



MOON ON THE WATER

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Road Trip

Michael Zinke, DT

When I was young I remember my father was always reading maps. We never really went anywhere, but he would spend hours looking at maps of our state, the surrounding states, and even the entire U.S. He knew all the major roads, where they went, what towns they went through, and the fastest route from here to almost anywhere. He knew just about every major and minor river, where it started, and where it ended. One time on a trip home, I mentioned that I had crossed the East Branch of the Skunk River. The name just struck me as funny, so I mentioned it to my dad. He knew exactly where it was and even told me where the West Branch of the Skunk River was. Yet with all reading he did and knowledge he had about roads, cities, and states; we hardly ever went anywhere.

I used to look back at that and laugh and wonder what that was all about, and then one day I caught myself doing the same thing. When I stopped and thought about it, I realized that I also spent a lot of time looking at maps. I don't know, maybe it's just a guy thing, or maybe it's some strange genetic trait passed on from my forefathers. But I remember a couple of summers ago, my wife and I talked about going to the Outer Banks of North Carolina. Before long I had the maps out and was planning a road trip. Within a day or two I had mapped out several different routes from here to the Outer Banks. Not just one route, mind you, but I had probably four different routes through as many states as you could imagine. I even had several different routes for the trip back home. But something came up, and the trip never happened. The following summer we thought about going down and checking on some land we own in Tennessee. Of course that trip was then expanded to go farther. As long as we were in the area, we may just as well go to Asheville, North Carolina – it's right down the road a piece, and as long as we were that far south, we might just as well continue on to Savanna, Georgia and check it out. I always wanted to see Savanna. Out came the maps and several routes were once again plotted. Both to and from, several selections, just take your pick of states to go through. Of course, something else came up, and that trip was postponed also. But I continued to look at maps and atlases, and at the very mention of a trip I would start plotting routes again and again, never taking the trips, but always prepared.

You can probably see where this is headed, right? Nowhere. As long as you plan, plan, plan you never go anywhere. Someday you have to stop planning and just go. You can be like my father and know every major road in the United States, but until you actually get in your car and drive on those roads, you will always be right there in your driveway where you started.

Continued on page 3

Ask the Zen Master

Zen Master Dae Kwang

Q. How does one meditate on a kong-an but not think about it at the same time?

A. Our style is to not meditate on the kong-an. Zen means whenever you do something, just do it. At that time there is no subject, no object; you are the universe, the universe is you. You and everything become one because "I, my, me" have disappeared. The kong-an also means "just do it." Become one with the kong-an.

One day Ma Tzu and Pai Jang were walking in a field when some ducks flew overhead. Ma Tzu said, "What is that?"

Pai chang said, "Wild ducks."

Ma Tzu said, "Where have they gone?"

Pai Chang said, "They've flown away."

Just then Ma Tzu twisted Pai Chang's nose, causing him to cry out in pain.

Ma Tzu asked, "What has flown away?" Pai Chang screamed in pain. What does this mean? If you are thinking you will never understand. If you don't understand then only keep a don't know mind. Don't know mind creates the whole universe-- it can answer the kong-an easily. That means only do your practice, then soon the answer will appear by itself, guaranteed. Thinking about the kong-an is not good, not bad. When you realize you are thinking, just cut off all thinking and return to a "just now" mind. If an answer appears, then check it with a teacher. That's all.

Practice Schedule Change

Due to the holidays, there will be no Wednesday evening practice on December 24 and December 31.



YMJJ Retreat and Precepts Ceremony Held at GLZC

October 17-19, 2003

On October 17th GLZC's guiding teacher, Zen Master Dae Kwang, gave a public talk at the Great Lake Zen Center in Milwaukee. This talk kicked off a YMJJ retreat that culminated in a precepts ceremony on Sunday, October 19. Those in attendance at the retreat included Kwan Um students from Chicago, Peoria, and Indiana as well as our own GLZC sangha members. We would like to thank Zen Master Dae Kwang for his excellent, clear teaching and also thank those in attendance for their strong practice, together action, and silence.

Following the retreat, a precept ceremony was held. Gary Dixon and Jen Maher took five precepts. Andy Yench completed his Dharma Teacher in Training program and became a Dharma Teacher. Finally, GLZC co-director Peter Neuwald took 16 precepts and became a Senior Dharma Teacher. As a senior dharma teacher, Peter will be able to conduct consulting interviews. The GLZC sangha is very grateful to Peter, Andy, Gary, and Jen for their generosity and commitment to their practice, our Zen center, and our sangha. Congratulations and thank you!



Front from left: Dani and Laura Otto-Salaj, Zen Master Dae Kwang.
Back row: Mike Yonkers, Jen Maher, Andy Yench, Peter Neuwald,
Gary Dixon.

New Board Members Selected

On Sunday, November 23, a Sangha/Board meeting was held at GLZC, and two new board members were selected. Dee Schwaiger will be the new treasurer, and Mike Yonkers will be the inter-sangha liaison (formerly the at-large position). Additionally, Mike Zinke will be taking over responsibility for the newsletter. Joanne Toman will be assisting with publicity. Thanks to all who serve the Sangha and help to handle the details that allow GLZC to run smoothly.

Heart Kyol Che Scheduled Opening Ceremony

Monday, January 5, 2004, 7:30 PM

On Monday, January 5, there will be a celebration at GLZC marking the beginning of Heart Kyol Che. Kyol Che, literally translated, means "tight dharma", and it is an extended period of intense practice. At GLZC we celebrate Heart Kyol Che during the same period of time that the Kyol Che 90-day retreat is occurring at the Kwan Um School of Zen's main temple in Providence, Rhode Island.

Participants in Heart Kyol Che will make commitments to increase their practice during this period. Heart Kyol Che will continue until April 5, 2004. There will be an intensive week of practice half-way through the Heart Kyol Che period. During the week of February 23, 2004, we will hold nightly practices, Monday through Thursday, from 7:00 PM until 9:00 PM. A YMJJ retreat will be held on Saturday and Sunday, February 28-29, and there will be a public talk with Zen Master Dae Kwang on Friday, February 27. Mark your calendars, and plan to join us for this great opportunity to turn up the flame on your practice!

Kido Retreat Scheduled

Saturday, January 24, 2004

9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

On Saturday, January 24, 2004, GLZC will sponsor a one-day Kido retreat. The Kido will begin at 9:00 AM and continue until 4:00 PM. Kido, literally translated, means "energy path." Participants in this Kido will play percussion instruments while continuously chanting "Kwan Seum Bosal." Zen Master Seung Sahn has said that completing a one-day Kido may provide as much benefit as a one-week YMJJ retreat. The Kido will be held at the First Unitarian Church, 1342 N. Astor, Milwaukee. Participants should bring a percussion "instrument" (anything you can bang or hit, such as blocks of wood, may serve this purpose) and a bag lunch. The charge for this retreat is \$15. A lack of funds should never be a reason to not practice, so if you are in need of a scholarship for the Kido, please contact Peter or Laura. Register by signing up at GLZC or by contacting Peter.

Newsletter List Update

It's time to update our mailing list so that we can be sure we are only sending the newsletter to those interested in receiving it. **If you would like to continue on the mailing list**, please respond by e-mail at info@glzc.org, by signing up at the Zen Center, or by sending a note by mail. As always, donations to help offset the cost of printing and mailing the newsletter are appreciated.

Road Trip

(continued from page 1)

Many times we plan to do things, whether it be to go to practice or go shopping. But the results are the same if we only plan to do these things and never get around to actually doing them. Then we never get to practice or we never go shopping. We can apply this same principle to a lot of other things in our home lives and our work lives. As the end of the year approaches I am reminded that I had planned to take several classes to fulfill my development plan objectives at work for the year. But so far I have only planned to take the courses. I haven't actually taken them yet, and the year-end is quickly approaching. So planning to take the courses is as far as I have gotten, and that isn't going to meet the objective which was to actually take the courses.

As I talk to other people about Zen practice, I run into many people who say they have read a lot about Zen. They haven't practiced Zen at all, they don't apply Zen to their daily lives, but they have read a lot and know probably far more than I do about historical facts and figures relating to Zen. But reading about Zen and not practicing is like reading maps and not going anywhere. Over the years I have heard many teachers say, "Put the books down and practice." Sometimes we need to remind ourselves that reading about Zen is fine, but someday you have to put down the books and start sitting on the cushion. We have to take all of those great ideas that we read about in all of those books and start applying those things in our daily lives. That way when we see someone who is hungry, we know that we need to feed them. If we see someone who is suffering, we can help them find the origin of their suffering and correct the situation.

Planning is a necessary part of life. We need to plan for the future, but we must remember to do that planning in the present moment. When we make those plans we have to act on them, follow the plan that we have laid out. Many people don't plan and have no way to handle bad situations that arise. But having a plan that is never followed is of no use to us either.

There is nothing wrong with looking at maps and planning trips. There is nothing wrong with reading all the Zen books you can find. There is nothing wrong with planning. Just remember that all of that planning is empty unless you start the car or sit on the cushion. You must put the plan into action to reap any benefits of the plan.

So the next time you pick up a map and look at all of the different ways to go from point A to point B, remember to start the car and actually experience the trip. The next time you enjoy reading about Zen in a new book, put the book down and sit on the cushion for a while. Experience the trip, experience Zen. You'll be happy you did.

Lecture on Zen Buddhism Given at UW-Washington County

As part of the University of Wisconsin-Washington County's lecture series, "Religion in a Changing World", SDT Laura Otto-Salaj gave a lecture, "An Introduction to Zen Buddhism" to approximately 100 people on December 3rd. The lecture covered the foundations of Buddhist and Zen Buddhist practice, Zen and other religions, forms and functions of Zen practice, and a "virtual tour" of several Kwan Um School Centers using Microsoft PowerPoint. The lecture was videotaped for broadcast on a local cable channel. Look for a copy of the broadcast to be available for check-out at GLZC in the near future.

YMJJ Retreat Scheduled *February 28-29* *with Zen Master Dae Kwang* *6:00 AM-9:30 PM*

A YMJJ retreat has been scheduled with GLZC Guiding Teacher Zen Master Dae Kwang for February 28-29, 2004. The retreat will be held at GLZC. Zen Master Dae Kwang will be leading this retreat and conducting interviews. The price of the retreat is \$70 for both days, or \$40 for one day. The price includes vegetarian meals. Sleeping space is available at no extra charge at GLZC. Those planning on staying at GLZC should bring a sleeping bag, pillow, and washcloth/towel.

The retreat will begin with a free public talk with Zen Master Dae Kwang at 7:30 PM on Friday, February 27. Please plan on joining us for some very strong practice. **You may register for this YMJJ by signing up at GLZC or by contacting Peter or Laura.**

Celebration of Peace for the New Year

*Sponsored by the Greater Milwaukee Chapter
of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship*
Thursday, January 1, 2004, 10 A.M. – Noon

Milwaukee Zen Center
2825 N. Stowell Ave.
(between Locust St. and Newberry Blvd.)

The Milwaukee Zen Center is hosting this year's event. The celebration is an ecumenical Buddhist opportunity to encourage peace and non-violence. The celebration will include meditation, readings about peace, tea, cookies, and companionship. All are welcome to bring writings of their own or others to share. Treats are appreciated too. There is no fee.