



Ink on  
the Cat 

Deep Listening

Zen Community of Oregon and Great Vow Zen Monastery

November, 2006

# Words from the Teacher...

Zen practice is a radical approach to living a modern human life. We humans are usually focused on producing, progressing, thinking, talking, having opinions, gossiping and criticizing.

Zazen is the center of our practice, and it is the opposite of all of these. Zazen does not produce anything. In zazen we do not progress. We strip away what is extra and a burden. We uncover what is innate and sustaining. The timeless truth is revealed.

In zazen we let go of thinking, opining, gossiping and judging. We become one with things as they are—not by speaking, but by listening deeply. Deep listening can inform all aspects of our lives. It requires complete receptivity. When we listen not only with our ears but with our entire being, we attune our eyes, our skin, our bones and our heart.

This also means that nothing is being broadcast. There are no outflows. Deep listening asks us to quiet the body, the mouth and the mind. Our thoughts must be silent. This is possible when you are listening so carefully that even the sounds of your thoughts are in the way of your listening. This is absorptive listening, complete absorption in sound.

Listening like this has been likened to the hushed attention of the audience at a symphony when the lights go down and everyone is anticipating the pleasure of the first notes. It is like sitting by the bedside of a loved one who is very sick and barely breathing. Each breath could be their last. Each breath tells you something very important; will they live or die? Listening in this way, you keep your mind very quiet, so you won't miss any aspect of the sounds, however subtle.



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By itself alone deep listening can be healing, both to the one being listened to and to the listener. It asks us only to be aware, without judgment, to all the phenomena that arise. In the body these are sensations, in the mind, thoughts, and in the heart, emotions.

The Surangama Sutra describes a gathering of thousands of buddhas and bodhisattvas. They come together for a professional meeting, and like professionals everywhere, they begin to discuss the best tools for achieving their common goals. In this case, their mission is to bring the multitudes of people in the world out of suffering and into enlightenment. The Buddha selects the one, most effective method for bringing people to enlightenment - deep listening.

*“All you who listen here should turn inward your faculty of hearing to hear your own nature. This is how enlightenment is won....For those who wish to escape from samsara in their search for Nirvana’s heart, it is best to contemplate worldly sound.”*

Here it is the bodhisattva Avalokitesvara who advocates for the power of deep listening as the best way to enlightenment. Avalokitesvara, the embodiment of compassion, is also called “the one who hears the sounds of the world and responds.” At the great conference of enlightened beings, it is Avalokitesvara who speaks about developing the “hearing heart,” undivided by seeing, feeling and knowing.

The practice of pure listening involves listening as if you were a brand new baby. You have just been born. Your mind is pure, pristine. You have never heard the sounds of this world before. You have no idea what is making them. You have no words and therefore no thoughts. You can only listen, with curiosity and wide awareness. Your mind and heart are wide open, and undivided.

When we can listen to our patients, our clients, our students, our difficult neighbors, our parents and our children, our friends and our enemies - and not be prejudiced by what we see, what we already know, or by our emotions - then we are practicing pure listening.

Humans developed over hundreds of thousands of years in social groups of thirty-five to fifty individuals. We were built as human beings to cope with the happenings in a group of that size—the joys, the sorrows, the births, the deaths of a group of less than a hundred people. Now our televisions, our news media, pour into our ears and eyes the suffering of the entire world, the misery of hundreds of thousands of people on the other side of the earth. The more we listen deeply, the more pain we become aware of, not only in humans, but in all creation. If our caring hearts are open to this pain, we may feel beset and helpless as to how to respond.

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We can meet this reality of modern life in three ways: we can ignore the news from around the world; we can harden our hearts to it; or we can equip ourselves to handle it. The best tools to handle the reality of human suffering are spiritual tools. They help our minds to re-frame the overwhelming immensity of human suffering. If we are Christian we can try to understand it as part of God's plan for our salvation. If we are Buddhists we can try to experience the ease of nirvana within the pain of samsara. All of us must practice to stretch our hearts to encompass all the cries of the world. Our faith gives us the means to respond to these cries.

Deep listening can heal us. Deep listening can teach us. Deep listening is a tool for investigation. Deep listening is a way to hold another's grief. Deep listening is a cure for boredom and existential alienation. Deep listening can ensure that we never feel alone or out of place.

What is the sound of one hand? It is the sound of the home we did not know we had lost.

*Chozen Bayz*



## Contest Winner

We sought a new name for the bulletin and so we held our contest. We heard from many of you and appreciate all your many wonderful, imaginative, silly, thoughtful, all-inclusive and variously spirited offerings. Looking out for one that short-circuits the intellect, we also wanted it somehow to reach back into our tradition.

We chose **INK ON THE CAT** in the spirit of our embodied practice - the surprise of it, where all kinds of accidents happen, messy, unexpected, impossible of intellectual solutions. So many words... but when the cat leaps up, the ink flies, obscuring the words and inking the cat.

We hope that our new name will continue to inspire us all not to cut things in two, nor to get stuck in one. This is the challenge of sangha practice and the intention of the bulletin staff - to inspire each other to leap, to investigate, to know directly.

Thank you and gassho to Meghan Jisho Caughey for offering us this wonderful new name. Please come to GVZM to collect your prize.



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## Sangha Spotlight: Meghan Jisho Caughey

### *What brought you to practice?*

I discovered Buddhism when I was about sixteen years old and working in a bookstore. There was a new book called *Three Ways of Asian Wisdom*, and I devoured it. When it said that the Buddha said that life was suffering and that there was a path that would lead to the end of suffering, I thought, "This makes complete sense!" Not much else did back when I was sixteen. I encountered ZCO many years later. I was in my thirties and had been sitting with a Zen group down in Santa Cruz, California when I moved to Oregon. In Corvallis I met Abby Mushin Terris and I began to sit with the Corvallis Zen Circle. Eventually, I went to a beginner's retreat at Larch Mountain and met Jan Chozen Bays.

### *Where does deep listening fit into your practice?*

I've been schizophrenic since I was nineteen, so deep listening means a number of different things to me. First, I just have to get past the auditory and other hallucinations that are part of the brain disorder. So deep listening means using various techniques to change my focus from the crazy noise in my head and if those techniques don't work—sometimes they don't—then I just sit with the voices, or other kinesthetic distortions, or whatever my brain is presenting me with, and I just be with it, moment, by moment.

For me deep listening means going beyond those hallucinations to see what is really there and who I really am. "Suchness" is not a concept, it is something that I experience when I ask myself "what are things the way they really are?" I ask myself this question often, usually when I first begin my zazen.



Jisho and Max

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I think the elephants that went to higher ground before the tsunami were practicing deep listening. It is about energy. I used to think that my identity was defined as a person with schizophrenia. Then I heard something more deeply. But I didn't hear it with just my ears. I heard it with my heart, and my belly, and my tongue and my hands. All of me. It said I was Buddha-Nature. It said I was whole. It said I was inter-connected. This was a great relief! What a joy! Much better than the old isolated, schizophrenic story. This is freedom.

I learned this from sitting, from sesshins, from sanzen, from being in the forest, in the garden, with good friends, with animals, from hard times in the hospital, and a thousand moments of grace.

One thing I have learned is that sometimes all I can do is just hold on, from moment to moment. If things are really hard, then just being in the moment, until the next moment, and then the next moment—sometimes it takes everything to simply be on the cushion.

And there have been some times when I could not do even that, and I have had to learn compassion for myself, and learned how to be gentle with myself—that is one of the hardest things to learn, I think. When I received Jukai, Chozen gave me the name Jisho which means “compassion for all living beings” and she told me that I would have to learn compassion for myself. I suspect that this is difficult for many persons and learning how hard to push ourselves and how to listen deeply and be compassionate to ourselves is a skillful practice.

***What are the nuts and bolts of your practice?***

I do zazen every morning with my dog, Max. He is a Tibetan terrier. He seems to love to sit. If I am sluggish in getting up, he gets impatient and lets me know it. We have a monthly sit where people come to my house in Alpine. Max attends the sit. We serve tea and Max even bows when he is being served his cookie (dog biscuit). Practicing with the animals is a wonderful way to take refuge in the sangha.

I am so grateful for my life and this practice. It quite literally has saved my life. Moment by moment. That is all I really need. And when I'm forgetful, something crops up from the universe and speaks my true name. And I listen.



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## Listening Practice

Kim Hoben Hansen

I remember thinking hard about the Sound of One Hand koan after first receiving it at a sesshin at Larch Mountain . I presented myself all a-tremble to Chozen for sanzen and stated my name and practice. In response to her gentle enquiry as to the 'Sound of One Hand" I roared out "MU!!" in my most impressive deep voice. I thought I was very clever.

That was the start of my listening practice and since then listening has been the mainstay of my meditation practice, though I'm not quite sure why. I was never particularly auditory. When I was a child my accordion teacher mercifully persuaded my mother that my own unique talents probably lay in another field of endeavor.



Hoben and family

I soon ran the Sound of One Hand up on the rocks and abandoned it, but the listening practice stuck with me - opening to ambient sound both on my cushion in sesshin and on the street. When I did jukai, Chozen directed me to the story of the monk who asked "I have come here seeking the truth, where can I enter? Master Gensha asks him if he can hear the sound of the mountain stream and when he affirms this, tells him "Enter there."

For me, listening has by and large been more effective than contemplation of the breath in opening up the present moment. Rain, birds and frogs have become favourite doorways, but so also are airplanes and automobiles. I caught myself in a small regret about losing the monastery's mechanical HVAC noise to our new heated zendo floor. I love our noisy zendo in Vancouver because it allows me to move right out into the street with the traffic.

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For me, the practice remains one of simply paying attention to this very instant and whatever its sound may be, without separating from it. Enter here. The quality of this attention and the experience of it changes from moment to moment, of course. In session I disappear into the sphere of sound and the space surrounding the sound until sound itself stops. On the street, the practice requires more prudence or that one sound may be the impact of a bus hitting me! In any case, this moment of sound will only open up if I let go of identifying, knowing and judging and just attend to what is. I don't see the flowers if I'm tromping all over them with the big muddy boots of my thought.

In the *Surangama Sutra* a gathering of bodhisattvas compare the various meditation practices by which they achieved enlightenment. They determine that Avalokiteshvara's practice of listening, the contemplation of sound, is the most expedient meditation practice, suited to free ordinary human beings from *samsara*. Manjusri describes it as being one with Reality, pervasive and unborn.

At its best, deep listening is the practice of generosity and compassion. Hearing the cries of the world and responding to them. Giving the gift of my complete fresh attention to the moment and bringing it alive. When I am truly attentive and really do listen openly I am much more responsive to my family, clients and everyone I encounter. This requires giving up my personal agenda, however, and letting go of my preconceived ideas, my judgments and my overwhelming need to package things up intellectually, to understand, to know.

Learning to listen has helped transform my practice as a lawyer. I am now much less likely to butt heads with other lawyers, clients or persons in authority. Sometimes it seems that I just have to take the hard position, but often if I really listen openly to what is being presented and to the other side's position and needs, this, in and of itself, is enough to resolve the situation or to frame a compromise.

Frequently it is my own "noise" that affects my ability to remain present with someone and what they are saying to me. This mental noise includes all of the usual cast of characters: thoughts, memories, anxiety or emotional reactions to what is being said, or something else altogether.

I am often quick to think that I have identified a "problem" or the root of the problem, from what is said and then I chip in with good advice, which, of course, in most instances is absolutely worthless to the person. I trust more to the dharma these days, but I am still quick to fall back on thinking much of the time. I think I have the answer when often this is just me trying to control the situation because of my discomfort with the uncertainty of what is presenting itself.

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I find it hard to really freshly listen to people and to give them my complete attention without selecting, judging or thinking I know. I shrink from the pain of really opening myself up to someone else's suffering and giving them my full presence and attention. Come to think of it, it isn't really much more than just being genuinely friendly.

So I'll just keep listening. I mean, I am anyway, so I might as well enjoy it.

Shhhh. Just listen.

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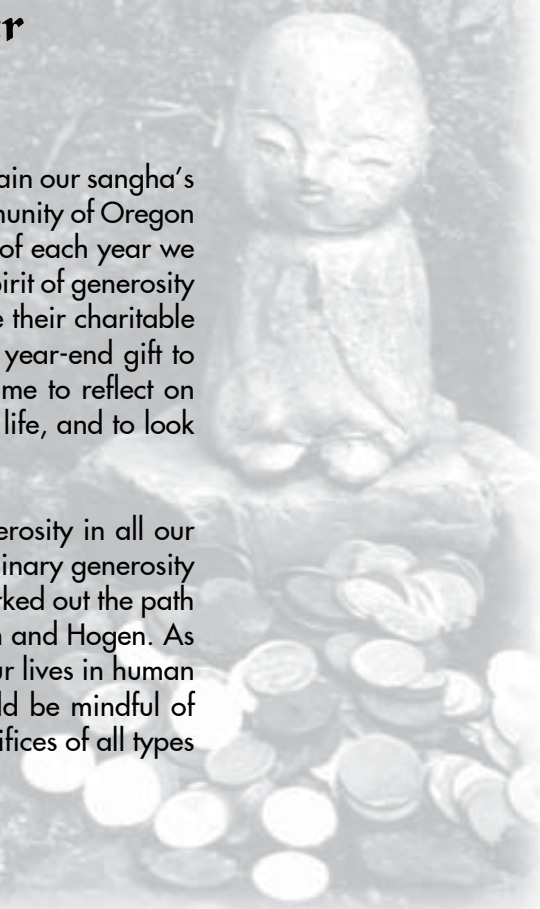


## Musings from the Treasurer

Chuck Ensoku Gleason

The end of 2006 is rushing toward us, and once again our sangha's members have generously supported the Zen Community of Oregon through a year of growth and change. At the end of each year we traditionally invite those caught up in the holiday spirit of generosity and gift-giving (or those simply looking to increase their charitable contributions for the calendar year) to consider a year-end gift to ZCO or Great Vow Zen Monastery. It's a good time to reflect on what the sangha and its work have meant in your life, and to look ahead to the benefits of a new year of practice.

As you explore the interpenetrating circles of generosity in all our lives, please give particular thought to the extraordinary generosity of all of those who have, for over 2,500 years, marked out the path we follow, and to our own gifted teachers, Chozen and Hogen. As each of us dwells on the great privilege of living our lives in human form and having access to the Dharma, we should be mindful of those who have brought it to us. Our gifts and sacrifices of all types and sizes uphold their work and dedication.





## Not A Sound

Carl Stromquist

My introduction to sounds began when I was studying with Aitken Roshi in Hawaii. I had reached an intolerable level of frustration with formal koan study and told him I would like a break. He agreed and suggested that I could 'just sit' and not come to dokusan for the rest of the sesshin. But he added, "Once in a while, why don't you try posing the question to yourself 'Who hears?'

Don't expect an answer, just let it bubble up naturally." I thought, "Hey, this is great," not realizing he had just given me another koan. After five days of looking I couldn't find the 'who' that hears.....just the sounds.

Almost twenty years later I moved to Oregon and began studying with Chozen and Hogen. At one of the first sesshins I mentioned to Chozen that I had been hearing an annoying, high-pitched ringing noise in my head while sitting. Her eyes lit up when I said 'annoying'. "You should sit with that sound," she said. "Come back tomorrow and tell me what you find." So, back I went to my cushion, with some foreboding, wondering what it would be like to purposefully focus on the ringing instead of doing my best to ignore it. And, sure enough, at first it was very irritating. But after awhile I became absorbed in listening more intently and just trying to fathom it. Was it some other-worldly, extra-dimensional calling or just an auditory nerve phenomenon? I couldn't tell. My logical mind said it was the latter, but I wanted to believe it was something mystical.

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At the next sanzen I told Hogen about the irritating noise. He got a gleam in his eye similar to Chozen's and said, "Oh yes, that's the 'nada sound'. Continue working on it." But I thought he had said 'not-a-sound'. I returned to the zendo wondering, "If it's not a sound, then what is it?" I spent the rest of the sesshin wrestling with this question.

During the next week I Googled 'ringing noise in head' and found that 'tinnitus', the Latin word for ringing, was a fairly common physical condition. Of course I couldn't find anything about 'not-a-sound'. By trial and error I discovered that there was a branch of yoga called Nada Yoga which dealt with both outer and inner sounds. The internal sound was variously described as 'inaudible', 'unstruck' or 'unmade'. I found this intriguing, but was not sure how to proceed with my practice.

Since then I have continued to work with the nada sound and have found it challenging. Sometimes it's sweet, sometimes sour. But it's always there for me - a convenient point of focus. Gradually I began listening to other sounds simultaneously.

During this process I found that sounds are also visual. For instance, if my breathing is loud enough and the room quiet enough, I can hear the soft intake noise. But, I also visualize the *process*. If the breath's noise level drops to the point where I can no longer hear it, I still have the visualization, which feels exactly like the hearing. And I've noticed that this is the same for other sounds. Along with the hearing, an image occurs. This is true even of my thoughts. They have a sound quality to them, especially words spoken internally, like a chant or the lyrics of a song. But they also have an accompanying shape if I look for it. When my mind is settled I feel like a room of indeterminate size filled with all these things. There is a pervading feeling of attentiveness, like waiting to hear the thunder after a lightning flash. I'm not sure when, or even if, the sound will come, but I'm ready for it.



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## Deep Listening

LaShelle Yoan Charde'

In my work I spend a lot of time teaching people how to listen with a whole heart, body, and mind - I call it empathy. Our own experience of listening deeply to ourselves provides a foundation that allows us to offer empathy to others: self-awareness, self-acceptance, and discerning skills.

Taking care of myself allows me to take care of others. For me, this means practicing self-acceptance and attending to my needs. In practicing self-acceptance I learn to watch my inner dialogue and translate judgment and diagnosis into feelings and needs. When my inner critic is saying, *"You can't run your own business. You're failing"*, I can hear the genuine feelings and needs of that part of myself instead of automatically buying into the critical voice. The whole tone changes with this: *"Not having the number of private couples clients I would like, I feel disappointed and frustrated. I want to contribute to others in a meaningful way and I need clarity about how to let people know I can help them."*



Connecting directly with my need to contribute energizes me and gives me a clearer idea about what actions I might take to help meet that need.

When I learn to do this consistently, a sense of self-trust develops. With this trust, the small self loosens and relaxes. I am no longer so reactive. I'm more patient as I trust that I can truly hear my needs and meet them. This leaves me with a spaciousness to receive others. In listening to others, I might notice my own feelings and needs arise and, because there is self-trust, I can set them aside and attend to them later. I can then keep my attention focused on the person in front of me.

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Of course, I can't tend to my needs if I don't notice them and know they are there. I need self-awareness. Our bodies and hearts are constantly sending up signal flags to clue us in about our thinking and our needs. When the mind is like a wild monkey jumping from diagnosis, should's, judgments, comparisons, if only's, and back to judgments again, we tend to walk around either shut down or in reaction. This kind of thinking disconnects us from our life-giving needs – clarity, intimacy, contribution, affection, honesty, trust, community, play, celebration, autonomy, empathy, purpose, and others. But with the self-awareness, focus and attentiveness gained from sitting, I can catch a line of thinking before it drags me into depression, anger, or guilt (well not always, but more often than I use to).

With self-awareness and self-trust, I have a spaciousness in which to receive others. So what else do I need to really listen to someone? In my own practice of self-acceptance I learn to be okay with a diverse array of feelings. It's okay to be in pain, grief, irritation, etc. Part of receiving someone in spaciousness means that I don't *do* anything. I don't need to push them out of how they feel or save them from how they feel. When faced with someone else's pain it's hard just to stay with it and trust them to get through it. It's important to be aware of the habitual responses we often have: sympathy, advice, analysis, correcting, consoling, telling a similar story of our own, asking questions, educating, diagnosing, or just holding our breath waiting until we can out of there.

When I am listening deeply, I feel like I am in zazen. My core is anchored and solid and the rest of me becomes porous and light. Though I hear a person's words, I am "listening" to their feelings and needs. In this case, by listening, I mean that I am often experiencing their feelings and needs in my own body. My mind is quiet.

When the person I am listening to wants to know if I am hearing them, I need discerning skills. I need the knowledge it takes to name their feelings and needs. I also need the awareness of where they are at so I can meet them there. If they are sorting out thoughts and I jump to feelings and needs, I may be listening to their deeper self, but I am not meeting them where they are at.

In the end, if I had to say this in one sentence, I would say: *"Deep listening is about meeting someone with complete presence and unconditional acceptance and love."*



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## Be Hear Now

Tom Kosho Johnson

*"Listen, it's like a bolt out of the blue  
Aahhh-  
Listen, it could be calling now for you..."*  
-Spinal Tap



We have an abundance of teachings, yet how do we apply them so that we become active participants in the world, not practitioners drowned in a sea of words and metaphor? Is it really possible to live life without our subscriptions to ShamDharmaCycle?

What if we were to put our ideas about Zen aside and just listen, that is - *consciously* listen? The in-vogue term for this in Zen is 'deep listening.' This isn't something we do everyday. It's my hunch that the brain has evolved to filter out non-relevant noise, presumably because it has limited capacity for the other five senses to protect it from stampeding elephants or other imagined threats. Try this experiment. When you're finished reading this, stop what you're doing and *listen*. Don't listen to the exclusion of the five senses, that is, don't try to block out anything. Just sit with open awareness, paying particular attention to sound.

I'm trying it. I just hear the fan in my window. I hear a bird, and the sound of typing on my keyboard. Slowly the fan noise takes on more subtlety - a low whir, a high whir. I notice anomalies in sound from time to time as air currents produce various 'hums.' My mind visualizes a spinning blade. I hear a clicking. An image of a piece of string intersecting with the fan blade comes to mind. I visualize a green and white caterpillar holding on to the fan blade for dear life. Now the caterpillar is singing... "What goes up must come down ... Spinning wheel got to go round..." My chair creaks. I stop typing and hear myself exhale. The thought, "Is the article absurd?" comes to mind. I notice a

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craving for tea. "Yes it is," comes to mind. I hear the fan. The caterpillar keeps singing "to everything, turn turn..." The computer monitor looks strangely bright. Night falls. My mind says "night falls, yet it doesn't get hurt." I hear faint talking in the distance...

Why bother with an exercise like this? How does this matter in daily life? In my opinion, what starts as a practice I do when mediating can become more of a habitual pattern, which restructures my conscious daily experience, thereby increasing my appreciation for life. So, the exercise with the fan could be repeated while listening to a co-worker, playing music, or in the bath with a loved one. Though I don't recommend going off the 'deep' end and fixing a 'Zen' gaze on a co-worker as they talk (like they're a spot on the zendo floor) I do think it's worth noticing what happens when one places greater awareness on sound and less on interpretation.

This practice has relevance for my guitar playing. Like any activity, playing music can be overly controlled by my mind. I plot, I plan, I consider chord progression, scales, modes, timing, lyrics... I write songs based on intellectual ideas of song structure and evaluate and compare them with their predecessors to determine their quality. All of these approaches to music take energy. Though I appreciate my brain's ability to analyze, I've learned to set aside time for the *deep listening* approach to music. From this perspective, the *process* takes priority over the *product*...a little more energy and appreciation goes into how things sound instead of thoughts like "Has this been done before?" or "Is this a 'good' melody?"

If I listen deeply the world takes on greater subtlety and dimension. I might, as in any form of meditating, let go of my conception that there is a *self* controlling all of this. For a moment or two there's just the sound of the fan, the guitar, my friend talking, and the thoughts, the bodily sensations, the feelings and the interplay of them all. Sitting and listening I don't have to do anything or try to control anything or anyone. I don't even have to try to *be myself* as the infinitely wise Sesame Street once instructed. At last I can freely move away from Sesame Street and maybe, just maybe, find myself in the more adult place of my actual direct experience.

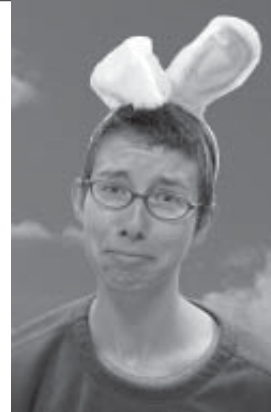
**Tom Kosho Johnson** is a denizen of the Zen Community of Oregon, the Zen Center of Portland and other places of pervasive wall-staring.



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# Sangha NEWS

Delia Shugetsu Garigan



The taking of Buddhist precepts is always cause for celebration and a time to reflect on our own path. This July, **Xiao Feng Wong, Walker Diebolt** and **Matthew Heyward-McDonald** received the first five precepts during a Wagesa ceremony at the monastery. **Rob Taylor** received jukai later in the month.

His dharma name, **Jitsuyu**, blends the characters for courage and faith. Rob has begun studying at The Evergreen State College. In September Chozen gave the name **Bokudo** to **Steve Holy** during his jukai ceremony. Bokudo, which means *simple path*, says "the name is so bulls-eye, it's made a lot of people happy, especially me."

July's fourth annual **24-Hour Chant for Peace** bore hundreds of guests and regulars along on a seamless stream of sound and intention. And, when the crowds had left, those who remained ripped up the old floor in preparation for the planned renovations. Over the summer dozens of volunteers and residents lent a hand in the loving and extensive overhaul of the Great Vow zendo. The interior was painted, a new roof went on overhead, and a luxurious heated floor was laid below. The blow-by-blow saga of the floor's transformation to an endless expanse of radiant bamboo can be studied in detail on the ZCO on-line news website (always of interest), [www.zendust.org](http://www.zendust.org). Make sure to take a look there at the auspicious markings and blessings that were placed on the sub-floor.

Online news or no, the annals of life and death bear repeating, and for many in the Zen Community of Oregon, the passing of the diminutive and geriatric monastery dog,



Walker



Xiao Feng



Jitsuyu

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**Mickey**, marks the end of a remarkably long kalpa of service to all. Mick's amazing powers of survival—he was nearly 25 when he died in early August—were matched only by his self-contained dignity and his affinity for cheese.

Not yet ready to go on his way, "**Captain**" **Dan Conroy** is said to be recovering well from a heart emergency that sent him to the ER in July. Danno's expansive heart is legendary, of course; and his little Clatskanie property, with its hot tub, has become the go-to spot for sangha members in need of relaxation.

There's more to this Zen business than relaxing, though. At some point you've gotta stand for something. And so it was that **Patrick Green** and **Laura Martin** embodied the spirit of ZCO at the first Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon Chant for Peace, which was modeled on our own **24-Hour Chant for Peace**. They led those assembled in the *Chant of Boundless Compassion*. In their own show of boundless compassion, **Jikan Quitorio** and **Nancy Kodo Conover** represented ZCO at the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of **Portland's Nichiren Buddhist Temple**. Other ways of standing up for ZCO include volunteering at the monastery and in your sitting group; staying current on dues payments; and continuing to feed some of the tastier and more inspiring morsels of your life story right to this very column. Other people really do want to know what's up in your life.

To wit: the adventures of the young and upcoming Buddhists of Portland. **Scott Genmyo Miller** is temporarily housed with **Cibyl Kavan** and **Ed Welsh**. Independent observation reveals that the backyard art studio, and the company of young **Emma**, **Jeremy** and **William**, seem to agree with him. **Josh Dainin White** has joined the Department of Psychiatry at OHSU as Clinical Supervisor of the Behavioral Health Clinic. I, **Delia Shugetsu Garigan** have been working as a tutor and substitute teacher (math and science) at the Catlin Gabel School. And **Lisa Tetsugan Zummach** has landed in Portland and is in search of administrative or bookkeeping work. If you have any inkling of her talents, do recommend her around your own workplace.

So there it is: inspiring, incomplete, and wholly yours. Enjoy this life!



Bokudo



Jikan



Kodo

## Grapefruit

Peel the rind.  
A tearing sound  
Mingles with  
The citrus smell  
While pieces drop  
Into the bowl  
To peel its soft  
Ceramic bell.

A thumb can  
plunge  
And part the  
halves,  
Pull a little  
Section free  
A hundred tiny  
Worlds of pulp  
Each a shining,  
Bounded sea.

The flavor riding  
Over tongue  
Crests upon  
The sourest back  
And lingers when  
The work of teeth  
Is over. Is there  
Any lack?

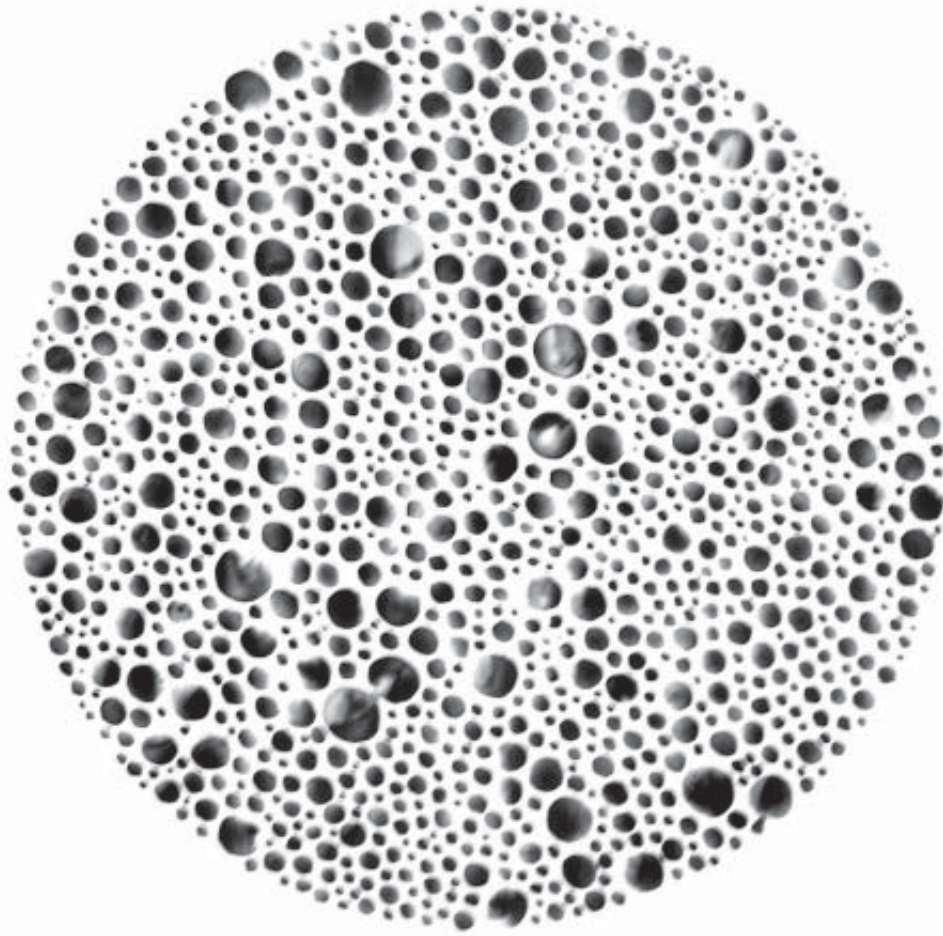
When the heart  
Grows full and ripe  
The time has come  
To peel the rind.  
While the fingers  
Peel the fruit  
The fruit is peeling  
free the mind.

- Ed Welsh

## Fragment

I've become more  
interested in what the leaves say to the wind  
than the word soup in my mind,  
the click and tock of this clock,  
it's death marching rhythm.  
I've really nothing of value to say,  
nine toes in the void,  
interested only in coffee  
and some quiet.

-Jogen Salzberg



**"Infinity"** by James Jaku Jack

"A drop of water takes form in emptiness."  
-Rich Shokyo Clark

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## Other Surangama Sutra Translations

### *Excerpt*

Ananda and all you who listen here should turn inward your faculty of hearing to hear your own nature which alone achieves Supreme Bodhi. That is how enlightenment is won.

For those in the Dharma ending age who wish from samsara to escape in their search for nirvana's heart it is best to contemplate worldly sound.

*-Translated by Charles Luk*

### *Excerpt*

Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara turns the stream inward to contemplate the mysterious sound of the great Brahma tide.

*-Translated by Dwight Goddard.  
From **A Buddhist Bible.***

## Hakuin on The Sound of One Hand

### *Excerpt*

What is the Sound of the Single Hand? When you clap together both hands a sharp sound is heard; when you raise the one hand there is neither sound nor smell. Is this the High Heaven of which Confucius speaks? Or is it the essentials of what Yamamba describes in these words: "The echo of the completely empty valley bears tidings heard from the soundless sound?" This is something that can by no means be heard with the ear. If conceptions and discriminations are not mixed within it and it is quite apart from seeing, hearing, perceiving, and knowing, and if, while walking, standing, sitting, and reclining, you proceed straightforwardly without interruption in the study of this koan, you will suddenly pluck out the karmic root of birth and death and break down the cave of ignorance.

*- Translated by Philip B. Yampolsky.  
From **Yabukoji, The Zen Master Hakuin: Selected Writings.***

*Also of interest:*

Ajahn Sumedho "The Sound of Silence" from the book *The Way It Is*  
Zen Master Hongzhi *Cultivating the Empty Field*



## REPAIRS ARE NUMBERLESS

Opportunities to help out with maintenance and repair around the monastery are constantly arising. If you are skilled in carpentry, painting, or any other construction or mechanical skill, and want to help out, please contact GVZM. Skilled or unskilled, we have work for you.

## Thank you

Lee Sheffield - gifts  
Nancy Skinner - linens  
Jukei Fran Eager - tea urn  
Elizabeth Van Horn - towels  
Lynn Eleanor - oak bookcase  
Brian Reynolds - light switches  
Leila Keltner - laptop, chairs, bed  
Tenkan Hugh O'Haire - spider catcher  
Virginia McGuinn - elegant hardwood bench  
Velma Kolbaba - thangkas, books, statues, bells  
Jim Scott - lots of good advice - infrared laser sight  
Wynn Curtis - expert carpentry skills on the Zendo roof  
Deston Denniston - wisdom and hard work on the Zendo floor  
Wayne Hacck - expertise, time, & rental of flooring equipment  
Deanne Lightfoot - garden stepping stones, dedicated garden help  
Gary & Connie Leinonen - manure Melinda Bell -double bed, sheets, tea  
Mark Unno, Josh Bartok, Dai-Bosatsu Zendo, Ellie Leishman, Jonathan Bower - books  
Lynn Moser - compressor for the walk-in fridge, washcloths & towels, hallway lights, lamp

Gratitude to the many generous volunteers, who gave their time, energy and resources to help us renovate the monastery zendo inside and out.

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## Help us decide who will be on the ZCO Board of Directors.

Each year, two of the directors' terms expire, leaving two open seats on the ZCO Board of Directors. This year, one of those seats is to be filled by the teacher's appointment; the other director is to be elected by voting members of ZCO. Anyone who has been a member for at least three years who is currently up-to-date on their dues is eligible to be on the ZCO Board.

To nominate someone for the open position please contact one of the nominating committee members (Larry Fuho Trussell, Greg Hill, Alex Rudinsky, Michael Sojin Kip, Bruce Podobnik, Steve Jokai Karakashian) before Friday, February 23. They will review the nominations and choose the new director, to be ratified by those voting members present at the ZCO annual meeting, scheduled for March 25th.



Questions? Contact me at [kojun@greatvow.org](mailto:kojun@greatvow.org)  
or 503-728-0654.

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## Artists & Poets



Share your drawings, photos, and short poems with the sangha for future editions of this publication. Hush the inner critic and offer the fruits of your creative practice to delight and edify. Submissions to [jogen@greatvow.org](mailto:jogen@greatvow.org)

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## Welcome New ZCO Members

Steve Bokudo Holly  
William Kelley  
Valerie Kyosho Kelly  
Diane Lancaster  
Kenneth Lancaster

Cydria Manette  
Anderson Rice  
Dr. Mae Sakharov  
Robert Hoisington  
Becky Hart  
Dan Robinson



## Invitation

You are invited to the ordination of Jogen Salzberg on December 10th, 10am at Great Vow Zen Monastery.

Please join us to support Jogen as he takes on his new role as a novice priest.

## Wish list

**Special request:** Carpentry skills or supplies to help maintain the monastery roof.

tall tables - printer cartridges (HP Officejet 9110, HP Laserjet 2420d) - new computer - flower bulbs (especially stargazer lilies) - harvesting knife - fish emulsion or other organic nitrogen fertilizer - netting for trellising - two queen-size bed skirts (neutral color) - *please no plants at this time*



## Sangha Harmony Teas

Check [zendust.org](http://zendust.org) for the date of the next tea



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Correction: Finch Sangha is now in Kennewick. It had been erroneously stated in our last issue that they were still in their original Richland WA location.

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P.O.Box 368  
Clatskanie, OR 97016

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### **GVZM Sesshins**

December 3 - 10 - Rohatsu - ZCO, DRZC and Eugene Zendo  
January 22 - 28 - Life Vows - Led by Hogen Bays  
February 19 - 25 - Pari-Nirvana - Led by Shohaku Okumura & Chozen Bays  
March 17 - 25 - Eight Realizations (9-day Sesshin) - Led by Hogen Bays

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### **PDC Classes**

Basics of Buddhism - January 14, 21, 28  
Zen at Work - February 11, 18  
Relationships - March 4, 11, 18

Zen Community of Oregon &  
Great Vow Zen Monastery  
503-728-0654  
info@greatvow.org  
**www.zendust.org**

### **ZCO Board meetings**

December 17, 2006  
February 4th, 2007  
March 11,  
March 25 - ANNUAL MEETING  
All Welcome!  
E-mail info@greatvow.org  
to confirm time and place.

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Editors Mushin Terris & Daitetsu Hull, copy editing by Shugetsu Garigan