Rev. Tanaka’s Speech Concludes

Closing

I would now like to close with a moving letter to his parents by a young American Nisei soldier and a Buddhist during World War II, it was written originally in colloquial Japanese of the dialect of his parents, mixed with English. Amidst his mother and father being left behind barbed wire fences of the relocation camp and his leaving for the battle field overseas, the young soldier conveys his love for his parents and his Buddhist conviction. He speaks of “the story of the Buddha,” presumably about the sacred story of Amida’s Vow that we discussed earlier.

Dear Mama and Papa,

It’s me. Tonight, I’m finally being shipped off. Thank you that we discussed earlier. Buddha,” presumably about the story of the Buddha, it is something else, Mama. That is nothing else left to say except everything’s set to go, I’ve got health till then, alright? Since I’m not sad at all because the Buddha will protect me. Mama and Papa, don’t worry about me, because I remember that story real well. Well, I’ve got to be off, so you two take care of yourselves.

Goodbye.

The letter speaks for itself and is best left alone without my comments. Instead, let me reiterate:

1) we aspire to work toward a world where that African boy can go to school, and where sons and daughters are not torn away from their families like the Nisei soldier;

2) we aspire to share the Dharma so that, among the members, more people would be discouraged from taking their own lives like that young woman in Tokyo;

3) we aspire to cultivate joy, confidence, caring for others and humor by living in the Buddha’s Vow as did Lady Kujō, Prof. Miyaji, the Nisei soldier, Christine, and the countless others throughout the centuries; and

And finally here is Shinran Shōnin, our ultimate teacher Buddha. I remember that real well, so you can put your mind at ease. The Buddha will always be with me, even when I’m shipped abroad. I’m not sad at all because the Buddha will protect me. Mama and Papa, don’t worry about me, because I remember that story real well. Well, I’ve got to be off, so you two take care of yourselves.

Goodbye.

Rev. Dr. Kenneth Tanaka was the keynote speaker at the 13th World Federation of Buddhist Women’s Convention in Honolulu, HI last September. The text of his speech has been serialized that began in the February 2007 issue and concludes in this issue.

In Support of Pro-Democracy Efforts in Burma

The disturbing reports of the violent crackdowns being inflicted upon the peaceful pro-democracy demonstrations led by Buddhist monks and nuns in Burma (Myanmar) lead us to draft this letter in support of their efforts to realize a truly harmonious society.

The spiritual leaders of Burma seek to alleviate the suffering caused by the inequities and injustices of an oppressive military government. For decades, their peaceful actions on behalf of the exploited populace have met brutal suppression. The recent confrontations have included even harsher and more inhumane treatment of the monastic community and civilian population. They have realigned a government that has lost the moral authority to lead.

Reflecting on the Teachings of the Buddha for guidance, we cite his admonition that: “Of societies, there are three kinds. First, there are those that are organized on the basis of power, wealth or authority of leaders. Second, there are those that are organized because of its convenience to the members, which will continue to exist as long as the members satisfy their conveniences and do not quarrel.

“Third, there are those that are organized with some good teaching as its center and harmony as its very life. Of course, the third and last of these is the only true society, for in it the members live in one spirit, from which unity of spirit and various kinds of virtue will arise. In such an organization there will prevail harmony, satisfaction and happiness.”

This is the society that we all seek. The monks and nuns of Burma are attempting to lead their country in this direction.

In a spirit of understanding the causes and conditions of suffering and a concern for alleviating them, we add our voices to the urgent call for humanitarian and diplomatic aid to be provided to the citizens of Burma, to help them bring about a peaceful, harmonious, and enduring society.

Respectfully in gasho,
Socho Koshin Ogui
President Gordon Bermant

By Dr. Gordon Bermant

One does not step into the same river twice. Waters disperse and come together again … they keep flowing on and flowing away in the end, there is only flux, everything goes away.

What a wonderful Buddhist expression this is—a remarkable affirmation of impermanence. It was composed during the lifetime of Sakyamuni Buddha, approximately 500 B.C. But the author was not a disciple of the Buddha, or an Indian. He lived many miles to the west of the Buddha’s homeland in northeast India, in what today we would call western Turkey. He was Heraclitus of Ephesus, who lived between (approximately) 540-475 B.C.

Heraclitus taught, as the Buddha taught, that impermanence marks the world. This is summarized in the Greek phrase panta rei, meaning “everything flows.” What a splendid reminder this simple phrase can be for us in many parts of our lives. I am fond of the phrase and its meaning for two reasons that I would like to share.

First, panta rei is an example of a teaching from the Western tradition that goes beyond mainstream Western religious sources of similarity and contrast with Buddhism. The teaching of impermanence is basic to Buddhism, but it is not basic to Western religious teachings. There is more to Western intellectual tradition than is found in the mainstream religious teachings. The philos-
Although we may tomorrow,

Even now a delicious aroma of miso-shiromi
Is drifting towards me from the kitchen.

Feasting on the fresh and fragile
new leaves
Through the opened sliding doors,
Sitting at the dining table,
I caught myself holding rice and miso-shiromi,
Like a child.

In this beautiful autumn season
it is good for us to listen to our hearts,
and in the light of the unending
Prayer-Compassion
Vow of Immeasurable Life and Light
(Amida Buddha), may our lives be refocused to see the preciousness of each moment we are alive, and treasure this very life we have been given.

Gazëkô

Wheel of Dharma

OCTOBER 2007

This Life

By Rev. Kenko Hasegawa

Buddhist Church of Stockton

After their regular religious gathering, a group of Buddhist women were chin-chating about their children and the hopes and aspirations that they have placed on them. After awhile a woman who was listening quietly suddenly entered into the conversation remarking, “I envy all of the pleasure of discussing it with you because I lost my child a few years ago. My husband carried our child in his arms and cried all night, asking for forgiveness. Whether one’s child has an I.Q. of 50 or 150, that life is irreplaceable and precious. And we shouldn’t discriminate one’s life in terms of birth, education, etc.”

By the time this woman said this, she was in tears, and she went on to say, “I’m sorry I got so upset. But I feel this way because my child had died. When he was alive, my husband and I also talked about our son’s future, of what school he should go to, how much he should study, what companies are most promising for him, and generally thought in terms of an elite course for his sake. So when I think about it, I really can’t get angry at you. If my child hadn’t died, I would never have known the preciousness of one’s life. It is so untrue to say that one has to pass the entrance exam to a better high school, has to join an elite corporation and make advancements. When you get rid of all these qualifications, you realize that life itself is unrepeatable, an extremely rare opportunity, and irreplaceably noble.

And unless we awaken to this life, it is just a vicious cycle of feelings of dissatisfaction and satisfaction, grief and joy.” This woman’s heartfelt comments helped to refocus the topic of their conversation from casual, everyday happenings to a more sincere quest for a deeper understanding of the value of life itself.

Let’s listen to another person’s utterance. Ishikawa, Masaji says: “I wonder what it is to be happy? Is it to live extravagantly? Is it to live with fulfilled love? I have neither wealth nor status, But the only wish I have is for my wife and me, Who are both aged, to live each day, One day at a time, with health & safety.

Since I am still working
There is no worry about us going hungry today.

Page 2

Wheel of Dharma

OCTOBER 2007

We gratefully acknowledge contribution to the Wheel of Dharma from the following donor:

Senshin BWA, Los Angeles, CA

$100

This Life

Rev. Imamura Assigned to Florin

Rev. Dr. Ryo Imamura was assigned to be the resident minister of the Buddhist Church of Florin as of Oct. 1.

Ryo Imamura was born in the Gila internment camp (#2) in Arizona in 1944, and is the son of Rev. and Mrs. Kanmo Imamura. His father was the resident minister of the Berkeley Buddhist Temple from 1941 until 1958, founder and first director of the Institute of Buddhist Studies, founder of the Buddhist Study Center in Hawaii, and served as the Bishop of the Hawaii Kyodan. His mother, Jane Imamura, was a choir director in BCA and Hawaii, and composed many of the children’s gathas used in the Dharma School services. His paternal grandfather was the late Bishop Vennyo Imamura of the Hawaii Kyodan. His maternal grandfather was the late Rev. Iisei Matsuura of the Buddhist Churches of America.

Former Canada Bishop and BCA Minister Emeritus Rev. Newton Ishiura, who also served at Florin, is an uncle.

Rev. Imamura received a Bachelor’s degree in Mathematics from the University of California at Berkeley in 1967, a Master’s degree in Counseling from the San Francisco State University in 1980, and a Doctorate degree in Counseling/Educational Psychology from the University of California in 1986.

He received his ordinations in Japan in 1971-2, after which he was a minister in Hawaii and California for 15 years. In Hawaii, he was the first director of the Buddhist Study Center, director of Buddhist Education for the Hawaii Kyodan, and a staff minister at the Hawaii Betsuin. He served as part-time and resident minister at the Buddhist Temple of Alameda (1977-1983) and part-time minister at the Marin and Concord branch temples (1983-1988) for BCA.

Before moving to Washington in 1988, he was also a psychotherapist in California and co-founder of the East-West Counseling Center in Berkeley and Oakland, which provided Buddhist-based counseling to the general public. He was also a past national president of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship and a national board member of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, which is the oldest and largest international religious peace and justice organization.

Since 1988, he has been a professor of Counseling Psychology at The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington. The focus of his teaching and research is East-West Psychology with an emphasis on Buddhist thought and practice. Some recent program titles are “Buddhist Psychotherapy,” “The Awakening Mind-Spirit,” “Turning Eastward: Explorations in East/West Psychology,” “The Expression of Self: West to East,” “Liberation Theology: East and West,” and “Multicultural Counseling: Theory and Practice.” His writings have appeared in various books and publications such as The Faces of Buddhism in America (1998), Dharma Family Treasures: Sharing Mindfulness with Children (1994), and Gary Snyder: Dimensions of a Life (1991). He also provides Buddhist consultations on issues of living and dying to the general community.

Rev. Dr. Ryo Imamura feeling that he would like to be closer to his mother in Berkeley, with his wife Tery’s support and sons Michi and Kaya’s understanding, decided to take an early retirement from the college and return to the BCA ministry.

He looks forward to reuniting with old friends and meeting new members. His interest in interfaith activities will help our efforts to expand and engage our Sangha.

We gratefully acknowledge contribution to the Wheel of Dharma from the following donor:

Senshin BWA, Los Angeles, CA

$100
Campaign BCA News

Legislated Change for Charities and Donors

On August 17, 2006, President Bush signed into law new tax incentives for charitable gifts from donors who are 70½ or older. The Pension Protection Act of 2006 encourages financial support of the good work done by charitable organizations in the U.S. Under the new law, you can use funds from your IRA to make a lifetime charitable gift free of tax obligations. Prior to the law, you would have to report any amount taken from your IRA as taxable income, then take a charitable deduction for the gift, but only up to 50 percent of your adjusted gross income. In effect, this caused some donors to pay more in income taxes than if they didn’t make a gift at all.

Fortunately, now these IRA gifts can be accomplished simply and without tax compliccations. Plus, you can make the gift now – while you are living and able to witness the benefits of your generosity.

You May Contribute Funds This Way If:

- You are 70½ or older
- The gifts do not total more than $100,000 per year.
- You make the gift on or before December 31, 2007.
- You transfer funds directly from IRA or Rollover IRA
- You make the gift to a public charity

How the Pension Protection Act Works:

David, age 75, has $280,000 in two separate IRA’s. She made a pledge to give $50,000 to us this year. She has a choice of giving cash, appreciated securities or other assets to fulfill the pledge. Betty checks with her tax advisor who explains that under the new law, she has yet another option and the pledge.

If Betty transfers $50,000 from one of the IRA’s directly to us before December 31, 2007, she will avoid paying income tax on the $50,000 withdrawal. She will not, however, be able to use it as a charitable deduction – it is a pure “wash.” It is an easy and convenient way for Betty to accomplish her charitable goals.

David retired from his career about 10 years ago and has been receiving retirement income ever since. Part of his income is in the form of minimum distributions from an IRA since turning age 70½.

Fortunately, with David’s other retirement funds and Social Security, he does not need the IRA distributions now or in the foreseeable future. Yet each year he has to take receipt of these minimum distributions to comply with the Internal Revenue Code and pay income tax even though he doesn’t need or want to receive the income.

Under the new law, David can transfer the minimum distributions directly to us. His benefits are twofold: 1) He avoids paying income tax on the $50,000 withdrawal; and 2) He uses those funds to fulfill his charitable dreams. Instead of waiting until after his lifetime to leave his IRA funds to our organization, David can enjoy witnessing the benefits of his generosity – while you are living and able to witness the benefits of your generosity.

With some pride, unamess and a lot of energy we took the path not yet trodden and ventured forth with a renewed beginning.

Already a year has fleeted by, so how was that trodden path?

October 21, 2006 we gathered at the newly constructed Jodo Shinshu Center located at 2140 Durant Avenue Berkeley, California adjacent to the U.C. Berkeley campus. Thus began the history and the legacy of a new facility today referred to as The JSC.

From Day One the JSC was visited and introducted to hundreds of folks visiting from these United States, Canada, South America, Mexico, Australia, Japan, India, Thailand, Taiwan, China, Nepal, various European countries, and of course BCA temples and its members of the Guest Registry in the Lobby there are signatures from folks visiting from all of the countries and BCA Temples mentioned above a thousand signatures have been recorded. I’m sure we missed a few hundred signatures butcollectively their expressions included; A beautiful place, a magnificent place, a peaceful place, A BCA Place? It belongs to us! Wow! Now I can identify with the Campaign effort. Every BCA member should visit the JSC!

The JSC has become a living treasure, a place to listen to the Dharma, a place to express the Dharma, a place to interpret the Dharma, a place to express sincerity, gratitude, and thank you, thank you. Most of all to see, hear, and be with the youth listening, chanting, giving dharma talk, exchanging thoughts, eating together, and enjoying new dharma friends makes it all worth while.

Again, to have Dharma School teachers at the JSC sharing, caring, and honing their skills to be an even more effective teacher where unlimited facility resource is at hand makes the task a rewarding event. And to see Temple Lay Leaders from all parts of the BCA come together to become more aware of the relationship of their respective Temples with each other and the BCA National organization is a promise for the present and future of BCA.

The JSC opened its doors on Aug. 3, 2006 and kept the doors open for all who scheduled their activities through Richard Endo, Interim Master Scheduler for all activities at the JSC. We kept the doors open for those of you who called to say you were going to be in the area and want to see the JSC. Of course has been our standard reply didn’t matter what day of the week or weekend. Words out! If you’re in the vicinity of the Bay Area, UC Berkeley, you’ve got to go see the JSC. Oh yes, and we’ve had the curious passerby’s peering through the glass door – May I help you? Sure, come in see the JSC! So this past year the JSC played host to thousands….

On a routine schedule we have IBS students, GTU students attending IBS class, Ryukoku University student from Kyoto Japan, and CBE (that’s BCA’s Center for Buddhist Education) folks of all ages here for YAC Retreat, Dharma School Teachers Retreat, Temple Leaders Retreat, Minister’s Assistant training session, Minister’s Continuing Education, Evening lectures by CBE and IBS, and more being planned.

And of course the BCA Temple visits, including the Temple Senior trips. Let’s see, Fresno, Watsonville, Marysville, Palo Alto, Venice, Mountain View, Scouting groups from Seattle, Portland, Youth group from Salt Lake (the first to visit and sleep at the JSC), Cal YABA, San Francisco Summer Dharma School, Coast District Youth Retreat, and countless BCA Executive, Finance, and various Committee meetings, FBWA Conference Planning meetings, FDSTL Conference Planning meeting, National Board meeting, National Council Planning meeting, IBS Board, CBE Board, so you can see that the JSC is utilized Monday – Sunday all interconnected and focused on propagating, listening, and learning the Buddha Dharma.

I am thankful to all who made the JSC possible, your efforts has had great returns, and will provide much to the present and future of BCA.

The sound emanating
From the kannon in the Kodo
Pernantes and Embraces all within
The JSC with
Nama Amida Butsu
Glenn Kameda,
Facility Manager JSC

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,
( ) $15,000, ( ) $25,000, ( ) $50,000, ( ) $100,000
( ) $150,000, ( ) $250,000
( ) 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,
( ) $15,000, ( ) $25,000, ( ) $50,000, ( ) $100,000
( ) $150,000, ( ) $250,000
( ) other amount over a period of:  (1 to 5 years
( ) to Campaign BCA - The 21st Century.

□ YES! I would like to make a pledge to:
( ) $1,500, ( ) $3,000, ( ) $5,000*, ( ) $10,000,
( ) $15,000, ( ) $25,000, ( ) $50,000, ( ) $100,000
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( ) $150,000, ( ) $250,000
( ) other amount over a period of:  (1 to 5 years
( ) to Campaign BCA - The 21st Century.
The following are comments from three BCA Youth participants who attended the exchange in Hiroshima. This issue will feature three comments and will conclude in the Nov. issue.

Trevor Kinoshita (San Diego)

The Buddhist Youth Exchange Group was a way of meeting new people and seeing my homeland again. I have been to Japan three times and every time was a learning experience. This year was different though, I went with people I didn’t know except for one person, but by the end of the trip it felt like we were all family. It was really great to meet the other Buddhist youths from Brazil, Hawaii, and Canada. The home stay program we all went through was very fun and difficult at times. Although there was a language barrier between us we used many different ways to get our point across. The family I stayed with, the Ishi’s, were very welcoming and it felt on the first day that I stayed there it seemed that I had lived there my whole life. All of the food I ate in Japan was delicious and I would go back just for that factor. The people that live in Japan have way different customs and I think that factor. The people that live in Japan have had different beliefs and customs, and I think that all of the youth exchange group learned from it.

One major thing I took back from going on this trip was that I had a greater respect for everyone in Japan. The Japanese people are so respectful and kind, even if you didn’t know them. Shopping in Japan was excellent; there are so many new and exciting electronics that have yet to come out in the United States. Japanese fashion was excellent; there are so many new and exciting fashions that have yet to come out in the United States. Japanese food was excellent; there are so many new and exciting foods that have yet to come out in the United States.

Justin Tanimoto (Watsonville)

I was hesitant on going on the BCA Youth Exchange program to Japan because the trip was during my obon. However, I am glad now that I decided to go on the trip. I made lifelong friends and got to experience Japanese culture. Seeing the Hongoji was really special to me because not many people get to see one of the oldest temples in Japan. I also enjoyed living with my homestay family. I have never lived with a family for 3 days and air so well! I wish my mom could cook as well as my homestay family. Going to Japan was an experience that I will remember until the day I die. I am trying to convince my parents to send me to Japan next year. However, I hope that next year I will know more Japanese.

Lina Okita (LA Betsuin)

BCA Youth in Hiroshima, back row, from left, Michael Endo (Office of Bishop), Stuart Otto (San Mateo), Amy Asai (Fresno Betsuin), Justin Tanimoto (Watsonville), Trevor Kinoshita (San Diego), David Chin (San Mateo), Stephanie Kubo (Fresno), Ryan Yamaguchi (Salinas), Kazumi Chin (Berkeley), Dean Miyashita (Alameda), Nicole Kawashira (Salinas). Front row, from left, Rev. Yuhi Mukojima (San Diego), Lauren Nakamura (San Diego), Jessica Ogata (Lodi), Mchuye Cabral (Lodi), Lina Okita (LA Betsuin). Kelly Nishikawa (Senjinsen).

Self Consciousness

By Rev. Don Castro, Seattle Betsuin

American community, I have talked with a number of people for whom the need to “sell yourself” on the job is a significant stumbling block.

In Buddhism, it is taught that there is no permanent, unchanging self. What the ordinary person calls “self” is a temporary complex of selfish desires and attachments. To become a Buddha is to become “selfless” in the most positive sense of the word. Thus, spiritual maturation is a life journey of ever-deepening penetration into the blind and foolish nature of self and awakening to what in my school of Jodo Shinshu is called the “Other Power” of Amida Buddha. For Shin Betsuin, it is the enlightening power of Amida Buddha that awakens us to our blind passions. Put another way, you cannot insightfully study the ego with the ego and the ordinary person cannot help but study the ego with the ego; a vicious circle.

The awareness of our spiritual helplessness is a deeply humbling experience. I believe this accounts for the self-effacing nature of Buddhist cultures. Before meals, Japanese families traditionally say, “Itadakimasu,” which means, “I humbly receive this food.” It is not that I deserve this food. This humble sentiment is quite contrary to that expressed to me by a Catholic priest, who commented, “We don’t have to apologize to the animals for eating them. God put them here and we have to eat them. God put them here and we have to eat them.”

In a society based on self-promotion, it becomes natural to blame our frustrations and unhappiness either on the lack of skill in getting what we want or on the conflicting and competing interests of others who thwart our desires. As a result, psychological maneuvers arise offering courses such as “assertiveness training.” As if we are not obvious enough, we need to learn how to be even more obvious! I write this last statement lightheartedly because I’m sure there are ways to assert ourselves in a relatively nonconfrontational way.

Over the years, I have tried to become more alert to how the self is used in English courses such as “assertiveness training” (or courses that have “it’s” but not “it”) and focused on the self. However, I have been to Japan three times and I have been able to briefly experience the everyday life of a Japanese family.

I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to be apart of the BCA Youth Exchange Program. It not only taught me about the understanding of Jodo Shinshu, but also my outlook on life. The program was very educational and I feel that I was able to do many fun and interesting things that I wouldn’t have been able to do on my own. Thank you very much to the BCA, the many students that went, the many parents who helped fund the trip, and everyone else involved with the BCA Young Buddhist International Cultural Study Exchange, and to be a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist.

Continued from Page 3

Your Life...

The legislation allows you to make a gift in the 2006 tax year and the 2007 tax year. So if you make $100,000 gifts in each year, you can give $200,000 over the two-year period. Plus, if you have a spouse aged 70½ or older with an IRA, the amount you can give is $200,000 over the same period.

For More Information:

• Contact your financial or tax professionals if you are contemplating a charitable gift under the new law.

Buddhist Churches of America
Campaign BCA – The Life of Buddha
2140 Durant Ave.
Berkeley, CA 94704
(510) 809-1453
e-mail: robert@bcacampaign.org

Love. Overall the experience I had for the youth exchange in the United States. Japanese fashion was exciting electronics that have yet to come out in the United States. Japanese food was excellent; there are so many new and exciting foods that have yet to come out in the United States. Japanese fashion was excellent; there are so many new and exciting fashions that have yet to come out in the United States. Japanese food was excellent; there are so many new and exciting foods that have yet to come out in the United States. Japanese food was excellent; there are so many new and exciting foods that have yet to come out in the United States. Japanese food was excellent; there are so many new and exciting foods that have yet to come out in the United States.


does not act on self. A person who considers him/herself a Buddhist teacher, run the vicious circle.

I'm sure there are ways to assert ourselves in a relatively nonconfrontational way. As if we are not obvious enough, we need to learn how to be even more obvious! I write this last statement lightheartedly because I’m sure there are ways to assert ourselves in a relatively nonconfrontational way.

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Continued from Page 3

Your Life...
Imagine being asked to repre-
sent Socho on behalf of the BCA at
a meeting in Washington, D.C.,
sponsored by the federal Depart-
ment of Health and Human Servic-
es? Sounds like a nightmare of sorts?
Yes, that’s what came to mind when
it happened recently. So here are
some highlights from that interest-
ning and important assignment.
The theme was Pandemic Pre-
paredness, specifically for the Bird
Flu, although any type of infection
spreading rapidly through the en-
tire population would qualify.
The reason that Socho was invited
in the first place was because the purpose
was to inform national leaders of all
segments of society and to impress
upon them the role that their organ-
izations and leadership should play
at the local level in educating and
motivating the public to at least think about how
they might cope as families and communities and to make some re-
dundant preparations.
At the meeting there were business leaders,
community leaders, medical leaders, American Academy of Pediatrics, College
of Emergency Medicine and reli-
gious leaders (e.g. Jesuits, Luther-
ans, Baptist, Latter Day Saints).
Did you think Bird Flu was old
news, ho-hum? Please think again.
The U.S. government is sufficiently
concerned about the potential for a serious public health risk that it has
been carrying out an extensive pro-
gram of research, simulations and
meetings on the subject over a period of several years. It is
normal for there to be a few influ-
ence pandemics every century. In the last century, the 1918 influ-
enza pandemic is still in the recountable
past for most families. The experi-
ence of various cities at that time set
an important example for public
health policies. So, first of all, we
due a severe influenza pandem-
ic. Pandemics happen! And the Bird
Flu is on tap. The Bird Flu is quite
a virulent infection affecting many
species of birds in 55 countries (in-
cluding Canada). All it would take
is for the Bird Flu virus (H5N1 vi-
rus to be specific) to swap some ge-
netic material with an influenza vi-
rus capable of infecting humans and
VOF there would be the capacity for human to human transmission.
That has NOT happened yet. When
humans have become infected with
Bird Flu it is from contact with in-
fected birds. However, most of
these people die of the infection be-
cause it is a nasty one. And like
most influenza pandemics it affects
kids the most. You may not be con-
cerned for yourself, but please be concerned for the children.
So, if or more likely WHEN
the Bird Flu becomes able to be trans-
mitted human to human (all things
change as we Buddhists especially
are aware and that includes viruses,
OK) then it will start to spread. In
order to contain the infection and
reduce contacts with infected indi-
çuals, several actions will be taken
by the governments at all levels un-
der the recommendations of the
CDC. Mainly there will be school
and workplace dismissals. No classes at the schools. SO, someone will have to stay home with the kids. Also, there will be a voluntary quarantine for family
members of anyone who is sick. It
is important to remember that one
is infected with the virus and thus
sharing it with others a good 24
hours before symptoms become ap-
parent.
Has it gotten your attention yet?
I bet so. This is why without being
alarmed, various organizations of
the government, private industry
and the nation’s public health sys-
tem have been working on lots of
preparedness considerations at all
levels and sectors of society. It was
actually extremely reassuring to lis-
ten to the speakers which included
the President Emeritus of Princeton
University, the Secretary of the U.
S. Department of Health and Hu-
man Services, the Special Assistant
to the President for Biodefense of
the Homeland Security Council,
and the Director of the Centers for
Disease Control and Prevention.
A very capable, down-to-earth, highly
intelligent and caring group of indi-
viduals. All the right stuff!
To quote Socho, SOKODE
Gassho! SO, whenever you do gas-
sho, let it be a reminder to wash your hands!
Also cover a cough, make some preparations and visit www.Pan-
demicFlu.gov or www.Avian-
Flu.gov PandemicFlu.gov or www.Avian-
Flu.gov PandemicFlu.

San Francisco Valley
Hongwanji Kieshiki

“World Peace Begins With
Gassho”

Socho Ogui conducted a Kieshiki ceremony on Sept. 16,
presenting Dharma Names (HoMyo) to sixty-four members
of the San Francisco Valley Hongwanji Temple.
In preparation for the Kieshiki the affidavits had at-
tended a series of classes on Buddhism and Jodo Shinshu
presented by Resident Minister Rev. Patti Usuki.

Visalia Buddhist Church
100th Anniversary

The Visalia Buddhist Church 100th Anniversary
will be held on Saturday, Nov.
4, at 514 East Center Avenue, Visalia.
California
A Ti-Sarana Affirmation
Ceremony officiated by So-
cho Koshin Ogui will be con-
ducted at 11 a.m. at the tem-
ple on Saturday Nov. 3.
Preceding the centennial
commemoration service at 10 a.m.,
a Chigo procession will begin at 9 a.m.
Following the service a
banquet will be held at the Visalia Holiday Inn (9900 West Airport Drive).

Visalia Buddhist Church
100th Anniversary

The Visalia Buddhist Church 100th Anniversary will be held on Saturday, Nov. 4, at 514 East Center Avenue, Visalia, California. A Ti-Sarana Affirmation Ceremony officiated by Socho Koshin Ogui will be conducted at 11 a.m. at the temple on Saturday Nov. 3. Preceding the centennial commemoration service at 10 a.m., a Chigo procession will begin at 9 a.m. Following the service a banquet will be held at the Visalia Holiday Inn (9900 West Airport Drive).
BCA Scouts Gather for Nembutsu Camporee
By Brooke Muranaka, Sacramento Betsuin
Group photo by Nick Bellizi

During the first weekend of August, scouts gathered from everywhere along the western region to attend this year’s Nembutsu Camporee held at San Francisco State College. Despite our different troop numbers we were broken up into mixed patrols, led by older scouts. A weekend of ice breakers, patrol pride, and the everlasting Buddhist teachings brought everyone together. Our daytime activities can include a crazy scavenger hunt, intense meditation sessions and a baseball field of games and workshops. The fun ran into the night as we roomed with fellow scouts and enjoyed Saturday night’s social.

Reverend Abiko and Reverend Kobata graciously conducted services and led the Buddhist activities. We were also fortunate enough to see Bishop Socho Ogai, who came by to offer his own words of wisdom.

Everyone had a great time and all the hard work put into the camporee was greatly appreciated. This was an opportunity to meet new friends as well as expand ourselves as young Buddhists.

Bay District Installs Dharma School Officers

The newly elected officers of the Bay District Dharma School Teachers League were recently installed on Sept. 6, during a service held at Palo Alto Buddhist Temple.

Pictured above are Rev. Hiroshi Abiko (advisor), Mary Lawrence and Janet Umez (co-presidents), Carl Yamazaki (vice-president), Susan Battari (secretary), Rev. William Manuda, Chiz Kakuishi (Research and Education), and Rev. Seigen Yamanka (advisor).

This group will be busy planning for the 2008 FDSTL conference to be held (May 2 to 4, 2008) in San Mateo. Not pictured are Grace Joo and Gail Minamoto (co-treasurers).

The President’s Message

Continued from Front Page

Seek Enlightenment

Teach yourself out of the rat race for a visit to the Ekoji Buddhist Temple. A 5-foot tall statue of Buddha greets the entrance, and allows visitors to the 150-seat sanctuary for meditation and prayer. An expansive program of classes range from talk/splas to studies of Buddhism. Go early for the 8 p.m. Thursday night meditations class and you will be given a tour of the buildings and gardens. If you would like a longer visit, just e-mail for an appointment. Fall times: Thursdays, 7:30-9:30 p.m. www.ekoji.org; 703-295-6300

50 COOL THINGS

Enlightenment Mary Lawrence

18. An’Gel’s event on Aug. 24.
22. President’s Message.
23. Pictorial of new Dharma friends – thank you.
24. “Seek Enlightenment” drops.
25. SIH computer is split between the Longmont and Denver temples.
26. Longmont Temple as host for the event.
27. $1,100 collected in donations is $1,000.
28. LONGMONT TIMES-CHALLENGER.
29. Mahalo. Best wishes to you all.
30. By Gansho Carol O’Dowd, Education Program Director, Tri-State Denver Buddhist Temple

Intrafaith Event Benefits Temple and Promotes Shin Buddhism

What began as hosting the third event of a kind mandala by Lama Karma Namgyel and Kensing Dorje, Bhutanese monks from the Drupka Miler Center in Longmont turned into major promotion of the Longmont Buddhist Temple and Shin Buddhism throughout Colorado. Along side with the volunteers from the Drupka Miler Center, we learned that we have as many similarities as Buddhists as much as we have differences.

By hosting such an event, we had opportunities to involve more than 650 members from the Longmont Buddhist Temple in a variety of activities. Book-store committee members met several times prior to the week of events to make sure that we were not the only one.

One member led the efforts to paint and put down new carpeting downstairs. Although this project was done in so many monks could have a quiet place to rest during the week, the result is that the Longmont Temple now has classrooms for its growing Dharma School. What better way to motivate teachers for the fall?

Along with the downstairs improvements, members cleaned and cleared out the Community Room for construction of the mandala. The Community Room at the Longmont Buddhist Temple became a room for the community – literally. Along with hosting a stream of 600+ visitors, TV cameras and newspaper reporters, we used it to host a Chenrezig meditation session on Wednesday evening led by Lama Karma. We used our hondo for talks on Shin Buddhism as visitors were interested. Many indicated they wanted to come back and attend one of our services, including two teenagers.

The dismantling ceremony led by Lama Karma Namgyel and Kensing Dorjee on Sunday morning was before a packed 150+ people of all ages at the Longmont Buddhist Temple Community Room. Fortunately, the dispersion ceremony was held at the Kanemoto Pacific Park 5 minutes away, which allowed more than 350 to attend. We were pleased that more than 140 stayed for our Shin Buddhist service and joined us for a potluck picnic at the Pagoda.

The benefits from this partnership between Longmont Buddhist Temple and the Drupka Miler Center is that we continue to grow. Just a few of the connections we made include requests by Longmont Hospital for information on Buddhism to share with the public. Also, the Chaplain wants to explore how the Hospital and the Longmont Buddhist Temple might work together in the future. Directors from a local rehab center and a senior center came through and are requesting training to be offered at their facilities by a Shin Buddhist priest.

The press coverage helps to increase the community awareness of Longmont Buddhist Temple. The Temple was included in several city TV news broadcasts, the Denver Post, and in two articles each in local papers, the Boulder Camera and the Longmont Times-Call. As a result, when another reporter was doing a story on shrines for the faith section, she thought of us and had her source say to try to explain the paramita of generosity and our Shin practice of living a life of gratitude.

Another benefit is money, which all temples need. The Longmont Temple as host for the event through its sales generated more than $1,000. Another $1,100 collected in donations is being split between the Longmont Buddhist Temple and the Drupka Miler Center. The benefit for the Temple is that it collected more than its usual $100 a day fee with this arrangement.

Finally, what benefits will flow from future events are untold but yet to come. We have made new friends through this effort under the watchful eyes of Mary, the Buddha of Universal Compassion and Chenrezig, the Buddha of Compassion. The value of new Dharma friends – priceless.

For more information, please contact gansho@earthlink.net or at the Tri-State Denver Buddhist Temple (303) 295-1844.

Rev. Tanaka
Continued from Front Page

and exemplar, who resounds with joy, confidence and caring rooted in the Vow: Oh, how joyous I am, with my mind and heart freely planted in the soil of Buddha’s universal Vow and my thoughts and feelings flowing and flowing freely in the inconceivable Dharma Ocean. Namo Amida Butsu.

Mala

WHEEL OF DHARMA OCTOBER 2007
PAGE 6
今月の法話

渋苦（しぶにか）くて甘い人生

agog - 仏教教會 松本ディビッド

渋苦の

渋苦がそのまま

甘みかな

平砂 デルフィン

ほど著書「The Art of Gaman—我慢の芸術」と中で、第二次世界大戦中の収容所での日系アメリカ人による芸術作品150点を紹介しています。

1942年、十二万人にもおよぶ日系アメリカ人

が、理不尽にも、たった二日間という短い間に、自宅も仕事も社会生活をもそのまま投げ捨てて指定された場所へ集まることは、政府の命令を受けたのであります。

日常生活と財産のすべてだけでなく、将来にたるす希望や保障も全部捨てて、人々は収容所やそれ以外の指定された所へと送られていきました。

戦争中の日系人に対する仕打ちは、アメリカ社会全体と連動するほどであると。

特に、政府による、人権侵害や戦争による病的な過剰反応と偏見によって起こるようなこととは疑いの余地がありません。しかし、同時に、この日系人の苦しむ実際の経験が、考えも及ばない実の機会を与えただのです。

それは日系人一面ひとり、家族、そしてコミュニティの苦難を苦難ともせずにそこから立ち上がる行動に見ることができます。

その行動は、大切な家族や友人を正当な理由なく収容した国に対しても、自分を犠牲にして忠実を尽くすということであり、逆境にかかわらず、たくましく生き抜き、かつ前進をも支える強い意志の中に発表されています。

また彼らによって更に表現された実は、島の置物、宝飾、彫刻、人形、絵画、刺繍、かご、服飾品、お仏壇、家具など、日常の何でもないようなものの中にも見ることができます。これは、言葉に表せない美しさを輝かせ、人間の心の奥にある、否定することのできない、本当のいのちを持ちいる本来の願いが、そのような形をとって表現されたのです。

夢が破れ、望みが断たれ、足元からすべてがぐずれさ

いでいたとき、心の奥にある本当の願いが聞こえてくるのです。普通の生活の中ではその声を聞くことはできません。目的の前で頭の中はいっぱいです。そして、自分の考えや思いを信じてもらい自分の思いで思い描く世界をあつめて、実現の永遠のいのちをあたえそこに感じるかもしれません。

私たちは、その永遠のいのちに出会いたいと、心の奥底では願っているのです。いのちの根源的な願いの一つは、その内のものになってことなのです。そして同時に、他のものにもそれを与え、と共に生きていきたいとすのです。

これを浄土真宗では「阿弥陀仏の本願」と言います。心をかすめるものと光の仏と言い表してきたのです。

このいのちの持つ本当の願いが聞こえてきたときに、私たちの本心、人生、世界すべてが転じてくるのです。

冒頭にあげた有名な俳句「渋苦のしぶがそのまま甘みかな」とはこのことを表しています。渋苦は渋くて甘いものではないです。それだけではなく、渋みがあればあるほど甘みよりも増すのです。渋は取り除かれたではありません。渋がそのまま甘みに転じたのです。

多くの日系アメリカ人にとって、戦争や収容所にたいする思いは、渋苦くて甘いものです。いろいろなものを失ったということとは決別することのない事実です。苦しみや悲しみはつらい、いかなる理由があろうとも正当化できません。でも、多くの人たちにとって、そのような経験が、説明することのできない実をと甘さを持った作品や行動を生み出していったのです。

収容所でさえ、いのちの根源的な願いを閉じ込めておくことはできません。そのいのちの願いは、収容所の中でも、いのちそのものになるとし、または他のことを一緒に転じていくことでした。このことは、同時に私たちの人生の教訓となっているものです。（文責

梅津）
私たちが今日から 仏の子として 新しく旅立ちます

このたびの帰依式では、総勢64名（内一名は西羅府会員）が新しく仏弟子となり、新しい人生の一歩を踏み出しました。この帰依式に先立ち、全員が一般仏教ならびに浄土真宗のことについて学ぶ研究会に出席しました。

今教団には新しい波が起こっています。