

Mt. Equity Zendo Zephyr-

September 2011



August Sesshin First Lay Dharma Combat Ceremony

August 21st marked the end of our three-month summer practice period at Mt. Equity. The practice period culminated with Nanshin White as our “Head Seat”, doing our first-ever Lay Dharma Combat Ceremony. One highlight of this ceremony was that Nanshin was responsible for answering students’ questions from a Dharma point of view without thinking about the questions beforehand. This is the test of the Head Seat’s understanding of the Dharma. After three months of much service to the Sangha and study of the Dharma, Nanshin was able to fulfill all the requirements for her position. We congratulate and thank Nanshin, her husband Tomei for his on-going support, and the whole sangha for their combined efforts in making this happen.

Our autumn practice period begins in September, with the Head Seat duty being conferred to Daijun. She will be coming for part of one day each of the weeks other than sesshin in preparation for her Shuso Preamble taking place during September Sesshin, the Reading of the Koan Case during October Sesshin, and concluding with the Dharma Talk and Dharma Combat Ceremony during November Sesshin. We hope that all members of the sangha may be present for these important events to support Daijun.

NiOsho to Japan in October/November and Other Travelings

On October 1st, NiOsho will be traveling to Japan both to participate in Soto Shu ceremonies and to visit the Tohoku Region which was most affected by the recent tsunami. We have set up a special account designated specifically to Japan Earthquake Relief of which 100% of it will be donated. When NiOsho is there she will make offerings directly to the places she sees needs the most help. If you would like to make a donation to this account we have set up a Paypal button on our website's homepage: www.mtequity.org. Another way is by sending a check to Mt. Equity Zendo with "Japan Earthquake Relief" in the memo to the following address, specifically for donations: Mt. Equity Zendo, P.O. Box 202, Montoursville, PA 17754.

NiOsho will also be away from Tuesday, September 6th through Saturday, September 10th for the Association of Soto Zen Buddhism meetings in Los Angeles.

Daishin will be away from Sunday, September 18th through Sunday October 2nd for Yoga teacher - training at Yogaville in Virginia.

Running MEZ with one resident priest is challenging. For meditation retreats to take place, the building, grounds and retreat organization needs attention. If you have time and are able, please consider supporting MEZ during the fall months by helping with cleaning, meals, and gardening.

MEZ Goes Solar

In June we asked our carpenter, Dale Hessler, to build and install our first trial passive solar window heater unit. Presently, MEZ is heated primarily with oil. This panel can make skillful use of the sunny south side of the building. While this act may seem insignificant in its effect on our warming planet, it is a symbolic gesture to sangha members, the larger community, political leaders, and those in the oil and gas industries that we support the movement of our nation and the world into renewable energy resources, and hope over time to add even more panels. To learn more about climate change and what you can do, visit www.350.org. (350 ppm is the optimum co2 level scientists recommend for human health. The present level is at 390 ppm.)



Special Events

Half Day of Mindfulness - Changing our Relationship with Negative Emotions

Saturday, October 1st, 1:30pm - 4:30pm

Led by MEZ senior student Jido Lindauer

\$12 suggested donation, \$10 for Friends

Cleaning the Earth - Saturday, October 8th, 10am - 4pm

Join MEZ on the Muncy Creek. We will begin and end with zazen. In between we will pick up garbage on the river. Bring protective gloves!

Introduction to Zen Meditation - Saturday, October 10th 7 - 8:30pm

\$10 suggested donation.

Weekend Sesshin - September 16th - 18th and October 14th - 16th

Half Day of Mindfulness - Saturday November 5th 1:30 - 4:30pm

\$12 suggested donation, \$10 for Friends

Day of Mindfulness - Zen and the Brush - November 6th 10am - 4pm

We will practice using brush and sumi ink and create our own Zen words and phrases. Make a gift for someone or hang it on your wall. Meditation interspersed. No materials necessary.

\$30 suggested donation includes materials.

Registration for Special
Events:

daishin@mtequity.org

or

(570) 546-2784

Weekly Practice Schedule

Tuesday Evening 7 - 9:15pm

Thursday Morning 6:30 - 8:00am (includes breakfast with oriyoki bowls - phone before coming)

Thursday Evening 7 - 8:30pm

Gratitude to the following people for making offerings of food and related items the month of August: Nanshin, Tomei, Misho, Will Smith, Tokuen, Mike Armstrong, Michele Swope, Thomas Nadig, Daiko, Itay Nachson, Susan Gresens, Michel Lau, Tenryu, Dendo, Eido, Doko, Rev. Jisen, Rev. Andrea Minnick, and all others we may have inadvertently missed. Our heartfelt gratitude.



Carrying Out Pre-Sesshin Essentials

A special thank you to Keien coming from State College, Dendo from Baltimore, Susan Faeder, and Michael Armstrong from Bald Eagle Sangha, working all day Friday to prepare MEZ for our Candles on the River Sesshin. Besides cleaning the building and setting out bedding, they also prepared lunch. All of this work greatly supported our Sesshin.

Comings and Goings

Rev. Jisen Coghlan of Zen Center of Pittsburgh joined us August 25th - 28th to study ceremonial offerings and to share wonderful meals that she cooked for us. We hope to have her come to teach another Alexander Technique workshop soon.

On July 31st, Daikan's cockatiel, "Indigo", passed away. We send Daikan our heartfelt sympathy for the loss of his dear pet.

On August 3rd, Daishin was called to Baltimore to lead a funeral service for Atom Chan, born in China and raised in the U.S., married to Yayoi Ishizaka from Japan, who had requested MEZ to perform a traditional Japanese Buddhist funeral. May all of their families know peace.

On August 9th, Meigetsu's uncle, Jack Robishaw passed away, who was a twin to her father. By coincidence, he passed away on the same date as his brother but eleven years later. Our sincere sympathy to Meigetsu and her relatives.

On August 24th, Domon Luu Pham of Baltimore Dharma Group received word of the passing of his brother-in-law, Tam Anh Chu, in an automobile accident. He leaves a wife and two children, residing in Virginia. May the prayers and sympathetic wishes of all our sangha members be of some solace at this tragic time for all his family.

"I had learned that all the greatest and most important problems of life are fundamentally insoluble.... They can never be solved, but only outgrown." - Carl Jung