

# RING OF BONE ZENDO

SPRING 2017

WWW.RINGOFBONEZENDO.ORG

P.O. BOX 510 NORTH SAN JUAN, CA 95960

## JUKAI AT RING OF BONE

(*Jukai* means "receiving the precepts.")

On Saturday, April 15th, Nelson conducted a precept ceremony for seven fellow members: Sheelo, Kate, Anna, Eric, Jenny, Marsha, and Masa. This culminated a very rich process of group study that began more than four years ago, focusing on the ethical conundrums and imperatives involved in embodying practice and realization under the circumstances of life in these times. This was a big moment for the entire sangha as well as for these seven friends.

During this threshold-crossing event, each participant received a precept name, inscribed on the back of a rakusu, the bib-like garment that you've seen worn at formal zendo occasions. Nelson says the process of identifying a suitable, resonant name for each of these one-of-a-kind characters was fascinating, and he elucidated the qualities the names allude to when he announced them in the course of the ceremony.

## HILLS & CREEKS SESSHIN

A mini Mountains and Rivers sesshin will be offered Sept. 8-10. Nelson will offer dokusan and give a talk. Steve Mulford who is organizing the sesshin will send out more information in the next couple of months.

## SESSHIN GUIDELINES

Please review the following information if you are interested in attending sesshin.

### SESSHIN SIGN-UP PROCEDURE

1. Heed the deadlines. Space is limited. Early submissions have priority.
2. Send a check for the full fee, your name, address, phone number, membership category, and e-mail to the coordinator. If you don't use e-mail, send a self-addressed stamped envelope.
3. Let the coordinator know if you have a special medical condition or food allergies pertinent to this sesshin.
4. Let the coordinator know if you are unfamiliar with dokusan or meal procedures.

5. If paying the full sesshin fee poses a problem, talk with the coordinator. A fee reduction may be possible.
6. If you are behind in your membership dues, please send with your deposit/fee.

### SESSHIN SIGN-UP CAUTIONS

Your check will be held for deposit until after sesshin.

You may cancel up until two weeks before sesshin and receive a full refund. If you must cancel, please do so as soon as possible to help enable another to take your place. Cancellation within two weeks of sesshin may result in the loss of 25% of your sesshin fee.

Acceptance depends on membership status and the date the coordinator receives your check and is determined at the sign-up deadline. Once accepted, the coordinator will contact you with details about the sesshin or let you know if you are on the waiting list. If you are new to Ring of Bone Zendo, contact the coordinator early so that a participant query can be sent to you, and read *Taking the Path of Zen* by Robert Aitken before you sign up.

Bring a sack supper to the work meeting before sesshin begins. For long sesshin, work meetings begin at 5 PM. For week-end sesshin, work meetings begin at 7 PM.

Plan to arrive early and stay until cleanup is finished after sesshin. Sangha relations are an important part of our practice. If you come from a long distance, please arrange your flight schedule to allow ample time before and after sesshin. We ask you to arrive no later than 2 PM to help with zendo cleanup and other sesshin setup tasks and to settle in and visit with others.

Hidden Portals

Eyes to Nose,  
Ears to Throat,  
Mind to World.

~ Ken Schumacher, April, 2017

Post-sesshin is also a very important time, especially when it follows a five or seven day sesshin. Plan extra time to unwind and help close down the zendo. Please do not plan to leave before 4 PM at the earliest.

### SESSHIN CHECKLIST

- Bag Supper
- Bowl Set
- Sleeping Bag
- Flashlight
- Slip-on Shoes
- Towel and Toilet Articles
- Dark, Solid-Colored Sitting Clothes
- Warm Clothes
- Rain Gear
- Mosquito Gear (summer)
- Tent (optional)

If you have any questions about sesshin, contact the coordinator.

### MOUNTAINS AND RIVERS SESSHIN

Mountains and Rivers Sesshin are week-long backpacking sesshin, held each spring and summer. Destinations vary from year to year and season to season, according to weather, availability of water, trail conditions, etc. We don't look for difficult circumstances, but they often find us, so it's vital to prepare physically and to equip yourself for inclement weather. Break in new boots beforehand, and minimize the weight of personal gear. Plan on carrying ten pounds of group food and supplies, more or less.

We limit M&R sesshin to fifteen people, so sign up early to make sure you get a place. Participants gather at the zendo (or an assembly point closer to the trailhead) by 5 PM to divvy up the group food and supplies, eat our sack dinners, do some zazen, and go over the cautions and procedures for M&R sesshin. Come earlier than 5 PM for visiting time.

In 2008, we instituted a less strenuous (Easy Wandering) mode of M&R sesshin, and we now alternate between that mode and our standard trips, which en-

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tail more days walking under full packs. If you're only interested in one of these two modes, before signing up check with the coordinator about which sort of M&R it will be. If you aren't certain whether you're up to it physically, ask what level of fitness the route will demand.

We take trail planning for these sesshin very seriously, aiming for places wild, relatively untraveled, and within reasonable driving range of the zendo. Usually we do a low desert, canyon, or coastal route in the spring and a high-elevation site in the summer. We make every effort to scout our routes in advance, so if you could assist in the scouting (or have destination ideas), please contact the coordinator.

### ROHATSU

The eight-day Rohatsu Sesshin commemorates the awakening of the historical Buddha. It is a working person's sesshin. Rohatsu is open to part-time and weekend attendance. Please determine your commitment for this sesshin and notify the coordinator when you sign up.

The weekday schedule is 4:30 to 6:30 AM, and 7:30 to 9:30 PM. Participants carry out their practice through the rest of each day in their homes and workplaces. Dokusan with Nelson Foster will be available throughout sesshin. On the last night we sit till midnight. The next morning we close with our annual walk to Bald Mountain and a sunrise ceremony. Bring hats, gloves, warm footwear, rain gear, etc. as the weather is unpredictable. An informal breakfast and cleanup follows.

We welcome people from out of the area to attend Rohatsu during the weekdays as well as on the weekend. Anyone who wishes to stay for one or more of the weekdays, however, must either arrange to spend daytime hours away from the zendo, possibly at the home of a sangha member, or join group activities at the zendo (meals, additional zazen, light manual labor, etc.). When you sign up, be sure to indicate whether you're interested in participating in the weekday activities or will be arranging an off-site program of your own. Just hanging out at the zendo on the weekdays is not an option.

### ZAZENKAI

Zazenkai are one-day sittings that also require advance sign-up. The daily schedule is as follows:

Densho at 9:00 AM, sutras, zazen, bag lunch with sutras, silent break, zazen. Dharma assembly at 2:00 PM led by a sangha member, meadow kinhin, zazen. The Zazenkai will end at 3:50 PM with a closing ceremony followed by tea and cleanup.

The newsletter has changed. New volunteers have necessitated a change in the final product. As we get more familiar with the process, we may expand it a bit, who knows?

## HANDY-DANDY EVENT FACTOID 2017

### Workday

April 23

### Spring Mountains and Rivers Sesshin

April 29-May 6 R

### Workday (at Nelson's and Masa's)

May 21

### Zazenkai

May 28

### Seven-Day Sesshin

June 10-17

### Summer Mountains and Rivers Sesshin

Aug 12-19

### Hills and Creeks Sesshin

Sept 8-10 S

### Workday

Sept 17

### Bald Mtn. Assn (BMA) Workday

Oct 15

### Five Day Sesshin (taught by Michael Kieran)

Oct. 20-25

### Rohatsu

Dec. 1-8

# 2017 RING OF BONE ZENDO CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## GENERAL INFORMATION

1) Zazen occurs year-round on Wednesday nights, except during January and July and on the dates of Feb 15, June 14, and Oct 25. In 2017, we're experimenting with an earlier time than in the past: 7 pm – 9 pm. Please take note!

2) We've also adjusted the time of Sunday morning Zazen, as indicated.

3) Eight dates have been set aside for Meeting for the Practice of Business (MPB), but as few as six MPBs may actually occur, with the remaining dates utilized for other purposes, at the discretion of the Moderator. The expected use of each date will be announced well in advance.

4) View from the Hojo is an informal, semi-annual review of practice and teaching matters, delivered by Nelson Foster.

Date	Event	Time	Coordinator
April 23	Zendo Workday (Bring sack lunch)	9:30 am – 4:30 pm	Buildings & Grounds
April 29-May 6	Spring Mountains & Rivers Sesshin (backpacking sesshin)		Reed Hamilton
April 30	Sunday Zazen Meeting for the Practice of Business	9:30 am – noon 12:15 – 2:15 pm	Moderator
May 7	Sunday Zazen Potluck Lunch Sangha Circle – Topics TBD	9:30 am – noon noon – 1 pm 1 – 4 pm	TBD
May 14	Sunday Zazen	9:30 am – noon	
May 21	Work Party for Nelson & Masa	9 am – 4 pm (Bring sack lunch)	Greg Leeson
May 28	Zazen kai	9 am – 4 pm	Chris Mulford
June 4	Sunday Zazen Potluck Lunch/Work Hour	9:30 am – noon noon -- 2:30 pm	Buildings & Grounds
June 10-17	Seven-Day Sesshin		Keith Melton
June 18	No Sunday Zazen		
June 25	Sunday Zazen Meeting for the Practice of Business	9:30 am – noon 12:15 – 2:15 pm	Moderator
July	Zendo closed this month		
Aug 6	Sunday Zazen Potluck lunch/Work Hour	9:30 am – noon noon-2:30 pm	Buildings & Grounds
Aug 12-19	Summer Mountains & Rivers Sesshin (backpacking sesshin)		Eric Larsen
Aug 13	Sunday Zazen	9:30 am – noon	
Aug 20	Sunday Zazen Sack Lunch//View from the Hojo	9:30 am – noon noon – 1:30 pm	
Aug 27	Sunday Zazen Meeting for the Practice of Business	9:30 am – noon 12:15 – 2:15 pm	Moderator
Sept 3	Sunday Zazen Potluck Lunch	9:30 am – noon noon	
Sept 8-10	Hills and Creeks Sesshin (no zazen at the zendo on Sept 10)		Steve Mulford
Sept 17	Zendo Workday (Bring sack lunch)	9:30 am – 4:30 pm	Buildings & Grounds
Sep 24	Sunday Zazen Meeting for the Practice of Business	9:30 am – noon 12:15 – 2:15 pm	Moderator
Oct 1	Sunday Zazen Potluck Lunch Founders' Day	9:30 am – noon noon – 1 pm 1 – 4 pm	Kate Duroux
Oct 8	Sunday Zazen	9:30 am – noon	
Oct 15	Bald Mtn Assn. (BMA) Workday	9 am – 4 pm	Sheelo Bohm
Oct 20-25	Five-Day Sesshin (taught by Michael Kieran)		Steve Mulford
Oct 29	Sunday Zazen Meeting for the Practice of Business	9:30 am – noon 12:15 – 2:15 pm	Moderator
Nov 5	Sunday Zazen Potluck Lunch Sangha Circle – Topics TBD	9:30 am – noon noon – 1 pm 1 pm – 4 pm	TBD
Nov 12	One-Day Sesshin	9 am – 4 pm	Cindy Leeson
Nov 19	Sunday Zazen	9:30 am – noon	
Nov 26	Sunday Zazen Meeting for the Practice of Business	9:30 am – noon 12:15 – 2:15 pm	Moderator
Dec 1-8	Rohatsu Sesshin		TBD
Dec 10	Sunday Zazen	9:30 am – noon	
Dec 17	Sunday Zazen Potluck Lunch/ Work Hour	9:30 am – noon noon – 2:30 pm	Buildings & Grounds
Dec 24	Sunday Zazen (subject to cancellation)	9:30 am – noon	members@ringofbonezendo.org
Dec 31	Sunday Zazen (subject to cancellation)	9:30 am – noon	members@ringofbonezendo.org



## SESSHIN LEADER POOLS

Sangha members interested in a leadership position should contact the appropriate pool leader. If you are listed in a pool and your availability has changed, please advise the pool leader (named in **bold italic**).

TANTO: Judyth Collin, Kate Duroux, Allan Finlay, Reed Hamilton, Anna Gold, Eric Larsen, Greg Leeson, Cindy Leeson, **Jenny Long**, Andrew Mason, Steve Mulford, Jim Pyle, Masa Uehara

JIKIJITSU: Sheelo Bohm, Walt Carnahan, Kate Duroux, Allan Finlay, Anna Gold, **Reed Hamilton**, Mike Kelly, Michael Keown, Eric Larsen, Cindy Leeson, Greg Leeson, Jenny Long, Andrew Mason, Steve Mulford, Nate Popik, Jim Pyle

JISHA: Sheelo Bohm, Judyth Collin, Kate Duroux, Allan Finlay, Anna Gold, Reed Hamilton, Eric Larsen, **Greg Leeson**, Jenny Long, Andrew Mason, Steve Mulford, Jim Pyle

INO: Johanna Bangeman, **Kate Duroux**, Anne Dutton, Anna Gold, Eric Larsen, Cindy Leeson, Greg Leeson, Jenny Long, Andrew Mason, Steve Mulford, Nate Popik, Dana Turner, Masa Uehara

TENZO: Bob Abugov, Sheelo Bohm, **Judyth Collin**, Kate Duroux, Anna Gold, Michael Keown, Andrew Mason, Chris Mulford

SESSHIN COORDINATOR: Sheelo Bohm, Judyth Collin, Reed Hamilton, **Michael Keown**, Eric Larsen, Cindy Leeson, Greg Leeson, Keith Melton, Steve Mulford, Jim Pyle, Masa Uehara, Jay Veazey, Lynne Westerfield

## DĀNA

Your generosity is a gift that not only supports ROBZ, but also the teacher, the Sangha, the larger Dharma community, and your own practice. If you would like, you may direct your gift to a particular fund or project, such as the Teachers Fund, General Fund, Building Fund, Sangha Assistance Fund, or make a split gift. All undesignated gifts will go into the general fund. You may send a check to:

Chris Mulford, ROBZ Bookkeeper,  
13224, Red Dog Road  
Nevada City, CA 95959

or donate on our website at:

[ringofbonezendo.org](http://ringofbonezendo.org)

We appreciate your spirit of giving!

## GENERAL INQUIRY & ADDRESS CHANGES

Please send general inquiry and changes of your contact information to:

Cindy Leeson, Membership Coordinator  
P.O. Box 676, Colfax, CA 95713  
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[members@ringofbonezendo.org](mailto:members@ringofbonezendo.org)

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## NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

Submissions of original artwork, poetry, articles, photographs or anything else that might be of interest to the sangha are appreciated. Please send any materials to:

[dfennessy@mac.com](mailto:dfennessy@mac.com)

The deadline for the next issue will be **September 1st**.

If you would like to become more involved with creating this newsletter, please write to the editor at the above email address.



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Address Correction Requested  
RING OF BONE ZENDO