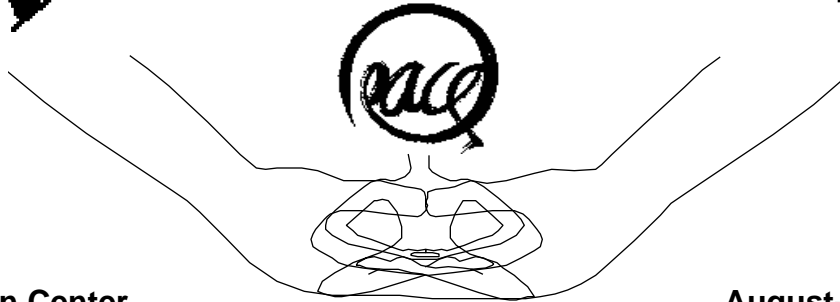


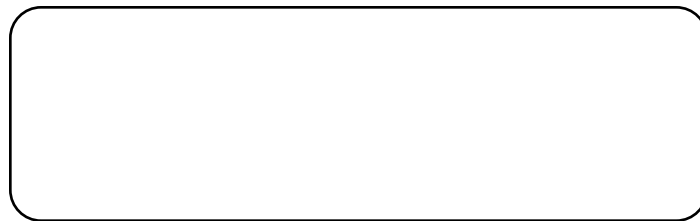
# Dharma Life



The Missouri Zen Center

August-September, 2000

The Missouri Zen Center  
220 Spring Avenue  
Webster Groves, MO 63119  
314/961-6138



Visit Our Web Site:  
[www.missourizencenter.org](http://www.missourizencenter.org)

*Address Correction Requested!*

## Japanese Festival, classes in Sept.

The Zen Center is holding many events during September. Here's a short rundown of them.

Japanese Festival: September 2-4. The Zen Center has a food booth during the Missouri Botanical Garden's Japanese Festival. It's our major fund-raiser, and we need your participation! Please read the article on page 4 for details on how you can help.

Beginner's Mind class: the next Beginner's Mind class starts on September 20. Details are on page 3.

Choices for Sustainable Living course: see the article on page 4 for info about this discussion course.

## Rosan returns

Our teacher, Dr. Rosan Yoshida, has returned from Japan; he will remain here through early September.

## Sesshin, September 9-10

A day and a half sesshin will be held on Saturday, Sept. 9 from 6:20 a.m to 9:30 p.m., continuing through the normal Sunday schedule on Sept. 10. **Please notice the starting time on Saturday;** it is 10 minutes earlier than previously published starting times. There is sleeping space available; attendees who plan to stay at the Center should bring their own towels and sleeping bags.

The fee for the sesshin is \$30. Indicate if you will be participating in the oryoki lunch on Saturday when you register. Scholarships in lieu of part of the fee are available; contact the Zen Center to discuss scholarship possibilities. Contact the Zen Center for more info and to register.

# Dharma Talk by Zuiko Redding

transcribed by Maku Frank from the tape recording

*Zuiko Redding of the Iowa City Zen Center gave this dharma talk during her visit to the Missouri Zen Center in November 1999. Because of space limitations, we have included only the first half of her talk here. The second half will be published in the October-November issue.*

I want to talk about a poem that was written by a man named Gida Dai Chi. Gida Dai Chi was the founder of Shogoji, where I practiced for most of the time I was in Japan. He was born in 1289 and died in the 1300s. He founded Shogoji when he was 50 years old, in 1338, and he was a disciple of one of Dogen Zenji's disciples. He wrote many poems and is famous in Japan as a poet. I like this one especially.

*I burn incense and sit alone in zazen under a  
tall pine tree.*

*Wind blows cold dew and wets my robe.*

*In the fifth watch I get up and go down to the  
two ravines*

*and bring back a pitcher containing the moon.*

This is a poem about our practice. In considering this poem, let's consider our practice and how we do our practice.

First of all, he starts with burning incense. We offer incense every morning and evening. Incense symbolizes impermanence. We light it and gradually it goes away. This is where we start our practice so Dai Chi Zenji starts with burning incense. We start our practice with what is called the "awakening of bodhi mind" or the "awakening of bodhicitta" in Sanskrit. Bodhicitta is the mind that sees impermanence. Dai Chi Zenji writes about it a little more directly in another piece. He says, "If you want to completely understand this great matter of life and death, first you must generate the bodhicitta, the awakening mind of nonpermanence. Whatever is endowed with life and the vital forces between heaven and earth must undergo change and destruction without exception. There is no time when the destroying demon is not watching for the favorable opportunity. Therefore, in the scripture it says, 'as a day has passed this life is also diminished. It is like a fish in a small shrinking pool. What pleasure is there in this?'"

These are tough words, aren't they? Indeed, it's when these words penetrate us that we wake up and begin to think about practice. When we truly realize that here we are and each of us is under a death sentence — suddenly things, our priorities, reorder themselves. The little irritations and angers we have with other people and other things — these aren't so important anymore when you think that this life is going to be over this moment. This life is shrinking. We naturally begin to forget about these things and concentrate on what's really important to us and it's this line which begins our practice.

Our practice is sitting alone — sitting alone in zazen,

he says. This sitting alone of his is not some wonderful thing like "I am a hermit sitting alone." We do get a very romantic image of this figure sitting under a pine tree on this beautiful, blissful mountain. That's partly true, but what Dai Chi Zenji is also saying here is that each of us naturally sits alone. Each of us this morning sitting here is giving each other our energy which is very wonderful. We need to sit together in order to really encourage each other. I was encouraged by seeing your straight backs and I hope you were encouraged by my presence. But in the last analysis we each have to do it ourselves. Reading about it doesn't work. Hearing about it doesn't work. We can't have somebody else do it for us because it is our life, not theirs. That's what it means when it says "transmission beyond words and letters." Zen is a transmission beyond words and letters. That doesn't mean we shouldn't read the sutras or listen to lectures, or we shouldn't accept the assistance of other people. What it means is that no matter how much we read, our zazen is our zazen. That is beyond anything else; that is something we, and only we, can do for ourselves.

Sitting alone also means just sitting — not expecting some reward for it. When we're alone there is nobody but ourselves to reward ourselves or castigate ourselves — nobody else. Katagiri Roshi always used to talk about sweet candy, wanting some sweet candy. There is, in religious life, no sweet candy to be had. We just sit. No rewards, also no bad things. No "my zazen wasn't good this morning"; not that either. Just to sit, giving up judgment, no goals. Just doing the activity of the Buddhas and the ancestors. Dai Chi Zenji says about this, "In dealing with the matter of life and death there is no other essential way surpassing zazen." Zazen is placing a cushion in a quiet place, sitting with the right posture, having nothing to do with the body, nothing to say with the mouth, not designing good and bad with the mind, just sitting aimlessly facing the wall, spending the day and passing the time in sitting. Besides this there is no special, wondrous truth. I think we often forget this side of zazen. Zazen is not total relaxation and leaning back in your chair and doing nothing. Zazen is sitting up straight but it's also just sitting. No special thing to do, just put your thoughts aside and spend time being right here, right now. This is what Dai Chi Zenji is doing — just giving up judgment under the tall pine tree.

Pine trees are flexible, and I think that is a very important thing to remember in our own practice. You make the pine stitch on the back of your rakusu. It's a useful stitch because it's very strong and very flexible. We use pine for that because you can bend a pine branch over but the moment you let it go it is straight again. This is a piece of advice for our lives — be able to bend in that way without losing essential self, harmonize ourselves with one another, bend to accommodate the situation of the moment.

*continued on page 5*

# Hui-neng, the Sixth Patriarch

by Mac

Traditional accounts of the events in the life of Hui-neng are gleaned from documents and verbal lore that were created hundreds of years after his death. Many were created to lend authenticity to the lineage or teachings of later teachers or schools of Zen. Modern scholars and academics continue to debate the veracity of these stories. The following is the traditional account.

The Sixth Zen Patriarch, Hui-neng (Dainan Eno Daiocho), 638-713 C.E., was born in what is now the province of Kwangtung in southern China. His father, a disgraced and banished public official, died when he was three. Hui-neng supported his widowed mother by cutting and selling firewood.

As a young man of twenty-three, while delivering some firewood to a customer, Hui-neng happened to hear a monk reading from the Diamond Sutra and was instantly enlightened. Questioning the monk, Hui-neng learned that the monk had come from the Fifth Patriarch, Hung-jen (Daiman Ko Nin Daiocho), 601-674 C.E., who was teaching the Diamond Sutra on East Mountain, in Hupeh Province, in the north of China. Making arrangements with his wood customer to care for his mother, Hui-neng travelled to East Mountain.

Hui-neng's encounters with Hung-jen and Hung-jen's leading student, Shen-hsiu, are classics in Zen literature. In the 7th century A.D., Chinese from the north viewed Chinese from the south as uncivilized barbarians who were less than human. After a month of travel, the poor, illiterate woodcutter from the south presented himself to Hung-jen and stated that he wished to become a Buddha. Hung-jen replied that Hui-neng was a southerner and thus had no Buddha-nature. Hui-neng's now famous response was, "There may be southerners and northerners, but as far as the Buddha-nature goes, how could you make such a distinction in it?" (Suzuki)

This answer pleased and impressed Hung-jen. He could not, however, admit an illiterate southerner into the monkhood. He gave Hui-neng a job as a rice pounder. Eight months after Hui-neng began working there, Hung-jen decided to seek a successor. Hung-jen asked that the monks demonstrate their understanding of the Dharma by writing a verse and presenting it to him. All of the monks abstained, deferring to the most senior and learned monk, Shen-hsiu. Shen-hsiu composed the following verse and, at midnight, wrote it on a wall in Master's Hall.

*The body is the Bodhi tree,*

*The mind is like a clear mirror.*

*At all times we must strive to polish it,*

*And must not let the dust collect.* (Yampolsky)

Upon reading the poem, Hung-jen realized that Shen-hsiu's grasp of the true dharma was incomplete. Several days later, another poem appeared on an adjacent wall. Hui-neng, being illiterate, had asked someone to write his understanding of the dharma. His poem read,

*Bodhi originally has no tree,*

*The mirror also has no stand.*

*From the beginning not a thing is,*

*Where is there room for dust?*

Hung-jen realized that Hui-neng understood the dharma. He feared, however, that some of the monks might harm Hui-neng out of jealousy and loyalty to Shen-hsiu. He, therefore, stated publicly that the verse demonstrated an incomplete understanding of the Dharma. Secretly, he summoned Hui-neng to his chambers at midnight and bestowed upon him the bowl and robe of Bodhidharma, making him the Sixth Patriarch. He advised Hui-neng to leave the monastery and hide until the time was right for him to begin teaching.

Hui-neng remained in hiding for 18 years, at which time he became the master of Ta Fan temple in his home province of Kwangtung. He remained there until his death. Hui-neng did not pass the bowl and robe of Bodhidharma to a successor, so he became the sixth and last patriarch of Zen.

His student, Hsing-szu (Seigen Gyo Shi Daiocho), died in 740 C.E., and passed the Dharma to Shih-tou (Sekito Kisen Daiocho), 700-790 C.E. Another of his students, Huai-jang, 677-744 C.E., passed the Dharma to Ma-tsu, died 788 C.E. The Dharma heirs of Shih-tou and Ma-tsu founded the T'sao Tung (Soto) and Linchi (Rinzai) houses of Zen.

The information for this article came from "Essays in Zen Buddhism" by D. T. Suzuki and "The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch" by Philip B. Yampolsky.

## Beginner's Mind class, Sept. 20

Have you wanted to learn more about Zen meditation? Then attend the next Beginner's Mind class, which starts on Wednesday, September 20 from 7-9 p.m. at the Zen Center and continues on every Wednesday from Sept. 20 through Oct. 25 from 7-9 p.m. at the Zen Center. It is designed to be an introduction to Buddhism and Zen practice, including zazen (sitting meditation) and discussions. The class will be team-taught by members of the Zen Center.

Cost for the class is \$50 including the text, and you must be pre-registered to attend. To pre-register, send your check, made out to the Missouri Zen Center, to our address as shown on this newsletter. The first 15 people who send checks will be accepted into the class; we will return all subsequent checks. For more info, call the Zen Center or visit our website.

If you wish to attend the class but the cost is a barrier, there are a limited number of scholarships available. Please contact the Zen Center for scholarship information.

## Choices for Sustainable Living course offered this fall

Our teacher, Rosan Yoshida, often tells us of the importance of replacing ego-centeredness with eco-centeredness and of living ecologically. But it may be difficult to figure out how to live in a ecological, sustainable way since mainstream media provide almost no information on this.

The Northwest Earth Institute has developed a group discussion course called Choices for Sustainable Living. This nine-session course explores the meaning of sustainability and offers practical ways to live more lightly on the earth. The discussion course format provides a safe space within which people can talk about their feelings and values and respect those of the other group members. The courses are self-led (a mentor assists the group only during the first session, to demonstrate the facilitation process), participatory, and democratic. Groups are small, from 8-14 people, to allow everyone ample time to speak.

Topics explored during the first four sessions include a call to sustainability; ecological principles; sustainable communities; and sustainable business and economy. Topics for the next four sessions are sustainable food; sustainable buying; sustainable lifestyles; and visions of sustainability. The mentor returns for the last session, to participate with the group in a celebration of the course experience. The only cost for the course is \$12.50 to purchase the course readings.

The Zen Center is offering members and friends the opportunity to take the Choices for Sustainable Living course on Tuesday evenings this fall. An introductory presentation, to explain the course process and content and answer any questions people have about the course, will occur on Tuesday, September 12, starting at 7:45 p.m. (after sitting). Attendees can sign up for the course following the presentation. Coursebooks, the reading assignment for the first session, and an envelope for payments will be in the kitchen at the Zen Center following the introductory presentation for anyone who knows they want to take the course but can't attend the presentation.

The first session of the course will take place on Tuesday, Sept. 19 after sitting, from 7:45 - 9 p.m. The course will continue on Tuesday evenings following sitting through November 14. Please note that we will continue to observe sitting from 7-7:40 p.m. on each Tuesday during the time the course takes place; the course will happen after sitting is concluded.

For more information on the course, contact Sustainable St. Louis at 314/773-1940 (e-mail [sustainstl@aol.com](mailto:sustainstl@aol.com)).

## Simplicity Sunday reminder

Anyone interested in exploring issues surrounding living more simply is invited to attend Simplicity Sunday, beginning at 11 a.m. on the first Sunday of each month (except in September it will be on Sept. 10). **All you need to bring is yourself and your interest in living simply.**

## Call for Volunteers for Japanese Festival, Sept. 2-4

Like any other organization, the Zen Center requires some money for continued existence: for rent, utilities, building and grounds maintenance, communication means such as this newsletter and our website, library resources, and so on. We do what we can to keep expenses down, and memberships and other contributions help to pay for some of our expenses. But we aren't able to raise enough money from memberships to pay all our expenses. So we rely on fundraisers to make up the difference.

Our biggest fundraiser occurs during the Japanese Festival, held each year during Labor Day weekend at the Missouri Botanical Garden. This year it's Saturday through Monday, September 2-4. We are fortunate to have a booth space at the Festival where we sell slushies, somen noodles, and vegetable rice to people attending the Festival. At our booth we have newsletters and information about Zen and the Center available, and members who can talk to people who want to learn more. Not only do we satisfy peoples' hunger and thirst; we can introduce them to the Dharma through this skillful means. Many people first hear about us through our booth at the Festival.

Our festival booth requires the help of many people to be successful. We need cooks; runners to move food from the cooking area to the booth; fruit-cutters; slushie makers; cashiers; dishwashers; and so forth. We need people to set up the booth at the beginning of the Festival and break it down at the end. We need at least 8 to 10 people on hand at any one time to keep up with food and slushie orders. We have found that to ensure enough people on hand at all times requires a substantial commitment of time from our members and friends.

Here's the bottom line: **We need as many volunteers for the Japanese Festival as possible who can commit to two shifts of 4 hours each. You can set up your two blocks of time in any way that pleases you and also ensures that we have a minimum of 8 to 10 people on hand at any one time. A sign-up board will be set up at the Zen Center after the August 6 Board meeting for people to sign up for the various time slots.** Volunteers get into the Festival for free, so you will be able to take in the rest of the Festival before or after your shifts. What a deal — you can help keep the Zen Center in existence, further the spreading of the Dharma, and attend the Japanese Festival, all in one weekend! Please commit to helping all of us make this a successful fundraiser.

## Special MZC Board Meeting, Aug. 6

We have many decisions to make prior to the Japanese Festival. Hence, in addition to the regularly scheduled MZC Board meeting on August 20, **we have scheduled a special MZC Board meeting for August 6 following the dharma talk and samu. All Board members, and anyone else interested in helping plan for the Festival, please attend this important meeting.**

*Zuiko Redding's talk, continued from page 2*

This is something we don't have much of in our culture. Those of us who were active in the sixties removed another bit of it. Everything for us is principle; we stand on our principle and we don't yield, and therefore we're constantly coming up against one another. But we can simply put principle a little bit aside, look at the other person and realize this is another human being. This human being suffers, just like me. Could we work together to realize both our principles? How can I take care of this person without giving up my own principles?

Here Dai Chi Zenji gets into the nitty gritty of things. The next line reads, "Wind blows cold dew and wets my robe." This wind is the wind of our tradition. Cold dew is uncomfortable, cold wind is uncomfortable. After you spend a winter in a Japanese monastery you realize cold is uncomfortable because your room is pretty much the same temperature as the outside. There is very little heating. Part of this is to let us learn to deal with adversity — to deal with not being comfortable, to accept that we're not comfortable every moment of our lives and to not be constantly wasting our energy striving to be comfortable. Every once in awhile I look at my own energy and how much of it I spend avoiding pain in this knee or going to get another sweater because I'm too cold or doing this or doing that so I'm comfortable. What if I spent that time doing something that really mattered? I could get a lot done. Also, if we can go into discomfort, if we can just not worry about being uncomfortable, we become much more free. We don't spend a lot of our lives avoiding situations where we might not be so happy or we might be a little cold or a little warm.

*To be continued in the next issue ...*

## Mailing Label Update

As reported in the last issue of Dharma Life, we have added membership expiration dates to the mailing labels. Membership information has been updated for all members and friends of the Zen Center.

If there is no date below your address, we have not received a contribution from you. **If you wish to keep receiving the newsletter, send us at least the subscribing member fee by September 15.** Our purpose is to make sure everyone who wants to receive the newsletter gets it, and to not send it to people who don't want it. If the subscribing member fee is a barrier but you wish to receive the newsletter, please contact the Zen Center.

If there is a date below the address, this is when your membership was, or is, due. **If your membership is past due, please support the Zen Center with a contribution.**

An XXXX means no membership payment is needed.

## Zen Center E-mail List

To subscribe to the Zen Center's e-mail listserv, send a message to <Majordomo@mail.win.org>. Leave the subject field blank. In the body of the message, type "Subscribe MZC" (without the quotes). That's all you need to do!

## Membership Categories

### Individual

3 months	\$60
6 months	105
One year	200

### Family

3 months	\$75
6 months	120
One year	225

### Student/Limited income

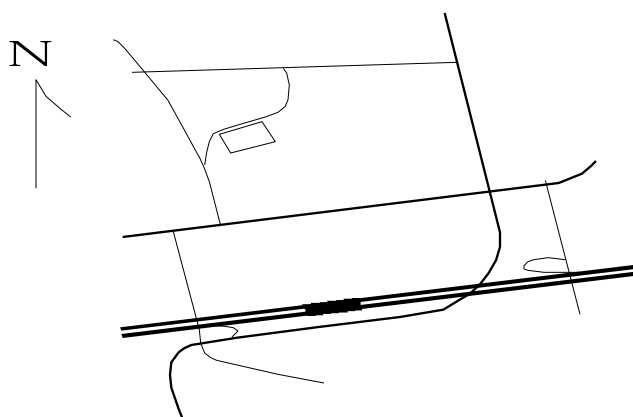
3 months	\$50
6 months	90
One year	170

### Subscribing member

One year	\$15
----------	------

Anyone is welcome to participate in any Missouri Zen Center activity without making a financial membership commitment. However, we only allow members to borrow items from the library.

The Missouri Zen Center is a nonprofit organization. Donations may be tax-deductible; consult a tax advisor.



## Current Zendo Schedule

### Sunday

6:20 a.m.	Zazen
7:00 a.m.	Service
7:20 a.m.	Zazen
8:00 a.m.	Kinhin
8:10 a.m.	Zazen
8:30 a.m.	Lecture and discussion, work period, and tea

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

### Monday-Friday

6:00 a.m.	Zazen
7:00 p.m.	Zazen

Check the calendar and articles for special events being held on certain evenings.

## August 2000

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

<i>Harmony</i>		1	2	3	4	5
6 <b>Special Board mtg &amp; Simplicity</b>	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20 <b>Board Mtg</b>	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

## September 2000

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

<i>"It's not what you don't do, but how you don't do it."</i> Gendo Bunting, explaining zazen to a nonpractitioner					1	2 <b>Japanese Festival</b>
3 <b>Japanese Festival</b>	4 <b>Japanese Festival</b>	5	6	7	8	9 <b>Sesshin</b>
10 <b>Simplicity Sunday / Board Mtg</b>	11	12 <b>Choices course intro presentation</b>	13	14	15	16
17	18	19 <b>Choices course begins</b>	20 <b>Beginner's Mind class</b>	21	22	23
24	25	26 <b>Choices course</b>	27 <b>Beginner's Mind class</b>	28	29	30