

Sangha Life



The Missouri Zen Center

February-March, 2007

The Missouri Zen Center

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Coming Events

- Feb. 1: MZC Board nominations open
- Feb. 3: Movie Night
- Feb. 11: MZC Board meeting
- Feb. 24: Reducing Global Warming wkshp
- March: Rosan in St. Louis
- Mar. 3: Movie Night
- Mar. 17: Growing Food Sustainably wkshp
- Mar. 24: Members Meeting, Board election



*Address Correction
Requested*

Visit Our Web Site:

www.missourizencenter.org

Rosan's Schedule for March

We look forward to our teacher Rosan's return to St. Louis during the first week of March. He expects to remain in St. Louis until March 31, so he will be present at our Members Meeting and potluck on March 24.

On Sunday, March 11 and Sunday, March 25, Rosan will offer his teisho on the following topics:

What is the awakened way?

Why do we need the global ethic?

Please join us for sitting and for Rosan's teishos on these Sundays. Please also let friends, family members, and colleagues who might be interested know about these special teishos and invite them to join us.

Rosan also says that while he is here, we may read his book *No Self: A New Systematic Interpretation of Buddhism* again, taking up any topic on any evening. This would be a good time to come to evening sittings and after sitting, ask any questions

you may have from reading his book. Please watch for more information on the listserv and at the Zen Center.

Movie Nights

The Missouri Zen Center and sangha member Frederick are hosting a Movie Night on the first Saturday of each month (February 3 and March 3). The movie will be shown in our library on the Zen center's big screen television. Frederick will choose movies with some connection to our practice – which offers a lot of possibilities.

The Movie Night schedule is:

6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. (Pizza, ordered out)-optional

7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. (movie)

8:30 p.m. (discussion and perhaps tea)

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Those who choose to order pizza will split the cost of the pizza between them.

If you want to know the title of the upcoming movie, please check with the Zen Center a few days beforehand or watch the listserv for information.

Website Redesign Committee

It is time to update the Zen Center's website. The Zen Center is forming a website redesign committee to consider how to reorganize the website, both in terms of look-and-feel and in terms of the information it contains. Anyone who is interested in being part of this effort should contact the Zen Center.

Spring Garden Sale

For the past 12 years the Zen Center has held a plant sale on the Saturday before Mother's Day, which is May 12 this year. The Sale has featured hostas, shade-tolerant plants with beautiful leaves that do well in the St. Louis region, as well as other kinds of plants and honey and other non-plant items. Members of the sangha have given many hours of time before and during each sale for such tasks as digging and potting-up plants, labeling plants, deciding on plants to order, procuring additional plants from local nurseries, and all the activities occurring on the sale day itself. The revenue brought in from the sale has helped to keep the Zen Center in existence, and we hope that the plants have helped to create beautiful gardens.

Since the last Sale, board members and others have been considering how to organize future Sales in a way that reduces the number of volunteer hours and materials required in the weeks prior to the Sale. We are also considering shifting the types of plants offered over the next few years so that we offer a larger proportion of native plants and food plants.

At the time of this writing, we are expecting to hold a Spring Garden Sale in some form on the morning of Saturday, May 12. However, we will not make a final decision on the Sale until the February 11 Board meeting. If anyone would like to offer additional input before the Board meeting, please contact the Zen Center.

Workshop: Reducing Your Home's Contribution to Global Warming

To learn how to calculate your household CO2 emissions (a factor in global warming) and learn more about what you can do to reduce them, attend the workshop I'll be offering at Meiku's and my house, 1519 Twillman Ave. in Spanish Lake, on Saturday, February 24 from 1-4 p.m. I ask that each attendee offer dana of \$5 to the Missouri Zen Center (please modify dana lower or higher as your circumstances indicate). Attendees should bring fuel bills (electricity, natural gas, oil, propane, and wood) for the past year so that they may calculate their current household CO2 emissions. Past electric bills may be obtained from AmerenUE's website, www.ameren.com. I'll show attendees what we've done to lower our emissions. There will be plenty of time for discussions about possible approaches to take, cost issues, finding information on supplies and contractors, and so forth. Pre-registration is required, and attendees will need to print and bring a copy of the Cool Citizens: Household Solutions paper from the Rocky Mountain Institute's website,

www.rmi.org, to the workshop (this will be our text for the workshop). To pre-register or for more information, contact me at the Zen Center or call me at home, 314-355-3505. Pre-registration deadline is February 10.

Growing Food Sustainably Workshop

The Missouri Zen Center will offer a one-day workshop on growing food sustainably on Saturday, March 17 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Zen Center with a one-hour break for lunch. Kuryo will lead the workshop, which will draw largely from the Grow Biointensive method developed by John Jeavons and colleagues at Ecology Action in Willits, California. The morning will include a discussion of all eight aspects of the basic Grow Biointensive method. When these eight aspects are practiced together, they offer a sustainable way to grow annual food plants (most grains and vegetables) in the smallest possible space with the lowest use of water and other inputs. Kuryo will also discuss why she believes that growing perennial food plants requires different methods for best results and what those are. Finally, she will touch on the ecology and politics of seeds and offer sources for sustainably grown seeds.

The afternoon portion of the workshop will be more hands-on. She plans to demonstrate and offer attendees the chance to practice some of the Grow Biointensive techniques such as double-digging, making soil for growing seeds (flat soil), planting seeds in flats, transplanting on offset spacing to create ideal microclimates in the vegetable bed, and harvesting seeds. Finally, she'll show how to plan a garden using the charts available in *How to Grow More Vegetables* and some of Ecology Action's other resources. In order to provide the best learning experience, she is limiting the workshop to a maximum of eight attendees.

Kuryo requests that attendees offer \$50 dana to the Zen Center for this workshop (some of this will be used to make handouts). If that is a barrier, please offer dana to the extent possible. Lunch will be on your own (bring lunch or eat at one of the nearby restaurants). She asks that attendees commit to growing at least a small (roughly 4 foot by 4 foot) area using one or more of the Grow Biointensive aspects during 2007 as her only payment for offering the workshop.

For more information or to register for the workshop, please contact Kuryo through the Zen Center or by phone at 314-355-3505. Registration deadline is Friday, March 2.

Members Meeting & Board Election

The MZC Board announces that nominations for new Board members are open during February. The Board is charged with ensuring that the Zen Center abides by its bylaws. In addition the Board takes responsibility for organizing the work necessary to keep the Zen Center in existence. This includes fundraisers, maintenance of the building and grounds, and other work to keep the Zen Center as a vital place for practice of the Three Pillars: zazen, voluntary simplicity, and the Global Ethic.

In accordance with our bylaws, and because we'd like to have more people to join in this important work, we request nominations for new members to the Board. Nominees should have a strong commitment to our practice and to the Zen Center as a place for the sangha to practice and a means

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to bring the practice to more people. Nominees need to be willing to participate in Board meetings, usually held once a month, and to do whatever work they commit to during the meetings. The term of membership on the Board is three years. You may nominate yourself or someone else. If you wish to nominate someone else, please be sure to get his or her agreement first. Please submit your nominations to the Zen Center no later than February 28. The list of candidates will be published on the Zen Center listserv and posted at the Zen Center on March 6.

The Board member election and annual Members Meeting will be held on Saturday, March 24 starting at 5 p.m. at the Zen Center. Anyone who meets one or more of the following criteria may vote at that meeting:

- has taken lay ordination through the Zen Center; or
- is current with member dues; or
- is active but is not able to pay dues. Anyone falling into this last category should contact the Zen Center by February 28.

Following election of Board members, we'll conduct any other necessary business. Then we'll hold a vegetarian potluck dinner. Please bring a dish to share and enjoy the food others bring!

Vesak Day

The Buddhist Council of Greater St. Louis, a nonprofit organization of Buddhist groups in the St. Louis area and nearby which includes the Zen Center among its members, holds Vesak Day each May at the Mid-America Buddhist Association in Augusta. The 2007 Vesak Day will be held on Sunday, May 20. The event is free and open to the public. We encourage the sangha to attend and ask that you bring it to the attention of people you know who are interested in learning more about Buddhism.

The tentative schedule is as follows.

May 20th, 2007: MANY TRADITIONS, ONE HEART

- 10:00-10:15 Opening Ceremony
- 10:15-10:30 Bathing Buddha
- 10:30-11:00 Guided Meditation
- 11:00-11:30 First Speaker
- 11:30-12:45 Lunch
- 12:45-1:00 Walk to Kwan Yin Pavilion
- 1:00-2:00 Dr. Don and Chaplain Monnett presentation
- 2:00-2:30 Walk back
- 2:30-3:30 Last Speaker
- 3:30 Closing Ceremony

Sustainable Gardening: Food for All Beings

By Kuryo

After decades of changes that have forced small farmers off the land and consolidated food growing into mega-farms with close connections to multi-national corporations, most of us now obtain most of our food from farms practicing these large-scale agricultural practices, often referred to as industrial agriculture. However, industrial agriculture is not a sustainable way to grow nourishing food. It takes roughly 1/3 to 2/3 acre to grow the food the average resident of the U.S. eats per year. That may not sound like much in a country the size of this one. But if everyone in the world were to eat an average U.S. diet, already as of 2000 there was not enough arable land per person available to support that diet. The problem only gets worse when we factor in population growth and loss of arable land to development, desertification, salinization, and the potential effects of global warming in the years ahead. Furthermore, industrial agriculture rapidly destroys the soil; in the U.S. each pound of food produced destroys about 6 pounds of soil. Nutritional levels of many vegetables appear to have dropped significantly since chemical farming became widespread after WWII (by 1/4 to 1/3 or more, according to the little data available). Finally, it takes 10 or more calories' worth of energy, in the form of fossil fuels, to grow 1 calorie of food energy, a luxury we are not likely to have for many more years as the supply of oil and natural gas begins to shrink.

Many of us have begun to search for alternatives. We may be choosing to eat less meat or dairy, or none at all. However, even a vegan diet grown by the usual organic methods requires more land per person than will be available within 50 years. This is because manure and other organic fertilizers are used to grow the food, and they deplete the soil of the place from which they are obtained. We may be eating more locally grown produce. This lessens the fossil-fuel input into the foods we eat, but it still takes more energy to grow the food than the food contains because most local farmers use machinery and off-the-farm fertilizers.

As we learn more about the problems with large-scale agriculture, many of us contemplate growing some of our own food, usually vegetables. Vegetable plants and seeds are readily available and they can be relatively easy to grow. But there can be problems associated with growing our own vegetables. Perhaps we haven't grown up with gardening knowledge, so we don't know how to begin. Or we may be growing and eating vegetables from our gardens but be depleting the soil, undermining our ability to grow food in future years. We may be having pest and disease problems because we don't know how to grow food in ways that mesh with the larger cycles of life. We may be spending a lot of time and energy on foods with little to offer us in terms of nutrition. We may be supporting large corporations and unsustainable practices unknowingly through our purchases of seeds, plants, or supplies, even if we buy certified organic versions. If we don't buy certified organic or sustainably grown seeds, we may be buying genetically engineered seeds with unknown effects on our health or seeds whose production depleted the land used for them.

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The nonprofit organization Ecology Action (www.growbiointensive.org), based in Willits, California, has been working for over 30 years to learn how to grow a total year's nutritional requirement on the smallest amount of land with the least amount of water and other inputs. Over the years they have published their results in their major resource, the book *How to Grow More Vegetables (and fruits, nuts, berries, grains, and other crops) than you ever thought possible on less land than you can imagine* (John Jeavons, 7th edition, 2006). In addition to the book, they also offer about 20 shorter and more specialized publications on various aspects of their method, now called Grow Biointensive, and they offer occasional 3-day workshops to the public. In 1999 I took one of the 3-day workshops, after a few years of trying to learn the method from the book. I came away from the workshop with a much better idea of how to double-dig a garden bed, extensive notes, and a renewed interest in working with the method in my own garden. Now, after several more years of using the method, I think I have a better understanding of why it works for annual crops, how to apply it under St. Louis conditions, and under what circumstances other gardening techniques, like permaculture, might work better. I've also learned something about how seeds are produced, who to buy them from, and why and how to grow them yourself.

Many of us at the Zen Center are growing vegetables or would like to begin doing so as part of our practice of the Three Pillars. To aid in that effort, I'm offering a one-day workshop focussing on the Grow Biointensive system, with a bit of discussion on why I think it works well for annual plants and what other techniques complement it. The workshop will take place on Saturday, March 17 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Zen Center and includes a one-hour lunch break. Please see the description of the workshop elsewhere in this newsletter for more details and to sign up. May your adventures in growing and eating more sustainably bear much fruit!

Live a Tree-like Life

By Rosan Daido

Trees live with all (water, wind, stars, the sun, etc.) and for all (birds, butterflies, plants, the planet, etc.) always by all means, communicating and cooperating. They sit solid and serene, sending their roots and branches wide, deep, and high, surviving as long as a thousand years. Thus they endure in time and space, functioning fully in truth, beauty, goodness, and holiness.

Zen Center E-mail List

All members and friends of the sangha are invited to subscribe to the Missouri Zen Center e-mail list. To subscribe, send an e-mail message from the address you wish to use for list messages to:

missourizencenter-subscribe@buddhistcouncil.us

The message field should remain blank.

You will receive a message asking you to confirm your subscription. Follow the directions in that message and your address will then be added to the list. If you encounter difficulties, consult the list owner at this address:

missourizencenter-owner@buddhistcouncil.us

Please note: we may lose our current e-mail server at any moment. To help us make the transition if and when we need a new list server, new subscribers should also please send their subscribed e-mail addresses to joe@joethejugler.com.

Regular Zendo Schedule

Sunday

6:20-7:00 am	Zazen
7:00-7:20 am	Service (sutras)
7:20-8:00 am	Zazen
8:00-8:10 am	Kinhin
8:10-8:30 am	Zazen
8:30 am	Talk/discussion, work period, tea

You are welcome to come throughout the morning, but please do not enter the zendo during zazen. Enter quietly at other times.

Monday

6:00-6:40 am	Zazen
11:00-11:40 am	Zazen
6:30-7:00 pm	Instruction*
7:00-7:20 pm	Zazen
7:20-9:00 pm	Writing Practice

Tuesday

6:00-6:40 am	Zazen
11:00-11:40 am	Zazen
7:00-7:40 pm	Zazen
7:40-9:00 pm	Tea/discussion

Wednesday

6:00-6:40 am	Zazen
11:00-11:40 am	Zazen
7:00-7:40 pm	Zazen

Thursday

6:00-6:40 am	Zazen
7:00-7:40 pm	Zazen

Friday

6:00-6:40 am	Zazen
7:00-7:40 pm	Zazen

Saturday

8:00-8:40 am	Zazen
8:40-9:30 am	Discussion
10:00-10:30 am	Family Sitting

*Work periods may be scheduled following zazen. * Anyone bringing a class to the Monday Beginners Night, or wishing to bring a class at any other time to the Zen Center, should contact the Zen Center well in advance to ensure that accommodations will be available for the number of people attending.*

