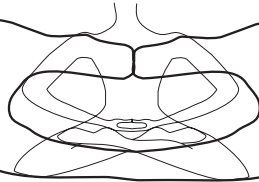


Sangha Life



The Missouri Zen Center

April-May, 2010

The Missouri Zen Center

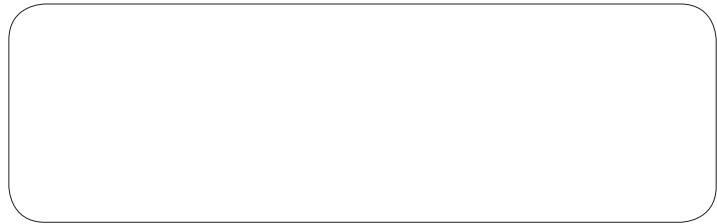
220 Spring Avenue
Webster Groves, MO 63119
(314) 961-6138



Printed on recycled paper

Coming Events

- April 10, 11, 18: garden workdays
- April 17: Board, sangha meetings
- May 1, 2, 8, 9: garden workdays
- May 15: guest teacher (see insert)
- May 16: Vesak Day (see insert)
- Aug. 7-14: Great Sky Sesshin, www.hokyoji.org



Visit Our Web Site:

www.missourizencenter.org

*Address Correction
Requested*

New Board Members Elected

At MZC's Annual Meeting on February 27, members present elected Erin and Maku to MZC's Board, joining Junsho, Suzanne, Brittany, Kuryo, and Rosan. Erin and Maku are elected to a three-year term. The rest of the board members are continuing in their three year terms, except for Rosan, who as our Executive Director and abbot is always on the Board.

The Board chose the following people to be officers in 2010:

- President - Kuryo
- Vice President - Junsho
- Treasurer - Suzanne
- Secretary - Maku

Green Tea For Sale At MZC

MZC is now offering green tea for sale that is provided by the largest producer of green tea in Japan. Shizuoka accounts for 45% of Japan's overall tea production, and the prefecture is at the leading edge of research on the benefits that can be obtained from green tea. Green tea plantations date back to 1241, when a monk named Shoichi Kokushi returned from Sung China to his native province of Shizuoka with green tea seeds, which were then planted in this area. Tea growing became economically important in Shizuoka after the end of the Tokugawa Shogunate, when a former retainer of the shogun began to cultivate green tea in Makinohara for its trade potential. Shizuoka's climate, the quality of its water, as well as its proximity to major ports all enhanced this area's position as a major green tea producer. Green tea comes in a number of different varieties suitable for drinking on different occasions.

Continued on Page 2

Continued from Page 1

This is the same grade of green tea that we have been enjoying at the Zen Center for many years. Each 100-gram package costs \$8. Your purchase helps to support MZC.

A pick up time may be arranged with Junsho if you are unable to pick your tea up during a scheduled zazen time. Pickups during daytime hours are welcome. Contact MZC by phone or email for details.

If you are unable to come to MZC for tea pickup, please contact us to have your tea shipped to you.

Board, Sangha Meetings April 17

The next MZC Board and sangha meetings will take place at MZC on Saturday, April 17. The Board meeting will begin about 10:45 a.m., after the family sitting and discussion ends. Since the Board has fiduciary responsibility for MZC, this meeting is concerned with MZC's financial status and ensuring that any money spent furthers MZC's mission. We will make every effort to end this meeting by noon.

After the board meeting ends, we will hold a combination potluck lunch and sangha meeting. This meeting is when the entire sangha gets together to discuss whatever we need and want to talk about regarding our practice and MZC as the place of our practice. Please bring a vegetarian dish to share and join in the conversation.

Spring Garden Workdays

We're setting up a number of days to work MZC's beautiful yard, rain garden, and vegetable garden, weather permitting. Potential work dates are the following:

Saturday, April 10

Sunday, April 11

Sunday, April 18

Saturday, May 1 and/or Sunday, May 2

Saturday, May 8 and/or Sunday, May 9

We'll start work after the usual morning activities, including the hour between sittings on Saturdays (i.e., 9-10 a.m.). We'll forward schedule updates to the list as we go along.

Donations of plants for our new rain garden are most welcome! For a copy of the list of plants for the rain garden, please contact Kuryo at 314-355-3505.

Right Livelihood

By Junsho

Missouri Zen Center members, guided by Dr. Rosan Yoshida, focus on three pillars in their practice, which are 1) The Awakened Way, 2) the Global Ethic and 3) Voluntary Simplicity. Taking care of all life may be one way of summing up these three pillars. Or, from another angle, cause as little suffering in the world as possible.

It is with these aspirations in mind that I would like to look

more closely at the possibility being discussed to raise funds for our organization by adding a new food item made from factory farmed animal products at our Japanese Festival food booth this year: Ted Drewes frozen custard which contains milk and eggs. The egg for the custard is provided by Michael Foods, the world's largest supplier of processed eggs. The milk for the custard is provided by Prairie Farms Dairy.

I would also like to open for discussion the possibility of changing to a non-egg-based noodle for our sesame noodle dish.

Some of you may know of the cruelty that is a common fact for chickens raised for their eggs but for those who don't, here are some facts about the life of these animals: "The 340 million chickens raised for their eggs, called 'laying hens' by the industry, endure a nightmare that lasts for two years. A large portion of each hen's beak is cut off with a burning-hot blade, and no painkillers are used. Many birds, unable to eat because of the pain, die from dehydration and weakened immune systems. After enduring these mutilations, hens are shoved into tiny wire 'battery' cages, which measure roughly 18 by 20 inches and hold five to 11 hens,... each of whom have a wingspan of 32 inches. Even in the best scenario (five hens to a cage), each hen will spend the rest of her life crowded in a space about the size of a file drawer with four other hens, unable to lift even a single wing." <https://secure.peta.org/site/Advocacy?cmd=display&page=UserAction&id=1500>

"Cows raised for their milk are repeatedly impregnated. Their babies are taken away so that humans can drink the milk intended for the calves. When their exhausted bodies can no longer provide enough milk, they are sent to slaughter and ground up for hamburgers. Calves are generally taken from their mothers within a day of being born—males are destined for veal crates, and females are sentenced to the same fate as their mothers. Calves raised for veal are tethered in crates so small that they can't even turn around. "Veal" is the flesh of a tortured, sick baby cow, and a byproduct of the milk industry. All adult and baby cows, whether raised for their flesh or their milk, are eventually shipped to a slaughterhouse and killed. A cow's natural lifespan is 25 years, but cows used by the dairy industry are killed after only four or five years." http://www.goveg.com/factoryFarming_Cows_Dairy.asp

In regard to the effects of factory farming on global warming, here is what Missouri Zen Center will be supporting and profiting from with our proposed sale of products made from factory farmed animal ingredients: "Raising animals for their flesh, eggs, and milk is one of the world's leading emitters of carbon dioxide (CO₂). But global warming is caused by more than just CO₂. Animal agriculture is the leading source of methane and nitrous oxide emissions, which—combined with carbon dioxide—causes the vast majority of global warming. The most effective way to fight the global warming crisis is to stop eating meat, eggs, and dairy products."

I think that religious centers need to be leaders in the areas of

Continued on Page 3

Continued from Page 2

compassion, kindness and wisdom. I hope we, as a community will unite in cherishing the lives of our fellow Earthlings rather than joining in the torture and extermination of them. I think that if we choose to sell these products we would be making a clear and open statement of support, participation and even a desire to profit from the cruel and irresponsible practices of factory farming.

At the upcoming board of directors and Sangha meeting on April 17 I would like to open a discussion of alternatives to selling factory farmed animal products. I believe that together we can come up with alternatives that will be safe and sustainable for all life. If you are unable to be at the meeting and you would like to comment, please voice your opinions via the listserv or by e-mailing to: info@missourizencenter.org.

Affluenza

by Ando

“To shop, to buy some more; and by our shopping to say we fulfill the heart’s desire.”

—Sign at the entrance to St. Louis Mills

“I encourage you to go shopping.” — George W. Bush 12/20/06

Indeed, no activity is more emblematic of Affluenza than shopping. Shopping and consuming or acquiring things that are not needed is the primary symptom of Affluenza. Those who suffer from Affluenza are trying to alleviate the fear of living and to be happy by trying to fulfill all their desires. Furthermore, they are told what is desirable by the media. Modern media exist for the purpose of brainwashing the population as to what it takes to be happy and where it can be bought. All one has to do is watch T.V. for one day to find out how to be well-dressed, have a good lawn, own a good vehicle, and, most importantly, be sexy.

Driven by this information, people work longer hours, spend less time with their family, go further into debt, and become LESS happy. In *Affluenza: The All-Consuming Epidemic*, by John De Graff, David Wann and Thomas H. Naylor, Affluenza is defined as “a painful, contagious, socially transmitted condition of overload, debt, anxiety and waste resulting from the dogged pursuit of more.” On the program *Affluenza*, PBS defined the virus as “1. The bloated, sluggish and unfulfilled feeling that results from efforts to keep up with the Joneses. 2. An epidemic of stress, overwork, waste and indebtedness caused by dogged pursuit of the American Dream. 3. An unsustainable addiction to economic growth.”

It is quite likely that Affluenza is largely responsible for the economic and political problems we face as a nation today. The corruption of Congress and the looting of the treasury by the financial elites were made possible, to a great extent, by the Affluenza epidemic. The importance of capitalism and the profit motive to the exclusion of all other considerations such as ecology, health care, real happiness and inner peace are indicative of the prevalence of Affluenza in the population.

Rosan told me, “Overconsumption is nothing but delusion, desire, dissatisfaction, decimation, destruction and dead end of human civilization, doom of human karma.”

Affluenza results from the delusion that desires can be fulfilled and happiness achieved by acquiring things. Since this is a delusion, desire remains and true happiness is not achieved. Then, of course, more must be acquired and consumed.

If you are working harder so as to be able to acquire more of the “good things in life,” going further into debt, spending less time doing the important things, are still not happy, and still want more, it is quite likely you suffer from Affluenza. Don’t feel bad, 99% of people in the USA are afflicted. What to do?

There is very little that we can change, except ourselves. So with that in mind, here are some suggestions to help us abandon the “American Dream” and eliminate overconsumption in our own lives:

Go participate in the activities at the Zen Center or one of the other Buddhist Centers that make up the Buddhist Council of St Louis. Dealing with the delusion that is the basis of Affluenza is a good start. Realizing that we are not what we own is the beginning of recovery from Affluenza.

Turn off the television set. It has been used to brainwash you and develop and exploit your Affluenza. Thanks to television, Affluenza has become an epidemic among the youth of this country.

Put away your credit card, or use it so as not to carry a balance. In other words, do not use it to make “loans.” The interest is deadly. I understand that, as a result of the looting of the middle class by the financial elites, some people must use their credit cards to survive from month to month. This was always the intent. Still, do the best you can to leave them in your wallet. It is also a good idea to get your money out of the national or multi-national bank chains. Put your money in small, local banks or credit unions.

Buy only what you need and, when possible, buy it locally. Starving the multi-national corporations will do much to alleviate Affluenza and many of the other ills that currently plague our society.

If you are interested in getting serious about Affluenza and over consumption, there is good information and resources at the PBS site: <http://www.pbs.org/kcts/affluenza/>, based on the program, *Affluenza*. The link for the follow on program, *Escape From Affluenza* is here, as well.

Two books are well worth owning: *Your Money or Your Life*, by Joe Dominguez and Vicki Robin and *The Simple Living Guide*, by Janet Luhrs. These books provide good guidance on living in such a way as to generate happiness and sustainability.



How We Can Solve Global Problems

By Rosan Daido

Problem: We have been experiencing global economic disasters such as economic meltdown, bankruptcy, unemployment, debt, etc.; global ecological deterioration as manifested in climate change, desertification, deforestation, pollution, extinction, etc.; global social disintegration, shown in wars, terrorism, genocide, starvation, discrimination, etc.; and global cultural demise, as in the rise of dogmas, fanaticism, sectarianism, selfishness, etc.

We have entered into the sixth mass extinction (hundreds of species going extinct per day), caused by human civilization for the first time, which may terminate civilization along with the runaway ecological and economic catastrophe. Problems of such magnitude multiply with population explosion and technology innovation. Still people are ignorant of and irresponsible for them, playing ostrich and acting with audacity. This intertwined global problematique is a system failure.

Cause: The culprit is civilization (urbanization) competing for limited matter and power. With the development of walled city-states came an artificial social system marked by the five calamities of civilization – delusion and bondage, leading to discrimination, exploitation, and extermination. In the nation states of the modern era, these have grown on an unprecedented scale. The natural cyclical system has been violated, replaced with a pyramidal system in which the delusion of independent ego at the base unilaterally (un-systemically, unsustainably) feeds the top. This is system ignorance. We need the *awakened way*.

Solution: The independent ego, an increasingly bloated element within the interrelated, encompassing eco (system truth), goes against the law of Dependent Origination. In this Buddhist concept, the ego is like a bubble on the ocean. The solution to our global emergency lies in diminishing delusion and desire, so that the bubble may reunite with the ocean. This is the way of religion: reunion from disintegration to integration, holiness, a wholesome whole. This is the system solution. We need the *global ethic*.

Civilization must be replaced by culture, a sharing of limitless mind and life in truth, beauty, goodness, and holiness, through the cultivation of the five blisses: awakening, freedom, equality, love, and peace. We need a paradigm shift from the ego-oriented, pyramidal system to an eco-oriented, cyclical system, the general rule being to “lower walls and pyramids.” The major players in modern civilization must transform into a natural system: nations into super-nations or NGOs, decentralized centers; corporations into NPOs; media into mini-communicators; education into life-long learning with all; religions into “wholesome whole.”

Methods: Follow Nature’s way of Five Ss (Systemic, Sustainable, Saving, Simple, Safe); Five Ls (Law, Life, Love, Liberation, Lielessness). We have a well-trodden, fail-safe, awakened way to live on joy with all always, rather than a delusive way to live in the slavery of all always. The practical way to stop human karma and settle in truth and peace is sitting meditation, living the law of Dependent Origination. Tree-like truth is itself peace and ethic. Let’s establish our lives in Nature’s cyclical system, cultivating ourselves in truth and peace. This is the system life. We need *voluntary simplicity*.

E-mail List

Subscribe to our e-mail list at:

<http://groups.google.com/group/mzclist>

Once you are signed up, you can send messages to the list using this address:

mzclist@googlegroups.com

Regular Zendo Schedule

Sunday

6:20 am Zazen
7:00 am Service (sutras)
7:20 am Zazen
8:00 am Kinhin
8:10 am Short Zazen
8:30 am Lecture (Teisho)
9:30 am Work period (Samu) & tea

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

Monday

6:00-6:50 am Zazen & Heart Sutra
11:00-11:40 am Zazen

Beginner's Night Registration required (at least 24 hours in advance)

6:30-7:00 pm Instruction
7:00-7:20 pm Zazen
7:20-8:00 pm Discussion/Q&A

Tuesday

6:00-6:50 am Zazen & Heart Sutra
7:00-7:40 pm Zazen
7:40-9:00 pm Tea/discussion

Wednesday

6:00-6:40 am Zazen
6:40-6:50 am Kinhin
6:50-7:40 am Zazen & Heart Sutra
7:00-7:40 pm Zazen

Thursday

6:00-6:50 am Zazen & Heart Sutra
12:15-12:55 pm Zazen
7:00-7:40 pm Zazen
7:50-9:00 pm Dharma Study
Group (call for details)

Friday

6:00-6:50 am Zazen & Heart Sutra
7:00-7:40 pm Zazen

Saturday

8:00-8:50 am Zazen & Heart Sutra
10:00-10:20 am Family Sitting
10:20-11:00 am Children's activities



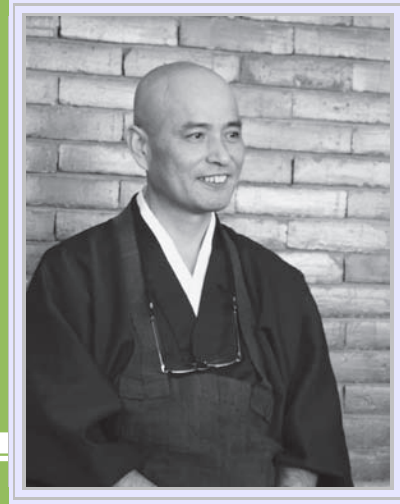
Shohaku Okumura

Lecture and Discussion
at
The MISSOURI ZEN CENTER

220 Spring Ave • Webster Groves, MO
(314)961-6138 • info@missourizencenter.org
Please call or email for parking details

May 15th • 7pm to 9pm

7:00-7:20 Zazen (meditation)
7:20-9:00 Talk, Q & A



Rev. Shohaku Okumura received Dharma transmission from his teacher, Kosho Uchiyama-roshi, in 1975. Since that time he has taught at numerous Zen centers in both Japan and America. Currently, Okumura-roshi serves as Director of the Soto Zen International Center, located in San Francisco, CA; and as Guiding Teacher of the Sanshin Zen Community, headquartered in Bloomington, IN – a practice community that he was also instrumental in founding.

In addition to translating the teachings and commentaries of Uchiyama-roshi, Shohaku Okumura is one of the foremost translators of Japan's greatest Zen teacher/philosopher, Dogen Zenji. Okumura-roshi regularly leads Zen meditation retreats and guides students and teachers alike in the study and practice of Dogen Zen.



While Rev. Shohaku Okumura is in St. Louis, he will also be guest speaker for Vesak Day, May 16th at Mid-America Buddhist Association (MABA) Monastery in Augusta, MO. See MABA's website for more details: www.maba-usa.org

Sponsored by The Missouri Zen Center
www.missourizencenter.org

Both Events are Free and Open to the Public

Vesak Day

Commemorating the Birth, Enlightenment and Death of the Buddha

Sponsored annually by the Buddhist Council of Greater St. Louis

Sunday, May 16, 2010

10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

On the peaceful, countryside grounds of the

Mid-America Buddhist Association

(MABA) Monastery

Augusta, Missouri

(Approx. 45 minutes southwest of St. Louis)

Free and Open to the Public



Rev. Shohaku Okumura



Dr. Rosan Yoshida

Guest Speaker: *Rev. Shohaku Okumura, Founding Teacher of the Sanshin Zen Community, Bloomington, Indiana. He is the Director of the Soto Zen Educational Department of North America*

Vesak Day Schedule of Events

- 9:30 AM** *Arrival and parking*
- 10:00 - 10:15 AM** *Opening Ceremony, led by the Monastics*
- 10:15 - 10:45 AM** *Bathing Buddha Rite, led by the Monastics*
- 10:45 - 11:45 AM** *Dharma Talk and Guided Meditation by Dr. Rosan Yoshida, Director, Missouri Zen Center
(Children's program under the tent: Origami, Storytelling, making Korean Lotus lantern, Buddha's Praying Beads)*
- 11:45 - 1:00 PM** *Vegetarian Lunch & Entertainment
Music by John Goldstein et al*
- 1:00 - 1:30 PM** *Walking Meditation to the Guan Yin Pavilion*
- 1:30 - 3:30 PM** *"Unity & Diversity in Buddhism" Dharma Talk
by Rev. Okumura, with Q & A*
- 3:30 PM** *Dedication of Merit & Closing Ceremony*

Directions: From St. Louis, take Hwy 40 (I-64) west over the Missouri River Bridge. The next exit after the bridge is Hwy 94 to Augusta. Take a left and go approx. 25 miles on Hwy 94 southwest and follow the signs to MABA located near Augusta. See MABA Website at: www.maba-usa.org

For more information contact: Don Sloane 314-576-4900, e-mail donshushu@maba-usa.org