



# Water Wheel

*Being one with all Buddhas, I turn the water wheel of compassion.*

—Gate of Sweet Nectar

## Filling the Cracks with Gold

By Roshi Wendy Egyoku Nakao

Our hearts have been broken open by the horrific massacre at Virginia Tech. The fabric of our lives includes the threads of alienation, loneliness, and violence. Who among us does not intimately know these threads? Perhaps this event has triggered visceral memories of a sad childhood or adolescence, a sense of isolation in college, or even illuminated your current life circumstance.

The broken heart responds by sending prayers and love to the victims and their families. It responds by deeply inquiring into the causes of suffering and how to end it, into the terrible violence that pervades our life, into wars and genocide. Earlier this year, we ourselves at Normandie Mountain were engaged in protecting each other from a potentially violent stalker.

A Buddhist master was once asked, “Who is the gentlest person in the world?” The master responded, “The one with the broken heart.” How can this be so when the instinct is to avoid a broken heart, to build a protective barrier? There is a technique of filling the cracks in broken pottery with gold leaf. Practicing with a broken heart is like this—it is in these very cracks into which we are plunged that we are made gentle and tender, that we become bodhisattvas, great beings of caring.

We pray for a good rebirth for all the victims, that they may not linger in confusion and horror. We pray that in time their families will find the gold in the pieces of their own hearts. We pray for the young man who killed, that he find his way through the darkness of ignorance and destruction. We pray for his family, who must also bear the unbearable grief of this tragedy.

I ask each of you to reaffirm the fundamental commitment you have made to take care of your heart-mind. Please do not underestimate the monumental consequences of attending to the thoughts, words, and deeds



of your own mind on a daily basis. That

rage, alienation, and mental illness not be allowed to grow to such consuming proportions pierces to the very core of what practice is all about.

It is tragically too late to interrupt the sequence in the heart-mind of the young man who killed, but it is not too late for each of us to attend to our own heart-mind. And it is not too late to notice and to reach out to those alienated around us.

Our world is complex —everyone so busy, with little time to genuinely connect and relate in meaningful ways. We are stopped by this tragedy. We are brought to stillness and quiet by the sheer shock of what has happened. This is a time to listen deeply to the stirrings within; to ponder, to question, to allow the gold of wisdom to arise from the broken heart of being.

There is no formula; no quick fix—only the raw experience of openness, of falling into pieces and slowly, ever so gently with deft and lightness of touch, brushing gold into the cracks. In the midst of this tragedy, we can find the raw materials to make a buddha.

May all beings be consoled. May all beings give and receive love freely. May all beings be liberated. ■

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# The Three Qualities of Zen

By Roshi Wendy Egyoku Nakao

Our exploration of Zen koan practice leads us to three fundamental qualities: great faith or confidence, great doubt or questioning, and great determination or courage. When life's pivotal questions—Who am I? What is death? What is this?—grips us, these qualities are the basis for resolution.

Koans arose from situations that were shockingly immediate and personal, such as when Eka begged of Bodhidharma to “please pacify my mind.” Bodhidharma replied, “Bring me your mind, and I will pacify it for you.” For Eka there was no respite from the consuming need to break through. He moved far beyond intellectual speculation into the immediacy of resolution. Later, Eka returned to Bodhidharma and said, “I have searched everywhere and cannot find my mind.” Bodhidharma responded, “Then I have pacified it for you.”

Eka's struggle, like our own, was characterized by three qualities that led to resolution. Great faith is the confidence that we can pierce the grave questions of our life. Whether we are very confident or merely have a tiny, tender flame that grows gradually within us, each of us has great faith. What is the evidence of this? Our practice, the very fact that we are addressing the primary issue.

At first, great faith may seem academic and distant. But with practice, our confidence grows as we experience ourselves settling and changing for the better. We are surprised that we are no longer caught up in our dramas. We experience moments of clear-headedness and open-heartedness, which become familiar ways of being.

Yasutani Roshi said, “Have faith that your zazen is the zazen of the buddhas.” Through practice we see that the buddha nature that we feel we lack—the peace of mind that seems to elude us—has been here all along. According to Dogen Zenji, we practice because we *are* buddhas—already fundamentally pacified. True nature is often likened to the vast sky—sometimes obscured by clouds or frightening thunderstorms, but always there. Great faith is our anchor as we navigate through all the changing conditions.

Producing a great doubt or questioning is another

quality. In everyday speech, doubt can mean indecision or wavering. In Zen training, doubt means questioning. Questioning is the antidote for the dullness that often invades our sitting, it cuts through the stuckness of beliefs, ideas, and deluded thinking. Great doubt means developing within ourselves the ability to go beyond our usual petty preoccupations and to question and undo deeply entrenched habitual energies. We see that we can let go of the concerns and anxieties that often consume us. Maezumi Roshi would say, “I don't ask you to give that up, just put it aside for now.”

The Buddha's awakening is born out of direct experience. His instruction was always to question every truth, every teaching and to test it against direct experience. This is the very heart of practice—to open into not-knowing by constantly raising a questioning mind. In this way, we learn to embrace the wisdom of insecurity, which results not in fear and trembling at the groundlessness of life, but in discovering delight and life anew in each moment in the most so-called mundane activities.

Great determination or courage is effort—our capacity to stick it out until we get to the bottom of our questioning. People often express how much practice means to them, sometimes even that it is the most important thing in their life. Yet many people seem to have time for everything but their sitting. To arouse great courage is to daily reaffirm why this practice is important and to get beyond our limiting personal habits to our infinite potential for wisdom and love.

What kind of courage do we need to live a fully human life in our fast-paced, complex, modern world? We need the courage to cut through negativity, despair, and insecurity. Great courage gives us the impetus to go beyond our habitual responses. Habits are the limitations we settle for because the present-moment mind, the now, is too unsettling for us. We cannot bear the unconditioned open space of being—the groundlessness, the vast sky. But as this effort becomes more familiar, we are less likely to hesitate, more able to say no to all that distracts and deludes us.

Maezumi Roshi summed up these three attitudes by saying, “Have good guts.” Each of us must have the guts to wrestle with life's koans and take it to resolution. ■

*Roshi Egyoku Nakao is the abbot and head teacher of ZCLA.*

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***“... great faith or confidence,  
great doubt or questioning,  
great determination or courage ...”***

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## ZCLA Launches New Web Site

*Kipp Ryodo Hawley is an assistant teacher at ZCLA and serves as the Center's Information Technology Manager and Web Master.*

**WATER WHEEL:** We recently debuted our beautiful new website. As Web Master and the person who oversaw its creation, what was your vision for the site?

**RYODO:** The Internet, today, is where everybody puts their face. It's the way people get to know you. The way I got to know Zen Center was, I was driving by on Normandie Avenue, saw the sign, and decided to see what the place was like. But now most people find us on the Internet, and while we had a very nice site, we thought it was time to update.

Rather than just go ahead and do the project myself, I approached it through Shared Stewardship. We created a Website Group and gathered input from as many people as possible over about two years, including writers, artists, and technical people. The site grew organically from everybody's ideas. First of all, of course, reflecting Roshi's vision, since she's our Abbot.

One of our residents helped us appeal to a younger generation of eyes. He gave us strong principles of website design. Navigation is crucial to the success of websites, so we worked carefully to make it easy to move through the site and get to information.

The artist we chose, Ellen Kirk, took his ideas, and the look blossomed, using her vision for the color scheme, fonts, and layout. Ellen is a deeply experienced professional illustrator who's worked for many big entertainment companies and other clients. She incorporated overlays, pastels, and electronic scrap booking. The Website Group went back and forth with her several times.

**Q:** One thing we've learned from stewarding is how visioning always has to attend to constraints. You have a grand idea, but it may not be possible to do it all. Can you talk about that tension in creating the new site?



**A:** That tension is a marvelous part of any undertaking. It's a kind of Dharma teaching. You start in the field of Not Knowing, and then create what's possible in form.

The challenge for us was... There are so many Zen Centers out there. How do you convey the flavor of our Center as a living personality, as well as make the teachings available?


We wanted to show Maezumi Roshi as the founder of Zen Center and the White Plum Asanga, that this is Maezumi Roshi's mother temple for his lineage. We wanted to show our Abbot, Egyoku Roshi, and share her vision for the Center. We wanted to show the style of Zen practice we have here — koan study, precept study and practice, and shikantaza, and how we exercise governance through Shared Stewardship.

We tried to use lots of pictures, like the beautiful portrait of Roshi as Abbot on the teacher's page, and the right-hand margins with pictures of people and familiar buildings. And, of course, our paulownia crest. We wanted to show the sunny California look, the palm trees. We wanted to show ZCLA's true face.

*(Continued on page 8)*


# Zen Programs On Normandie Mountain

You will find the latest program information at our new website [www.zencenter.org](http://www.zencenter.org). Please check it regularly. See our calendar for the detailed daily program schedule. Program details and updates are also sent by email through [ProgramFlash](#).

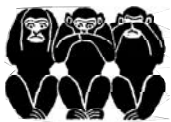
 **Please register in advance.** Contact the office at [info@zcla.org](mailto:info@zcla.org) to register.

The **Dharma Training Fund (DTF)**. Through the generosity of the Sangha, the DTF is available to all Zen practitioners to supplement program fees. No one is ever turned away for lack of funds. If you find yourself in financial need for a particular program you wish to attend, please do not let finances keep you from attending. Inquire with Gemmon in the office for an application. Do not miss any opportunity to practice and study the Dharma!

## Zazen Programs

**Zazenkai.\* Friday evening, June 8, 7:30 p.m. to Saturday, June 9, 5:00 p.m.** Led by Shingetsu Guzy. Zazenkai is an all-day sitting. This is an excellent opportunity to spend a quiet practice day. The schedule includes zazen, service, work, meals, Dharma Talk, and face-to-face meeting with a teacher. Open to everyone. Fee: \$40; \$75 for nonmembers. 

\* Zendo remains open for nonparticipants.



## Precept Practice

A **Day of Reflection** on the Zen Bodhisattva precepts will take place on **Saturdays, May 26 and June 16, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** We begin with recitation of the precepts, zazen, and a brief precept talk followed by a short work period and lunch. A Precept Circle is held from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. on the precept of the day. Open to everyone.

**May 26** will be led by Heather Faith-Spring Chapman on Precept #9: Not being angry;

**June 16** will be led by Kongcha'l Stephenson on Precept #1: The practice of non-killing.

**Atonement Ceremony. Thursday, June 14, at 7:30 p.m.** During this ceremony of renewing the vows and precepts, we each have an opportunity to bear witness to our conduct in thoughts, words, and actions. Everyone is welcome to participate and renew themselves. Those who have received the precepts are asked to attend on a regular basis. Officiated by Koan Janka.

**Zen Bodhisattva Priest Ordination. Sundays, 11:00 a.m.** On **June 10, Mike Solitary-Pine Ford** and on **June 24, Debbie Faith-Mind Thoresen** will receive their vows as Zen Bodhisattva priests from Roshi Egyoku. Everyone is invited to witness this rite of passage, which marks the beginning of novice priest training. During the ceremony, Roshi will speak about the implications of these vows, including its effect on the recipients and their families.

The head shaving ceremonies will take place at 6:30 a.m. on June 10 and 24 in the Buddha Hall. Members are invited.

## Presentation of New Sensei

**Sunday, June 17, 2007  
11:00 a.m.**

After a week-long retreat in June, Kipp Ryodo Hawley will receive Dharma Transmission from Roshi Egyoku as a lay Zen teacher. Please come and welcome our new Zen teacher (Sensei) to the Sangha.

## Retreats, Classes and Workshops

**Working Together Practice: 40th Anniversary Preparations. Saturday, May 12, 1:30 to 5:00 p.m.**

Come and enjoy the fun and camaraderie of an afternoon of working together as one body. We will clean and prepare the Center for the 40th Anniversary events in May. Everyone is invited to join in the myriad work-groups. After samu, a pizza supper. Bring your Self, your work clothes and work/garden gloves.

*(Continued on page 5)*



PROGRAMS (Continued)

**Contemplative Caregiving for Caregivers. Friday, June 1, through Sunday, June 3.** For caregivers. Led by Evi Gemmon Ketterer. ☎

**Jukai Class. Wednesdays, June 6 and 13, 7:30 to 9:00 p.m.** Roshi leads a two-part series on receiving the precepts, exploring the lineage, dharma names, rakusu, and the ceremony. Open to all, and especially for those who will receive the precepts. \$70 for class series; discounted fees when bundled into Precepts/Jukai class series. Call the office for more information. ☎

**Shared Stewardship 2007. June 10** and continuing on **August 12** and **October 7, 1:30-3:30 p.m.** This series explores the collective koan of Shared Stewardship, reviewing its basic principles, forms, and practices. We will also continue the active stewarding of the Center in these meetings. 2007 Shared Stewardship led by John Plum-Hermit Swanger and Jeanne Dokai Dickenson. Everyone is welcome.

**Rakusu Sewing Class. Saturday, June 17, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.** Instruction in sewing a rakusu, Buddha's Robe, for those who are preparing for the bodhisattva initiation ceremony with a Zen Center teacher. Participation by those who need to repair an old rakusu or who wish to sew one as a gift is also encouraged. Led by Evi Gemmon Ketterer. ☎

## 40th Anniversary Celebration

**Saturday, May 19**

Founders' Memorial Service  
Panel Discussions with White Plum Teachers  
Lunch • Celebratory Dinner & Fun

**Sunday, May 20**

Zazen • Open Mike: what ZCLA means to us  
Gate of Sweet Nectar • Farewell Lunch.

We will be celebrating the remarkable work of Maezumi Roshi and of the sangha. The annual White Plum teachers' meeting will also be held prior to the weekend celebrations.

Saturday (day): \$50  
Saturday (eve) Celebratory Dinner: \$50  
Sunday: \$50  
Registration for both days is required.  
Space is limited.

**STUDY TOPIC: KOANS.** During May and June, the theme for talks will be bodhisattva practice.

## ZCLA Artist-in-Residence

**Thomas Matsuda, Sculptor**

**Friday, July 6**

**7:00 to 8:00 p.m. Exhibition Reception**

**Saturday, July 7**

**10:00 a.m. to noon Slide Show**

Contemporary Work of Matsuda

**1:30-4:30 p.m.**

Workshop: Creating Jizos for a New World

**Sunday, July 8**

**10:00 a.m. to noon**

Buddhist Sculpture Carving  
Demonstration and Talk

The Center welcomes sculptor Tom Matsuda as ZCLA's 2007 Artist-in-Residence. Join in all or part of this weekend artist's retreat.

Tom's formal studies began with contemporary American art, receiving his initial training at Pratt Institute where he now teaches.

Driven by his interest in Eastern philosophy, Tom apprenticed in Japan under the renowned sculptor Kaukei Eri for twelve years. His work appears in various temples and shrines, with exhibitions in many major cities throughout the world.

Tom will present both his contemporary work and Buddhist carved sculptures. He will lead a hands-on workshop in which everyone will create Jizo Bodhisattva in clay. Open to everyone; no prior experience is necessary. Workshop fee (includes the cost of materials): \$50; \$45 members. ☎

Check out Matsuda's web site: [www.tmatsuda.com](http://www.tmatsuda.com)



## Sangha Rites of Passage

### Zen Bodhisattva Priest Ordination

From Roshi Egyoku

April 15, 2007

Teido Cartee

### New Members Entering Ceremony

March & April 2007

Ritu Goswamy

Jill King

Arno Kroner

Karen Shlanka-Lanoix

Francis Maile

Jenny Warner

### Shared Stewardship Leave-taking

Database Steward

Ty Jotai Webb

### Members Circle

Penelope Luminous-Heart Thompson

Mark Shogen Bloodgood

Nancy Marquez

Hillary Kongcha'l Stephenson

John Heart-Mirror Trotter

### Tenzo Coordinator

Lourdes Jisen Reybin

### Library Steward

Derek Hutchinson

### Buddha Hand Circle

Cliff Shishin Collins, Steward

Evi Gemmon Ketterer

### Shared Stewardship Entering

Tenzo Coordinator

Gary Belton

### Library Steward

Tom Dharma-Joy Reichert

### Buddha Hand Circle

Steward, Raul Ensho Berge

Burt Wetanson

Hillary Kongcha'l Stephenson

### Database Steward (Interim)

Jeanne Dokai Dickenson



*The Sangha celebrates Teido Cartee (front row center) upon his renewal of Zen Bodhisattva Priest vows, which were first taken in 1966 from Bishop Sumi at Zenshuji.*

—Photo by Jimmy Jakugen Chou

## Your Gifts are Received with a Heartfelt Thank You!

Please let our staff know of the many bodhisattvas to appreciate. Have we missed anyone?

To **Kipp Ryodo Hawley** for the launching this month first phase of ZCLA's fabulous new web site, and **Ellen Kirk** who implemented the design of its new look;

All those who directly contributed to the new website development: **John Daishin Buksbazen, Tom Yudo Burger, Jeanne Dokai Dickenson, Andrew Halladay, Evi Gemmon Ketterer, Arno Kroner, Mary Rios, Roshi Egyoku, Reeb Kaizen Venner, Tai Jotai Webb, and Burt Wetanson;**

**Gary Koan Janka** and **Deb Faith-Mind Thoresen** for leveling, re-sodding Jizo Garden, and sprucing up Jizo and Kanzeon Gardens;

**Cliff Shishin Collins**, outgoing steward of the Buddha Hand Circle, for 3 years of devoted and constant service; and to incoming steward, **Raul Ensho Berge;**

**Gemmon** for her service on the Buddha Hand Circle;

**Jotai** for skilled and patient work repairing the sprinkler system and keeping up the lawns;

**Roshi** and **Patricia Shingetsu Guzy** for offering the third session of the in-demand Shadow class series;

**Ensho** for offering the 2007 Precepts class;

**Koan** for leading the Introduction to Sesshin;

**Yuigyo Kamimura** for painstaking digital scanning of ZCLA photo archives;

Everyone who deep-cleaned Sangha kitchen: **Gary Belton, Heather Faith-Spring Chapman, Koan, Yuigyo, Gemmon, Hillary Kongcha'l Stephenson, Kaizen, and Burt;**

**Derek Hutchinson**, outgoing steward of the ZCLA Library and to incoming Library Steward, **Tom Dharma-Joy Reichert;**

**Ryodo** for leading Zazenkai;

Brown-Green Group: **April Ford, Nelida Cartolin, Faith-Spring, and Mukei Horner** for leading Eco-workshop on Earth Day;

**Burt** and **Kongcha'l**, incoming members of the Buddha Hand Circle;

**John Heart-Mirror Trotter** for continuing the projects of fence painting and covering graffiti;

**Jill King** for overseeing the financial aspect of the 2007 Shared Stewardship series;

**Lorraine Gessho Kumpf**, Tangaryo Steward, and to all those who participated in Tangaryo: **Larry Barber, Elizabeth Bryer, Shishin, Shingetsu, Arno, Daiji Powell, Michael Sakamoto, and Burt;**

Buddha's Birthday celebration bodhisattvas: Liturgy: **Koan Janka;** Tenzo: **DeWayne Gojitsu Snodgrass;** Flower-house altar: **Gessho**, Flower Group coordinator; with **Luminous-Heart Thompson, Roshi, Gemmon, Sayaka Kamimura, and Dokai; James**

**Bodhi-Song Graham** for setting up Buddha's bower-house;

**Moshe YooWho Cohen** and **Bodhi-Song, Andrew Harmon, Sarah Leddley, Julia Seirin Norstrand, and Kaizen**, and for their hilarious sacred mischief-making in bathing the baby buddha during Buddha's birthday celebration;

Altar-cleaners: **Carla Flowing-Mountain Trotter** and **Conrad Butsugen Romo**, Co-coordinators, and to **Jessica Dharma-Lotus Armstrong, April, Mukei, Koan, Gessho, Yuigyo, Gemmon, Francis Maile, Ando Martinez, Kongcha'l, Luminous-Heart, Burt, and Reiju Wasserman;**

All those recording the teachers' talks: **Bodhi-Song, Dharma-Joy, Jisen Reybin, Kongcha'l, Luminous-Heart, Faith-Mind, Heart-Mirror, and Gemmon.**

Welcome to new members: **Jenny Warner**, mother, aerospace engineer, and metalsmith artist; **Jill King**, retired psychotherapist and new resident, moving from Tehachapi; **Ritu Goswamy**, Director of Legal Services at Homeboy Industries; and **Keicher Payne**, massage therapist and world traveler; **Dana Dovitch**, psychotherapist who enjoys gardening and photography, and **'Z' Lisa Zeller**, personal financial manager, consultant to nonprofit organizations, and yoga practitioner.

Fond farewells to long-time residents **Cliff Shishin Collins**, returning to his home in Upland, and **Derek Hutchinson**, focusing on school and career, and to **Yuigyo** and **Sayaka Kamimura**, returning to their temple in Japan.

Congratulations to **John Heart-Mirror Trotter**, certified as a Clinical Chaplain by the College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy. ■



*Buddha's Birthday Celebration: baby bodhisattva Gemmon receiving water blessing from mischief-makers. —Photo by Arno Kroner*



The *Water Wheel* is published by the Zen Center of Los Angeles / Buddha Essence Temple, which was founded in 1967 by the late Taizan Maezumi Roshi.

**The ZCLA Buddha Essence Temple mission** is to know the Self, maintain the precepts, and serve others. We provide the teaching, training, and transmission of Zen Buddhism. **Our vision** is an enlightened world free of suffering, in which all beings live in harmony, everyone has enough, deep wisdom is realized, and compassion flows unhindered. **Our core values** are available upon request.

Founding Abbot: Taizan Maezumi Roshi  
Abbot Emeritus: Roshi Bernard Glassman  
Abbot: Roshi Wendy Egyoku Nakao

Staff: Mary Rios, Business Manager; John Plum-Hermit Swanger, Operations Steward; Evi Gemmon Ketterer, Program Steward; Tom Yudo Burger, Guest Steward; Jeanne Dokai Dickenson, Development Steward. *Water Wheel* Editor, Dokai Dickenson; Assistant Editor, Burt Wetanson; Photographers, Tom Yudo Burger, Arno Kroner, Dokai Dickenson.

The *Water Wheel* is published bi-monthly. Contact the Editor at (213) 387-2352 or [dokai@zcla.org](mailto:dokai@zcla.org). Subscription: The annual rate is \$25 for non-members. We are in the process of converting to electronic distribution.



1967  
2007

**ZCLA Buddha Essence Temple**

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Address Correction Requested

*(Continued from page 3)*

**Q:** How did you relate the Shared Stewardship process to the design of a website, which is such a technical process?

**A:** In the programming world, we have what is called “Open Source Programming,” where many volunteers program different parts of a project, give their input, find errors and fix them. To me, that’s Shared Stewardship in the world.

We have a great many pages out there — how do you keep track of them all? We had a master spreadsheet to organize the many pages. We prioritized the pages, each of us then chose pages to work on, and we had editors polishing their work. That makes the final product representative of the Center.

**Q:** That would be lateral accountability. But what about the hierarchical issue? Who held all the threads?

**A:** To implement Roshi’s viewpoint, we would always ask her, “What do you think?” I looked at myself as

kind of the dispatcher, and as we got closer to the deadline, I started making more decisions on my own.

**Q:** A website is a living thing. In what ways will ours keep evolving?

**A:** A few areas where growth will be taking place are opening up the Membership area, sharing reports from the Shared Stewardship Circles. We’re going to have a nice Photo Gallery and fill up the shelves of the Online Store. There will be Online Registration for programs, so you’ll be able to sign up for sesshin or zazenkai. In the Members Area, there’s already an online Dharma Hall where members can listen to recorded talks.

**Q:** What response have you had so far to the new site?

**A:** It’s been wonderful, and everyone is invited to send their comments to me at [webmaster@zcla.org](mailto:webmaster@zcla.org). We would love to hear from them. We want everyone to be part of the mandala. ■