



The Missouri Zen Center

August-September, 2009

The Missouri Zen Center

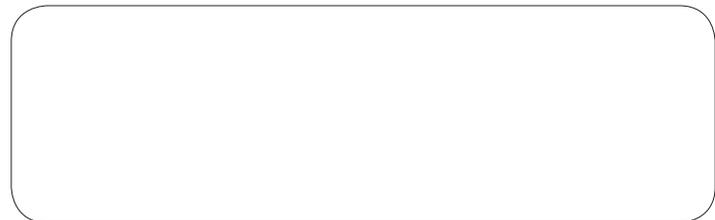
220 Spring Avenue
Webster Groves, MO 63119
(314) 961-6138



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Coming Events

- Aug. 20: J-Fest supply organizing
- Aug. 29: One-day sitting
- Sept. 4: Load van for J-Fest
- Sept. 5-7: Japanese Festival
- Sept. 18-20: Sesshin
- Oct. 31: One-day sitting
- Nov. 28: One-day sitting
- Dec. 4-6: Sesshin



**Address Correction
Requested**

Visit Our Web Site:

www.missourizencenter.org

Changes to Zendo Schedule

Recently we have made changes to the regular zendo schedule included in this newsletter. The Tuesday and Wednesday 11:00 a.m. zazens have ended due to low attendance. Mid-day zazen remains available on Mondays at 11:00 a.m. and Thursdays at 12:15 p.m. Please join us as we sit in perfect peace and realize the Awakened Way together with all!

John Hale Takes Precepts, Named Junsho

On Sunday, June 14 John Hale received lay ordination and was given the Dharma name of Junsho. After the ceremony, Junsho wrote, "I appreciate the efforts and sacrifices of time and energy that were so graciously given to make the Jukai ceremony and potluck lunch so welcoming and beautiful. My family members and friends who attended enjoyed the ceremony, the potluck, and meeting and visiting with you all. Thank you also for your kind guidance and presence in supporting me as I took the precepts. I'm truly grateful."

Wish List: Mac Computer

MZC is looking for a used Mac computer that is capable of running OS 10.4 or higher. Our current computer is still functional, but sometime within the next few years MZC expects to replace it with a computer capable of running a more-recent OS than the current one can. Perhaps someone in our sangha may be upgrading during this time and will need to find a new home for their current machine that runs OS 10.4 or higher. If you are in that position, please contact MZC.

Projects Need Volunteers

The Zen Center always needs volunteers to help with ongoing and one-time projects. Below we've listed some of the current projects. The starred items are the most urgent needs.

If you have 10 minutes per week there is a way for you to help out. Every little bit really does help. Please contact Junsho at the Zen Center to learn more or to schedule a time to work. Rosan encourages us to coordinate our Zen Center work with a scheduled zazen *when possible* — preferably working after a sitting.

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- * Water our vegetable garden and ornamental garden plants.
- * Become a weekly assistant. Set up a regular time to come in and help with the day-to-day upkeep and continually changing list of projects needing attention at the Zen Center.
- * Routine cleaning help with the bathroom, zendo, kitchen, porches, floors, windows, and so forth. There are many jobs available. Choose one to create a once or twice per week duty for yourself as a way to give back to the Zen Center and deepen your Zen practice.
- Cut down a tree in the back yard (about 40 feet tall, but not very thick). You'll need a chain saw and climbing gear.
- Cut the grass on the front lawn. Gas powered lawn mower provided.
- Seal front steps and other exposed front porch wood.
- Install two four-inch long PVC pipes into the kitchen sink system. Materials, tools, and instructions provided.
- Assorted office work, including some computer work.
- Sew and fill zafus and zabutons. MZC's production of zafus and zabutons (meditation cushions and mats) is an ongoing effort to provide affordable and fine quality meditation cushions and mats to people in the St. Louis area. This sewing project is also one of the ways MZC raises funds. Sewing experience is helpful but not required.
- Landscaping work, including work to eliminate the excess water flowing through MZC's grounds during periods of heavy rain.
- Final sanding work on the inside woodwork of the back porch. We need to borrow an electric sander for this work.
- Seal the inside woodwork of the back porch with linseed oil or some other environment friendly finish. We welcome suggestions on what kind of finish would be best for the porch.
- Library work. This will involve entering books and periodicals into the system, some filing work, and dusting the bookshelves.
- Clean and organize basement.
- Weed gardens.

Volunteers Needed Aug. 20

We need volunteers to help with organization of Japanese Festival supplies on Thursday, August 20, from 1:30-6:00 p.m. Meiku will be here to help us do inventory and organize the materials into labeled totes that correspond to the two separate work sites, the food preparation area and the food sales booth. If you can help during all or part of that time, please contact Junsho at the Zen Center.

Volunteer For MZC Labor Day Weekend

The Zen Center will again be operating a food booth at the Japanese Festival, held at the Missouri Botanical Garden on Labor Day weekend, September 5-7. We respectfully request your volunteer assistance to help us make this fund-raising event and opportunity to serve go as smoothly as possible and be as beneficial as possible. We gratefully acknowledge the Missouri Botanical Garden for allowing us to operate our food booth at the Japanese Festival and for providing excellent assistance toward making it a success for everyone involved.

We operate the food booth for several different reasons. On one level, we are able to raise a significant fraction of the money needed for the Zen Center's yearly expenses in one concentrated weekend of work. On another level, because Zen has been and continues to be part of the Japanese cultural fabric, our presence at the Festival brings attention to the practice of Zen and its role in Japanese culture to Festival attendees. Some of the people who come to our booth, and all who come to Rosan's lectures, want to know more about Zen practice. We can answer their questions and direct them to the Zen Center to learn more and to try the

practice for themselves. On yet another level, operating the food booth offers us the opportunity to serve all beings. We step off that 100-foot pole and serve the people who attend the festival by offering them delicious and nutritious vegetarian meals. In this way we deepen our practice and offer the fruits (and vegetables) of our practice to all beings.

We need lots of volunteers to run a high-quality food booth operation that doesn't overwork the volunteers in the process. We need as many people as possible to commit to at least one, and preferably two or more, four-hour work shifts during the course of the Festival so that we can have a minimum of 4-6 people each at the sales booth and in the food preparation area. The last couple of years we have been short on volunteer help. If that proves true this year, we will make adjustments in our operation to avoid overworking our volunteers.

To volunteer, sign up on the sign-up sheets posted on the closet door at the Zen Center, or call or email the Zen Center, leaving your name, phone number, and choice of shifts. The shifts last from 8 a.m.-noon, 11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., and 3-8 p.m. each day. On Friday, September 4 we will be loading a truck with Japanese Festival supplies to take to the Garden. We will need volunteers to help with that process as well. The time will be announced on the listserv and posted at the Zen Center.

Everyone who signs up to work a shift at the Festival receives a free admission pass good for all three days ... a \$15/day value this year to nonmembers of the Garden. In addition, parking passes for volunteers needing to drive to the Festival will be available. Once each kind of pass arrives at the Zen Center (mid August), volunteers can get the passes they need.

All food service personnel must wear hats (city Health Department regulations). We may have a few hats available for purchase at the Zen Center, or you can wear your own or one of the hats that we'll have on hand at the food booth and preparation areas. If you have a Zen Center T-shirt, please wear it; if we are all wearing MZC T-shirts, it makes a professional visual appearance. We have T-shirts available for purchase at the Zen Center. Some sangha members find it helpful to have one T-shirt dedicated for use at the Festival, because stains seem to be hard to avoid.

We welcome the help of responsible family members and friends who are willing to work one or more shifts, if we have extra passes remaining after all sangha members who are volunteering have received their passes. Please put their names on the sign-up sheet too, and acquire passes (volunteer and parking, if needed) for them. Check with the Zen Center about a week before the Festival to find out if we have extra passes available for family members and friends who are willing to volunteer. Please contact the Zen Center if you have questions or need more information on our food booth at the Festival.

The Japanese Festival is one of the premiere cultural events in St. Louis. Before and after your work shifts, you will enjoy the many different activities and demonstrations offered during the Festival. Or just enjoy a quiet walk through the Japanese Garden or the other gardens. For a schedule of events and more information about the Japanese Festival, call the Missouri Botanical Garden at 314-577-9400 or visit www.mobot.org.

One-day Sittings & Sesshins For 2009

As a result of input from the sangha during the last Sangha Meeting, the Zen Center is scheduling three weekend-long sesshins each year and one-day sittings on the last Saturday of months in which there is no sesshin. We hope you can join us for some or all of these opportunities for deeper practice.

The weekend-long sesshins will take place on the weekends nearest the spring and autumn equinoxes and Rohatsu (December 8). They will begin on Friday evening, continue through Saturday, and conclude with the regular Sunday morning schedule.

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In September, the autumn equinox sesshin will take place from Friday evening, September 18 through Sunday morning, September 20. Please watch the listserv and postings at the Zen Center for more information and a detailed schedule for this sesshin.

The one-day sitting for August will take place on Saturday, August 29. We welcome the assistance of interested volunteers to plan the sitting schedule, make announcements about the sitting to the listserv, and arrange the informal lunch that takes place during the one-day sitting. Contact the Zen Center if you want to help or need more information.

The other one-day sittings for 2009 will take place on Saturday, Oct. 31 and Nov. 28. The Rohatsu sesshin will take place on Friday, Dec. 4 through Sunday, Dec. 6.

Growing Veggies in August & September

By Kuryo

By this time in the gardening year, planting mostly yields to harvesting and preserving the harvest. Even so, you can still start and grow a surprising amount of food, especially with season-extension techniques. In this issue, we'll look at what you can start in an open garden in August and September, and take a look at how to extend vegetable harvest through winter and spring.

During August and September, the day length continues to get shorter. Eventually temperatures begin to cool down as well. St. Louis has recorded frost as early as the end of September, but the more usual time for the first fall frost is during the month of October, generally the second half of the month.

By the beginning of August the first frost is 90 or fewer days away, possibly as few as 70 days, and on top of that, the shortening day lengths and cooling days in September slow the growth of warm-season plants. It's too late to start any of the classic summer veggies and expect to have them mature, even using season extension techniques. However, it's not too late to start crops of veggies that prefer growing in cooler temperatures. These include kale, mustard and turnip greens (and turnip roots), Asian greens like bok choy and tatsoi, daikon and large storage radishes, arugula, beets, chard, carrots, dill, cilantro, lettuces, endive, and maybe radicchio. Short-season varieties (60 days or less) of cabbage, collards, and broccoli are worth trying from seed, and Gateway Greening claims that you can plant cauliflower and Brussels sprouts seedlings in August and get a crop. You can also plant the topsets from topset onions to obtain green onions in fall and start salad radishes from seed.

I find it works best to wait to sow seeds until the beginning of a 3 to 5 day long period when the nighttime low is in the mid to upper 60s or lower, and keep the seeds moist while they are germinating. Sow your seeds as early in August as possible, but you will likely still get something even sowing as late as the third week of August. You can plant topset onions anytime in August or September; they'll grow when conditions are right for them.

You can also check garden centers for started seedlings of some of these crops. Bell Garden, 3871 Bell Avenue (east of Vandeventer and 2 blocks north of Delmar) will offer seedlings at \$2 per 4-pack or 4-inch pot from 9 a.m. - noon on Saturdays in August. You can plant seedlings in the late afternoon or evening when we are not in the middle of a heat wave and when it is not windy. Keep them moist until you can see growth resuming.

September is too late for seed starting, unless you are sowing seeds into a cold frame or hoop house. The only exception I know of is salad radishes, which you can start as late as early to mid September. It's best to wait till October to plant garlic and overwintering onions.

If you want fresh vegetables after the weather turns really cold in November, you have a few options. One option is to grow the most cold-hardy types of vegetables in your regular veggie garden and harvest them for as long as possible. These include kale, tatsoi,

arugula, carrots, chard, beets, turnips, green onions from topsets, and leeks. All of these can survive temperatures into the teens. I can harvest them into late November or December depending on the weather. The root crops become sweeter after they've been through a frost or three, but be sure to dig them up before the ground freezes solid. Another possibility is mache, an extremely cold-early but small plant used in salads. It's not sown until October and can be harvested through the winter. You'll need to sow it very thickly to get enough to amount to anything. Jerusalem artichokes, also known as sunchokes, can be harvested after frost and taste best that way.

A second option is to harvest the crops before really cold weather starts and then hold them in storage for as long as possible. Winter squash and sweet potatoes are the easiest. Harvest them before the first frost and hold them in a cool area of your house, one that stays between about 50-65°F. Meiku and I have kept squash into March and sweet potatoes into May by this means.

Most everything else needs to be kept at 32-45°F to hold well for long periods of time, the colder the better. Before refrigerators existed, people built and used root cellars for this purpose. Root cellars are essentially small basements that are well insulated and sealed against water leakage, and have a means to let in cold outside air and vent warmer air. If you are interested in learning more, consult books on root cellars. You may be able to adapt something you already have to this purpose, such as a basement closet or corner, garage or shed space, window well, or a staircase to the outside. Meiku and I use a short staircase leading from our basement to the outside as our root cellar. The walk-in closet-sized space that is at the bottom of that staircase stays from 32-45°F from about late November to early March. We have kept leeks, turnips, sunchokes, and storage radishes in 5 gallon buckets sitting inside that space until early March. Sometimes people put caches of storage crops into insulated coolers and bury them in the ground under big piles of leaves or straw, unearthing each in turn throughout the winter. You'll need to make sure the covering material doesn't freeze so hard that you can't dig into it if you try this method.

A third option is to build a cold frame or hoop house, grow cool-weather crops in it during fall, and harvest them throughout winter and into spring. A cold frame is a bottomless box with a transparent top that sits on top of soil, into which you plant your crops. They can be built to a variety of sizes using scavenged materials such as old windows for the transparent top and scraps of wood or other materials for the sides. They can be sized to fit over a garden bed that contains crops you'd like to hold over the winter, or they can occupy a permanent place in the garden. Hoop houses have a plastic or metal frame, usually arched (hence the term hoop house), over which greenhouse plastic is stretched. They can have a footprint as small as a cold frame or as large as a quarter acre if you have the land and the money for that. Another version uses a garden fabric like Reemay stretched over a garden bed and held up by wires shaped like croquet hoops. Many garden books contain basic instructions on making and using one or both of these, and you'll find a lot of information on the Internet as well. Eliot Coleman's book *Four-Season Harvest* is the single best book on using these structures to extend the season, and Mark Freeman's book *Building Your Own Greenhouse* includes information on making simple cold frames and hoop houses. Meiku built a cold frame that measures 10 feet by 3 feet and is 1 foot high on the south end and 3 feet high on the north end. We put either window screens or windows on the openings, depending on the weather, and use it to hold crops for harvest until December or January and again in spring. It works well, even though it has a lot of air leakage. St. Louis doesn't get enough snow for snow loading to be a concern, and winter is mild enough to not require another layer of winter protection, as Coleman does in his Maine hoop houses.

Next issue we'll discuss planting garlic, overwintering onions, and sunchokes and start considering garden design for next year's garden.

Why We Need the Awakened Way

By Rosan Daido

We are confronted with unprecedented problems on top of the usual ones to solve. We are doomed to demise and destruction, individual deaths and a global catastrophe. We are in the midst of the sixth mass extinction (more than one hundred species go extinct per day compared to the usual rate of one species in tens of thousands of years) and in the global problems of global warming, pollution, population explosion, resource depletion, and so on (all entwined, thus called the global problematique).

We are like blind people groping an elephant, feeling only a part of it yet fighting for that partial finding as the only truth. What we need is to have a total view, through sharing information and serving the common purpose, rather than fighting blindly.

We are blinded and fighting due to our karma (past and present physical, verbal, and mental actions). *Karma* is etymologically equivalent to *ceremony*: it is the results of our habitual actions. All living beings are karma-machines (or karma-relatives as the Buddha called it). All our views and actions are karma-ridden. Whenever we think and do things, we are conditioned by karma. It is like a hamster running on a treadmill; the faster it runs, the less chance it has to get off and observe its conditioned running. We are conditioned by karma, in essence conditioned by attachment, aversion, and delusion (the three poisons).

The only way to get rid of karma is to stop running and conditioning. Sitting meditation stops karma (physical, verbal, and mental fabrications arising from the three poisons, which eventually kill all). Through sitting meditation we can stop our volitions (impulsive physical actions such as killing, stealing, or lying), emotions (such as greed or hatred) and conceptions (such as delusions or dogma). Sitting meditation (*dhyana/jhana/chan/zen*) is the natural, concrete, direct way to realize the Buddhist Triple Learning of *sila* (morality), *samadhi* (concentration), and *panna* (*prajna*, prognosis).

In a dreaming or deluded state, we feel as if we are awake or awakened, but only when we wake up do we know that we have been dreaming. Only when we are not conditioned by karma can we be in unconditioned peace (*nirvana/nibbana*) and unsurpassed awakening. Only when we are unconditioned by karma can we live in peace and truth, like a tree, free from the three poisons.

Tree and *true* both came from the etymological root of *dhree*, which is the root of *dharma*. Dharma means form (*harma*) and norm (*darma*). The Buddha (Awakened One) was awakened to the Dharma (Norm/Law/Truth) of all dharmas (forms/phenomena), Dependent Origination: all phenomena are originated dependent on causes and conditions, like plants that depend on seeds, water, air, light, soil, and genes to grow. The Buddha attained unconditioned peace and unsurpassed awakening by going beyond and before karma for the first time in history. He lived on joy, not on food, fame, and fortune, tasting *amrita/amata* (ambrosia, immortality): good in the beginning, in the middle, and in the end for himself and for all through the "come and see" (*ehi-passika*) way.

The Awakened Way may be realized by anyone regardless of race, religion, gender, age, or any other condition.

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

August-September, 2009

Regular Zendo Schedule

Sunday

6:20-7:00 am	Zazen
7:00-7:20 am	Service (sutras)
7:20-8:00 am	Zazen
8:00-8:10 am	Kinhin
8:10-8:30 am	Zazen
8:30-11:00 am	Lecture (Teisho)/ Discussion, 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

6:00-6:40 am	Zazen
Beginner's Night*:	
11:00-11:40 am	Zazen
6:30-7:00 pm	Instruction
7:00-7:20 pm	Zazen
7:20-8:00 pm	Discussion/Q&A

Tuesday

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

Wednesday

6:00-6:40 am	Zazen
6:40-6:50 am	Kinhin
6:50-7:30 am	Zazen
7:00-7:40 pm	Zazen

Thursday

6:00-6:40 am	Zazen
12:15-12:55 pm	Zazen
7:00-7:40 pm	Zazen
7:50-9:00 pm	Buddhist Text Study Group (call for details)

Friday

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

Saturday

8:00-8:40 am	Zazen
10:00-10:20 am	Family Sitting
10:20-11:00 am	Children's activities

Work periods may be scheduled following zazen.

** Anyone bringing a class to the Monday Beginners Night, or wishing to bring a class at any other time to the Zen Center, should contact the Zen Center well in advance.*

