

# Friends of Robert Aitken

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*"Xuefeng Yicun called Xuansha Shibe a true ascetic. One day he cornered him and said, "You're a reborn sage. Why don't you go about on pilgrimage to meet enlightened masters?" Xuan said, "Bodhidharma didn't come to China. The Second Ancestor didn't go to India." Xuansha is our true teacher. We tend to go over there: to Zen and its many stories, to Vipassana, to all sorts of Hindu faiths, to Meister Eckhart and the various saints. Whatever happened to breath-counting? One ... Two ... Three ... and so on up to Ten. That is our pilgrimage. Xuansha is smiling. Even Bodhidharma cracks his face. - Robert Aitken Rōshi*

June, 2010

Dear Friend,

We are writing once again to give you news of Rōshi, to thank you for your generosity, and to ask for your continued support. This is our third Dana for Aitken Rōshi fundraising letter. We are glad to report that Aitken Rōshi's health has been quite stable since moving to Palolo Zen Center. He has been to the hospital only twice since October 2006. At ninety three, he continues to enjoy zazen and take part in zendo activities.

Aitken Rōshi is currently working on a new book of Haiku translations. The working title is *The River of Heaven* and the publication date will be 2011. According to Sue Lauaki, Rōshi's primary caregiver, writing is what keeps him going. Rōshi also hosts a poetry class once a month, discussing selected poems with students and friends.

In May 2008 Rōshi decided to forgo night time care. However, 24-hour care had to be resumed in August 2009 and consequently monthly care costs have increased from \$6,900 to \$10,300. Rōshi currently has three main caregivers – Sue, Fipe, and Mele – with additional help on weekends from Straub Hospital nurses. His caregivers report that Rōshi has increased his number of meals per day and is trying to gain weight. He also does restorative yoga once a week with Lisa Yanagi, a Honolulu Diamond Sangha member.

Brandon Wilson, Rōshi's personal assistant for the past nine months, recently left for Japan. Fortunately another Palolo Zen Center resident, Juan Cruz, has stepped in temporarily to take on the position of Rōshi's personal assistant, soon to be succeeded by Steven Hauge.

Rōshi has requested that the hours for his personal assistant be increased from part-time to full-time. In addition to reimbursement payments for Rōshi's care costs, the Friends of Robert Aitken have paid for a personal assistant since September 2007. With your support, the Friends of Robert Aitken have so far contributed \$189,891 toward Rōshi's care and well-being. We hope to continue on this trajectory.

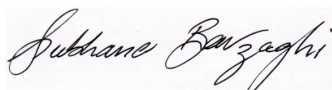
For additional information about the Friends of Robert Aitken and its Dana for Aitken Rōshi project, please read the updated "Questions and Answers" on the back of this letter. If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact us at the telephone number or e-mail address listed above.

We are very grateful for your help in the past years and ask that you continue to support Aitken Rōshi. Staying at Palolo Zen Center continues to be Rōshi's wish. Your ongoing support enables him to do so and to keep writing and participating in zendo activities. Please be as generous as you can be.


On behalf of the Friends of Robert Aitken,



Doug Codiga



Subhana Barzaghi



Marian Morgan

-- Please refer to the "Questions and Answers" on the back of this letter --