



# Berkeley Zen Center



## April 2014 Newsletter

### Spring Practice Period

**Saturday, May 10 – Sunday June 22**

Our annual spring practice period will begin with a one-day sitting on Saturday, May 10 and continue through the Shuso Ceremony on Sunday, June 22. Sojun Roshi invites everyone to increase their commitment to practice during this period while tending to their obligations outside the gate.

Sojun Roshi has invited Kogen Yudo John Mogey – *Constant Presence/Courageous Path* – to be the Shuso this year, sharing the Abbot's seat and setting an example for us all. Sangetsu Seikyo John Busch – *Mountain Moon/Clear Mirror* – will serve as Benji, assisting the shuso.

*Continued on page 2*



### Buddha's Birthday Saturday, April 5

This year Buddha's birthday will be celebrated at Berkeley Zen Center on Saturday morning April 5. Please bring your family and friends!

Children, who embody our hope for enlightened peace and the planet's future, are especially encouraged to attend. The celebration will include a song by our children, lecture, the ceremony and a birthday cake.

An important part of the ceremony is bathing the baby Buddha in his bower. Everyone is invited to help decorate the flower bower from 7:30 – 8:30. Flower donations are appreciated. Flowers such as iris, daisy, ranunculus, sweet william, camellia, and carnations work well. Please leave flowers on the community room porch before evening zazen on Friday, April 4.

The Saturday morning program will begin at 9:40. Additional information and volunteer opportunities will be posted on the bulletin board.

Questions? Please contact Head Chiden Stephanie Seaborg at slseaborg AT gmail.com.

### B Z C S c h e d u l e

#### April

#### **Buddha's Birthday Celebration**

Saturday, 4/5

#### **Founders' Ceremony**

Thursday, 4/3, 6:20 pm

Friday, 4/4, 6:40 am

#### **Bodhisattva Ceremony**

Saturday, 4/12, 9:40 am

#### **Shukke Tokudo (Priest Ordination)**

Saturday, 4/12, 2:30 pm

#### **One-Day Sesshin**

Sunday, 4/13

#### May

#### **Founder's Ceremony**

Thursday, 5/1, 6:20 pm

Friday, 5/2, 6:40 am

#### **Mountains and Rivers Sesshin**

Friday, 5/2 – Sunday, 5/4

#### **One-Day Sesshin, Practice Period Opens**

Saturday, 5/10

#### **Bodhisattva Ceremony**

Saturday, 5/17, 9:40 am



*Photos this page by Ko Blix.*



#### 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.

## Spring Practice Period - *continued*

There will be a Thursday night class with Sojun Roshi, with the topic to be announced soon. For a detailed practice period schedule, see the insert in this newsletter. Practice period applications will be available on the main bulletin board shelf in April. Please fill one out and put it in the shuso's box on the community room porch by Monday, May 5.

In addition to signing up for practice period and turning in a registration form, you need to sign up separately for many practice period events. See the bulletin board for sign-up sheets.

### Practice Period Events

Opening Sitting: May 10, 5 am - 9 pm  
Opening/Shuso Entering Ceremony: May 10, 4 pm  
Shuso talks/lectures: May 12, 17, 30, and June 7  
Classes: Thursday evenings, May 15 - June 12  
Bansan (tea, dharma discussion with the abbot): May 16  
Dinner and Skit Night: May 31, 6 pm  
Shosan (dharma dialogue with the abbot): June 13 & 16  
Lay Ordination: June 14, 3 pm  
Five-day Sesshin: June 18 to 22  
Shuso Hossen (dharma dialogue with the shuso):  
June 22



### One-day Sesshin

**Sunday, April 13, 5am – 5pm**

Denkei Raul Moncayo will lead a one-day sesshin on Sunday, April 13, from 5 am–5 pm. We encourage old and new sangha members to participate. This is a great opportunity to get prepared for our Spring Practice Period. Please sign up on the patio bulletin board by Wednesday morning, April 10 after zazen.

If this is your first sesshin at BZC, we recommend that you first participate in a full Saturday program and also speak with the sesshin director. The fee is \$35 per day and should be paid in advance (a discounted fee is possible; please speak to the director). Put checks marked “April sesshin” in the mail slot in the courtyard laundry room door or mail to the BZC Office Manager at 1931 Russell St., Berkeley 94703. You can also use the bill pay option on your banks’ website and make the notation “April sesshin fee.”

If you have questions, contact the sesshin director, Gerry Oliva at [sesshindirector@bzc.com](mailto:sesshindirector@bzc.com) or 510-652-7217.

## Family Activities at BZC

### Saturday Morning Supervised Play

Supervised play is offered free of charge many Saturday mornings (see schedule below) for 9:40 am zazen through lecture. Supervising is Berkeley High student Lihong Chan. If you want to use this service, contact Laurie Senauke, 510.845.2215, or [lauries AT kushiki.org](mailto:lauries@kushiki.org) by noon the Friday before.

Coverage for 8:45 am zazen instruction is offered by arrangement; contact Laurie for information.

### KidZendo

Kidzendo is a program for children three and up, offered about twice a month during the school year, usually on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays, from 9:30 to 11:15 am (check schedule below). Together, we explore meditation, mindfulness, compassion and Buddhist traditions in a kid-friendly fashion. We are developing our curriculum and experimenting with what works best for our situation, which often includes a range of ages from pre-school through late elementary. BZC members Tamar and Judy Fleischman are among those teaching. Come take part! Our program includes songs, stories, discussions, snacks, walks, and art activities. Laurie Senauke oversees the program and can answer questions and receive input.

Family practice schedule:

April 5	Buddha's Birthday
April 12	Supervised play
April 19	Supervised play
April 26	<b>Kidzendo</b>
May 3	Supervised play
May 10	Sesshin - no program
May 17	Supervised play
May 24	<b>Kidzendo</b>
May 31	Supervised play
June 7	Supervised play
June 14	Supervised play
June 21	Sesshin - no program

### Family Practice E-mail Group

To make it easier to communicate about family practice activities at BZC, we have a Yahoo group. We only send, at most, ONE e-mail per week – a short reminder of upcoming events. To join, e-mail Marie at [marie\\_hopper AT sbcglobal.net](mailto:marie_hopper@sbcglobal.net) or Laurie.

**Please RSVP for ALL family activities to [lauries AT kushiki.org](mailto:lauries@kushiki.org)! Thank you.**

## Remembering Myogen

On the last day of 2013, the San Francisco Zen Center's Central Abbot, Myogen Steve Stuckey, passed from this world in a startlingly short time, just three months after his diagnosis of incurable cancer. In 1971, Steve arrived at Zen Center hoping to meet Suzuki Roshi, who passed away just at that time. But he stayed and practiced at Zen Center and was ordained as a priest by Abbot Richard Baker. Steve played a significant role in the development of Green Gulch. As a boy, he had worked on the family farm in Kansas during the summers and knew how to drive a team of plow horses. This fit right in with the newly emerging organic and gentle treatment of the land, ideals of the time, and Steve ended up guiding a team of plow horses for a while at Green Gulch. In a 1975 Wind Bell, there is a classic photo of Steve and the horses.

But in the mid-eighties just before Zen Center's big crisis, Steve left to start a landscaping business in Marin, and initiated the Dharma Eye Zen sitting group, which is still active in San Rafael.



*Steve Stuckey, Wind Bell, 1975.*

Steve searched me out around 1990 when I was abbot at SFZC and we discussed dharma transmission. He asked me what my practice was, and I said "like water." He liked that, and we started working and studying together for transmission. In 1993, I performed three ceremonies at Tassajara, one after the other, for Steve Stuckey, Paul Haller, and Steve Weintraub.

I think it was around 2007 that Myogen was asked to be a co-abbot at SFZC with Paul. It was somewhat difficult for Steve coming from the "outside." Having been gone for a number of years he was not well known and had to prove himself and gain the trust of the sangha. But he was up to the task and ended up being loved and respected by everyone.

During that time SFZC decided to have a third, or central, abbot, and that was given over to Myogen.

The abbots and former abbots always lead the Tassajara practice periods. As a former abbot I said I would be willing to share or fill in for an abbot who had obligations elsewhere. Steve took me up on that, but his idea was that we both be there together. So I said OK, and we shared a couple of practice periods teaching together. We both wanted to create a harmonious situation between us, together with the students. I believe it was very successful for all of us. I think it was beneficial for the students to see two teachers working together in this way. Steve and I also taught a class together on Suzuki Roshi at Tassajara every summer. We enjoyed tossing the teaching back and forth in a spontaneous way.

This year SFZC was having a hard time finding someone to lead the Winter-Spring practice period so I suggested that Steve, Paul and I each lead one month as a kind of experiment. They agreed. But unfortunately this was not to be for Steve. I was to do January, Steve February, and Paul March. So Paul and I each did 2 extra weeks in February; 6 weeks in all.

Steve's journey toward his death in those three months was truly inspiring. Physically, psychically and emotionally painful as it was, he faced it squarely and wanted to experience his last moments with dignity. As his body lost weight and grew thinner, his radiance shone brighter. Throughout that whole time and in his last moments he was truly an inspiration to us all.

I will be at Tassajara the first week of April to close the practice period together with Paul Haller. It has been a good practice period and I miss not having done the last half. But I am quite happy to be in Berkeley and sharing the practice with all of you.

- Sojun Roshi

## Eulogy for Myogen

Myogen Sama  
Deshi  
Fellow traveler  
on the way to nowhere.  
Our paths overlap  
and intersect.  
For a long moment  
our eye meets and we play  
in the field of dharma  
like twining vines.

How will I remember you?  
Energy like fire  
Solid like earth  
Flexible like water

Serene like ether  
Wise and compassionate  
Brave and courageous  
You showed us how to live  
and How to die.

*Photo by Hozan  
Alan Senauke.*



And now we part  
still wanting more.  
That is the best way.  
So grateful for having known you.  
We send you off with tears  
and a smile.  
Your radiant light fills our heart.  
We will not forget you.

YAAAA AH!

- Sojun Roshi



### **Within Heaven and Earth: A Class on Living with Living and Dying**

We, Ryushin Andrea Thach and Guy Micco, will be offering a class this spring concerning our relationships with aging, illness, dying and separation. We will draw on personal experiences and materials from the Pali Canon using Buddha's and his disciples' teachings, Chan, Zen and Tibetan stories; poems, essays and reflections from the last centuries by philosophers, poets, health practitioners, and others. Our readings will anchor what we hope will be a lively exploration of our paths following Siddhartha outside the palace gate to understand how to find our place in this world.

Guy is a long time member and friend of BZC, student of Yvonne Rand, a physician-educator at UCB, and an internal medicine and hospice/palliative care physician. Andrea is a priest at BZC, and also an internist working in geriatrics and hospice/palliative care. We, perhaps like you, have been tangling with these questions in our medical practices and our personal lives.

We will meet on four Thursdays from 7:15 to 9:00 pm: April 3, 10, 17 and 24. Cost is \$40 plus copying cost for a small syllabus. Please contact Ryushin Andrea at [andrea.thach AT gmail.com](mailto:andrea.thach@gmail.com) or Ron Nestor at [rnestor1 AT yahoo.com](mailto:rnestor1@yahoo.com) with questions.

## Sounding Board

The Board's new Electronic Communications (E-Comm) Committee has begun to explore BZC's internet presence. Our website was designed over 15 years ago and has served us well, but it might be time to make changes. Are we happy with what we have, or is it time for a fresh look? Should we move toward a content management system that would look more modern and be easier to maintain and update? How about a Facebook page, Twitter, Blogging? Would adding any of these be worth the effort involved? As in the George Booth cartoon, BZC is like a duck – calm and placid on the surface, but paddling like crazy underneath. Do we have the people power to administer a more complicated, interactive web presence?

A major concern is what impression our website has on younger people – folks the age many of us were when we began Zen practice. Shall we actively seek ways to appeal to a younger demographic, or should we mainly be concerned with making BZC's website inviting to anyone, regardless of age? As part of our assessment, we will investigate how other Zen centers, like Austin Zen Center and SFZC, are addressing these issues.

Of course, this conversation extends beyond the issue of age to compelling questions about the "face" of BZC. How do we come across to people visiting our temple for the first or second time? Are we perceived as welcoming and inclusive? Some avenues we are pursuing include adding an "I'm New" section on the current website; having an assigned greeter of new people, not just on Saturdays but for every period of zazen; expanding the 20s and 30s Dharma Group to meet weekly and perhaps be structured differently. In all of this, it is important to distinguish the roles of the Board and of the Practice Committee, and where they overlap.

Sangha input is most welcome as the Board begins this investigation. Please send your comments and suggestions to Ed Herzog (eherzog AT comcast.net) who is chairperson of our E-Comm Committee.

## Report from the Treasurer

At the March 4 All-Sangha Budget Meeting, attending members reviewed the 2013 year-end financial reports and reviewed and approved the 2014 budget. Overall, BZC's financial health is stable and positive. Copies of the report can be found on the patio bulletin board shelf.

Highlights of the financial report include:

- Our overall cash and investments increased by \$3,534 in 2013. This is mainly due to a \$10,674 addition to the Leadership Fund.
- Our unrestricted revenue slightly exceeded our operating expenses in 2013. Although our member dues and donations and revenue from sesshin and class fees did not equal the amounts received in 2012, we were able to reduce our operating expenses enough to achieve a small positive cash flow by year's end. When we examined trends over the last three-year period, including 2011, 2013 was in line with the past. Our unrestricted funds are used to cover the day-to-day operations of the Sangha. They can also be used to subsidize any other area with a demonstrated need.
- We did not meet our fund-raising goal of \$20,000 for the Leadership Fund, raising instead \$10,674. As of year's end, the balance in the Leadership Fund was \$135,819.
- We also raised \$3,415 in donations to the Building Fund that assisted us in dealing with the substantial cost overruns we've incurred in the kitchen and community room remodeling project. There was a \$30,770 balance in the Building Fund at year's end, which will be used to pay for most of the remodeling projects.
- We are hoping to raise \$25,000 in 2014 for the Building Fund in order to complete the remodeling project and to fund other much-needed projects. The list of projects we hope to accomplish in 2014 will be provided soon in a posting to the community e-mail list once all of the required cost estimates have been received.
- We are projecting a positive cash flow in 2014 due to a large unrestricted donation that was received early in 2014 and a projected 3.5% decrease in overall operating expenses. The 2014 budget also provided for \$4,000 in capital equipment for a new office computer and a replacement washing machine.

The board remains optimistic regarding the future financial well-being of BZC and is grateful for the continued generous support from our members and friends. If you have questions or concerns regarding the 2013 financial report or the 2014 budget, please contact BZC treasurer Paul Farber at pfarber AT pfarber.net.



## Three-Day Mountains and Rivers Sesshin

Our next Mountains and Rivers Sesshin will take place Friday-Sunday, May 2-4, at Point Reyes.

The sesshin will begin with an orientation Thursday evening, May 1, at BZC. Friday morning we will carpool to Point Reyes, then hike from Bear Valley trailhead to Coast Camp (5.5 miles), moving at a moderate pace with rest stops and lunch on the way. We will get back to Berkeley around 5:00 pm Sunday. All meals are provided and camping experience is not required. You are encouraged to do the full three days, but provision will be made for those who have to arrive late.

The signup sheet will be posted on the BZC bulletin board. Signup deadline is Sat., April 26. The fee is \$60. If you have questions, contact Ken Knabb at 510.527.0959 or knabb AT bopsecrets.org.



## BZC Campout - Save the date!

You are warmly invited to the annual BZC Campout, July 26-27. We've reserved a group campsite in Tilden Park, and will meet for a potluck dinner, a hike, S'mores, and songs around the campfire, followed by oatmeal and hot drinks in the morning. Join us to pass on old songs, tell stories, and learn the latest songs from our kids.

Families and those without children are all welcome. If you prefer not to stay the night, come for the dinner and company. If you want to camp but don't have a tent or sleeping bag, we can find one for you. Contact Katherine O. at klo999 AT yahoo.com if you have questions, and look for a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in July.

## Shukke Tokudo

On Saturday, April 12, Matt Gillam — Junki Ninrei — *Pure Nature Patient Abiding*, will receive priest ordination (Shukke Tokudo) from our abbot, Sojun Roshi. The ceremony will be held in the zendo at 2:30 pm. A simple reception will follow. Please come and give your support to Ki as he takes his vows and we celebrate his ordination.

## BZC Grassroots Wants You

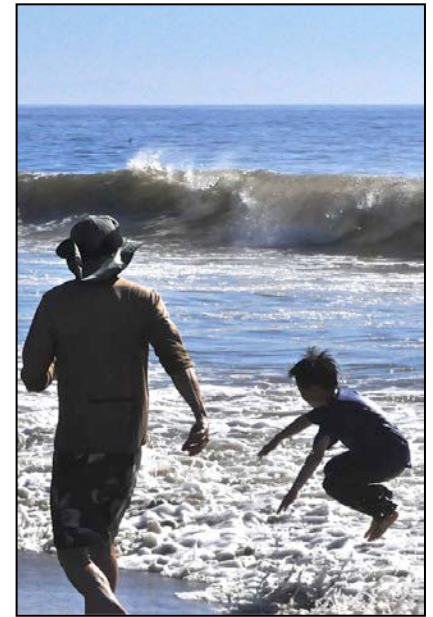
Missed your chance to pet a giraffe at the Oakland Zoo, discover Berkeley's architectural gems, or revel in the poetry of Kabir? Fear not. Sangha sign-ups will be back at this year's September fundraising party. These grassroots, collaborative events were such a hit that many will be reprised. Jake Van Akkeren and Christy Calame,

who will coordinate sign-ups, invite you to contribute by offering to lead an event, solo or with a friend. All you need is enthusiasm — the development committee will handle details like setting price and attendance limits.

We all have hidden talents, some more hidden than others. Maybe you've mastered the art of making French crepes. Maybe you know how to do basic bike repair. Maybe you're an avid yodeler. Want to contribute in this fun and homespun way but need help coming up with an idea? Talk to Jake, who leads a mean hike (Jvanakkeren AT comcast.net), or Christy, who can transmit the joys of hula hooping, no prior flexibility required (ccalame AT earthlink.net).

## Finding Presence in Conversation

This open dharma group focuses on practice in the context of everyday communication. These meetings, addressing ways we speak and listen to each other, have been ongoing for a few years, and are open to everyone. They are coordinated by Peter Overton. The upcoming meeting will be held at 2218 Stuart Street; Thursday, April 17, 7:15-9:00 pm. For information contact Peter at 510.325.2342, or peterovrtn AT gmail.com.



Photos this page by Ko Blix. Ko and Jake Van Akkeren led this photo hike at Pt. Reyes: Paul Ridgway and Yoyo play.

## Taking Care of Our Practice Home

Most of the things we value require attention and tender loving care. Whether it's an automobile, a relationship, or a house, maintenance is an essential and continuous process, with the respite of occasional quiet spells.

Since 1979, Berkeley Zen Center's buildings on Russell Street have been home to our practice. Over the years, sangha members have diligently addressed maintenance needs as they arose. But just as human bodies fall apart with time, as BZC's buildings age, physical problems tend to increase in scope and frequency. Some of the structures are nearly a century old, which means the maintenance to-do list is ongoing.

BZC's project management team periodically reassesses our maintenance priorities to determine which needs are most critical, estimate the cost of repairs, and identify which jobs are best handled by professionals and which tasks can be accomplished by sangha members. The team is in the midst of that assessment process now for 2014.



*Crumbling countertop in 1929A. Photos by Ross Blum.*

While some repairs can be deferred, some should not be, as doing so might result in damage. Shelley Brock, who serves as the coordinator for building projects, says that the upstairs apartment at 1929 (over the community room) has needed kitchen and bath upgrades for years, "but because of the size of the job and the necessity for building permits, we will need to wait for sufficient funding before undertaking it."

Contractor Gustavo Salcedo, who worked on two prior projects at BZC, recently inspected the grounds with Shelley and identified some high-priority (but more affordable) maintenance needs:

caulking around windows and penetrations in the exterior walls to prevent leaks between the outer and interior walls, and pressure washing and resealing exposed wood porches, railings, and steps, as well as other stressed exterior wood surfaces, like the zendo walls.

Those of you who attended the recent 2014 budget approval meeting know that while BZC is generally in sound fiscal shape, the building fund was drained in 2013 by kitchen renovations and unexpected

community room bathroom repairs. General funds from dues are required to support normal, budgeted operating expenses and are distinct from capital funds raised for building improvements. To replenish the money set aside for repair projects, this year's fundraising goal for buildings is \$25K.

We are planning another September Bazaar and exploring other avenues for generating the funds required. With a bow to the sangha's past demonstrations of support, we encourage your early and generous contributions to help us collectively take care of our practice home.  
--Colleen Busch, Development Committee member

*Exterior walls of the zendo and dokusan hut are showing signs of wear.*



*This window at 1933 won't fully open or close.*



### **Saturday Morning Lecture Schedule**

April 5 Sojun Weitsman Roshi  
April 12 Sojun Weitsman Roshi  
April 19 Hozan Senauke Sensei  
April 26 Sojun Weitsman Roshi  
May 3 Sojun Weitsman Roshi

**NEWSLETTER SUBMISSION DEADLINE**  
**Third Friday of the month before each issue.**  
**Submit to bzcnewsletter AT gmail.com.**

**May deadline:**  
**Friday, April 18, 8:00 pm**

### **Way-Seeking Mind Talk Schedule**

March 31, Monday 6:20 am - Rhea Loudon  
April 4, Friday 5:50 pm - Walter Kieser  
April 7, Monday 6:20 am - Open Discussion  
April 14, Monday 6:20 am - Peter Carpentieri  
April 21, Monday 6:20 am - Gary Artim  
April 28, Monday 6:20 am - Karl Shoenberger

### **Calendar Update**

Due to the conflict with Sojun's 85th birthday party, the zazen sitting originally scheduled for Sunday July 13 has been rescheduled for Sunday July 20.

Berkeley Zen Center  
1931 Russell Street  
Berkeley, CA 94703



# BZC Spring 2014 Practice Period Schedule

*Schedule subject to change; please check bulletin board for updates.*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>MAY 4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>MAY 10</b> Sesshin— PP Shuso Entering
<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> Talk- am Shuso John Mogey	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> Class – Sojun Roshi 7:30 pm	<b>16</b> Bansan- Sojun Roshi 5:40 pm	<b>17</b> Lecture- Shuso John Mogey
<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> Talk - am	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> Class – Sojun Roshi 7:30pm	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> Lecture- Sojun Roshi
<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> Memorial Day Zendo Closed	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> Class – Sojun Roshi 7:30 pm	<b>30</b> Talk- Shuso John Mogey 5:40 pm	<b>31</b> Lecture- Hozan Sensei PP Dinner & Skit Night
<b>JUNE 1</b> Half-day sitting	<b>2</b> Talk - am	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> Class – Sojun Roshi 7:30 pm	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> Lecture- Shuso John Mogey Lay Ord Rhrs
<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> Talk- am	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> Class – Sojun Roshi 7:30 pm	<b>13</b> Shosan- Sojun Roshi 5:40 pm	<b>14</b> Lecture- Sojun Roshi Lay Ordination
<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> Shosan – Sojun Roshi 5:40 am	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> Sesshin	<b>19</b> Sesshin	<b>20</b> Sesshin	<b>21</b> Sesshin
<b>JUNE 22</b> Close Sesshin/ Shuso Hossen	<b>JUNE 23</b> Zendo Closed in the am					