In addition, monies went toward the 2011 repair of the first Kilung Rinpoche's historical stupa; big-city hospital treatments for three Kilung nomads; reinstatement of a major traditional 10-day puja; handyman construction and furniture for the new Sershul house; Ponru graduation gifts; and an upcoming winter retreat in Tibet for Rinpoche.

The VMRC program is especially wonderful since it gives Kilung Rinpoche the latitude to put donations where the need is greatest, and for emergencies. The total raised since launch in 2008: \$60,500. **Please consider joining this uplifting campaign** which enables Rinpoche to attend less to fundraising and more toward his humanitarian and Buddhist work. *Thank you so much for participating!*

BUDDHIST GOINGS ON...

Meditation is being taught over a one-year period at Yeshe Long House on south Whidbey Island. Mondays, 5:30-6:30 pm, these sessions are open to the public in a progressive program to introduce people to the basics of meditation, while giving experienced meditators a chance to practice together. Call for info: 360-341-4184.

MEMORIAM

Some life passages we would like to honor~~

Jerry George. Kilung Foundation's first webmaster and board member passed away unexpectedly in August of 2010. Seeing from the start in 1998 that we needed a website, Jerry set to registering our domain name, dove into creating a beautiful site, technically and esthetically, and remained the webmaster for years. He was also the vice-president of the Foundation's board from inception in 1998 to 2007, and brought needed energy and foresight to the Foundation's beginnings. He was a good friend, a family member, and we will miss him.

Teri Sandstad. Teri was a deeply devoted student of Kilung Rinpoche, a Pema Kilaya sangha member, and friend. She volunteered for the Kilung Foundation, taking care of paperwork while we travelled abroad, enthusiastic even when chronically ill. She passed away this fall, and Kilung Monastery conducted pujas for her transition. A sorely missed spirit with a truly compassionate heart.

Thupzang. Kilung tribal leader, 89 years old, who did so much for Kilung Monastery, a long-term benefactor, an amazing person. He passed away this fall of old age, and the monastery is still in the midst of end of life pujas for him.



WAYS TO BENEFIT~~

Contribute to the Kilung Foundation with your credit card through [our PayPal account](#) as a one-time donation or by setting up regular contributions. We also are set up to accept gifts of stock, and are a tax-deductible non-profit organization.

Greeting Cards Gift Packs. Buy these cards of stunning Tibetan images as an inexpensive holiday gift and benefit the Kilung Foundation. \$12 for 12 cards, plus shipping. [All details, including shipping and payment.](#)

[Buddhist Thangka Prints](#). High-quality giclee deity images painted in Nepal and chosen by Kilung Rinpoche as particularly beautiful. Benefitting Pema Kilaya, our Buddhist teaching organization. Printer: Fine Balance Imaging of Langley, Washington.

Warm Solstice Wishes & Great Thanks for All,

Diane Berger

Managing Director

Kilung Foundation

www.kilung.org

PO Box 622, Langley, WA 98260



Moving [new photos](#) by Kilung Foundation photographer, Li Mingyang, summer of 2010.