A teacher’s report from Kaizan Doug Jacobson

This report covers Jikoji programs continuing since Dec 2018. These include the Sunday Program, the 4 traditional sesshins (Tanjo-e, Denko-e, Rohatsu, and Nehan-e) plus Genzo-e sesshin, monthly Science and Buddhism, weekly book study group, monthly Zazenkai, bimonthly Nature Sesshins, and Work Practice Weekends.

**Rohatsu**, Dec 2-9 led in silence by Doug with over 20 attending at least some of it.

**Nehan-**e, in early February led by Caroline Dille, with a rich assemblage of practioners, some new to practice and to Jikoji who have continued attending Sunday program and other sesshins.

**Practice Period** between **Nehan-e** to **Tanjo-e**: we studied the Heart Sutra (Red Pine’s translation, mostly) every weekday morning. We also studied it one evening each week, open to the sangha, and it became a model for a Weekly Study.

**Tanjo-e April 1 – 7** with Mike, Cliff, and Doug leading talks and discussions on the Heart Sutra.

**Genzo-e,** led for the 5th year by Kokyo Henkel, begins next week studying some Dogen.

**Denko-e** sesshin is scheduled for October.

During the Nehan-e to Tanjo-e Practice Period, residents participated in the scheduled two periods of zazen in the morning and two in the evening. We often added Friday evenings and Saturday morning/eve sits with Jikoji guests joining in zazen with residents. Weekend guests often ask if there will be additional zazen.

**Sunday Program** from Dec 9 through June 2, we hosted (11) female speakers and (15) male speakers. Thank you, Cliff, for keeping our speaker lineup strong. Since management of the Sunday Program reverted back to the Residents after Andy relinquished the role on his departure to Winter Practice Period to Tassajara, zazen instruction is provided by residents as Mike has encouraged. Each current resident has provided instruction at least once and the role is on rotation.

**Science and Buddhism** – The 2019 theme is Wellness with monthly sessions led by Cliff, Eric, and Doug, and sangha member Ross Smith. Mark Adams will lead the next one. The program has regular attendees and usually sees 10 or more each month. Sunday program attendees often stay for the afternoon SB.

**Zazenkai** – held the first Saturday of each month and led by Doug, Eric, and Mark A.

Consistently 6 – 12 guests participate. Often morning zazen is offered on the ridge. Participants often book rooms for the night before. On Jan 5, 2019, we were surprised to have 17 guests in the community Building at 6:30 am ready for zazen on the ridge and to spend the day in meditation. Since it rained we didn’t walk but still had a full day of zazen and kinhin in the large zendo, providing breakfast and lunch.

**Nature Sesshins** – Held 4 or 5 weekends a year for 2 or 3 days, led by Doug and Eric. Now in its second year, participants in traditional sesshins become Nature Sesshin participants, and Nature Sesshin participants join our traditional sesshins and other Jikoji events. Most Nature Sesshin participants book a room. Only Jikoji can offer Nature Sesshins like this and they have become an important part in how we fulfill our mission to help people find and deepen their practice.

**Evening Book Discussion – Heart Sutra, Zen Mind, Beginner’s Mind -** Mike had suggested starting a study group on the history of Buddhism. We aren’t studying much history yet, however we have for the last 5 months a weekly Evening Book Discussion led by Doug and Cliff with typically 6 – 10 guests, now held most Thursdays. We offer dinner at 6 pm, then have discussion and close with zazen in the Big Zendo.

**Work Practice Weekend -** May 31 – 1 June led by Hogan and Doug.

Approximately 15 people participated, many staying overnight, to help move drain rock and road base, paint exterior walls on sections of building facing the creek, move boulders, weed areas around the buildings, take down the top half of dead oak above the zendo, and give attention to the library and encourage book circulation. Most participants attended a recent sesshin or zazenkai and just wanted to come back to and give back to Jikoji, a wonderful example of sangha spirit and sangha building. We plan to schedule another Work Practice Weekend sometime between early September and end of October.

Thanks to Nico for her care in publicizing and coordinating our programs and for nurturing the newer ones. Thanks to all who help make Jikoji’s programs happen. Thanks to Jen for buying the food, managing the kitchens, and for room readiness. Thanks to all who have voluntarily helped with tenzo duties. Thanks to Yossi for quick restoration and turnover of the rooms. Thanks to Michael Newhall for allowing all this to happen. Thank you, Jikoji!