



# Berkeley Zen Center



July-August 2017 Newsletter

## Lay Entrustment Ceremony

Leslie Bartholic and Jake Van Akkeren will receive Lay Entrustment from Sojun Roshi on Monday morning, July 10. Sojun will present them with a green rakusu to acknowledge their position as lay teachers in our sangha. The ceremony will take place in the zendo at 5:40 a.m. All are invited to attend, with a reception to follow in the community room. There will be no Practice Committee meeting on this date.

## One-Day Sesshin: August 5

Denkei Raul Moncayo will be leading a one-day sesshin on Saturday, August 5, from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. We encourage old and new sangha members to participate. Please sign up on the patio bulletin board by Wednesday morning, August 2, after zazen. If this is your first sesshin at BZC, we recommend that you first participate in a full Saturday program and also speak with the sesshin director. The fee is \$35 and should be paid in advance (a discounted fee is possible for those in need; please speak to the director). Leave checks marked "August sesshin" in the mail slot in the courtyard laundry room door or mail to the



### Affirmation of Welcome

Walking the path of liberation, we express our intimate connection with all beings. Welcoming diversity, here at Berkeley Zen Center the practice of zazen is available to people of every race, nationality, class, gender, sexual orientation, age, and physical ability. May all beings realize their true nature.

## B Z C S C H E D U L E

### July

**Zendo Holiday**  
Tuesday, 7/4

**Founders' Ceremonies**  
Wednesday, 7/5, 6:20pm  
Thursday, 7/6, 6:40am

**Bodhisattva Ceremony**  
Saturday, 7/8, 9:40am

**Zazenkai (Just Sitting Day)**  
Sunday, 7/9

**Lay Entrustment Ceremony**  
Monday, 7/10, 5:40am

**Half-Day Sitting**  
Sunday, 7/16

**Mountains & Rivers Sesshin**  
Thursday 7/27 through Sunday 7/30

### August

**Founders' Ceremonies**  
Thursday, 8/3, 6:20pm  
Friday, 8/4, 6:40am

**One-Day Sesshin**  
Saturday, 8/5

**Bodhisattva Ceremony**  
Saturday, 8/5, 9:40am

**Half-Day Sitting**  
Sunday, 8/13

BZC Office Manager at 1931 Russell St., Berkeley, CA 94703. Those attending for the first time will need to fill out a Sesshin Information Sheet to let us know of food allergies or other health or physical concerns requiring accommodation. Please request this by contacting the sesshin director, Peter Overton, at [sesshindirectorbzc@gmail.com](mailto:sesshindirectorbzc@gmail.com) or 510-325-2342 .

### **Four-Day Mountains and Rivers Sesshin: July 27–30**

Our annual Mountains and Rivers Sesshin will take place Thursday through Sunday, July 27–30, at Point Reyes.

Seiwa Leslie Bartholic will be joining us as the doshi. She will be leading our daily discussions of Dogen's "Mountains and Rivers Sutra," and will also be available for one-on-one practice discussion during our free-time periods on Friday and Saturday afternoons.

The sesshin will begin with an orientation meeting Wednesday evening, July 26, at 6 p.m. in the Community Room. Thursday morning we will carpool to Point Reyes, then hike from the Bear Valley Visitors' Center to Coast Camp, moving at a moderate pace with frequent rest stops and lunch along the way. We will get back to Berkeley around 5 p.m. Sunday. All meals are provided and camping experience is not required. Everyone is encouraged to do the full four days, but provision will also be made for those who may have to arrive late.

The sign-up sheet will be posted on the BZC bulletin board as of July 7. Your spot will be reserved after you submit all the logistical information requested on the sign-up sheet. Sign-up deadline is Thursday, July 20. The fee is \$75. If you have any questions, please contact Zosie Calame at [zosiec@zoho.com](mailto:zosiec@zoho.com).

### **Nominations for the BZC Board**

Every year the sangha elects three of six members-at-large to terms of two years to the BZC Board. There is a two-term limit. Elections take place in October and the new term starts in January 2018. The Board will present its three nominees at the all-sangha meeting on Tuesday evening, September 12. Other nominations can be made by sangha members at that time from the floor. Two current members-at-large who are currently serving their first term, Katy Guimond and Mary Beth Lamb, have agreed to be Board nominees for a second term. Laurie Senauke, another current member-at-large, has been appointed by the Board and Sojun to be the BZC treasurer, so her seat is open. The Board will thus be considering whom to nominate to fill the one vacant member-at-large position. We would like to receive suggestions from BZC members. Among the skills which a nominee might add to the Board are: oral and written communication, organization, information technology, money management, fundraising, engineering, building maintenance, and non-profit law. Board members attend monthly Sunday morning meetings and an all-day retreat in January, and they serve on at least one working Board committee: finance, buildings, development, electronic communication, and recruitment/nomination for elections. If you have a suggested candidate or are yourself interested in being nominated, please contact the Broad Recruitment and Elections Committee chair, Stan Dewey, at [standewey@comcast.net](mailto:standewey@comcast.net) by July 12. Please include any relevant information about why you think the person you mention would be a good BZC Board member.

## **Reminiscences of BZC**

As part of BZC's 50th Anniversary celebration, we are working on a 50-years-of-memories book and would appreciate participation of as many people as possible. Do you have a story or some reflections to share about the various aspects of practice at BZC during any of those years? If you've been thinking about writing something but haven't quite gotten around to it, perhaps you'd prefer to have a conversation instead? If so, shoot an email to Andrea Thach at [andrea.thach@gmail.com](mailto:andrea.thach@gmail.com) or give her a call and she'll arrange something for you.

The theme of our 50th Anniversary is "Lighting Up Our World." So we'd also like to hear how your practice at BZC has lit up, or is lighting up, the path of your life. Please send a few lines or paragraphs to share as a part of the celebration to Andrea (see email above) or to Mary Duryee ([maduryee@earthlink.net](mailto:maduryee@earthlink.net)).

## **BZC T-Shirt**

The Development Committee has created a 50th Anniversary T-shirt, very limited edition. These shirts will be available for \$20 each beginning in July (on sale after the Saturday program). All profits will be donated to the Let's Party Fund, in support of our upcoming anniversary party in September. The shirt front has the BZC logo with "Berkeley Zen Center, Fifty Years." The back reads: "Accomplishing nothing since 1967."

## **Position Changes**

Peter Pfaelzer has performed the ordinary yet extraordinary task of tending to the BZC laundry these past two and a half years. While not quite a rags-to-riches story, we are very grateful for his keeping us well stocked with clean rags, dish towels, and reception table

cloths. This laundry position has been reincorporated into the Kitchen Keeper's role currently held by Teri Jo Tinus, where it was originally conceived decades ago. Thanks to both of you.

## **Heart Sutra Class**

The Heart Sutra is chanted daily in Zen temples around the world. In this class we will read and chant the sutra and do a line-by-line, word-by-word exploration of the meaning that lies in the words and beyond the words.

What we chant at BZC is a highly condensed version of a larger Mahayana sutra rarely studied in the Zen school, although its teachings are found in many of the Zen koans characteristic of the lineage. Time permitting, we may read a few passages from the unabbreviated original sutra, widely associated with Nagarjuna and the second turning of the Dharma wheel. (The first turning or Dharma teaching consists of the original teachings of Buddha, such as the Four Noble Truths. The second turning consists of the Mahayana sutras emphasizing emptiness of own being and the practice of compassion.)

The class will be held every Thursday from August 24 to September 14, and will be taught by Denkei Raul Moncayo. Raul has been practicing at BZC since 1978 and received Dharma Transmission from Sojun Roshi in 2010. He has also had a long career as a psychologist.

## Lay Ordination

On Saturday, June 3, three members of the Berkeley Zen Center sangha received Lay Ordination (*Zaiko Tokudo*) from Sojun Weitsman Roshi and Hozan Senauke Sensei. This ceremony takes place once a year at BZC and is a significant rite of passage for each participant and for the whole sangha. We have the feeling that we are all together witnessing and participating as the ordines receive Buddha's precepts. We welcome these ordines into the lineage of Shakyamuni Buddha and Suzuki Roshi's family.

### Sojun Roshi's students:

John Lake

*Hei Ko Shin Kan*

Calm Lake Deep Insight

Matt Haug

*Ji Dô I Shin*

Compassionate Path Healing Heart

### Hozan Sensei's student:

Tim Lane

*Kô Ryû Gen Shin*

Peaceful Dragon Sees Heart

## Another Lay Ordination Coming Up

The fourth member of this year's BZC sewing group will complete her lay ordination later this summer. Long-time member Cheryl Gordon will receive the precepts from Ryushin Andrea Thach on Saturday, August 26, at 3:00 p.m. Please come witness her commitment to the Bodhisattva path and welcome her anew to the community.

## 29th Shuso!



*Congratulations to our 29th BZC shuso/head student, Mary Duryee—Honkyo Josu/Original Home, Stable Center—shown here with benji Rob Lyons and Sojun Roshi following her shuso hossen on June 11, 2017.*



*From left to right: Hannah Meara (sewing assistant/jisha), Tim Lane, Jean Selkirk (sewing teacher), Abbot Sojun Mel Weitsman (preceptor), Matt Haug, Vice Abbot Hozan Alan Senauke (preceptor), John Lake, and Gerry Oliva (jisha).*

## Family Practice Summer Vacation

Family Practice will not be happening during July and August. It will resume some time in September. Meanwhile, we hope you have a nourishing, enjoyable summer!

## New Resident at BZC!

We would like to welcome Hannah Meara to our residency training program. She will be moving into the vacant apartment above Sojun's office.

Since the apartment became vacant, the Board decided to take the opportunity to undertake a review of the residency program, with the goals of emphasizing and supporting its role as a training program, making it more responsive to the sangha as a whole, and allowing for more turnover. Based on this review, there have been several modifications to the program, including the formation of a standing Residency Committee (composed of our Abbot, Vice Abbot, Head Resident, and two nonresident senior students); updating the Residency Guidelines to emphasize the training-program aspect; introducing an annual review program for residents (to support their edge of practice and to consider their ability to meet their responsibilities in the training program with a fresh mind); and setting variable term limits for incoming residents. The Residency Committee currently consists of Sojun, Hozan, Ken Powelson, Susan Marvin, and Ron Nestor.

The committee is continuing to look for another person who is willing to participate in this residential training program, either on a short-term basis (for a summer, a semester, or a year), or for a longer three-year term. If you are interested, please contact Ken Powelson at [BZCHHeadResident@gmail.com](mailto:BZCHHeadResident@gmail.com).

## Saturday Speakers, 10:15 a.m.

July 1	Peter Overton
July 8	Sojun Roshi
July 15	Karen Sundheim
July 22	Sojun Roshi
July 29	Ryushin Andrea Thach
August 5	Denkei Raul Moncayo
August 12	Laurie Senauke
August 19	Hozan Alan Senauke
August 26	Ron Nestor

## Friday and Monday Talk Schedule

July 3	Mon 6:25am	open discussion
July 7	Fri 5:40pm	tba
July 10	Mon 5:40am	Lay entrustment ceremony
July 17	Mon 6:25am	tba
July 24	Mon 6:25am	Ken Knabb
July 31	Mon 6:25am	tba
August 4	Fri 5:40pm	tba
August 7	Mon 6:25am	open discussion
August 14	Mon 6:25am	Hannah Meara
August 21	Mon 6:25am	tba
August 28	Mon 6:25am	tba

## Friday Tea Time

The Friday Tea now begins at 4:45 p.m. It takes place on the patio or in the community room (depending on the weather) and is open to everyone. Please join us as we question and discuss dharma practice while sipping tea and opening our body and mind to harmony and lightness of being.

## Come and Sit with Us

### Monday through Friday

5:40-7:00am : zazen, service, soji

5:40-6:30pm : zazen, service

### Tuesday through Thursday

noon-12:30pm : informal zazen



## Benji Poem

*Shuso Ceremony for Honkyo Josu Mary Duryee  
Berkeley Zen Center, June 11, 2017*

A cloud obscures the moon.  
A dismayed teenager takes to her bed for three days, then cuts herself.  
A fragment of the mind breaks off,  
    floats to the ceiling,  
        and surveys the scene, asking:  
            "Is this poem even in English?"

When we live in exile, we may think we are flourishing: we have a loving  
husband and two children . . . but the longing for home arises.  
    We ask: "What can I rely on?"  
    We ask: "Shall I follow the minor precepts to the letter,  
        or follow my heart?"

Then abruptly: the sight of blood, the hand leaving the handrail . . .  
    and we resolve to return home to family,  
        to Old Plum Mountain.

When they meet, Sei and Sei-jo melt together,  
    and her father Chokan rejoices!

Compassion is the child of wisdom.

In the Biblical parable, the prodigal returns home  
    amid wonder and redemption and feasting;  
But this miracle was possible only because of the primal rupture  
    and the bitterness of long estrangement.

When you hit the boiling water, don't say I didn't warn you.  
    Mountain and valley: not two, not one.  
        Not hiding.

present moment      wonderful moment

—*Gyoshi Kirei Rob Lyons*

## “Nothing Special”

Today I was looking through a book for a spark to set off this talk and ran across an old note that said, “The phrase ‘Nothing special’ keeps coming up for me. Could you please talk about its meaning?”

It is a good question, which is at the heart of our practice. Suzuki Roshi used this phrase a lot. At a time (the 60s) when young people were looking for profound experiences in psychedelics, some were investigating meditation. D.T. Suzuki was popularizing a side of Rinzai style that emphasized koan training leading up to *kensho*, or sudden awakening. Shunryu Suzuki Roshi’s training in the Soto school led him to understand that what brings us to practice is our inherently enlightened mind and that realization is like walking through a fog – unaware that through continuous daily zazen practice our clothes are becoming wet. Suzuki Roshi did not encourage attainment. He said that when we are always looking “over there” for something, it is harder to appreciate where we are right now. With this understanding, grasses, pebbles, and waters are always preaching the Dharma and teaching us how to act. So there is nothing special to achieve.

And yet, everything is special in its own unique form and way, and to be fully respected and appreciated as a form of Buddha nature.

Recently we were studying the Buddhist precepts of different schools. Some have 250, others have 16, and some have none. Suzuki Roshi respected them, but his understanding was that precepts are simply our way of navigating our life. When we pay attention to our surroundings and keep our senses and mind unassuming and open, everything we encounter brings us back to our compassionate, joyful, and harmonious practice. It is not that we ignore enlightening moments. But even when they are extraordinary, they are at the same time not more extraordinary than the ordinary sight of the divine light of a periwinkle by the side of the road.

—Sojun

**NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION DEADLINE**

**Third Friday of the month before each  
issue. Submit items to  
knabb@bopsecrets.org.**

**September-October deadline:  
Friday, August 18**

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1931 Russell Street  
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