

# SEVEN THUNDERS

newsletter

www.seventhunders.org

February 2017

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Many thanks to all who contributed their time and talents to this publication. Articles may not be reprinted without permission from the author.

## THE TRUE EYE

by Leonard Marcel

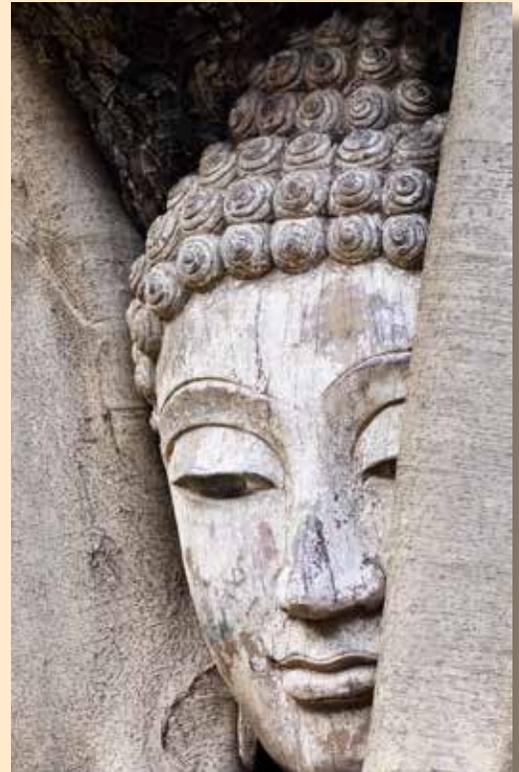
Chao-chou was planning to visit a mountain temple when an elder monk wrote a poem and gave it to him:

Which mountain is not a holy place?  
Why take walking stick and visit Mount Tai?  
If the golden lion appears in the clouds,  
It is not a happy omen at all.

After reading the poem, Chao-chou asked:  
"What is the true eye?"  
The monk made no reply.

The Iron Flute (Tettekai Tosui) is a collection of one hundred koan compiled in Japan in the eighteenth century by a Soto master named Genro (n.d.). Now flutes can be made from any of several kinds of wood, including bamboo, as well as certain other materials, and they have a series of graduated openings and a mouthpiece to create music. A Zen flute, however, is different. It is made of iron and has no holes. So how does one make music with such a thing? Let us see what this case can tell us.

The protagonist in this case is Chao-chou Ts'ung-shen (Joshu Jushin, 778-897). He is well known to



us from his appearance in cases in other koan collections. At the age of eighteen, he met his teacher, Nan-chuan (Nansen Fugen, 748-835) and trained with him for forty years until his teacher's death. At the age of sixty he began to travel throughout China, visiting prominent Zen masters of the time for twenty years before settling at the age of eighty in a ruined temple in northern China. There, for the next forty years he taught a group of students. He is sometimes regarded as the greatest Zen master during that golden age of Ch'an (Zen) in China.

In this case, the old monk is asking, in effect, "What are you seeking out there? What are you hoping to experience, a vision of Manjusri in the mountain clouds? What an illusion! Such is of no use to a person of Zen. No seeking outside can bring true happiness." In other words, awaken to your own inner wisdom. See with your own true Dharma Eye. As Hakuin Ekaku (1686 -1768) tells us: This very place is the Lotus Land. This very mountain, right where you are right now, is the abode of Manjusri.

## IN THIS ISSUE:

The True Eye	pg 1
7 Thunders retreats & events	pg 2
7 Thunders sittings	pg 3
Other Pacific Northwest Groups	pg 3
Membership Form	pg 3
A Letter from the President	pg 4
From Brother Mark	pg 4
Rohatsu at Stones & Clouds	pg 5
October Kosesshin	pg 6
Off the Cushion: In the Classroom	pg 7
Bend Retreat	pg 10
Zazenkai Information	pg 11
Spring Kosesshin Registration	pg 12
June CIR Registration	pg 13
Summer Sesshin Registration	pg 14

Continued on page 8



## SEVEN THUNDERS RETREATS & EVENTS

### FIRST SATURDAY SITTINGS

Monthly "First Saturday" sittings continue in Bethany House at the Trappist Abbey just north of Lafayette, OR. Orientation is offered at 8:15 a.m. and formal group sitting begins at 9:00 a.m. A talk by the teacher begins at 10:00 a.m., which is followed by opportunities for private interviews with the teacher. Formal sitting ends at noon. There is no charge, but donations for teacher support and for the Trappist Abbey are gratefully accepted. Here is the schedule for the remainder of 2017:

- March 4, Leonard Marcel
  - April 1, Leonard Marcel
  - May 6, Sister Joan Saalfeld
  - June 3, Brother Mark Filut
  - \*July 8, Sister Joan Saalfeld
  - August 5, Leonard Marcel
  - \*September 9, Leonard Marcel
  - October 7, Sister Joan Saalfeld
  - November 4, Leonard Marcel
  - December 2, Brother Mark Filut
- \* Indicates 2nd Saturday of month.

### RETREAT SCHEDULE 2017

- April 7 - 8 – Meditation retreat in Bend, led by Leonard Marcel. For registration information, please contact Leanne Latterell at leannelatterell@bendbroadband.com or call 541.923.7607.
- April 21 - 23 – Zen Kosesshin at Stones and Clouds led by Leonard Marcel. Registration information on page 12.
- June 22 - 25, – CIR at Our Lady of Guadalupe Abbey with Sister Joan Saalfeld. Registration information on page 13.
- July 11 - 15 – Zen sesshin at Stones and Clouds led by Leonard Marcel. Registration information on page 14.
- September 29 - October 1 – Zen kosesshin at Stones and Clouds co-led by Leonard Marcel. and Lee Ann Nail. Registration information in a future issue.
- December 3 - 8, – Zen Rohatsu sesshin at Stones and Clouds led by Leonard Marcel. Registration information in a future issue.

### NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTIONS

Published three times a year, our newsletter is a benefit of Seven Thunders membership. Prospective members who would like to receive the newsletter can be added to the mailing list by contacting Nancy Roberts at nroberts@peak.org. Complimentary copies will be sent for up to one year or until January dues requests are mailed. After that, if membership dues (full membership currently \$30 per year) are not received by March, you will be sent an announcements-only version of the newsletter. ⚡

### ZAZENKAI

Held at the Stones and Clouds (*Rai'un*) Zendo in Lake Oswego, led by Leonard Marcel. Details on page 11.

- February 18
- March 18
- October 28 ⚡





**JOIN SEVEN THUNDERS – MEMBERSHIP FORM**

Membership is open to all persons interested in developing and continuing their contemplative prayer or Zen practice, regardless of religious affiliation. We encourage you to renew your membership – or join us – if you have not yet done so this year. Dues are \$30 per year. For those who can afford it, the Board encourages one-time or periodic contributions beyond the basic dues amount.



**SEVEN THUNDERS  
2017 MEMBERSHIP AND DONATION**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership (\$30)  
 I am pleased to be able to include a Donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Total enclosed is \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to Seven Thunders and address this form with your check to Seven Thunders Treasurer Nancy Roberts, 3830 NW Polk Ave, Corvallis OR 97330. Although payment by check is preferred, you may also utilize the Seven Thunders website to pay with Paypal/credit card. Simply go to [www.seventhunders.org](http://www.seventhunders.org) and click on the **Contribute** tab.

**SEVEN THUNDERS LOCAL SITTINGS**

**PORTLAND AREA SITTINGS**

■ Monday evenings at Stones and Clouds (*Rai'un*) Zendo, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m., zazen & dokusan. Contact: Leonard Marcel at 503.636.9009 or [marcellj@hotmail.com](mailto:marcellj@hotmail.com).

**SALEM SITTINGS**

■ Wednesdays at the Salem Zen Center: 'On the Way Home' zazen from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. and an evening program (chanting, zazen, silent tea and Dharma talk) from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. 504.949.3188. [SalemZenCenter.com](http://SalemZenCenter.com)

**CORVALLIS SITTINGS**

■ Monday evenings, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. (except Labor Day) at CMLC, 128 SW 9th St, Corvallis. Contacts: Jane Huyer, 541.752.6597, [ahuyer@comcast.net](mailto:ahuyer@comcast.net), or Glenna Pittock, 541.752.6139, [gpittock@yahoo.com](mailto:gpittock@yahoo.com)

**OLYMPIA SITTINGS**

■ Monday evenings, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., and every Saturday morning from 6:00 to 8:00 a.m. in the Chapel at St. Michael Church, 1021 Boundary St. SE, Olympia, WA 98501. Three rounds of sittings (from 6:00 to 7:30) are followed by a reading from contemplative writers and a questions and comments period. Contact: Pat Harvey, 360.357.8401 [patri-ciamharvey@comcast.net](mailto:patri-ciamharvey@comcast.net)

**REDMOND SITTINGS**

■ Monday evenings, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. at 529 NW 19th, Redmond, OR 97756. Contact: Richard Lance or Leanne Latterell at 541.923.7607. ✨

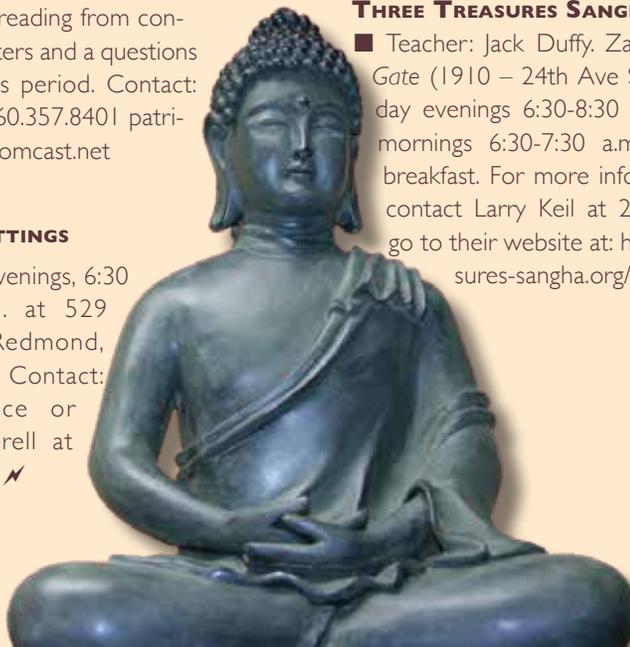
**OTHER PACIFIC NORTHWEST  
DIAMOND SANGHA GROUPS**

**NO SANGHA, PORT ANGELES**

■ Teacher: Kristen Larson. Zazen: Saturday mornings, 8:00 to 9:30 a.m. For more information, please contact Kristen Larson at 360.452.5534 or [NOSangha@aol.com](mailto:NOSangha@aol.com).

**THREE TREASURES SANGHA, SEATTLE**

■ Teacher: Jack Duffy. Zazen at *Dharma Gate* (1910 – 24th Ave S.) on Wednesday evenings 6:30-8:30 p.m. and Friday mornings 6:30-7:30 a.m., followed by breakfast. For more information, please contact Larry Keil at 206.322.8759 or go to their website at: <http://three-treasures-sangha.org/> ✨





## A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Greg Smith

For many of us, I imagine that our contemplative or zen practice throughout the fall has provided a steadying influence in the midst of the political uncertainty and change associated with November's election. Leonard's words after Monday night zazen or in his New Year's letter point to the importance of returning to what is most essential in our lives and to bringing the heart of compassion and generosity to whatever events confront us. This is clearly a time to remain grounded in our spiritual practice.

With regard to the business of Seven Thunders, I want to express my gratitude to Josh Shindler and Dan Brown for responding so quickly to our request for someone to take responsibility for the Seven Thunders website. This is one of the tasks Doug Speers quietly attended to for over a decade. Josh and Dan have spoken with Doug and are learning the ins and outs of making corrections and additions. If you notice errors or omissions that need to be attended to, please let me know, and I will forward the information to them.

Looking to the future, we will be in need of the services on the board of someone willing to take on another of the roles Doug played for many years, that of Treasurer. Given the complexity of this task, it would be helpful if someone with appropriate accounting skills could come forward and volunteer for this position as well as board membership. Nancy Robert's term on the board will be coming to a close in July, 2017, and she is interested in passing on this job to someone else. If you have the interest and the skills, please speak with or e-mail me about helping the organization in this way.

During the annual meeting in July, the possibility of participating in some kind of service activity was raised. Dan Dickinson suggested volunteering at the Oregon Food Bank, something he has done regularly with other associ-

ates for a number of years. Nine of us will be going to the OFB on Tuesday, February 7 to bag food between 6-8:30 that evening. If you are interested in participating in this kind of service activity, please let me know, and I'll be sure to include you in the next doodle poll I send to assess good dates for a second evening at the Food Bank. We're looking forward to this opportunity to be with one another in a different space and to offer dana to the broader community.

Finally, Teresa once again pulled together a beautiful holiday card to serve as a reminder about renewing your membership or becoming a new member of Seven Thunders. If you have not yet sent the form and your annual membership fee (\$30) to Nancy Rob-

erts, please do so within the next few weeks. Members receive a discount for longer retreats as well as access to Leonard's writings and archived newsletters on our website (if you need a user name and password to access these, please let me know and I'll forward your request to Dan and Josh). We are also grateful for donations that have been made to Seven Thunders at the end of the year. This ongoing support is one of the reasons we are able to charge retreat fees that have remained essentially unchanged for a number of years. General donations, as well as donations to provide scholarship assistance, are deeply appreciated. Thanks to everyone who has offered this kind of financial dana to Seven Thunders. ✨

### FROM BROTHER MARK





## ROHATSU SESSHIN, DECEMBER 2016

by Céline Mattersdorff

It was a cold and rainy evening and already time to leave for Skyland Drive. I said goodbye to my family and heard a "Have fun!" from my husband.... If only he knew, I remember thinking.... Sesshins are long and demanding, and I was not THAT eager to go.

On top of the hill, the atmosphere was far from the solemnity I had imagined. I would even say it was rather festive. Our Tenzo had set the tone with a beautiful dinner: gratin of artichokes on a bed of greens, followed by a lavender custard for dessert. No wonder there were bursts of joy and excitement as we sat together for an informal dinner.

But it was not long before the house grew quiet. And everything was finally ready for sesshin to begin: samu assignments for our ten participants, emergency phone numbers and instructions from our four officers - Dan Brown (*Tanto*), Dan Dickinson (*Ino*), Paul Kirkland (*Jikijitsu*) and Lisa Rosser (*Jisha*).

From the days that followed, I must confess that nothing gave me greater satisfaction than chopping vegetables and working in the kitchen. I was humbled at the sight of our Tenzo working tirelessly to prepare artful and nourishing meals for everyone. To me, it felt like a pure expression of love and devotion.

It's not to say that other elements of the retreat were less important. They just touched me in a different way. Our Roshi's gentle guidance, the light he shone on the Great Bodhisattva Vows during teisho and the stillness exuding from everyone in the zendo, all created a beautiful and unique container. It's that container that helped me keep steadfast in the face of complaints, doubts and tiredness.

Our sesshin ended prematurely due to forecasts of freezing rain. I went home feeling somewhat disappointed, and somewhat relieved it was over. But something had grown inside me. A place that felt light and strong. A place so spacious I could now greet my boys' endless calls for attention with love and patience. A place I want to stay close to, even if it takes hard work. ✨



**Photos: Top:** Outdoor kinhin. **Middle:** Talking at end of sesshin. **Right:** Standing, left to right: Paul Birkeland, Dan Dickinson, Lisa Rosser, Lee Ann Nail, Greg Smith, Kaylin Kent, Josh Shindler, Céline Mattersdorff, Dan Brown. Sitting: Teresa & Leonard Marcel.



**OCTOBER KOSESSHIN IN PHOTOS – OCTOBER 20 - 22, 2016**



October Kosesshin at Stones & Clouds was co-led by Leonard Marcel and Lee Ann Nail.

In attendance, pictured, clockwise from top left, were: Josh Shindler, Kailyn Kent, Ted Fontaine, Matthew Mctigue, Mike Seely, Eric Roost, Dan Dickinson and Lee Ann Nail. Not pictured: Jenny Brausch, Liam Engle, Phil Smith, Mark Schwier, Jim Sisley, Greg Smith and Teresa Marcel.

*Photos by Mike Seely and Teresa Marcel*





## OFF THE CUSHION: TAKING REFUGE IN THE CLASSROOM

by Kailyn Kent

It's 10:38 am. I've been busy herding cats for three hours, and by cats I mean two rounds of distracted sixth-grade students. The lesson plans I spent hours creating bear only a passing resemblance to the activities we've ended up doing, that reality seemingly demands. Trying to build in a little spontaneous movement, I invite the kiddos into a kinetic activity that degenerates as we move closer to lunch: "Head to the "A" corner if your book is fiction, head to the "B" corner if your book is nonfiction!" Each kid grudgingly walks to whatever corner their best friend is closest to, claps them on the shoulder, and starts quietly chatting as I attempt to bring their attention back.

The lunch-bell blares, and the students rush out. All pretense of interest vanishes. Books and pencils tumble to the floor as thirty children push their way out. I flop back into my chair. The lesson wasn't great. Lightbulbs didn't go off. Several students were completely confused. All were more than ready for something they could understand: food. The illusion that I feel at home in a middle school dissolves amidst the slamming of locker doors and the aggressive bustle of the hallway, noises ruder and sharper than any New York City subway station. I want to curl up and take refuge in something, some bigger picture. I take a breath, and attempt to be as intimate as possible with the shiny green linoleum floor under my feet. I whisper, "I take refuge in the Buddha. I take refuge in the Dharma. I take refuge in the Sangha." Then I remember-- my sangha isn't just a sitting



group. My sangha is my class, and every other being on this planet. No escape!

This moment, and many others like it, have happened during my first year of teaching in Salem, Oregon. I constantly come back to my Zen practice while teaching. Practice led me to teach in the first place; I realized I wanted to become a teacher during my first long retreat, which was spent observing my life-long, incessant daydreams about teaching (among other things.) Fortunately, this intuition has been confirmed on the job. I feel fully present while teaching, and it opens my heart in ways far outside my own control.

While my practice supports my teaching, it also forces me to confront my violence towards other people and myself. Why is it so easy for eleven-year-olds to threaten my ego? I watch myself feel flattened when a student rolls her eyes at my joke. I feel helpless when a boy begins to cry when he can't finish an assignment. I feel held hostage by my class clowns. I silently rage about students' narrow obsession with mass-marketed plunk

and their phones. Sometimes, I watch myself crouch down to comfort them, apologize for a mistake, and try to connect with them. At other times, I watch myself snatching their cellphones away with a nasty remark, or lampooning their unruly distraction over a squirrel. I watch every condescending thing I say to them, every dark revenge-fantasy that crosses my mind, and every referral I write. It hurts to accept the fact that I do these things.

As my students jump out of their seats to look at a squirrel, I also know that squirrels are wondrous. I have also rolled my eyes at teachers, and cried over feeling left behind. And when I was eleven years old, I cared about nothing but mass-marketed plunk. When people react to the world in these ways, they are attempting to make the world a better place, even if only for themselves. All are attempts at compassion, even when selfish and misguided. So, incident by incident, I try not to grasp onto control or anger. I take a breath and remain present, and trust that the chaotic interplay of desires, emotions, and intentions in my classroom is perfectly fine – maybe even perfect. ✨

### ABOUT "OFF THE CUSHION"

Off the Cushion is a regular feature of our newsletter. We invite you to submit articles about what your practice means to you, of activities off the cushion which feel like an extension of your practice. Please e-mail your submissions to newsletter editor Greg Smith at [gasmith@clark.edu](mailto:gasmith@clark.edu). ✨



## THE TRUE EYE, *continued from page 1*



Chao-chou (Joshu) responds by asking the old monk, "What is the true Dharma eye?" This question, at once sincere and challenging, foretells the giant of Zen he will become. We are all familiar with the deluded eye: the fundamental delusion of an independent self separate from other selves and the resultant delusions, such as the fear of being found wanting, because we feel inadequate; the unfavorable self-comparisons, criticisms and evaluations; the old stories we tell ourselves and the old dramas we keep acting out in our lives. Our old dramas are convenient fictions so that we do not have to do the hard work of waking up. Instead, we stay with what is familiar, such as our habitual reactions of anger and fear to anything that threatens our fragile egos. We may act as if we know what is going on, but because everyone and everything is filtered through our own personal agenda, we cannot see or hear anything as it truly is. Even some spiritual achievement, if we cling to it, becomes an impediment to true vision. There is an old saying: "Although gold dust is precious, in the eye it causes blindness."

Our old stories and dramas, of which we are always the star, also impede the development of compassion. When we feel threatened by another's attitude or behavior, we cannot see its source in the pain that the other

feels. Since we are so skilled at keeping our own pain buried, we know very little about another's pain. On this path we endeavor to know the other's pain and to respond to it with compassion, but also to know our own pain well enough to see what arises from it so that we can prevent the next stage of blame, attack and justification.

Because of the introspective process of our zazen, we see our lack of attention, lack of awareness, lack of kindness. We see more and more immediately our unhelpful habits, our conditioned self, and with each complete exhalation we let go.

So how do we answer Chao-chou's (Joshu) question? What is the true eye?

The verse to case 19 of the Wu-men kuan (Mumonkan) helps us here:

The spring flowers, the autumn moon,  
Summer breezes, winter snow,  
If useless things do not clutter your mind,  
Every season is the best season.

In other words, when we see with the true eye, whatever we see is It. And not-It. Both true at the same time. Do you see?

After all, what are we doing in this practice? We are dropping all useless things. In fact, anything to which we are clinging is useless. This is the revolutionary nature of our practice. We are here to realize and experience this uncluttered mind. With the true eye of discernment, we clearly see all beings in their original state, right here, right now. Then, every season is a good season, every day a good day.

This is why zazen and sesshin are so crucial to our practice. Daily zazen is essential; sitting regularly with the sangha is essential; but making the time for more intensive one day or multiple day practice is most crucial as well. The deeper we can go into our practice, the more open and awake to the truth of our interconnected experience we can become.

When Chao-chou (Joshu) asked, "What is the true eye?" the old monk did not answer. How do you see his silence here? There are many kinds of silence on this path: one is the silence of being clueless ("I do not know, cannot say, am unable to respond"). Another is the silence of waiting to see what the teacher will do next; that never works. Another is silence as practice. And still another is silence as instruction, the most famous example of which is that of Vimilakirti when asked by Manjusri about the gate to non-duality.

Many years after the encounter which this case recalls and after Chao-chou (Joshu) had settled in his own temple, he did go to Mount Tai. This time, however, he was not seeking anything, but he was investigating an old woman who ran a teashop at the bottom of the five peaks. The story is told in Case 31 of the Wu-men Kuan (Mumonkan). The case recounts that there were always monks wanting to go to the sacred mountain to pay homage to Manjusri, perhaps hoping to see some vision or to have a spiritual experience in the mountain clouds. At a fork in the road, each one would stop at the teashop and ask for directions to Mount Tai. Invariably, the old tea woman would answer, "Go straight ahead." The monk would walk on, no doubt thinking that the tea woman had merely been giving directions and completely missing her Mind. Expecting something else, we do not see what is right in front of us. After the monk had gone on a short distance, she would say, "A good, respectable monk, but he too goes on like that."

Evidently the monks at the monastery of Chao-chou (Joshu) who had had encounters with this woman were quite distressed to



## THE TRUE EYE, *continued from page 8*

be caught short by her. What did she mean? Why was she disrespecting them? When one of them told the teacher about this, he said, "I will go and investigate the old woman for you." So the next day he went and asked of the woman the same question and she gave the same response. Upon returning, Chao-chou (Joshu) said to his students, "I have investigated the old woman for you."

What did he see? Who was the old tea woman of Mount Tai? Who are you? What is the true eye? What is the one taste of truth? It is not about names, nor about directions. When we are standing upright on our own two feet, right here is true north. Great master Hakuin (1686 – 1768) posed the same question when he asked: "How can one penetrate to the True Face of the Lotus?" Then, he said: "It is nothing more than seeing into your own mind.... Courageously and firmly... investigate it to the end.... You will see right before you, in the place where you stand, the True Face of the Lotus, and at once your body and mind will drop away. Opening the True Eye is seeing that this very world is itself the brilliance of Nirvana." (Orategama letter)

This path is the Buddha Way, the path of the awakened one. And on this path we begin with zazen and go straight ahead. We come together in harmony, which is the very definition and life of sangha, and engage in zazen, which is not a process of becoming someone else, but of becoming less. Zazen strips us bare. No self, but also no no-self. Both are constructs and concepts.

When Shakyamuni Buddha sat down under the tree and committed himself to stay there until he realized something, he was just as we are – a simple human being who needed to awaken. This not knowing penetrated to the deepest extent that everything fell away and the True Eye opened.

What had become clear to him? The same that had become clear for Chao-chou (Joshu) and Hakuin. There is no secret to it. All we have to do is sit down as they did, be-

come quiet, let go and prune away all that is extraneous. No inside, no outside. And then manifest that mind in everything we do – completely, throughout life, with nothing left out.

In case 23 of this Iron Flute koan collection, master Hsueh-feng (Seppo Gison, 822 – 908) says to a student: "Do not stop until your ax cuts to the very center of the tree." Each of us is using our ax and our shears, cutting and pruning. This is assiduous daily practice – cutting and pruning away this powerful delusion of a separate self, an individuality which asserts itself so imperiously at the slightest threat to the well-defended ego. It is a thick tree and needs to be cut through to the center, leaving no trace.

Although we spend only a few hours together during sesshin or zazen, practice does not end with the bell or at the door. What is it that follows then? What is that? Do not let even a little bit slip past unattended, neglected. Every tiny bit of your life is all of it at every moment. None of it is hidden anywhere.

This intensity of practice is not just for sesshin, but for every moment of every day. In our culture, which is so geared toward entertainment, distraction and the five second sound-byte or image, every one of us has at some level pressing questions about life, death, change and loss. These questions demand our attention, demand resolution. It is these questions which most often bring us to submit ourselves to the rigors of Zen practice. We hope and eventually trust that there is a resolution to this dis-ease (dhukka).

So we sit down – every day – and we come to zazen and sesshin. Yet, we find that sitting down and becoming still and silent can be difficult and frustrating, not because that is the nature of Zen practice but because it is the nature of how we experience the mind. The untangling of the mental and emotional webs we have been weaving for so long takes discipline and patience. Silence and stillness. Back straight. No moving. Do not scratch that itch!

It seems counter-intuitive that such constraint and restriction leads to real freedom. Yet, when we submit to the discipline of the practice, there is a very deep kind of commitment and liberation. By giving ourselves to the practice and committing ourselves to it, we confirm it for ourselves. Then we can do it completely, day after day, and nothing can impede us. Whatever arises in our day is not an obstacle, not an impediment, but just grist for the mill of practice. It becomes our intimate friend – the True Eye.

In his commentary on this case, Nyogen Senzaki (1876 - 1958) quotes a Chinese poem of the T'ang dynasty:

All mountains are the temple of Manjusri.  
Blue ones are far and green ones near.  
Each has the Bodhisattva enshrined.  
Why climb Mount Tai?  
The sutras depict Manjusri riding a  
golden lion.  
You may see such an illusion in the  
mountain clouds,  
But it is not real to the eye of a Zen  
person.  
It does not bring the happiness that is  
sought.

He then quotes another koan: "Avalokitesvara has a thousand hands and on each one of them is an eye?" Which one of them is the True Eye? Which is the true eye of the Bodhisattva of Compassion? Kanzeon (Avalokitesvara) is not only the Bodhisattva of Compassion, but is also known as The One Who Gives No Fear.

To give no fear also means having no fear. No fear, no anger, no worry, no greed, no delusion. You, as Kanzeon, practice deep prajna paramita and see that all five skandhas are empty. Every koan is a metaphor for your life. Each one is about you yourself. If you can penetrate this Kanzeon koan, you will also be able to answer Chao-chou's (Joshu) question. What is the true eye? ⚡



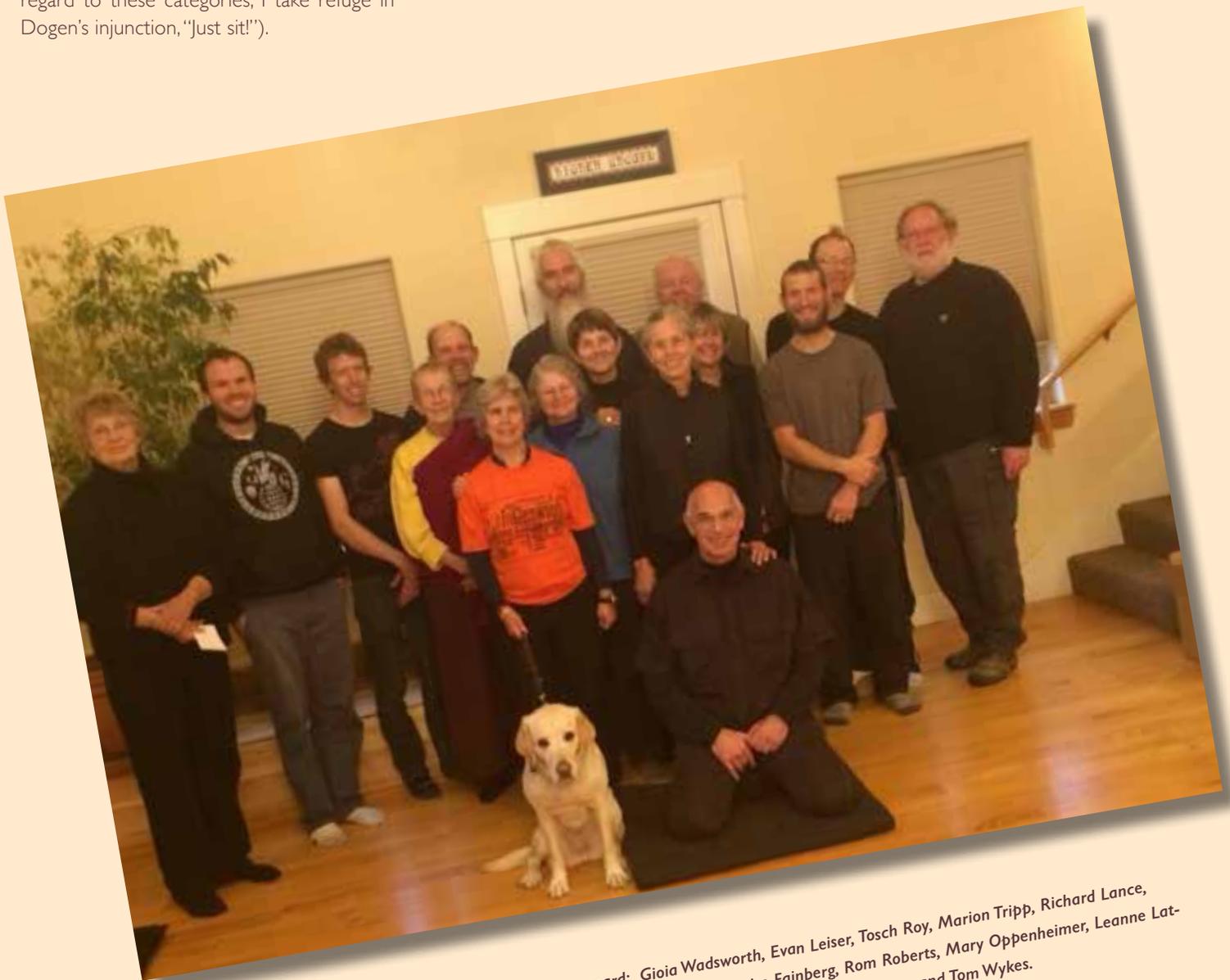
## BEND RETREAT IN OCTOBER 2016

by Denise Fainberg

For several years now, Leonard has been making semi-annual trips to Bend at the invitation of the Bend sitting community. As Bend's small practicing community includes Zen, Christian and unaffiliated practitioners, these retreats are a bit different in that the chants and Leonard's talks stem from both Eastern and Western traditions. His profound experience with both Buddhism and Christianity are a boon to all of us seeking to deepen our practice, whether it be called "prayer" or "meditation" (sometimes, with regard to these categories, I take refuge in Dogen's injunction, "Just sit!").

On his latest visit, fifteen participants enjoyed deep sitting Friday evening, October 28, and all Saturday. The day included a pot-luck lunch and a short work period, as well as two talks by Leonard and interviews with him. It was a cool, rainy day – unusual for Bend! – but that did not dampen our practice. Deep bows! ⚡

The next meditation retreat in Bend led by Leonard Marcel is scheduled for April 7 - 8, 2017. For registration information, please contact Leanne Latterel at [leannelatterel@bendbroadband.com](mailto:leannelatterel@bendbroadband.com) or 541.923.6707. ⚡



Left to right, behind Leonard: Gioia Wadsworth, Evan Leiser, Tosch Roy, Marion Tripp, Richard Lance, Nancy Stevens and her service dog Abby, Denise Fainberg, Rom Roberts, Mary Oppenheimer, Leanne Latterel, Hugh Mitchell, Lindsay Peters, Andrew Goldstein, Joe Barrett, and Tom Wykes.



## ZAZENKAI & STUDY GROUPS AT STONES & CLOUDS



**Z**azenkai are an opportunity for intense practice with the Sangha in a shorter timeframe than either a Kosesshin or a Sesshin, as they are limited to one day only.

There will be three Zazenkai in 2017 at the Stones and Clouds (*Rai'un*) Zendo in Lake Oswego, led by Leonard Marcel.:

- February 18, 2017
- March 18, 2017
- October 28, 2017

These take place on Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. In addition to formal zazen, the day includes a sutra service, teisho, and dokusan. Please bring a brown bag lunch, to be eaten in silence. Teas and water will be provided. You are asked to wear plain conservative clothing of dark or subdued color – no shorts or sleeveless tops, please. Zabutons, zafus, low and high benches will be provided, but if you have a favorite zafu or bench (no chairs) please feel free to bring it.

While there is no set fee for zazenkai, a **donation of \$20** is much appreciated to help cover costs.

Zazenkai is followed by a study group, to which all are invited. Study group lasts approximately one hour, and is centered on a reading agreed upon at the end of the previous study group.

Please contact Teresa Marcel at [tdmarcel@mac.com](mailto:tdmarcel@mac.com) or 503.636.9009 to reserve a place for Zazenkai, and for more information. ⚡





**SPRING KOSESSHIN AT STONES AND CLOUDS ZENDO  
APRIL 21 - 23, 2017**



members. Donations for such scholarships are both appreciated and tax-deductible.

**RETREAT REGISTRATION:**

To register for the retreat, please either pay your fee or deposit online at [www.SevenThunders.org](http://www.SevenThunders.org) or send a check (payable to **Seven Thunders**) to retreat organizer and registrar **Teresa Marcel, 1333 Skyland Drive. Lake Oswego, OR 97034**. Questions? Please contact Teresa Marcel at 503.636.9009 or [tdmarcel@mac.com](mailto:tdmarcel@mac.com)

**RETREAT DETAILS:**

Space is limited to a maximum of 16. Additional applicants will be wait-listed in case of cancellations.

This is a non-residential retreat. For non-commuter participants, limited accommodations in members' homes may be available. Information about local accommodations and carpooling will be sent to out-of-town registrants upon request after receiving your registration and deposit.

As always, total silence will be observed for the entire sesshin. All attending are required to participate fully in the daily sitting and work schedule, including cleanup at the end of the retreat.

You are asked to wear plain conservative clothing of dark or subdued color during sesshin. No shorts or sleeveless tops, please. Zabuton, zafus, low and high benches will be provided, but if you have a favorite zafu or bench (no chairs) please feel free to bring it. ⚡

In lieu of Spring Sesshin, a Kosesshin will be offered in April at Stones & Clouds. This weekend sesshin will begin Friday, April 21, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., continue Saturday, April 22, 6 a.m. to 9 p.m., and conclude Sunday, April 23, 6 a.m. to 10 a.m. The Kosesshin will be led by Leonard Marcel.

**RETREAT FEE:**

Kosesshin: \$75 members, \$95 non-members. Includes all meals (vegetarian) on Saturday and Sunday breakfast.

A deposit of half the retreat fee is required with your registration; payment in full is appreciated. Any balance is due no later than two weeks before retreat begins. Should you need to cancel, all but \$25 is refundable until that time; after two weeks prior to the retreat, \$35 is refundable.

You will receive a confirmation from the registrar. If for any reason you find the full fee a barrier to attending, please contact the registrar requesting a scholarship. Affordability need not be a deterrent to attendance. Full or partial scholarships are almost always available for Seven Thunders

**REGISTRATION FORM  
STONES & CLOUDS FALL KOSESSHIN, APRIL 21 - 23, 2017**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I will be able to provide accommodation for \_\_\_\_ people.

Special dietary requirements: \_\_\_\_\_

I will bring my own zafu or bench.  This is my first Seven Thunders Retreat.

I request a scholarship of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  I enclose a donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Seven Thunders members:**

- I enclose full payment of \$75 (the member rate).
- I enclose a \$35 deposit (\$30 balance due by April7)

**Not a current Seven Thunders member:**

- I enclose \$95.
- I enclose a \$50 deposit (\$45 balance due by April7)

**Please make checks payable to Seven Thunders.**



**CONTEMPLATIVE INTENSIVE RETREAT (CIR) JUNE 22 - 25, 2017**

The retreat will be held at Our Lady of Guadalupe Trappist Abbey, Lafayette, Oregon. It will begin with supper at 6:00 p.m., Thursday, June 22 continue all day Friday and Saturday, and end after lunch on Sunday (about 1:30 p.m.), June 25. Please arrive well before 6:00 p.m. Thursday, check in, and get your room assignment at the Porter's Lodge.

Sr. Joan Saalfeld, SNJM, will lead our retreat, sit with us, present talks and offer interviews. Sr Joan is a member of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary currently living and working in Portland, Oregon. She has studied and practiced Zen and Contemplation for 35 years, first with Robert Aitken, then with Fr. Willigis Jaeger, OSB, and most recently with Fr. Pat Hawk, C.Ss.R., who encouraged her to teach in CIRs.

The retreat differs somewhat from our standard CIR in that it integrates most of the monastic liturgies into our schedule — from Lauds and Mass (6:30 a.m.), through the Day Hour (12:30 p.m.), Vespers (5:30 p.m.), and Compline (7:30 p.m.). Vigils (4:15 a.m.) is optional. Our normal sitting schedule will begin at 6:00 a.m. and conclude at 9:00 p.m. This is a short and intense CIR retreat. All retreatants must commit to participating fully in the entire schedule of group sittings.

The Abbey's guest facilities limit overnight

attendance to 9 people. Each retreatant will have one of the two private rooms in a guest unit, the two sharing a toilet and shower. Meals are prepared by the monks; the fare is vegetarian, simple, and balanced.

We will sit together in the meditation hall in Bethany House, which is big enough to seat about 20 of us, as well as the few monks who will sometimes join us. This means we can accommodate 10-12 additional retreatants who wish to attend part of a day as commuters or who have a place to sleep outside the monastery and who will provide their own (brown bag) meals.

While there is plentiful sitting equipment on hand at Bethany House, you may wish to bring your own to be sure you have what you need or prefer. Dark, layered clothing is right for this occasion. Distracting jewelry and perfumes are not. Bed and bath linens are provided.

The total fee for the 9 overnights is \$310. The fee is \$280 for Seven Thunders members. Partial scholarships are available to Seven Thunders members. The deposit to hold your place is \$75, with the remaining balance due on arrival at the Abbey. All but \$25 will be refunded for cancellation requests received by Nancy Roberts on or

before June 1; after that date, all but \$50 will be refunded. Registrations will be made in the order of postmark dates, alphabetically by last name within each date.

When the 9 overnights places have been filled, all but three of the remaining registration requests and fee payments will be returned. The three requests will be notified of their status and, if desired, held on the waiting list. A similar process applies to those who choose to register as commuters. Commuter fees: \$75, two whole days or more; \$40 one whole day; \$25 half day. No deposit, pay on site. Please contact retreat coordinator **Nancy Roberts** at [nroberts@peak.org](mailto:nroberts@peak.org) with any questions and for details on where to return this completed form with your check. Alternatively, you may e-mail your registration to the registrar and pay the deposit/fee online at [SevenThunders.org](http://SevenThunders.org) (Click on the 'Contribute' tab and follow the donation process, leaving a note in the last window saying that this is your CIR fee payment.)

Please note: since the rooms will be available, the Abbey invites any 9 of us to stay on another night (Sunday night) and leave the next morning by 10 a.m.; Sunday supper and Monday breakfast included for \$35 total. This opportunity is available to retreat commuters as well as overnights. ⚡

**REGISTRATION FORM  
CONTEMPLATIVE INTENSIVE RETREAT (CIR) JUNE 22 - 25, 2017**

I wish to register as a full-time overnight guest of the abbey (deposit required)

I wish to register as a day-to-day commuter (no deposit required)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Special needs \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I commit to participating fully in the entire schedule of formal group contemplation.



Full payment of \$310 enclosed

\$280 for Seven Thunders members

Deposit of \$75 enclosed

Donation for Scholarships \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Request a Scholarship of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to reserve a room for Sunday night, June 25, and will pay then.



**SUMMER SESSHIN AT STONES AND CLOUDS ZENDO JULY 11 – 15, 2017**



The 2016 Seven Thunders Zen Summer Sesshin will be held at the Stones and Clouds Zendo in Lake Oswego, OR, from Tuesday, July 11, at 5 p.m. until Saturday morning July 15, at 10 a.m.. Sesshin will be led by Leonard Marcel. Registration deadline is June 21. Registrations will be accepted on a first come basis. As this sesshin is usually well subscribed, early registration and payment is encouraged. Part-time attendance will be possible.

Space is limited to a maximum of 16. Additional applicants will be wait-listed in case of cancellations. Sesshin fee is \$210 (member rate \$180) and includes all meals (vegetarian). A member rate is available to regular members at all sesshins and retreats throughout the membership-year. Non-members may choose to join Seven Thunders (dues are \$30). They then qualify for the member rate at this and other Seven Thunders regular retreats and sesshin through the remainder of that calendar year. A deposit of \$80 is required with your registration; payment in full is appreciated. Any balance is due by June 22. Should you need to cancel, all but \$25 is refundable until June 22; after that date all but \$80 is refundable. You will receive a confirmation from the registrar. If for any reason you find the full fee a barrier to attending, please check the box on the registration form requesting a "scholarship" or contact the registrar. Affordability need not be a deterrent to attendance. Full or partial scholarships are almost always available. Donations for such scholarships are both appreciated and tax-deductible.

This is a non-residential retreat. For non-computer participants, information about local accommodations is available. Limited accommodations in members' homes may also be available. Information about local accommodations and carpooling will be sent to out-of-town

registrants upon receiving your registration and deposit.

As always, total silence will be observed for the entire sesshin. All attending are required to participate fully in the daily sitting and work schedule, including cleanup at the end

of the retreat. You are asked to wear plain conservative clothing of dark or subdued color during sesshin. No shorts or sleeveless tops, please. Zabutons, zafus, low and high benches will be provided, but if you have a favorite zafu or bench (no chairs) please feel free to bring it.

To register for the retreat, complete this form and send it with your deposit to retreat organizer and registrar: **Teresa Marcel, 1333 Skyland Drive. Lake Oswego, OR 97034.** Please make checks payable to **Seven Thunders.** Alternatively, you may e-mail your registration to the registrar and pay the deposit/fee online at SevenThunders.org (Click on the 'Contribute' tab and follow the donation process, leaving a note in the last window saying that this is your Summer sesshin fee payment.) Questions? Please contact Teresa Marcel at 503.636.9009 or [tdmarcel@mac.com](mailto:tdmarcel@mac.com) ✍

**REGISTRATION FORM  
STONES & CLOUDS SUMMER SESSHIN, JULY 11 – 15, 2017**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I will be able to provide accommodation for \_\_\_\_\_ people.

Special dietary requirements: \_\_\_\_\_

I will bring my own zafu or bench.  This is my first Seven Thunders Retreat.

I request a scholarship of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  I enclose a donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Seven Thunders members:**

I enclose full payment of \$180  
(the member rate).

I enclose a \$80 deposit  
(\$100 balance due by June 21)

**Not a current Seven Thunders member:**

I enclose \$210, please apply \$30 to  
Seven Thunders member dues.

I enclose a \$80 deposit  
(\$130 balance due by June 21).

I enclose \$110, deposit & member dues  
(\$100 balance due by June 21).

**Please make checks payable to Seven Thunders.**