



# Mountains Talking

Lotus in the Flame Temple, Zen Center of Denver

Summer 2002

## Encouraging Words

*Talks given by the tanto in the course of recent sesshins*

### Taking Care

A couple of years ago, the great choral director, Roger Wagner, died. On one of the televised retrospectives of his life and career, he was shown admonishing his singers. He said, "Take care of each note. Take care of it at the beginning, take care of it in the middle, take care of it at the end." This is what we do in our practice. We take care of it.

Take care of each breath. Take care of it at the beginning, take care of it in the middle, take care of it at the end. Whether it is Mu, or One, or just breathing, take care of it. Take care of the posture, the straight spine, the relaxed shoulders. Take care of the mudra, left palm on right, thumbs just touching.

Take care of the practice and the practice will take care of you. Take care of each moment. Take care with continuous and careful attention of each moment. It is all we can do and all we need to do.

Just take care.

### One Doing

Sensei has often quoted Harada Tangen Roshi, saying, "Ichi tante; one doing."

Bowing at our seats, one doing  
Standing, one doing  
Bowing to each other, one doing  
Walking to the tables, one doing  
Unwrapping the oryoki, one doing

One doing is not a goal to strive for. One doing is the reality. How could there possibly be more than one doing? Be alert, be mindful and one doing arises of itself.

One doing; just one doing.

### Late Zazen

The Buddha said:

"Regard this fleeting world like this:  
Like stars fading and vanishing at dawn  
Like bubbles on a fast moving stream  
Like morning dewdrops evaporating on blades of grass  
Like a candle flickering in a strong wind  
Echos, mirages, phantoms, hallucinations  
and like a dream."

Everything quickly passes away, and even though our sesshin will seem like a dream next week, that's OK. That's the way of things.

Yet we can be vastly different in our relations to this fleeting world as a result of our sesshin by having touched what is changeless, immovable, that essence that is always at peace.

The night is wonderful and mysterious, and it seems that often in the time just before sleep or just with waking up the ego lets go its grip just enough to enable one's practice to take them deeper, especially after all this week's work.

So keep working tonight, but if you need to go to sleep now, that's OK too.

### Don't Waste a Moment

The passage of time is swift indeed. None of us can afford to waste the precious opportunity of sesshin. The worst thing we can do is think that we have time, that there are still three and a half days left, so it's OK to take a little break and think about other things for awhile. But there are no guarantees that we will have the whole seven days, none at all.

So if you've been drifting, now is the time to pull yourself back. If you are lost in confusion or despair, don't give up. The light of a single candle can dispel the darkness of 10,000 years. Keep at it. Don't let up.

# Sangha News

Dear Sangha,

I missed a morning sitting during the last training period due to illness. Although I am fortunate enough to be in very good health, at my age it would be ridiculous not to acknowledge the fact that my health will steadily decline from here on. As such, please realize that from time to time I will miss sittings due to illness or fatigue. Know that I take this work seriously and will do my best to fulfill my responsibilities to the sangha. I am very grateful for those training in the Monastery Without Walls program who are putting a great deal of time and energy into running a strong zendo for daily sittings, zazen and sesshin. Also, I am thrilled to discover that there are some students who may soon be able to share in formal Dharma teaching including giving teishos, daisan, dokusan and conducting the Saturday samu sessions. May our sangha grow in depth, clarity and compassion.  
--Danan

## New Office Manager

Linda Hardesty was selected for the position of Office Manager during the time that Shonen is undergoing monastic training in Japan. Linda has been a member of the Center for 10 years and is highly qualified for the job, having much administrative and publications experience. Linda has been working with Shonen since the first of May to ensure a smooth transition after his departure on May 23rd.

## Proposed Change to By-Laws

Sensei agrees with Aitken Roshi on the importance of taking the new bearings gained in Zen practice into the larger community. Therefore, Sensei formulated the following addition to the Zen Center's by-laws out of his growing commitment to engaged Buddhism:

### **Article III Purpose of the Zen Center:**

*E. To facilitate the extension of the Buddhist practice and realization of kindness, compassion, goodwill and equanimity into the larger community by providing opportunities for engaged Buddhist practice through participation in social outreach programs and by bringing a spiritual and moral*

*perspective to the heart of social, economic, political, and environmental debate.\**

*\*Political activities and lobbying efforts by the Zen Center must be conducted within the constraints of the Internal Revenue Service Code for 501(c)(3) status.*

A special meeting of the Lay Order was held on April 14th, during which all the Lay Order members present (Shonen Dunley, John Emelin, Jann Griffiths, Mike Griffiths, Danan Henry, Ken Morgareidge, Peggy Sheehan, Mike Tabor, Dennis Tesar, Ed Wydallis and Becky Wethington) approved the proposed addition. The proposed addition was then taken up at the Board of Directors meeting on May 8th and was approved by all Board members present (Jann Griffiths, Danan Henry, Jim Hubble, Patty Kelley and Dennis Sienko).

From here, this proposed addition must go to the Sangha for ratification, which requires the vote of two-thirds of an all-Sangha meeting quorum. If you are an in-town Supporting Member, please reflect on this addition to the Center's by-laws, come to the all-Sangha meeting on Sunday, June 16th and cast your vote. If you are unable to attend, please be sure to give another Supporting Member your proxy with your voting instructions.

## Dokusan Bulletin

In spite of the fact that dokusan is offered eight times a week, the number of those attending is steadily increasing. Henceforth, when ten or more people attend dokusan during the evening or morning sittings, it will be impossible to take up both subsequent koan study and the review of the mindfulness efforts assigned in the practice of Every Minute Zen. At such times, only one practice will be investigated in dokusan: koan, mindfulness training or questions regarding practice.

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### Heart Shrine Relics Tour

On May 18th and 19th, the Center hosted the Heart Shrine Relics tour, an exhibition of relics of the Buddha and numerous masters of the Buddhist tradition. Included among the relics were

Shakya Muni Buddha, Kashyapa Buddha, Ananda, Shariputra, Maudgalyana, Nagarjuna, Milarepa and others. It was truly an unforgettable, deeply moving



experience. Hundreds of people came; some merely curious, others expressing devotion in a variety of ways, reflecting the many different Buddhist traditions. On the first day, before doors were opened to the public, members of the Sangha carried relics of Shakyamuni in a long circumambulation of the temple, ending in the Zendo where they were enshrined. Each day included an opening ceremony, time for viewing the relics, chanting, a guided loving kindness meditation and a closing ceremony. During the closing ceremony, participants were blessed by having a small stupa containing the Buddha's relics placed on their head.

The Heart Shrine Relics tour is sponsored by the Maitreya Project, an organization founded by Lama Zopa Rinpoche that is building a 50-story statue of Maitreya Buddha in India, along with a hospital, school, museums, parks and temples. The relics will eventually be enshrined within the statue.

### Sangha House

The Board of Directors has been discussing the possibility of purchasing a sangha house in the neighborhood of the Center. Anyone interested should speak with either Lindsey Trout or Dennis Sienko. The topic will be on the agenda at the all-Sangha meeting June 16.

### Sunday School During Teisho

At the June 2 teisho, Hoag Holmgren will hold the Zen Center's first Sunday School upstairs in the auditorium. Right now it's geared toward younger kids (infants - 10

years old), but older kids are invited to participate by reading to the younger kids and helping out.

Hoag invites all Sangha children to attend the first Sunday School and asks parents to call him if you're interested in participating or have ideas for activities. After the June 2 Sunday School, there will be a break and then Sunday School will be offered once a month, starting in the fall training period.

### Committee Members Wanted

Recently, several events have been booked in the Center's auditorium, and the auditorium committee needs more members to handle the increased activity. Please contact Peggy Sheehan if you would like to participate on this committee. The auditorium committee is becoming a very important area of interface with the community at large, and so it is vital that we have an enthusiastic and energetic group of people involved.

Also, if you're not on any committee, please let Peggy know so she can assign you to something and help you to get involved.

### Classical Guitar Music Series

Masakazu Ito will perform a classical guitar concert at the Center Friday, June 14 at 8 pm. Ito has played with numerous symphony groups in Japan, Europe and throughout the U.S. The recital will be the first in a three-part series by Ito at the Center. Advance purchase tickets are \$15 (\$10 for seniors and students). Call the Zen Center office to purchase tickets. Prices at the door are \$20 (\$15 for seniors and students).

### Alternative Medicine for Sangha Members

As many of you know, Kymm and Greg Cicciu are sangha members with a Chinese medicine practice called Inner Peace Wellness Institute. They offer acupuncture, massage, yoga, and medicinal herbs. In gratitude, they'd like to extend an offer of 25 percent off all their services to Zen Center members. You can find out more by viewing their website at [www.ColoradoAcupuncture.com](http://www.ColoradoAcupuncture.com) or calling 303-274-5733.

## Question Box

So that we can better tailor our schedule to suit the needs of the Sangha, Sensei would like feedback about the following possible time and schedule changes:

Would samu work better for you if it ran from 8 AM-12:30 PM rather than 9 AM-1:30 PM? Please let the office manager know if you have a preference.

It has come to Sensei's attention that members who teach or attend school can only come to one sesshin per year; namely the June sesshin. If possible, we would like to schedule sesshin during school breaks. If you are a teacher or student, please let the office manager know when your spring break, summer break and winter breaks occur.

## Gassho Corner

- Becky Wethington made all new oryoki linens for use during sesshin. This was a tremendous amount of work, as each of the 40 or so oryoki sets require a napkin, towel, wrapping cloth and utensil bag. The utensil bag in particular was made in a lovely style that required hand sewing. Truly, this was a labor of great devotion and love which will benefit sesshin attendees for years to come.

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- Bob Gamage in his period of residency made numerous repairs, installed a spice rack and a cutting board storage unit in the kitchen, and a cabinet for storage in the third floor shower room. Because of this, Bob started being known as “resident of the month” among the other temple residents. Bob has since moved to his own residence, but his contributions to the temple remain.

- From Shonen: “I would like to express my deepest thanks to everyone in the Sangha who organized and attended my surprise farewell party and to the generosity of everyone who made contributions to my trip to Japan. Also, in a general way, I would like to thank everyone in the Sangha for all of your support over the years. If I fall on difficult times in the year ahead, I'll be able to think of you and find the strength to persevere. I will miss you all.”

## Upcoming Events

Sangha Picnic	July 4
Kannon Ceremony	July 11
Zazenkai	July 21
Repentance Ceremony	August 13
Zazenkai	August 18
All Sangha Workday	August 24
Board of Directors Meeting	August 28