



Water Wheel

Being one with all Buddhas, I turn the water wheel of compassion.
—Gate of Sweet Nectar

Zen Center of Los Angeles / Buddha Essence Temple

Vol. 10 No. 3 2551 Buddhist Era

MAY / JUNE 2009

Collective Wisdom And Awakening

By Roshi Wendy Egyoku Nakao

When I ponder the nature of collective wisdom and awakening, I often recall the declaration made by Siddhartha Gautama upon seeing the morning star, “How wonderful, how wonderful! I, the broad earth, and all beings are enlightened and simultaneously manifest the Great Way together!” Here is the mystery uncovered: everything, *all together*, is awake.

What are the implications of “everything, *all together* is awake” for our life? We have traditionally understood the Sangha as a container to support individual awakening and wisdom. We approach practice as an individual endeavor, each person awakening in their own time alongside each other, or ahead of or behind one another. We may assume that the principle of *all together*—that is, being free from the slightest sense of separation—blossoms from within ourselves through our own effort.

We can practice within a Sangha for years and still not quite see ourselves either as whole or even as a significant part of the whole. This can be apparent in our behavior, even the behavior of long-time practitioners—we don’t quite see the ways in which our behavior affects not only ourselves, but also the people living in our home, at our workplace, and beyond. And yet, through Zen practice, we are seeking the skillful means that bursts this bubble of separation, so that we can live out the truth of *all together*.

Through our Sangha’s working together over the past decade, we have come to understand that, as important as the focus is on individual awakening, there is another equally important and vital focus that is also available to us—a focus on collective wisdom and awakening. This is



The Great Dragon of Recycling, created for Earth Day by the ZCLA Brown-Green Group and made entirely of recyclable materials.

new territory for us, but through our experiences with Shared Stewardship, *Under the Bones of the Master (Bones)*, and the Many Hands and Eyes/Prison Project endeavors, we are beginning to explore this new territory of collective wisdom and awakening. As we wrote in a recent grant application to The Angell Foundation, which supported last year’s *Bones* organizational spirituality initiative, “we have begun to examine our leadership structures, our learning processes, and all aspects of our community through the lens of how they support, or inhibit, both individual *and* collective awakening.”

(Continued on page 2)

INSIDE

- 4 Opening the Padlock That is You by Dharma-Holder Raul Ensho Berge
- 6 Programs
- 9 Rites of Passage
- 10 New Features on ZCLA’s Members Website
- 11 Sangha Appreciation

Roshi Egyoku is Abbot and Head Teacher of ZCLA.

Within a Zen tradition that emphasizes the vertical relationship of teacher and student, we have worked hard to equally strengthen the horizontal relationships of the Sangha. Our focus is now expanding beyond the vertical and horizontal dimensions to the awakening of the collective and the treasuring of its wisdom. How does a Sangha awaken *all together*? What is the relationship between individual and *all together* collective awakening?

Several principles have come to light using the Many Hands and Eyes model, which we developed as a skillful approach to addressing the complex situation arising when we learned that a convicted child molester was a member of the Sangha. This skillful means arose out of the well-known koan of Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva, the bodhisattva of compassion. The myth of this bodhisattva is that when Avalokitesvara saw the suffering of the world, she imploded and re-formed with a multitude of hands and eyes. The koan is as follows:

Yunyan asked Daowu, "What does the Bodhisattva of Great Compassion do with so many hands and eyes?"

Daowu said, "It's like someone reaching back for the pillow at night."

Yunyan said, "I understand."

Daowu said, "How do you understand?"

Yunyan said, "All over the body is hands and eyes."

Daowu said, "What you said is roughly all right—but you got only eighty percent of it."

Yunyan said, "Elder brother, how do you see it?"

Daowu said, "Throughout the body is hands and eyes."

"Many hands and eyes" refers to the countless hands and eyes of each person *all together*. In other words, to state the obvious but all too often forgotten or ignored fact, we know more *together*—at least 80 percent more! Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva illuminates our spiritual capacity when conditioned ways of being collapse and fluidity and flexibility come to the forefront, so that *all together*, we create surprising actions which serve the whole, thereby enlivening ourselves and each other.

In being face-to-face with our Sangha situation, we applied *throughout the body is hands and eyes* by forming a circle of twelve persons, each one being the hands and eyes of the complex issue before us, and linking with the hands and eyes of Sangha members. During the *Bones* series, allies John Ott and Rose Pinard introduced us to the scallop principle which, it turns out, is the principle of many hands and eyes. A scallop has hundreds of eyes—each unique and so irreplaceable in relationship to the scallop that the scallop grows back an injured eye—which passes information to the scallop itself.

Collective wisdom and awakening were called forth when a situation arose that was so complex that it required the hands and eyes of many people. The situation itself seemed without any known, or even possible, solution and was clearly beyond a solution that could be conceived of by just a few people. Collective wisdom began to emerge when we saw that a pre-packaged solution would be unskillful, and we were willing to engage in a collective process and were committed to staying awake to whatever unfolded.

We define a complex issue as one in which a situation has multiple facets, has many unknowns, has no clear approach or solution, and significantly impacts many people. Through this experience, we realized that even highly sensitive, emotional, and controversial issues

***“... the uniqueness of each person
consciously becoming who they are
and the collective wisdom being invited
forth and manifesting are
‘one process and one movement.’”***

are capable of drawing the Sangha together—rather than imploding it—while also strengthening our individual and collective capacities for awakening. Sometimes, as in a crisis, the complexity of an issue is obvious; at other times, it is simply that someone takes a backward step into a larger view and points out that more people need to be included in the process. We learn through experience when not to cheat the process.

In the May issue of *Wired* magazine, J. J. Abrams, the creator of the television show *Lost* and the director of the new *Star Trek* movie, is guest editor. He has created an issue that pulls the reader into a process of unfolding mysteries embedded throughout the magazine. Abrams himself hilariously recounts his experience of completing the video game *Super Mario Bros 2*. Determined to complete the game, he hunkers down for days with a best friend with enough food to last. They hit a snag that has them so panicked that they phone a friend, who refers them to someone else. As Abrams tries out the pointers from the person called, he continues to lose even more game points and yells, “Tell the guy he doesn’t know what the f— he’s talking about!!” His friend turns to him, covers the mouthpiece, and says, “Dude, he’s seven.”

Well, it turned out that the seven-year-old was right—his tip worked and they finished the game. But Abrams realized that “cheating is humiliating ... no matter what form it takes ... Skipping ahead lessens the ex-

perience.” He goes on to say that “mystery demands that you stop and consider—or, at the very least, slow down and discover. It’s a challenge to get there yourself, on its terms, not yours.”

The situation that unfolded at the Zen Center also demanded that we stop and consider, that we slow down and discover. In doing so, the Many Hands and Eyes Circle members created a process that used guiding questions to address the multiple facets of the situation. They maintained an atmosphere of safety and respect. The circle members actively gathered and researched information, identified and consulted experts in the local community, created educational workshops on pertinent topics, and remained in communication with the Sangha and with individuals for whom the situation was particularly difficult. The situation had its own terms from which we learned.

The focus for the Circle, and of the process as a whole, was to develop responses that addressed *all* facets of the situation and provided support to everyone involved—the person who had been convicted of child molestation, members of the Sangha who are survivors of molestation, and the community at large. This new process has had a profound healing impact on our community—aspects of the situation continue to unfold—and has now become a skillful means for how we can approach other issues of varying complexity.

The underlying aspects of this situation can be identified as the following: 1) a particularly challenging situation called the Sangha together; 2) we became awake *all together*, from knowing together; 3) we were exposed to a depth of suffering that brought new and deepening connections with one another; and 4) collective wisdom was invited to arise, thus enabling something new to emerge which honored the entire situation and was greater than any one person.

It is challenging to stay awake and not turn away. We learned to honor the process by aiming for inclusivity. As J. J. Abrams reflects on his experience, he says, “...the point is, we should never underestimate process. The experience of the doing really is everything. The ending should be the end of that experience, not the experience itself.”

In Zen, we are encouraged to practice together. Zen Master Seung Sahn Nim called this together-action. Together-action accelerates learning, or at least helps us appreciate the different rhythms at which everyone learns. We cannot truly be together until we drop our opinions, our self-absorption, our grip on “me, myself, mine.” We are called upon to recognize and drop the need to be right, the need to make someone else wrong, or the need to project what is wrong onto others.



James Sosbin Thornton, Roshi, and Martin Goodman after Sosbin's Zen Bodhisattva Priest ordination.

So, when the collective comes into view, we must—as Dogen Zenji instructs—take the backward step and illuminate the self, both the so-called conditioned self and the so-called universal Self. When we consciously recognize that we are all part of an inseparable web of Life, whose commonality is Life itself, something extraordinary happens simultaneously. Individual uniqueness is illuminated—not one’s self-centered identity, but rather we see each other’s irreplaceability, much like the irreplaceability of each eye of the scallop.

We recognize how the light shines all over and throughout the body; how the Way is attained simultaneously because we experience that the uniqueness of each person consciously becoming who they are *and* the collective wisdom being invited forth and manifesting are “one process and one movement”; are both the one body and multiple expressions in complete harmony.

When members of a group have had this awakening experience, the group continues to awaken, and those who do not know this kind of awakening have a container in which to grow. Those with the habitual conditioning of blaming (“he or she did such and such”), of acting out of their unseen neediness (“why can’t you change?”), or of having a mistrustful relationship to authority (“they are doing this”) have a powerful container which illuminates their conditioning. This is messy work, but doable and transformative. How wonderful! ■

Opening the Padlock That is You

By Dharma-Holder Raul Ensho Berge

The Denkoroku has been assigned by The Teachers Circle as the study text for the current practice period at ZCLA. This collection of 52 awakening accounts was written in 1300 by the 13th century Zen Ancestor Keizan Zenji. It traces the Soto Zen lineage from Shakyamuni Buddha to Dogen Zenji's successor, Zen master Koun Ejo.

One of the great Zen patriarchs that Keizan Zenji wrote about in the *Denkoroku* is one of the Indian patriarchs, Vasubandhu, the 21st patriarch.

India is a place full of magic, and one instance of this magic is how Vasubandhu was born. His parents wanted to have children but could not, so they went to a Buddhist stupa and prayed and prayed. As a result, two sons came into this world. One of them was Vasubandhu.

Vasubandhu was quite an extraordinary character, a scholar-philosopher-monk who systematized and wrote enormous number of works. At one point, he was even the abbot and head teacher at Nalanda University.

Keizan Zenji starts this teisho not with Vasubandhu but with the 20th patriarch, Jayata. In the first paragraph of the Case, Keizan Zenji says:

The 21st patriarch was the Venerable Vasubandhu. One time the 20th patriarch (Jayata) said: 'I do not seek the Way, yet I am not confused. I do not venerate Buddhas, yet I am not conceited. I do not meditate for long periods of time, yet I am not lazy. I do not restrict myself to just one meal a day, yet I am not attached to food. I do not know what is enough, yet I am not covetous. When the mind seeks nothing, this is called the Way.' When the master (Vasubandhu) heard this, he attained the undefiled wisdom.

Then Keizan Zenji says the following: "This story contains the greatest secret for learning the Way. Why? If you think you've got to become a Buddha or acquire the Way, and that in order to acquire the Way you have to abstain from food [except once a day], live a life of purity, meditate for long periods, never lie down, venerate the Buddha, and chant the scriptures and accumulate all the virtues — this is like making flowers rain down from a sky where there are no flowers or making holes [in the ground] where there are none."



Dharma-Holder Raul Ensho Berge.

How come the 20th patriarch doesn't seek the way yet he is not confused, doesn't venerate the Buddhas, yet he is not conceited, doesn't meditate for long periods of time, yet he is not lazy, and so on? What secret enables him to do these things?

We talk often about Three Poisons in our tradition. Greed - really a big umbrella for desire - Anger, and Ignorance. As for greed, all the time our mind is looking for all types of things. Objects, ideas, whatever it is. It's like we are a magnet that needs to attract whatever comes along. What do we do about this wanting, and how does it relate to the case I just mentioned? What do we do to take care of this greed?

Renunciation looks like a nice word, depending on how we understand it, but do we need to renounce as a way of life? Do we need to renounce everything that is in front of us? What if we look at the experience of desire itself, desiring? What happens if we look at it and stay looking at it?

We see a desire coming - for security, an emotional desire, whatever it is - and simply stay put and see what our mind and our body does with it. Without trying to control it or to work it. Can we stay put with the experience of desiring that arises in us? Can we allow our minds and our bodies to experience that desire and see what it does and where it goes without flinching? We all want

(Continued on page 5)

Dharma-Holder Ensho will receive Dharma Transmission from Roshi Egyoku on Saturday, May 2, 2009.

experiences that take us to wonderlands. Why don't we watch what desire does with us, go into it without stopping.

Perhaps we are watching desire and then we stop. We say, "I cannot take it any more!" That moment when we cannot take it any more, can we be very precise and say, "Okay, I cannot take it any more. I know I could take it to this point, and then, I cannot take it any more." Some other day that desire will come up again or another desire. We have innumerable desires. They are numberless. They'll come up right now, in five minutes, in ten minutes, in an hour, tomorrow. Can we look at them and let them evolve in front of our eyes? If we do, there will come a point where you will experience that the desire doesn't need to control you. Doesn't need to control your behavior. Oh, what a relief!

"If [desire] doesn't control my behavior . . . that's liberation"

If it doesn't control my behavior, that has a name. Liberation. How, why – that's not as important, not the problem. The important point is to see if you can leave that padlock behind. Then we can say, like Jayata:

I do not seek the Way, yet I am not confused. I do not venerate the Buddhas, yet I am not conceited. I do not meditate for long periods of time, yet I am not lazy. I do not restrict myself to just one meal a day, yet I am not attached to food. I do not know what's enough, yet I am not covetous. When the mind seeks nothing, this is called the Way.

So it's all an internal affair of the mind to decide to do this. Nine in the morning, ten at night. It doesn't matter. You stay at home, you go to a park. It doesn't matter. You simply stay focused. Perhaps, yes, you need to do it in a peaceful place because then you don't have excuses to stop. And if you want to stop, you say, "I voluntarily don't want to open this padlock." But then you know it and see what happens with that.

Keizan wrote: "The Venerable [Jayata] wanted to liberate him [Vasubandhu]. First, he asked the group [of people with Vasubandhu]:

"This ascetic, Vasubandhu, cultivates purity very well, but can he acquire the Buddha Way?" The group replied: "Our teacher is diligent, so why can't he?" The Venerable [Jayata] answered, "Your teacher is far from the Way. Even if he practices asceticism for countless eons, they

are the roots of vanity and falseness." The group asked, "What virtuous practices has the Venerable (Jayata) accumulated that enable him to slander our teacher?" Then Jayata said these words...

I do not seek the Way, yet I am not confused. I do not venerate the Buddhas, yet I am not conceited. I do not meditate for long periods of time, yet I am not lazy. And so on.

When Vasubandhu heard these words, there arose in him "the undefiled wisdom." So he obviously had practiced long and deeply.

Everything you do can be wonderful. But can you stop desiring, for a minute at least, to become a Buddha? Obviously, Vasubandhu did because something happened to him when he heard the previous patriarch. Keizan Zenji says: "This story contains the greatest secret for learning the Way."

Something that is very important is to cultivate our own inner compass. Let's say you sit and sit and recite the sutras 500 times a day and give 20 lectures like Vasubandhu. You have an urge and you do it, but why do you do it? Because the desire controls you? Can you just experience it?

Can you sit down and let it do whatever it wants? Can we open that padlock and let that experience take hold of us without controlling it, without working on it, without manipulating it in even the most subtle way? Can we step aside from all that and let it simply evolve?

Perhaps Vasubandhu ate only once a day at the appropriate time. The point is this: He wasn't controlled by it. He was praying to the Buddha, chanting the sutras — he wasn't controlled by a desire to become that. He was free. And Keizan tells us that is the Way. That is our Way. We are free. We can unlock this padlock that we ourselves are. Can I do that, let my imagination run wild when my desire catches me? You're not killing anybody, you're in bed with your eyes closed. Can I do that? Do I allow myself to do that? Then there comes a point where desire doesn't manipulate you. Doesn't control your behavior.

I mentioned India as a place full of magic. The other side of magic would be all the tragedies that are there and are here, too. Not just this economic meltdown that we live. The daily tragedies. But do we experience desire and apply ourselves to it like scientists. I do the things I have to do every day like a scientist. Then the other side is at my disposal. Not that I control it. It simply happens. And for that I need Great Faith and Great Doubt. Doubt everything totally and completely, greatly. And have Great Determination. I need to do that! Everything else is magic, there for us. ■

Zen Programs at Normandie Mountain

Face-to-Face Meeting Schedule

Roshi holds FTF for members Wednesday evenings, Friday dawn, and Saturday and Sunday mornings. Changes to her schedule are posted in the DharmaFlash each week. Sensei Merle Kodo Boyd will be available for FTF during the first two weeks of May. On Saturdays, FTF meetings are rotated between Dharma-Holder Patricia Shingetsu Guzy and Sensei Kipp Ryodo Hawley. On Sundays, between Sensei John Daishin Buksbaze and Dharma-Holder Raul Ensho Berge. Please note that all of the Teachers Circle members are also available by private appointment.

Dharma Training Fund

Through the generosity of the Sangha, the **Dharma Training Fund (DTF)** is available to all Zen Practitioners to supplement program fees. No one is ever turned away for lack of funds. If you find yourself in financial need for a particular program you wish to attend, please do not let finances keep you from attending. Inquire with Dokai in the office for an application. Do not miss any opportunity to study the Dharma!

See our calendar at www.zcla.org for the daily program schedule and for additional program details and updates.

☎ Please register in advance. Contact the office at info@zcla.org to register.

Zazen Programs

Introduction to Sesshin.* Thursday evening, May 28, 6:00 p.m. supper and registration; 7:30 p.m. (sesshin begins) to Saturday, May 30, 9:00 p.m. Led by Sensei Daishin Buksbaze. This two-day sesshin is designed for newcomers to sesshin practice. Instruction is given on all aspects of sesshin. Sesshin, "to unify the mind," is an essential practice for the deepening of one's zazen. Also for experienced sitters and those who haven't sat sesshin in a long while. The schedule will be posted and sent by ProgramFlash. Daily fee: \$40; \$75 for nonmembers. ☎

Wall-gazing Day.* Saturday, June 13, 6:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to come to this silent and restful half-day of sitting. A **Chant Circle**, held at 8:30 a.m., is dedicated to refugees of Sudan's Darfur conflict and all beings everywhere suffering the effects of war, famine, and disease. Zazen is scheduled every hour on the hour, with ten minutes of

walking meditation at ten minutes to the hour. No interviews or talks. Includes breakfast and lunch. Fee: Dana. ☎
* Zendo remains open for non-participants.

Precept Practice



A **Day of Reflection** on the Zen Bodhisattva precepts will take place on **Saturdays, May 16 and June 20, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

May 16 will be led by Tom Dharma-Joy Reichert on Precept #1: Non-killing.

June 20 will be led by George Mukei Horner on Precept #8: Not being stingy. Open to everyone.

Atonement Ceremony. Thursday, June 18, 7:30 p.m.

During this ceremony of renewing the vows and precepts, we each have an opportunity to bear witness to our conduct in thoughts, words, and actions. Everyone is welcome to participate. Those who have received the precepts are asked to attend on a regular basis. Rev. Jifu Gower will officiate.

Guest Speaker

Stephanie Kaza, Ph.D., Sunday, June 7, 11:00 a.m. to noon. Dr. Kaza will speak on the green Buddhist practice path. See next page for more information about her week-end workshop presentation at ZCLA.

(Continued on page 7)

Dharma Transmission Announcements

Roshi Egyoku will give Dharma Transmission to Raul Ensho Berge on May 2nd and to Patricia Shingetsu Guzy on May 9th in private ceremonies. The Sangha is invited to the following events:

For Ensho: Sunday, May 3, 2009

10:15 a.m. - Robe Changing Ceremony/Zendo
11:00 a.m. - Presentation to the Sangha/Dharma Hall

For Shingetsu: Sunday, May 10, 2009

10:15 a.m. - Robe Changing Ceremony/Zendo
11:00 a.m. - Presentation to the Sangha/Dharma Hall

Save these dates!

Classes and Workshops

First Aid Class for Disaster Preparation. Tuesday, May 12, 7-9:00 p.m. The class will cover major injuries like broken bones, bleeding, burns, and treatment for shock. Everyone is invited. Residents and staff are especially encouraged to attend. Led by Evi Gemmon Ketterer.

Compassionate Care of the Dying. Friday, May 15 through Sunday, May 17. Led by Evi Gemmon Ketterer. Participants will learn care-giving skills from Buddhist and other spiritual and psychological traditions. They will learn ways to heal the Wounded Healer in themselves. Open to professional caregivers who work with the dying. Fee : \$250. To register, contact the office or go to the ZCLA website.

Taking up the Green Practice Path: Buddhist Environmental Activism

Led by Stephanie Kaza, Ph.D.

June 5 and 6
Friday, 6:00-9:00 p.m.
Saturday, 6:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

People are thinking deeply about what matters to them and taking their actions seriously during this time of growing concern about a sustainable future.

To be explored will be key aspects of green practice: core principles for green valuing, green wisdom to support the path, and walking the walk with desire and consumer actions. Buddhist principles and practices will be drawn upon. Follow-up materials will be provided.

A Professor of Environmental Studies at the University of Vermont, Dr. Kaza is engaged in numerous greening organizations, initiatives, and is the author of several books on the environment. She is a Zen student of the late Kobun Chino Otogawa Roshi.

Cost: \$75 members, \$100 nonmembers. See ZCLA website, www.zcla.org, for more information, fees, and registration, or call office at 213. 387.2353. ☎

2009 Precepts & Jukai Series

This year, Dharma Holder Shingetsu Guzy will hold the precepts and jukai series at the Valley Sangha. ZCLA will hold its next precepts series in 2010.

We encourage interested members to enroll in this series. The precepts can be taken from any of the Center's preceptors, regardless of who has led the classes.

Zen Precepts Study Series
Thursday evening,
June 1, 18, 25, July 2, 9 & 16, 7:30-9:00 p.m.

This series will explore the Zen Bodhisattva Precepts and will be taught at The Valley Sangha by Dharma-Holder Pat Shingetsu Guzy. Any member may take this series regardless of whether one decides to formally receive the precepts. This series is a prerequisite for all those who will receive the precepts (Jukai). Tuition: \$175 for members; \$300 for nonmembers. ☎

Jukai (Receiving the Precepts) Class Series
Thursday evening,
August 13 & 20, 7:30-9:00 p.m.

This two-class series is for those who wish to receive the precepts. Taught at The Valley Sangha by Dharma-Holder Pat Shingetsu Guzy. The Precepts Series is a prerequisite for these classes. The class topics include the Lineage, bowing practice, the Jukai Ceremony, the Rakusu (the Buddha's robe), and the mudra of Gassho. Tuition: \$70 for members; \$120 nonmembers. ☎

Register through the Zen Center office. Contact Gemmon for information about a combined class package with reduced fee.

DHARMA CHATS. Held on the last Sunday of most months at 11:00 a.m, Dharma Chats are led by Sangha members on various topics of interest. **Sunday, May 31,** led by Conrad Butsugen Romo on "Positively Negative"; **Sunday, June 28,** led by Katherine Senshin Griffith on "Lay Pioneers."

SPRING STUDY TEXT: Dharma talks during May and June will continue with *The Record of Transmitting the Light: Zen Master Keizan's Denkoroku*.

Rites of Passage



Above: James Soslin Thornton standing between Roshi Jan Choen Bays of Great Vow Monastery and Roshi Egyoku, with Sangha members, after dawn Head Shaving Ceremony in preparation for Zen Bodhisattva Priest ordination ceremony (also see photo on page 3).

At right: Sensei Daishin, after the Tree-planting Ceremony in honor of his Dharma Transmission from Roshi Egyoku.

Below: Precept recipients and their families and friends with Roshi and the Sangha.





Sangha Rites of Passage

ZEN BODHISATTVA PRIEST ORDINATION

Roshi Egyoku Nakao, Preceptor

James Soshin Thornton

April 5, 2009

CEREMONY FOR RECEIVING THE PRECEPTS

Roshi Egyoku Nakao, Preceptor

Larry Genkai Barber

Betsy Enduring -Brown

Diane Enju Katz

Jill Jiki King

April 18, 2009

NEW MEMBES ENTERING CEREMONY

Andy Handler

Gerald Parham

Jason Patti

Santha Sivabalan

March 7, 2009

SHARED STEWARDSHIP — Incoming

TEACHERS CIRCLE

Sensei Don Ani Shalom Singer, Rabbi

DAY MANAGER PROGRAM

DAY MANAGERS:

Penelope Luminous-Heart Thompson

Deb Faith-Mind Thoresen

Ty Jotai Webb

SHARED STEWARDSHIP — Leave-taking

DAY MANAGER PROGRAM

DAY MANAGERS:

Jeanne Dokai Dickenson

Evi Gemmon Ketterer

Tom Dharma-Joy Reichert

Buddha's Birthday Celebration



Above: Egyoku Roshi showers green tea water over the baby Buddha in Buddha's Flower House. Below: George Mukei Horner, sacred clown Reeb Kaizen Venners with his orange daisy, and young Buddha.



Stop Clinging to Books about Buddhism: Donate your books!

ZCLA reaches out to incarcerated men and women through The Angulimala Prison Project. The teachings of the Buddha have opened the door to serenity and compassion for many angry and stressed prisoners. Please donate books to help this program. (Box in Sangha House).

New Features on ZCLA's Members Website

Interview by Burt Wetanson

Evi Gemmon Ketterer, resident priest and the Zen Center's Program Steward, has continued the development of the members web-site with ZCLA Technical Web Master, Sensei Ryodo Hanley. Access to the members area of the website is open to all ZCLA members; new members can obtain an access code from the Program Steward.

WATER WHEEL: In the last few months, we've added some wonderful new features to the ZCLA website. Could you walk us through some of them and explain how they support the practice of our members?

GEMMON: Our goal is to create interactive practice features that help our members discover how ZCLA functions as a mandala. We now offer teachings and temple information and explore the roles of the various Circles and Groups.

When you open the ZCLA website, click on MEMBERS at the top to access the ZCLA Members Home page. The Program Steward will explain how to log onto the Members area of the site.

WW: Let's say you'd like to listen to a talk by one of our teachers?

G: The menu to the left gives access to members' resources. Click on RECORDED TALKS and select an individual talk by the Speaker, Title, or the Date of the talk. You can also access collections of talks, such as Day of Reflection Talks or Special Series and Workshop talks given by Roshi Ekyoku.

To listen to a talk, just click on the Title. To download it to your computer, click the download button, which is an inverted triangle. You can also download talks to your iPod or MP3 player. They'll sort automatically in the same format. By speaker, date, etc.

Another new interactive feature is CIRCLES & GROUPS. Click on a Circle that interests you and a pop-up window will give you information about that Circle.

WW: Could you take us on a tour of one of the Groups?

G: Let's go to the Brown-Green Group in the Service Circle, which is about integrating environmental practices into your own practice. How do we practice with the Earth? You'll find their Vision and Mission Statement,

background information, and minutes of their meetings. There are also environmental tips from the Sustainability Workshop that you can apply in your own life to protect and preserve our planet.

If you're interested in the functioning of the Executive Circle or the Board of Directors, you'll find their Missions and Core Values, as well as Minutes of their meetings. The Minutes of the various groups are also presented in chronological order, as they become available.

WW: What do we have for members who want more information about upcoming Temple events or the various gathas and verses that are chanted at the Center?

G: We've greatly expanded our online overview of Temple functions, whether they happen daily or once a year.

In the LITURGY area, you'll find the Liturgical Calendar — when we celebrate Buddha's Birthday, New Year's

“By exploring our online Circles and Groups, you'll more fully understand the Five Buddha Families and the structure of the Zen Center.”

Service, Parinirvana Day, and so on. As another submenu of Liturgy, you can learn more about services that are performed on a daily basis.

If you can't make it to the Center but would like to participate in services, you can download them and be confident that you're partaking of the life of the Zen Center in your own home. Using the link called Gathas and Verses, you can read and download them all.

If you'd like to learn a Service Position as it's performed in the Buddha Hall, you can now download the current Service Position Manual in PDF format. It's a wonderful new training tool.

Meal Services with the Meal Chant is also downloadable, and to refresh your knowledge of oryoki, there's a link to complete instructions, clearly written and illustrated, from a sister monastery of ZCLA, Zen River Monastery in the Netherlands.

(Continued on page 12)

Your Gifts are Received with a Heartfelt Thank You!

Please let our staff know of the many bodhisattvas to appreciate. Have we missed anyone?

Deb Faith-Mind Thoresen for directing and working with the many grounds projects, and those cleaning and preparing the grounds for Buddha's Birthday and beyond: **Ensho Berge, Lilly Brodie-Berge, Betsy Enduring-Vow Brown, Tom Yudo Burger, Roshi, Tom Pine-Ocean Cleary, Richard Cloud-Forest, Dokai Dickenson, Gemmon Ketterer, Andy Handler, George Mukei Horner, John Heart-Mirror Trotter, Tim Vreeland, and Ty Jotai Webb;**

Tom Dharma-Joy Reichert for photography of the Priest's Ordination Ceremony and the Ceremony for Receiving the Precepts (Jukai);

The many **Buddha's Birthday celebration bodhisattvas;**

Buddha's Birthday Tenzo, **Jessica Dharma-Lotus Armstrong**, who created a magnificent Earth Day cake; Flower-house altar: Coordinator **Penelope Luminous-Heart Thompson**, and **Lorraine Gessho Kumpf**, and everyone who helped to decorate the Buddha's flower bower;

Katherine Senshin Griffith for telling and enacting the story of Buddha's birthday;

Brown-Green Group: **Lynda Golan, Diane True-Joy Fazio, Nelida Cartolin, Heather Faith-Spring Chapman, and Mukei Horner** for the fiery Great Dragon of Recycling eco-sculpture created for Earth Day;

Burt Wetanson for his strong editorial support with *WaterWheel* interview articles;

Rabbi Singer Sensei for Passover Seder and **Dharma-Lotus, Ensho Berge, Andrea Graham, Jay Gold, and Dokai** for organizing and hosting the beautiful and inspired evening;

Altar cleaners for their constancy and devotion to the Center's altars: **Coordinators: Carla Schmitt and Conrad Butsugen Romo; Betsy Enduring-Vow Brown, Faith-Spring, Lynda Golan, Mukei Horner, Jill Jiki King, Gemmon, Gessho, Rosa Ando Martinez, Trent Moyer, Miguel Rojas, Luminous-Heart, Heart-Mirror, Reeb Kaizen Venners, Reiju Wasserman, and Burt Wetanson;**

Roshi for The Angell Foundation Core Operating Support Application for 2009 with invaluable feedback and help from **Patti Muso Giggans, Darla Myoho Fjeld, Burt Wetanson, and Dokai;**

The winter quarter Jikidos: **Dharma-Lotus, Larry Genkai Barber, Enduring-Vow Brown, Elizabeth Bryer, Mukei, Jill Jiki King, Trent Moyer, Hillary Radiant-Vow Stephenson, Heart-Mirror, Kaizen,**

Jenny Jusen Warner, and Z Zeller;
The Fundraising Committee: **Steward Patti Muso Giggans, Rosa Ando Martinez, Dokai, and Gemmon** for launching the Great Dragon Mountain Renovation Campaign, Phase I;

Residents who helped with the production and mailing of the capital campaign fundraiser: **Reiju, Heart-Mirror, Mukei, Ando, Roshi, Karen Brodie, Lilly, Radiant-Vow, Gessho, and Dokai.**

Andy Handler for delivering and planting ground plants and working on grounds projects;

Tom Yudo Burger for graphic arts support;

Roshi Chozen Bays of Great Vow Monastery, OR, for leading the transformative The Sacred Art of Eating workshop; and to

Richard Cloud-Forest for his devotion to pulling out dead shrub roots, clearing the Center's grounds, and bringing our gardens to life.

Hearty welcome to new members **Brandon Clark** of Atascadero, recent graduate in philosophy from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo; **Sunghae Byeon**, registered nurse and acupuncturist; **Don Erway**, software contractor; **Carmen Izzo**, clarinetist and graduate student at USC school of music; and **Erik Johnson**, recently graduated from USC with Masters in Business Administration, Operations and Risk Manager, who enjoys cooking.

Welcome back to **Sheila Lamb**, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, who works as a psychiatric social worker with LAUSD; **Tim Vreeland**, painting student, retired Professor of Architecture, UCLA; and **James Otis**, CEO Inkwell Art and documentary film maker.

Congratulations to **Katherine Senshin Griffith** currently appearing in *The Devil with Boobs*, written by Nobel Prize-winner Dario Fo.

We enjoyed visits from by **Chozen Bays Roshi**, Abbot of Great Vow Monastery, and **John Plum Hermit Swanger**, recently moved to Austin, Texas. ■

Resident Training Opportunities

A two-bedroom apartment is available now. A studio and a one-bedroom will be opening up. These are great opportunities for plunging into long-term Zen Buddhist training and living in an intentional community.

Guest-residencies for short-term are also available. If you are interested, please inquire at info@zcla.org and you will be directed to the appropriate contact person.

The *Water Wheel* is published by the Zen Center of Los Angeles / Buddha Essence Temple, which was founded in 1967 by the late Taizan Maezumi Roshi.

The ZCLA Buddha Essence Temple mission is to know the Self, maintain the precepts, and serve others. We provide the teaching, training, and transmission of Zen Buddhism. **Our vision** is an enlightened world free of suffering, in which all beings live in harmony, everyone has enough, deep wisdom is realized, and compassion flows unhindered. **Our core values** are available upon request.

Founding Abbot: Taizan Maezumi Roshi
Abbot Emeritus: Roshi Bernard Glassman
Abbot: Roshi Wendy Egyoku Nakao
Staff: Mary Rios, Business Manager; Evi Gemon Ketterer, Program Steward; Tom Yudo Burger, Guest Steward; Jeanne Dokai Dickenson, Development Steward. *Water Wheel*: Editor, Dokai Dickenson; Assistant Editor, Burt Wetanson. Photographers: Tom Dharma-Joy Reichert, George Mukei Horner, Tom Yudo Burger, and Martin Goodman. The *Water Wheel* is published bi-monthly in paper and electronic formats. Contact the Editor at (213) 387-2352 or dokai@zcla.org. The *Water Wheel* is also available through electronic distribution.



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Address Correction Requested

ZCLA's WEBSITE (Continued from page 10)

Another new feature is TEXTS with access to e-books and study texts. You can access texts being used at the Center as well as any e-book that the Teacher's Circle recommends as important or simply interesting for Zen students to have. Just click on the Title to open a PDF file you can download to your computer and print out or read on-screen.

The FORMS area lets you download Application Forms for Membership, Residential Training, or for Guest Residency. There's a Proposal Form if you'd like to suggest a new program or improvement, and several other forms

Under PRACTICES, you can access the ZCLA Curriculum—a menu of classes and training offered by the Center—as well as Ceremonies, Council, Healing Circles, Atonement Ceremony, Precept Study, and more. You will also find introductory material about Receiving the Precepts (jukai) in the PRACTICES areas.

In this limited space, we can only brush the surface of the many ways our website now serves our members as a teaching tool and resource. There's a lot more information on our site. We hope our Members will say, "Wow, all of this is practice, and all of this is offered at the Center I'm practicing at." ■

ZCLA-Affiliated Sanghas & Sitting Groups*

The Laguna Hills Sangha (CA)
coordinated by Helen Daiji Powell

The Lincroft Zen Sangha (NJ)
led by Sensei Merle Kodo Boyd

The Ocean Moon Sangha (Santa Monica, CA)
led by Sensei John Daishin Buksbazen

The San Luis Obispo Sitting Group (CA)
coordinated by Mark Shogen Bloodgood

The Valley Sangha (Woodland Hills, CA)
led by Dharma-Holder Patricia Shingetsu Guzy

The Westchester Zen Circle (CA)
led by Sensei Kipp Ryodo Hawley

Contact us at info@zcla.org for information.

* Led by Dharma Teachers (Senseis) or practitioners who are actively practicing at ZCLA. Those interested in leading a ZCLA-affiliated sitting group may apply to the Teachers Circle.