**PRESIDENT’S COLUMN**

**Things As They Are and Can Be**

*By Dr. Gordon Berman*

During the weekend of Oct. 13-14, I attended two meetings that brought home to me the breadth and depth of BCA activities, opportunities, and challenges. I would like to share my impressions of these meetings with you.

On Saturday, Oct. 13, about a dozen people gathered in a conference room at the Jodo Shinshu Center in Berkeley. This was the Finance and Budget Committee, chaired by BCA Treasurer Everett Watada from the Tri-State/Denver Buddhist Temple. The other meeting was attended by more than 550 people at the Marriott Hotel located nearby the San Francisco Airport. This was the meeting of the Buddhist Women’s Association (BWA), which began on Friday the 12th and adjourned on Sunday the 14th. The chairperson for the event was Keiko Furusho from the Enmanji Buddhist Temple.

Here were two meetings, one small and one very large, but both absolutely central to the present stability and future vitality of BCA. The accomplishments of these groups represent BCA leadership at its best. This year the work of the two groups connected in an important way that I will describe.

The challenge before the Finance and Budget committee is to find every possible economy from the budget every expense that can be. This challenge is to present a budget to the National Board in December for disbursement. After a brief discussion, the committee voted 10-0 to support the new Jodo Shinshu Center.

The SWF Committee also received an application from UNICEF to help the children in the country of Sudan, the Darfur area. This committee is in operation. More than $1.3 million dollars have been disbursed to worthy recipients. Because of your generous donations to the Annual Thanksgiving Offering the BCA has been able to help people all around the world.

The Annual Thanksgiving Offering is coming soon. Look at it this way, we have 17,000 members in the BCA, if we donated just $10 dollars each, we would have $170,000. We could do the World a lot of good with $170,000. Thank you for your support.

In Gassho,

Calvin Doi, BCA SWF Committee Chairman

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**CURRENTS OF CHANGE**

*By Rev. Patricia Kanaya Usuki*

**American Buddhist Women Speak Out on Jodo Shinshu**

**40th BCA FBWA CONFERENCE**

Heavy downpours hammered the Buddhist women as they wound their way to the S.F. Airport Marriott Hotel to attend the 40th BCA FBWA Conference. That did little to dampen their spirits as they traveled by air, bus, and by car. Some were encountered detours, but the weekend of Oct. 12-14 turned out to be a most memorable one for everyone.

Five hundred and thirty-one women from throughout the U.S. and five from Japan assembled for the biennial national conference. The theme for this year’s conference hosted by the Bay District Buddhist Women’s League was, “Buddhism: Open Mind, Open Heart (Hirekai Kokoro).”

On Friday, a number of special activities were available for early arrivals to enjoy. The conference was preceded by a delegates’ meeting on Friday evening. A major topic of discussion was a resolution co-authored by representatives of the Palo Alto and Southern Alameda County chapters. It proposed that each BWA unit designate a percentage of its treasury’s unrestricted funds to be contributed to the support of the BCA Center for Buddhist Education’s operating budget for the next three years. After a lengthy discussion the resolution was adopted by a majority vote.

BCA President Dr. Gordon Berman in his greetings during the banquet and Sunday morning BCA Hour breakfast acknowledged this action as “one of the most innovative and creative ways to raise funds and spread the Buddha Dharma.” He added that the BCA would also like to count on the BWA to assist in finding new ways to support the new Jodo Shinshu Center.

Following a report on the survey of past resolutions by Terrie Munoz, the session turned to the business of voting on resolutions presented for consideration. The resolutions, which are available upon request, fall into two categories: those dealing with the internal operations of the BCA, and those concerning matters of importance to the Buddhist women of America.

The resolutions will be considered and voted on at the next BCA FBWA Conference, scheduled for October 12-14, 2008, in San Antonio, Texas. If you have ideas for resolutions, please send them to me at FBWA@bcabookstore.com.

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**26th Annual BCA Thanksgiving Offering**

The year 2007 marks the 26th year that the BCA Social Welfare Fund Committee has been in operation. More than $1.5 million dollars have been disbursed to worthy recipients. Because of your generous donations to the Annual Thanksgiving Offering the BCA has been able to help people all around the world.

On Aug. 2, 2007 the SWF Committee met to review the BCA and Socho Oga’s request to grant $10,000 to the Niigata Earthquake Fund. Monies to be sent to the Hongwanji in Kyoto, Japan for disbursement. After a brief discussion, the committee voted unanimously to recommend that $10,000 be to granted to the Niigata Earthquake fund.

The SWF committee received an application from the Rebuild Lives Project in Sri Lanka, an area devastated by the 2005 South East Asian Tsunami. After thoughtful consideration the committee will recommend at the National Board meeting on Dec. 1, 2007 that the RLP in Sri Lanka be granted $15,000.

The SWF Committee also received an application from UNICEF to help the children in the country of Sudan, the Darfur area. Most of the grant money will be used for education. School to these children is the only thing that resembles normal life. The committee will recommend that the BCA grant $10,000 to UNICEF to help the children of Africa.

Any non-profit organization whose chief aim is to reduce or eliminate the suffering of people who are deprived of basic human needs is qualified to receive consideration for a grant. Please take advantage of this service, contact the BCA of more information.

The Annual Thanksgiving Offering is coming soon. Look at it this way, we have 17,000 members in the BCA, if we donated just $10 dollars each, we would have $170,000. We could do the World a lot of good with $170,000. Thank you for your support.

In Gassho,

Calvin Doi, BCA SWF Committee Chairman

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(THANKS TO ALL DONORS WHO HAVE SENT DONATIONS TO BCA BOOKSTORE)
Although we at Enmanji celebrate Ho On Ko in November, other Nishi Hongwanji temples cele-
brate in January. The difference has to do with the calendar switch that happened when Japan decid-
ted to take up the solar-calendar system of the West, rather than continue to follow the tradition of the East. I actually like celebrating this in November... that way we avoid clashing with "Super Bowl" Sunday in late January.

When Shinran Shonin passed away, he was 90 years old. I don’t know how many other people lived to the age of 90, but the 90th birthday of Shinran, in medieval Japan, but it seems that this was a rare occurrence, even by current standards. He had returned from exile and lived very frugally in the Capital of Kyoto accompanied by his youngest daughter, Kukushiki. When he died, Kukushiki informed her mother of Shinran’s passing. She must have written that she was concerned about whether or not he actually attained birth in the Pure Land. As James C. Dobbins writes in his book Letters of the New Eshinni:

In Shinran’s writings there are ample passages indicating that birth in the Pure Land is not con-
tingent on the sublimity of one’s death. Specifically, he argued that this promotion of the deathbed nembutsu ceremony—a ritual that helps the dying person to maintain pure and undistracted thoughts and to behold in a glorious vision of Amida Buddha and his retinue coming to usher the person into the Pure Land—is not necessary.

Rather, faith alone decides one’s birth in the Pure Land. The information in Eshinni’s letter, sketchy though it may be, suggests that Shinran may not have died the peaceful and digni-
died death that traditional Neo-
genesus describe, and hence Kukushiki took his inef-fec-
tual as an ominous sign.

Is our spiritual destiny deter-
mined by “how” we die? It ap-
pears that this connection was
made by Shinran’s daughter, as she questioned her mother. This is not a surprise given that many people of that time took seriously the belief that one’s state of mind at the death moment had influ-
ence in determining one’s spiritu-
al destiny in the next life.

How many of us here have ever had that question cross our minds? It is a most persistent question, and some even think that it is the most important reli-
gious question one can struggle with. But for a Jodo Shinshu fol-
lower this question should be of no concern. Why? Shinran him-
sel-f said...

The idea of Amida’s coming at the moment of death is for those who seek to gain birth in the Bud-
da motory prac-
tices, for they are practices of self-power. The moment of death is of central concern for such people, for they have not yet attained true shinjin.

The person who lives true shinjin, however, abides in the stage of the truly settled, for he has already been grasped, never to be abandoned. There is no need to wait in anticipation for the moment of death, no need to rely on Amida’s coming. At the time shin-
jin becomes settled, birth too be-
comes settled; there is no need for the deathbed rites that prepare one for Amida’s coming.

For Shinran, the moment of one’s death was nothing more than the final playing out of one’s past actions in a nembutsu follower’s life, act-
ually promoted by Rennyo Shon-
in, whether one had settled the aspect of anjō, or peace of mind.

I’m sure that you are aware that traditional Buddhism, for the most part, requires much from those who choose to follow the Dharma Path. There are medita-
tion practices, moral and ethical practices, even some dietary prac-
tices, that are all a part of the tradi-
tional Buddhist path. Shinran was aware of these traditional practices for he had tried to fol-
low them during his 20 years as a student priest on Mt. Hiei.

Although it sounds as if he wasn’t aware of Nembutsu before he met Honen, Shinran did prac-
tice Nembutsu while a monk on Mt. Hiei. The kind of practice that he did was the traditional one of reciting the name of Amida Buddha, as pure practice.

For the monks, there was a traditional practice which consist-
ed of constant recitation of the Nembutsu for some 100 days. The monks would do this day and night, trading off in shifts, in or-
der to keep up a continuous reci-
tation of Nembutsu. This kind of Nembutsu practice Shinran knew about and actually practiced.

For lay people, there was the practice of reciting the name of Amida Buddha while on one’s death bed. It is said that accord-
ing to the sutras, in the 19th Vow, if one recited the Name while dy-
ing, the Amida Buddha himself, with a retinue of bodhisattvas would come down from the heav-
ens and receive the follower into the Pure Land. People would have scroll pictures of the Amida Bud-
descending (raigo), and a few colored ribbons connected to the Amida Buddha’s hands. The dy-
ing person would tie these rib-
bons around their own hands and recite the nembutsu, all the while fervently hoping that the Amida Buddha would appear as prom-
sed. For Shinran, such practices were necessary for those who needed to practice and accumu-
late “good” merit for birth.

In his letter #1 Shinran ex-
plains:

The terms “meditative good” and “non-meditative good” are used with reference to birth through religious practice and in-
dicate the good practices of self-
power. Without awaiting Amida’s coming, the practitioner of self-power will not at-
tain birth even into the border-
land, or the womb of Buddha, or the realm of indolence. For this reason Amida created the 19th Vow, vowing to appear at the moment of death to welcome people who wish to attain birth by turning the merit of their ac-
cumulated good toward the Bud-
da motory Path. Thus, it is the person endeavoring in meditative or non-
meditative practices who must be concerned about awaiting the mo-
ment of death and attaining birth through Amida’s coming.

This was the state of most Buddhist Pure Land followers. They could never be absolutely sure that they had fulfilled all re-
quirements, and so they were nev-
er absolutely sure that they could attain the state of being known as “anjō.” Peace of mind was not as-
sured, since one could die with-
out reciting Nembutsu at the cru-
cial moment. In such a case, even if one had prepared all one’s life-
time, one’s birth in the Pure Land would still be unsure.

Shinran reasoned, however, that there did exist a way for one to achieve the state of “anjō.” He says in the same letter,

In the Jodo teaching there are the true and the provisional. The true is the selected Primal Vow. The provisional teaches the good of meditative and non-meditative practices. The selected Primal Vow is Shin Buddhism—the true Jodo teaching; good practices, whether meditative or non-
mediative, are provisional ways.

Thus, for Shinran, the attain-
ment of ‘shinjin’ was able to as-
sure for the follower the state of being ‘truly settled.’ How is this accomplished? By confirming that the true force, or energy, or pow-
er, (whatever you may call it) that makes one able to achieve su-
preme enlightenment is not some-
thing that we determine, (through practice or accumulation of good deeds) but something that was de-
termined many eons ago by the Amida Buddha through the Pri-

Continued on Page 5
First CBE Temple Leadership Workshop

The first Center for Buddhist Education (CBE) Temple Leadership workshop was held on Oct. 19 at the Jodo Shinshu Center. Leaders from the Ekoji, Spokane, Parlier Buddhist Church for their donation of delicious California fruits served throughout the weekend at this seminar.

Rev. Harry Bridge led the session on Buddhism and Jodo Shinshu and professional facilitators, K.G. Osy and Pauline Millgram talked to the group about leadership qualities and techniques. Onaijin set-hondo, Usho etiquette, the Jodo Shinshu & Hongwanji world, CBA history and the organization were covered by Rev. Kodo Umezu and Brian Nagata. In the evening, an open discussion was held at which time the assembled temple leaders were able to share ideas and concerns of their respective temples with each other.

The CBE has organized the temple leadership seminars so that temples with like needs and concerns can meet together in the day and a half seminar with a variety of informative sessions which the CBE feels will enhance the leadership and organization needs of our CBA temples. In commenting on this weekend leadership session, one participant said: "There were good ideas shared regarding improving our skills in trying to address our membership problems and how to recognize people’s personality types and how to deal with them."

Another participant stated “the seminar was flawlessly organized and the content was a perfect balance of practical problem solving, discussions, videos and long-term perspectives with an opportunity to hear the Dharma.”

The next CBE Temple Leadership seminar will be held for leaders from mid-size temples with resident ministers and the CBE encourages each temple to send at least two temple leaders or members with leadership potential to attend a CBE Temple Leadership seminar.

The CBE committee would like to thank the members of the Parlier Buddhist Church for their donation of delicious California fruits served throughout the weekend at this seminar.

CBE Temple Leadership seminar is for over 25 years. She passed away at the age of 55 years old.

Just before she passed away, she put her hands in Gassho and said “Namu Amida Butsu.” Then I knew she was a Buddhist in heart. This is why I donated to Campaign BCA – The 21st Century. For my wife, I knew she would like to entrust Jodo Shinshu Buddhism for future generations in America.

My wife and I would always take trips to Las Vegas, Hawaii, Disneyland, and Washington, D.C. Since I do not have her to take on these trips, I want to donate the money I would have spent and give it to the campaign Donor Wall. I’m sure my wife is smiling.

Last month (CBA FBWA National Conference), my sister Sue Uyeki went to visit the Jodo Shinshu Center. When she called me and said she saw my name on the donor wall, it brought warm happy tears in my eyes. I know this is what my wife Jamie would want me to do. Gassho, Patti Hasebe Idaho-Oregon Buddhist Temple Ontario, OR

Campbell College will present for the first time a weekend seminar geared toward temple newcomers who come from a non-Shin Shu tradition background.

CBE Director Rev. Kodo Umezu cordially invites all convert newcomers to join this special seminar to be held at the Jodo Shinshu Center in Berkeley on Feb. 1-3, 2008.

In speaking about the concept for this seminar, Rev. Umezu stated: "Newcomers coming to our temple must at times feel like fish out of water. So much of our temple’s history, practices, activities and direction is based on the history and experience of the Japanese American community and what many BCA members of Japanaese-ancestry might take for granted could be something totally alien to a newcomer."

The Rev. Donald Castro from the Seattle Betsuin will be the guest speaker at the opening service. Panel discussions and workshops have been planned to provide members with a stronger foundation in Buddhism and our Shin Buddhist way of life.

“It’s obvious that the educational and social needs of newcomers will be different and we want to give them an opportunity to share their ideas and concerns and to give them an opportunity to learn more about Shin Buddhism and themselves at the same time,” said Umezu.

Registration for this seminar is $60 per person and lodging at the Jodo Shinshu Center is available on a first come, first serve basis.

For further information about this seminar, please contact Rev. Kodo Umezu at: admingcche-bca.org or call (510) 809-1460.
When I first received the news that I was chosen to be one of the fifteen students involved in the YBCISE tour through the Buddhist Church of Oakland, I was pleasantly surprised. However, after scanning the list of the other fourteen participants, I was overcome with nervousness and reluctance because I would be the only one representing my temple, and only one of four that originated from Southern California. However, my nerves were quickly forgotten in rushing to obtain a passport to even be able to attend this trip. During our first flight in Japan, when we tiredly sat listening to the instructions and overall schedule for this trip, I do not believe that anyone really understood the full extent of what we had signed up for. I knew that we all dreaded those six o’clock services sitting Japanese style thinking that our legs would have to be severed, but I knew that the only reason that I kept sitting was because the people around me kept me entertained.

The home stay experience was truly appreciated because I was able to more fully understand the everyday lives of the Japanese people. In addition, from being in Kyono, and later Hiroshima, I was able to witness the awe and beauty from the various temples. The trip to the Hiroshima peace memorial, in dedication to the victims of the atomic bomb dropped on the city, was mind altering and featured numerous stories that will haunt ones mind for time to come. I am greatly appreciative of the list of the other fourteen participants, I was overcome with immeasurably enlightened my concept of Buddhism, and I will never think of Jodo Shinshu. I was also able to meet loads of people from all over the world. People from Canada, Brazil, Hawaii, and also many people from the U.S. A. I will never forget this experience and hope that one day I will be able to go back to Japan and experience more of it. Also thanks to all the people who helped make this trip possible. Arigato gozaimasu!

Jessica Ogata (Lodi)

So much happened in the whirlwind of ten days that I can’t even begin to explain everything that happened. It was such a great trip and I was glad that I was chosen to be able to experience it. It definitely opened my eyes up to a new world. I got to experience not only of the Japanese culture there, but also expand my understanding of Jodo Shinshu. I was also able to meet loads of people from all over the world. People from Canada, Brazil, Hawaii, and also many people from the U.S. A. I will never forget this experience and hope that one day I will be able to go back to Japan and experience more of it. Also thanks to all the people who helped make this trip possible. Arigatou gozaimasu!

Kelly Nishikawa (Senshin)

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Jessica Ogata (Lodi)

One day a Dharmo School teacher came to me with a question: “Senses, I hear that the 18th Vow is the most important vow. Is this correct?” “Yes, it is,” I nodded. “So, why is it located in the middle of all the vows? Why isn’t it the first, or the fourth with Vow if it is so important?” she asked. Her question made me very happy. I smiled at her and said, “I understand what you are asking, however, I cannot answer you today.” To tell you the truth, the same question came to me more than 30 years ago. At the time I was unable to recognize the fundamental importance of the question. Later, however, I came to know its significance through Shinran’s writings: “Jodo-Shinshu is the teaching of the Tathagata’s Primal Vow (Hongwan) and the Buddha’s Name (Amida).” In other words, Jodo-Shinshu is not the teaching of meditation or prayer, but Buddha’s Practice given to us through Myogo. Buddha’s Wisdom and Compassion. The sincerity of all 48 Vows in the Larger Sutra. If you want to know why, you can come to the class and find the answer to your question.” She accepted my invitation, adjusting her work hours to attend the study classes. At the completion of the study classes I asked, “Did you find your answer?” “I don’t get it yet,” she said as she smiled at me. “Keep listening,” I replied.

From the bottom of my heart, I truly appreciated her question and efforts.

In Gakush, Rev. Doei Fujii

Buddhist Church of Oakland & Berkeley Buddhist Temple presents a
Public Seminar & Workshop
Naikan - Cultivating Self-examination and Gratitude

By Gregg Krech
Executive Director, Todo Institute
todo@todoinsitute.org

Join us for a guided meditation on our lives, our interconnections and our missteps, through Naikan

Saturday, November 10, 2007
8:30 am to 3:30 pm
at Buddhist Church of Oakland

“Through Naikan we develop a natural and profound sense of gratitude for blessings bestowed on us by others, blessings that were always there but went unnoticed.”

Registration fee: $10.00 (includes lunch)
Public to the limited seating – Advance registration is recommended. To register for the workshop or for more information, please contact:
Buddhist Church of Oakland
825 Jackson Street
Oakland, CA 94607
tel 510.832.5988
bco825@aol.com

Young Buddhist International Cultural Study Exchange (YBCSE) visit to BCA niches at Ohtani Mausoleum

The following are comments from three BCA Youth participants who attended the exchange in Hiroshima.

Michiye Cabral (Lodi)

When I was first asked to sum up my experiences from the Young Buddhist International Cultural Study Exchange program in two paragraphs, I didn’t know how to be so concise because I had so much fun and memories to last a lifetime! As soon as I stepped off the plane in Japan, I was in awe. It was my first visit. It was so beautiful and everyone that we met was extremely friendly and polite. Touring the Hongwanji was breathtaking. I was moved by the lectures on Jodo Shinshu and the history of the Hongwanji. Having an audience with the Gomonzu was the best experience. I felt honored to receive my Buddhist name “ShoHo” meaning “Pure Dharma.”

Our homestay in Hiroshima was so much fun too. Our home-stay family treated us like we were their own children.

I will never forget my experiences in Japan. I’m so grateful to have been given this wonderful opportunity and would like to thank everyone who made this trip possible, my family and all who have supported me. A special thank you to Endo Sensei, Rev. Mukojima, Rev. Harry Bridge, the Buddhist Church of Lodi and the Lodi Buddhist Women’s Association.

Jessica Ogata (Lodi)

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Kelly Nishikawa (Senshin)
HONOLULU—Honorable Lady Noriko Ohtsani, bishops, honoured guests, ministers, and last but certainly not least, Bud- dhist Women and Dharma friends:

It is a privilege and honour to be invited to address you today. I was asked by Socho Koshin Ohtani, Bishop of the Buddhist Churches of America to speak on behalf of our kyoja and friends.

Actually, even though I am representing the United States mainland, I was born and raised in Toronto, Canada. My col- league, Rev. Kikuchi, who is rep- resenting Canada, is from Japan. And, I was surprised to learn re- cently from my Koshin Ko- repre- senting Hawaii Kyodan, is origi- nally from the area near which my temple, San Fernando Valley Hongwanji, is located!

What a wonderful interna- tional world we live in today! We are no longer confined to the borders of the frontiers of our birth places, but are given many opportunities to expand our horizons and open our eyes to newer and broader ex- periences and perspectives.

And, yet no matter where we are from, all of us here today share in common the Nembutsu path and a wish for universal peace.

I was asked to speak about what inspired me to become a Buddhist minister. To be honest, I never felt that I had an inspiration to become a Buddhist minis- ter. It is something that just hap- pened due to a certain set of causes and conditions in my life. You could say that I was led to the life by my vision, that Amida Bud- dha took care of it all. In that sense, I can understand that my aspiration is also the Buddha’s as- priration — that I owe a debt of thanks for what I am and who I am to that which we call Immea- surable Light and Life.

Ho On Ko Continued from Page 2

and needs to wait in anticipation of the truly settled, for he has come the supreme Buddha and there is no way for the supreme Bud- dha to manifest itself other than in the working of the Primal Vow, and there is no way for us to know and be- come the supreme Buddha other than by being grasped by the power of the Vow. [Mattosho, Introduction]

The person who lives true shinjin . . . abides in the stage of the truly settled, for he has already been grasped, never to be abandoned. There is no need to wait in anticipation for the moment of death, nor need to rely on Amida’s com- mencement of the time shinjin be- comes settled, birth too be- comes settled; there is no need for the deceased rite that prepare one for Amida’s coming.

It is with great apprecia- tion that we continue to ob- serve the passing of Shinran Shonin. Let us all endeavor to show our gratitude through following his advice to achieve our own shinjin nembutsu.

President’s Message Continued from Page 1

BCA has taken large steps forward with its programs at the Jodo Shin- sha Center, including the activities of the Center for Buddhist Educa- tion (CBE) which is directed by Reverend Kodo Umezui, the Insti- tute for Buddhist Studies (IBS) led by Dean Richard Payne, and the BCA bookstore, which is operated under a contract awarded to Jeffrey Kimoto and overseen by JSC Facili- ties Manager Glenn Kameda and BCA Executive Director Henry Shi- bata. These Finance and Budget committee must scrutinize all bud- get proposals and determine how to meet all truly necessary expenses by drawing, as appropriate, from BCA dues, the BCA Endowment Fund, and some current Campaign contri- butions.

The Finance and Budget com-mittee is facing up to this challenge fully. It is not clear at this point that we will be able to hold the line on creating a dues-neutral proposal for the National Board. But it is clear to me that the committee is taking every reasonable step in that direction, and I applaud the com- mittee’s effort.

When I left the committee meet- ing and made the brief trip south from Berkeley to the hotel south of the San Francisco airport, I was in way moving from the way things are today to the way things can be in the near term future. This is be- cause I believe, to the bottom of my heart, that the future success of BCA depends importantly on the emergence of women in BCA lead- ership at every level.

This is not the place to expand on the history of women in BCA. Fortunately, Reverend Parti Usuki of the San Fernando Buddhist Tem- ple has presented this history, and created a vision for the future, in her splendid book Currents of Change: Large edge every year the Wheel of Dharma to read Reverend Usuki’s book. It will repay you in- dividually and as a member of our national organization.

As an example of what BCA women can do in their national or- ganization, the BWA this year ap- proved a resolution that has every local chapter contribute a portion of their year-end unrestricted trea- sury directly to the Center for Bud- dhist Education. The money will operate as a direct program grant, not an endowment.

This is a most creative financing decision. We should all express ap- preciation to the BWA leaders who brought the idea forward and to the entire organization for endorsing it.

You can see immediately how the AWA’s actions feeds back on the work of the Finance and Budget Committee because, The BWA re- lieved some of the pressure on the committee to find the right mix of income sources to sustain the mo- mentum of CBE’s important work. The challenge for all BCA indi- viduals, temples, districts, and affil- iated organizations is to find other creative ways to do the important work of Buddhist education. Because that is what we must be about: making our Buddhist teachings in English to all who would hear them.

If that is not our purpose, then what could our purpose be? This is not an accessory effort conducted by one small part of the organization, any more than the heart is one small part of my human body. Propaga- tion is our heart, and we have been given the responsibility to use Eng- lish as our medium of propagation; that is why we are the Buddhist Churches of America. This effort begins at the temples and must be amplified by coordinated effort at the national level.

The women of BCA have shown us by their example that finding the resources to fulfill our vision can be accomplished creatively. I hope they will continue to be creative. And I hope that they will serve as an example to all of us to do the same.

Meetings that I couldn’t understand.

But a Buddhist women, your thoughts, words, and deeds, and living in the Nembutsu teaching will have far more impact on oth- ers than you will ever know. Rely on Amida Buddha’s Vow for yourself and for all beings.

To bring the Nembutsu teachings in English to all who would hear them. Your efforts will have far more impact on oth- ers than you will ever know. Rely on Amida Buddha’s Vow for yourself and for all beings.

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On Sunday, Aug. 24-26, the Center for Buddhist Education (CBE) sponsored its first seminar for DBU students. Entitled “The ABCs of Buddhism,” this retreat brought together over thirty new and continuing teachers from twelve BCA’s eight districts.

The ABC (Amida Buddha’s Children) retreat was opened by CBE Director Rev. Kodo Umezu, who explained the philosophy behind this retreat in wanting to instill in and invigorate these Nembutsu seekers/teachers who have committed themselves to passing on the Dharma to our next generation.

Rev. Harry Bridge from the Buddhist Church of Lodi spoke in the morning on “Today’s American Buddhism” and shared a most interesting explanation of the purpose for chanting in our Shin tradition. This was followed by two well-received informative and introductory sessions to Buddhism and Shin Buddhism by the Rev. David Matsumoto of the Berkeley temple.

This was followed by a personal enrichment session on “Onaijin 101 and temple/Shinshu etiquette.”

Another participant stated “there was such a wealth of material shown and available for us to use. I gained a lot of new insights about Buddhism and span across different cultures and countries.”

On the afternoon work-shop, several ideas and concepts on professional education and child development were shared andשתמש.
広大なる世界

ニューヨーク本願寺仏教会  中垣 風 實

来年2008年の夏の仏教研究会はここニューヨークで行われるということで、今か
ら準備を進めています。アメリカ生まれの僧侶であり、ニューヨークに来たことがある人
も結構いっしゃるようですので、アメリカという国の広大さ、ニューヨークのものである
ニューヨークを少しでも理解していただける、いいご縁であると思います。

実は、西海岸の会議に行くもの、なるべくニューヨークのこ
とは話さないようにしていました。なぜかというと、言うべく
あまり意味がないからです。たとえ、日本食を食べたことの
ない人に、どれだけ説明をしたところであまり意味が無く
ありません。少しは興味を示されるかも知れませんが、結局日本食を食
べてみたいのは始まらないのです。

最近は特に自分で足を運んでみると大切さを感じます。
以前イングランドに行った時も、それを感じました。お客様さまの
生活を知っていることも、自分が実行に行ってみると。私が想像
していたものとは違う面が多々ありました。私が初めてニューヨー
クに来たときに、想像していたニューヨークとは全く違い
ました。変な表現されるかもしれないが、ニューヨークは
大阪とよく似ており、アメリカなのか、なぜ自分の育った
場所に帰ってきような気分でした。今もそう思っています。

今、だけの知識ではなく、自分で声を出して学んでいくとい
うことがより大切なのです。法縁はじめてよく読む
三荷縁文にも「体解」という言葉がでてきますように、身体で
理解するということ、体解することを重んじるのです。それ
が、自分の足を運ぶということです。

自分の足を運んでみることによって視野が広がるのです。
広いもの、大きなものを知ることが、自分の狭さ、小さい見
えてきます。いろいろな分野で活躍しているような人にお会
い、自分の未熟さが見えてきます。ある意味で旅相（浄土から
この世界に満ちて浄土へと導かすたらいもったしたが）
の書籍に述べられているのがニューヨークなのかと思われ
ます。経典の文字を離れて書籍たちが飛び回っておられるような
世界でしょうか。

阿弥陀如来の本願を「弘願」とか「弘願」という表現をしますが、まことに本願は弘願の誓願であり、ひろくすべての衆生を
救うのです。時に、私たちがこの広い広範な本願を狭くして
いっているように思います。これは大手、あるいは大手という
姿勢は、広大とした阿弥陀如来の本願を狭き門にして、
一切衆生どこぞく一匹らず救われないような道となっている
ように思われます。

親鸞聖人が「心を弘願の仏地に樹て、念を難解の法海に流
す」と言われたときに、「弘」や「海」という広大な世界を
見て、愁と念仏をされていたのが親鸞聖人であろうと思うの
です。

親鸞聖人が法然聖人とを「いたと法然聖人にすかされまいさせ
て（だされまして）、念仏して地域におどりときと、ささに後悔
すべきから」とまで言われるほど数多い、尊敬したのは、もちろん教えの云々はあるでしょうが、法然聖人の広さ、大きさ、
深いに触れられたからではないと思うのです。そこには、
広大・深淵なる念仏の教えが、法然聖人とを通して顕現していた
のです。

阿弥陀如来の本願の広さと深みに感動し、お互い、常に広い
心を持ち、如来さまの広大な慈悲を感じつつ、この大きなアメ
リカの地で高らかにお念仏申したものです。

南無阿弥陀仏。

広大な アメリカの地で ナショミダ
大なる華 ここに開かん

（鏡覚作）
ダーナとは 有難く受け取ることでした