

January 2023
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Rocky Mountain Zen Newsletter

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

We wish all of our RMZ friends a wonderful year in 2023!

This year marks the beginning of the second century of Soto Zen Buddhism in North American continent which officially started in 1922. I am grateful to the friends of Rocky Mountain Zen for allowing me to be a part of the community as a guiding teacher as we continue to evolve as a Zen Sangha in Alberta with other sanghas in Canada and the US.

I hope that we can enjoy each moment of our practice with the spirit of 一期一会 *ichi-go ichi-e* "once in a lifetime" treasuring each moment that is unrepeatable by nature.

Warmly in gassho,



Gyoeki Yokoyama
Guiding Teacher



Reigetsu 怜月
Kathy Ridenour
Practice Leader
Lethbridge



Horyu 法隆
Sean Friesen
Practice Leader
Edmonton



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HOW ROCKY MOUNTAIN ZEN STARTED AUGUST, 2021

Ryugen Aaron Roth reached out to Gyokei in early 2021 amid the pandemic as many sanghas including Sozenji temple offered online Zen sessions. After Ryugen's Jukai with Domyo Bark from Bright Way Zen, Gyokei came to meet Aaron and conducted a novice ordination ceremony in August 2021 to formalize the teacher-student relationship. With the blessings of Rev. Yasuo Izumi from the Buddhist Church of Southern Alberta, Ryugen and Gyokei had the first session to introduce Zen and Japanese Culture at Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden where Ryugen had been offering meditation practice.



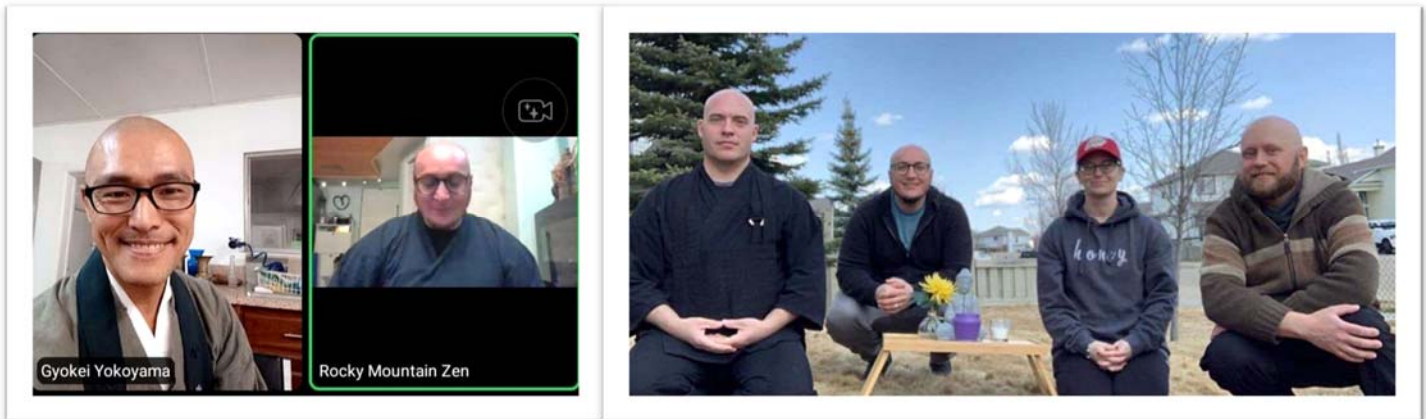
In 2021, RMZ became a registered organization in Alberta with its first Board of Directors.



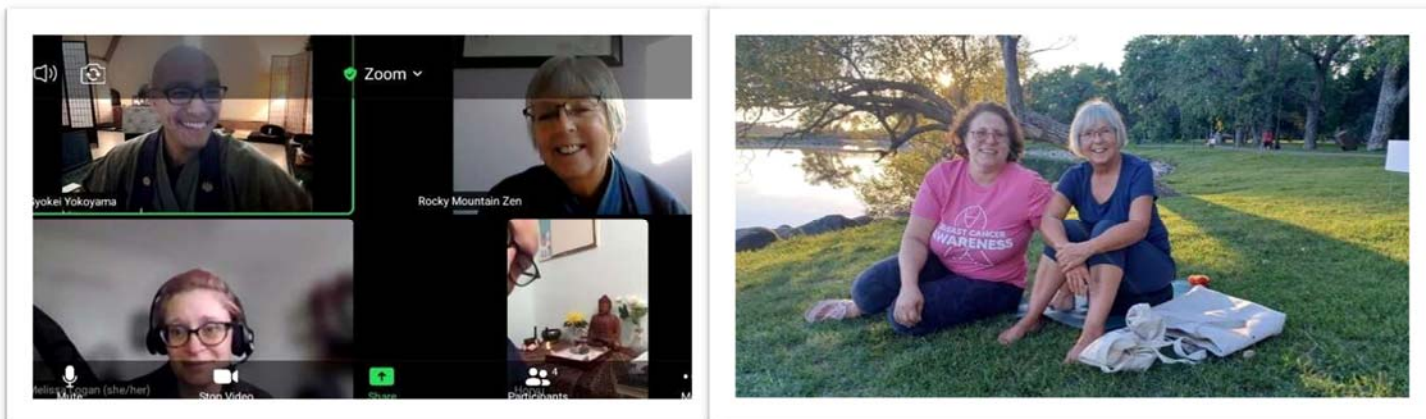
Later, Ryugen stepped down from the leadership role as he pursued the path of Thich Naht Han's lineage and Reigetsu Kathy and Horyu Sean each stepped up to take the leadership role for Edmonton and Lethbridge Group. Thank you to Ryugen Aaron for all your hard work starting our sangha!



RMZ EDMONTON IN-PERSON ZAZEN



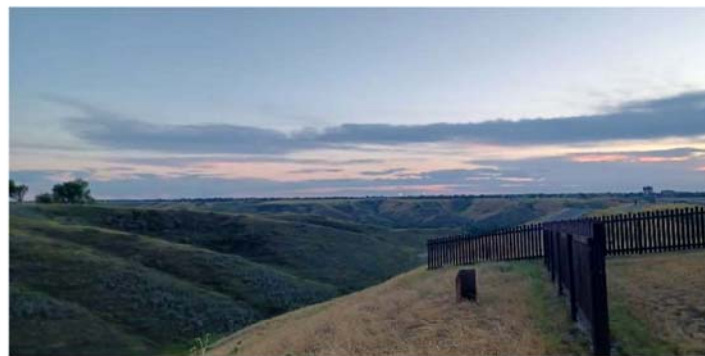
RMZ LETHBRIDGE IN-PERSON ZAZEN AT BUNKA CENTER AND HENDERSON LAKE PARK



ROCKY MOUNTAIN ZEN WEEKEND RETREAT

AUGUST 26-28, 2022

Gyokei, Ryugen/Aaron, Reigetsu/Kathy, Horyu/Sean, Melissa, and Laurie-Ann attended in person and Sogaku/Randall participated online in the inaugural retreat at the beautiful Martha Retreat Centre in Lethbridge, Alberta.



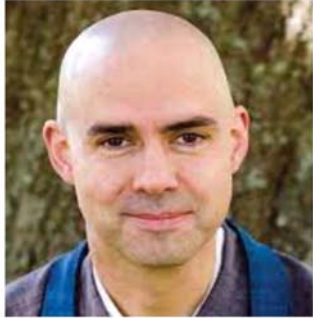
Kinhin (Walking Zen) (above) and Samu (Work Practice) (left)

ROCKY MOUNTAIN ZEN JUKAI AT NIKKO YUKO JAPANESE GARDEN
AUGUST 28, 2022



Jukai for Reigetsu 怜月 /Kathy, Horyu 法隆 /Sean, and Sogaku 祖覚 /Randall

Guest Teachers Visiting RMZ via Zoom



Kounra Franz from Thousand Harbours Zen, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Koun Franz shared his Dharma talk with Rocky Mountain Zen in November about the practice of Zen in Canada.

Kiyo Tezuka of Chosho-in temple, Hikone, Shiga pref. Japan

Kiyo shared his memories with Tetsugen Bernie Glassman and his perspectives of Western Zen.



Tracey Pickup from Wildrose Sangha, Calgary, Alberta

Tracey discusses the practice and tradition of Plum Village and the Ven. Thich Nhat Hanh as well as the Order of Interbeing.

Myoun Ford, Empty Moon Sangha, California

Myoun shared with RMZ a dharma talk on the precepts.



Dr. John Harding, University of Lethbridge

Buddhism in the Global Eye and Buddhism in North America

Domyo Burk, Bright Way Zen, Oregon

Domyo gave a Dharma Talk on Self, No Self and Death



Ryushin Hart, Corvallis, Oregon

Ryushin Hart shared a Dharma talk on Bodhicitta (Awakened Mind / Heart).

Dave Cuomo of Angel City Zen Center

Dave shared with RMZ his story of how he started his practice.



Geoff Shoun O'Keeffe, Zen Peacemakers

Talk on Zen Peacemakers International

MONTEBELLO SOZENJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION CEREMONY



For 50 years, Sozenji Temple has been a center for Buddhist worship, meditation, and learning as well as a community and cultural center for Japanese art, music, and crafts. The influence of the temple has grown with time, and it now has sister communities around California, in Italy, and, since 2021, it has a sister community in the Rocky Mountain Zen sangha located in Alberta, Canada.

We are so happy to walk the path of the Buddha along with you and we hope to transmit the teachings of Soto Zen to the community around us, just as Sozenji Temple has done for the past 50 years.

I hope that Temple members look back on the accomplishments of the past 50 years with gratitude and appreciation for everything the Temple has provided to the community and that you look forward to the future with a spirit of hope and optimism. On behalf of the Rocky Mountain Zen sangha, I congratulate you on achieving this significant milestone and I look forward to our continued relationship for many years in the future!

*Regards,
Marlin Schmidt,
President of the Board of Directors,
Rocky Mountain Zen*

Rocky Mountain Zen celebrated the 50th anniversary of Sozenji Buddhist Temple as the affiliated Canadian sangha of Sozenji Buddhist Temple, which is affiliated with the Sojiji Head Monastery in Japan



Members of Rocky Mountain Zen have been joining the monthly Buddhist service of Sozenji Buddhist Temple over Zoom

SOTO ZEN BUDDHISM NORTH AMERICA 100TH ANNIVERSARY JUKAI-E

Horyu/Sean, participated in the 5-day jukai-e held at Zenshuji Soto Mission built in 1922, Los Angeles, California, over zoom from Rocky Mountain Zen on November 16 – 20, 2022. Gyokei served as an interpreter for the preceptor and the representatives from Japan.



THE FIRST OF MANY NEWSLETTERS!

We thank all of you who have signed up for our email newsletter. This first edition provides a quick summary of how our sangha formed, and the activities we have been participating in over the past year. We hope you have enjoyed the many images we have to share!

Rocky Mountain Zen

Regular Online Zen Practice
ZOOM ID: 692 424 2965

M/W/F 6:30 am—7:15 am
Tues 7:00 pm - 7:45 pm
Sat 9:30 am—10:30 am

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www.rockymountainzen.weebly.com

