



## Green Mountain Zen Center Newsletter

5014 Sunset Bluff Drive, Huntsville, Alabama 35803 [www.gmzc.us](http://www.gmzc.us)

Sundays	Newcomers' Session	6:00 pm
	<i>Contact: Jim Gordon (256) 882-0513, home / (256) 426-3344, mobile</i>	
Sundays	Regular GMZC Zazen Service	7:00 pm
Fourth Sundays	Dharma Discussion and Teleconference	7:00 pm
Wednesdays	Regular GMZC Zazen Service	7:30 pm

Welcome to the inaugural issue of our newsletter. Green Mountain Zen Center has been in its new home now for nearly a year, and we've begun twice-weekly services with four trained attendants. We've held two day-long retreats, and the zendo, thanks to your donations, maintains a relatively temperate internal climate as it strives toward a state we like to call *finished*.

At the risk of violating our understanding of the illusory nature of *the future*, we have a number of upcoming events of interest including the annual Buddha Day Celebration sponsored by the North Alabama Buddhist Association. This ecumenical Buddhist event involves all the Buddhist sanghas in the Huntsville area. We traditionally recognize the Buddha's birth (*Wesak*) and death (*Parinirvana*) during the month of May. This year both a day-long retreat on Saturday, May 14, and Sunday's ceremony-cum-potluck lunch will be held at the Giac Lam Temple, operated by the Vietnamese sangha and the Venerable Giac Chan, resident monk.

More specifically to the GMZC sangha, there will be an initiation ceremony, *Zaike Tokudo*, for Rick Gardner on Sunday, March 27. I strongly encourage you to be present for this ceremony as well as for the celebration. The special schedule for the evening is as follows:

- 6:00pm Chant the Heart Sutra
- 6:05pm Zazen
- 6:35pm Chant the Four Vows
- 6:40pm Tea and dharma discussion of Red Pine's *The Heart Sutra (Prajnaparamita, pp. 29 - 55)*
- 7:00pm Teleconference with Sensei
- 8:10pm *Zaike Tokudo* ceremony

Each one of you is encouraged to become a contributor to this newsletter. Joy has volunteered to take on the duties of editor and publisher, but she cannot produce the newsletter alone. This month's edition has already profited from contributions by several members of the sangha, and Shanna's original letterhead will grace the pages of subsequent newsletters. Please feel free to contribute anything you feel will be of interest to the GMZC's growing community. This includes announcements, dharma stories, quotes, and the like.

Finally, I'd like to express my profound thanks to Eric, Shanna, Shelley, and our newest attendant (but long-practicing Zen Buddhist), Gary for taking the time and energy required to guide our services at Green Mountain Zen Center. With the GMZC sangha, it is your dedication that is the life of our center.

Gassho – *Kawa* Jim Gordon ☸

And now we will count to twelve  
and we will keep still ...

For once on the face of the earth  
let's not speak in any language;  
let's stop for one second,  
and not move our arms so much.

It would be an exotic moment  
without rush, without engines,  
we would all be together  
in a sudden strangeness.

Fishermen in the cold sea  
would not harm whales  
and the man gathering salt  
would look at his hurt hands.

Those who prepare green wars,  
wars with gas, wars with fire,  
victory with no survivors,  
would put on clean clothes  
and walk about with their brothers  
in the shade, doing nothing.

What I want should not be confused  
with total inactivity.  
(Life is what it is about;  
I want no truck with death.)

If we were not so singleminded  
about keeping our lives moving,  
and for once could do nothing,  
perhaps a huge silence  
might interrupt this sadness  
of never understanding ourselves  
and of threatening ourselves with death.

Perhaps the earth can teach us  
as when everything seems dead  
and later proves to be alive.

Now I'll count up to twelve,  
and you keep quiet and I will go.

-- Pablo Neruda ☸

### Upcoming Events at GMZC and area:

- 27 March: Heart Sutra discussion, continued., and initiation ceremony (6:00pm - 8:30pm) (GMZC)
- 14 May: Buddha-Day Meditation Retreat (8:00am - 5:00pm, tent.) (Giac Lam Temple)
- 15 May: Buddha-Day Ceremonies & Picnic (10:00am) (Giac Lam Temple)

- July TBD: Mini-sesshin (Fri. evening & Sat. 7:00am - 7:00pm) (GMZC)
- Sept. 2 - 4: Sesshin, Eric & Jim leading (Fri. pm - 12:00 noon Sun.) (ASZC)
- October TBD: Weekend sesshin with Sensei (Fri. evening - Sun. noon) (GMZC)