



Great Tree Zen Temple

newsletter / fall-winter / 2015 -16

Milestones 2015

In May, Great Tree was happy to welcome Rev. Shoken Winecoff of Ryumonji Monastery in Decorah, Iowa. Rev. Winecoff assisted in the Dharma Transmission Ceremony for Rev. Chimyo Atkinson on May 27 and delivered a well-received lecture.

On August 30, we celebrated the 10th Anniversary of Great Tree Zen Temple and held a memorial service commemorating the 25th anniversary of the death of Dainin Katagiri Roshi.

Also in August we introduced our new and much improved, and simpler to use, Great Tree Zen Temple website at www.greattreetemple.org.

Sangha members Paige Kanko Gilchrist and Randal Daigu Pride were featured in an article about Buncombe County prison volunteers in the November 3 issue of *Mountain Express*. Paige, a yoga instructor, and Randal, a leading member of Zen Center of Asheville, volunteer at Buncombe County Detention Center and Craggy Correctional Center, respectively. Our Prison Outreach at Avery-Mitchell Correctional Institution in Spruce Pine, North Carolina, also continues.

In October, Rev. Dai-En Bennage of Mt. Equity Zendo in Pennsylvania visited us and delivered a lecture during her stay. We were also visited by long-time friend Myojo Sara Wexler.



Both attended our very first meeting of the Great Tree Women's Practice Circle: Attending the Moon. The Circle will continue to meet twice a month (see our website for the schedule).

Finally, on November 8, Randal Daigu Pride, Meredith Myoun McIntosh, Art Shindo Mandler, and Don Seido Wilkerson were recognized for their many years of leadership and teaching in a lay investiture ceremony held during the November sesshin. The ceremony and party that followed were attended by friends and family.

"Destiny itself has no solid form; it's something you can create. You can create your life. That is why we study karma."

Dainin Katagiri,
Each Moment Is the Universe

GREAT TREE

Our mission is to create a community, based on teachings of Dogen Zenji in the Soto Zen tradition, which serves all whose journey brings them to Great Tree, and to support a residential practice for women.

We are wholly supported by gifts from our friends, membership, volunteers and sangha.

Abess

Rev Teijo Munnich

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828-645-2085

Great Tree is a 501(c)3 religious organization, registered with the State of North Carolina



Randal Daigu Pride, Meredith Myoun McIntosh, Rev. Teijo Munnich, Rev. Chimyo Atkinson, Art Shindo Mandler, Rev. Shogen Sheehey & Don Seido Wilkerson

Great Tree is pleased to announce our 2016 Special Events schedule.

The year begins with the Rakusu Sewing Retreat with Rev. Bussho Rosemary Taylor of Minnesota Zen Center, January 22-26. Sewing a rakusu (small Buddhist robe) is a requirement of those who plan to take the precepts (jukai) during the April sesshin. Rosemary has studied Nyoho-e (the way of sewing Buddha's robes) with Tomoe Katagiri for 16 years and is one of three okesa sewing teachers endorsed by Mrs. Katagiri upon her retirement. If you are interested in sewing a rakusu in January and participating in the precepts sesshin in April, contact Great Tree for more information at 828-645-2085, or register online.



Rev. Shuichi Thomas Kurai, the abbot of Sozenji Buddhist Temple in Montebello, California, and founder of the Taiko Center of Los Angeles, will present two Taiko Workshops on March 19. Rev. Kurai will lead a beginners class in Kumi Daiko, or Japanese folk drumming, in the morning. In the afternoon he will show us Kito Daiko, the temple drumming that accompanies sutra chanting in Zen monasteries. All ages are welcome to attend. Rev. Kurai will also give lectures and demonstrations at Great Tree and Zen Center of Asheville during the week. Look for those dates and times in our monthly updates and on the Great Tree website.



Rev. Byakuren Judith Ragir will lead two 12-Step Workshops on July 23 and 24. These workshops will focus on learning meditation and seeing the 12 Steps through a Buddhist, nontheistic lens. Rev. Ragir was a guiding teacher of Clouds and Water Zen Center in Minneapolis. She has been sharing her unique Buddhist approach to the 12 Steps through workshops and lectures for many years.



These are just a few of the new and exciting events on offer at Great Tree in 2016. In addition, we welcome returning workshop presenters including Peggy Tabor Millin, who will once again bring us Zen Mind, Writing Mind, August 5-7. She will also lead an extended version of The Hidden Word: Writing with Kuan Yin, November 11-13.



Nancy Sujata Spence will return with her Let the World Take Care of Itself (Anat-satati Magga) retreats in spring (April 7-10) and fall (October 20-23).

We will also present one-day workshops featuring yoga with Paige Gilchrist, writing with Laura Hope-Gill, Ikebana with Norma Bradley, and more. Be sure to check the calendar at www.greattreetemple.org for dates and times of all our special events, sesshins, and other practice opportunities.

Report from the Great Tree Board of Directors

We on the Great Tree board always look forward to sharing time to brainstorm ideas and put them into action for the sake of Great Tree. We are all busy folks, but we treasure the time we spend helping our Zen temple in this important and needed way. Would you like to be a part of this inner circle? We are looking for people who are willing and able to serve.

The board has been up to quite a bit, and some of our actions have brought more noise than others! The impending road work, for example, is an exciting first step in the development of the building and grounds. There will be no more worrying about how weather conditions will affect the hill leading up to our temple. The contractor will soon begin overhauling the road, and Great Tree has sent out a call to match the funds available. Please do what you can! We will all breathe a bit easier when we have a stable road under us.

With help from our sangha members we continue to cross off items on our to-do list: well work, new deck steps, patched-up zendo, firewood for the hearth. These necessities are what help keep the temple warm and safe, allowing Rev. Teijo, Rev. Chimyo, visiting teachers, and sangha members to focus on Zen practice.

We also have some surprises in the works in hopes of reaching out as far as Great Tree's roots will spread.

In thankfulness and appreciation of you all, Jayne/Baika

Directors: Jayne Baika Harnett-Hargrove, Chair / Art Shindo Mandler, Treasurer / Priscilla Yokote, Secretary / Elizabeth Strand

POEM

BY PRISCILLA MYOSHU YOKOTE

There is a big freedom
in the word
permission.

And what a wonder
to be among
others
who give it
when we cannot give it
to ourselves
to be ourselves.
Permission

The bliss of a sleep
relieved of solving
the problems of the world.

The bliss of being so
tired, all that matters is the
quiet of the rest.

Something
to lighten the mind
releasing the concerns
of things that
cannot yet be resolved.

The bliss of forgetting,
even for an evening,
the feeling of approaching
unknowns
and what to do about them.

Closing my eyes
wishing to trust
the greater guidance
to let my life
live itself.
without my control

sunlight warms
even the stones.

The bliss of a sleep
relieved of solving
the problems of the world.

2016 Workshops, Retreats, Events

Please note that this is a partial list of events at Great Tree. For more information about our ongoing weekly and monthly programs and calendar updates, and to register, please go to www.greattreetemple.org, or call us at 828-645-2085.

JANUARY 2016

JAN. 17 Restorative Yoga—*with Paige Kanko Gilchrist*

JAN.22- 26 Rakusu Sewing—*with Rev. Bussho Rosemary Taylor*

FEBRUARY 2016

FEB. 5-7 Nehan Sesshin

FEB. 27-28 Mother and Child Retreat

MARCH 2016

MAR. 4-6 Sesshin

MAR. 11-13 Men's Retreat

MAR. 15 Lecture and Taiko Demonstration—*by Rev. Shuichi Tom Kurai at Zen Center of Asheville*

MAR. 17 Lecture—*by Rev. Kurai at Great Tree*

MAR. 19 Taiko Drumming Workshops—*with Rev. Kurai at Great Tree*

APRIL 2016

APR. 1-3 April Sesshin (Precepts Sesshin)

APR. 3 Jukai (Precepts Ceremony)

APR. 7-10 Let the World Take Care of Itself Retreat
— *with Nancy Sujata Spence*

MAY 2016

MAY 1 Writing Workshop—*with Laura Hope Gill*

MAY 6-11 Sesshin

MAY 22 Ikebana Workshop—*with Norma Bradley*

MAY 27-30 Beginner's Mind Retreat at Southern Dharma
—*with Rev. Teijo Munnich and Meredith Myoun McIntosh*



Laura Hope-Gill reading at Great Tree's Poetry and Pie annual fundraiser held at Urban Dharma in downtown Asheville.

JUNE 2016

MAY 3-8 Sesshin

JULY 2016

JULY 1-3 Sesshin

JULY 11-13 Annual Youth Retreat

JULY 23-24 12-Step Workshops—*with Rev. Byakuren Judith Ragir*

JULY 31 Annual Sangha Picnic

AUGUST 2016

AUG 5-7 Zen Mind, Writing Mind Workshop—*with Peggy Tabor Millin*

AUG 14 Writing Workshop—*with Laura Hope Gill*

SEPTEMBER 2016

SEP 4 11th Anniversary Celebration
& Annual Meeting of the Great Tree Sangha

OCTOBER 2016

OCT 2 Ikebana Workshop—*with Norma Bradley*

OCT 7-9 Beginner's Mind Sesshin at Great Tree

OCT 20-23 Let the World Take Care of Itself Retreat
— *with Nancy Sujata Spence*

NOVEMBER 2016

NOV. 4-6 Sesshin

NOV. 11-13 The Hidden Word: Writing with Kuan Yin
— *with Peggy Tabor Millin*

DECEMBER 2016

DEC 2-7 Rohatsu Sesshin

DEC 11-12 Annual Craft Sale and Buddha's Enlightenment Celebration

DEC 31 Ringing in the New Year

GREAT TREE SESSHINS

Sesshin means to gather the heart-mind. Traditionally, Soto Zen temples offer these monthly retreats during which both monks and laypersons are invited to renew and strengthen their practice together.

Sesshins at Great Tree offer several periods of zazen each day, formal meals with oryoki, work practice, student-teacher interviews (dokusan), and nightly dharma discussions. We follow a semi-monastic schedule, eat simple vegetarian meals, and maintain silence as much as possible.

To register for sesshin go to www.greattreetemple.org.

2-nights: \$175 / 3-nights: \$225 / 4-nights: \$275 / 5-nights: \$300 / 6-nights: \$350

Great Tree Zen Women's Temple
679 Lower Flat Creek Road, Alexander, NC 28701

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Great Tree's 2015 Annual Craft Sale & Buddha's



Enlightenment Ceremony

Held at Urban Dharma

Downtown Asheville NC

Saturday, Dec 12, 10 am – 4 pm

Buddha Ceremony, 2 pm

At: Urban Dharma, 29 Page Ave.

2016 Ongoing Practice

Please note that this is general description of practice opportunities at Great Tree. For specific dates and more information about our ongoing weekly and monthly programs and calendar updates, please go to www.greattreetemple.org, or call us at 828-645-2085.

ATTENDING THE MOON: THE GREAT TREE WOMEN'S PRACTICE CIRCLE

Supporting and encouraging each other in our daily Zen practice and our daily lives. Meditation, discussion, study, creative expression and building community. Third Wednesday of each month from 6 pm-7:30 pm and second Sunday of each month from 10 am-11:30 am.

PRACTICE PERIODS: ZAZEN, STUDY, WORK

Three-month practice periods are designed to encourage Zen students to renew their efforts to bring the three components of Zen practice into their daily lives. Students can commit to residential or nonresidential participation. Residential participants must follow the full temple schedule; nonresidential participants are asked to commit to the following: taking part in Tuesday and Thursday zazen and the Saturday morning program of zazen, study, and work at Great Tree; attending two lectures each month at Zen Center of Asheville; and attending one sesshin during the practice period (see schedules on page 3 and below). Each practice period will begin and end with a tea.

GREAT TREE PRACTICE DAYS (ZAZENKAI)

These 1-day sittings offer a somewhat gentler schedule than sesshins and are excellent opportunities to learn more about zazen practice. The schedule begins at 9 am and includes sitting and walking meditation, a short Dharma discussion at mid-morning, and a formal lunch using the oryoki practice. We end with an informal tea. Practice days are led by senior students of Rev. Munnich.

FAMILY MEDITATION

Family Meditation meets at 10:30 am on the last Sunday of each month, except where noted (see schedule online). Led by Rev. Munnich, these gatherings introduce children and their parents to meditation through storytelling, discussion, crafts, and free play. Everyone is encouraged to join us on Family Meditation days for the Buddha's Birthday and Flower Festival Celebration (Hanamatsuri) and planting of the Children's Garden in spring; our Sangha picnic in July; and the celebration of our ancestors (Segaki) in the fall. All ages are welcome. Parents provide healthy snacks and potluck dishes to share during the morning.

SANGHA SUNDAY

We start Sangha Sunday at 9 am with an hourlong gentle and restorative yoga class perfect for any level of yoga practitioner, including beginners. Classes are led by one of our three sangha members who are certified yoga instructors and are by donation.

Zazen and dharma discussion follow from 10:30-11:30. Come meet other Sangha members, ask questions, and learn more about Zen practice at Great Tree.

Sangha Sundays are held the third Sunday of each month.

WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

EARLY MORNING ZAZEN Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays:

6-6:40 am Zazen / 6:40-6:50 Kinhin / 6:50-7:30 Zazen / 7:30 Morning Service

EVENING ZAZEN Thursdays:

6-6:40 pm Zazen / 6:40-6:50 Kinhin / 6:50-7:30 Zazen / 7:30 Closing

(Zazen—sitting meditation / Kinhin—walking meditation)

Tuesday Study Group

Every Tuesday during the spring and fall practice periods, Rev. Munnich leads sessions in the study of the writings of Dogen Zenji, 13th century founder of the Soto Zen School. The sessions begin with meditation followed by readings, writing, and discussion. You may join at any time and attend as many sessions as you like.

Zen Center of Asheville Lectures

Tuesday evenings from 7:00 to 8:30 ZCA presents dharma lectures and discussion. Rev. Munnich gives a lecture twice a month with guests or sangha members filling in the other weeks. Go to www.zcasheville.org to see their schedule and get directions or call 828-398-4212 for more information. Everyone welcome.

Thursday Morning Sangha 6-11:30 am

Come for all or part of our early morning program. After zazen, the morning continues with formal breakfast (oryoki), morning tea (chosan), and community work.

Saturday Sangha 6 am – 3 pm

Zazen, dharma discussion, and work practice are offered every Saturday. You may come for any part of the day. Please RSVP if you would like to join us for lunch.

6-6:30 am ... Zazen
6:30-6:40 am ... Kinhin
6:40-7:10 am ... Zazen
7:10 am ... Morning Service
8:00 am ... Breakfast
9:30-10 am ... Zazen
10-11:00 am ... Lecture
11 am-12:00 pm ... Community Work
12:30 pm ... Lunch
1:30-3:00 pm ... Community Work
3:00 pm ... Tea

