



# Sun Do News

**Fall 2020, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition**

Volume 36, Issue 4

## We'll miss you, Pauline!

Pauline White, a long-time Sun Do practitioner, Senior Instructor, and good friend, passed away on October 19<sup>th</sup> after a long illness.

*Pauline remained so positive and lovely through it all; she is such a great inspiration, I'm sure, for everyone she knew. I will miss her. —Kim Hedegaard*

*When I first met her, she was a school teacher and also a Tang Soo Do teacher, teaching and helping her students in the West Hartford area. She had made many friends through her travels to many places, including Thailand, Malaysia, and Korea, sharing like a SunDo Ambassador. Pauline, thank you so much for sharing your energy with us. We will miss you!!!*

*--KL Pang*

*Pauline was part of the group I traveled with to Korea in 2001. I remember a lovely evening in an ornate tea room in the Insadong in Seoul, which Pauline knew about from a previous stay in the city. I'll always remember the warmth of her company that night—Betsy Forrest*

In accordance with her will, Pauline's ashes will be spread at the Sun Do retreat center during the 2021 summer retreat.

Dear Members,

Meditation is a practice for  
Death

Sleep is also a practice for  
Death

Breath bridge between Death  
and Life

That is why Sundians follow  
the cosmic rhythm,  
the Breath.

----Master Hyunmoon Kim



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## International Sun Do Association

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### Grand Master

Hyunmoon Kim

### Masters

Ron Catabia

Tora Strawderman

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Virginia Platt

Betsy Forrest

Hyun Hee Kim

Christine Ucich

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Lucy Young

Teresa Lenzen

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Teresa Dunning

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Mihaela Talpau

Rebecca Newhouse

Marciana Ranceanu

Greg Vorst

Inna Dagman

Kira Visek

Korodi-Popa Ferenc

Milan Strnad

## Swaddled in Silk

By Kira Visek

Nerves jolting in shock, my heart pounded as consciousness made its presence known. I awoke with a start and scared out of my wits, having been awake through the night. Tossing, turning, pacing, peeking through curtains to watch the sun rise. For an hour or two, somehow, I had slept. The day must begin... again, I guess.

Staggering back to bed and finally collapsing, hopes of moving began to fade. Hours passed, then days, in quicksand I was stuck. Again I surrendered to a vicious fever several thermometers had refused to detect. Unexplainable aches and pains that made my doctor scratch his head. On the days I managed to convince myself to go to work, each step out of the room, toward the door, and finally into the car took tremendous effort. Thirty minutes or more would pass before I realized I still had to turn the ignition. My stomach turned inside out as I prepared for another day of chaos. All I had to do was last long enough to make it back. Overwhelmed from the day and struggling to function, in pieces I would arrive home. Whether I made it to the couch or halfway to bed, I couldn't help but sift through the depths of why I was even alive. Every day, or rather every second felt absolutely, undoubtedly excruciating. Life... a curse. Death... a blessing.

Did I mention I had been addicted to alcohol, marijuana, and various other drugs for over 15 years? Well, I didn't think that mattered very much. That was, until I landed at Embodied Recovery. I met with

Michael, and then Greg. And then, I practiced SunDo for the first time.

I was nervous and scared, completely wrought with anxiety as I walked into the room full of strangers. I wanted nothing more than to hide and disappear. What did I sign up for again? Oh yeah, this thing they call recovery. A thousand and one thoughts ricocheted in my skull. Was I going to pass out? “Air, I need air,” I thought. Was everyone staring at me? Are they watching, are they talking? Do they know I’m even here? Do they hate me, am I weird? Should I run? Michael and Greg soon eased my introduction to the group, and then Greg said, “OK, let’s begin class.”

Front and center, really? Everything, please disappear. It’s me... It’s just me here. The tears flooded again, began to break loose. My grip was too weak in their wake. Blurry eyes burned as the walls were closing in, and a voice broke the silence, “It’s OK, you can cry.” An acceptance of tears? Am I worthy of such a gift?

This very same person who had given such permission, moments later was instructing me to tap around my belly. Now I have to rotate my hips around in a circle? And then breathe in, stretching backward and forward, showing my belly off to the world? Oh no, it was happening... the sleeping beast began to stir.

“Kira,” I begged to myself, “please, please be nice. Please do not attack this man. Just, please, do what he says. Please?” My better self was listening, and thankfully, heeded that request. I followed along, though I admit with a sort of reluctance. The warm-ups were tough the first time through, but I felt lifted by the friendliness in the room. There really were others around me, and

they were doing this very same thing. We got to lie down, be quiet and still, focusing on our breathing. This was a meditation! Suddenly, maybe, this wouldn’t be so bad after all... Then, I heard the sound of the bamboo flute, and I was shown the beginning level postures. I soon found out this was all about breathing. Quite a challenge indeed! Though I could only manage a two-count breath at the time, I told myself, “That’s OK; if that’s the best we can do, then that’s what we can do.” So I did. After completing the cool-down exercises, I felt such a sensation of relief. I felt... better. So, this is SunDo. Well, I’m willing to try this some more.

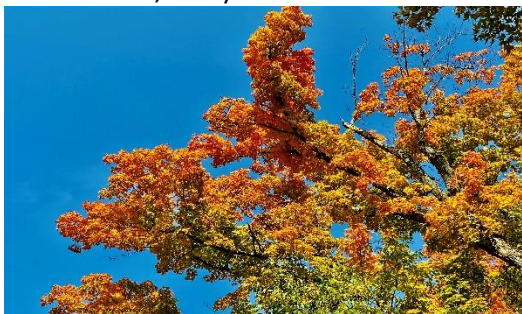


**Fall at the retreat center**—photo by Betsy Forrest

Each additional practice going forward was unique and special in its own way. The more I could breathe, the easier my arms would flow. It was incredible; they were moving effortlessly in sync. I imagined I had wings, and with each breath, I came closer to floating away. I think fondly of SunDo and how good it feels when I’m alone and feeling uncertain.

I’ll always remember the first time I felt melted--bathed in the most authentic peace I’ve come to know. I learned this feeling of peace is called Qi, and soon with it came golden rain. I closed my eyes, and it was as

if we were all in an expansive valley. Snowy mountains in the distance, a clean, clear sky, and fields of flowers abound. Our mats floating like colorful magic carpets and everyone wearing a great big smile. SunDo has allowed for powerful reconnections that I am learning I deserve to have. I get to remember what it was like to be a ballerina, and be reacquainted with spirit friends. Each practice I feel reminded to invite the angels and to ask for their help in our session. (I have learned it's important to thank them, too.)



One day, the time must have been right, and Greg showed me a page in his book about SunDo. The book taught of a golden light that lives deep in our belly, and that breathing helps it to grow. Greg taught me to breathe even deeper, and before I knew it, I was able to do four-count breathing. I recently surpassed 180 practices, and Greg said it was time to learn eight. In practicing eight counts, I have already felt that this light is indeed beginning to grow. Light that feels like silk, a gentle blanket for my soul. The word I use to describe this is "honor."

SunDo has a way with the universe, bearing gifts in mysterious packages. I opened a door to find a life of sobriety, and in walking through have discovered even more. I believe I may have stumbled right into flight school, and now I am working to earn my wings. Thank you, SunDo. I am a humble student, grateful and eager to practice.

*Kira Visek practices in Los Gatos, CA*

## 2020 Brings Big Progress for the SunDo Retreat Center's New Building

In 2018 a pair of building specialists with a burning determination and a passion for SunDo dedicated themselves to making a new retreat center a reality. Ron Walesch, a veteran SunDo practitioner of two decades, took on the job as project coordinator with his friend and fellow practitioner John Mallory. With Ron's 25 years of experience in construction and interior work, alongside John's architectural talents, the duo had the confidence and know-how to take on this project.

*John Mallory and I are close friends — we looked at each other and I said, "I'm willing; are you willing to take this on?" And we both said "yes."--Ron Walesch, Project Coordinator*

The two have worked tirelessly on the design and construction of the new kitchen and dining hall building over the past two years. We were able to catch up with Ron recently and get an update from him on the status of the project. We also learned what makes its unique insulation so efficient and eco-friendly.



Shawn and Ron—photo by Christine Ucich



## Challenges and Progress in Vermont

While enthusiasm for the new building is at an all-time high amongst the construction team, Ron admits it's been a challenging road to this point with a lot of troubleshooting, moving of walls, fixing structural issues, and navigating the difficulties of a limited budget. Whenever possible Ron invested his own time, physical labor, and logistical planning into executing this ambitious project.

While the team was able to do a great deal on their own with their nearly 50 years of collective building industry experience, gaps in funding posed challenges they could not easily avoid.

"The flow of money has caused us to stop and start, which is not cost-effective when doing a construction project," Ron says. "I've had excavators in here five times, rather than one excavator two times, to lay water lines and waste lines underground." But in spite of these hang-ups, the building project is progressing.

"There's been a huge leap in the details," Ron says. "We're finishing the interior now — for the most part the exterior is done." Ron meticulously planned out aesthetically pleasing and functional flooring types for the three bathrooms, kitchen, and main dining hall, which are to be installed next. The dining hall, in particular, will likely have a beautiful wooden floor.



Ron and Shawn insulate—photo by Christine Ucich

## About the New Construction

The building was designed by John Mallery, a longstanding SunDo member, architect, and builder. John developed several different drawings and models until he and Ron reached a floor plan and architectural design that was approved by Master Kim and the SunDo community.

"It took several months and we made adjustments," Ron says. Changes included moving walls, enlarging bathrooms, and optimizing each individual room with its function clearly in mind. Aesthetics were key in the team's planning. The interiors are well-designed to promote an open and relaxing atmosphere, and Ron calls the exterior "a complement to the land," with its porch view of the open field and hilly sunsets, as well as the way it structurally contrasts with the meditation hall.

“They’re different designs — the meditation hall is an octagon, and the dining hall is a square with four hip roofs and two pitched roofs with a cupola; it’s almost like a sentinel on top that draws energy,” Ron says. (Hip roofs are where two sloping roof lines intersect.)

### **Insulated with Nature’s Approval**

There’s more to the new building’s interior than just good design — it’s also insulated with 100 percent sustainable cellulose from Green R Insulation. Shawn Ecklund, a contractor at the company that has worked with the special material for over 10 years, installed the cellulose insulation in the new retreat building and explained its unique benefits to us.

“I am completely convinced it’s the best insulation for buildings because, environmentally, it’s a renewable resource; it’s part of the working landscape in New England,” Shawn says. To those who don’t know, cellulose is actually just post-consumer paper pulp treated with the natural mineral borate, which repels insects and rodents and makes the insulation fire retardant and mildew resistant.

“The great thing about cellulose is that all of our buildings are framed out of wood, and the insulation here is made of the same fiber as the building, so it handles moisture and changes in the seasons as a complete system, instead of the materials being at odds with each other,” Shawn explains. By using cellulose throughout the new retreat center, we end up with a much more breathable, sustainable, and long-lasting building.

But back to aesthetics for a moment — when a building is a work of art, cellulose is

the perfect fit for any crevice. Shawn says, “Cellulose is really easy to install in irregular-sized cavities, and with the beautiful architecture of this building with all of the hip roofs, it would make for a very challenging situation to insulate with fiberglass or foam board.” The cellulose goes right in and fills the crevices — no wasted labor and no wasted materials.



**New walls**—photo by Betsy Forrest

### **Goals for the New Building**

While the new building’s completion will add immensely to the quality of SunDo retreats for practitioners in the Northeast, Ron has bigger aspirations in mind for the space for both bringing the SunDo community closer together and attracting new practitioners.

“I suggested this to Master Kim, and it’s part of my vision, that the entire global SunDo community have an opportunity to come here, any time they feel to,” Ron says.

This would mean that even if members don't have the flexibility in their schedules to attend planned retreats, they could still come at their convenience with their families and friends who haven't tried the practice yet.

*That's my vision: to see this place used more often. – Ron Walesch, Project Coordinator*



**Shirley Walesch peeking through the kitchen pass-through—photo by Betsy Forrest**

Ron also hopes to see the space used by people outside of the SunDo community by making the building an income-earning property with rentals to other institutions and practices. If the building is able to accommodate year-round retreat bookings, he believes a custodian will likely need to stay at or nearby the facility to prepare it and welcome non-SunDo practitioners who arrive.

"I think, give us one more year, and this place is going to be available in its finished condition with running water, heat, hot showers, and an industrial kitchen, which is going to be fun to cook in," he says.

Above all, Ron wants the space to be used to its fullest potential, and his own habits align with this vision. "I come out here three, four, five times a week because I enjoy being here. This place is sacred, it's

quiescent, it's solitude, it's a beautiful place."

*Want to help bring the project to completion? Donate to our Giving Fund [here](#)! Or send donation by mail to: SunDo, C/O Treasurer Roy Bushman, 4125 34th Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45209.*



**Front door and windows—photo by Betsy Forrest**

## Retreat Schedule

### January Retreats 2021

January 5~10 (5 days)  
5~7, Mountain Retreat  
7~10, Regular Retreat  
Led by Master Hyunmoon Kim  
Sundo Retreat Center, Vermont, US

January 21~24  
15th European Retreat  
Led by Master Hyunmoon Kim  
Sundo Retreat Center in Europe  
Bran, Romania  
more info: [www.sundo.ro](http://www.sundo.ro)





**Promotion ceremony by Zoom for EU Sundo community, held on 10-16-20 in front of the ancient observatory, built in 7th Century at Kyungju City, South Korea: 8 belts and 2 Instructor Trainee Apprenticeships with candidates from Czech Republic, Romania, and Germany.**

## Promotions

### **Joong Ki Don Boup Hoo Pyun (White-Yellow)**

Veronika Čihulková (CZ)  
Magdalena Bažantová (CZ)  
Nicolas Lavaud (CZ)  
Korodi-Popa Ferenc (RO)  
Korodi-Popa Aurelia Nicoleta (RO)

### **Keon Kon Don Boup (Yellow)**

Oldrich Burda (CZ)  
Rainer Kitza (DE)-Germany

### **Won Ki Don Boup I (Red)**

Martin Zemek (CZ)

### **Instructor Trainee**

Korodi-Popa Ferenc (RO)  
Milan Strnad (CZ)

## Work Day at the Retreat Center

On October 9<sup>th</sup>, several people met at the retreat center to till the garden, plant garlic, weatherize the trailer, drain the pipes and shut off the water, and other tasks that needed to be completed before winter.

Participants were Betsy, Rick, and Julia Barstow; Dennis Downey; Ron and Shirley Walesch; Steve and Heidemarie Holmes; and Betsy Forrest.



**Shirley plants garlic—photo by Betsy Forrest**



**Microcosmic orbit—photo by Betsy Forrest**





**Dennis helps spread the straw on the garlic—photo by Betsy Forrest**



**Steve and Dennis mask the masters—photo by Heidemarie Holmes**



**Picnic tables ready for the snow—photo by Betsy Forrest**



**From the microcosmic orbit—photo by Betsy Forrest**





**The Sun Do News** welcomes stories, articles poems, photos, and announcements. Please send your contribution to Betsy Forrest as an email attachment, if possible, at [bforrest777@gmail.com](mailto:bforrest777@gmail.com).

**Website:**

**[www.sundo.org](http://www.sundo.org)**

Visit the Sun Do website for information on Sun Do history, retreat dates and registration, and much more.

You may also e-mail questions to us through the website.

**Find us on Facebook:**

<https://www.facebook.com/Sundo.Healing/>

**Editor and producer:**

Betsy Forrest



**Lillooet Sun Do group**—photo by *Lucie Lambert*



**On the way to the retreat center this fall**—photo by *Betsy Forrest*