

Kaihan

Fall 2006



The Quarterly Newsletter of the North Carolina Zen Center

At the request of a number of our members, dharma talks for the next duration will focus on the Record of Rinzai. Following the example of my teacher Joshu Roshi, I have started this series with chapter 10 in the Discourses section of Ruth Fuller Sasaki's translation, now out of print. For those interested in a translation of your own, I suggest Eido Shimano's recently published version, The Book of Rinzai from The Zen Studies Society Press.

The opening lines of chapter 10 include Rinzai's tetralemma (four propositions or statements) with regard to the activity of the dharma, which Rinzai calls U-Ji, or Being-Time:

*Being-Time snatches the person and not the environment;
Being-Time snatches the environment and not the person;
Being-Time snatches both the person and the environment;
Being-Time snatches neither the person nor the environment.*

As is the custom in our practice, these four statements can be best experienced, understood and appreciated through manifesting one's self in these four activities.

The first two statements can be categorized as activities in which subject and object are separated; the last two statements describe activities in which subject and object are not separate.

The practice of Complete Breathing is one simple way to practice and clarify the activity of the dharma. The capital letters indicate a specific practice; that is, to inhale to one's limit, then enter into the pause at the end of the in-breath, followed by exhalation to the limit of the out-breath, followed by the pause which then occurs, and continuing in this fashion.

It is not necessary to try equating the tetralemma with the four aspects of the breath. Giving one's whole attention to breathing is enough. Out of the repeated practice of Complete Breathing we naturally come to a place of understanding. I hope you will enjoy yourselves in this amazing situation of having a body that is able to breathe!

——— Sandy Gentei Stewart

Upcoming Events

December 8 is Rohatsu, traditionally celebrated in northern Buddhist countries as the date of Siddhartha Gautama's awakening. It is often marked by an intensive seven-day sesshin ending on the morning of the eighth to commemorate this paramount event. While we will not be holding such a sesshin here at the Center, we will be celebrating the Buddha's enlightenment with a special ceremony during the scheduled service on the morning of Sunday, December 10, followed by tea after the service. Please feel free to bring snacks.

The Center will host a Winter Zazenkaï Weekend in January, Thursday, Jan. 11 — Sunday, Jan. 14. As usual, everyone is welcome, from beginners to old hands. The Center has sleeping accommodations for up to 18, with preference given to full-time participants. Suggested donation is \$25/night. Please check the website or call the Center as the time gets closer for more information.



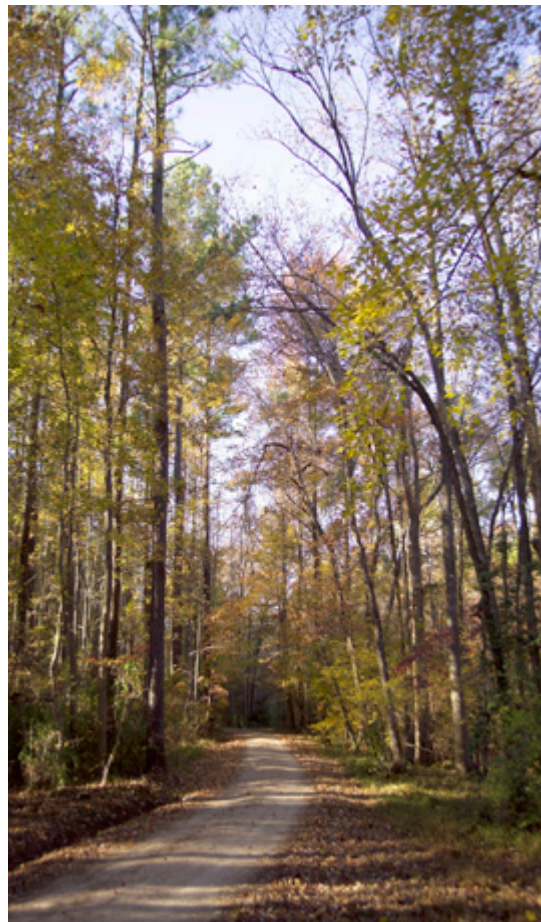
The Center is hosting a two-day retreat entitled *The Heart of Stillness — Deepening Presence* on Saturday, January 27 and Sunday, January 28. The retreat will be hosted by Susan Harper and Sandy Stewart, and will focus on a combination of wholehearted attention, traditional Zen meditation and meditation with movement. Susan Harper teaches Continuum Movement internationally. She has developed Em' oceans and Sensations and Portals of Perception Trainings. Susan has trained and teaches with Emilie Conrad, Chris Price - Gestalt Awareness Practice, Peter Levine, and Hubert Godard - Perceptual Movement work. Meditating With The Body teachings of Reggie Ray deepens her personal practice. For more information please call the Center or visit continuummontage.com

Plan on ringing in the New Year with the NC Zen Center. Dinner will be served, followed by meditation and fellowship, including a champagne toast, and the traditional ringing of the big bell 108 times. It would also be a great time to renew your yearly membership with a donation of \$50. Please try to let the Center know at least two weeks in advance if you plan to attend. Also note that there will be no formal sitting sessions at the Center between December 24 and December 31.

General Notes

Top of the list this fall is the new addition to Matt and Kim's family. Taylor Young was born on August 29, and joins her sister, Samana in residence at the Center. Matt commented on how different the experience can be from one child to another. "Samana has seemed like an old soul, for the most part very easy-going and accepting and ready to grow up. Taylor is a bit fussier. We're very happy to have our hands full" The delivery was normal and everyone is in good health. And the next time you are sitting in the zendo, in addition to the bird calls and horse neighs from next door you might hear another small child's voice and ask yourself, how do I manifest my true nature hearing this sound, as Taylor manifests her true nature in making the sound.

The Center would like to welcome BJ and Dina O'Brien to the area. They recently moved from Virginia to Bynum in order to be closer to family, and to be closer to the Center. BJ has been a student of Sandy for many years. BJ and Dina stayed at the Center for four weeks at the end of August and into September while their log louse was being readied in Bynum and helped with a number of small projects around the Center, which is always most appreciated. In addition we would like to thank BJ for his efforts at a major cleaning of the zendo here on the edge of winter, including beating the dust out of and vacuuming all of the cushions.



As the days get shorter you might find yourself walking the path to the zendo in the dark. Thanks to the efforts of several members we now have lights from the gate to the zendo along the path by the creek. There are two switches, one at the zendo and on one of the posts of the gate, so if you arrive in the evening and the lights are not lit, please avail yourself of them and don't stumble about in the dark!

The Center hosted its Fall Zazen Week from October 12—15. Participants included BJ O'Brien, Matt and Kim Young, Sandy Stewart, Bill Mayhew, Andy Bell, Tim Holmes, Casey Miller, Joe Kenlan, Barbara Gordon, John Iler, Roxanne Henderson and Leila Webster.

The Center also hosted 13 guests for Rumi Fest for several days in October, an annual gathering of the Rifla Marufi Order of America, held in and around Chapel Hill every year. The group is in the process of building their own center just west of Chapel Hill and Matt Young, our resident monk, who guided much of the recent construction here at our center, has agreed to oversee construction of their first building. The local group will use the facility on an ongoing basis, in addition to hosting the annual national gathering. Says Matt, "It is invigorating working for a whole new board of directors and membership toward goals that are parallel to those toward which we have worked here at the NCZC." We welcome them to the area's ever-growing spiritual community.

You may have noted in the last two Kaihans a message from a young man named Kapil Kumar, whom Sandy met on his trip to India last spring. He was asking for financial help to take his entrance exam for medical school. One of our members inquired as to how much money he needed, and it was not a lot of money by our standards. He sent it to him, actually at the last minute, the day before it would have been too late. Kapil got it, took his entrance exam,

passed it, and is now studying to be a doctor, hoping thereby to make life better for his whole family. He may need more help somewhere down the road, but for now he would simply like to convey his thanks to our community for coming to his aid.

We would also like to thank Casey Miller who has been coming regularly to Sunday work practice and helping out with a number of chores around the Center, including updating our well-water meter log, which we may use one day to request a septic variance when we request another building permit for the dining hall. Please remember the Sunday work-practice, the hour before scheduled sitting every Sunday. There is always something needing to be done.

The Center is still doing the Adopt-A-Street clean-ups every 6-8 weeks. The next one is scheduled for Sunday, December 10, after tea. It usually only takes an hour or two if we have 6-8 participants, so hang around and help us do our part to keep our community tidy.

It is now even easier to make a financial contribution to the Center. We've set up the website for online donations. All you have to do is go to the Support page of the website and click on the Donate Now link. You'll see a secure donation form hosted by Click and Pledge, where you can make a one-time or periodic gift of whatever amount you choose.

As usual, the Center wishes to acknowledge and thank all who give so freely of themselves, their time, money, energy and services, to make this expression of the Dharma happen. It would not be happening without you.

The Brooks Branch Zendo is currently operating on the following schedule:

Monday — Friday mornings:
6 AM — 6:40 AM Zazen, Tuesday & Thursday followed
by opportunity for interview with Sandy

Tuesday Evening:
7 PM — 8:30 PM Zazen

Thursday Evening:
7 PM — 9 PM Chanting, zazen, interviews and
Dharma talk

Sunday Morning
9 AM Work practice
10 AM - Noon Chanting, zazen, interviews
and Dharma talk, followed by tea

Sandy regularly attends Tuesday mornings, Thursday mornings and evenings, and Sunday mornings. Also, please note the hour of work practice before the Sunday morning session. Feel free to show up and give a hand in the many small tasks which keep the Center running smoothly.

