

Mountain Wine

APRIL - JUNE 2019

WINTER ANGO SHUSO LECTURE

This talk was given during the Winter Practice Period on February 9, 2019 at SMZC by Shuso (bead student) Ed Daiki Cadman.

Good morning everyone.

I'm Ed Cadman, Daiki, Shuso for this Ango at Sonoma Mountain Zen Center.

One week ago I spoke to many of you. At that time Roshi related to me the story of going to Ehei Monastery in Japan and seeing a sign that says "If you enter, know that you'll be changed when you leave." During the past week since I last spoke, I think I've seen that sign many times. As I walked into the zendo, and slowly, slowly thought about what I might be saying today. Or listened to the owl calling in the morning. Or while trying to get the incense to stay straight.

We're in Ango, which means "peaceful dwelling." Sonoma Mountain Zen Center holds Ango twice a year. It's a traditional practice period, from the time of Buddha and his followers, when they would stop their travel and spend the rainy season together in concentrated practice.

I was asked to pick the theme for Ango, and the theme that I selected was the first sentence from the Mountains and Waters Sutra by Eihei Dogen. As I read through this sutra, one of the passages that spoke to me immediately was talking about mountains and waters, and how the blue mountains are constantly walking. I present this sutra to our residents by reading a little bit from it after each meal. Fortunately it's just the right length to read in the four weeks of Ango! Dogen says,

"If walking had ever rested, the Buddhas and ancestors would never have appeared. If walking were limited, the Buddhadharma would never have reached us today. Stepping forward has never ceased. Stepping backward has never ceased. Stepping forward does not oppose stepping back, nor does stepping back upon stepping forward. This virtue is called the mountain flowing, the flowing mountain."

This passage was calling me to learn more about Dogen, and about this sutra, Fascicle 14 in the Shobogenzo, so I chose the very first sentence of the sutra. It goes like this.

"These mountains and waters of the present are the the expression of the old buddhas."

I wanted to choose a sentence that could be a focus for us, as an inspiration, as a guide, something easy to recall in our angu moments. And I wanted to choose a theme which spoke about my experiences on this mountain in the few years I've been attending Sangha events here; my experiences and my gratitude for SMZC. Roshi also urged me to choose a theme that would not only guide us in Ango, but would guide me personally, for the rest of my life.

I think, and I know, I've chosen a theme that does guide me in that way.

These mountains and waters of the present are the expression of the old buddhas.

I wanted to give a sentence to honor our mountain here and to include all the mountains I've ever hiked around, and the mountains of my little town where I grew up, and I want to hearken back to a few persons who have guided me, people who offered their insights and creations to me, who embodied the Trikaya. Let's call them buddhas. Last week I told you about my mother, Mary Jean Cadman, a buddha. And in this room now are some of my dearest teachers. May I just mention Roshi, and Shinko, and Nyoze, and Kashin.

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I'd like to mention the residents here, from whom I continually learn, beginning with the person I met here at the door of the Sangha House back in February 2006, when I first arrived. He was called Mike then, now ordained as Jundo. And Gesshin [Susan], Choan [Angus], and Koten. Koten also attended that 2006 angosesshin and he's been a resident ever since, I believe. Also here now in the zendo is Chuck Tensan Ramey, who was the shuso at that same angosesshin. Chuck now leads a branching stream of Sonoma Mountain Zen Center in Tacoma, Washington called South Sound Zen, itself a profound place to practice.

Sonoma Mountain Zen Center is in the midst of construction of a new campus with the groundwork prepared for a new zendo, and this is a link to the fulfillment of Roshi's vision to establish a foundation for Zen practice, a mandala for the next 300 years. I wanted to choose a theme - a passage of insight - which would bring together and represent these mountains, plus Zen poetry, plus Sonoma Mountain Zen Center, plus an understanding of the fortitude of all my teachers. All of which brought me to select the first sentence of the Mountains and Waters Sutra.

These mountains and waters of the present are the expression of the old buddhas.

To examine that theme sentence literally, we're sitting on a literal mountain and we're using its waters to make tea, wash dishes, bathe... And here, in this present moment, we're inside this beautiful zendo. The building itself is a radiant expression of Buddha, Buddha-nature, Buddha activity. Samadhi activity. The activity practiced day after day in this building, on this mountain, in the daily chanting, is an expression of the old Buddhas, the ancient teachings continuing today, in this moment. The first stanza of the sutra continues:

"The mountains and waters of the present are the expression of the old Buddhas. Each abiding in its own Dharma state fulfills exhaustive virtues. Because they are the circumstances prior to the kalpa of emptiness they are this life of the present. Because they are the self before the germination of any sudden sign, they are liberated in their actual currents. Since the virtues of the mountains are high and broad, the spiritual power to ride the clouds is always mastered from the mountains, and the marvelous ability to follow the wind is inevitably liberated from the mountains."

When Roshi first asked if I would be the shuso, and I started to think of what theme I could possibly offer, there was an amazing coincidence: a friend of mine had just received this new book by Shohaku Okumura: *The Mountains and Waters Sutra* and his commentary on it. That was last October, so I was able to get hold of the book and start reading. I'd like to read to you just a section from his commentary before going on. He starts off by quoting a poem by Dogen in his commentary. The poem goes like this.

The person in the mountains should love the mountains.

With going and coming, the mountains are her body.

The mountains are the body but the body is not the self.

So where can one find any senses or their objects?

Okumura says, "Dogen said the person in the mountains must be a person who loves the mountains. In the Mountains and Waters Sutra he also wrote that the mountains belong to the people who love mountains. This love is important. We are in the mountains and we love them. We love mountains. Mountains belong to us and we belong to the mountains. We are living within the network of interdependent origination and we love this network. To love means to be intimate and to be one. The person who is coming and going in the mountains must be a person who loves the mountains."

According to Dogen again, "The mountains are the body but the body is not the self."

Okumura comments, "Dogen says that his body is not his self. This is Dogen not grasping body and mind as the self. We are living in the mountains together with all other beings and the mountains are our body. But this body is not the self. The body is there but it's not our self. This is dropping off body and mind. Dropping off of body and mind does not mean this person's body and mind disappear. They're still here, functioning as part of interdependent origination, living together with all beings. Only that misidentification of body and mind as self has fallen away."

Interdependent origination. When I think of an example of interdependent origination here at SMZC, I think about the quince out in the garden. The very first time I was here in 2006 there was a woman from Poland who was asked to make a bouquet of flowers for Roshi. She came to me and asked, "What is quince?" And I said I hadn't a clue what a quince was. Eventually we found the quince, and she was able to make her bouquet.

I think the next time I came I was actually working in the garden, and Sally had me do some pruning on the quince. And as I was pruning, Roshi walked by, going down the road to his home, and said to me, "Do you know what you're doing there? That's quince." "Yeah, I'm pruning."

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And Roshi said "OK!" That got me thinking about where that quince comes from. Did someone here plant it some time ago? It's huge. Then I got to thinking, well, did some person purchase it at a store and bring it up here years ago? It got me to thinking, well, what was the very first quince seed that ever happened.... You know how Mind just likes to roll into interdependent origination. Seventy-two labours brought us this food. Seventy-two labours brought us this quince. And now the February altar always has quince flowers. Last week Tom brought some white quince blossoms, which have since faded away.

Speaking of interdependent origination, I always like to think about how I found SMZC and began to practice here. It has something to do with my love of mountains, and expression of practice of the old Buddhas; it's a story flowing to and from the mountains, but I wouldn't be here if it weren't for the Seattle Public Library.

In 2005, I had my ten-year anniversary of taking jukai. My teacher was Genki Takabayashi, a Rinzai Zen teacher from Japan who had been asked to come to Seattle. He founded Dai Bai Zan Chobo Zenji, which means "Listening to the Dharma Temple on Great Plum Mountain." I had discovered his group and had started to attend sesshins there.

And I have always enjoyed - what I called back then in the mid 2000s - Zen high season for me. We would have the fall sesshin in September. In October I'd usually go to another group like the Great Vow Zen Monastery in northwest Oregon. November was a veterans' retreat which I used to do with Claude AnShin Thomas, a person my age who had experienced trauma as a soldier in Vietnam and now worked with veterans, taught them to meditate. December of course was Rohatsu. Our abbot at the time would fly back east to practice with his teacher then, so I had to find somewhere else to do Rohatsu. I would go back to Great Vow. Great Vow had five different

teachers, one of whom was Ejo McMullen, who spoke here a while back. In January Chobo-ji would have its Rohatsu now that our teacher was back, and March was the spring sesshin at Chobo-ji.

What about February? There was this gap. One day I was at the branch library near where I lived.

In the Zen section there was an audio tape album called "Breath Sweeps Mind" by Jakusho Kwong. I checked it out. Mostly I used to listen to Dharma talks by Rinzai teachers, who sound pretty authoritarian, and hard, and sanctimonious. But on the "Breath Sweeps Mind" tape, I heard a different voice, a voice of quietude and wonder, interspersed with chuckles about the stories the speaker was remembering, about the Dharma and his teachers. The speaker of course was our Roshi. Do you remember, at the end of the very last tape, Roshi spoke directly to the listeners - inviting listeners wherever they were to come and practice on Sonoma Mountain. And I thought what a welcoming voice... I wonder if Sonoma Mountain has February sesshin? (chuckles)

I was in Seattle, with Dai Bai Zan Chobo Zen Ji - "Listening to the Dharma on Great Plum Mountain." Well, that's like Sonoma Mountain, and I'm listening to Roshi's Dharma on Sonoma Mountain. So that was a parallel that intrigued me.

I called, and Nyoze answered. I asked, do you guys have sesshin in February? and he said yes we do. How can I sign up for it? Send in a fifty-dollar deposit.

My mind was made up. So here was Daiki from Seattle, off to California to practice Zen. Attending Sonoma Mountain Zen Center winter practice period, flying to Oakland, and my old friend who was there, drove me up. This was before we all had GPS. So we drove up the Glen Ellen side, from the East. And ran into the washed out part of Sonoma Mountain Road- closed for road repair. I

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thought, oh my God, you know - another obstacle. We drove back down, all the way around and up the other side, and we made it. My friend dropped me off. And there I was with my suitcase. I went to the Sangha House and opened the door to a crowded room of people. It was the afternoon before sesshin was going to start.

I said Hi, I'm Daiki! And Mike - Jundo - bounded up, met me at the door and he said Hi, I'm Mike, and took my suitcase and before I knew it I was following him down the pathway to the small yurt. He also explained that at Sonoma Mountain we use our [legal] given names, not our Dharma names, and that was strange because you know I never go by Ed. It's, like, my dad's name, and I always had a family nickname, so, OK. And I say, I'm Ed. I always remember that moment when Jundo took care of me. Opened the door. And to me that was an expression of the old buddhas. Later that evening I received my first ever oryoki instruction from Julie, and learned so much about the buddha bowl... like, don't put your lips on it. That night I found myself sleeping in a crowded dorm, the small yurt.

The next day, first full day of sesshin, I woke up to the bell and saw - whoa! So where did everybody go? I put on my robe, which was a Rinzai robe that I'd had made in India, and went up to the zendo. I saw the shoes in the foyer and I - oh my god. Am I late? And I was so disappointed. But what is this? I opened the door and peeked in and saw everybody dressed in gym clothes! That was when we did 108 prostrations first thing in the morning during Ango. I stood there like a deer in the headlights, and immediately Nyoze bounded up to the door, just like Mike had the day before, and totally calmed me down. "It's OK, you know. You can come in and just do standing bows and then you'll be all ready as soon as we've finished." And I felt that was so welcoming. So sesshin began, in this beautiful zendo with the lamps and the wood and Quanyin statue and the quince in the flower arrangements and the zafus all plumped up perfectly, like little mountains.

We didn't do zafus like that in the Rinzai group. There, they're just kind of like stacked up in the corner. There would be some blue ones and some black ones and maybe an embroidered one. Whatever felt good, you just took one down. After the sitting was over, you'd just leave it, you know - no fluffing or puffing of the zafus.

Anyway, I was so happy to be here at Sonoma Mountain for that sesshin.

In my first dokusan with Roshi, he started off saying, "Tell me a little bit about your background in Zen." "Well, I studied with a man who's now retired, but was originally our abbot, Genki Takabayashi. Roshi says, "Ah, Genki Takabayashi." He didn't even leave his seat, just reached around and pointed to a photograph hanging there in the dokusan room, of a group of people, one of whom was Genki Takabayashi.

I thought Wow. You know, just a connection right there, that Kwong-roshi recognized the man who was so important to me, Genki Takabayashi. So as I continued to attend angos and sesshins here year after year, I believe Genki and Roshi exchanged a few letters. And Genki always wanted to know how sesshin was. He had a broken English Japanese way of speaking and would say to me, "Ah, you tell that Roshi, I'm coming down there next time."

When Genki passed away, Roshi did a memorial service for him. He posted his photograph on the Sangha House bulletin board. Roshi laid his memorial on the altar for seven weeks. For this honor and compassion and caring, I vowed to continue... continue... continue my practice.

So let me tell you a little bit about Genki Takabayashi, share some expressions of that old buddha. Again let me start off by quoting Okumura. He says "our common idea that time flows from the past to the future is that time flows from the past to the future through the present, but Dogen said that if we see time and being with the true Dharma eye through zazen, then each and every one of us is all of time and space." That means everything is connected to everything else.

Which is the Buddhist teaching of interdependent origination. Everything is connected with everything else within this network. So when we see one thing we see everything.

I first saw Genki Takabayashi in 1992. I had been traveling a lot and was back in Seattle to make some money so I could go back and travel some more, but I had a hankering to do some kind of quiet sitting in a group. I saw a notice in a grocery store that said 'Meditation Introduction Wednesday night.' I called these folks up and they said "No, it's not on Wednesday anymore, it's Tuesdays. But there's this group that meets on Wednesday, so why don't you try that."

So I called and was told to come on over at seven. I didn't know if it was Buddhist or mindfulness, or what. I just wanted to sit and learn about meditation. So I'm taking two buses across town, no car. Got there a little late, came all this way, and I'm late and I can't go

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home, right? I'm gonna do it. So I went in. The group was in the small living room of an old house. There were about ten zafus around the perimeter of the room. Somebody said, "Come on in, find some cushions, sit down. Better take your socks off." And over in the corner I saw this gentleman sitting in perfect zazen posture. He didn't budge. He didn't react to my coming. I sat down. No more instruction. I just looked around and sat on my zafu... Ten minutes goes by, twenty minutes goes by...

And then a cat comes down the stairs. MEOOW.

Like this - [CLAP!] - that gentleman in the corner pops up, walks across the room while everybody's meditating. He picks the cat up, opens the front door, and puts the cat out.

Wow. I'd heard about spontaneity, but that was a true example of spontaneity.

So I started practicing with Genki Takabayashi, and having dokusan with him.

He was so compassionate in dokusan. He started me out with a koan like, "Show me Ed's samadhi activity." "Samadhi activity?" "Yeah, samadhi activity."

And before I could even, like, talk, he said, "You're driving, right? Samadhi activity."

Then he'd go, "You photograph, right? Samadhi activity."

And then he would go pour me a cup of tea... Samadhi activity.

As I got a bit more advanced, he gave me mu koan. Mu koan is the first koan in the Mumonkan. Does a dog have buddha-nature, or not? Does a dog have buddha-nature, or not?

I go into the dokusan room. "Well, Roshi... The dog... [long pause and groan] Aghhh!..."

Genki utters "Mu u u u" - and rings the bell. Ohh... That's the answer! OK.

So he was the kind of teacher who would answer the koan for you. (Laughter.)

He was also a great potter and he would make little Buddha statues and tea bowls and all the special paraphernalia you'd need for the tea ceremony.

I had a seat by the door for zazen. When the sit was finished, Genki was always the first person to leave. He would come out and bow at the door. One time he stopped and took out of his sleeve a little confection of bean cakes and put it on my zabuton. And another time he put down a little black Buddha statue about four inches high, a little Buddha like this. Around it was a red thread with a black plastic cat hanging from the thread. I think it came off a Black Cat wine bottle. He said, "I give you Black Cat Buddha." (Laughter)

On September 24th, 1995, I received jukai from Genki Takabayashi. I was standing there by the entrance door waiting for him to arrive and go in for the ceremony. He comes in holding my rakusu, and says [Ed speaks gruffly with Japanese accent]: "Tell your name now!"

Genki Takabayashi was a very diminutive man. He says, "Dai -you're big guy - Dai -

And ki - huh, my name. My name. You have my name." So from Genki to Daiki. Now. Ahh.

I was his disciple for life. I carry around his name. It's... it's part of me.

Another beautiful thing about Genki Takabayashi was that I learned so much about creativity from him - photography and poetry. I think it is traditional, [that] he would end every sesshin, every important event in his life, with a poem, what he would call an incense poem. He would stand before the altar with a big stick of incense and do three circles. Then he would read the incense poem to commemorate what happened during sesshin. I'd like to read you one of his poems here.

Mu-shin

Just passing.

Clouds just passing.

Who helps them along?

I don't know.

Passing. Passing.

What is their destination?

Passing. Passing.

Where will they come to rest?

I don't know.

Yet my mind before I was born understands.

Clouds. Water. Moon. Star.

All just passing.

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Mushin. Just passing. And Genki had drawn the characters for Mu-shin on the back of my rakusu. (Chuckles.)

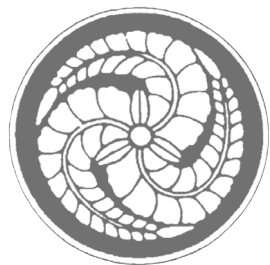
That brings us back here to being shuso, because Roshi's teaching me. During Ango, the shuso offers incense over and over and over. Roshi said, "OK, offer this incense." So I took it and offered it. But - "You have to do the shin!" That was Nyoze. Shin? Then Roshi followed up, and in dokusan he actually wrote the character of shin on a piece of paper. "Aahhh - shin. You mean this shin?" I showed Roshi the calligraphy for shin by Genki written on the back of my rakusu. "Yeah, yeah."

So, now when I offer the incense, I do the shin so that I can actually feel the heat on my forehead, like it's branded there, and then place it. I think of mind, which shin relates to. And I think of my teacher Genki. When I offer the powder incense in the morning, that's always for my mom.

For one of my birthdays Genki sent me an incense poem in the mail. I'd like to read that to you. (Genki's formal priest name was Muho, so Muho Genki.) "Birthday Poem for Daiki":

Autumn wind going though Mujo garden
Daiki Zen mind shining in the universe
Ordinary mind continue... continue... continue
Water birds running on Lake Washington

I'm going to ask you guys to indulge me. I created this little song I'd like to sing to you. It seemed more appropriate to write a song about the kind of teacher that Genki was. It's called "Genki's Gift." (Daiki sings)



Clay from mountain sand
Bowl from stream-bed clay
Shaped by my hand
To drink from every day.

Do you have a whisk? Do you have green tea?
Can you take the time to drink from eternity?
I made it twenty years ago. I use it every day.
I glazed this bowl with mountain sand.

This bowl I give away.
Do you have a whisk? Do you have green tea?
Can you take the time to drink from eternity?

This bowl I give to you,
My student on the way.
Every time you whisk the tea
Please remember me and say,
Yes, I have a whisk. Yes, I have green tea,
And every day I use your gift to drink from
eternity.

Often he would give me a tea bowl. He gave me eating bowls once.

Some students have received so many tea bowls from him that they just sit in the closet. He would say (Japanese accent), "No using! No power! Put your pennies in it!"

By the time Genki had passed away, he had given me many spiritual and literal gifts.

May I just pass on his guidance by saying, let's continue... continue... continue.

So. Thank you everyone. ❖



Winter Ango

SANGHA NEWS & NEW MEMBERS

by Erik Zenshin Shearer

NEW YEAR'S CEREMONY – RINGING IN THE YEAR OF THE BOAR

On December 31, the SMZC sangha gathered with friends and family to ring in the New Year on Sonoma Mountain. The evening started with soba noodles, followed by a period of zazen in the zendo. At 11:45, the assembly gathered under a sky full of stars in the cold, breezy night to chant the Heart Sutra and ring the bonsho 108 times leading up to midnight. The evening concluded with refreshments in the Sangha House. We were joined by several newcomers to SMZC who were looking for a different way to celebrate the New Year and found the invitation to our ceremony through our website and social media posts. These guests enjoyed a unique introduction to the sangha and a small glimpse of practice at our Center. We hope to see them again in the coming year.

SPRING SANGHA EVENTS

Spring is coming to Sonoma Mountain Zen Center and with it, many opportunities for the Sangha to gather for practice and fellowship. On April 7th, SMZC celebrated the Buddha's birthday with a flower festival and sweet tea ceremony in the zendo, followed by a sumptuous potluck. Due to the cool weather and chance of rain, we decided to hold both the ceremony and potluck in the zendo this year. Our 'inside' flower festival always offers plenty of opportunity to feel the warmth of the zendo and closeness of our sangha family. (see more photos on page 15)

Our annual spring Sangha Potluck was held on Saturday, April 20 from 10:30 – 1:30. Members, friends, family, attended and took part in a lively meeting which introduced new members and highlighted the many events happening at Genjo-ji. Following the meeting in the zendo we enjoyed a sumptuous potluck meal in the Sangha House. A more detailed account of our April Sangha Meeting and Potluck will be forthcoming in our next issue of the newsletter.

NEW MEMBERS

The SMZC sangha welcomes three new members this winter: Brian Schultz, Betty Beachman, and Binji Mukherjee. We are happy to have you join our sangha and look forward to practicing with you. Welcome!

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Thank you to everyone who has responded to our annual membership renewal letter. Many members of the sangha have increased their support level in the new year. Your continued contributions ensure our ability to offer public programs and to provide a home for our Zen practice on Sonoma Mountain. A deep bow to everyone who has donated or renewed their membership.



*Buddha's Birthday
(more photos on page 15)*

WINTER PRACTICE PERIOD

by Susan Gesshin Frey



Spring is awakening. After so much rain the grass has become green and high, and the soft mud has finally hardened, making it easier to walk the paths around the new construction. Wildflowers are in bloom, and in the garden and everywhere else, there are masses of daffodils.

Though this winter our core Ango group was small, our practice nevertheless seemed remarkably intimate and still. On our seventh day we woke up to a rare layer of crunchy snow, both nearby & on the surrounding hillsides. Then it began to rain. Since some of us were down with flu, we just had to make do, each healthy person taking more than one position. Yet everything flowed smoothly, just as in the mountains and waters of Dogen's sutra. Several dedicated practitioners even traveled up and down Sonoma Mountain daily, as part of their commitment. For the entire sesshin the spirit of both coming-and-going & not coming-and-going, could be felt deeply and continuously. There seemed no inside and no outside.

THE SPIRIT OF "JUST PRACTICE"

In an interview for our January newsletter, Rev. Kosho Shiraishi, a monk from Eihei-ji, mentioned that he felt a strong sense of "just practice" here at Genjo-ji. "I was surprised and moved because Genjo-ji follows this spirit, so that everyone works together," he remarked. "It's the same as at Eihei-ji. Words like 'just practice' and 'work together' truly connect with something deep.

As Shohaku Okamura-roshi writes, "When we practice the Buddha way there is no self, no Buddha way, no others. Self and all others are working together. The working done by self and others is called our actions.... This is the actual way all beings are working within the circle of interdependent origination."

It seems that when we follow this path in Ango we open to a bigger world. Whether we're Zen Center residents, guests, members or non-members, all of us can manifest "just practice," because everything we do, in every dharma position, manifests this original unity.

In our study group book on Dogen's "Sansuikyo" Okumura comments, "It's clear that when Dogen talks about mountains walking he is talking about our practice. We are in the mountains, we are persons within the mountains and this entire mountain, including us, is walking. This walking, this functioning, this activity is our practice."

I think the reason Dogen so emphasized daily activity is simply because it keeps the dharma alive. To put our teachings whole-heartedly into practice is to maintain, or hold, the dharma. This way it's always fresh, ready to be transmitted to future generations without decline. I may be unskilled, and make mistake after mistake, but I also know that in actual practice there are no mistakes. It's all "just practice." What are we waiting for?

RESIDENT / GUEST UPDATE

We were pleased to have Rev. Koyu Osawa with us for the last week of Ango. She really ran with the running bell to wake us up every morning. I also remember how straight and like a mountain, her posture was during sitting. Koyu-sama returned again for Hoitsu Suzuki-roshi's visit after the end of Ango, this time bringing her husband, Yamato. She's now working in the Sotoshu International office. With her excellent English she easily interpreted for us during Hoitsu's visit. (See article on page 10)

This spring may be bringing new people to residential practice here at Genjo-ji. Look for more news in the next newsletter. ❖

HOITSU SUZUKI-ROSHI VISITS GENJO-JI

by Susan Gesshin Frey

About 25 sangha members gathered early in the morning of February 27th to participate in cleaning the sangha house and zendo, and raking the grounds. It was not since 2015 (Nyoze's Hossenshiki ceremony) that Hoitsu Suzuki-roshi had visited Genjo-ji, and today he would arrive at 11 a.m. Although we had had steady rain for the past week, this morning the weather was clear, cold and bright.

At 11 a.m. sharp Hoitsu and his wife, Chitose, arrived and we received them in the zendo, where Hoitsu offered incense and three prostrations. Along with three large bells we bowed along with him. Welcome! Hoitsu-roshi circled the interior of our zendo, carefully observing each thing. He bowed in front of our large Kanzeon and at the picture of his father Suzuki-roshi on the east side wall. I noticed that he was very quick but at the same time he paid attention to absolutely everything. Then we all walked to the sangha house for lunch together.

After serving hot tea and plates of lasagna and salad, there was time for questions and answers. We were fortunate to have Rev. Koyu Osawa on hand to translate between Japanese and English. Here are a few of the questions:

Q: What is the meaning of the name Rinso-in? (Hoitsu-Suzuki's family temple).

A: In Japanese kanji it is 林叟院. Rin 林 means "forest" 叟 means ancestor/monk. Sorin refers to a Zen monastery, lit. forest/thicket. The name is said to be reminiscent of trees growing so close together it makes each one grow straight and tall. Roshi gave the feeling that there was a deep meaning to the name of this 500 year old temple.

Q: What is the most important thing for us, as Americans, to focus on in our practice?

A: Not just as Americans, but everyone without distinction should realize that we are all interdependent, that all is one.

Roshi talked a little about his father's history and noted that *Zen Mind, Beginners Mind* has only been in Japanese print since 2013. Even more recently, Issho Fujita has translated Shunryu Suzuki's "*Not Always So*" into Japanese (publish date 2015). Although Shunryu Suzuki-roshi is well known in America, he is just now being recognized in Japan. Hoitsu-roshi said the timing of the new translation is very good. More and more Japanese people are becoming aware of his father, his teachings, and his place in Zen Buddhist history.

After lunch Nyoze and family showed the Suzuki's the progress on the new buildings. Then the Suzuki's retired to Nyoze and Kashin's house to rest before going out for a "family" dinner with Kwong-roshi and Shinko, Nyoze and Kashin.

The next day, Hoitsu and Chitose both joined us for early morning zazen. Hoitsu-roshi officiated the morning service and together we chanted the Heart Sutra, the Sandokai, the ancestor lineage names and the Daihishin Dharani, all in Japanese. Following this robust service we gathered in the sangha house for a warm breakfast. Everyone was rested and relaxed and we had very good informal "family style" conversation, with Rev. Koyu Osawa doing the interpreting. We talked about little things, and just thoroughly enjoyed each other's presence.

Everyone then donned their warm clothes for a walk to Suzuki-roshi's stupa where we all offered incense and again chanted the Heart Sutra. The Suzukis were interested in seeing where the fire had burned and asked many questions. It was a very bright morning and quite beautiful after we had had so much rain. We lingered at the Stupa just enjoying the morning.

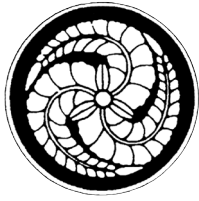
Back at the sangha house we took a group picture under the oak tree. We were laughing at little things. Around 11 am we saw Hoitsu and Chitose off. It had been quite a warm and genuine experience. Everyone was waving and smiling! ❖



See photos on next page



*Hoitsu Suzuki-Roshi Visit
(see article on previous page)*



April 7 Buddha's Birthday Ceremony and Potluck

Bring your entire family to SMZC to commemorate the birth of Shakyamuni Buddha. We hold a flower festival in the zendo and pour sweet tea over the baby Buddha. An outdoor reception and potluck to follow. Bring a dish to share - \$10 donation appreciated.

April 13 Saturday Dharma Talk Jakusho Kwong-roshi

11:00 a.m. Zendo, following 10:30 a.m. zazen

April 13 Spirit of Tea - Purifying the Mind

1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Soei Mouri-Sensei and Kashin Julie Kwong will be leading this workshop on the study of tea in the Omote Senke tradition.

April 20 Community Potluck: Mapping Out The future

10:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Mapping Out The Future Potluck - Our Spring Community Sangha gathering is right around the corner. SMZC friends, family and sangha members are welcome to attend. Everyone is welcome! Bring a dish and try a dish!

Welcoming Members Ceremony - offering incense • Hoitsu Suzuki-roshi at SMZC Slide Show - history and lineage • Wired Magazine Founder's Visit SMZC - fascinating ways technology and beliefs converge

Mapping Out the Future - manifesting a place of practice for future generations.

April 23 Rakusu Sewing Practice

Tuesdays 7:30 - 9:00pm

Kashin Kwong will be leading sewing program. Over the course of several weeks, you will complete an intricate interweaving pattern of Buddha's rakusu with single minded focus, silently repeating refuge vows with each stitch. The sewing unifies body and mind due to its silent continuous effort.

April 26 Temple Stay: Rest in a Restorative Environment and Experience Soto Zen Buddhism at SMZC

Temple stay is an opportunity to experience the rituals and spiritual practice of authentic Soto Zen Buddhism. Take the backward step and illuminate the jewel within yourself. Friday April 26 - Saturday April 27.

April 27 Saturday Community Student Talk Jesse Brunette

11:00 a.m. Zendo, following 10:30 a.m. zazen

April 27 SRJC: Buddhism, Asian Philosophy and World Religions Students Visit

Chris King will be leading an introduction to Zen workshop for students from Santa Rosa Junior College Buddhism, Asian Philosophy and World Religions. They will join SMZC for our Saturday Community Program.

May 4 "Entering The Gate" One-Day Sitting

An introductory retreat for both beginners and experienced sitters to plunge into the heart of Zen practice.

May 11 Saturday Dharma Talk Jakusho Kwong-roshi

11:00 a.m. Zendo, following 10:30 a.m. zazen

May 18 Saturday Community Student Talk Rohit Patel

11:00 a.m. Zendo, following 10:30 a.m. zazen

May 24 Kids Community Campout with Jesse

Plus Gardening with Jesse on the 25th

May 25 Saturday Community Student Talk Erik Shearer

11:00 a.m. Zendo, following 10:30 a.m. zazen

June 1 Saturday Dharma Talk Jakusho Kwong-roshi

11:00 a.m. Zendo, following 10:30 a.m. zazen

June 1 Introduction to Zen Workshop: Returning to Forms and Rituals of Everyday Life

An introduction to the basics of Zen.

June 6 "Returning to the Ground of Being" Three-Day Sesshin

A special time of practice to let go of the conditioned self in order to resume our original nature. June 6 - 9.

June 12 Rev. Bunsu Ono from Hokoji Temple Joins Us for Practice

Rev. Bunsu Ono was sent to SMZC by Soto Zen Buddhism International Center of San Francisco. We welcome Rev. Bunsu Ono from Hoko-ji temple located in Saitama prefecture Japan. He is a 24 years old and he will be practicing with us from June 12 - July 8. Come and practice with Rev. Bunsu Ono to greet him.

June 15 Saturday Dharma Talk Jakusho Kwong-roshi

11:00 a.m. Zendo, following 10:30 a.m. zazen

June 22 Saturday Community Student Talk Angus Atwell

11:00 a.m. Zendo, following 10:30 a.m. zazen

June 29 Saturday Community Student Talk Lizbeth Hamlin

11:00 a.m. Zendo, following 10:30 a.m. zazen

July 6 "Moment to Moment" One-Day Sitting

An introductory retreat for both beginners and experienced sitters to plunge into the heart of Zen practice.

July 13 Dharma Talk Jakusho Kwong-roshi

11:00 a.m. Zendo, following 10:30 a.m. zazen

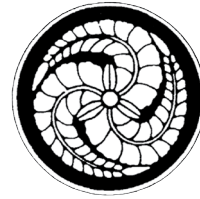
July 13 Board of Trustee Meeting

1:00 - 4:00pm

July 20 Summer Community Workfest

8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Best to check website or call in case of changes - smzc.org • 707.545.8105



July 27 Saturday Community Student Talk Tim Metzger
11:00 a.m. Zendo, following 10:30 a.m. zazen

July 29 Summer Ango Practice Period
SMZC's Summer Practice Period begins. Jesse 'Shogen' Brunette (Illuminating Source) will take the position as Shuso (head student). He is a student of Kwong-roshi. Opening ceremony begins Monday evening at 7:30 p.m.. (More schedule details to follow...)

August 24 Ango Closing Ceremony - Revealing the Self
10:30 a.m. zazen; 11:00 a.m. ceremony
Participants will ask Jesse 'Shogen' Brunette (Illuminating Source) dharma questions to reveal the truth of practice. A Shuso celebration dinner will follow at 6:00 p.m. We encourage all members to close the practice period with us. Open to the public.

August 3 Practice Period Shuso Talk Jesse 'Shogen' Brunette
11:00 a.m. Zendo, following 10:30 a.m. zazen

August 10 Practice Period Shuso Talk Jesse 'Shogen' Brunette
11:00 a.m. Zendo, following 10:30 a.m. zazen

August 11 "Actualizing the Way" Seven-Day Sesshin
A multi-day retreat for experienced sitters. Manifest zazen mind in an intensive schedule that includes prostrations, ten daily periods of meditation, chanting, mindful work practice, Dharma talks, and private interviews with Kwong-roshi. Days begin at 4:45 a.m. and end at 9:00 p.m. Begins with Sunday 6:00 p.m. oryoki dinner.

August 26-28 Closed

August 31 Saturday Community Student Talk
Michael 'Genrei' Persinger
11:00 a.m. Zendo, following 10:30 a.m. zazen

September 7 Dharma Talk Jakusho Kwong-roshi
11:00 a.m. Zendo, following 10:30 a.m. zazen

September 14 Manifesting the Heart - Benefit For Sonoma Mountain Zen Center's New Temple Buildings
During the month of September 2019 we will be focusing on our 2nd phase of our Mandala Temple building project. Saturday, September 14th from 11a.m. - 2:30p.m. Limited tickets are available. More details to follow.

September 16 Closed

September 21 Saturday Community Student Talk
David 'Kize' Hirsch
11:00 a.m. Zendo, following 10:30 a.m. zazen

September 28 Kids Community
10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
This program is an opportunity for Sangha members and friends to introduce their children to the Zen Center in a fun and creative way. Supervised, age-appropriate activities introduce children to the Zen Center as a fun, safe, nurturing environment. Children can join their parents for an informal vegetarian lunch following activities. Parents are welcome to join in the fun along with their children or participate in Saturday community practice.

October 1 Fall Study Group
Tuesdays 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.
An opportunity to explore the fundamental teachings of Buddhism and build a foundation for daily practice through discussions on a book. October 1 - November 12. (Details to follow...)

October 5 Spirit of Tea - Purifying the Mind
1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Soei Mouri-Sensei and Kashin Julie Kwong will be leading this workshop on the study of tea in the Omote Senke tradition.

October 11 Temple Stay: Rest in a Restorative Environment and Experience Soto Zen Buddhism at SMZC
Temple stay is an opportunity to experience the rituals and spiritual practice of authentic Soto Zen Buddhism. Take the backward step and illuminate the jewel within yourself. Friday October 11 - Saturday March 17.

October 17 "No Beginning No End" Three-Day Sesshin
Sesshin, literally "to touch the Mind," is an intensive meditation retreat to let go of the conditioned self and resume our original nature. This three-day practice period will allow us to still the mind from moment to moment and manifest realization of the Way. Begins Thursday, October 17 and ends Sunday, October 20.

October 26 Sangha Potluck: Gathering Practitioners and Community
10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Members as well as the public are invited to the Zen Center for a day of sharing Dharma and food together as a Sangha. Please bring your favorite dish to share. There will be a short period of zazen followed by a brief update on current news and the Mandala project. Also an opportunity for new members and anyone wishing to renew their vows to offer incense in the Zendo.

Please see next page for Daily Practice and Saturday Community information, including Zazen and Oryoki Instruction

DAILY PRACTICE & SATURDAY COMMUNITY

JOIN US FOR DAILY PRACTICE

Monday - Friday

5:15 a.m. meditation
5:50 a.m. walking meditation
6:00 a.m. meditation
6:40 a.m. chanting
7:00 a.m. breakfast
8:45 a.m.-3:30 p.m. work practice

Tuesday* - Friday

7:30 p.m. meditation
8:10 p.m. walking meditation
8:20 p.m. meditation
9:00 p.m. end of day

* Tuesday evening zazen not scheduled during Tuesday evening study group.

Friday Oryoki Instruction:

6:40 - 7:15 pm with Kashin

SATURDAY COMMUNITY

5:15 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

This half-day schedule will give you a taste of everyday Zen in silence, stillness and activity. You may also join us for part of the schedule if you wish.

Your first time at the Zen Center, come at 9 a.m. for meditation instruction and join us till noon. \$10 minimum suggested donation.

5:15 a.m. meditation
5:50 a.m. walking meditation
6:00 a.m. meditation
6:40 a.m. sutra chanting
6:55 a.m. formal oryoki meal
8:30 a.m.-10:00 a.m. work practice
9:00 a.m. meditation instruction
10:30 a.m. meditation
11:00 a.m. Dharma talk
12:15 p.m. buffet lunch (except August and February)

Saturday Zazen Instruction

9 - 10 am, Godo

Best to check website or call in case of changes

2019 KIDS COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Please join us for Saturday Kids' Community! This program is an opportunity for Sangha members and friends to introduce their children to the Zen Center in a fun and creative way. Supervised, age-appropriate activities introduce children to the Zen Center as a fun, safe, nurturing environment. Children can join their parents for an informal vegetarian lunch following activities. Parents are welcome to join in the fun along with their children or participate in Saturday community practice. Intended for ages 4-11. Younger ones are welcome with parent, older children welcome to assist.

Fri May 24 Campout with Jesse

Sat May 25 - Jesse (Gardening)

Sat Sep 28 - Mike (with Yoga from Susan Leslie)

Sat Dec 14 - Julie

ZEN DUST NEWS

by Janet Buckendahl

We are very fortunate to have a new Calligraphy by Roshi to celebrate this New Year – *The Year of the Boar*. Traditionally these signs bring good luck and they are now available in the Store for a \$10.00 donation to the Mandala Project.

Some new books arrived early this year. Shohaku Okumura's commentary on the Mountains and Waters Sutra, which was used by the Shuso for this year's Winter Ango and is also our Spring Study Group book. *Being Time* is Shinshu Roberts' highly recommended commentary on Dogen's Uji; and, for students of calligraphy, we now have copies of John Stevens' "*Sacred Calligraphy of the East*."

We still carry our mango wood Oryoki bowls, but also have a few sets of plastic bakelite bowls in stock – 3 bowls for \$30.00 or complete sets, with bowls, cloths and utensils for \$75.00. These bowls are slightly smaller than those made from mango wood.

Come visit the Store on your next trip to S.M.Z.C – and don't forget to purchase one of Roshi's calligraphies to help the Mandala Project.





Buddhas' Birthday (see Sangha News on page 8)



SHUSO – DAIKI ED CADMAN

“These mountains and waters of the present
are the expression of the old buddhas.”

*from Dogen's Mountains and Waters Sutra
trans. by Carl Bielefeldt*

SHUSO INTERVIEW WITH DAIKI ED CADMAN – WINTER, 2019

by Katsuzen Chris King

MW: This was your first experience as Ango Shuso. Did it give you a different perspective on anything? Was it what you expected? What were the major challenges? Were there any surprises?

Yes, serving as Shuso did deepen my perspective on zen practice. I felt I was helping to lead the group, and also I felt the experience was a huge gift to me which no one else would ever understand. Through the responsibilities and rituals of the Shuso, I felt a steady and deepening relationship with zen, Sonoma Mountain, and the life and times of Dogen. As the Ango began, Roshi gave me

instruction on many details of my personal practice and then, of my Shuso practice. The more I could repeat and reinforce his pointers the more I realized I was being led into a Buddha realm where I felt the strength of every form and aspect happening within me like a huge growth spurt. Roshi offered on-the-job instruction on my bowing, on my gassho, on oryoki, and on my lighting and placing of incense. With each of his suggestions, I felt a new understanding.

My major challenge was my feet swelling and aching from going barefoot in the zendo, the Sangha House, and on the zendo decking. One afternoon, Roshi noticed my puffy feet and immediately urged me to sit zazen with my leg elevated. Then, the residents told me I could wear shoes in the zendo. I had not expected this alternative! But, I began to wear indoor shoes, and for the next weeks I was so much more comfortable. My biggest surprise was how caring folks were about my painful feet.

MW: Has this long month affected your sense of Soto practice, of the sangha, or of SMZC itself?

Yes, definitely my practice has been affected! I feel viscerally connected to Soto practice by having had a whole month of zazen, lighting incense, ringing the wake-up bell, eating oryoki. With my thoughts often concentrated on the Ango theme, I felt, moment-by-moment, held in the Dharma, the life of Dogen, and the land of our practice center, as if this had been my whole world forever. The words of the chants rang clearer and clearer as I listened to them every day. Roshi's talks were clear and made me happy. Like it all made sense...after years of practice, it all made sense.

MW: You've been a long-distance member of the SMZC sangha for a number of years. Can you tell us about your connection here and also about your practice in Seattle where you live?

Yes, my connection to Sonoma Mountain Zen Center is founded on grace. As a curious zen student, I discovered Kwong-roshi and SMZC browsing at the Seattle Public Library. First, I found Roshi's photo in Helen Tworokov's book, *ZEN IN AMERICA*. He seemed so happy and centered in the photos. Later, also at the public library, I happened upon Roshi's tape series, *BREATH SWEEPS MIND*, and connected to

his voice which was light, wondrous, and full of awe combined with laughter. On the final tape, Roshi invites his listeners to join him in practice at Sonoma Mountain. I thought, "Could this be possible?" I came for my first Sesshin during the Winter Ango of 2006. I actually felt transported to ancient Japan, California-style. The esthetics, the devotion to the forms, the focus of the teachings were new to me. In Seattle we practiced in tight quarters with a motley collection of zafus and coffee-table altars. At Sonoma Mountain I felt a level of devotion to zen tradition, for example, in the regular attention to the altar, the flowers, and the zafus, kneading them back to fullness after every sit.

Seattle is home. My employment and now my retirement is in Seattle. Friends and family live close by. I had first discovered zen practice in Seattle also by a happy accident. In 1992, I attended an "Introduction to Meditation" class which by chance happened to be with a Rinzai Zen sangha led by Genki Takabayashi. Genki-San became my teacher, and he gave me Jukai in 1995. After his retirement in 1999, I settled in with his sangha but also felt a yearning for more practice. By then I had read the books by Suzuki-roshi. My first Soto practice experience came in 2003 at Great Vow Zen Monastery in Northwest Oregon. In the next few years I visited Great Vow for Rohatsu and other retreats, and soon I felt I was really a Soto student at heart. My practice at home was Rinzai, and yet my travels abroad were Soto.

In 2011, I met Eko Jeff Kelley who had recently become the guiding teacher of Seattle Soto Zen. We met at a bookstore where Edward Espe Brown was giving a presentation about his latest cookbook. The next day I attended my first practice period at SSZ, and eventually I felt to transfer all my practice in Seattle to SSZ. Jeff invited me to be a senior practitioner, offer occasional Dharma

talks, and serve as Ino for the 2017 practice year. With weekly practice at Seattle Soto, and once or twice-yearly visits to Sonoma Mountain Zen Center, my conversion to Soto practice has been achieved!

MW: Your theme from Dogen's 'Mountain and Rivers Sutra' was quite inspiring and is taken from a writing we haven't explored much at SMZC. Can you say how you decided on this particular writing for your theme?

My choice of theme is another example of grace and synchronicity. My first visit to Great Vow Zen Monastery in 2003 was to attend a photography workshop led by John Daido Looi. That meeting led me to acquire his book of photos and essays, *THE WAY OF MOUNTAINS AND RIVERS*. His text was an investigation of Dogen's *SANSUIKYO: THE MOUNTAINS AND WATERS SUTRA*.

The subject of mountains and rivers in zen literature and art really first arrived to me in the late 1960's when I discovered the poetry of Gary Snyder. I actually heard him read from his work-in-progress, *MOUNTAINS AND RIVERS WITHOUT END*. I became inspired by this encounter to begin extensive backpacking, to record my experiences in hiking journals, and to try out zazen practice on deep wilderness camping trips. Little did I know then that Dogen's vision had been a direct inspiration for Gary Snyder.

So with photography, poetry, and zen I was ready to go deeper into Dogen. Last October Roshi asked me to be the Shuso, and almost on that very day, I met a friend who was reading Shohaku Okumura's latest book, *THE MOUNTAINS AND WATERS SUTRA*. I soon had read the book myself and knew I had found the source material for my Shuso talks!

continues next page

Roshi suggested that I select for my Shuso theme just one sentence from Dogen's fascicle and start from there. So, I picked the opening sentence (using the Bielefeldt translation which Okumura was using): "These mountains and waters of the present are the expression of the old buddhas."

Also deeply influencing me was wanting to choose a theme which would honor Sonoma Mountain Zen Center directly. From my first visits to the property, I had imagined a connection to ancient Japan and to the California of the Native Americans. With Roshi's vision of the Mandala building project, I wanted to be able to select a theme that held all these influences in one sentence, one theme. I wanted to pay homage to what Sonoma Mountain Zen Center will be in 300 years, to show my gratitude for my current practice at SMZC, and to investigate Dogen's understanding as portrayed in the imagery of mountains and waters. I assembled and wrote my talks day-by-day as the Ango progressed feeling grateful for the flowing mountain of Dharma unfolding.

MW: Did most of your commentary during meals center on this writing by Dogen or did you also read from and comment on other texts?

Yes, for the opening two weeks of the Ango, I read after each breakfast and each lunch. I decided to concentrate on "Sansuikyo," itself and little-by-little actually read the complete fascicle out loud. On the final day I completed reading the final sentences of the entire the fascicle.



Occasionally I would read other material about Dogen, usually Okumura's thoughts and commentary. He offered a full understanding of the text and its place in the history of Buddhism. I also read a few of my favorite chapters from *ZEN MIND, BEGINNER'S MIND*. For instance, Suzuki Roshi's "Nirvana, The Waterfall," seemed to connect directly to the "Waters" section from Dogen's fascicle: "One whole river or one whole mind is emptiness."

MW: Ah yes, that's a beautiful section in Suzuki-roshi's book. Wonderful that you could make that connection with Dogen's writing in the Mountains & Waters fascicle.

How did your interaction with Roshi go during the month? Did he give you much direction regarding your role as Head Student?

Yes, in a previous question, I referenced some of the ceremonial details that Roshi rehearsed with me. Lighting and placing incense became a moving, personal expression for me even though the incense was the Shuso's responsibility in his leadership of the whole sangha.

I was honored to be so near Roshi. We sat beside each other during zazen and during the Dharma talks, we chanted together, we bowed to each other at the end of the meals. Roshi's strength and connection to the Soto lineage was viscerally demonstrated when he chanted. From him, I felt encouraged to be as strong as I could be in my zazen and in my speaking opportunities.

continues next page

MW: The closing Dharma Encounter was especially dramatic. Can you give our readers a sense of how it went and how you experienced it?

Yes, from the beginning of the Mondo I felt I needed to speak from my hara, and speak loudly. On the day before, we had rehearsed the opening of the ritual, but on that morning, the sangha questioning interrupted the procedure I had expected from the rehearsal. I reasserted my intention to proceed according to plan by using a strong voice. Hence, the Dramatic Encounter.

My responses seemed to roar out from that beginning. I used an energy I had sometimes called upon when answering koans as a Rinzai zen student. We had sometimes given responses by shouting “KATSU” or “HAI” or emitting a long, bellowing “MU.”

The ice seemed to break, I relaxed more, and spoke more quietly. Many of the questions touched my heart, a question about kindness, and one about mountains and waters, and one about what was the meaning of life for which I could say nothing.

MW: Finally, do you have any thing else you'd like to add?

Thank you to everyone. Thanks to the Jikidos who had the incense lit and waiting for me to place in the bowl. Thanks for the assistance of the bell ringers. ❖



SONOMA MANDALA – SPRING CONSTRUCTION

by Cam Shunryu Kwong

Spring flowers are blooming on Sonoma Mountain. Over the last few months, rain fell at record amounts. The Zen Center and Santa Rosa had nearly 6" of rain in just one day. Fortunately the rain only caused minor erosion, thanks to the efforts of the Zen Center. In order to protect the graded retaining wall areas, we laid down hundreds of feet of tarp held in place by sand bags.

Despite the wet weather, Glazier and Glazier completed the construction of three 10,000 gallon concrete water tanks in February. Week's Pump and Drilling is working on completing the piping and water treatment system installation in early spring. With the installation of the domestic water and fire water lines this May, the new water system will be completed and ready for testing.

The grading for the new Meditation Hall (Manjushri Hall) and new Community Building (Wisteria House) has been completed along with the driveway and the new parking areas. The majority of the work on the new septic system has also been completed and the system is up and running. To date, 70% of the infrastructure work has been completed. This construction work will restart in April after being dormant for the last 4 months.

To make room for the Manjushri Hall, a 6' high concrete retaining wall will be built extending from Residence 2 (Genjo Building) and water tank 150' to the west. The grading for the retaining wall is in progress and construction of the wall will begin once the soil dries out, hopefully by June. We were disappointed last fall when the contractor was not able to complete the retaining wall due to weather and scheduling issues.

Construction drawings for the new Maintenance and Agriculture Building are nearing completion and construction coordination is underway. The Zen Center will serve as the general contractor and is actively recruiting people who can help with the construction, whether for a few days or for a few months. Construction will begin in May. Please call the office if you are interested in helping. ❖





Rare snowfall on Sonoma Mountain during Winter Ango - February 5, 2019. Fred Jacobs photo



Rock Rose, Fred Jacobs

FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

by *Lizbeth Myoko Hamlin*

Our hard-working SMZC board, formed in 2017, recently sat down to brainstorm continuing problems and suggest further actions. Clearly, we now have more to do than we can easily get done. Our goals are basically to endure the winds of progress while attending to sangha needs, issues of membership, operating costs, and, of course, the Mandala Project.

It's obvious that none of us were prepared for the October 2017 fires. We feel blessed to have survived that challenge, as well as assist our neighbors on Sonoma Mountain Road, and support those sangha members who lost homes or were otherwise impacted by this catastrophe.

This year our practice continues to support our regular weekly schedules and our two yearly Ango retreats. Our biggest challenges now involve recouping financial stability during this period when we're less able to host visiting groups. We're now at a turn-around point in this complex effort, with the prospect of establishing new water and sewer lines, and developing exciting new buildings to better house visitors and members in coming years.

We've re-written and passed new versions of our By-Laws, essential for progress in the future. We've also formed a committee, consisting of David 'Kize' Hirsch, Cam "Shunryu" Kwong and Nyoze Kwong, to continue seeking donors for our ongoing Mandala Project.

Recently Eric 'Zenjin' Shear joined the board, to assist with membership, with the intention of increasing it, while creating community outreach, and following up on managing dues, annual donations and general sangha needs.

Shinko Kwong has been steadfast in providing our financial support documents to get this new system streamlined. We continue to seek a consistent office manager, able to provide technical support for SMZC, support the needs of residents, guests and visitors, and co-ordinate the myriad needs of continual dharma practice and community involvement here on this beautiful mountain site. ❖



All Contributions Help
Maintain
The Buddhadharma!

Donate Now!
smzc.org

MEMBERSHIP



We invite you to become a member of Sonoma Mountain Zen Center. Our purpose is to offer Soto Zen meditation practice and its basic teachings to people of all religious faiths. The practice of meditation allows us to see beyond our one-sided perception of ourselves and the world, so that we are able to participate in society with clarity and peace. We are a lay residential practice center and a non-profit organization relying on membership dues, guest practice programs, Zen programs and contributions to sustain our operating cost. *Call or visit soon to join us in actualizing the Dharma!* ❖

ONLINE RESOURCES ~ DHARMA TALKS & EVENTS

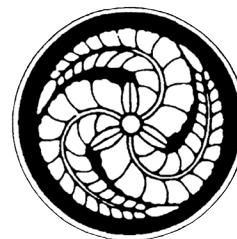
SMZC's website conveys the essence of our practice to others and invites their participation at the Zen Center. It is found at **smzc.org**.

A selection of Dharma Talks by Jakusho Kwong-roshi, and more, are available online in video, audio, and podcast formats.

Roshi's **Vimeo** channel offers several of Roshi's and Shinko's Dharma talks plus other notable events from SMZC. Please check it out! Just go to vimeo.com/smzc.

"The best" of Roshi's talks are available free through two websites - Podbean and iTunes. Access via **iTUNES** - Open iTunes on your computer; click "iTunes Store" in the left navigation column; click "Podcasts" on the top row; in the small box in the very upper right side shown with a "Q", enter "smzc"; hit the enter key on your computer; in the middle of the page with Roshi's picture, click on "Sonoma Mountain Zen Center" under the heading "Podcast"; Roshi's talks then appear.

Access via **Podbean** - Go to www.podbean.com; in box at top right of page, enter "Sonoma Mountain Zen Center" (not case sensitive); click "SEARCH"; click on "Sonoma Mountain Zen Center" next to Roshi's picture or on the picture itself. **OPTION 1** - click on the "Listen" button beside any talk; **OPTION 2** (recommended) - click on smzc.podbean.com beside Roshi's picture; once in the site click on any "Listen" button. ❖



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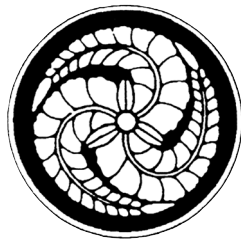
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