



Berkeley Zen Center



September-October 2016 Newsletter

Studies from *Dogen's Extensive Record (Eihei Koroku)* with Hozan Alan Senauke Sunday, September 4

Hozan Alan Senauke will lead this year's one-day study sesshin on Sunday, September 4, from 5:00 am to 5:30 pm. As the summer winds down, this day will provide a quiet and reflective respite. It will include zazen, oryoki meals for breakfast and lunch, soji, and two study and discussion sessions. Our study will be a selection from Dogen Zenji's *Eihei Koroku*, drawn and collected from Dogen's extensive later teaching. These are recorded talks and pithy commentary, part poetry, part performance, offered from the teaching seat in the Dharma Hall, similar in style to those of Chinese masters in the Tang and Sung dynasties.

Materials will be available on the bulletin board shelf in advance of the sesshin. The fee is \$35, and should be paid in advance. Please leave payment marked "Study Sesshin" by Wednesday, August 31, in the donation slot. For more information, contact sesshin director Carol Paul: caroljpaul@yahoo.com or 510-206-5051. A sign-up sheet is posted on the bulletin board.



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

September

Study Sesshin

Sunday, 9/4, 5:00am-5:30pm

Zendo Holiday

Monday, 9/5

Founders' Ceremonies

Tuesday, 9/6, 6:20pm

Wednesday, 9/7, 6:40am

New Member Entering Ceremony

Monday 9/12, 6:25am

All-Sangha Potluck & Board Nominations

Tuesday, 9/13, 6:30pm

Bodhisattva Ceremony

Saturday, 9/17, 9:40am

Sangha Work Day

Sunday, 9/18, 8:30am-4:30pm

Fundraising Party

Saturday, 9/24, 11:00am

October

Half-Day Sitting

Sunday, 10/2, 8:00am-noon

Founders' Ceremonies

Monday, 10/3, 6:20pm

Tuesday, 10/4, 6:40am

Jizo Ceremony

Saturday, 10/8, 1:00-2:30pm

Bodhisattva Ceremony

Saturday, 10/15, 9:40am

Open Aspects of Practice Sitting

Sunday, 10/23, 5:00am-5:30pm

Sejiki

10/29, 10:15am

Tours of 1929A

BZC and our contractor have recently completed the upgrade to the kitchen and bathroom of 1929A, where Ken and Katy live (and the session servers often eat). It's almost expected that construction projects will take longer than expected, and this was no exception — work started in August 2015, and though Ken and Katy were able to move back in in April 2016, final inspection was not completed until July. Improvements included removing an unused vent cavity from the kitchen below (gaining roughly 10 square feet to the room), new flooring, all new kitchen cabinets, a new energy-efficient fridge, and new lighting. We reused the range and the water heater, both of which were in good shape. The bathroom was remodeled to locate the more commonly used public functions (the sink and toilet) closer to the door, while putting in all new floor and wall tile and new fixtures.

Of course, no renovation is without its surprises, and ours included the discovery that the floor joists were spaced too far apart and had been notched out for plumbing, rendering their structural capacity seriously below code. A number of exterior wall studs had also been cut for utilities, similarly weakening their capacity. We reinforced both floor joists and wall studs to bring them up to strength and added insulation and waterproofing in the process. We also discovered dangerously unprotected wiring under the flooring in the attic, which constituted a significant fire hazard. That wiring was replaced. Some of the most important work that was accomplished, which significantly improved the structural integrity and safety of the building, is now performing its function invisible to the eye.

While most of the work for a project of this scale is most efficiently done by a contractor, we did some of the work ourselves. Shelley Brock did the initial design work. Ken Powelson managed the project, sourcing many of the materials and searching out more cost-effective options. Access panels were rebuilt during work day. Walter Kieser made the shower rods in the bathroom, and Ken made the towel racks. Henry Herndon wired up all our smoke detectors to meet code for our final inspection.



During and after renovation



We will be offering guided tours of 1929A at our all-sangha fundraising party on Saturday, September 24, so you'll be able to see the completed construction (in case you missed the impromptu tour held after a semi-recent Saturday program). Come check it out!

Many thanks to the Building Committee members — Ross Blum, Shelley Brock, Mary Duryee (point person), Walter Kieser, Ken Powelson, and Ron Nestor — who helped plan and carry out the renovation project, and to Ken in particular for shepherding the whole project from beginning to end. The project went much longer than expected (9+ months to the point of the apartment being habitable, and closing in on 12 months to button up final details). This amounted to a “second job” on top of Ken’s employment and residency schedule. His steady attention to detail and patience were evident and much needed. Special thanks to both Katy and Ken for their good-natured flexibility and endurance during the time they lived out of suitcases — in so many different locations that they lost exact count (but somewhere between 8 and 9 places in as many months) — and to sangha members Lisa Nelbach, Jed Appelman, Linda Hess, Laurie and Hozan for opening their homes to Ken and Katy while they were itinerant. This was a moving expression of the treasure of sangha.



Sangha Potluck & Board Nominations Tuesday, September 13

Please join us for a potluck dinner on Tuesday, September 13, beginning at 6:30 in the community room. A sign-up sheet is posted on the patio bulletin board for bringing food and drinks and helping with cleanup. After dinner the Board will nominate three candidates for this fall’s election. In recruiting candidates, the Board Nomination and Election Committee has identified skills that support the sangha’s interests, including but not limited to: oral and written communication, organization, information technology, money management, fundraising, engineering, building maintenance, and nonprofit law. Board members are expected to attend monthly meetings and an all-day retreat on a Sunday in February and to serve on at least one working Board committee: finance, buildings, development, electronic communication, nominations/elections. As in the past, all BZC members are welcome to nominate fellow members for this position, but please contact them first concerning their willingness to be nominated. We hope to see you at the dinner and meeting.

BZC Annual Board Election

It’s once again time for members of Berkeley Zen Center to cast their votes for members-at-large of the BZC Board of Directors, the Board’s executive officers, and the three salaried positions at BZC: abbot, vice abbot, and office manager. Following a successful launch in 2015, the Board has decided to conduct the 2016 voting electronically.

BZC eVoting relies on a tokenized, anonymous web survey link emailed to each eligible member. “Tokenized” means that the link is unique and issued just to one member

(by email address). Once the token is used by a member to submit a ballot, the token expires and is no longer usable. The token is encrypted, and the results are completely anonymous. We can verify whether a particular member has voted but not how he or she has voted.

The voting will be exclusively electronic this year. There will be no paper alternative to the electronic ballot. This means that eligible members will need an email address and access to the Internet to cast their ballots. This being the case, the month of September would be a very good time for you to check in with the office manager and update your email address if necessary.

Links to the poll will be emailed at 12:01 am PDT on October 1, 2016. If you haven't received yours that morning, please contact the office manager to request a new ballot. Once you get your email ballot, click the link it contains, and then just follow the instructions on the screen.

Thanks for your support of this year's electronic voting process. If you have specific technical questions about eVoting, please direct them to BZC's webmaster, Troy DuFrene (troydufrene@gmail.com). General questions about voting eligibility or other aspects of the election should be directed to the office manager (bzcofficermanager@gmail.com).

Noon Zazen Bag Lunch

We are continuing the practice of sharing a bag lunch (BYO) and informal discussion with vice abbot Hozan Alan Senauke once a month after noon zazen. Upcoming dates are Thursday, September 22, and Tuesday, October 25.

20s and 30s Dharma Group

BZC invites young adults in their 20s and 30s to join us in a monthly open discussion group about Zen, Buddhism, meditation, and developing a practice. Our aim is to cultivate *kalyana mitta* (spiritual friendship), to provide members with an opportunity to meet others in their age group, and to support each other in bringing practice more fully into our daily lives. The group is collaborative in structure and we encourage members to suggest issues/topics/activities for the group to pursue.

We meet either in the zendo at 11:30 am after Saturday lecture or at a local café on specified dates and locations. Remaining 2016 meetings: Tuesday, September 27 at BZC at 6:30 pm (we'll then walk to a nearby café for food and discussion); Saturday, October 15 at BZC at 11:30 am; Monday, November 21 at BZC at 6:30 pm for a potluck supper; and Saturday, December 17 at BZC at 11:30 am.

For further information, contact Gerry Oliva: gryoliva@gmail.com.

Sojun Roshi's Two-Part Mini Koan Class

Sojun will teach a two-session koan class Monday, October 10, and Monday, October 17, 7:15-8:45 pm in the community room. Sojun's travel plans, and our other classes close to this time, limit the number of evenings available. The titles of the two koans he chooses are yet to be announced. Fee for the class is \$20. A sign-up sheet will be posted on the patio bulletin board closer to the date. All are welcome.

Resident Rental Discussion

At their August 14 meeting, the BZC Board voted to form an ad hoc rent committee, to include renting residents, Board members, and other sangha members. The Board passed the resolution below detailing the task of this committee. The committee will be chaired by Ed Herzog, who welcomes comments, questions, and other input from the community. He can be reached by email at edherzog@comcast.net.

Task of the 2016 BZC Rent Committee:

To determine, given all the related factors (listed below), what would be an appropriate rent increase for the Board to institute, within the lawful ceiling but greater than the annual allowable increase (which we typically use).

- a. How much to increase rent, and over what period of time?
- b. Propose other rent-related policies as deemed appropriate, including but not limited to handling of vacancies and creation of rental agreements.
- c. As deemed appropriate, further the process of giving the Berkeley Rent Board updated information on amounts and tenancies.

Factors (after consideration, the committee has the authority to deem a factor irrelevant):

- current rent amounts
- allowable rent ceiling
- previous Board policy re rents
- contributions of the residents, financial and otherwise
- current rents in relation to each other
- input from the wider sangha

- BZC estimated income needs over the next 5-10 years
- rent subsidies for residents as needed
- ideas in Mark Copithorne's proposal (see Board minutes)
- other factors introduced by Board or committee members

Initial Clarifying Points for Everyone to Agree on Going into the Process:

1. We're all in this together.
2. The rental income is considered as an income source in an analogous way to how sesshin fees are considered an income source. The Board is considering a rent increase in a similar way to how they considered a sesshin fee increase a few years ago. The Board last investigated the rent amounts about 15 years ago. It is appropriate for the Board to tackle this issue at regular intervals.
3. There is no intention to raise rents to market rate.
4. There is no intention to try to "get around" the allowable rent ceiling.
5. There is no intention to use a rent increase to generate all of the \$25,000 the property committee and Board have projected as needed for the next few years
6. There is an intention to set rents low enough to support residents to practice at BZC fully and wholeheartedly.
7. The rent committee will report its progress at the November Board meeting.

FUNdraiser Party Saturday, September 24

Please join us for Berkeley Zen Center's annual fundraising party on Saturday, September 24, starting about 11:00 am, and enjoy:

- Music — BZC's own Rob Lyons and the Blue Cliff Ensemble.
- Raffle drawing — including gift certificates to Chez Panisse, REI, Indra's Net Theater, Peet's, Diesel Books, Piedmont Movie Theater, and more!
- Guided tours of 1929 Russell — see your donation dollars at work in the newly remodeled kitchen.
- Food — yum!
- Community fundraising events — sign up to attend a teach-in from Sojun Roshi on BZC's Buddhist art, or a tea tasting with Ross Blum (details below).
- Getting to know your dharma friends.

Bring your family and friends to join this FUNdraising party after lecture. All funds raised during the event, and in preceding weeks via raffle sales, will go toward supporting this year's goal of \$20,000 for the BZC building improvement fund. If you have any questions about the fundraising event, please contact Development Committee Chair Laurie Senauke at lauriesenauke@gmail.com. We hope to see you at the party!



Community Fundraising Events

Over the last several years, BZC has sponsored auction items that brought small groups from the community together for an event: to learn a skill (flower arranging), to spend time in nature (kayaking) or on a tour (the Oakland zoo), or to enjoy dinner and a movie. This year's fundraising committee has decided to separate these items from the September FUNdraiser Party, and to offer select events throughout the year (more fun for all!). So be on the lookout for announcements of these in the newsletter, on the bulletin board, on the website, and through the Yahoo e-group.

Our first event will be held on Sunday, October 9, at 4:00 pm in the community room. Sojun Roshi, with the assistance of others in the know, will lead a teach-in on BZC's Buddhist art collection. A donation of \$30 to the Building Fund will be collected at the door, and refreshments will be provided. Please register for this event, so that we know how many to plan for. You can register by contacting Mary Beth Lamb at mbethlamb@gmail.com, by signing up on the bulletin board closer to the event, or by signing up for it at the September 24 FUNdraiser Party.

Sangha Support Is for Helpers, Too

Are you helping a loved one to do things that they used to do for themselves? Many in our Sangha are doing so. Sangha Support is sponsoring a gathering to share experiences, tips, and resources to support your efforts, facilitated by Laurie Senauke and Debbie Schley. All are welcome to come on October 2, 4:00-5:30 pm, at the Senauke house, 1933 Russell. Please let Debbie know if you hope to attend (there won't be a sign-up sheet for this). Also contact us if you'd like more information: debbieresearcher@gmail.com, 503-505-4282.

Jizo Ceremony for Children Who Have Died
Saturday, October 8, 1:00-3:00pm

The loss of a loved one often opens a well of profound grief. No matter how the loved one dies, suddenly or slowly, whether through illness, accident, miscarriage, abortion, or suicide, our sorrow is deep and may be long-lasting. To help families and friends in their process of grief, we will honor our lost loved ones in a ceremony in our Jizo garden on October 8. Jizo, the Earth Store Bodhisattva, is viewed as a guide and protector for those who are enduring the loss of a loved one, particularly a child lost in miscarriage, stillbirth, or abortion, or in early life. Jizo's vow is to remain in the world until all beings are free from suffering, and he accompanies children when they pass out of this world.

Before the ceremony we will spend time making a personal memorial for a lost one, by writing a message or by making a simple necklace, a robe for our Jizo statue, or other offering. Attendees are also invited to bring a picture of their loved one or other personal token of remembrance for our altar.

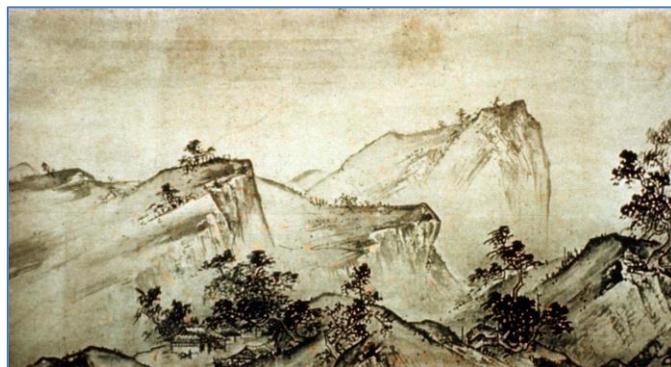
The ceremony will be led by two BZC priests, Gerry Oliva and Judy Fleischman. All BZC members, members of other Zen groups, and neighborhood residents are invited to attend. A more detailed description will be posted on the BZC courtyard bulletin board. There is no fee but offerings of dana are welcome. We will not have a sign-up sheet but request that those attending let us know in advance so that we can have adequate supplies and refreshments. For more information or to let us know that you're coming, contact Gerry Oliva at gryoliva@gmail.com or call 520-652-7217.

Aspects of Practice:
Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind
October 23 through November 19

We invite you to join the 2016 Aspects of Practice period — four weeks of practice, renewal, study, and discussion led by Hozan Alan Senauke and BZC practice leaders. Aspects of Practice has traditionally encouraged newer students to root their Zen practice. It always includes the wider BZC community who wish to refresh themselves and make a sustainable commitment to practice.

This year we will return to the perennial classic, Suzuki Roshi's *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*. Practice leaders will lecture on Saturdays, lead Monday morning discussions, and offer a four-week class. In addition there will be informal teas and regular practice discussion. Each sangha participant is strongly encouraged to meet with Hozan Sensei or a practice leader at least once during Aspects.

We will begin with a daylong sitting on Sunday, October 23 (led by Hozan), and end with a daylong sitting on Saturday, November 19 (led by Denkei Raul Moncayo). The Thursday evening class will be open to everyone as usual. Your interest, support, and encouragement can be of help to the whole sangha. For further details about Aspects of Practice, please look carefully at the zendo events bulletin board.



Sangha Work Day Sunday, September 18

Come and enjoy the fun and satisfaction of working together to maintain and beautify our temple and gardens during Work Day on Sunday, September 18. The day will begin with a half hour of zazen at 8:30 am, include a delicious lunch made by Kika and friends, and end with 20 minutes of zazen at 4:10-4:30 pm. We have a diverse set of indoor and outdoor tasks, including gardening, house painting, sanding, wood oiling (the community room back porch and stairs), carpentry projects, and more. You can come for the whole day, or just the morning or afternoon, and still have lunch! If you arrive between 8:00 and 8:30 am, you will be warmly greeted by Kika with coffee and breakfast snacks.

This will be the last time this year that we spend the day working together rather than just 1½ hours during sesshin work periods, so don't miss it!

To plan the work for the day, we need to know you are coming, so please sign up on the courtyard bulletin board. The sign-up list will be posted on September 4.



Sejiki Saturday, October 29

Sejiki is a popular Buddhist festival that highlights the connection between our world and the worlds of spirits. At BZC, we offer it as a sort of Buddhist Halloween. The ceremony is a mixture of spooky and solemn—there will be costumes and noisemakers, but we will also recite the names of departed friends and family and make offerings to appease our own hungry ghosts. This year's Sejiki ceremony will be held on Saturday, October 29. To allow preparation time for the ceremony, we will not be having early morning zazen or breakfast. Instead, we will begin with a work period at 8:30 am to prepare our temple for the ceremony. The formal program will start with zazen at 9:40, followed by a short lecture and the ceremony at 10:15. We will also be offering



a special children's program beginning with a kids' activity at 9:30 am at 1933 Russell. Everyone is encouraged to come in costume and bring noisemakers for the ceremony. For more information about the program, please contact Sue at soehser@earthlink.net. You can also give Sue names of departed ones to be recited during the ceremony if you will not be able to attend. If you are planning to attend the 9:30 kids' activity, please RSVP to Laurie at lauries@kushiki.org or Ryk at ryk@groetchen.com.

Come and Sit with Us

Monday through Friday

5:40-7:00am : zazen, service, soji

5:40-6:30pm : zazen, service

Tuesday through Thursday

noon-12:30pm : informal zazen

Saturday Speakers, 10:15 am

September 3	Sojun Mel Weitsman
September 10	Andrea Thach
September 17	Michael Wenger
September 24	Hozan Alan Senauke
October 1	Sojun Mel Weitsman
October 8	Gerry Oliva
October 15	Karen Sundheim
October 22	Hozan Alan Senauke
October 29	Hozan Alan Senauke (no early Saturday program)

Friday and Monday Talk Schedule

September 2	Fri 5:50pm	Lihong Chan (Susan Marvin's daughter)
September 5	Monday	zendo holiday
September 12	Mon 6:25am	new member ceremony
September 19	Mon 6:25am	Greg Denny
September 26	Mon 6:25am	Susan Marvin
October 3	Mon 6:25am	open discussion
October 7	Fri 5:50pm	Judy Bertelsen
October 10	Mon 6:25am	Mark Copithorne
October 17	Mon 6:25am	tba
October 24	Mon 6:25am	Aspects speaker
October 31	Mon 6:25am	Aspects speaker

Family Practice at BZC

BZC Family Practice on Saturdays

BZC Family Practice is offered on almost all Saturdays (but check the calendar for details, and always RSVP so we can share late-breaking news), at the usual time, from 9:30 to 11:15. BZC member and Music Together teacher Ryk Groetchen will be taking the lead. See details at our section of the website: berkeleyzencenter.org/family-practice.

New Sign-up Form

Check out our handy new sign-up form on the website (berkeleyzencenter.org/family-practice) — you may use this form, or send an email to ryk@groetchen.org.

Saturday Morning Supervised Play

Due to the expanded Family Practice program, we will not be offering supervised play. We want to serve the needs of parents keeping the flame of practice alive, so don't hesitate to contact us with your questions, concerns, and wish list. Direct inquiries to Laurie Senauke (lauries@kushiki.org).

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 Marie (marie_hopper@sbcglobal.net) or Laurie (lauries@kushiki.org).

Family Practice Schedule

September 3:	No program — holiday
September 10:	No program — training
September 17:	Family Practice
September 24:	Family Practice
October 1:	Family Practice
October 8:	Family Practice
October 15:	Family Practice
October 22:	Family Practice
October 29:	Family Practice

Please RSVP for ALL family activities. Thank you.

Shuso Poems

Walter Kieser recited this poem from memory during his first Shuso talk:

The Wild Geese

by Wendell Berry

Horseback on Sunday morning,
harvest over, we taste persimmon
and wild grape, sharp sweet
of summer's end. In time's maze
over fall fields, we name names
that rest on graves. We open
a persimmon seed to find the tree
that stands in promise,
pale, in the seed's marrow.
Geese appear high over us,
pass, and the sky closes. Abandon,
as in love or sleep, holds
them to their way, clear
in the ancient faith: what we need
is here. And we pray, not
for new earth or heaven, but to be
quiet in heart, and in eye,
clear. What we need is here.

* * *

Benji Mary Duryee recited this poem at
Walter's Shuso ceremony, June 12, 2016:

Everything you need is here.

Difficulty piles on difficulty.
Moment after moment
Spoiled
With boring scientific theories.

Words. Words. Words. Words. Words. Words. Words.
Words. Words.

The thwack of the shuso staff
Cleanses the palette
For the next sip of wine.
His fan whisks away words.

High above the Canyonlands —
above the confluence of
two ancient rivers —
the fledging eagle shouts his freedom,
and abandons to the vast, empty, sky.

Everything we need is here.

* * *

Mary adds this comment:

*It is always dangerous to explain poems,
however the underlying stories might be interesting
or amusing.*

*Last summer, when a large group of family and
friends rafted down the Green River in the
Canyonlands, my granddaughter (age 10) was
standing one evening at the edge of the river,
intently watching it turn from its usual chalky
green to a brick red-orange, when Walter walked
over to see what she was looking at. She looked up at
him and said, "Walter, don't spoil this moment
with one of your boring scientific theories." He has
recounted this often with great delight, and denies
that he was about to expound.*

*Once when hiking across the mesa above the
confluence of the Green and Colorado rivers, three
eagles reeled overhead, one of them crying out. Back
home we learned that eagles do not vocalize —
except when they are fledging. We had been
watching the launching of an offspring and its
parents.*

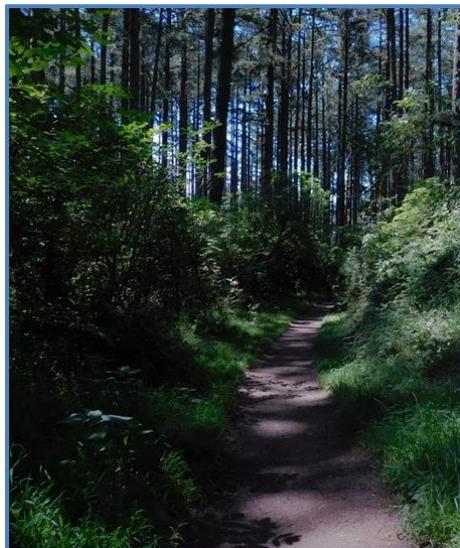
The Problems You Are Experiencing Now . . .

One morning during zazen, Suzuki Roshi gave a brief impromptu talk in which he said, “Each one of you is perfect as you are . . . and you can also use a little improvement.”

He had a nice way of putting things into perspective. This was the mid-sixties, when young people were breaking out of the old societal structures and experimenting with psychedelics and mind-expansion techniques related to self-improvement. One time around the fourth day of sesshin when there was enough pain and discomfort to go around, he began his talk by saying slowly, “The problems you are experiencing now . . .” (*will go away*, we were sure he was going to say) “. . . will continue for the rest of your life,” he concluded. The way he said it, everyone laughed. (Thank goodness for laughter!) This seems like the last thing a student wants to hear from a teacher: You are doomed to be who you are for the rest of your life. Suzuki Roshi’s radical statement turns our whole world back 10,000 miles. He grants us that improvement is okay. But if improvement is our goal of practice, it is easy to think that some future moment could or must be better than this present moment. After all, if we had an improved future we would have fewer problems. Wouldn’t we? He liked to say, be careful; that solving the problems you have now might give you a bigger problem. He wasn’t against solving problems, he was simply trying to help us understand that if we neglect to live fully in each moment, sacrificing this moment for a future time, we miss our life, which is only this moment with its joys and sorrows.

Our present problems are our equipment or tools for practice. Gifts of our karma. Because we don’t understand and appreciate what THIS is, we tend to think that there must be something better than this. Master Dogen begins his *Genjo Koan*, the koan of our daily life, with the statement, “When all dharmas are Buddha Dharma . . .” etc. When we can approach the world as a field of practice, responding to the ever-changing circumstances with a non-assuming, open-minded, and compassionate attitude, the way unfolds . . . one moment at a time.

—SOJUN ROSHI



2016 Mountains & Rivers Sesshin

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION DEADLINE

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

**November-December deadline:
Friday, October 21**

Berkeley Zen Center
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