



# PLUM MOUNTAIN NEWS

Volume 14.1

Spring 2007

## Dear members and friends,

A couple of days ago Seattle's temperature got above 80° F; today I have the heater on again — a typical Seattle spring. I am happy to report that the Zen House has a new roof and that our fundraising effort was very successful. As you recall, we sent out an appeal for \$9,000 and I am very pleased to report that we collected \$16,000! This means that not only is our cash reserve fully restored to the pre-storm level, but also that we are able to use the extra cash to pay off our home loan sooner than expected. In fact it may be the case that we are able to pay off our loan before the end of the year! Not bad considering that we moved in only nine years ago.

We had our Annual Meeting on March 11th that was very well attended. We elected the new board and officers for this year. We discussed several topics which Rev. Genko Blackman, Board President, will briefly report on.

Also in March, I traveled to Dai Bosatsu Zendo (DBZ) in New York to be the co-celebrant with Eido Shimano Roshi at Peter (Shinkon) Glynn's unsui (Zen monk) ordination. As everyone knows, Shinkon has long been a student at Chobo-ji and recently began his second Kessei (resident training program) at DBZ. Recently ordained Rev. Zenmu Nightingale accompanied me to DBZ. It was our great pleasure to assist as we could with Shinkon's ceremony. He now officially begins his 1000-day commitment to unsui training in the monastery, and after the ceremony Zenmu

remained at the monastery to begin the DBZ Spring Kessei with him. In this way these two Chobo-ji siblings can support each other while they give themselves to the Dharma. In addition to the picture here on the front page, you can find many more shots of the ceremony at [www.choboji.org](http://www.choboji.org), links page, "Recent Chobo-ji Sangha Pictures."



*Shinkon with Eido Roshi, Genjo Osho & DBZ Sangha*

Spring Sesshin began almost immediately after my return from DBZ. There were twenty people in attendance, which is once again near our maximum. Uncannily our sesshin attendance is rarely less or more than the maximum we can easily handle; somehow there is just enough room for those who can and need to be at sesshin. The Dai Tenzo (Chief Cook) was Bob (Daigan) Timmer, who, despite his initial trepidation, did a grand job serving the Sangha (community). Our Shika (host/manager) was once again Rev. Genko Blackman, who in the face of trying circumstances always comes through. Mary (Choko) Cabaniss-Ballard was our Jikijitsu (time keeper) and she seamlessly kept us in line. Matthew (Myodo) Perez and Sally (Zenka) Metcalf were our Jisha

(tea servers), and kept us well nurtured and hydrated. Edward (Daiki) Cadman, with his beautiful baritone voice was our Densu (Chant Leader), and Scott (Ishin) Stolnack served me well as Inji (Abbot attendant). Sesshin concluded with a Jukai (Buddhist Precept ceremony) for Michael Blome and Tina Grant; you can read more about this later in this issue.

A couple of weeks after Spring Sesshin, on Sunday, April 8th, the historical Buddha's 2,550th birthday, Genki Takabayashi Roshi (our founding Abbot) was present to help us celebrate and affirm Rev. Genko Blackman as a full Osho in a *suiji* ceremony. Genko has completed the requisite ten years of training at Chobo-ji needed to warrant such a service. More than fifty people were in attendance, and all had a good time. The service was coordinated by Dee

(Seishun) Endelman and Diane (JoAn) Ste. Marie. Seishun and Randal (Daigetsu) Tanabe provided the fabulous food spread. I've asked Genko Ni Osho to share some thoughts about her life journey right now and you can read them in this issue.

Since then I've been to San Diego Aikikai to do a three-day sesshin with my many Dharma friends there, and also to Ellensburg and Wenatchee to sit zazen with our east of the Cascades associates. The Dharma connections are strong and the relationship between these various practice centers continues to deepen. Soon I will be traveling with Genko and Tina to DBZ

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to train once again with Eido Shimano Roshi at Memorial Day Sesshin. I am looking forward to practicing with the entire DBZ Sangha, especially Shinkon and Zenmu. Chobo-ji's Summer Sesshin is coming up at the end of June, and if you are planning to attend, please get your reservations in early.

In addition to what I have already mentioned, you will find our Fusu's (Treasurer) Annual Financial Report, Genko's Annual Meeting report, a transcription of a Dharma Talk from Spring Sesshin, and Spring Sesshin's closing In-cense Poem. I hope you enjoy these offerings, and that your springtime is one of renewal and rededication to priorities you hold dear.

With gassho,

*Genjo*

## Annual Meeting Report

The Chobo-ji membership held its annual meeting as usual right after the March mini-sesshin. All members of the current board were willing to remain on the board for the coming year, and were re-elected by the membership. Serving until March 2008: Genko Kathy Blackman, Daiki Cadman, Tom Shodo DeGroot, Dee Seishun Endelman, Diane JoAn Ste. Marie, Carolyn Josen Stevens, Scott Ishin Stolnack, Bob Daigan Timmer, Linda Muka Wehnes, and Genjo Osho as an ex-officio member.

After the board election, the membership meeting formally adjourned, and the board met in its annual meeting. Many members stayed on to discuss various temple topics. The board elected its new officers to be Genko as President, Daigan as Vice President, Muka as Secretary and Josen as Treasurer.

We learned that the membership responded strongly to the fundraising appeal for roof repairs, allowing full coverage of

expenses, full restoration of our reserve fund, with some left over to apply toward retiring Zen house debt. In addition to hearing this news, the board heard reports on the Northwest Dharma Association annual meeting and elections, Genki Takabayashi Roshi's retirement situation, and preparations for my sui-ji ceremony in April.

One current topic of discussion is the possible upgrade of Chobo-ji's airplane, which was discussed at the March meeting and at an additional board meeting held in April. The board agreed to pursue the upgrade to a new model, assuming that appropriate financing can be worked out. This action will allow the leaseback arrangement with Galvin Flight School to continue for the foreseeable future. As of this writing the matter is still not resolved, but we will most likely be reporting about it in the next issue of the newsletter.

Regularly scheduled board meetings are planned for 11:30 am, June 10, and 11:30 am, September 9, immediately following mini-sesshin on those days. Members are more than welcome to stay for these meetings and participate in discussions of temple business.

With gassho,

*Genko*

### Summer Sesshin June 23rd - 29th

Please send a deposit by June 10th, earlier if you want to guarantee a reserved spot. Make your deposit check to Chobo-ji. The cost of sesshin is \$210 (less dues). Sesshin begins promptly at 5 am the morning of Saturday, June 23rd, so plan to be there at least 20 min. early. Sesshin will end around 11 am, Friday morning, June 29th.

## Annual Financial Report

2006 was a stable financial year for the zen group until December when the roof blew off. Our income was \$50,917, expenses were \$31,448, leaving a net income of \$19,469. Overall these numbers are lower than 2005, because we moved Ro-hatsu sesshin from December 06 to January 07, so a year-to-year comparison is bit problematic. Our biggest income category was dues at \$25,490, about the same as last year, followed by sesshin income, which was \$8,713 for three sesshins. Our biggest expense was \$12,194 for Genki Roshi's pension and health insurance, followed by \$8,137 in house related expenses (mortgage interest, insurance, repairs). Of some note, mid-year we paid off our loan for the Cessna.



And then the wind lifted up parts of our roof and deposited them on the ground for zen students to stumble over when they arrived in the next day's early morning darkness. After an assessment of the damage, we decided to replace the entire roof, which cost us \$20,630, plus \$1,630 for temporary patches. Our insurance company paid \$5,661 for repairs, and our rainy day fund had \$11,000, so we were coming up short. Genjo included a fund appeal in the winter newsletter, and low and behold, \$16,650 came in to pay for the roof and replenish the savings account. We are deeply grateful to everyone who contributed. Our new roof keeps us dry, and the zendo ceiling and walls were repaired and painted in time for Genko's Sui-ji ceremony – we are once again whole.

With gassho,

*Josen Carolyn Stevens*

## Hekiganroku: Case 32

### Jo Joza Stands Still

(4th day, Spring Sesshin, 2007)

Transcription help from Dee Seishun

#### Engo's Introduction:

Once the delusive way of thinking is cut off, a thousand eyes are suddenly opened. One word blocking the stream of thought, and all non-actions are controlled. Is there anyone who would undergo the experience of dying the same death and living the same life as the Buddha? Truth is manifest everywhere. If you do not see it, here is an ancient example. See the following:

#### Main Subject

Jo Joza asked Rinzai, "What is the essence of Buddhism?" Rinzai, getting up from his seat, seized him, slapped him, and pushed him away. Jo Joza stood still. A monk standing by said, "Jo Joza, why don't you bow?" When Jo Joza bowed, he suddenly had an awakening.

#### Setcho's Verse

Inheriting the spirit of Dansai,  
How could he be gentle and quiet?  
Not difficult for Kyorei  
To lift his hands and split Mount Kasan,  
Letting the Yellow River through.

It is now the middle day of Spring Sesshin and, not unexpectedly, some are flowing freely, while others are feeling stuck. It could be said this way, some quack like a duck and others just say, "Duck." You may think there is not much distance between these two positions; yet, it's like the distance between heaven and earth. They are far apart and at the same time they are inseparable.

Engo's introduction says, "Once the delusive way of thinking is cut off, a thousand eyes are suddenly opened." Please note there's nothing wrong with thinking or analyzing. In fact, this capacity to name, to call a quacking duck a quacking duck is one of the most extraordinary and ingenious capabilities of our species. To have a sense of self is a relatively primitive attribute, many species have this capacity,

but to say something like, "I think, therefore I am" is really extraordinary.

I have said, "You could never imagine Bruno (the dog) saying, 'I think therefore I am.'" It is a great evolutionary advance that we can reflect on our own sensations, thoughts, feelings, hopes and desires. Our capacity to reflect on our own sense of self is ingenious. However, from time to time, regardless of how mature we become, all of us will get caught in delusive thinking. In other words, it is impossible not to occasionally take our rational, philosophical, analytical way of viewing the world too seriously. If we're caught in



our own analytical perspective for too long, we actually begin to see the world upside down. We confuse the apparent—"it's a duck"—with reality. "Quack, quack, quack, quack!" When we let go, or see past our rational/dualistic way of looking at the world, we no longer confuse the apparent for the real. We realize that within the apparent is the real, and that within the real is the apparent. Form is emptiness and emptiness is form.

Our feeling for the real is encouraged by zazen, and then what is called "true insight" or "pure awareness" bubbles up from our own depths. With true insight it's impossible to confuse the apparent for the real and we become much more humble, free, creative, spontaneous, caring—all these lovely adjectives just flow when we're being informed by true insight rather than exclusively by our

rational/dualistic worldview.

It's very hard to be confused or conflicted if you're viewing the world from the real perspective. Engo says, "It's as though a thousand eyes are suddenly opened." For example, we all have two eyes. Put your hand over one eye and look around. Now, when you're looking through one eye, you're seeing the same world, nothing is really different. But, if now you open both eyes, the same world has depth. It has *depth!* You're all enlightened! (laughter) "Enlightenment" is like opening a thousand eyes, suddenly. You're seeing the exact same world but with much more depth.

When we're stuck in our rational, analytical capacity to name and reflect on the world—it's like having only one good eye open. Never minimize what your rational, analytical faculty does for you. It would be foolish to abandon this capacity. It would be like closing both of your eyes! But, *alone*, your rational analytical faculty has no depth and it easily confuses the apparent with the real.

Even one thought or one idea clung to, such as, "The world is like this" or "I am this," limits potential insight and inhibits depth perception. Clinging to even one idea or belief causes everything be filtered through this lens. What a mistake! Don't limit your perception by foolishly clinging to any thought, feeling or sensation. Did I say there is anything wrong with having thoughts, ideas, feelings or sensations? No. But if you cling to even one idea or belief you've systematically narrowed your perspective to that idea or belief.

In zazen we naturally learn how not to cling to our own thoughts, feelings and sensations. As we learn how to let them come and go freely, they can no longer possess us; therefore, they won't skew our view of reality. When we're clinging or attached to even one idea it warps us; our perspective becomes necessarily wrapped around it. We can't help but have endless thoughts, feelings and sensations, but, as soon as we *cling* to any opinion or feeling, our perspective is helplessly skewed by it. Even "I like this" or "I don't like that" or "That's right" and "That's wrong" or "He's bad" and "She's good" immedi-

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ately impedes our naturally free flowing mind. Holding on to a single opinion, preference or feeling skews your view. When your mind cannot flow freely, it loses some of its depth perception.

**S**o, in zazen, we're practicing letting go or "Cut, cut, cut, cut, cut, cut, cut!" as in "Don't hold on! Don't hold on to this thought, opinion, preference, feeling, desire, sensation." Don't hold on! Let them come, let them go. Combust so completely that they leave no trace!

**I**s there anyone who would undergo the experience of dying the same death and living the same life as Buddha? Let it be known that truth is already manifesting in full and we're already living the life of Buddha, and death of Buddha. Are we not born, do we not all die? We are already living the life of "Buddha" but we don't realize it. We think, "Buddha's life must be special. Rinzai's life must be special. Bodidharma's life must be special. Gandhi's life must be special. Einstein's life must be special. Marie Curie's life must be special. Not *my* life!"

**F**irst of all, their lives weren't out of the ordinary! They all on occasion had confused thoughts, fuzzy brains, fatigue and soreness. They all had to go to the bathroom, put on their cloths, made many mistakes, got sick and died. However, to whatever extent they realized their true nature, thereby allowing the actualization of their natural genius, they must have been capable of *letting go* of their thoughts, feelings and sensations. This allows spaciousness for new ideas, feelings and sensations. Because they all knew how to let go of preconceptions they had *room* for creative, ingenious, new ways of looking at things.

**A** perpetually fresh way of looking at things, or beginners mind, was possible because they were not clinging to their own opinions and preferences. Not that they didn't have them! Each knew how to not hold on to their own opinions and experiences and this was the key to their creativity and genius! There is no difference between these ancients and us; however, at some point they must have freely learned how let go of their thoughts, feelings and sensations so that their minds could stay relatively fresh and clear.

**W**ith the practice of being fully and naturally present to the activity at hand, everyone becomes more skillful at being dynamically awake and ready for whatever arises. You know, an athlete can't stay sharp unless she practices and trains rigorously. An artist stays vibrant and fresh because he practices so much. Likewise, we make a concerted effort to be present and non-attached during zazen or whatever task we are engaged in. In this way, through the rigors of this weeklong sesshin, the capacity to see things clearly with a fresh mind naturally blossoms. With each breath we make the effort to be accepting and present, no more, no less. This is simple to say, but hard to do. What do we do when it seems difficult to let go of our thoughts, feelings and sensations: cut, cut, cut, cut.

**T**he most systematic way to challenge our minds to let go of fixed ideas and preconceptions is to engage in Zen koan training. I'm sure there are other ways that also work well; however, I've never come across anything as remotely effective. Koan training forces us to be quick on our feet and to continually let go of our preconceived ideas. Each koan requires a fresh look at reality and keeps us stretching our capacity for true insight. I haven't found any other method that so consistently requires me to keep on my toes, and perpetually necessitates the relinquishing of old ideas and seeing the world with new eyes.

**"I**f you do not yet see this truth that is manifested everywhere right now, see the following."

**J**o Joza (I don't know if this "Jo" is like the "jo" in "Genjo" or not, I'd have to look up the character) and "Joza" is the senior priest or Shika. So the Shika, who was named Jo, asked Master Rinzai at a time of dharma dialogue, "What is the essence of Buddhism?"

**N**ow this question has been asked a lot, but the nice thing about this question is that it is always fresh because it is really asking, "What is THIS?" After all, what *is* this? Or, after all, who is asking, "what is this?" If you approach them properly, these are always fresh questions pushing us again and again into Great Doubt and deep inquiry. Do I still have ideas that I'm clinging to? YES! However, I can also say that, over the years, I have be-

come more proficient at letting them go more quickly. Do I still get stuck in my current conceptualizations of reality? Absolutely! Once a new idea forms about who this is and what this is, I'm still susceptible to fixating on it. That is until Eido Roshi asks me another koan, and once again I must come up with a fresh view. If I come to dokusan with an old idea, and say, "It works like this, Roshi." (laughter) Ring, ring, ring, he will quickly ring me out.

**I** might say, "Roshi, the only answer is Mu!" or "Roshi, it's the mind. I know it's the mind!" No. "It's the Nothing" No. "It's the Nothing Mind. I'm sure of it!" No. (laughter) Let go of your ideas of what this is, and have a fresh insight.

**H**ow do you know what is a "fresh insight?" True insight is a direct, personal, intimate experience of opening *your* eyes, or of feeling what is in your true heart! It is far beyond simply naming your ideas or explaining your thoughts. Put everything aside again and fully enter Muuuuu. Enter what is raw and real! And if in dokusan you're asked, "What's that standing out in the front yard?" And you say, "A pine tree," ring, ring, ring. How will you *reveal* tree as tree, bell as bell, flag as flag, three pounds of flax as the essence of the Universe or a shit wiping stick as the quintessential fragrance of the world? Allow your heartmind to open by letting go of your preconceptions. Let go of your ideas and definitions. Let go of your preferences. Let go of your idea of a separated selfhood. *Feel it! Be it.* Then, risk expressing it.

**W**hen a mutually satisfying token of it has been expressed, then I'll ask, "What does that mean?" (Laughter) But don't bother explaining before you are asked! And when you respond to the question, "What does that mean?" the response must be fresh, without borrowing from anyone else. A response must arise directly from the *heartmind*, that is to say, from your experience, not what the books say, or the ancient masters, nor from your own opinions. The words need to elaborate on the experience or realization just shared without words.

**T**here's something besides our rational mind that interferes with us feeling and being it, that interferes with trusting Mu, or even believing Mu. This has to do with what Carl Jung sees as our tendency

to get caught in either inflation or deflation. We all tend to think from time to time that we are either superior or inferior. “I really can’t experience Mu. I don’t know why. I was born that way.” (Laughter) “It’s just my limitation.” Or alternatively a person might say, “Oh, I felt Mu long ago! Come on, can’t we get past that now? Don’t you know I already experienced Mu in 1974?” (Laughter) “Don’t you trust me yet?” No, I don’t trust your old experience. Just because you’ve tasted it or glimpsed it or have been convinced of it does not mean that you’re somehow finished, superior or more capable. It just means you know where to turn, so keep turning there. Knowing where to look is good. Now go look.

**J**o is a senior monk, he must have been training many years under Rinzai, and very likely he has had glimpses of Mu already. Yet, again he asks, most genuinely, “What is the essence of Buddhism?” What is THIS? I’m feeling confused *again*. No surprises, it just happens. What *is* THIS?

**G**ently a Zen Master might say, “Mu, remember Mu? Remember when you tasted Mu? You know where to look. Look, look!” Rinzai, being Rinzai, stood up, seized the poor man, slapped him and then pushed him away. Jo Jaza stood still. Now, did he say, “What did you do that for?” or “How rude!” No, he was slapped, like getting hit with the keisaku. With his direct question Jo went up to Rinzai and essentially asked, “Come on, hit me with a keisaku. I’m feeling stuck!” Rinzai obliged. Sometimes when you’re feeling really stuck, I’ll ask for and share with you a clearing Mu [Shout of “Muuuuu!!!” Sounds of slap] “Come on! Look, look, look!” This is Rin-zai’s “look, look, look. Open your eyes!” and pushes him away.

**J**o just stands still. This is like after you receive keisaku. Ohhhhhhh. Sometimes, the hit is just right! Ohhhhhhh. “I was so stuck in my pain and my thoughts and my fatigue. Oh, that feels good! I was feeling so constipated.” Now he’s just speechless.

**S**o he just stands there. A monk, who just witnessed this exchange, says, “Why don’t you bow?” It would be like you receiving the keisaku and forgetting to bow,

just going right into Zazen — the slap was so cleansing that you just went right into Zazen. A fellow monk says, “Bow!” And at that moment — follow along with me — he puts his palms together and he bows, realizing at the same moment who is bowing. Probably not for the first time, but now more deeply, he sees into his true nature. He realizes, probably with tears springing from his eyes, that THIS and who is bowing are not different, not separate. In that moment, he and the universe, he and Rinzai, he and time are One.



It’s not like we are not always One, but his eyes are open to it.

**I**n close proximity to this kind of experience any koan can be penetrated. Because mind is feeling so fresh, tuned, and harmonious — when asked a koan — a response comes that is immediate, simple, clear and direct. The response is so clear because the insight informs your noggin rather than your noggin trying to figure it out. The cerebral cortex then simply puts it into words, fresh words, with real heart, the experience of what is felt — not

known — but *felt*. Finally one’s *fantastic* capacity to think, analyze, judge and discriminate is put to good use, because it is in service to deep communion. Insight does not begin with analysis. That’s no good at all, absolutely no good at all! We use our refined discriminating consciousness to interpret and perhaps stimulate our insight, but not to formulate it. Somehow in the zendo it seems easier to be fully present and awake to what is, perhaps simply because sitting is such a simple act. After a natural insight bubbles up, then with little or no effort the naturally brilliant analytical mind sees a way to impart a token of the experience. In koan training, we’re not going from this meaning to that meaning. Some time after sufficient gestation, natural insight follows natural insight.

Setcho’s Verse:

Inheriting the spirit of Danzai  
(this is another name for Obaku)  
Inheriting Obaku’s spirit,  
How could Rinzai be gentle and quiet?  
Not difficult for Kyorei  
(a demi-god in Buddhist mythology)  
To lift his hands and split Mount Kasan,  
Letting the Yellow River through.

**I**n Chinese mythology, Kyorei split Mount Kasan with his hand allowing the Yellow River to come through the gorge. Setcho is likening Rinzai to this demi-god who could split a mountain (Jo Joza) with one slap. And, when Jo bowed, he was opened all the way from the root chakra to the crown chakra. There is no way of knowing what THIS is, but we can feel completely at home in It. When we are in touch with it, we’re all creative, spontaneous, free thinkers, caring towards all; therefore, it’s worth reaching for this touchstone again and again. The touchstone is our true nature. When we get clogged up and constipated can we become at least a little skillful in clearing ourselves out? Yes. Just sit, just breath, just listen. Accept whatever presents itself and release it. There is no one here that can’t do this. So, even though we’re at the peak of sesshin, don’t you see that we’re just getting started?

With gassho,

Genjo

## Jukai Ceremony

On Friday, March 30th, the last day of Chobo-ji's Spring Sesshin, Michael Blome and Tina Grant formally accepted the Buddhist precepts. They have both been active participants in our Sangha for some time, and each has completed the requisite two week-long sesshins. In Michael's case he has done many sesshins here at Chobo-ji and many more at his former training temple Sonoma Mountain Zen Center.

Michael writes in his Jukai application letter:

*Ever since I was introduced to Zen over 30 years ago through the writing of Alan Watts and D.T. Suzuki I have had a deep faith in it. Or maybe it's better just to say that the practice (and the art and the literature) of Zen resonates in me, and always has, even though my effort has at times been distracted or ambivalent or muddled or all of the above.*

*A few years ago as I was just beginning to sit again regularly after a lapse of a few years, I came across Genjo's "Discriminating Mind" talk on the Chobo-ji web site. In that talk is the sentence: "Zen is about discovering who is holding the hammer, it is not about "fixing" anything." Reading that was like recalling*



*something extremely important that I had once kind of known but forgotten. Feeling as I did that my Zen practice was beyond repair, the message that nothing needs to be fixed actually made it sound doable again. So my association with Chobo-ji actually began at that time, maybe 3 or 4 years before I felt ready to start sitting again with a group. Now I look forward to many more years of not fixing, not practicing, not trying to be a Zen student, etc. — together with you and the rest of this wonderful sangha. Plum Mountain is already singing and dancing.*

Here is some of what Tina wrote:

*I feel an overwhelming sense of gratitude to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.*

*In my early twenties, I "discovered" Buddhism though my understanding was only superficial. I read books, was drawn to what was said, but never took my inquiry any further. To anyone who asked, I always stated that I had Buddhist leanings and that if I were to claim anything it would be Buddhism. I did not have the realization then of the thick, nearly impenetrable walls holding my spiritual practice at bay...*

*From the first time four plus years ago, when I sat zazen at home, I knew I had found what I had not known I was seeking. This sense of a connectedness with the universe was new and at times overwhelming. I was eager and so open in a wondrous, childlike manner to the depths and heights of what I was experiencing... I understood that "I" was so much more and so much less than what I thought...*

*Coming to this peaceful place for daily zazen has only strengthened my commitment to the Buddha and the Dharma and brought with it an unfolding understanding of the importance of the Sangha in my life. For as long as I can remember, I have wanted a place to belong, community to call my own. While I have come close,*



## Spring Sesshin 2007 Closing Incense Poem

*The dream of spring sprouts  
in the garden.*

*What barrier lies  
between life and death?*

*Followers of the Way have  
true insight.*



After that Michael and Tina received a Rakusu (symbolic pieces 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. Michael's new Dharma Name is Mu-Kan, which means No Barrier. Tina's new Dharma Name is SeiMu or Sprouting Dream.

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

*there was always something that was lacking, a sense of an emptiness through which my heart energy flowed.*

*As I begin to settle into this Chobo-ji Sangha, I recognize that what had always been missing was being surrounded by, embraced by other spiritual seekers... With every fiber of my being, I understand and feel gratitude that in this Sangha I can surrender self so that my heart will continue to unfold.*

During the Jukai Ceremony Michael and Tina 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.



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.



# Suiji Ceremony

It was wonderful to have so many of you present April 8 for the sui-ji ceremony and Buddha's birthday celebration. I am so grateful for everyone's support of my prac-



tice over the years. At that time I said it felt my practice was just beginning, and that really is true.

Many of you have asked what happens next. I plan to continue doing sesshins and mini-sesshins with ChoBo-Ji and come to zazen whenever I am able, and to support Genjo at ChoBo-Ji in whatever way he asks. The prison work will continue and hopefully expand, and I will continue to offer meditation at Bailey Boushay as long as possible as well. Currently I am going to the Wenatchee Zen group monthly in the summer and will continue to support that group if they ask for that support. Also I have been asked by Genki Roshi to travel to Montana from time to time to help with the small Zen group there; I will go for a mini-sesshin in May.

The tea study, which I have undertaken for the last seven years, is ongoing (another lifetime practice!), and I am interested in offering some sort of instruction around tea for those Sangha members who would like it. We have done a couple of workshops at the zendo in the past; please let me hear from Sangha members what you would enjoy as a follow-up.

Having said all that, I am open to whatever the Dharma offers in the way of opportunities. It certainly could not be foreseen ten years ago, when I became an unsui, how my practice would unfold to this point, and in spite of all those plans written above I don't pretend to know how it will unfold in the future. Eido Roshi always says that if you give yourself to the Dharma, the Dharma will give itself to you. This cannot be emphasized enough. It is my sincere hope that all of us at ChoBo-Ji will remain open to the Dharma and what it brings us.

I look forward to many years of practice together.



With gassho,

*Genko*



## 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 Genko Kathy Blackman Ni Osho. In addition to his Zen duties, Genjo Osho is a psychotherapist in private practice, a certificated 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: 6/10, 7/8, 8/12, 9/9, 10/14, 11/11

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

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

*Rohatsu Sesshin: 1/3/08 - 1/11/08*

*Spring Sesshin: 3/22/08 - 3/28/08*

**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 \$350. Members may subtract their monthly dues from the week-long sesshin cost. For more information see:

[www.choboji.org](http://www.choboji.org)