



Berkeley Zen Center



January 2010 Newsletter

108 BOWS TO PETER OVERTON & JOHN RUBIN

At the turning of the year, BZC's board will welcome new officers — president Gerry Oliva, vice president Jake Van Akkeren, and treasurer David Weinberg — as well as new and continuing board members. In this turning we also offer our deep appreciation to Peter Overton and John Rubin, our outgoing president and treasurer. Their gift of long steady service to our community and their dedicated attention to the often hidden but necessary details of sangha life reflect the maturity of their practice.

Peter Overton has been board president for the past four years, seeing us through various transitions and construction projects, fund-raising efforts, and the sometimes thankless challenge of creating policies that will last. Peter's passion for communication and his many years of Zen practice helped maintain the board's harmony and its accessibility to the community at large.

John Rubin has spent an unprecedented ten years as BZC's treasurer. Obviously, it was hard for us to let him go. His mastery of finance, developed during his years at Mechanics Bank, is so thoroughly integrated into his financial reporting that John is always able to explain BZC's financial situation to the board and to the sangha, in person and on paper, in ways that everyone can understand. This is a rare ability. John's steady practice manifests as clarity and joy, which has benefited us widely.

Welcoming the new board, we celebrate Peter and John who have served us selflessly and so well. May we all reside together in zazen for many years to come.

— Hozan Alan Senauke



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

January

New Year's Day (zendo closed)

Friday, 1/1/2010

Bodhisattva Ceremony

Saturday, 1/2, 9:40 AM

Founder's Ceremony

Monday, 1/4, 6:20 PM,

Tuesday, 1/5, 6:40 AM

Half-day Sitting

Sunday, 1/10, 8:00 AM - Noon

Kidzendo

Saturday, 1/16

One-day Sitting

Sunday, 1/24

Bodhisattva Ceremony

Saturday, 1/30, 9:40 AM

February

Founder's Ceremony

Wednesday, 2/3, 6:20 PM,

Thursday, 2/4, 6:40 AM

Half-day Sitting

Sunday, 2/7, 8:00 AM - Noon

Buddha's Paranirvana

Saturday, 2/13

Two-day Study Retreat

Sunday-Monday, 2/14-15

Kidzendo

Saturday, 2/20

Bodhisattva Ceremony

Saturday, 2/27, 9:40 AM

HALF-DAY SITTING

Sunday, January 10, 2010

8:00 AM – 12:00 NOON

BZC offers eight half-day sittings each year. Each includes five periods of zazen, kinhin, and an informal tea. A half-day sitting is a great opportunity to focus on “just zazen” and is appropriate for beginning as well as experienced sitters. Sojun Roshi asks participants to commit to the four-hour schedule and, in support of everyone’s practice, to refrain from using scented products in the zendo. Contact January’s half-day director Ann Kennedy at 510-649-9432 or kaimon@earthlink.net with any questions.

EIHEI DOGEN'S *BENDOWA* (Wholehearted Practice of the Way) with Ryushin Andrea Thach

Ryushin Andrea Thach will teach a four-week class on Eihei Dogen's *Bendowa* beginning Saturday, January 16. Classes will run from 12:30 to 2:00 PM. The signup sheet is on the bulletin board, and the suggested text for the class is *The Wholehearted Way* by Kosho Uchiyama. To purchase a copy in advance contact class coordinator Ron Nestor at rnestor1@yahoo.com. The cost will be about \$17.00. The class is on a donation basis. \$20.00 for the series is a suggested starting point.

Bendowa was Dogen's first teaching text, written at a time before he actually had students but was beginning to attract attention. In it, he is formulating the expression of his teaching—what is this zazen, understood in a way unique enough to found a new school of Zen practice with it as its basis? *Bendowa* includes questions and answers about what sets his understanding apart from the prominent schools of the time, and to deeply understand the text it is important to understand what these differences are. Depending on the interests and experience of the group, we will look at some of the roots of Dogen's understanding in the related texts of other prominent schools as we study the meaning of "wondrous dharma," "dropping off body and mind" and, especially, "self fulfilling and receiving samadhi." In 2006 and 2007, Okumura Roshi gave three Genzo-e retreats on the *Bendowa*. The lecture part of class will draw heavily from his teaching and understanding. The other part will be from our experience of zazen.

For an in-depth interview on *Bendowa* with Andrea, see page five of our December newsletter.



Saturday Childcare

Childcare is offered free of charge on Saturday mornings for zazen from 9:30 to 10:15, then families are welcome to listen to the lecture on the sound system in the community room. It's helpful for planning if you can let us know that you're hoping to attend; call or email Laurie Senauke, 845-2215, or lauries@kushiki.org.

Childcare for 8:45 Zazen Instruction and Beginner Orientation may be offered by special arrangement.

Kidzendo

A talk in the zendo for young ones three and up is offered on the third Saturday of each month (or the fourth Saturday if a sesshin is scheduled on the third). We meet in the community room at about 9:45, then sojourn to the zendo for the first ten minutes of lecture starting at 10:15. Afterwards, families reconvene in the community room as usual. From time to time we offer additional activities at kidzendo.

Childcare Schedule

January 2	Childcare
January 9	Childcare
January 16	KIDZENDO
January 23	Childcare
January 30	Childcare
February 6	Childcare
February 13	Childcare
February 20	KIDZENDO
February 27	Childcare
March 6	Childcare
March 13	Childcare
March 20	Sesshin – no program
March 27	Childcare (no kidzendo)
April 3	Buddha's Birthday

SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR BZC NEWSLETTER
is the third Friday of the month preceding each issue.
February 2010 deadline: Friday, January 15, 8:00 PM.

A Lecture by Sojun Roshi

Commentary on the Enmei Jukko Kannon Gyo

Enmei in the title means something like “eternal,” but eternal is not such an accurate word in Buddhism. Something like endless dimensions without beginning or end may be more accurate. Or we could say, unlimited life, eternal life, boundless life. *Jukku* (or *jikku*) means “ten phrases.” *Kannon* is Japanese for Avalokiteshvara or Kwan-yin, which is Chinese. *Gyo* is “sutra.” So, the title is “Endless dimension, ten phrases, Avalokiteshvara sutra.” Endless dimension also has the meaning of endless dimensions in the moment. If there is no beginning or no end, then this moment has, as Dogen says, its own past and future, its own endless dimension. We tend to think of this moment as one speck of time, one fleeting moment of time, but we also have to understand this moment as covering or including all time and all space. Extending life is the same as when we talk about no-birth, no-death – birth, death and no-birth, no-death in endless dimensions.

Here are explanations of the ten phrases:

1) *Kanzeon*: To evoke Kanzeon is to call forth the spirit of compassion. Each one of the ten phrases expresses our compassionate practice from a particular standpoint. Kanzeon, one might say, is our compassionate heart. It’s our unlimited, universal, compassionate heart. *Kan* has the feeling of penetrating, illuminating, piercing through or totally understanding. *Ze* means “world” and *on* is “sound.” So, Kanzeon is the one who hears the sounds of the world or the cries of the world and doesn’t ignore the suffering of the world. “Sound” here also can stand for sight or touch or taste or any sense. Avalokiteshvara is probably the most popular Bodhisattva and is given many human qualities. I think Kanzeon personifies what I like to think of as our humaneness, as distinct from our wisdom, which is Manjushri. Manjushri sees with a clear, cold eye, and Avalokiteshvara sees with a vast, warm heart. The balance or synthesis of the two is Buddha. So on one side of the altar we have Manjushri, who personifies wisdom beyond wisdom, seeing everything just as it is without any distortion, and on the other side, we have Avalokiteshvara, who personifies compassion. In between we have Buddha. Each one is a Bodhisattva who represents a different aspect of our nature. Since these are not idols but personifications, having these figures on our altar is a way we respect aspects of our own nature. Similarly, when we bow, we don’t worship something in particular, but we greatly respect these aspects of our nature. When we offer incense and chant the sutra, we invite the spirit of Kanzeon to join our practice. We evoke something from within ourselves. So the sutra is dedicated to Kanzeon.

2) *Namu Butsu*: *Namu* is sometimes translated as “Homage.” *Butsu* is Buddha. So, the phrase is “Homage to Buddha.” When we say, “pay homage,” it may seem like a vassal paying homage to a lord, and to see ourselves and Buddha in that way may be okay, but to translate *Namu* as “at one with” is another way of expressing that feeling. Not “Buddha is over there and I’m over here,” but “one with Buddha.” We use the word “atone” sometimes, and we think of atonement as penitence. The word has taken on that meaning. But atonement means to be at one, to return to oneness, or return to completion. It is what we do to be at one with “wholeness” or “holiness.” Whatever is necessary to be at one with Buddha is what we have to do. We can call it “at-one-ment” or atonement. Actually, *zazen* is atonement. You don’t have to make a fuss, just sit. So *Namu Butsu* really means at one with Buddha.

3) *Yo Butsu u in*: *Yo* means “with,” and *Butsu* is Buddha, and *in* means “direct cause,” or “fundamental cause,” or “seed cause.” In this phrase, we have *in* and in the next phrase, *en*. *In* means “direct” and *en* means “indirect” or “supporting.” This third phrase has the meaning, “this very nature is Buddha, directly Buddha.” There are three ways of talking about Buddha nature. One is called *Ryo in Bussho*. *Ryo* means to realize; it means the capacity to realize our Buddha nature. *Bussho* means fundamentally, Buddha nature, Dharmakaya or, we are that. *En* means through participating, or cooperating cause, we can realize it. The seed is a direct cause for a plant. This is *in*. Sun, water, air, heat, and so forth are cooperating causes, or *en*. Direct cause, or *in*, is the absolute fundamental factor of what we are, and *en*, or indirect cause, is what we have to manifest to realize it. *In* is kind of like your original face.

4) *Yo Butsu u en*: As I said, *en* means “indirect cause.” So the third and fourth phrases go together. We have a direct cause for Buddhahood and also an indirect cause. The contributory cause is like a catalyst. Practice is like the water and the sun that causes the seed to sprout. *En* is rubbing the flint to create a spark, or we can also call it the condition. *In en* is another term.

(Continued on p. 4)

(Continued from p. 3) *Inen*, as the combination of *in* and *en* means “karma.” When we have a volitional action which causes something to move, that’s called karmic activity. That karmic activity is activity within emptiness, or *ku*. *Inen* is constantly creating forms in emptiness. So, how we direct our effort is important. The basis of Buddhist morality is that you reap the fruit of your own action. If you do something unwholesome, then unwholesomeness follows. And if you do something wholesome, wholesomeness follows. We’re responsible for whatever we do and we share responsibility for the world. Some people think of Buddhism as fatalism because we don’t talk about God or God’s judgment. But instead of judgment, we understand the results of our actions as a kind of retribution according to the laws of karma.

5) *Bu po so en*: This phrase uses the same *en* as before, meaning indirect or cooperating cause. *Bu* is “Buddha.” *Po* is “Dharma.” *So* is “Sangha.” Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, the Three Treasures, are also a cooperating cause for understanding our Buddha nature, or for being one with our Buddha nature. The Three Treasures evoke our Buddha nature and cause us to remember our original face.

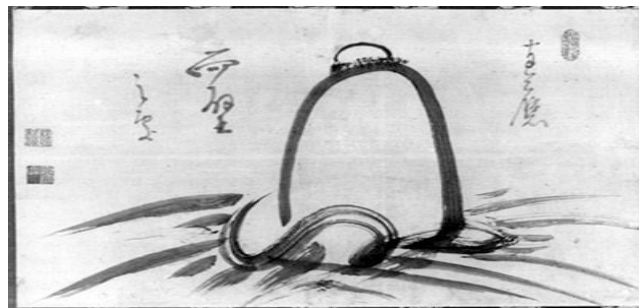
6) *Jo raku ga jo*: *Jo* here is another word for “permanent,” or “eternal,” or “endless dimension.” *Raku* is “happiness” or “joy.” *Ga* is “self,” and *jo* is “purity.” This has the feeling of, “in purity we have eternal joy of ourselves, or endless dimensions of enjoying our self-nature.” I would say, “self-joyous samadhi.” When we are one with our original nature, when we let drop body and mind and become one with truth, no matter what happens to us, we have joy and purity. So the sixth phrase has the sense of pure joy, self-joyous samadhi, which extends to everyone, and is not separate from anyone.

7) *Cho nen Kanzeon*: *Cho* is “morning.” *Nen* is an important word. It means “mind,” or individual consciousness, or our conscious thought. This phrase has the meaning of, “in the morning put your thought on Kanzeon.” That is, put your undistracted thought on Kanzeon, or evoke Kanzeon. Bring Kanzeon to life. Don’t neglect Kanzeon. *Nen* is like the conscious thought of this moment. There are different kinds or degrees of *nen*. There is the *nen* of this moment and there is the *nen* which takes a step back and contemplates. The first *nen* is one with activity, without reflection, just direct perception. The second *nen* is when we reflect on something and try to identify it by thought or think about it. And the third *nen* is taking another step back and developing what the second *nen* has thought about the first *nen*. All these *nen* thoughts are important, but when we sit zazen, we are concentrated in the first *nen*, just direct perception moment by moment. So in the morning, just let your *nen* thought become completely with Kanzeon.

8) *Bo nen Kanzeon*: *Bo* means “evening.” In the evening, let your *nen* thought be on Kanzeon. Together, these last two phrases mean, “moment by moment, be one with Kanzeon.”

9) *Nen nen ju shin ki*: Thought after thought, conscious thought after conscious thought. *Ju* means “follow.” Thought following thought. *Shin* is “mind” and *ki* is “arrived.” Each thought which follows upon the last is no other than *shin*, which is big mind, all-inclusive mind. We can say Buddha nature, or universal mind. In this sense, *shin* is used to complement thought. So sometimes we call Buddha nature mind only. There are many ways of expressing it. Here our individual small mind is not separate from Big Mind and is actually an expression of Big Mind.

10) *Nen nen fu ri shin*: This complements the previous phrase. Again, it’s *nen nen*. *Fu* means “not,” and *ri* is “separate,” and *shin* is “mind” again. This is just saying it in a different way. These two phrases go together. Thought after thought arises from Big Mind; thought after thought is not separate from this Mind, meaning Kanzeon is not separate from you or I or Big Mind—the mind of the universe.



MONTHLY STUDY GROUP WITH SOJUN ROSHI

Sojun Roshi's new monthly study group, open to dues-paying members of BZC, will begin Thursday evening, January 28th, 7:15 to 8:45 PM, meeting on the fourth Thursday of each month thereafter. The group will run for at least one year. We ask that you make a minimum six-month commitment if you join. This is not a drop-in group. Sojun will continue with commentary and discussion on *The Precious Mirror Samadhi* (Hokyo Zammai) begun at last year's Labor Day study sesshin. He asks that you listen to the recorded lectures from that sesshin if you did not attend. The four lectures are available on the BZC website, berkeleyzencenter.org, under the heading "audio library". Lecture dates were September 6th and 7th of 2009. Over the course of the coming year the subject matter will gradually evolve into related areas.

A signup sheet is on the bulletin board. To start, we'll be working from the text of *The Infinite Mirror* by Master Sheng Yen, easily available from internet sources. Section handouts will also be provided. Suggested donation for each class is ten dollars.

MARK YOUR 2010 CALENDAR

This year there will be a few changes to our previous calendars: Okumura Roshi is coming to offer his teaching retreat in August this year instead of January. Accordingly, Sojun will teach the two-day study retreat President's Day weekend, February 14th and 15th. There will be a two-day sesshin in September instead of a study retreat. And both two-day retreats will be on Sunday and Monday, with an abbreviated Saturday program on the day before. This change was made in response to positive feedback from the scheduling of our September retreat. Let us know how it works for you.

We will have two beginner's sesshins (in March and October) and two zazenkai ("just sitting") retreats (in April and August) this year. There will be Work Day retreats in April and August, and no regular sesshin those two months. We are also offering a four-day Mountains and Rivers Sesshin in late July this year, in addition to the three-day Mountains and Rivers in April. We would like to offer a variety of retreat/sesshin formats that

all have as their basis the tradition of Shunryu Suzuki's teaching. Your input is welcome. Speak with Sojun, Hozan or Andrea.

NEW QIGONG GROUP

A qigong group at BZC will begin meeting on Fridays at 3:00 PM, starting January 8. The form is Wisdom Healing Qigong, and will be led by teacher-in-training Diana Lion in six-week segments. Please be sure to come unscented. A more complete description of this class appeared in the December newsletter.

REMINDER: MYOAN GRACE SCHIRESON LECTURE, WORKSHOP

On Saturday, January 9, Myoan Grace Schireson will be at BZC to give a lecture at 10:15 AM, followed by a workshop from 1:00 to 3:00 PM. She will be covering issues included in her recent book, *Zen Women: Beyond Tea-Ladies, Iron Maidens, and Macho Masters*.

Path of the Bodhisattva

Sunday January 31, 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM
Lynn MacMichael will report on her recent trip to Israel/Palestine

BZC's Socially Engaged Dharma group invites all sangha members to attend a slide presentation and talk by longtime peace activist Lynn MacMichael.

She has recently returned from Israel and the West Bank, where she spent two weeks with the Interfaith Peace Builders. She then stayed on by herself another two weeks, hoping to enter Gaza.

Lynn met with numerous Jewish Israeli and Palestinian peace activists. She sees signs of hope in the many people who are courageously addressing the Israeli occupation, settlements building, the Wall, and other obstacles to peace.

Since Israel receives almost four billion dollars a year of U.S. taxpayer money, MacMichael thinks it is our responsibility to find out how that money is spent.

Lynn talked at BZC in 2005 about Iraq, where she had traveled with Voices in the Wilderness. We look forward to her clear-eyed and compassionate outlook on Palestine/Israel.

For more info, contact Annette Herskovits at louisah@comcast.net, Ed Herzog at ehertzog@lmi.net, or Catherine Cascade at catherinecascade@sbcglobal.net.

NEW MEMBERS

Please welcome new members "Rocky" Stephen Burgess, Mike Cole, Andrew Corson, Dawn Farber, Vincent Fleming, Jeff Taylor, David White, and Maria Winston.

IMMEDIATE OPENING FOR PART-TIME BZC OFFICE MANAGER

Duties include bookkeeping, maintaining our membership data base, and related administrative tasks. Preferred qualifications include experience with MS ACCESS, MS EXCEL, Quickbooks Pro, or other accounting software. The position requires about ten hours a week. An additional benefit is that the Office Manager does not have to pay dues, class, or sesshin fees. John Mogy, our current Office Manager, is stepping down from this position early in 2010. He has agreed to stay on until March to train his replacement. A more complete announcement will be posted on the patio bulletin board. For more information contact David Weinberg, the incoming BZC Treasurer, at david@stresscaretraining.org.

CLEAR WATER ZENDO CELEBRATES 10TH ANNIVERSARY

On Saturday, January 30, beginning at 2:00 PM, Clear Water Zendo in Vallejo will be celebrating its tenth anniversary. There will be a ceremony, a procession to bless the space, and a reception to follow.

Clear Water Zendo officially opened in January of 2000. Founder, teacher, and Sojun's dharma heir Mary Mocine says, "It seems like yesterday. Many, many friends were here to support our small temple and you have continued that support over the years. We are very grateful for that support. Come share our joy in the dharma once again!"

All are invited to attend this event. Clear Water Zendo is located at 607 Branciforte Street, Vallejo, CA 94590. Phone number: (707) 649-2480, www.vallejozencenter.org



CHANGING HANDS

Two new positions have been filled:

The **Special Event Coordinator** will handle arrangements for members holding rituals (e.g., weddings, funerals) and outside groups renting space. Please be in touch with **Mark Copithorne** if you are planning a wedding or other ritual outside of the usual BZC schedule. Events scheduled by BZC will continue to go through the Coordinator.

The **Administrative Assistant for Temple Activities (AATA)** will fill some of the more mundane duties previously handled by the Office Manager. **Dave White** will be handling the mailboxes and phone calls, and sorting emails, among other duties. If you don't know him yet, please introduce yourself.

Carol Paul has been quietly and unofficially proofreading our newsletter for some years, and is now heading to Tassajara. Thank you, Carol. **Everett Wilson** will be lending his watchful eye to our monthly publications.

THE SANGHA SUPPORT NETWORK

Request For Volunteers

"Real care of the sick does not begin with costly procedures, but with the simple gift of affection and love. In the practice of healing, a kind heart is as valuable as medical training, because it is the source of happiness for both oneself and others."

~ The Dalai Lama

The Sangha Support Network, which provides confidential support to sangha members and friends in need, is gathering steam. Most recently, volunteers have provided grocery shopping, cooking, cat sitting, hospital visits, and plenty of good old-fashioned companionship. We have responded to needs from offering short-term assistance when members were down with a cold to creating an ongoing team for someone with a chronic medical condition.

Because this time of year can be difficult for many people, we want to emphasize that we are available for those wrangling with seasonal blues or depression as well as physical needs. Please consider joining the ranks of volunteers by completing a Sangha Support Network volunteer sign-up form, found on the Community Room porch bulletin board, so you can become an active part of our expanding network.

The Sangha Support Network Committee:
Alexandra Frappier; Christy Calame; Deborah Good and Lisa Nelbach.

BZC BOARD ANNUAL RETREAT

The BZC Board is meeting for its annual retreat on January 31st. This provides an opportunity for us to reflect on and have more in-depth discussion of the more complex issues we will be facing in the next year. It also gives us the space to come up with more creative solutions to chronic problems like ensuring the integrity of the property and structures, planning for our financial future, and promoting better communication among ourselves and other sangha members. If you have any suggestions for issues that we should consider during the retreat please e-mail Jake Van Akkeren at jvanakkeren@comcast.net or Gerry Oliva at olivag@fcm.ucsf.edu.

First Day of Winter

First day of winter —
mother still lives
in the old family home.



*BZC member **Kazumi Cranney** has been working in haiga painting for more than 30 years. Haiga is a form of painting that combines three traditional Japanese arts: haiku, calligraphy, and watercolor. She is a longtime resident of Berkeley. Her paintings have been exhibited in many locales throughout the Bay Area, including the Japan Cultural Community Center and Gallery Voyage in San Francisco, the San Ramon Community Center, and the Berkeley Art Center.*

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