



Berkeley Zen Center



June 2005 Newsletter

Welcome new member Rhonda Wilson.



Jukai -- Receiving Buddha's Precepts...

On Saturday, 11 June, Sojun Roshi will lay ordain several members of the BZC Sangha. Everyone is warmly encouraged to attend the ceremony and the reception afterwards. In addition, the ordinees will be sitting for some period of time before the ceremony, so please feel free to join them for this too. Check the zendo bulletin board for details.



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 preference, age, and physical ability. May all beings realize their true nature.

June & July Schedule

Founders Ceremony
Thursday, 6-2, 6:20pm
Friday, 6-3, 6:40am

Kanzeon Sitting
Sunday, 6-5 8am to 5pm

Jukai/Lay Ordination
Saturday, 6-11

Bodhisattva Ceremony
Saturday, 6-18, 9:30am

Half-Day Sitting
Saturday, 6-18, noon to 4pm

Five-Day *Sesshin*
Wednesday, 6-22 to Sunday 6-26

Shuso Hossen
Sunday, 6-26

Founders Ceremony
Monday, 7-4, 6:20pm
Tuesday, 7-5, 6:40am

Half-Day Sitting
Saturday, 7-10, 8:00am to noon

One-Day Sitting
Sunday, 7-17 5am to 5:30pm

Bodhisattva Ceremony
Saturday, 7-23, 9:30am

Mountains and Rivers
Friday 7-29 through Sunday, 7-31

New Member Entering Ceremony:

On Monday Morning, 6th June, we will have our ceremony to welcome new members. It will be held at 6:20 am, in place of the Monday morning talk. All are welcome to join this ceremony of incense offering, bows, a *jundo* where older members bow to new members, and words from Sojun Roshi.



Coming of Age Group:

Calling all pre-teens! Starting some time in late summer, BZC will gather a group of young people ages 11 - 13 to participate in a Buddhist Coming of Age group. The group will be led by BZC Member Marie Hopper and will likely meet once a month for about two years. The group will learn meditation, and study Buddhist precepts as they play out in our daily lives; members will have input into other topics the group will study. We're announcing this ahead of time, because it may take some time to assemble a group of six to ten young people; pass the word along to anyone you think might be interested. For more info or to let us know you want to participate, contact Marie at deagin@california.com.



Kid Zendo:

A kids' program is starting on the third Saturday of each month for young ones three and up. After participating in the first ten minutes of the 10:10 lecture, Amaselu Meyer will lead activities for the kids to participate in upstairs at the Senaukes' household until tea. This program will replace the second hour of regularly scheduled childcare on these days. Please email Amaselu at amaselu@earthlink.net

by the previous Thursday if you plan to attend.



Mountains and Rivers...

The upcoming Mountains and Rivers *Sesshin* will be held **beginning Friday afternoon, 29th July , and ending Sunday afternoon, 31st July** . Sojun Roshi will be leading it. Information and signup sheet will be posted on the zendo bulletin board. If you have any questions, contact Ken Knabb at 510.527.0959.



Jizos for Peace

BZC's banner contribution to the Jizo's for Peace project was finished and display in the community room in late April until mid-May. It is now on its way to accompany the more than 304,000 images of Jizo being carried to Hiroshima and Nagasaki by Great Vow Monastery members in commemoration of 60th anniversary of the atomic bombings of those cities. Our work joins an international offering of peace and compassion to the people of Japan. The colorful, delightful images made by many of the BZC members, including many of our youngest members. Deep *gasshos* to Sue Oesher and Ellen Doudna for making this project available to us join.



Lecture By Sojun Roshi
On *Dharma* Transmission
May 7, 2005

In January I went to Tassajara to lead the practice period, and now I am back three months later. I just went to Tassajara again for one week to do a *dharma* transmission ceremony for two priests that we know very well, Grace Schireson and Mary Mocine. So I want to talk about *dharma* transmission and what that means for us.

In our tradition, there is lay ordination and priest ordination. After priest ordination, the next step is called *shuso* which is to take the position of head monk at a practice period. This is the same for a lay ordained person. After that, a priest is in a position to receive *dharma* transmission at some point. *Dharma* Transmission basically means that one receives a final ordination as a full priest and that they have permission to be an independent teacher, set up a practice place or be invited to lead a practice and accept a position as an abbot. They can ordain others, perform weddings and officiate at funerals. They hold and pass down the lineage. During the transmission ceremony they receive a brown robe which is the identification or mark of a transmitted priest.

There's a lot of mystique around *Dharma* Transmission, which I would like to put into perspective.

Ideally we like to feel, after reading the legends, that when a priest receives *Dharma* Transmission they are fully enlightened person. That's the mystique of the ideal. It is important for a person who has *Dharma* Transmission to have an enlightened understanding of *dharma* and to put that understanding into practice. But it doesn't mean that one is perfect or has no flaws or has nothing to work on. It means, to me, that they've reached a point in practice where there's maturity, capability, stability, knowledge, and trustworthiness, among other qualities, and that they have enough of a foundation that they will not backslide, and will continue to develop as a practitioner and a guide.

When I asked Suzuki Roshi many years ago, in the '60's, when he was going to give Transmission to his first *dharma* heir he said, "I'm going to go to Japan and give this person *Dharma* Transmission. What do you think of that?" He asked me my opinion. I said, "Do you think he's ready?" He said, "Sometimes we give it when a person is ready, sometimes we give it, and we hope."

There's the feeling of "yes" this person is ready and at the same time, recognizing their weaknesses. My wish is, "Please, be careful." "Please be careful" is most important. because one can fall into feeling special, and when you feel special, it can do a lot of things to your head.

The most complete ceremony takes twenty-one days from beginning to end. Sometimes it is abbreviated because of circumstances, but the main ceremonial part is one week. And, at the end there are two ceremonies that take place around midnight. One recognizes that person's position, authorizing them to give the precepts to others and to ordain others. The

second ceremony is the so-called *dharma* transmission ceremony which recognizes the equality as well as the difference in position between teacher and disciple. It is a humbling ceremony, where their practice is made new. We call them "new person." Hopefully, this establishes the basis of the rest of their life. They start out new from this place.

I have given *Dharma* Transmission actually to twenty people so far. In Japan it is more common for a person in my position to have one or two transmitted disciples; or as Dogen says "at least one and a half." But I feel that in America we need many good teachers. Within Zen Center, people have been devoting their lives to practice for twenty, thirty, forty years. Grace has been practicing since 1967 when she showed up at the door at Dwight Way [former home of Berkeley Zen Center]. We've had a stormy relationship, not a nice easy, calm sea relationship. I'm often giving her my stick. She is a very intelligent, strong-willed person who knows what she needs to work on. Mary and I have also been at odds with each other from time to time, but our relationship has been transformative for both of us.

So it is important to take this *Dharma* Transmission, or entrustment, seriously and to know how to exercise constraint and self-control. The teacher's practice is shaped by the students. If the teacher's practice is not being shaped by the students, something is wrong. The students shape the teachers and the teachers shape the students, it's not one way. We may think that if someone has *Dharma* Transmission they must know everything. Unh-unh. But we trust that their responses come from the deepest and most fundamental place. If you see a problem, you should say something, and if you see the teacher is doing something that is not correct, you should say something, not just let it go by. Sometimes you feel intimidated, so you don't want to say anything. But, you should have some courage to say something, But we shouldn't be critical just in order to get up our courage or to be petty.

We call *Dharma* Transmission by two names: one is Transmission, the other is Entrustment. In *Dharma* Transmission there is actually nothing transmitted, but the mind of the teacher and the mind of the student co-respond. The teacher recognizes the understanding of the student and the student understands the mind of the teacher. Maybe not completely, but enough. The Transmission has already happened. We perform the ceremony, which verifies the transmission that is already there. We seal the understanding.

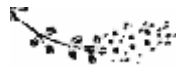
Entrustment means that we trust the person to carry out the practice and the teaching and to continue the lineage, passing it on to future generations without backsliding and without deviating. It is very hard to keep our practice pure, because there are so many desires pulling us this way and that way. It's easy to dilute the practice. We feel maybe there's something missing, maybe we should make our practice more interesting, by introducing new things. It's not easy to keep the practice simple and unadorned. There's always the tendency to want to add something. "Maybe we could take a little from this practice or a little from that practice and add it to our practice to make our practice more interesting, beneficial or complete." There's always this tendency. It's really hard to keep it pure, adding nothing and letting go; emptying our pockets and seeing what we have. "Oh,

nothing?" Okay! We don't have to fill our pockets or our basket. Just let go of the hindrances and we have what we need.

It is a very wonderful occasion when we perform *Dharma* Transmission. It's a very intense time, and the transmitted *deshi* (disciple) spends a lot of time creating, (writing) out their own transmission documents. It takes all day and all night for three days to do that. And then we have the two ceremonies. It's very intense and very hard work, but when it's finished, you feel that something has really happened. And my hope is that the power of that ceremony actually helps everyone. As I said, to be a new person is to mindfully renew your life every day. Be careful.

I wrote out some admonitions for a person receiving *Dharma* Transmission but of course, they apply to all of us. I just wrote them hastily down, as they appeared to me. The first one is to practice letting go of the need to control. Dogen says, the practice is to turn the *dharma* and be turned by the *dharma*. To turn the *dharma* means that you are in the assertive position and the *dharma* is in the yielding position. And to be turned by *dharma*, *dharma* is in the assertive position and you're in the yielding position. It's allowing a harmonious relationship with whatever you're confronted with. Sometimes you're being turned, sometimes you're turning. But if you're always simply turning, that's dominance, and if you are only being turned, that's passivity. Someone who has a responsible position has to practice this very carefully.

The next practice is to let go of the need to always be the center of attention. For example, to let go of the need to always bring a conversation around to where the focus is on you or to be inevitably drawing attention to yourself in other ways.



To be continued...

New Dharma Study Group:

We are starting a new dharma study group, led by Doug Greiner, for people who's best time to meet is a weekday morning. The first meeting will be **Wednesday, 15th June, at 10:00 am.** At the first meeting, members will decide the best day and time to meet, so if you'd like to join this group but can't make the first meeting, or if you just want more information, email Doug at degreiner@gmail.com. Not sure what a dharma group is? Read below:

BZC Dharma Groups:

BZC sustains several *dharma* study groups. The idea was started by our beloved elder, Maylie Scott, several years ago, to promote a more "horizontal" sharing of our wisdom. These are small groups of BZC members who meet once every three to four weeks, to study and discuss the dharma as it manifests in our everyday lives. The groups are usually facilitated by a senior student. Membership requirements vary; the groups are somewhat more formal than "drop in", however they often have an opening for one or two people. Following is a list of the groups and contact info:

Monday night group - Marty Kovach:
mkovach@ucsc.edu

Tuesday night group - Jim Storey:
Jamesbstorey@aol.com

Raul Moncayo's weekend study group - opens to new members in January

Teens, 20s, & 30s group (meets once a month on Sunday early evening) - Blake Tolbert: blakestert@yahoo.com

Socially engaged Buddhism group (meets every 3 weeks on a Sunday at 6:30 pm) - Ed Herzog:
ehertzog@seiu-uhw.org

Weekday morning group (forming now) - Doug Greiner: degreiner@gmail.com



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, 510.845.2215.

June 4	Childcare
June 11	Childcare
June 18	Kidzendo!
June 25	Sesshin - no childcare
July 2	Childcare
July 9	Childcare
July 16	Kidzendo!
July 23	Childcare
July 30	Vacation - no childcare

Kanzeon Sitting

This special sitting, on **Sunday, 5th June**, from **8:45 am to 4:30 pm**, is designed for those who have difficulty with the more rigorous typical sesshin schedule, but it is open to anyone. In fact, because the periods of zazen are shorter, it is a good opportunity to experiment with a more challenging posture. **Lunch is bag lunch - please bring your own.** Sign up on the bulletin board as usual. Contact Laurie: 510.845.2215, lauries@kushiki.org .

Tentative sitting schedule:

8:45	Arrange seating
9:00	Zazen - Robe Chant
9:25	Kinhin
9:35	Zazen
10:00	Kinhin
10:10	Zazen OR mindful walking and stretching outside
10:35	Kinhin
10:45	Lecture/Discussion
11:45	Service
12:00	Silent bag lunch & resting
1:00	Work Meeting - Soji
1:30	Clean Up
1:45	Zazen
2:10	Kinhin
2:20	Zazen
2:45	Stretching in the zendo
3:15	Kinhin
3:25	Zazen
3:50	Kinhin
4:00	Zazen
4:25	Refuges
4:30	Clean-up/End of Day



Change in the 2005 Sesshin Schedule:

The August *sesshin* date has been **changed from Saturday the 6th to Saturday the 13th**, so that *sangha* members may attend events commemorating the 60th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Nagasaki and Hiroshima.

The Five-Day Sesshin...

To end practice period the *sesshin* will be **Wednesday, 22nd June through Sunday, 26th June**

- The *sesshin* begins at 5:00 AM and ends at 9:10 PM, all days but Sunday, when it ends at 3:30 PM. Attendance requirement is a minimum of the entirety of two consecutive days.

- We will try to seat everyone who wants to participate. However, kitchen space and seating for *oryoki* determine *sesshin* size. If needed, priority will be given to those in practice period, those sitting all five or four days, and Sojun's students coming from out of town.

- If you can only sit two days, consider sitting the first two days.

- A registration form *must* be turned in by **noon on Saturday, 18th June** to verify that you are sitting. The forms are necessary for *sesshin* planning. Turning them in soon helps. They can be put in the *Sesshin* Director's box on the community room porch.

- Late sign-ups will not be possible.

- Late cancellations affect many aspects of *sesshin* planning. Carefully consider your intention, so that cancellations occur only for illness and emergencies.

- If you have questions about *sesshin* or *sesshin* attendance, speak with the *Sesshin* Director, Andrea Thach at 510.420.0902 **before 9 PM**

- If you plan to sleep overnight at BZC, contact the *shika*, Eric Greene at 510.649.1653.

The deadline for sign-up is noon on Saturday, 18th June.



Transcribing Sojun

Sojun Roshi would appreciate help in ongoing work transcribing his lectures from our recordings, many of which appear in this very newsletter. If you have the time and interest in doing this, please talk with him or leave a message on his office phone.

Gasshos

During the first four months of 2005, the following people contributed additional sums above any regular commitment (this list includes sustaining members). Thank you!

Maria T. Alvarez
Baika
Judy Bertelsen
Janet Bisbing
Ross Estes Blum
Colleen & John Busch
Diablo Valley College
Mary Duryee
Linda Eby & Bob Zepernick
Jeff Ennor
Tamar Enoch
Norman Fischer
Katalin Galasi
Andrew Goodwin
Doug & Penny Greiner
Robert Hayes
Maureen Hentschel
Annette Herskovits
Edwin Herzog
Anne Jennings
Sara Jotoku
Sue Kloss
Reiner Leibe
Ellen Levin
Rhea Loudon
Catharine Lucas
Anne Macey
Fred & Elena Maroth
Jane Mauldon
Michael May
Guy Micco & Wende Williams
Bill & Connie Milligan
Raul Moncayo
Gencil Muhammad
Jeanette Northern
Sue Oehser
Peter & Susan Overton
Peter Parise
Carol Paul
Carol Perkins
Laura Perrault

John & Louise Rasmussen
Bob Rosenbaum
Claire & John Rubin
Sarah Ruddy
Judy Smith
Stephanie Solar
Steve Stucky
Andrea Thach
Katharine Thanas
Rene Thomas
Fumiyo Uchiyama
Jacob Van Akkeren & Leslie Bartholic
Charles Ware & Rondi Saslow



Zen Dust

Several weeks ago I was given two boxes of Zen books by a couple of new friends I have been visiting. Referred by SF Zen Hospice, both husband and wife had advanced cancer. The man passed away ten days ago.

Among the books is a beautiful copy of *Zen Dust* by Miura & Sasaki.

A friend mentioned that this is a very rare and much-sought volume. Searching around online I have found copies selling between \$350 and \$600. After talking with Laurie I have decided to sell this book and give all the money back to the surviving wife, who is having a hard time financially.

This is a first edition, 1966, with original dust cover. It is in good-to-very good condition, with just a small dent at top of the spine. I would like to sell this for \$425, and would love to see it go to a Zen student who can appreciate it.

Please let me know if you are interested or know someone who might be.

Thanks,
Alan Senauke
510.845.2215



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