Following the theme "Gojidan" (Jodo Shinshu Religious Counseling) the Central California Ministers Association hosted a very informative program. A series of lectures were given by Dr. H. Dan Smith, California State University at Fresno professor of counseling and this year’s specially dispatched Hongwanji lecturer Professor Hisato Tomohisa of Ryukoku University.

Dr. Tomohisa is an ordained Hongwanji priest who has received a medical degree and specializes in psychology. Each speaker presented their material in their native language to one priest who has received a medical degree and specializes in psychology. Each speaker present -

The past two years have seen a whirlwind of activities at FBWA meetings in Alameda and Berkeley and at local Bay District BWA chapters, as plans and preparations proceed for the 40th BCA FBWA Conference scheduled for Friday, Oct. 12 to Sunday, Oct. 14 at the San Francisco Airport Marriott.

The theme for the Conference is "Buddhism: Open Mind, Open Heart." Special highlights of this gathering will be the keynote speakers Rev. Tukiko Motoyoshi of Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin and Rev. Pattie Nakai of the Midwest Buddhist Temple in Chicago.

In addition, exciting workshops are planned, such as Kamakura in Daily Life with Rev. Dr. Wil-
Hav e you ever heard the term "GNH" (Gross National Happi- ness)? This phrase was suggested by the king of Bhutan many years ago. That Kingdom, located in the eastern Hi-malayas between Tibet and India, has been using GNH as a criterion for their country’s growth.

Generally, we use GDP as a standard for a country’s economic development. We assume that the higher the GDP, the richer and happier the society is. The dictionary defines GDP (Gross Domestic Product) as the market value of all final goods and services produced within a country in a given period of time. In short, GDP refers to a nation’s material economic wealth. Ac- cording to the GDP criterion, the United States is the world’s richest country. A sur- vey reports that in 2006, America’s GDP was about thirteen trillion dollars, followed by China, Japan and some European coun- tries.

However, talking about happiness, we find that material and financial wealth does not necessarily make these countries happier. For example, Japan is rich in goods, foods, services, etc. like the U.S., where many people have flat panel TVs, DVDs, PCs, a car or two, and most people don’t go hungry. In fact, obesity is a growing concern. Although they are materialistical- ly well off, many Japanese are not so hap- py. In Japan, it’s reported that about thirty thousand people commit suicide every year, and the severity and number of incidents of domestic violence is increasing. I think we cannot measure our happiness by using the GDP. More material abundance does not always bring us happiness. A higher GDP does not equal a higher GNH.

The idea of using Bhutan’s GNH stan- dard as a measure of well-being in their country is now drawing attention from so-called advanced countries. They do not val- ue economic growth so much, but they pay attention to how happy the people feel. In order to activate GNH, they try to preserve the natural environment and their tradi- tions, and the government encourages the people to practice Buddhism. Bhutanese people look happy. They do not care so much about possessing many material things. They realize that selfish-desires are lim- ited, and obtaining material things does not provide real happiness because of our aversion. So they instead find happiness living harmoniously with others.

If we are not happy even though we are living a very high number on GDP country, maybe we should learn from Bhutan’s GNH for our and others’ happiness.

“Having little desire for his own sake, he knew contentment.” (Laerger Sutra) Namsamdekhata.

4536 Miles Away:

In my previous article, I highlighted the social aspects of being a Japanese American Buddhist teenager in Tokyo. However, in doing so, I feel that I haven’t done enough justice to address my issues on the Buddha and Shinran’s teachings. It’s no doubt that I’m removed from the support system of the Jr. YBA, or the social networking that a typical Japanese American may belong to.

And though as I stated in my previous article it can be lonely. I’ve gained an extremely vital lesson when it comes to my relationship to my religion. I’ve acquired a new perspective and thirst for Buddhism, and in doing so, have realized how little material there is for me to explore this new need for knowledge that I’ve developed. When reading this article, please do not consider me a teenager in search of an identity, instead, read me as a Buddhist in search of understanding.

It’s disheartening, after 17 years on this earth, being exposed to Buddhism, I can’t explain my religion without doubting myself. I say one thing, but I don’t know if I made that up, or if I heard it in a movie. In a community where abortion, gay marriage, and war are always hot topics of debate, I find myself needing more religious guidance. I’ve already formed strong individual beliefs on what I believe is right, so I’m not calling on Buddhist doctrines to teach me what’s right and wrong. I am however in need of guidance because these topics often involve discussions on religion. There are countless numbers of times where I say that I’m a Buddhist, and when I have to explain what being Buddhist is, I could only think of playing basketball. And it’s finally come to a point where enough is enough. If I’m going to say that I’m a Buddhist, I need to know more than the Three Treasures.

If I was submerged in the safety network of a temple community, I’m sure I wouldn’t feel as much in need to find more tangible evidence to support my belief in what being Buddhist means. And though I’m not an official member of any temple community I’m still a member of the larger Buddhist community and am frustrated at the lack of guidance available outside of temple walls. I’m an exposed Buddhist in a predominantly Christian community (at an American high school in Japan) and I am extremely vulnerable without the Buddhist teachings.

I have the opportunity to be a representative of Buddhism to people who never even heard of Amida, but instead I have to shy away and say, “it’s complicated.” I can’t begin to explain the admiration I have for my friends who are so dedicated to their faith and their youth group, who are able to explain why they are Catholic with such eloquence and why they trust in themselves and their God. It’s something that I’ve never been able to discuss fully honestly. I’m not saying our system of teaching is wrong, but I feel like there’s an obvious disconnect between the teachings, teachers and the students of Buddhism aside from the social support system.

Perhaps it’s the characteristics of Buddhism to have an extremely individual interpretation of the religion, but if so I want to know that for a fact. The Jr. YBA is a perfect example of bridging the gap between the teachings and the students. It’s a strong coalition of young adults trying to gain knowl- edge, to have fun and to develop a support system that goes deeper than shallow interests. If there were a way to capture this community and reprint it as a book, I’d be reading it every night. If this piece comes across as misguided or accusatory, I apolo- gize. I am eager for knowledge, and because I’m too far away to go to temple, I’m left with confusion. It may just be me frustrated of not knowing enough about my religion and not knowing where to turn for guidance. We don’t have a “holy book” full of answers, and though I know it as “Ju Sei Gei,” a lot, I have only a little idea what I’m saying. I do not doubt that I’m a Buddhist. I just want to find a way for the gap between the teachings and the students, no matter their geographical location, to be less prominent.

“Buddhist Systems of Meditation: from Sakyamuni to early Mahayana”

Guest Speaker:
Prof. Masaki Nonin
Department of Buddhist Studies, Ryukoku University, Japan

Wednesday, September 5
Wednesday, September 12
Wednesday, September 19
2:10 to 5 p.m.

at Jodo Shinshu Center
(2140 Durant Ave., Berkeley, CA)

We hope that you will be able to join us during this exciting lecture series!
This event is free and open to the public.
RSVP Requested: (510) 809-1444 / events@shin-ibs.edu

HEAD OF SCHOOL
HONGWANJI MISSION SCHOOL

HONGWANJI MISSION SCHOOL (HMS) is owned and operated by Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin, a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist temple. HMS is a private Buddhist coeducational school, pre-school through grade eight. HMS develops their children academically, physically, socially and spiritually through programs guided by Buddhist values such as interdependence, selfless giving, compassion, and gratitude.

The Head of School is responsible for the leadership and management of HMS and will move HMS forward in implementing the internal and external objectives related to the school’s mission and strategic plan. The successful candidate will have demonstrated success as a visionary leader with a record of achieving results in educational administration and management; sound fiscal management skills; exceptional interpersonal, communication, team building skills; and experience working with a Board of Directors. A bachelor’s degree is required; an advanced degree, such as an administrator’s certificate, a master’s or Ph.D. preferred. Candidates must support Buddhist values. See www.hongwanjimissionschool.org

Qualified candidates should respond by September 15, 2007 with resume, cover letter and salary requirements in confidence to:
Inklen & Associates
Executive Search Consultants
1001 Bishop Street, Paululi Tower, Suite 477
Honolulu, HI 96815
jobs@inklen.com

We gratefully acknowledge contribution to the Wheel of Dharma by the following donors:
Mike/Tsuayoko Kimura, Fountain Valley, CA .................................................. $100

GNH (Gross National Happiness)

By Ryuta Furumoto, Arizona Buddhist Temple

Are you an exposed Buddhist or do you wish to have more evidence to support your belief in what being Buddhist means? Read this article by Ryuta Furumoto to explore this new need for knowledge that you’ve developed.
CBE Family Dharma Summer Retreat

By Brian Nagata, Buddhist Church of Oakland

The BCA Center for Buddhist Education sponsored its first Family Dharma Summer Retreat on the weekend of July 20 to 22 at the Jodo Shinshu Center.

The overall theme for the weekend was getting to know more about Shinran Shonin.

The retreat began with an energetic ice-breaker to introduce everyone to each other. CBE Director Rev. Kodo Umezu conducted the opening service and introduced CBE Resource Committee member Brian Nagata who delivered the morning’s Dharma message and spoke on the various types and combinations of families and their importance in the 21st century Buddhist sangha.

Retreat participants were shown a short animated video on the life of Shinran Shonin, followed by a discussion on the founder of our tradition and our lives as Shin Buddhist.

In July of 2005 and 2006, the Sacramento Betsuin hosted, back to back, the first ever Youth Advocacy Retreats. It was an experiment to develop an experiential one week marathon of Dharma learning and growing for its youthful participants.

Each time, the YAC Retreats far exceeded all of our expectations.

They proved so successful that with each group, we had a follow up Reunion Retreat. First at the Idaho-Oregon Temple with Rev. Dennis Fujimoto and the following year at the Seattle Betsuin with Rinban Matsubayashi and Rev. Castro.

I credit the Minister’s Assistants of the Sacramento Betsuin, Tim and Carol Castle, Grace Hatano, Koichi Mizushima, and Patti Ohshita; and also the Denver Buddhist Temple’s Minister’s Assistant, Peter Insokjo-Kim, for planning, organizing and running these remarkable events. But as they all will quickly acknowledge, it took a supportive Temple and Sangha and an encouraging CBA leadership to bring those retreats to life.

I would especially like to credit Socho Ogui for always finding some way to provide funding for and participating in these retreats. When he was attending the Spring Seminar at the White River Buddhist Temple earlier this year, nine of the Northwest Youth Retreat veterans took him out for his first ever “Slurpee” (at 7-Eleven). Socho was so touched and moved by their affection that he called to thank me for hosting these events. Some explained to him that the kids love both he and Mayumi because they know that they really care.

The kids know that however filled their schedule may be, that Socho and Mrs. Ogui will always make time for them. He has said, “There is no doubt that they are our future. And from such YAC programs will come future dedicated leaders and for their families to have a chance to do something together as a family without outside distractions, and that this CBE Retreat was a good program to facilitate this important family time for their families.

This program is the first of many more programs, seminars and retreats which will be sponsored by CBE to bring the Nembutus teachings to more of the diverse Sangha of our BCA temple membership.

In addition to the above mentioned people, CBE Resource people Judy Kono and Ken Tanimura and Berkeley temple members Lena and George Yin, Karen Kato, Emiko Kusumoto, David Watabe and Mrs. Taya Oda volunteered their time and efforts to assist with this first Family Summer Retreat program at the Jodo Shinshu Center.

MY GIFTS TO CAMPAIGN BCA—THE 21ST CENTURY

□ YES! I’m enclosing my / our special gift of:  
( ) $1,500, ( ) $3,000, ( ) $5,000, ( ) $10,000,  
( ) $________ other amount to Campaign BCA—The 21st Century.

□ YES! I would like to pledge a total of:  
( ) $1,500, ( ) $3,000, ( ) $5,000, ( ) $10,000,  
( ) $________ other amount over a period of ( ) 1 to 5 years  
to Campaign BCA—The 21st Century.

My Gift to Campaign BCA—The 21st Century

c/o Campaign BCA—The 21st Century, 2140 Durant Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94704

□ YES! I’m enclosing my / our special gift of:  
( ) $1,500, ( ) $3,000, ( ) $5,000, ( ) $10,000,  
( ) $________ other amount to Campaign BCA—The 21st Century.

□ YES! I would like to pledge a total of:  
( ) $1,500, ( ) $3,000, ( ) $5,000, ( ) $10,000,  
( ) $________ other amount over a period of ( ) 1 to 5 years  
to Campaign BCA—The 21st Century.

Donate by Credit Card (See BCA website)

Check enclosed, made payable to Campaign BCA—The 21st Century.

□ YES! I’m enclosing my / our special gift of:  
( ) $1,500, ( ) $3,000, ( ) $5,000, ( ) $10,000,  
( ) $________ other amount to Campaign BCA—The 21st Century.

□ YES! I would like to pledge a total of:  
( ) $1,500, ( ) $3,000, ( ) $5,000, ( ) $10,000,  
( ) $________ other amount over a period of ( ) 1 to 5 years  
to Campaign BCA—The 21st Century.

My Gift to Campaign BCA—The 21st Century

c/o Campaign BCA—The 21st Century, 2140 Durant Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94704

□ YES! I’m enclosing my / our special gift of:  
( ) $1,500, ( ) $3,000, ( ) $5,000, ( ) $10,000,  
( ) $________ other amount to Campaign BCA—The 21st Century.

□ YES! I would like to pledge a total of:  
( ) $1,500, ( ) $3,000, ( ) $5,000, ( ) $10,000,  
( ) $________ other amount over a period of ( ) 1 to 5 years  
to Campaign BCA—The 21st Century.

My Gift to Campaign BCA—The 21st Century

c/o Campaign BCA—The 21st Century, 2140 Durant Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94704

Check enclosed, made payable to Campaign BCA—The 21st Century.

□ YES! I’m enclosing my / our special gift of:  
( ) $1,500, ( ) $3,000, ( ) $5,000, ( ) $10,000,  
( ) $________ other amount to Campaign BCA—The 21st Century.

□ YES! I would like to pledge a total of:  
( ) $1,500, ( ) $3,000, ( ) $5,000, ( ) $10,000,  
( ) $________ other amount over a period of ( ) 1 to 5 years  
to Campaign BCA—The 21st Century.

□ YES! I’m enclosing my / our special gift of:  
( ) $1,500, ( ) $3,000, ( ) $5,000, ( ) $10,000,  
( ) $________ other amount to Campaign BCA—The 21st Century.

□ YES! I would like to pledge a total of:  
( ) $1,500, ( ) $3,000, ( ) $5,000, ( ) $10,000,  
( ) $________ other amount over a period of ( ) 1 to 5 years  
to Campaign BCA—The 21st Century.

Check enclosed, made payable to Campaign BCA—The 21st Century.

□ YES! I’m enclosing my / our special gift of:  
( ) $1,500, ( ) $3,000, ( ) $5,000, ( ) $10,000,  
( ) $________ other amount to Campaign BCA—The 21st Century.

□ YES! I would like to pledge a total of:  
( ) $1,500, ( ) $3,000, ( ) $5,000, ( ) $10,000,  
( ) $________ other amount over a period of ( ) 1 to 5 years  
to Campaign BCA—The 21st Century.
Snapshots from San Francisco’s 2007 Summer Dharma School

On July 16, Nancy Okada and Ruth Funai, on behalf of the Bud- dhist Churches of American Federation of Buddhist Women, par- ticipated with women of different religious faiths who meet at a con- sultative meeting of Religions for Peace: North American Women of Faith Network with the underly- ing aim of working with a grow- ing global network of inter reli- gious councils and groups to harness the power of cooperation among the religious communities to transform conflict, build peace, and advance sustainable develop- ment with a network of 60 national and regional inter reli- gious councils, organizations of religious women, and affiliated groups.

Dr. William Vendely, secre- tary general of Religions for Peace, gave the opening message of the model of shared moral concern with deep spirituality. He stated that each community has a religious con- cept of peace, not just the absence of conflict. In the late 60’s, reli- gious groups met for a world con- ference on peace. We should use existing religious organizations and communities that have the leadership which extends from lo- cal to district, to national and in- ternational spheres. Women have always been involved in the reli- gious community and have been the “brick and mortar” that has supported that religion and must be brought into the main- stream and must be representative of the religious community.

Women’s groups build coalitions for shared concerns for peace and the well-being of the human fam- ily. Religions for Peace started the Women’s Mobilization Pro- gram in 1998 to promote the role of religious women in conflict transformation, peace building and sustainable development. In 2001, the program launched the first-ever Global Women of Faith Network, which has since expand- ed into regional networks in Afri- ca, South East Asia, Latin Ameri- ca and the Caribbean, and more recently, throughout the rest of North America has yet to organize such a network.

Rev. Dr. Karen Hamilton of Toronto, Canada, addressed the need for building of the North America Women of Faith Net- work, which is the newest and least focused. An ad hoc leader- ship committee was formed with representatives from the Prot- estant, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim and Buddhist faiths who will be contacted in three weeks by Jodo Shinshu Dharma School students on behalf of the organization and will work together by way of communicat- ing and e-mail. By mid-September, this committee will have selected approximately 15 nominees for the North American Women’s Coordinating Committee and identify issues that should be ad- dressed. At the end of the year, this group plus those who were unable to attend to form a larger Consultative Group will meet and review the issues and nominate the coordinating committee.

Mission: to gather representa- tives from women’s religious communities; promote multi-religious women’s cooperation for peace and justice; to build on spiritual, review the issues and nominate the coordinating committee.

Continued on Page 6
The Continuing Generation of Care

2007 College Summer Retreat in San Luis Obispo

"GPS with Amida: Find Yourself on the Map" was held on July 27 to 29 in San Luis Obispo and was hosted by the BCA Center for Buddhist Education and the YAC. The purpose of the seminar was to bring together college students to connect with each other through Buddhism and to offer a wide variety of experiences. There were a lot of good discussions, fun activities and the food, as usual, was good! The activities were designed to get everyone involved. Through these activities, we all began to meet other people and learned about our similar interests. From a post-er board with each person's picture, we had to connect ourselves to the people on the board based on similar interests. One of the experiences was a walking meditation along a path where we stopped at several stations to chant or recite a passage out loud. Another activity was a team of the winning team got to select the dinner of choice for the Iron Chef cook-off. The losing team had to cook dinner AND do the dishes.

A few were of foods that were made during the cook-off were spaghetti with meat balls and garlic bread, Mexican tostadas, chicken teriyaki shiitake-hoba, and Dharma Wheel rice crispy treats. Yum! All of the lectures were held as discussion groups so everyone had an opportunity to participate and voice their opinions about the discussion issue. Rev. Ron Kobata, executive assistant to the Bishop, led the first two of the three lectures. He talked about what it means to be a Buddhist and the common misconceptions that non-Buddhists have about Buddhists. Keishi Mizushima from Sacramento Betsuin spoke with us about financial planning and preparing for the future.

A few of us who previously attended a YAC Religious Retreat had the opportunity to lead the opening and closing services, as well as San Luis Obispo Temple's Sunday morning service. This was a great summer retreat to learn more about Buddhist while relaxing with friends, old and new. It is a good way for college students to re-connect with each other through Buddhism.

In Gassho,
Lauren Hiroshima
Lauren Hiroshima is a freshman at UC Riverside.

Societal Participation

The second area of the slogan is societal participation. Some Buddhists think that this is something that only Christians do, but let's just recall the title of our parable who kept a lookout for those in need.

I recently saw one such person of need on a television program. An orphaned boy of about nine in some African country was asked what one thing he wanted in life. He wore tattered clothes and was living in a hut. When asked what one thing he wanted in life.

"Well, there are Buddhists organizations that are dedicated to assisting people like that boy. There are, for example, Sarvodaya in Sri Lanka, Tzu-Chi Foundation, centered in Taiwan, and Ayus in Japan. In North America, there are the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, Hartford Zen Hospice and, of course, Project Dina in Hawaii, which was the topic at one of your previous conventions.

Lady Kujō Takeko, the founder of your Buddhist Women's movement is still remembered as someone who helped the victims of the great 1923 Tokyo earthquake. We've seen photos of her handing out clothes and food to the victims. It's been said that Lady Kujō died at a young age of 41 from physical exhaustion, stemming from her earthquake relief work.

As an organization or as individual Buddhists, I am not advocating that you do as much as the groups that I mentioned or Lady Kujō. But you can make an effort for that. Actually, working to create a strong family of your own is a way of contributing to society. We tend to think that my family is private and not considered part of the larger society. But family is the smallest unit of society. By making sure to take good care of the family, you are contributing positively to society.

And please don't forget to help each other within your own Buddhist Women's Association chapter. Again, it begins at home.

Motivation

And as we put our slogan into action, let us be guided by those inspiring words from Shinran Shinon. "If the sky is filled with light sources colors. It's a large catch! Truly a large catch of the giant sardines! The harbor is like a festival. Boats with joy and excitement, Ms. Kaneko is painfully aware of human nature. She writes:

“At dawn the sky is filled with bright source colors. It’s a large catch! Truly a large catch of the giant sardines! The harbor is like a festival. Boats with joy and excitement, Ms. Kaneko is painfully aware of human nature. She writes:

“Every moment of life, we are all embraced and nurtured by the loving care of so many others. When we begin to understand this, the roots of genuine gratitude cannot help but begin to grow in our hearts. We often hear that “Living a life of Nembutsu is to live a life of Gratitude.” And so it is. When we become AWARE that our lives are not just our own; when we realize that our lives are truly made up of the kindness, patience and sacrifices of others.”

President's Message

Continued from Last Page

be if, by being in the presence of an extraordinary person, I could become extraordinary myself. Imagine if we could become holy by associating with others.

How different such an idea is from the deep spiritual efforts because they block our ability to listen to what has always been available for us to hear. Humility, not holiness, becomes our aspiration.

This is such a difficult lesson. It is not a petty virtue when someone strives to humble and takes pride in the accomplishment. This sort of “spiritual materialism” is an ever-present sand trap on our way. I find myself in the bunker more often than not. And yet I know that in the past twenty-one years I have met individuals within BCA whose character and conduct show me that the lesson can be learned. Some are ministers, some are laypeople. Some are visible leaders in the church, while others work more in the background. Some are professionally successful and wealthy, some are not. But they are all sensitive to the people around them and seek common ground whenever they participate at the local, regional or national level of BCA activity. I want to say that they are distinguished by their extraordinary ordinary natures.

It is more accurate, though, to say that these individuals are distinguished by their extraordinary good will. I mean that they evaluate maters from the viewpoints of others as well as themselves. They are able to go beyond short-term benefit to consider the benefit of generations down the line. They are willing to take risks on behalf of the future. They are not afraid or self-protective. It is not that they think less of themselves. It is that they think less of others. These ordinary people teach us by their examples. I am sure that there are more of them than I have met personally. I think they are the true faces of our faith moving forward.

Continued from Page 3

“Your Life...”

maybe even future ministers for BCA.” If you said this phrase to any of your YAC participants, “Your life is not just your life...” I guarantee they will immediately smile and say, “Socho Ogu!”

This is one of the many great messages that has planted in their hearts. Knowing well that in life we must inevitably know times of trauma and loss, frustration and failure, the practice of mindfulness enabled this awareness in their young hearts and minds. He has said to them on a number of occasions, “Whatever difficulties you may face in life, you must always remember that your life is not just your life...” Life is not just your own. Your life is made up of the kindness, patience and sacrifices of others.”

“Your life is not just your life...” I guarantee they will immediately smile and say, “Socho Ogu!”

This is one of the many great messages that has planted in their hearts. Knowing well that in life we must inevitably know times of trauma and loss, frustration and failure, the practice of mindfulness enabled this awareness in their young hearts and minds. He has said to them on a number of occasions, “Whatever difficulties you may face in life, you must always remember that your life is not just your life...” Life is not just your own. Your life is made up of the kindness, patience and sacrifices of others.”

Every moment of life, we are all embraced and nurtured by the loving care of so many others. When we begin to understand this, the roots of genuine gratitude cannot help but begin to grow in our hearts. We often hear that “Living a life of Nembutsu is to live a life of Gratitude.” And so it is. When we become AWARE that our lives are not just our own; when we realize that our lives are truly made up of the kindness, patience and sacrifices of others, our Dharmic Eyes are opened... and we begin to live our lives with deepened APPRECIATION and Recognition in the hearts and minds of our future leaders, Socho Ogu continues to lead the seeds of O-Nembutsu Gratitude for the future of BCA.
Attending the Kaikyoushi Retirement Ceremony at Nishi Hongwanji Temple

By Rev. Kakuyo Tada

It was mid-June 2007 when I received a phone call from Rev. Ron Kobata, assistant to the Bishop, regarding an invitation by the Hongwanji to attend the official retirement ceremony at the Nishi Hongwanji in Kyoto. It was held on June 29. After some consideration, I accepted the invitation.

In Kyoto on the morning of the ceremony, my wife and I were greeted by Rev. Yansuki Hayashi, supervisor of the Hongwanji International Center. At the Center, I also met old friends from Hawaii, Rev. Toshio Murakami and Rev. Shigetomi Makino. The three of us overseas ministers were attending the retirement ceremony.

The event is officially known as the 19th Jukyukoku (head priests of local temples) and Kaidyukushi (overseas ministers) retirement ceremony. This was the first time that overseas ministers were being invited to this annual event; it was a historical event for our Kyodan.

With a great anticipation and excitement, we arrived at the Amida Hall in Kyoto at the assigned time. The hall was already filled with retired ministers and their families from throughout Japan. According to the official program, a total of 482 names—including some deceased—were listed for this special occasion. Some weren't able to attend the gathering.

The service in the Amida Hall began with the tolling of a bell at exactly 10 a.m. As live gakuso music was performed, the Monshu and the entire cabinet entered and were seated before the shrine of Amida Buddha. As the large gathering chanted the Amida Sutra together, each participant offered incense.

The Monshu delivered his message in rather simple Japanese. His talk was uncomplicated and clear, expressing his sincere gratitude to the ministers and their families for their many years of dedicated service. After his message, a representative of the guests made a formal response to the Monshu and the Hongwanji. This portion of the program concluded with the singing of Ondashin.

The one-hour service was well planned and coordinated. At all, it was a solemn and impressive ceremony. To me, it was one of most memorable services I have ever attended. After the service, Rev. Michio Tokugawa gave a sermon primarily recounting his role as English translator for Hongwanji translation projects.

That afternoon, the program continued at the Kyoto Tokyu Hotel adjacent to the Hongwanji. There the tone of the gathering changed completely to a more cordial and relaxed atmosphere. We were all seated around tables rather than standing as is required at some formal Japanese occasions.

The Monshu and the cabinet members were present.

The event began with a speech delivered by the Governor General and followed by a traditional kampū (toast).

A western style lunch was served.

Before the conclusion of the event, a few of the retirees were asked to recount some of their valuable ministerial experiences. Quite unexpectedly, I was among those chosen to say a few words about my life in the BCA.

When this event finally came to an end with gasho, I left with many unforgettable and enjoyable memories of my participation. Reflecting upon this historic event, this was certainly one of my life's most precious moments.

For the BCA and the BCA-J and the BCA for giving me the opportunity to attend.

On way back to the States, I felt inspired to do something for the cause of Jodo Shin Buddhism. In America I can still continue sharing the Nembutsu teaching with others in my limited and small way.

With gasho.

Continued from Page 4

WCRP trafficking and the impact of global climate crisis as it relates to women and children.

Resources: WCRP (World Conference of Religions for Peace) and MDG (Millennium Development Goals) toolkit that is the priority area for Religion for Peace.

Membership: Ensure representation of different religions and geographical areas; respect religious differences; act on shared concerns; preserve the identity of religious community; and, honor the way they are organized.

Process: Convene a large group of the North American Women for Faith & Development Network to possibly meet in 2008 with date to be determined by the Consultative Group meeting to be held before the end of the year. Update list of potential invitees (2001) and share information regarding the Women, Faith, & Development Alliance which is convening in April 2008.

In the history of Jodo Shinshu, Rev. Toshio Murakami was elected as a representative of “the Jodo Shinshu woman” in strengthening, spreading and consolidating the “faith” in the early history of our sect. As in many religions in our global community, it is the women who galvanize their energies to make sure religious and traditional practices are observed, they hold the families together, they undertake the many tasks in their houses of worship for the benefit of the religion. Consider how many of our Jodo Shinshu temples would be hard pressed to have bazaars and fundraisers without the ingenuity, talents and concerns of its women.

Teaching Sunday School, Japane- ese school, caring for the home, domestic duties and needs of the tem- ple building and rallying together for members funerals when many have been confronted by illness or serious problems has been the invaluable data of sangha women. Sharing their cre- ativity, insights, concerns, and nurturing for the betterment of the community has been one of the reasons why Jodo Shinshu has been called a “living” religion – our practice is for the betterment of our commun- ity.

Jodo Shinshu in entering the 21st century in North America and part of a diverse brocade of many religions representative of the global community. Jodo Shinshu is not only longer relev- ant to the initial Japanese community of North America; it has been discovered by a multi-ethnic population and needs to join other religions in confronting the global concerns of the 21st cen- tury which inevitably affects all of us. The similarities between the diverse faiths in greater than one thinks if one is willing to look, learn and listen to the fab- ric of other religions.

It is hoped that the BCA and especially the Federation of Bud- dhist Women Associations can continue to participate in this dynamic undertaking. It was a most rewarding experience for Ruth Fanui and Nancy Okada to represent the BCA at this meet- ing.

Front row, left to right: Kinsyu Tanaka (White River), Reasee Minokubo (Motoll), Anjess Lawhorn (W.R.), Kelsey Asato (W.R.), Valerie Chun (W.R.) Daniel Kashima (Seattle), Kevin Hirono (Tokyo). Back row: Travis Suzuki (Seattle), Mark Saiget (Oregen), Laurel Salto (Idaho-Oregon)

The Sr. Young Buddhist Association at The University of Washington just completed its first school year of activities. Since the beginning of this school year, Sr. YBA at UW has been continually growing, with new members coming from temples in Oregon, Ha- waii, and throughout the Northwest district. Mem- bers not only include UW students, but from other colleges as well, such as Seattle University. The group held its first meeting last October, and since then, many discussions, outings, road trips, bazaars, and EATING has made this school year one of the most memorable yet for most of us. Nine students showed up to the first meeting, and since then, membership has grown to approximately sixteen. We also plan on welcoming more freshman mem- bers from White River, Hawaii, and San Francisco this fall.

Many of our close-knit active members made an effort to attend services weekly, carpooling from the universities. We’ve held discussions with several in- teresting guests including Dr. Kenji Akahoshi from San Jose, Rev. Kobata, and Rev. Koyama. For Spring Break, five members organized a trip up to Vancou- ver, where we spent the night and visited Stevestone Budhist Retreat with one of the alumnae Sr. YBA friends. Later that week, we all went snowboarding at Sno- qualmie Pass to top off a wonderful Spring Break.

Other activities this past year included attending the UW Lu’au, a picnic under the cherry blossom trees at UW, and doing community service for Seat- tle Niisi Veterans, organizing old files. This July, we plan on hosting the N.W. District High School Youth Retreat, themed “Wi Gasso.” This event hasn’t been held for many years, but because of the increasing activity, we thought it would be a great idea to let more high-school youth experience the dharma and friendship we’ve had at past retreats.

When many of our members graduated from high school, they didn’t think they would continue to participate in this temple, one of the reasons being that there wasn’t really a program specifically for post-high school age youth. Each member had a great amount of optimistic enthusiasm, which made this past year so enjoyable with wonderful experiences. Our combined efforts made it possible to recognize Sr. YBA at the Seattle Betsuin, and re-en- sure to the Sangha that there is a bright future for Jodo-Shinshu in America.

If you would like to join Sr. YBA or have ques- tions, please contact: Travis Suzaka (206)715-8767 or Seattle Betsuin office at (206) 329-0800 or email at zuaka@uwashington.edu

May Peace and Tranquility Prevail Throughout the World

Shirian Showin’s 75th Memorial

UIW YBA Report

Email: bcahq@pacbell.net

Official Publication of the Buddhist Churches of America, 1710 Octavia Street, San Francisco CA 94109.

Send address changes to “Wheel of Dharma,” Buddhist Churches of America, 1710 Octavia Street, San Francisco, CA 94109. Subscription free to BCA members; $12.00 annually for potential invitees (2001) and $15.00 for members funerals when many have been confronted by illness or serious problems has been the valuable data of sangha women. Sharing their creativity, insights, concerns, and nurturing for the betterment of the community has been one of the reasons why Jodo Shinshu has been called a “living” religion—our practice is for the betterment of our community.

Jodo Shinshu in entering the 21st century in North America and part of a diverse brocade of many religions representative of the global community. Jodo Shinshu is not only longer relevant to the initial Japanese community of North America; it has been discovered by a multi-ethnic population and needs to join other religions in confronting the global concerns of the 21st century which inevitably affects all of us. The similarities between the diverse faiths in greater than one thinks if one is willing to look, learn and listen to the fabric of other religions.

It is hoped that the BCA and especially the Federation of Buddhist Women Associations can continue to participate in this dynamic undertaking. It was a most rewarding experience for Ruth Fanui and Nancy Okada to represent the BCA at this meeting.
今月の法話

「聞（もん）」ということ

ロサンゼルス別院 岡崎康紀

「まぁ〜ようするに、
安心して死ぬところか」

ホスピスで、その私に
答えてくれたおじいちゃん
は、もうこの世にはい
ない。海外 開教使
の特牲、そういった出会い
と別れを何度も経験し
てきた先生方がほとんど
ではないだろうか？　そう・それは日本の僧侶との大き
な経験の差の一つなんだと、私は切実に思う。

アメリカで、生まれて初めてホスピスを訪れたときのカ
ンヤ先生（岡本寛弥開教使のこと）の言葉を今でも思い出す。

「この病院にいる人たちは、まず助けられる思いのない人
たちばかりです。」

驚きを隠せなかった私が、

「本当に？　本当ですか？」とたずねると、先生は
少し悲しみそうな顔で、

「残念ながら本当です。」と言った。

そして、その日のホスピス訪問の後、先生から仏教の
門徒さんが入所しているホスピスリストを手渡され、こう
告げられた。

「自主的に時間をとって訪問して下さい。ただし、他に
残された時間が少ないこともちゃんと考えてあげてください。

私は正直、本気でぴったり。若いアメリカ人の女と
会話をしては喜んだり、お酒を飲んでは陽気になって時間
を過ごしてしまう。そんな俗な私が、一体彼らに何ができ
る？　何もできないじゃないか！　でも、それでも行か
くてはいけない、それが開教使の仕事だから。

そんなある日、私は偶然にもホスピスで初老のチャプレ
ンと話す機会に恵まれた。私は元々は彼らに何もしてあ
げられなかった、私は聖職者として失格です、と告げると
彼女は、こう私にアドバイスしてくれた。

「あなたにできることならありますよ。それは彼らの
話を聞いてあげることです。」

「聞いてあげるって？　それなら、いつも私は聞いて
あげていますよ。」と言うと、

「はてして、聞くということはそんな簡単なこと
でしょうか？」と言われ、私は思わずむっとしてしまい、す
ぐには彼女のその言葉の意味を理解することができな
かった。

数週間後・・・思ったより早くその言葉を理解するこ
とになった。

仏教教からの一通の電話。M病院のICU「ルームNo.
203」で、Sさんのが臨終を迎えているので、早く
行ってあげてくださいとのこと。私はすぐにM病院の
ICU203に飛んだ。

203号室のカーテンを開けると、そこには白人の老夫婦
がいる。まるで旦那さんが重病のなだ・・・。お
やっ？　白人？　確実にSさんは二世はなすだけど・・・。
と考えているとすぐに看護のの方が来て、Sさんの遺体は
すでにすでに家族の方が引き取られたとのこと。間に合
わなかったか！　とりあえずお寺に帰って報告だ、と
私が部屋を出ようとしたらその時！　その老夫婦がこう私に
尋ねてきた。

「あなたはReverendですか？」

「はい、そうです。でも仏教のReverendですよ。あな
たはクリスチャンですか？」

「ええそうです。でも主人には時間がないのです。
Reverendでしたら仏教徒でもかまいません。主人に何か
祈りをささげてあげてください！」と、悲痛な面持ちで
私に懇願してきた。すみません、浄土真宗は祈らない
宗教なので、それはできません。愚かな私はもう少し
そう言いそうになったが、ぎ
りぎりで思いとどまり、静か
に聖書を唱え始めました。

チャプレンのいうとおり
だった。私が言って「聞く」
ということは簡単なのでは
なかった。それは、私が私の考えで聞いてあげていると
いう心、私は私が一番正しいと思うあがったところ
で聞いていたからだ。「聞く」ということは、
出てきたあたりまで受け止められる心がちゃんとできてい
て、はじめて「聞く」が完成するのだ。

今日も知らず、明日も知らず・・・そんな言葉が
現実味を帯びてくる人たちの心の声を、私たち開教使
は、まだまだこれからもずっと聞いてもらわなければ
ならない気がする。

キャンペーンにご協力を

教団の将来を確かなものにする
ために皆さんのご協力をお願いし
ています。現在1210万ドル達成（約
束額を含む）。詳しくは各仏教会まで

詳細は各仏教会まで
英語通信教育に向けて

現在、米国仏教団は本願寺や他の海外教団と連携して、英語による通信教育を来年の9月より開始するための準備を行っている。下の写真は8月21日にセンターで行われた会議に出席した委員たちである。

特別寄稿

住職退任式に参列して

多田 覚英

この度、京都の西本願寺においてお住職退任式を行っていたが、今回引退したのは、西本願寺住職である西願寺が前日で、同調は今後の観念が残された。退任式は、お住職退任式として、全国より到着のものと、出席者一堂に集まったものと、共に大変に感じた。儀式は「無量寿の教」を含めて行われ、退任式は終了した。