



WHEEL OF DHARMA

Official Publication of the Buddhist Churches of America

Dr. Scott Mitchell Is Selected as the Next President of IBS

By Rev. Gesshin Greenwood
Communications and
Admissions Director
Institute of Buddhist Studies

Dr. Scott Mitchell, a faculty member of the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) since 2008, has been appointed as the next

president of IBS.

Dr. Mitchell will succeed Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto on July 1, 2024. Rev. Dr. Matsumoto previously announced his retirement this year.

Dr. Mitchell is the IBS Rev. Yoshitaka Tamai Professor of Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Studies and Dean of Students and Faculty

FYI

Dr. Natalie Quli Named to IBS Core Faculty. Page 4

Affairs. He has been a member of the IBS and Graduate Theological Union (GTU) community in Berkeley, California, since he

began his graduate work in 2000. His research interests include Buddhism in Western contexts, Buddhist modernity, Pure Land Buddhism, translocal religions, ritual studies, and media studies.

“Dr. Mitchell is well prepared and positioned to continue the



Dr. Scott Mitchell

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The third annual BCA Virtual Art Exhibit entries included, clockwise at top left, a depiction by Vista's Hajime Ohno (he/his/him) of his Aunt Fumiko's wedding in Hokkaido in 1960, and Ohno is 3 and walking in front of his aunt; San Diego's Margie Kitano with "Sumi-e Enso Cat"; Oregon's Maho Suzuki Garner's watercolor scene of dancing to "Mottainai" at Obon; and OCBC's Akemi Osajima painting of herself with her grandparents as a tribute to her ancestors and Japanese and Japanese American culture. Below is Alameda's Valerie Pham's acrylic painting depicting the family's kitchen altar. The painting represents California's 12th Congressional District and is currently hanging in the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. (Courtesy of BCA)

Talent Abounds in BCA Virtual Art Exhibit

Annual Event Has Grown in Popularity and Is Now in Its Third Year

By Jon Kawamoto
Wheel of Dharma Editor

Now in its third year, the BCA Virtual Art Exhibit is proving once again that there's a wealth of artistic talent throughout the BCA.

The BCA Virtual Art Exhibit debuted online on Sept. 23 and is available on the BCA's website at: bit.ly/46hUezV

“Returning and new artists have provided their latest expressions of their hearts and hands,” said Rev. Joshin Dennis Fujimoto, an artist himself who came up with the idea for a BCA-wide exhibit. Rev. Fujimoto, who now



leads the BCA Art Committee, is Resident Minister of the Buddhist Temple of Alameda and Supervising Minister for

FYI

The BCA Virtual Art Exhibit was held beginning Sept. 23 and is available on the BCA's website at: bit.ly/46hUezV

Enmanji Buddhist Temple in Sebastopol, California.

Koichi Mizushima, who has diligently worked with Rev. Fujimoto from the onset of the exhibit, praised this year's art entries.

“I am honored to be a part of this amazing project,” said Mizushima, who is the BCA's Center for Buddhist Education

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HMHH Raises Over \$400,000 in Maui Relief Donations

Support Also Includes BCA, Nishi Hongwanji Headquarters in Japan, Canada Kyodan

By Jon Kawamoto
Wheel of Dharma Editor

More than \$400,000 has been raised for Maui relief by the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii (HMH) as of Sept. 12, including an outpouring of donations from throughout the BCA, Nishi Hongwanji headquarters in Japan, as well as the Canada Kyodan.

“Mahalo for your generous contributions as we support our Dharma friends and Maui residents affected by the devastating wildfires,” said Kona

Hongwanji Buddhist Temple Resident Minister Rev. Blayne Higa, chair of the HHMH's Committee on Social Concerns. “The outpouring of aloha has been inspiring and healing for our community. We are grateful for your continued support as we help the members of Lahaina Hongwanji and others along the long road to recovery.”

The HHMH's Committee on Social Concerns has processed \$2,000 “Omimai” (contribution of support) for each member

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OCBC's Jo Ann Tanioka Details Benefits of Sangha

In NCM Seminar, Church President Says ‘It's Acceptance, Security and Compassion’

Editor's note: This is the sixth and final article in a series about the Feb. 18 BCA National Council Meeting's Town Hall seminar, titled “The Benefits of Following the Shin Buddhist Path.”

By Jon Kawamoto
Wheel of Dharma Editor

If ever there was a prototypical BCA Shin Buddhist — from infancy

on through adulthood — Orange County Buddhist Church (OCBC) President Jo Ann Tanioka would certainly fit the mold — and break it.

As the daughter of parents who were active in OCBC — her father was the church's first president and her mother served as a Dharma School teacher — Tanioka literally grew up in the church.

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BISHOP'S MESSAGE

The Dharma Should Be Enjoyable



By Rev. Marvin Harada
Bishop of the BCA

On Oct. 8, I participated in the Northern California District's observance of the 800th anniversary of the establishment of the Jodo Shinshu teachings and the 850th anniversary of the birth of Shinran Shonin.

Several of our BCA districts have had a districtwide service like the one I attended in Sacramento. It was a really wonderful service planned by the Northern California district ministers led by Rinban Rev. Yuki Sugahara

seen this ritual performed before. All of the ministers wore special, formal robes, which created a solemn but dignified atmosphere for the celebration.

The Dharma message was given by Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto, president of the Institute of Buddhist Studies, and he shared a wonderful talk on "What Shinran Shonin Means to Me," which was both heartfelt and educational for all. He reviewed the life of Shinran Shonin in a manner that gave us new insight into the life of our spiritual founder of Shin Buddhism.

On top of all that, Rev. Sugahara, a talented musician, accompanied the Sangha in singing the gatha "Shinran Sama" on the electric guitar with a stirring solo as well.

When the service ended, to my surprise, two hours had passed. To me, it didn't seem that long. The chanting was enjoyable, the music was enjoyable, and the Dharma message was enjoyable.

apologizing that his talk was getting long and he cut some parts of it out so as to not go too long. After the service, one mother shared with me that her two adult daughters both were saying to each other during the service that they had wished that Rev. Matsumoto would speak longer rather than shorten his talk. How many times have you ever heard that said about a Dharma message or sermon? Don't we hear most of the time, "That sermon was too long! He should have made it a lot shorter."

I also heard the comment from people saying, "It didn't feel like two hours to me. It went by so fast."

To me, our services should always be like that. I want people to leave from attending a service with the feeling of, "I am so glad that I came to service today. That was such a nice service. It was so enjoyable and I learned so much."

Listening to the Dharma or attending a service or seminar

"Kyogyoshinsho," makes the following statement: "My joy grows ever fuller, my gratitude and indebtedness ever more compelling."

We too can come to find that the Dharma is enjoyable, and that our joy, our gratitude and our indebtedness becomes "ever more compelling."

During Rev. Dr. Matsumoto's Dharma message, he kept apologizing that his talk was getting long and he cut some parts of it out so as to not go too long. After the service, one mother shared with me that her two adult daughters both were saying to each other during the service that they had wished that Rev. Matsumoto would speak longer rather than shorten his talk. How many times have you ever heard that said about a Dharma message or sermon? Don't we hear most of the time, "That sermon was too long! He should have made it a lot shorter."

of the Sacramento Betsuin. The service had special chanting that we don't normally do that incorporated music and a melodious style of chanting. I also conducted a special ritual on the middle platform area of the altar that a few of our temples have. Many of the members in the district had never

What was even more gratifying for me was to hear so many people at the luncheon say how much they enjoyed the service and how glad they were that they had attended this special service, which is only done on rare occasions.

During Rev. Dr. Matsumoto's Dharma message, he kept

doesn't have to be boring and tedious. It should be enjoyable.

That is our challenge, to make our services, to make listening to the Dharma be like that — interesting, thought-provoking, inspirational, impactful, moving, humorous, gratifying, and enjoyable.

Coffee Dharma



By Rev. Harry Gyoko Bridge
Buddhist Church of Oakland

Not many people know that I used to work at Starbucks. It was about 30 years ago, I was right out of college, living at home and playing with my band Jiggle the Handle.

A friend thought I'd be a good fit for the job — I don't know why he thought that, but I'm glad he got me the job

because it was a very significant part of both my life and my path as a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist.

I have many memories of working there. People that I worked with, the customers I interacted with, what I learned about coffee. Food service is not an easy job, and when caffeine is involved — watch out! People can sure be grumpy in the morning ... I could tell all kinds of stories about my time there, but instead, I would like to share two thoughts I distinctly remember:

One: I felt like I wasn't "good enough."

I was investigating Buddhism at the same time that I worked at the coffee shop. I didn't have a teacher, but I had discovered books, especially used books!

Living outside of Boston, I had access to some wonderful

book stores, especially since Cambridge was nearby. I was basically stumbling around, trying to make sense of Buddhism. But I knew that it wasn't just about "enlightenment" (whatever that meant), it also asked me to look at myself and how I treated others.

So a coffee shop was a perfect place to try and be Buddhist! Plenty of different emotions and situations and relationships. I remember at some point, probably a couple of years into my employment, thinking that I couldn't commit to Buddhism yet because I "wasn't good enough" — I wasn't treating people as well as I should be if I were to be a Buddhist. And I didn't feel like I had become Buddhist until I went to visit the New York

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Correction

In the October issue of the Wheel of Dharma, in the Cherry Blossom story, the name of photographer Mark Shigenaga was misspelled.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Congratulations to Rev. Harada on Re-Election as BCA Bishop



By Terri Omori
BCA President

It is hard to believe that Rev. Marvin Harada will be completing his first four-year term as our BCA Bishop at the end of March 2024.

The time has gone by fast. Perhaps not for Rev. Harada. However, I am amazed how much Rev. Harada has accomplished during his first term, especially in light of circumstances beyond his control.

In April 2020, at the beginning of Rev. Harada's term as Bishop, we were in the midst of a global pandemic. The entire world shut down. We were introduced to a virus called COVID-19 with new terms in our everyday language like "shelter in place," "work from home," and "social distancing." Masks became part of our attire and the temples were

forced to close their doors.

This did not stop Rev. Harada. With his positive attitude, he made sure the Dharma continued to be accessible. He supported our BCA ministers and members as they switched to online platforms to keep their Sanghas connected and shared the Dharma. He worked together with the BCA Executive Committee as they reached out to temples in sharing innovative ways to keep their Sanghas engaged.

Rev. Harada supported the "Dial the Dharma" idea by past BCA President Dr. Kent Matsuda. This was created especially for those members who did not have the technological bandwidth to be online. This program continues today with Rev. Harada providing a Dharma message each week.

Rev. Harada began to meet each month with members in the BCA Individual Membership program who have been introduced to our Jodo Shinshu tradition, but who do not live near a temple. They are grateful for receiving the Dharma through the BCA Center for Buddhist Education programs, the Wheel of Dharma and Rev. Harada's services. Currently, there are 55 members.

Rev. Harada has also represented the BCA not only

within our own BCA family, but also the greater Buddhist community, which included participating in a special Vesak ceremony at the White House and as a presenter for an event by Naropa University. There is so much more Rev. Harada has accomplished, but I am limited to space for this message.

the BCA eight districts (Bay, Central California, Coast, Eastern, Northern California, Northwest, Mountain States, and Southern districts).

On Sept. 30, the Bishop's Selection Committee was held online. I had the privilege of serving as the committee chairperson with the assistance of Rev. Bridge as the

tinue working toward the following: growing our membership, completing the Dharma Forward campaign, ministerial staffing, and a practical approach to Buddhism.

After an impressive Q&A session between the committee members and Rev. Harada, a vote was taken. It is with great honor to announce that Rev.

I am amazed how much Rev. Harada has accomplished during his first term, especially in light of circumstances beyond his control. In April 2020, at the beginning of Rev. Harada's term as Bishop, we were in the midst of a global pandemic. This did not stop Rev. Harada. With his positive attitude, he made sure the Dharma continued to be accessible There is so much more Rev. Harada has accomplished, but I am limited to space for this message.

It came as no surprise when Rev. Harry Bridge, chairperson of the BCA Ministers' Association (Gicho), informed me that Rev. Harada was the only nominee submitted to run as the next BCA Bishop. This was confirmed by the Ministers' Association at the annual seminar (Fuken) in August.

To continue the process of selecting the BCA Bishop, the Bishop's Selection Committee was formed. The committee is comprised of a minister and lay representative from each of

vice chairperson and Darlene Bagshaw as the secretary.

Rev. Harada's platform statement was shared with the committee, which consisted of the following: "It is an honor and privilege to have been nominated by the ministers in our Buddhist Churches of America to serve for a second term as their Bishop. I take this opportunity very seriously and with a renewed sense of determination to complete some things that were started during my first term."

Rev. Harada hopes to con-

Harada has been re-elected unanimously to serve a second term as our BCA Bishop. Four more years! Thank you, Rev. Harada! The next process, according to the BCA Bishop's Selection Guidelines, is to have this decision ratified at the upcoming BCA National Board Meeting on Dec. 2 and at the BCA National Council Meeting in February.

Following the meeting, later that evening, it was back to business as Rev. Harada, Rev.

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Berkeley Hosts College Welcome Event



More than 60 students, mostly from nearby UC Berkeley, attended the Berkeley Buddhist Temple's College Welcome Night on Sept. 22 for a fun night that included socializing, musical entertainment, a delicious dinner, and a Dharma message. Above, Devon Akiyama of Berkeley leads an icebreaker. Below left, Halle Fukawa from Senshin and Zora Uyeda-Hale from Berkeley are all smiles, and below right, students line up for the dinner prepared by chef Alan Hirahara. (Courtesy of Jon Kawamoto)



A yoga session was held Sept. 23 involving Salt Lake and Ogden temple Sangha members, led by Bob Matsueda of the BCA. Shown, from left, are: Matsueda, Brenda Koga, Christy Fong, Maya Chow, Geniel Summers and Julia Fujimoto. (Courtesy of Jani Iwamoto)

Ogden, Salt Lake Sanghas, Others Experience Yoga

By Christy Fong
Ogden Buddhist Temple

On Sept. 23, I, along with approximately 60 members from the Japanese Christian Church of Christ, Salt Lake Buddhist Temple and Ogden Buddhist Temple, experienced yoga and oneness as a community.

The session at the Japanese Christian Church of Christ was held in conjunction with a fundraiser for the Maui Strong Fund. Bob Matsueda from the BCA's Jodo Shinshu Center led us

in a morning of yoga practice across faiths and ages.

It gave me great joy to see my aunt in her 90s as well as people in their 20s able to fully participate and feel a sense of well-being and peace. I have attended yoga classes before that sometimes left me feeling self-conscious about my lack of flexibility or balance, but this was completely different. I could tell first timers to yoga were "all in" and left wanting more.

On Sept. 24, Matsueda was the guest speaker for the

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Dr. Natalie Quli Appointed to IBS Core Faculty as Associate Professor

By Rev. Gesshin Greenwood
Communications and
Admissions Director
Institute of Buddhist Studies



Dr. Natalie Quli

Dr. Natalie Quli has been appointed to the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) Core Faculty as an Associate Professor of Theravāda Studies.

Dr. Quli, who served as an IBS Research Fellow for many years, received her Ph.D from the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California, and focuses on Buddhism in the United States and Canada, Theravāda studies, contemporary Buddhism in Sri Lanka and tradition and the construction of religious authority.

"I'm interested in the construction of religious authority and authenticity in Buddhist communities in response to social change," she said. "How do these various Buddhist groups maintain, reconstruct, or even reinvent traditions? I'm also drawn to study the development of hierarchies and structures of power within these commu-

nities, as well as relationships between them."

Dr. Quli's recent article publications include "When White Buddhists Don't See Race" in *Buddhadharma* magazine and "A Brief Critical Appraisal of the Buddhist Modernism Paradigm" in the *Routledge Handbook of Buddhist-Christian Studies*. She will be teaching "Women in Theravāda Traditions" in spring of 2024.

Following the retirement of Dr. Richard Payne, Dr. Quli will be taking on a larger role in the publication of the

Pacific World journal, the academic journal of IBS. She currently serves as the Senior Editor.

"I started working at IBS as a proofreader for *Pacific World* in 2003 while I was a graduate student," Dr. Quli said. "So I've been with *Pacific World* for 20 years now. I feel really fortunate having a job that I absolutely love — and I really do love the entire process of editing a journal, from author submissions to copyediting to production. I'm grateful for the opportunity to work with so many talented scholars. It really is a dream job for me."

IBS Dean of Students Dr. Scott Mitchell praised the appointment of Dr. Quli to Core Faculty.

"I've had the pleasure of working and collaborating with Dr. Quli for well over 15 years," Dr. Mitchell said. "Her work as an editor, scholar and teacher is brilliant, and I can think of no one better suited to continue IBS's publication projects into the future. I am thrilled that she is able to join us on the Core Faculty."

Temples Take Part in Coastal Cleanup

On Sept. 23, the Tri-Temples of the Central Coast, consisting of Monterey, Watsonville and Salinas Buddhist temples, took part in the California Coastal Cleanup Day.

Over 30 members gathered at the Moss Landing State Beach and fanned out over the beach and dunes, cleaning up trash. After filling about 30 bags of trash, the members were rewarded with fellowship and a great potluck lunch at the beach.

The event coincided nicely with Fall Ohigan and was a reminder to all of us of our intimate connection to



Sangha members from the Monterey, Watsonville and Salinas temples pose for a group photo Sept. 23 in the California Coastal Cleanup Day. (Courtesy of Barbara Shingai)

nature and our responsibility to care for the world we live in. Special thanks to the City of Watsonville for providing

buckets and grabbers for the volunteers. We hope to see more volunteers next year on Sept. 21, 2024.

Dr. Mitchell

Continued from Page 1

strong leadership that IBS has had throughout its history and build upon the successes of his predecessors," said Dr. Leroy Morishita, chair of the IBS Board of Trustees.

Dr. Morishita said Dr. Mitchell "has been an integral member of our IBS team for many years and has worked collaboratively and very effectively with President Matsu-moto, the faculty and staff."

"I am deeply grateful that the board has entrusted me with the position of IBS President," Dr. Mitchell said. "Our work here at IBS is deeply important — our students go out into the world as teachers, chaplains, and ministers to be of support to sentient beings, to confront suffering. To

support them, IBS grounds them deeply in the Dharma through our educational programs. And I'm humbled and honored to be continuing my work here at IBS, to provide this education for generations to come."

Dr. Mitchell received his Ph.D. from GTU, his master's degree from IBS and GTU, and his bachelor's degree from San Francisco State University.

His most recent publication has been the critically acclaimed book "The Making of American Buddhism," which was published this year by the Oxford University Press.

The book describes how the Nisei, the sons and daughters of Japanese immigrants, helped to create a place for Buddhism in America, through projects like the "Berkeley Bussei" magazine

that was published from 1939 to 1960. The book also details the behind-the-scenes labor and figures like BCA icon Jane Imamura who helped spread modernist Buddhist ideas with their involvement in creating communities, publishing magazines and holding scholarly conventions and translation projects.

The Institute of Buddhist Studies is a graduate school in Berkeley, California, and the oldest Buddhist Seminary in the country. It began as the Buddhist Study Center in 1949 and has steadily grown, training ministers, chaplains, and scholars from diverse Buddhist traditions while being firmly rooted in the Jodo Shinshu community. IBS has been affiliated with the GTU since 1984, and became a full member school of GTU in 2021.



DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know BCA Minister Emeritus Rev. Bob Oshita adapted the title and lyrics of "I Love the Story" by Yumi Hojo as "With Grateful Hearts"?

Mrs. Hojo embraced the new title and lyrics and expressed that she was happy that her music lives on. A gatha video of "With Grateful Hearts" in honor and in memory of Mrs. Hojo has recently been added to the BCA Music YouTube channel playlist.

In addition, in anticipation of Bodhi Day next month, a gatha video of "The Bodhi Tree" by Linda Castro has also been posted. Here is the shortlink: <https://bit.ly/45NzgYh>

— BCA Music Committee

Rev. Bridge

Continued from Page 2

Buddhist Church and "accidentally" recited the Three Treasures.

That is another story that I can't tell here, but the outcome was that I realized that 1) Now I was Buddhist, and 2) I could be Buddhist without being perfect! I now felt that I had to try and be more aware of how I could behave in a more proper Buddhist way, even under the pressure of distributing caffeine to people at the start of their day.

Two: "I like people!"

The other thought I remember was probably after another few months. It was a sudden realization, as I stood behind the register, that I liked people. I grew up as an only child, and due to a variety of circumstances, was very shy, introverted, and insecure. I wasn't particularly comfortable around people, I was even afraid of some of them! But working at the coffee shop led to this realization. I also recognized that this included the difficult people as much as the friendly ones.

This could be interpreted

simply as a result of my continuing interaction with people and a gradual maturation. But I don't think that's all it is.

I could easily have become cynical, judging others for the faults I perceived. Instead, I think it came from my engagement with Buddhism that I partially outlined above. Even though I was probably not behaving well in a Buddhist sense at all times, my viewpoint had been transformed. Not through any effort of my own. I didn't set out thinking, "How can I improve my valuation of humanity?" The realization that I liked people just dawned on me.

Would it have happened if I hadn't recited the Three Treasures in New York City? Maybe, maybe not. But reciting the Three Treasures and taking on the challenge of "being Buddhist" definitely changed me.

I would go on to discover the Institute of Buddhist Studies, quit my band, move out to Berkeley, etc. In my studies since then, I have learned so much more.

One set of concepts that apply here are "self-benefit/

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2024 BCA

NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING

EMBRACING THE DHARMA WITH

HOPE AND JOY

VIRTUAL

February 16 Ministers' Association

February 17 Workshops

IN-PERSON

February 23 & 24 National Council Meeting

VIRTUAL AND IN-PERSON

February 24 IBS Symposium

February 25 Eitaikyo Service at the Buddhist Church of Sacramento

Hosted by the

Northern California District Temples



Bus Trip Brings Two Temples Together for a Day of Memories

San Diego, Vista Members, Friends Gather for One-Day Trip to Los Angeles

By Ralph Honda

Wheel of Dharma Correspondent

Sangha members and friends from the Buddhist Temple of San Diego (BTSD) and Vista Buddhist Temple (VBT) gathered for a one-day trip to Los Angeles on Aug. 5 in what some felt was a “once in a lifetime experience.”

The itinerary included a visit to the Japanese American National Museum in Little Tokyo for the Ireicho stamping project, the musical “Peace On Your Wings” at the Aratani Theatre, and participating in the Gardena Buddhist Church’s Bon Odori.

Big smiles and chatter filled the air as 54 passengers boarded the bus from their respective temples for the all-day excursion.

The first stop was at JANM in Little Tokyo for the stamping of the Ireicho or the record of Consoling Spirits Register. The group was greeted by Karen Kano, Ireicho Project Specialist and Gallery Educator at JANM. Kano provided a brief introduction to the project, then assisted everyone with the stamping of names.

The majority of participants had the opportunity to stamp names of family members in the sacred book that contains over 125,000 names of Japanese and Americans of Japanese ancestry who were incarcerated in internment camps during World War II.

For Ruth Voorhies, the oldest traveler in the group at age 100, the chance to remember her immediate family members and herself with the stamp was special.

“It was a very interesting experience. I really enjoyed it,” Voorhies said. “I was thankful to at least stamp the names of my mother and brother.”

Each guest had the honor to stamp the “Next Unmarked Name” in the book. JANM’s goal is for every single name in the book to be acknowledged at least once by a visitor. In addition, the project gives families the opportunity to stamp the names of their ancestors and relatives.

Many thanks to Kano, Nicky Woo and the JANM staff for accommodating the San Diego and Vista groups. A special thank you is extended to Amy Watanabe of Nakatomi Public Relations in Los Angeles for helping arrange



At left, more than 50 people from the Buddhist Temple of San Diego (BTSD) and Vista Buddhist Temple (VBT) pose for a group photo at the Japanese American National Museum (JANM) in Little Tokyo in Los Angeles on Aug. 5, as part of a day trip to Los Angeles. Second row, from left, Ruth Voorhies, who is 100, and Miki Honda, stamp their names on the Ireicho, or the record of Consoling Spirits Register, which lists the Japanese American internees during World War II. In the third row, BTSD Sangha member Ralph Honda and VBT Sangha member and BCA President Terri Omori flank Jenny Taira and Laurie Rubin from the musical “Peace On Your Wings” at the Aratani Theatre in Little Tokyo. (Courtesy of Arturo Rubio and Terri Omori)

friends, folded over 1,000 paper cranes before she passed away on Oct. 25, 1955 at the age of 12.

The message that Sadako shared with her friends in her young life was the teaching of “ichigo ichie,” a Japanese phrase that expresses the concept of treasuring a moment in time.

The final leg of the day’s activities was a stop at the Gardena Buddhist Church to participate in its Bon Odori. The bus arrived at Gardena about 15 minutes before the start of the odori. Everyone put on their blue (San Diego) and yellow (Vista) temple happi coats and headed for the dance circle.

Although the group danced for only 55 minutes, everyone enjoyed the opportunity to participate in the last Southern District Bon Odori for 2023.

“The day was filled with heartfelt remembrance, gratitude while stamping, tears of sadness from the play, laughter when eating lunch and chatting on the bus, and gathering of joy at the Bon Odori. A



shima on Aug. 6, 1945. Ten years later, she was diagnosed with leukemia. When learning about Sasaki’s illness, the children’s lives and tenuous bonds with each other seemed to unravel. But Sasaki’s struggle and dreams for a better tomorrow teach her friends about courage, love and peace.

The itinerary included a visit to the Japanese American National Museum in Little Tokyo for the Ireicho stamping project, the musical “Peace On Your Wings” at the Aratani Theatre, and participating in the Gardena Buddhist Church’s Bon Odori.

the visitation to JANM.

“I hope to go back again so I can stamp more of my relatives,” Voorhies added.

After the Ireicho stamping, everyone had a chance to spend several hours having lunch, shopping, and exploring Little Tokyo.

Then, it was on to the Aratani Theatre for a matinee performance of “Peace On Your Wings.” The Ohana Arts youth theater company, based in Honolulu, brought its revival production of its

signature musical to Los Angeles for the first time since its debut in 2015.

Inspired by the life of a young Japanese girl, and carrying a message of global peace, the story is set in post-war Japan in the 1950s, and is based on the courageous story of Sadako Sasaki, with the musical following the lives of junior high school students in Hiroshima.

At age 2, Sasaki fell victim to the horrific atomic bomb that was dropped on Hiro-

shima on Aug. 6, 1945. Ten years later, she was diagnosed with leukemia. When learning about Sasaki’s illness, the children’s lives and tenuous bonds with each other seemed to unravel. But Sasaki’s struggle and dreams for a better tomorrow teach her friends about courage, love and peace.

Although knowing that she would not survive, Sasaki, along with the help of her

full circle of emotion,” Junko Kajita shared in an email with the group following the trip.

With the two San Diego County temples rekindling friendships, the bonding of the two Sanghas wrapped up a memorable, meaningful and rewarding day.

“The entire day was filled with wonderful moments shared with Dharma friends,” BCA President Terri Omori said, “Truly a ‘Gathering of Joy.’”



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Shown above, in top row, is Berkeley's Kai Fujioka's landscape of the Drum Mountains in central Utah that overlooked the Topaz mass detention camp, and Twin Cities Sangha's Christopher Sandberg's abstract image of a bamboo grove in Arashiyama, Japan. In second row, from left, are: Spokane's Toni Largent's stained glass titled "Tree of Life"; Oregon's Mayu Garner's Buddha; Jimothi Rosaria DiFonzo, of Reading, Pennsylvania, with his double knit myogyo ("This project got me through hard times, but my fingers said the Nembutsu with every stitch"); and San Mateo's Hailey La Monte's ceramic puzzle box. The pattern on the border, inspired by the Seigaiha wave pattern, was made with a single ceramic stamp LaMonte repeated over and over. (Photos courtesy of BCA)



Art Exhibit

Continued from Page 1

(CBE) Youth Coordinator. "This collection of art from Sangha members throughout the BCA is a beautiful representation of everyone's talent, emotion and work."

In all, there were 87 entries and they spanned the spectrum of art media: drawings, paintings, sumi-e (Japanese ink paintings), watercolors, pastels, Japanese calligraphy, photography, wood carving, ikebana, stained glass, sculptures, and even a video.

What's always fascinating are the artists' descriptions that are submitted with the artwork.

Valerie Pham of the Buddhist Temple of Alameda is a high school student at Notre Dame High School in Alameda. Her entry, "Kitchen Chaos" was chosen to represent California's 12th Congressional District in the annual Congressional Institute for Art Competition and is on display at the U.S. Capitol for one year.

The painting depicts her family's Buddhist altar stand in the hectic chaos of a busy daily kitchen scene. It shows us the place of quiet grounding that spiritual practice provides in our fast-paced lives.

"I painted my kitchen altar because I wanted to challenge typical depictions of Buddhism in popular media," Pham said. "Oftentimes, Buddhism is depicted in a very orientalist and exoticized lens, which not only ignores the ways Buddhism is

practiced by ordinary people but allows Buddhist practices to be twisted to fulfill corrupt desires. My painting is not a depiction of Buddhism one would typically see in America. I wanted to show Buddhism from an ordinary lens, without the exoticized imagery or narrow-minded view."

Akemi Osajima of the Orange County Buddhist Church submitted a striking painting of herself with the images of her grandparents hovering above her.

"I painted this piece as a tribute to my ancestors and my Japanese and JA culture," Osajima wrote. "The vision came during a meditation, where I felt my grandparents (who died when I was little) watching over me. The background of the piece is based on a watercolor painting my great-grandfather did of our family's homeland in Japan, and inside the bubble is the World War II concentration camps, where my family (including father) was imprisoned for three years."

"Painting this piece was an incredible experience, not only because I felt deeply connected to my grandparents for the first time, but also because this was the first piece that integrates my heritage and culture and family into my art," Osajima continued. "It's the most meaningful work I've done so far, and continues to give me so much life as I sit in front of it every day (with the photo it was based on) to request support and wisdom from my inner child, my higher self, and my spirit guides."



Berkeley Buddhist Temple's Kai Fujioka did a colorful landscape of the Drum Mountains, primarily using palette knives to create an almost abstract rendering. The knife strokes' uneven patterns give high contrast to the peaks and valleys of the natural landscape.

Fujioka chose the Drum Mountains in west Utah because they "were visible from the barbed wire fences of the World War II incarceration camp (Topaz) that housed 11,000 American citizens, many from the San Francisco Bay Area." He dedicated the

painting to the Japanese American internees and the harsh yet beautiful landscapes they endured for years.

Jeanie Kashima of Buddhist Temple of San Diego submitted three images of her notable "Topaz Collages" that illustrate the story of her Takaki family, who were incarcerated at the Topaz mass detention camp during World War II. She was the first baby born at Topaz and was featured in the March 2023 issue of the Wheel of Dharma.

Elaine Tsumura of the Tri-State/Denver Buddhist



At left, Tri-State/Denver's Elaine Tsumura entered a mixed-media collage titled "Calm Before the Storm," which illustrates the story of her maternal grandparents. Above, San Diego's Jeanie Kashima created "Topaz Collages" about Takaki family. Kashima was the first baby born at the Topaz camp and is shown as a young child with her mother at Topaz.

Temple's "Calm Before the Storm" is a mixed-media collage that illustrates the story of her maternal grandparents, Kyoichi and Rise Yoshida. Last year, Tsumura entered a stark watercolor of Kyoichi Yoshida next to his Ford Model T in 1919, and soon after, died in a farming accident.

"This dark chapter in the life of many Japanese American citizens needs to be recorded and remembered," Tsumura said. "Redress and apology came in the 1990s, but by that time my grandmother had already passed away at the age of 80."

Apart from the mass detention of Japanese Americans, several other themes and subjects were depicted, ranging

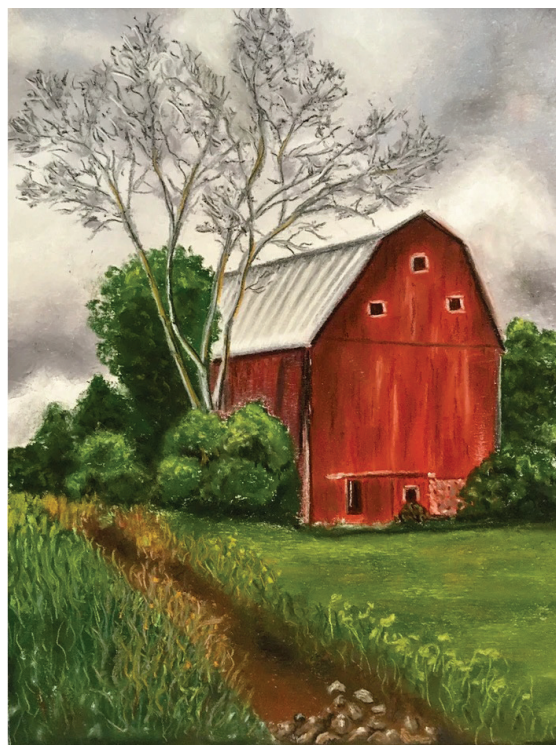
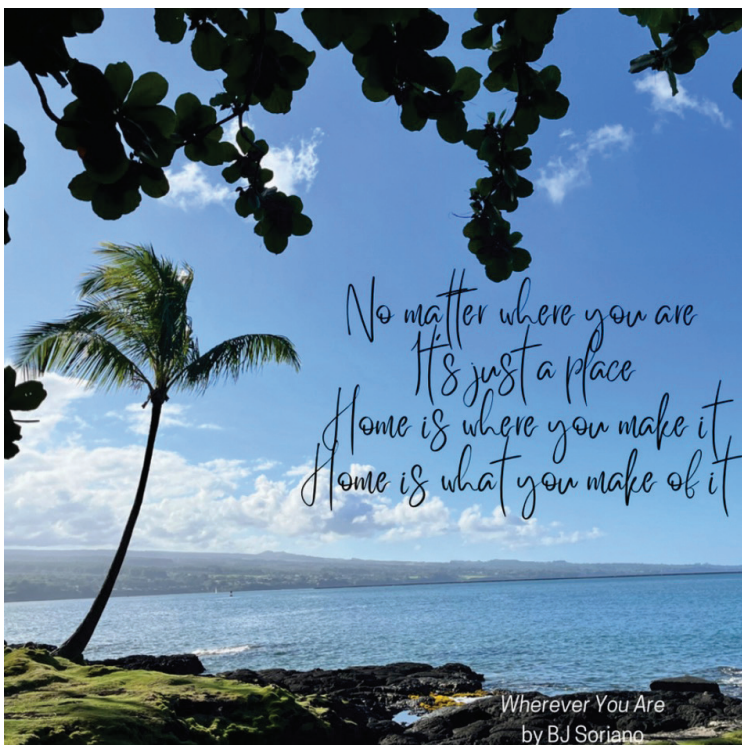
Continued on Page 9



At far left, Alameda's Randy Kato, a Cyr wheel artist athlete, performer and coach, created a video with the backdrop of New York. At near left, Sacramento Betsuin's David B.H. Menda shows a wood carving of Shinran Shonin. Second row, from left, Seattle Betsuin's Joseph Gotchy submitted a photograph of Hiroshima Castle; Stockton's Alex K Sakata's self-portrait; and Spokane's Paul Vielle's watercolor of a canoeing trip he took with his wife. (Photos courtesy of BCA)



At far left, Honolulu Hawaii Betsuin's Kaethe Kauffman captured contemplation and deep listening in nature in her drawing. Above, OCBC's Ann Hiroko Nakahira submitted "Ichigo Ichie" ("Each meeting is once in a lifetime"), and above right, Alameda's Madame Kayoko Suiyo Fujimoto entered this flower arrangement. In bottom row, from left, are San Francisco's BJ Soriano's photo of her home in Hawaii and lyrics to her song, "Wherever You Are"; Enmanji's June DeBusk's pastel on sanded paper titled "Old Red Barn"; and Alameda's Cameron Yoshi Wang's drawing.





Trial of Gratitude



Editor's Note: The article "Trial of Gratitude" was written by Ann Nakahira, a new Minister's Assistant at the Orange County Buddhist Church. It first appeared in the EVERYDAY BUDDHIST blog at everydaybuddhist.org and is being reprinted with the permission of Ann Nakahira.

By Ann Nakahira

Orange County Buddhist Church

I often wonder and think about how I can connect my scientific, professional life to my spiritual, personal life.

As a drug information pharmacist, I've spent many years formally reviewing clinical trials published in medical journals about new medi-

cations. I would determine how these new medications compare to existing therapies and then develop guidelines for their use.

The gold standard for a clinical trial design is a randomized, controlled trial. The study participants need to be randomized to either the treatment or placebo group. The treatment group is the group that takes the medication. The control group is the group that takes a placebo or another similar drug. Participants must be randomized so that both groups would be the same. If you don't randomize, you might end up with a group that is older or sicker and then your results could be inaccurate.

I often watch a YouTube channel called MedCram. The tagline of this YouTube channel is "medical lectures explained clearly." I regularly watched this channel early in the pandemic to learn about the COVID-19 illness, vaccines, and treatments. A few months ago, right before Thanksgiving, they had a video called, "The Science of Thankfulness Clearly Explained."

In this episode, the YouTuber described a clinical study titled: Does gratitude writing

improve the mental health of psychotherapy clients? Evidence from a randomized controlled trial. I was quite excited to learn that it was a randomized control trial on gratitude.

In this study, the three groups were:

Psychotherapy only (control group)

Psychotherapy plus expressive writing about stressful experiences

Psychotherapy plus gratitude writing

Participants in the expressive writing condition wrote about their deepest thoughts and feelings about stressful experiences and participants in the gratitude group wrote a letter expressing gratitude to a person they had not properly thanked. The researcher's definition of gratitude was "acknowledging the value of a benefit in one's life or that one has received something of value from another person." They measured the participants' mental health status using a survey called the General Mental Health Index at the initial visit, at three weeks, four weeks, and at 12 weeks.

After four weeks and 12 weeks, the patients that were in the gratitude writing group

had a significantly higher General Mental Health score compared to the other two groups.

The authors of the study had four conclusions:

Gratitude unshackles us from toxic emotions.

The gratitude writing group used more positive words. The group that wrote about stressful experiences had lower mental health scores, and therefore, don't ruminate on negative experiences.

Gratitude helps even if you don't share it. Only 23% of the gratitude writing group sent their letters, yet they saw the same benefit.

Gratitude benefits take time. Benefits were seen at week four and 12, so even if you don't notice anything in the first couple of weeks, you need to stick with it and see the benefits over time.

Gratitude has lasting effects on the brain. In a follow-up study, the gratitude writing group had greater activity in the medial prefrontal cortex, which is a part of the brain where learning and executive function occur.

I once heard a minister say that Namo Amida Butsu means to experience gratitude beyond words. In the randomized

controlled trial, people wrote letters to express their gratitude. I think you can have the same effect by just saying or thinking Namo Amida Butsu. Especially, if you know that Namo Amida Butsu expresses gratitude beyond words. As I wrote this article, I tried to think of examples of what I'm grateful for. I think most of us will think of family and friends as things we are grateful for, but as I thought more deeply, my list got longer and longer. Soon my list started to become complex and abstract and unexplainable. To me, this is what is meant by gratitude beyond words. Our Shin Buddhist practice gives us a simple tool to express that gratitude by just saying Namo Amida Butsu.

As I looked back at the study conclusion, I connected my scientific, professional thoughts with my personal, spiritual thoughts to make the following conclusion:

Namo Amida Butsu unshackles us from toxic emotions.

Namo Amida Butsu helps even if you don't share it.

Namo Amida Butsu benefits take time.

Namo Amida Butsu has lasting effects on the brain.

Watsonville Holds Its First Open House; Event Attracts 40 People



The Watsonville Buddhist Temple held its first open house on Sept. 10, featuring several temple organizations. The event attracted about 40 people. At left, Kokoro No Gakko chair Zooey Ito talks with guests. Above, the refreshment committee and temple board members pose for a photo. From left, are JoAnn Kato, Kim Yoshida, Perry Yoshida, Tad Kato, Phyllis Nagamine, and Sheryl Wobber. (Photos courtesy of Barbara Shingai)



At far left, Rev. Jay Shinseki talks with Sangha member Victor Kimura. At left, temple President Kenny Kusumoto, right, is shown with Gary Mine and Rebecca Hernandez from UC Santa Cruz archives.



At far left, Tri-State/Denver's Matt Kawakami submitted a pencil drawing of the family puppy, and New York's Eiko Nishida created a mandala of a myriad of die-cut newspapers. (Courtesy of BCA)

Art Exhibit

Continued from Page 6

from landscapes, beach scenes, portraits of cats, dogs, celebrities, and self-portraits.

BJ Soriano, the well-known Hawaiian Shin Buddhist musician and composer, submitted a photo of her home in Hawaii and an original song composition of "Wherever You Are":

*No matter where you are
It's still a place
Home is where you make it
Home is what you make it*

Hailey La Monte of the San

Mateo Buddhist Temple created a ceramic puzzle box. "The pattern on the border, inspired by the Seigaiha wave pattern, was made with a single ceramic stamp I created repeated over and over," La Monte said.

Jimothi Rosaria DiFonzo of Reading, Pennsylvania, did a double knit myogyo so the front and back are opposite colors. "This project got me through hard times, but my fingers said the Nembutsu with every stitch," DiFonzo wrote.

Randy Kato of the Buddhist Temple of Alameda created a video with the preface:

"'Here Comes the Sun' (the Beatles classic by George Har-

risson) is the COVID discharge song for many hospitals – when it's played, it means someone is going home ... alive. The song's message of hope amid difficult realities makes it a fitting anthem for us to emerge from the darkness. This is for New York City."

Kato is a Cyr wheel artist athlete, performer, and coach. The Cyr wheel is a single large ring made of aluminum or steel. He has performed for Big Apple Circus, The Bindlestiff Family Cirkus, Omnium Circus, The Chicago Contemporary Circus Festival, NBC News, the CBS Morning Show, the FOX Morning Show, and

more.

In the video, Kato spins around with the Cyr wheel along the New York City waterfront and the Brooklyn Bridge in the background, all while various versions of "Here Come the Sun" play.

There were several artists who were repeat participants, including Maho Suzuki Garner of the Oregon Buddhist Temple (OBT). Last year, Garner had a watercolor from the OBT's Obon, and this year, she chose the same theme – Obon at the OBT. Garner wrote: "Dancing to 'Mottainai' at Obon. Everyone starts laughing even if you put the other foot in front."

Maui Relief

Continued from Page 1

of Lahaina Hongwanji and other members of the Hawaii Kyodan who have been impacted by the wildfires, totaling \$210,000. The Maui Wildfire Emergency Response Ad-Hoc Committee provided the list of recipients.

Omimai was sent to Rev. Ai Hironaka of Lahaina Hongwanji Mission, Rev. Gensho Hara of the Lahaina Jodo Mission, and to Rev. Takayuki Meguro of the Lahaina Shingon Mission.

The wildfires in Maui, which struck on Aug. 8, have led to at least 97 deaths as of Sept. 29, making it the deadliest U.S. wildfire in more than a century. The Lahaina Hongwanji Mission was devastated by the wildfires. The temple Hondo, the minister's residence, the temple office, the social hall and the old Japanese school building were all destroyed.

According to photos, it appears that the temple's Nokotsudo (columbarium) may be intact. But damage to the building remains unknown. As of Sept. 28, Rev. Hironaka, temple President Aileen Cockett and temple

members were not permitted to enter the temple property.

Hawaii Kyodan Headquarters reported that one of the temple members who was on the list of those missing as a result of the wildfires was recently confirmed to have passed away.

About half of the Lahaina Hongwanji members, including Rev. Hironaka and his family, were displaced after the fire.

The Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha in Kyoto, Japan, also made a generous contribution to the Maui relief efforts, donating \$10 million yen to the Hawaii Kyodan, and \$1 million yen for the state of Hawaii.

Honzan has also launched a fundraising campaign and are actively soliciting donations from those who reside in Japan.

Monshu Kojun Ohtani, Urakata Lady Ruzumi Ohtani, Monshu Emeritus Koshin Ohtani, and Urakata Emeritus Lady Noriko Ohtani also sent messages of condolences and sympathies to Rev. Hironaka and Lahaina Hongwanji members.

The Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha Buddhist Women's Federation of Japan provided financial aid to Hawaii Kyodan

to be used by Rev. Hironaka to purchase the necessary robes and supplies for his ministerial duties.

Through the HHMH's Social Welfare Fund, \$28,000 was given to various organizations and affected individuals to immediately support relief efforts on Maui, including Hawaii Community Foundation's Maui Strong Fund, Maui Food Bank, Hawaii Red Cross and the Makawao Hongwanji for their support of evacuees and first responders.

Donations can be made online through: <https://bca.kindful.com/>, or by check payable to: BCA Endowment Foundation (Please note on memo line: Maui Relief). Mail checks to: BCA Endowment Foundation, 2140 Durant Ave., Berkeley, CA 94704.

People can find additional updates on the Maui fire disaster from Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, including ways to donate, by using the shortcut link: <http://honpahi.link/fire>.

"Mahalo for your continued support," Rev. Higa said. "Your Dana is truly making a difference during this extraordinary time of need."

Rev. Brian Nagata contributed to this article.

Ultimately, however, I see that it was me receiving benefit from others. From my customers, from my co-workers, and in the big picture, from Amida Buddha, even if I wasn't aware of it yet at the time. Who knew coffee could have such an impact?

Rev. Bridge

Continued from Page 4

benefiting others" and "other's benefit." The first two are a pair. These are related to bodhicitta, the mind aspiring for enlightenment and to save

all beings, but I think we can also understand them in a mundane, everyday sense as well. I took the coffee job for my own sake — I needed money! I also benefited from the interpersonal interactions. And even further, I came to enjoy helping others.

And Garner's daughter, Mayu, entered two pieces herself — of the Buddha and a cat.

Other exceptional repeat artists included Madame Suiyo Fujimoto of the Buddhist Church of Oakland. Madame Fujimoto has taught the Ohara School of Ikebana Flower Arranging for more than 60 years.

Madame Fujimoto has the extremely rare title of Grand Master, holds both Tokudo and Kyoshi ordination from Nishi Hongwanji and has taught altar flower arrangements for the BCA to ministerial aspirants for years. She is the wife of the late Rev. Hogen Fujimoto.

In addition, two of Madame Fujimoto's students, Mitsuko Suiko Maruyama of Southern Alameda County Buddhist Church and Yoshiko Suinyo Gilli of the Buddhist Temple of Alameda, submitted photos of arrangements this year. Both Maruyama and Gilli teach Ikebana flower arranging.

"Art is a way to convey thought, emotion and ideas without words," Mizushima said. "Art is without definition or boundaries. What a beautiful way for all of us to connect and share. Thank you all for sharing your art, and thank you to all of the visitors who came to enjoy this exhibit."

President's Message

Continued from Page 3

Michael Endo and I attended the 41st World Jodo Shinshu Coordinating Council Meeting.

The virtual meeting was attended by the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-Ha Board of Governors, the International Department Staff, Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara on behalf of the Jodo Shinshu International Office, as well as representatives from the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temple's of Canada, Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii and Sul-Americana Da Seita Jodo Shinshu Honpa Hongwanji (South America). Reports were shared from all four districts (Kyodans). In the report

presented by Hongwanji-ha, an acknowledgement was made to all who attended the Joint Celebration in honor of Shinran Shonin's birthday and the anniversary of Jodo Shinshu teaching, and the World Buddhist Women's Convention in May.

Currently, as of this writing, many committees are meeting as they are preparing for the upcoming National Board meeting as well as the 2024 Ministers' Association and National Council Meeting for the February events. There are also committees preparing for next year's celebration of BCA's 125th anniversary. I also realize many are also taking care of preparations at your temples. Thank you to all for your time and dedication. I am deeply grateful.

Yoga

Continued from Page 3

Dharma School Ohigan service at the Ogden Buddhist Temple.

Matsueda focused his talk on "Yoga and Chanting." Using the techniques of deep breathing in yoga, he connected it to our Buddhist practice of chanting and reciting the Nembutsu. I admit these often become rituals of habit I go through without much thought. Matsueda showed us, by coupling our breathing to both, the sound of my voice can resonate to my mind, heart and soul. What a wonderful gift to have the power of the

Nembutsu vibrate through my being!

I saw so many connections between the goals of yoga and goals of myself as a Buddhist. Practices of letting go, a focused mind, heart and body, and becoming one with all life offers me Right Meditation, Right Thoughts, Right Mindfulness — practices needed in today's world for both old and young alike.

We thank the Jodo Shinshu Center and especially Bob Matsueda for sharing his knowledge and time with us. We look forward to an ongoing friendship and relationship with him through future Zoom/in-person yoga sessions together.

Namo Amida Butsu.



Tanioka

Continued from Page 1

She had perfect attendance in Dharma School for about 15 years. What's more, her three children each had about another 15 years of perfect attendance — a staggering total of approximately 60 years of perfect attendance.

Tanioka was the final speaker during the BCA National Council Meeting online Town Hall on "The Benefits of Following the Shin Buddhist Path" on Feb. 18. Because one of her daughters was expecting a baby on Feb. 20, Tanioka taped a video beforehand.

"To be honest, when Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada first contacted me to speak today about the benefits of a Sangha, I tried very hard to find a reason to decline," she said, noting she was busy with the upcoming OCBC Hanamatsuri festival and preparing for the next board meeting, as well as having a grandchild on the way.

"But then I stopped to realize that every reason I had for not speaking was directly related to being a part of a Sangha," she said. "How can I tell him I couldn't speak about the importance of a Sangha because I had important Sangha duties to take care of."

Tanioka described her upbringing at OCBC. She began the cycle of different OCBC organizations — the Golden Chain Club, Sangha Teens, Jr. YBA and Senior YBA. She attended Japanese school and played on the church basketball and softball teams. And, as a high school student, she served as a Dharma School assistant.

Growing up in Orange County in the 1960s and 1970s was decidedly different than the Orange County of today.

"I attended an elementary school with a predominantly Caucasian student body and I believe the only other Japanese American students at my school were my younger brother and another younger girl," Tanioka recalled. "So, during those years, OCBC not only served as a place for me to hear the teachings, but it also gave me the opportunity to socialize with other Japanese American youth, an experience I didn't have during my weekdays.

"At OCBC, I was with a Sangha that not only shared similar religious practices, but also shared the same foods, expectations, looked like me, and knew what it meant to be a minority," she continued. "The Sangha provided a sense of belonging."

Although she and her



"The Sangha is a connector to the Buddha and the Dharma," says Orange County Buddhist Church President Jo Ann Tanioka. Tanioka gave a presentation on the benefits of a Sangha during a National Council Meeting Town Hall workshop earlier this year. (Courtesy of Jon Kawamoto)

five siblings only attended Dharma School once a week, OCBC was the subject of daily conversations at her home. "OCBC just seemed like another sibling that I had to share my parents' attention with," she said. "The Sangha had a place at our dinner table every night as we spoke about OCBC and what was going on at the temple and its Sangha."

It was just natural that Tanioka would become good friends with her Dharma School classmates and friends in the clubs.

"What I didn't realize at the time was the strength and longevity of those friendships," she said. "I'm grateful to say that my closest friends today are the same Sangha friends that I sat in a Hondo with and counted the number of light fixtures on the ceiling, the ones who I worked with at our festivals, and the ones who I shared a room with at our Jr. YBA conferences.

she noted that more than half of those students still attend OCBC. Many of these classmates, she said, took a break after college and returned after they got married and had children.

"I think the main reason that most returned with their families is the memorable experience they had as children, and they wanted the same for their children," Tanioka said, adding that the Dharma School has added 35 new students this year. "They hoped that their children would find friends and a Sangha that would become their lifelong friends, just as they experienced. I know that was my hope for my children.

"When I was a new parent, I knew I had had a wonderful life," she said. "And a big part of that life had been the temple, so I wanted the temple to be a significant part of my children's lives as well. I envisioned them in the same

him differently?

"I knew that the teachings were always inclusive and did not alienate or discriminate against anyone, but I wasn't quite sure how others understood the teachings," she continued. "I felt very fortunate that my son has always had a sense of confidence, and he assured me that I shouldn't worry. With this assurance and the welcoming words I've received from many Sangha members, I knew that he would continue to receive the support of the Sangha, who he had always known. And it is my hope that he now encourages all Sangha members to live an authentic life. The Sangha is acceptance, security, and compassion."

Tanioka said an important element of a successful temple is an engaged Sangha, and cited the many groups or organizations at OCBC — beginning at kindergarten and extending to seniors: sports teams, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Dharma

and churches have reopened. She said she joined a virtual Sunday chanting group during the pandemic, which "brought the comfort and familiarity of a Sangha into my home again."

Tanioka saw the "limitless boundaries of a Sangha" when Paul Goodman, the son of one of the Sunday chanting couples — longtime OCBC members Greg and Bonnie Goodman — was diagnosed with a recurrence of leukemia and was in need of a bone marrow transplant.

The OCBC Sangha, which was deeply touched by Paul Goodman's plight, went on the offensive and held bone marrow drives in early 2021. Other BCA temples such as the Gardena Buddhist Church and community groups followed suit in their fight for "Team Paul."

Goodman had his bone marrow transplant in March of that year and stayed in remission for over two years. During that time, he went on to write and direct the acclaimed independent film, "No No Girl," which has been screened at several BCA temples. The movie revolves around a 20-year-old Yonsei woman and her Buddhist family as they grapple with a family mystery tied to their relationships with each other and the World War II mass incarceration of Japanese Americans.

In June of this year, Goodman relapsed for a second time and is undergoing treatment at City of Hope. He's currently in remission and awaiting a second bone marrow transplant. Goodman is always grateful for the love and support he receives from the Sangha and community.

"Our reverends often speak on the importance of the Three Treasures — the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha, but especially the importance of the Sangha," Tanioka said. "I agree that the pandemic showed us the strength of the Sangha and how it is a necessity to truly appreciate the Buddha and the Dharma. The Sangha is a connector to the Buddha and the Dharma."

"I know my words are nothing new or unique, but I think it's always good to be reminded that the Sangha holds us accountable, provides a sense of belonging, provides friendship, comfort and dependability," she said. "It's acceptance, security and compassion, is engaging, is accountable for each other, is limitless and generous, is a connector, and is impermanent. So we need to hold it close in our hearts — with gratitude."

"What I didn't realize at the time was the strength and longevity of those friendships. I'm grateful to say that my closest friends today are the same Sangha friends that I sat in a Hondo with and counted the number of light fixtures on the ceiling, the ones who I worked with at our festivals, and the ones who I shared a room with at our Jr. YBA conferences."

— OCBC President Jo Ann Tanioka

"My friendship with my childhood Sangha friends has carried me throughout my life," Tanioka continued. "We've shared the typical heartbreaks of adolescence. We were part of each other's weddings. We became unofficial aunts and uncles to each other's children. And, we were there to support each other again with the heartbreak of the loss of our parents. The Sangha provides friendship, comfort, and dependability."

When she was in the seventh-grade, there were more than 25 students in her Dharma School class — and

clubs that I had been a part of and maybe even finding their life partner at a future YBA event."

Tanioka pointed out the importance of a Sangha when her son came out during his high school years and told her he was gay.

"I was a little surprised at first, but then I went into 'Mama Bear' mode, and my surprise turned to concern for him," she said. "Would people misjudge him, mistreat him, misunderstand him? Would the friends he had known all his life look at him differently? Would the Sangha look at

Wheel club, Sangha Teens, Jr. YBA, ABA, BWA, Project Kokoro, crafters, as well as cultural groups. And OCBC recently began a pickleball program held midweek and on the weekends that has attracted generations of families and has served to bring back some of the children of Sangha members.

"I don't think a Sangha is limited to Hondo walls," she said, noting that this was especially true during the pandemic, when Sunday services were strictly held online — as they continue to be, even as BCA temples



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今月の法話

「ノリ アンド ニヨライ」

ストックトン仏教会
開教使 柴田 キャンデイス



Rev. Candice Shibata

今月号のメッセージは京都から福岡に向かう新幹線の中で書いています。

数日前に京都の本願寺で営まれた親鸞聖人御誕生850年、立教開宗

800年慶讃法要と国際会議場で行われた世界仏教婦人会大会に北加教区の仏教婦人会メンバーたちと一緒に参加しました。法要と大会が終わり、今は親戚に会うために、福岡にある私のファミリーのお寺に向かっているところです。この2時間45分の新幹線での旅は、法要と大会のことを思い出したりまとめたりするのにちょうどいい時間となっています。

日本に行く前に、法要でのおつとめに必要な衣と輪袈裟とお念珠を荷物に入れたのですが、お念珠をポーチに入れた時に、そのポーチの中に小さな錦の袋があることに気づきました。それを見たとき、私の同僚でオックスナード 仏教会に駐在していた渡邊正憲開教使のことを思い出しました。渡邊先生は、2021年11月26日に癌で亡くなりました。私は先生のことを親しみを込めて「ノリ」と呼んでいました。

その小さな錦の袋はノリが私にくれたもので、袋の中には阿弥陀仏の絵像が入っています。阿弥陀仏は無限の光と生命の仏陀で、阿弥陀如来と呼ばれ、他にも多くの美しい比喻で表現されています。親鸞聖人が和讃にお示しくださっている阿弥陀仏の描写の中で私が特に惹かれるのは、

「平等寛（無差別の悟り）」、「畢竟依（究極のシェルター）」、「清浄大摂取（すべての存在を広く受け入れるきよらかな者）」、「清浄楽（きよらかな音楽）」

などがあります。

私はこの阿弥陀如来の絵像を袋から取り出し、その絵像を見つめました。阿弥陀如来は静寂で平和な顔立ちをしておられます。そのお顔を見た時私ノリの顔、ノリの笑顔、ノリの目の優しさを思い出しました。私は寂しくなって涙が溢れましたが、生前の彼を知ることができたことを喜ばしく思い、微笑むこともできました。

ノリと初めて会ったのは、私がIBSの学生だった時です。その時、私は得度の準備をしていました。得度とは、僧侶になるための儀式です。ノリはIMOPという開教使を志望する日本人僧侶のためのオリエンテーション・プログラムの参加者でした。参加者はバークレーにある浄土真宗センターに滞在して、英語や仏教などの講義を受け、現地の寺院を訪問し、寺院でのインターンシップなどに参加します。この間に、ノリと私は友だちになりました。よく会話をしてお互いに日本語と英語を教えあいました。彼が日本に帰国した後も私たちの友情は続き、彼がBCAの開教使となり、南部教区のオックスナード 仏教会に赴任して再会できた時、私は嬉しく思いました。

私は仏法を多くの人々に伝えたいというノリの情熱と態度をいつも尊敬していました。会話の言葉やEメールの文、そしてノリの描く絵などは、彼が仏法を深く学びたいという思い、そして仏法に出遇ったことへの深い感謝を映し出しているように思うことが度々ありました。

ノリは癌になって治療中の中でもできる限りサンガに奉仕しようとしていました。彼は楽観的に癌の進行状態

の診断を受け入れていた様子でしたが、同時に自分が困難な状況にあること、自分自身の無常の現実を強く意識していました。2020年4月17日付でノリが送ってくれたEメールには、「先のことは誰にもわからない。今こうして生きていること、仏陀の教えに出遇えたことにただただ感謝します」と書かれていました。

ノリのこの言葉には、彼の浄土真宗の教えの深い理解が表現されていると思います。体の状態が思わしくなく、命に不安があったにもかかわらず、数え切れないほど多くのご縁によって彼が生かされていることに深く感謝をしているのです。

ノリとの出会いがあったことや京都での慶讃法要にお参りしたことは、私がアメリカで浄土真宗の僧侶となることが、どんなにありがたいことなのかを思い起こさせてくれました。850年前にお生まれになった親鸞聖人が阿弥陀仏のすべての衆生を受け入れる智慧と慈悲のはたらきを深く理解されたことで浄土真宗の教えが開かれ、そしてそのおかげでノリもお念仏の教えに出遇うことができ、阿弥陀仏、そして生かされていることに感謝することができたのです。

今回、京都での慶讃法要へお参りすることが縁となって、ノリのことを懐かしく思い出することができました。私は、ノリはいまや仏陀となり、そのほんとうの誠意と苦悩のない心で私をお浄土へと導き続けてくれていると思っています。それで私は彼のことをノリ如来と呼ぶこともあります。

合掌

このメッセージは2023年5月13日に執筆し、ウォルナット・グループ仏教会の2023年6月のニュースレター用に英語で掲載したものです。今回の法輪誌への掲載にあたり、英語で書かれたものを日本語に意識しました。

バークレー 仏教会で大学生歓迎会

9月22日にバークレー 仏教会が、大学の新生や新学期が始まった学生を応援しようと、大学生歓迎会を開催し、約60名が集まりました。バークレー 仏教会はUCバークレー校に近いことから、主に同校の学生で、高校生の時に各地の仏教会のジュニアYBAに所属していた生徒や



Rev. Joshin Kuwahara and Cal students

その友人らが参加した。歓迎会のおつとめでは、桑原浄信開教使が学生向けに法話をした。おつとめの後、学生たちは自己紹介やゲームなどをして交流し、バークレー 仏教会メンバーがふるまった食事を楽しんだ。参加者は「いろんな仏教会のジュニアYBA出身の人たちと会えて楽しかったです。」「大学に近いところにある他のお寺でもこのようなイベントがあると学生が来ると嬉しいです。」「またバークレー 仏教会にお参りしたいです。」と集いを喜んでいました。



College Welcome Night at Berkeley Buddhist Temple

法輪

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FAX(415) 771-6293
Email: info@bcahq.org
for WOD: WODeditor@bcahq.org

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総長メッセージ

仏法は楽しい

米国仏教団 総長 原田 マービン



Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada

10月8日にサクラメント別院で営まれた、北加教区の親鸞聖人御誕生850年、立教開宗800年を記念する法要に参加しました。

サクラメント別院輪番の菅原祐軌開教使と北加教区の僧侶たちによって企画された法要は、たいへん素晴らしいものでした。

法要では、音楽を取り入れたメロディアスなお経をとなえたほか、礼盤を使用した作法も行いました。多くのメンバーの方は初めてそのような儀式を見たと言っていました。また法要に参加した僧侶たちは色衣や五条袈裟などを着用して正装をし、厳かな雰囲気の中でおつとめをされました。

法話はIBSプレジデントの松本デービッド開教使がされ、「私にとっての親鸞聖人」というテーマで心に響く素晴らしいお話をしてくださいました。浄土真宗を開かれた親鸞聖人のご生涯に関して、



Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto



Rev. Yuki Sugahara

私たちの知らなかったような新たな情報や見解を聞くことができました。

そして、才能あるミュージシャンである菅原師がエレキギターで仏教讃歌の「親鸞さま」の伴奏をし、皆で歌いました。師は感動的なソロ演奏も披露してくださいました。

法要が終わった時には、なんと2時間もたっていました。私にはそんなに長く感じられませんでした。お経も音楽も法話もすべてが楽しかったからでしょう。

さらに私にとって嬉しかったのは、昼食会に参加した多くの人たちが、この特別な法要に参加でき、またお経や法話をたいへんエンジョイできてよかったと喜んでおられたことです。

松本師の法話では、「話が長くなりすぎて申し訳ないです」と師が何度も謝られ、長くなりすぎないようにと法話の一部をカットされました。けれども法要の後、ある女性のメンバーの方が私に話してくれたのですが、法要と一緒に参加した成人した二人の娘さんたちは、「松本先生にもっと長く話してほしいね。」と言いつづけていたそうです。法話や説教でそんなことを言われたことが何度あるでしょうか。むしろ「あの説教は長すぎる」とか「話をもっと短くしてほしい」と言葉をお聞きすることの方が多いでしょう。

私だけでなく多くの参加者が「私には2時間とは思えなかった。あつという間だった。」と言われていたことが印象に残りました。

私は法要や礼拝は常にそうであるべきだと思います。「今日、礼拝に来て本当によかった。とても楽しかったし、多くのことを学んだ。」と参加者がいつも思っているのが理想的です。

法話を聴聞したり、サービスやセミナーに参加したりすることは、退屈でつまらないことはありません。楽しくあるべきなのです。

それが私たちの課題です。聴聞することを、興味深く、示唆に富み、感動的で、インパクトがあり、ユーモアがあり、ありがたく、楽しいものにするということです。

もし私たちがサクラメント別院で行われたような法要をいつもすることができれば、ますます多くの人々が法要や礼拝に参加し、お寺のメンバーになるでしょう。多くの方が仏法を楽しんで学びたいと思っています。

親鸞聖人は『教行信証』の最後の箇所にも、「よろこびの思いはいよいよ増し、敬いの思いはますます深まっていく。(現代語訳)」とお書きになっています。

私たちがまた、仏法が楽しいものであることを知り、喜びや感謝、敬いの思いを深めることができるのです。

南部教区カンファレンス

10月14日に南部教区仏教徒大会がパサデナ仏教会で行われ、オンラインと対面式の参加者、あわせて約180名が参加した。

大会はオックスナード仏教会とパサデナ仏教会の共催で、テーマは「Gratitude. the Opening Gate to the Nembutsu Path」。

基調講演は赤星健治名誉開教使(英語)と宮地信雄名誉開教使(日本語)が主



SD conference at Pasadena Buddhist Temple

めた。基調講演のち、英語グループは赤星師の奥方、赤星カレンさんの自身の思い出に

出遇いについての話、赤星師とカレンさんのメッセージについて

の感想や味わいを語りあった。約30名が集った日本語グループは、南部教区の高田興芳開教使、ワンドラ睦開教使、村上響開教使による法話を聴聞した。日本語のグループには少なからずの若い世代の新一世の方々も参加し、「日本語による法話やレクチャーなどをもっとしてもらいたい

です。英語もいいですが、やはり生まれ育った言葉の日本語で聴聞できるご縁があるのはありがたいです。」と今後も米国においての日本語での伝道を期待する声があった。

ダイヤルザダルマで日本語法話

電話でいつでも法話を聞くことができる「ダイヤルザダルマ」が好評を得ている。(800) 817-1791に電話すると、原田総長の声で音声ガイドが始まる。英語の法話を聞きたい人は1を、日本語は2、スペイン語は3を押すと、それぞれの言語で約5分間の法話を聴聞できる。英語は原田総長のメッセージ、日本語は日本語スピーカーの開教使によるメッセージ、スペイン語は英語のメッセージをスペイン語に訳したものになっている。法話は毎週水曜日午後5時に更新される予定。



SD conference at Pasadena Buddhist Temple