

# PRIMARY POINT

PUBLISHED BY THE KWAN UM ZEN SCHOOL

528 POUND ROAD, CUMBERLAND, RI 02864 (401) 769-6476

VOLUME THREE, NUMBER 2 JUNE 1986

## A Time Of Complete Transformation

by Zen Master Seung Sahn

(The following is taken from a talk given by Zen Master Seung Sahn on March 19, 1984 at the Providence Zen Center.)

Everything that happens in this world is correct. Things go in cycles: spring, summer, fall, winter. Every year this cycle of seasons occurs. But there are longer cycles too, and this year makes the beginning of both a 60 year cycle and a 360 year cycle. It is a very interesting time.

There is a very large insect called the cicada, that grows very slowly inside a cocoon fastened to a tree. The transformation from cocoon to winged creature takes a long time, about 17 years, and is very difficult. During this time in the cocoon, the cicada's internal body appears disrupted. The skin, the organs, the wings, all appear not to be working. They aren't moving. The body looks as if it were confused and broken.

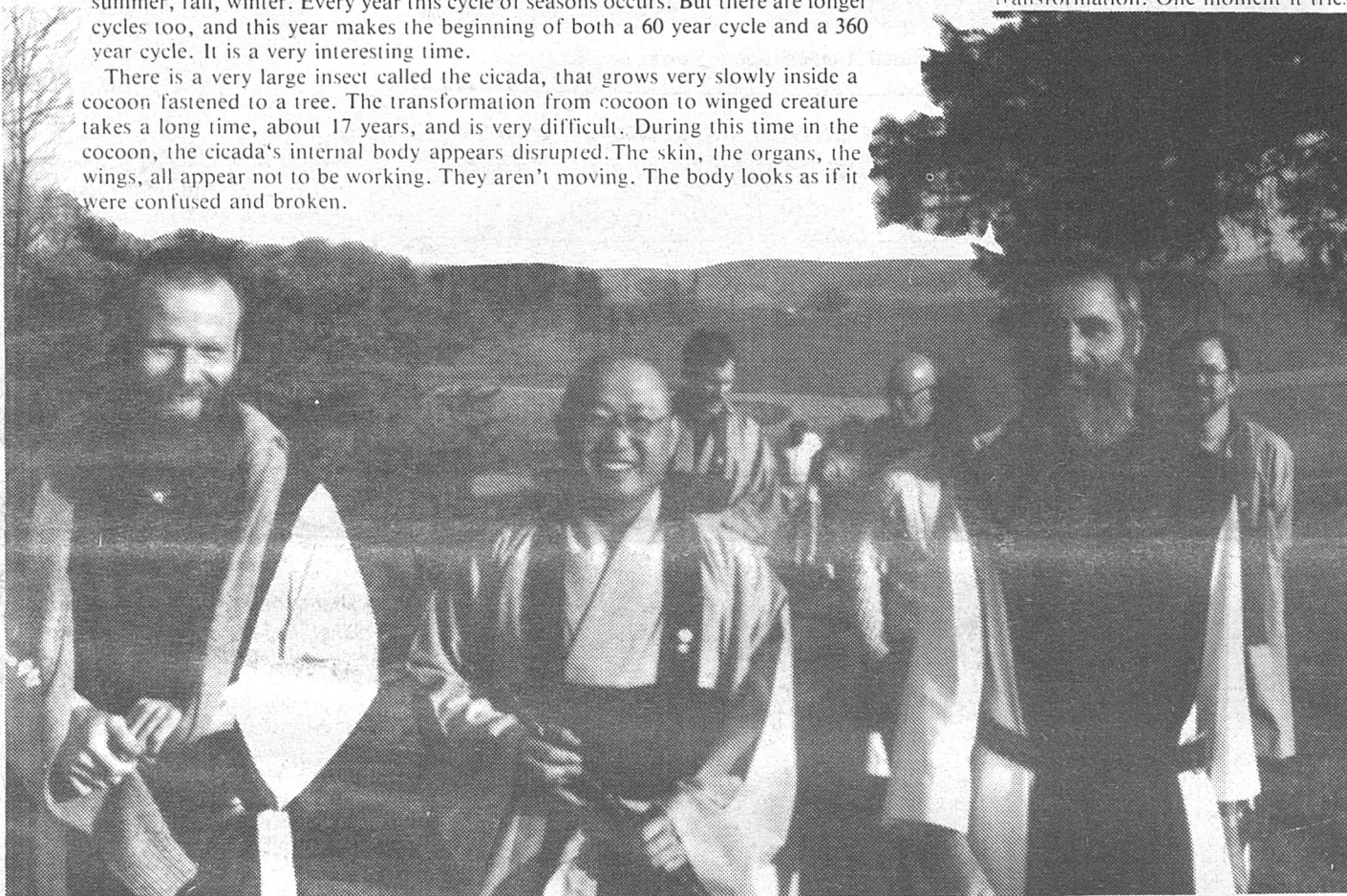
Then slowly the cocoon breaks open and the new body begins to appear. A wing emerges, then a leg stretches forth. At first the cicada's movements are slow and difficult. It crawls out of the cocoon and falls to the ground. At this stage the cicada never thinks about the sky or about flying - it only thinks about how to get food, any kind of food. Sometimes it takes three or four hours between the time it leaves the cocoon and the time it is able to fly. But this is a time of complete transformation. One moment it tries to fly and then it flies!

This year is like that. Things look disrupted, stuck in a state of not working. We are very worried about the future. How can we ever fly? How will our wings possibly appear? How can we get enough food? Many problems are appearing. If we buy a business, we want to know if the future will be good for sales or bad. So we have many worries. But human beings are part of nature. Like the cicada, even if we have already emerged from our cocoon, it still takes time before we understand how to stretch our wings out and fly. Finally we will fly.

There is always change. But changing means not changing. Moment to moment, everything is complete. Everything that happens is correct. If you are attached to name and form, it means that your thinking appears and disappears. If your thinking does not appear and disappear, everything is complete. If your center is not moving, you will have no difficulty even though many new conditions will appear. If you have no center, you will always have problems.

Think of it like this: not much happens in the winter months, the season of cold and ice. No leaves or flowers appear from the frozen ground. When spring comes, the ground thaws. Water goes into the soil and starts working. Everything erupts. The grass grows. Leaves appear and get bigger. Flowers appear. All the colors are changing. Everything is changing, quickly changing.

Continued on page 2



TRAPPIST MONKS SIT CHRISTIAN-ZEN RETREAT with Soen Sa Nim at Gethsemene Monastery in Kentucky, where the late Fr. Thomas Merton lived. Story on page 2.

### KWAN UM ZEN SCHOOL CONGRESS AND ZEN MASTER SEUNG SAHN'S BIRTHDAY CEREMONY: AUGUST 1-3, 1986

For School members and friends, the annual summer gathering at the Providence Zen Center is an important tradition, the highlight of our year. First and foremost, the weekend is an opportunity to just be together. Ours is a large and ever more far-flung sangha; rarely do we have occasion to congregate in one place.

Secondly, within the program are panel discussions, workshops and small groups. We talk about issues in our School, how we can help our Zen Centers, our practice, each other. Zen Master Seung Sahn and all the Master Dharma Teachers will be present.

Finally, we celebrate our teacher's birthday with tributes, music, food and fun.

For further information, contact your local Zen Center or the Kwan Um Zen School office.

### CARRYING SNOW IN A TEASPOON: The Bodhisattva effort

by Master Dharma Teacher Richard Shrobe

(The following exchange of questions and answers took place during a retreat at the Providence Zen Center on February 1, 1986.)

Q: What is the underlying essence of Zen?

RS: (Lifting up his cup and drinking) Cold water. (Laughter) Soen Sa Nim told me that's what they say in Korea when they want to tell someone to just keep a clear mind, "Go drink cold water." (Laughter) Only that. I had an interesting and useful experience a few weeks ago. I was talking with Ken Kessel, and oldtime student of Soen Sa Nim's [and a director of the Chogye International Zen Center]. He told me that sometimes he likes to practice for two hours straight in the morning. He doesn't walk, he doesn't get up, he just sits there for two hours in his full lotus position, without moving.

I got inspired to find out what that was about. (Laughter) So I tried a couple of times. I got pretty close, one time an hour and 50 minutes. But one of the interesting experiences I had when trying this was coming to a moment when I had the recognition that it was just sitting. There was nothing miraculous that was going to appear, even if I sat for two more hours straight. (Laughter) It was just sitting, pure and simple, just like drinking cold water is just drinking cold water.

Continued on page 7

### INDEX

Trappist Monks Sit Zen .....	2
SSN's Whirlwind Tour .....	2
Zen Dialogues in China .....	3

Growing Pains: an editorial .....	4
Death of Zen Master Baek Cho .....	5
International retreat: photo essay .....	5
New developments in European Zen .....	6
A shakuhachi concert .....	8

Dying to the Self: Christianity and Zen .....	10
Poetry: Parker and Roitman .....	11
"A Still Forest Pool" reviewed .....	12
Bodhisattva Path .....	13
Calendar of Events .....	15



# A TIME OF COMPLETE TRANSFORMATION

Continued from page 1

It's the same in our minds, in our "inside" world as well as the "outside" world. During winter for three or four months everything stays the same, so we experience no difficulty. In the spring there are many changes, so our minds move and we experience many doubts and problems. Just at this time of the ending of an old set of 60 year and 360 year cycles and the beginning of a new set, many things are happening "inside". A strange, complicated mind is appearing.

Just now we need to practice more strongly and make our direction clear. If you are not doing hard practice or your direction is unclear, any kind of demon might take you. When you die, you will not understand where you go. What kind of hell will you go to? There are many kinds. If in this life you have killed many animals, when you die, these animals will appear to you saying, "Give me my life!"

It is necessary to die every day, and every day to give life. If in one day you die ten thousand times, you are ten thousand times alive. In only one day, understand? This life is maybe 70-80 years long. Many things happen in one life. We think it is so short, but to some beings, even one second is very long.

Buddha went to Heaven to save his mother. He only stayed three days, but in this world, it was 90 days. During this time the king missed the Buddha. He went to see the Buddha, expecting a Dharma speech, but the Buddha was not there. The king was



WALKING with members of Comunidad Ahabad, Spain, during last fall retreat

**"Women will become as strong as men, as it was thousands of years ago. This change from yang to yin has already begun."**

unhappy. His mind could not rest. So he invited a very good sculptor to make a gold Buddha, and he put it on the Buddha's seat.

The Buddha said, "You understand form is emptiness, emptiness is form. If you think this Buddha is truth, that is me". So Buddha statues appeared at that time.

Then the Buddha came back. He looked at the gold Buddha - its face and his face were the same! The king explained, "We missed you, so we made this statue just like you and put it on your seat. Is this good or bad?"

Just like that story, if your mind, your center is strong with no thinking, then you

already have infinite time and infinite space. If you have thinking, then even one hour can seem like many years. Sometimes our thinking makes many years seem like only one second. So it's very important how strong your center is. In a changing time, a time of beginnings, it's very important to have a strong center. At this time, if your direction is clear, then the beginning goes this way and that way. If you are not clear, the future is not clear.

Some people say the end of the world is coming. But when an old age is finished, a new age appears. Human beings are part of the natural cycle and this is a changing time for all species. This year is the beginning of the age when women will control everything, just as men have up till now: the house, the family, politics, the economy. Soon there will be many more women leading their countries. Women will become as strong as men, as it was thousands of years ago. This change from yang to yin has already begun.

When Bodhidharma came to China, he became the First Patriarch of Zen. As the result of a "marriage" between Vipassana-style Indian meditation and Chinese Taoism, Zen appeared. Now it has come to the West and what is already here? Christianity, Judaism, and so forth. When Zen "gets married" to one of these traditions, a new style of Buddhism will appear.

Perhaps there will be a women Matriarch and all Dharma transmission would go only from woman to woman. Why not? So everyone, you must create American Buddhism. Get enlightenment!

In this new age time, a strong center is necessary. Are you clear, everyone? No? Then more hard training is necessary. Also, your direction must become clear. Why do you eat every day? Why do you study Zen? Why do you sit? These are important questions. □

## SOEN SA NIM ON SPRING-SUMMER WHIRLWIND TRIP



IN THE MOUNTAINS OF SPAIN last autumn, Soen Sa Nim led a first-time Zen meditation retreat for the Comunidad Ahabad. Centro Zen de Palma Abbot Joan Insa, Centre Zen de Paris Abbot Do Mun Sunim and Mu Sang Sunim accompanied Soen Sa Nim and assisted during the retreat.

Soen Sa Nim is in the middle of a tour of the United States and Europe, with a few side trips to Korea. In early March, after officiating at closing ceremonies for the first international winter Kyol Che at Su Dok Sah temple in Korea, he returned to the

West Coast and proceeded east, leading retreats and giving talks at Ojai (CA), Kansas, Chicago and Ontario. In April he officiated at the closing ceremony for the winter Kyol Che retreat at Providence Zen Center, then went on to Paris to support ex-

citing developments at Centre Zen Paris (see separate story in this issue). He led two retreats in Kentucky, one at the Trappist Monastery where Thomas Merton lived (see separate story), and another at Lexington Zen Center.

Book News...Currently there are at least six new book projects about Soen Sa Nim's teaching that are underway or recently finished. In the USA, Senior Dharma Teacher Stanley Lombardo of Kansas Zen Center and Dharma Teacher Dhananjay Joshi of Chicago Meditation Center are in the final editing stages of "Ten Gates," a book about kong-an practice which includes let-

ters and some of Soen Sa Nim's formal Dharma speeches. Lexington Zen Center Abbot Bob Genthner has started working with Soen Sa Nim on a book tentatively entitled "Just Do It," which will be "a practical Americanized version of Soen Sa Nim's teaching." Bob is working from 900 minutes of taped discussions with Soen Sa Nim.

The Kwan Um Zen School staff is work-

ing on a translation of "100 Cases," which Soen Sa Nim published in Korea in 1965. Just arrived from Korea is a small pamphlet entitled "Zen Dialogues in China," an account of Soen Sa Nim's "Dharma combat" with the old Chinese monks and Zen Masters he met during his trip last fall to the People's Republic of China. Excerpts from the pamphlet are printed in this issue. Some

copies will be available through the Kwan Um Zen School office in Cumberland, RI. Centre Zen de Paris Abbot Do Mun Sunim reports that some members are working on French translations of Soen Sa Nim's work. Last but not least, the Krakow Zen Center (Poland) publishing group has a number of translations of Soen Sa Nim's books underway.

Going on to Florida, he led his first retreat at the Gainesville Zen Circle, a new affiliate, and gave a talk at a karate school which attracted several hundred people. In May he led a retreat at New Haven Zen Center and the following week in Providence, sponsored by another new affiliate, Dharma Hope Zen group, gave a high-energy talk to over 170 students and faculty at Brown University. An unexpected side trip to Korea occurred when Soen Sa Nim went to attend funeral ceremonies for Zen Master Baek Cho Sunim (see separate story).

Returning to the United States, he participated in the closing and rededication ceremonies of a conference on Buddhism and non-violence, sponsored by the Rochester Zen Center (Kapleau Roshi's school). He led a weekend retreat at Chogye International Zen Center in New York and seven-day retreats at Providence and Cambridge Zen Centers in early June.

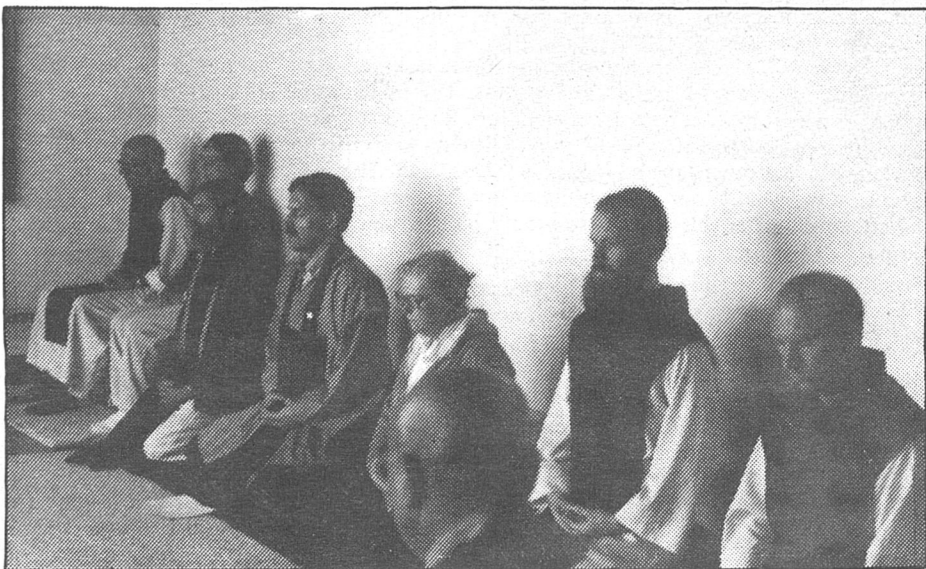
He is scheduled to go to Europe with stops in Paris, Germany, Spain and England before returning to the East Coast. In July he will be participating in a one-day ecumenical festival and dedication of the Lotus shrine at Yogaville, VA, with Swami Satchidananda and other spiritual leaders. The first weekend of August he will be at Providence Zen Center with members of the Kwan Um Zen School to celebrate his birthday and preside over the fourth annual School Congress.

For up-to-date information on his schedule, contact the director, Kwan Um Zen School. Soen Sa Nim's schedule is subject to frequent changes, so when planning to attend an event, make sure you get in touch with the local contacts, or check the School newsletter which is available from the School and Zen Centers.



## “BE STILL— KNOW THAT I AM GOD”

*Soen Sa Nim Leads  
Combined Christian-  
Buddhist Retreat at  
Gethsemene Trappist  
Monastery in  
Kentucky*



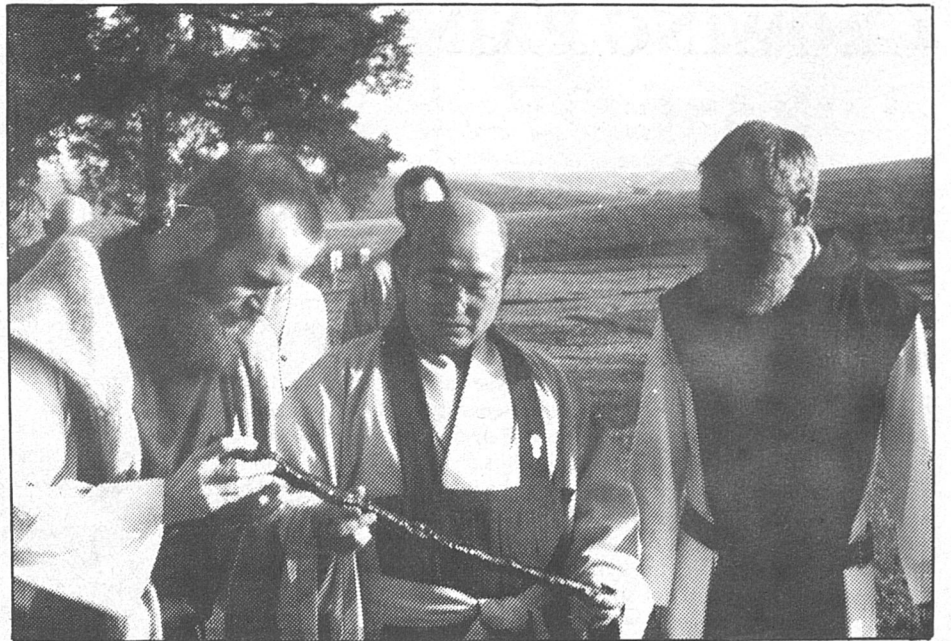
Ten people, including 8 Trappist monks, two nuns, and three members of the Lexington, KY, Zen Center, sat an unusual two day ecumenical retreat at Gethsemene Monastery in Trappist, KY, in April. Soen Sa Nim led the retreat, assisted by Brother Anthony Distefano of the monastery. Gethsemene Monastery is well-known because of one of its famous former residents, Thomas Merton, a prolific writer and modern spiritual pioneer in the ongoing East-West dialogue.

This retreat marked the first time Soen Sa Nim has been invited to led a retreat for monks at a Catholic monastery, although for years he has been speaking at numerous monasteries around the world. The retreat was a balance of Zen and Catholic monastic forms. Soen Sa Nim gave Zen interviews and Dharma talks, and led prostrations in the early morning, but not all of the monks participated. There was group chanting of

the Heart Sutra (in English), a traditional Zen chant, and Kyrie Elison, a traditional Christian chant. The retreatants sat in chairs and ate silent meals with plates and forks, instead of four-bowl temple style.

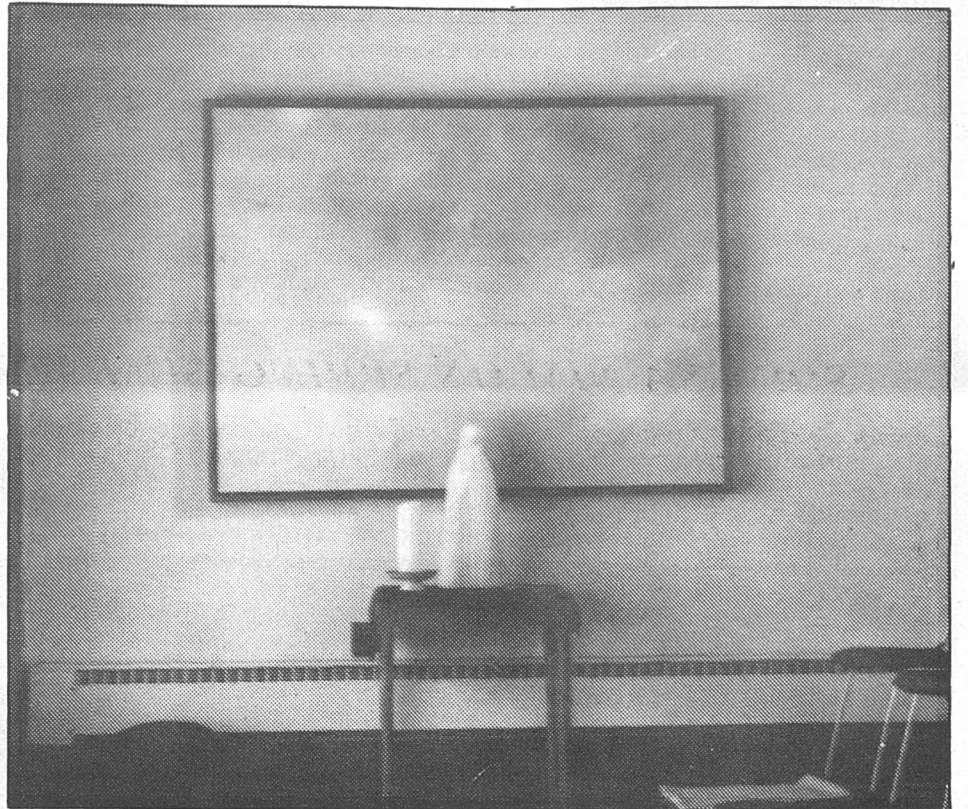
Lexington, KY, Zen Center Abbot Bob Genthner, who was one of the three LZC members permitted to join the retreat, spoke of the good spirit of the retreat. He said that Soen Sa Nim spoke of “God-mind” instead of “Buddha-mind” and told the retreatants, “You do not need God—God needs you. This world is in trouble, so you must find God.”

This retreat grew out of a talk that Soen Sa Nim gave at Gethsemene last year. Some years ago, Joshu Sasaki Roshi also gave a combined Christian-Buddhist retreat there. Gethsemene seems to be trying to keep the ecumenical spirit alive. Soen Sa Nim welcomes such opportunities to help people of different religious traditions practice and worship together.



The Gethsemene retreat was followed by a weekend Zen retreat at the Lexington Zen Center. Some 25 people attended, from as far away as Ohio, Tennessee, West Virginia, Indiana and Rhode Island. Accompanying Soen Sa Nim and also sitting was Richard Streitfeld, Director of the Kwan Um Zen School. The retreat ended with a Precepts Ceremony on Sunday in which four people took the Five Precepts.

With so many people attending, the logistics of eating, washing, sleeping and movement were tricky in what is basically a 3-bedroom house. But it went smoothly, according to Streitfeld who was impressed with the new Dharma room the Genthners had constructed in their basement and the cooking and coordinating skill of Mara Genthner, who is the mother of two children and in the last month of expecting her third child. □



THE MADONNA adorns a simple altar used during Gethsemene retreat

### Excerpt from “ZEN DIALOGUES IN CHINA” Dialogue No. VIII

September 15, 1985

The next place visited was Pu Tuo Mountain, located on Pu Tuo Shan Island, one of the most sacred Buddhist places in China. On the island there had been one hundred temples, most of which were destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. Some are now being reconstructed by the government. The island as a whole is dedicated to Kwan Um Bodhisattva. Mt. Pu Tuo means “mountain of beautiful, little white flowers.” The mountain on the island is shaped like a small half-moon. It is so beautiful that it looks like a bunch of flowers. Anyone on the mountain feels like he is being embraced in the arms of the Bodhisattva. Hills, water, rocks, everything seems to preach the Dharma, and the trees, flowers and singing birds all combine to make a joyful, holy scene.

There are three big temples on the mountain and the group visited Pu Ji Temple first and then Fa Yu Temple. This temple was destroyed during the Cultural Revolution and was being rebuilt under the direction of the present Abbot, Master Miao Shan. Master Miao Shan is quite in-

fluent. Donations came from abroad, from the government and from many devotees. Thus the reconstruction work has progressed quite rapidly.

Master Miao Shan left home at the age of seven and stayed at the temple for the next seventy years, except for twenty years when he was chased out during the



Cultural Revolution to work in the fields; He looked much younger than his age; strong, clear-voiced and very compassionate. He had visited America, touring New York and San Francisco, etc. He said that America seemed like the Western Pure Land, a paradise on earth. He said he

liked Americans and gave us a special welcome.

Soen Sa Nim asked the Dharma Master, “This temple is the temple of Kwan Um Bodhisattva, who has one thousand eyes. Of his one thousand eyes, which is the true eye?”

The Chinese Master wrote, “The eye nature is completely bright.”

Soen Sa Nim asked, “What is it that is completely bright?”



The Master replied, “One nature is all nature. It is without hindrance.”

Soen Sa Nim asked, “What is that nature?”

The Chinese Master hesitated, so Soen Sa Nim said, “Blue sky and blue mountain, isn’t it?”

The old Master said, “I’m not sure. But you are wonderful.” He held Soen Sa Nim’s hands with delight and everyone laughed with one mind.

Then the talk continued. Soen Sa Nim asked, “Since we have come to China, we have been given tea everywhere we go. This reminds me of JoJu Zen Master who used to say to students, ‘Go drink tea.’ What then is the meaning of JoJu’s ‘Go drink tea?’”

The Chinese Master answered, “Have you drunk tea in China?”

Soen Sa Nim then took up the tea cup and offered it to him. The Chinese Master and everybody burst into laughter. They then bid farewell and the old Master shook hands with each member of the group and gave them a cordial send off. In return, the group bowed in deep respect to Master Miao Shan’s compassionate mind, cultivated throughout his whole life. □

This excerpt is from a small pamphlet sent to us from Korea, an account of Soen Sa Nim’s trip to the People’s Republic of China last fall. In the pamphlet are nine stories of places visited where Soen Sa Nim had “Dharma combat” with the old Chinese monks and Zen Masters. Soen Na Nim was the first South Korean monk admitted to China for decades. He was accompanied by several dozen students and colleagues.



## GROWING PAINS

By Editor-in-Chief Ellen Sidor, with contributions from Master Dharma Teachers Barbara and Lincoln Rhodes and Jacob Perl, School Director Richard Streitfeld, and Contributing Editor Shana Klinger.

In the past few years the Kwan Um Zen School has been experiencing a difficult transition, the nature of which has only recently become apparent—the shift from the authority and leadership of our founder and Zen Master to a sharing of these responsibilities between him, the School Council, and his six American Master Dharma Teachers. After 14 years of teaching in America, now Soen Sa Nim is spending less time here and more time abroad. The American school is being expected to function more on its own.

While many of his older students perceive this as a loss and react with different emotions, others perceive it as the inevitable separation of a growing-up child and its parent. We are grappling with the difficult task of beginning to fill the gap that our powerful and charismatic teacher is purposely leaving. It is a challenge to find our own ways of maintaining our centers, teaching without him, growing and fund-raising. "If I stay in one place, you will not grow up," Soen Sa Nim says. "Zen means, 'become independent.'"

Already there are numerous new students in the School who have not met him and who regard the American Dharma heirs as their real teachers. To some people this is a welcome development, others are not so sure. However, it has placed a great responsibility on the American teachers, none of whom has been a monk or practiced for more than 15 years. The six Master Dharma Teachers (two were named in 1977, two in 1981, two in 1984) have needed time to deal with their own lives in relation to becoming teachers, to get to know and trust each other. It is not surprising that they have shown the strain of this position at times.

The Master Dharma Teacher group is the second "leg" of the governing stool, of which Soen Sa Nim is the first. It has the function of making teaching decisions along with Soen Sa Nim, and making decisions in cases where an individual or center is experiencing difficulties.

The third administrative "leg" is the School Council, which has been in existence only three years, although most of its members have been students of Soen Sa Nim for up to a decade or more. The Council has about 18 members from Zen Centers around the country, meets three times a year, and operates by consensus. In the beginning, it was difficult to feel credible as a governing body.

It took time for the Council members to get to know each other and to work as a team. Often there were situations that arose between Council meetings that called for speedy action, and consensus over such distances was impossible. Some decisions were reached by the School Staff through consultation with Soen Sa Nim and the Master Dharma Teachers by telephone. Other decisions were made by Soen Sa Nim alone and discussed later with the Council. This process has inevitably created some serious communication glitches.

Over time the face-to-face Council meetings have proven to be a good clearing-house and healing process. The realization that the Master Dharma Teachers and the Council could give useful group feedback to Soen Sa Nim has solidified the effectiveness of both groups. At the recent April Council and Master Dharma Teacher meetings, a new sense of clarity and cohesiveness emerged, in large measure due to our having to deal with several difficult issues.

### Looking at the Zen organism

If you have been reading other Zen publications in this country over the past few years, it becomes apparent that we are all going through a similar process. We are all experiencing, in one way or another, the growing pains of Zen. It is often helpful, in the middle of what seems to be just a particular, personal struggle or crisis within one group, to see the universality of the growth process.

Here at the Kwan Um Zen School, as elsewhere, the scenario is becoming familiar: an event occurs or comes to light concerning a teacher. It may provoke severe disapproval and

Eventually some common ground is reached. Through the process of sharing, practicing, suffering together, a new consensus and a new relationship to the teacher emerges. Guidelines are discussed and written down. There is a reshuffling of the hierarchy, sometimes a decentralizing. Large organization shrink or subdivide, new groups spring up. When the smoke clears, the landscape has changed a little.

Perhaps now there are fewer of the original pioneering teachers from the East who are still in supreme authority in their sanghas, or their sanghas are smaller. Some teachers and students have parted ways. These relationships need to be completed in a clear way. Deserting a "stuck" relationship is like not finishing a koan. Some people have left Zen practice over these incidents, but others have gone into it more deeply. For those of us who have stayed, who imagine we are going to be doing this for the long haul, there is a less idealized view of reality and a new sense of humility. The air is clearer.

In a talk last July, Soen Sa Nim cautioned the Kwan Um Zen School Congress that it was now, as an embodiment of his teaching in the United States, 14 years old—in other words, an adolescent. He warned us that the next few years would be stormy as this adolescent begins to deal with the issues of taking responsibility, communicating with siblings, developing an identity that is separate from its parents. It's a helpful image that seems to describe what is happening in many sanghas. We're growing up and it's a turbulent time.

It's easy to get hung up on being judgmental about some of our teachers' behaviors. There have perhaps been abuses of power and position, of sex. The mystique of robes, shaven heads, Buddhist images, exotic rituals are still a powerful, often shocking, counterpoint to a good deal of American culture. Whether we greet the trappings of Zen with enthusiasm, wariness or outright dislike—the tradition of patriarch, the unquestionable authority of roshi and Zen master, the sternness of the monastic discipline—an important truth is being obscured. Growing up (with or without the help of Zen) is an extremely personal, visceral matter.

It helps when we can see what we bring to the task: idealism, high hopes, the wish that our teachers can ease us through the process. The fundamental job is still often painful, calling for persistence, or perhaps desperation. Rage, arrogance, sadness and confusion are part of it, as is joy. But after the hoorah of dealing with crisis (inspired by teacher behavior or whatever) dies down, the basic task is still at hand. This is our Zen. What is it going to be? Just now, what is our relationship to our teachers? What ways can we embrace them and effectively offer this practice to others, so that we can begin to digest our American Karma?

### Lay practice and monasticism

Zen is still very young here. When the first blush of romanticism and idealism wears off, we have to deal with the nitty-gritty of getting family life, career, relationships and Zen practice into some kind of harmony. At best it's a precarious balance which never seems to hold for long. Part of the reason for that is that we have, as yet, no American Zen tradition to fall back on, no established role models for the "complete" American Zen layperson. We discover this when we try to rely strictly on the Eastern models which have been brought to us.

One of the thorniest challenges to American Zen will be to see whether it can fashion a lay practice which actually works. Some of us, harboring monasticism in our hearts, deal with the daily burden in part by dreaming of a future time when we can put it all aside. Some of us have already chosen some form of ordination, and are trying to live it in a secular and materialistic America. Most of us, however, live a non-monastic life, embracing families and cars and jobs, trying to find a right livelihood and peace of mind, while being fully engaged in a complicated society. What kind of practice, what traditions can we fashion that will help us balance all this, and perceive our True Self?

Basic to Soen Sa Nim's (and other Zen teachers) teaching in America has been the establishment of Zen Centers in which people can pursue a more rigorous practice and live and work together. The rigid schedule calls for strong determination. But the attraction of families to these centers, and the natural movement of most older students toward marriage and family life, has created a whole set of interesting, frustrating issues that are becoming familiar to all the lay sanghas of American Zen. These issues revolve around the tensions of commitment to formal practice and the demands of family and economic life.



Zen Master Seung Sahn



photo by Ernie Leveque

### NOTE TO OUR READERS...

Starting with this issue, PRIMARY POINT will now be publishing three issues a year instead of 4, and will be 16 pages instead of 12. You can expect us in February, June and October. Copy deadlines will be January 1, May 1, and September 1.

confusion within the sangha. Some members of the sangha react with anger and hurt. Gossip flourishes. Emotional letters are sent.

The event polarizes people. Suddenly the whole panoply of opposites arises: we are men or women, students or teachers, monks or laypeople, residents or nonresidents, leaders or followers. Opposites are painful. In trying to resolve them people begin to reveal their true feelings. Meetings are held, facts are shared. Everything is looked at: the teacher, the hierarchy, the practice, the decision-making process, one's personal life and commitment. Although some people leave the sangha, others stay. Some turn in their robes/authority roles, others opt for the sidelines to await developments. Lots of people feel a great learning process, and some wounds, also.

A basic paradox of a Zen Center is that without some people who commit themselves to a single life in order to keep a strong core of practice going, the paired and married older students are moving away from formal practice just when newer students need them the most.

Soen Sa Nim has tried to establish a monastic community in America, but it has been very difficult. As many monks have left the Kwan Um Zen School as have joined it. When he first came to the United States 14 years ago, sensing a fertile field for Zen in the independence and open-mindedness of the American hippie, he introduced the traditional forms of the Korean Chogye Zen. Little by little he has had to modify many of them to fit the American character.

Most recently, despite strong disapproval from the Chogye Order in Korea (which for decades has fought to represent the single monk tradition), Soen Sa Nim created the role of "Bodhisattva monk," a lay person who makes a greater commitment to practicing and helping others, yet may marry, have a career and so forth. This option has been attempted by more people so far than the single monk role. It remains to be seen whether these seeds will flourish or not in America.

If we always cling tightly to the familiar, the parental, we will break no new ground. In the long hour of the history of Buddhism, American Zen is merely the last few seconds. Here's trusting that in our American passion for analyzing and scrutinizing things so closely, we don't miss the sweep and humor of the grand overview. □





Seoul International Zen Center...A recent letter from Do Gong Sunim (formerly John Barrazuol) brings us the following news: Do Ryeun Sunim (formerly David Ladeboer) is now living at Jeung Hye Sah temple and is both "administrator and sangha" of the Jeung Hye Sah Zen Center. Mu Ryang Sunim (formerly Eric Berall) went on a walking tour of coastal Korea, staying overnight in temples, village houses and cathedrals...At SIZC Hae Soeng Sunim (formerly Diana Clark) is Head Monk; Mu Shim Sunim (formerly Josh Lea) is Housemaster; Arnold Schuh from Germany is assistant Housemaster; Do Won Sunim (formerly Nancy Brown) is Guestmaster; and Do Gong Sunim is Director. Jeff Webster served as Tea Master until his recent return to the United States.



**1985-86 KOREA KYOL CHE PARTICIPANTS at Su Dok Sah on Christmas Day, 1985. Front row (l to r): Jeff Webster, USA; Noh Sunim, Korea; Hae Shim Sunim, a Korean monk living in the USA; Mu Shim Sunim, USA. Middle row: Gwa Dae Sunim, England, now living in Hong Kong; Do Gong Sunim, Canada; Do Won Sunim, USA; Jan Schaake, USA. Back row: Joan Insa, Spain; Mr. Kwak, Korean guest; Mu Reyum Sunim, USA; Arnold Schuh, Germany; Mu Ryang Sunim, USA. Absent: Do Ryeum Sunim, USA.**



tour of Korean temples and did some "Dharma combat" with a few Korean Zen Masters.

During the retreat the group was interviewed by reporters from a popular Korean magazine, and also were filmed for a local TV program. Soen Sa Nim managed to get a copy of the video and showed it to a large crowd at the Buddha's Birthday ceremonies at Providence Zen Center in April. Before leaving Korea, Soen Sa Nim taught the Kwan Um Zen School style of chanting and meditation to a group of 125 laypeople, who will continue to meet weekly led by In Won Sunim, a professor at Dongguk University.



Do Won Sunim

In addition to all those mentioned above, a number of Korean laypeople and monks and nuns participated in the 90-day intensive Kyol Che at Su Dok Sah. During the last 10 days of the retreat they were joined by Soen Sa Nim, who came to officiate at the closing ceremony, Master Dharma

Teacher Mu Deung Sunim (who went on to do a 49-day solo retreat at a hermitage on Dok Sahn Mountain), Dr. Danette Choi (see article on Centre Zen de Paris), Diana Clark, Jim Binger, Jon Solomon and Jun Ping from Taiwan. After the retreat ended, many of the participants went on a 6-day



Mu Ryang Sunim

## ZEN MASTER BAEK CHO 1893-1986

Baek Cho Sunim, Zen Master at the Jung Hye Sah temple on Dok Sahn Mountain in Korea, died there in April at the age of 93. He had been living the monastic life since the age of 9, when he was carried to Su Dok Sah monastery on his father's neck. He and his father became monks together and trained under famous Zen Master Mang

Gong, Soen Sa Nim's grand teacher.

During his many years at Jung Hye Sah, which is about an hour's hike above Su Dok Sah in a rugged national park, Baek Cho Sunim did a great deal of construction work at the tiny temple. He built many of the present stone walls and stone stairways by himself. He was noted for his muscular frame and strong voice. Except for an occasional pilgrimage or outing, Baek Cho Sunim never left the mountain for 84 years!

### Many Links to Our School

In 1982 a number of American Zen students traveling with Soen Sa Nim sat a two-

day retreat at Jung Hye Sah. Baek Cho Sunim gave a Dharma talk in which he told them, "Your body home may be in America, but your mind home is here."

At that time he was already ailing somewhat and needed the help of a young boy or a wooden staff to get around. But his mind remained keen, and he enjoyed Soen Sa Nim's rare visits. He and his Do Gam, Hye An Sunim (who came to the Providence Zen Center last year and speaks some English), have been very interested in developing Jung Hye Sah as an international training center. The first international 90-day intensive retreat was scheduled to start last November but had to be relocated to Su

Dok Sah until repairs to the Son Bang (Zen hall) floor and heating system can be completed.

Soen Sa Nim has described Jung Hye Sah as the "primary energy point" for the Kwan Um Zen School. The temple was enlarged and used by Zen Master Mang Gong for intensive training of his senior students. There are numerous small hermitages on the mountain, some of which have been used in recent years by monks from the Kwan Um Zen School of America. Mu Sang Sunim did a 100 day solo retreat there last year, and Master Dharma Teacher Mu Deung Sunim recently completed a 49-day solo retreat. □

# SECOND INTERNATIONAL 90-DAY MEDITATION RETREAT TO BE HELD AT JUNG HYE SAH, KOREA

November 17, 1986 to mid-February 1987



Master Dharma Teacher Mu Deung Sunim, who recently returned from a 49-day solo retreat on Dok Seung Mountain, will

be leading the second international Kyol Che meditation retreat at Jung Hye Sah, Korea. He will be giving weekly interviews.

There is no charge for monks, nuns and those willing to shave their heads. For others, the cost will be \$300.

The schedule will include 12 hours of formal practice a day, including rising early, sitting, bowing, chanting, working and eating together in total silence. It is likely that Soen Sa Nim will visit the retreat at some point.

Living conditions are simple (outhouse and only occasional hot water) but Korean temple food is excellent. Only seasoned Zen students willing and able to live with few amenities should consider this retreat. Time for sightseeing in Korea will be arranged following the retreat. Since formal invitations must be obtained from Korea, please write or call very soon to the director, Kwan Um Zen School (528 Pound Road, Cumberland, RI 02864, 401-769-6476) if you are interested

in doing this retreat. Participants must register for the entire 90 days.

Jung Hye Sah is about an hour's hike above Su Dok Sah, its grounds the forest of a rugged national park. There are numerous small hermitages and monuments on the mountain, each with its own special history. American students who have been to Jung Hye Sah testify to the strong energy of the place. From the courtyard and other vantage points, you can see a hundred miles. There are numerous hiking trails on the mountain.

Tiny Jung Hye Sah is one of the most famous temples on Dok Seung Mountain. Built by Zen Master Mang Gong (Soen Sa Nim's grand-teacher) as a special meditation retreat for his senior students, Jung Hye Sah is the place where many great Zen Masters got enlightenment, so it has special meaning for our School. Soen Sa Nim strongly encourages his students to sit there at some point in their practice, because he considers Dok Seung Mountain the "primary energy point" for the Kwan Um Zen School. His Dharma name, Seung Sahn, means "man of Dok Seung Mountain." He stayed at Jung Hye Sah after he got enlightenment.

Richard Shrobe, C.S.W, A.C.S.W.

Psychotherapist

Specializing in the Gestalt approach

201 East 34th Street, 5th Floor  
N.Y., N.Y. 10016 (212) 689-7740



## KWAN SEUM BOSAL'S PATH: New developments in our European school

by Do Mun Sunim, Abbot  
Centre Zen de Paris - Dharma Sah  
and Paul Leu

Dr. Danette Choi's Social Buddhism aims at bringing Buddhism into society: the whole of society, not just people already on the path or searching for it. Her teaching reaches beyond those who come questioning, toward those whose questioning is still latent and needs to be aroused. In particular, Social Buddhism addresses people in their present circumstances. Rather than drawing them into a separate, parallel spiritual life, it helps them to attain their correct situation and function within the actual context of their lives.

"Loose but tight" is one of Dr. Choi's maxims. Another is, "No rule but rules." This means, "live your social life, like your professional and family life, but keep clear from moment to moment and always have a correct human function and relationship." The practice which she teaches aims at achieving this; however everyone is individually responsible for his or her own practice. In contrast to monastic traditions that provide more systematic guidelines and rules, and then seek to accommodate individual needs ("tight but loose"), the focus of Dr. Choi's teaching is on individual situations and needs, with the teacher watching how each student is finding his or her correct relationship, functioning and energy. This—rather than pre-established prescriptions—constitutes the real "rule," the essence of which is being strong "inside."

"Take myself," says Dr. Choi. "I look like an ordinary woman, but inside, what I can give is different [from other women]."

To transform from within, one must be ready to meet people on their own ground. Speaking of the Zen Center in Paris, Dr. Choi says, "Our practice means taking the Zen Center and our teaching into European society and shaking up all those high-class people. That's why I wear high-class clothes and make-up, to be able to help that kind of human being and bring our teaching to all levels of society." In the same spirit, the Bodhisattva Kwan Seum Bosal is depicted wearing jewels and beautiful robes, yet moment-to-moment 100% keeping the correct situation with one great purpose.

If Dr. Choi sometimes cuts a stunning figure in society, far more often she is in an old pink jogging suit, meditating in her small room at our cramped Parisian quarters, where people camp refugee style and

on occasion even use the kitchen to practice. A typical day finds her performing ceremonies and healing in the morning, giving consultations in the afternoon, and leading evening practice. "People don't understand her," says Randy Koseki, Director of Dr. Choi's center in Honolulu, Hawaii, Dharma Sah. "She lives like a nun—always practicing in her room. She hardly ever goes out, and then it is only on Zen Center business."

Among those coming for counseling are Parisians from all walks of life, as well as a shipping tycoon from Norway and businessmen from Saudi Arabia and Poland. Recently the wife of the President of Madagascar arrived with her servants and bodyguards. Dr. Choi greets them all in her simple and direct manner, without regard to rank and status. In Europe, spiritual matters are taken seriously by people at all levels of society, and many who came to practice at the Zen Center are well-established people with jobs and families. Some have deep questions concerning not only their own personal welfare, but also that of society at large.

Recently Dr. Choi met Dr. Jo Jaz from Belgium, chairman of the Science Coordinating Committee of UNESCO. This committee is responsible for international scientific projects sponsored by UNESCO, and its members include several Nobel prize winners. Dr. Jaz was so impressed by his conversation with Dr. Choi that he appointed her as counselor to the committee, which seeks to understand the relation of spirit and matter and the correct use of science in the world.

One of our directors recently introduced Dr. Choi to the Minister of Transportation in the new French government, with the view to creating a business for needy people who cannot find jobs or have difficulty holding them, and who want to practice at the Zen Center. To this end, Dr. Choi has plans to purchase a hotel.

Still more tangible support for the Center has come through Dr. J. Donnars, a famous psychiatrist and director of L'Homme et la Connaissance, an organization which has been sponsoring conferences with spiritual leaders and psychologists for 26 years. At his first meeting with Dr. Choi, Dr. Donnars offered to help the Zen Center. When

photos by Randy Koseki



A "LA MAISON IMAGINAIRE" in Janze, Bretagne, France, a sculptured house being made available for Centre Zen de Paris retreats. (L to R) Jacques Villet, a CZP director; Francik Lucas; and CZP Abbot Do Mun Sunim



Dr. Danette Choi

Dr. Choi mentioned that for several months we had been looking for larger quarters, Dr. Donnars offered her an apartment essentially as a gift.

In mid-May the Zen Center moved into the old headquarters of L'Homme et la Connaissance, a spacious apartment with five large bedrooms (potentially ten) and a large meditation room which can hold over 100 people. It is very difficult to find space like this in or around Paris. The apartment is in central Paris and is in the typical high-class French style. The Zen Center is also taking over the running of L'Homme et la Connaissance, as Dr. Donnars wants to retire. The new space will enable more people to live at the Center. Additional classes and programs are being planned outside of daily Zen practice.

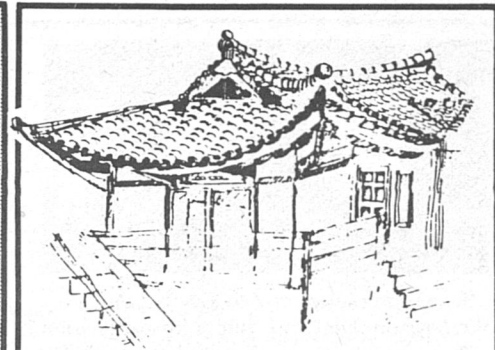
In March and April Dr. Choi gave a special two-months women's course in the evening on energy, healing, human relations and the correct function of life. The course included intensive individual supervision by Dr. Choi of each student's efforts, in addition to talks, special breathing and meditation techniques, healing, group practice and lots of time for questions. It was so successful that a 3-month advanced course will begin in June as well as a second beginner's course. There will also be an important 3-month course for future Dharma teachers, with detailed instruction in Buddhist theory and our practice style. Dr. Choi will give individual attention to each student's meditation practice.

Two of Dr. Choi's students, Jacques and Francik Lucas, have given their house in Bretagne (three hours from Paris) to the Zen Center to be the country retreat center for the Kwan Um Zen School of Europe. Set amid rolling hills and farms in the town of Janze, the old farm house has been lived in and added to for 17 years by Jacques, who is an artist. Called "La Maison Imaginaire," it has a completely sculpted facade and environs. Jacques recently added another bathroom. Our first retreat was held there in April. A retreat with Soen Sa Nim is planned for June.

Many capable people have begun practicing at the Center, devoted to Dr. Choi and the purpose of the Center and working for the Dharma in Europe. Here is a brief introduction to the directors:

Jacques Villet, 53, Masters in engineering from MIT, international business and industrial consultant for the French government. Jacques was a cabinet member under President Pompidou, and is founder of Comete, a foundation bringing together political, business and industrial leaders to find solutions to interdisciplinary problems.

Daniel Friart, 37, Masters degree in engineering, University of Orsay. An engineer doing research on laser fusion, he is sent yearly to California on an exchange of scientists between the French and American government. Daniel has been a student of Tibetan and Zen Buddhism for seven years.



### 19-DAY SUMMER RETREAT DURING AUG. 5-24

This summer the Providence Zen Center is offering its fourth 19-day Kyol Che. The retreat will be led by Master Dharma Teacher Barbara Rhodes, who has been practicing with Zen Master Seung Sahn for the past 13 years. The retreat will be held at the Diamond Hill Zen Monastery, located on the grounds of the Center. Conducted in silence, the daily schedule includes eight hours of sitting as well as chanting, bowing and working meditation. Barbara will give interviews and talks on a regular basis.

Registration is open for any number of the 19 days as long as it is a minimum of two days. Entry times are Mon., Wed., and Fri. evening. Costs: 19 days: \$400 non-members (\$300 members); 7 days: \$155 non-members (\$110 members); less than 7 days: \$24/day non-members (\$15/day members). Registration requires a \$20 deposit.

For information and registration contact:

PROVIDENCE ZEN CENTER  
528 POUND ROAD  
CUMBERLAND, RI 02864  
401-769-6464

### CARVING SHOP

WOODEN SIGNS

FIGURES

ARCHITECTURAL

SCULPTURE

David Klinger  
Providence, RI  
401-861-3646

Paul Leu, 41, novelist and pianist. Born in China, Paul has lived extensively on three continents and is fluent in four languages. He was lecturer in Comparative Literature at Washington University and music critic for the St. Louis Post. He is preparing a book on Dr. Choi's teaching in Europe and is helping get Soen Sa Nim's books translated and published in Europe.



## CARRYING SNOW IN A TEASPOON

Continued from page 1

That's our teaching, our way, and yet it's difficult to believe. Over and over we want to make something, add something, romanticize something. It's very difficult to just believe in the truth of something that simple. So maybe there is no essence of Zen, none at all. (Laughter)

As soon as we start to think about the essence of something, we're already caught up in some subtle conceptual framework because we're looking for something called an "essence." If you sit for two hours straight, you can go on a long journey towards essence. Your nervous system and your mind and everything will do miraculous and extraordinary things in two

On the other hand, when I was studying with Soen Sa Nim around 1976, we were having a discussion with him. We had just moved the Zen Center and were debating whether we could keep a daily practice going as a Zen Center because there was no one living in it, or whether we should call ourselves something other than a Zen Center. Soen Sa Nim subtly baited us. He said, "Well, you can be a Zen club if you want to and get together every so often and occasionally I'll come here." In the midst of all this talking, he finally coerced us into making a commitment. Then he said (this was the first time I'd heard him say it, and he's said it a million times since then), "Ok, so you try. Try, try, try for 10,000 years nonstop."

That's a teaching based on "just try." But the intention of his "just try" and the intention that was being imparted in these

### "Maybe there is no 'essence' of Zen, none at all."

hours of sitting, that is, along with the pain in your legs. So one of the fundamentals of the Zen way of talking is to talk about "no self" and "no trace." No trace means that experiences, phenomena have no trace of something conceptual sticking to them. That means no essence.

There's a story about a sea turtle who comes out of the ocean, crawls up on the beach, buries its eggs, smooths over the sand so that no one can find anything and then goes back down the beach to the ocean and swims away. But this turtle has a tail. As it crawls down the beach, the tail drags back and forth in the sand, leaving quite a clear tracing of just where the eggs were. So, the Zen way emphasizes existing with no trace, no tail. Somehow we have to cut off our tail, or have the patience to endure just waiting until it falls off by itself. It's doubtful to me, at this point in my life, that we could really cut it off once and for all. If you cut it off, it just grows back anyway, like a salamander.

Richie said last night when I came in, that it was good to have the retreat going on here and it was amazing how quickly things fall away and you get back to the simplicity of natural mind. After saying that, he said, "It's amazing how easily things fall away, and also how quickly they come back."

We need the patience just to let these things wear themselves out, over and over, until there's no trace left. It's like sandpaper getting things smoother and smoother. We're all looking for the essence of Zen and that's creating many problems.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Q:** When I don't think about effort, it seems like I'm able to do something. When I do think about it, I have come to think there is no such thing as trying. Where do we get that impulse inside ourselves to do it?

**RS:** It's a combination of self-determined focus, on one hand, and a spontaneous emergence, on the other. I think the two come together at a certain point. Words like "try" and "effort" are teaching words, a particular expedient means that someone might offer to encourage someone else. Sometimes, a teacher might say "try" and at other times, "don't try at all."

The other day my 13-year old daughter was home sick and I was there with her. We have a video cassette of the movie "Karate Kid," and we were watching it for about the millionth time (laughter). Parts of it have a Zen flavor. The karate teacher is going to teach this kid karate and they make a pact to begin. The teacher says, "Are you ready to begin?" The kid says, "Yeah, maybe, I guess so."

The teacher then says something like this: "With some things, you can walk on one side of the road, you can walk on the other, or you can walk in the middle, but in karate, if you have this attitude of 'I guess,' you get squashed. So either karate 'do' or karate 'don't,' but there's no 'I guess' karate."

That's a teaching that's based on effort. You have to focus yourself. There's no in-between, you either do it or not. There's a similar scene in the second Star Wars movie, where the master-like figure Yoda is teaching Luke Skywalker to become attuned to the force of the universe. Luke says something like "I'll try" and Yoda says, "Either do or don't. There's no try."

two movies is basically the same spirit. To some degree, effort comes out of a determination to want to do something. If you have this determination, then there's willingness and in that willingness you can find interest, effort, spontaneous emergence. I think even before spontaneous interest or effort comes, there must be a certain willingness to want to do something. That's what we call having a great vow. There's a commitment, and out of that comes interest, which sometimes needs to be rekindled and sometimes just emerges

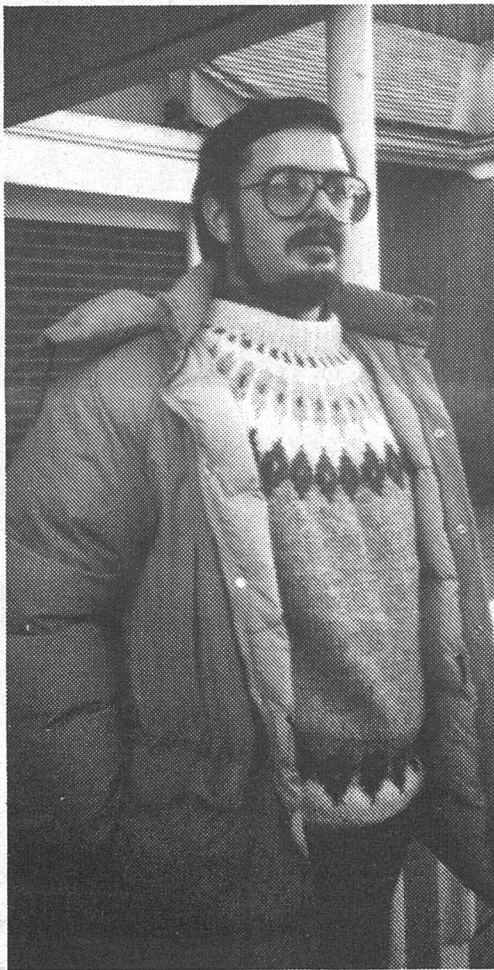


photo by Ellen Sidor

very spontaneously.

At times "I want to do this" comes up quite easily and you don't have to work very hard. You don't have to work at all, except just to get out of your own way, put the conscious, computer-like activities of your mind aside and just let the thing run on its own. Sometimes it's like that. Sometimes when we're sitting in a retreat, we'll have moments or periods like that.

But there are other times when it doesn't come forth like that. You might have to reinstate your commitment, your willingness to go through what it takes. I think both are important. In a way they come together, when you have a wide open mind that's clear enough at any moment - pfft! -to become one with the point at hand. There's a particular kind of energy that's born of these two things coming together, willingness and intention and getting out of your own way and just letting it happen. It's dangerous to think that it should just occur spontaneously.

Suzuki Roshi was very good at making that point in his writings, that human life is imperfect. It's always leaving traces. Even the word "imperfect" isn't quite right. Our human life, moment to moment, is always

changing. There are always difficulties and limitations coming. At the same time, those particular ways of expressing ourselves and those things that we're doing are the creative activity of the big mind or "don't-know" mind or beginner's mind, whatever word you want to use. On one hand, we're always leaving traces. On the other hand, there's no need to get rid of those traces.

So we say there's some spiritual truth and that truth is embodied in or expressed as everything. But we also look around and see so much disarray in ourselves and others. Why are people suffering? You can explain that away through some philosophical notion like karma, if you want. Not that karma is just a philosophical notion - it might be a reality as well. But while we can explain away painful things through a concept like karma, the real paradox of human existence comes if we don't explain or justify it away. How do we live having faith that there's some truth in the universe and that it's manifesting itself as all this that we see and hear and taste and smell and touch, and at the same time see so much disarray? How is all this disarray truth?

**Q:** How is it?

**RS:** Yes! That's great doubt. Keep that question for 10,000 years—"how is it?"

**Q:** Every morning I get up with everyone else here and take a vow to save all sentient beings from suffering. How can I do that?

**RS:** Do you want to do it?

**Q:** Yes.

**RS:** Then you'll find a way, through getting up every morning and taking that vow. That's an impossible vow. Each one of these is an impossible vow. "The Buddha way is inconceivable—I vow to attain it." How do you attain something that's inconceivable? "Sentient beings are numberless, I vow to save them all." How? It brings up the image of some great social worker in the sky—(laughter)—bigger than the whole universe, going to save all beings from suffering.

One time I heard Bernie Glassman Sensei, a teacher in Maezumi Roshi's school (he has a group in New York), talking on the radio. He gave an example of what a Bodhisattva is. He said, there's a well that's dry down on the plains, and up on the mountain tops there is snow. So the Bodhisattva is like a guy who decides he'll fill the well by bringing the snow down to the plains, but the only thing he has to carry the snow in is a teaspoon. So he goes up to the mountain, gets one teaspoon full of snow, comes back down to the plains and

### "The Zen way emphasizes existing with no trace, no tail. Somehow we have to cut it off, or have the patience to endure waiting until it falls off by itself."

puts the snow in the well. Then he goes back up the mountain, gets another teaspoon full of snow, brings it down and puts it in the well, over and over.

That's a ridiculous endeavor. Never in a million years is he going to fill up that well, but what's important is his sincerity of effort - to just do something, whether it's possible or impossible. That effort, that spirit, is a contribution in and of itself that can't be compared to anything else, so it has absolute value. Because it can't be compared to anything else, the spirit of that fills the universe in one second. At each moment that we do that, all sentient beings are saved, because we affirm the absolute value of everything.

We have to do something, even if it's not possible. So the vow points to something like that. At least, that's my view of it.

**Q:** What is absolute value?

**RS:** Relative value is concerned with, "This is good," or "This is not as good as something else." Value is ascribed to something based on a comparison with something else. "My watch is better than your watch, so it's worth more." That's relative value. Absolute value has no basis like that. We can't compare with anything, so it stands on its own just as it is. Sometimes we say subject and object become one—pfft! At that time, there's no comparison of anything with anything else, so the absolute value of something emerges at that point. It just stands or sits on its own.

## PRIMARY POINT

PRIMARY POINT is published by the Kwan Um Zen School, a non-profit religious corporation under the direction of Zen Master Seung Sahn. The School supports and arranges the world-wide teaching schedule of Zen Master Seung Sahn and his senior teachers, issues publications on contemporary Buddhist practice, and supports dialogue among religions.

PRIMARY POINT is published three times a year in February, June and October. Subscription cost for one year is \$10.00 (\$11.00 for Canada and Mexico, \$20.00 for foreign). If you would like to become a member of the Kwan Um Zen School, write to the nearest Zen Center or to the School Director.

Average circulation of PRIMARY POINT is 6,000 copies. For information on advertising rates or distribution, contact the business manager.

School Abbot: Master Dharma Teacher Lincoln Rhodes

School Director: Richard Streitfeld

Teacher Editors: Master Dharma Teachers

Barbara and Lincoln Rhodes

Editor-in-Chief: Ellen Sidor

Senior Editor: Richard Streitfeld

Contributing Editor: Shana Klingner

Art Director: Mel Ash

Production Group: Ralph Gauvey, Richard

Streitfeld, Eleanor Ash.

Contributions to this issue: Robert Genthner, Jane McLaughlin, Do Gong Sunim, Robert Moore.

PRIMARY POINT is typeset and printed by Weston Graphics Inc., Bellingham, MA.

Copyright 1985 Kwan Um Zen School. All rights reserved. Kwan Um Zen School, 528 Pound Road, Cumberland, RI 02864. Telephone (401) 769-6476.

**Q:** Your story about the Bodhisattva with the teaspoon reminds me a similar story of the sparrow who tries to put out a forest fire by carrying water in his beak. I told that story to one of my friends and they said, "That's the dumbest thing!" Why didn't he take a bucket?"

**RS:** He didn't have a bucket.

**RS:** But we're not talking about mountains and snow, we're talking about suffering. You can't use a power tool on suffering.

**Q:** I get the feeling sometimes that the sparrow was really dumb.

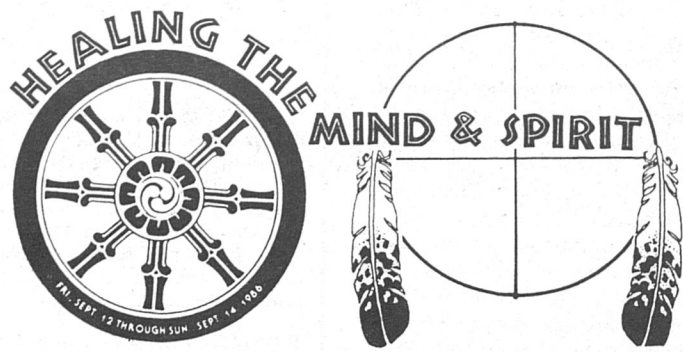
**RS:** Yes, sure! But dumbness has its place too. Someone might have a really simple kind of faith which is kind of dumb, given what we see all around us, and yet the energy that might come out of that effort might be quite profound. That doesn't mean we shouldn't sometimes look at the instruments we're using. If there's a bucket at hand and you're using a teaspoon, then that's stupidity. But if there's no bucket and you won't choose the teaspoon because there's no bucket, then that's stupidity too.

We talk about saving all sentient beings, every morning when we get up and bow and say our vows. But to have the idea that this little congregation of people here is doing something so profound that it's going to make a dent in the social fabric of this country, is from one perspective, dumb. Yet this is the instrument we have at hand, so we make use of it. □

Richard Shrobe studied intensively with Swami Sachidananda from 1967 until 1972. During that period he lived with his wife and three children for four years at the Integral Yoga Institute in New York. A former piano player, he has a Master's degree in Social Work and did four years of postgraduate training in gestalt therapy. In his private psychotherapy practice, he specializes in the gestalt approach.

He met Soen Sa Nim in 1975 and has been associated with the Chogye International Zen Center for many years. Certified as a Master Dharma Teacher in 1984, he lives in New York with his family.





### A Three-Day Conference, Sept. 12-14, 1986

This conference will bring together Native American and Buddhist teachings. Each teacher will present talks and also engage participants in practices derived from their traditions. The schedule will include Native American dancing, chanting, story-telling, Buddhist meditation and movement, visualization, stress reduction and relaxation work, and yoga.

**TWYLAH NITCH** - A Seneca elder, Wolf-Clan mother and keeper of the traditional dance.

**RUTH DENISON** - Founder of the Desert Vipassana Meditation Center and a regular teacher at the Insight Meditation Society.

**JON KABAT-ZINN** - Director of the Stress Reduction and Relaxation program at the University of Mass.; Assistant Professor of Medicine and long-time student and teacher of yoga.

**DHYANI YWAHOO** - A Cherokee woman, 27th lineage holder of the Cherokee Nation; founder of the Sunray Meditation Society.

Costs: 3 days: \$110 non-mem., \$75 mem. (incls. meals and accommodations)

2 days: \$75 non-mem., \$40 mem. (includes meals and accommodations)

1 day: \$40 non-mem., \$25 mem. (includes meals)

Child care: \$10/day

Registration requires a \$10 deposit.

For more information contact:  
**PROVIDENCE ZEN CENTER**  
528 POUND ROAD  
CUMBERLAND, RI 02864  
401-769-6464

## THE SOUND OF WIND

### An Evening of Shakuhachi

by Anthony Manousos

In the darkened dharma room sat the shakuhachi player, a slim, bearded, formally robed Westerner, his face illuminated by candlelight, his gaze one-pointedly fixed on a piece of driftwood and a few stones suggesting a Zen garden.

His audience consisted of around forty people, many of whom were from the local community and had no previous exposure to Zen. They avidly dined on such Korean delicacies as kimbop (vegetarian sushi) and kimchee (highly seasoned pickled vegetables), socialized with members of the Providence sangha, chanted sutras, and now sat expectantly listening as the shakuhachi player began to speak:

"My name is Bob Seigetsu Avstreich, and for the past twelve years I have studied and practiced sui-zen. The name Seigetsu ('Clear or Peaceful Moon') was given to me by my teacher, Ronnie Nyogetsu Seldin, as a mark of my attainment in this art. Sui-zen is a 1200 year old tradition of direct meditation and healing utilizing the shakuhachi, an end-blown, five-holed bamboo flute.

"Shaku is actually a unit of measure, like a foot. It's as if we were to name our Western flute or recorder 'a foot-and-a-half.' The three flutes I play are the standard 1.8, a 1.9, and a 2.4 length, all made by the renowned maker Kono Sensei. The longer flutes are used for pieces of the older, more meditative mode.

"Traditionally, the art of sui-zen was offered not as entertainment, but as a form of healing meditation for player and listener alike. Practitioners of honkyoku ('music of the original self') aimed to alleviate suffering and create 'the one perfect sound that would heal the world.'

"It is significant that the shakuhachi is made of bamboo, a material which, in the East, is esteemed because it embraces all the qualities of Nature: it is flexible, strong, evergreen, wide-ranging, utilitarian, and perhaps most important from the Zen point of view, it possesses a hollow or empty center.

"Joining the textures of breath and bamboo, the shakuhachi player celebrates the union of spirit, nature and humanity in the manner of the Chinese proverb: 'Heaven and Earth live together, and all things and I are one.'"

According to legend, sui-zen originated in the 9th century with the Chinese Zen master Fuke whose ringing bell and bamboo flute were a main component of his wandering teaching. This unique and sometimes controversial style of musical meditation was brought to Japan in the 13th century, where it was practiced by wandering monks of the Fuke order.

**"Try not to listen too closely. Just let it be there."**

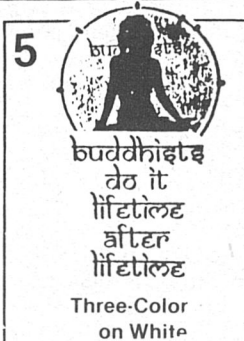
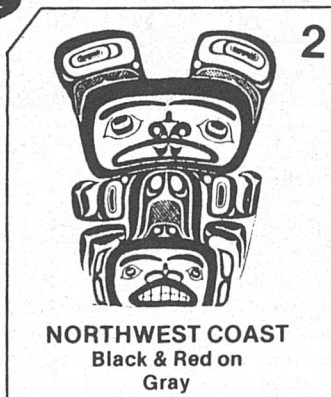
When Japan was unified under the shogun in the 1600's, the Fuke sect came under special government protection. The ranks of these wandering "priests of nothingness" were swelled by the ronin—unattached samurai whose services were no longer needed for the battles of feudal Japan. The life of a Zen monk was one of the few honorable paths open to these samurai; and although some of them became sincere practitioners, many others became part of an extensive spy network. (The figure of the komuso, head covered by the traditional basket, still lurks in the popular Japanese imagination as a symbol of evil.) In the mid-19th century, when the Meiji Reformation overthrew the power of the shogunate and the Fuke sect, the playing of shakuhachi was banned in Japan. This edict was rescinded within 10 years, however, and, for the first time, the playing of shakuhachi was available to the general population. Today the Fuke order survives and can be experienced at Myoan-ji Temple in Kyoto.

In Korea, shakuhachi players strayed from their spiritual mission to become travelling minstrels and vagabonds. They secularized traditional Buddhist themes and created lively and popular folk songs and dances that were often accompanied by hand bells. Organizing themselves into "tribes" that did not adhere to Buddhist precepts, they occasionally ate meat, drank wine, and engaged in free love. Like the hippies and street musicians of the 1960's, these free spirits made their living by panhandling and were regarded as the riffraff of society. Observed one writer, "like other despised classes, they endured long and disappeared."

As Korean Buddhism degenerated towards the end of the Chosen dynasty (ca. 1910), bamboo flute playing became associated with blind masseurs, who used the haunting sound to attract customers at night. A decade ago, the practice of itinerant begging—a venerable Buddhist practice—was formally prohibited by the Chogye Order in an effort to improve its public image. As Korea increasingly turns to Western values, such as competition, achievement, and material gain, sui-zen and the art of shakuhachi have virtually disappeared.

Like the original wandering monks of the sui-zen tradition, Avstreich regards the shakuhachi as a spiritual practice and is willing to offer his music to those in need, regardless of ability to pay. He travels widely, performing at colleges, museums, churches, and cultural events, such as the Omega Institute, the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, M.I.T., the Brooklyn Botanical Garden "Cherry Blossom Festival," Amnesty International, the Sierra Club, Interface, Smith College, and many more. A serious musician as well as sui-zen practitioner, he has collaborated with such artists as Susan Osborne, the Omega Liturgical Dance Company and Persis Ensor, a lutenist and singer of Medieval and Renaissance music.

Hand-screened original T-Shirts!  
**thangka t's**



ONLY \$9 (plus \$1 post.) TOTAL \$10 ea.

Send self-addressed, stamped envelope for catalog of Buddhist & Native American designs

Thangka-T's 184 Cypress St. Providence, Rhode Island 02906

Ordering Info: Indicate size: S,M,L,XL. All shirts 50/50. Make checks payable to: New Age Graphix - Allow 4-5 weeks delivery



## TEMENOS

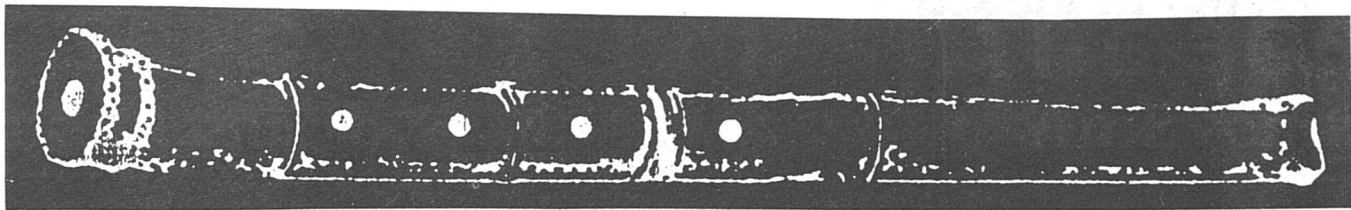
Temenos is a center for workshops and retreats on a wooded hillside in Western Massachusetts. During the '86 season we have workshops on Dance as Peace-making; Food, from Gastronomy to Politics; a Tree Camp for Families; a weekend with Joanna Macy; a 3-day Forest Retreat, and others. Individual sojourners are welcome, except during workshops. Our lodge is available for rental also. For information write Temenos, Star Route, Shutesbury, MA 01072, or leave message at (413) 253-9281.



# AND WATER

## Flute with Bob

### Seigetsu Avstreich



The music of the shakuhachi initially sounds very strange to Westerners, since it lacks external rhythm and melody, and does not possess the strict back-and-forth cadence usually associated with the Orient. Shakuhachi pieces have an organic quality, as phrases emerge from and return to silence, like the ebb and flow of the sea or the rising and falling of the wind through the trees.

In order to make the experience of shakuhachi more accessible, Avstreich introduced each piece with a brief dramatic reading of a Zen story or poem. He also used humor to help people relax and flow with the music.

"Make yourself comfortable," Avstreich told his audience after finishing his first piece, a 400-year-old *sanya* meant to express 'a free floating, boundaryless state in which there is no up or down, left or right—a state in which, as one mystic wrote, **you must be nothing but an ear which hears what the universe of the Word is constantly saying within you.**' When several members of the audience lay back on their cushions and appeared to be either in a boundaryless state or dozing off, Avstreich remarked: "Whenever I tell people to relax, somebody usually falls asleep, and it's always someone who snores. But in Zen there is, or should be, no distinctions. Snoring and the sound of the shakuhachi also must live together."

Introducing his next piece, Avstreich recounted the story from Chuang-Tsu about the man who fell asleep and imagined he was a butterfly. Upon awakening, he wondered, "Am I a man dreaming that I was a butterfly, or am I a butterfly dreaming that I am a man?" "This story in its gentle humor expresses the mutuality, the indivisible interpenetrability of Life, which sui-zen celebrates," Avstreich observed. "Man and butterfly are inseparable in their act of Becoming, which we call being alive."



"The most popular piece for the shakuhachi," Avstreich continued, "is a duet. Not definitely part of the sui-zen tradition, it exists by itself and is called **Shika No Tone** (pronounced **to-nay**), two deer, male and female, calling to each other across the hills in spring." To set the mood, he recited the following Chinese poem:

Wild geese fly across the sky.  
Their image is reflected on the waters.  
The geese do not mean to cast their image on the water.  
The water has no mind to hold the image of the geese.

The most striking and memorable piece of the evening was undoubtedly **Sagari**, which means "air" or "melody" (lit. "wind through the autumn leaves"), but which sounded more like a hurricane tearing through the forest. "**Sagari** was developed from the Bushido, the samurai tradition," Avstreich explained. "Its style of playing uses the ancient traditional method of panting from the diaphragm. It is very strange-sounding and discordant. Imagine it like a great rushing river. If you are in a river that has great force and you try to direct your own way, you'll have great difficulty. If you let it take you, if you ride with it, you will arrive safely when the rapids cease. So try not to listen too closely. Just let it be there."

The next piece was Ajikan, "the most well known and popular existing in Zen tradition and monasteries." Ajikan (a composite word combining characters from "Amida [Buddha]," "sound," and "hear") could be translated simply to mean, 'Perceive sound' [or Kwansum Bosal]. Its mood was one of peacefulness and stillness.

The last piece, appropriately enough, was the oldest in this tradition. Call Kyorei ('False bell,' or 'Echoing of the Bell'), it is supposed to evoke "that remembrance of reality that we all carry within and which gets awakened by a bird's call at dusk, or a gull's cry over the waves, or a flower or the wind." This title also refers to a legend about the founder of sui-zen who often walked down the street ringing a bell. When he died, or rather disappeared, a bell—or was it the echo of a bell?—was heard in the sky as a ghostly echo of his teaching.

Avstreich concluded his performance by reading poems by Wallace Stevens and Pablo Neruda that seemed to echo, in an uncanny fashion, the Zen experience. These poems were a compelling reminder that what Zen art tries to convey is universal and cannot be confined to a particular culture or style.

After the concert, people crowded around to ask questions and to take a closer look at the flutes and at the strange Japanese notations.

#### *How was the music of sui-zen preserved?*

"This music was originally transmitted from master to disciple as a pathway of enlightenment. It was not formally written until the turn of this century. In the komuso (mendicant priest) tradition, the great shakuhachi master Jin Nyodo traveled to the remaining monasteries to learn and notate the pieces. About 80 remain of the more than 140 that existed when the tradition flourished.

#### *How did you get started playing shakuhachi?*

"Some ten years ago I casually borrowed a record from my local library entitled 'The Mysterious Sounds of the Japanese Bamboo Flute.' I was completely unprepared for the experience of first hearing the shakuhachi, though in fact I had been awaiting it all my life. The sound simultaneously pierced and filled my soul, fulfilling a hunger of spirit which I could never before identify.

"Within two weeks I began studying with Ronnie Nyogetsu Seldin, Dai Shi Han (Grand Master) in Kinko School of Shakuhachi, whose Ki-Sui-An Dojo (Dojo of "Empty Breath" or "Blowing Nothingness") in New York City is the largest in the world outside of Japan. I have also had the opportunity to study in master classes with the world famous musicians Aoki Sensei and Yokoyama Sensei."

*You have been a music therapist for nearly a dozen years. What do you see as the relation between music and healing?*

"I have used this music in my work with an adult schizophrenic outpatient population successfully for many years in several different settings, including Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

"The music cannot create change in and of itself. Rather, by being non-directional and spontaneous, like the sound of wind and water, it helps to create the context, the "potential space," within which healing work can be accomplished.

"This sense of the healing environment has been rediscovered in the West in many ways. Joseph Campbell in his studies of ancient mythologies describes it as 'the place of passage.' The eminent British psychoanalyst D.W. Winnicott described it as the 'facilitating environment.'

"Perhaps because of its unique musical structure and because it is a form of meditation that requires neither action nor non-action on the part of the recipient-meditator, sui-zen promotes both self-integration and relaxation. It encourages a state of active receptivity that is perhaps congruent with Michael Balent's theory of 'passive object love' and the controversial Japanese concept of *amaeru*.

"Neurologically, this state of active receptivity has application in the study of brain patterns, the nurturing environment for premature infants, and the brain repatterning needed for those suffering from stroke or brain damage as well as certain forms of schizophrenia..... I have found that sui-zen is the music of Peace in all meanings of the word."

**"I was completely unprepared for the experience of first hearing the shakuhachi, though in fact I had been waiting for it all my life."**

#### *Do you improvise or compose your own sui-zen music?*

"I enjoy this question since I do play and occasionally perform blues, jazz and folk music on a variety of other instruments. The question always reminds me of the Zen dialogue in which the disciple requests enlightenment to find his 'true self' and the Master replies, 'What would you want with a self?'

"Sui-zen is unlike jazz or blues in that the musician is encouraged to express himself. Sui-zen is not concerned with self-expression but rather with unself-conscious awareness. The form of the music contains my 'self.' I give my 'self' up to the inevitability of the form in the same way I give myself up to the inevitability of breathing. The form takes care of my self. Without a self to worry about, who knows what wonders may be experienced?"

It was indeed a night of wonders for many members of the audience. Patricia Jalette, a psychiatric counselor who brought her 11-year-old daughter to the concert, explained: "Lauren loved the music but she was especially intrigued by the stories. When she got home the next day, she drew a picture of a butterfly with a bearded man's face. For some reason, this story left a deep impression on her." Others, including the harried writer of this article, reported feelings of incredible well-being and calm.

Avstreich embarks this spring on his first concert tour of Japan. Asked about future plans, he said: "I'd like to work more with Buddhist organizations. The experience of playing this music at a place like the Providence Zen Center has been truly wonderful. I hope to connect more often with places like this in the future." □

*Anthony Manousos, a recent resident at the Providence Zen Center, is a freelance writer and former editorial associate to Fellowship in Prayer, a bimonthly Quaker publication based in Princeton, NJ.*



## Dying to the self:

### The core of Christian and Zen practice

(This exchange of letters was sent to us by Rev. Rusty Hicks, a Christian minister and Senior Dharma teacher in the Kwan Um Zen School. A long-term student of Soen Sa Nim, Rusty is Abbot of the New Haven Zen Center and Director of the Urban Ministry for the Greater Bridgeport, CN Council of Churches.)

June 24, 1984

Dear Rusty,

My name is Peter. I was a member of the Providence sangha before I moved to California. Now I am rather inactive, due to graduate school.

I have heard that you are a Dharma Teacher and a Christian minister. Perhaps you can help me. There is a conflict in my heart about Buddhism and Christianity operating simultaneously within the same person or family (my fiancée is a Christian, and I support her 100% for I truly believe that is her Way.)

The problem is not with Zen, for we are taught, "The Dharmas are boundless-I vow to master them;" this includes the teachings of Jesus Christ, presumably. The problem is with Jesus' declaration, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Light, and no one comes to the Father but through me." One can see this as equivalent to Buddha's "In Heaven above and Earth below, only I am holy." To me that means, in both statements, "What is perceived purely, clearly, that is 'Big I.' 'Big I' is holy, and realizing 'Big I' is salvation."

I understand Jesus' miracles and Resurrection as 270° on the [Zen] teaching circle, and His death as "putting it all down." I know that He loves me and that He wants me to find my correct Path...I want Him in my life to guide me and teach me, but I also have learned so much from Zen. I am sure that he would understand me, does understand me, but unfortunately most contemporary Christians do not. Some that I have met see Zen as heathen or even Satanic; especially when I told this one fellow about the Five Precious ceremony and the fire ritual. This hurts me deeply.

I am at a loss as to what to do. I have even considered giving up Zen and becoming 100% Christian, so as to participate fully in Christian worship with my wife-to-be, and to raise our children in a non-contradictory framework. I would be most grateful if you could offer any suggestions on our inter-faith problems.

I hope that your life is blessed, and that things are turning up roses for you. Hope to hear from you soon.

Yours in all Dharmas,

Peter

August 5, 1984

Dear Peter,

Hello. I am very sorry to be returning your letter so late. My only excuse is that I have been very busy.

You wrote me about the conflict you feel your relation to your Zen practice and Christianity. I can surely understand that dilemma; I live with it every day. Let me just explain briefly how I have dealt with the apparent conflict, and you can decide how it sounds to you. Ultimately, you and your wife will have to make your own decisions about your future religious path and that of your children.

My own feeling is that Christianity is highly compatible to Zen practice. First let me define Zen as primarily practice, not belief. In some ways it is like jogging or weightlifting, or any other form of discipline. It is just clearing the mind to perceive what is. It is an intimate relation with the truth, what is right in front of us. It is really very clear; it carries no taint and cannot really be seen as a religious system or set of beliefs.

In this light I find it resonates strongly with Jesus in the gospels. Jesus throughout his ministry was protesting against the legalism and overintellectualism of the religious

authorities of his day. The Pharisees and the Sadducees were constantly living according to their predetermined laws and opinions: you can do nothing on the Sabbath (including healing), you cannot eat with taxcollectors and prostitutes, you have to wash your hands before eating...and all of these petty rules by which they judged whether Christ was holy. They missed the point, because they could not see the reality of Christ's power and love. Jesus points to an intimate relation to God; he calls God 'Abba' which means 'daddy.' His was a direct relation to the truth.

In his teaching Jesus also emphasises an attitude of watchfulness and wakefulness, very similar to Zen practice which calls for one being fully awake, completely mindful. Mark 13:32-37 is a great example of this.

**"Arnold Toynbee felt that western civilization would be saved by the union of Christianity and Buddhism."**



"Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house will come. And what I say to you I say to all: Watch."

My understanding of this passage is that it speaks of the kind of prayer Jesus calls us to develop. It is similar to the form of contemplative prayer that has been used in Christian monasteries for centuries. This form of prayer is usually nonverbal, it is based on waiting for the presence of God. I just learned recently that a prayer that St. Francis used as his basic practice was asking the question, "What am I, Lord. And who are You?" Since the time of the Desert Fathers, back in the fourth century A.D. a common practice was asking the question, "What am I?" My sense is that these folk were striving to find

the real presence of God and not just an idea. I myself am not content to believe that God is just an idea. If God is not rooted in reality, then is this really God?

I realize I am mixing a bunch of ideas up here. But my basic feeling is that Christians

I guess I basically feel that the essential direction of each religion is extremely similar. The core teaching, to my mind, of Christianity is that Christ died to save all people, and for this reason rose again to be with God. Christians are also called to do

**"What Zen has to offer is a method for doing what so many Christians talk about."**

often tend to be really stuck on beliefs, on ideas. Zen only points to reality itself. God has to be reality. What else can God be? And Zen only uses silence. Is silence Christian or Buddhist? Is a tree Christian or Buddhist? Is your true self, or the essence of God or the universe Christian or Buddhist or whatever. God is only God. God claims in Exodus, chapter 3, that God's true name is "I am What I Am." That to my mind is a wonderful explanation of the vanity of so much talk and so

just that, as well. "And he said to all, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." (Luke 9:23) St. Paul also explains that Baptism is the experience of dying to your old self and being reborn anew in God. In Zen practice we hear over and over again the notion of putting it all down, let go of small self, become true self. Dying to self is a very basic notion in both Christian and Zen practice throughout the centuries.

In terms of the notion that Jesus says, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Light. No one comes to the Father but through me," I have to believe that there is a broader interpretation. Jesus shows over and over again that he does not give in to prejudice and narrowness. He does not go only to the Jews, but to all varieties of people, including sinners. My own interpretation is that no one comes to God except by the way of selflessness, by way of the cross. But this does not exclude other forms.

My own feeling is that Christian exclusivity is derived from the Jewish roots. My feeling is that this is more a tribal notion, than anything that needs to be written for all eternity. We now live in a very small world. I have a hard time imagining that God or the universe would be so narrow as to only give one way that came from only one tribe.

My sense is that Zen and Buddhism have a great deal to offer to Christianity, and visa versa. Arnold Toynbee, the historian, felt that Western Civilization would be saved by the union of Christianity and Buddhism. What Zen has to offer is a method for doing what so many Christians talk about. It is a way to get beyond all the rhetoric, to get to the simple and straightforward truths of the faith. The danger that Christianity faces in modern times is being discredited because it is so caught up in words and dogma that it does not pay enough attention to daily life, to going deeply into the essence of reality and finding God there. Christians are often threatened by science, but do not have to be at all. But they are threatened because of the separation between belief and facing the real world directly.

Anyway, I feel that the dialogue, or the introduction of Zen into Christianity is extremely healthy. It causes us to be less dependent on beliefs and words, and more confident in the truth of the teaching in every moment of our lives.

I hope that some of this rambling was helpful. As you can see, I have been thinking a lot about this, though I feel I have much more to learn. It is exciting to be part of the dialogue.

Basically, I just trust practicing, whether it is Christian prayer or Zen meditation. This world is so screwed up that any form of sincere religious effort in my mind is great. So keep up the work!

Take care. In all the Dharmas,

Rusty Hicks



PERCEIVE  
WORLD  
SOUND

## ZEN CHANTING

Zen Master Seung Sahn and his students have created a masterpiece of sound—clear and profound chanting that cuts through our thinking minds to stillness and compassion. This tape includes the morning and evening bell chant and regularly practiced chants professionally recorded at Sprague Hall, Yale University.

Copies of these high quality tapes are available at \$10.95 each and can be ordered by writing to the New Haven Zen Center, 193 Mansfield St., New Haven, CT 06511. Connecticut residents should add a 7% sales tax. Shipping is free.



**addressing the trees**

being as you are,  
forms,  
all things,  
help me, please!  
to be this

for Maurine Freedgood Roshi,

**Mother of Dharma  
Gives Life**

before the mountain  
and by grace of nature  
I was allowed to realize "Oh!  
I am only a child!"  
and for a while, tendered  
by spruce and birds, saw  
without my usual defenses  
and endless thinking I know  
anything or everything coming  
between me  
and all creation

by that same  
grace in this zendo  
you so caringly  
teach and encourage  
allow one to feel and accept  
your living tissue  
Dharma now  
not afraid to be  
a child in this  
great wilderness I am able  
to ask will you help me  
learn to give  
this life as given

September 1985

**love poem**

what was it before  
water before kelp  
before sea birds before  
even you?

*Lassie saves the day*

*When Timmy saved Bessie from the  
slaughterhouse  
(they thought she was going dry but it was just  
the neighbor kid stealing milk for his  
baby sister after their cow had died and they  
had no money to buy another one what with the  
new baby and all)*

*when Timmy saved Bessie from the  
slaughterhouse  
did the other cows rejoice?  
Did their spirits rise  
that one of their own had beaten  
the system, Lassie stopping the butcher just  
as he was leading Bessie away his apron  
immaculate (she would have been the  
first to go) mommy's truck  
pulling up in the  
nick of time?*

*Now it's the next cow's turn but the camera's  
gone on already to the story's happy ending.  
Sorry, cow.*

*Timmy Timmy one cow  
just one cow in this sea of cows bleating  
for deliverance  
(okay I know she's **your** cow whatever  
that means but still)  
just what exactly has been accomplished  
And Bessie never knowing  
acquiescent  
such a good cow  
did she think  
this was an interesting  
Saturday outing? Does she look forward  
to a repeal performance some other time?*

ga! cold

poem, I ask  
you, how  
can you be  
written so  
everyone can  
hear? I'm  
asking you

my body opens  
to the great night  
of space and I  
am infinite  
in wonder the beauty  
of the stars I  
breathe

cell to cell  
what is me and  
what is kelp? in  
this lavish bed  
of ocean life  
so rich I nourish  
all creation

time bends  
because God is  
so awkward or is  
it the other  
way around time  
bends God  
to tides  
fluctuations days  
and years good  
and bad this  
and that every  
range of fruit  
blossom piquancy  
calls and the myriad  
arachnids?

1/12/86

Dharma Teacher Linda Parker established the Cape Ann Zen Group in Gloucester, MA in 1983. Author of three volumes of poetry, she recently completed a 100 day solo meditation retreat. She operates a seaweed-collecting business.

**bee medicine**

she was confused  
lost her way then she  
looked at the sun  
and was home

**more bees**

look  
at the sun! look  
at the sun! we are  
already at home  
being as you are  
trees birds stones  
salamanders rain  
so purely such otters  
moss diatoms flax  
and beetles please!  
help me  
be real

when I speak  
to the fire the fire  
burns

great mother move  
through us  
as you do  
inspite of every  
obstacle resistance  
we present we  
are  
human help us  
learn  
to move  
as you we  
are

not to pose  
a mystery but only appreciation  
of tender life particularity I wonder  
where do these fish come  
from who leap skyward  
from high mountain ponds?  
did fisher birds' colons transport undigested  
caviars or did Pogy Pond  
stocked water rise right  
with Katahdin's volcanic urgency  
from a oneness  
with other water other  
fish to the loft  
and isolation that makes me  
so peacefully curious  
today and the kingfisher  
en route again, these fish  
may have been salmon-kind  
swimmers up streams  
we can't see  
anymore. clearly enough  
this is their home  
even if they are going  
somewhere  
on their way to the  
sky stream now in my mind  
or by kind nature the light  
of the trout's mind I understand  
the answer to my question more  
than I could imagine: gorgeous  
trout came to this high pond  
as a life  
gift so naturally  
rendered by the rain  
bow and as far as one  
lets that gift extend  
we are and this  
all begins

*From a rural calendar*

*"Most black-tailed deer fawns  
born around now."*

*You hide behind a log  
watching for deer. Remember  
huge bright feathered dinosaurs  
(why not? you know better?)  
around here  
wasn't so far back*

*cockroaches in the walls who  
like human babies  
have no particular  
birth season.*

*Don't forget last year's  
deer crop  
already harvested*

*stars whose seasons  
we don't know:  
the exact moment they're born  
or die*

*and my first son born two months early  
dead five months later.*

*Our planet rolled  
through great crustal disturbances  
of the early Mesozoic  
through the emergence of dinosaurs  
their primacy in the Jurassic  
rolled through the Pleistocene*

*the emergence of mammals  
and of men and women in the  
late Cenozoic era.*

*Our planet is moving to its  
completion  
life bound to it  
bound to leave it  
one way or another*

*This redwood forest  
waiting for the birth of fawns  
right now is turning to desert.  
Krakatoa erupts  
Mt. St. Helens dissolves  
as in a movie how can you know  
exactly when to leave?*

*How can you know  
the time of each fawn's birth  
and if you knew  
where would it get you  
gangly boy with hands  
as large as the universe  
trapped in the perceptions  
of the Holocene*

*a time known only  
to your species here on earth?*

Senior Dharma Teacher Judith Roitman, a Professor of Mathematics at the University of Kansas, has had poetry published in numerous journals. A student of Zen Master Seung Sahn since 1975, she established (with her husband, Stanley Lombardo, who has an article elsewhere in this issue) the Kansas Zen Center in Lawrence in 1978.

*New leaves*

*New leaves  
on an old tree.  
What fills our minds  
to make such comparisons?*

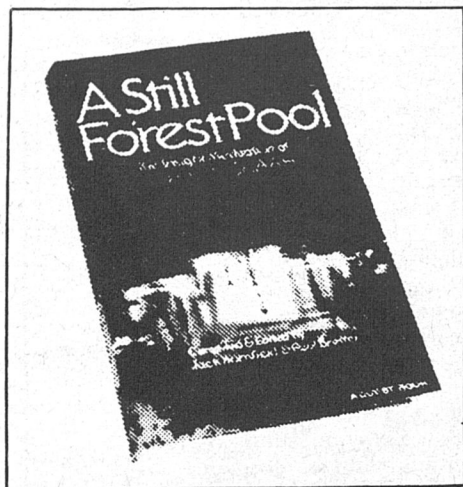


## A STILL FOREST POOL. The Insight Meditation of Achaan Chah.

Compiled and edited by Jack Kornfield and Paul Breiter. (The Theosophical Publishing House, 1985, 192 pp.)

Reviewed by Shana Klinger

If you have a section on your bookshelf for Buddhist meditation books—straight from the horse's mouth, you'll be happy to make space for this wonderful new addition. But don't keep it on the shelf. Leave it lying on the dining room table or even in the bathroom (there are still a few meditators who read on the john), because the power of Achaan Chah's words, the depth and seriousness of his practice, and his daring invitations to join in such a practice are worth confronting daily, no matter what flavor of meditation you practice.



Achaan Chah is a living master of Buddhist vipassana or insight meditation. He is a monk and his "home" is a forest monastery in Thailand where he practices and teaches meditation. It is a world of thatched huts, silence, simplicity and renunciation. Like all who have practiced a meditation technique deeply, his wisdom is universal and his words are useful beyond the particulars of his situation and training.

"The original heart/mind shines like pure, clear water with the sweetest taste. But if the heart is pure, is our practice over? No, we must not cling even to this purity. We must go beyond all duality, all concepts, all bad, all good, all pure, all impure. We must go beyond self and no self, beyond birth and death. To see a self to be reborn is the real trouble of this world. True purity is limitless, untouchable, beyond all opposites and all creation."

**A Still Forest Pool** was translated, compiled and edited by two Western men who practiced and took monastic vows for varying periods with Achaan Chah in his forest monastery. They have arranged the book into seven chapters—many less than a page long—which are either direct teaching quotes from Achaan Chah or stories related about him and his students. In addition, each section is prefaced by a short explanation by the editors. What results, though sometimes choppy as far as continuity of style, is the kind of book you can open to almost any page to read a complete and engaging quotation or anecdote.

In many ways **A Still Forest Pool** is a manual for vipassana meditation. The words Achaan Chah uses, the concepts he employs, are often particular to that style of Theravadan Buddhism. In this way the book is a treasure house of instruction and insight into the methodology and difficulties of vipassana, particularly the sections entitled "Meditation and Formal Practice" and "Questions for the Teacher."

"You will see that when the heart/mind is unattached, it is abiding in its normal state. When it stirs from the normal because of various thoughts and feelings, the process of thought construction takes place, in which illusions are created. Learn to see through this process..."

Since Achaan Chah is himself a monk and since the context in which he teaches is monastic, a notable portion of the book

is basically advice for monks who are practicing with him or persons who are practicing in intensive retreat settings. Still the wisdom of his advice often goes beyond time and place, and sometimes about the depth of commitment and purity of purpose which underlies monastic practice is communicated in an inspiring way.

"We must use the physical solitude of the forest to develop mindfulness, not just for isolation and escape. How can we escape our mind and the three characteristics of conditioned phenomena? Really, suffering, impermanence and no self are everywhere. They are like the smell of excrement. Whether you have big piles or little piles, the smell is the same."

Such earthy metaphors are a striking and often delightful aspect of Achaan Chah's teaching style.

"Some people think that the longer you can sit, the wiser you must be. I have seen chickens sit on their nests for days on end. Wisdom comes from being mindful in all postures... Don't be concerned about how long you can sit."

Perhaps the most unsettling quality of Achaan Chah's teaching style is that of daring-inviting-chiding us to seriously follow a meditation practice and come to true peace. Over and over again there are statements like, "Do you want to practice or not?" or "From now on, it's up to you." As one who has persevered and met his own demons of laziness, doubt and desire (to name a few), he speaks with a combination of reassurance and impatience about the Buddha's Path and the difficulties thereon.

**The Path of Compassion**

A new book of contemporary writings on the engagement of Buddhism and Buddhists in the political, social and economic affairs of our world, by:

Robert Aitken-Roshi

H. H. the Dalai Lama

Ven. Maha Ghosananda

Thich Nhat Hanh

Jack Kornfield

Joanna Macy

Gary Snyder, and others.

Edited by Fred Eppsteiner and Dennis Maloney.

The Path of Compassion is available by mail for \$9.95 per copy. Postage and handling charges are \$1.05 for one copy and \$.25 for each additional copy.

**Buddhist Peace Fellowship**  
Rochester Chapter  
P.O. Box 10605  
Rochester, NY 14610.

"There is a boat you can take to the other shore. Why not jump in? Or do you prefer the ooze and slime? I could paddle away any time, but I am waiting for you."

For a book so full of spiritual challenges, practical instruction and timeless wisdom there is something strangely unsatisfying about the overall effect of **A Still Forest Pool**. Perhaps that is a credit to Achaan Chah's teaching and his editors. If we could finish the book and put it down with a sigh of pleasure or artistic appreciation, we would be missing the message entirely.

"Outward, scriptural study is not important. Of course, the Dharma books are correct, but they are not right. They cannot give you right un-

derstanding. To see the word **hatred** in print is not the same as experiencing anger, just as hearing a person's name is different from meeting him. Only experiencing for yourself can give you true faith."

"You must go beyond all words, all symbols, all plans for your practice. Then you can see for yourself the truth, arising right here. If you do not turn inward, you will never know reality."

Thank you Achaan Chah and editors of **A Still Forest Pool**. □

(Shana Klinger, a Dharma Teacher in the Kwan Um Zen School, lives with her husband and her one year old daughter at the Dharma Hope Zen Group house in Providence, RI.)

## GIVE THE GIFT OF ZEN TEACHING

Back copies of PRIMARY POINT are available for low cost and are a solid resource in anyone's library of contemporary spiritual thought. We will ship larger numbers of copies to you and to the organizations and groups of your choosing for just the mailing and handling costs. In this way, people who are in prisons, hospitals, halfway houses, remote areas, etc. can share in the valuable encouragement of Buddhist teaching. Fill out the enclosed order form today. We think you will find it a gold mine.

January 1984 (Vol. 1 #1)...teaching articles by Zen Master Seung Sahn and Master Dharma Teachers Barbara Rhodes and Mu Deung Sunim. Report on 1983 "Women in Buddhism" Conference. Won Hyo, famous Korean monk. The new Diamond Hill Monastery and background of Zen monasticism. Creation of the Kwan Um Zen School.

May 1984 (Vol. 1 #2)... "Buddhist perspectives on world peace," report on 1982 World Peace Assembly at Providence Zen Center. Talks by Ven. Mahaghosananda, Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche, Tetsugen Glassman Sensei, Jack Kornfield, Zen Master Seung Sahn. Talk by Master Dharma Teachers Lincoln Rhodes and George Bowman, "Journal of a Solo," part 1.

July 1984 (Vol. 3 #3)... "Prayer and meditation in the nuclear age," report on 1984 Ecumenical conference featuring 22 eloquent speakers from Buddhist, Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Sufi and Native American traditions.

October 1984 (Vol. 1 #4)... "The roots of American Buddhism" by Zen Master Seung Sahn. Report on the Polish sangha by Master Dharma Teacher Mu Deung Sunim. Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche on carving a Buddha. A Zen student writes to his Hindu father. Practicing in Burma and Thailand by a Vipassana/Zen student. Opening of Diamond Hill Zen Monastery. Second Annual Congress of the Kwan Um Zen School.

January 1985 (Vol. 2 #1)... "Women and American Buddhism," 1984 conference at Providence Zen Center. Talks by Maurine Freedgood Roshi, Toni Packer, Geshin Myoko Midwer, Jan Chozen Soule Sensei, Master Dharma Teacher Barbara Rhodes and Jacqueline Schwartz-Mandell. (special 16 page issue)

April 1985 (Vol. 2 #2)... "How can sitting save this hungry world?" by Zen Master Seung Sahn. Master Dharma Teacher Lincoln Rhodes on family life and practice. A Korean master woodcarver. The art of Zen sword by Maria Kim.

July 1985 (Vol. 2 #3)... "This universe gives us everything" by Zen Master Seung Sahn. Master Dharma Teacher George Bowman's "Journal of a Solo," part 2. Death of Zen Master Hae Am. "The flowering of Polish Dharma," by Ellen Sidor. "Engaged Buddhism" by Ruth Klein. Stephen Mitchell's unpublished translations of Rilke's **Sonnets to Orpheus**.

November 1985 (Vol. 2 #4)... "A gentle rain," visit by Vietnamese Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh. "The sword that kills, the sword that gives life: finding balance in Zen practice" by Zen Master Seung Sahn. Article on his recent trip to China. Talks by Dharma Master Danette Choi and Master Dharma Teacher Lincoln Rhodes. "The Heart of Buddhism" reviewed.

February 1986 (Vol. 3 #1)... "Four posts to build a strong practicing house" - Soen Sa Nim's new teaching in Europe. "The Balancing of American Buddhism" 1985 conference at Providence Zen Center. Panel discussion and talks by Bhikshuni Pema Chodron, Dr. Joanna Macy, and Ve. Prabhava Dharma, Roshi. "Buddhist Faith and Sudden Enlightenment" reviewed. (16 page issue)

## ORDER FORM

Volume One	Volume Two	Volume Three	RATES
___ #1	___ #1	___ #1	1-5 copies \$1.00 per copy (US & Canada)
___ #2	___ #2		\$2.00 per copy (foreign)
OP #3	___ #3		6-50 copies \$5.00 total (US & Canada only)
___ #4	___ #4		Foreign, see below.
			51-100 copies \$10.00 total (US & Canada only)
			Foreign, see below

\_\_\_ Total copies ordered  
\_\_\_ Total \$ enclosed (checks or money orders only, drawn on US banks or their agents)

(For more than 5 copies to be sent overseas, write us first and request the cost for a specified number of copies.)

\* single copies only

Send to: Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Zip \_\_\_\_\_

If a gift, sent by whom? \_\_\_\_\_



## BODHISATTVA ACTION

by Stanley Lombardo  
Kansas Zen Center

If you look up "bodhisattva" in a good dictionary you will find something like this: bodhisattva n. *Buddhism*. An enlightened being who, out of compassion, forgoes nirvana in order to save others. [Sanskrit, "one whose essence is enlightenment": *bodhi*, enlightenment + *sattva*, being]

The bodhisattva ideal is at the heart of Zen Buddhism. It has many different formulations. One that I like very much goes like this:

Practice all good  
Avoid all evil  
Keep your mind pure  
Save the many beings  
Thus all Buddhas have taught.

This was the answer Tao Lin, an old Chinese Zen Master, gave to someone who asked him, "What is Buddhism?" Hearing this answer the questioner said that even a child understood that. The Zen Master replied, "A child may understand it, but even an old

man cannot do it." He meant that it is very difficult to keep one's mind clear and practice compassion. On the other hand, this is everyone's original nature, and bodhisattvas are to be found everywhere. Two old Jewish women I know, for instance. Here's a poem about them working in a soup kitchen run by a Catholic church:

Blanche and Sarah, first generation holocaust Jews, volunteering in the soup kitchen at St. John's, asked by the cafeteria director to lead the staff in prayer: **Blanche**, after an awkward silence: "Just thank God we're here to do this." And Sarah: "Amen. And I hope we're around to do it a lot longer," as she shuffled off to the serving trays.

The phrase "Saving all the people," the work of the bodhisattva, might be misunderstood as missionary work, converting people to Buddhism. It doesn't mean that at all, but simply helping people in whatever way is appropriate to their situation. **Blanche and Sarah** were helping to feed hungry people. It is also possible to feed people's minds, to help them by the very clarity of your own actions. There's another Zen saying: "When your direction is clear, every swing of your arm as you walk down the street saves all people." There are some people who have practiced hard for a long time and whose minds are really clear who have a way about doing the

most ordinary things that touches and awakens other people's minds. I remember this scene when Munindra visited our Zen Center:

Stumbling into the dark Zen Center kitchen before morning bows, don't recognize at first at the sink there the old Theravadin monk who spoke last night. He turns slowly, luminous in our scullery's mirk, and says "Good morning!"

That smile and simple "Good morning," coming right from his center, made the situation complete and helped me wake up to its completeness. That's what we're faced with every moment of our lives: waking up to the completeness of any situation and acting accordingly. The ultimate situation, and the ultimate response, is expressed in this vow, which is said first thing in morning practice: "Sentient beings are numberless. I vow to save them all."

That's a Great Vow alright, and saying it first thing every morning helps give direction to our lives, but it's got to be activated to mean anything. This means being completely open to every situation, finding ways to step around the selfishness and self-consciousness that protect our petty interests and block our minds. In this work other people help us as much, or more than, we help them:

What can you do? A colleague approaches in the hall, you've just heard he has bone-marrow cancer. Embarrassed, you want to hurry by with a mumbled hello but his smile leads you to ask "How's it going, Gerhard?" and he knows you mean it and starts talking. This is called helping each other in the great work of life & death.

Gerhard knew that I was embarrassed, and self-conscious. His smile helped dissolve

that, then our minds connected. This connection between minds is very important. There's a wonderful stanza from the Morning Bell Chant (from the Avatamsaha Sutra) that my wife Judy and I wanted to use in our marriage vows (we used something else similar instead):

Vowing together with all world beings  
Together in Buddha's Ocean of Great Vows  
To save beings of numberless worlds  
You and I simultaneously attain the Way of Buddha.

It sounds like science fiction, "beings of numberless worlds," an intergalactic consortium dedicated to work for the enlightenment of all the races of the cosmos. Maybe that's just what Buddhism is, what bodhisattva action ultimately means. But however much the bodhisattva's work may aim at a cosmic ideal, it is also deeply personal and intimate: "You and I simultaneously attain the Way of Buddha." The old proto-Indo-European root *bheud*, from which *bodhi* (and Buddha) derive, means "to be aware" and "to make aware." I see this reciprocal process most clearly at work and in my marriage (marriage being possibly the keenest test of Zen practice): the constant effort to be aware and to make aware, seeing how one partner's awareness and action out of awareness awakens the other. Seeing the opposite also and realizing the consequences in suffering and confusion both for the marriage, for "you and I," and for the world of people we affect, a much larger world than we usually suspect. When I see this I am moved to renew the great vow and - try, try, try for 10,000 years, finish the great work of life and death, and save all people from suffering. □

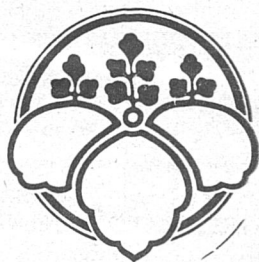
Senior Dharma teacher Stanley Lombardo, a Professor of Classics at the University of Kansas, helped edit two of Zen Master Seung Sahn's books, *Bone of Space* (poetry) and *Only Don't Know* (teaching letters). He is currently compiling and editing a book entitled *Ten Gates: Kong-an Study with Zen Master Seung Sahn*. With his wife, Judith Roitman (whose poetry appears elsewhere in this issue), he established the Kansas Zen Center in Lawrence in 1978.

A gift subscription of PRIMARY POINT will be appreciated by your friends.

# TIBET

AROMA-THERAPEUTIC INCENSE \$5. ea. 3/\$12.  
J. CROW CO.  
Old Tenney Road, New Ipswich, NH 03071

## 1986 Summer Retreat



## Zen Meditation May 26 to August 24

An intensive program of Zen meditation, work, and study in the beautiful San Jacinto Mountains of Southern California.

Attend all or part.

**ZCLA Zen Mountain Center**

923 S. Normandie Avenue  
Los Angeles, California 90006

(213) 387-2351

## CLASSIFIED ADS

The rate of classifieds is \$15 per word. Please send your ads and a check or money order to PRIMARY POINT, Kwan Um Zen School, 528 Pound Road, Cumberland, RI 02864.

JOIN THE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN BUDDHISTS. FOR BROCHURE WRITE AMERICAN BUDDHIST 301 W. 45th St. New York, NY 10036



RESIDENT SPACES are available at the Providence Zen Center, a Zen Buddhist practicing community and training center. The Center is under the direction of Zen Master Seung Sahn and is the head temple of the Kwan Um Zen School. It is located on 50 acres of woods and fields in Cumberland, RI, 20 minutes outside of Providence. For further information contact the Director, Providence Zen Center, 528 Pound Road, Cumberland, RI 02864. 401-769-6464.

THE PROVIDENCE ZEN CENTER is looking to fill two staff positions: Director and Financial Manager. The Director is a full-time position and pays room and board and a salary. Financial Manager is a half-time position and pays room and board. For further information about either job, please contact the Director, Providence Zen Center, 528 Pound Road, Cumberland, RI 02864. 401-769-6464.

JUNE 23-JULY 2 VIPASSANA RETREAT with Ruth Denison at Breitenbush Community, Healing, Retreat, Conference Center. Breitenbush, a restored hot springs resort, is 60 miles east of Salem, Oregon, 100 miles from Portland. Public transportation available. \$23/day covers vegetarian meals, cabin accommodations, hot springs. For registration, information, please contact Breitenbush, P.O. Box 578, Detroit, OR 97342. (503) 854-3501.

THE NEW HAVEN ZEN CENTER announces the availability of additional residential space as of July or August 1986. Space will be available either for individuals or as a 5+ room apartment. The Center is located near the Yale campus in a culturally rich urban environment. For information, contact: New Haven Zen Center, 193 Mansfield St., New Haven, CT 06511. (203) 787-0912.

## BUDDHIST MEDITATION SUPPLIES



RETAIL & WHOLESALE

Statues • Cushions • Benches  
Bells & Gongs • Altar Supplies  
Incense • Clothing • Books & Tapes  
Rosaries • Posters • Jewelry

For fully illustrated and annotated 41-page CATALOG, send \$1.00 to:

**SHASTA ABBEY BUDDHIST SUPPLIES**  
Dept. P, P.O. Box 199, Mt. Shasta, CA 96067  
Tel. (916) 926-4208



**ZEN CENTERS**

**ANN ARBOR ZEN CENTER**  
6 Geddes Heights  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104  
(313) 761-3770

**COMUNIDADE ZEN DE SAO PAULO**  
Rua Mariano Procopio 76  
V. Monumento  
Sao Paulo, S.P.  
BRASIL  
270-7084

**CAMBRIDGE ZEN CENTER**  
199 Auburn Street  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
(617)576-3229

**CENTRO ZEN DE PALMA DHARMA SA**  
C/San Feilo, 6  
07012, Palma de Mallorca  
SPAIN  
(71)22-77-37

**CHOGYE INTERNATIONAL ZEN CENTER**  
40 W17th Street #4A  
New York, New York 10011  
(212)645-5149

**DIAMOND HILL ZEN MONASTERY**  
528 Pound Road  
Cumberland, RI 02864  
(401)765-5007

**EMPTY GATE ZEN CENTER**  
1800 Arch Street  
Berkeley, CA 94709  
(415)548-7649

**GDANSK ZEN CENTER**  
Gdansk 80-244  
Grunwaldzka 121/26  
POLAND

**JEONG HYE SA ZEN CENTER**  
Sa Cheon Ri  
Deok San Myeon Yesan-Gun  
Chung-Chong Nam-Do  
KOREA 340-32

**KANSAS ZEN CENTER**  
1115 Ohio Street  
Lawrence, KS 66044  
(913)842-8909

**KRAKOW ZEN CENTER**  
ul. Boguslawskiego 2/18  
Krakow  
POLAND

**LEXINGTON ZEN CENTER**  
345 Jesselin Drive  
Lexington, KY 40503  
(606)277-2438

**LODZ ZEN CENTER**  
ul. Czernika 15/49  
92-539 Lodz  
POLAND

**LUBLIN ZEN CENTER**  
c/o Emil Wacior  
ul. Fr. Arnsztajnowej 7  
Lublin  
POLAND

**NEW HAVEN ZEN CENTER**  
193 Mansfield Street  
New Haven, CT 06511  
(203)787-0912

**ONTARIO ZEN CENTRE**  
c/o Bushido-kan  
Modern Martial Arts Institute  
700 Weston Road  
Toronto, Ontario M6N 3R2  
CANADA

**CENTRE ZEN DE PARIS—DHARMA SA**  
26 Rue Bergere - 4e  
75009 Paris  
FRANCE

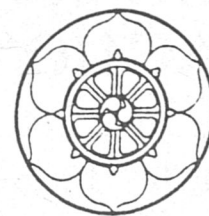
**PROVIDENCE ZEN CENTER**  
528 Pound Road  
Cumberland, RI 02864  
Office (401)769-6464  
Personal: (401)769-2499

**SEATTLE DHARMA CENTER**  
1147 NW 57th Street  
Seattle, WA 98107  
(206)783-8484

**SEOUL INTERNATIONAL ZEN CENTER**  
Hwa Gye Sah  
487 Su Yu Dong  
To Bong Ku, Seoul 132  
KOREA  
(82)902-2663

**KWAN UM ZEN SCHOOL**

administrative offices at 528 Pound Road  
Cumberland, RI 02864



**TAHL MAH SAH ZEN CENTER**  
1025 So. Cloverdale Ave.  
Los Angeles, CA 90019  
(213)934-0330

**WARSAW ZEN CENTER**  
04-962 Warszawa Falenica  
ul. Malowiejska 24  
POLAND

**AFFILIATES**

**ZEN GROUP at ANNANDALE**  
c/o Dan Sedia  
Box 5  
Annandale-on Hudson, NY 12504

**AIKIDO AI DOJO**  
6727 S. Milton Street  
Whittier, CA 90601

**BORIMSA ZEN BUDDHIST TEMPLE**  
535 Williams Avenue  
Seaside, CA 93955  
(408) 394-9129

**BYTOM ZEN GROUP**  
c/o Stanslaw Zgola  
ul. Konstytucji 101 a/3  
41-906 Bytom  
POLAND

**CAPE ANN ZEN GROUP**  
c/o Linda Parker  
2 Stage Fort  
Gloucester, MA 01930  
(617)283-9308

**COMUNIDAD AHABAH**  
Ca Demunt-Mieres  
Gerona,  
SPAIN

**CHEONG GAK ZEN CENTER**  
c/o Alan Redman  
16 Birch View  
Epping, Essex  
ENGLAND

**CHICAGO MEDITATION CENTER**  
5049 North Major, #1  
Chicago, IL 60630  
(312)286-4699

**THE DHARMA BUDDHIST TEMPLE OF HAWAII**  
1294 Kalani-iki Street  
Honolulu, HI 96821  
(808)373-3408

**DHARMA HOPE ZEN GROUP**  
168 Fourth Street  
Providence, RI 02906  
(401)861-3646 or 274-4026

**GAINESVILLE ZEN CIRCLE**  
c/o Jan Sendzimir  
562 NE 2nd Ave.  
Gainesville, FL 32601  
(904)373-7567

**KOSZALIN ZEN GROUP**  
c/o Bozena Narloch  
ul. Koszyrnierow 12  
75-232-Koszalin  
POLAND

**OJAI FOUNDATION**  
P.O. Box 1620  
Ojai, CA 93023  
(805)646-8343

**POEP KWANG DO JANG**  
c/o Miguel Palavecino  
265 Main Street—Apt. 606  
Toronto, Ontario M4C 4x3  
CANADA  
(416)691-0875

**SHIM GUM DO ZEN SWORD CENTER**  
203 Chestnut Hill Avenue  
Brighton, MA 02135  
(617)787-1506

**SZCZECIN ZEN GROUP**  
c/o Hanna Balcerek  
ul. Henryka Poboznego 10/15  
70-508 Szczecin  
POLAND

**ZENTRUM FUR BUDDHISMUS UND BEWUSSTES LEBEN**  
Im Kirschengarten 26  
D-5421 Kemmenau-Bad Ems  
GERMANY  
02603-12424

**READERS .....**

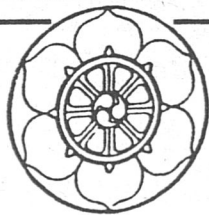
Starting with this issue, PRIMARY POINT will be published three times a year instead of quarterly, and will be 16 pages instead of 12. Please note for advertising and news copy, our new deadlines will be September 1 (for the October issue), January 1 (for the February issue) and May 1 (for the June issue).

**Personal Questions?**

If you have personal questions about your life or Zen practice we encourage you to write to any of the six Master Dharma Teachers. Soen Sa Nim will continue answering his mail, but his extensive traveling, especially outside the United States, often forces considerable delays in his response.

PRIMARY POINT WELCOMES LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: your agreements, disagreements, and alternative viewpoints on the articles we run; as well as statements you may wish to make on issues you feel will interest other readers.

**PRIMARY POINT**



**SUBSCRIPTION FORM**

To receive a one-year subscription to PRIMARY POINT (4 issues), I am enclosing:

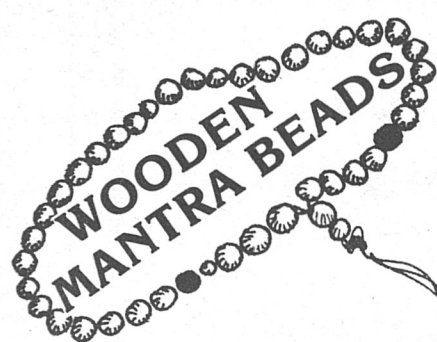
- \$10.00 for United States
- \$11.00 for Canada and Mexico
- \$20.00 for Foreign

Send payment in U.S. dollars only, to Kwan Um Zen School, PRIMARY POINT, 528 Pound Road, Cumberland, RI 02864.

Canadian and foreign customers: We cannot accept your personal checks unless they are drawn on a U.S. bank. Please send Canadian Postal Money Orders in U.S. dollars, International Postal Money Orders, or bank checks payable on any U.S. bank or banker's agency.

- Please put me on your mailing list.
- Here's my (tax-deductible) contribution to help produce PRIMARY POINT.
- Affiliated with a Buddhist or other religious organization \_\_\_\_\_ (name of group)

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_



Please write:  
**Beads**  
Kwan Um Zen School  
528 Pound Road  
Cumberland, RI 02864

Available in sets of 27, \$4.00; or 108, \$6.00 (price includes postage)

And a limited supply of Bodhi Seed beads from Korea, 108, \$15.00.

All proceeds donated to THE KWAN UM ZEN SCHOOL

**AMARA'S**



serving  
**Lunch & Dinner**

Featuring  
**Vegetarian dishes**  
**Fresh Fish & Poultry**

**63 Warren Ave.**  
**Providence, RI**  
**(401)621-8919**

**The Natural Foods**  
**Restaurant**



# INFORMATION ABOUT THE KWAN UM ZEN SCHOOL

**The Teachers:** Zen Master Seung Sahn is the first Korean Zen Master to live and teach in the West. He is the 78th Patriarch in the Korean Chogye Order, and became a Zen Master in his native Korea at the age of 22. After teaching in Korea and Japan for many years, he came to the United States in 1972 and founded the Providence Zen Center, now located in Cumberland, Rhode Island. He is addressed as "Soen Sa Nim" (Honored Zen Teacher) by his students.

Soen Sa Nim has established over 30 Zen centers and affiliated groups in the United States, Canada, Brazil, Europe and Korea. These centers comprise the Kwan Um Zen School. The Providence Zen Center is Head Temple in the United States. In 1984 a Kwan Um Zen School of Poland was formed which includes five Zen Centers and two affiliated groups, of which the Head Temple is Warsaw Zen Center.

Soen Sa Nim travels worldwide leading retreats and teaching Buddhism. In recent years he has been doing more intensive international peace work, bringing people of many countries and religious traditions together to demonstrate world peace. In 1985 he was presented with the World Peace Award by the International Cultural Federation, under the auspices of the Korean government. Working to strengthen the connection between American Zen and Korean Buddhism, he has established the Seoul International Zen Center in Korea and the Diamond Hill Zen Monastery in the United States. At Diamond Hill, Zen students who wish to may become monks and live the traditional monastic life in the original practice style of Bodhidharma.

Soen Sa Nim has published **Dropping Ashes on the Buddha** and **Only Don't Know**, collections of his teaching letters and Zen stories, and a book of poetry, **Bone of Space**.

He has given "inga"—authority to lead retreats and teach kong-an practice—to six senior students. Called Master Dharma

teachers, they regularly travel to Zen centers and affiliates in America and abroad, leading retreats and giving public talks. The Master Dharma Teachers are: **George Bowman**, Cambridge Zen Center; **Barbara Rhodes and Lincoln Rhodes**, Providence Zen Center; **Mu Deung Su Nim**, Tahl Mah Sah Zen Center; **Richard Shrobe** and **Jacob Perl**, Chogye International Zen Center of New York.

**Training Programs:** Each Zen center holds meditation practice every morning and evening, and a weekly Introduction to Zen talk. These events are free and open to the public. Some centers also offer personal interviews each month with the teachers in our school when available.

**Introduction to Zen Workshops:** Beginners and newcomers can experience Zen practice for a day, with instruction on meditation, question periods, informal discussions and lunch.

**Short Intensive Retreats (Yong Maeng Jong Jin, or "Leap like a tiger while sitting"):** Each month many of the Zen centers hold silent meditation retreats for 3 or 7 days under the direction of Zen Master Seung Sahn or one of the Master Dharma Teachers. The daily schedule includes 12 hours of sitting, bowing, chanting, working and eating in traditional temple style. Personal interviews and Dharma talks are given by the Zen teacher. Advance reservation is necessary and requires a \$10 non-refundable deposit.

**90-Day Intensive Retreat (Kyol Che or "Tight Dharma"):** Conducted in total silence, long intensive meditation retreats are powerful tools for examining and clarifying our lives. The daily schedule includes 12 hours of sitting, bowing, chanting and formal silent meals. Personal interviews and Dharma talks are given frequently. Registration is for 90 days, 21-day periods or a one-week intensive. The School offers three long Kyol Che's (one each in Poland, Korea and the United States) and a

short three-week summer Kyol Che at Providence Zen Center. See schedule on this page for details.

**Chanting Retreats (Kido):** Several times a year chanting retreats are held. A Kido is powerful training in keeping a one-pointed mind and using group energy to deepen awareness.

**Membership:** If you would like to become a member of the Kwan Um Zen School, you may either contact the Zen center or affiliate nearest you, or become a member-at-

large by writing directly to the School. You do not have to be a member to participate in any of the training programs. However, rates for members are reduced and include a free subscription to the bi-monthly NEWSLETTER and the international newspaper, PRIMARY POINT (3 issues per year). The most up-to-date calendar information is in the NEWSLETTER. Non-members may subscribe for \$6.00 per year, and \$10.00 per year for PRIMARY POINT.

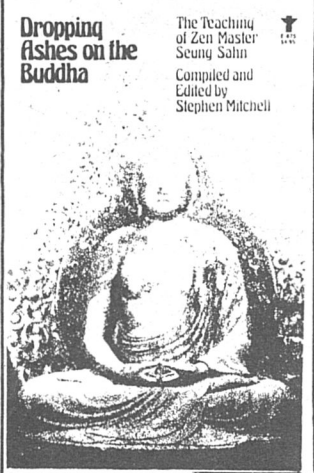
## RETREAT AND SPECIAL EVENTS CALENDAR

May 23	Opening of 90-day summer Kyol Che at Jeung Hye Sah, Korea	5-24	at Providence Providence, 21-day Kyol Che (BR). Intensive sitting similar to winter Kyol Che, talks and interviews by Master Dharma Teachers. Registration: minimum two days.
June 2-8	Providence (SSN) Cambridge (SSN)	10-31	Warsaw, 21-day Kyol Che (LR)
14	New Haven, Introduction to Zen Workshop	22-24	New Haven, work retreat
13-15	Empty Gate (LR)	Sept. 14-16	Providence, conference on "Healing the Mind and Spirit"
21-22	Bath, ME (RS) Contact KUZS Director for details.	Oct. 4-6	Kido at Providence (*)
22	Opening of 90-day summer Kyol Che at Diamond Hill Zen Monastery	Nov. 17	Beginning of 90-day winter Kyol Che at Jung Hye Sah, Korea (MDSN)
29	Cambridge, 1 day sitting (GB)	* teacher to be announced.	
July 4-6	Providence (RS)	Please call the appropriate Zen Center to confirm these dates and teachers, and make your retreat reservations at least two weeks in advance. Retreat leaders are indicated by their initials: SSN, Zen Master Seung Sahn; GB, George Bowman; BR, Barbara Rhodes; LR, Lincoln Rhodes; MDSN, Mu Deung Sunim; JP, Jacob Perl; RS, Richard Shrobe.	
14-19	Zen Buddhist Temple, Ann Arbor (Zen Lotus Society) conference on Zen Buddhism in North America (includes LR)	For the most up-to-date schedule, contact your local Zen Center or the Kwan Um Zen School.	
18-20	Ecumenical festival and dedication of Lotus Shrine in Yogaville, VA. (includes SSN. See separate article on SSN's schedule)		
18-20	Seattle (MDSN) Cambridge (BR)		
25-27	New Haven (*)		
Aug. 2-3	School Congress and SSN's Birthday Ceremony		

### 3 BOOKS BY ZEN MASTER SEUNG SAHN

**Only Don't Know**, The Teaching Letters of Zen Master Seung Sahn

Contemporary letters of Zen Master Seung Sahn, the first Korean Master to live and teach in the West, in which he responds to Western students' questions about daily life. Zen Master Seung Sahn carries on an extensive correspondence with his students worldwide, personally answering every letter written to him. Only Don't Know contains a rich choice of letters representing the broad range of the modern Zen student's concerns and the responses of a master. (Four Seasons Foundation, 1982) \$6.95.



**Dropping Ashes on the Buddha**, The Teaching of Zen Master Seung Sahn

A delightful, irreverent and often hilarious record of the encounters of Zen Master Seung Sahn with his American students. Consisting of stories, formal Zen interviews, Dharma speeches, and the Zen Master's spontaneous interactions with his students. (Grove Press, 1976) \$4.95.



**Bone of Space**, Zen Poems by Master Seung Sahn

Since the T'ang Dynasty, poetry has been used to express the experience of Zen. These poems by Zen Master Seung Sahn continue that tradition of using words to point to original nature. (Four Seasons Foundation, 1982) \$4.95.

These books can be found at your local bookstore or at your nearest Zen Center.

**The Official Kwan Um Zen School T-Shirt**  
Four-color hand silkscreen on silver T-shirt  
**Only \$10.00**  
Send to: Kwan Um Zen School (plus \$1.25 post. & hand.)  
528 Pound Rd., Cumberland, R.I. 02864 Indicate size: S, M, L, XL  
Proceeds benefit Kwan Um Zen School

**DHARMACRAFTS**  
MEDITATION SUPPLIES  
Pants • Zafus • Mats • Incense • Buddhas  
Malas • Benches • Books • Etc.

**Wholesale & Retail**  
(617) 492-4793  
MC & Visa Accepted

For Catalog Send \$1.00

c/o Cambridge Zen Center, Dept. P  
199 Auburn St., Cambridge, MA 02139



## INCREASING ZEN TRAFFIC BETWEEN POLAND AND USA

In the past several years, because of liberation of visa rules between Poland and the USA, there has been an increasing number of Zen students and teachers going to and coming from Poland. Just from the Kwan Um Zen School alone, five teachers visited Poland in 1985, and Master Dharma Teachers Lincoln Rhodes and Jacob Perl are planning trips in August and June-July, respectively, in addition to Soen Sa Nim's annual trip in the fall.

Recently, three senior Zen students from Poland visited various centers in the Kwan Um Zen School in America. Jacek Dobrowolski, a scholar from Warsaw, is now in residence at Cambridge Zen Center. Jacek, who speaks and writes English fluently, has been accepted by Harvard Divinity School and will begin doctoral studies there in the fall.

Ala Czarniecki, wife of Andrzej Czarniecki, Abbot of Kwan Um Zen School of Poland, came from Warsaw Zen Center to the Providence Zen Center for six weeks starting in March. After sitting the last 21 days of the winter meditation intensive, she visited several East Coast cities and Zen Centers and stayed for a week at Lexington, KY, Zen Center. The LZC Abbot, Bob Genthner, visited Poland last year for the first time, accompanied by his daughter Gretchen.

Darek Gorzowski, Abbot of the Lublin Zen Center, arrived in early May and is liv-

ing at Providence Zen Center. Darek has a degree in psychology and will be staying for several months, training at PZC.



TAHL MAH SAH ZEN CENTER

The sangha at Tahl Mah Sah Zen Center in Los Angeles is enjoying their new alter, hand-carved by Sang In Kim, a well-known and talented wood carver from Korea.

John Chan and his wife, Susan Phillips, are co-directors of Empty Gate Zen Center in Berkeley. John was instrumental in helping plan many details of Soen Sa Nim's trip to China last fall, and acted as an indispensable translator, along with Jon Solomon.

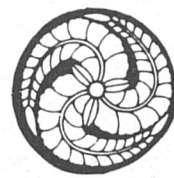
Bodhisattva Monk and Senior Dharma Teacher Bob Moore, who has been associated with Tahl Mah Sah Zen Center for many years, is teaching an active group of students at Aikido Ai Dojo in Whittier, CA. The dojo is one of the newer affiliates in the Kwan Um Zen School. Bob teaches nui gung (yogic breathing), tai chi ch'uan, zazen, and gives Dharma talks. Soen Sa Nim has given several talks at Aikido Ai, and several of Bob's students have partici-

pated in retreats at Tahl Mah Sah. Bob lives 35 miles from TMS and still manages to get there about twice a week for practice.

Cambridge Zen Center recently completed a very successful lecture series on "Healing Self and Spirit" which has been running since January. Distinguished speakers included psychologists and psychotherapists, Buddhist and Native American teachers, on topics such as tai chi, Native American spiritual practice, political action, alternatives in healing and medicine, and meditation and action. The series closed with a discussion led by Joe Gorin, co-founder of the Western, Mass., Buddhist Peace Fellowship. He has invited a guest from Guatemala who was being sheltered by the Sanctuary Movement in the United States, and a peacemaker recently released from 18 months in prison for dismantling a Pershing II missile in Florida.

The Cambridge Zen Center is almost full, reports new director Jane McLaughlin, with 25 residents, 10 of whom came in the

last three months. A redecorating project led by Abbot Mark Houghton and Master Dharma Teacher (and skilled carpenter) George Bowman is underway, to try to complete the finishing touches on the massive renovation that has been going on for two years at the 4-story, 4-unit townhouse. George Bowman led several well-attended retreats, and a work retreat was held in March.



### SUMMER PROGRAMS at the ZEN CENTER OF SONOMA MOUNTAIN INTRODUCTION TO ZEN WORKSHOP

Orientation for beginners to learn Soto Zen meditation, Buddhist perspective, form and ritual, informal discussion.

June 21 Sept. 20 \$25

### GUEST PRACTICE PROGRAM

Month-long period of mindfulness and constancy in peaceful schedule of prostrations, chanting, meditation, work, study, formal meals, interviews.

July 6-Aug. 21 \$115 week \$450 month

### SESSHIN RETREAT

Silent meditation intensive to "Still the Mind" in a daily schedule of prostrations, chanting, 5 hours meditation, work, dharma talks, interviews, formal meals.

July 20-27 \$18 day \$126 full-time  
Oct. 2-5 \$ 54 full time

### ONE DAY SITTING

For beginners to experience a taste of silence in moderate schedule of prostration, meditation, chanting, work, outdoor walking.

Sept. 6 \$15

On 80 acres, the Center is under the direction of Jakusho Kwong-roshi, dharma successor to Soto Zen lineage of Shunryu Suzuki-roshi.

6367 Sonoma Mountain Road  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404  
707/545-8105



FIRST ZEN RETREAT AT THE new Ann Arbor Zen Center in Michigan. At left, Master Dhara teacher Jacob Perl, who led the retreat, and Michael Elta, founder and Abbot of the Center.

## 3 MONTH INTENSIVE ZEN AND ZEN ARTS TRAINING

June 6 — August 31

Includes: Daily Training in Zazen (Zen Meditation)  
Introduction to Zen Practice Weekend Course Series  
Monthly Week-long Silent Meditation Retreat (Sesshin)  
Daily Work Practice, Art Practice, Body Practice  
and The Following Courses:

- June 10 - 15 **The Zen Brush (Sumi-e Painting)** with Kazuaki Tanahashi (\$300)
- June 26 - 29 **Buddha Mokucho (Wood Carving)** with Zen monk, Rev. Seido Suzuki (\$125)
- July 18 - 20 **The Lotus in the Fire (The Practical Art of Everyday Life)** with Dr. Daniel Doen Silberberg (\$125)
- July 30 - Aug 3 **Mountains & Rivers (Silent Back-packing Retreat)** with Bruno Kyoshin Zupp (\$160)
- August 8 - 10 **The Japanese Zen Garden (Aesthetics and hands-on techniques)** with Fred Kasan Hagy (\$125)
- August 7 - 10 **Secrets, Settings, & Characters (Writers' Retreat)** with Maureen Brady (\$160)
- August 12 - 17 **Zen Arts Celebration (Traditional & Emerging Western Arts explored as Practice)** with instructors in Tea Ceremony, Flower Arranging, Bamboo Flute, Calligraphy, etc. (\$325)
- August 22 - 24 **Warrior Spirit (The Art of Effective Communication & Action)** with Dr. Jules Shuzen Harris (\$125)

Residency: \$1200/3 months, or \$500/month - covers lodging, meals and tuition for all courses. Non-residents may take individual courses (fee includes lodging, meals & tuition for the course)



To register contact:  
**ZEN MOUNTAIN MONASTERY**  
Box 197 P, South Plank Road  
Mt. Tremper, NY 12457 (914) 688-2228

## SPRING WIND

BUDDHIST CULTURAL FORUM

DHARMA \* FEATURES \* BUDDHIST TALES \* NEWS \* ART \* CROSS CULTURAL EVENTS

A quarterly journal dedicated to promoting spiritual culture and practice in the nuclear age. The journal is devoted to the Way of Wisdom and Enlightenment through the practice of Buddhist meditation, and seeks to serve as a vehicle for social expression and action. As Buddhists we are concerned with peace in the world, the spiritual awakening of all beings, and encounter with different cultures and religions. It has been the traditional Buddhist attitude towards all to promote friendliness and harmony even at our own sacrifice, and to transform self and others for new inspiration and new culture. We uphold this Buddhist spirit of change and evolution.

To subscribe, remit \$15/yr. (\$28/2 yr.) by cheque or M.O. in U.S. funds to: Spring Wind, 46 Guyonne Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M6K 2C3, Canada. Include your name and full mailing address with postal code. Spring Wind is published by the Zen Lotus Society, a non-profit religious organization.

## ZEN TRAINING WEEKENDS

EXPERIENCE AUTHENTIC ZEN TRAINING AT ZEN MOUNTAIN MONASTERY

These experiential weekends are held at the monastery's 200 acre training and retreat center in the Catskills; and include instruction, seminar sessions, Zen Meditation sessions, and individual face-to-face teaching with resident Zen Teacher John Daido Loomi \$95. (\$25 deposit required 1 week in advance)

**Level A: The Introductory Workshop: Getting Started: The Practice & principles of Zen Buddhism**  
June 6 - 8 July 4 - 6

**Level B: Personal Empowerment Training: The Intimate Self: A powerful, practical experience providing access to the source of individual effectiveness**  
May 9 - 11

**Level C: World Action Training: The Mountain Dragon: The Enlightened Way of personal & political action**  
June 27 - 29



To register contact:  
**ZEN MOUNTAIN MONASTERY**  
Box 197 P, South Plank Road  
Mt. Tremper, NY 12457 (914) 688-2228



## BUDDHIST PEACE FELLOWSHIP

Membership Form

To become a member & to receive the BPF quarterly newsletter please send \$15 to: Buddhist Peace Fellowship, PO Box 4650, Berkeley, CA 94704

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_