



PLUM MOUNTAIN NEWS

Volume 11.3

Autumn 2004

Dear members and friends,

Everywhere in Seattle the maple trees are bright with a rich mix of reds and yellows. There is a new chill and bite in the air. Autumn has definitely arrived in the low lands. For the second year in a row, my fall training began with a trip to Doylestown, Pennsylvania to train at Bucks County Aikido (9/3-5) with Lyons Sensei, Daiui Apodaca Sensei, Robert Savoca and twenty other students of Aikido and Zen. Carl Baldini served as my Inji (attendant) and made sure I didn't get into too much trouble during the Jo (stick) practice on Saturday afternoon.

Chobo-ji's Autumn Equinox Sesshin (9/18-24) rooted all fifteen participants into their original nature. Everyone participated more or less fulltime, which is best. As we are a city center and not a monastery, we do allow participants in our spring, summer and autumn weeklong sesshins to attend school or unavoidable work responsibilities; however, I am glad to say, that all participants have seen to it that there has been a minimum disruption to the practice. Carolyn (Josen) was our Tenzo (chief cook), and made it look so easy to provide such delicious and nutritious meals. For this sesshin, Rev. Genko Blackman stepped into the role of Shika (manager) and kept us all occupied during samu (work mediation period), and after the first couple of days of cleaning and gardening at the temple, sent a crew each day to work at the Japanese Garden in the UW arboretum. Diane (Joan) Ste. Marie kept us all punctual and in good form as our Jikijitsu (time keeper). Michelle (Muji) LeSourd was our Densu (chant leader) and brought a slightly Chinese accent to the verse (she is a Chinese translator). Peter (Shinkon) Glynn was our Jisha

(tea server), ably assisted by Justin (Myozan) Wadland. Shinkon reported that we ate fewer sweets and other snacks after samu this sesshin. I think that means we were more awake for afternoon zazen. Bob (Daigan) Timmer pitch-hit as my Inji (attendant). We concluded Autumn Sesshin with a Jukai (Dharma Precept) ceremony for Peter Ilgenfritz and Linda Wehnes, more on this later.

On October 4th, there was a well-attended and powerful forum on "Preparing for Death" at the University Friends Meeting House. On the panel was Rev. Ron Moe-

May we overflow with the wisdom of all Awakened Beings and wake up ourselves to the vastness that underlies us all, so that we, too, can become as Buddhas whose compassionate love (Bodhicitta) works with all beings to free them from the treachery of self-ignorance.

Finally, preparing ourselves for the inevitable, when the time comes for us to die, may we have a minimum amount of sickness and suffering. May we become aware of our approaching deaths within seven days before our bodies drop and may we accept the news with ease.



*Genki Roshi's new Zendo Calligraphy
"Your Body, Pure as Mountain, is Buddha"*

Lobeda a pastor of University Lutheran Church, visiting Lama Venerable Karma Samten representing the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, Carolyn representing Friends, and myself representing a Zen approach. Each of us gave a ten-minute introduction to the topic, with a lively and lengthy discussion period that followed. In my introduction, I included Priest Daiei's Prayer that we chant as a closing verse each evening at spring, summer and fall sesshins, and in part reads as follows:

On October 9th, a dozen people were in attendance at our Saturday Workshop, "Jizo's for Peace, which Carolyn will report on later in this issue. After our mini-sesshin on October 10th, we had a well attended Chobo-ji Board meeting, the topics of discussion included the need to further investigate our sewer line to the street, and my up coming 50th birthday, Nov. 5th, which will be celebrated later in the November as I will be in New York at the DBZ monastery training with Eido Shimano Roshi, 9/30-11/7. Last weekend (9/16-17) Genko traveled to Wenatchee to introduce the Japanese Tea service to over a dozen participants at a Saturday workshop. She also gave a Dharma Talk on Sunday to the East Wenatchee Unitarian Fellowship. Both were very well received, and she has already been invited to return.

In addition to the articles already mentioned, in this issue of Plum Mountain News you will be able to read reviews of *The Zen of Living and Dying*, by Philip Kapleau Roshi, and of the music CD "The Nature of Sound"; moreover, you will get

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a heads-up on upcoming events, including Rohatsu, 2004, and I've included a potent and funny excerpt from Todd Petit's "Summer Sesshin Notes." Todd and Sharon Petit, who reside in Wenatchee and coordinate the Wenatchee Unitarian connection with Chobo-ji, attended their first weeklong sesshin this past summer. Transcribed for this issue, you will find the text of my final Dharma Talk at our recently concluded Autumn Sesshin. May your fall be as colorful as the autumn leaves.

With gassho,

Genjo Osho

Autumn Sesshin 2004

Closing Incense Poem

*Awaiting the next spring,
The iris have been thinned,
The vegetable garden
turned over.*

*Where has the flower essence
gone?*

*Red and white fuchsia and
roses continue to bloom.*

*Incomparably profound and
minutely subtle,
Nature never leaves home.*

Summer Journal

(excerpt from Todd Petit's "Sesshin Notes")

The wooden clappers "smack!" and a small bell rings four times signaling the start of zazen. The lights go out leaving us in dawn's slow waking. Silence and stillness fill the morning and I relax into my first zazen period. I keep my head up and glance down at the golden toned hardwood floor. I will not move now until the

jiki jitsu signals the end of zazen.

Saturday morning starts slowly in the Capitol Hill neighborhood of Seattle where Dai Bai Zan Cho Bo Zen Ji is located. A bus goes by on Madison just a block away and an occasional car passes in the street out front. I hear birds calling and crows caw noisily. The dawn is lighting the windows. There is one window across from me to my left and another across from me to my right. I face a wall and the floor is bounded left and right by bright reflections from both windows. The crows caw ceaselessly. I begin to notice the positions of the other participants. There are three across from me against the wall and another in the corner to my left in front of the window. To my right, the wall takes a jag away where another window frames a fifth figure and others are to his right. On the far right wall more figures sit until I can no longer see with my peripheral vision. On my left are two more windows and three figures sit there. Further back I cannot see, but I know Genjo Osho, the Abbot of Cho Bo Ji is there as well as the altar. Sharon sits silently on my right and just to her right is the door to the Zendo. I understand we have a total of 20 participants.

My left knee hurts. I am sitting with my legs crossed in front of me, my left leg in front of my right one. I am flexible and I can get into a half lotus position but I am not prepared to try that yet. I have been sitting on a regular basis, almost daily since the 9/11 terrorist attack, but I use the more relaxed Burmese position. I let my eyes rest on the polished wood floor and ignore the pain in my leg. Cool morning air touches my skin and I breathe easily and softly. My heart is still beating too fast because of the excitement of being here and the knowledge that I have given control of my actions over to someone else. I want to adjust my leg because the pain is growing, but everyone else is sitting like statuary.

I listen to the morning traffic pick up and the sound of far away voices. The crows continue their harassing noise. An airplane goes overhead and after a few minutes another one goes over. They are not very loud despite how low they are. I think

about it and realize we must be in the traffic pattern for a runway at the airport. Now I'm beginning to feel some real pain and am getting very uncomfortable. I try straightening my back and lifting my shoulders. That's all very nice but doesn't ease the leg pain. So I try a little shift of my legs to get some ease. It doesn't help. This would be a good time for the zazen session to end so I could stand and stretch. It doesn't happen. I listen to more crows, cars, buses, airplanes, voices and wind. Now I am in big trouble. My left knee and leg is partly asleep and the pain is urgent. If your damn leg is going to sleep, how come it hurts so bad! I try another small almost imperceptible shift. It doesn't help. But in a place where nobody is moving, even a small display of discomfort is visible to almost everybody. What am I going to do! I can't just throw my leg straight out but I'm not sure I can stand the pain any more. I am sitting bolt upright now, trying to levitate right off the cushion! Cushion? I am sitting on a god damned granite rock! DING! The bell sounds followed by two wooden claps. Everyone bows. "Ten minute bathroom break" a voice calls as everyone stands up. I stand up carefully and find my leg is fine. The pain quickly dissipates and I feel normal again. I have survived and made it all the way from 5 a.m. to 6 a.m. This was the first hour of the first day of seven days of Sesshin and I've had my first realization. A 10 minute bathroom break is more wondrous than all the angels in all the heavens above! My second realization was that in less than 10 minutes I was going to do it again!



Book Review

by Rev. Genko Blackman

The Zen of Living and Dying Philip Kapleau Roshi

Having lost seven family members in the last eight years (eight if you include our dog, Kumo), this book seemed a good choice for reading during the fall intensive. The subtitle of the book is "A Practical and Spiritual Guide," and Kapleau weaves easily back and forth between the two, addressing, for example, details of planning a memorial service in the same sentence with Buddhist views of rebirth. The depth and facility with which he can elucidate the subject for us also makes this a difficult book to read through. I expect it will take several readings to glean much of its worth.

Kapleau divides his text into roughly five parts – Death, Dying, Karma, Rebirth, and a series of short appendices on topics such as living wills and meditation. I particularly valued the section on karma. This is the best exposition on this topic I've seen in English and geared towards lay practitioners. Kapleau speaks to the subtle interactions between collective and individual karma, the importance of motivation, and considerations when making difficult choices.

Perhaps the most helpful aspect of the book is the way he leads us so gently, beginning with our fundamental fear of death, to an intellectual understanding of its nature from a phenomenal and an absolute perspective. He then helps us become familiar with all aspects of dying before addressing the causes of the continuing cycle from life, through death, back to rebirth and on.

It is clear that Kapleau's understanding as expressed in this book is based on profound personal experience as well as many years of study and teaching. From a Zen perspective, there is no substitute for a direct experience of the fundamental nature underlying what we call life and death. Nevertheless this book can provide us with much-needed guidance in navigating the details of the life passage.

CD Review

by Shodo Tom DeGroot

Shri Durga dj Cheb I Sabbah

Genjo-Osho has often exhorted us to "listen to the silence." One of my favorite CDs lately has been Shri Durga by dj Cheb I Sabbah, a blend of electronica and classical Indian ragas. I found the following text in the liner notes.

THE NATURE OF SOUND:

Sound is considered to be of two kinds, one a vibration of ether, the other a vibration of air.

The vibration of ether, which cannot be perceived in the physical sense, is considered the principle of all manifestation, the basis of all substance, the "music of the



spheres." This kind of vibration is not caused by physical shock as are audible sounds. It is therefore called anahata, "unstruck."

The other kind of sound is an impermanent vibration of air, an image of the ether vibration. It is audible and always produced by a shock. It is therefore called ahata, or "struck."

"Struck sound is said to give pleasure, unstruck sound leads to Liberation". (Narada Purana)

[Note: both of these selections are available from Chobo-ji's online Bookstore linked to Amazon.com]

Rohatsu Sesshin

11/30 - 12/8

Please make your reservations by Nov. 15th. The cost of sesshin is \$320 (less dues). No part-time participation is allowed. We will leave from our Zendo, 1811 20th Ave., at 4 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 30th. Please be at the Zendo by 3:00 p.m. so that we can pack up and make car pool arrangements to Camp Indianola. Formal zazen will begin after a light dinner. Rohatsu ends around 10:00 am on Wednesday, 12/8, but please don't plan departure flights before 2pm.

If you are coming from the airport you can take Shuttle Express, (800) 487-7433, from the baggage claim to the Zendo for about \$23 per person, 45 minute travel time. <http://www.shuttleexpress.com/> (make reservations early). Or, you can take either the #174 or #194 Metro buses from the baggage claim area to downtown, and then transfer to either the #11, #12 or #43 to Capitol Hill and the Zendo (travel time is about 1.5 hrs.). Bus fair is \$2.

Please bring a zabaton and zafu if you have them. Bring clothes for cold, wet weather (layers are best), and sturdy shoes for outdoor kinhin (walking meditation). Bring a sleeping bag, pillow, towel, washcloth and flashlight. Eating bowls and utensils will be provided (bring traditional nested bowls if you have them).

We serve three vegetarian meals, one large tea and two small teas per day. Leftovers may be available for snacking at the cook's discretion. Hot coffee and tea will be available most of the time. If you want food to munch on, please plan to bring your own. The kitchen and provisions in Totem Lodge are reserved for the planned meals. Totem has two dormitory wings (male & female) with bathrooms, and in Chak Chak, about 50 yards from zendo, there are semi-private rooms.

Morning wake-up bell is at 4:00 am. There are 30 min. breaks after each meal. Group zazen will adjourn at about 10:00 pm, followed by yaza (personal sitting).

Mumonkan

Case 4: The Foreigner Has No Beard

(6th day, Autumn Sesshin, 2004)

Koan: Wakuan said, “Why has the foreigner from the West no beard?”

Mumon’s Commentary

Training in Zen has to be real training. Satori has to be real satori. You have to see this foreigner here clearly yourself, then you actually know him. If, however, you talk about “clearly seeing,” you have already fallen into dichotomy.

Mumon’s Poem

In front of a fool,

Talk of no dream.

The foreigner has no beard.

It is adding stupidity to clarity.

There is only this afternoon, evening and tomorrow morning before we conclude our Autumn Equinox Sesshin together. Summer has ended. Fall has begun. Another year passes. Stories of old are being told. Bodhidharma to China in the 6th Century. The historical Buddha lived 2,500 years ago. Zen Master Wakuan lived a mere 850 years ago, in the 12th century. By Zen standards this is a very modern case.

Though I do not claim to be any kind of renaissance person myself, in all my investigations I’ve never come across a way of inquiry more precise and, in the end, more capable of making fun of itself. When it comes to the biggest questions, words fail because language is intrinsically dualistic and necessarily descriptive. Even when waxing poetic, we cannot impart our experience to another, no matter how accurate or clear our words may be, unless they have already experienced it for themselves. It’s rich that this very simple koan, which has so much in it, is on the second-to-the last day of Sesshin when we are most apt

to appreciate what it has to say.

Zen Master Rinzai extols us to realize our true nature, which is unattached to rank, position or ideology. What is our true nature? Our true nature is that which directly, vitally and passionately lives and dies. With an open heart and, for the most part, a clear mind, we find we have nothing to do and endless things to get done.

washing machine. You get all banged up, baked and exhausted, and you come out combusted, clean and smelling sweet. [laughter] And it’s odd; sitting here “doing nothing” we tend to become so clear about all that needs doing! It is not that if I don’t do what “needs doing” the sky will fall. It’s more like, “Oh, this is what next needs doing.” More relaxed and naturally ordinary, we realize there is “nothing to do” while endlessly getting things done.



Autumn Sesshin 2004 Participants

Rinzai’s “nothing to do” is very difficult to convey, but it is related to the “no beard” found in this case. Does “nothing to do” imply that we are all to sit here like so many lumps on a log? This is NOT Rinzai’s intent! Rinzai does say in the Tenth Discourse of the Rinzaïroku, “Better than grasp at the words from my mouth, take it easy and do nothing.” Rinzai follows this sentence by saying, “Don’t continue [thoughts] that have already arisen and don’t let those that have not yet arisen be aroused... Just be ordinary.” Yes, “Take a load off and relax,” come down to the zendo and have a nice sesshin. [laughter] Of course, at this point we are all well aware that to do zazen at sesshin is like sitting in a furnace or going through a

As we realize that there is “nothing to do,” we have time to do everything that needs doing. I don’t know how to better explain it, but perhaps it is clear that when we realize that there is no need to be in a hurry then the next thing that needs doing more easily gets done. When from an “absolute” perspective, we realize there is “nothing to do,” that is to say, there is nothing lacking or in excess, nowhere to go and nothing to attain, then from a “relative” perspective, we get a lot more done. It feels like we’re not doing anything in the sense that we’re relaxed and at ease. When we’re tired, we sleep. When we’re hungry, we eat. And the next thing that needs doing, presents itself. There’s no need to hurry because today’s a good

day to live and today's a good day to die.

Everyone knows the axiom, "Don't put off until tomorrow what can be done today." Yes, why burden yourself or somebody else, if it can be done today, do it! On the other hand, it's going to be okay. It's fundamentally going to be okay because it *is* okay. The earth is turning. The sun is shining. The Universe is unfolding. It's all okay!

If this planet doesn't survive the adolescence of the human species, it's okay! How many incarnations has this planet had already? If you landed on this planet in one of its earlier incarnations or ages, you would definitely think you were on some other planet in the galaxy. What strange creatures—this is certainly not earth! Maybe this good earth will have many more evolutions. It's okay. Why get so attached? Everything is impermanent. The Universe is unfolding without our making it do so.

Hopefully, we will emerge from sesshin at ease and, therefore, with "nothing to do." Hence, a lot more gets done! When truly at ease, you become the busiest and most effective person you know. Genko tells me that when we have trekked to do samu in the Japanese garden, the gardener is very happy to see *us* show up. All these Zen students are so at ease! They get a lot done! Twice as much as any other volunteer. Ah, that's right, when at ease, with nothing to do, a lot more gets done!

There's nothing to do and there's no one to save. The first Bodhisattva Vow usually is translated: "The number of sentient beings are innumerable, we vow to *save them all*." Yet, from the "absolute" perspective there are no separate "beings" therefore no need or way to save them. A number of Rinzai's discourses end with "Take care of yourselves." So perhaps our great vow should read, "The number of expressions of Mu are innumerable, be caring." Be delighted, be in awe, and take care to be caring.

Wakuan says to his monks, "Why has the foreigner from the West no beard?" The foreigner he's talking about is Bodhidharma [the first Zen ancestor who traveled Plum Mountain News

from India to China in the 6th Century], and nearly all representations of Bodhidharma portray him with a beard. So, why does Wakuan ask why the foreigner has "no beard?" Well, he just as easily could have asked why Bodhidharma has no eyes, no ears, no nose, no tongue, no body, no mind?

First of all, this word "no" is the simplest translation of the character "Mu" which has lots of meanings. "Mu" infers



"absent" or "empty" and is linked to "great void" or "unnamable Tao." It cannot be adequately defined or interpreted in any language. It seems so absurd to say Bodhidharma has no beard. It would be like saying I have no nose. And, if we're stuck in "yes" or "no" thinking, these sorts of statements immediately confound us. Good koans are meant to confound us.

They help us break through our attachment to right and wrong, black and white discriminating consciousness.

We are not here to rid ourselves of our discriminating consciousness, but to learn that there are other ways to perceive, be and act in the world. We do not need to be directed or confined by our rational cerebral cortex. We have a very fine cerebral cortex, more folds in our brain than in any other brain on the planet, I think. But it's only a few millimeters thick and it is certainly not all of who we are. Discriminating consciousness is just that, discriminating. It comes up with reasons for this and that, and it tends to separate the world into likes and dislikes, rights and wrongs, you and me, us and them. So the conundrums of Koans try to break us through our attachment to discrimination. Discriminating consciousness is okay, even powerful, but let's set it aside for a moment, and then what do you see?

When not directed or confined by our discriminating consciousness, what do we see? A very different place! We open to a reality much more vast and rich than our rational faculties can ever imagine. Just let your rational mind take a rest, don't worry, it's not going anywhere, I swear. Give it a rest! Let yourself experience the world independent of all that analyzing, judging, formulating and systematizing! Ah, learn give it a rest, and experience the world as it really is and your own original nature.

So, "no" can mean the absence of a beard. Tell me, how can Bodhidharma have no beard right now? "No" can also relate that there is no real boundary or fence between my nose and my face, my face and my body, my body and the universe. Conceptually, this is my nose (Genjo points to his nose), but obviously there's no separation between my nose, face and body, except for the artificial boundaries we have developed and imposed for our convenience. Hence, there's really no "nose." So, in this sense, you could say that Bodhidharma has no beard.

But then, there's the "empty" or "Mu" nose. What is an empty nose? (Genjo sniffs). Perhaps you will claim that everything is emptiness, what's this then (Genjo holds his nose)? What am I breath-

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ing through? Here is transcendent nose (big sniff)! [Laughter] Yes, you got it! Transcendent Nose! My nose is “apparent” when I say, “this is my nose.” My real nose is more like (big sniff—laughter). Though this is a “real” demonstration of nose, don’t forget that all apparent form IS empty. “All apparent form is empty” is just a line! Muumuu...

Behind our apparent reality is what I’ve referred to as the Totem reality. The indigenous peoples of the Pacific Northwest make totems. There are totem images of bear, eagle, raven, orca, turtle, human being and many others. They don’t look quite right, do they? [laughter] We might call them distorted representations. They’re a little mysterious. But they *are* the *real* bear, eagle, and raven! They got it! They carve a token of the essence of bear, the essence of orca, the essence of raven or human being. Their culture has learned to carve a token of inner essence.

In Zen, we often ask, “What is the essence of rain falling?” or “the essence of the flower,” or temple bell or Mu? If you say, “Mu is the Absolute” or “Mu is emptiness” Ring, ring, ring, goes the dokusan bell. A description of the apparent will never do. If you say, “Mu is everything.” Ring, ring, ring. Apparent. “Mu is nothing.” Ring, ring, ring. Apparent! [laughter] Bring a real Mu. Muumuu...

Beyond the idea of a flower, the name of a flower, the description of a flower or the parts of a flower is the flower essence. No flower is necessary to perceive or relate flower essence. It doesn’t matter what country you are from, a rose by any other name still smells sweet. Flower is flower! A mountain is a mountain! Fox is fox! No matter when or where or on what creature we all recognize an “eye” when we see one. It does not matter what language we use or whether we have any understanding of its parts or how it works, an eye is an eye. If you saw an eye on any other planet, you would very likely recognize it as such. If you look at some of the earth’s fossil records, many of the creatures look like they are aliens from another planet; nevertheless, we would still immediately

recognize the creature’s eye, even though it is not at all like our own. There’s something about “eye” that transcends space and time. Somehow, the character or essence of “eye” is a part of the Universe. An eye’s essence is called “no eye.”

What else can “no” mean? Have we exhausted it yet? Let’s see, “no” can be a reference to what is variously called “Quiet Power”, “Thundering Silence”, “Animating Vibration”, “Creative Source” or “Ki.” Again a lot of descriptions, but down there somewhere is the experience. Before all our conceptualizations or discriminations, there is a naked truth or reality. Physicists tell us that if the electrons were aligned just right, two motor vehicles could pass through each other without colliding! Matter is just energy, form *is* non-form. You do not have to be a physicist to feel THIS right here on the cushion. You can *feel* the *alive emptiness* that is everything.

“No” goes beyond the beyond, and tells us “Don’t even talk about it. Don’t even try and impart it. Don’t say the word ‘emptiness.’ Don’t say ‘Buddha nature.’ Don’t say ‘Tao.’ Don’t say ‘Sunyata.’ No, no, no, no. Just Be It. Live It.” Don’t get caught by your rational mind, trying to explain it, because, as someone keeps pointing out to me in Dharma Interview, “How do you *know* that?” Truthfully, I don’t know anything. Zen is very clear on this point. No one will ever be able to tell you what emptiness is, where it comes from, how long it’s been here, or its purpose. So what can I tell you? *Nada.*

Nevertheless, these Koans and Zen practice can be a catalyst for you to experience *This* reality beyond the capabilities of your discriminating consciousness and primary senses. All I can say is that I’m very glad to be a part of an environment and practice where each of us can experience the depth of “no.” It truly warms my heart. And I believe, but I can offer no proof, that the world is a better place for our practice together. But, if I’m attached to the world being a better place, I’m lost once again. If I attach to the word “Emptiness,” or “Tao,” I’m lost. If I attach to the idea that I know something, I’m lost.

Which is why Mumon says in his commentary on this case, “If, however, you talk about “clearly seeing,” you have already fallen into dichotomy.” Mumon’s poem begins, “In front of a fool, talk of no dream.” He’s talking about Wakuan, as if to say, “Who are you talking to? Just another fool, about a dream. Your dream of ‘no.’ ” “The foreigner has no beard. Adding stupidity to clarity.” I have no nose! That’s just adding stupidity to clarity! (large sniff). And yet, as is often true in Zen circles, his criticism is really praise. What was in Wakuan’s heart when he said, “The foreigner has no beard?”

Zen Master Wakuan made a poem at his deathbed, which is often the case in Zen circles. It is customary to write a poem when you know you are close to the end of this life. I hope to write such a poem if circumstances allow. I don’t have any idea how my poem will read. We’ll see. However, his poem reads:

*An iron tree is in bloom.
A cock lays an egg.
Seventy-two years.
The cradle has fallen.*

Perhaps he is saying, “It’s all been a dream. After 72 years, never know what to expect, nothing to fear. This incarnation is finished.” What a wondrous dream! In the time that remains, take care not to miss *this*.

With gassho,

Genjo Osho

(Transcription help from Dee Seishun)



Jizo's for Peace

by Josen Carolyn Stevens

On Saturday, October 9, a dozen Sangha members gathered around the zendo dining tables to participate in the Jizo's for Peace project. Jizo's for Peace, initiated by our friends from Oregon's Great Vow Monastery, is committed to bringing 270,000 images of Jizo Bodhisattva to Hiroshima next summer. August 6 and 9, 2005 will mark the 60th anniversary to the atomic bombings of the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, events that killed 270,000 people within the first year.

Jizo Bodhisattva is the protector of children, women and travelers. His compassionate presence offers profound calm in times of distress, and is a fitting symbol of reconciliation and sorrow for the lives lost in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Two Great Vow members, Yuko and Mushin, brought us instructions and materials to make Jizo images. Mushin Abby Terris, who lives in Corvallis, was formerly a member of the Seattle Zen Temple. The primary medium is cloth panels like quilt squares, on which we drew and stamped images. Creating and decorating panels evoked an interesting interaction of light-hearted artistry with adult seriousness. We also learned how to make origami Jizo's that are strung in together in chains. We were taught the Jizo mantra, On Ka Ka Kabi Sam Ma Ei Sowa Ka, which we chanted silently to ourselves while working. The whole process was a wonderful mixture of creativity, healing and meditation, and we all felt enriched by the opportunity to participate.

Great Vow will be collecting Jizo panels until next spring. Cho Bo Ji has a supply of panels, templates and instructions, so we can continue making Jizo images in the coming months. At our 2005 spring sesshin, we will sew our panels into quilts and send them to the monastery to begin the pilgrimage to Japan. I would be happy to share materials and instructions with anyone who missed the workshop, so if you'd like to

participate, please let me know.



Jukai Ceremony

On the last day of Autumn Equinox Sesshin 2004, Peter Ilgenfritz and Linda Wehnes formally accepted the Buddhist precepts. Both have been active participants in our Sangha for some time, and by the conclusion of Autumn Sesshin both had completed at least of two week-long sesshins.

During the Jukai Ceremony they both acknowledged their respect for Zen practice and Buddhist principles by giving themselves to the Three Treasures (Buddha, Dharma and Sangha), chanting the Bodhisattva vows and leading the Sangha in reciting the Ten Precepts.

After that they each received a Rakusu (symbolic piece of the historical Buddha's robe worn around the neck) and a Dharma Name. A Dharma Name is selected by the abbot to be an inspiration for realizing one's full potential.

Peter's new Dharma Name is Shin-ke which means Profound Home. As most of you are aware, Peter is United Church of Christ minister. In his Jukai petition letter he writes:



This is how it is:

Just a little over one year ago, I went down to the waterfront and I got in a boat. I didn't know where the boat was going, how the journey might be, or where it might end.

All I know was that I had come to the end of on far stretch of land, a journey and a letting go, a death even was needed and a trusted guide that I had found on my journey across the terrain behind me said, "Here there is a boat that



Linda's new Dharma Name is Mu-ka which means No Flower or Essence of Flower. Linda wrote:

You and the Sangha have been such a refuge for me. Here I'm stopped short, and don't know how to describe it. I just feel so fortunate. You all have taught me, just by your being, that all people are worthy, including myself. how do you do that without word? Anyway, I still forget both these things all too often. I feel like I've know it all my life though, and you and the sangha

might take you to where you need to go." persist in gently reminding me.

And with the awareness that the journey had ended and another need begin, the trust in a guide and the foolhardiness of all sailors, I set forth on this boat, and left behind me letters of thanks and good-bye to those I love --.

It wad the hardest journey I had taken - it shook me all over - shook me out. I marveled at their strange cloths, language, music traditions and was taken far from home of all my familiars.

And at the week's end I knew I had gone somewhere, had begun a journey of being taken to a new place and way - and I didn't have a clue where I was going next..."

Jukai candidates need to petition in writing at least one month prior to the ceremony, saying why they feel the time is ripe to take this step. Jukai candidates usually have attended regular zazen at ChoBo-Ji for a minimum of six months (including at least two week-long sesshins), have become regular financial supporters of the Temple, and feel ready to give themselves to the Three Treasures (Buddha, Dharma & Sangha). In other words, they find themselves inspired by practice, feel that the training opens their Heart-Mind, and want to serve the Temple community.

Shodo's New Show

Lately I've been exploring patterns formed by resin flowing over the surface of corrugated cardboard. These materials are a new development in my work, and with them it feels like I've come "home". I find myself in the place I didn't know I always wanted to be.

I'm using open-face corrugated cardboard, a material I find fascinating not only for its patterning possibilities and graceful shapes, but for its roots in packaging our consumer culture, and its thoughtless abandonment afterwards. I often find cast-off cardboard in exquisite forms, and in two works in the Tacoma show I use actual litter as the substrate. Of course Zen students will have no trouble experiencing the sublime in our culture's waste.

My show opens at William Traver Gallery in Tacoma on Saturday, November 13th, please consider coming down and celebrating with us. The gallery is directly adjacent to the Museum of Glass, and the whole area is rich with museums, old architecture, parks, cafes, and shops; lots of ways to use an afternoon.

Complete information is available through links on my website: www.tomdegroot.com

There are postcards for the show in the temple foyer, if you'd like me to send you one, drop me an email at my website.

Thank you, *Tom Shodo DeGroot*



About Dai Bai Zan Cho Bo Zen Ji

In 1978, Zen Master Genki Takabayashi was invited by the Seattle Zen Center, founded by Dr. Glenn Webb (at the time a UW Art History professor), to become the resident teacher. He accepted, and by 1983 he formalized his teaching style around a small group of students, and founded Dai Bai Zan Cho Bo Zen Ji, translated as *Great Plum Mountain Listening to the Dharma Zen Temple*.

Before Genki Roshi came to Seattle, he trained for nearly twenty years at Daitoku-Ji, the head Rinzai temple in Japan. In addition, Genki Roshi directed a Rinzai temple in Kamakura, Japan. He entered the monastery when he was 11 years old.

After twenty years of tirelessly giving himself to the transmission of Buddha



Dharma to the United States, in 1997 he retired as our teacher, got married and moved to Montana. There he is planting the seeds for yet another American Zen group, and doing the activities he loves best: gardening, pottery, and cooking.

Genjo Osho began his Zen training in 1975, was ordained in 1980, became an Osho (full priest) in 1990, and our Abbot in 1999. In 1981-82 he trained at Ryutakuji in Japan. Genjo Osho is assisted by Rev. Genko Kathy Blackman. In addition to his Zen duties, Genjo Osho is a psychotherapist in private practice, a certified spiritual director, married to wife, Carolyn, and father to daughter, Adrienne. Our temple is in the Rinzai Zen School. Since Genki Roshi retired, Genjo Osho has continued his training with Eido T. Shimano Roshi, abbot of Dai Bosatsu Monastery in New York.

World Wide Web Address
www.choboji.org

Schedule

Introduction to Zen

Tuesdays, 7:30-8:30 pm

Zazen

Monday - Friday, 5:30 am, 1 hr.

Saturdays, 6:30 - 8:00 am

Sundays, 6:30 pm, 1 hr.

Dharma Talks

1st and 3rd Sundays, 7:30 pm, 1 hr.

Sesshins: Quarterly week-long retreats last week in March, June, September and the first week of December.

Mini-Sesshins: Half day retreats with breakfast, Dharma Talk and Dharma Interview. 5 - 11:20 am, Sundays: 11/14/04, 1/9/05, 2/13, 3/13, 4/10

Rohatsu Sesshin: 11/30/04 - 12/8/04

Spring Sesshin: 3/26/05 - 4/1/05

Summer Sesshin: 6/18/05 - 6/24/05

Autumn Sesshin: 9/24/05 - 9/30/05

We Are Located: at 1811 20th Ave., (one half-block north of Madison and south of Denny). Street parking is available in front or between 19th and 20th on Denny, or off-street parking is available behind the house. After entering the front door, remove your shoes and socks in the entry way and proceed to the Zendo (meditation hall) upstairs. [206-328-3944](tel:206-328-3944)

Dues and Fees: go to support the life of this temple. We have no outside support from any organization.

Dues are \$60 a month or whatever one can afford. Any amount received monthly means that you will receive this quarterly newsletter, receive discounts on retreats, and be considered an active member.

The suggested fee for any morning or evening practice period, including Tuesday night introduction and Sunday night Dharma Talk is five dollars. The \$5 fee is waived for all members.

The suggested fee for mini-sesshins is \$20. Fees for the March, July, and September sesshins are \$210, and Rohatsu Sesshin is \$320. Members may subtract their monthly dues from the week-long sesshin cost.