



# PLUM MOUNTAIN NEWS

Volume 15.1

Spring 2008

## Dear members and friends,

The irises are in full bloom, the Zen garden is brimming in growth, and our Sangha (Dharma Community) is ready to pop. So many important events have taken place since our winter issue of Plum Mountain News, it is difficult to conceive how much we have learned and grown. This issue is coming out late, as there has been little time to compile what we are doing, with each new event closely following the last.

On March 9th, after mini-sesshin (half-day Zen retreat), we had our first "Visioning Session" to explore Chobo-Ji's future and growth possibilities. Seishun (Dee Endelman) has compiled a summary of her notes, which you will find in this issue. Our second Visioning Sesshin will be held Saturday, June 7th, from 9 - 11 a.m.

Spring Sesshin (March 22 - 28) was packed. Clearly we are outgrowing our current space. We had 23 people in attendance; our small zendo (meditation hall) can sit 20 comfortably. It is my hope that in the not too distant future we will have a bigger zendo on a

larger property that will accommodate a residential practice.

Daigan (Bob Timmer) was our Shika (Host/Manager) for Spring Sesshin, and, in addition to organizing our Samu (work meditation) practice, he oversaw the pro-

jects to be completed before the Dharma Transmission ceremony on May 21st. Choko (Mary Cabaniss-Ballard) was our Dai Tenzo (Chief Cook) for sesshin and at her first time at bat for this post, she did a great job. Daikan (John Green) kept the pace as our Jikijitsu (timekeeper). Zenmu

(Rev. Brenda Nightingale) and Zenka (Sally Metcalf) were the Jisha (tea servers) who kept us well supplied with tea, coffee, samu snacks and gluten free treats. Zenshin (Chris Jeffries) could only attend sesshin part time, so the Densu (chant leader) duties were shared by Seimu (Tina Grant) and Myodo (Matthew Perez). Myodo and Seimu also alternated as Inji (Abbot assistant); this gave them both a little more exposure to the kinds of duties that they can expect to encounter when they both go to Kessei (Zen intensive) at DBZ (Dai Bosatsu Zendo) in New York this fall. On the second day of sesshin, Genko (Kathy Blackman) Ni-Osho gave an inspiring Dharma Talk.

On April 8th, we celebrated the Historical Buddha's birth, 2,551 years ago. As an infant it is said that he stood and raised one hand to the heavens and the other to the earth and declared, "I alone am the World-Honored One," implying that above the heavens and



*Above Chobo-Ji Spring Sesshin, Below SD Aikikai Sesshin*



*Continued on next page...*

*Continued from previous page...*

beneath earth there is but One Mind. All those who open their hearts will realize this truth.

Over the weekend of April 25 – 27, there was the San Diego Aikikai Spring Sesshin with twenty participants. It was good to sit with many old friends, including Leslie Cohen and Steve Garber. Chiba Sensei was not in attendance, but, as has been demonstrated in the past, the sincerity of the zazen practice he has encouraged over the years now has its own momentum and vitality. Even though Sensei plans to retire from active teaching this summer, I hope to continue to be invited to lead sesshins in San Diego and other locations where the joint practice of Zen and Aikido has been fostered.

On the evening of May 1st, Daikan, Seishin (Josie Backhouse) and I traveled to DBZ for Nyogen Senzaki's, (1876 – 1958), 50th Anniversary Memorial Sesshin (May 3 – 10), with over forty participants in attendance. Eido Roshi and



Roko Ni-Osho were in fine form giving in-depth Teishos (formal Dharma talks) that helped everyone know and appreciate Senzaki's sacrifice and contribution to the foundation of Zen in the West. He was the first Zen priest to reside in America, and did so for over 50 years. It was through his work that many Zen Masters, including Soen Nakagawa Roshi and Eido Shimano Roshi found their way to the States.

Eido Roshi (Abbot of DBZ), Genki Roshi (Chobo-Ji's founding Abbot), Roko Ni-Osho (senior Dharma Heir of Eido Roshi) and others began arriving in Seattle on May 20th, to begin the celebration of

the May 21st Dharma Transmission ceremony. Shortly after their arrival a joyous traditional Japanese whisked green-tea ceremony was held at Bonnie Mitchell Sensei's home overlooking Lake Union, assisted by Genko and Myodo. That night there was a celebratory dinner at Nishino Restaurant. The morning of the 21st the Chobo-Ji Sangha met for daily zazen and then moved the whole zendo to the University Friends Meeting (UFM) Worship Room, where the 11 a.m. ceremony took place to accommodate all those who said they would attend. The Social Hall at UFM was set up for a delicious white tablecloth lunch buffet that followed the ceremony. Following all this, the zendo was returned to the Zen House, just before dinner with sixty people at Ivar's Salmon House. The next morning, there was a departure breakfast at Sorrento Hotel. Throughout the whole series of events, the Chobo-Ji Sangha acted in a well organized exemplary fashion. I received many gifts but the greatest of all was how everyone pitched in as necessary. I wish to give special acknowledgement to Mukan (Michael Blome) who oversaw the transportation needs of all guests, to Seimu and Ryushin (Michael Sobel) who did the bulk of driving for the Roshis and Roko Ni-Osho, to Seishun (Dee Endelman) and Daigetsu (Randal Tanabe) for overseeing the lunch buffet, to Daigan, Genko, Daikan (John Green), Josen (Carolyn Stevens)... to name a few who were also indispensable. Speaking of gifts, I want to mention my special thanks to the Chobo-Ji sangha for collectively contributing to the purchase of two Bodhisattva guardians for our main altar. Zenka has provided a wonderful narrative of the actual ceremony that you will find on the next few pages of this issue. I cannot express the gratitude that I have for being associated with this sangha.

The weekend following the ceremony (May 24 – 25), Genko, Josen and I traveled to Wenatchee to sit with our Chobo-Ji associates. There was a half-day sesshin on Saturday, with a haiku workshop that followed that afternoon, a potluck dinner for the Zen and Tibetan practitioners that night, a forum Sunday morning on

“Living Wisdom and Compassion Every Day” with Lama Padma, and finally I was the guest speaker at the Cascade Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Sunday Service. While in Wenatchee, we were hosted by Daiko and Meho (Todd and Sharon Petit).

Well I think that about brings us up to date; I'd better stop writing now so that this issue can be released before the summer issue is expected. Our next weeklong sesshin is scheduled for June 28 through the morning of July 4th. May your spring continue to bloom.

With gassho,

Genjo

## 2nd Visioning Meeting Saturday, June 7th, 2008

Our sangha will hold the second of two visioning sessions on Saturday, June 7, from 9 a.m. – 11 a.m.

On March 9, nearly 30 members of the sangha held a first session at which we envisioned our future as a community and talked about a residential center that could house that vision.

Several over-arching themes emerged from the first session. We see the following as our future: continued strong practice and more of it, an inclusive community, including intergenerational and other diversity; beauty in its many forms (art, music, tea ceremony, etc.); and service to others. Sangha members had many creative ideas for the kind of physical space that could house this desired future.

We left the meeting on a positive note, but with the clear understanding that there are fears and concerns about the process and the change that is inevitable. The purpose of this second meeting is to make sure that we hear one another's concerns, talk about how we might address them and decide whether to move forward to raise funds and acquire property for a residential center.

As at the first session, this meeting will be facilitated by Genko Ni-Osho and Dee Seishun.



# Visioning Summary

Notes from March 9, 2008

**Meeting Purpose:** To have a Sangha conversation about the community's future and a residential center that could house that future.

The following are "raw" notes, with some of the duplications removed. We were torn between just doing a little editing and sending these notes out with all of the repetition and imprecise language and doing some synthesizing. Duplication has been removed to save space, but otherwise the thoughts are there pretty much as they were spoken.

It is interesting that people often gave the same ideas under different "titles." There are really some strong common themes with everyone expressing these themes personally--so one person will just say "art" and another will say "art room--sculpture, pottery, high ceilings." Of course, there are some who dream really, really big--we'd need 40 acres and a mule (and a large inheritance) to fulfill some of these ideas!

Several overarching themes emerged: strong practice and more of it, inclusive community, beauty in its many forms, and service to others. We left the meeting on a positive note, but with the clear understanding that there are fears and concerns about the process and the change that is inevitable.

## What We Love About: The Practice:

- Full schedule of activities/sits/Sesshins
- Simple form, not highly ritualized
- Keep morning service schedule and style
- Simple and good meal service
- Keep using plum tea in the mornings
- Keep synthesis of Genki Roshi and Eido Roshi forms
- Keep practice adaptable, flexible, yet strong Rinzaï Zen spirit; traditional Zen practice
- Commitment to cleanliness and order
- Semi-silent retreats
- Blue collar Zen—everyday Zen practice
- Focus on practice as our bridge to our whole life and death journey
- Continue our appreciation of the roots of this practice.

## The Sangha:

- Sustain pragmatic group process
- Egalitarian, no "one-upmanship" i.e. everyone pitches in for all activities
- Continue to have a coffee hour
- Social commitment and communication
- Keep a small-town Zen feeling
- Work to have an open, vulnerable, trusting, safe, supportive welcoming environment
- Accept and encourage a wide diversity of backgrounds and ages and sexual orientations



- Work to accommodate various health/aging/work issues and be a nonsexist environment
- Don't have a sense of division between residents vs. nonresidents
- Fully incorporate different diverse levels of participation
- Ability to come and go without stigma
- Sense of intimacy, caring and trust
- Strive to recognize that everyone's presence adds something
- Practice with warmth, humor and sincerity
- Inclusiveness of community, don't have to meet criteria to start
- Be inspired by new people and have longtime practitioners who are inspiring
- Minimize politics and bureaucracy
- Members are independent, sincere, resilient, confident
- Staying in sangha builds strength
- Everyone feels they can be as involved
- People are accessible and together form a sense of family
- Quaker style care committees
- Our natural abilities are encouraged
- Senior students don't hog the show; people are assigned posts early in their practice
- Newcomers feel welcome and valuable

## The Facility:

- Zendo is central to all other functions
- Love the garden and grounds
- keep water feature

- Simple temple, e.g., coffee table altar
- Simplicity of Zendo design and décor
- Centrally located in Seattle
- Filled with incense and Zen sweat
- Bamboo floor
- Library
- Benches available, hand made, beautiful, multiple use
- Find value in things people cast out.
- Use only what is really necessary.
- Having residents (Genjo, Carolyn and others) grounds the space
- The Zendo is accessible to members to use at other than scheduled zazen times

## The Instruction:

- Genjo does not insulate himself from the group, direct access
- Good instruction, but allowed to stumble about/grapple, extemporaneous style
- Good guidance with koans/straight shooting down-to-earth dialog
- Genjo's therapist training and Genjo's pastoral care are real assets
- Genjo is not a self-declared teacher
- Tradition is strong
- Having Genjo, Genko and other senior members as teachers
- Vivid American Rinzaï Zen style
- Genjo's commitment to be clear, loving and approachable is appreciated

## The Temple Organization:

- We don't have to worry about money all of the time; group continues to be finan-



- cially solvent
- Group is a good model of responsible organization and action
- The group honors its commitment to take care of Genki Roshi
- Genjo/Carolyn— are good examples of being tidy and environmentally conscious
- Web site/newsletter are simple direct informative and not ostentatious
- Group does not support Abbot financially, he has his own livelihood
- Not a lot of ego agendas in our decision-

*Continued on next page...*

*Continued from previous page...*

making

- Rotating posts, building skills, enriching the depth of practice
- Flexible attendance allowed through a flexible schedule

#### Other Assets:

- Prison work— outside dharma work
- Community participation, involved in outreach
- Working at Japanese garden
- Zendo dogs!
- Sangha comes without advertising or proselytizing



- Positive vibe
- Urban practice

Ideas posted in answer to these questions: What kind of residential center might hold this future? What other (non-space) things do we need to do in our future?

#### • Daily Practice

- Zendo with lots of light, big windows
- Zendo with high ceiling, good lighting
- Heated floors?!?
- 40-person Zendo— square or rectangle
- More Dokusan
- More sesshins
- Joju chanting (kitchen, etc.)
- Space for morning coffee/breakfast
- Evening Zazen and additional times
- Founders/Ancestors' Hall
- Strong lay practice
- Outdoor Kinhin space (greenbelt)
- Guest Zen speakers, talks, workshops
- More practical instruction: how to breathe, sit with less pain, deal with

thoughts, etc.

- More zafu/zabutons of uniform color and size
- Pali chants like at DBZ

#### • Residence

- Structure for temple bell
- 2-10 residential apartments
- Residential space open to non-practicing spouses/partners
- Keep rents affordable, room for economically-challenged or disadvantaged
- Space for short-term (weekend) or long-term residencies
- Space for 6-10 people to live on campus
- Flexible multi-use space
- Private rooms with private baths

#### • Room for Guests

- Charge for room? Bring your own bedding, cost is less
- 1-2 open apartments for guests
- Could be visitors, visiting students, visiting teachers, releasing inmates
- Dorm
- Friendly to non-Buddhists
- Private silent retreat
- Can temporarily accommodate more sleeping over (sesshins)
- Sharing meals
- At least 6 beds plus futons/floor pads for guests and out of town Sesshin participants

#### • Communal Space/Social Space

- A garden
- Large kitchen
- Flexible multi use space: Toya, multi-space, yoga, art gallery, Genki gallery
- Library, books, audio, video
- Lounge/library
- Psychotherapy space for Genjo's clients
- Dining room
- Weekly potluck dinners for all
- Communal transport
- Room for creative and informed members to offer wonderful classes, workshops
- Guest speakers
- Gallery/performing arts room
- Tea house/room— classroom space— room suitable for films
- Substantial organic vegetable garden
- Courtyard
- Cozy, comfortable communal spaces
- Continue morning coffee tradition
- Green design— solar, alternative energy

#### • Accommodation

- Bamboo floor in Zendo

○ Space for:

- Permanent residents (Abbott, etc.)
- Long-term practice (6 months)
- Guest rooms
- Bunk rooms for Sesshin
- Cat/dog friendly?
- Elevators?
- Avoid oversized tubs
- Okay to play flute, guitar, instruments
- Church-like building for Zendo— base-ment for multipurpose room— room for apartments for long-term residents— room on land for “mini-homes,” 300-400 square feet
- Quiet residential rooms
- Sauna or hot tub
- Big old trees
- Natural light in Zendo
- A piano
- Accessible bathrooms
- Some accommodation for reentry from prison or drug/EtOH treatment
- Going as deep here as at DBZ
- Library/book store
- Zendo on ground floor— few steps
- Accessible for persons with disability
- Space for less formal events
- Location— central/public transit
- Neighbors glad to have us here
- Being able to “drop by” during day
- Parking!

#### • Service/Outreach

- Classes/workshops on Zen and tea, art, other activities?
- Hospice/palliative care program



- Continue work with incarcerated and re-leased populations
- Occasional large public events
- Be involved in service for the poor and hungry
- “Multipurpose room” shared with/rented by others— AA meetings, after school programs, etc.
- Share any Zen Art-related services with wider community

- Continue/expand “virtual” Zendo, library, podcasts, etc.
- Media room for maintaining web site, e-mail, newsletter, DVD viewing, recording teishos
- Always open and available/welcoming
- Affiliate with a halfway house?
- Community garden and/or kitchen
- Craft room— sewing, painting, other— ongoing projects could be left there
- Pea patch
- Interfaith discussions/presentations
- Compassion projects for youth
- Compassionate listening projects
- Conflict resolution
- Neighbor get acquainted events
- Creating partnerships with our community organizations to fulfill common goals of service

#### • Organization

- A committee to do group visioning
- Open, transparent, egalitarian
- Consensus style
- Continue Board structure
- Good communication as we grow
- Someone to keep public spaces clean and in order— manager?
- Stay financially sound and conservative
- Grow slowly— fiscally responsible
- Step by step process
- Everyone feels welcome, even if not a resident
- Some dimension— such as rentals— that makes money as a funding source
- Outreach through publications, etc., to encourage visitors
- Rotating posts: to include house manager, newsletter, correspondence, grounds
- Incorporate under IRC 501 (C)(3)
- Clearly inclusive (diverse) community— as welcoming as possible
- Z-level organizational structure!

#### • Tradition

- Founders Hall (Kaisando)
- Buddhist holidays
- Stick with rigorous practice
- Continue mix of traditional and English chants
- Preserving history and traditions through archives, publications and strong practice
- Keep Genki’s legacy
- Zen 101 and Buddhist 101 Classes
- Keep the Big Bell— ring it!
- Art! Making it, having it
- Learn more about our tradition
- Keep it simple and authentic

- More emphasis on the eightfold path
- Zen calligraphy displayed throughout
- Clean, simple, black & beige?

#### • Multigenerational/kid friendly

- Childcare for parents doing Zazen
- Arts studio space— painting, sculpture, pottery, etc.— workshops & lessons, craft projects
- Encourage more racial diversity
- Introduce children to Buddhist practice
- Accommodation for aging sangha
- Co-op day care or child care
- Zazen for parents/baby-sitting
- Activities for kids
- More public ceremonies— e.g., Buddha’s birthday— where families can participate
- Samu & community work includes kids
- Teens could work— help elders
- Outreach to schools
- Inclusive events and activities
- Library has kids books
- Music making/music appreciation
- Compassion project for kids/youth— compassionate listening & conflict resolution

## Spring Sesshin 2008 Closing Incense Poem

*The Great Way is not difficult for  
those without choice  
and attachment.*

*Just let things be in their own way  
and there will be neither coming  
nor going.*

*What then of the favored plum  
blossoms falling like snow  
in the spring breeze?*

*Who sees this fleeting world?  
Who feels the subtle joy  
of the present moment?*

*Recall the unity of Emptiness, but  
remember this too is but a name.*

## Summer Sesshin June 28th - July 4th

Please send a deposit by June 15th, 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 28th, so plan to be there at least 20 min. early. Sesshin will end around 11 am, Friday morning.

## Shiho-shiki May 21st, 2008

Through the process of Dharma transmission (*Shiho-shiki* in Japanese), Zen’s lineage can be traced through a long line of masters and disciples back to the Historical Buddha. On May 21, 2008, at Seattle’s University Friends (Quaker) Meeting



House, Eido Shimano Roshi passed his staff to Genjo Marinello Osho. Eido Roshi is the abbot of the New York City zendo Shobo-Ji and the Dai Bosatsu Kongo-Ji monastery in the Catskill Mountains of New York State.

The ancient process of Inka — Mind flowing into Mind down the ages in an

*Continued on next page...*



*Continued from previous page...*

unbroken stream — has now swept Genjo Osho into its mysterious current. And so it has been from the moment Shakyamuni held up a flower and affirmed the smiling Maha Kashyapa as his Dharma Heir.

In our Rinzai - Hakuin Zenji Dharma Line there are 27 generations in India counted from the Historical Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama, until Bodhidharma brought what became known as Ch'an (*Zen* in Japanese) to China early in the Fifth Century. Another 27 generations passed in China until this lineage moved to Japan, and again another 27 passed in Japan before Eido Shimano Roshi established our sect in New York. This makes Genjo Osho the eighty-third generation after the Historical Buddha.

Among the dignitaries present to witness the transmission ceremony were Genki Takabayashi Roshi (Genjo Marinello's ordination teacher and founding abbot of Chobo-Ji), Roko Sherry Chayat Ni-Osho,



abbess of the Zen Center of Syracuse, Hoen-Ji and Dharma Heir of Eido Roshi, and Meido Moore Roshi from Chicago, IL. Zen teachers from the Pacific Northwest included Eido Frances Carney Roshi of the Olympia Zen Center, Chozen Bays Roshi and Hogen Bays of Great Vow Monastery in Oregon, and the Ven. Shen-Ling Rossi of Dragon Flower Ch'an Temple in Tacoma. Another honored guest

was Urasenke Japanese Tea Instructor Bonnie Soshin Mitchell Sensei.



Ninety guests arrived for the ceremony. Shakuhachi music from Hanz Araki drew all into a state of quiet, and the entrance of Eido Roshi and Genki Roshi opened the service. Four of Genjo Osho's Dharma peers entered to serve as the initial four gates or barriers through which Genjo had to pass. Finally, Genjo Osho entered the room dressed in the simple robes of an unsui (monk) with the broad-rimmed round



bamboo hat of a traveling monk in hand. Genjo was challenged by each of the six gatekeepers (the four peers, Genki Roshi and Eido Roshi). At each gate, a question was put to him. Each time the gatekeeper was satisfied and responded with a resounding "OK!" Once the six gates were passed, a ceremonial staff was stamped forcefully on the floor by Eido Shimano Roshi and passed to Genjo Osho as the symbol of the transmission.

Genjo Osho retired briefly and returned wearing new robes to deliver the following incense poem:



*The Buddha, Dharma  
and Sangha are all empty.  
What is there to treasure?*

*There is nothing to attain.  
What can be transmitted?*

*Digesting entanglements,  
Body and Mind are set free.*

*Nothing to do but listen  
to the thunder  
And follow the wind.*

Roko Ni-Osho, Genki Roshi and Eido Roshi spoke, reflecting on the significance of this transmission and the new responsibilities of Genjo Osho as he carries into the future the lineage of Hakuin, Rinzai, Bodhidharma, and Gautama Buddha.

In her talk, Roko Ni-Osho reminded us all that this ceremony was truly a matter of trust. "I trust you, Genjo Osho," she con-



cluded, the power in her words resounding through all who heard.

**G**enki Roshi said, “A day such as this is as rare and precious as finding a small diamond in a vast ocean. No yesterday! No today! No tomorrow! Just right now — *strong Dharma!!!*”



**E**ido Roshi spoke eloquently on the Rin-zai lineage and the lineages of Soen Nakagawa Roshi and Nyogen Senzaki, which he carries through formal and informal transmission. Carrying these lineages forward into the future in their purest and strongest form is a deep responsibility. He expressed his confidence in Genjo Osho to do this in partnership with him.



**G**enjo Osho presented “Tozan’s Masagin (Three Pounds of Flax),” Case 18 of the *Gateless Gate*, and gave his first teisho (formal Zen discourse) as a Dharma heir. The teisho was rich with grateful remem-



ber together today.” Genjo Osho recounted personal and formative stories from his life, all of which led him, step by step, to his vocation and maturation as a Buddhist monk. He said that his first Zen teachers (Dr. Glenn Kangan Webb and Hirano Osho-san) opened his eyes. Genki Roshi and others showed him how to walk (bow, cook, clean, i.e. “Everyday open hearted activity is the Tao”). He spoke of Eido Roshi as his running coach. At one point Genjo Osho removed his glasses and said, “The opportunity to study with Eido Roshi has been like putting on my glasses after going without. Everything is so much clearer, sharper and transparent.”

**F**rom both his biological father and Dharma father, Genjo has received a do-or-die spirit that has helped him pass through and “digest” the challenges of life. He reported that combusting entanglements has steadily freed him to be

a more caring human being.

branches of connections, support, challenges and love of many friends, family and teachers. “Without each stitch of this seamless fabric, meeting each person when I did and how I did, we would not be here

**T**o conclude the ceremony, everyone chanted the Four Great Bodhisattva Vows.



## The Art of Zen Haiku by Rev. Genko Blackman

*The following was written as an introduction for the ongoing haiku group in Wenatchee at the Cascade Unitarian Fellowship*

The way of poetry has been from the beginning the Dharani of Japan. When one dismisses poetry as but the clever weaving of words, even one's study of the sutras and commentaries and one's practice of meditation are no more than delusional thinking.

[Shinkei, *Sasamegoto*, Part 2, Verse 45]

Shinkei was a renowned renga, linked verse, poet in 15th century Japan. Along with Noami, the noted Noh play writer, and Murata Shuko, the tea master, he is largely responsible for transforming the arts in Japan from entertainment into a spiritual practice, a meditative way of life.



Haiku came from the poem form called waka, usually shown in English as a five-line poem and used as the basis for renga, or linked verse gatherings. Working within the constraints of a set of complex rules, a group of poets set out to write a collective poem using the basic building block of the waka, a poem of two lines, one of 17 syllables and the other of ten. The first poet would draft a 17-syllable line and the next a ten-syllable line, complementing the first and building on the theme it introduced. Each succeeding poet would add a line, alternating 17 and 10 syllables, until the poem was complete.

Aside from the number of syllables, there were strict rules as to how often an image could be repeated, or a kigo (seasonal reference) used, and many other restrictions. Similar to zendo rules, it forced the participants to look deeply rather than

broadly, for inspiration.

Over time, the 17-syllable first line of the waka, or renga, became its own separate form. Probably the most famous haiku practitioner was Basho, with Issa a close second. Traditional haiku adhere to the 17-syllable rule in Japanese, and juxtapose the first part of the haiku against the second in some way. You will also usually find a seasonal reference of some sort. As with all Japanese art forms, the images are very specific – you never say “flower” when you can give the name, for example. Ultimately we are working to express in the

most succinct and specific, even mundane way something universal.

Any of the Japanese arts as traditionally taught begins with learning the rules, then learning how to break the rules, and finally becoming free enough and familiar enough with the form to be free of chafing at the rules. In the spirit of that, here is a list of guidelines to writing haiku, given to me by Christopher Herold, an American haiku poet.

Haiku should be written:

- 1) In three lines
- 2) With 17 syllables or less (5-7-5 syllables, or 2-3-2 accented syllables or short-long-short lines)
- 3) With a distinct cut after either the first

or second line (use line break, colon, em-dash, ellipsis, or margin adjustment)

4) Optional: Kigo, or seasonal reference

**A**void telling the quality of a thing in general ways (“old rake”)

**R**ather show the quality through one or two carefully chosen modifiers (“Rusted rake”)

**A**void making overt comparisons (“Animal-shaped clouds”)

**R**ather imply by juxtaposition (“Browsing sheep – puffy clouds drift above the hillside”)

**A**void opinions or judgments (“beautiful evening,” “ugly cat”)

**R**ather evoke feelings with specific images and details (“first star,” “bedraggled cat”)

**A**void looming large, either in personal pronouns or otherwise (“I watch a duck land”)

**R**ather describe what is there as if you were not there (“a duck lands”)

**A**void too many images or too much going on in one poem.

**A**void confusing perspectives. Pinpoint the viewpoint for the reader.

**C**hoose verbs and modifiers carefully and creatively.

**D**on't Personify: (“Daybreak finds the full moon sleeping”)

**A**void the use of big, complicated, fancy words or highly specialized words: “interminable silence,” cumulo-nimbus”

**U**timize musicality to draw readers in: assonance, consonance, and onomatopoeia, all in moderation.



Utilize humor in a light way, not bawdy or gross distracting stuff.

There are of course always exceptions. This is one of my favorite English language haiku:

*Snow mixes with rain -  
My mother keeps calling me  
By my brother's name.*  
- Paul M.



[Porter Pond, taken by Todd Petit]

And another by the same author:

*Cold snap  
The rattle of a rake  
Over stones.*

## Kessei Fund

As many of you know, two Sangha members — Tina (Seimu) Grant and Matthew (Myodo) Perez — plan to attend Fall Kessei at Dai Bosatsu Monastery in September 2008. This Kessei period will be in preparation for their intention to become unsui (Zen monks) thereafter.

To help defray the costs for Seimu and Myodo, we have established a Kessei Fund. If you wish to donate, please send your contribution to Cho Bo Ji, marked "Kessei Fund." The proceeds collected by August 10th will be distributed between the two Kessei students.

A contribution to this fund forwards our intention to deepen our collective practice and support the furtherance of deepening True Dharma in the West.

## 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 20 years of tirelessly giving himself to the transmission of Buddha Dharma to the West, in 1997 he retired as our teacher, got married and moved to Montana. In retirement he does the activities he loves best: gardening, pottery, calligraphy, writing and cooking. Many visit him in the hope of learning something about a Zen life.

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 State.

## 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, 1hr.

Monday & Wednesday, 7:30 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: 6/8, 7/13, 8/10, 9/7, 11/9, 12/14

*Summer Sesshin:* 6/28/08 - 7/4/08

*Autumn Sesshin:* 9/27/08- 10/3/08

*Rohatsu Sesshin:* 1/4/09 - 1/12/09

*Spring Sesshin:* 3/21/09 - 3/27/09

**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)