



■ DHARMA TALKS

A Brand New Start



In the past, we may have been unwelcome among friends and family, but now we can make good connections with everyone. With the support of friends and classmates, we can launch a brand new start. In the past, we may have been critical and unkind, but today our attitudes have changed for the better. We treat others with courtesy and consideration, and they embrace us with renewed friendship. When we have the confidence it takes to turn over a new leaf, there is hope for success in the future.

Some people sustain serious physical injuries in accidents and become confined to wheelchairs. However, they are still able to move ahead and succeed with great confidence and perseverance. Some people seem to be doomed with ill fate. When they are ready to reap a harvest, a hurricane or flood ruins their crops. On starting a new business, an accident destroys their home or store. However, if their faith in life is still

intact, they can start anew and within a few years, success can still be achieved.

If we fall down while walking, we can get up and move on. If our car breaks down on the road, we can get it fixed and drive away. If we fail the entrance examination for college, we can take it again next year. If we lose an election, we can run again next time. Natural disasters like floods, fires, tornadoes or earthquakes may destroy our homes and property, but they can never ruin our faith. If we can start over, we will succeed.

A prominent pianist was struck with polio, became paralyzed, and could no longer work the piano pedals. Although he was forced to retire from performing, he was not discouraged and instead started playing the cello. Through perseverance, and with determination and faith in himself, he eventually became a master cellist.

Victor Stein was a master pianist during the early 20th Century in Vienna, Austria. Unfortunately, his right arm was blown off during World War II. Instead of giving up on his destiny, he pleaded with composers to write music to be played with only the left hand. Later, he became well-known for playing pieces such as the "Left-hand Piano Concerto."

Thomas Edison watched his factory

By Venerable Master Hsing Yun

burn down in a fire in which he lost all his possessions. Many worried he could not sustain such a major setback. Much to the surprise of others, he addressed his workers the following day, "I am so thankful that the fire did not destroy me, but rather it burned away all the mistakes I made in the past. We will launch a new beginning today!"

Nine out of ten times in life, our wishes go unfulfilled. This is why we have to learn to get up again when we fall down. Some people can never recover from a single setback. Other people, after overcoming each difficulty, strive on stronger than before. How do we survive falling down and then have the motivation to start anew? I have the following suggestions:

1. Face difficulties with a calm and equanimous mind.
2. Turn adversities around with gratitude.
3. Build up strength with great diligence.
4. Understand causes and conditions with wisdom.

On the journey of life, as long as we have the perseverance to start anew, we will never permanently be knocked down by any setback.

By Sheng Yeon Cheng

Do A Good Turn Daily

October 29th and 30th, 2012 are going to be two very memorable days, especially for residents of New York and New Jersey. Many people lost their belongings and were displaced from their homes; some even lost their lives. While we braced for heavy winds and surging waters in the city, IBPS Deer Park, although about 100 miles northwest of New York City, also took a heavy hit. Having learned that trees were down and roadways were blocked in Deer Park, our boy scout troop headed to Deer Park to lend extra hands in helping to clear the fallen trees and foliage.

The boy scouts departed late Friday night, November 16, 2012, to camp at Deer Park and wake up early on Saturday to get a head start with the clean up. In the early morning of Saturday, some adult leaders went out to do a quick survey and we got our first look of the area after Hurricane Sandy. From what we were told, some of the trees blocking the roadway close to the main entrance had been removed days before to make it possible for vehicles to enter. However, the ramp leading from the lake to the Main Shrine was still blocked by fallen trees. A fallen hemlock tree was blocking the roadway by cabins four, five and six, and several trees behind the cabins were down as well. Luckily, there were no major damages to any of the buildings. After breakfast, the

scouts set out to work as planned. The first stop was the ramp stretching from the lake to the Main Shrine. Adult leaders spread out and started to cut branches off the tree trunks. In the meantime, scouts transported those branches to the flat ground by the lake. The large tree trunks were cut into pieces and dragged to the baseball field with a bulldozer. By the lakefront, scouts piled up the branches and set them on fire to reduce the amount of debris and to prevent beavers from dragging those branches into the lake and blocking the lake drainage. Some scouts swept up the foliage and dumped it deep into the woods so that it would not be easily blown back to cover the roadways again. The scouts worked the whole day and made no complaints. It was laborious work but that did not deter their motivation of getting the job done. They stopped working when it turned dark; however, continued with other scout activity after supper. A scout conducted a session on astronomy and all scouts lay down in front of the dormitory to stargaze. Scouts were amazed to see so many stars in the sky, including two shooting stars.

We do not really know how many trees were brought down by the hurricane. An approximate count gave us a number of 41. However, this number represents only those close to the roadway where we had access to during our stay at Deer Park. We do not

know if there were more fallen trees deep in the woods. Regardless, the scene of 41 uprooted trees showed us that the power of nature should never be ignored. Our lives are entangled with nature. In recent years, the hurricane season has extended further into the end of the year and hurricanes are getting stronger. As cited by USA Today on November 19, 2012, the Journal of Science reported that the rise of global temperature might reach eight degrees by 2100! As commented by New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo and some environmental scientists, we should expect this type of weather as a norm in the future. With all of this in mind, as well as all that we saw in the tri-state area and at Deer Park, we need to respect nature and be more vigilant in practicing environmental conservation. As per the scout slogan, "Do a good turn daily." We should ask ourselves, scout or not, have we done our part in contributing to environmental conservation today?



By Jena Chen

Brining holiday cheer to the elderly

Many paper flowers were given to the elderly at the beginning of the show during the song Hello, Hello. The IBPS Girl Scouts showed their love by performing at the Chapin House of Aging on December 9, 2012. They truly made the elderly very happy. The planning of the performance involved a lot of hard work and time.

The girls had been practicing for the past two months. They performed a total of eleven programs. Starting with a traditional Chinese fan dance, performances included more dangerous routines of Chinese yoyo and Chinese Kung Fu. The talents and bravery of the scouts amazed the audience. The girls further demonstrated their many talents by

playing instruments such as the clarinet, violin, and Chinese xylophone (Gu-Zheng), either in groups or individually.

The girls brought holiday cheer by singing "Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer." Because of Hurricane Sandy, the scouts also prayed for the safety of our land by performing sign language—"Love and Care for All" and "Wear a Smile". The audiences were so touched by the beauty of the moves they yelled, "Excellent!"

To make the show more multicultural, the girls performed a Latin dance, "Wepa" sung by Gloria Estefan, and a cute Hawaiian dance, "Biggest Coconuts that You'll Ever See." The show was closed by the Taiwanese

Mountain Dance. While waving goodbye, the girls hoped to go back to the nursing home soon so that they could make the grandmas and grandpas happy again. On the other hand, I am sure the grandmas and grandpas are also looking forward to see those cutie-pies again soon.



By Tony Lam

Relief for the Rockaways

Under the leadership of the Red Cross Disaster Team, Buddha's Light International Association (BLIA) New York Chapter joined and volunteered to hand out meals and relief kits to the most heavily affected neighborhoods of the Rockaways on

November 18, 2012. Though it has been more than two weeks since Hurricane Sandy struck, many organizations and local communities continue to help people persevere in the aftermath of this natural disaster. We visited each household to listen

to how they worked out during the storm and how they survived without food and power in the past several weeks. We also walked up to some high-rise buildings to look for senior citizens who may have needed immediate help.

Thanksgiving Dinner with the Girl Scouts



dish (creamed corn, mashed potatoes, etc.) and a main dish. When cooking the dishes, the girls had to work together and follow directions from the printed recipe. If girls did not know any culinary words (sauté, dice, etc.), they learned their meanings and used these skills to prepare the dish. Younger cadets and seniors were also able to learn knife skills and how to cook vegetables properly. Adult advisors and leaders supervised the girls as they cooked. After the girls finished cooking within the designated time, parents arrived and the Thanksgiving potluck commenced. (Vivian Chan)

The BLIA New York YAD Winter Blood Drive

by Frank Yao



On December 2nd, the BLIA-YAD New York hosted its annual Winter Blood Drive with the New York Blood Center. Every winter the Blood Center faces a low blood supply and this winter they see an even greater need for blood supply due to the recent Hurricane Sandy. There is a shortage of various blood type and platelet donations. Our YAD members who were campaigning for the Three Acts of Goodness, went through orientation and training from the New York Blood Center and served as translators during the blood drive. The YAD members called upon the public to donate the "gift of life". Besides BLIA members participating in this blood donation drive, we were happy to see people from the local community respond to the YAD campaign and support the event. Our Abbess, Ven. Chueh Chuan, also jumped on the bandwagon to donate blood. We gathered a bountiful donation of 40 packets of blood for the Blood Center.

Upcoming Activities January-March 2013

Sunday Services

Sunday Services are from 10:00 AM to 12:30 PM

Humanistic College of Fo Guang Shan Temple
Events and Various Classes Are Available

1/5-1/26	Sat	9:00 am	Chinese School
1/6	Sun	2:00 pm	BLIA Jan. Birthday Party
2/3	Sun	2:00 pm	BLIA Feb. Birthday Party
2/16-2/23	Sat	9:00 am	Chinese School
3/3	Sun	2:00 pm	BLIA Mar. Birthday Party
3/12-3/26	Tue	7:30 pm	Tai Chi Class
3/2-3/23	Sat	9:00 am	Chinese School
Special Events			
1/1	Tue	10:00 am	Dharma Service for Dedicating Merits for Patrons and Sponsors
1/12	Sat	10:00 am	Cleanup Day
1/13	Sun	10:00 am	Buddha Enlighten Day Dharma Service
		2:00 pm	BLIA, NY Annual Conference
1/19	Sat	1:00 pm	Cleanup Day
1/27	Sun	10:00 am	Completion of the Light Offering Service
2/9	Sat	9:00 pm	Chinese New Year's Eve Blessing Service
		10:00 pm	Chinese New Year First Incense Offering
2/10	Sun	10:00 am	Homage to Thousand Buddha Service
		2:00 pm	Tea and Chan Music
2/17	Sun	11:00 am	Liturgy for Making Food Offerings
		12:00 pm	New Year Celebration / Culture Fair / Food Court
2/23	Sat	7:00 pm	Buddhas & Celestial Guardians Offering Ceremony
2/24	Sun	9:30 am	Buddhas & Celestial Guardians Offering Ceremony
3/10	Sun	10:00 am	Annual Light Offering Inauguration Service
3/31	Sun	9:30 am	Great Compassion Repentance Service