



Water Wheel

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

Zen Center of Los Angeles
Great Dragon Mountain / Buddha Essence Temple

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Who Is That One?

By Sensei Merle Kodo Boyd

Mumonkan Case 45: Who Is That One?

Case:

Ancestor En of Tozan said, "Even Shakyamuni and Maitreya are servants of that one. Just tell me, who is that one?"

Verse:

*Don't draw another's bow;
Don't ride another's horse;
Don't speak of another's faults;
Don't try to know about another's affairs.*

If we let this simple question "Who is that one?" sink within us like a pebble dropped into a bottomless pool, we will experience its depth and subtlety. We can ask this question for all of our lifetime and be taught forever. Who is that one?

But before we reach that question of the koan, we are faced with a thicket of others. Why does the koan say "even Shakyamuni and Maitreya"? If Great Ancestors and Bodhisattvas, with all of their wisdom and insight, are subjects, what can we expect for ourselves? What concepts, hopes, and expectations does it reveal in us?

Initially, in stepping onto this path that becomes zen practice, we do not know that it is a beginningless and endless path. Our ideas may be vague, but we are hoping to find something, to resolve some perceived dissatisfaction within ourselves. We think there is some attainment embodied in Shakyamuni and awaiting expression in

Sensei Merle Kodo Boyd is Abbot Seat Holder for 2011.



"The Way is beyond language ..."

Maitreya that frees all suffering and discomfort. We are seeking a so-called better self, one we like more.

When the notion of ending our own suffering first arises, are we expecting something to happen to us or are we expecting to do something? Are we really expecting to face the aspects of ourselves that we dislike and reject? Or are we expecting the teacher, teachings, and zazen to magically dissolve them? What work are we expecting to

(Continued on page 2)

INSIDE

- 3 [Sitting With Gaining Mind by Sensei Gary Koan Janka](#)
- 5 [When I Grow Up, I Want To Be ... A Priest? by Deb Faith-Mind Thoresen](#)
- 7 [Programs](#)
- 10 [Day of Dana](#)
- 10 [Rites of Passage](#)
- 11 [Sangha Appreciation](#)
- 12 [Save the Date!](#)

do ourselves? What we can count on is that anger, sadness, and grief will come. They will not be dissolved by the words of another. They will not be dissolved by our wishing them away. It is hard, isn't it, not to wish for an absence of hurt and discomfort?

We must sit zazen and practice with the work of daily life for a while before we get a glimpse of this new definition of perfection: things as they are. For so long, we have had no intention of judging ourselves by such a standard—ourselves as we are. As we come to this different meaning, we come to see that ending suffering both does and does not mean what we thought.

“We come to see that ending suffering both does and does not mean what we thought.”

It does not mean thinking, planning, manipulating, and controlling so wisely that bad things never happen to us. It does mean seeing clearly what is happening, accepting completely the truth of this moment, and responding fully to the needs and demands of the circumstance of the moment. No gap.

We have learned a particular way of being in the world, dodging and muting its unexpected slings and arrows. Conditioning is strong. We have learned to direct our attention and energy toward our pleasure and comfort. Turning toward the hurtful moments of our life seems at first counter-intuitive, and yet when hurtful moments occur, this is exactly what we are being asked to do. This is our obedience to that One. We bend into the sharp and hurtful places although our first instinct is to get as far away from the hurts of life as possible. We obey and serve the reality of our life.

In our daily life, the word “servant” rarely evokes indifference or impartiality. It derives from the Latin *servus* and means slave, one who serves others, one who is of use. Most of us have strong associations with the word servant. We prefer to be the more fortunate rather than the less fortunate. In some situations, we prefer to be the one serving, giving, or helping rather than the one served or helped. In other situations, we prefer to be the one receiving the service, rather than the servant. How do we come to these preferences? What does it mean to be a servant? What does it mean to be a servant of “that one?”

In his teisho on the koan, Master Shibayama says that Shakyamuni and Maitreya are but “lowly servants,” “humble footmen” to this One. What is the internal shift that allows us to experience this? Is it trust, humility, surrender? Is it simply realization of things as they are?

This is not a wimpy, passive stand we are being asked to take. It demands piercing inquiry into the conditioning and nature of our being in the world. It demands that we no longer have moments of being on automatic pilot. It demands that we look at and even befriend those parts of ourselves that we have pushed into dark corners hoping they would never appear again. And, of course, they do, but we often blame someone else. We are being asked to stop this blaming of others and accept responsibility for all that happens in our lives. All and one are the same thing.

How do we carry out this practice of observation, inquiry, and response. We can begin with questions about practice, its forms and teachings. To what or to whom do we offer incense? To what or to whom do we bow? On what or on whom do we rely? It is the Bodhisattva Vow to liberate all others before liberating ourselves. These are the vows and actions of a servant. Who is the servant? Who is served? What is the serving action?

We can begin with questions about the everyday realities of our daily life. How is it that desire and hurt arise in our life? What forms and circumstances do they take? What is our reaction? Who else does it affect? How responsible do we feel for the way that our reactions touch others? How vulnerable do we feel to the karma of reactions that touch others? Do we expect to feel the effects of our actions? Do we expect to get away with reactions that hurt others? Do we expect to be apart from the One?

This kind of inquiry is a practice of both spiritual and practical nature. We often think of those two as different, especially early in practice. Often, “spiritual” has come to suggest some kind of feeling of being serene and at ease in the world, at least for that moment. “Practical” is more active and involves taking care of ordinary, everyday tasks. “Practical” is tending to one everyday reality after another because physical necessity demands it – going to work, taking care of a living space, meeting the needs of dependent children. “Practical” makes us the servant of our human life. We do what is necessary to sustain it. What does our so-called “spiritual” life demand of us? Are these demands the same or different?

“Even Shakyamuni and Maitreya are servants of that one. Just tell me, who is that one?”

(Continued on page 4)

Sitting With Gaining Mind

By Sensei Gary Koan Janka

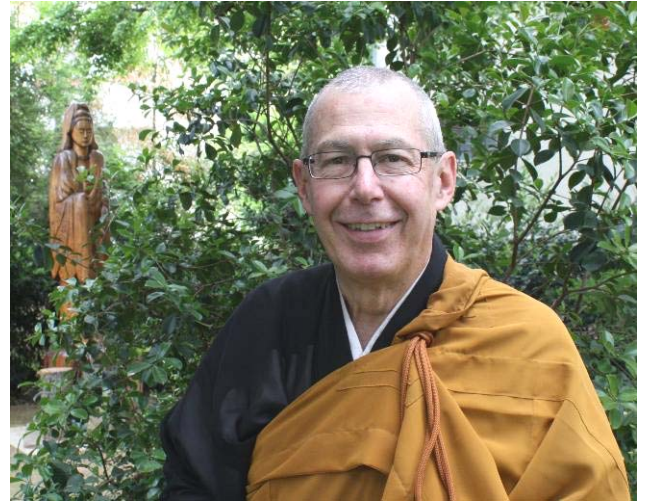
On a recent Tuesday evening, I was driving back to the Zen Center, southbound on the 101 freeway. Somewhere around the Topanga Canyon exit, I was looking at the cars moving around me and I entered into a kind of clear space, one of those moments in which we see things more clearly than usual. Especially, I became very aware of a nice looking car passing on my right – a two-door Lexus, I think. It looked as though it had undergone a bit of customizing, as the normal letters and plaques were missing. It was black in color and sounded really hot. One lane further to the right, a silver Nissan was moving ahead of the Lexus and me. The windows were down and I could feel the vibrations from the heavy beat of large bass speakers. On my left, in a third car, a female passenger was applying makeup, looking intently into the mirror on the back of the sun visor. I can still see that situation clearly in my mind's eye.

I'm not much into cars these days; I'm very happy with my Ranger pickup truck. But what I realized and felt in that moment was that all of those people moving around me were, in some way, trying to be happy. For one, it was a nice car and, perhaps, the admiring looks of others. For another, it was a cool (and attention getting) sound system. For another, it was looking attractive. What came up for me in that moment was the Buddha's teaching that "no conditioned thing* can bring happiness." So why are we always trying to get something? All of these things are means to what end?

A mile or two down the road, I also reflected that we often approach practice the same way. We go into it trying or hoping to get something. It may be peace of mind, it may be less stress, we may want to like ourselves more, we may be looking for an end to the pain we are feeling. I suppose there are as many things to seek as there are forms of suffering, probably more. We call this "gaining mind." And from the teachings of the Buddha, and from our own experience, we know this can be a trap.

It is worth taking a look to see what we are doing in our practice. When we sit, are we trying to change ourselves? Are we trying to gain something? My experience

Sensei Gary Koan Janka received Dharma transmission from Roshi Egyoku Nakao in 2010. He is the Center's Resident Steward.



Sensei Gary Koan Janka

is that the answer usually is, "Yes." It may be any of the things mentioned above and a host of others. In many ways, pain and suffering are good as they may lead us to spiritual practice, but once we get there, do we keep on trying to gain something? On the one hand, there is nothing to gain for we already have it all, and, on the other, there is enlightenment, freedom. What is this "nothing," and what is it to be awake?

The point I want to make is that when we sit, we should do so without expectation or any sense of gaining something. When we sit, just sit. The sense of gaining can be very subtle. Perhaps we are trying to get the answer to our koan, or trying to feel calm, or trying to recapture the wonderfully clear moment we had the last time we sat, or trying to count out breath "right." As soon as we set up something to be gained, we are stuck in duality. As Master Sengcan says in the Verses of the Faith Mind, "even to be attached to the idea of enlightenment is to go astray."

Try an experiment the next time you are sitting in the zendo. Just sit there and look to see what you are trying to gain. For what reason are you sitting? Let's face it, zazen can be a difficult and uncomfortable thing to do. Why would anyone do it if not to gain something? This is not about good or bad, right or wrong. It's simply becoming clear about what is driving us. What's true for us? If you're going to let go of it, you have to know what it is. Remember, the beginning point of any shift is always awareness: awareness, awareness, awareness! Whatever it is we're after, it is simply a form of desire, and we know, it

(Continued on page 4)

is the desire, not the lack of something, that creates the problem.

So how do we not get caught in the gaining mind? First, the word “how” is problematic in that it implies a method, but there is no method; there is just doing. When I open my hand, it doesn’t take any thought or skill or particular process. I just open my hand. Letting go is like that. As soon as I am aware of trying to gain something, I let it go and return to my practice. As long as there is something we are trying to gain, we are in opposition to it.

“Zazen can be a difficult and uncomfortable thing to do. Why would anyone do it if not to gain something?”

This also requires that we practice a radical, unconditional acceptance of what is right now. The human condition seems to dictate that we are always fighting reality, wanting things to be otherwise. I want things I don’t have and don’t want the things I do. This doesn’t mean we can’t try to change our conditions or accomplish something, but it does mean that we give up the struggle and surrender to the fact of this moment.

Simple? Yes, it is. Easy? Not necessarily. The important thing is to be aware and to keep letting go. Only then can we be free. Let’s use this Ango period to clarify what we are doing on the cushion.

* By “conditioned,” the Buddha meant anything that arises from causes and conditions, which is all forms, the 10,000 things. What is changeless and exists before causes and conditions? It’s the same as asking, “What is your original face?” ■



Sensei Kodo offers encouraging words during the 2011 Practice Period Entering Ceremony.

On my very first visit to a formal zendo, I heard the Sangha chant the text below. I had been sitting zazen alone according to the instructions in a book. I knew nothing about practice, but recognized that this verse completely expressed the cause of my beginning to sit. It is called “On Zen” and is attributed to Daio Kokushi, a master of ninth century Japan.

There is a reality even prior to heaven and earth:
Indeed, it has no form, much less a name;
Eyes fail to see it; It has no voice for ears to detect;
To call it Mind or Buddha violates its nature,
For it then becomes like a visionary flower in the air;
It is not Mind, nor Buddha;
Absolutely quiet, and yet illuminating in a mysterious way,
It allows itself to be perceived only by the clear-eyed.
It is Dharma truly beyond form and sound;
It is Tao having nothing to do with words.
Wishing to entice the blind,
The Buddha has playfully let words escape his golden mouth;
Heaven and earth are ever since filled with entangling briars.
O my good worthy friends gathered here,
If you desire to listen to the thunderous voice of the Dharma,
Exhaust your words, empty your thoughts,
For then you may come to recognize this One Essence.
Says Hui the Brother, “The Buddha’s Dharma
Is not to be given up to mere human sentiments.”

“Who is that one?” It is said that as soon as Hoen asked the question, another Master immediately replied, “Kochosan and Kokurishi.” This would be like one of us immediately saying, “John and Mary,” or whatever the most popular names are these days. This would be like one of us immediately replying with the names of ordinary folks. Of course your name would fit right in there, but for it to be true, you would have to know that this is so. You would have know with certainty that this is so.

The “Verses of the Faith Mind” end this way:

One thing, all things;
move among and intermingle, without distinction.
To live in this realization
is to be without anxiety about non-perfection.
To live in this faith is the road to nonduality,
because the nondual is one with the trusting mind.
Words! The Way is beyond language,
for in it there is no yesterday, no tomorrow, no today.
■

When I Grow Up, I Want To Be ... A Priest?

By Deb Faith-Mind Thoresen

I don't see myself as a spiritual person. It's all words, semantics, and it confuses me. So I started looking into what religion is, and how far back it goes. Something I found said it goes back 50,000 years, and it hones into the questions of what my life is, and what this life is, and my place in it. Some speculation is that the first religions arose in response to human fear; they were created to give people a feeling of security in an insecure world, and a feeling of control over an environment where there was little control. And the other purpose was to help make sense of the questions people confronted in their day-to-day lives: What controls the seasonal cycles in nature? What controls the environment? Why are there floods and other natural disasters? What system of morality is needed to promote the stability of the tribe? And above all, what happens to a person after they die?

These are questions that have been an important part of my life. One of the themes of my life was never feeling like I belonged, never feeling like I was part of it. Feeling separate. As a child, I grew up in Seattle, living on the water. I would sit on the beach with my dog, looking at this beautiful environment, and I would be crying. Because I didn't get it, I didn't get what I was doing here. This feeling of never quite belonging was a theme that carried through my teenage years. I always worried about what it was all about.

When I was seven, my brother was 13, and he began an Eastern practice of yoga and meditation, a spiritual journey. We didn't go to church in my family, so it was the only religious practice going on in my life. I saw my brother growing and developing. If you have been around people who have meditated for a long time, you see that they can develop a certain quality of movement and voice, and it was on that level that I started to understand and to crave something he had. But I wanted it quickly, I didn't want to go through all he had to go through.

When I was 16, my brother told me about a yoga teacher who was a professor at the University of Washing-

Among many other responsibilities she has resisted over the years, Faith-Mind is currently a priest and also the Membership Steward and Facilities and Grounds Steward for ZCLA. This article is adapted from a personal practice talk she gave in September 2011. The audio recordings of other personal practice talks can be found on the Members' side of our website, www.zcla.org.



Deb Faith-Mind Thoresen

ton (there weren't yoga studios at the time). His main practice was to do postures and hold a posture for five minutes. I would go home to my room and practice my yoga. One time, I was very fidgety – I could never sit still – but I was going to do it come hell or high water. At first, it was all fighting and tension, it was terrible. But eventually, I let go, and I disappeared. And then the timer went off, and when I got up, I was different. But I didn't stick with it.

In college, I was a terrible student, but I spent a lot of time scuba diving. I would lie at the bottom of the ocean and pretend I was meditating. In the ocean, there is a surge, and I would just become the surge. Or I would hang weightless and become the water and the breath. People would ask me what I was doing, and I would say I was meditating. It was something I craved and wanted to do, but I didn't actually do it. I didn't know about places to meditate, and I didn't seek out places like that.

After college, I went to work for United Airlines, because I didn't know what I wanted to do when I grew up, and working as a flight attendant was something you could do until you figured that out. Now it's forty years later, and I'm still there.

I had always said I wanted to learn to meditate, but I never did it. In my late 20s, I started therapy. Eventually,
(Continued on page 6)

WHEN I GROW UP ... *(Continued from page 5)*

my therapist said, "You need to look into a spiritual practice." My response was, "I'm not spiritual, don't push that on me." We went around and around over that, and she finally gave up. But she said, "What about just meditating?" So I agreed, and then went to visit different places that offered meditation. First, I went to try TM, but it didn't feel right for me. So I checked that off, and then I checked something else off.

Then I showed up at the Zen Center. There were 100 people here in black robes, and it was terrifying. But I took ZP1, or whatever it was called at the time, then took ZP2, then took ZP3. During this time, I bought Shunryu Suzuki's "Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind." And as I was sitting on the beach in Waikiki during a layover, reading this book, I felt myself sitting up. At the end, I closed the book and I had changed, something had changed.

When I came back, things had shifted at the Center, so I started sitting at Mountain Center. They only did Ango summers at the time, so I would live up there during the summers, and come down and do my flying, then come back. Maezumi Roshi was in and out, and the only time they had a resident teacher was during sesshin. So all I did was just sit. And work, you worked a lot. I didn't work with a teacher until one sesshin, which was with Daido Looi Roshi. I saw that there was something possible in that. But then I left and I didn't practice for 11 years.

I didn't really leave, I just didn't go back. I felt I left the practice, but it didn't leave me, it just kept churning around inside. In this time, a lot of things changed in my life. I ended a relationship and bought a house. I worked on this house on my own a lot. Before I had left, Maezumi Roshi had said I had a beautiful work practice. Now, I am not sure that's what he said, but it's what I heard. So I worked on the house, and I had a cassette player and headphones, and as I worked, I had Joko Beck, Sharon Salzberg, Pema Chodron in my ears.

One day in 1995, Annette and I were in Cambria, and as I was out exploring among the tide pools, Annette called me in. She was reading the paper, and she said to me, "Debbie, Maezumi Roshi died." I bent over in pain. It was the oddest thing. I hadn't seen this man in four or five years, but I felt like I had been stabbed. I felt I had lost a real opportunity.

Years later, in 1999, Annette was reading the newspaper again, and she called me over and said, "Look at this, a woman has taken over as abbot at the Zen Center of

Los Angeles." And I looked at that, and "hmmm..." Then I came back, and very, very slowly I stepped back into this practice, and now, here I am.

Why am I here? Why have I stayed? That is an incredible theme for me. During my second sesshin, I was asked if I could be the assistant tenzo. Sensei Ensho was the tenzo, and Karen was pregnant at the time. I had never done any of this – never cooked for a sesshin, never cooked vegetarian. I said, "Ensho, I am not going to commit to doing this if Karen is going to be having her baby during sesshin." It was a ten-day retreat. He said, "No problem, no problem." I showed up on Friday, and Roshi greeted me and said, "Debbie, it's so exciting, we're having a baby!" And I said, "No, we're not, we are not having a baby." I said, "Wait a minute, what about me?" Roshi was walking up the driveway, and she turned and said, "Let me put it this way: whatever you cook, we have to eat. What about that?" And she turned around and left.

I stayed, and I honestly don't know why. That was not my thing. My thing was hiding, pushing away life, pushing away feelings, not wanting to experience things, not stepping forward like that. But I stayed. It was important for me to realize that I could stick it out. Not to analyze the why – I've never gotten to that. But it's really important to get that, what keeps me showing up.

One of my great themes has been my resistance. Whenever people would ask me to do anything, I would say "No," and then I would leave, stomp my feet, throw myself on the floor. The responses just come out. And eventually, I get over it and we move forward. The story I had about myself was that I was a runner and a quitter. Now, I have been with United for 40 years, and I was in a 15-year relationship, and now I am in a 25-year relationship, but somewhere in my mind, I had this idea I was a quitter. It is a very deep thing. I could just as easily be crying as laughing about it.

As my resistance slowly wore out, I began to explore a bit. Roshi had a priest exploration meeting. I had no interest. There was a big barrier in my mind – this is not you. But I was in dokusan, and she was telling me about this meeting, and I asked if I could attend as a witness. She said, "Well, I don't know." Eventually, she said it was okay. By then, of course, I didn't want to go, but I went anyway. So we did this priest exploration, and it broke that barrier, and it opened me, and I said, "I want to do that, I don't know why, but I want to do that." I had been a flight attendant for 40 years, and I finally figured out what I wanted to do when I grow up. It was very exciting, to get in touch with that.

(Continued on page 8)

Zen Programs at Great Dragon Mountain

Face-to-Face Meeting Schedule

When she is on campus, Sensei Kodo will offer Face-to-Face meetings for members Wednesday evening, Friday dawn, and Saturday and Sunday mornings during scheduled zazen. Members of the Teachers Circle will offer Face-to-Face meetings on Saturday and Sunday mornings for members and non-members. Their specific schedules will be posted in the weekly Programflash.

Fall 2011 Practice Period

Fall Practice Period. October 1 to December 31.

The theme of the Practice Period is One Body: Realizing, Manifesting, and Serving.

Practice Period Commitment Agreements. It is not too late to make a practice commitment for the Practice Period! The practice period commitment form is available on the web site or in the Sangha House lounge.

On **Sunday, November 6, at 11:00 a.m.**, Sensei Gary Koan Janka will lead a conversation about practice to check in on how the practice period is going for people and where people can share and receive the support of the Sangha.

Practice Period Sangha Meals. During the practice period, supper is available on Thursday evenings at 6:15 p.m.; on Saturday and Sunday mornings, a buffet breakfast (with the first ten minutes in silence) is available at 7:00 a.m. All members are welcome. There is no fee for meals, but **please sign up in advance** so the kitchen has a head count. **We also need volunteer cooks** for these Sangha meals, so please consider extending yourself in this way! ☎

Special Event

Bodhi Day Service, Sunday, December 11, 8:30 a.m.

We will have a service commemorating the enlightenment of the Buddha Siddhartha Gautama under the Bodhi Tree on the Sunday morning after Rohatsu sesshin concludes. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend this annual observance.

Zazen Programs

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

☎ – Please register in advance on the sign-up sheet in the Sangha House through info@zcla.org.

* – Zendo remains open for non-participants.

Rohatsu Sesshin.* Friday, December 2, 6:00 p.m. (supper and registration); 7:30 p.m. (sesshin begins) to Saturday, December 10, 9:00 p.m.

Led by Sensei Kodo. “Sesshin” means “to collect one’s heart-mind.” This sesshin commemorates the Buddha’s enlightenment, traditionally designated as having occurred on Rohatsu (“eighth day, twelfth month”). Sesshin is highly recommended for deepening one’s practice. The schedule includes zazen, chanting, Face-to-Face meetings with Sensei Kodo, Dharma talks, work, rest, and three vegetarian oryoki meals daily. Limited overnight accommodations available. Fee: \$320 practicing members, \$600 nonmembers. Housing fees additional. Open to both full- or part-time participation. Please contact Sesshin for more details and to register. ☎

End-Of-Year Sesshin.* Monday, December 26, 6:00 p.m. (supper and registration); 7:30 p.m. (sesshin begins) to Saturday, December 31, afternoon.

Led by Sensei Kodo. This relaxed year-end sitting retreat offers time for us to reflect and refresh ourselves for the New Year, and an opportunity to enjoy your creative and meditative mind. Please note the schedule for December 31 below and check the website for the sesshin schedule. Fee: \$200 practicing members; \$375 for nonmembers. Open to both full- or part-time participation. Please contact Sesshin for more details and to register. **Due to the holiday schedule, the last day to register is December 19.** ☎

Precept Practice

A **Day of Reflection** on the Zen Bodhisattva Precepts will take place on **Saturday, December 17, from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** Led by Carla Flowing-Mountain Schmitt on Precept #7, Not Elevating Myself and Blaming Others. Open to everyone.

(Continued on page 8)

Atonement Ceremony. Thursday, December 1, 7:30 p.m. During this ceremony of Renewing our Vows and Precepts, we each have an opportunity to bear witness to our conduct in thoughts, words, and actions. Everyone is welcome to participate. Those who have received the Precepts are asked to attend on a regular basis. Sensei Koan will officiate.

Ceremony of Receiving the Precepts. Thursday, December 15, 7:30 p.m. Yvonne Beatty will receive the Precepts (*jukai*) from Preceptor Sensei Kodo. Everyone is encouraged to support and witness this important Sangha rite of passage.

Dharma Training Fund

Through the generosity of the Sangha, the **Dharma Training Fund** is available to supplement program fees. No serious practitioner is ever turned away for lack of funds. If you wish to take part in a particular program, please do not let financial difficulties keep you from attending. Inquire with Senshin for an application. Do not miss any opportunity to practice the Dharma!

Classes and Workshops

Introductory Zen Practice Classes. Our introductory Zen practice program includes beginning meditation instruction (ZP 1 and ZP 2, offered weekly) as well as a full day of practice at ZCLA (ZP 3, offered monthly). For information on times and dates for these programs, see the “beginners” section of our website, at www.zcla.org.

Koans Now. Saturday, November 5, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Led by Sensei Ryodo. Join Sensei Ryodo in this second of two lively sessions exploring the koans we use at ZCLA. Where did they come from? How do we work with them? Why? Fee: \$20.

Sangha Forum. Sunday, November 6, 1:30-4:00 p.m. Join us for our final Sangha-wide gathering of the year, where we have an opportunity to hear what is going on at the Center, offer feedback, hear and receive the feedback of others, and learn of the work of the many Circles that support the Center’s functioning.

Guest Speaker: Claude AnShin Thomas, Sunday, December 18, 11:00 a.m. Join us as we welcome back Claude AnShin Thomas, Zen priest, founder of the Zalt-ho Foundation and author of *At Hell’s Gate: A Soldier’s Journey from War to Peace*. ■

Schedule for December 31

Please join us for some or all of these events to mark the end of 2011, the leave-taking of Sensei Kodo and the return of Roshi Egyoku.

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| 3:00 p.m. | Leave-taking ceremony for Sensei Kodo and Re-entering ceremony for Roshi Egyoku (Zendo) |
| 3:20 p.m. | Sangha Year-End Council and opportunity to appreciate Sensei Kodo’s service as Abbot Seat Holder for 2011 (Dharma Hall) |
| 5:00 p.m. | Sangha Members’ Annual Memorial Service followed by informal supper (Buddha Hall) |
| 7:30 p.m. | Atonement & Fire Ceremony |
| 9:00 p.m. | Ring of 108 Bells |
| 9:20 p.m. | Revolving the Sutra Service followed by a celebratory meal for the New Year 2012! |

WHEN I GROW UP... (Continued from page 6)

At the end of the exploration process, I made an appointment to talk to Roshi. As I left for the meeting, Annette asked where I was going. I told her, “I’m going to ask Roshi if I can be a priest with her.” I hadn’t talked to Annette about this. I was teary. I said, “I’m sorry, I have to.” And she said, “You tell Roshi, you do not have my support on this one.” And I did tell Roshi, and she laughed, because she knows Annette.

Driving to the meeting, I asked myself, “What if she says no?” And I was so prepared for the “no” that when she said “yes,” I blurted out, “What about all the things I have to do?” She said, “You’ve done enough of that, let’s talk about sewing your okesa.” So I began sewing. And that was one of the deepest practice I’ve had. It was the culmination of many years of my life looking for what I wanted to do when I grew up.

An important part of this practice for me involved the death of my mother, and being there fully and present for that experience. Had I not taken this journey, with all of you, I couldn’t have done that. This practice is about us, and about being here, and about this journey that each of us, independently, is doing, and that we are also all doing together. It is amazing that we have this opportunity to practice together. May we be upright together, and continue on the journey together! ■



2011 Fall Practice Period Participants



We acknowledge the following eighty-six practitioners who have made formal practice commitments for the Fall Practice Period.

Thank you to Sensei Kodo, leader of the Practice Period, and to Senseis Ryodo, Daishin, Shingetsu, and Koan. And thank you for everyone's practice and support of one another across the miles.

Alan Taigen Turton
Andrew Bodhi-Heart Halladay
Andy Mugen Handler
Betsy Enduring-Vow Brown
Bob Gido Fisher
Bonnie Myosen Nadzam
Brandon Clark
Burt Wetanson
Carla Flowing-Mountain Schmitt
Carmen Chisho Izzo (in Japan)
Charles Duran
Chris Daian Fields
Chris Gose
Concetta Getsuren Alfano (Ocean Moon/ZCLA)
Conrad Butsugen Romo
Dan Hegarty
Darla Myoho Fjeld
David Hilton
David Kisen Thompson (Valley Sangha/ZCLA)
David Sacks (Valley Sangha/ZCLA)
Deb Faith-Mind Thoresen
Dewayne Gojitsu Snodgrass
Diane Enju Katz
Diane True-Joy Fazio
Eisho Moss (Lincroft)
Elaine Chikai Held (Lincroft)
Elaine Ottlinghaus (Lincroft)
Ellen Reigen Ledley
Gary Belton
Gary Koan Janka, Sensei
Gemma Cubero
Geoff O'Quest (San Luis Obispo/ZCLA)
George Mukei Horner
Jamie Jian Nappi (Lincroft)
Jane Chen
Jeff LaCoss (Westchester/ZCLA)
Jim Hanson
Joel Mitsujo Latimer
John Daishin Buksbazen, Sensei (Ocean Moon/ZCLA)
John Heart-Mirror Trotter
John Plum-Hermit Swanger
Jolene Beiser
Jonathan Levy (Westchester/ZCLA)

Julia Seirin Norstrand
Katherine Senshin Griffith
Kathi Novak (Lincroft)
Kathleen Pure-Heart Rork (Valley Sangha)
Kathy Myoan Solomon
Kipp Ryodo Hawley, Sensei (Westchester/ZCLA)
Lee Nedler (Valley Sangha)
Lone-Pine Lischinsmith (Lincroft)
Lorraine Gessho Kumpf
Louise Myotai Dasaro (Lincroft)
Lynda Jikai Golan
Mark Shogen Bloodgood (San Luis Obispo/ZCLA)
Max Andes (Ocean Moon/ZCLA)
Merle Kodo Boyd, Sensei
Michael Jishin Fritzen (Valley Sangha/ZCLA)
Mike Solitary-Pine Ford
Myokai Snodgrass
Nelida Koen Cartolin
Nem Etsugen Bajra
Nina Harake
Nina Reiju Wasserman
Pam Smith
Patricia Shingetsu Guzy, Sensei (Valley Sangha/ZCLA)
Patti Muso Giggans
Paul Ritchie (Lincroft)
Penelope Luminous-Heart Thompson
Peter Nyodo Ott (Lincroft)
Reeb Kaizen Venners
Richard Schulhof (Valley Sangha)
Roberta Brehm
Rosa Ando Martinez
Susanna Knittel
Susan Tritt (Ocean Moon Sangha/ZCLA)
Tara Jihō Sterling
Tina Jitsujo Gauthier
Tom Dharma-Joy Reichert
Tom Pine-Ocean Cleary
Tom Walukonis (Lincroft)
Tom Yudo Burger
Tsvetana Yvanova (Valley Sangha)
Ty Jotai Webb
Yoko Bajra
Z Zeller

Day of Dana at ZCLA

Friday, November 18

7:00 p.m. Sangha Supper
7:30 to 9:00 p.m. Assembly of Food Bags

Sunday, November 20

8:30 a.m. Gate of Sweet Nectar Ceremony
9:00 a.m. Delivery of Food Bags

It's the time to give thanks by giving to our neighbors in need. For the 26th time, ZCLA repeats its annual tradition of offering bags of food and supplies for families-in-need in our neighborhood.

These food bags are made possible through your dana. To provide for 25 local families, we need to receive contributions of at least \$1,000 for food purchases. The bags will be delivered through St. Mary's Church, with whom we have a long relationship in community support. **Please give generously!** We all know that every little bit counts in these tough economic times. Make your check payable to ZCLA, marked "Dana Baskets." **Every dollar donated to the Day of Dana is used to purchase food and supplies; we spend exactly what we receive.**

The drive will culminate on Friday, November 20, with a special dinner, after which we will package items and assemble the bags. Please plan to join the One Body in this celebration of good works, good food, and good cheer.

If you would like to help in one of the myriad ways we need assistance before November 18, , please contact Senshin at programsteward@zcla.org. ■



Assembling the Dana Baskets.



Dana Baskets assembled: many hands and eyes working together.



Sangha Rites of Passage

NEW RESIDENTS ENTERING CEREMONY

October 29, 2011

Gemma Cubero
Nina Harake
David Hilton

NEW MEMBERS ENTERING CEREMONY

October 29, 2011

Jeff Lotus Peace Albrizze
Terry Medeiros
Kristi Twilley

SHARED STEWARDSHIP INSTALLATION

Angulimala Prison Circle Steward
DeWayne Gojitsu Snodgrass

Development Circle Design Team
Tom Yudo Burger
Lynda Jikai Golan
George Mukei Horner

SHARED STEWARDSHIP LEAVE-TAKING

Angulimala Prison Circle Steward
Sensei Gary Koan Janka

Your Gifts are Received with a Heartfelt "Thank You!"

Please contact Dharma-Joy (dharma-joy@zcla.org) if you know of bodhisattvas to appreciate. Have we missed anyone?

To the volunteer chanters who chanted the Enmei Jukku Kannon Gyo as part of two recent performances by the San Francisco Ballet in Orange County: **Tom Dharma-Joy Reichert, Deb Faith-Mind Thoresen, Diane True-Joy Katz, Katherin Senshin Griffith, Andy Mugen Handler, Tom Pine-Ocean Cleary, Tara Jiho Sterling, Lorraine Gessho Kumpf, and Roberta Brehm;**

All those who participated in the Gate of Sweet Nectar service and Heart Sutra chanting at the Los Angeles Day of the Dead event: **Sensei Merle Kodo Boyd, Sensei Gary Koan Janka, Rosa Ando Martinez, Carla Flowing-Mountain Schmitt, Gessho, Jorge Issan Infante, Reeb Kaizen Venners, Neli Koen Cartolin, George Mukei Horner, Darla Myoho Fjeld, Senshin, Susanna Knittel, Mark Shogen Bloodgood, Lynda Jikai Golan, Conrad Butsugen Romo, and Tammy Abell.** Thanks also to **John Plum-Hermit Swanger, Faith-Mind and Tom Yudo Burger** for help in the event preparation;

Sensei Koan for organizing the recent Non-violent Communication workshop;

Dharma-Joy and Ty Jotai Webb for their tenzo efforts during the autumn sesshin;

Our parking coordinator and assistants: **Tina Jitsujo Gauthier, Jolene Beiser, Jane Chen, Chris Shaw, Jiho, Mugen, Betsy Enduring Vow Brown, Koen, and Nina Reiju Wasserman;**

Our cooks and snack coordinators, including for our An-go meals on Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays: **Ando, Hope Lam, Sensei Koan, Miguel Rojas, Yoko Bajra, Nem Bajra, Reiju, Lois Craig, DeWayne Gojitsu Snodgrass, Nancy Ward, Jikai, Yudo, Senshin, Faith-Mind, Carla, Kaizen, Mugen, Enduring-Vow, Koen, Penelope Luminous-Heart Thompson, and Jitsujo;**

Sensei Kipp Ryodo Hawley for years of dana supporting the ZCLA website;

Yudo, Jotai, Faith-Mind and Armando for their work cleaning and organizing the Sangha House basement;

The Mandala Circle for its continued work supporting the Abbot Seat Holder in 2011;

The kitchen cleaners from the October fushinzamu:

Miguel Rojas, Jonathan Levy, Lois Craig, Ellen Reigen Ledley, Susanna Knittel, John Heart-Mirror Trotter, Enduring-Vow, Koen, Patti Muso Giggans, Sensei Kodo, Gary Belton, Conrad Butsugen Romo, and Yvonne Beatty;

Yudo for buying and installing blinds in the Sangha

House lounge;

Nilotpala gardeners **Jikai, Heart-Mirror, Flowing-Mountain** and **Enduring-Vow** for their beautiful transformation of the garden;

Sensei Ryodo for leading the Koans Now classes;

Faith-Mind for overseeing work on the resident apartments and common buildings;

The **37+ members** from ZCLA, Lincroft Sangha, San Luis Obispo Sitting Group and the Pasadena Sitting Group who hand-copied 50+ Heart Sutras that we sent to the "10,000 Shakyo for Japan / Tohoku Earthquake Memorial Sutra Mound" project;

Tom Pine-Ocean Cleary for recording the Thursday night talks, and **Mugen, Kaizen, Heart-Mirror, Don Erway, Enduring-Vow, Senshin** and **Dharma-Joy** for recording other talks.

Burt for his tireless efforts editing and proofing the *Water Wheel* under short deadlines;

Mukei and Dharma-Joy for leading recent Dharma Chats, and **Butsugen** for coordinating the Dharma Chat program year after year; and

Jikai, Yudo and **Mukei** for their design assistance to the Development Circle, and to Development Circle members **Muso, Enduring-Vow** and **Plum-Hermit** for their dedicated efforts.

Thank you!!! ■

ZCLA Affiliated Sanghas & Sitting Groups*

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

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

The Monday Night Meditation Group (Pasadena, CA)
coordinated by Betty Jiei Cole

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

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

The Valley Sangha (Woodland Hills, CA)
led by Sensei Patricia Shingetsu Guzy

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

Contact us at info@zcla.org for information.

* Affiliated groups are led by Dharma Successors of Roshi Egyoku or coordinated by practitioners actively practicing at ZCLA with a teacher. Those interested in leading a ZCLA-affiliated sitting group may apply to the Teachers Circle.

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

Our mission is to know the Self, maintain the precepts, and serve others. We provide the teaching, training, and transmission of Zen Buddhism. **Our vision** is an enlightened world free of suffering, in which all beings live in harmony, everyone has enough, deep wisdom is realized, and compassion flows unhindered. **Our core values** are available upon request or on our Web site, www.zcla.org.

Founding Abbot: Taizan Maezumi Roshi
Abbot 1995-1999: Roshi Bernard Glassman
Abbot: Roshi Wendy Egyoku Nakao
Abbot Seat-Holder: Sensei Merle Kodo Boyd
Staff: Mary Rios, Business Manager; Katherine Senshin Griffith, Program Steward; Tom Yudo Burger, Guest Steward; Deb Faith-Mind Thorsen, Grounds & Membership Steward; John Plum-Hermit Swanger, Development Steward.
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923 South Normandie Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90006-1301

Address Correction Requested

SAVE THE DATE!

January 22, 2012

9:00 a.m. Leave-taking ceremony for Sensei Kipp Ryodo Hawley, followed by tea and cookies

11:00 a.m. New Year's Visit to Evergreen Cemetery

Please be sure to mark your calendars for these two important events occurring on the same day in January! At 9:00 a.m., we will have a leave-taking ceremony for Sensei Ryodo, who leaves his teaching and regular practice roles at ZCLA after thirty-two years. Please join us for this important Sangha event, after which we will have an informal gathering to express our appreciation.

Later that morning, we travel to Evergreen Cemetery in East Los Angeles for our annual New Year's services, including a service at the gravesite of Nyogen Senzaki Roshi, an early Zen pioneer in America.

