

Dharma Life



The Missouri Zen Center

December 2002 - January 2003

The Missouri Zen Center

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Events for December and January

- Each Monday night – Beginner's sitting
- Each Tuesday night – tea and discussion following sitting
- Each Wednesday night – writing practice following sitting
- Dec. 14, 2 p.m. - Japanese language class
- Dec. 14 and Jan. 11, evening – Movie Night
- Dec. 25 – breakfast potluck following morning sitting
- Dec. 31, 9 p.m. to midnight – special New Year's eve sitting followed by potluck
- Jan. 1 – no morning sitting (evening sitting as usual)



Address Correction Requested

Visit Our Web Site:
www.missourizencenter.org

Rosan Returns

We expect our teacher Rosan to return to St. Louis around December 20 and to remain in St. Louis through about the first week of January. We welcome him back and wish him a safe journey.

Anyone who may be interested in taking lay ordination (taking the 16 lay precepts) in 2003 is encouraged to talk with Rosan while he is here. It is traditional to ask our teacher's permission to take the precepts. Lay ordination is usually held in mid-September. Upon receiving Rosan's permission to take the precepts, please inform a Board member so that you may receive instructions and material for sewing a rakusu.

Member's Meeting and Board Election

Please note that the annual Member's Meeting and Board

election will be held early in 2003. For information on the date, time, and agenda, please watch for announcements at the Zen Center and on the Zen Center's listserv and website. At that time, also, we will announce the opening of nominations for positions on the Board of Directors. The Board is charged with the administrative work needed to keep the Zen Center in existence. This includes correspondence, bookkeeping, event scheduling, and short and long term planning activities.

If you want to find out more about the Board, and especially if you are interested in becoming a Board member, talk to any of the current members. Their names and positions are listed on the Zen Center's website. And don't forget that our monthly Board meetings are open to everyone, and that the Board needs member input

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to ensure that Zen Center activities benefit all members and all beings. Board meeting dates and times are announced on the Zen Center listserv.

New Events at the Zen Center

We are pleased to announce the following new events for our sangha and friends. A monthly Movie Night began in November. This is planned for the second Saturday evening of the month. Attendees will enjoy a potluck supper at the Zen Center and watch a video afterward. The December 14 video hasn't been chosen as of press time... if you have any ideas, please let Kalen know.

A Japanese language class is scheduled to begin on Saturday, December 14 at 2 p.m. Everyone is welcome... a little knowledge of Japanese will help, as this is a continuation of the previous Japanese language class. Frequency of future meetings had not been decided as of press time; check the listserv, website, and postings at the Zen Center.

Also, on Christmas morning, December 25, sitting will be followed by a potluck breakfast.

New Year's Eve Sitting and Potluck

Please join us for a special sitting on Tuesday, December 31 beginning at 9:00 p.m. with 40 minutes of zazen followed by 10 minutes of kinhin. Zazen and kinhin will continue until just before midnight, when the bell will be rung 108 times to mark the changing of the year. Following the bell-ringing, enjoy a potluck supper (bring a vegetarian dish to share). There will be no 6 a.m. sitting on January 1 but the evening sitting will be held as usual.

Extra Help for Beginners

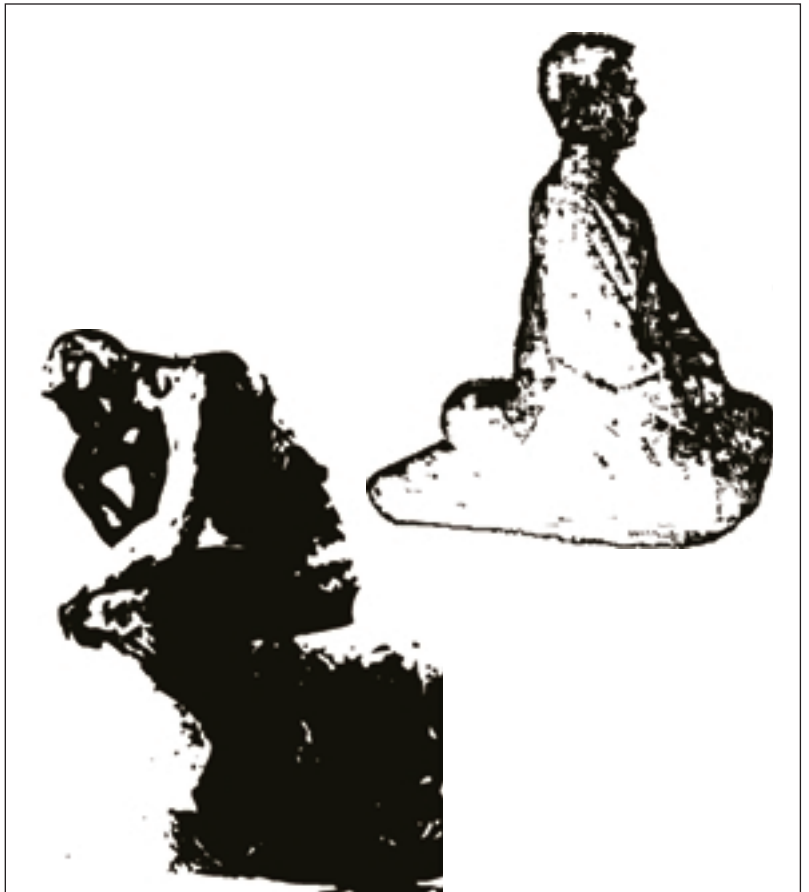
People beginning our practice may need some help to become at ease with it and the Zen Center. For them we offer Beginner's Night every Monday evening, with instruction in zazen and Zen Center etiquette beginning at 6:30 p.m., sitting at 7 p.m., and a question and answer period following sitting focussing on the needs of beginners. (Experienced sitters are welcome too!) Beginners are also encouraged to join us on Sunday morning, especially during the time when Rosan is here. You can join in any or all of the Sunday morning sittings. If you prefer a shorter sitting, arrive between 8 and 8:10 a.m. to take part in the sitting from 8:10-8:30 a.m., followed by a teaching from Rosan. When Rosan is not here, the doan will offer a teaching. Beginners are always welcome to ask questions after the teaching and during tea and discussion.

Holiday Bread Baskets Available

It's time to put in your order for those delicious breads that our volunteers have been baking for the past several weeks. This year we are offering two different packages. The traditional bread basket includes 1 large Peaceful Poppyseed, 1 small Zestful Zucchini, and 1 small Crazy Cranberry breads; 1 Absolutely Apricot muffin; and hot chocolate mix, cookies, and candy. The cost of this

basket is \$25. You may also choose 1 large individual loaf of Peaceful Poppyseed bread for \$9. The breads and muffins are baked from organic flour and eggs from free range hens. Some of the breads use honey as the sweetener. The sale of every basket or individual bread benefits the Zen Center.

To order, use the order form available at the Zen Center, or send your name, address, phone, and e-mail address to the Center. Indicate how many of each package you wish to buy, and enclose payment. Checks should be made out to the Missouri Zen Center. Also indicate the date on which you will pick up your order. Available dates are Sundays, December 8 and 22, 10 a.m. to noon each day; and Thursday, December 19, from 6-8 p.m. Quantities of breads and muffins are limited, so please order soon.



In contrast to zazen posture, Rodin's The Thinker is weighed down by the thoughts and worries occupying the front of his head. The arm is used as a support, placing undue pressure on the chin and wrist. The lungs are unable to fill completely. The position is not stable, tending to fall forward off the stone base.

E-mail Discussion List (listserv)

To subscribe to the Missouri Zen Center's e-mail discussion list, send an e-mail message to <majordomo@joethejuggler.com>, leave the subject field blank and in the message body type "subscribe mzc". You will then receive a confirmation message (including instructions on how to unsubscribe). Please only subscribe the e-mail address of individuals.

Live Limitless Life

by Rosan

All phenomena are dependently originated on causes and conditions. This means all are related and relative; all are dynamically interacting and interchanging. There is no independent eternal entity, ego or empire, action or attribute. Nobody was born from and in absolute vacuum. All are limitlessly related in time and space, matter and mind.

Despite this, our conventional minds, however, identify our bodies as our “Selves.” We delude ourselves, are bound in this delusion. We discriminate Self and Other, Mind and Matter, etc. We then exploit and exterminate the other, the matter, etc. We are thus caught in the five calamities of delusion, bondage, discrimination, exploitation and extermination.

Beside delusions and discriminations, beyond senses and ideas, Self and Other, Mind and Matter, etc. are limitlessly interrelated, interacting and interchanging. We share mental, verbal, physical actions, individual, social, natural phenomena limitlessly in time and space. We are part and parcel of this universal system. Ultimate truth beyond the conventional one is that we are limitless life itself.

If we are awakened to this truth, we are freed from the bondage of selfishness and suffering from it. We witness total equality, true love and genuine peace. We attain the five blisses of awakening, freedom, equality, love and peace. Limitless mental, verbal and physical actions enable limitless life for all limitlessly in time and space.



Living the Global Ethic: Reducing Your Contribution to Global Warming

Part 2: Keeping Records

by Kuryo

This is the second article in a series on ways to step off the hundred-foot pole and put our practice into action. The previous article discussed how to calculate your household's carbon dioxide emissions for the past year. This article will look at how to keep records of your fossil fuel use to help you decide on and evaluate changes you make to save energy.

The information that fossil fuel utilities provide on their receipts is an indicator that is useful for making and evaluating changes. We are familiar with indicators such as the speedometer in our car. By knowing our current speed, the speed limit, and weather conditions, we can determine if we are operating our car safely and change our speed if necessary. Indicators to help us evaluate our energy usage and the effect of changes that we make are the total amount of energy used, the number of days during that billing period, and the heating or cooling degree days. Heating or cooling degree days are the number of degrees by which the daily average temperature is below or above, respectively, an average of 65 degrees.

I keep a sheet of paper on which I write the billing dates, the charge, and the total amount of energy used for both electricity and natural gas. On the electricity side, I also record the kWh used per day (divide the total kWh by the number of days in the billing cycle) and a short comment. On the natural gas side, I include the usage in both hundred cubic feet and therms, the heating degree days (HDD) for the billing period, and a short comment. The comment may include a note if the weather was unusually cloudy or sunny, any changes we made to reduce energy use during that time period, and the like. All the information can be found on the receipt from AmerenUE or Laclede, or calculated from that information (except for the comments). When I pay energy bills, I record the information from the receipts onto this sheet of paper. This gives me a good idea of our patterns of energy usage and the effects of changes made. It becomes more valuable as data is kept over several years. I also created a spreadsheet on which to record data from multiple years, to make year to year comparisons easier.

You can use this data to determine places where you can make cost-effective changes. For instance, we used the information from ours to determine that our electric water heater was the major contributor to our electricity consumption. We made a couple of inexpensive changes to conserve electricity used for water heating (water heater wrap, pipe wrap, and lowering the temperature set point). Initial data indicate that these changes have reduced electricity consumption by the water heater. It is also clear from our data that the highly energy-efficient air conditioner and furnace we had installed last summer have significantly reduced energy consumption relative to the previous units during periods when they are in use.

It is important to take account of the outdoor temperature when looking at energy used for space heating and cooling. For energy used for space heating, compare periods of similar HDD when determining the effect of any changes made, such as adding weather-stripping, reducing thermostat settings, or caulking. To evaluate changes made to reduce electricity for space cooling, compare periods of similar cooling degree days (CDD). You will need to use NOAA's St. Louis weather station's web site (www.crh.noaa.gov/lscx) to obtain CDD for each billing period.

Next issue will discuss using this information and other factors to help you plan your energy reduction strategy.

“Truth or Twist”

Dharma Talk given by Rosan Yoshida, transcribed by Ando

When we come here, early in the morning, we can see the stars in the sky—we can hear the singing of the insects. When we are busy in our daily lives, we do not see and hear these things, but only the busy sounds in and out of us, not far enough in space and time—only bubbly, foamy sounds.

Bubbles and foam can never attain Great Mind,

Mature Mind, Joyful Mind. They are appearing and disappearing around, always tossed up and down.

So, they can never see a great distance, hear the subtle sounds, and have real, peaceful, pure mind.

Only through the long practice can we attain the ocean-like Great, Mature, Joyful Mind, and the Joyful Life. If we sit down, calm, we can see this Truth. But, somehow, our lazy and easygoing mind wants to twist this truth. Everyone wants what one wants, wants to see and hear. Then we, ourselves, bind ourselves with our own locks.

We want to twist the truth with numbers. But, how many bubbles may we gather, bubbles cannot be stable enough. So our actions are wasted, eventually. And just temporarily, we think we win. However, no bubbles will overturn the ocean ever. “Only truth wins.” Never twisting!

Why do we sit?

by Rokan

Why do we sit? Why should we sit everyday? We know that practice makes sitting better. The more we meditate, the better we get at it.

But we don't seem to get it. Some of us think because we come to the Zen Center or read books about Zen, we are Buddhist, or oh yes, we think we know all about meditation and practice, even if we only sit once or twice a week.

Some of us think that knowing about Zen or Zazen makes us enlightened or awakened. Bullhockey! We wear our practice or occasional sitting like a robe, taking it off and on, thinking once we sit it sticks to us with some special spiritual glue...Wrong.

Enlightenment or wakefulness is not an intellectual understanding, but you cannot do it without the mind. Master Jiryu at MABA says you may understand, but you have to experience it. It is like breathing. You can't do it without lungs, but the lungs aren't breathing. It is not even your body that breathes, it is the whole world.

Dr. Yoshida tells us to sit more. No matter how many times we are told, we still seem to see the curtain, not what is outside of the window. We see the tree, not the forest. We see a person, but not humanity. We see the landscape, not the universe.

Zen is not about understanding: it is about seeing with our real eyes. In order to see we have to cultivate and nourish. Everyday we feed our bodies, at least once, usually three times a day. Why then to we expect to nourish our spirit by sitting one or two days a week. When we eat, we don't have to think about it. We just get hungry and eat. We “fill the hole” in our bellies. We nourish those “stinky old skin bags”. But when our spirit is hungry, we ignore it, or say we will do it later.

If we nourish and cultivate our minds through sitting, we cultivate our bodies as well. We cultivate the universe. We open the curtains of our ignorance and see everything, just as it is. We see the universe reflected in the crystal ball.

The goal is not to understand nor experience enlightenment. It is to see differently and then live differently. Please come sit with us, not just once, but many times. Come to the table and eat. Nourish your lives and cultivate your mind and body, and then you will not only see the awakened way, you will live it.

“...the universe appeared to disclose its hidden reality: it was in perpetual transformation. What apparently was stable melted away into the moving; what was apparently finite sank into the infinite. There was no fixed, final state. And is that not the real truth, since all living things are but a condensation of the breath?” (Cheng, *The River Below*)

Come sit with us. We sit every weekday at 6:00 a.m. and evenings at 7:00 p.m., on Saturday morning at 8:00 a.m. and on Sunday from 6:20 a.m. with a service.

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
6:30-7:00 pm	Instruction
7:00-7:20 pm	Zazen
7:20-9:00 pm	Discussion/ questions

Tuesday

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

Wednesday

6:00-6:40 am	Zazen
7:00-7:40 pm	Zazen
After sitting	Writing Practice

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
After sitting	Dinner out

Saturday

8:00-8:40 am	Zazen
8:40-9:30 am	Discussion

Work periods may be scheduled following zazen. Any changes to this schedule: please contact the Zen Center.



Scheduled Events are apt to change from time to time. When in doubt, call to verify.

December 2002

Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
1 6:20 am Sunday Service	2 6:00 am Zazen 6:30 pm Instruction 7:00 pm Zazen 7:20 pm Q & A	3 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen 7:40 pm Tea & Discussion	4 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen Writing Practice	5 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen	6 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen	7 8:00 am Zazen
8 6:20 am Sunday Service	9 6:00 am Zazen 6:30 pm Instruction 7:00 pm Zazen 7:20 pm Q & A	10 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen 7:40 pm Tea & Discussion	11 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen Writing Practice	12 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen	13 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen	14 8:00 am Zazen 2:00 pm Japanese Class Movie Night
15 6:20 am Sunday Service	16 6:00 am Zazen 6:30 pm Instruction 7:00 pm Zazen 7:20 pm Q & A	17 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen 7:40 pm Tea & Discussion	18 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen Writing Practice	19 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen	20 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen	21 8:00 am Zazen
22 Winter Solstice 6:20 am Sunday Service	23 6:00 am Zazen 6:30 pm Instruction 7:00 pm Zazen 7:20 pm Q & A	24 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen 7:40 pm Tea & Discussion	25 6:00 am Zazen Potluck Breakfast 7:00 pm Zazen Writing Practice	26 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen	27 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen	28 8:00 am Zazen
29 6:20 am Sunday Service	30 6:00 am Zazen 6:30 pm Instruction 7:00 pm Zazen 7:20 pm Q & A	31 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen 7:40 pm Tea & Discussion	Possible dates for Holiday Bread order pick-ups: Sundays, December 8 and 22, 10 a.m. to noon Thursday, December 19, from 6-8 p.m			

PLEASE POST

January 2003

Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
Watch for announcement of Board Meeting and nominations for Board Elections!			1 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen Writing Practice	2 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen	3 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen	4 8:00 am Zazen
5 6:20 am Sunday Service	6 6:00 am Zazen 6:30 pm Instruction 7:00 pm Zazen 7:20 pm Q & A	7 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen 7:40 pm Tea & Discussion	8 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen Writing Practice	9 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen	10 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen	11 8:00 am Zazen Movie Night
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