



Heartwood

NEWSLETTER OF THE WATERLOO RIVERVIEW DHARMA CENTRE

SPRING 2005

Coordinator's Message

Susan Child

Values, beliefs, identities conditioned by family, church, and culture are all a function of social order and cohesiveness. For western culture in general, those traditional forms of definition and meaning have been altered dramatically, over the past few decades, and many of us have been left in a spiritual /ethical vacuum. This shifting ground has given rise to feelings of helplessness, indifference, denial, anxiety, hopelessness, and indulgence.

In his speech for the new Millennium, the Dalai Lama spoke about the fact that with the decline of religion in the west, increasingly people are finding themselves without any moral or ethical guidelines. Many parents today are spiritually illiterate and have inadequate resources to impart knowledge on value- based issues to their children, having, themselves, not had any formal spiritual or religious training. He spoke about how conditions of modern society foster alienation from one another rather than connection. For example, when we used to live in smaller communities, we were more connected to one another- we could see how we were dependent on one another and how our actions impacted on others. Now we live separate and disconnected from each other and from the environment. Pop culture seems to have more of an influence on our children than education or religion. And the emphasis of pop culture is the same as that of mainstream culture: individualistic and materialistic. We, as a western culture, think in terms of us and them, 'me' being the most important, protecting what we have.

The Dalai Lama emphasized the need for a new paradigm shift to interdependence, and the need for skillful means to break down barriers between people.

He proposed the idea of 'Secular Ethics', as the ground for moving forward into the new millennium.

Recently, I participated in a day retreat with local religious leaders and public education officials, where we examined a UN document, called the Earth Charter. The Earth Charter is a document of 'Secular Ethics'. It is a declaration of fundamental principles for building a just, sustainable and peaceful society in the 21st century. It is a synthesis of values, principles, and aspirations that reflects extensive international/global consultation, conducted over a period of many years, with input from non-governmental organizations, community groups, professional societies, and international experts in contemporary science, international law, as well as the insights of philosophy and religion.

The Earth Charter seeks to inspire in **all peoples** a new sense of global interdependence and shared responsibility for the well being of the human family and the larger living world. It is an expression of hope, and shared vision of basic values to provide an ethical foundation for the emerging world community. It is calling for a change of mind and heart. It is asking individuals, families, organizations and community to play a vital role in offering creative leadership toward this end.

During our day retreat we used Mindfulness awareness exercises to lay the ground (prepare the mind) for our inquiry into the following question: "What would it require of **ourselves** to take this challenge seriously, and make this change of mind and heart?"

We used the Mindfulness practice to look inward to learn about the nature of our hearts and minds; our motivation and intentions in the world; the results of our actions. The result was that, through deep introspective, personal inquiry, we saw that, as the Buddha said, all individual and global suffering arises from three root causes: greed/desire, aversion/hatred, delusion/ignorance. And in the ensuing dialogue in small groups, we were not able to 'escape' from this realization, or the personal responsibility that it implies.

All of us, who are engaging in mindfulness practice, are taking our responsibility seriously. Our practice, in and of itself, makes a difference in mind and heart, wisdom and compassion, and this has an impact on the world around us. But there is something else to

consider. Many of us forget what a precious thing it is to have this human life, free and well-favored. We live in affluent conditions by global standards, which allow us the opportunity to practice and reap the benefits of the practice. If one stops to reflect on this blessing, one will be touched with gratitude and a sense of individual responsibility. It prompts us to think, how can we give back, how can we make a difference.

I invite you to reflect deeply on these themes.

You can view the Earth Charter, at:

<http://www.earthcharter.org/files/charter/charter.pdf>

Reflections from the Board Chair- Toward a Life with Service

John Lord

Those of us who meditate and follow the Dharma as part of our daily lives ultimately face the question "how do we serve others?" At this time of such a huge natural disaster in our world (the Tsunami in South Asia) this is a vital question to explore.

Some of the phrases we encounter over and over (loving kindness, compassion, engaged Buddhism as examples) remind us that we reduce our suffering and extend our joy by serving others in some way. While some of our Sangha members have found small and large ways to serve our fellow human beings, some of us are just beginning to reflect on what a life with service might involve.

Your Dharma Centre Board has reflected on this question as well. An important part of the Board's volunteer role is to serve the members of the Sangha. With this in mind, we will be initiating a "*Dialogue with the Sangha*" later this winter. You will have an opportunity to share your thoughts and insights about our Centre, and how you think we should serve.

On a personal level, the Dharma Centre Outreach Committee is encouraging all of us to engage in *random acts of kindness* in the New Year. Put a flower

on a co-workers desk, send a card to someone you admire, smile and let other drivers go ahead of you, or give money to a charity that need resources to address the impact of the south Asian disaster.

Volunteering is also a powerful way to contribute to your life of service, to the Sangha, and to the wider community. In terms of our Centre, we always need volunteers to do all kinds of practical things. We encourage you to join a committee, offer yourself as a Board member, or call Susan to say what gift you are willing to share. Beyond the Sangha, our volunteering in the community allows our practice of compassion to express itself more fully.

It is my experience that a life with service begins with small steps that can grow as we gain confidence. Many small steps then become part of big goals for our world. The eradication of suffering obviously needs all of us to be contributing in some way. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to wish you a Happy New Year, and best wishes with your journey, your practice, and your life with service.

2004 Year-End Financial Report

Larry Dickhout, Treasurer

I am happy to report a very positive financial statement for 2004, with our total revenues exceeding our expenses! Your treasurer and Board of Directors feel great about this, since in previous years our year-end statements were often in the red. For the past two summers we have not had to borrow money to get us through the summer months.

Our fund raising revenues, from the combined efforts of Celebration of Giving, Raffle, and new projects such as the Film night and the Garage sale, resulted in higher revenues than 2003. Our 2004 course fee revenues were down significantly from the previous year, however, the 2005 winter revenues look strong so far. Thanks to the generosity of Sangha memberships, our dana contributions increased significantly in 2004.

Our 2004 total expenses were again remarkably similar to previous years as we manage to keep expenses as low as possible. Our 2005 total budgeted expenses will be higher than previous years as we have hired a part-time assistant

to provide badly needed administrative assistance to Susan. I am confident that the Sangha will once again rise to the occasion by ensuring that our 2005 revenues at least equal our 2005 expenses.

In addition to acknowledging the generous financial donations by the Sangha in dana and fundraising donations, I would also like to acknowledge the following contributions:

Doug Brock for a new computer, and paying the monthly internet costs

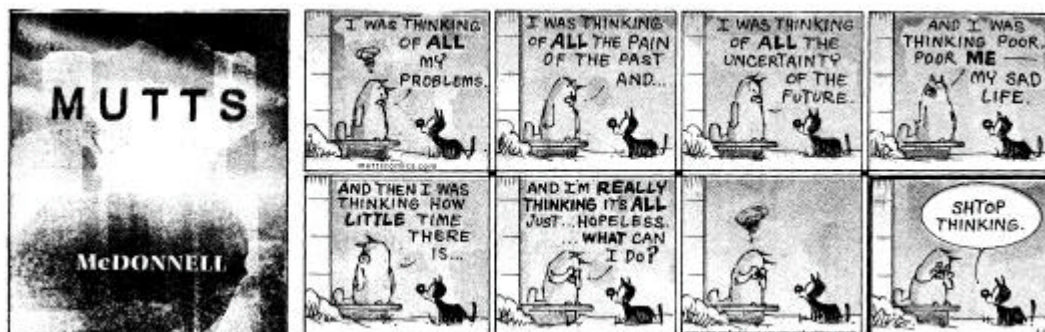
Dave Bean (We-Create) for donating web service and maintaining web service

Ken Handley for his weekly bookkeeping

Allan Kirker for his graphic arts design of invitations and bookmarks

Anita Davis for being a great fundraising coordinator

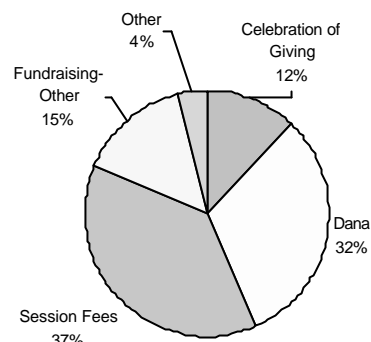
And all the Sangha who donated their time in our fund raising efforts.



Financial Report cont'd

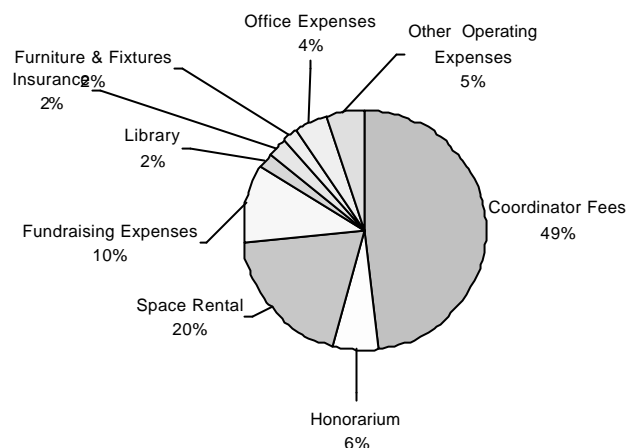
Where is Money Coming From?

Source of Revenue	2004 Revenue
Celebration of Giving	\$3,839.00
Dana	\$10,239.00
Session Fees	\$12,308.00
Fundraising-Other	\$4,774.00
Other	\$1,233.00
Total	\$32,393.00



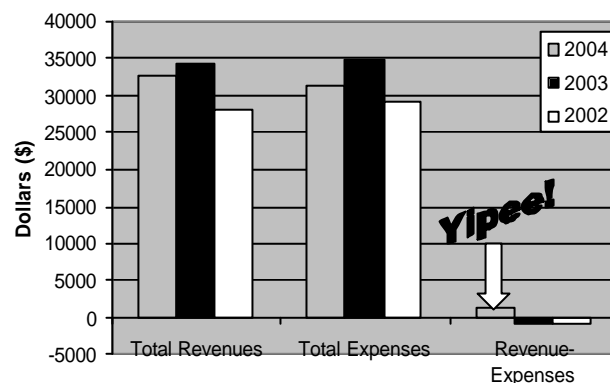
Where is Money Going?

Type of Expense	2004 Expenses
Coordinator Fees	\$15,000.00
Honorarium	\$1,960.00
Space Rental	\$6,000.00
Fundraising Expenses	\$3,220.00
Library	\$664.00
Insurance	\$756.00
Furniture & Fixtures	\$732.00
Office Expenses	\$1,285.00
Other Operating Expenses	\$1,639.00
Total	\$31,256.00



How do we look overall, compared to past years?

	2004	2003	2002
Total Revenues	\$32,393.00	\$34,225.00	\$28,055.00
Operating Expenses	\$31,256.00	\$34,913.00	\$28,965.00
Revenues-Expenses	\$1,137.00	-\$688.00	-\$910.00



How do Levels of Dana/Fundraising Compare to past years?

	2002	2003	2004
Dana+Fundraising	\$15,515.00	\$12,958.00	\$18,852.00



Financial Report cont'd

Dharma Centre
Financial Statement
Dec. 31, 2004

Sources of Revenue

Fees	12,239
Dana	10,239
Fundraising	8,872
Memberships	340
Other	360

Type of Expenses

Co-Ordinator Fee	15,000
Assistant/Honorarium	1,960
Space Rental	6,000
Fundraising Expenses	2,588
Furniture/Fixtures	1,002
Insurance	756
Office Supplies	690
Library	664
Telephone	595
Computer	244
Other	981

Total Revenue	32,050
Operating Expenses	30,481
Revenue-Expenses	1,569

Volunteer Bulletin Board

ANNUAL MEETING SCHEDULED FOR APRIL 23

Please be sure to join other members and the Board of Directors at the Annual meeting of the Waterloo Riverview Dharma Centre

When: Saturday, April 23 - 1 pm to 4 pm

Where: Location TBA

What: This yearly meeting is a chance to review our work as a Centre, to vote in new Board members, and to share food and ideas with fellow members.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR COMMITTEES AND FOR THE BOARD

We are looking for Dharma Centre members to participate in the governance of our Centre.

We need two new Board members to be elected at this AGM.

We also need committee members to help us raise funds for the Centre.

We also need committee members to help with the social committee.

None of these tasks are very challenging, but we do need people to help- please consider stepping up!



"Can he call you back? He's meditating."

The Board of Directors is Responsible for Carrying Out the Purposes of the Dharma Centre,
in Collaboration with the Coordinator and the Members.

