



# 追憶 歐果法 居士

In Memory of Upasaka Guo Fa  
(Bob Olson)

## LOYALLY PROTECTING THE DHARMA FOR 40 YEARS

(A TALK BY GUO SUN SHR ON MAY 18, 2008 AT THE BUDDHA HALL OF THE CITY OF TEN THOUSAND BUDDHAS)

*Editor's Note: Upasaka Bob Olson (Guo Fa) took refuge with the Venerable Master over 40 years ago. (His short biography was published in issue #381 of Vajra Bodhi Sea in 2002.) When he was only in his twenties, he visited the Buddhist Lecture Hall in San Francisco and started studying the Buddhadharma with the Master. He also supported the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas and other DRBA monasteries by undertaking numerous and diverse maintenance and construction projects. He upheld the Six Guidelines – no contention, no greed, no seeking, no selfishness, no pursuit of personal advantage, and no lying, remained single, and led a very simple life. He worked quietly every day in the monastery for decades until May 13 this year, when he passed away at the age of 65. After his body was cremated, sharira clusters were found. He was truly a laudable and exemplary Dharma-protecting layperson.*

We all want to cut off selfish love and desire. In order to do this, the Venerable Master taught us to do what others cannot do and to bear what others cannot bear. I think that Bob Olson took this practice to heart in the work he did for DRBA (Dharma Realm Buddhist Association).

I first met Bob in 1974; he'd already been living and working in the Buddhist Association monasteries for six years. He was living in the first Gold Mountain Monastery, the one on 15th street in the Mission District of San Francisco. The building they called Gold Mountain Monastery had been a three-story mattress factory; it was a brick building. It needed to be reinforced to meet earthquake standards. Bob worked on this job of reinforcing the building; he said it was just like building a metal building but it was much harder because there was an old building in the way. He worked on the reconstruction of Gold Mountain Monastery. He also worked at electrical jobs outside and donated the money he made to the Buddhist Association.

When laypeople and monks were encouraged to fast, to create merit to establish CTTB, he fasted as well, working outside at electrical jobs even while he was fasting. Did he endure what others could not endure?

Bob did a great deal of work to improve the drainage in CTTB. He did concrete work and construction work, supervised the construction and did a great deal of work on the front gate, taught other workers useful skills, and did roofing, electrical work, plumbing, carpentry, and many other things too numerous to mention.

A few years ago when Bob was over 60 years old, there was a large leak in a pipe by the Ordination Hall. Bob dug out the earth around the pipe, but for some reason the pipe could not be shut off and the pipe was spewing out water creating a layer of mud about three feet above the pipe. Bob dove into the muddy

hole with a pipe repair clamp. He kept holding his breath and going back into the mud until he put the repair clamp on the pipe. He did not complain but was cheerful the whole time.

Bob did other difficult jobs as well; he frequently dug up sewer lines that were blocking the routes. A pit had to be made around the old sewer pipe, and a section of sewer line had to be cut out and replaced with a new section. When the old section was cut out, all the backed up sewage flowed into the pit. The new section had to be put in right away. Bob did this repair many times. Bob also worked in the freezing cold and rain when the CTTB electrical system failed. Sometimes many days of work during bad weather were required to restore power.

Bob did not wait for someone to tell him what needed to be done. When he first came to CTTB in 1976, he saw serious problems; the water system was out of control, and there were leaks all over the property. Bob tracked down and repaired the water leaks. The electrical system was out of control; the state hospital put in huge transformers. These huge transformers were far in excess of what the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas needed. These transformers used a great deal of electricity just sitting there. Bob put in small transformers to cut down our electric bill. Before this year, Bob was still repairing the electrical system and finding and repairing leaks in the water system.

In 1996, the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas needed new sewer facilities. Bob worked for two years to complete these facilities. Now when the project started, many trenches need to be dug for new sewer lines. CTTB had an old

Ford backhoe for digging. Bob tried to use this backhoe for a while, but it became clear this old backhoe was not up to the task. A bigger JCB backhoe was rented. Now Bob despised the old Ford backhoe; I think he would have rather dug a hole with a shovel than use that old Ford backhoe. Over the two years of the project, Bob became very good at digging with the JCB backhoe. I think he grew to enjoy digging with the big backhoe and if there was anything he missed it was probably that he could no longer dig with it.

Now I will tell a humiliating story that happened to Bob. About ten years ago, the drainage system south of the houses in CTTB (near where the organic farm is now) failed. The land was very muddy and useless. Bob worked to restore the drainage in this area. This was not easy because if he drove the backhoe too far into the mud, it would get stuck. Now the backhoe has a big bucket and it can push this bucket into the ground, get a solid grip and pull itself out of the mud. However, one day Bob got stuck so badly he could not even pull the backhoe out of the mud with the bucket.

Now when a big heavy piece of equipment gets stuck in the mud, something has to be done right away. But the weight of the backhoe will cause it sink further and further into the mud everyday. If the mud is deep enough, the backhoe can entirely disappear under the mud.

He needed help; I came to help with the old Ford backhoe that he despised. He told me that the old Ford backhoe was weak and useless. "If the big backhoe could not pull itself out of

the mud, then how can a little backhoe do the job?" I ran a cable from the little Ford backhoe to the big JCB backhoe. Now it is true that the little Ford backhoe was not very strong but it was on solid ground. I pulled once and got the big backhoe out a little ways but it was still stuck. I pulled again and this time the pull enabled Bob to drive out of the mud.

Bob also put a lot of work into restoring and improving our water system. The valves were old; many valves would not open or would not shut. They were stuck; they were useless. Bob dug up and replaced these valves, and the new valves worked very well. You could open them in a matter of seconds. It is just because the new valves were so good that Bob got thoroughly soaked one very hot day in August. We had just finished putting in the first of the new valves at a hydrant. I was standing at the valve, but Bob was standing in front of the hydrant. I told Bob, "This new valve is so good, I think I can turn it on so fast that you won't be able to get out of the way in time." Bob looked at me and said, "I dare you to do it, go ahead. Turn on the valve as fast as you can." This was eight years ago, and Bob was still pretty fast. There was no way I could have turned on that valve fast enough to get Bob wet, not without some help anyway. Help came from John Scroggs; he came driving down the road in his car, and he leaned out his window and asked Bob a question. Bob turned his head to answer him. Well, Bob did dare me to turn on the valve as fast as I could, didn't he? He got pretty wet before I realized what happened. We all had a good laugh over this.

Perhaps you may have heard Bob

described as gruff; I don't think he would have denied this. He spoke his mind, but he didn't insult people. If he spoke sharply it was to say something like this, "I strongly disagree with you; I don't think what you're doing is in the best interest of the Buddhist Association."

☞ To be continued

## 忠心護法四十年

(果遜師二〇〇八年五月十八日憶述於萬佛聖城)

我們都希望能夠除掉自私和欲望，因此上人常教我們：「要行人所不能行；忍人所不能忍。」我想Bob Olson這方面的修行做得很好，特別是他以往對法總的貢獻。

我第一次碰到Bob是一九七四年，那時Bob已經住在我們中美佛教總會，替總會工作有六年了。我們第一個金山寺是在三藩市十五街，那時的金山寺是一棟三層樓，原本是個做床墊的工廠；因為它是一個磚造的房子，所以政府規定必須要加強防震結構，而



編者按：

果法居士Bob Olson，是歸依宣公上人超過四十年的西方弟子(其生平簡歷，2002年VBS第381期曾介紹過)。他從年輕二十幾歲就到舊金山佛教講堂，親近上人學習佛法，擁護萬佛聖城與法總的各個道場，從事各式各樣的維修與建設工程。他秉持不爭、不貪、不求、不自私、不自利、不妄語的六大宗旨，過著非常簡樸的單身生活，每天就在廟裏默默地工作，數十年如一日，一直到今年五月十三日去世，年六十五歲，火化後有舍利花。他是一位非常值得表揚的護法居士典範！



Bob把這個老房子幾乎變成一個鐵造的房子。因為老房子要加強結構是非常的困難，他花了很多精力在修復；同時也接一些電工，把賺的錢捐給廟裏，讓總會能夠有錢修廟。

在尚未買下萬佛城時，上人鼓勵一些在家人跟法師們斷食，以功德迴向建立新的萬佛城；他當時也是一樣斷食，而且還在外面做一些電力的工程，又為廟裏

作工，他真正做到忍人所不能忍的修行。

Bob花了很多精力去改善我們的排水系統，而且做了很多水泥工程，還有一些營造工程，我們的山門就是他去蓋的。他也教了其他工人很多施工的技術，他也作屋頂、電工、水工、木工，很多很多的工他都會作。

幾年以前，Bob剛過完六十歲，戒壇的前面大水管子破了，漏得很厲害。Bob挖出四周泥土，可是不知怎麼搞的，關不掉水源，水還拼命流出來，四周泥巴變成爛泥，差不多比水管還要高三尺。Bob帶著止水夾，跳到爛泥裏，頭沉進去，屏住呼吸，想辦法夾住水管，後來終於成功。整個過程，他不但一點抱怨都沒有，而且一直都很高興在做。Bob也常常做一些其他困難的工作，譬如他把污水管挖出來。因為我們老舊的污水管常常被樹根給塞住了，為了把它疏通，只好把舊的管子給挖出來；挖出來以後，管子裏的糞便都會流出來，所以坑裏面都是這些東西。這個時候，Bob要把新的管子接上去，把舊的管子砍掉，他常常都



要跳到這些臭的爛泥裏面做這些工作。Bob也常常在寒冷的冬天，或在大雨之中修理聖城的電力

系統。在這種很惡劣的情況之下，爲了趕修電力系統，有時要花好幾天的工夫才有辦法把電力恢復。

通常Bob不會坐著等人家告訴他做什麼事情；什麼事情需要做，他自己會決定。譬如一九七六年他第一次到聖城時，他就發現聖城有兩個很嚴重的問題，一個是水，一個是電。水的問題是很多水管都在漏，Bob就趕緊找尋這些漏的地方，儘快地把這些漏水管修復。第二個是州政府留下來的電力系統，其變壓器都很大，遠超過我們的使用量；所以即使我們不用，它也是會耗掉許多電力。Bob就想辦法找一些小的變壓器把大的給換掉，節省我們很多的電費。在今年之前，Bob每天還是在找尋電力系統和水系統的漏水和壞的地方，想法子把它修好。

在一九九六的時候，萬佛城必須建立新的污水處理系統，以自行解決污水。Bob就花了兩年的時間把這個新的污水系統給做好。當工程開始的時候，必須要挖很多的溝渠，然後埋新的污水管。我們工程部有一台很老的福特怪手，專門挖溝用的，Bob用這很老舊的怪手用了一陣子。因爲這個老的怪手已經無法負荷新的工作量，後來就去租了一個比較大的JCB怪手。他可能情願用一把鏟子或手來挖一個洞，也不願意用那個老的福特怪手去挖。以後的兩年中，Bob幾乎天天都在挖溝壕，他變成這方面的專家。現在他不在了，我想可能他很遺憾的，就是沒有辦法再用這個怪手

來挖溝渠了。

我現在講一個故事也是關於他的。大概十年前，在聖城單棟的房子南邊，就是靠近現在有機農場附近，我們的排水系統整個都無法產生作用。那邊常常都是一些爛泥，所以很難使用，Bob就決定把排水給修好。這是一個很困難的工作，因爲爛泥太多了，怪手開進去可能會被陷在裏面；如果離泥巴太遠，又無法挖掘。所以這時他用比較大的怪手，它有一個很大的挖土夾子；萬一它被陷在泥巴裏面，可以用大的挖土容器把車子想辦法推出來。可是那一次，怪手被陷在泥巴裏；不管他怎麼想辦法用那個大的箱子去推它，還是推不出來。

因爲怪手的重量會讓它每天不停地在泥地裏一直沉下去；如果這個爛泥很深的话，這個怪手會整個沉進去不見了。這時Bob需要人幫助，我立刻開著那小的福特怪手過去幫他。他說：「小福特怪手這麼弱，沒什麼力量，一點用都沒有，怎麼可能把這大的怪手拖出爛泥呢？」我用鐵纜把兩個怪手綁在一起，然後把小的福特怪手遠遠地停在乾的泥土上，然後就開始慢慢地拖；拖一下，那大怪手就動了一下；我努力又再拖一下，終於漸漸把那大的怪手拖了出來。

Bob同時也修理換了很多供水系統的開關，這些開關都很老舊，甚至都無法運作——有時無法打開，或者打開又無法關起來；所以每次碰到這種情況，誰都很頭痛。Bob就會把舊開關整個挖出來，重新換一個；新的開

關很好用，要關要開都很方便。因爲它開關非常好，所以有一次Bob整個被水淋溼了。

那是在八年前的一個非常熱的夏天，大約八月的時候；我們剛裝好一個新的開關，這個開關控制一個消防栓。那時我站在開關的這邊，Bob就站在消防栓的那邊；我就跟Bob講：「這新的水閥非常好，我可以一下就把它打開來。那到底有多快呢？快到你連跑都來不及，我一開就會把你噴得全身都是水。」Bob那時身手還非常矯健，他就跟我說：「你可以試試看！沒關係！試試看我跑得有多快！」我當時想：不管我動作多快，當看到我在開開關時，他就可以溜了，我是沒有辦法把他淋濕的。可是，這時忽然有人來幫我了，是誰呢？就是John Scroggs。他剛好開著車子從旁邊經過，他把頭伸出車窗外問Bob一個問題；這時Bob就把他的注意力轉到John那邊，我趁這個機會就立刻把水管打開來。碰！一下子就把他整個人淋濕了，他來不及溜了！這時我們三個人笑成一團。

你如果曾經跟Bob談過話，我相信都會有這個經驗，他常常都很直心地講他心裏要說的話，但不會侮辱對方。他不贊成別人的想法、作法時，他會直截了當地跟大家說：「我是很堅決地反對你的看法，我不認爲你這樣做，會給法總帶來最大的好處。」

◎待續