

在動物避難所舉行放生儀式

Holding a Liberating Life Ceremony in an Animal Sanctuary

麥瑞英文
何書凡中譯

.....
By Maureen McIver
Chinese Translation by Shu-fan He



The City of Ten Thousand Buddhas (CTTB) and the Dharma Realm Buddhist University (DRBU) held a Liberating Life ceremony at the PreetiRang Sanctuary, located in Solano County, on Saturday, April 1, 2017. The Sanctuary is a haven for animals who are slated for death, having exhausted their usability to the livestock industry, by either aging, injury, or abuse.

The PreetiRang farmyards, pens, and animals are all kept clean and comfortable. Amy, a 6th grader of Instilling Goodness Elementary School (IGES) said, “All the animals there thrive so well because of the love and kindness shown to them by the owners of the sanctuary.”

Due to the Liberating Life event, five hens who had spent two years caged in a building and artificially spurred to lay 300 eggs per year (by nature they would have laid about 10-14/year) were set free to roam in a safely enclosed yard. For the first time they experienced sunlight, felt the earth, and could clean themselves with dust baths.

About 30 people attended the ceremony, including the founders of PreetiRang Sanctuary, eight Bhiksunis, two veterinarians who provide services, DRBU students, and laypeople from CTTB and the Bay Area. They ranged in age from 8 years on up.

萬佛聖城與法界佛教大學於2017年4月1日星期六在位於索拉諾縣的PreetiRang避難所舉行了放生儀式。該避難所是一個為瀕臨死亡的動物而設的避風港，這些都是受盡畜牧業的虐待和傷害已老化不再有可用性的動物。

PreetiRang農場，所有的欄圈和動物都保持得乾淨、舒適。育良小學六年級學生艾米說：「由於避難所的主人對動物們的愛護，所有的動物都生活的很好。」

因為放生活動，五隻已被關了兩年，並以人工激素刺激年產300個雞蛋的母雞（在自然情況下就是已經下了10-14年的蛋），現在可以安全地在有圍欄的田地裡漫遊。這是牠們第一次經歷陽光，感受大地，並可以用塵浴清理自己。

大約三十人參加了儀式，包括PreetiRang避難所的創始人，八位比丘尼法師，兩名提供服務的獸醫、法大學生，以及聖城和灣區的居士。最小的只有八歲。

我們念著〈大悲咒〉排隊繞過公雞、母雞和山羊區時，好像引起了鄰近農場的一群小馬的注意，牠們都興奮地跑著、聽著；明媚的陽光，宜人的微風和清澈的藍天，再加上人們的愉快心情，真是非常美好。

The *Great Compassion Mantra*, recited as we filed around the barnyard past roosters, hens, and goats, also caught the attention of a herd of young horses on the neighboring farm who cantered up in all excitement and listened. Sunshine, pleasant breezes and blue skies matched the happy mood of all participants.

After a simple picnic lunch, we crossed the big field to enter the pasture. For many of us this was the first opportunity to be up close and in touch with cattle. One steer towers at six feet in height and weighs 2000 lbs. Our host explained that although he is gentle and loves attention, we should take care not to let our toes get stepped on! Those who wanted, could brush their coats, which most of the cattle



liked. We learned that, like people, they each have a unique personality, and that there is an order to their society, loosely based on seniority.

Yuen-Lin Tan, a DRBU graduate student, observed, "I was moved by the sincerity and dedication of Madhulika and her husband. Reciting together, in the midst of farm country, close to rescued animals was a very meaningful practice that brings the liturgy to life. Supporting sanctuaries like this seems an excellent way to practice liberating life in the present time."

Katherine, a 5th grader of IGES, reflected, "The sanctuary is located in the countryside where the animals live a happy life. I am grateful to the host for letting us transfer merit and virtue to the animals."

The founders of PreetiRang shared their story. Madhulika spoke about how, in the Hindu tradition, when a person has completed the first phase of student life (Brahmacharya) and the second phase of raising a family (Grihastha), they come to the third phase (Vanprastha), where they focus on giving back on a large scale and take up the activities of reflection and dedication. Eager for this step, she and her husband stepped away from their successful careers in Silicon Valley to dedicate their efforts to support the sanctity of life through opening

簡單的野外午餐後，我們越過一大片田野進入牧場。對於我們大部分人來說，這是第一次與牛群這樣近距離接觸。有一頭公牛高達六英尺，重2000磅。避難所主人解釋說，雖然這頭牛很溫馴，也喜歡人們的關注，但我們應該小心不要讓牠踩到我們的腳！如果想的話，可以刷刷牠們的毛，牠們喜歡那樣。我們感到，像人一樣，牠們每一隻都有獨特的個性，而且部分基於資格年齡，在自己的圈子裡有一定的秩序。

法界佛教大學研究生陳原霖說：「Madhulika和她丈夫的誠意和奉獻精神讓人感動。一起在農場念誦，接近那些被救的動物是一種非常有意義的作法，給與禮儀以生氣。這樣看來，支持這樣的避難所是當前放生的一個好辦法。」

凱瑟琳是一位育良小學的五年級學生，她說：「避難所位於鄉間，動物都過著自由快樂的生活。我非常感謝主辦方幫助我們把功德迴向給動物。」

PreetiRang的創始人分享了他們的故事。



Madhulika談到在印度傳統中，當一個人完成了第一階段的學生生活（Brahmacharya）和第二階段的家庭生活（Grihastha），就到了第三階段（Vanprastha），在這個階段裡他們專注於大力回饋，反思和奉獻。抱著對這個階段的渴望，她和她的丈夫離開了他們在矽谷的成功事業，並致力於通過建立這個避風港來支持生命的神聖。在沒有經濟外援的情況下，他們用他們自己的存款購買了這片40英畝的地產。他們的心靈導師一直鼓勵他們，去勇敢地迎接這徹底改變生活的一步，並幫助選擇了這個吉祥的場地。



this haven. Not having a financial backer, they dissolved their savings to purchase this 40 acre property. Their spiritual teacher gave them the courage to take this life changing step and chose this auspicious site.

During our interfaith celebration that day, Buddhists learned about the valuable teachings and traditions from the Hindu way, and Hindus learned the beautiful sincerity and ceremonies of the Buddhists. Both traditions acknowledge the divine within each sentient being, and both affirm the value of a cruelty-free, vegan or vegetarian diet. The day closed with a wider sense of community. ☸



在那天的間慶祝活動中，佛教弟子學到了印度教的寶貴的教義和傳統，同時，印度教徒也瞭解到了佛教的美好儀式和誠意。這兩種傳統都承載了對每個有情眾生的神聖認知，並且既確認了無殘酷，全素或素食的價值。這一天的的經歷讓大家有了更廣泛的社區意識。☸