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**August 2012**

# SHINGI

Newsletter of the Tendai Buddhist Institute



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## Jushoku's Meanderings

We are experiencing the long hot days of summer. Some parts of North America are suffering greatly from a devastating drought. Near Tendai Buddhist Institute it is dry, but not extremely so. . On Wednesday evenings we have been meditating in a very warm temple, in spite of

## August Events Calendar



**Weekly Meditation Services (WMS)** are on Wednesday evenings. They begin at 6pm with a discussion or talk (see below for this month's discussion topics). At about 7pm there is a meditation service, followed at 8pm by a potluck supper. All of Wednesday evening's events are open to the public. There is no fee, and reservations are not required.

### August Wednesday Meditations and Discussions

**1 Finding Peace in the Midst of Violence** - the tragedy in Aurora, Colorado should disturb any person. Such unmitigated violence against people poses so many questions. Let us examine the event and our responses to it as a reflection on peace and tranquility in the face of violence.

**8 Kujoshakujo - Its meaning and Practice** - The Kujoshakujo is a powerful liturgy in the Tendai Morning Service and is employed in a variety of rituals. We will explore the text and its profound teachings.

**15 Dengyo Daishi (Saicho)** - The founder of Japanese Tendai' birthday is observed on the 18th of August. We will observe this event by engaging in a discussion of his contributions to East Asian Buddhadharma..

the fact that it is always the perfect temperature for meditation.

[\(cont.\)](#)



### **Quicklinks**

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Monshin Naamon](#)

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**Our Other Sangha:**

[Blue Mountain Sage  
Sangha--Denver, CO](#)

[Celestial Drum  
Sangha--Indian Lake,  
NY](#)

[California Tendai  
Buddhist Monastery](#)

**22 DNA Sutra The genetic karma of our inherited selves** - by Richard Eskow. Read this article in the Summer edition of Tricycle: Practitioner's Quarterly magazine (see link below) and join us for what promises to be an intriguing discussion. Link: <http://www.tricycle.com/feature/dna-sutra>

**29 Questions & Answers** - It is questions time again. Is there been anything regarding the Buddhadharmas that you have thought about and have not found a satisfactory answer? This is your chance. Some people are shy about asking a certain question because they think, 'it's only interesting to me.' Chances are other people have the same question but are also too shy to ask. Write down your questions and bring them with you..

### **Other events in August:**

**4 Sutra Class and Morning Service, 8:30 - 10:30 AM - Vajrachedika Prajnaparamita Sutra (The Diamond Sutra).**

It is one of the earliest Mahayana sutras and is considered by many scholars as foundational to subsequent Mahayana thought. Don't miss this enjoyable class. Please obtain the following book for this class - *The Diamond Sutra: transforming the way we perceive the world*, by Mu Soeng; Wisdom Publications (2000). We will start studying the passages of the Diamond Sutra this month - so please copy the sutra by hand (Kyodo) before coming to class.

**16 Sangha Baseball Night - Tri-city ValleyCats at Jos. Bruno Stadium in Troy, NY - 6 PM** The Thursday night game with the Brooklyn Cyclones includes a pre-game buffet style picnic for all the members. The menu includes: Marinated Chicken, Hot Dogs, Hamburgers, Sausage with Peppers & Onions, Salt Potatoes, Salads, Potato Chips, Watermelon, and Beverages. Each person will also get a souvenir ValleyCats cap. Following the picnic the group will enjoy the game from the Reserved Box seats. This package is \$25 per person, \$20 for children age 12 and under. This is a great opportunity to enjoy a very casual outing with your sangha.

**18 Introduction to Buddhism - 1 -4 PM.** This short class is intended to give a brief introduction to the Buddhadharmas. Koki Bower will discuss the way Buddhists perceive the world, the main teachings of the historical Buddha, the goals of Buddhism, its rich history and the ways in which it addresses contemporary issues. The class is open and free to the public.

[Tendai Denmark](#)

[Flowing Waters--  
Ottawa, Ontario,  
Canada](#)

[Great River Ekayana  
Sangha--Arlington,  
VA](#)

[Nagado Sangha--  
Springfield, MA](#)

[Nishi Sangha--  
Albany, NY](#)

[Red Maple Sangha--  
Renfrew, Ottawa,  
Canada](#)

## Upcoming Events:

### September

#### **21-23 O-Higan Retreat - The Three Gates of Liberation.**

Karuna - Prajna - Upaya - are the three Gates of Liberation.

We will focus on these concepts as they relate to our practice and daily life. Register early, we will only take 12 people and this is sure to fill quickly.

**23 Refuge ceremony** - "Taking refuge" is often seen as the difference between Buddhists and non-Buddhists. It is in fact not necessary to take refuge in a formal session with a teacher, but it may help to clarify your choice and to remember your commitment. We will be offering Buddhist refuge during the Mahasangha service on Sunday September 23rd, following the O-Higan retreat. If you would like to take refuge please let Monshin know.

### Notes

Our sincerest sympathies go out to the E-Vam Institute sangha in Chatham, New York, at the passing of Traleg Kyabgon Rinpoche IX on 24 July 2012. Traleg Rinpoche was the founder of Kagyu E-Vam Institutes in Australia and around the world, an extraordinary teacher, scholar and spiritual leader.

**Food Pantry at Jiunzan Tendai-ji** - The number of families who now depend on the food pantry has grown as a direct result of the continued economic recession. There are fewer and fewer resources going to more and more people. Please bring non-perishable food items to the Tendai Buddhist Institute on Wednesdays. We contribute these items to the Chatham Silent Food Pantry.

Meanderings (cont. from side bar at left)



Meditating when it is very warm or very cool, the extremes of temperature, are to me the best temperatures for meditation. If the temperature is most comfortable - around 72° f. (22° c.) - my mind wants to examine the external. When the temperature is extreme my mind turns inward and it is easier to attain deeper samadhi.

There are all sorts of skills we can employ to assist us in our

meditations, not to make the meditations easier, but to make the meditations more effective. These can be handed down by teachers. At the same time each person can become more aware of one's own patterns of meditation, more in touch with the environment in which the meditate takes place. This requires an active personal commitment to one's practice. It requires effort beyond the cushion. Don't be shy, it's your practice.

*Gassho . . . Monshin*

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The Third Jewel--Where sangha members share ideas, poetry, and art to enrich everyone's Buddhist practice.

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### **Picsalin**

by Tomie Hahn

Lately I yearn to make up words.  
Words for emotions. Wordless emotions. Dreams that have no words. How it feels to stroke a crocus petal. The shape of a blotch. The smell of mist mixed with honey and bark.

Crayons arrive from the store neatly arranged in their yellow and green box. After repeated use, the practice of returning each color to its slot becomes tiresome. Anyway, their names begin to peel off and the color names begin to blur. I found that if I shade a layer of "Goldenrod" and blend in "Brick Red," then a new "orangey" color appears. There's a reason why your grade school teacher worked so hard to keep your spelling in check. One wrong letter and your word would be dysfunctional and unable to fit properly in the crayon box vocabulary slot. A known space. One word could blend meanings and become another. Potential disaster. Unintentional wordplay. Words help us share experiences, hold memories for the future, or predict. Before text did these emotions-without-words exist? Do they now? I don't want to say "it's like such-and-such an emotion" but "I felt so picsalin today." And who set up this crayon box of words? Seemingly endless, but even now my little picsalin sits dormant except in my heart.



Yesterday I tore up an old pink pillowcase to make three rags. Once cradling my head, they now push dirt. My blue-green dreams over the years stilled, and patches of pillow pink seeped through my tiny ear canal to arrange chaotic dreams-predicting three rags.

I wonder about wordless dreams. I mean, dreams that I hold no words for. Dreams that present substance with no words apparent. While I dream-in my mind, in my body-do I translate these visions into text to make sense? or can I capture their essence entirely and directly?

...and is there a word for a pink-pillow-rag that arose from a dream and now collects dust? Or is this one of those sense-less experiences, one that reaches beyond our perception and directs us to a time when experience communicated experience? Unconscious. Sense as sense. Let's name that crayon  
Piscalin.

**Call for material:** Please send the Shingi photographs, artwork, poems, book reviews, articles, etc. that you have created that you consider an outgrowth of your Buddhist practice or that you think reflect Buddhist themes, ideas, questions, etc. If submitting an image, you may wish to include a short statement sharing some of your thoughts to accompany it.

### **Questions? Comments? Suggestions? Contact . . .**

Shingi Editor  
Peter Chorin Donahoe  
pdonahoe2010@gmail.com

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Tendai Buddhist Institute | 1525 Rt. 295 | East Chatham | NY | 12060