

# SEVEN THUNDERS

newsletter

www.seventhunders.org

Winter 2015



## SEVEN THUNDERS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### President

Michael Seely  
503.494.6096  
seelym@ohsu.edu

### Past President

David White  
503.588.9008  
majo15@comcast.net

### Secretary

Joshua Lipps  
503.419.7373  
joshualipps@gmail.com

### Treasurer

Doug Speers  
503.957.8954  
ddspeers.38@gmail.com

### Director

Dan Dickinson  
503.632.5957  
Firfied@bctonline.com

### Director

Nancy Roberts  
541.754.9108  
nroberts@peak.org

### Director

Greg Smith  
503.657.3926  
gasmith@clark.edu

### Director

Tom Davies  
503.312.4545  
tom\_davies@comcast.net

### Newsletter Editor

Joshua Lipps  
503.419.7373  
joshualipps@gmail.com

### Newsletter Layout

Teresa Marcel  
503.534.2600  
tdmarcel@mac.com

## TEACHER

Leonard Marcel Roshi  
503.636.9009  
marcellj@hotmail.com

Many thanks to all who contributed their time and talents to this publication. Articles may not be reprinted without permission from the author.

## BEYOND SPEECH AND SILENCE

by Leonard Marcel

### MANA SHOBOGENZO - Case 165

When the World-honored One was about to enter parinirvana, Manjushri asked him to give a sermon once more. The World-honored One scolded him, saying: "I have not spoken even a single word for forty-nine years. Now you are asking me to speak once more. Have I ever said a word?"

Manjushri was silent.

When great master Dogen returned to Japan from China in 1227, the fruit of his training there was recorded in a collection of three hundred koan called the *Mana* or *Shinji Shobogenzo* (Chinese Treasury of the True Dharma Eye), which provided much of the material for his later and better known *Kana Shobogenzo* (Japanese Treasury of the True Dharma Eye).

The case here is set at the time of the death of the historical Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama, and his passing into that state known as parinivarna. His death and funeral services are recounted in the *Maha Parinirvana Sutra*, where we are told that he died on the fifteenth day of the second month. Consequently, this is remembered in most Buddhist centers on 15 February (although in some countries on 8 February). According to the sutra, the events surrounding his death can be summarized as follows:

Buddha was eighty years old. He and his monks were staying in the village of Beluva, which is near the present-day city of Basrah in north-eastern India. It was the time of the monsoon rains when he and his disciples stopped traveling. One day the Bud-

## IN THIS ISSUE:

Beyond Speech and Silence	pg 1
7 Thunders sittings, retreats & events	pg 2
Other Pacific Northwest Groups	pg 2
A Letter from the President	pg 3
From Brother Mark	pg 3
Kosesshin At Stones & Clouds	pg 4
Winter CIR	pg 5
Spring Sesshin Registration	pg 8
Loving Each Note Completely	pg 9
Summer Sesshin Registration	pg 10
Haiku	pg 11
Website Update	pg 11
June CIR registration	pg 12

dha asked the monks to leave and find other places to stay during the monsoon. He would remain in Beluva with only his cousin and companion, Ananda. The Buddha said to Ananda: "Now I am frail, old, aged, far gone in years. This is my eightieth year and my life is spent, my body is like an old cart, barely held together. Therefore, Ananda, be islands unto yourselves, refuges unto yourselves, seeking no other refuge. With the Dharma as your refuge, seek no other refuge."

*Continued on page 6*





## SEVEN THUNDERS LOCAL SITTINGS, RETREATS & EVENTS

### FIRST SATURDAY SITTINGS

Monthly "First Saturday" sittings continue in Bethany House at the Trappist Abbey just north of Lafayette, OR. Orientation is offered at 8:15 a.m. and formal group sitting begins at 9:00 a.m. A talk by the teacher begins at 10:00 a.m., which is followed by opportunities for private interviews with the teacher. Formal sitting ends at noon. There is no charge, but donations for teacher support and for the Trappist Abbey are gratefully accepted. Here is the schedule for the remainder of 2015:

- March 7, Leonard Marcel
  - April 11\*, Sr Joan Saalfeld
  - May 2, Leonard Marcel
  - June 13\*, Brother Mark Filut
  - July 11\*, Brother Mark Filut
  - August 1, Leonard Marcel
  - September 12\*, Leonard Marcel
  - October 3, Brother Mark Filut
  - November 7, Leonard Marcel
  - December 5, Brother Mark Filut
- (\* indicates second Saturday of month)

### ZAZENKAI

Held at the Stones and Clouds (*Rai'un*) Zendo in Lake Oswego, led by Leonard Marcel:

- February 21
- March 21,
- May 9
- September 19

Zazen, followed by a study group, take place on Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. In addition to formal zazen, there will be sutra service, teisho, and dokusan. Bring a brown

bag lunch (eaten in silence). Teas and water will be provided. Please contact Leonard Marcel at 503.636.9009 or marcellj@hotmail.com if you are planning to attend and for more information about zazen and the study group. There is no fee for zazen, but a donation of \$20 will help cover costs.

### PORTLAND AREA SITTINGS

■ Monday evenings at Stones and Clouds (*Rai'un*) Zendo, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m., zazen & dokusan. Contact: Leonard Marcel at 503.636.9009 or marcellj@hotmail.com.

### CORVALLIS SITTINGS:

■ Monday evenings, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. (except Labor Day) at CMLC, 128 SW 9th St, Corvallis. Contacts: Jane Huyer, 541.752.6597, ahuyer@comcast.net, or Glenna Pittock, 541.752.6139, gpittock@yahoo.com

### OTHER PACIFIC NORTHWEST DIAMOND SANGHA GROUPS

#### NO SANGHA, PORT ANGELES

■ Teacher: Kristen Larson. Zazen: Saturday mornings, 8:00 to 9:30 a.m. For more information, please contact Kristen & Bill Larson at 360.452.5534 or NOSangha@aol.com.

#### THREE TREASURES SANGHA, SEATTLE

■ Teacher: Jack Duffy. Zazen at *Dharma Gate* (1910 – 24th Ave S.) on Wednesday evenings 6:30-8:30 p.m. and Friday mornings 6:30-7:30 a.m., followed by breakfast. For more information, and for a schedule of zazen and retreats, please contact Larry Keil at 206.322.8759 or go to their website at <http://three-treasures-sangha.org/> ⚡

## NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTIONS

Published three times a year, our newsletter is a benefit of Seven Thunders membership. Prospective members who would like to receive the newsletter can be added to the mailing list by contacting Doug Speers at [ddspeers.38@gmail.com](mailto:ddspeers.38@gmail.com). Complimentary copies will be sent for up to one year or until January dues requests are mailed. After that, if membership dues (full membership currently \$30 per year, associate membership \$15 per year) are not received by March, you will be sent an announcements-only version of the newsletter. ⚡

### OLYMPIA SITTINGS

■ Monday evenings, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., and every Saturday morning from 6:00 to 8:00 a.m. in the Chapel at St. Michael Church, 1021 Boundary St. SE, Olympia, WA 98501. Three rounds of sittings (from 6:00 to 7:30) are followed by a reading from contemplative writers and a questions and comments period. Contact: Pat Harvey, 360.357.8401 [patriciamharvey@comcast.net](mailto:patriciamharvey@comcast.net)

### REDMOND SITTINGS

■ Monday evenings, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. at 529 NW 19th, Redmond, OR. 97756. Contact: Richard Lance or Leanne Latterell at 541.923.7607.

## EVENTS & RETREAT SCHEDULE

- April 12 - 16 – Zen sesshin at McKenzie Bridge with Leonard Marcel. Registration information on Page 8.
- June 25 - 28 – CIR at Our Lady of Guadalupe Abbey with Sr, Joan Saalfeld. Registration information on page 12
- July 14 - 18 – Zen sesshin at Stones & Clouds with Leonard Marcel. Registration information on page 10. ⚡





## A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT: SILENCE & CONTEMPLATION AT BETHANY HOUSE

Some ten or twelve years ago a friend invited me to join her to attend a meditation group south of Portland in the heart of the north Willamette valley farmland and vineyards. I had been on a search to find a regular group to join that engaged in contemplative or Buddhist practice in or around Portland, but I had not made any solid connections. Instead, I relied on distant retreat centers to experience the sense of community I was seeking. We rambled down the valley early one beautiful Saturday morning to this place she called the "Abbey." We cascaded up a long driveway revealing a monastery I was unfamiliar with, but immediately drawn to, as if I had experienced this very setting before. We entered this amazing building on a small pond with large windows and a unique space dedicated for silent meditation. We were welcomed, instructed, and enveloped in silence. This was my introduction to Seven Thunders.

We all know this place, Bethany House at Our Lady of Guadalupe Trappist Monastery. I marvel at this place that so consistently provides a direct experience of community in silence. The river of gratitude flows richly for all who journey here to find rest and comfort. I am ever thankful for the Abbey and the vision of Bethany House. It, along with Stones and Clouds Zendo and the various sites where retreats are held by Seven Thunders, has become integral for many of us in our practice.

It has always been my goal to attend every First Saturday at the Abbey whenever possible. There were some lean years when work life interfered due to travel, but as these responsibilities settled down, I now relish each opportunity to wander down the valley to this sacred place. In the last two years, I noticed an increasing attendance. There have been some recent Saturday gatherings where every cushion and space is taken, a full house. Many first-timers, visitors to the Abbey on personal retreats, college students, and people returning after long hiatus fill the room. This is something to celebrate as it speaks to the essentials of Seven Thunder's mission and purpose. There is alignment with the monastery's former Abbott, Father Bernard, and his determination to create a sacred space for contemplation that manifests as Bethany House. This space becomes important because as Joseph Campbell reminds us, "it is where you can find your (true) self again and again."



If you haven't had the chance to attend or you have been away for some time, I invite you to join us when you are able. Take in the landscape and walk the footpath around the pond. If you are a regular, many thanks for adding to the power of the silence that supports our collective practice. I want to especially express deep gratitude to those who volunteer consistently as officers and timekeepers. Thank you for making the extra effort to welcome, orient, and guide others allowing the container that is Bethany House to flow so well. Lastly, many blessings to our teachers who conduct conferences each First Saturday and make themselves available to provide guidance to attendees.

Faithfully,  
Mike Seely

FROM  
BROTHER MARK

GROW



## AUTUMNAL KOSESSHIN AT STONES & CLOUDS

It was a full house at the often foggy mountaintop Stones & Clouds Zendo for kosesshin this past November 14 - 16, 2014. The retreat was co-led by Leonard Marcel Roshi and newly appointed Diamond Sangha apprentice teacher Lee Ann Nail (Sensei An of the Salem Zen Center). A new addition to the Stones & Clouds calendar, it is only the second time this kosesshin format has been offered and it was filled to capacity. Attendees were mostly local from Portland and Salem, though one came from Florida and another from Connecticut.

With a mix of seasoned retreatants and a first-timer or two, the energy in the Zendo was focused, settled, and smoothly guided by retreat officers. People sat, ate, worked, rested, walked, commuted, and managed the simultaneous double sosan "dance" mindfully and thoughtfully – quite an achievement as there was no formal dokusan line and dokusan rooms were located at different ends of the house. ⚡

*Below, standing left to right: Cheryl O'Neil, Scott Bellows, Phil Smith, Greg Smith, Nick Coffey, Nancy O'Connor, Irmgard Friedburg, Dan Dickinson, Lisa Rosser, Ted Fontaine, Kim Ybarra and Mike Seely. Kneeling, from left to right: Leonard Marcel, Lee Ann Nail, Eric Roost and Erin Marcel. Photographs by Teresa Marcel*





## WINTER CIR AT THE ABBEY

by Joshua Lipps



Six full-time and two part-time commuters participated in the Seven Thunders Winter Christian Contemplative Retreat at Our Lady of Guadalupe Trappist Abbey, January 29 to February 1, 2015. Clear skies, bright stars, and moon greeted us the first two early mornings, but an Oregon rain closed out the last three days, causing people to scamper between the Abbey's buildings with umbrella in hand.

Br. Mark was our teacher, and he reflected on the fact that Saturday was the 100-year birthday of Thomas Merton. In the meditation room we displayed an icon written by Jim Mishalani in 2002 and dedicated "to my fellow contemplatives of 'Seven Thunders,' in loyalty and friendship." Jim had intended to be at the retreat, but was under doctor's orders to stay home because of bumps suffered from a fall. ⚡

Above, clockwise, from back left: Tom Davies, Br. Mark, Matthew McTigue, Doug Speers. Joanne Clay, Denise Fainberg, Judy Hull. Not shown: Nancy Roberts, Heath Nieddu.





## BEYOND SPEECH AND SILENCE , *continued from page 1*

The Buddha and Ananda then traveled for three months and spoke to groups of monks. One evening he and several of the monks stayed at the home of Cunda, the son of a goldsmith. Cunda served a pork dish or a dish of something that pigs like to eat, like truffle mushrooms. Whatever was in the dish, the Buddha insisted that he would be the only one to eat from that dish, and when he was finished he told Cunda to bury what was left so that no one else would eat it. That night he suffered terrible pain and dysentery. The next day, however, he insisted on traveling to Kushinagara in northern India. On the way, he told Ananda not to blame Cunda for his death.

As they traveled, groups of monks came to join them, and eventually they came to a grove of sal trees in Kushinagara. The Buddha asked Ananda to prepare a couch between two trees with its head to the north. When the couch was ready, he lay down on his right side, one foot upon the other with his head supported on his right hand. Then, we are told, the sal trees bloomed, although it was not their season, and pale yellow petals rained down upon the Buddha.

The Buddha advised the monks to keep the rules of the order. Then he asked three times if any of them had any questions and assured them that they would realize enlightenment. He had taught that parinirvana is the realm of the eternal and of the pure. He told them that he was now about to enter that realm. It was at this point that this case begins and we are transported from the historical realm

to the mythic, teaching realm.

As he is about to die, Manjushri, the Bodhisattva of Wisdom, asks him to give a sermon once more. The Buddha scolds him in reply, "I have not spoken a single word for forty-nine years. Now you are asking me to speak once more. Have I ever said a word?"

This is one of those koans which, at first glance, appears to be fairly straightforward, but which is often the cause of much confusion and misconception. The Buddha has preached for forty-nine years, yet here he is saying that he has not spoken a single word. What about that?

In case 6 of the *Wu-men Kuan (Mumonkan)* we are told that "the World-honored One twirled a flower before his assembled disciples. Only Mahakashyapa broke into a smile." The Buddha then said: "I have the eye treasury of the true Dharma, the subtle mind of nirvana, the true form of no-form, the flawless gate of the teaching. It is not established upon words and phrases. It is a special transmission outside tradition. I now entrust this to Mahakashyapa."

This transmission to Mahakashyapa was indeed wordless, but what about the countless sutras which are said to have come directly from the mouth of the Buddha? Are these not words? We need to investigate thoroughly the fact that although he spoke all these words, he did not speak a single word. Yet, it cannot be said that he remained silent either. All phenomena in the universe, both

audible and inaudible, both tangible and intangible, both sentient and insentient, are the clear and ceaseless expression of awakened, or buddha, nature. These teachings are like thunder resounding through space and time down to this moment itself. Can you hear them? They transcend affirmation and negation, being and non-being. Words and ideas are conceptual descriptions of reality. What is the reality itself?

After Shakyamuni Buddha died, the monastics who remained gathered to form the first council of Buddhists. This is always when the trouble begins, when the first generation of successors coalesces and attempts to organize. Ananda, the Buddha's attendant, was said to have had perfect memory and recited to those assembled all of the Buddha's teachings of the previous forty-nine years. Each teaching was preceded by the words "Thus I have heard" and what he recounted of the Buddha's sayings became the sutras that were handed down from generation to generation. Yet, are what we call the sutras the true sutras? We need to realize that the true sutras are the entire universe itself. There is no space and no time which is not the sutras.

Great master Dogen (1200 – 1253) confirms this when he writes:

The words of letters and sutras... are the instruments of the Great Way, the scriptures for a Buddhist. The sutras are

*Continued on page 7*





## BEYOND SPEECH AND SILENCE , *continued from page 6*

the entire universe, mountains, rivers, the great earth, plants and trees; they are the self and others, taking meals, wearing clothes, confusion and dignity. Following each of them and studying them, you will see an infinite number of sutras appear before you. The sutras are the whole body of the Tathagata.

Dogen taught that the principle of no dependence upon words and letters does not mean abandoning the use of language, but rather, using language skillfully. Using words instead of being used by them. The truth is not to be found in one side or the other; the truth is not dualistic.

Consider that the Buddha is saying that truth does not lie in either speech or silence. Wordless is not the same as expressionless. It is in expression that most of the Dharma is transmitted. There is a tendency to cling to words, but within those words, or beyond those words, or hidden in those words is the real teaching. Words are not the answer; nor is silence the answer. When Vimilakirti was asked by Manjushri, "What is the non-dual Dharma?" Vimilakirti was silent. He was definitely wordless, but did he not say anything?

Can you appreciate this? Can you appreciate what human communication truly is, and how it is experienced from a Zen perspective? Are you aware of how much you are saying without uttering a word? Of how much you are saying without being silent? This is why zazen is so important and so powerful. It teaches us to come home to the moment, to be present in that elusive split-second of time which arises as it leaves. The present moment is where our life is lived, transcending speech and silence. There is a Zen *jakugyo* (capping phrase) which says: "Speech. Silence. Thought is destroyed."

The present moment transcends affirmation and negation. It transcends being and non-being, dual and non-dual. When we say non-dual, we think that unity is one side and duality the other. That is not it. It is not fragmented, nor is it whole. It is not existence,

nor is it non-existence. It is both and neither. It is one and not even one. Can you hold all of those apparent contradictions at the same time? That is the realization of *annutara-samyaksambodhi*, the supreme enlightenment which the Buddha expressed as his life.

So, as the Buddha is dying and about to enter the eternal, blissful pure realm of parinirvana, the bodhisattva of wisdom, Manjushri, leans over and asks him to give a last teaching. The footnote here says: "Even in his last moments, the iron-yoke presses on his shoulders." The iron-yoke is the yoke of the teacher, like an ox pulling a load.

The Buddha replies scoldingly, "I have not spoken even a single word for forty-nine years.... Have I ever said a word?" Can any of this be taught? Whatever you realize must come out of you yourself, not from the outside. The totality of all Buddhist teaching is *upaya*, the skillful means of helping us realize that which we already have. To understand the teachings with your intellect is of no help. They must be experienced with your own mind and heart. This practice is not about words. It is about your life. Your life is already a treasure, the treasure of the true Dharma eye. It is already the subtle mind of nirvana. It is already an infinite, limitless life. How are you living that life?

The verse to this case reads:

Without falling into speech or silence, he completely brings up the true imperative.

The clear solstice moon settles its frosty disk among the distant pines.

The true imperative is to see, really see, what we already have, what we have had from the very beginning, and to live our lives in accordance with that realization. The clear solstice moon is a symbol for enlightenment – moon, brightness, clarity, are all metaphors for the realized mind. However, such mind does not exist in isolation as a thing separated from everything else. Rather, it disappears among the pines, the metaphor for differentiation. The meeting of the clear realized mind with the differentiated world, that is the reality beyond speech and silence, beyond affirmation and negation, beyond being and non-being.

Please persevere to see it, to realize it, and to actualize it in all that you do. ⚡





**SPRING ZEN SESSHIN AT ST. BENEDICT LODGE, MCKENZIE BRIDGE, OREGON, APRIL 12 - 16, 2015**

The Seven Thunders Spring Zen Sesshin will be held April 12 - 16, 2015 at McKenzie Bridge, Oregon. It will be led by Leonard Marcel Roshi and will be conducted according to the standard Diamond Sangha format described in Robert Aitken Roshi's book *Encouraging Words*. The sesshin will take place at St. Benedict Lodge, McKenzie Bridge.

Please plan to arrive between 2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, April 12, for registration. Sesshin will begin with supper at 5:00 p.m. followed by orientation and zazen at 7:00 p.m. It will end on Thursday, April 16, after cleanup around 1:00 p.m. The daily schedule includes about nine hours of zazen with breaks for daily work assignments and rest. Total silence will be observed for the entire sesshin. All attending must participate fully in the daily cycle and in helping to restore the facility after the retreat.

St. Benedict Lodge is 50 miles east of Eugene, Oregon. The center has 70 acres of wooded grounds, bounded by the McKenzie River on one side and Willamette National Forest on the other. For more information see [www.sblodge.org](http://www.sblodge.org).

Things to bring: your own sitting cushion or bench and zabuton (include a zabuton or mat even if you will sit on a chair from the lodge because the zendo has a cold cement floor). Plain conservative clothing of dark or subdued color to wear for sitting. No shorts, sleeveless tops, or unnecessary jewelry, please. You may want to bring socks with grid bottoms as the smooth zendo floor can be slippery. Bring hat, coat, and shoes suitable for walking outdoors (the days can be frosty, warm and sunny, rainy and stormy). Bring all your own bedding and linens (towels, pillow, sheets, and blankets or sleeping bag). St. Benedict Lodge does not provide these. Also bring all your own toiletries.

The cost for this sesshin, including lodging, meals and tuition, is \$350. The cost for Seven Thunders full members is \$320. A member rate is now available to regular members at all sesshins and retreats throughout the membership-year. Non-members may choose to join Seven Thunders (dues are \$30). They then qualify for the member rate at this and other Seven Thunders regular retreats and sesshins. A deposit of \$100 is required with your registration (or \$130 if also paying member dues), with the balance due by March 12 unless other arrangements



are made. All but \$25 is refundable until March 12. If you cancel after that date, all but \$80 is refundable.

If the sesshin fee is a barrier to your attending, please check the box requesting a "scholarship" or contact the registrar. Although we need to balance our financial books, we also need and deeply appreciate your presence. Donations are also appreciated and they are tax-deductible.

To register for the retreat, complete the form below and send it, with your check payable to **Seven Thunders**, to registrar **Greg Smith, 2140 Volpp Street, West Linn OR 97068**. You will receive a confirmation message. Questions? Reach the registrar at 503.657.3926 or [gasmith@clark.edu](mailto:gasmith@clark.edu).

**REGISTRATION FORM**

**ZEN SESSHIN, MCKENZIE BRIDGE, APRIL 12 - 16, 2015**

*Please make checks payable to Seven Thunders.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

- First retreat with us? \_\_\_\_\_
- I will bring my sleeping bag or bedding, towels and toiletries.
- If needed, I can bring an extra set of bedding and linens to lend to someone else.
- I will bring my own pad (zabuton) and cushion (zafu) or bench.
- I might be able to give someone a ride from Portland \_\_\_\_\_ or Eugene \_\_\_\_\_
- I need to borrow: \_\_\_\_\_
- Other needs (rides, food, etc) \_\_\_\_\_

I request a scholarship of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Seven Thunders members:**

- I enclose full payment of \$320 (the member rate).
- I enclose a \$100 deposit (balance of member rate due by March 12).

**Not a current Seven Thunders member:**

- I enclose \$350, please apply \$30 to Seven Thunders member dues.
- I enclose a \$100 deposit (balance of **non-member** rate due by March 12).
- I enclose \$130, deposit & member dues (balance of **member rate** due by March 12).
- I also enclose a donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_





## OFF THE CUSHION: LOVING EACH NOTE COMPLETELY

by Greg Smith

About four years ago I started playing chamber music with a local cellist. We give recitals periodically to force ourselves to learn a new collection of pieces to the best of our ability. We performed recently in mid-January, and for three weeks before I practiced piano more intensively than I have since I was in high school and college.

I've been aware since my late teens of the relationship between meditation and the

kind of attention that needs to be brought to playing music. I began meditating in part because of my interest in sustaining concentration while practicing and performing. Only in the past few weeks—more than 40 years later—have I begun to experience what this means.

I'm learning that if I am able to keep my mind and ear on each note displayed in every measure, my body responds exactly to what I'm perceiving through my eyes. This can only happen because of hours of slow practice and practicing with each

hand separately, but if I don't maintain this level of attention to every note, there's no guarantee they will be sounded with the accuracy the music demands. Nor with the kind of musicality the music demands, as well. As with zazen, that attention comes and goes, and as in zazen, the task is always coming back to just playing.

At age 66, I feel as though I'm beginning to perceive what people who become professional musicians must have perceived in their youth. Although a little late, I'm grateful that this understanding has come at all. A piano teacher from my childhood said that playing well requires the ability to love each note completely. It is this love that zazen can teach us to bring to all aspects of our lives—to the feel of a dishrag on a plate after supper, to the glint of sunlight through dew hanging from tree branches during a morning walk, to the taste of anise seed in a late-afternoon tea. Such intimacy! Such delight! ✎



### ABOUT 'OFF THE CUSHION'

Off the Cushion is a new feature in our newsletter, in which we invite you to submit articles about what your practice means to you, of activities off the cushion which feel like an extension of your practice. Please e-mail your submissions to newsletter editor, Joshua Lipps, at [joshualipps@gmail.com](mailto:joshualipps@gmail.com). ✎



**SUMMER SESSHIN AT STONES AND CLOUDS ZENDO JULY 14 - 18, 2014**



You will receive a confirmation from the registrar. If for any reason you find the full fee a barrier to attending, please check the box on the registration form requesting a "scholarship" or contact the registrar. Affordability need not be a deterrent to attendance. Full or partial scholarships are almost always available. Donations for such scholarships are both appreciated and tax-deductible.

This is a non-residential retreat. For non-commuter participants, information about local accommodations is available. Limited accommodations in members' homes may also be available. Information about local accommodations and carpooling will be sent to out-of-town registrants upon receiving your registration and deposit.

As always, total silence will be observed for the entire sesshin. All attending are required

to participate fully in the daily sitting and work schedule, including cleanup at the end of the retreat. You are asked to wear plain conservative clothing of dark or subdued color during sesshin. No shorts or sleeveless tops, please. Zabutons, zafus, low and high benches will be provided, but if you have a favorite zafu or bench (no chairs) please feel free to bring it.

To register for the retreat, complete this form and send it with your deposit to retreat organizer and registrar: **Teresa Marcel, 1333 Skyland Drive. Lake Oswego, OR 97034.** Please make checks payable to **Seven Thunders.**

Questions? Please contact Teresa Marcel at 503.636.9009 or [tdmarcel@mac.com](mailto:tdmarcel@mac.com)

The 2015 Seven Thunders Zen Summer Sesshin will be held at the Stones and Clouds Zendo in Lake Oswego, OR, from Tuesday, July 14, at 5 p.m. until Saturday morning July 18, at 10 a.m.. Sesshin will be led by Leonard Marcel. Registration deadline is June 23. Registrations will be accepted on a first come basis. As this sesshin is usually well subscribed, early registration and payment is encouraged. Part time attendance will be possible.

Space is limited to a maximum of 16. Additional applicants will be wait-listed in case of cancellations. Sesshin fee is \$210 (member rate \$180) and includes all meals (vegetarian). A member rate is available to regular members at all sesshins and retreats throughout the membership-year. Non-members may choose to join Seven Thunders (dues are \$30). They then qualify for the member rate at this and other Seven Thunders regular retreats and sesshins. A deposit of \$80 is required with your registration; payment in full is appreciated. Any balance is due by June 24. Should you need to cancel, all but \$25 is refundable until June 23; after that date all but \$80 is refundable.

**REGISTRATION FORM  
STONES & CLOUDS SESSHIN, JULY 14 - 18, 2015**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I will be able to provide accommodation for \_\_\_\_\_ people.

Special dietary requirements: \_\_\_\_\_

I will bring my own zafu or bench.

This is my first Seven Thunders Retreat.

I request a scholarship of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I enclose a donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Seven Thunders members:**

**Not a current Seven Thunders member:**

I enclose full payment of \$180  
(the member rate).

I enclose \$210, please apply \$30 to  
Seven Thunders member dues.

I enclose a \$80 deposit  
(balance of member rate due by June 23)

I enclose a \$80 deposit (balance of  
non-member rate due by June 23).

I enclose \$110, deposit & member dues  
(balance of member rate due by June 23).

**Please make checks payable to Seven Thunders.**

**HAIKU***by Joshua Lipps*

**A**lmost to the door  
low bell-tones echoing  
echoing behind

**B**elow the bridge  
ice stretching out in an arch  
with the river's bend

**S**now water  
draining down this plastic pipe  
from somewhere above ✎

**Title:** Up Overhead  
**Media:** Graphite on paper  
by Joshua Lipps.

**WEBSITE UPDATE**

In the last newsletter we reported that our website, [www.seventhunders.org](http://www.seventhunders.org), was functioning again, having suffered a serious crash in August 2014. Progress in building a new site has continued since then, to the point of being able to say it is now fully operational. One can use the site, without having to log in, to find information on our offerings. More and more people are also finding the site a useful way to pay dues, deposits, and contributions by credit card. For Seven Thunders Full Members additional resources are available after logging in. These include some of Leonard's writings, past newsletters, and links to related websites. For comments, questions, and assistance with passwords, etc. contact Doug Speers, [ddspeers.38@gmail.com](mailto:ddspeers.38@gmail.com). ✎



**CONTEMPLATIVE INTENSIVE RETREAT (CIR)  
OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE ABBEY, JUNE 25-29, 2015**

**Sr.** Joan Saalfield, SNJM, will lead our Summer Contemplative Retreat at Shalom Prayer Center at Our Lady of Guadalupe Trappist Abbey, Lafayette OR, June 25-28. Sr. Joan is a member of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary currently living and working in Portland, Oregon. She has studied and practiced Zen and Contemplation for 35 years, first with Robert Aitken, then with Fr. Willigis Jaeger, OSB, and most recently with Fr. Pat Hawk, C.Ss.R., who encouraged her to teach in CIRs.

This retreat is especially designed for those who desire the opportunity for intensive sitting during a long weekend type of retreat. It begins with supper at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday and ends after clean-up and lunch on Sunday (by 1:30 pm). Please arrive between 2 and 6 p.m.

Our daily schedule includes about six to eight hours of sitting contemplation and an hour of assigned work. Sitting contemplation occurs in 25-minute periods separated by 5 minutes of walking contemplation. Total silence will be observed during the entire retreat. Everyone participates fully in the daily cycle unless prior arrangements are made.

Each of us has a private room, with access

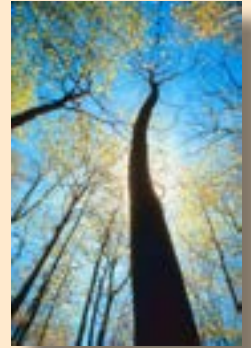
to shared bathrooms with showers. Bedding and bath linens are provided. Meals are the same as those eaten by the by the Trappist monks. The fare is vegetarian, simple, and balanced. It is possible to bring foods that you require for other special diets, but no cooking facilities are available. A refrigerator is available.

Please bring your own cushions or prayer bench, if you desire. Some will be made available. Chairs are available. During the retreat you are asked to wear conservative clothing of dark or subdued color. No shorts or sleeveless tops please. Bring additional clothes suitable for walking outdoors (possibly in the rain) and for work (gardening, washing dishes, cleaning, etc).

The fee for the retreat, including lodging, meals and tuition is \$310, with a \$30 discount for members. A \$75 deposit is required with your registration, and full payment is due by May 26, 2014. All but \$75 is refundable until May 26. If you cancel after that date all but \$75 is refundable. Part-time, commuter attendance is possible.

If the retreat fee is a barrier to your attendance, please check the box requesting a "scholarship" or contact us. Although we

need to balance our financial books, we also need and deeply appreciate your presence. Donations are appreciated and tax-deductible. To register for the retreat, send the form below with your deposit to **Doug Speers, 7111 SW 14th Ave., Portland, OR 97219**



You will receive a confirmation email. Questions? Please feel free to contact Nancy Roberts (nroberts@peak.org) or Doug Speers (ddspeers.38@gmail.com).

**DAILY SCHEDULE**

Thursday will include dinner, an orientation, and contemplation until 9 p.m. On Friday and Saturday, we will rise at 5:30 a.m. for intensive contemplation, breakfast, lunch, and dinner, an optional opportunity for the Eucharist with the Trappist monks, conference, and interviews with Sr. Joan. These days will end with contemplation until 9 p.m. On Sunday, we will rise at 5:30 a.m. for contemplation, breakfast, lunch, an optional opportunity for the Eucharist, and cleanup. We will complete the retreat with lunch at 1 p.m. on Sunday.

**REGISTRATION FORM**

**CONTEMPATIVE INTENSIVE RETREAT (CIR), OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE ABBEY, JUNE 25-28, 2015**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

First Seven Thunders retreat?  yes  no

I will bring my own pad (zabuton) and cushion (zafu) or bench.

I might be able to give someone a ride from Portland \_\_\_\_\_ or Eugene \_\_\_\_\_

I need to borrow: \_\_\_\_\_

Other needs (rides, food, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

I request a scholarship of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  I enclose a donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make checks payable to Seven Thunders.**

**Current Seven Thunders members:**

- I enclose full payment of \$280 (the member rate).
- I enclose a \$75 deposit (balance of member rate due by May 26).

**Not a current Seven Thunders member:**

- I enclose \$310, please apply \$30 to Seven Thunders member dues.
- I enclose a \$75 deposit (balance of non-member rate due by May 26).
- I enclose \$105, deposit & member dues (balance of member rate due by May 26).