



Berkeley Zen Center



March 2015 Newsletter

One-Day Sesshin Saturday, March 14

Sojun Roshi will lead a one-day sesshin on Saturday, March 14, from 5:00 am–9:00 pm. We encourage old and new sangha members to participate. Please sign up on the patio bulletin board no later than Wednesday morning 7:00 am, March 11 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 per day and should be paid in advance (a discounted fee is possible for those in need; please speak to the director). Leave checks marked “March sesshin” in the courtyard laundry room mail slot or mail to the BZC office manager at 1931 Russell St., Berkeley 94703. You can also use the bill pay option on your banks’ website and make the notation “March sesshin fee.” If you have any questions, contact the sesshin director, Gary Artim at sesshindirectorbzc@gmail.com or 510.676.9756.



The First Work Day of 2015 March 29, 8:30 am - 5:00 pm

Please come and share a day of fellowship, and as always, good food, while we care for our practice place. This is a great chance to use tools and learn new skills. There will be a wide enough range of tasks to suit everyone’s level of ability and interest.

Berkeley Zen Center

1931 Russell Street, Berkeley, CA 94703

B Z C S c h e d u l e

March

Half-Day Sitting

Sunday, 3/1

All-Sangha Potluck – Budget

Tuesday, 3/3, 7:30pm

Founder’s Ceremonies

Tuesday, 3/3, 6:20pm

Wednesday, 3/4, 6:40am

Bodhisattva Ceremony

Saturday, 3/7, 9:40am

One-Day Sesshin

Saturday, 3/14, 5:00am – 9:00pm

Work Day

Sunday, 3/29, 8:30am – 5:00pm

April

Founder’s Ceremonies

Thursday, 4/2, 6:20pm

Friday, 4/3, 6:40am

Buddha’s Birthday

Saturday, 4/4 (regular program starts at 8:30am)

Bodhisattva Ceremony

Saturday, 4/11, 9:40am

One-Day Sesshin

Sunday, 4/12, 5:00am – 5:00pm



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.

www.berkeleyzencenter.org

510.845.2403



Rocky contemplates the story of Nan-ch', an cutting the cat in two. Not amused, he vows to sit until Nan-ch', an apologizes.

- Ross Blum



Family Activities at BZC

Saturday Morning Supervised Play

Supervised play is offered many Saturdays (schedule below) from 9:40 am zazen through lecture, supervised by Berkeley High student Lihong Chan. To use this service, or for coverage for 8:45 am zazen instruction, contact Laurie Senauke, 510.845.2215, or lauries@kushiki.org by noon the Friday before.

KidZendo

BZC's Saturday program for children 3 and up is offered during the school year, typically on the fourth Saturday of each month, from 9:30 am to 11:15 am (see schedule below or online). BZC members create this program, which includes songs, stories, offerings, art activities and a snack. For more information, and to RSVP, contact Laurie.

Theater Games

We are continuing our monthly Theater Games offering suggested by sangha member Thea Gold. It's a way to be silly and free together, while cultivating creativity, body awareness, spontaneity, relaxation, expressivity, trust, laughter, and concentration. It is suitable for all ages, and for the shy as well as outgoing. Through games, storytelling, and improvisation, we practice fully opening to each moment. It is held typically on second Saturdays (see schedule or online) from 9:30 am to 11:15 am. To RSVP, contact lauries@kushiki.org. Family practice schedule:

March 7	Supervised play
March 14	Sesshin - no program
March 21	Theater Games
March 28	Kidzendo
April 4	Buddha's Birthday
April 11	Theater Games
April 18	Supervised play
April 25	Kidzendo

Family Practice E-mail Group

Our Yahoo group makes it easier to communicate about family practice. We only send, at most, one event e-mail a week. To join, e-mail Marie at marie_hopper@sbcglobal.net or Laurie.

Please RSVP for ALL family activities to lauries@kushiki.org. Thank you!

Mindfulness

I have been thinking about mindfulness lately and how it is related to awareness and to concentration. I think about it when I cross the street, especially the busy avenues. I have been a car driver, a taxi driver, a bike rider, and a pedestrian. Engaged in each of those activities I have wanted to get to where I was going as fast and efficiently as possible. Traffic was always a game. But I always played by the rules and never hit anyone or caused an accident. I was always testing and honing my skill.

What I learned was that I had to be mindful and concentrated, and that the act of driving overrides all distractions. A driver should be aware of what is happening two or three blocks ahead as well as what is happening behind and on both sides in a constantly shifting complexity of patterns. I also learned what it means to be a pedestrian some years ago when walking my dog. I trained him to walk off leash, and to stop at all the corners, which he did. I realized how risky it is to walk across the street when there are cars moving around. By myself I can do a little dodging using my judgment. But that was too much to expect of him.

So I came to the conclusion that the best thing is just to wait until all the traffic has gone by on both sides of the street and then walk at our leisure. Slowing down like that and stopping for 10 seconds or 15 or 30 seconds can seem like you will never get to where you are going. Now I am very aware of how pedestrians get hit by cars. The law in California says that a pedestrian has the right of way in the crosswalk. People often take advantage of this and in an arrogant manner step off the curb expecting



the traffic (maybe as many as 20 people just like us) to come to a screeching halt. Or on the other hand they may enter traffic being totally oblivious.

In a perfect world no one has the right of way. We should all be looking out for each other. Before walking across the street, I give way to the traffic and wait my turn. Often, people stop for me even though I don't want them to. I often just wave them on because I don't want to stop the flow of traffic. If all pedestrians waited until the coast was clear there would be

far fewer targets. Giving privilege to one side creates an unequal division putting all the responsibility on the drivers and reduces pedestrians' reliance on awareness and proper judgment. This is an example of our ordinary daily life practice of mindfulness, awareness and two kinds of concentration; both narrow and wide. Our practice is to be mindfully aware of every opportunity to create harmony and to awaken together with all beings.

- Sojun

Sounding Board March 2015

The Board held its annual day-long retreat on January 18. The retreat is a time for Board members to talk in a more free-ranging and relaxed way about issues facing BZC in the coming year. One outcome of this year's retreat: the Board made a decision to again focus fundraising efforts on our Building Fund; typically we have been alternating between our Leadership Fund and Building Fund. It is our intention to provide as well as we can for long-term sustainability for BZC in all areas—practice and teaching, physical plant, financial resources, etc.

BZC is lucky in many ways: we have paid off our mortgages, we are able to support an abbot, a vice-abbot, and an office manager, and we have a decent amount in our Leadership Fund, due to Board efforts beginning 15 years ago. We have also assembled a property management team with an excellent depth and breadth of skills. These folks have been evaluating our building maintenance and improvement needs, and it is becoming clear to the Board that right now, our greatest need is to take care of the buildings and grounds that have been given to us, in order to respond to both expected and unexpected impermanence. Last year's successful fundraising efforts will enable us to rejuvenate and modernize the kitchen in 1929A. While in that process, it makes sense to investigate the plumbing in that entire building, which will no doubt require additional funds. BZC Board and officers are very grateful for the support of this generous sangha.

As always, Board members are available to receive your questions and suggestions. The list of Board members is available on our website and in our member directory.

Thank You!

Thanks to John Mogey, who is our former Shuso, for making a lovely pottery candle holder for our kitchen altar. It just arrived in the mail from his home in Oregon, and it is a very nice addition.



Saturday Practice Opportunities

Every Saturday BZC offers breakfast to people attending the morning program. If you've been looking for ways to help out at our temple, the Saturday program offers several practice opportunities that do not require any prior experience: assisting the head cook, serving the meal, and washing dishes.

Assisting the head cook in the kitchen begins at 6:00. This is a wonderful way to see what kitchen practice is all about. The head cook will provide training as you work together to prepare the meal. We also need servers to serve the breakfast in the zendo. If you haven't done this before, the head server will train you during the second zazen period. During the serving of the meal, each server practices fully meeting each person being served. After breakfast, the dishwashers go to the kitchen to wash the dishes. You work as a team, led by the head dishwasher, to get the dishes washed and the kitchen cleaned.

All three of these activities are fundamental elements of our sangha practice. We encourage you to join us. There is a sign-up calendar on the porch bulletin board that includes all of these activities. If you have any questions about these practice opportunities, or how to sign up, please contact the coordinator, Leslie Bartholic at lbartholic@comcast.net.



New Priests in Our Family

In the far north of Germany Juen Ryushin Friederike Boissevain and Nanzan Shunki Harald Schoklmann were ordained as Soto Zen priests by Hozan Sensei at Wind und Wolken Sangha on February 8. Juen and Nanzan began this group in 2002, and have long dedicated themselves to the dharma even as they each maintain active lives as physicians and creators of the region's first hospice organization. As dharma names Juen Ryushin means Circle of Giving/Arising Heart-Mind; Nanzan Shunki translates as South Mountain/Bright Spirit.

Capping Verse to Ross's lecture, "Our Shadows Cover The Ground Equally"

The moon is shining serenely in the sky, casting her reflection in countless places wherever conditions are matured. We see her image on the least trace of water or a vast expanse, which may be polluted or clean, but each reflects the same moon according to its nature. The shadows also are as numerous as the bodies of water, but we cannot say that one shadow is essentially different from another, nor has the moon left her orbit even for a moment.

- Nyogen Senzaki, Buddhism & Zen, 1953

Second Self-Defense Primer Workshop Saturday, March 21, 12:30 – 3:00 pm

The March 21 self-defense workshop will now be held in the zendo, so the class size will no longer be limited to 20 people. The sign-up sheets will include room for more names.

This workshop is offered free by BZC. If you are moved to provide a dana gift, that would be gratefully received and would help offset the cost.

The workshop will be taught by Hand-to-Hand. Hand-to Hand...

"...provides traditional martial arts training and self-defense classes. The center was founded in 1980 by Professor Coleen Gragen and remains under the leadership of Chief Instructor Sonya Richardson. (They) teach adults of all genders and are affiliated with the Kajukenbo Association of America... In a highly supportive environment, Hand to Hand classes explore the links between personal safety and community wellness because seeing this connection provides an opportunity for healing and encourages every individual to walk fearlessly in their lives."

For more information, contact Mary Duryee at maduryee@earthlink.net.



Changing Hands

We are grateful to Gary Artim for being our oryoki instructor for the past two years. He offered instruction in this form for groups and individuals, conveying both the simplicity and details of this way of receiving and eating our food in the zendo. Thank you, Gary! We welcome Alexandra Frappier to this position. She will be offering instruction to groups several times a year. Keep an eye on the bulletin board for the dates for this. You may also contact Alexandra directly if you wish to schedule instruction for another time.

Saturday Speakers, 10:15 am

- March 7 – Kaz Tanahashi
- March 14 – Sojun Roshi (sesshin)
- March 21 – Karen Sundheim
- March 28 – Taigen Dan Leighton

Friday and Monday Talk Schedule

- March 6 Friday 5:50 pm – Sojun Roshi
(zazen refresher – includes answers to all those questions you didn't know where to ask)
- March 2 Monday 6:25 am – Open Discussion
- March 9 Monday 6:25 am – Mary Mocine
- March 16 Monday 6:25 am – Jeanne Courtney
- March 23 Monday 6:25 am – Ed Herzog
- March 30 Monday 6:25 am – Deb Self

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION DEADLINE

Third Friday of the month before each issue. Submit items to bzcnewsletter@gmail.com.

**April deadline:
Friday, March 20, 8:00 pm**

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Berkeley, CA 94703