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## From the Chair

While events like the Global Financial Crisis has made difficulties throughout the year for many individuals, our capacity to show compassion and wisdom through these interesting times have been inspiring.

A different global event happening in Melbourne is the **Parliament of the World's Religions** (PWR), 3-9 December 2009. This will see the result of much hard work by many spiritual traditions and many more individuals with a 'many voices, one shared future' approach. There are many offerings by international and local Buddhists, and all are welcome.

To support the PWR's 'hearing each other, healing the earth' theme, Melbourne's Buddhist community created **It's Vegie Time** food and environment fair in St Kilda in September (see page 6) and upcoming **Healthy Taste, Healthy Mind** food festival in Braybrook 11am-2pm 22 November.

On the local level, the hard work and tireless effort of Venerable Chi Kwang Sunim and others continued, responding to the many challenges faced daily by the Bushfires Survivors.

The organizing efforts of Siladasa, Rosemary, John, Rachael, Di and Linda made the **2nd Melbourne Buddhist Film Festival** dream into a reality. This Festival while enjoyable and challenging on a personal level, has become one of the biggest fundraisers for the Education Program and the Prison Chaplaincy. The brainstormed ideas already brewing for next year's festival are exciting.

The ongoing activities of **Buddhist Education in Victorian Schools** chaired by Peggy Page with Helen Ponder, Education Officer, have coped very well with the increased invitation by schools for volunteers to share Dharma. There were 12 primary schools that offered Buddhism to their students during the year. New volunteers are always required to fill in for absences or to fill new school requests. Each teacher undergoes training and receives the curriculum manual *Discovering Buddha*. Of this manual, Helen says "It is not just for the content that we are appreciative, but for the individual approach it allows each teacher to take." If you would like to be a volunteer teacher or if your school would like to have a Buddhist teacher visit, please contact [www.bcvic.org.au/education/index.htm](http://www.bcvic.org.au/education/index.htm).

The valuable efforts of the **Prison Chaplaincy** team coordinated by Libby Shields, Paul Gardner and others would not be possible without the assistance of several member temples, notably the Quang Minh Temple (Vietnamese), the Soen Centre (Korean) and Jikishoan (Japanese). Two movies from the recent film festival *Dhamma Brothers* and *Meditate and Destroy* depicted two different approaches to sharing Dharma within a prison setting, and showed the great benefits of having access to the Buddha's teachings.



**In summary**, the message continues to be very clear that practitioners can cut off the desire and anger from previous lives and become liberated if they practice diligently. Buddha Business as usual then!

May the various committees and community members sit back, relax, enjoy the PWR and 2010.

Laura Chan, Chair

# Take part in the Buddhist offering to the Parliament of the World's Religions

With the **Parliament of the World's Religions** now only a couple of weeks away, many members of Victoria's Buddhist community are actively involved in preparations for the world's largest interfaith event, taking place at Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre from 3-9 December.

Led by Parliament Patron Venerable Phuoc Tan, a local Buddhist working party has been meeting for the last six months to plan for this huge event. The Buddhist community has assisted with publicity and fundraising for the Parliament, particularly through the highly successful **It's Veggie Time** food fair in September, and many groups are sponsoring their international leaders to travel to Australia to speak at the Parliament.

**Local Buddhists speaking** at the Parliament include Venerable Chi Kwang Sunim, who will talk about her experiences in Kinglake during and since the February bushfires as part of a panel session on *Faith, Community and Disaster Risk Reduction*. Jill Jameson and Tony Le-Nguyen will participate in a session on *Socially Engaged Buddhism: a Pathway*



Pages 2-4: images from various interfaith events held here and around the world in the lead up to Melbourne 3-9 December 2009.



to Peace with a number of **international Buddhist speakers** including Sulak Sivaraksa from Thailand, and Venerable Karma Lekshe Tsomo, President of Sakyadhita: The International Association of Buddhist Women. Dr Padmasiri de Silva will be the Buddhist member of an Australian interfaith panel addressing the issue of *Strangers in a Strange Land: Integration of Religious Minorities, their Families and their Identities into Australia*. Other Melbourne Buddhists who will be speaking include Brian Ashen, President of the Federation of Australian Buddhist Councils, Freeman Trebilcock, founder of *InterAction: Multifaith Youth Network* and Parliament Youth Patron Rinchen Norbu. There will also be a *Buddhist Observance* organised by Ven Phuoc Tan and other Melbourne Buddhist teachers.

The **Gyuto Monks** will be constructing a sand mandala onsite during the Parliament, and will also take part in the Closing Plenary on the afternoon of Wednesday 9 December which will feature **His Holiness the Dalai Lama**.

One of the features of the Parliament's Offsite Program will be the daily **Walking Meditation**, which will take place between 7.30am and 8.30am each morning beginning and ending at Batman Park, located on the northern bank of the Yarra between Queen Street and Kings Way. The Walking Meditation is open to everyone, whether they are attending the Parliament or not. Participants are encouraged to wear their Temple or Traditional clothes for

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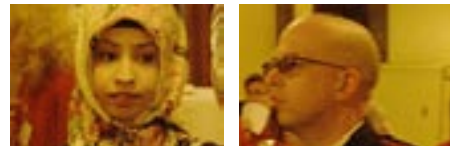
the walk to add to the occasion. The first meditation will take place on Wednesday morning, 2 December, and Buddhist sangha and laypeople of all traditions are invited to take part. A different Buddhist group will take responsibility for leading each morning's meditation – if your group is interested please contact Ian Roberts on 0419 581 784.

On Friday, 4 December from 7.30pm the Victorian Buddhist Community will host **Communities Night 'A Night of Hospitality'** for Buddhist delegates from interstate and overseas. There are two venues: *Quang Minh Buddhist Temple*, 18 Burke Street, Braybrook and the smaller hosting venue will be at the *Buddhist Compassion Relief, Tzu Chi*

*Foundation*, 17 Ellingworth Parade, Box Hill. The Communities Night provides the only formal opportunity for people from around the world from a single faith or spiritual tradition to come together. It is hoped that this experience will deeply enrich everyone's lives as they share together in this *'Night of Hospitality'*.

To find out more about the **Parliament of the World's Religions**, including registration details, visit the website [www.parliamentofreligions.org](http://www.parliamentofreligions.org) – or call 1800 852 156.

*By Alex Butler, Lead Community Organiser, Parliament of the World's Religions*



## Celebrating Diversity

A network was established in the City of Port Phillip November 2007, as a response to consultations with the community around health and well being, and the importance of spirituality.

Members adhere to a strong commitment to social justice and dialogue. The network meets mainly monthly to plan projects. Projects undertaken last year include a booklet published on all the Multifaith network members and was distributed to most households (around 60,000) in Port Phillip (see

### Port Phillip Multifaith Network

attached); as well as an outdoor festival promoting diversity, inclusiveness and spirituality .

Current projects for this financial year include holding a series of Open Houses early next year, with the first one occurring at St Kilda Town Hall, as a Post-Parliament of World religions event, focussing on local issues.

Buddhist representation would be warmly

welcomed on the network on any level of involvement that people (or one representative) would be willing to give, whether its just to receive information, to attend meetings or be part of the project planning.

More information about the network can be obtained on the website [www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/multifaith\\_network.htm](http://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/multifaith_network.htm) or contact **Cristina Del Frate**, Multicultural Liaison Officer, City of Port Phillip. Tel: 9209 6385, email: [cdelfrat@portphillip.vic.gov.au](mailto:cdelfrat@portphillip.vic.gov.au)

# Healthy TASTE, HEALTHY mind



Melbourne

Sunday 11am-2pm  
22 November 2009

Quang Minh Temple

Multicultural Tasty Food Fair



Featuring

**T**aste the flavours of friendship. Join with the multicultural Buddhist community of Melbourne to enjoy Vegetarian cuisine from favourite family recipes of the locals.

Be delighted by a range of dishes like dumplings, rolls and pastries, mushrooms of all sorts, tofu, beans and lentils, noodles thick and thin, rice creations and vegetables prepared lovingly by the hosts.

**Entry \$10 full, \$5 conc/child.  
Groups of 10+ get 10% discount.**

Keep your footprint small – come with many friends in the same vehicle or by public transport!



Co-starring

**T**his event is organised by the Buddhist Council of Victoria to celebrate and share the cultural diversity within the Buddhist and non-Buddhist communities in Victoria. The event aims to raise funds on behalf of the Victorian Buddhist community towards the organising costs of the upcoming Parliament of the World's Religions (PWR) to be held in Melbourne, 3-9 December 2009, the world's largest interreligious gathering. This fundraiser has been made possible with the support of the Quang Minh Temple. May all beings be happy, for the benefit of all!

Find us at



Guest Appearance



THE BUDDHIST COUNCIL  
OF VICTORIA, INC

Event Organiser



QUANG MINH  
TEMPLE

Event Sponsor

Funds Raised Towards



[www.parliamentofreligions.org](http://www.parliamentofreligions.org)

## It's time for Vegies and raising funds for Parliament of the World's Religions Melbourne 2009

National Vegetarian Week started a day early this year, as Buddhist 'Masterchefs' from eleven temples and centres around Victoria came together and whipped up a tantalising array of dishes, including laksa, rice paper rolls, dumplings, curries, crepes and steamed buns, all made without meat.

*It's Vegie Time* food fair, held on 27 September 2009 at St Kilda Town Hall was organised by the Buddhist Council of Victoria to raise funds for the upcoming Parliament of the World's Religions (PWR) Melbourne 2009. Approximately \$5,200 was raised from sales of \$5 and \$2 coupons, which were exchangeable for mains and desserts.

Petr Svoboda, part of the organising committee and Program Associate for PWR Melbourne 2009 said the event was a success for both the Parliament and

the Buddhist community in Victoria, creating a positive energy and atmosphere for all who took part.

The unfixed, round table seating allowed guests from different cultural and faith backgrounds to mingle together in an open and friendly environment. Guests were also invited to take part in traditional Japanese, Chinese and Vietnamese tea ceremonies and environmental sustainability presentations held in rooms adjacent to the main hall.

Dishes were served with biodegradable or reusable plates and cutlery, and guests were encouraged to travel to the venue by public transport to minimise their carbon footprint. Volunteers from the Tzu Chi Foundation monitored waste disposal from 11am to 3pm, ensuring waste was sorted into food scraps, biodegradable material and rubbish.



The event was made possible by the generosity from the City of Port Phillip to cover the cost of hiring St Kilda Town Hall, and the dedicated efforts of BCV organising committee members: Peggy Page (project leader), Rachael Wass, Laura Chan, Linda Marett, Petr Svoboda, Helen Richardson, Maureen French, Ranjith Soysa and Albert Chang, as well as Quang Minh Temple's Venerable Thich Phuoc Tan and many other volunteers.

Special guests attending the event were Executive Director of Council for PWR Rev. Dirk Ficca, Team Leader of the Community Organisers for the Melbourne PWR Alex

Butler, Deputy Mayor of Port Phillip Cr Judith Klepner and Caroline Martin, member of the local Boonwurrung people.

Venerable Thich Phuoc Tan OAM, Buddhist Patron of PWR Melbourne

2009 and *It's Veggie Time* committee member said, 'The food fair provided an opportunity to promote PWR and co-operation amongst temples. It helps send a good image of Buddhism's connection with health and the environment. Therefore, it should be repeated.'

The temples and centres taking part were: Buddhist Council of Victoria, Buddhist Discussion Centre (Upwey), Buddhist Society of Victoria, Buddhist Tara Institute, Chan Meditation Centre, Melbourne University Buddhist Studies Society, Quang Minh Buddhist Temple, Sakyamuni Sambuddha Vihara & Buddhist Vihara Victoria Inc., Wat Thai Nakorn Melbourne and Yun Yang Temple, together contributing approximately forty speciality dishes from Thailand, Malaysia, Taiwan, Vietnam, Australia, India, Sri Lanka, China and Italy.

Another BCV event *Healthy Taste, Healthy Mind* food fair (see page 5) to raise funds for the PWR will take place on Sunday 22nd November 2009 and once again everyone from the Buddhist and wider communities are welcome to attend and share a meal together.

By Ms Kim Lam with assistance from Ms Rachael Wass



## DONATIONS

Make a donation to support the activities of the Council. Cheques can be made out to *Buddhist Council of Victoria* and mailed to The Treasurer, Buddhist Council of Victoria, P.O. Box 6104, Footscray West Vic 3012

## MEMBERSHIP

Council Membership is open to Buddhist temples, groups and organisations operating in Victoria and costs \$55. Friend's membership is open to individual Buddhists who support the aims of the Council and costs \$27.50.

## MORE INFORMATION



THE BUDDHIST COUNCIL OF VICTORIA, INC

A Newsletter of: Buddhist Council of Victoria  
P.O. Box 6104 Footscray West VIC 3012 AUSTRALIA  
Web [www.bcvic.org.au](http://www.bcvic.org.au)  
Email [chair@bcvic.org.au](mailto:chair@bcvic.org.au)

## OTHER ACTIVITIES

- Volunteer Teaching  
Email [educationinfo@bcvic.org.au](mailto:educationinfo@bcvic.org.au)
- Volunteer Prison Chaplaincy  
Email [secretary@bcvic.org.au](mailto:secretary@bcvic.org.au)

# Second Melbourne Buddhist Film Festival attracts hundreds

The 2009 Melbourne Buddhist Film Festival ran at ACMI in Federation Square from Friday 30th October until Sunday 1st November, attracting hundreds of filmgoers.

Opening night saw the Australian premiere of *The Dhamma Brothers*, which chronicles a 10-day Vipassana meditation retreat in Alabama's most notorious high-security prison. Thanks to Paul Gardner for speaking about the Council's prison chaplaincy program before the screening.

Many stayed on to enjoy *Meditate and Destroy*, which outlines the journey of Noah Levine, author and son of prominent Buddhist teacher Stephen Levine, from violent drug-addicted punk rocker to committed Buddhist practitioner and teacher (but still punk rocker...).

Both documentaries garnered extremely positive responses and extensive discussion. Most commentary focused on the ways in which Buddhist practice had clearly effected healing and transformation for people whose lives were previously utterly bereft of hope.

The rest of the weekend saw large audiences for three more documentaries – *Amongst White Clouds*, a deeply affecting portrait of a group of Chinese Buddhist hermits; *Wheel of Time*, Werner Herzog's insightful documentation of two Kalachakra ceremonies; and *The Devotion of Matthieu Ricard*, a lively and heart-warming biography of prominent French monk Matthieu Ricard. Closing afternoon featured the exquisite Japanese animated drama *The Book of the Dead*.

Melbourne Buddhist

Film Festival 2009

[www.melbournebff.com.au](http://www.melbournebff.com.au)

Fri 30 Oct–

Sun 1 Nov 2009



The screenings were complemented by two special events – a Dharma talk on Buddhist symbolism by Senior Venerable Phuoc Tan OAM, abbot of Quang Minh Temple in Braybrook; and a Japanese tea ceremony presented by the Urasenke Association. These, too, attracted large and appreciative audiences.

Many thanks to supporters ACMI, the Victorian Multicultural Commission, and the International Buddhist Film Festival, and to sponsors Lam Brothers, Mr Wilson Ching, Mr Terry Stanley and Quang Minh Temple for helping to make the Festival so successful. And to the programming committee for their dedicated work.

By Diane Cook, Team Member, Melbourne Buddhist Film Festival 2009

Clockwise from Top LHS: *The Dhamma Brothers*, *Meditate and Destroy*, *Wheel of Time*, *Amongst White Clouds*, *The Devotion of Matthieu Ricard*, *The Book of the Dead*

