



Berkeley Zen Center



March 2003 Newsletter

Welcome to new Member Craig Morton.



Schedule Changes and Reminders...

The **Women's Sitting**, originally scheduled for March 30, **has been postponed**. Check the newsletter and/or the community bulletin board for new date.

Memorial Service for and Celebration of the life of our dharma sister, Dolly Gattozzi is Sunday, March 9. The service will be in the zendo at 9:30am, the celebration is at the Sequoia Lodge in Oakland from 3 to 6pm. Sequoia Lodge is located on Mountain Blvd. in Oakland. Mountain Blvd. runs just east of the 13 Freeway and the Sequoia Lodge is between the Park Blvd. and Joaquin Miller Exits. All are heartily invited to both events. If you are coming to the celebration, please either sign up at the community bulletin board or RSVP Gerry Oliva at 652-7217.

Sangha 36th Anniversary Celebration And Buddha's Birthday is scheduled for April 5th. For more info on Buddha's Birthday, see below. For more info on party, see below and make sure to check community bulletin board in late March.



March & April Schedule

Half-Day Sitting
Sunday, 3-2, 8:30 to 12:30pm

Founders Ceremony
Monday, 3-3, 6:20pm
Tuesday, 3-4, 6:40am

Bodhisattva Ceremony
Saturday, 3-15, 9:30am

One-Day Sitting
Sunday, 3-16, 5am to 5:30pm

Women's Sitting
Sunday, 3-30
(postponed!)

Founders Ceremony
Thursday, 4-3, 6:20pm
Friday, 4-4, 6:40am

Buddha's Birthday and
BZC Anniversary Celebration
Saturday, 4-5

Bodhisattva Ceremony
Saturday, 4-19, 9:30am

One-Day Sitting
Saturday, 4-19, 5am to 9:10pm

Mountains and Rivers
Saturday 4-26 through Sunday, 4-27

Buddha's Birthday....This year, Buddha's Birthday will be celebrated at Berkeley Zen Center on **Saturday, April 5th**, the same day the sangha celebrates BZC's 36th anniversary. Buddha's Birthday is one of the important dates on the Zen calendar, marking the birth of the Buddha and the fresh possibility of awakening in one's own life. Check the zendo bulletin board for the full schedule. Please feel free to bring your friends and families. Children, who embody our hope for enlightened peace and our hope for the planet's future, are especially encouraged to attend.

An important part of the ceremony is the baby Buddha's bower or arbor, which the sangha decorates every year. **The decorating of the flower bower will take place on Saturday morning between 7:30 and 8:30am!** Please bring flowers on Friday the 4th -- carnations, iris, daisies, ranunculus, sweet william, camelias, lilies are especially good - and leave them on the Community Room porch before evening zazen. Or bring treasures from your garden when you come Saturday morning. **For more information, contact BZC head chiden Catherine Lucas at 526-3100.**



Young People's Performance at the 36th Anniversary Celebration... Come one, come all! We need children to perform and adults to help stage our play, "Everyone Knows What a Dragon Looks Like," at the 36th Anniversary Celebration on April 5th. Any and all are welcome. **For more info, call Laurie Senauke, 845-2215.**



Class:...Introduction to Zen...Starting April 10, 7:30 to 9:00, and continuing for 4 weeks through May 1, this class will explore the roots of Zen in early Mahayana, and continue studying our Chan and Zen ancestors through China and Japan up to the present. It is appropriate for beginning and advanced students. Class instructors are Ross Blum and Laurie Senauke. Cost for the four weeks is \$20; watch for the sign-up on the bulletin board.



Workshop:...At Hell's Gate – Practicing With All Kinds Of Pain Sunday, March 23rd from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm....Dharma teacher and author Darlene Cohen is a long-time Zen practitioner. Through her own path of self-healing after painful illness, she developed and now shares her healing approach, an approach that focuses on the synchronization of mind and body through attention to the minutiae of everyday life. The workshop is an interactive opportunity to explore experience through mindful sitting, walking and gentle movement. This includes presentation and discussion of coping strategies for stress and pain, as well as the importance of pleasure and comfort.

Space is limited to 25 participants; see the bulletin board for further details about registration. Cost is \$40 for members/\$45 for non-members, with partial scholarships available. Bag lunch break at noon. Bring an exercise mat if you have one.

For further information about Darlene Cohen, visit www.darlenecohen.net.

Lecture by Sojun Roshi

There is this question. What is our practice? What are we doing? Is it vital enough? Are we sinking into complacency? Do we have enough pressure to feel that we're doing something vital? It's important to have pressure. Some people feel the pressure more than others. One person may feel that pressure is a burden and another may feel that it's okay, or that it's not enough. Each one of us is in a different place in our practice, in our dispositions, in our character, in our strength, and in our ability, in particular, in our ability to accept things as they are and to have equanimity and concentration. We're all different. Even though we have the same practice, there is something about the practice, the fine-tuning of our practice that has to be tailored to each person.

What is it that we can all practice that is vital for each one of us? What is the koan that covers everyone? There are a couple of koans that I sometimes give people, and there are a couple of practices that I sometimes give people. If someone has a very angry disposition and suffers a lot from self-alienation, I may give that person a Metta practice, either reciting the Metta Sutra, or practicing the four aspects of Metta. The first aspect of Metta is to bestow love on oneself, the second is to focus love on someone one knows. The third is to focus on someone one doesn't know, and the last is to focus on someone one considers an enemy, extending from that a love, which includes the whole world, the whole universe and so forth. In any case, all of this begins with knowing oneself and accepting oneself. I introduced the Metta Sutra into our service at Green Gulch because I felt it was something we really needed to think about as a balance to our "wisdom practice."

Dogen Zenji gave us the *Genjokoan*, the koan of our daily life - how we meet every aspect of our life as the koan, the fundamental point where sameness and difference meet. We have collections of One Hundred Koans, Fifty Koans, and so forth, and those koans are examples from the daily lives of the ancestors. In the same way, our true koan appears within the intimacy of what is actually happening in our life. And so, when we study the

old examples, they are not just stories about someone else. Because these stories are so fundamental, we can relate to them as our own.

“What is metta?” is a koan. It is a wonderful koan. “What is gratitude?” is a koan. I often give people the koan of gratitude. No matter what happens to you, just bow and say, “Thank you,” whether you feel it’s a good thing or a bad thing. If someone insults you, just bow with gratitude and say, “Thank you.” If someone compliments you, just bow with gratitude and say, “Thank you.” Sometimes it’s hard to accept a compliment. Someone may say, “Oh, you’re nice, or you did this well.” It can be very hard for us to accept that. What are we supposed to say? Anything we say makes us feel either egotistical or evasive. Every time I take my dog for a walk, someone will say, “What a beautiful dog you have!” The dog doesn’t care, and it’s no compliment to me but I feel obliged to come up with something. So sometimes I say thank you and sometimes I just agree. How do you accept a compliment without being egotistical? As someone said, “How do we cut through?” Right there is our practice. It’s not thinking it over, it’s “How do we cut through?” If we’re dealing with this kind of koan all the time, we don’t have any problem about whether there is pressure or not enough pressure, or whether we’re at the edge or not at the edge. If you can accept this koan that is always right in front of you, you will be right at the edge all the time. The only problem is the problem of ego. We don’t have to know so much. We don’t have to be so smart. We just have to be able to stand up in the middle of our life and accept whatever it is.

March 1, 1995





Gasshos... During the last 4 months of 2002, the following people contributed additional sums to BZC above any regular commitment:

Catherine Abel
David Abel
Gregory Andreas
Judy Bertelsen
Alan Block
Harriet Cooper
Gary Croner
Tom Dinwoodie
Laurie Doyle
Naome Dragstedt
Linda Eby and Bob Zepernick
Matthew Flickstein
Alexandra Frappier
Doug & Penny Greiner
Ryk Groetchen
Richard Haefele
Robert Hayes
Annette Herskovits
Lynne Hofmann
Leavenworth Jackson
Anne Jennings
Chris Jones
Betty Jung
Agnes Kaji
Ann Kennedy
Steven Kent
Walter Kieser
Cheryl Kojina
Anne Larsen
Robert A. Lee
Mildred Lowther
Catharine Lucas
Susan Marvin
Michael May
John Moge
Marie Murray
Kalle Nemvalts
Ron Nestor
Susan Oehser
Gerry Oliva
Katherine N. Otagiri
Peter & Susan Overton
Carol Jean Paul

Carol Perkins
Baika Andrea Pratt
Isabella Rosekrans
Claire & John Rubin
Grace & Peter Schireson
Yudo Kenneth Schnelle
Alan & Laurie Senauke
Stephanie Solar
Jim Storey
Andrea Thach
Katharine Thanas
Rene Thomas
Al Tribe
Jacob Van Akkeren
Maggie Vashel
Peggy Waldman
Keith Walker
Charles Ware & Rondi Saslow
Kwanlam Wong



IRS Charitable Contributions...

A close reading of the tax code has revealed that dues payments are tax deductible if they are made to religious organizations where the benefit received is of the "intangible religious" variety. Members whose total dues and donations in 2002 were greater than \$500 should have received an acknowledgement letter. Any other members who wish to receive an acknowledgement letter for their dues and donations, please contact the BZC office manager, Laurie Senauke (845-2215, lauries@kushiki.org).

Sustaining members note: any contribution above the dues amount for basic membership (\$30 individual, \$45 family) is categorized by BZC for budget purposes as a donation.

Directory Correction... Teresa Lesko's work number should be 510-923-1082 not 510-923-1080.



Exploratory Meeting for Dharma Seminar...April 12, 12:30 p.m. (bring your lunch)... Mary Mocine is interested in offering a dharma seminar for intermediate and advanced students. It would meet the first Saturday of each month, after the morning program. We would study a significant text, such as Komito's translation of Nagarjuna's 70 Stanzas or Thich Nhat Hanh's Transformation At the Base. The seminar would be open to all students who already have some working knowledge of basic Buddhism. It would run for six months then we would re-evaluate and decide whether or not to continue. The charge would be the same as for a regular class. At the meeting we will work out logistics and decide what to study if enough folks are interested in doing this. If you can't make the meeting, please see Mary.

Berkeley Zen Center
1931 Russell Street
Berkeley, CA 94703



Saturday Childcare

Childcare is offered on Saturdays from 9:15 to 11:15. The cost is \$5 per family. Note that the childcare schedule is tentative.

Childcare is not offered if no one's planning to come, so please call Laurie the Thursday before to let us know if you're hoping to attend. For more information, call Laurie Senauke, 845-2215.

March 1	Childcare
March 8	Childcare
March 15	Childcare
March 22	Childcare
March 29	Childcare
April 5	Buddha's Birthday/ Anniversary Celebration
April 12	No program
April 19	Childcare
April 26	Childcare
May 3	Childcare
May 10	No program
May 17	Childcare
May 24	Childcare
May 31	Childcare