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PLEASE VISIT OUR

Greetings!

Welcome to Sakyadhita Canada's May 2012 Full Moon Newsletter. Happy Vesak

We decided to send this newsletter out a few days early because this month's full moon is the observation of **Vesak**. We wanted to give people the opportunity to partake in celebrations.



VESAK " Buddha's Birthday "

Vesakha Puja (Vesak) is the most important of the Buddhist festivals and is usually celebrated on the full moon in May. It is a time of commemoration of the Buddha's birth, and for some Buddhists this also marks his enlightenment and passing away (parinibbana)

It is particularly strong in the Theravada tradition in countries such as Sri Lanka, Burma and Thailand. In such places temples will be adorned with lanterns and candles (light symbolizing the Buddha's enlightenment) and lay followers will involve themselves in acts of generosity, meditation and observing extra precepts.

Buddha literally means 'one who is awake' and has become enlightened. It is a term that denotes a person who has attained the supreme wisdom and compassion of enlightenment.

To Buddhists enlightenment is a blessed state in which the individual attains Nirvana (Nibbana) - the transcendence of craving and suffering.

What do people do? For Vesak

**WEB SITE FOR MORE
INFORMATION, AND
OTHER EVENTS.**
Sakyadhita Canada

**Notice of the annual general
meeting of Sakyadhita
Canada Association of
Buddhist Women**

Place:
Seoraesa Korean Temple
8611 33rd Avenue NW
Calgary AB

Date & Time: Tuesday, May 29th, 2012
7:00 PM

Please join us for the Annual General Meeting of Sakyadhita Canada. It is time for election of board members for the next two years. Please contact Sakyadhita Canada if you are interested or would like more information. (sakyadhitacanada@gmail.com)

With Peace & Joy for all,

Jayanta (Shirley Johannesen)

President, Sakyadhita Canada

*"I don't think that art
comes from art...
I think it comes from the
awakening person."*

ISAMU NOGUCHI



Many Buddhists visit temples on Vesak to light candles, and listen to monks give talks and recite ancient verses. Devout Buddhists may spend all day in one or more temples. Some temples display a small statue of Buddha as a baby. The statue is placed in a basin filled with water and decorated with flowers. Visitors to the temple pour water over the statue. This symbolizes a pure and new beginning.

Many Buddhists pay special attention to Buddha's teachings during Vesak. They may wear white robes and only eat vegetarian food on and around Vesak. Many people also give money, food or goods to organizations that help the poor, the elderly and those who are sick. This is a time for Buddhist world wide to come together and celebrate. This can be large affairs and festivals, or small remembrances, filled with meditation.

It is an opportunity to reiterate a determination to lead a noble life, to develop ones mind, to practise loving kindness, and to bring peace and harmony to humanity.

Look for celebrations in your area, or
CLICK below for information:

[Calgary](#)
[Toronto](#)
[Vancouver](#)

To mark

International Women's Day

A number of female monastics and devout laywomen have been honoured with
*Outstanding Women in Buddhism
Award.*

The International Buddhist Film Festival

[Visit web site here](#)

2012 features productions from China, Japan, the US., Nepal, Thailand, Italy, Canada, Argentina and Sri Lanka.

The works include drama, documentary and animation.

[Click here for more information](#)

Read, and view Canadian winners from previous years.



Venerable Sonam Wangmo (Tenzin Dadan),

A nun from Bhutan, (who Sakyadhita Canada sponsored to attend the Sakyadhita International conference in Mongolia in 2008), was recently honored at the Outstanding Women in Buddhism Awards in Thailand. This special awards ceremony is held in conjunction with the United Nations' International Women's Day, held annually to recognize the accomplishments and celebrate the acts of courage and determination of Buddhist women across the globe in promoting positive social changes, e.g. propagating the Buddha dharma, carrying out social work, peace activism, community development and spiritual practice.

[Click here to read more about Venerable Tenzin Dadon](#)

And to read about other award winning women, and some of the amazing things they have done.

[Click here](#)



SUSAN'S FRONT PORCH

Tibetan Prayer Flags

Panels of cloth inscribed with auspicious symbols and words.

There are two kinds, horizontal, and vertical.

Traditionally they come in sets of five, one in each of five colours representing the elements. These flags are believed to spread good will and compassion.

THE BUDDHIST FLAG

Submitted by Barbara Downie



At a recent Sakyadhita Canada Board meeting, the topic of the Buddhist flag was 'raised', which led to the following question, "



Dharmacakra Flag

The Dharma wheel.
Often the symbol of
Buddhism in Thailand. The
chariot wheel, with 8 or
more spokes is one of the
oldest known Buddhist
symbols.

What is the Buddhist flag?"

The official Buddhist flag, although designed in 1885 in Sri Lanka, and raised for public viewing on Vesak, April 28, 1885, was not adopted as the official flag to symbolize and universally represent Buddhists around the world, until May 1950.

The original flag shows six vertical bands, representing the six colours of the aura which Buddhists believe emanated from the body of the Buddha when he attained Enlightenment:

BLUE [Nila] : Loving Kindness, peace and universal compassion

YELLOW [Pita] : The Middle Path -avoiding extremes, emptiness

RED [Lohita]: The blessings of practice - achievement, wisdom, virtue, fortune and dignity

WHITE [Odata] : The purity of Dharma - leading to liberation, outside of time or space

ORANGE [Manjesta] : The Buddha's teachings - wisdom

No one saves us but ourselves,
No one can, and no one may.
We ourselves must walk the path.

May this Vesak
bring peace and happiness to all.