



South Wind

the Newsletter of the KansasZenCenter

July ~ September

Sangha Notes

Our condolences to Dennis Duermeier, family and friends on the death of Dennis' mother May 2—Ji Jong Bosal.

Also our condolences to Katherine Bailey, family and friends on the death of Katherine's father Frank Bailey who died June 4—Ji Jong Bosal.

Congratulations to Judy Wright on becoming a grandmother! Two beautiful twin baby grandsons were born March 1, Benjamin and Jonah.

Judy Roitman and Rebecca Otte gave a public dharma talk at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Topeka KS on June 6.

The Prairyerth sangha (Topeka, KS) sponsored a one-day retreat with Judy Roitman JDPSN. The retreat was held in a beautiful chapel located on Menningers' campus, June 8.

Congratulations to Christina and George Frazier on the birth of their daughter, Chloe Elizabeth Frazier on April 3, 2002.

Dennis Duermeier gave a public dharma talk in conjunction with a religions of the world class and Harvard University's Pluralism Project. The talk was held at Baker University, March 1.

Clark LaFever gave a talk at the annual Change Your Mind Day in Kansas City, June 8.

A one day retreat led by Dennis Duermeier was held in Kansas City on April 17.

Congratulations to Bill Lucero who retired June 10 from 34 years with the state of Kansas. He was most recently employed at the Youth Correctional Facility..

All Too Human

Many years ago before I actually began practicing, I read many books about Zen. One was *Zen Macro-biotics* by the Japanese teacher George Ohsawa.

He based a way of life upon cosmic theories made manifest and manageable in human life though diet, the diet in turn being based upon the traditional food regimen practiced in the Zen Monasteries in Japan.

“We always seemed to run into one another at the supermarket, guiltily clutching Snickers bars.”

Being at that time enamored of self-improvement, I was an avid follower of the Macrobiotic principles and diet and was part of a group studying and practicing together a rather austere lifestyle. (We always seemed to run into one another at the supermarket, guiltily clutching Snickers bars.)

One practice the group offered was a weekly public meal to which we often invited other groups. One group was the precursor to the Kansas Zen Center, the Lawrence Zen Group. I still remember my excitement and apprehension as the members arrived. I watched them closely for signs of the superhuman serenity, wisdom, equipoise – in a word, enlightenment – that Zen practice was sure (I had read and believed) to foster. What I noticed most, however, was

All Too Human

Human - (continued)

an attractive sense of humor and the grace to be polite about what we served them. One participant, over 20 years later, still makes jokes about the food.

Macrobiotics fell from my life for a variety of reasons. One of the last things I did as a member of the study group was write a paper entitled, "Where's the Zen in Zen Macrobiotics?" Again, for a variety of reasons, my interest in Zen practice grew until I finally sat a retreat with Dae Soen Sa Nim and many of the same people who attended that long ago meal. In the intervening 20-odd years, I've looked at and experienced practice in many different ways – curious, enthused, ardent, disgusted, bored, dogged. Everything appears and disappears.

KZC Notes

Please send both surface and e-mail address changes to info@kansazencenter.org or call 785.331.2274.

We are now accepting tax deductible memorial and honorary donations. These include gifts to the KZC in the memory of loved ones or to commemorate special events such as graduations, birthdays or anniversaries. Please contact Marie LaFever at mlafevertwo@yahoo.com for details.

Contributions to the Kansas Zen Center are tax deductible and may be sent to the Kansas Zen Center at 1423 New York Street, Lawrence, KS 66044.

Kansas Zen Center

The Kansas Zen Center is a non-profit organization founded in 1978 in Lawrence, Kansas. KZC is affiliated with the Kwan Um School of Zen Buddhism an international organization with more than sixty centers and groups founded by Zen Master Seung Sahn, the first Korean Zen Master to live and teach in the West.

Teachers: Dennis Duermeier JDPSN, 785.749.5744
Judy Roitman JDPSN, 785.842.7010
(guiding teacher)

President: Clark LaFever 816.686.6899
Secretary: Betsy Forcade 785.843.1605

Lately, however, I've been remembering my sense of expectation and almost awe upon first encountering people who actually practice and what that may indicate about what many of us hope for, or fear about, Zen.

It seems that we hope for a *transformation*. A transformation that will recreate ourselves as some sort of superhuman, free from all the anxiety and general messiness that informs our lives. Never angry, frustrated, grumpy, depressed. Sailing serenely through crises, unattached and benevolent.

"It seems that we hope for a transformation that will recreate ourselves as some sort of superhuman..."

The bar of "should" is often set awfully high. Many of us judge ourselves and sometimes others harshly. Sometimes we abandon practice as the self-induced pressure mounts and our perceived failures never end. We can and should do it all – isn't that the Bodhisattva vow?

Of course, this way of thinking is not unique to Zen. Perhaps it's *the* problem of our time and place. Practice is certainly demanding but the only requirement is that we regularly sit still and look. What is This? Our human life is a great gift and bears examination, requires it in order to live simply and humanely. When we encounter someone who understands human beings' job and just does it, the experience is unforgettably simple and moving. Not superhuman.

Dae Soen Sa Nim always said, "Enlightenment cannot save you!" What then? He also said, "Seven times fall down, eight times get up." Just try. Give yourself a break but keep trying.

"It is mind itself, leading mind astray. Take care of your mind."

Dennis Duermeier, JDPSN



Kzc Calendar~ Check the Kzc website for most current schedule

Regular Practice Schedule

Kansas Zen Center - 1423 New York Street, Lawrence KS - 785.331.2274

Monday—Friday 6:00 to 7:00 am
Saturday 6:00 to 8:00 am (kong-an interviews)
Sunday 9:30 to 11:30 am, dharma talk at 11:00, beginner's introduction 9:00 am
Wednesday 7:00 to 8:00 pm, (kong-an interviews twice a month)
6:30 to 7:00 pm special chanting

Prairyerth Zen Center - Unitarian Universalist Fellowship 4775 SW 21st St., Topeka KS
785.478.3478 (Rebecca) or 785.232.5958 (Bill)

Tuesday & Thursday 6:00 to 7:00 am
Thursday 6:30 to 7:30 pm (kong-an interviews second Thursday of the month)

Kansas City Zen Group - Unity Church on the Plaza - 816.361.2584 (Greg)

Tuesday 7:00 to 8:00 pm, (kong-an interviews the first Tuesday of every month)

Tall Grass Zen Center - Manhattan KS - 785.537.8713 (Christina or Margaret)

Tuesday & Friday 6:00 to 7:00 am
Wednesday 7:00 to 8:00 pm

Kansas Zen Center Special Events

5 Day Retreat with Dennis Duermeier JDPSN - July 16-21

Retreat at KZC begins at 6:30 pm July 16 and ends at 10:30 am July 21.

Precepts Ceremony - July 21

11:00 am at KZC. There will be a potluck lunch following the ceremony.
(If you want to take precepts, please contact Judy Roitman)

2 Day Retreat with Judy Roitman JDPSN - September 20-22

Retreat at KZC begins at 6:30 pm September 20 and ends at 12:00 pm September 22.

Whole World is a Single Flower Conference - October 5-6 Kye Ryong Sahn, Korea

Optional group travel in Korea through October 11. Charter flights available. Contact J.W. Harrington at the Kwan Um School of Zen at jw@kwanumzen.org for more information.

2 Day Retreat with Judy Roitman JDPSN - November 15-17

Retreat at KZC begins at 6:30 pm November 15 and ends at 12:00 pm November 17.

Compass of Zen Class - For anyone having taken 5 precepts.

A new class begins in November. Held at KZC and taught by Judy Roitman JDPSN. For more information call 785.842.7010 or email info@kansaszencenter.org.

Please note that expenses have required us to increase our retreat fees by \$10 per day for all categories. There will very likely be another increase this fall. These increases will enable us to meet our operating costs, however no one will be turned away for lack of funds. Scholarships or work exchanges can be arranged with the teacher leading the retreat.

Please register for retreats at least five days before a retreat. There is a \$10 late fee. Retreats are now \$40 per day for KZC members and \$55 per day for non-members. Retreats are \$34 per day for dharma teachers and dharma teachers in training. Two-day retreats cost \$68 for dharma teachers and teachers in

training, \$80 for members, and \$110 for non-members. Five-day retreats cost \$170 for dharma teachers and teachers in training, \$200 for members and \$275 for non-members. To register send in the attached registration form or call 785.331.2274. You can also register via the KZC website at www.kansaszencenter.org.

If you can not sit and entire retreat as scheduled, please talk to the retreat teacher to make arrangements.

For more information, call Betsy or Tim at 785.843.1605 or email us at info@kansaszencenter.org