



Eugene Zendo

January 2003

Buddha Eye Dharma Association

Volume 3 Issue

EZ News

Expanded Spring Ango 2003

This upcoming Ango (Practice Period) will provide a new separate forum (mostly on Monday evenings) for members to make practice vows and share their experiences in a more intimate setting. This allows for more consistency on the regular Tuesday evening gathering - alternating double sits with Dharma talks and Q & A sessions. It will also introduce Mondo practice to the Sangha - or "dharma debate" where one person presents a verse and answers questions from the Sangha. Although the new schedule is expanded by 4 days, it should offer more opportunities for members to participate in different events. Thursday evening classes will focus on the Buddhist precepts and three other classes will be offered by Ejo on altars, chanting and forms. Fusatsu, an atonement ceremony which includes a renewal of vows, will be held twice during the 100 days. All events are open to everyone. We will have two weekend retreats, the final one will culminate in a Jukai ceremony where three EZ members formally receive the precepts and commit to the Buddhist path.

Ango Students:

Feb 3rd Monday 7-9 PM; Opening/ Practice Commitments
Mar 3rd Monday 7-9 PM; Practice Discussion
April 21st Monday 7-9 PM; Practice Discussion
May 14th Wednesday 7-9 PM; Ango Closing

Tuesday Evening Program:

Feb 4th Dharma Talk
Feb 11th Double Sit w/ Sanzen
Feb 18th Q & A
Feb 25th Double Sit w/ Sanzen
Mar 4th Dharma Talk
Mar 11th Double Sit w/ Sanzen
Mar 18th Mondo
Mar 25th Double Sit
April 1st Dharma Talk
April 8th Double Sit w/ Sanzen
April 15th Q & A
April 22nd Double Sit w/ Sanzen
April 29th Mondo
May 6th Double Sit
May 13th Dharma Talk

Ango Weekend Retreats:

Fri ñ Sun Feb 7th - 9th ; Weekend sesshin
opens with study of forms
Wed - Sun April 2nd - 6th; Jukai Sesshin

Thursday Classes/ Events

Feb 13th Buddhist Precepts Class #1
Feb 20th Buddhist Precepts Class #2
Feb 27th Buddhist Precepts Class #3

Mar 6th Buddhist Precepts Class #4
Mar 13th Buddhist Precepts Class #5
Mar 20th Fusatsu Ceremony
(Equinox & Full Moon 18th)
Mar 27th Sutra Chanting Class

(April 3rd No Class During Retreat)
April 10th Buddhist Precepts Class #6
April 17th Buddhist Precepts Class #7
April 24th Buddhist Precepts Class #8



New Look for the 2003 Eugene Zendo Steering Committee

January begins the new format for the steering committee which will meet once a month to assist in the care and well being of the operations of the Zendo. There's still time to get your name on the list before this month's meeting if you're interested in taking on the responsibility. See last month's newsletter or talk with Ejo if you have questions. The current list includes, Ejo, Ross, Carmelita, Thelma, Douglas, Lois, Robin, Sidney, Seido, Nick and Anne. Meetings continue to be open to the entire Sangha and everyone is encouraged to attend.

Financial Status

Due to recent expenses, our savings account has fallen below projected limits at \$1800 and will continue to do so as our \$700 in property taxes have come due and a chimney assembly needs purchasing to reduce heating bills. We encourage new members to pledge monthly support of the sangha if they are able, any amount helps, before we renew our dana commitments as a group in April. It has also been suggested that we have quarterly fundraisers to boost the account for unexpected expenditures and development. Bring your ideas and energy to the Steering Committee. Thank you all for the timely support from our pledging members that help maintain the operations of the zendo.

Begging Bowl

*May we, with all beings,
realize the emptiness of
the three wheels: giver,
receiver and gift.*

Tapestry Cloth
contact: Ejo

Garden Plants
contact: Thelma

Garden Tools
*weeders, forks,
rakes and more*

**Document
Shredder**
contact: Ejo

- Gassho



ON PRACTICE

Moving Through Time

I recently visited San Cristobal de las Cristobal, a town in Chiapas, Mexico. The Spanish town was founded in 1528 by General Mazariegos and his Aztec force. The main churches and two cathedrals were built with side churches for the local indigenous people, the highland Maya, who were segregated while being converted. Through all this time the local Mayans continued to carry out their own rituals and maintain their cultural traditions.

Until their last ten years all their clothing was woven on backstrap looms and each cultural group wore distinctive patterns and colors. This was before television and acrylic had arrived. So I was ambivalent about going to visit my friend, Marcey Jacobson, who is 91 now. She has lived there since 1957 and has created a photographic record of what "was" and is now passing away. I was last there six years ago and knew there had been much change. I was aware of my attachments to "the way it was" in 1983 which of course was not the way it was in 1583, 1683, 1783, 1883. I was attached to my feeling, my wonderful experience of driving into the center of town that first time and the delicious sense of mystery and the unknown.

Walking into the Chamula the first time and seeing many people sitting on the floor in front of arrangements of burning candles, chanting ritual prayer in Mayan dialect, musicians playing home made harps and guitars, and the copal smoke rising carrying the ritual prayers that "feed" the old Mayan gods was a stunning experience and I never wanted it to change.

So I arrived and hit the streets, me my critical mind all set to notice how many people were still wearing traditional clothes, how much manufactured stuff was being sold by the weavers in front of Santa Domingo cathedral, and how many cars crowded the narrow colonial streets. And then as I was walking along a street where cars are no longer allowed I saw a Chamulan women coming toward me with a shawl covered bundle on her back and as I got closer I noticed a tiny perfect foot sticking out of the bundle and with each step the baby foot did a little bounce. I wanted to walk backwards so I could keep watching that perfect baby foot keep time with the mother's steps. I felt that with that "seeing" that maybe just maybe I saw the cause of suffering and the cessation of suffering expressed in that perfect baby foot.

- Carmelita

Don't Leave Home Without It

The fundamental requirement of the way is home departure. What you should understand correctly is that the day of home departure is the day when the opposition between bodhi and the first thought of enlightenment is transcended.

-Dogen in Shukke or Home Departure

I may not know what Dogen means by this second sentence, but I *have* accepted his invitation. Returning from Rohatsu, I was reminded of a time when Hogan Bays said to us at dinner that sesshin was the heart of their practice. From the place of effort you could say *returning from sesshin* is the heart of our practice, for clearly learning to survive sitting still for hours on end, following the drill and eating in ritual is not the point of retreat. Contrary to appearances, we actually go away to do the *ordinary* and return to the *extraordinary* ñ seeing this exact functioning of this world of unrepeatable phenomena that we call suchness. Because of its intense nature, sesshin makes the initial contract clear, that is, to leave all nests. Sometimes we forget this when upon return to our regular life, our awareness is struck by the tenaciousness of the self's protective plan and we think *what happened to my practice?* We actually experience this in a subtler way when we leave the cushion or leave the zendo to return to the everyday. Who hasn't felt, *I was so calm and peaceful and now I'm confused or angry, isn't this practice working? When will we finally get it?* But just to notice this tension means that the practice *is* working, in that our constant insistence that this world be a certain way for us is made clear. Each time we go home, leaving home is well underway.

The practice of monks, *Shukke*, is really a perfect term, literally and metaphorically, to leave the sometimes-comfortable sometimes-claustrophobic construct of "I" and to venture forth. To leave the place where we are known. Even if we don't completely reproduce the practice form developed through the wisdom of thousands of years, we have the added advantage of formlessness to see into the hidden attachments that come with form. The vehicle has to be the hardest thing to let go of. The Buddhist ancestors were well aware of the seduction of stillness and freedom or monastic life to become a new dwelling place and didn't spare the stick on their disciples - shining the light on all their hiding places - especially in the shadow of Buddha's own image. They took everything away. Still, the message from this is neither to give up nor to try harder, both "I" based motives; it's just go forward wholehearted in this practice right before us and pay attention.

One of the ways that zen practice centers foster this environment of shukke is that we learn to both hold and take care of our members while also allowing each other the space to become aware of the cracks in our ego-identities and our strategies to avoid the pain or even pleasure. This takes a lot of courage on both sides, not to compulsively ameliorate another's discomfort for our own sake or to draw near or push away, but to see others clearly without wishing they were different. In that space we can experience the compassion of "bearing witness". It is said that true compassion does not get lost in the other's story. Taking refuge is not avoiding suffering. Some of my most valuable and painful experiences have been when I have been left alone to dwell in the lonely pain and grief of this small I and watch my own unique strategies for comfort or distraction. The compassion we seek to give and receive is not the Band-Aid variety; it is the tender and truthful regard of Kanzeon that speaks to our hearts. Why would we wish to avoid the truth we've exactly come seeking, the truth of the illusion of this limited self?

Returning to our lives within *shukke* requires as much care and effort as our retreats so that we may move through any conditions recognizing and letting go of our nests. Ironically, it allows for a more profound sense of caring and belonging. In *this* moment "leaving" and "returning" give way to one another and on one side you know that there really can be no departure or arrival. This may be where awakening and aspiration are one, but I have taken to heart Kyogen's words *not to hedge when it comes to the dharma* and for now this unsettled not-knowing keeps me going. -*Seido*

My First Rohatsu

One is struck by the timelessness of what we do. There is no sense of time yet the occasional glimpse out the window gives reference to daylight or darkness, the bells guide the motions.

While parading to and from the dining hall, I was aware of what we were doing others had been doing for hundreds of years in the same form, parading down the path with bowls and robes and felt very connected to all across the centuries. Returning to the zendo after the early morning meal one would hear the geese calling in the valley below and would be very tempted to look out at the early sunlight dancing on the trees and cliffs.....oooops, someone taller than me just clunked me in the head with their bowls, they must have been looking....Oh! the person in front of me just stopped.

- Anne

About the Eugene Zendo

www.eugenezendo.org

The Eugene Zendo is a Soto Zen Practice community open to everyone. The Buddhist teachings of compassion and wisdom are fostered amidst Sangha so that we can express these naturally in our daily life. The temple is entirely supported by donations from its members. There is no fee for any event, although donations are gladly accepted. Activities center around zazen (silent meditation), which is the foundation of our practice. Gatherings may also include service, chanting, dharma talks and study & discussion. If you are new to Zen practice, you may want to attend our periodic introduction class or just drop by 1/2 hour early before our Tuesday evening gathering to receive an orientation or contact our resident priest for more information:

Ejo McMullen 541- 302-4576 ejo@eugenezendo.org

Zendo Address: 2190 Garfield Eugene, OR 97405

Newsletter Items: Seido Martin hortonorganics@earthlink.net 925-3019 (contributions welcome!)

Web guy & contact to receive this newsletter: Ross Morris rossm@efn.org

EZ January 2003!

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
<i>Note: *If Double Sit Evenings are difficult, you may come and join us for only the one</i>	<i>of the 40 minute periods. Please leave or enter during Kinhin.</i>	<i>You may also join the morning zazen anytime before 6:50 AM Service</i>	1 HAPPY NEW YEAR	2 <u>5:30 -7:30 AM</u> Zazen/Service Temple Cleanup	3 <u>5:30 -7:30 AM</u> Zazen/Service Temple Cleanup	4 <u>8:30 AM</u> Zazenkai at the Eugene Aikikai
5	6 <u>5:30 -7:30 AM</u> Zazen/Service Temple Cleanup	7 <u>5:30 -7:30 AM</u> Regular Schedule 6:00 Garden Group Meeting 7:30-9:30 Double Sit/Service	8 <u>5:30 -7:30 AM</u> Zazen/Service Temple Cleanup	9 <u>5:30 -7:30 AM</u> Regular Format	10 <u>5:30 -7:30 AM</u> Zazen/Service Temple Cleanup	11 <u>8:30 AM</u> Zazenkai at the Eugene Aikikai
12	13 <u>5:30 -7:30 AM</u> Zazen/Service Temple Cleanup	14 <u>5:30 -7:30 AM</u> Regular Schedule 7:30-9:30 PM Service/ Zazen Dharma Talk	15 <u>5:30 -7:30 AM</u> Zazen/Service Temple Cleanup	16 <u>5:30 -7:30 AM</u> Zazen/Service Temple Cleanup 7 - 9 PM Intro to Zazen	17 <u>5:30 -7:30 AM</u> Zazen/Service Temple Cleanup	18 <u>8:30 AM</u> Zazenkai at the Eugene Aikikai
19	20 <u>5:30 -7:30 AM</u> Zazen/Service Temple Cleanup	21 <u>5:30 -7:30 AM</u> Regular Schedule 6:00 Zendo Mtg. 7:30-9:30 PM Service/ Zazen (Double Sit)	22 <u>5:30 -7:30 AM</u> Zazen/Service Temple Cleanup	23 <u>5:30 -7:30 AM</u> Zazen/Service Temple Cleanup 7 - 9 PM Home Altar Class	24 <u>5:30 -7:30 AM</u> Zazen/Service Temple Cleanup	25 <u>8:30 AM</u> Zazenkai at the Eugene Aikikai
26	27 <u>Reg. AM 7 - 9 PM</u> Buddhist Peace Circle at Thelma's	28 <u>5:30 -7:30 AM</u> Regular Schedule 7:30-9:30 PM Service/Zazen Sangha Q & A	29 <u>5:30 -7:30 AM</u> Zazen/Service Temple Cleanup	30 <u>5:30 -7:30 AM</u> Zazen/Service Temple Cleanup	31 <u>5:30 -7:30 AM</u> Zazen/Service Temple Cleanup	