

## ZEN COMMUNITY of OREGON ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES -- March 29, 2015

In attendance (\*Directors): Michael Sojin Kip, Larry Fuho Trussell, Nancy Kodo Conover, Judy Mukyo Perry, Linda Cho-on Frischmeyer, Eimyo Meladandri, Julie Grant-Weiss\*, Doug Onkatsu Kagel\*, Allen Whitaker-Emrich, Arlene Holmes, Chozen Bays Roshi\*, Hogen Bays Roshi, Celine Perrin, James Halsey, Jogen Salzberg, Gensho Welsh, Kisei Costenbader\*, Nancy Boros, Michael Kubetz, Soten Lynch, Carol Hernandez, Bill Dainen Kelly\*, Tim Landry, Haley Bokel, Cloe Margarita, Seiko Judy Stamp\*, Darah Shonin Ashton\*, Roberta Margolis, Aubrey de Clerk, Irmgard Friedburg, Cibyl Welch Kavan, Kotetsu Marmaduke, Daimei Marmaduke, Josh Shindler, Kailyn Kent, Heather Poole, Peter Gavin, Nan Whitaker-Emrich, Gloria Staat, Steve Fair, Laura Jomon Martin, Kassie Fisk, Heather Dorfman.

Meeting begun with zazen.

### **Welcome (Fuho):**

This meeting's function is to bring us together and up to speed as to what has happened over the last year.

We live in a world climate of fear but when we look locally there is a lot to be grateful for. Monastery training is stable and vibrant, and lots of work happening in the local Temple. In keeping with the law of impermanence, our job is to steer change to the dharma and envision positively how things might be and nudge karma in the right direction. There have been changes with leadership and teaching, changes with Trillium house. Formation of the Teachers' Circle. The teachers have been moving senior folks into co-leadership for sesshin to train them and to prepare for the teachers to step back someday.

### **Teacher Remarks (Hogen):**

What's happening at Great Vow:

- We offer opportunity: get to know one's own mind, to serve, and to touch the great mystery.
- New members of the teacher's circle: lay transmission to Kodo, Fuho, and Hogen, Jogen now able to do precepts,
- Monastery keepers: 3 ordained and one postulant
- Everyone has work to do: earn our living, train our minds, practice loving-kindness with guests and community, steward the facilities, live ethically, support local community and Sangha, teach Dharma.
- 2014: 900 hours of zazen, 75 days of sesshin, 90-day ango, 35 two hour classes, summer residency, 1 or 2 Intro to Zen practice, 3-4 beginner's mind, hosted thanksgiving, and other celebrations, marimba performance, and approximately 27,000 meals per year, retreats (mindful eating, aspiring heart, inner critic etc), Dan Brown retreat, roaring stillness, Arianna Weisman retreat, mindful eating UCSD and painting experience retreats, SZBA AZTA, ASZBA, teaching circle retreats, and at least 1500 people come through and stay from 1 year to 1 night, summer program,
- New benches outside and new benches in the dining area, shop cleaned up and looks good, bamboo is looking amazing. White Buddha garden has siding, moss garden is in progress
- Shrine of vows is up and running
- Kyogen died last year
- Core of monastery is Chozen: involved with so many parts of ZCO and GVZM.

Any single person who steps forward and says "I'm going to make something happen!" the potential is there! That is the core of our community, people bring things alive in their life and it spreads out!

## Heart of Wisdom Update (Kodo)

How do we manage HOW?

Temple council: Hogen, Nan, Darah, Jomon, Kotetsu, Gensho, come together and discuss issues of where we're going as Heart of Wisdom.

This year:

- A year of stability, kept sitting programs very consistent
- Each sit is like little Sanghas of their own. People are stepping forward and taking on service positions
- Sunday evening we're having a steady group
- Kotetsu is leading zendo 3 times each week
- Tuesday has discussion and sitting,
- Thursday dharma talks, Nan is taking on organizing the talks.
- Every weekday Gensho has led the 6am sitting
- All of these things have kept going and growing
- Steady continuous growth.
- Full moon metta has become an entrance gate for Heart of Wisdom. Often have a new group of people.
- Sangha Council: a group of senior practitioners, a hearthstone group meeting for 10 – 15 years, and they've taken the responsibility to staff Full Moon Metta.
- Ven. Mahinda from Australia who donated the Pagoda is the leader of the group who invited us to join Full Moon Metta, so we are connected with others doing the same all around the world.
- Steady attendance at Introduction to Zen Practice, and Zazenkai.
- Gensho leads Refuge Recovery on Monday nights. A program of recovery from addiction based on Buddhist principles. Started in June, had ~20 people; lot of regulars. Retreat day with 28 attendees.
- Julie and Eimyo are leading mindful eating meet-ups, keeping that alive. This is a follow up to the mindful eating retreat, for folks who already have some experience and work through different issues people have, it's a supportive environment to keep it going.
- 8 fold path class, both online and in person, 40 people signed up online. Met monthly as a study circle. Led by Kodo, Onkatsu and Shonin
- Mukyo began a Climate Change group, and just had the first Workshop, which explored feelings around climate change. 15-17 people attended.
- Library, headed by librarian Arlene. We have 600+ titles.
- Manny did a lot of work around the place, painting, Arlene led the Friday work practice, Kodo has continued to keep work going. No big changes.
- Rent out the space about 6-8 times a year to different groups, Jomon rented for Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction day long retreats, 3 MBSR teachers, and all of those students can do the retreats here so the most recent one had 60 people attending!
- Allen has been cleaning the place for years, Nan has been leading the garden for years, both of them are requesting more help and assistance.
- New offerings: Foundations of Buddhist Practice: Bansho has been leading this with about 25 people.
- We're almost debt free
- Next project: outside work this summer, new stairs in the garden, fenced area for the garbage. Perhaps in 2016 we'll consider redoing the kitchen.

None of this can happen without the generosity of the Sangha, the energy from GVZM and our teachers.

### **Trillium House (Kodo):**

It started a couple of years ago as a training house by Kishin and Ryushin, but when they left it became a practice house. Josh and Manny helped keep it going, Rachel used it as a transition to leave the monastery. Gensho, Hogen, Genmyo and Kodo helped work on this. Sharing the rooms hasn't worked too well, and we need an on-site manager who could keep the focus of practice going. It's been an interesting process for everyone to be involved in. Now all the folks are moving out, and back to saying "How does this work?" We're now at the point of getting input as to what C&H want to do with it.

Chozen: It has served as its purpose as a transition house. Ryushin transitioned from long residency and is now the priest for a group in Bend, and Rachel had also been a long term resident and is now moving out on her own and has a job, Josh is now transitioned off to Eugene to continue practice there, and Manny has moved on to be an airline pilot with special training in Arizona. Hogen has started thinking of the Trillium house as a university where people go through training and then move on, like GVZM. We have the coincidence of pretty much everyone leaving at once so we get to ask: is it working, how do we want to change it?

Kodo: we've used it as overflow for events, a guesthouse, and a place of practice. There are really positive parts of the house. Are we using it, how can we use it, or should we let it go and put energy elsewhere?

### **Children's program (Celine and Fuho):**

Gensho initially spearheaded the beginning of the children's program, we're now at a point of transition. Last year there was a small meeting with Chozen and a few parents, goal: to continue what Gensho had started. Parents who started volunteering have dropped out, in September they started a web site with the goal of setting up a calendar and it hasn't really helped so far, so officially we're down to 3 volunteers: Celine, Eimyo, and Christine from trillium house but she's leaving to return to the Netherlands in May. Feelings of isolation in part because there is just one volunteer at a time, need mentoring for volunteers. Feedback and information that would help carry this project along would be beneficial.

Started looking at what other Sanghas offer and would like to have another meeting to discuss what this program has brought and what we can do. We want something a bit more structured, with a curriculum of Buddhist teachings.

In the short term: Need volunteers. Sometimes its 1-2 kids, other days 5-6 kids; one volunteer is not enough.

### **Communication (Fuho for Seiko):**

Last year Seiko said the web site was in trouble, and the aim was to have a new web site up and running, which has been worked on by Seiko and Suzan and some volunteers and a web site person. The result is that it looks great. In addition we had a ZenWorks web store launch. And they continue to add a new collection of dharma talks. Thank you Suzan and Seiko!

### **Financial (Fuho for Bansho):**

Bansho reminds us that ZCO is a non-profit and the umbrella over GVZM, Heart of Wisdom and the overall ZCO Sangha. See treasurer's report.

- ZCO operates in the black
- List of income by category:

- o Event fees 28%
- o Membership 20%
- o Donations 22%
- o Facility Rental 10%
- o ZenWorks 10%
- o Sesshin 10%
- We have approximately 5 months of operating expenses in the bank.
- Debt: we are on track to pay off the GVZM mortgage in 2022, we will pay off the loan for repairs to HOW and Chozen and Hogen for purchase of GVZM this year.
- If any questions arise regarding the Budget, please ask the treasurer not the president.

### **Acknowledging service:**

Many service positions, as well as committees and work groups. All of them are volunteer.

- Seiko and Suzan for Communications
- Kodo, Kisei and Julie for Fundraising
- Kotetsu for Head of Zendo
- Service Positions: Many nights and one day that we practice here, its all due to the volunteers that come and dedicate their effort: Aubry, Ryotetsu, Amy, Shonin, Choon, Fred Pool, Daimei, William, Cibyl, Arlene, Nancy, Kassie, Heather, Mary, Pat, Frankie, Onkatsu
- Membership: Led for the last year by Onkatsu, and in the beginning of 2015 Arlene took over. New members words from Arlene: Greeting, badges, new member survey/interview, membership info spreadsheet, new member teas (will start again) announcements in circle, 1000 hands of Kanzeon which Jomon will continue to lead (helping with folks who may be ill and might need housework or meals as an example), hearthstones (Great thanks to Ryotetsu who just started a men's group). Big news: sudden influx of new members, in 2014 we had 14 new members, so far in 2015 we've had 12! Big thanks to Onkatsu for coming up with the idea of graduated level of membership dues. Challenges: need to get new member teas, a chance for new members to meet teachers and one another, and Hearthstones. We need senior students who can facilitate the groups.
- Gloria spoke about women's group at the monastery, going 3 years and started by Reiyu. 10 members, meet once per month to check in about life and practice, and then discuss something they are studying. Ona: "old women" most members are 65 or older.
- Sangha Harmony Committee: headed by Jomon.
- Heart of Wisdom Temple Council led by Kodo
- Programming: Nan
- 3 board officers: Treasurer Bansho, Secretary Daimei, President Fuho
- Childcare: Celine

### **Business Meetings: Elections**

ZCO board are elected and appointed, the board meetings are open to the Sangha and all are welcome and encouraged to attend. Chozen's term doesn't expire and she selects 2 directors, the remaining 4 are elected. Each serves 3-year terms, and can serve 2 terms in a row.

The open slot on the board as Onkatsu's first term is coming to an end. The Election's committee of Shonin, Dainen and Kisei with Arlene, Mitch and Jomon has put forward Onkatsu for a second term and he assented: call a vote of members of 1 year or longer, unanimously approved. Onkatsu is re-elected for second term.

Next year there will be 2 open slots. Election committee will include 3 board members: Dainen, Julie and Kisei, and 3 non-board members: Cho-on, Jogen and Kotetsu will serve. Alternates: Ryotetsu, Sojin and Danno. Membership votes to accept the slate, accepted as the elections committee for next year and their alternates.

Officers elected by the board. Fuho calls the meeting of the Board to order.

Bansho has agreed to continue as treasurer, Fuho has agreed to continue as president, Heather Dorfman has agreed to take on Secretary. All three voted in by board.

### **Concluding remarks (Chozen):**

We have done a series of workshops in the past of the evolution of Churches. Typically they start as a “family centered” or “pastor Centered” where everyone’s focus is on the Pastor. The next stage is “program centered” meaning that we have a number of programs and people involved, but people may not even have met the teacher. We have clearly become a program centered Sangha, which is a cause for rejoicing, because it means that the Sangha has a life of it’s own and will go on beyond our lifetime. We have a spreading of the teaching with Mushin in Corvallis and Hoben in Canada, and we have more transmitted teachers and teachers in a junior role to help carry on the teaching and supporting Chozen and Hogen to do so. We couldn’t want for anything more for this organization. When I sent the notice to the White Plum lineage, a whole bevy of congratulations poured in, so they’ve joined a new family. The more dharma, the more dharma, there’s plenty of suffering to go around! Every program that we evolve is a wonderful offering to the community. Transmission is a sign that we’ve lived with people long enough to trust them with the most precious things that we have –the dharma. When push comes to shove they will truly take refuge. The teachers will take sabbatical, and a 3-week trip to Europe, starting next Sunday.

Coming here and to the monastery gives them a change to clear their distress. They need support and help to make that first step of the next part of their life. We cannot gloat and coast, we’re always looking for where is the need next. There is a great need for this practice among young people and we all need to pitch-in in any way we can. It’s great that we’re growing but we’re growing for the right reasons—people see there is something of value here. We offer peace of mind, and community: a place called fellowship.

When Chozen signs a book, she often writes “Blessings along your path” but what is Blessings? One thing for sure is this Sangha.

**Meeting closed with chant.**

Submitted by Daimei Marmaduke