



Berkeley Zen Center



May 2015 Newsletter

Practice Period at BZC

Practice period at BZC this spring begins with the Opening Ceremony on the afternoon of Saturday, May 2 and ends with the Shuso Ceremony on Sunday, June 14. Sojun Roshi has invited Susan Marvin — Sentei Kunka — *Spring Garden/Virtuous Influence* to be Shuso and serve as exemplar of devoted practice for us. We invite BZC members to participate in this time of intensified practice. The full schedule of events is on the BZC website and the bulletin board.

To participate, please complete a registration form on the bulletin board shelf. You must also sign up separately for sesshin and a number of events, even though you may have noted them in your registration form. Those sign-up sheets will be posted.

There are some requirements for participation in the practice period. These are detailed on the registration form. The spirit of this practice is expressed by Sojun Roshi in his words on page 3 of this newsletter.



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

May

Spring Practice Period
Saturday, 5/2 – Sunday 6/14

**One-Day Sesshin/
Open Practice Period**
Saturday, 5/2, 5:00am – 9:00pm

Bodhisattva Ceremony
Saturday, 5/2, 9:40am

Founder's Ceremonies
Monday, 5/4, 6:20pm
Tuesday, 5/5, 6:40am

Half-Day Sitting
Sunday, 5/17, 8:00am – 12:00 noon

Practice Period Dinner and Skit Night
Saturday, 5/23, 5:30pm

Zendo Holiday (Memorial Day)
5/25

June

Founder's Ceremonies
Wednesday, 6/3, 6:20pm
Thursday, 6/4, 6:40am

Lay Ordination / Zaike Tokudo
Saturday, 6/6

Bodhisattva Ceremony
Saturday, 6/6, 9:40am

**Five-Day Sesshin/
End Practice Period**
Wednesday, 6/10 – Sunday 6/14

Shuso Hossen
Sunday, 6/14, 3:30pm

Zendo Holiday
Monday, 6/15

Half-Day Sitting
Sunday, 6/28, 8:00am – 12:00 noon



Practice Period Events

Opening sitting: May 2, 5:00am-9:00pm
Opening/Shuso Entering Ceremony: May 2, 4:00pm
Shuso talks/lectures: May 4, 16, 22, and 30
Classes: Thursdays, May 7-June 4, 7:15-8:45 pm
Bansan (tea and dharma discussion with the abbot):
Friday, May 15, 5:40pm (*please note date change*)
Dinner and Skit Night: Saturday, May 23, 5:30pm
Shosan (dharma dialogue with the abbot): June 5,
5:40pm and June 8, 5:40am
Lay Ordination: Saturday, June 6, 3:00pm
Five-Day Sesshin: June 10-14
Shuso Hossen (dharma dialogue with the shuso):
Sunday, June 14, 3:30pm

BZC Campout

All are warmly invited to the annual Berkeley Zen Center Campout, scheduled for July 11-12. We've reserved a group campsite in nearby Tilden Park, and will meet for a potluck dinner and possibly a short hike, as well as



s'mores and songs around the campfire, sleeping under the stars, and waking up to oatmeal and coffee/tea/cocoa in the morning. Join us to pass on the campfire rounds we grew up with, tell stories, and learn the latest songs from our own kids.

All ages are welcome! If you prefer not to stay for the night, come for the dinner and company. If you would like to stay but are missing a tent or sleeping bag, let us know, and we can almost definitely find one for you. Contact marie_hopper@sbcglobal.net if you have questions, and look for a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in mid-June.

Family Activities at BZC

Saturday Morning Supervised Play

Supervised play is offered many Saturdays (schedule below) from 9:40am zazen through lecture, supervised by Berkeley High student Lihong Chan. To use this service, or for coverage for 8:45am 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 9:30am to 11:15am (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 9:30am to 11:15am. To RSVP, contact lauries@kushiki.org. Family practice schedule:

May 2	Sesshin - no program
May 9	Theater Games
May 16	Kidzendo (note date change)
May 23	Supervised play
May 30	Supervised play
June 6	Supervised play
June 13	Sesshin - no program
June 20	TBA
June 27	TBA
July 4	Zendo Holiday - no program

Note: supervised play during the summer months will be arranged ad hoc by appointment. contact Laurie at lauries@kushiki.org

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!

Practice Period

Our six-week spring practice period will begin Saturday, May 2 with a one-day sitting. The requirements and sign-up sheet are on the bulletin board. Practice period gives us an opportunity to examine the rhythm of our Zazen attendance and make adjustments according to the changing circumstances of our other obligations. If we can realistically balance our many obligations with our zendo attendance and activities, respecting each one's Buddha nature, studying the Dharma, and harmonizing with the Sangha, we can have a rewarding practice period together. When we can forget about our self, and simply contribute our effort while supporting each other, all aspects of our life can come together, with zazen as the fundamental touchstone.

Practice period can be like spring cleaning. We look around and let go of what we have been dragging around and lighten up our load going forth into the rest of the year both refreshed and rejuvenated. I encourage all of us to attend the opening day sesshin when we will install long-time practitioner Susan Marvin as the head student (Shuso). Her attendant Dean Bradley will be organizing teas where informal dharma discussion can take place.

The five-week class will be based on Ancestor Vasubandhu's teaching model of the eight levels of consciousness interactive (and not interactive) with the dharmas. What are the eight levels? Do I really know what dharmas are? What is true self and what is not? If there is no self then what is there? Where exactly is the ego? How is consciousness transformed into wisdom? These and other questions will be dealt with, and class materials for study will be forthcoming.

So come and enjoy these three fundamental activities together: Buddha, Dharma, Sangha. Let the Dharma turn you as you turn the Dharma. Each one of us is both individual and collective, and one does not interfere with the other. Let's make our effort to find this harmonious balance moment by moment.

- Sojun





Five-Day Sesshin Concludes 2015 Spring Practice Period June 10 - 14

Our spring practice period will conclude with a five-day sesshin from Wednesday, June 10 to Sunday, June 14. The first four days' schedule is from 5:00am until 9:00pm, while the final day's schedule is from 5:00am until 3:10pm, followed at 3:30 by the Shuso Hossen, dharma dialogue with the Shuso. Please sign up on the patio bulletin board for a minimum of three days; we encourage you to make two of those days consecutive. If you want to request an alternative schedule, please speak to the sesshin director. Sign-ups close on Saturday, June 6, at 12:00 noon.

The Shuso Hossen ceremony will begin promptly at 3:30pm, and will be followed by a reception. All practice period and sesshin participants will be supporting the Shuso and our practice by coming with *a* question.

If this is your first sesshin at BZC, it is strongly recommended that you first participate in a full Saturday program, have oryoki instruction, and that you speak with the sesshin director. The fee is \$35 per day, advance payment requested. Leave checks marked "June sesshin" in the laundry room door donation slot. If you have questions, contact the sesshin director Gary Artim gartim@gmail.com or 510.676.9756.



Half-Day Sitting Sunday, May 17 8:00 am - 12:00 noon

Half-day sittings include five periods of zazen, kinhin (walking meditation) and an informal tea. Sojun Roshi asks participants to commit to the entire four-hour schedule. A \$10 donation is requested. If you have questions or if you cannot sign up on the bulletin board, contact the May half-day director Peter Overton peterovrtn@gmail.com or 510.848.5239



Saturday Participation

If you stay for breakfast on Saturday morning it is expected that you will stay for the following work period (Samu).

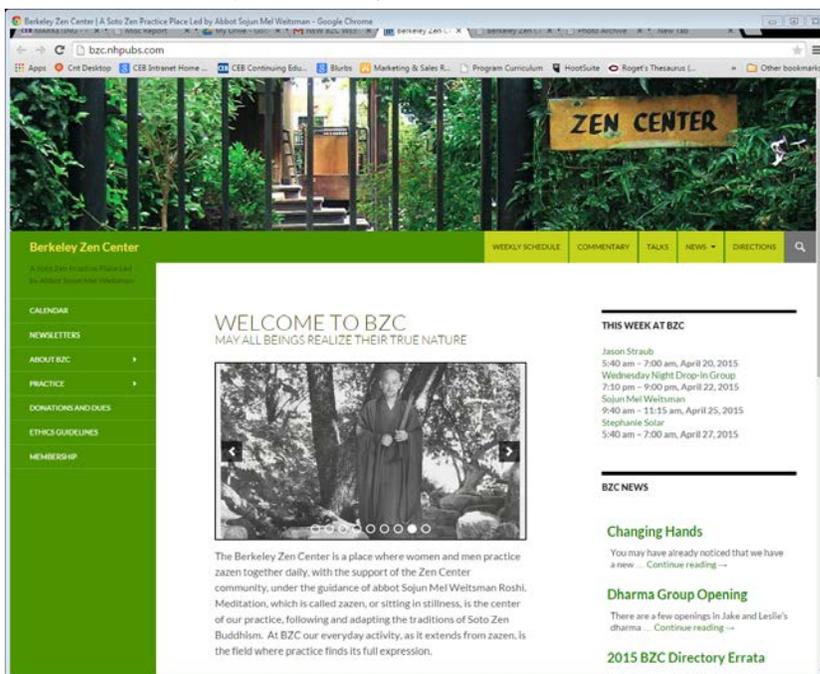
New BZC Website Launches May 1st

The start of this year's spring practice period will coincide with a major milestone in BZC's presence on the World Wide Web. Our completely new WordPress-built website will go live on May 1.

The new site will introduce several new features, including:

- Podcasting for our dharma talks and classes (subscribe through iTunes or RSS)
 - Live calendars of upcoming events, family practice events, and 20s and 30s group events
 - Faster downloads of files, including the newsletter PDFs
 - Better image gallery views
- ...and more.

The best part is that you won't need to do anything to enjoy the new site. Simply continue to visit www.berkeleyzencenter.org as you always have. If you miss any features from the old site, catch any errors, or have any other feedback, please drop our webmaster, Troy DuFrene, a line at troydufrene@gmail.com.



Light and Dark

While studying with Rocky, Ross points out a quote from Dogen's teacher Rujing which throws both Ross and Rocky into great doubt:

"Nowadays elders in monasteries keep cats; this is really

unacceptable; only stupid people do this." Between Nan Chu'an's cutting the cat in two and this present reading, both Rocky and Ross are seeing Dogen in a new light which is rather dark...

- Ross Estes Blum

2015 BZC Directory Errata

There were a number of mistakes in the BZC Directory this year. We are preparing an erratum that we mail out to our Yahoo groups in a few weeks. If you would like to have one sent to you by regular mail, please contact the office manager at 510.845.2403 or bzcofficermanager@gmail.com.

Two Vases

Barbara Stevens Strauss created a beautiful white vase and donated it to BZC in memory of Nancy McClellan, and Andrea Thach donated a special black Japanese vase.

These vessels will be used and loved.



Saturday Speakers, 10:15 am

May 2 – Sojun Roshi (open practice period)
May 9 – Sojun Roshi
May 16 – Shuso Susan Marvin
May 23 – Hozan Alan Senauke
May 30 – Shuso Susan Marvin

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION DEADLINE

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

**June deadline:
Friday, May15, 8:00 pm**

Friday and Monday Talk Schedule

May 1, Friday 5:40 pm – Meghan Collins
May 4, Monday 6:25 am – Shuso Susan Marvin
May 11, Monday 6:25 am – TBA
May 18, Monday 6:25 am – TBA
May 25, Monday – Zendo Holiday

Noon Zazen every weekday 12:00 - 12:30

Informal meditation

Come in. Sit down.

For more information:

mariawinston@yahoo.com

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