



Berkeley Zen Center



June 2006 Newsletter

Five-Day Sesshin

The sesshin to end practice period will be Wednesday June 14 through Sunday June 18. If you plan to attend, you must sign up and complete the registration form. Look for both by the courtyard bulletin board. Participants are expected to make a commitment of three consecutive days for this sesshin. If you have not yet participated in a sesshin at BZC, or if you have questions, please contact sesshin director, Leslie Bartholic, at (925)-933-3486 (before 9 pm) or lbartholic@comcast.net

Lay Ordination

On Saturday, June 10 the following members of the BZC sangha will receive Lay Ordination (*Zaike Tokudo*) from their teacher:

Sojun Mel Weitsman	Hozan Alan Senauke
Colleen Busch	Elizabeth Flora
Gemma Cubero	
Kate Gilpin	
Barbara Llewellyn	
Bill Milligan	

The ceremony is done once a year and is an important and significant ceremony for each participant, as well as for the whole sangha. The attendance of the sangha is not only encouraging and supportive, but we have the feeling we are all participating and witnessing as the ordines receive Buddha's Precepts (*Jukai*), and welcoming the ordines into the lineage of Shakyamuni Buddha.



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.

BZC Schedule June

Founders Ceremony

Thursday, 6-1, 6:20 pm

Friday, 6-2, 6:40 am

Bodhisattva Ceremony

Saturday, 6-10, 9:30 am

Lay Ordination

Saturday, 6-10, 2:00 pm

Five-Day Sesshin

End Practice Period

Wednesday-Sunday, 6-14 through 6-18

July

Founders Ceremony

Monday, 7-3, 6:20 pm

Wednesday, 7-5, 6:40 am

Bodhisattva Ceremony

Saturday, 7-8, 9:30 am

All-Sangha Gathering

Thursday, 7-13, 6:30 pm

Kidzendo

July 15

One-Day Sesshin

Sunday, 7-16

Half-Day Sesshin

Sunday, 7-23

Mountains and Rivers Sesshin

Friday-Sunday, 7-28 through 7-30

Practice Period Calendar

Shosan, June 2, 5:30 pm

Dinner and skit night, June 3, 6:30 pm

Shosan, June 5, 5:40 am

Shuso Hossen, June 18, 3:00 pm

PEOPLE

Welcome new Members **Michael Adcock and Martine Sevik.**

New e-mail address for **Mary Mocine:**
mmocine@sbcglobal.net

Note: If you have well being messages or short items of interest for the BZC newsletter "PEOPLE" column, please submit them to: eherzog@lmi.net Deadline is the 20th of the month.

New Bodhisattva Figure in Zendo

The new Bodhisattva figure which recently appeared in the corner of the zendo, that you see as you walk in the front door, was bequeathed to us by Katherine Caldwell, an older member who passed away several years ago.

Her father brought it back from China and left it out in the yard to weather and be attacked by bugs. She rescued it and kept it in her entry-way. As an Asian art historian she appreciated it, but in her heart she loved it very much. The stand needs to be modified, and then we will have an eye opening ceremony to install it in the

Cell Phone Use at BZC

In order to support our mindful practice together please use cell phones outside the gate.

ORYOKI by Mark Ray



Oryoki instruction is offered by Jake Van Akkeren. Contact, jvanakkeren@comcast.net

June 2006 BZC Newsletter

BZC Library to House Suzuki-Roshi Transcripts

The BZC's Library is pleased to announce the arrival in mid-May of the Collected Transcripts of Shunryu Suzuki-Roshi, courtesy of the San Francisco Zen Center's Suzuki-Roshi Archive. They include 12 volumes plus a guide and index that cover the years 1961 to 1971. About 240 transcripts are verbatim from tape, with an additional 145 edited transcripts lacking an extant recording, or are reconstructions from student notes. (Data tables are being compiled and exact numbers will be available later.) These are for use in the library only. They are a rich source of information both in the material Suzuki-Roshi covered as well as extensive footnotes explaining Japanese terms and other insight. These BZC's custom-bound copies were prepared with meticulous and loving care by our sangha sister Jean Selkirk.

New Suzuki-Roshi CDs Available at BZC Audio Archive

The BZC Audio Archive is pleased to announce the June arrival of the Suzuki-Roshi "Nothing Special" audio CD's, a set of forty CD's that may be checked out, one per dues-paying member, for one week. Each CD has both audio track(s) and a pdf file of the verbatim transcript for computer use. In addition, a bound set of these talks, called the "Nothing Special Manual", will be available for library use only, and contains introductory material about the project and an index for these talks.

This acquisition is courtesy of the SF Zen Center. SFZC's librarian, Celeste West, wanted people to hear Suzuki-Roshi's laugh and to hear him speaking. Arrangements were made to allow BZC members Richard Haefele and Jean Selkirk to begin the project. Richard digitized the audio tapes and Jean worked with Celeste to design the label and title the talks, and then produce the CD's for BZC as well as the three Zen Center libraries. Kudos to Jean, Richard, and Celeste who contributed close to 400 hours over two and a half years to put this very valuable collection together for all of us to enjoy.

Lay Ordination (J. Zaïke Tokudo): The Ceremony of Receiving the Precepts for those who remain at Home

Shobogenzo "Jukai" states, "All Buddhas and Ancestors taught that receiving the precepts is the first step in the Way." Dogen Zenji also tells us that upon receiving the Buddha's precepts we immediately enter the position of all Buddhas. How so? Because these wonderful precepts arise from the purity of self-nature and reveal the Buddha-nature -- our true nature. The ceremony of receiving the precepts as lay followers is called zaïke tokudo or lay ordination. According to definition, "ordain" means to invest with the functions of an office or position. In understanding Buddhist ordination, we should know that the functions we are invested with are those of a Buddha. This is exactly the meaning of "upon receiving the precepts we immediately enter the position of all Buddhas." To have zaïke tokudo is to acknowledge our true nature and confirm our intent to realize it fully.

The ceremony itself consists of several significant elements to which we should give thought. First, there is the invocation in which the officiant priest invites all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas to be present as witnesses. The officiant acts as their representative, but we should know that actually the buddhas are our Acariya or preceptor, therefore, we receive the precepts directly from all buddhas.

Secondly, all who wish to receive Buddha's precepts must first purify themselves through confession and repentance in which one acknowledges past and present wrongdoing and delusion. We do this by chanting the verse of "Formless Repentance" and personally looking into our own hearts.

Having purified ourselves, we may receive the bodhisattva precepts -- that is, the 3 Refuges (Buddha, Dharma, Sangha), the 3 Pure Precepts and the 10 Prohibitory Precepts --- a total of 16. The Nirvana Sutra states, "Although all living beings are replete with the Buddha Nature, they must uphold the precepts as the cause before they can perceive it." Therefore, let us give thought to the meaning of "keeping the precepts is exactly Buddhahood." Until we fully understand our true nature and penetrate it thoroughly, we may understand the precepts as guidelines for daily living and a framework for Buddhist practice.

Lastly, in acknowledgment of our receiving the precepts and joining the family of Buddha, we are given a rakusu (small Buddhist robe which one sews according to the traditional way) and a kechimyaku or lineage paper upon which our Buddhist name (given on this occasion by the teacher) is written along with the names of all ancestors in the lineage from Shakyamuni Buddha to our present teacher. The red line that connects your name and all others written therein illustrates the truth that the precepts are indeed the lifeblood of all Buddhas.

Receiving the precepts is an important part of Buddhist practice available to anyone regardless of mental or physical ability. It is the way by which we manifest the truth of our own Buddhahood here in the world, right now.

Taizan Maezumi Roshi
(used with permission of Zen Center of Los Angeles)



Sojun Mel Weitsman, Tassajara Commentary on Suzuki Roshi's Ordinary Mind and Buddha, from 'Not Always So'. continued:

Suzuki Roshi: "Our activity is both cosmic and personal. So there's no need to explain what we're doing. We may want to explain it, but we should not feel uneasy if we can't, because it is impossible to understand." That is why we sometimes have such a hard time when we go home, and your mother says, "What are you doing?" And you say, "I kind of know, but I can't explain it." So, I always say that if you want to understand what you're doing you should go home and explain it to your mother. This is a first rate koan. S.R.: "Actually you are here, right here. So before you understand yourself you are you."



We have to stand up in the midst of not knowing. If we wait until we understand, we won't be able to make a move. If you are willing to do that, you'll know, even though you don't know you know. Then he says, "After you explain, you are not really you any more, because you just have an image. But usually, you will stick to the



image, which is not you, and you'll ignore the reality." We create an explanation and then we believe in the story. And then, we lose the thing itself. That is why it may be good to be silent and make an effort to demonstrate your understanding through your actions. Suzuki Roshi once said, "Because I have to give a talk, I make a mistake on purpose." It may be a big mistake to explain our practice, but we have to do it.

"As Dogen Zenji said, 'we human beings attach to something that is not real and forget all about what is real.' That is actually what we do. If you realize this point you will have perfect composure and you can trust yourself whatever happens to you, it doesn't matter. You trust yourself, and this is not the usual trust or belief in what is not real. "In one sense it doesn't matter, and in another it does. On the side of momentariness it matters, but in the long run, it doesn't matter at all. So, we have these two sides: the momentary side, of discontinuous time, the side of comparative values. We compare ourselves to others, and that's how we know who we are. We find our place and our identity by familiarity with everything around us.

The other side is to know who we are regardless of our surroundings because that knowledge is not dependent on comparing our self to others. So whatever happens to us. It doesn't matter. We know who we are. And we have composure because we know that we're Buddha. It is the continuous or eternal life of this always now moment. In the realm of comparative values, we think about justice, righteousness, war, atrocity, pain, pleasure and suffering. This is the human side. It's only human beings that worry about these things; and animals and plants to a lesser extent. The rest of the universe doesn't seem to be concerned. Planets explode and the universe is constantly being destroyed and renewed. But as human beings we suffer because of our attachments in the realm of comparative values. In the realm of absolute value we find our virtue, our trust, and our composure. It can be hard to find our composure in the hustle and bustle of our daily life. Everything is changing and shifting including morality and values. There is nothing stable. It looks like civilization is advancing. But although it is constantly changing, nothing is really changed, except the toys. In the realm of comparative values, toys are necessary. A baby needs toys in order to learn how to be in the world.

Uchiyama Roshi used to have sesshins with no lectures and no kinhin. Just sit facing the wall all day. He called it sesshin without toys. But I think it's okay to have sesshin with toys, because toys help us in our play. In order to learn to play or to interact with each other, we have some toys. It's play! The play of the bodhisattvas! Bodhisattvas play in the realm of enlightenment. All work and no play - not so good for you. But, it's serious play. So, your legs are hurting, and you take it seriously.

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Suzuki Roshi continues: "whatever happens to you, it doesn't matter, you trust yourself, and this is not the usual trust or belief in what is not real. When you are able to sit without [being attached to] any image or any sound, with an open mind, that is true practice. When you can do that, you are free from everything. Still, it's all right for you to enjoy your life moment after moment, because you are enjoying your life as both momentary and eternal. Our life is momentary, and at the same time, each moment includes its own past and future."

Each moment is independent, and each moment, each activity has its dharma position. Dogen says that, each moment's activity has its dharma position and can't be moved. One thing doesn't change into another, even when it appears that way. Spring does not become summer. Spring is spring, summer is summer. Spring includes both past and future. Summer likewise, has its past and future. And that dharma position is both momentary and eternal life. 'So our life is momentary and at the same time each moment includes its own past and future.' S.R.: "In this way our momentary and eternal life will continue. This is how we actually lead our everyday life. How we enjoy our every day life, and how we have freedom from various difficulties." Then he talks about how he was sick in bed. He was at Reed College giving a talk and then after that just before he got on the plane he had a gallbladder attack. It was very painful, and when he got back, he went to the hospital.

S.R.: "I was sick in bed for a long time, and I was thinking about these things. I was just practicing zazen in bed. I should enjoy being in bed (laughing). Sometimes it was difficult, but then I laughed at myself, why is it so difficult? Why don't you enjoy your difficulty? I think this is our practice." Suzuki Roshi always encouraged us to enjoy our difficulties. He had a very difficult life himself, and this is how he expressed his enlightenment. He said that it's not like, when you're enlightened you won't have any more difficulties. When you finally become enlightened, you may not like it, so you should be very careful about what you wish for.



SAVE THE DATE

Women's Zen Retreat

A retreat for women will be hosted at Empty Nest Zendo, in the Sierra Foothills just South of Yosemite, July 21-23. Signup at BZC or contact Baika (baika2@gmail.com), before 9:00 pm at (925)287-9860 or (510).407-7910. For more information, www.emptynestzendo.org

The retreat will include zazen, training in Zen forms, a class on female Zen ancestors, and a council-style meeting to discuss issues pertinent to women's Zen practice as well as time for hiking, swimming, and resting. BZC women and children are welcome.

BZC Board Meeting

The Berkeley Zen Center board of directors will be meeting June 4, 9:00 am, in the community room. All sangha members are invited to attend.

Japan Trip for Men and Women

Myoan Grace Schireson is leading a trip to Japan Oct 21-Nov 5. The trip will include cultural activities (incense ceremony, tea ceremony, flower arranging), visits to outstanding Zen temples, visits to historical women's temples, overnight stay at Eiheiiji, and 4 nights at Suzuki-Roshi's home temple, Rinso-in. There will be free time for sightseeing in Tokyo, Kamakura, Nara and Kyoto as well. Cost of the trip excluding airfare is \$1750.00. It includes two week accommodations, rail pass and food during temple stays. Current group plane ticket cost is about \$940.00 for round trip, non-stop, San Francisco-Osaka For more information contact grace@netptc.net or call 559.877.2400.



Precious Gems: A Summer Sutra Study Class

Beginning Thursday, July 6, we will offer a class of sutra study. Each night the class will recite and discuss an entire short sutra from the Pali Cannon, the original teachings of Shakyamuni Buddha. We will cover a variety of juicy topics, including right speech, loss of loved ones, and a serial killer. Come to one meeting of the class or all, to accommodate your summer vacation plans. Class will be led by Laurie Senauke; call her with questions (lauries@kushiki.org; 845-2215); the fee is \$5 per class. NOTE: Class will begin at 7:00 PM (uncharacteristically), and the dates are broken up; note the schedule below:

July 6 - class: 7 pm to 8:30

July 13 - no class due to sangha potluck

July 20 - class: 7 pm to 8:30

July 27 - no class

August 3 - class: 7 pm to 8:30

August 10 - class: 7 pm to 8:30

NOTE: The BZC Newsletter invites sangha members to submit short articles, poems, or cartoons. Send to: eherzog@lmi.net. Deadline is the 20th of the month.

Planning for BZC's Future and Financial Needs

The BZC Board will be hosting a gathering for all sangha members on Sunday afternoon, June 25 from 2-4 pm at Gerry Oliva's home. We will be discussing BZC's future financial needs and strategizing ways of meeting them. For more information, check the bulletin board or contact Andrea Thach, (510) 420-0902 (h), andrea.thach@gmail.com, or Gerry Oliva, (510) 652-7217 or dyleli@itsa.ucsf.edu.



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 Senauke the Thursday before to let

her know if you're hoping to attend. For more information, call Laurie at 845-2215.

SCHEDULE

June 3	Childcare
June 10	Childcare
June 17	Sesshin, No kidzendo/childcare
June 24	Childcare
July 1	Childcare
July 8	Childcare
July 15	Kidzendo
July 22	Childcare
August 5	Childcare
August 12	Childcare
August 19	Kidzendo
August 26	Childcare

KIDZENDO

A talk in the zendo for young ones three and up is offered the third Saturday of each month. We meet upstairs at the Senauke's household (1933 Russell) at 9:45 for a briefing on forms, then sojourn to the zendo for the first ten minutes of lecture starting at 10:10. Afterwards, children may join the regular Saturday childcare program if they wish.

Ashes Ceremony for Butch Baluyut

On July 8 at 1:30pm we will conduct an ashes ceremony at the jizo garden for our late friend, former resident, and priest, Butch Baluyut. All are invited to attend.



Desire and Love In Mahayana Zen Buddhism

By Raul Moncayo

There are two views of desire within Buddhism: the Hinayana and Mahayana view. The first is much easier to understand because it fits with dual views or with how language and formal logic divide things into good and bad, true and false. But the Hinayana and Mahayana views are found in all spiritual traditions including Zen. Nowadays people criticize the distinction because the Hinayana term is seen as a derogatory reference to traditional Theravada Buddhism. Since the Theravada tradition is also represented in the West in the form of a westernized version of Vipassana meditation, there are ways in which the distinction does not really apply.



Classically, the division between Hinayana and Mahayana is traced to the council of Vaisali about 500 years after the death of the historical founder. The Hinayana School, as the Mahayana called it, emphasized strict solitary monastic practice in relative isolation from the social world. The ideal was the arahat who left the human world to meditate in the forest. They made a distinction between the monks and the laity. The Mahayana school, under the bodhisattva ideal, did not make an absolute distinction between nirvana and sam-



sara, the mundane and the supramundane, lay people and monks, enlightenment and delusion. True enlightenment is beyond enlightenment and delusion, ordinary people and saints. The Mahayana advocated strong daily practice but remaining in the world, practicing in the world, and putting other people's enlightenment before your own. Since Vipassana practitioners in the US also remain in the ordinary world, the distinction does not apply to them.

The Hinayana and Mahayana views are represented within Zen, by the southern and northern schools of Zen in China as reported in the Platform Sutra. Shen Hsiu represents the southern school and Hui-Neng the Northern school. Hui-Neng is known as the sixth ancestor. They both wrote two poems that represent the spirit of both schools. Shen Hsiu defines the practice as one of wiping the mirror of the mind clean. This poem implies a distinction between clean and dirty, the immaculate mirror and a dust-soiled mirror. Hui-Neng's poem emphasized emptiness, and since there is no mirror and no dust, we practice cleaning although there is nothing to clean. In emptiness there is no enlightenment and no delusion, true mind is no mind, and true Buddha is no Buddha. Neither dust nor the mirror has inherent existence. Some have interpreted one teaching as superior to the other, but Sekito Kisen, who wrote the Sandokai poem, said that there are no southern or northern schools. Both are different aspects of the teaching and are necessary for different people at different moments of time. For those who think that formal practice is not necessary, then the Southern school applies, whereas for those who fall into dualistic views of the dharma, then the northern teaching of no gaining idea and beginner's mind is the right counterpoint. In the Shobogenzo, Dogen also taught that there is no Hinayana or Mahayana Buddhism, although he himself felt the pull of the lay and monastic forms of practice in his early and later teaching.

The four noble truths represent the Hinayana aspect of the teaching and is the first turning of the dharma wheel. According to the four noble truths, life is suffering and the cause of suffering is desire. As the cause of suffering, desire is bad or problematic, whereas Nirvana is good and represents happiness, the extinction of desire and the overcoming of suffering. From this perspective, the solution to the problem of desire is to let go of desire. As one of the four bodhisattva vows goes: desires are inexhaustible, I vow to end them. But this koan already contains a paradox: how can desires be ended if they are inexhaustible? The traditional solution to this koan is to sublimate desire by turning desire into an aspiration for the dharma.

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Buddha was the doctor for the existential pains of humanity and Buddhism is primarily concerned with the question of suffering. Gautama lived in his father's palace where all his desires were at least apparently satisfied. Buddhist legend and lore tells us that a sage told his father, the king, that his son would either be a political or spiritual leader. To guarantee a succession to his political administration, and to prevent that Gautama become a spiritual leader, his father satisfied all his desires and discouraged him from leaving the palace. But the ignorance of Buddha's father resulted in unintended consequences. The kingdom was left without a king-leader but the culture at large gained a spiritual leader.

Buddha's desire was not satisfied with the various objects of desire; he still had some yearning and curiosity. One day Gautama left the protection of the palace and came across the reality of suffering in the form of an old person, a sick person, a madman and a poor woman. Upon seeing them he made a vow to end all suffering. Siddharta could not just go out and be with people, he had to find a way to help them and himself. The four types of people Siddharta encountered represent the gamut of social and health services provided by the modern state: geriatric care, health care, mental health services, and social services. These are all prime fields for bodhisattva practice.

To be continued



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