



Berkeley Zen Center



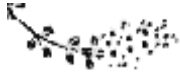
August 2012 Newsletter

OKUMURA ROSHI TEACHING RETREAT

Saturday, August 4, 6:00 am-4:30 pm

Shohaku Okumura will return for his annual visit and day of teaching at BZC on August 4.

The first part of the day will be structured as our usual Saturday program, with a lecture by Okumura Roshi at 10:15 am, followed by kinhin, a short period of zazen, and buffet lunch in the community room. After a rest period, we will sit another period of zazen and then Okumura Roshi will offer 1½ hours of teaching, followed by a final period of zazen. He will be speaking on Ryokan's waka poems. Materials will be available at the retreat. The morning lecture is open to the public. The afternoon lecture is open to people who come for the teaching retreat. There is a sign-up sheet to help the cooks plan for meals. The fee for the day, or part of the day, is a sliding scale of \$30-50. If you have questions or cannot come to BZC to sign up, please contact the director for the day, Carol Paul, at 510-206-5051 or caroljpaul@yahoo.com.



BZC Summer Break

Sunday, August 12 – Friday, August 24

During this time our normal schedule is suspended, though informal zazen will be held in the mornings and evenings. If you wish to volunteer to open and close the zendo at these times, you can sign up on the zendo bulletin board. No experience necessary.

During the interim David Weintraub and Catherine Cascade will complete their ceremonies of Dharma Transmission with Steve Weintraub and Hozan Alan Senauke respectively. This joyous and complicated activity is being conducted with the guidance and encouragement of Sojun Roshi.



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

August

Founder's Ceremony

Thursday, 8/2, 6:20 pm

Friday, 8/3, 6:40 am

Bodhisattva Ceremony

Saturday, 8/4, 9:40 am

Okumura Roshi Teaching Retreat

Saturday, 8/4, 6:00 am-4:30 pm

Summer Recess

Sunday, 8/12 – Friday, 8/24

September

Two-Day Study Retreat

Saturday, 9/1 – Sunday, 9/2

Founder's Ceremony

Monday, 9/3, 6:20 pm

Tuesday, 9/4, 6:40 am

Bodhisattva Ceremony

Saturday, 9/8, 9:40 am

Half-Day Sitting

Sunday, 9/9

All-Sangha Potluck & Board Nominations

Tuesday, 9/11, 6:30 pm dinner, 7:30 pm meeting

Fundraising Party

Saturday, 9/22, 11:00 am-2:00 pm

Women's Sitting

Sunday, 9/23

Mountains and Rivers Sesshin

Thursday, 9/27 – Saturday, 9/29

20s and 30s DHARMA GROUP

September – December

Sojun Roshi invites students in their 20s and 30s to join him once a month for a short period of zazen and open discussion about Zen, Buddhism, the teachings, meditation, and/or your own practice. Selected Buddhist texts may also be discussed. Meetings are held in the zendo on Saturdays after lecture at 11:30 am.

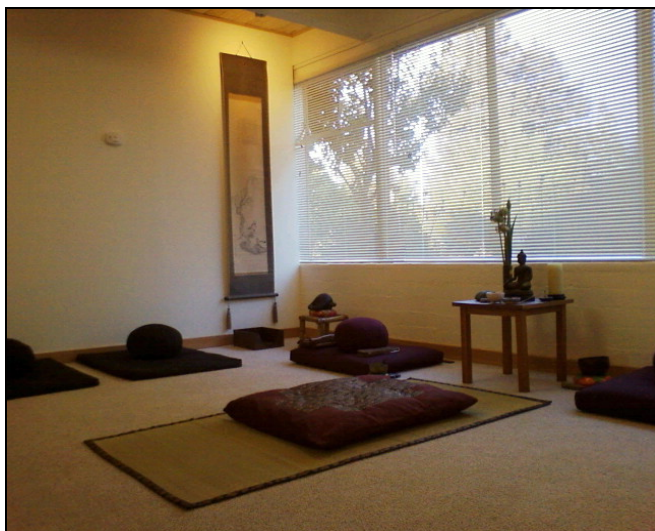
Upcoming dates are:

September 15

October 20

OPEN HOUSE & ZENDO WARMING

Saturday, August 11, 2:00 pm – 5:00 pm



It is our great pleasure to invite you, our friends, families and benefactors to an open house and zendo warming. Join us in celebration of Ensho-ji, Mt. Diablo Zen Group's new home, 404 Gregory Lane, Pleasant Hill, CA. Refreshments will be served. Please RSVP to Baika at baika2@gmail.com

We meet regularly on Wednesday evenings, and are open Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings at 6:00 am for zazen and service.

DHARMA GROUP OPENING

There are openings available in a dharma study group focused on supporting people who often sit at home. The group meets at BZC every Monday evening from 7:15 to 9:00 pm for zazen and study, on an academic calendar – i.e., with a winter break, a spring break, and a summer break; it is led by BZC senior student Laurie Senauke. For more information, contact her at lauries@kushiki.org. The first meeting after the summer break will be September 10.



Family Activities at BZC

Saturday Morning Childcare Childcare for August will be by appointment. Please e-mail Laurie Senauke at lauries@kushiki.org if you'd like to arrange free childcare on a Saturday morning for zazen from 9:30 to 10:15. After zazen, families are welcome to listen to the lecture on the sound system in the community room. Childcare for 8:45 zazen instruction and beginner orientation may be offered by special arrangement.

Kidzendo There is no kidzendo in August.

September 1	Sesshin – no program
September 8	Childcare
September 15	Childcare
September 22	KIDZENDO
September 29	Childcare

Family Practice E-mail Group To make it easier to publicize, announce and remind ourselves about family practice activities at BZC, we have a Yahoo group. We'd love to have you join this list if you have children in your life, even if you don't typically attend family practice events. We promise to only send, at most, ONE e-mail per week, just a short reminder of upcoming events. To join, just e-mail Laurie at lauries@kushiki.org or Marie at marie_hopper@sbcglobal.net.



LABOR DAY WEEKEND STUDY SESSHIN

Saturday, September 1 – Sunday, September 2

Hozan Alan Senauke will lead this year's Labor Day sesshin from 5:00 am to 9:10 pm on Saturday, September 1 and 5:00 am to 5:00 pm on Sunday, September 2. Our study topic this year will be Dogen's "Raihai Tokuzui"/"Getting to the Marrow by Doing Obeisance." This fascicle explores the nature of Buddha activity equally available to all sentient beings with a sequence of vivid stories mostly about enlightened women. We've not studied this before at BZC, so here is an opportunity to plunge in together. Two translations will be available before sesshin. For more information contact the sesshin director, Carol Paul, 510-206-5051, or caroljpaul@yahoo.com.

Old and Young
Thoughts from Sojun Roshi
August, 2012

For a long time, practitioners have been concerned about the scarcity of younger people in the sangha. This is understandable. For an institution to maintain itself, as members age and retire, it is important and necessary to have young enthusiastic people to help keep the practice vital and lively. Sometimes younger folks will complain about the scarcity of peers and feel a bit isolated. Younger people who are interested in Zen are often drawn more to a residential style of practice like Green Gulch or Tassajara. Many younger people start here and go on to a residential practice, which I encourage. Sometimes they may come back to BZC. It sometimes happens that I will send young students to train at Tassajara in a more concentrated way.

Consequently I have students in various practice places. Young people are often still restless and although drawn to practice, may stay for a while and leave in order to explore the possibilities that the world has to offer. Some make a full circle after becoming settled.

At the same time there is a great value (or virtue) and wisdom in the long, sincere practice of a mature Zen student that is incomparable. When I started the BZC, I expected more transient seekers who would experience practice and then move on. As it turned out, the sangha has developed as a group of steady longtime members. I also envisioned it as an extended neighborhood zendo. In order to have this kind of steady practice, one has to have a somewhat settled life style. The early hours (we used to sit at 5:00 am) are not conducive to a student schedule, and whatever schedule you might think would work for students has already been thought of. Making Zen practice available through school is one way. I taught Sonoma Mountain Zen Center Abbot Jakusho Kwong's class in Zen at Sonoma State College in 1971, which was quite successful. Some of those students are still practicing to this day.

People often begin practicing when they are older, have seen through the illusions of worldly success, and are truly interested in engaging with others in developing in a truly mature way. It doesn't matter to me if someone is young or old. Although I like to encourage younger people, I intuitively am drawn to dedicated sincere students of any age.

Last year when I did a teaching at Ekoji in Richmond, Virginia, there was a pre-teen boy who later sent me a card. He said, "I am glad that you could come to Ekoji. I have never seen a Zen Master before. Your thoughts have inspired me. I now sit in zazen with a whole different mindset. Thanks so much, Luke." So what is old and what is young? The young and the old complement each other and need each other. A sangha of young people can easily lose their way, and a sangha of old people have no venue for transmitting their knowledge, experience and wisdom.

I am not so worried. The way children learn from their parents is by watching their behavior. When our practice is inspired, others will be inspired by our practice.

-Sojun

BENJI POEM
Spring Practice Period 2012



*To Marie Hopper,
Dharma Heart Radiant Spring, Kisen Hoshin*

Emperor Wu built temples. Bodhidharma said,
"No merit," and left for his cave.
You figure it out.
Trust without attachment?

But Dharma Heart, mother of Sam and Eli, sits in our midst; tells
us stories; calls Bodhidharma grandfather; cultivates secure
attachment.

Remember Leo, the Lightning Bug, who tried to find his light?
To all of us who desire and try, Radiant Spring sends waves of
light and comfort.

*Let us hear our shuso.
From Benji Sue Oehser, Ju Myo Sei Shin*



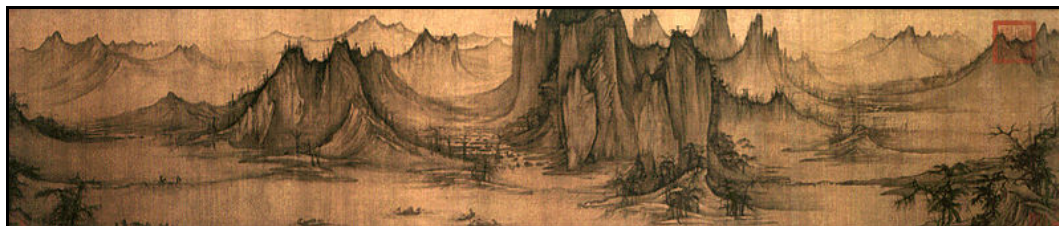
PARTY
for Building Improvement Program
Saturday, September 22, 11:00 am - 2:00 pm

BZC will kick off its 2012 Building Improvement Program (BIP) fundraising with a party on Saturday, September 22, from 11:00 am -2:00 pm. In 2010, the Board of Directors established the BIP to ensure the long-term care of our wonderful temple and practice place. This year the Project Management Team is focusing on two major projects— structural repairs and façade improvements to the front of 1933 Russell Street and functional and design improvements to the community room porch. Our Project Management Team completed last year’s project, a seismic retrofit of the community room porch, way under budget, for just \$3,000. This was achieved through careful project management and lots of good volunteer labor. Come celebrate the work completed and get information on the projects ahead. Help raise some money through a silent auction and a raffle, and enjoy great food, drinks, and music.

Here is a preview of a few of the items available through the auction and raffle.

- Private tour and wine tasting for 40 at Terra Firma Farms
- Portrait of Sojun, painted by one of our members, and a sketch of Hozan
- Guided ski/snowshoe day in Tahoe, one night’s lodging in a north shore home with a lake view included
- Private tea gathering for up to ten guests, with tea sensei Meiya Wender at Green Gulch Farm’s “Sowing the Moon” teahouse
- Haircut with Peter Thomas, owner of Peter Thomas Hair Salon on Shattuck
- A \$100 gift certificate to The Monastery Store (online), purveyors of lovely zafus, statues and incense
- A 60-minute traditional Thai massage at Metta Thai Massage in Albany
- Two dozen home-baked water bagels by the former sole source of commercial water bagels in Eugene, Oregon
- \$40 gift certificate for Venus Restaurant
- Hand-knit mittens
- And lots more...

A complete list of items and minimum auction bids will be circulated closer to the event. Mark the date in your calendar right now! We look forward to seeing you there.



- Fisherman's Evening Song, Xu Daoning c.1049

SILENT AUCTION

GET YOUR GROUPS TOGETHER!

As you know, the silent auction is a big part of our September Party (shhhhhhh). There are several items that can be bid on as a group, including a tea ceremony at Green Gulch Farm for up to 14, a hike and nature photography clinic for up to 15 (or so), a homemade dinner with music for six, and a guided seminar on end-of-life issues for up to ten. Start putting your groups together now so you can sign up and bid. Next month we'll have the full list of items, so stay tuned!

JUKAI PHOTOS

Photos from the 2012 Jukai ceremony and after-party will be posted shortly on the private BZC photo site. If you are a member or friend, but don't know how to get to it, contact Ko Blix at kofotofactory@me.com.

HELP US GO GREEN

If you can view the newsletter online, why not go green?

It has been some time since the last update of our mailing list for the BZC newsletter. You may no longer be interested in receiving a monthly hard copy of the newsletter in the mail, preferring to save paper and trees—and the cost of postage.

If you are getting the newsletter by mail and would like to switch delivery mode, please e-mail the Office Manager at bzcoffice manager@gmail.com and let us know your preference(s) for delivery. If you have an e-mail address, you have the option of being notified by e-mail when the newsletter is available to view on the BZC website.

Thanks for helping us all go green.

- The Office Manager

August 2012 BZC Newsletter

BOARD NOMINATIONS

The BZC board is currently finalizing its search for prospective candidates for our member-at-large election this October. Formal nominations will be made at the all-sangha meeting on Tuesday, September 11, immediately following the potluck that begins at 6:30 pm. In recruiting candidates we have identified a variety of skills that support our work, including but not limited to: communication, organization, information technology, money management, fundraising, engineering, building maintenance and nonprofit law. Board members are expected to attend monthly Sunday morning meetings as well as to serve on one or more working committees—finance, project management and development. At our September meeting, all BZC members are welcome to nominate fellow members for this position, but please contact them first concerning willingness to be nominated.

We hope to see you at the dinner and meeting, and wholeheartedly welcome your participation in the nomination process.



*Meeting of
Village Elders,
Safavid dynasty*

NEW BZC COMMUNITY E-MAIL EXCHANGE

A new e-mail list-serve has been established to facilitate communication between BZC members and friends about anything they wish to share with each other. Membership in the group will initially be limited to those whose names appear in our roster.

The idea is that folks who don't want to track (or delete) message threads which are not of personal interest can choose not to join, and filter incoming messages according to preference. This list is not intended for formal communication about BZC business or practice positions. The new Yahoo group is called BZC Community.

Judy Bertelsen and I will be co-moderators, which we hope will involve only minor administrative tasks. Since this group will traffic not only in random informational items, but also make possible "discussion forum" interactions, it will be another wonderful opportunity to learn about right (e-mail) speech. Hozan's recent lecture is a good reference to a useful approach. In any case, the "old" adage regarding electronic communication applies. Compose your message, pause, cultivate great patience, and then consider whether to send it. I apologize for the advice, if not useful or needed.

To join this Yahoo group, send a message to Judy Bertelsen at: jbort@lmi.net. You will receive an invitation. After joining, you can post to the group at: BZC_Community@yahoo.com. Any questions? Peter Overton, peterovrtn@gmail.com, 510-325-2342.

- Peter Overton

WELL-BEING LIST

When friends or family are ill or injured, it is natural to turn to the sangha for encouragement and support. BZC members can request well-being services for loved ones, and/or ask to have their names placed on the well-being list. The names on the list are chanted twice a week during well-being services, and also posted on the bulletin board.

Until now, our practice has been to leave names on the well-being list for a month, unless otherwise requested. Over the years, some members have asked to have names placed on the list indefinitely, when the person has a serious condition that will not improve over the one month interval. Some of these names have been on our list for many years. Only a few members request that names be left on the list indefinitely, although many members have loved ones who are living with difficult, incurable conditions for extended periods of time. If everyone with a serious condition was on the list for the length of their illness, the list would become too long for the scale of the service. The Practice Committee has therefore decided to revise our current practice, so that we can offer the positive energy of our services equally to everyone in the sangha while maintaining the list at a reasonable length.

Beginning August 1, we will try extending the length of time that names can be on the list from one month to three months, so that we are offering more support to those with serious conditions. At the same time, we would like to end the practice of placing names on the list indefinitely, so that the list does not get too long for the service. The names that are currently on the "indefinite list" will be treated as though they were added to the list on August 1, which means they will be removed from the list at the end of October. Members will always be welcome to place names that have been removed back on the list after some time has passed. For example, a particular name might cycle on and off the list several times over a period of years, as the person moves through the ups and downs of their situation.

To place a name on the well-being list, please contact the Zendo Manager, Tamar, by e-mail at tlxeno@earthlink.net, or leave a note in the Zendo Manager mail slot on the community room porch. You can also contact Tamar to schedule a well-being service or a memorial service and to give her feedback or suggestions regarding this change to our practice.

The following was written by Benji Sue Oehser's husband Gordon after she asked him for his input on her benji poem for the shuso ceremony.

Bodhi came, he brought the dharma.
No Merit, said Emperor Wu.
Unless it helps to feed the sangha,
An en-"lightening bug" will do.



*John Tenniel (1820–1914),
from Lewis Carroll's Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*

**NEWSLETTER
SUBMISSION
DEADLINE:**
Third Friday of the
month before each
issue.
September deadline:
Friday, August 17,
8:00 pm.

**Berkeley Zen Center
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