



OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2020

TEN THOUSAND RIPPLES FOLLOWING A SINGLE WAVE

The following is a chapter from Kwong-roshi's forthcoming book MIND SKY.

One of the most beautiful chapters in the *Shobogenzo*, “*Kai-in-Zanmai*,” is translated as “Samadhi, the State Like the Sea.” These are words of the Buddha, which appear frequently in the Flower Ornament Sutra and the Lotus Sutra—the sea being a frequent metaphor for the mind. In the literal translation of *Kai-in Zanmai*, *Kai* is the great sea, *In* means seal, and *Zanmai* is samadhi. In this fascicle, Dogen wrote,

“Because of not speaking of the appearance of self, my self is in the middle of the sea. The surface before me is eternal preaching, as ten thousand ripples following a single wave, and the surface behind me is the *Lotus Sutra*, like a single wave following ten thousand ripples.”

The phrase *my self is in the middle of the sea* means that you are in the center of the universe, but not in an egotistical sense. Since you are in the center, you are relating to everything, before and behind and everywhere. Everything.

The surface before me is eternal preaching as ten thousand ripples following a single wave.

Before me is zenmen. Here, *Zen* means “in front” and *men* means face or surface. *Zenmen* means the actual scene before one’s eyes. At the same time, it suggests the pivotal instant even *before* the moment of the present. I’m not talking about present moment. I’m talking about instant *before* the moment of the present. [BAM! strikes lectern]

This *before me* is very important. It means everything you behold is the universe. Actually, this is your realization of truth: whatever the eyes see is *it*. Nothing is hidden from you. Anything in front of you is seen, and that object is no longer an object. The idea of object is not there. And then—it is there again but perceived in a different way. And you return to yourself. Through that intimacy you see everything around you, as nothing is hidden—because you will have given up your ingrained habits of greed, anger, and ignorance.

Realization is referred to as a Great Death, but it’s that old-habit part of you that has to die. You have to know how to die while you are alive. Don’t wait until you’re dying. Please learn how to die while you’re living! So how do you learn how to die? Give up certain things. You know when you’re clinging to something? Just let it go. Don’t hold on so tight.

So *zenmen* means—the instant before the moment of the present. [BAM! strikes lectern] We’re not talking about present moment. We’re talking about the instant *before* the moment of the present. Zen is a really subtle, refined practice. If you seek Zen you must be refined yourself. You have it. You already have it. When you see something beautiful, you must be beautiful yourself before you see it. Isn’t it true?

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GATA BOATMAN MONK
for a THOUSAND FEET MY LINE
HANGS STRAIGHT DOWN.
the SLIGHTEST WAVE ^{is} FOLLOWED
by TEN THOUSAND RIPPLES.
the NIGHT is QUIET
the WATER is BITING.
MY BOAT ^{is} WITH A
VACANT CARE of
MOONLIGHT, MASTER
I RETURN! ^{ON SUITING}
SHARING with YOU this ACTUALIZED POEM
for THIS AUSPICIOUS YEAR
of the ROOSTER
Nine BOWS - JAKUSHO

Verse from Chuanzi DeCheng – Boatman Monk by Jakusho Kwong-roshi

Through zazen practice you'll find intimacy with the relative and the absolute. There is no dichotomy, no contradiction. It's all one thing. This intimacy with all things becomes manifest. Isn't that wonderful?

Chinese Zen Master Chuanzi DeCheng, a poet born four hundred years before Dogen, wrote a poem about the *Ten Thousand Ripples*:

For a thousand feet my line hangs straight down.
The slightest wave is followed by ten thousand ripples.
The night is quiet,
the water cold,
the fish not biting.
My boat filled with a vacant cargo of moonlight,
I - Return.....

The fisherman notices the night is quiet. It's just like being in this zendo: it is quiet, and there's nowhere to go. The fish are not biting—but it's OK, because he realizes that though his boat has no fish, it has a vacant cargo of moonlight. And with that he returns.

But in returning, where does he go? He goes home.

That vacant cargo of moonlight is the emptiness of true realization.

Returning to Dogen's fascicle: ten thousand ripples following one slight wave. Not a big crashing wave, just one very small one. Many things happen very subtly this way. If we're in a hurry, we may overlook ten thousand things—ten thousand ripples, ten thousand stars, ten thousand people—it can be anything. Dogen paraphrases the fisherman, saying, "Even though I have wound and cast a thousand feet or even ten thousand feet of fishing line, regrettably, the line just hangs straight down."

We go back to the surface before and surface behind—those waves, Dogen's waves and ripples—but now it's the instant before and the instant after, *zenmen* again. "Before" and "after" suggest momentary occurrences of reality, flashing. [BAM! strikes lectern] They're happening right in front of us.

In *Kai-in Zanmai*, Dogen tells a story about Zen Master Sozan Honjaku, discussing the Great Sea with his disciple:

Master Sozan is asked by a monk, 'I have heard it said in the teachings that the Great Sea does not accommodate dead bodies. What is meant by the Sea?' Sozan says, 'It includes myriad existence.'

The monk asks, 'Then how can it not accommodate dead bodies?'

Sozan says, 'Whatever has stopped breathing does not belong.'

The monk says, 'Given that the Sea includes myriad existence, how can what has stopped breathing not belong?'

Sozan says, 'Myriad existence, being beyond those ten virtues*, has stopped breathing.'

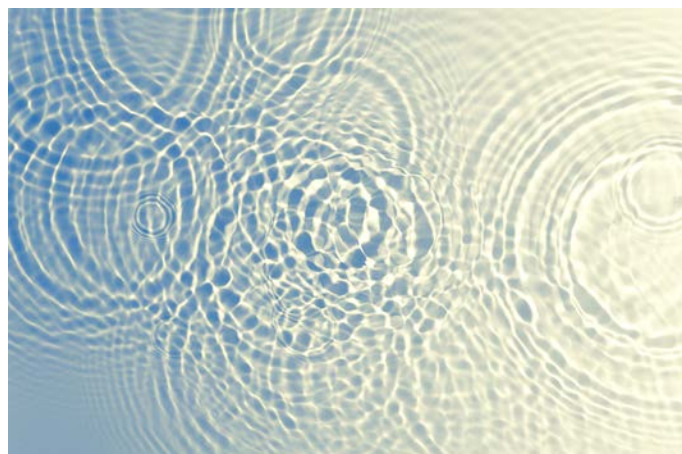
Dogen comments that "... such things are not the concern of Zen students. We recognize as sea not only that which is *not* the sea, we recognize as the sea that which is the sea. Even if we forcibly insist that this sea is the sea, we cannot call it 'the Great Sea' ..."

The sea is a metaphor; we are not talking literally about dead bodies, like corpses washed ashore. This non-accommodation of dead bodies is one of ten virtues traditionally ascribed to the sea. In this story of Sozan, the sea not accepting dead bodies suggests that there is nothing in this world which does *not* have life or meaning. That is why it's said this way. Everything in life has meaning. We must accept and appreciate the meaning in life.

*In the *Garland Sutra*, the ten virtues ascribed to the sea are analogous to the ten states of the Bodhisattva.

The Ten Virtues Assigned to the Great Sea:

It gets gradually deeper.
It does not accept dead bodies.
The name "Great Sea" cannot be given to lesser bodies of water.
It has a single taste.
It contains many treasures.
The depths are impenetrable.
It is wide, great, and immeasurable.
It contains many creatures with big bodies.
Its tide does not lose time.
It can accept all great rains without overflowing. ❖



SUMMER SHUSO INTERVIEW

WITH GOSIA 'MYOJU' SIERADZKA-IMHOFF

by Ed Genzen Cadman

This was your first experience as Ango Shuso. Did it give you a different perspective on anything?

Yes, it gave me a new perspective on myself, my relationship with my husband, my relationship with my teacher, my relationship with my Polish Sangha and American Sangha. But mostly it gave me a new perspective on everyday practice and what it means.

Let's begin with your relationship with Kwong-roshi. What changed there?

I used to be very attached to Roshi, but throughout this month I really had to grow up. I had to learn how to trust myself. I had to make my own decisions and take responsibility for them. For instance, in selecting the subject matter for my talks. Roshi was giving me a lot of guidelines. After each talk he was giving me notes. He was very supportive. He was giving me some criticism, too. I could see that I really wanted to please him, and at the same time, I had to take a risk and just show who I am regardless of wondering if I was going to please Roshi or not.

What was something that you really appreciated about the feedback from Roshi?

What I really appreciated was that Roshi set the example. He urged me to speak slowly, read slowly, and not rush anywhere. And that was really helpful! I realize that presenting my readings in the morning was also like zazen; that was also a practice. So I had to settle down, connect with my body, and remind myself that we are not in a rush. That even if we do not have much time, still, we are not in a rush. So that was something I really, really appreciated from Roshi's suggestions.

Did he give you any suggestions about form or how to appear on Zoom?

Those guidelines came from Nyoze. I received a lot of guidelines from Nyoze regarding the form. And guidelines from Kashin—about the altar, for instance. Both Kashin and Roshi made suggestions about the placement of the painting of Avalokiteśvara on my altar, an original painting from Nepal and a gift from a Dharma brother.

Can you tell us about any new perspectives in your relationship with your husband Erik Konpo during the weeks of Ango?

First of all, I don't think I would be able to do it without him. He understood what we were doing. He knew that he needs to help me to bring the spirit of Ango into our home. Another thing was that it was really wonderful to observe the change that my being Shuso introduces into our relationship. I was more compassionate with him! Because I was Shuso, I wasn't only his wife; I was his Wife-Shuso. That was really touching for me to see that I can be more compassionate with him, more forgiving. I was trying to be really respectful and gentle and think more about what I'm going to say to him and how to say it.



Were there any surprises?

Yes! The surprise was that I had to be the Shuso on Zoom! That was a big surprise... A big challenge as Shuso was staying calm with the internet connection—the glitches, being logged out, having different connection speeds—yes, that was really challenging. I did not expect that. For example, Roshi did not appear at one of my talks because of a wi-fi problem on Sonoma Mountain. We never knew what was gonna happen. And a surprise was that we were supposed to have the Mondo ceremony in the Warsaw Zendo, and it turned out that Erik and I had to be put in quarantine a day before. So, we had to stay home and bring the ceremony into our apartment.

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The theme you chose for Ango was Dogen-Zenji's 'The Patch-Robed Monks.' Can you say how you settled on this particular writing for your theme?

The first time I heard this theme was at Sonoma Mountain Zen Center when Ray Estabrook was Shuso. As I remember, Kwong-roshi used this passage during one of his Dharma Talks. I remember that it impressed me very deeply. Throughout the years since, I have been going back to this passage. And when I was looking for a theme for this Ango, I looked for this writing online. I read it and thought, "Wow, this feels like a perfect theme for Ango, and for me!" It's really hard to say why. I just felt drawn to it. And now I see that after this month, it made perfect sense that I chose this theme.

In your talks you investigated what the theme says about courage.

Yes, this theme is so great because it really does take courage—TO LIVE! It takes courage to practice, it takes courage to be present. It really takes courage to be present, doesn't it? It takes courage to love...

You also read from 'The Hidden Lamp' from the chapter on the Chiyono story.

Yes, I love that book, and I am a part of a "Hidden Lamp" study group. We were working on this koan. So, I felt that I have a connection with it. It's such a beautiful story!

In that story when the bottom of the bucket falls out, there's no longer water in the bucket, and there's no longer the reflection of the moon in the water, what does that mean to you?

That's not an interview question! (Laughter!) Hmmm, what does it mean to me? I would say the story is describing dropping off body and mind! That's what it means: you keep things together, and then the bottom of the bucket

falls away which means the dropping away of body and mind. To me this is the experience of what practice is about.

When you were Shuso, did you experience body and mind dropping away?

You know, I cannot answer this question. If I say, "yes," then that's not gonna be true anymore. What I can say is that I've experienced somebody else other than who I thought I am while being Shuso. I didn't think I was this person who appeared. I had no idea that there is this person in me. Like with the Mondo, for example, I was really scared. While we were doing the rehearsal, Nyoze asked me a question. In my opinion, I didn't answer well. Then I started to think, "God, I'm not gonna do it well!" But, you know what! When I sat down, I was looking at this point in the camera, and I was holding the shippei, it didn't matter if I was scared or not scared. I felt strong and courageous beyond the fear! And, that is an incredible experience that I take for myself—that there is this wisdom, courage, and clarity in me every moment. Every moment! You just need to focus and direct your intention, and it's there.

Has this long month affected your sense of Soto practice, of the Sangha, or of Sonoma Mountain Zen Center itself? Let's start with Soto practice.

That was a great month! This was the first time I really had a chance to study Dogen's writings and spend so much time with them. I found these incredible commentaries by Shohaku Okumura on "One Bright Pearl." I've been studying "One Bright Pearl" for fourteen years, and it was a big koan for me. Reading Okumura's commentaries really gave me hope—that I can understand what Dogen is writing about.





Holding the shippei (竹篋)—symbol of a Zen master's authority at the opening ceremony



Relaxing with her husband and Ango assistant Erik Konpo at her Zoom party hosted right after the closing ceremony

What I discovered, that biggest insight I have from this Ango, is that there is incredible depth to Dogen's writings, to Dogen's experience. When he says that in Buddhism "to study the way is to study the self, to study the self is to forget the self"—there is this Soto experience behind that—it is really about this moment. It's really about each moment. It's about your every day life! The fact that we were able to organize our little, cluttered studio apartment into the temple for such an important ceremony as Mondo, that means to me that we can truly find the temple anywhere we go. It's really about our focus and intention. And that's absolutely beautiful and exciting!

Another question I had about your being Shuso via Zoom...I was really strengthened by you being there on time, every day, no matter what. Can you talk about the challenges of managing the time change between Poland and California?

Yes, I had to get up at 4 a.m. To be honest, I didn't sleep much during the Ango anyway. So my 4:30 a.m. matched your evening time of 7:30 p.m. I was a little bit worried about my neighbors because the walls are very thin, and I was chanting, "FUKANZAZENGI" at 5:00 in the morning. My 3:30 p.m. was your morning. I didn't need to go to work, so the schedule was doable. In the beginning getting up at 4 a.m. was challenging, and my organism didn't know what was going on. But I found my rhythm finally.

Could you give us more thoughts about being Shuso for Sonoma Mountain Zen Center from your home in Poland?

My great discovery was that my roots are not only in the Polish Sangha, but that I feel a deep bond with the American Sangha also. I felt that one of the reasons Sonoma Mountain Zen Center is such a unique place is in the care for details. What the guidance of Nyoze, Kashin, and Roshi showed me throughout the Ango, was the importance of it. When you go as a student to the Zen Center, everything is already prepared for you. Sometimes it can even get annoying...that everything is so perfect. Because you may not understand clearly the reason behind it. But when you are in your apartment, and you have to create a container, you start to realize that this care for details makes sense and really helps create the space for practice, so that your mind can settle.

Do you have any thoughts on why attention to detail is so important?

Yes! What's important behind it is that you understand why you do it. When you care for details, you need to be present. It takes presence. For example, when I sit down before Zazen, I used to think it didn't matter if I sat in a mess, surrounded by clutter. But when you put some effort into creating the space—when you put your cushion on a nice mat, and adjust the table a little bit—there's something sacred that is evoked in you. There is this Soto spirit here, too. We prepare the space so that something arises.

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Theme for **Summer Ango 2020**

Shuso – “Myoju, Bright Pearl”

Małgosia Sieradzka-Imhoff



The Courage of Patch-Robed Monks

“The courage of a fisherman is to enter the water without avoiding deep sea dragons. The courage of a hunter is to travel the earth without avoiding tigers. The courage of a general is to face the drawn sword before him, and see death as just like life. What is the courage of patch-robed monks? After a pause Dogen said: Spread out your bedding and sleep; set out your bowls and eat rice; exhale through your nostrils; radiate light from your eyes. Do you know there is something that goes beyond? With vitality, eat lots of rice and then use the toilet. Transcend your personal prediction of future buddhahood from Gautama”

*From Dogen’s Extensive Record: A translation of the Eihei Koroku,
translated by Taigen Dai Leighton and Shobaku Okumura*

Do you have anything else you would like to add?

The last thing I could say...Roshi told me that this is a revolution in Zen—the Zoom practice. And I feel it may be true because thanks to the Zoom situation, I had to take Zen practice under my roof. I literally had to do it. For me to see that this is possible was an incredible experience. We can really have Zen centers in our homes! This is a great gift. It turned out I didn’t have to be with Roshi in person. I didn’t have to be at the Zen Center surrounded by the beautiful sounds of nature. I could do it in Warsaw, in our apartment on the 5th floor using only myself and the reality around me. If I could do it like this, it means I could do it anywhere. It was the first ever city-Zoom Ango, and I say we succeeded! ❖



SANGHA NEWS & MEMBERSHIP

by Erik Zenjin Shearer

SMZC's "Zoom Zazen" continues to bring our Sangha together in practice as we adjust our lives in light of the ongoing pandemic. Online practice is well-attended and has provided a unique opportunity for us to sit with members of Wisteria Wind from all over the world. As a reminder, the Online Zendo at SMZC meets for morning zazen Monday through Saturday from 6:30–7:00 a.m. PST. Evening zazen begins at 7:30 and concludes at 8:00 p.m. PST with the Four Vows. All members, friends, and guests are invited to join us in practice. Information about logging in, online forms, and guidelines can be found on the Sonoma Mountain Zen Center Website at <https://www.smzc.org/online-zendo>. In addition to the morning and evening practice schedule, everyone is invited to join for regular Saturday community practice, with zazen starting at 10:30 a.m. and a dharma talk at 11:00 a.m.

On Tuesday evenings we are offering an ongoing Study Group on Zoom, currently focusing on "Deepest Practice, Deepest Wisdom. Three Fascicles from Shobogenzo with Commentaries" by Kosho Uchiyama-roshi. New participants are always welcome! Details and a link to join this weekly group are found on the SMZC webpage. Also see the article on page 15 for reflections on the Study Group.

SMZC will continue to offer online programming for the foreseeable future while we adjust to a world that continues to reinforce the lessons of impermanence and change. Recordings of our Saturday dharma talks are available on our YouTube and Facebook pages. Additionally, Nyoze and Kashin have been posting regular videos discussing issues of practicing in our current environment. These talks are more conversational and provide another way for us to ground our Zen practice in the everyday. Please find us on YouTube by searching for "Sonoma Mountain Zen Center" and subscribe to the channel. You can also find us on Facebook where we post all of the videos that are uploaded on YouTube.

VOLUNTEERING

While we are continuing our practice online, we still have need of volunteers to work on projects at Sonoma Mountain and from home. Volunteer work on the property is governed by strict pandemic protocols and does not involve working inside or with other members. Volunteer opportunities at home include helping the office with projects and possible phone trees as we work to stay connected with all of our members. Please contact SMZC at office@smzc.org if you are interested and have the time to help out.

NEW MEMBERS

Toni Weisberg joins us from Santa Barbara, California. While new to our Sangha, Toni is not new to practice, having studied with Suzuki-roshi from 1966 to 1971. Toni helped start the children's program at Tassajara and also studied for a time with Dainin Katagiri-roshi. She enjoys writing, art, and gardening and is excited to study with Kwong-roshi, Dharma heir to her first teacher, Suzuki-roshi.

Sofia Close joins our Sangha from San Pablo, California. Sofia studied at Genjo-ji from 1975 to 1977 while she attended Sonoma State College (now University). She joins us in practice after a long career as a high school teacher. She has had the opportunity to travel extensively throughout the world, including time in Asia, Africa, and Europe. Sofia shared that she appreciates the authentic beauty and development of meaningful community at the Zen Center.

Wade Lippard joins our Sangha from Alexandria, Virginia, where he is an active member of the Del Ray Zen affiliate group. He is a practicing attorney and avid musician, playing both the guitar and piano. Wade has practiced with various Zen groups in Virginia prior to joining in practice with Peter and Nancy at Del Ray Zen and he is hopeful that he will be able to visit SMZC in person to experience our daily practice.

Joan Scott joins us from British Columbia, Canada where she is a Reiki master teacher. She is entering practice at SMZC after many years of deep spiritual and formal religious practice. Joan found out about SMZC through a sangha member Sheryl 'Gyo Nyo' Hamilton who has led a meditation group in BC for many years. Through that affiliation, she has read and listened to Kwong-roshi's teachings and is happy to start practice with him through our online Zen programs.

On behalf of the Wisteria Wind Sangha, welcome. ❖



SONOMA MANDALA – WHAT’S NEXT?

by Cam Shunryu Kwong

Because of financial concerns and lack of volunteers brought on by the pandemic, the Sonoma Mandala’s next steps have been revised. All Phase 1 projects will be completed except for the Inryu Studio and Sangha House remodels. Most of the Phase 1 projects will be completed by the end of the year and include removing the existing cabins, connecting the new water system, and finishing construction of the Sangha cabin. The Zen Center will reassess its financial situation at the end of this year and determine next steps.

You may recall the County required the Zen Center to divide the construction of Sonoma Mandala into 2 phases: Phase 1 includes construction of Ando Quarters and Genjo Building, new water and septic systems, grading and drainage infrastructure, and the demolition of the existing cabins. Phase 2 includes the construction of the new Zendo and new Community Building. The Zen Center’s highest goal is to complete Phase 2 as fast as possible.

The Zen Center has been fortunate during this difficult fire season. The only problem has been the unhealthy air quality for the past 3 weeks due to the smoke from the Walbridge Fire, 25 miles away. This fire was a big one, burning 86 square miles. Despite the surrounding fires and pandemic, construction continues!

Koten has been working on the removal of the cabins since July. Progress has been slow, but earlier in September, a few volunteers participated in our first Covid safety-modified Workfest. Our appreciation goes out to all of those who volunteered. The Zen Center must complete the cabin demolition by the end of the year, when the building permits expire. If you are interested in volunteering with Koten, please contact him at koten@smzc.org.

Angus has been single-handedly working on the Sangha Cabin remodel and is completing the installation of insulation and drywall in preparation for trim work. In the next month, drainage work will be done to divert the fall rain away from the building.

The Zen Center’s water system passed the final “Fire” inspection, and we expect final approval of the building permit by the end of September. De Lopez Landscaping is in the process of connecting the new and existing water systems. The last section of the State Water Board application documents has been submitted for review, and we are waiting for the final State inspection in October. This inspection is the last major task before the Zen Center can put the system into operation.

With the completion of most of the Phase 1 projects, next year the Zen Center will be in good shape for opening to the public when there is no longer a threat of the virus. ❖

Clear morning sky (left) & Panoramic view of the Valley of the Moon (bottom)





SANGHA COMMUNITY GATHERING

Online Zoom Roundtable

We are hosting an informal Zoom get together for Sonoma Mountain Zen Center's Sangha Members. This is an opportunity for members to connect, give positive feedback and hear about SMZC's direction and plans for the upcoming year. We know that it has been a challenging time for many of us and we want to make sure that we are all staying connected.

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|-------------|--|
| 7:30 | Zazen |
| 7:40 | Incense offering and reciting Dharani for Preventing Calamity |
| 7:45 | Conversation, dialogue and SMZC updates |

We are offering 3 different nights with a maximum of 30 participants each night. Please come to one of the gatherings below. We would love to see and hear from you on one of these nights!

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|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Monday, September 28 | 7:30-8:30 p.m. |
| Monday, October 5 | 7:30-8:30 p.m. |
| Monday, October 12 | 7:30-8:30 p.m. |

Please contact the office@smzc.org to sign up and a link will be sent to you.

**October 3 Saturday Community Dharma Talk
by Jakusho Kwong-roshi**

11:00 a.m. in online Zendo following 10:30 a.m. zazen

October 3 Workfest

8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Join us at SMZC for a day of good work. We will work outside on cabin demolition, Sangha Cabin remodel, and gardening. Please, contact the office at office@smzc.org to sign up and for SMZC Covid-19 guidelines.

October 5 & 12 Online Membership Roundtable

7:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. We are hosting an informal Zoom get-together for Sonoma Mountain Zen Center's Sangha Members. This is an opportunity for members to connect, give positive feedback, and hear about SMZC's direction and plans for the upcoming year. We know that it has been a challenging time for many of us, and we want to make sure that we are all staying connected.

October 6 Fall Study Group (Continuing)

Tuesdays 7:30 - 9:00 p.m. Explore the fundamental teachings of Soto Zen and Buddhism as a foundation and inspiration for daily practice in an online course with questions, answers, and dialogue.

**October 10 Saturday Community Student Talk
by 'Tensan' Chuck Ramey, Board President**

11:00 a.m. in online Zendo following 10:30 a.m. zazen

**October 10 Ordinary Beauty Online Workshop
with Kashin Kwong**

1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. The Heart of Zen is in everyday action. It permeates our waking life in simple acts. Kashin Kwong will continue her exploration of ordinary beauty in our daily lives. By donation.

October 15 – 18 Bodhidharma Online Three-Day Sesshin
Sesshin, literally “to touch the Mind,” is a period of intensive meditation retreat to let go of the conditioned self and resume our original nature. This special time of practice will allow us to dive into the core of Zen training. It will be held online. Please, contact the office for details at office@smzc.org. By Donation.

**October 24 Saturday Community Dharma Talk
by Nyoze Kwong**

11:00 a.m. in online Zendo following 10:30 a.m. zazen.

**October 31 Saturday Community Student Talk
by Margaret 'Saiten' Tighe**

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

**November 7 Saturday Community Dharma Talk
by Jakusho Kwong-roshi**

11:00 a.m. in Zendo following 10:30 a.m. zazen. Dharma talk will be given by Jakusho Kwong-roshi, founding Abbot of SMZC.

**November 7 Introduction to Zen Workshop: Returning
to Forms and Rituals of Everyday Life**

An online introduction to the basics of Zen with instruction. This workshop will be taught by Zen student 'Koten' David Price.

**November 14 “Peacefully Settling Down” Half-Day
Online Sitting**

This retreat is an introduction to Zen training and an opportunity for beginners and experienced sitters to plunge into the heart of Zen practice. Retreatants will experience a moderate schedule of zazen (five periods of sitting meditation), samu (work practice), and sutra chanting.

**November 21 Saturday Community Student Talk
by Susan 'Geshin' Frey**

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

**November 28 Saturday Community Dharma Talk
by Shinko Kwong**

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

**November 30 – December 5 Online Rohastu
Five-Day Sesshin**

Sesshin, literally “to touch the Mind,” is a period of time set aside for an intensive meditation retreat to let go of the conditioned self in order to resume our original nature. This sesshin is a special time of practice that will allow us to dive into the core of Zen training. A silent meditation intensive for experienced sitters to still the mind from moment to moment manifesting the realization of the Way.

Each day, the schedule begins at 5:00 a.m. and includes 10 periods of meditation, chanting, mindful work, Dharma talks, and private interviews, and ends at 9 p.m. The retreat begins at 7:30 p.m. Monday and ends at 8 a.m. Saturday. Special arrangements can be made for those unable to come for the entire retreat due to work commitments. In the spirit of Buddha's enlightenment, on Friday night we will be in tetsuya, which means we will “sit through the whole night” from 12 a.m. to 4 a.m.

**December 4 Online Tetsuya – Founder's Ceremony
All-Night Sitting**

In the spirit of Buddha's enlightenment, Friday night we will be in Tetsuya, which means we will “sit through the whole night” from 12 a.m. to 4 a.m.

**December 12 Saturday Community Dharma Talk
by Jakusho Kwong-roshi**

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

December 12 Online 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. Parents are welcome to join in the fun along with their children or participate in Saturday community practice.

Morning Zazen

**Monday – Saturday
6:30 a.m. – 7:00 a.m.**

Evening Zazen

**Wednesday – Friday
7:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

Ongoing online Zazen on Zoom. For more info, visit the online Zendo at <https://www.smzc.org/online-zendo>.

RESIDENT REPORT – OCTOBER 2020

by Susan Gesshin Frey



August marked not only the sixth month of the pandemic but also the start of what could be a very long wildfire season. It started me thinking about what our ancestors must have gone through in times of disasters. Fortunately, we have a sitting practice to keep us balanced when it seems like there is no certainty. We are taking things day by day, just doing what is in front of us.

We had a volunteer workday this last Saturday, and it was the first time that we have been open for practice in over six months. It was so good to see people again! For half a day, we wholeheartedly engaged the way together working on taking down the old resident cabins, splitting firewood, and preparing the garden vegetable beds for the winter. It may be a different form, but we are finding that our practice can include everything.

ANGO ONLINE

We did it—Ango on Zoom. Each person was challenged to bring their zazen directly into their home and into their whole life.

The month's schedule consisted of two rounds of Zoom zazen each morning followed by a short talk from the Shuso. Then we returned to Zoom in the evening for two more rounds of zazen and ended by reciting Dogen's Fukanzazengi. For the seven-day sesshin, the morning practice commitment was leveled up to a half-day beginning with two sittings, soji cleaning practice, breakfast on one's own, more sitting and then ending with a talk by Shuso or Roshi. Afternoons were for home/family chores or work practice.

Our Shuso, Małgorzata 'Myoju' Sieradzka-Imhoff, was able to engage the sangha directly by encouraging participants to have direct communication with her by Zoom and email throughout the Ango. MANY more people were able to sit together than we normally would have accommodated in our zendo. Sometimes there were over 100 people sitting together, including many from our Polish sangha. About 25 people sat the seven-day sesshin together.

Even though we were physically separate, there was definitely a feeling of being in Practice Period. We could see each other in zazen, and this seeing each other was more than "seeing a painting." Sesshin felt like sesshin—there was more energy due to less thinking. In the online version of the opening/closing ceremonies, we could see and feel Shuso doing her bows and receiving the Shippei. Each person was able to ask their question "live" and receive a "live" response. Things were still a bit unpredictable, which was good! There were even times when the internet server went out. The participants were the glue that held it all together.

I heard it expressed that this was a great way for a new person to be introduced to a retreat practice schedule in a gentler way. Following the schedule without leaving one's home and family is a challenge to our creativity and self-discipline. But it also allows us to deepen our relationship with everyday life, and what an opportunity for family to see and connect with what we do. One person mentioned that her visitors from out-of-state were moved enough to join her in the practice. Perhaps there is no better way to actually bring our practice right into our daily life.



GENJO-JI GARDEN HAS A BUMPER YEAR

Right now in the garden, it is definitely fall. The plants that gave us their all this spring and summer are spent and brown. We are pulling them up and putting them to more use as compost. Thinking back on the season, there was quite a variety of crops this year.

We started the season with scads of asparagus that we picked from the end of February till the end of April. Asparagus is a perennial, meaning it comes back every year without having to replant it. It grows into giant ferns that last into the fall. Next were lettuces and what seemed like masses of snow and snap peas which fed us all spring long. Beets, turnips, bok choy, leeks, long

(green) onions and carrots (red, yellow, and purple) were also plentiful while the purple carrots were amazingly sweet.

All the cabbage family did great; huge heads of green cabbage and broccoli plants were giant. This year we had strawberries galore. Next year we may have blueberries if we get the bird net on in time. The birds are really smart, grabbing them one by one as they turn blue. The blueberry plants are just now getting big enough to produce a sizable crop. We also have raspberries and (wild) blackberries.



continues next page

As we got into summer, cucumbers, basil, and parsley followed the peas in succession planting. The corn did not grow properly this year. The pollen stalk came up earlier than the ears and silks, so early that there was no more pollen left when the baby corn needed it to grow. So—no corn! However, we did have a bumper crop of green beans. Kale, bountiful as ever, is still going and has not bolted yet. Swiss chard will usually last through the winter, but the new variety we planted does not appear as hardy and is already bolting. The old standby Rainbow chard is OK.

It was not a great year for tomatoes. The plants initially did well but then developed what appeared to be calcium deficiency. Next year — chicken manure? Melons seemed to thrive in the gentle weather and then ripened right up in the heat wave. We grew Crenshaw, honeydew, and also winter melon, which is a savory white-fleshed melon that we use in soup. There was also kabocha squash (Japanese pumpkin), regular “pie” pumpkin, butternut squash, and zucchini squash. All the squashes did great. We also store the winter types (kabocha and butternut) to eat in the fall and winter.

Fairly new to the garden mix are apples and peaches. Nine little trees were planted two years ago and will take a few more years to produce fruit (though we have had some samples already).

If we are lucky, we may have some cauliflower, Brussel sprouts, and Chinese broccoli for late fall and winter. Planting has been seriously delayed due to the two heat waves, and I am not sure if they will be successful or not.

With all this you would think we had a lot of excess food (especially since we have had no guests since March!) but amazingly enough we ate our way through most of it and are storing some of it.

Damon Navas-Howard, Guy Ekett, Bosung Sunim, Fumiya (Bunzai) Chiba, and Alex Pirotti helped start the garden this year during winter Ango. This summer, Coco Mellinger and Aspen Stepanek helped pull many weeds and start the fall seedlings.

Thanks everyone! It was a great year! ❖

BE CAREFUL WITH FIRE

Taken from 'Be Careful With Fire' on cuke.com

The tradition of fire watch in Japan may have begun in the seventeenth century when night watchmen would walk through the streets hitting clappers to remind people to put out cooking fires before sleeping. This was very important for houses made of wood and paper. Even today, on the eve of the new year in Japan, a group of volunteers will patrol neighborhoods, hitting their clappers and chanting ‘Hi no yo jin’: ‘Be careful with fire!’

Years ago the founder of San Francisco Zen Center, Shunryu Suzuki-roshi, represented that phrase in Japanese calligraphy in the piece shown here. Suzuki-roshi gave this calligraphy to his first ordained disciple, Grahame Petchy, and it reminds us that the traditional warning is as relevant today as ever. Fire can both destroy and serve, protect and harm, nourish and deplete. We must balance proper use of fire with its proper care. ❖



Shunryu Suzuki Roshi calligraphy:
courtesy of San Francisco Zen Center

TUESDAY STUDY GROUP REFLECTIONS

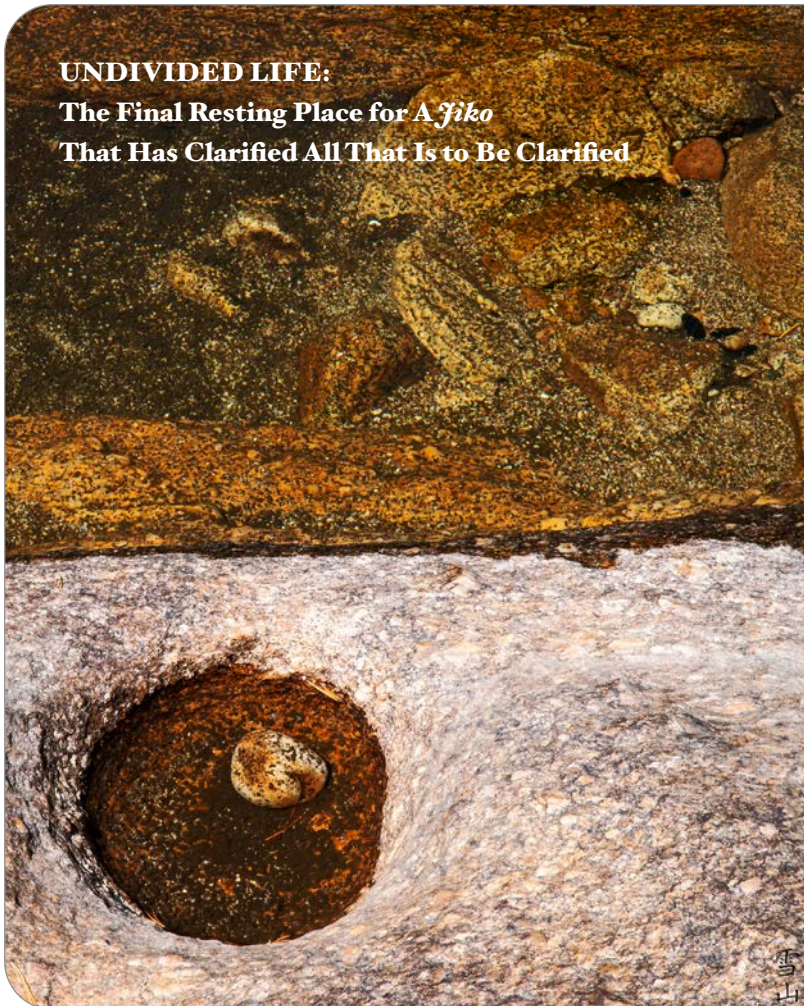
“ During the pandemic our entire practice has moved online, including the weekly evening study group. We started reading *Deepest Practice Deepest Wisdom* in the fall of 2019 and have continued to examine Uchiyama’s commentary on Dogen’s writing throughout the stay-in-place period. When the many hardships of the virus began to expose enduring inequities in our society, people joined together and started asking questions. It is difficult to imagine navigating our changing world without our study group as a guide. I have found our online meetings to be as lively and intimate as in-person discussions. Kwong-roshi often leads the group to focus on a specific excerpt, and his insights leave us with a deeper understanding of the text. I miss our sangha, but I am so grateful we are able to study the Dharma together online, until we can be together again. ”

—Megan Backus

“ The SMZC study group on Tuesday evenings has been very supportive for my practice. My experience is that sitting zazen and studying zen texts inspire, encourage, and invigorate each other. With our questions and comments, we come together as one body to reveal the true self. The collective energy of these discussions, anchored by the wisdom of our teachers, nourishes each one of us to Wake Up — Come Alive — and Act Like True Bodhisattva-Adults in our daily life. ”

—James King

UNDIVIDED LIFE:
The Final Resting Place for A *jiko*
That Has Clarified All That Is to Be Clarified



At the end of aging
We can see that
Lifedeath is one Life
Not life *and* death
Lifedeath is one undivided
Lightness and darkness
One vast blue sky
Is like the depth of
One Lifedeath is
The depth of Life –
Encountering right now
That depth-ful Life
While holding it precious
To revere that depth
Walking toward that Lifedepth

To divide, classify, separate
Letting go of the hand of thought
Just holding precious
Undivided Life
Life as it is.

—Kosho Uchiyama-roshi

BOARD OF TRUSTEES UPDATE

by Lizbeth Myoko Hamlin

On behalf of the Board of Trustees for SMZC, we want to thank all of you for your continual support, donations, participation in online sittings, Ango, study group, children's programs, and volunteer work. It is with the support of the sangha of Genjo-ji, that we are sustaining ourselves the best we can during this COVID-19 pandemic.

Please continue to make your donations as it truly is appreciated and is making a difference. The Board's focus of late is to continue to provide programming through Zoom with great success, allowing us to truly be a world-wide community. We are also addressing re-opening, but the future is not clear at all. Being able to join together in morning/evening sittings, study group, and sesshin is a great opportunity.

I want to announce with both gratitude and sadness, that our beloved Office Coordinator, Greta Canton, who has worked infinite hours and has brought so much value to getting us technologically up and running, is leaving us in the near future. She has been offered a position that is just too good for her to pass up. She will be here to provide training and guidance for her incoming replacement once we have secured this position. We are in the process of interviewing and making decisions that will support the well-being of SMZC.

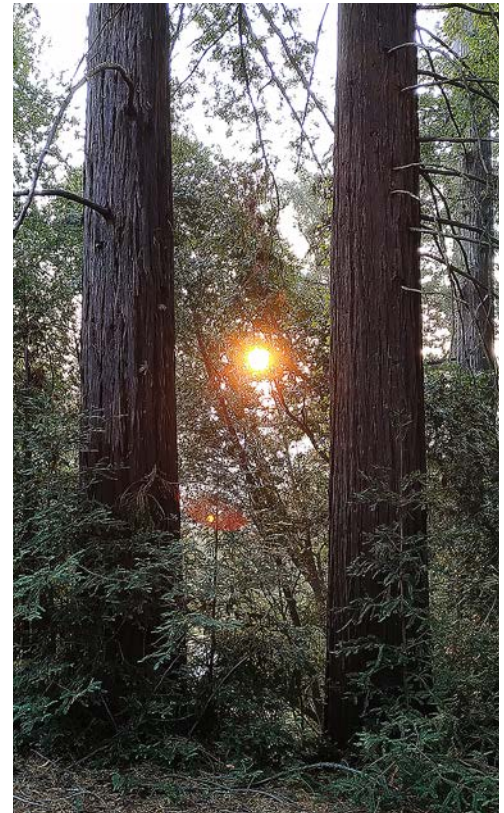
We thank you Greta for bringing your wisdom, skills, enthusiasm, and kindness to the way we are now practicing. ❖

FRONT DOOR PICKUP

by Janet Myoho Buckendahl

Zen Dust would like to offer members, who live locally, 'Front Door Pickup' from my house in Petaluma for store merchandise. If you are running out of your favorite incense, need something for your home altar, or would like to purchase other store merchandise, please contact me at janet@smzc.org. ❖

Koten hard at work demolishing cabins



PLACING THE GEGYO (懸魚)

by *Koten Price, Shissui (Facility Manager)*

The gegyo design is a traditional Japanese motif for temple structures. They are positioned on the end of roofs. Their function is to acknowledge the Elements—Earth, Water, Wind, and Fire. The gegyos ask for their protection. At Genjo-ji, the gegyos remind us that we are entering living structures and a sacred practice place.

Mark Peterson sculptured the many pieces of wood taken from Barton Stone's design. Mark is a long-time Zen student and woodworker. Koten precariously positioned them on the roofs. ❖



Mark Peterson posing with the gegyo before installation



VOLUNTEERS

Janet 'Myoho' Buckendhal

Weekly Zen Dust Store Upkeep

Brion 'Butsuden' Bear

Workfest: Moving & hauling construction debris

Pete Estabrook

Workfest: Garden

Jundo Farrand

Workfest: Moving & hauling construction debris

Tom 'Jakuryu' Huffman

Land stewardship (weed whacking)

Gary Kiehne

Monks Cabin and Dana Tower demolition

Michael McCulloch

Chain sawing large downed oak back of zendo

Coco Mellinger

Garden

Jeff Moore

Land stewardship (weed whacking)

Jason 'Shinmei' Nichols

Workfest: Sila Cabin demolition

Keiko Ohnuma

Workfest: Garden

Alex Perotti

Workfest: Dana Tower demolition

Bruce Richardson

Workfest: Genjo-ji Cabin &
Dana Tower demolition

Aspen Stepanek

Garden & cabin demolition

Mark Peterson

Wood Carving Gegyo 樹魚 & Construction



ZEN DUST NEWS

by Janet Myobo Buckendahl

Zen Dust has been very quiet since the lockdown began in mid-March, but recently I have been able to go to the store one day a week to mail out orders that have accumulated. If anyone has requests for incense or any of our merchandise, please feel free to contact me at janet@smzc.org. We still have a few copies available of Uchiyama's book *'Deepest Practice, Deepest Wisdom,'* which is being studied on Tuesday evenings.

The residents are all working hard to keep the Zen Center looking spotless and welcoming for the time we will be able to resume community practice. In the meantime, I hope to see you all on Zoom for morning and evening Zazen. ❖



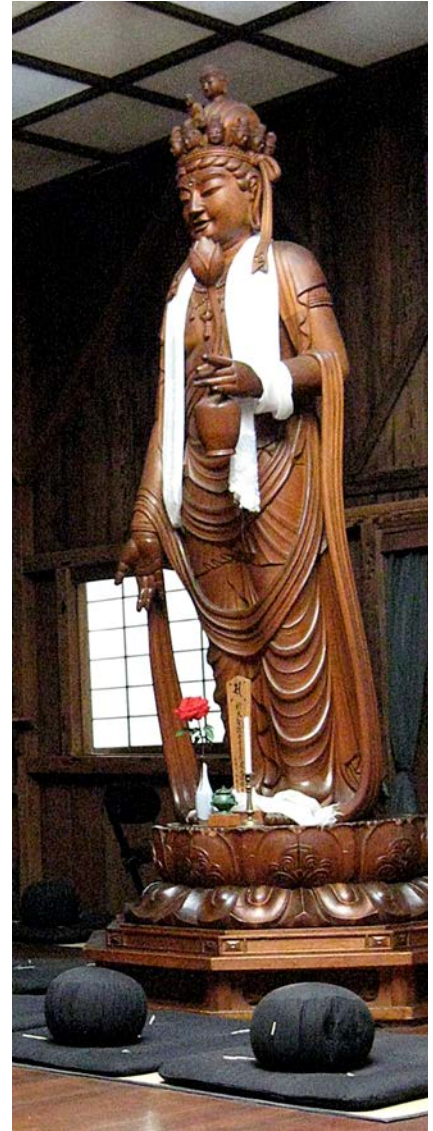
ANGO CLOSING POEM

"The whole world in ten directions is one bright pearl"
when you laugh, I laugh,
when you cry, I cry.
Interconnected, intertwined, no separation, no difference.
When one knot of Indra's net drops off its body and mind,
All knots drop off the body and mind.
This is saving all sentient beings!
Radiate light from your eyes,
exhale through your nostrils.
Make your bed, eat your breakfast,
water the plants, feed the cat.
What is your original face?
What is your true name?
Manifest the trust in your true self moment by moment
and all that's unnecessary will drop off by itself.

Remember, ango does not end.
It has never begun.

Only this moment.

—Myoju Sieradzka-Imhoff



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 **www.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 **www.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 at 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"; and Roshi's talks then appear.

Access via Podbean—Go to **www.podbean.com**; in the 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 or **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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Mountain Wind is available to all members of the SMZC sangha. If you are not a member of Sonoma Mountain Zen Center and would like to receive the newsletter, the cost for a one-year subscription is \$25. Please call the office to request a subscription, or visit online at www.smzc.org and donate via Paypal. When subscribing via Paypal, once you have made your donation please contact us and provide your newsletter format preference (print or electronic), and your contact information. If your subscription is due to expire, please renew. We also welcome submissions of poetry, prose, and art relating to the Zen experience.



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“FOR THE BENEFICIAL PROTECTION
AND AWAKENING OF ALL BEINGS”



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