

# GADEN NOTES

## NEWSLETTER OF THE GADEN RELIEF PROJECTS

DECEMBER 2009



### CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

After three years of running two Gaden Relief organizations in parallel I am happy to report that finally we have wound down and closed the old organization. The last of the old organization's funds were disbursed in June. The old Gaden Relief was a branch of Toronto's Gaden Choling Buddhist Meditation Centre on Christie St. It's aim was to provide a way for Gaden Choling's members to send money to help Tibetan refugees living in India. But before long Gaden Relief's work became known across Canada, the United States and abroad and donations began coming in from around the world.

It became necessary to separate from Gaden Choling to better serve our wide base of supporters. But winding down the old organization and starting a new one turned out to be more complicated than we imagined. The Canadian government's Charities Directorate was surprisingly unhelpful when we asked for advice on how to spin off Gaden Relief. We eventually realized that a new Gaden Relief had to be formed first before the old one could be shut down. But we couldn't simply transfer the funds from the old to the new; we had to disburse the old funds from the old organization, and that took longer than expected.

There were two reasons why it took longer than expected. Unrest in Tibet last year led the Chinese government to restrict access to many areas, including the Zadoh area in eastern Tibet where we operate the Jamseng Health Clinic and support a monastery and nunnery. So far we have not been able to get visas to travel to the area. We hope that the restrictions will be relaxed soon, but in the meantime we are working on alternative ways to deliver funds and manage our projects in Tibet. The second reason is the rules for Canadian charities changed, especially for charities operating outside Canada. Government initiatives to combat the funding of terrorism required greater control over the use of funds and more documentation.

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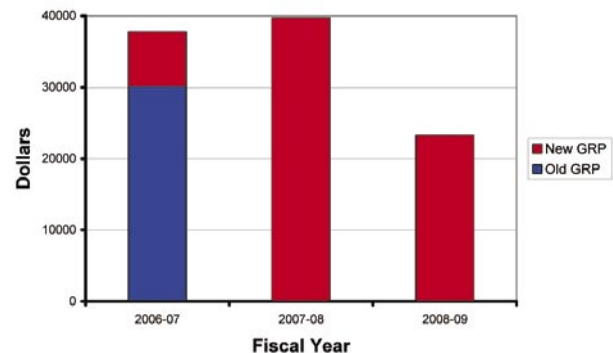
In the remote areas where we operate this proved to be quite a challenge. Not only is the infrastructure weak in these areas (no phones or computers and banking systems are inadequate), our beneficiaries are quite unfamiliar with Western notions of keeping receipts for everything and writing formal reports.

We struggled a lot with the new rules, trying to find ways to implement them to satisfy the Canadian government while keeping the burden down for our nunneries and monasteries and health clinics. We are setting up agencies in each of the three main project areas in Zangskar, Zadoh and Mongolia. Each of these agencies is responsible for managing our projects in each area and for making sure that all the documentation requirements are satisfied. The agencies are slowly getting used to their roles, but more visits by Gaden Relief volunteer staff will be necessary to ensure that all the new requirements are being met.

The economic downturn has had a large impact on donations. We have seen a big decline – over 40% compared to the previous year. And we're not alone. In July Community Foundations of Canada reported a 37% decline in annual donations, and it looks like other charities are seeing big declines as well. Charitable giving will rebound once the economy recovers, but for now the decline is not affecting our programs because we are still working on a backlog of undelivered funds that were delayed by the government's new rules.

Of course if the drop in donations persists for long programs will suffer eventually. I would like to remind our donors in Australia and the U.S. that we now offer tax receipts for donations to our health related projects in Tibet. We are grateful to our partner BODHI in Australia and the U.S. for agreeing to collect donations and issue tax receipts on our behalf.

**Gaden Relief Donations**



And for our donors in Canada, it is now possible to donate monthly through automatic payments from your bank account or credit card. Please email me for details at [grp@gadenrelief.org](mailto:grp@gadenrelief.org)

Times are tough. But I am actually excited about the future of Gaden Relief. The changes mandated by the government will make our programs more effective and will build a solid foundation for the future. And besides, we shouldn't measure our success by how much we grow in size each year, but by how much we make every donation count to the fullest. To witness a monastery in the Gobi Desert get power and light for the first time is a big thrill. To know that the nuns of Zangskar, cut off from the rest of the world for five months each winter, can now study at night with solar lanterns from Gaden Relief, is a big thrill too. We do this without any funding from big foundations or from government – all of our funding comes from donors like you. A big thank you to all of you!

– Conrad Richter

## MESSAGE FROM OUR SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

**Dear Friends and Supporters of Gaden Relief Projects,**

I would like to express my gratitude, and thank you for your support even during this difficult time of economic down turn. I am so grateful for your generosity and kindness. We at GRP would like to let you know that we are always committed to wonderful projects.

We are continuously working for Jamseng Health Care Clinic in Zadoh, Tibet; School of Philosophic Studies at Tashi Lhapug; Dechen Nunnery in Zadoh area; and Zangskar Nuns Project in Ladkha India. Also we are supporting Zava Rinpoche and the monks at Delgruun Choira monastery in Mongolia.



We have decided to take on three new projects:

- 1) Nyanang Phelgyeling monastery in Kathmandu in Nepal. This monastery is small and 90 percent of the monks here come from a poor rural Nepalese villages and it needs help.
- 2) Geralt Mur project to purchase yurts for poor and single mothers in Ulaan Baatar Mongolia. Ulaan Baatar has its share of poor families and single moms. Winter is very harsh in Mongolia; it can get so cold – minus 40 below zero with cold winds blowing from Siberia. Summer can be very hot with air blowing from Gobi desert. They say, “40 in the winter and 40 in the summer”. GRP is providing yurts for single moms and poor families to keep them warm.
- 3, Tsongkhapa Institute of Buddhist studies in Ulaan Batar. This new Buddhist centre is a place where young Mongolians can learn Buddhism through English speaking teachers. They can learn Buddha Dharma and English both at the same time. Also we would like to teach Buddhist meditation and how to live according to Buddhist principals in today's Mongolian life style, and we hope to offer family counseling services as well.

Thank you so much for your support. I pray for many blessings and much happiness for you and your families.

**-- Zasep Rinpoche**

## PHOTO CAPTIONS

**PAGE 1 - Zangskar's Mountains with Yak**  
**PAGE 2 - Sani Nuns and their Sunflowers.**  
**PAGE 3 - Zasep Rinpoche on his faithful horse**  
**PAGE 4 - Nuns carrying heavy lumber**  
**PAGE 5 - Solar Lanterns for Zangskar Nunneries**  
**PAGE 6 - Lauren Galvin with Skalzang Lhamo**  
**- Skalzang Lhamo, President of the ZNA**

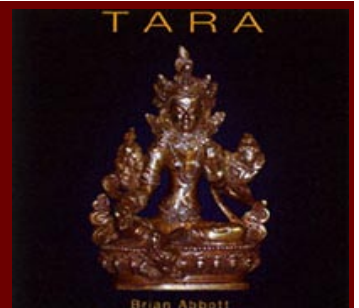
**PAGE 7 - Dorje Dzong Nunnery**  
**- Skyagam Nuns**  
**- Chortens in Zangskar**

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**LAUREN GALVIN**

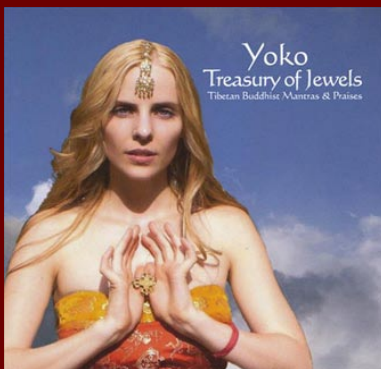


## Songs of Support

Almost all of our donations come in the form of cash, cheques or credit card payments from private individuals and a few small organizations. But some donors have come up with alternative and equally effective ways to raise money. One donor, for example, auctioned valuable Buddhist artifacts on Ebay. Some have volunteered to put on fundraising video or slide show presentations. Some have even held meditation-a-thons to raise money.



Over the past few years two recording artists have donated a portion of the sales of their albums to Gaden Relief. Brian Abbott's beautiful CD Tara has raised hundreds of dollars in support of the nuns of Zangskar. The CD features the voices of the nuns of Chuchikjall nunnery along with vocals of Jackie Juno and others as well as the amazing work of Brian and friends on guitar, keyboard, flute and an assortment of traditional Tibetan instruments. The sound is timeless and meditative and uplifting. Brian donates \$1 per disc to Gaden Relief, so go to his website (Click on Link) [www.brianabbott.info/tara.htm](http://www.brianabbott.info/tara.htm) - listen to a few sample tracks, and then buy this CD.



Yoko, our dear friend (and daughter of the editor of this newsletter!) also has a beautiful disc featuring Tibetan-themed meditative music. Yoko has put a variety of mantras and prayers to music for her Treasury of Jewels album. Some of the tracks feature our spiritual director, Zasep Rinpoche, as background vocals to Yoko's "deep honey sweet" voice, and the effect is riveting. The album is currently featured on the CDBaby website (Click on Link) [www.cdbaby.com/cd/yokomusic](http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/yokomusic) where you can listen to sample tracks and buy the CD. Yoko is donating 10% sales, so buy the CD and support Gaden Relief!

-- Conrad Richter

## FROM THE 2008 - 2009 FINANCIAL REPORT

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>Jul 1, 2008 Jun 30, 2009</b>	<b>Jul 1, 2007 Jun 30, 2008</b>
Zadoh Sales	100.00	280.00
General Donations	2,577.01	2,675.00
Zadoh Donations	1,902.00	200.00
Zangskar Donations	5,403.00	9,270.17
Jamseng Donations	4,852.20	6,201.37
Dechen Donations	640.00	-
Tashi Lhapug Donations	2,101.85	7,801.00
Mongolia Donations	3,125.00	4,235.00
Amarbayasgalant Donations	1,296.25	1,100.00
Delgeruun Donations	300.00	1,550.00
Tashi Lhapug Health Donations	1,077.20	6,666.86
Interest Income	1.50	0.79
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>23,376.01</b>	<b>39,980.19</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Zangskar Aid	6,046.09	-
Mongolia Aid	2,354.58	234.00
Accounting & Legal	30.00	30.00
Newsletter	-	568.92
Interest & Bank Charges	180.89	491.41
Internet	-	54.14
Meetings & Conventions	400.00	-
Foreign Exchange Loss or Gain	67.03	(160.74)
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>9,078.59</b>	<b>1,217.73</b>
<b>INCOME / (LOSS)</b>	<b>14,297.42</b>	<b>38,762.46</b>

THE FULL FINANCIAL REPORT IS AVAILABLE ON-LINE AT

[www.gadenrelief.org/staff/reports.html](http://www.gadenrelief.org/staff/reports.html)



Solar Lanterns ready for delivery to the Zangskar nunneries

## Report from Zangskar

This summer, Zangskar Nuns Project Coordinator Kim Gutschow and Field Officer Lauren Galvin visited nine of Zangskar's ten nunneries to begin the work of implementing projects that had been selected on the basis of two intensive surveys in 2007 and 2008. Those two surveys identified the most pressing needs at each nunnery. Every nunnery received one solar lantern and most received funding to purchase a water storage unit to store drinking water in summer and winter when the supply of drinking water is often irregular or contaminated.

With the generous donation of one Gaden Relief sponsor Sani Nunnery will plant willow cuttings across a large hillside and build fencing to protect the plants from roaming animals. The tree plantation will supply firewood for the nuns and help to stabilize the hillside from erosion.

At Skyagam Nunnery, the 17 nuns will build a greenhouse and a passive solar classroom.

The 10 Tungri nuns will build a small washroom out of local rock and mud mortar, with a thin cement stucco on the inside walls and floor. Gaden Relief plans to bring solar showers here and to other nunneries that want them.

The Tungri nuns also established a small willow plantation on one of their three fields and plan to improve the stone fence around it to increase the likelihood of the trees surviving to maturity.

At Manda, the eight resident nuns will build a collective washroom and compost toilet using mostly local materials. They also elected to use their Gaden Relief funds to purchase additional solar lanterns from the Sani nuns who are trained to produce and market small, durable solar lanterns.

The 19 nuns of Karsha will improve the reliability of their drinking and irrigation water by constructing a passive solar heater at the spot where the water pipe often freezes. A water storage tank will be installed also. The 16 nuns of Zangla plan to build a small passive solar classroom. The classroom will have angled glass panels to maximize the use of winter sunlight and warmth.

The seven nuns of Dorje Dzong, aged 35 to 77, will plant willow saplings as well as potatoes, turnips, and other hardy crops.

The six nuns of Bya, aged 15 to 34, have decided to build a small kitchen and passive solar sitting room next to their assembly hall. This nunnery, founded only 10 years ago, is one of the poorest nunneries in Zangskar. The nuns will use their Gaden Relief funds to hire masons and carpenters and to purchase wooden beams, posts, doors, lintels, windows, and other building materials. Locally available rock and mud will also be used in the construction.

One of the current goals for Gaden Relief is to improve communication with the Zangskar Nuns Association, the new NGO that administers our projects in Zangskar. To that end, Kim and Lauren attended the ZNA's annual meeting. At the meeting several nunneries introduced their new members who will serve on the working committee and elections were held for several posts of the executive committee. Nuns from Karsha and Zangla were elected as Secretary and Chief Advisor, while the posts of President and Treasurer, served by Skalzang Lhamo and Konchog Drolma, were uncontested.

– Lauren Galvin, Zangskar Field Officer

The full Zangskar Nuns Project report is available on the Gaden Relief website. [www.gadenrelief.org](http://www.gadenrelief.org)





### On a Long Path of Recovery

Our dedicated Gaden Relief volunteer and dear friend, John Huizinga, was recently seriously ill in hospital for many months. On his last Gaden Relief volunteer mission in the summer of 2008 he started to feel ill in Zangskar and, after his return to Canada, ended up in hospital. A bizarre series of misdiagnoses led to several lengthy stays in hospital when doctors struggled to understand what was wrong. Fortunately some answers eventually emerged from the doctors, and with prayers and some help from Zasep Rinpoche's Australian friend Ken who practices Chinese and Ayurvedic medicine, John's condition slowly improved.

John and his wife Celeste accompanied Rinpoche on a fact-finding tour of the nunneries of Zangskar in 2008, and many of his recommendations for improving the life of the nuns in the remote nunneries are now being implemented. Previously, he designed and installed a solar powered lighting system for the Delgeruun Monastery in the Gobi Desert in Mongolia. His simple but effective approaches to solving problems in remote places have been incalculably valuable to Gaden Relief.

In a recent email message to Gaden Relief volunteers and supporters, John wrote:

"I wish to thank all of you for your prayers for my health. All the concern expressed by so many, really moved me and, I know, affected the course and the outcome of a debilitating illness."

- Conrad Richter

*"Receiving the Gaden Relief financial statements made me realize how fortunate Gaden Relief has been to have had a steady hand at the helm all these years. Thank you for your dependability and dedication to the cause."*

- Sandra



# YOU CAN HELP



Gaden Relief is a non-profit organisation that is run by a dedicated team of volunteers. Over 95% of all donations directly benefit people in need.

Gaden Relief is currently asking for your generous contribution to support our ongoing projects in Tibet and Mongolia.

Projects include: The Jamseng Health Care Centre in Tibet, the Zangskar Nuns Association and the various monasteries supported by Zasep Rinpoche in Mongolia and Tibet.

All donations are graciously accepted and tax deductible.

Personal Cheques can be mailed to:  
637 Christie Street  
Toronto, Ontario  
M6G 3EG

**MAKE A DONATION ON-LINE  
VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT  
[WWW.GADENRELIEF.ORG](http://WWW.GADENRELIEF.ORG)**

# IT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

## Gaden Relief Projects

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Matthew Richards

