



Berkeley Zen Center



August 2013 Newsletter

Labor Day Weekend Study Sesshin Saturday, August 31 – Sunday, September 1

Hozan Alan Senauke will lead this year's Labor Day study sesshin from 5:00 am to 9:10 pm on Saturday, August 31 and 5:00 am to 5:00 pm on Sunday, September 1. Each day will include zazen, oryoki meals, soji, and two daily study and discussion sessions. Our study will begin with Dogen Zenji's "Vow of Practice," "Eihei Koso Hotsuganmon," and will touch on sections of Shohaku Okumura Roshi's book Living By Vow. Materials will be available on the bulletin board shelf in advance of the sesshin. The fee is \$35 per day, and should be paid in advance. Please leave payment marked "Labor Day Study Sesshin," in the kitchen/community room porch door donation slot. For more information contact the sesshin director, Carol Paul at 510.206.5051, or caroljpaul@yahoo.com. A sign-up sheet will be posted on the bulletin board.



Photo: Ko Blix

B Z C S c h e d u l e

August

Founder's Ceremony

Thursday, 8/1, 6:20 pm
Friday, 8/2, 6:40 am

Summer Recess

Sunday, 8/11 – Friday, 8/23

Work Day

Sunday, 8/25

Two-Day Study Retreat

Saturday, 8/31 – Sunday, 9/1

September

Founder's Ceremony

Tuesday, 9/3, 6:20 pm
Wednesday, 9/4, 6:40 am

Half-Day Sitting

Sunday, 9/8, 8:00 am - noon

New Member Entering Ceremony

Monday, 9/9, 6:30 am

All Sangha Potluck – Board Nominations

Tuesday, 9/10, 6:30 pm

Bodhisattva Ceremony

Saturday, 9/21, 9:40 am

Women's Sitting

Sunday, 9/22, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

Board Party – Fundraiser

Saturday, 9/28, 11:00 am – 2:00 pm



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.

Caring for Buddha's Robe

If you need assistance (or simply time and space) with rakusu/okesa/robe repairs, replacement, or finishing already started rakusu, the following dates are on the calendar.

Saturday, August 10
Sunday, August 18
Saturday, September 7
Sunday, September 15
Sunday, September 29
Saturday, October 12
Sunday, October 27
Sunday, November 3
Sunday, November 17

Each session is from 1:00 – 5:00 pm. Please contact the sewing teacher, Jean Selkirk (510.655.0820), before you attend the first time. Any changes to the schedule will be made on the bulletin board.

Material fees only apply for envelopes or new (second or replacement) rakusu, and the usual class fee applies for new rakusu, which must be started by the end of August.

Starting first rakusu for Lay Ordination will begin in January as usual. If you are considering this, please speak with your teacher and then also speak with the sewing teacher before the winter break begins.



Photo: Ko Blix

Sewing a Sutra Cloth

If you are interested in sewing a sutra cloth (for wrapping around and carrying dharma class materials and/or books), the sewing times listed above are available. If you are interested, please contact the sewing teacher as soon as possible to receive information about how to prepare.



Family Activities at BZC

Saturday Morning Supervised Play

Supervised play is offered free of charge on many Saturday mornings for 9:40 am zazen through lecture. Currently supervising is Berkeley High student Lihong Chan. We need to know by 6:00 pm on Friday if you are planning to avail yourselves of this service on the following day (so she can sleep in if not!). Phone or e-mail Laurie Senauke, 510.845.2215, or lauries@kushiki.org.

Coverage for BZC's 8:45 am zazen instruction and beginner orientation is offered by special arrangement; contact Laurie for more information.

KidZendo

BZC's Saturday program for children three and up usually happens twice a month during the school year, typically on the second and fourth Saturdays, from 9:30 am to 11:15 am. Several BZC members are teaching in this program: BZC resident Tamar has been trained in offering a curriculum known as The Toolbox. Nancy Suib and Jin Young, longtime practitioners at BZC, have been trained in the Mindful Schools program. See details on our website. Check the calendar online or below for the exact schedule. As always, RSVP if you plan to attend (lauries@kushiki.org).

July – Aug. No KidZendo, supervised play offered by appointment

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 only send, at most, ONE e-mail per week—just a short reminder of upcoming events. To join, e-mail Laurie at lauries@kushiki.org or Marie at marie_hopper@sbcglobal.net.

Gyoji & Dokan

Comments from Sojun Roshi

August, 2013

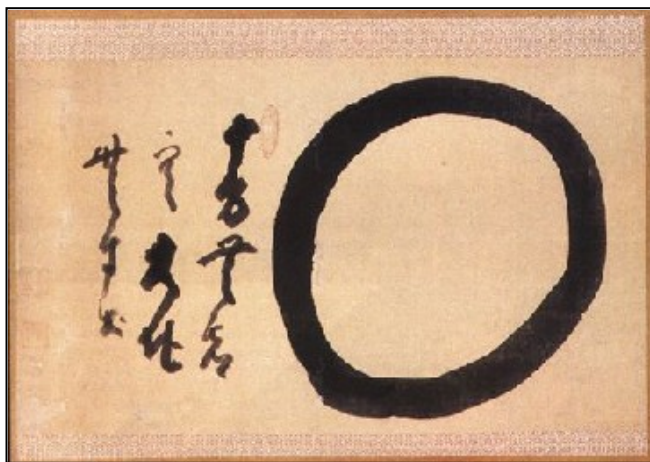
Gyoji and Dokan are two terms in Soto Zen that we should be familiar with. Gyoji is a term that Dogen used that means continuous practice, and Dokan means Way Ring; the cyclical daily form of practice. Without using this Japanese nomenclature, Gyoji/Dokan was the fundamental practice that Suzuki Roshi introduced to us. In a talk, Suzuki Roshi said, “If you lose the spirit of repetition, your practice will become quite difficult.” He also said that if you chant the Heart Sutra once you may feel OK about it, but if you chant it over and over every day you might lose your original attitude toward it. You will maintain your beginner’s mind for a few years, but after a while you are liable to lose the limitless meaning of original mind.

This presents an interesting koan for us. In an unrepeatable universe how can any act be repeated? The only way is to be fully present in each moment in each activity as just this, just now, without comparing. I remember observing my teacher’s behavior; nothing special, living each moment with total presence, not getting ahead, not lagging behind. Suzuki Roshi sat zazen every morning and every evening, bowed nine times and chanted the Heart Sutra three times (that was our original service). In between he simply responded to circumstances with the same attitude. His life was all of a piece. He did not have a lot of dependencies. His demeanor was relaxed, soft, flexible and upright. He was always shining, and his presence was nourishing.

Dokan, the ring or circle of the way is the non-repeatable rhythm of daily practice. It is to follow the cosmic order. Every day the sun appears in the sky, and at night the moon, while the planets circle in their orbits. At night the world sleeps, and at dawn we awake.

This is the basic cycle; the formal alternation we call night and day. It is the turning of the world in harmony with the cosmos. All creatures follow individual and collective patterns and the various formalities and structures that support our unique situations.

The life of a Zen student revolves around zazen, while zazen opens us up to the cosmic order. Do (Tao) means the path or the way, and kan means ring or circle, the cycle of practice; doing something over and over again. When sitting we hold our hands in the “Cosmic Mudra.” The form of the hands creates the empty circle that creates the form of the hands. All is empty and empty is all. Although there are many things that are important in our lives, receiving our nourishment from the source has to be primary.



Ensō, Hakuin Ekaku, 1700s

When we survey the cosmos, we see an infinite variety of circular forms. We experience the cycles of the seasons and the cycles within the cycles within the cycles and we realize that each one of us is the place where heaven and earth meet. We can also see that circles of energy emanate from us and mix and overlap with those of others. What kind of vibe do we want to send into the world? The way we think and act has an effect. To sit upright in the center of the empty circle as a vehicle for light is the Zen student’s life. The cycle of continuous practice, of sitting zazen and allowing that selfless freedom to be expressed in daily life is the turning of the wheel and the basis for harmony.



Galileo Galilei, Moon Phases, 1616



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, Sept. 10, 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 (9:00-12:00) meetings, an all-day retreat on a Sunday in January, and to serve on one working committee: finance, project management, or development.

At our September meeting all BZC members are welcome to nominate fellow members for this position, but please contact them first concerning their willingness to be nominated. If you yourself are interested in being nominated, please contact Jake Van Akkeren at jvanakkeren@comcast.com or call 925.933.3486 (before 9:00 pm please).

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



Brush Mind at the BZC Bazaar

Kaz Tanahashi is celebrated locally and internationally for his brushwork and his work with the written word. He exhibits his calligraphy all over the world. Through his extensive translations, he brought Eihei Dogen's teachings to English-speaking Zen Buddhist scholars and practitioners.

Whether you're enticed by Tanahashi's eminence as a teacher, artist, and writer, by his long-time connection to Berkeley Zen Center, or by the simple beauty of his creations, don't miss the bidding during this year's silent auction at the BZC Bazaar & FUNdraiser in September, which will feature a Tanahashi scroll.

At the previous two silent auctions, bidding for Tanahashi's calligraphy has been lively and brisk. Judy Bertelsen took home last year's enso scroll, called "Miracle of Each Moment." It hangs over a congregation of animals and reclining Buddhas in her home. Though ensos are usually made with one swoop of the brush, Judy says hers "has little feathers that I can't explain...It's like life: simple and not so simple."

Stan Dewey's Tanahashi original, "Mindfulness," hangs in his dining room above a figure of Kwan Yin and Tanahashi's two-volume translation of Dogen's Treasury of the True Dharma Eye, reminding Stan to "wake up and pay attention!"

Bidding for the Tanahashi scroll and other treasures starts after the Saturday program on September 28. Check the complete list of silent auction items and raffle prizes—and watch for updates—on the bulletin board.



Sojun Roshi's Study Group
Thur., 8/1, 8/8, 8/29, 9/5, 9/26, 10/3, 7:15 pm

Sojun Roshi's next study group continues on Thursday evenings at 7:15 pm. All are welcome. A sign-up sheet will be posted on the bulletin board, or you may contact class coordinator Ron Nestor at rnestor1@yahoo.com. Scheduled dates are August 1, 8, and 29, September 5 and 26, and October 3.



Zendo Chair Alignment

In order for the free and easy passage of people during kinhin as well as meal servers, please do not position the west (abbot's side) chairs in direct alignment with the floor tan zafus. They should be situated behind the plank line as shown. Thank you!

Founder's Ceremony Form

During our monthly Founders' Ceremony honoring Suzuki Roshi, please remain in gassho after the food offering during the doshi's three prostrations AND through the eko following the Sandokai.

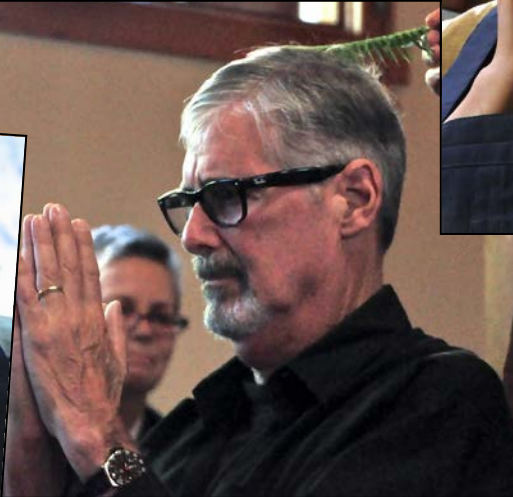


**Vallejo Zen Center's
Jazz and Garden Party**

Vallejo Zen Center is throwing its annual fundraiser party on Saturday, August 3, 3-6 pm, at 607 Branciforte Street in Vallejo. Great jazz, food, drink, door prizes, silent auction and a raffle of dinner for two at Greens restaurant will be part of the festivities. You need not be present to win. Raffle/doorprize chances are \$5 per chance or \$20 for five chances. Admission for adults is \$15 per person. You can purchase tickets from Steve or Chie Treagus at BZC; Daigan Gaither, Kogan Sheldon or Richard Urban at San Francisco City Center; Julia TenEyck at Hartford St. Zen Center, or at the door. You can also get admission tickets online at www.vallejozencenter.eventbrite.com.

Jukai Photos Available

Photos of the June 2013 Zaiko Tokudo ordination and celebration are now posted on the BZC Photo Site. If you need help viewing them, contact Ko Blix, KoFotoFactory@me.com.



Photos: Ko Blix

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION DEADLINE
Third Friday of the month before each issue

September deadline:
Friday, August 16, 8:00 pm

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