



PLUM MOUNTAIN NEWS

Volume 13.3

Autumn 2006

Dear members and friends,

This time of year a cold chill greets us most mornings and fall colors display their full glory in the brisk autumn sun. Way back in August, I assisted leading a three-day sesshin (concentrated period of seated meditation) in Michigan with the help of Frank (Daiui) Apodaca, Jr. Sensei and Rodger (Tozan) Park Sensei. It was a small group of about a dozen people, each committed to facing the vast void beyond our narrow sense of a separated individuality. We did sesshin in the midst of hot, muggy, still August air. The sesshin was held at the Leaven Retreat Center along the banks of the Grand River. At night, fireflies danced in the trees. The sesshin environment gave me an idea of what it might be like to do sesshin in the bayous of Louisiana.

My other trip in August was to visit Genki Takabayashi Roshi (our founding abbot) in Montana. Our connection was short but sweet. I was able to tell him about my trip to Dai Bosatsu's 30th Anniversary sesshin and my visit with Eido Roshi, the abbot of DBZ. He was able to tell me of his recent visit with master Japanese potter Yasuo Terada in northern Alberta in early July. During this week-long visit Roshi was able to learn from and share with Terada Sensei. Both men admired each other's work, and Terada Sensei was able to "repair" a few pieces of Roshi's pottery with gold filling. It sounds as though there will be a long association between them. At the conclusion of our time together, Genki Roshi gifted to me a couple of items supportive of my role as Chobo-ji's abbot. One was a cloth used by Roshi to cover and protect books used during Teisho (formal Dharma Talks); the other was a doughnut shaped bell used by Roshi to ring out students during Dokusan (formal Dharma Interview). Those who have recently come to Dharma Interview with me have surely no-

ticed the new bell and its distinctive sound.

Also new to the Dokuson room on the third floor of Chobo-ji is a new exquisitely mounted six-foot scroll by Eido Shimano Roshi. This scroll was sent to express gratitude for a donation I made at the DBZ 30th Anniversary celebration to help with the purchase of a gas generator. The generator will be the back-up power supply



for the monastery during the frequent power line failures. The scroll begins with the kanji (Japanese character) "Kan!" which means "barrier." This is the response that Zen Master Ummon gave to his Dharma brother Suigan, when Suigan asked his compatriots if he had talked too much during the summer training period (Case 8 of the Hekigan-roku, "Suigan's Eyebrows"). The seven smaller kanji below "Kan!" are the first line of a two-stanza poem written by Daito Kokushi (1235-1308), the founder of Daitoku-ji in Kyoto, when he passed through Ummon's Kyoto, when he passed through Ummon's Kyoto. The meaning of it is more or less as follows: "Having passed this gate, the vital path goes to the South, North, East and West." Breaking through the gateless barriers of the Zen masters is what doku-

san is all about, so there is no better place for this scroll to hang. By the way, Daito Kokushi is the author of the admonition we chant at the close of formal sitting each night of our spring, summer and autumn sesshins. He is also listed in our Dharma Lineage chant as the second ancestor of the Japanese portion, "Shu Ho Myo Cho Zenji." After his realization, Daito Kokushi ripened his realization by living for years with the beggars under a bridge in Kyoto. According to Zen lore, one day a high official of the Emperor sought to sort him out from the gathered beggars by offering a favored melon to the one who could take it with "no hands." Daito Kokushi immediately stepped forward and said, "Give it to me with no hands!" Needless to say, Daito Kokushi was found out and commissioned by the Emperor to found Daitoku-ji, the very temple where Genki Roshi did his primary training.



On Saturday, September 23rd, eighteen people from Seattle, Ellensburg and Wenatchee gathered for a half-day mini-sesshin at the Ellensburg Zen Center. Incorporated into the conclusion of the mini-sesshin was a special Jukai (Dharma Precept & Dharma Naming) ceremony for longtime Chobo-ji members from Wenatchee, Todd and Sharon Petit. Normally, Jukai is held at the end of weeklong

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sesshins in Seattle, but in order to accommodate friends and members east of the Cascades this exception was made. You can read more about our Jukai ceremonies towards the end of this issue of Plum Mountain News.

Autumn Sesshin, September 23-29, with twenty participants went smoothly. Charlie (Taishin) Blackman was our Dai-Tenzo (Chief Cook) and did a grand job for his first time as Dai-Tenzo. TaiShin was ably supported by our assistant Tenzo Bob (Daigan) Timmer. Dee (Seishun) Endelman served the Sangha well as our Shika (Manager), assigning samu (work meditation) assignments with gusto. The post of Jikijitsu (Time Keeper) was masterfully handled by John (Daikan) Green. Neither of this season's assigned Densus (Chant Leaders) were able to attend this sesshin, so Rev. Genko Blackman primarily filled the post with assistance from Scott (Ishin) Stolnack. Serving us tea and homemade sweets as our Jisha (Tea Server) was Brenda (Zenmu) Nightingale. Peter (Shinke) Ilgenfritz served as my Inji (Abbot Assistant). Noticeably absent from sesshin was Peter (Shinkon) Glynn, who is attending his second consecutive Kessei (training intensive) at DBZ. Even though autumn had just begun, this sesshin was hotter than our recent Summer Sesshin. The more extreme the temperature, the more intensive sesshin becomes. It was, in fact, a strong sesshin, and as usual much got accomplished during our samu periods. Not only did we clean and garden thoroughly, but also we were able to spend time taking care of our local area and once again assisted the grateful gardeners at the Seattle Arboretum Japanese Garden. On the last morning of sesshin we had a Jukai ceremony for Ryan Grant, longtime Chobo-ji member. A while back, Ryan moved to San Francisco, but has traveled to Seattle at least once a quarter to attend all four of Chobo-ji's annual sesshins.

For the fourth year in a row, I traveled to Doylestown, Pennsylvania, to help lead a three-day sesshin at Bucks County Aikido, which is located on a lavender farm across from beautiful Lake Galena and Peace Val-



Bucks County Aikido Sesshin 2006

ley Park. The dates for this year's sesshin and Aikido weapons seminar were October 13 – 14. Nearly thirty people were in attendance, including Robert Savoca Sensei from Brooklyn Aikikai, Bob Burns Sensei from Aikiframs Aikikai in Connecticut and Roger (Tozan) Park Sensei from Huron Valley Aikikai, Michigan. George Lyons Sensei, who with Robert taught the weapons portion of the weekend, hosted the sesshin. His lovely wife Patti was the Tenzo, again assisted by Robert Savoca. In the course of these few short years this diverse and widely distributed Sangha has really deepened their practice together. It is my great pleasure to be included in this flowering.

Genko, health permitting, will be leaving for Japan on November 10th and will be gone most of the month. Her visit will be centered on her long-term study of the Japanese Tea ceremony. Also, Barbara (Jodo) Bullock, one of Chobo-ji's oldest members will be leaving on November 7th for a minimum six-month stay with her daughter in Australia. As you may well know, both Barbara and Genko have nerve disorders that are seriously disabling. Therefore, as the Quakers would say, please hold them both in the light, or as we might say, keep sending them strong Nen (primal thoughts).

The zendo will be closed for the holidays November 23 & 24, and between December 25th and New Years Day. As usual, we will have a New Years Day celebration 10 am, January 1st, 2007. Our celebration

includes lots of chanting, ringing in the New Year, and a fabulous potluck. This year, during the ceremony, we will be ringing our new Kansho, Chobo-ji's recently acquired large exterior temple bell. This new Kansho is about three feet high and over a foot and half in diameter. It can't be missed sitting under the laurel tree to the right of the Zen House front porch. Daikan and Daigan are working hard to have an initial mounting ready by New Years. We may eventually build a small hut to further house and protect the bell. The Chobo-ji Board approved funds for the bell at the October 8th Board Meeting. We are not sure of the bell's history, but we do know that it once resided at the south gate of a temple in Japan from the same prefecture as our founding abbot, Genki Takabayashi Roshi. The bell was expensive, but not excessively so for this authentic temple relic. In addition to New Year's Day, the bell will be rung each Sunday evening before zazen and also each evening before dinner during Spring, Summer and Autumn Sesshins. I believe its gentle deep tone will augment and assist our practice. Edward (Daiki) Cadman has written a poem that in part celebrates the inauguration of the new bell, which you can read in this issue. Please consider making a special year-end donation to Chobo-ji to assist with the cost of the bell and to support and maintain our practice. Thank you.

As you know, Chobo-ji's Rohatsu Sesshin, which up to this year has always been held from December 1 – 8 has been

moved to early January. The reason for this is to give those wanting to attend DBZ's Rohatsu a chance to do so. This year Zenmu, Daigan, Tozan and I will be traveling to New York to attend, and of course, Shinkon, longtime Chobo-ji member from California, is already there. Chobo-ji's Rohatsu will be January 4 – 12, please have a deposit in by mid-December if you are planning to participate.

In addition to the items discussed above, you can read in this issue of Plum Mountain News more on our upcoming January Rohatsu, which will include an unsui ordination ceremony for Zenmu, a transcription of a Dharma Talk from Autumn Sesshin, a book report on "Mud & Water: The Collected Teachings of Zen Master Bassui" and a report on "Prison Dharma Work." Please enjoy these offerings, and have a mindful and joyous holiday season.

With gassho,
Genjo

Book Report on Mud & Water by Sally Metcalf

"Sleeping and waking, standing and sitting, profoundly ask yourself, 'What is my own mind?' with an intense yearning to resolve the question."

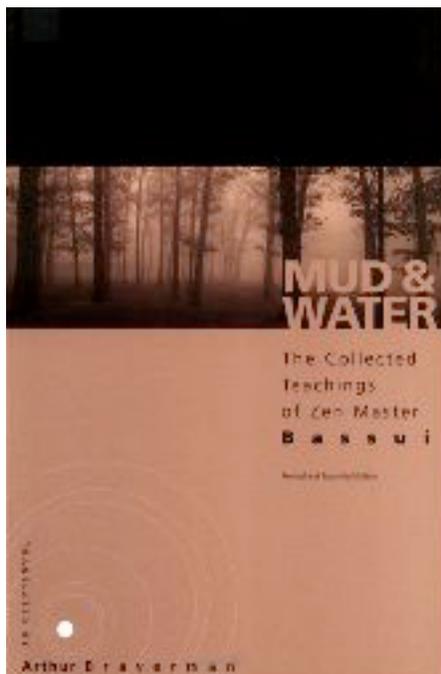
— Bassui

This is the essence of fourteenth-century Japanese Zen master Bassui Tokusho's teaching. So much so that, in his early years, he had little taste for the formalities of temple life, for sutra chanting, ceremony or the like, in fact, for little else but the pursuit of his own true nature. He routinely alienated his fellow monks by refusing to wear robes or live in the monasteries of his teachers. And, as his reputation grew, he took to escaping his followers in the middle of the night. Harried guru decamps out window into the dark.

As a young monk, Bassui was asked by a friend, "Are you looking into the koans of the old masters?"

"Of course not," he said. "How can I appreciate the words of others when I don't even know my own mind?"

This refreshing, cart-before-the-horse Zen persisted throughout Bassui's teaching career. After all, he reasoned, "If beginning practitioners were first to look directly into their own inherent nature, they would be able to see into all koans naturally." From transcribing sutras to doing good deeds, Bassui admonishes that the forms themselves are not salvation. "All deeds are rooted in deluded feelings. If you cut out the roots, how can the leaves and branches grow?"



It's easy to get lost in the forest of advertised religious forms these days; so I deeply appreciate being unequivocally directed toward the troublesome roots in my own mind. I cannot hide in that landscape.

My two great loves in reading *Mud and Water* are: First, this emphasis on one's own mind and, second, the evocative use of metaphor to cut through intellectual entrapment. These two are most elegantly combined in Bassui's discussion of the precepts. "When your mind is deluded, you

are breaking all the precepts, and when you see into your own nature, you are at once keeping all the precepts perfectly. The power from seeing into your own nature will extinguish all delusion and bring life to Buddha nature." And now, his eloquent metaphor, "This is the precept not to kill living things...The other precepts should be understood similarly." Reading this discussion as I began Autumn Sesshin—and on the heels of Genjo Osho's talk on the precepts—Bassui's metaphors were especially poignant for me.

On theft: "When deluded thoughts arise, you damage the Dharma treasure, destroy its merit, and hence become a thief." Stealing my precious Self from myself, embarrassed by my failings, I hurried to zendo for help, flinching at Bassui's occasional Southern Baptist Hellfire and Brimstone lectures to his shivering monks.

On intoxication: "Isolated by deluded thoughts, you lose sight of your inherent wisdom and become frantic. This is what is meant by being intoxicated." I came to sesshin intoxicated by worry, having lost my way.

On lying: "When you are blinded by deluded thoughts, you forget your precious Dharma body, and, seeing only illusion, you call it your body. This is what is meant by lying." In sesshin, and in life, I find it much easier to see the Buddha in others than in myself. Even with my swollen ankles, am I not also a Zen warrior? And Virginia, in her chair, and Tina, with her luminous, half-formed fingers. And the man in the street with his gun. And the iris in the garden. To deny this is to lie—about myself and others. Why, then, do I lie?

In a touching letter to the Abbess of Jinryoji Temple, Bassui's conclusion reads, "If you realize this mind, the lotus blossom will open in the fire and won't wither in ten thousand world cycles. Everyone was originally in this lotus flower; why don't they know it?" Why don't I?

In conclusion, I'm grateful for Bassui's assurance that realization depends on aspiration, and not on aptitude.

Hekiganroku: Ummon's Preaching on Oneness

(3rd day, Autumn Sesshin, 2006)

Transcription help from Dee Seishun

Main Subject Case 14

A monk asked Ummon, "What is the teaching of the Buddha's lifetime?" Ummon said, "Preaching facing oneness."

Setcho's Verse

Facing oneness! There is no parallel!
He fitted the holeless hammer
with a handle.

From under the Jambu tree, laughter rings
out: Ha! Ha! Ha!
Last night the dragon
got his horns broken.

Remarkable, the old man of Shoyo:
He has one tally here.

Ego's Introduction Case 15

The death-dealing blade, the life-giving sword; they were the custom in ancient days and are still today the touchstone. Tell me, at this moment, what is the death-dealing blade, what is the life-giving sword? See the following.

Main Subject

A monk asked Ummon, "What is it when no thought is stirring and nothing is presenting itself?" Ummon said, "No preaching on oneness."

Setcho's Verse

No oneness! Each holds one tally.
He lives and dies with you, all the same.

The eighty-four thousand
did not respond quickly;
The thirty-three entered the tiger's cave.

Remarkable: see how turbulent—
The moon reflected on the waves.

Third day of Chobo-ji's Autumn Equinox Sesshin and, even though it looked as though we all started in a rather settled place, we've come through the initial brambles and it's now very quiet. The body has begun to adjust to the rigors of sesshin; from this point forward, nothing will terribly surprise us, mostly we will be visited by what is already familiar, pain, fatigue, fantasies, joys and sorrows [collectively *Dukkha*, the First Noble truth called "suffering"]. We're re-acquainted with our legs; we're re-acquainted with sesshin food. We're re-acquainted with samu (working meditation) and chanting, and also re-acquainted with the brambles of our ceaselessly thinking, feeling and sensing mind.

Beyond and within the routine, we are of course making the effort to be fully present. For example when sitting, we are listening with every pore and fiber of our being to what is. Listening gently and attentively to the goings on in the neighborhood, on the avenue and in our mind. Behind and within the form, we begin to settle into what is referred to as the silence between and within each note of this symphony, this symphony of the Now. We begin to be restored as we drop beneath the surface waters of our sense of existence and start to feel the seamless connection with that which is variously called Dharma, Tao, spirit or even the collective unconscious. In the readiness of time, we realize that all is One, this one reality we're swimming in, breathing in and out.

Ummon (d. 949) was a very famous Zen Master who we keep returning to, especially in the [Hekiganroku](#). A monk asked Ummon, "What is the teaching of the Buddha's lifetime?" The monk is asking, "Summarize all the sutras and commentaries about the Buddha's life and teaching, give a turning word or phrase that fully reveals his deep wisdom." If we spoke of just the sutras, it would be a library that could hardly fit into this room. If we add the commentaries, the library would not fit. The monk asked, "What is the essence of all this teaching? What did the Historical Buddha really have to say about this reality?"

Ummon, without missing a beat, said,

"Preaching facing oneness."

This is such a direct, succinct and strong affirmation, an affirmation that we're already It, we can't be anything but so-called Buddha nature. Moreover, everything around us also can't be anything but Buddha nature, whether manifesting as form or formlessness or any dimension of this multi-dimensional universe. Thoughts, feelings, and manifestations of any kind, seen or even imagined, can't be anything but Nature, this "One Nature" with a capital "N." How obvious and how simple!

If it's that obvious and that simple, why is there a library trying to explain it? Commentary after commentary has been written, so much analysis when it's all so simple. It comes down to *this...* to heaven and earth. There is a reality that has no form, much less a name. And this is It. We're It. So simple! But it's not so simple to feel. And why? According to the Second Noble Truth, because we get stuck and attached to a deluded view of separateness.

We all have a sense of self, and it's an asset to know where this corporeal body ends and where a flame begins; otherwise, there could be no awareness of burning! This sense of self is an important asset. Yet, human beings mistake this sense of self as proof of a separated individuality. Even though intellectually and scientifically we may understand that this is not so, we're still often stuck in our deluded sense of separateness.

Well, we ask, "Can anything be done about it?" The Third Noble Truth says the answer is "yes." That's the Buddhist "good news." It is possible to penetrate our delusion of separateness. It is possible to restore the feeling of Oneness, a feeling we've all had, but with little awareness, in utero. This awakened awareness, in Buddhism, is called "Nirvana," and we most often feel the beginnings of this awareness in the condition called samadhi. For example, when riding a bike in samadhi, there is just riding. In other words, the differentiations we normally make between "self," the "bike," the "path," the mechanism of "balance" and "propulsion" and the ideas of where we're coming from and go-

ing to, disappear. There's just riding; which is to say, a feeling of natural oneness.

In samadhi, there's no rider, there's no bike, there's no path, there's no coming from, no going to — there's just riding. The air is so sublime as it whizzes by. You might think that samadhi is a rare condition. No, it's very common. Most of the time, we breathe in samadhi. We don't think, "Take a breath. Now, I'm exhaling. Now I think I'll inhale!" (laughter) Most of the time, we're doing breathing Samadhi, no thinking, just breathing. And, in breathing samadhi, there's no inhalation, no exhalation. There's no thinking about the breath at all.

And how about our beating heart? Do we say, "Okay, time for the top chambers to pump, now the bottom chambers..." Imagine if we had to think about it! We wouldn't be able to do anything else. We'd just be directing that muscle to beat. "Better beat again!" "Oh, I forgot" (laughter) Thank goodness for samadhi! No thinking about the heart or its chambers. Just beating, no thinking! In fact, this is why Zen Master Hakuin (1686 – 1769) says, "We're primarily all Buddhas." Most of the time, most of what we do is in samadhi. It's the ten percent of the time that we're not in Samadhi that's the problem. It's a big problem! We get stuck in a false sense of separateness and we have to be preached at and told about the Oneness again and again. Listen to all the religions saying again and again, "It's all One! Listen, listen! Look, look!" We're so thick.

You know all the preaching in the world really doesn't do it! Well, how do we do it? In the Fourth and last Noble Truth professed by the Historical Buddha, Shakyamuni puts forth the Eightfold Path, which culminates with Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration. When we foster the skillfulness of being mindful, that is to say, when we develop the practice of being present to each and every activity at hand, everything becomes simple and undisguised. Beginning with, let's say, sitting on a cushion and just breathing. Yes, let's start simple! If we are able to realize natural samadhi while doing the natural ac-

tivities of sitting, breathing, chanting, sweeping or chopping vegetables, then perhaps we can learn to extend or appreciate natural samadhi in the ever more complex activities of our ordinary lives. Very simple really, but not easy! And, if we can re-establish our own conscious communion with the Oneness all around and through us, then we have what might be referred to as a mature samadhi, where there's an awareness of the natural oneness while samadhi is happening.

For example, let's say you are a dancer and you really get into the dance and cruise with that samadhi rhythm, then there's no self, no other and no thinking about your feet on the floor. By the way, I'm still amazed at people looking down at their feet when we're doing kinhin (walking meditation), not good dancing! Just look straight ahead, follow the rhythm of the person in front until so called "self" and "other" disappear! This is the point. If you're looking down at your feet, you're not disappearing! Anyway, samadhi dancing is where self and other disappear, no thinking about the footsteps, no thinking about where to move next, just spinning around. Then, heart opens! There's a great flowering of love. Not just between the two people dancing but for the whole world.

Image kayaking through the serene environment of the San Juan Islands. You're paddling left and right, not thinking about where you're coming from or going, the breeze is in your face. A dolphin or Orca swims by and you're naturally swimming



together. Or, even without any other corporeal being manifesting, visualize complete harmony with the environment. The barriers between the so-called person and the so-called environment have disappeared. Here there's a warm, loving awareness that transcends and supports the Universe. It's not magic and it's not rocket science, it's real. From time to time we all have glimpses of this, but through Zen training, we're becoming a little more consistent, skillful and conscious of it.

Where there is this openhearted awareness in rhythm with Nature, and the barriers between self and other have disappeared, then — as Torei Zenji (a Dharma Heir of Hakuin) says in his preface to the Four Great Vows — we *feel* "Everywhere is the glory of the Pure Land. In every moment, may we extend this mind over the whole Universe so that we and all beings together may attain maturity in Buddha's Wisdom." The feeling that goes with transcendence, dancing samadhi, kayaking samadhi or doing Zazen with full awareness is subtle, profound and not to be missed. It's a feeling of wide openheartedness; in other words, there is the realization that Mind does extend over the whole Universe. When encountering such a timeless moment, there is no you and no universe, there is but one heart embracing and manifesting as every creature great and small, animate and inanimate. This is the hallmark of non-separation and Oneness. Collectively we are all inexorably carried forward towards this realization and maturity in the Way.

When one heart opens like that, the whole collective is waking up a bit more. Does this planet need such awakening? You bet! We're a little behind the eight ball. We'd better become more deeply capable of holding each other in loving openheartedness. If humanity does not, we'll bring the planet down with us, voice of the Dharma or not.

Facing Oneness, there is no parallel. "He fitted the holeless hammer with a handle." How can you summarize this teaching? Can't do it, you say. Impossible to sum-

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marize all of the Buddha's teaching, we presume it's impossible to summarize all the Ancient Masters of all cultures on all planets in the galaxy. Ummon did it in three words! "Preaching facing Oneness!"

"From under the Jambu Tree (the tree of the Universe), a laughter rings out" Who's laughter is it? Buddha's? Ummon's? The monk's? Or could it be yours?

Remarkable this old man Ummon! He has one tally here. Setcho retorts, "Last night the dragon got his horns broken."

You may think, there is no way to go further. A monk asked Ummon, "What is it when no thought is stirring and nothing is presenting itself?" This monk I think has more on the ball than the first monk. The first monk likely wanted or needed to know. This second monk likely already has a good idea. "When no thought is stirring and nothing is present, what do you preach then?" Ummon said, "No preaching on oneness." This monk is likely asking from some awareness of deep samadhi, the samadhi that transcends ideas of "self" and "other," transcends all conceptualizations, even ideas of Oneness. By the time you've uttered the words, "Ah, I'm feeling the Oneness" or even the word "Oneness" a sense of separated individuality has taken hold once again. Samadhi Crash! So, "no preaching on oneness," means there is nothing to say and nothing can be said.

The other day I said, "when in touch with deep teaching, you can open your mouth and never get tired." With even deeper teaching, there is no need to open the mouth. Nothing can really be said about it. Instead, if required to say something, a verse like Setcho's may arise: "See how turbulent, the moon reflected on the waves." See how bright the sun shines in early Autumn! Smelling the sweet fragrance of falling plums... sitting, facing the inconceivable.

With gassho,

Genjo

Autumn Sesshin 2006 Closing Incense Poem

*The beginning of autumn
felt like summer.*

*Clear blue sky, nakedly reveals
every flaw and doubt.*

*Who can truly follow
the river of Dharma?*

*Beyond zenith
the seagull knows not;
yet, without effort skims over
Lake Washington.*

Prison Dharma Work by Rev. Genko Blackman

Most of us do not give a second thought to the great number of residents of this country in our prison system, and understandably so. Our lives run on parallel tracks, and rarely intersect. However a number of Chobo-ji members are currently corresponding with prison inmates both in and out of state and through their pen pals becoming involved with life on the inside.

One of the things that becomes clear in writing to inmates is that a primary focus of their lives is the date of release. Some look forward to being reunited with family and friends and resuming old activities, for better or for worse. But many others approach their release date with a sense of its overwhelming challenge. Most critical is finding housing while looking for a community of support, a job, and all the other pieces that make our lives successful. Whether or not you are interested in corresponding with inmates, there is plenty to be done to help with the re-entry process.

A few years ago a small group of dedicated volunteers founded Para-

mita House, a non-profit based in Olympia that provides re-entry support for Buddhist inmates. While the goal is eventually to have a physical location for former inmates to live upon release, in the meantime Paramita House works to provide Dharma mentors, first month's rent, clothing and supplies as needed for qualified applicants.

How can we help? In a number of ways. First and foremost, through financial support. Donations to Paramita House will help pay for rent, clothing, and supplies for releasing inmates, and administrative support of the program. If every member of every Pacific Northwest Sangha were to pledge a dollar a month, it would make a huge difference.

We can also give our time. Paramita House is looking for Dharma mentors – practitioners who are willing to help those recently released as they re-integrate into free world society. Training and guidance are provided.

If you are interested in donating dollars or your time, please contact Paramita House, PO Box 6014, Olympia, WA 98507, or phone them at 1-866-539-8122. Paramita House has 501(C)3 status, and your donations are fully tax-deductible.

There are also a growing number of inmates across the country who want to correspond with Buddhist practitioners as a support to their own practice. Genko has a list of names, and there is a long list available through Prison Dharma Network, another organization well worth your support. You can learn more about this organization through their website, www.prisondharmanetwork.org.



Rohatsu Sesshin

Please make your reservations by Dec. 15th. The cost of sesshin is \$320 (less dues). No part-time participation is allowed. We will leave from our Zendo, 1811 20th Ave., by 4 pm on Thursday, Jan. 4th, 2007. Please be at the Zendo by 3:00 pm 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 Friday, January 12th, after Zenmu's ordination ceremony, which will take place that morning. 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 \$29.25 per person (discounts available for groups), 45 minute travel time. <http://www.shuttleexpress.com/> Or, you can take either the #174 or #194 Metro buses from baggage claim 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 fare is \$2.

Please bring a zabuton 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, you will have 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 10:30 pm, followed by yaza (personal sitting).



*The thief left it there
There in the window frame -
The shining moon.*

- Ryokan

The Moon and Earth are One

A discourse on
the honored Zen poet Ryokan

by
Eido Frances Carney Roshi
Abbot of Olympia Zen Center

Saturday, November 18
7:00pm

at
Havurat Ee Shalom
15401 Westside Highway SW
Vashon Island, WA

As capacity is limited
please call 206-276-0842
for reservations.

Suggested donation \$10
Sponsored by



Incense Poem

by Edward Daiki Cadman

*Dai segaki incense
slips away on waves
of autumnal air*

*Deceased dharma friends
and parents whispered to
as the chant goes tolling on*

*Where are they now
who utters mu
beyond the final breath?*

*A temple bell is born
younger than
Savannah and Isaiah
wrapped in swaddling clothes*

*Soon it will hang
beneath the laurel tree,
and soon it will herald
our evening services*

*What is the essence
of those soon-to-come soft peals
calling us to meet
beyond death, beyond birth?*

*October wind shakes
the zendo windows*



Jukai Ceremony

On Saturday, September 16th at the close of EZG mini-Sesshin, Todd and Sharon Petit formally accepted the Buddhist precepts. They have both been an active participants in our Sangha for some time, and both have completed the requisite two week-long sesshins. For the last two years Sharon and Todd have led the small Wenatchee Zen group.

Sharon wrote in her application letter,

Since I was 18 years old I have known that this was the path I needed to follow. Only my own irresolution and fears kept me from starting much earlier. When on Sept 11, 2001 the terrorists attacked the twin towers I had nowhere else to turn to understand. What I needed to understand was not just how someone could do such a thing. My more important quest was to understand my own anger and hatred... The anger and hurt I felt on that day 5 years ago has long since dissolved in understanding of my connection with victim and hijacker, building and plane. It marked the true beginning of my spiritual quest... Zen is my anchor.

Here is some of what Todd wrote:

In 1957 I bought a 3 inch reflecting telescope from the Edmund Scientific Company in New Jersey. I was 14 years old and I had to put up my coin collection as collateral... From that time on, the sky was my temple and my telescope the means to unravel the mysteries of existence. When I looked in the eyepiece, the Earth shrunk to the size of a stepping stone and my body stretched beyond the Solar System, beyond the Galaxy, beyond the clusters of galaxies, all the way back to the beginning of time.



Todd Dai-Ko Petit & Sharon Me-Ho Petit



Ellensburg Zen Group, September 16th



Chobo-ji Autumn Equinox Sesshin 2006

But in the morning, the mundane world returned and an unending series of tasks awaited me... It seemed my fate was nothing

unusual or unpredictable. I would work until I retired and then I would die. Maybe in death I would finally find surcease and answers... or maybe not!

One morning I woke up and the twin towers were coming down... Sharon and I realized it was finally time to sit down in earnest. She began searching the internet for a Zen meditation group and she found ChoBo--Ji. We decided this was important enough to make an extraordinary effort and we finally attended our first mini-sesshin. Now I am in my 60s. "Sit for 40 years – then sit for another 40."

OK! I'll do it! It is time to dedicate myself to the Buddhist precepts. It is time to understand it. All of it!

On Friday, September 29th at the close of Autumn Sesshin, Ryan Grant also did Jukai.

Ryan had this to say in his application,

Approaching Jukai has been a slow process for me. It has been years. At this point I have to trust myself, and I can feel good doing so... I feel very close to our Chobo-ji Sangha, despite living far away [San Francisco].

My heart responds most, imagining that which once scared me most: this giving myself. Putting narrowly defined security and progress aside, and exploring what maturity is, in a field of interest set

well beyond my own desires... How better to step outside your boundaries, then to not worry about their purpose?



Ryan Ho-Sen Grant

During the Jukai Ceremony Sharon, Todd and Ryan 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 Sharon, Todd and Ryan received Rakus (symbolic pieces of the historical Buddha's robe worn around the neck) and Dharma Names. A Dharma Name is selected by the abbot to be an inspiration for realizing one's full potential. Sharon's new Dharma Name is MeHo which means Eye of Dharma. Todd's new Dharma Name is DaiKo, Great Light. Ryan's new name is HoSen, which means Dharma River.

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.

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 Ryutaku-ji 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.

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 early January.

Mini-Sesshins: Half day retreats with breakfast, Dharma Talk and Dharma Interview. 5 - 11:30 am, Sundays: 11/12, 12/17, 1/14, 2/11, 3/11

Rohatsu Sesshin: 1/4/07 - 1/12/07

Spring Sesshin: 3/24/07 - 3/30/07

Summer Sesshin: 6/23/07 - 6/29/07

Autumn Sesshin: 9/22/07- 9/28/07

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

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. For more information see:

www.choboji.org