



Berkeley Zen Center



March-April 2018 Newsletter

Upcoming Sesshins

March 24 and April 28 are two sesshin dates to mark on your calendar. Both sesshins are on Saturday, with a 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. schedule.

The March 24 sesshin will be led by Gerry Oliva. The April 28 one will be led by Sojun Roshi and will begin our practice period.

The fee for each sesshin is \$35, and should be paid in advance. Leave checks marked with the name of the sesshin in the laundry room door donation slot. Please contact sesshin director Peter Overton (sesshindirectorbzc@gmail.com) with any question or concerns.

Women's Sesshin

This year's Women's Sesshin will be Sunday, March 4, led by Alexandra Frappier (*Seisho Yusho*, Clear Resolve, Courageous Life). The sesshin will be from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and will include zazen, lecture, and discussion. Lunch will be provided buffet style (not oryoki). Contact Mary Duryee (maryduryee@gmail.com) for information.



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

March

Bodhisattva Ceremony
Saturday, 3/3, 9:40am

Women's Sesshin
Sunday, 3/4

Founders' Ceremonies
Monday, 3/5, 6:20pm
Tuesday, 3/6, 6:40am

Half-Day Sitting
Sunday, 3/18

Sangha Potluck & Budget Meeting
Tuesday, 3/20

One-Day Sesshin
Saturday, 3/24

Bodhisattva Ceremony
Saturday, 3/31, 9:40am

April

Founders' Ceremonies
Tuesday, 4/3, 6:20pm
Wednesday, 4/4, 6:40am

Buddha's Birthday Celebration
Saturday, 4/7

Hills & Streams Backpacking Sesshin
Friday 4/20 through Sunday 4/22

One-Day Sesshin/Open Practice Period
Saturday, 4/28

Bodhisattva Ceremony
Saturday, 4/28, 9:40am

Shukke Tokudo

On Saturday, April 21 in the zendo at 3:00 p.m., Ekai Uji Laurie Senauke will receive priest ordination from Steve Weintraub. Please join us for the ordination and reception, welcoming Laurie into the circle of Berkeley Zen Center priests.

20s/30s Hills and Streams Sesshin (April 20–22)

BZC's 20s and 30s Dharma Group is happy to announce it will be hosting its fourth annual "Hills and Streams" backpacking sesshin, from Friday, April 20, through Sunday, April 22 (plus a mandatory orientation meeting on Thursday, April 19). The sesshin will be held at Sky Camp in Point Reyes. You can sign up either at BZC or online at the BZC website. Cancellation deadline is April 8.

The topic of discussion (led by Gerry Oliva) will be the concept of "Acceptance and Radical Acceptance in Zen Buddhism." We will be reading from Suzuki Roshi's talks on the koans "Every Day Is a Good Day" and "Sun-Faced Buddha, Moon-Faced Buddha," and also Thich Nhat Hahn's poem "Call Me by My True Name." This is an intensive meditation retreat which will involve significant hiking and will maintain (to the extent possible) a sesshin atmosphere and practice. This includes long periods of silence, sitting zazen, and shared responsibilities (cooking, cleaning, etc.). If you are new to backpacking or to sesshins, please speak with the directors, Sandeep Lehil or Chris Frost. This sesshin is a wonderful way to connect with other young sangha members and experience practice in wilderness. If you or someone you know is interested in attending, please email Sandeep (slehil@gmail.com) or Chris (chrisfrost@gmail.com). We hope to see many old and new faces there!

BZC Board News

The BZC Board is very pleased to announce that the new Vice President is Carol Paul. Since this change was not made prior to the election last October, she will serve as interim Vice President until next October, when her name will be put forward to the sangha for ratification.

The Board is also pleased to welcome Gregory Smith as its new Recording Secretary.

Sangha members are welcome to attend board meetings. The agenda for meetings will be posted on the two Yahoo group lists several days in advance of each meeting, so that members can see if items of interest will be addressed. The meeting dates in 2018 are: March 18, April 29, May 20, June 10, July 15, August 19, September 16, October 14, and November 18. It has been our practice not to meet in December, and one of the meetings during the summer may be canceled.

All-sangha potlucks are scheduled for March 20 and September 25.

In the next few weeks we will be asking you to fill out a short questionnaire. This will help us update our knowledge of the experience and skills within the sangha. Your response will help us plan our work projects during the year ahead.

Spring Class by Hozan Sensei

The Platform Sutra of Huineng, the Sixth Ancestor of Zen, is an accessible and foundational text of our Zen tradition. This spring, Hozan Alan Senauke will lead a four-week *Platform Sutra* class at 7:15 p.m. on Thursday evenings in the community room, March 29 to April 19.

The sutra's biographical section is compelling, painting a clear picture of Huineng's impoverished and "uneducated"

background, along with his deep and intuitive understanding of Buddhism. The text unfolds his teachings on the essence of mind, the relation between wisdom and concentration, the “formless” precepts, and much more.

Along with several other versions, our main text will be Wong Mou-Lam’s translation, available in *The Diamond Sutra and the Sutra of Hui-neng* (Shambhala Classics). Copies of relevant selections will be available before the class by print and email.

Oryoki Training

Are you ready to deepen your formal meal practice in the zendo? Would you like to explore and learn how to use oryoki bowls with cloths? Next trainings will be March 3 (after Saturday program from 11:30 to noon) and April 13 (Friday 4:30 to 5:00 p.m.) Check the courtyard bulletin board for the sign-up sheet or just drop in. Contact Sue Oehser (510-339-0243 or soehser@earthlink.net) if you have questions or want to pick another date.

Position Changes

Gary Artim will take over from Ken Powelson and join Peter Overton as Co-Sesshin Director.

Community room porch bulletin boards will be maintained by Peter Carpentieri and Ko Blix, assuming the push pins from Afsaneh Michaels.

Heather Burns and Todd Gilens, our newsletter distribution team, will pass the position on to Alexander Coward.

Rhiana Wiggins will assume the role of Kitchen Keeper from Shingetsu Teri Jo Tinus.

Thanks to you all for your dedication! 🙏

Kitchen Practice

One day Wuzhao was working as tenzo at a monastery in the Wutai Mountains. When the Bodhisattva Manjusri suddenly appeared above the pot where he was cooking, Wuzhao beat him. Later he said, “Even if Shakyamuni were to appear above the pot, I would beat him, too!”

—Kosho Uchiyama, *How to Cook Your Life*

Sounds like fun, right?! Working in the kitchen is an important part of our practice at BZC, and the good news is that this practice opportunity is open to everyone. Anyone coming to BZC, whether you are brand new or have been coming for years, is warmly welcomed to join us for work in the kitchen.

There is a kitchen sign-up on the porch bulletin board. Almost every Saturday there are spaces for assistant cooks. You don’t need experience to sign up to help during any Saturday breakfast. Just add your name to an open assistant-cook slot and join the head cook at 6:00 a.m. on the date you choose. Help and guidance will be cheerfully offered!

But in order to beat metaphysical apparitions with a spoon, you’ll need to be trained to be a head cook. This training, too, is open to all. If you’re interested, please email the tenzo (our head head cook): troydufrene@gmail.com. Training to be a head breakfast cook takes two Saturdays: On the first, you’ll assist the tenzo (or, maybe, a former tenzo) in preparing a menu of his or her choice. On the second Saturday, he or she will assist you to prepare a menu of your choice. After that, you’re invited to sign up as a head cook when you can. Trained Saturday cooks can also check in with the tenzo about progressing to becoming sesshin cooks. Just think of all the Bodhisattvas you might get to beat during a sixteen-hour day! We look forward to seeing you in the kitchen soon!

We Offer Light

Bob Boese has been making the candles for Berkeley Zen Center's altars for over forty years. It hasn't been his habit to sit with us, but year after year, month after month, he made and delivered candles. I visited Bob last month. We stood in his workshop and he went through how he has made our candles and what that has meant to him as a spiritual practice. I noticed on his wall was thumb-tacked a yellowed BZC phone directory from 1992. When I left, Bob gave me a folder with copies of fifty pages of correspondence about candles, with the lineage of BZC chidens since 1973. It was sweet to see the patient and careful work of a hidden benefactor.

In the past couple of years, Bob's health has been inconsistent and he couldn't be as reliable with the candles as he had been. I offered to take over that task. I had made candles as a childhood business. As an adult, I made pillar candles for Christmas presents. It is important to me to have someone personally make candles for the altar instead of purchasing them from a store. And if you believe in making merit, there's no better way of leveraging one's effort than making candles for Buddha.

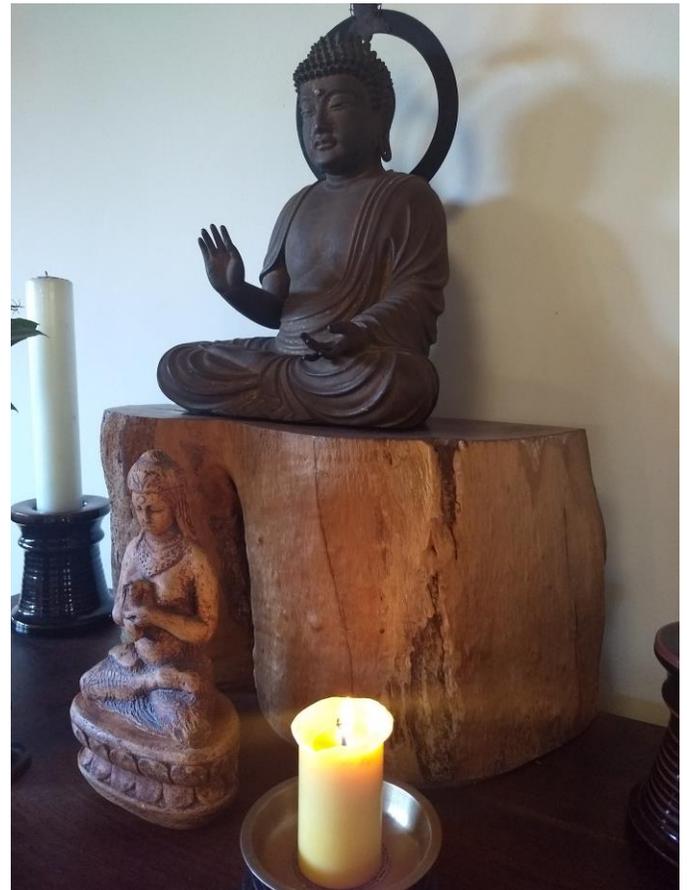
When I started making candles for BZC, I tried to make them out of pure beeswax. I thought that was the best way to be consistent with our stated principles about chemical sensitivities and VOCs. But I had no experience making beeswax candles—I had always used paraffin. While Bob's candles had a yellow appearance, they were actually made of paraffin, too, and he couldn't help me with how to make beeswax candles. It took quite a bit of trial and error to succeed in making beeswax pillars, and even when I did, they didn't burn well. I continued to experiment with different materials and methods. I have recently been making candles that are a

mixture of beeswax and soy and I am pleased that they burn cleanly and well.

I am glad to have a little craft practice like this. I remember a Zen teacher declaiming that every Zen student should practice an art form as part of their training. If I was artistic, maybe I would be an artist. I am not, but I can make this thing with my hands, knowledge, and care. To add a little Zen, I periodically say the great bright mantra while making a batch. Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha.

I daydream about developing a three-volume series of mysteries: *The Temple Chandler*, *The Temple Chandler and the Case of the Missing Sake*, and *The Temple Chandler's Apprentice*. If anyone wants to workshop this, let's talk.

—Mark Copithorne



Family Practice at BZC

BZC Family Practice on Saturdays

BZC Family Practice is offered on many Saturdays (check the calendar for details, and RSVP so we can share late-breaking news), from 9:30 to 11:15 a.m. See details (including a handy new sign-up form!) at our section of the BZC website: www.berkeleyzencenter.org/family-practice. You may use that website form or send an email to lauriesenauke@sonic.net.

Ad Hoc Supervised Play and Support

Childcare while you are taking part in Zazen Instruction and Beginner's Orientation (8:45 a.m. Saturdays) or Practice Discussion, or during the Saturday program during the summer months, is available by prior arrangement. Along with our interest in discovering and developing new forms of practice within our day-to-day family life, we want to help you keep the flame of formal practice alive. Contact Laurie (lauriesenauke@sonic.net) to make arrangements.

Family Practice Email Group

Our Yahoo group makes it easier to communicate about family practice. We only send, at most, one email a week. To join, email Laurie Senauke: lauriesenauke@sonic.net.

Family Practice Schedule

March 3:	Family Practice
March 10:	Family Practice
March 17:	Family Practice
March 24:	Sesshin—no program
March 31:	TBA
April 7:	Buddha's Birthday
April 14:	Family Practice
April 21:	Ordination—no program
April 28:	Sesshin—no program

Please RSVP for ALL family activities.

Saturday Speakers, 10:15 a.m.

March 3	Alexandra Frappier
March 10	Sojun Roshi
March 17	Denkei Raul Moncayo
March 24	Gerry Oliva (sesshin)
March 31	Hozan Alan Senauke
April 7	Leslie Bartholic (Buddha's Birthday)
April 14	Victoria Austin
April 21	Steve Weintraub (or Sojun Roshi)
April 28	Sojun Roshi (sesshin)

Friday and Monday Talk Schedule

March 2	Fri 5:50pm	Ross Blum
March 5	Mon 6:25am	Open discussion
March 12	Mon 6:25am	Bruce Coughran
March 19	Mon 6:25am	Rondi Saslow
March 26	Mon 6:25am	Gary Artim
April 2	Mon 6:25am	Open discussion
April 6	Fri 5:50pm	Alexandra Frappier
April 9	Mon 6:25am	Jed Appelman
April 16	Mon 6:25am	Sue Oehser
April 23	Mon 6:25am	Andrea Henderson
April 30	Mon 6:25am	Shuso talk

Friday Tea Time

Our Friday Tea begins every Friday at 4:45 p.m. It takes place on the patio or in the community room (depending on the weather) and is open to everyone. Please join us as we discuss and question Dharma practice while sipping tea and opening our body and mind to harmony and lightness of being.

Come Sit with Us:

Monday through Friday

5:40–7:00am: zazen, service, soji
5:40–6:30pm: zazen, service

Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday

noon–12:30pm: informal zazen

Samu and Soji

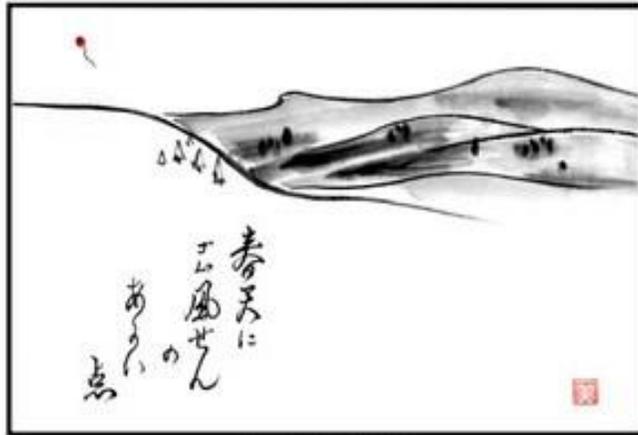
We don't use these terms so much any more. But when our Japanese teachers were with us in the 60s and for some years after, Japanese terms were used for positions and various activities, including Dharma names.

Soji refers to cleaning up: sweeping, mopping, putting things in order after some activity. Every day after morning *zazen* some of us sweep and mop the zendo and adjust the cushions, leaving it as it was when we came. Others sweep the central area and the paths. This is our first activity together after *zazen* and service. So refreshing! At SFZC when Suzuki Roshi was abbot, his room was facing the street and he enjoyed the sound of the brooms on the sidewalk below. He said, "Sweeping the path is [akin to] sweeping the mind." Single-minded activity, *zazen* in motion.

Samu refers to a longer sangha work project. It could be moving stones or branches together. Twice a year we have a work day, a sangha endeavor to take care of projects long overdue. *Samu*, *Zazen*, *Dokusan* or Practice Instruction, and *Teisho* (lecture) are the four fundamental activities of practice. All the various rotating practice positions are forms of *Samu*. We call it work practice. But the terms *Soji* or *Samu* give it a slightly different meaning. Sometimes using a foreign signifier gives a fresh meaning to a familiar activity. In the cool morning we sweep the leaves together into small piles. At that time one person holds the scoop and the other sweeps the leaves into it. There is a subtle satisfaction at play in this silent interactive moment when we agree on which is the last leaf, like the pause at the end of a bow. The next moment it is quickly forgotten as we continue our day. Master Hyakujo was famous for saying that a day of no work was a day of no eating.

Not all of us are in a position to contribute this way. In a lay practice many of us are fortunate simply to be able to practice *zazen*. In that case, being mindful about how we take care of our space in relation to our surroundings and how we treat each other with respect and thoughtfulness is not different.

—Sojun Roshi



Spring sky
Balloon escape —
a red dot
in the spring sky.

(Kazumi Cranney)

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION DEADLINE

**Third Friday of the month before each
issue. Submit items to
knabb@bopsecrets.org.**

**May-June 2018 deadline:
Friday, April 20, 2017**

Berkeley Zen Center
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