



ROCHESTER ZEN CENTER
A BUDDHIST COMMUNITY

March 8, 2016

Dear Sangha,

Buddha's Birthday

Here in Rochester, the winter has been unseasonably warm, with especially high temperatures lately. Spring is indeed just around the corner, and what better way to celebrate the new season than by celebrating the Buddha's birth at the Center. So save the dates (May 27 through 29), and stay tuned.

Chapin Mill Work Retreat: Work, Zazen, and Summer Fun

Veterans of the annual Ralph Chapin Memorial Work Retreat are fond of describing it as "summer camp, but for adults," although children and young adults (and dogs!) are also welcome. This year's work retreat will start on Tuesday evening, June 14, and conclude with lunch on Saturday, June 18. Every year, some 40 - 50 of us come from near and far to help get the Chapin Mill buildings and grounds ready for another summer and, this year, for our blow-out 50th Anniversary. Over the years, we've refined our schedule to balance work, sitting, and free time to spend with Sangha members and friends.

Our 50th Anniversary Celebration

Undoubtedly, this will be the Center's biggest event in its history: almost 300 people have registered so far – and it's still early! Scrolling through our registration database has become a trip down Memory Lane, with names popping up from the Center's earliest days. It's worth repeating: if you haven't registered yet, *please do so as soon as possible* so we can get an accurate count for all of our events (and so you can be sure of getting food!).

What happened to the June sesshin?

With the maha-logistical tasks involved in the run-up to our 50th Anniversary, we felt obliged this summer to move the usual late-June Chapin Mill Work Retreat up to a week earlier than usual. And with an introductory workshop booked for that month as well, we were left with too little time in June to squeeze in a 6- or 7-day sesshin this year.

The Kannon Committee

We're all subject to sickness, old age, and death, and as a Sangha, we want to find ways to help each other through our inevitable difficulties. For some years now, we've had a group of volunteers who offer support to ill or disabled members through companionship, chanting services, delivering meals, helping with errands, or providing transportation to appointments. If you would like to offer help, or if you know a member who could use some, contact our point person, Keith Carpenter at keith@rzc.org.

Comings and Goings

A fond farewell to Dan Esler, Cat Kana, Julian Díaz, and Leo Rubalcava. Both Dan (who left staff in December) and Cat (who just left) are staying in Rochester, and Cat will still run our Youth Program. Julian has returned to college in Alabama. Leo will be returning to Mexico City after a month-long yoga seminar in India.

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Trustee Nominations and Spring Ballot

Each spring, the term of one of the three member-elected Trustees expires, and an election is held to fill the opening. (Two of the other three Trustees are elected by the Board of Trustees itself, and one Trustee is appointed by Roshi.) Under the Center's by-laws, an elected Trustee is limited to serving three consecutive terms, but again becomes eligible to serve after being off the Board for a year. This year, Cecily Fuhr's third three-year term will come to an end. The Center's Trustee Nominating Committee is looking for two names to appear on the ballot. Suggestions for candidates are welcome from all Sangha members. If you'd like to suggest a possible nominee, write to the Center, *Attention: Trustee Nominating Committee*, or send an e-mail message to nominations@rzc.org. Or you may directly contact any of the members of the Nominating Committee: Roshi, Corporate Secretary Scott Jennings, Trustee Cecily Fuhr, and Sangha members Brenda Reeb and Deborah Zaretsky. Please submit any suggestions by March 31, so the Committee will have time to consider them. Ballots will then be mailed to all members, and the votes will be counted at the Center's annual meeting of members which takes place during Buddha's Birthday (and Memorial Day) weekend.

A Note from the Financial Office

Many thanks to all those who have responded generously and promptly to the 2016 annual membership pledge forms that the Financial Office sent out last November. (If you haven't yet returned your pledge form, it will help us if you do so as soon as possible.) Annual membership contributions are the main source of the money needed to pay the Center's bills, and the Sangha's continuing generosity through these recent years of economic uncertainty has been vital to the Center's financial health.

For the benefit of members who itemize their income-tax deductions, the Financial Office has also sent out statements detailing each person's financial contributions to the Center during 2015. If you haven't received your statement or have any questions, please contact our Business Manager, Scott Jennings (scott@rzc.org).

Rakusu Ceremony

During Buddha's Birthday celebrations over the Memorial Day weekend, there will be the customary rakusu ceremony. To receive a rakusu, you need to have been a member of the Center for at least one year, be a formal student of Roshi, and have taken the precepts. If you haven't taken the precepts previously, you'll have a chance on the Friday evening of Buddha's Birthday weekend. Order your rakusu kit and sewing instructions by sending your request along with \$30, plus \$4 for shipping. (Also, add 4% sales tax to the total for all New York State addresses.) The Center follows the tradition in Zen of people sewing their own rakusus, which makes receiving and wearing it more meaningful. Be sure to give yourself plenty of time to sew.

On the Horizon...

All-day sittings: March 13, April 17, May 22, & June 12

Temple Night & Buddha's Birthday: Friday evening, May 27 – Sunday, May 29

Chapin Mill Work Retreat: Tuesday evening, June 14 – Saturday, June 18

50th Anniversary Celebration: Friday afternoon, July 1 – Sunday afternoon, July 3 (Sign up on the website.)

50th Anniversary Lecture by Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn: Saturday evening, October 15 (Tickets can be purchased through the website.)

Sesshin Dates

Below are sesshin dates for the rest of this year; all are at Chapin Mill and led by Roshi, unless otherwise indicated:

2016

March 19-26	7-day		deadline: was February 25
July 23-30	7-day		deadline: June 30
September 9-11	2-day	(Eryl Kubicka)	deadline: September 1
October 1-8	7-day		deadline: September 8
November 12-19	7-day		deadline: October 20
December 6-10	4-day		deadline: November 10

2017

January 7-14	7-day		deadline: December 15
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If, for any session, you miss the deadline, it's all right to apply late. If there's room, you may well be accepted.

In the Dharma,



John Pulley
Head of Zendo