

Buddha Root Farm Avatamsaka Retreat

佛根地華嚴之旅 (8/3 ~ 8/9/08)



In Buddha Root Farm, there was more youth this year (more than half of the group was under the age of 21) and so they brought with them a very lively and spirited energy to the retreat. The sutra topic was The Ten Inexhaustible Treasures Chapter from the Avatamsaka Sutra by Rev. DM Heng Sure for twice a day every day in the week. Aside from the sutra lectures there were morning and evening ceremonies, about five possible meditation sits, group discussions, and outdoor excursions, such as the youth roundtable held in (yes) the Smith River, the trip to the dunes and the Pacific Ocean. Everybody was free to attend his/her favorite activities. A few attendees from the Berkeley Monastery formed much of the kitchen staff, and they prepared delicious meals every day. Most of the group camped outdoors in the serene woods. The spiritual energy and sweet air in the misty Turtle Mountain refreshed everyone's body and mind.

Overall the retreat was definitely a success, especially thanks to the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and the Venerable Master who worked behind as an invisible force helping everyone. Also thanks to all the attendees who came together to provide food for the body and the soul and allowed for a trip that no one will soon forget. Last but not least, much gratitude must be given to Silver the dog, the special BRF Dharma Protector who never failed to guard the Buddha Hall during the ceremonies and lectures. A week surely does fly by when you're having fun, and we all wait eagerly for next year's Buddha Root Farm retreat!

與 往年不同的是，今年有更多年輕人參加佛根地的活動（半數以上在21歲以下），他們帶來一股活潑的朝氣。此次主題是由恒實法師主講，為期一周，每天兩次之《華嚴經》的〈十無盡藏品〉。此外，每天都有早晚課，有大約五次的禪坐，小組討論和戶外遠足——比如在史密斯河中間的圓桌小聚（沒錯，在河中間），以及到著名的太平洋和沙堆短途旅行；每人都可選擇自己喜歡參與的活動。而由柏克萊的居士組成的香積組每天都為大家準備了可口的食物，多數成員都是在寧靜的森林裏露營，龜山獨特的靈氣和清新香甜的空氣讓每個人身心都煥然一新。

總體來說，此次活動是很成功的。特別要感恩諸佛菩薩、上人給與我們無形的加被，同時也感謝每位參與者共同成就此次難以忘懷的旅行，為我們的身心都提供了一場佳餚。還要感謝佛根地的特別護法，一條叫Silver的狗，每次講經和法會，牠都會定點在佛殿門口守護著。當你興致盎然的時候，時間總是過得飛快，我們急切盼望明年在佛根地的聚會。