

Sangha Life



The Missouri Zen Center

April-May, 2004

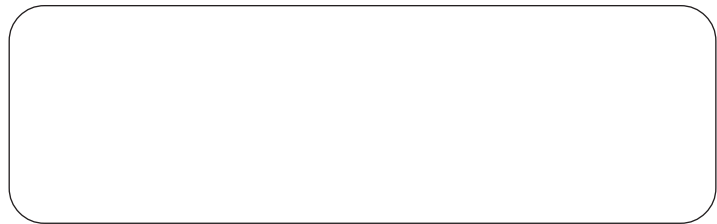
The Missouri Zen Center
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Events for April and May

- April 3, 10, 17, 24: Hosta work days
- April 25: Tree planting in Forest Park
- May 1: Hosta work day
- May 2: Vesak Day
- May 8: Hosta Sale



*Address Correction
Requested*

Visit Our Web Site:
www.missourizencenter.org

Buddha's Birthday, May 2

The Sunday closest to the first full moon in May is set aside each year as Vesak Day, a day to celebrate the birth, enlightenment, and parinirvana of the Buddha. Sponsored by the Buddhist Council of Greater St. Louis, this year's Vesak Day celebration will be held on Sunday, May 2nd, from 9:30am to 4:00pm at the Mid-America Buddhist Association (MABA) monastery near Augusta, Missouri. The event is free and open to the public.

This year's Vesak Day is to be dedicated to "The Child." There will be special events all day for children, including "Bathing the Buddha", Tibetan Prayer Flag making, painting, chanting for children, storytelling, origami, Joe the Juggler's show, and so forth.

Guest speaker Taitaku Pat Phelan will offer a guided meditation and a Dharma talk with a Q and A session following. She has been the Abbess of the Chapel Hill Zen Center since October 2000. Previously she was a Practice Leader and Director of San Francisco Zen Center's

residence facility before her arrival at Chapel Hill Zen Center in 1991. She was ordained in 1977 by Zentatsu Richard Baker, former abbot of SFZC and Suzuki Roshi's successor. She also studied with two of Suzuki Roshi's other disciples, Sojun Mel Weitsman and Tenshin Reb Anderson. In addition, she practiced with Robert Aitken Roshi of the Diamond Sangha in Hawaii. In 1995, she received Dharma Transmission from Abbot Sojun Weitsman of Tassajara (part of SFZC).

In addition to the events already mentioned, an opening ceremony (led by Lama Lobsang Palden and the monastics) and a walking meditation will be held. A delicious lunch will also be served, with live music during lunch. The times for the various events are still being worked out. Please watch MZC's listserv for an updated schedule, or contact MZC later in April.

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To get to MABA from St. Louis, take Hwy. 40 (I-64) approximately 1 mile past the Missouri River bridge to Hwy. 94. Take Hwy. 94 west approximately 25 miles to Schindler Road on the outskirts of Augusta. Look for and follow the MABA road signs.

Founded in 1999, the Buddhist Council of Greater St. Louis consists of 12 local Buddhist groups that meet monthly to discuss secular and spiritual issues and to organize year-round activities for the public. The Council is composed of the Blue Beryl Dharma Center, Fo Guang Shan St. Louis Buddhist Center, Hikoshin Ryu Buddhist Group, MABA Buddhist Monastery, Missouri Zen Center, St. Louis Insight Meditation Group, Thai Buddhist Temple, Do Ngak Choling and Kagyu Drogen Kunchab Tibetan Buddhist groups, Vietnamese Buddhist Association of St. Louis, Vietnamese Dharma Study Group, and Vipassana Buddhist Church.

Tree Planting for Earth Day

Celebrate Earth Day by planting trees in Forest Park! Trees benefit all beings in many ways such as by offering shade and thereby reducing hot summer temperatures, creating habitat for other beings like birds, absorbing and filtering rainwater, removing excess carbon dioxide from the air, and adding oxygen to the air. Missouri Zen Center has been participating in this interfaith activity during spring and fall for several years, and we encourage our sangha to help out this spring. Sponsoring organizations are the Jewish Environmental Initiative, Forest ReLeak of Missouri, and the St. Louis City Department of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry.

The third annual St. Louis Earth Day Festival Tree Planting Project aims to plant 200 trees in Forest Park on Sunday, April 25. A brief interfaith service at 2:00pm at the Steinberg Skating Rink will begin the project. Readings from various faith traditions, including Buddhism, will focus on the shared religious belief in taking care of God's creation and in being stewards of the Earth for future generations. Following the service, the trees will be planted. Volunteers are encouraged to bring a shovel, work gloves, and bottled water, though it is not required that they do so. Having these supplies will make the process of planting easier, however. Be sure to dress appropriately; it is likely to be muddy if it has rained recently.

Hosta Sale Fundraiser, May 8

The Zen Center's 10th annual Hosta Sale fundraiser will be held at the Center on Saturday, May 8 from 8 am until noon. How can you help to make this fundraiser a success? Read on to find out!

Digging up and potting plants for the sale Every Saturday morning during the month of April and on May 1, join us for sitting at 8 am followed by digging up and potting the plants offered for sale. Please be sure to wear clothes you can get wet or muddy. Bring garden gloves if you use them. We'll work till about 11:30 am and then eat lunch together. If you are unable to sit in the morning but can help with digging, plan to arrive around 9 am or so. Even if you've never touched a live plant before, come and help; we can teach you everything you need to know.

You can also donate special plants from your own gardens, such as divisions of hostas and other plants you bought at past Hosta Sales. If you do this, please be sure to label your plants ... include the same information as you received when you bought them if possible. The Zen Center can supply pots and potting soil.

Working before, during, and after the sale We need lots of volunteers to help us on the day of the sale, so if at all possible, please set aside some time on May 8 to work with us! We need people as early as 6 am to help set up the sales tables and move hostas to their sale locations. We will need more people around 7 to 7:30 am as our first customers begin to arrive. Sales will begin at 8 am. Ways to help include: answering questions about the plants; staffing the cashier's table; carting plants to customers' cars; rearranging the displays as plants are sold; making and serving tea; making bagel runs; and answering questions about our practice. Please show up as early as you can. Those of us who have worked at past Hosta Sales can tell you how pleasant it is to be outside early on a spring morning. If you can't show up until 9 am or later, please do come then. You can relieve someone who has to leave early. If you feel so inclined, you can bring a snack for the volunteers. Even if you can't come till 11 am or later, please still come. After the sale ends, we'll need people to help move the remaining plants out of the front yard and take down the work stations.

Publicizing the sale to family, friends, and co-workers Another way to help us is to tell all the gardeners you know about our sale. Anyone who likes hostas will want to check out our sale for its large number of different varieties at lower than retail prices. We carry other plants which like the same conditions as hostas (partial to medium shade and average to moist soil) and look nice planted with them. We often carry some sun-loving plants as well. Included in this newsletter is a flyer you can reproduce and post at work, in your city hall or local businesses, or anywhere else where people gather. If you're reading this from our listserv, watch for a pile of flyers to show up at the Zen Center; reproduce and distribute them to your heart's content.

Buying hostas and other plants at the sale If you have a garden or know someone who does, there is one final way you can help the Zen Center: you can buy some plants at the Sale. Hostas are easy to care for and live for many years, growing larger and more beautiful each year. They come in sizes, shapes, colors, and prices to fit the needs of most any garden and gardener. Beautify your garden and strengthen the Zen Center at the same time!

2004 MZC Board

At the 2004 Members Meeting held in March, and at the first Board meeting held afterward, the following people were elected to the Zen Center's Board. Because of the small number of people on the Board, each is functioning as an officer.

Ando - President, Tony Piccinni co-Vice President, Kalen co-Vice President, Kris Ash - Treasurer, Jeff Bridwell Secretary.

Rosan is also a member of the Board.

If you have concerns or issues regarding the Zen Center, you may come to any of the Board meetings. They are normally held once a month on a Sunday morning and are announced on the Zen Center's listserv and website. Please assist our Board members as they fill these positions to help the Zen Center spread the Awakened Way.

E-mail Discussion List (listserv)

To subscribe to the Missouri Zen Center's e-mail discussion list, send an e-mail message to <majordomo@joethejuggler.com>, leave the subject field blank and in the message body type "subscribe mzc". You will then receive a confirmation message (including instructions on how to unsubscribe). Please only subscribe e-mail addresses of individuals. Also please be responsible for any information you post, including forwards.

Living the Global Ethic: Preparing for Changes in Energy Supply

Part 2: Can Substitutes Provide Enough Energy For Future Usage?

In the last issue of Sangha Life, we began to summarize an important new book on patterns of energy availability: *The Party's Over: Oil, War and the Fate of Industrial Societies*, written by Richard Heinberg. The book's first three chapters presented evidence that a peak in the rate of worldwide oil production is likely to occur in the next 5 to 15 years. Substitutes for oil will then assume much more importance than they have to date. Chapter 4 of the book looks at each substitute in turn; the following discussion comes from that chapter.

Oil's critical importance comes from its ease of transport; its high energy density; and its ability to be refined into many different feedstocks for producing more-complex substances. In addition, oil has yielded a very high amount of energy relative to the amount of energy required to produce it (a high net energy return). Heinberg looks at each potential substitute in light of these properties.

Natural gas comes closest to oil in its properties and uses. Natural gas already accounts for about 25 percent of US energy consumption and can substitute for oil as a feedstock. How much of it remains is in dispute. Industry analysts suggest that natural gas could reach peak production in North America within a few years and decline in production far more rapidly than oil will.

While coal is the most abundant fossil fuel and can be used as a feedstock, it is less energy-dense than either oil or natural gas; burns much dirtier; and remaining supplies are so difficult to get at that they may approach a net energy return of zero within two or three decades.

Nuclear-power advocates claim it is an abundant, clean, practical, and safe source of energy. Heinberg shows it is none of these from a whole-systems view. Further, it has a low net energy return, perhaps actually negative, when all factors surrounding its use are taken into account, and it cannot substitute for oil's uses as a feedstock.

Of the renewable resources, wind and solar are by far the most promising for use in generating electricity. The net energy return for wind may approach that of oil through most of the last century. Net energy return for solar is currently much lower, but promising technologies and efficiencies gained with larger-scale manufacture suggest that it will have a net energy return greater than oil before long. However, for both resources the electricity generated is uneven in supply and the infrastructure required for its replacement for oil in electricity generation mostly does not exist. To produce that infrastructure would require the use of an ever-diminishing quantity of oil. Finally, neither can substitute for oil as a feedstock.

Hydrogen, touted as "the fuel of the future" for its clean burning, is expected to be used in fuel cells. Hydrogen is an energy carrier rather than an energy source; it requires more energy to produce hydrogen from its source materials than is obtained from the reactions occurring in the fuel cell. To be a substitute for oil or natural gas, hydrogen would have to be produced from water using energy gained from wind or solar sources. Fuel cells are analogous to a battery in their operation. A solar or wind electricity generator could divert some of that electricity to split water into hydrogen and oxygen, store the hydrogen, and then use the hydrogen to power fuel cells to provide electricity when the wind isn't blowing or the sun isn't shining. Fuel cells could also be used in vehicles from personal autos to trains. Again, however, the infrastructure would need to be built almost from scratch, at a time when the major energy sources are in ever-shorter supply, and hydrogen does not substitute for oil as a feedstock. None of the other renewable resources will provide anywhere near the energy needed to substitute for oil on a large scale; some, such as ethanol produced from corn, have negative net energy returns.

More "far out" sources of energy include fusion, cold fusion, and free-energy devices. Heinberg includes an interesting discussion of each. Any potential for any of these to be useful commercially lies far in the future. Even then, they would replace oil for electricity only, not as a feedstock.

We can also reduce curtail energy usage and increase the efficiency of the energy used. Energy efficiency improvements over the past three decades have substantially reduced the energy used in homes and workplaces, and greater efficiencies remain to be realized. However, as the efficiency of a device goes up, it becomes more difficult and costly to further increase its efficiency; eventually the energy needed to produce

the more-efficient device exceeds the energy it saves during use. Curtailing energy usage does not suffer from this limitation, but it may be difficult or impossible due to collective structures which evolved during an era of cheap and readily available energy. Further, curtailment means reducing economic activity. At some point it may translate into a reduced quality of life either for those doing the curtailing (for instance, a too-cold house in winter) or for those who lose jobs because of it.

The above discussion, added to the expected increase in world population in the next several decades, suggests that sometime in the near future we can expect per capita energy availability to decrease and continue to do so for some time. Changes are likely to be broadscale and painful. In the next issue of Sangha Life, we will consider possible scenarios outlined in the book.



Dharma Talks by Rosan Daido

transcribed by Jeff Bridwell

Good morning!

Looking up in the sky, we want to see the full moon, but it's not clear with mist. The full moon is one day old, but it is new. We see the full moon and the new moon. But the old moon is also the new moon.

The moon mirror reflects the whole world. And here different faces sit together. A new face, it's a bell. So there are always new things. So, always there is a new moon reflecting the new world.

Not only the moon but everyone, everything is the mirror reflecting the whole world like the crystal ball of the Indra-net. Each moment is a new world and a new mirror. How the moon reflects and how everyone reflects depend upon the mist and different faces, not only outside but also inside. Especially the mind mirror reflects well as we polish the surface and deep innermost. Far back in time and space we find the old mirror, not necessarily flat but different in shape.

We think the faces of the moon repeat from new moon, half moon, full moon, crescent moon, etc. Then soon we become uninterested in them. But the moon was formed and is changing and will disappear. So is every mirror, getting old, shattered into pieces and then forms a new mirror. Each moment is a new mirror. Therefore, we need to polish each moment, every morning like Ruiyan so that it's not covered by dust, not beclouded, but becomes bright fully.

One day Kao-tzu, Chinese philosopher, said at the fork road shedding tears, 'Oh this is to make thousands of miles difference.' When we take a step, right or left, then eventually the road will lead to different places, thousand miles afar. We think there is a fork road in some place at some time, but every moment is a fork road, every second is a mirror moment, how we reflect it, how we polish it.

So, either we become wolves or wakeful ones all depends upon our practice. Polishing time, polishing the body and mind, and reflecting the world and time depends upon our practice and how we practice. We need to go deep into the crystal ball to become transparent like the moon, clear and cool.

The year is passing. The new year is coming. Winter, spring, summer, autumn come again and again, but our lives are not coming again. People are not the same. Every moment we pass. At the year end we can sit together not only being born as human beings difficult to be born but we fortunately encountered the Awakened Way, really encountered. Not only encountered, we actually live it. How lucky we are!

If we have not encountered, we didn't know how to live and might have spent our whole lives for trifle, useless things, running around, looking for something impermanent, material things, money, etc. Thus not only creating problems in ourselves, but also causing problems to others. We have all kinds of problems individual, social, environmental. Global problematique we have. However, we scarcely have the time to consider them, simply concerned about personal matters.

Dogen summed up the Awakened Way:

To learn the Awakened Way is to learn the self. To learn the self is to forget the self. To forget the self is to be verified by all dharmas. To be verified by all dharmas is to drop off the body and mind of oneself and others. There is a traceless awakening. The traceless awakening is furthered on and on.

Unwittingly, we just imitate other people and spend our whole lives in this way. So, we even do not know how to learn ourselves. We just run around, scurry around. It's called samsara, transmigration. Much less, we have little chance to be verified by all dharmas. We are far away from dharmas. We see things only from our own perspective, very self-centered.

Thus we mistake. Thus we compete. Thus we damage our lives and others' lives. We just continue this competing, warring states and never stop this warring state. Wars just continue and never solve any problems, but rather create more problems.

There is the sole solution by learning the self and going beyond the self and living dharma life. Only when we live the dharma life, we are firmly established in the truth and peace, never moved by trivial things, much less by wrong ways. We can live fearless, deathless lives going beyond selfish, that is, sinful lives. This is the happiest life.

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 am	Talk/discussion, work period, 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
6:30-7:00 pm	Instruction
7:00-7:20 pm	Zazen
7:20-9:00 pm	Discussion/ questions

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
7:00-7:40 pm	Zazen
After sitting	Writing Practice

Thursday

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

Friday

6:00-6:40 am	Zazen
7:00-7:40 pm	Zazen
After sitting	Dinner out

Saturday

8:00-8:40 am	Zazen
8:40-9:30 am	Discussion
10:00-10:30 am	Family Sitting

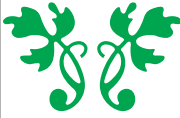
Work periods may be scheduled following zazen.
Any changes to this schedule: please contact the Zen Center.



Scheduled Events are apt to
change from time to time.
When in doubt, call to verify.








Calendar

April 2004

Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
a	a	a	a	1 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen	2 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen	3 8:00 am Zazen 10:00 am Family Sitting Hosta Work Day
4 6:20 am Sunday Service	5 6:00 am Zazen 6:30 pm Instruction 7:00 pm Zazen 7:20 pm Q & A	6 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen 7:40 pm Tea & Discussion	7 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen Writing Practice	8 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen	9 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen	10 8:00 am Zazen 10:00 am Family Sitting Hosta Work Day
11 6:20 am Sunday Service	12 6:00 am Zazen 6:30 pm Instruction 7:00 pm Zazen 7:20 pm Q & A	13 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen 7:40 pm Tea & Discussion	14 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen Writing Practice	15 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen	16 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen	17 8:00 am Zazen 10:00 am Family Sitting Hosta Work Day
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25 6:20 am Sunday Service	26 6:00 am Zazen 6:30 pm Instruction 7:00 pm Zazen 7:20 pm Q & A	27 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen 7:40 pm Tea & Discussion	28 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen Writing Practice	29 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen	30 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen	

PLEASE POST

May 2004

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2 6:20 am Sunday Service Vesak Day at MABA	3 6:00 am Zazen 6:30 pm Instruction 7:00 pm Zazen 7:20 pm Q & A	4 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen 7:40 pm Tea & Discussion	5 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen Writing Practice	6 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen	7 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen	8 8 am to noon-ish Hosta Sale
9 6:20 am Sunday Service after same: Board Meeting	10 6:00 am Zazen 6:30 pm Instruction 7:00 pm Zazen 7:20 pm Q & A	11 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen 7:40 pm Tea & Discussion	12 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen Writing Practice	13 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen	14 6:00 am Zazen 7:00 pm Zazen	15 8:00 am Zazen 10:00 am Family Sitting
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