BCA Ministers’ Association and National Council Meeting

The annual BCA Ministers’ Association and National Council Meeting was held at the Marriott Hotel in Oakland, California from March 7 to 11, and hosted by the Bay District. There were 167 delegates and boosters registered. The two representatives from the Hawaii Kyoidan were Lily Hirio of Honolulu and Honolulu Shi-mada of Kahului, Maui.

Socho Ogi’s message welcomed and thanked the temple leaders for their dedication and stressed two major issues. 1) BCA’s ongoing 21st Century Fundraising Campaign, 2) The impending ministerial shortage: In 10 years, nearly half of our current pool of 55 ministers will be eli-gible for retirement. He believes the BCA’s Minister’s As-sistant program is and will continue to serve as a vital pro-gram in meeting the needs of our organization.

On Thursday afternoon, the Institute of Buddhist Studies presented a symposium addressing the topic “In what way does shinjin become manifest in human life? What role might shinjin play in the world of today? Responses to this subject were presented by the IBS faculty: Dr. Richard Payne, Prof. Lisa Grumbach, Prof. Eiho Nasu and Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto. Presentations were also given by BCA Ministers: Rev. Gregory Gibbs, Rev. Dr. Will Masuda, Rev. Dr. Shoyo Taniguchi, and Rev. Dr. Seigen Yamakoa.

Dharma talks for the Friday and Saturday morning opening services were given by Rev. Zukei Taniguchi and Rev. Carol Miyaki-Himaka respectively. Our newest BCA minister Rev. Harry Bridge of Lodid/Walnut Grove was se-lected to give the Dharma message at the Sunday Eitaikyo service conducted at the Buddhist Church of Oakland.

During the Socho’s Hour on Friday afternoon, a panel comprised of Rev. Don Castro, Rev. Marvin Harada and Rev. Dr. Shoyo Taniguchi presented what they have been doing in response the question of, “How do we make Jodo Shinsuhi a major religion in the US?” (Their remarks will appear in a future issue of the Wheel of Dharma).

A special Town Hall discussion session suggested by Charlene Grinolds of the White River Buddhist Temple, organized by the Bay District and moderated by BCA Vice President Jeff Suda, was convened on Friday evening. The focus of the discussion was to address the financing of the debt that is being carried from the construction and op-eration of the Jodo Shinsuhi Center. President-Elect Billy Sacke gave an overview of what has transpired and outlined the various options that have been proposed to keep the project afloat. Other proposals were raised during the three-hour exchange of concerns and opinions. (Gordon Berman covers the details of this session in his Presi-dent’s Perspective column)

Glenn Kameda, Facility manager of the Jodo Shinsuhi Center gave an update on the operations and full schedule of programs being conducted through the Center for Bud-dhist Education, Institute of Buddhist Studies and Ryo-koku University-Berkeley Center. BCA Executive Director Henry Shihata announced that Jeffrey Kimoto has been given the contract to operate the BCA Bookstore. An on-going project is the conversion of the Jodo Shinsuhi Center to an eco-friendly/urban oasis, with on-site irrigation and grey water collection. An artist of note will be invited to the center to create a mural that will express the theme and the path around the world, represents “The gathering of positive energy and good Karma that surrounds the world and will help us attain world peace.” We put our hands together in gassho which is an expression of our gratitude for the infinite higher wisdom and infinite compassion of the Buddha which will lead us to world peace.

Julie Doi, Buddhist Church of Parkville

Continued on Page 6
Rev. Shingetsu Akahoshi, Pioneer BCA Minister and Friend of Ekoji, Passes Away at 100

By Konnon Nakamura, Ekoji Buddhist Temple

Rev. Shingetsu Akahoshi passed away short of his 101st birthday on September 27 at the age of 100 in Sakai City, Osaka, Japan. Rev. Akahoshi, a frequent visitor to Ekoji during his retirement years, was the former resident minister of the Seabrook Buddhist Temple and played a strong, supportive role in helping the Washington, D.C. Dharma School, a forerunner of Ekoji, get started. Rev. Akahoshi was the 13th generation of Buddhist priests in his family. Following his ordination, he served a mandatory ten-months in the Japanese army in Kagoshima Prefecture. In 1928, as a novice priest Rev. Akahoshi was selected and assigned by His Eminence Monshu Koutai Ohtani of Nishi Hongwanji, to serve for two years at the large Dairen Hongwanji in Dairen, China. After serving in China for two years, on May 10, 1930, he received orders to fulfill an existing need in the United States for ministers to serve the Japanese community there. On September 1, 1930, he arrived in San Francisco to take up his post as resident minister of the San Francisco Buddhist Church. (His shipmate on the voyage to the United States was Rev. Hozen Seki who was on his way to Los Angeles to assume his post. He later founded the New York Buddhist Church Academy.) In 1932, he was appointed as the Secretary-Treasurer of the Buddhist Mission of North America, which was the forerunner of the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA). Under the leadership of Socho Kenju Masuyama (1930-1938) Rev. Akahoshi described that period by writing, “I was kept busy involved with the head- quarters’ growing needs. Getting the Buddhist movement in the United States off to a firm footing, both financially and spiritually, were major projects during that time. New temples were built and fellowships started in every section of this nation-wide Depression.” During this time, he and his wife also met several of the ministers from Japan as they reported to the San Francisco headquarters. Among these ministers was the late Rev. Chikara Seki who was the founding minister of the Midwest Buddhist Temple in Chicago.

After overseeing the building of the present Buddhist Church of San Francisco, in 1938, he was transferred to the Sáté Lake Buddhist Temple in Utah. He supervised the states of Utah, Idaho, Nevada, the western part of Wyoming and eastern part of Oregon. Rev. Akahoshi talked about traveling this circuit by car “over barren and rough roads where hundreds of men working on the railroad and copper mines looked forward to my coming. This was especially because after the Dharma talk, I would show them a 16mm Japanese film and provide them with refreshments.” In April of 1940, Rev. Akahoshi was assigned to the large Gardena Buddhist Temple in Gardena, California. After the outbreak of World War II, he was recalled to the states for his family between 1942 and 1945, because he was kept in the relocation camp in Santa Fe, New Mexico, with many other priests and community leaders, while his family was incarcerated in Rohwer Internment Camp in Arkansas. In 1944, the family was finally reunited at the Tule Lake Internment Camp in California.

His retirement did not last long because then Bishop Tsuji, the head of the American Buddhist Churches of America, invited him as the resident minister to the United States as the resident minister of the large, thousand-family Wahiawa Buddhist Temple in Oahu. He served there for the next 17 years. While in Hawaii, he became a naturalized citizen. In September 1969, Rev. Akahoshi retired from the ministry and returned to Japan. His retirement did not last long because then Bishop Tsuji, the founding minister of Ekoji, had Rev. Akahoshi reactivated to become the resident minister for the Seabrook Buddhist Temple in Seabrook, NJ. While the temple was small, Rev. Akahoshi and his wife were very active in the community’s life. Besides serving the religious needs of the Buddhist community in Seabrook, he co-hosted a program called Fuji Hour, a Japanese music and news program, over the local radio station, WSNJ. At the request of the BCA, he also traveled to Brazil twice providing several Dharma talks as a guest minister to the newly formed Shinhuku temples in Brazil. On many occasions he demonstrated his skill in Japanese calligraphy and ink. Demonstrating his skill with the brush, he was one of the highlights of the Bicentennial Festival of American Folklore held by Smithsonian Institution in 1975-1976. In 1978, upon the recommendation of the Smithsonian Institution, Rev. Akahoshi was invited by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to display an original oil painting in Washington, D.C.

In April of the same year, Rev. Akahoshi was decorated with the Order of Sacred Treasure Fifth Class by Japan for his outstanding contributions to the United States in Human Relations with a special ceremony and celebration held at the Japanese Embassy in Washington, D.C. He was one of the highlights of the BCA’s 50th anniversary celebration. In 1982, Rev. Akahoshi was presented with a Proclamation by the Board of Chosen Freeholders of Mercer- land County, New Jersey, lauding and acknowledging his many years of dedication and service in the State of New Jersey. He and his wife once again returned to Japan in retirement but continued their trips to the United States to see their children, grandchildren, and the many friends they had made during their years of service in the United States. In 1992, Rev. Akahoshi traveled to Brazil for the first time that he often attended weekly services at Ekoji. Well into his 80’s and early 90’s, Rev. Akahoshi traveled to China, France, Germany, Italy, and Austria. Predeceased by his wife, Mrs. Fusako Kubota Akahoshi in August 1985, Rev. Akahoshi is survived by his four sons -- Masanori Akahoshi of Osaka, Masato Akahoshi of Torrance, CA, Hirofumi Akahoshi of Union City, CA, and Hidefumi Akahoshi of Sakai, Japan, and two daughters -- Toshiko Kujo of San Mateo, CA, and Noriko Nakamura of Burke, VA. He is also survived by numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren.
Rev. Tanaka Speaks at IBS/Numata Lecture Series
By Kumi Hadler, IBS office manager

The Institute of Buddhist Studies hosted a lecture on Feb. 14 entitled, “Rethinking Amidst Buddha: A Growing Sense of Doctrinal Crisis among Contemporary Japanese Buddhist Thinkers” by Dr. Kenneth K. Tanaka (Professor, Musashino University). Dr. Tanaka, as an ordained Jodo Shinshu minister and a professor of Buddhist Studies, satisfied both the religious and academic curiosity of an audience who gathered from all over the Bay Area. The focus of the discussion was Tanaka was invited as the first professor, Musashino University Dr. Kenneth K. Tanaka (Professor, Musashino University) at the Jodo Shinshu Center in Berkeley. Dr. Tanaka was invited as the first

From the JSC Campaign Office
By Robert Noguchi

Campaign Office Schedule
My weekly schedule at the Jodo Shinshu Center is Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, at (510) 809-1453, and Monday and Thursday at BCA Headquarters at (415) 776-5000, ext. 30 (subject to change). I’m always reachable via e-mail at: robert@bcacampaign.org.

B.C. Grand Raffle
The B.C. Grand Raffle was held during the National Council banquet. Raffle Chairperson, Hoshin Seki introduced Mrs. Mayumi Ogui to draw the grand prize ticket, along with Mrs. Janet Shimada and Mrs. Lily Horio of the Hawaiian Federation to draw the runner-ups and announce all the winners. Congratulations to the following winners:

Grand Prize ($12,000)
Mrs. Kimiko Ishihara (Stockton)
2nd Prize ($4,000)
Mary Hiroshina (Oakland)
3rd Prize ($1,500)
Sandy Hiroshima (Orange County)
4th Prize ($1,000)
Mieko S. Komatsu (Lodi)
5th Prize ($500)
Mr. and Mrs. Bob Nakayama (Tacoma)

Thank you for your participation and support of the raffle. This was the first time the BCA had held a nationwide raffle. We’re happy to report that over $85,000 was collected for the Jodo Shinshu Center!

Minister’s Assistant certification was presented to Glenn Kameda on March 18. From left: Kameda, Socho Ogui, and Rev. Will Masuda from the Palo Alto Buddhist Temple. Kameda is the interim facility manger at the Jodo Shinshu Center.
Jodo Shinshu and the Middle Way

By Rev. Harry GyoKyō Bridge, Buddhist Church of Lodi

I was never interested in Buddhism until I entered college. At that time, the Buddha that I encountered was what one might call “basic Buddhism” or “general Buddhism.” Stuff like the Four Noble Truths, the Eightfold Noble Path, etc. However, as one gets deeper into the study of Buddhism, it can seem like those “basic” teachings become further and further away. Recently, however, I began teaching a class on “general Buddhism.” For the first time in many years, I went back to look seriously at the Four Noble Truths and Eightfold Noble Path in order to teach them.

The teaching of the Four Noble Truths is basic in several senses: not only as a foundation- al doctrine, but also as the first teaching the Buddha gave after attaining enlightenment. It has been translated in several different ways, but for now I will stick with the way I learned it all those years ago: Life is suffering; 2) Suffering is caused by desire; 3) One can end suffering by getting rid of desire; 4) In order to do this, follow the Eightfold Noble Path. We can see, therefore, that the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path are closely connected.

However, on revisiting the text after all these years, I discovered that the text doesn’t begin with the Four Noble Truths; in fact, it starts out with the Middle Way! The Buddha begins by stating that the two extremes of sensual pleasure and difficult ascetic practices are to be avoided, and that by avoiding these two extremes he awakened to the Middle Way. These two extremes can be seen in the biography of the Buddha: as a young prince, he had been sheltered from any suffering and lived a life of pleasure, but after leaving the palace to search for awakening, he embarked on a course of ascetic practices – in other words, activities such as fasting, which are very intense and difficult on the body. I was familiar with this aspect of the Middle Way. However, the Buddha then goes on to state that this Middle Way is none other than the Eightfold Noble Path! I was really surprised to see that one of the main references to the Middle Way was so closely connected to the Four Noble Truths and Eightfold Noble Path. I also found the passage confusing: Which one is it? Is the Middle Way the avoidance of extremes? Or is it more specifically the right view, thought, speech, conduct, livelihood, effort, mindfulness and concentration recommended in the Eightfold Path? Of course, we don’t have to make any definite decisions, and should probably view it as a combination of both. And besides, do we have to stick to a traditional, doctrinal definition, or can we be more creative in our understanding of the Middle Path? As the passage suggests, then, as impermanence, interdepen- dence, and emptiness, along with the ideal of the compassionate activity of the bodhisattva, have so much to offer to the world in the 21st century.

But I also do not want to do away with the teachings of Shinnon. The concept of the “two kinds of deep entrusting” (nichio shinshin) originally expounded by Shan-tao shows us the core of Jodo Shinshu: deep insight into the nature of the self, and, simultaneously, deep insight into the compassionate nature of the Dharma or, in other words, reality itself. They are like two sides of the same coin, closely interrelated if not inseparable. In a way, we can view nichio shinshin from a variety of Middle Way perspectives as well, but I will leave that for another time. Although Shinran’s writings and ideas can seem intimidating at first, they offer profound possibilities for the future.

Therefore, from my Middle Way perspective, Jodo Shinshu Buddhism can only benefit from a re-examination of basic Buddhist principles, and at the same time, basic Buddhist principles need to be reinterpreted and understood from a Jodo Shinshu perspective. The 21st century is still young, but I think that it holds great potential for the development of Jodo Shinshu, in America and throughout the world. It won’t happen right away, but in fact the journey has already begun. It is up to us to walk the Middle Way into the future as best we can.

Nama Amida Bato

Socho Ogui presented minister’s assistant certification on March 7 to Michael Endo of the Buddhist Church of Oakland.

The Los Angeles Buddhist Coordinating Council (LABCC) Summer Camp provides children with a fun, exciting and safe week in the beautiful San Bernardino National Forest. The camp will provide the opportunity for each camper to develop an appreciation for nature, create new friendships with children from other temples, and learn how Buddhism teachings and principles apply to their daily lives.

Our camp is composed of trained staff members who are experienced leaders and selected also for their maturity and ability to relate to children. Many of the staff members are former campers themselves bringing a unique perspective and high level of energy to the camp. The entire staff is comprised of volunteers, including those in the kitchen crew, medical personnel and program leaders who come from our participating temples.

Buddhist services and religious studies are conducted daily and directed by ministers and other religious leaders. Daily activities include archery, arts and crafts, outdoor and swimming. Campers also experience cooking, cookouts and overnight camping. Camp has a rustic but modern lodge/dining hall and cabins for the campers and their counselors. The lodge is equipped with a kitchen, pantry and scullery. The camp has full toilet and shower facilities. A heated pool and campfire ring are used daily. Everyone enjoys well planned meals prepared by an experienced kitchen staff.

A registered nurse is on duty at all times and doctors are on call.

The camp is located in Angelus Oaks California. Transportation to and from the camp is provided by chartered bus.

The 2007 camp session runs from Aug. 4 to 11, and the fee is $250 per camper. Additional information and application form can be obtained at www.LABCC.org.

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LABCC Summer Camp Session
By Ron Kawasaki

The 2007 BCA Nembutsu Camporee

We are cordially invited to participate in the 21st Nembutsu Camporee, A weekend of fun, friendship and sharing the Dharma.

$250 per camper. Additional information and application form can be obtained at www.LABCC.org.

2007 BCA Nembutsu Camporee

2007 BCA Theme

Buddhism - A Peace of the Puzzle August 3-5, 2007

You are cordially invited to participate in the 20th Nembutsu Camporee, A weekend of fun, friendship and sharing the Dharma.

Buddhist camporee - a weekend of fun, friendship and sharing the Dharma.

While

Where

When

Contact

Cost

Inclusions

Parents and/or guardians

Parents and/or guardians

Compares and/or guardians

Parents and/or guardians

Parents and/or guardians

Parents and/or guardians

Parents and/or guardians

Parents and/or guardians

Parents and/or guardians

Parents and/or guardians

Parents and/or guardians

2715 Panoramic Drive

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Buddhism - A Peace of the Puzzle August 3-5, 2007

You are cordially invited to participate in the 20th Nembutsu Camporee, A weekend of fun, friendship and sharing the Dharma.
The 2007 CCBWL Conference took place at the Parlier Buddhist Church on March 4. We were very fortunate to have some very good speakers for our conference. Rev. Ronald Kengo Kobata, Executive Director of the Bishop, was our keynote speaker. He referenced one of our local residents, David Masumoto and his book, Episcope for a Peach. In reading the book, Rev. Kobata expressed how he saw parallels between calling himself a farmer and growing a temple. We cultivate our temples to produce a spiritually and nutritionally enriched lifestyle. We maintain the integrity of our temples by planting seeds of the Dharma for the nembutsu to blossom in our hearts and minds.

In another vein, he referred to his adaptation of the Golden Chain of Love that he titled the Golden Puzzle of Love and Life, pointing out that, “unlike a chain whose links are the same, we are like pieces of a puzzle whose part are of different shapes, colors and sizes. Our temples are like puzzles whose pieces (members) are all unique, but when joined together form a strong Sangha.”

Another message that stood out for me was the importance of appreciating “What is the most valuable thing in this world?” which in none other than our own existence and the op-_portunity to hear the Budd- dha Dharma, as we affirm in reciting the Three Treas- ures, “Hard it is to be born into human life...”

During our luncheon we were entertained by a video of our local obons and the newly formed Sangha Band and Chorus, comprised of local Central California Buddhists. During the luncheon, the Bodhisattva Preservation Committee’s combined service in Febru- ary at the Reddley’s Hanamatsuri in April 2006. We also added to the volume, “We Roju Kusumoto” (Life Begins at Sixty), a song sung to the melody of “Tando Bushi” with same yoi added to each verse. Our leaders also sang, the song like pros while the rest of us struggled with the Japanese words.

Our afternoon speakers were Dr. Pamela Iwasaki and Kim Francipke. Dr. Iwasaki addressing questions and concerns about women’s health issues focused on menopause and osteoporosis. She cited studies, treatments and their risks.

Kim Francipke introduced some basic yoga type movements and demonstrated how many of the moves could be done in the course of our daily activi- ties around the house, even while watching TV. She also instructed us on some simple relaxation tech- niques.

The conference con- cluded with Denise Kusunoki, CCBWL President, conducting our general meeting and the introduc- tion of our 2007-08 CCBWL cabinet. It was a full day of enriching and enjoyable interactions between our district chapters in the spirit of “World Peace Begins with Gassho.”

Paraible

So, as in Christine, the Buddhist teachings can make a huge difference. I would now like to tell you a modern parable of the “Drowning Sailor in the Ocean.” I have already written and talked about this, but like to share this with you this year so it’s a delight to illuminate this theme and slogan. At night a ship leaves the port of a tropical island. After many hours on the high seas a sailor falls overboard. No one on the ship notices that the man is missing, and the ship sails on its way. The water is chilly and the waves are choppy. It is pitch dark. The sailor paddles frantically to keep afloat. He then starts to swim toward an island he fell off a boat to. He has lost all sense of direction. So he’s not sure that he’s heading the right way. Though he’s a good swimmer, his arms and legs soon grow weary. The sailor feels lost and totally alone in the middle of the ocean. This could be the end for him. Despair overtakes him, and his energy begins to drain from him. He begins to chocke on the water slipping his face, and he can feel his body being dragged under. Then at that instant he hears a voice from the depths of the ocean. “Let go. Go of your striving! You’re fine just as you are! “Namo Amida Butsu.”

The sailor hears the voice and stops his useless striving. He, then, turns over on his back with limbs outstretched. As he does so, the ocean holds him afloat without any effort on his part! The sailor is overjoyed!

He soon realizes that he is fine all along. He just didn’t know it. The ocean has not changed at all. By changing his way thinking, the sailor’s relationship with the ocean had changed. The sea changed from being a dangerous and frightening enemy to a friend.

The sailor knows that he cannot stay afloat forever in the middle of the ocean. The image of his wife and small children waiting anxiously at home inspires him to try to reach the shore.

He begins to swim as before, but one important difference. He now trusts the ocean. He knows that whenever he becomes tired, he can let go, and the

Ocean will support him.

Now that he feels safe in the arms of the "sea, the sailor can think about finding the island. He studies the positions of the stars and the moon and the direction of the wind. Using his training as a sailor, he determines where the island might be and confidently moves toward it. Once he made this confidence and joy, the sailor finds more in his heart to think about the possibility that others may have fallen off the boat. So, he looks around as far as he could. Seeing no one, he heads toward the island, but continues to be on a lookout.

When he swims back, in appreciation for this newfound confidence and joy, the sailor hears himself uttering, “Namo Amida Butsu.”

And the sailor does eventually reach the island.

Significance of the Paraible

How do you like the parable? I don’t know where it came from. It’s not found in Japan. So it must be a North American creation, one that has been part of Jodo Shinshu community in North America for decades.

Now, I like to explain its significance in light of our theme, “Buddha’s Vow, My Vow.”

There are three phases. The first is the phase of striving, where the sailor finds himself falling into the ocean till he runs out of strength, and the second is the phase of letting go and entrusting, and the third is the phase of floating and flowing. These three represent a Jodo Shinshu journey, and the sailor represents each of us.

Phase One

The first phase of “striving” where he falls into the ocean and then tries to swim to the island is like us when we encounter difficulties and in life and strive to deal with them. The young woman who took her own life found the waters unconquerable and the waves too turbulent. She must have tried to swim, but just didn’t have the strength to continue. She gave up. On the other hand, Christine also fell into the ocean, but she was able to swim much further and did not give up. She was trained. She was trained in the Dharma. At Dharma, I like the Six Perfections. In Jodo Shinshu temples, we are encouraged to follow them during the Obon services, but are forgotten the rest of the year. It should instead be encouraged all year long, since they cultivate “My Aspiration” part of our theme.

The Six Perfections are, as you know, Danna, Conduct, Effort, Patience, Meditation and Wisdom. Since time is limited, let me talk about three of them, Danna, Meditation and Wisdom, for they best represent my call for greater action.

Rev. Tanaka’s article will continue in next month’s Wheel of Dharma.
President's Message
Continued from Front Page

tions and comments primarily to two Executive Committee members: Dr. Billy Saei, who is the chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Jodo Shinshu Center Financing as well as BCA Presi- dent-Elect, and myself as Presi- dent. Beyond doubt, the ques- tions and comments were earnest and pointed. Three themes pre- dominated: How did we get so far in debt? How do we plan to get out of debt? How will we ensure that we will not again get into this situation? How did we get here? Dr. Saei outlined an accounting of the cost growth of the Jodo Shinshu Center that he, who has gone back through almost five years of records and obtained additional reports from people who were close to the project at key points. A written report will be available at the National Board meeting in June. It is impossible to summarize this history without over-simplifying. Nevertheless, I offer the following three-sentence explanation. The Center grew as we accommodated unanticipated requirements and the prices of all of the necessary services increased at uncer- tained rates. Cash contributions to the BCA Campaign did not keep pace with construction costs, re- quiring us to obtain debt financ- ing. At every point where the deci- sions to stop construction might have been made, we concluded that it would be more expensive to stop and re-start than to keep the project going on schedule. Behind each of these admittedly general state- ments, there is a wealth of detail. When the detail has been mas- tered, however, the three sentenc- es remain reasonably accurate generalizations of the situation as it was.

What are our plans to get out of debt? The Ad Hoc Committee on Jodo Shinshu Financing has been working very hard to develop the best financing vehicles possible to carry us to free and clear owner- ship of the Jodo Shinshu Center. In the weeks prior to the Council meeting, Dr. Saei traveled to meetings in six BCA districts (ex- cepting only Mountain States and Eastern) to explain the problem and possible solutions. With great skill, he repeated detailed expla- nations during the Town Hall and in the Council session itself. It now seems clear that we can obtain reasonable financing, in- cluding a loan from our own BCA Endowment Foundation. But ar- ranging favorable financing terms is only part of the solution: pay- ing the debt is the other part. I will return to this topic below. How will we protect ourselves. “Let us work together, in a spirit of dana, to ensure the success of this major initiative for Jodo Shinshu in 21st century America.”

Our Annual Meeting
Continued from Front Page

Line shopping storefront is being developed and will be installed by mid-April. The operations of the JSC will be supported and re- viewed by a Board of Overseers appointed by Socho Ogui and President Bermant. The chairperson of the Board is Past BCA President and Trustee Mick Kubota (Southern District). The Board will meet quarterly.

Among the many reports given throughout the business meet- ing was Dr. David R. Hackett's presentation on the plan to follow Ogui Socho’s Nine-Point Proposal for the development of IBS. Presi- dent Bermant reminded the as- sembly of the need to increase the maximum benefit of $1,000 per month pension being provided to our retired ministers. BCA En- dowment Foundation chairperson, Steve Yamami reported that their investments realized an 11% gain during the past fiscal year.

The National Council unani- mously approved to recognize the Northampton (Massachusetts) Shin Buddhism Sangha, as an affili- ate of the BCA. Mick Kubota (Southern Dis- trict/Vista), Joyce bradsaw (Crest District/San Jose) and Lucy Ha- mai (Bay District/ Berkeley) were elected as Directors-at-Large to the BCA National Board for the 2007-2009 term.

The National Council ap- proved the BCA Budget of over $1 million dollars in income and disbursements for year 2007. The 2006-2007 Budget was $1,830,155. The expected budget for 2007-8 is $1,990,921 with income generated primarily from BCA Dues (79%), BCA En- dowment (18%), and the Cam- paign 21st Century (7%). Ex- pected disbursements equalled income for the following main ar- eas; Salaries (20.5%), BCA (16%), Ministers Benefits (12.6%) and Fringe Benefits/Staff (9.7%). The average dues will be approximately $81.29 per member of BCA based on the membership count for 2006-7. The 2008 BCA Ministers As- sociation and National Council Meeting will be held in Portland, Oregon, hosted by Northwest District, and will be held at the Doubletree Hotel Lloyd Center from Feb. 26- March 2, 2008.

BCA National Meeting of 2008

Palo Alto and San Mateo Members and Children Visit JSC

By Jeannette Arakawa

It was an incredible day. It was a challenging day. You all did a stellar job making us all feel at home. Everyone I spoke to was delighted by every aspect of the Jodo Shinshu Center. Sunday provided us with a clear incentive to urge others to support this magnificent facility and a clear plan to stay. For you all for your efforts Sunday and every other day you strive to keep the Center going.

Photo of the children from the Palo Alto and San Mateo temples visi- tation to the JSC.
偽りとまこと

アリソナ仏教会 古本隆大

4月8日はおしゃか様の誕生日で、
日本やアメリカ、各国の仏教会で
祝われています。花詫問に安置された誕生仏
に花を供えるのは、おしゃか様がお生まれになったことを祝し、
甘い雨を降らせたという仏話にもとづいたものです。お
しゃか様の誕生をお祝いする行事を蓮華会、または花祭と
いいます。岩波仏教辞典によると、承和7年4月8日（9
世紀）に清涼殿（天皇の日常生活の場）で、おしゃか様の
誕生を祝う儀式を行ったのが、日本仏教史のはじまり
だそうです。その後、日本で仏教が盛んになるにつれ、
宗派を問わず蓮華会が行われるようになりました。

ところで、漢字の『誕生』の『誕』という字には、「い
つまる、偽り」という意味があり、『言う』と『延ばす』
で、「おやにもわきのばしたそらご」という意味がある
のです。かつてシュレディンガーはラジオに、「人間に生ま
れたときに立ち上げたのは、アホリの舞台に引き出された
のが悪いからだ。」と言わしめ、親鸞聖人は「火宅無常
の世界は、およそしたこと、みなもてそらごたへごと、ま
ことあるなきこと」とおっしゃったように、私たち
は、なにごとも偽り変わり、真実と言えるものが何ひとつ
ない、偽りの世界に生まれてきたのです。季節が移り変わ
るの日を前にしているのに、友達や恋人の心は変わらな
いと思い、自分の姿や心はどんどん変わっているのに、
自分はいつも変わらない自分だけ處世し、それによって偽
り、苦しみという、馬鹿げたことをしてるのが私たる
境涯です。

けれども、そういう偽りの真実が何が本当と
いうことなのかを思い悩み、そして、常に変わらない、ま
ことというものを見つけ、行き着かれたのが、おしゃか様
なので、私たちを、さとりとか仏とか法といい、そ
のまことに至る道をいろいろな人々にさまざまな言い方をお
説きくださいました。私たち浄土真宗では、まことは、阿
弥陀仏、お浄土、お仏として言わざるを得ず、偽りの世
でのよろこびとして生きていくことをすすめて下さっています。

けれども、私たちは阿弥陀仏やお浄土を見たことがあり
ません。つまり、まことということを知ることができない
のです。しかしながら、阿弥陀仏さまやお浄土のことを聞
くことによって、この世のことは偽りである、ということを
とらえたいと考えられます。それによって、偽りの世界での
、悩みや苦しみが、あまり入らなかった事とは信じ
され、気持ちが楽になるということがあるだろうと思いま
す。人間関係や将来のことを、過去の罪で思い悩み決
られても、それはそらごと、たわごとの中で起こっている
のだから、そんなに気にしなくてもいいんだ、という視点
をもつことは、僕たちが抱えているのです。親鸞聖人は、
「仏のみぞまこと」とおっしゃいますから、私たちがま
ことを知らずとも、まことと思い、仏教と生きてゆくことが
、偽りの世を潤ってゆく道だということです。

まことに至る道をお示しくださったおしゃか様に感謝して、
花まつりをお祝いしましょう。南無阿弥陀仏。
八十七歳 若さの力
私たちも一緒に撮って！

世界平和は 合掌から
2007年 4月号

戦争と仏教

大学生40名近くが三月の最初の週末に、オレンジ郡仏教会で「戦争と仏教」
というテーマで学習会を行った。収容所
の体験談、体験者の証言、またイラク
戦争の是非、ワタガ草のケースなどにつ
いての話し合いが行われた。講師の一人は
デンバーの開教使アシスタントのピー
ター・イノコウジ・スミ氏で、氏自身も

何が話し合われたのか？

西北部仏教徒大会で、関係者以外立ち入り禁止の総
長と仏教青年会 だけの 朝食会 がひらかれた。写真上