

SEVEN THUNDERS

newsletter

www.seventhunders.org



May 2026

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IRON FLUTE - CASE 28

by Leonard Marcel

A monk asked Lung-ya,
"What did the old masters attain when they
entered the ultimate stage?"

Lung-ya replied,
"They were like burglars sneaking into a vacant
house."

Getting Nothing

The *Iron Flute* (*Tetteki Tosui*) is a collection of one hundred cases, some taken from other koan collections, but many not addressed in the regular Diamond Sangha curriculum. It was first compiled and published in 1783 by the Japanese Soto master, Genro Oryu (1720-1813), who added verses and short comments to some of the cases. Additional remarks were added to many of the later cases by Genro's principal successor, Fugai Honko (1779-1847).

The protagonist in this case is master Lung-ya Chu-tun/Longya Judun (J: Ryuge Koton, 835 – 923). He left home at the age of fourteen, was ordained and then began the first of two long pilgrimages in his life. Subsequently, he trained with Te-shan/Deshan (J: Tokusan Senkan, c. 781-867) and Tung-shan/Dongshan (J: Tozan Ryokai, 807-869) whose Dharma heir he became.

One day, he asked Tung-shan/Dongshan the meaning of Bodhidharma's coming from the west. Tung-shan/Dongshan replied, "I shall tell you when Tung-shan/Dongshan creek runs uphill." Upon hearing these words, Lung-ya/Long-ya had an awakening.

Exhilarated by this experience, he began a second pilgrimage, meeting with other masters, including Lin-chi/Linji (J: Rinzai Gigen, d. 866) who hit him with a meditation cushion, as we are told in case 20 of the *Hekigan-roku*. After eight

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SEVEN THUNDERS RETREATS & EVENTS

REGULAR SITTINGS

PORTLAND AREA SITTINGS

■ Monday evenings at Stones and Clouds Zendo, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m., zazen & dokusan. Hybrid events with both in-zendo attendance and online via Zoom. Further details at: seventhunders.org. ✨

FIRST SATURDAY SITTINGS

■ Monthly "First Saturday" sittings are held at Our Lady of Guadalupe Trappist Abbey, with an online option. Links to join the sitting online can be found on the Seven Thunders website at seven-thunders.org. The format includes formal group sitting beginning at 9:00 a.m., a talk by the teacher 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, the Abbey and Seven Thunders are gratefully accepted. The schedule for the remainder of his year is:

- June 6, Sr. Kathleen Pruitt
 - July 11*, Sr. Kathleen Pruitt
 - August 1, Leonard Marcel
 - September 12*, Sr. Kathleen Pruitt
 - October 3, Sr. Kathleen Pruitt
 - November 7, Leonard Marcel
 - December 5, Fr. Casey Bailey, OCSO
- (* = second Saturday)

RETREAT SCHEDULE

- July 14 - 18 – Summer Sesshin at Stones & Clouds, led by Leonard Marcel and Greg Smith. Registration information on page 14.
- December 1 - 6 – Rohatsu sesshin, led by Leonard Marcel and Greg Smith. For more information in a later newsletter.

ZAZENKAI

■ Unless otherwise noted, zazenkai are held at the Stones and Clouds Zendo in Lake Oswego. These are usually hybrid events, held from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., with in-zendo attendance available upon reservation. More details on page 8.

- August 15
- October 24

ANNUAL MEETING

■ The Seven Thunders annual meeting will take place at the Marcel home on Saturday, July 18 starting at noon, following the ending of Summer Sesshin. Please do join us, and, if you can, plan to bring a dish to share for the potluck lunch. More information will be sent in a separate announcement. ✨



OTHER PACIFIC NORTHWEST DIAMOND SANGHA GROUPS

SALEM SITTINGS

■ Salem Zen Center. Offerings on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays. Teacher: LeeAnn Nail. For more information email SalemZenCenter@gmail.com or call 971.599.1488. ✨

PORTLAND SITTINGS

■ Ring of Moss Sangha. Zazen: Wednesday evenings, 6:30-8:30 p.m. and Sunday mornings, 7:30-8:30 a.m.; virtually on Tuesday mornings, 6:00-7:00 a.m. Contact: Teacher Andrew Mason at andrewmasonpdx@gmail.com. ✨

OLYMPIA SITTINGS

■ Contemplative Community at St. Michael's. 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. Contact: Mary Solberg, 360.250.6362 or msolberg2@gmail.com ✨

PORT ANGELES SITTINGS

■ NO Sangha. Teacher: Kristen Larson. Zazen: Saturday mornings, 8:00 to 9:30 a.m. For more information, please contact Kristen Larson at 360.452.5534 or NOSangha@aol.com. ✨

SEATTLE SITTINGS

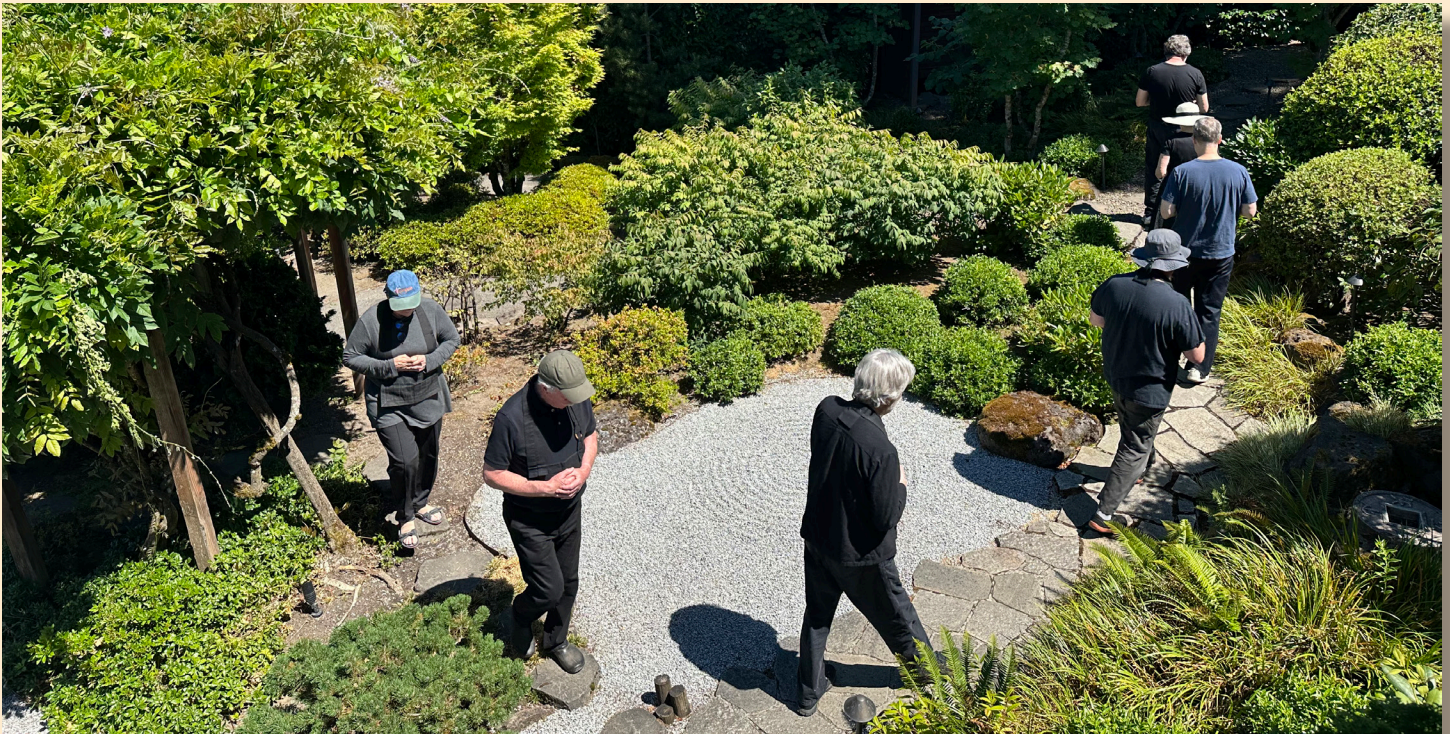
■ Three Treasures Sangha. Teacher: Lee Shields. Zazen at *Dharma Gate* (1910 24th Ave S.) on Wednesday evenings 6:30-8:30 p.m. and Friday mornings 6:30-7:30 a.m., followed by breakfast. For more information, go to their website at: www.three-treasures-sangha.org ✨

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 Jenny Brausch at SevenThunders.treasurer@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) are not received by March, you will no longer receive the newsletter. Please send membership dues to: Jenny Brausch, PO Box 3119, Albany, OR 97321. ✨



PRESIDENT'S REPORT: COMMUNITY WALKING THE PATH TOGETHER

by Jared Taylor



Every Spring, as the days grow warmer and bright new leaves appear on the trees, I try to slow down, notice the life erupting around me, and enjoy the renewed sense of community with all of the living and non-living beings that arises. That community, that mysterious connection, is sangha, and it truly is a treasure. As I write in my *Off the Cushion* article elsewhere in the newsletter, I am part of a busy search and rescue team. A recent SAR mission highlighted for me some of the ways in which a vibrant sangha benefits all of us.

My team was called to a ski resort after a tragic accident had seriously injured two maintenance workers. Upon seeing the incident occur, co-workers called 911 and then rushed to respond themselves. They were able to stabilize one of the workers, and then work with the Sheriff's department, paramedics, and their own ski patrol and emergency responders to transport the injured man to a trauma center for treatment. Without the immediate response of his co-workers and other first responders, the injured man may not have survived. In an emergency, a robust sangha is a safety net,

responding quickly to attend to whatever needs to be done to protect the community.

Unfortunately, the second worker did not survive his injuries, and my team was asked to help recover his body. When we arrived, several co-workers were still at the scene, sitting by themselves or in small groups, grieving. As we set up a rope system and prepared to transport the body, the grieving friends of the deceased cleared out his van, gathering up his personal belongings to deliver to his family. This process took some time, and involved many hugs and tears. A healthy sangha shares the load when there is a loss, supporting and comforting each other while facing tragedy head on.

Finally, within my larger SAR team there are several specialized sub-teams. One of those is composed of highly trained experts in rescue operations requiring ropes and climbing gear. I am not a member of that team, but for this mission all of us were relying on their expertise to ensure our safety, and the dignity of our deceased subject, as we lowered the body down a very steep and treacherous hillside. A sangha is a group of individuals,

each of whom contributes something unique to the community, and all of whom together combine into something much stronger and more resilient than any one individual.

Returning to our own Seven Thunders sangha, I see evidence of its strength and vibrancy every time that we get together. Our members gather early and work seamlessly together to set up the Monday night space at the Franciscan Spiritual Center, doing whatever needs to be done with harmonious efficiency. When tragedy strikes and dear sangha members are lost, we share that loss, and mourn together. With every bow and every chant, we are engaging with the dharma both as unique individuals, and as a cohesive community. Although the hybrid format has made attending Monday night zazen, First Saturdays, and our entire retreat schedule so much more convenient, I have noticed that we create a special connection when we meet face-to-face. With that in mind, whenever your circumstances permit, I encourage you to join sittings and events in-person, and I especially look forward to seeing you at the annual meeting and potluck at noon on July 18th this year. *Gassho!* Jared ⚡



PALM SUNDAY CIR

by Mike Seely



Seven Thunders held its annual Palm Sunday contemplative intensive at the Abbey of Our Lady of Guadalupe from Friday, March 27, until Sunday, March 29. Eight seasoned contemplative practitioners joined our teacher, Leonard Marcel, for an in-person only retreat. This is the ninth year for this meaningful gathering with its depth and simplicity integrating aspects of the monastic schedule of offices and including the blessing of palms and celebration of the Eucharist on Palm Sunday. From the contemplative perspective, Palm Sunday CIR provides an opportunity to focus and hold the tension between adoration and suffering and enables deep reflection and discernment.

We began our journey with an evening meal open to greetings and discussions. Leonard then led us in a clear orientation of the schedule and the intentions of this particular retreat. We joined the monks for the monastic office of Compline which signals the traditional collective entry into the "Great Silence" to be maintained as the essential rhythm for the rest of the retreat. After two rounds of meditation and evening closing prayer, we retired for the evening. As we turned in for the night, a few packs of coyotes gathered around the large pond adjacent to the guest houses to celebrate their evening bounties with a series of "lullabies."

Clear skies and a partial moon setting greeted us in the morning as we settled into the full schedule at 6 AM. We joined the monks for Mass after the first round of contemplation which set the pace for the day. Leonard's mid-morning talk emphasized that the life of God and the life of

each one of us are not two. Contemplative practice enables us to close the gap and experience the reality of this oneness. And to experience that everything God does in the created world is done out of the vehemence of God's love for us.

On Sunday, the blessing of the palms followed by the celebration of the Eucharist provided a translation of the interiority of our individual contemplative practices over the course of the retreat into a wonderful communal event. There was a deep collective expression of adoration and the hope for peace. Many thanks to the participants of this intensive for their embrace of silence and solid steadfast practices. We all are greatly indebted to Leonard for his ongoing guidance, wisdom, and direction. And, as always, we express deep gratitude for the hospitality of the Abbey that makes this retreat possible and so meaningful! ⚡



Back row, standing, L to R: Kirk Jarvie, Drew Hansen, Leonard Marcel, Caryl Thomas, Kent Kreisemaier, Mike Seely. **Front, kneeling:** Jane Huyer, Jenny Brausch and Barbara Tracy. Photos by Mike Seely.



In Memory of Roy Guptill (1956-2025)

by Patti Guptill, Leonard Marcel, Greg Smith

Roy Guptill, a long-time Seven Thunders member and an early student of Pat Hawk and then Leonard Marcel, passed away on December 28, 2025. Drawn to Seven Thunders' Christian contemplative offerings, Roy regularly participated in First Saturday events at Our Lady of Guadalupe Trappist Abbey, was active as a Seven Thunders Board member, and served diligently as Board President from 2006-2009.

Roy was born in North Dakota in 1956 but then moved as a child to California where he graduated from high school and then majored in computer science at California State University in Chico. Upon earning his bachelor's degree, he moved to Oregon after being recruited by Timberlake Software Corporation in Beaverton. About this time, he married his college sweetheart, Elizabeth Williams. They started a family and had four children, but in 1983 a blood transfusion resulted in an HIV infection for Elizabeth and then Roy. Elizabeth died in 1990, but trial medications and hospitalizations were able to keep Roy alive until protease inhibitors became available in 1995. After years of anticipating his own death, Roy began to thrive.

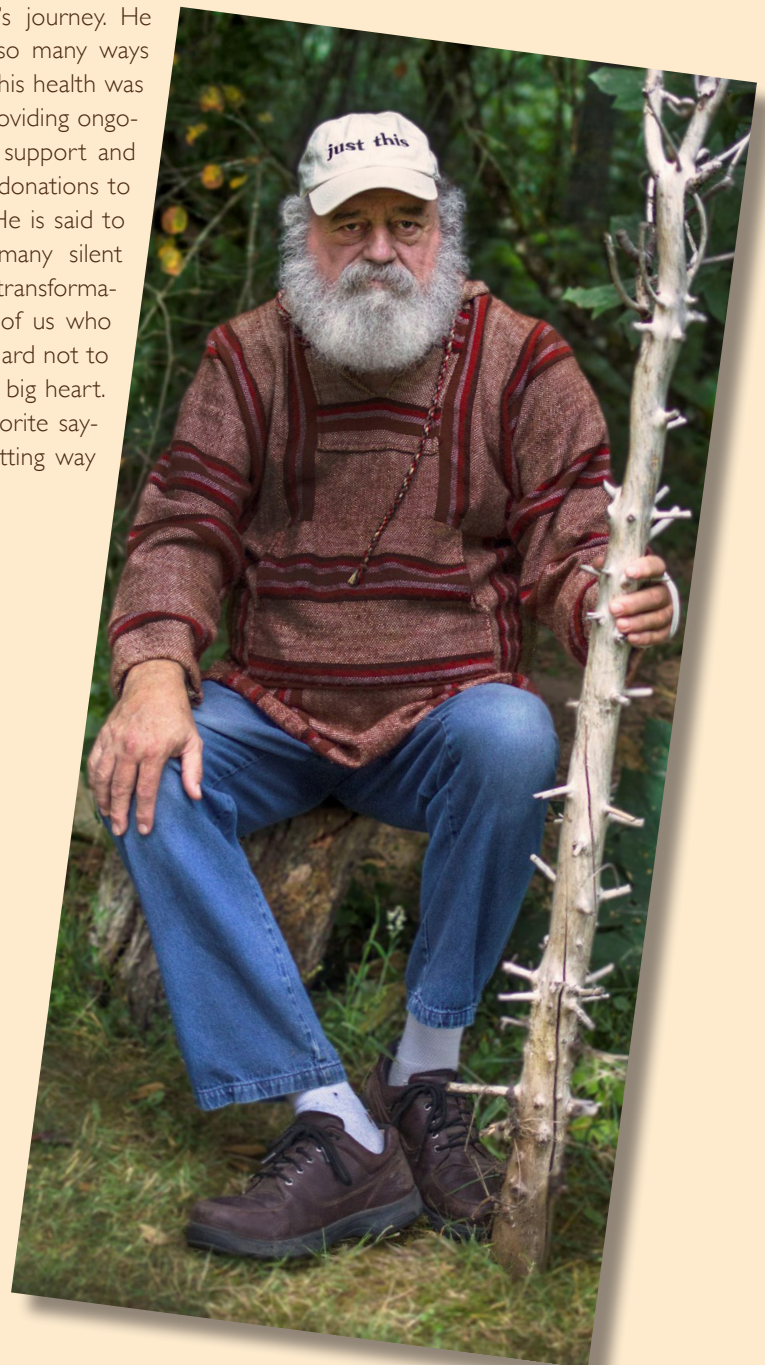
A few years earlier, he had remarried after meeting Patti, a woman who had started a Lonely Hearts Club for people who were singles and worked as data processors at Nike. Patti adopted Roy's children, and they jointly took over the task of raising them. During these years they started participating in Centering Prayer events after attending a retreat led by Father Thomas Keating, an activity that bridged their Catholic and Methodist traditions. They were inspired enough by what they experienced to then lead a Centering Prayer group at Beaverton Methodist Church for several years.

This willingness to reach out to others expressed itself in multiple ways. They started a foot-washing ministry for homeless people in downtown Portland as well as becoming involved in a prison ministry of silence. At one point they took on the care of a niece's children when she was having trouble, some-

thing that galvanized their interest in providing foster care for infant children. More than a dozen kids passed through their home, with two of the children eventually being adopted. Roy was also involved in non-profits like Mercy Corps, St. Luke Productions (films), Oregon Contemplative Outreach, A Promise to Health (which recently built a clinic in Oaxaca, Mexico) and Lamling Vista (which built a school in India).

Seven Thunders was an important part of Roy's journey. He was generous in so many ways in his life, even as his health was failing, including providing ongoing monthly dana support and making two large donations to the organization. He is said to have found the many silent retreats to be "transformational." For those of us who knew him, it was hard not to be touched by his big heart. Some of Roy's favorite sayings seem like a fitting way to remember him:

- "Love is stronger than anything that tries to get in its way."
- "Learn to forgive reality for being what it is."
- "We are not just made by God – we are made of God." ✨





IRON FLUTE - CASE 28, *continued from page 1*

years of wandering, he accepted an invitation from a regional governor to become abbot of a monastery on Mount Lung-ya/Longya (whence comes his name) and over time some five hundred students gathered there. He often quoted his teacher, Tungshan/Dogshan, saying: "Only when you regard the teachings of the buddhas and patriarchs as you would a newly made enemy are you qualified to be a student of Zen."

In other words, nothing from anyone else will do you any good. Find out for yourself. Awaken from your own direct experience to who you truly are. There is a Zen saying that the practice "requires a daring mind." Legend tells us that Bodhidharma cut off his eyelids so that he would not fall asleep during zazen. Daring mind, indeed! It is no doubt an apocryphal story, but it points to the importance of keeping our eyes open, urgently awake to the wonder of each moment and, simultaneously, awake to the suffering within and around us.

What would happen if we sat down and said, as Shakyamuni Buddha said, as many of our ancestors said, "I am not getting up until I break through this congested, self-protective shell and experience true freedom." That truly would be "daring mind."

We have so many stories about ancestral teachers awakening to their true nature, but what did they attain? What is it like to awaken? What do you get? How do you get it? Even though we are told, as in the *Diamond Sutra*, that there is no formula, we still yearn for instructions, directions, a game plan.

Most of us come to this practice with some idea of getting something from it. We may or may not believe that we shall become enlightened, but nonetheless we have some type of gaining idea. We may sit with Mu – mu, mu, nothing, nothing – but we continue to think that we must get something from doing so, rather than nothing.

When the second ancestor, Hui-ko/Huikē (J: Taisō Eka, 487-593) implored Bodhidharma to accept him as a student and to pacify his mind, Bodhidharma answered: "The subtle and supreme teachings of the Buddhas can be pursued only with endless effort, doing what is hard to do and bearing what is hard to bear. How can one of so little virtue dream of achieving it?" He was challenging Hui-ko/Huikē to give up everything. He challenges us in the same way to give up everything – all preferences, all cherished hopes, all fixed ideas

and cherished opinions, all hopes for a better relationship, or a healthier body, or a more satisfying job, all self-improvement projects, all imagined goals and dreams of attaining something.

Great master Lin-chi/Linji asks us, "What is it that you yourself lack?" In other words, what do we gain from this practice? Nothing at all. What do we lose? Everything. We lose all the unnecessary accretions, whatever they might be, whatever it is that we think we need. Is there anything to be added? Not a bit. It is all here. With each inhalation, full and complete; with each exhalation, full and complete; the universe manifesting in each moment. The complete presentation of the whole.

When Emperor Wu asked Bodhidharma, "What is the first principle of the holy teaching?" Bodhidharma replied, "Vast emptiness, nothing holy." When we hear this, what does our own inner emperor say? "Wait a minute! Nothing at all? Not even a little holiness? How about even a little peace of mind?"

Unless we recognize our own dis-ease, we can listen to all the teishō, read and chant all



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IRON FLUTE - CASE 28, *continued from page 6*

the sutras, read all the books, but they fall on deaf ears and blind eyes. There needs to be an intense yearning, a daring mind, the courage to address the fundamental questions: Who am I? Where do I come from? Where am I going? What is truth? What is life? What is death? These are not abstractions. What is needed is an urgent and daring condition of mind. When we have that, then we are open to the teachings in whatever form they may take.

With a daring mind and diligent and dedicated practice, we bring our full effort to those fundamental questions and we begin to understand that there is no barrier between what we call life and what we call death. Acknowledging our own greed, anger and folly provides fuel and motivation to do the real work of change and transformation, radically accepting what is difficult and taking up what is restorative and healthy.

Turning from the old patterns, we can begin to live fully, in the recognition that life is short, mystery profound, the recognition that every thought, word and deed matters and the recognition that, just as we are, there is nothing we lack. With that realization there arises as well the radiant power and warmth of a grateful and compassionate heart.

Lung-ya/Longya answered the student: "They (old masters) were like burglars sneaking into a vacant house." The old masters snuck into an empty house – into shunyata, into emptiness. Most of us are dwelling in a very full house, which we have filled with all manner of useless clutter—attachments, distractions, old wounds, regrets and other clings---convinced that everything is about gain and loss, success and failure, right and wrong, convinced that we just have to figure it all out and find the strategies that will help us win. Even coming to Zen we hope that we shall get something to relieve our anxiety about the hand we have been dealt in life. Believing in our own narratives of clinging and aver-

sion, ignoring the truth of impermanence, we construct a self and arrange to control every aspect of our circumstances. Yet, the practice shows us again and again that we need to release all the desires for what we think will improve us and our circumstances and everything we seek from others.

Ultimate truth has no concept, no construct, to grasp. It is for each of us to realize the boundlessness devoid of any characteristics. There is nothing to attain, nothing that can be held, nothing that can be obtained from anyone else. When we realize the ultimate vacancy of our own house, then the truth manifests. Dogen (1200 – 1253) wrote a verse:

Unmoored in midnight water,
No waves, no wind
The empty boat
Is flooded with moonlight

We keep sniffing around for something extraordinary we can call our own, some projection of what an awakened life is like, which only distances us further from waking up to who we really are. When we do finally awaken, it is just as Nan-ch'uan/Nanquan (J: Nansen Fugan, 748-835) told Chao-chou/Zhaozhou (J: Joshu Jushin, 778-897): "Ordinary mind is the Way." The extraordinary ordinary mind: no name can be given to it; nothing can be known *about* it.



Only a direct experience will do.

In his comment on this case, Choro Nyogen Senzaki (1876-1958) says: "This student monk probably thought masters have something others do not have; however, they have nothing others have." The monk was impatient to get answers. How often, in our own impatience to attain something, have we missed the endlessly subtle and continually manifesting ultimate reality, which comes in each moment from emptiness and returns in each moment to emptiness, just as we also have come from and will return to emptiness. Masters have never had anything others do not have. Realizing this is true liberation. When we feel uneasy and disheartened, it is usually a good indication that we are clinging, clinging not only to material things and to seemingly harmless distractions, but also to our own strategies for spiritual progress and attainment.

At such moments, we can remember the instruction from Master Shih-tou/Shitou (J: Sekito Kisen, 700-790) in the *Song of the Grass-hut Hermitage*: "Meet the ancestral teachers....Let go of hundreds of years and relax completely. Open your hands and walk – innocent."

And enjoy your empty boat flooded with moonlight. ⚡



UPCOMING ZAZENKAI

Zazenkai are an opportunity for intense practice with the sangha in a shorter time-frame than a sesshin, since they are limited to one day only. They take place between 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. In addition to formal zazen, the day includes a sutra service, teisho, and dokusan.

The next zazenkai of 2026 will take place on **Saturday, August 15**, at Stones and Clouds. This zazenkai will be led by **Leonard Marcel**.

Please contact Teresa Marcel at Stones-CloudsZendo@icloud.com to reserve a place for zazenkai. She will confirm your reservation and send you the zazenkai schedule and guidelines a few days before the event.

There will be a discussion group following zazenkai for those attending in person. The reading will be *Being-Time* by Shinshu Roberts, pages 13 - 71 (through Chapter 5).

There will also be a zazenkai on **Saturday, October 24**, at the Franciscan Center. This zazenkai will be led by **Greg Smith**. Further details about this event will be sent out at a later date.

While there is no set fee for zazenkai, a donation of \$20 is requested and much appreciated. To offer a donation, please either leave it in the donation basket in the vestibule or donate online at <https://seventhunders.org/asp-products/donate/> or send a check to Seven Thunders Treasurer:

Jenny Brausch
P.O. Box 3119
Albany, OR 97321

Please make checks out to "Seven Thunders." ⚡

OFF THE CUSHION: SO THAT OTHERS MAY LIVE

by Jared Taylor

For years I searched for a way to resolve a lingering sense that I needed to do more to help others. That sense only deepened after I took jukai, as one of the vows I made that day and have renewed nearly every day since is to "save the many beings," or in Leonard's paraphrasing, "to serve others." Surely there are a thousand ways to be of service to the myriad beings, but I felt the compelling need to do something more specific to mitigate suffering out in the world. Despite looking into a number of activities and vocations, nothing seemed to click.

Then one day in 2023 my wife attended a presentation by a search and rescue (SAR) volunteer about wilderness survival skills. Knowing that I have extensive backwoods experience and an interest in wilderness survival, she asked whether I had ever considered getting involved in SAR. Finally, there was a "click." I had relevant experience, a flexible schedule, and a drive to do more to help others in need. I had spent significant time alone in the wilderness over the years, and while I had some close calls, I never had a significant injury or incident. I knew that others were not so lucky, and I realized right then that this was likely the opportunity that I had been waiting for.

As I researched SAR teams, I learned that the SAR motto is typically a variation of "That Others May Live," which struck me as incredibly close to the bodhisattva's vow. I mentioned the opportunity to Leonard, and his response, "that is real bodhisattva work," had a profound impact on me; there can be no higher praise.

It has been three years since I joined Clackamas County Search and Rescue (CSAR), a volunteer organization that is part of the Clackamas County Sheriff's Office, and only two years since I have been certified to participate in SAR missions. I have completed more than fifty missions to date, and have loved every one. We are often called on to provide emergency medical care and transport to someone injured out on a trail, or to search for a lost hiker or group that missed a scheduled stop or got stuck in a bad storm. But we are also called out to search for urban "walk aways" (often older folks with dementia or children with autism), to recover the bodies of suicide victims, to look for evidence in a cold-case or active criminal investigation, or to perform wellness checks or assist deputies during natural disasters. Although most of our work is in the Mt. Hood National Forest or the Portland metro area, we provide occasional assistance to other surrounding counties.

Our missions are nearly always successful. Last November I rescued a woman in her late 70s who had slid 500 feet down into a ravine while mushroom hunting. My team found her just after midnight using a combination of cell phone triangulation and voice calls, rappelled down to her, and provided care for hypothermia and dehydration. Despite it being nearly 2:00 a.m. by the time we stabilized her, she decided that she wanted to try climbing back out of the ravine rather than stay overnight. We set up a succession of rope hauls and were able to get her safely back to her husband before sunrise. I stayed by her side for much of the journey out of

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**OFF THE CUSHION: SO THAT OTHERS MAY LIVE**, *continued from page 8*

the ravine, and was deeply impressed by her positive attitude. I will never forget her willingness to trust my team, a group of complete strangers, with her life.

Unfortunately, not all of our missions have such a happy ending. Last October we were called to search for a missing hunter outside of Estacada. I received the call late at night and was out searching until dawn. Other searchers took over the day shift, and I searched again that night, and then during three more day-shifts. Overall, we searched for seven days, including several nights. We brought in other SAR teams, K9 units, search planes, helicopters, drones, and military SAR units. Eventually the search was called off. I spent a little time with the subject's family and friends during that week, practicing meeting their suffering head on, and offering what support I could without sugarcoating the experience. I have never experienced a more emotionally demanding personal en-

counter. A week later the body was found, and I helped bring him back to his family. Mission accomplished, but a lot of tears were shed in the process.

My time with CSAR has not only enriched my life and practice, it has also changed the way that I view both. It has made me reconsider my career and look at ways that I can spend more of my time serving the community. It has helped me to learn about emergency medicine, and to embrace the fear and uncertainty that come with being a medical first responder in the backcountry. I have met an incredible group of people, from all walks of life, united by the calling to set aside personal comfort and preferences for the benefit of anyone in need. SAR has also helped deepen my practice considerably, allowing me to renew my vows every time I roll out of bed at 2:00 a.m. to venture out into the freezing rain and do everything I can for people having the worst day of their

life. For those missions, when I can use the reminder, I composed a gatha and wrote it on the back of my radio harness:

May I find the lost,
Heal the sick and injured,
And protect the vulnerable
So that Others May Live.

I hope that all of you are able to enjoy the astounding natural beauty of our region and be safe and well while doing so. Of course, if an emergency does arise, take comfort in the knowledge that help is on its way, with abundant compassion, an infectious joie de vivre, and a measure of skill. Take care! ⚡





FACING IT

My black face fades,
 hiding inside the black granite.
 I said I wouldn't
 dammit: No tears.
 I'm stone. I'm flesh.
 My clouded reflection eyes me
 like a bird of prey, the profile of night
 slanted against morning. I turn
 this way—the stone lets me go.
 I turn that way—I'm inside
 the Vietnam Veterans Memorial
 again, depending on the light
 to make a difference.
 I go down the 58,022 names,
 half-expecting to find
 my own in letters like smoke.
 I touch the name Andrew Johnson;
 I see the booby trap's white flash.
 Names shimmer on a woman's blouse
 but when she walks away
 the names stay on the wall.
 Brushstrokes flash, a red bird's
 wings cutting across my stare.
 The sky. A plane in the sky.
 A white vet's image floats
 closer to me, then his pale eyes

look through mine. I'm a window.
 He's lost his right arm
 inside the stone. In the black mirror
 a woman's trying to erase names:
 No, she's brushing a boy's hair.

~ Yusef Komunyakaa ⚡

YOU ARE ART

Your exact errors make a music
 that nobody hears.
 Your straying feet find the great dance,
 walking alone.
 And you live on a world where stumbling
 always leads home.

 Year after year fits over your face —
 when there was youth, your talent
 was youth;
 later, you find your way by touch
 where moss redeems the stone;

 and you discover where music begins
 before it makes any sound,
 far in the mountains where canyons go
 still as the always-falling, ever-new flakes of
 snow.

~ William Stafford ⚡





HYBRID SUMMER SESHIN AT STONES AND CLOUDS ZENDO JULY 14 - 18, 2026

The 2026 Seven Thunders Zen Summer Sesshin, led by Leonard Marcel and Greg Smith, is planned as a **hybrid event** to take place from 7 p.m. Tuesday evening, July 14 to 10 a.m. Saturday morning, July 18.

Both in-person and online attendees will follow the *revised sesshin schedule (9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on full days)*. The fee for in-person attendance is \$210 for members, \$240 for non-members, and includes only the midday meal. As this is a non-residential event, accommodations are not included.

If attending via Zoom, you will sit in your own space, access the retreat on your own device and provide your own meals. For online attendance, the fee is \$130 for members, \$160 for non-members.

The extra \$30 of the non-member fee can be applied to your Seven Thunders membership, should you choose to do so, which then qualifies you for the member rate for all other Seven Thunders regular retreats and sesshin through the remainder of the calendar year. **Registration deadline is June 23.** Should you need to cancel, all but \$30 will be refunded for cancellation requests received by the retreat coordinator on or before June 30; half the fee will be refunded if received by July 7; no refund in the last week before the retreat.

Registrations will be accepted on a first come basis. Part-time attendance may be possible as schedules permit.

Once your registration has been received and accepted, 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.

Silence will be observed in the zendo. For those attending online, please make every attempt to maintain silence to the extent possible, as your circumstances permit.

To register for the retreat, please email the registrar at **StonesCloudsZendo@icloud.com** to signal your intent to attend, and then complete the form below and send it with your fee to:

Teresa Marcel
1333 Skyland Drive
Lake Oswego, OR 97034.

Please make checks payable to **Seven Thunders**. Alternatively, you may pay the fee online at **www.seventhunders.org** (click on the 'Contribute' tab and follow the donation process). Questions? Please contact Teresa Marcel at 503.636.9009 or **StonesCloudsZendo@icloud.com** ⚡



REGISTRATION FORM STONES & CLOUDS SUMMER SESHIN, JULY 14 - 18, 2026

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Emergency contact name & Phone: _____

- I would like to **attend in person**, and enclose full payment of \$210 (the member rate).
- I would like to **attend in person**, and enclose \$240.
 - please apply \$30 to my Seven Thunders member dues.
- I would like to **attend online** and enclose full payment of \$130 (the member rate).
- I would like to **attend online** and enclose \$160.
 - please apply \$30 to my Seven Thunders member dues.
- I request a scholarship of \$ _____
- I enclose a donation of \$ _____

Please make checks payable to Seven Thunders



ROHATSU SESSHIN DECEMBER 2026

need to cancel, all but \$30 will be refunded for cancellation requests received by the retreat coordinator on or before November 17; half the fee will be refunded if received by November 24; no refund in the last week before the retreat. You will receive a confirmation from the registrar.

The 2026 Seven Thunders Rohatsu Sesshin, will be conducted at the Stones and Clouds Zendo in Lake Oswego, OR. This is planned as a hybrid event from **December 1 -6** with full in-zendo in-person attendance as well as online attendance.

retreat schedule, all chants and cautions a few days before retreat begins.

The hybrid event will take place from Tuesday, December 1, starting at 7 p.m. and end on Sunday, December 6 at 10 a.m. We will be following an **abbreviated schedule this year, with each day commencing at 9 a.m. and ending at 6 p.m.** Only the lunch meal will be provided for those attending in-zendo.

Registration deadline is November 10. Registrations will be accepted on a first come basis. Additional applicants will be wait-listed in case of cancellations. As this sesshin is usually well subscribed, early registration and payment is encouraged.

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.

To register for the retreat, please e-mail the registrar at **StonesCloudsZendo@icloud.com** to signal your intent to attend, and then complete the form below and send it with your fee to:

**Sesshin fees are as follows:
In-person retreat attendance:**

member: \$260, non-member: \$290.

Online retreat attendance:

member: \$160, non-member: \$190.

**Teresa Marcel
1333 Skyland Drive
Lake Oswego, OR 97034.**

Sesshin will be led by Leonard Marcel and Greg Smith. Space is limited to a maximum of 14 full-time in-person and 10 online. If attending online, you will sit in your own space, access the retreat via Zoom on your own device and provide your own meals. Those attending online will be sent a link for the retreat as well as a PDF containing the

In all cases, the extra \$30 of the non-member fee can be applied to your Seven Thunders membership, should you choose to do so, which then qualifies you for the member rate for all other Seven Thunders regular retreats and sesshin through the remainder of the calendar year. Should you

Please make checks payable to Seven Thunders. Alternatively, you may pay the fee online at **seventhunders.org**. Click on the 'Contribute' tab and follow the donation process. Please be sure to enter "Rohatsu sesshin fee" in the notes section. Questions? Please contact Teresa Marcel at 503.636.9009 or **StonesCloudsZendo@icloud.com** ✨

**REGISTRATION FORM
ROHATSU SESSHIN, DECEMBER 1 - 6, 2026**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Emergency contact name & Phone: _____

Special needs _____

I commit to participating fully in the entire schedule.

In-person attendance:
 member: \$260, non-member: \$290

Online attendance:
 member: \$160, non-member: \$190

Donation for Scholarships \$ _____
 Request a Scholarship of \$ _____