

Letter from the Editor

In June, the summer solstice rises, peaking suspended in shining glory. The world multiplies and energies surge forward towards the peak of our third year in this Global Tea Hut. We've had an amazing three years: We've grown significantly, and these envelopes now reach dozens of nations around the world. And looking inside, or at the shelf of previous issues, you can see the burgeoning colors, variety of articles and tea, as well as great improvements in photography and layout over the months. And in the abundance of the season, we feel honored to have so much energy at our center. Our hearts also overflow with gratitude for your continued support and encouragement.

It seems that the world is bursting with tea energy, a love for the Leaf and all it is: a delicious, healthy beverage, an intriguing hobby full of connoisseurship, a vehicle for spiritual cultivation and even a gateway to the Great Nature that pulses in every leaf, every bowl. We sincerely hope that as tea and community grow through this magazine, we manage to express our love for each of these facets of tea. Consequently, at this, the halfway point of our year together, we thought it would be great to restate that it is our aim to utilize a portion of the moneys we raise to improve Global Tea Hut itself, not just to fund our current center or build the future one. We plan to start traveling to more tea regions, exploring their tea culture, history, tea processing methodology and tell stories of some of the tea people that inspire us. We'll hopefully translate some ancient and modern articles, treatises and other tea writings to look back at the heritage of the most revered Leaf. We also will continue to show you teaware artisans who craft gorgeous and functional teaware, much of which we use here at the center. And, of course, ours is a tradition primarily devoted to tea as a means for awakening more present, conscious living, so we will continue to share our spiritual insights as well.

The word is spreading, and slowly but surely we are moving towards these goals, and closer to our ultimate goal of building a free, permanent center in the mountains of Taiwan that we can all come home to, resting, meditating, drinking tea, learning and sharing community with tea brothers and sisters from around the world.

There was a time when Global Tea Hut was full of people who we'd met in our travels, or who visited our center here, and wanted to support our center. The fact that they got a "magazine" (in those days it was more of a newsletter) was a very welcome added bonus. Last November, however, we decided that we wanted to turn this on its head: We want Global Tea Hut to be such an awesome experience that tea lovers want to join regardless



of the fact that it supports a non-profit. In other words, the center used to be in bold letters and the gifts of tea and a magazine in parentheses; whereas, now, we want "Global Tea Hut" in bold letters and "supports a free, non-profit center" in parentheses on the back. Imagine if you picked up your favorite tea, which you love because it is organic and delicious, and read the small print on the back of the package, only to find out the tea you've been buying supports a non-profit. And we hope that you feel that we have indeed reached our goal of making Global Tea Hut that great!

A big part of what makes Global Tea Hut so great is the community behind it. We encourage you to reach out to us and let us know how we can include *you* more. We very much want you to feel at home here, amongst these pages, drinking these teas and then visiting our tea spaces if you get the chance. As you can see, in the last few months we have started a series called, "Voices from the Hut" featuring essays, articles and prose by Global Tea Hut members around the world. You should also contribute! Or at least send us an email to say hello, telling us what you think about the magazine or how we can improve it.

You are all included in our hearts and our prayers. Here at the center, we set out a cup of tea for all of you every day. It sits waiting for you, steaming and delicious. You always have some tea and a place to stay here. And if you can't come right now, don't worry: just imagine that cup and you'll be with us in spirit, sharing in our joys.