Bishop Attends Presidential Inaugural National Prayer Service in Washington, D.C.

For the first time in the BCA’s history our Bishop was invited to attend the Presidential Inaugural Prayer Service. On Jan. 21, at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., Socho Koshin Ogui joined clergy and lay people from various faith traditions around the country, in a custom dating back to George Washington to hold a prayer service at the conclusion of inaugural activities. The service was attended by the 44th President Barack Obama, Vice President Joseph Biden, and high ranking members of the legislative and judicial branches of government.

On January 20, 2009 many of us watched the Inaugural Ceremony for the 44th President of the United States, Barack Obama. Passages from his inaugural speech showed that he has an understanding of America’s diverse religious landscape. As evidence of this, Socho Koshin Ogui was invited to attend the National Prayer Service held at the National Cathedral on Wednesday, January 21st. This service held the morning after the inauguration brought together President Barack Obama, Vice President Joseph Biden, members of their families together with dignitaries and Americans of diverse faiths to celebrate the previous day’s events through prayer, reading, and musical performances. Socho Ogui’s participation was a wonderful opportunity for the Buddhist Churches of America to show its presence in America’s religious community and to provide visibility of BCA to the nation and to the world.

On a more somber note, we all know, these are extremely difficult economic times for everyone. Here at the Buddhist Churches of America, we are mindful that the dana of our members should be used wisely and efficiently. The approval of the BCA budget is an agenda item for the annual National Council meeting that is scheduled for the end of February in Irvine, California. The BCA

Seattle BWA Celebrates Centennial

The Seattle Betsuin Buddhist Women’s Association (SBBWA) celebrated its 100th anniversary on Sept. 20 and 21, 2008. The theme, “Together in Nembutsu – 100 Years” was observed to pay tribute to the pioneering members of the Seattle Betsuin.

A special service and banquet chaired by Kyoko Takashima and Irene Mano began with a welcome message from SBBWA President, Terrie Tanino. Guests from the Buddhist Churches of America, Northwest District temples and past ministerial advisors were invited to attend. Guest speakers included Mrs. Mayumi Ogui who delivered the Japanese message and Rey. Dr. Shoyo Taniguchi in English. Socho Koshin Ogui delivered a congratulatory message to the attendees.

For the Sunday event service, Yoshi Hiroo chaired the Family Dharma School children and Rev. Dr. Shoyo Taniguchi gave the English Dharma message. As a side note, we are proud to announce that SBBWA has three (3) centenarians. Marian Kurosu, 102; Florence Minn Kato, 102; and the

Continued on Page 6

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People often say, “Why Ministry?” After 44 years of being a minister I would ask, “Why not ministry?” Shin Buddhist ministry is a great life experience. It is hard work and there will be down times, but what if life doesn’t have down times? The work of ministry is a life process which makes you face up to all the limitations of yourself, but gives you the opportunity to find meaning in life. You deal with and see all aspects of life. You see the polar events of opposite extremes in every experience of life, but yet, you are there to see and experience the merging of the polar extremes as one and seeing and learning that there is meaning in both. I have learned from people that if you hang on to life you drown in the fear of death. If you fear death you cannot see the meaning of life. I was able to see the transformation of persons go from fear to a grateful heart that realizes that death is a process which helps us to understand the meaning of life and that life is a meaningful process that helps persons to become free from the fear of death. I have seen persons transform from the fear of death because of self-centeredness to one of gratitude to all the interconnectedness of their lives that helped them to be. The sense of self-centeredness transformed to the realization that they lived within the compassion of interrelationships which filled their hearts with gratitude focused less on self but more on others. To see and experience life is the essence of ministry. Ministry is a life experience which helps the individual to see the self, framed within the sphere of others. Ministry is not a life apart from the movement of life; rather it is a life within the very heart of life’s movement.

750th Shinran Shonin Memorial planning update

By Ralph Honda

500th Publicity Committee

Excitement is building for the BCA-sponsored Shinran Shonin 750th Memorial Observance.

BCA members and friends are encouraged to participate in the commemoration Feb. 27 and 28, 2010, at the Fairmont Hotel in San Jose.

The event will be held in conjunction with the BCA Ministers and National Council meetings.

Keynote speaker will be “Ocean” book author Rev. Dr. Kenneth Tanaka of Musashino University in Tokyo. Rev. Tanaka, a product of the BCA, was born in Japan but grew up in Mountain View, Calif.

He chose the ministerial path to become a kaikyo-shi minister and was a professor of Buddhist Studies at IBS prior to serving as the resident minister at Southern Alameda Buddhist Church. Tanaka-sensei was the featured speaker at the World FBWA Convention in Hawaii in 2006.

On Sunday, Feb. 28, BCA members and their families are invited to participate in a unique memorial service observation.

The 750th committee, led by co-chain Judy Kono and Rev. Ron Kobata, are busy planning all aspects of the event which includes a symposium and banquet speakers.

The Hongwanji in Kyoto has selected “Yononaka Annon nare” or “May Peace and Tranquility Prevail Throughout the World” as its theme.

However, the BCA chose “Peace and Tranquility” as the theme for our Shinran Shonin 750th Memorial Observance.

Silent Auction

The commemoration’s first activity will be a Silent Auction fundraiser that will be held next month at the Hyatt Regency in Irvine, Calif. The auction will be held on Saturday, Feb. 28, in conjunction with the BCA National Council meeting.

Last month, all district and temple presidents received a flyer announcing the Silent Auction, and to spread the word. The committee encourages temples to participate by submitting a donation.

The goal is to raise $30,000. Proceeds from the auction will help underwrite costs for the 2010 commemoration.

Beginning February 1 auction items can be previewed on the BCA website www.buddhistchurchesofamerica.org. Click on the 750th Memorial link.

New Dharma School Service Book Published

The Tacoma Buddhist Temple has published a new Dharma School Servicebook. The project goals were to update the wording and verses of English gathas; translate Japanese gathas into “singable” English, and add new gathas.

The 108-page book includes 42 gathas, along with readings, sutras, translations and other important teachings.

The book is available at $7 a copy.

Inquiries can be made to: Mrs. Michiko or Rev. Ko-sho Yukawa, phone: (253) 943-9399, email: kmyukawa@comcast.net

Newest BCSF Minister’s Assistants Certified

Socho Ogai presented on Dec. 28 Minister’s assistants certifications to Leo Balamboo, Elaine Donkin, David Pat-ing, Matthew Stimson. Also pictured Rev. Hiroshi Akiba and MA Jerry Bolick.

Ministry

By Rev. Dr. Seigen Yamaoka

Minister Emeritus

May Peace and Tranquility Prevail Throughout the World

2009 BCA Ministers’ Association and National Council Meeting
Feb. 25 to March 1 at Hyatt Regency Irvine
Hosted by Southern District Council

We gratefully acknowledge contributions to the Wheel of Dharma by the following donors:

Mrs. Mary Nagatomi, Cambridge, MA ........................................ $250
Berkeley BWA, Berkeley, CA ........................................ $200
Seattle BWA, Seattle, WA ........................................ $200
Lodi BWA, Lodi, CA ........................................ $150
Pleasant BWA, Penny, CA ........................................ $100
Emmanji BWA, Sebastopol, CA ........................................ $100
Fresno BWA, Fresno, CA ........................................ $100
Mrs. Yuki Mori, Terry Matsumura, Yakima, WA ........... $50
MM Tom Ikeda, Torrance, CA ........................................ $50
MM Masayo Yamasaki, Fremont, CA .................. $50
Walnut Grove BWA, Walnut Grove, CA .................. $50
White River BWA, White River, WA .................. $50

BCA National Council Meeting
ARCHIVES WORKSHOP
HOW TO BEGIN TO PRESERVE TEMPLE HISTORY?
Friday, February 27, 2009
3 to 5 p.m.
Irvine Hyatt Hotel

Every temple is requested and encouraged to send interested member(s):
• What to preserve...
• Photos?
• Temple newsletters?
• Board meeting minutes?
• Artifacts (e.g. happy mats)?
• How to preserve?
• Organization methods?
• Preventing deterioration?
• Digital scanning?
• Computerization?
• Where to preserve...
• At your temple?
• BCA-JANM Archives?

BOOSTER TRIP
Los Angeles Little Tokyo and Japanese American National Museum
Saturday, February 28, 2009
11 a.m. to 5 p.m.
• JANM Guided Tour
• “Common Ground” Exhibit (Japanese American History Overview)
• “Gakuranma” Exhibit (Hawaii Nisei Photos)
• Documentaries on Japanese American Experience
• BCA Archives
• Browse Little Tokyo at your leisure
• Shop at Mitsuwa Marketplace (old Yaohan now Mitsuwa)
• Lunch at Kyoto Grand Hotel (old Otani Hotel) or Miyako Inn on Chinese, American, Korean, Japanese, on your own...

Wheel of Dharma

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Wheel of Dharma 2009

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Finding Guidance In The Buddha-Dharma – Perspectives on Buddhism and Social Issues

Happy New Year! We had an overwhelming response to the Year-End Appeal Brochure, resulting in $15,614.28 in gifts and pledges from 6,616 donors ($36.4% overall BCA participation)! Please continue to sell BCA Grand Raffle tickets to support the Jodo Shinshu Center. Tickets are $20 each, with a book of 10 for $200. Please send checks (made out to BCA Raffle) and completed stubs to me at the Campaign Office (address below). If you need additional tickets, please let me know. The drawing will be held on Feb. 28, 2009 at the Nait’ Council Meeting in Irvine, CA, with a Grand Prize of $12,000 cash!

Also, don’t forget the Benefit Dance and Concert held during Nait’ Council Sat. night, Feb. 28, from 8 p.m. to 12 midnight, at the Hyatt Regency Garden Pavilion, Irvine, CA. Live dance music by The Music Company, Featuring Mariko and Howie and DJ Mu. Donation per person: Advance Tickets $30 or $35 at the door. For information, call the Orange County Buddhist Church Office at 714-827-9590.

2008 Year-End Tax Statements have been mailed out. If you didn’t receive one or have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact me.

In Gasho,
Robert Noguchi
BCA Fundraising Manager
(510) 809-1453
robert@bcacampaign.org

Campaign Office
Jodo Shinshu Center
2140 Durant Ave.
Berkeley, CA 94704-1589
Fall Seminar at Venice Buddhist Temple

By Lauren Hiroshima
Southern District, Senior YBL
Religious Chairperson

This past November, Senior YBL sponsored their annual fall seminar at Venice Buddhist Temple. The theme was “Attachments: Being without Blings.” Through each workshop, we gained understanding of how much we rely on modern technology or how attached we are to material items. Everyone was divided into groups, and throughout the day, the winning group would receive “money.” This money could be used later to eat dinner, or if you had enough money, to eat dinner in a VIP section with Reverend Iwahara.

The first workshop was called, “Win a Car without Technology.” The leaders of the groups confiscated all electronic devices, cell phones and iPods, that delegates brought with them. Each group was then given an address and a theme. Each group had to find the payphone that was located at that address using only the theme. This assignment showed us how much we rely on getting directions from GPS systems or the Internet. The winning team received “money.”

After the workshop, all groups drew pictures of things that they could not live without. Many groups drew the image of a Buddha, cell phones, food, family and friends, sports, and clothes. Some groups even drew Ups of Starbucks coffee! This pointed out our many attachments to material things.

When we were finished drawing pictures of our attachments, we played a game called Bodhisattva-land. The delegates were divided into two teams and asked to divide into two teams and ask

questions. If answered correctly, they advanced to the next spot on the game board. Some of the questions asked were, “Name the three actors playing Buddha,” “How did the Buddhists defend themselves in the South China Sea?” “What is the name of the Buddha’s birthday?” “How did the Buddha defeat Mara?” “What is the name of the Buddha’s mother?” “How many of the Buddha’s teachings are moral?” “Have you ever attended a Buddhist service?” “Where is the center of the universe?” “What is the name of the Buddha’s right hand?”

Once again, the theme was attachments. The second was “Win a Car without Technology.” The leaders of the groups confiscated all electronic devices, cell phones, food, family and friends, sports, and clothes. Some groups even drew Ups of Starbucks coffee! This pointed out our many attachments to material things.

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Inspired by Shinran Shonin

Mrs. Rose Nakamura 2009 AARP Inspire Award recipient

By David Dudley
AARP The Magazine

The trouble in the island paradise of Hawaii is a collision of demographics and geography. The state boasts laudably high longevity rates, but longer generations of Hawaiians have long been encouraged to further their education and careers on the U.S. mainland. The result? Elderly parents whose children live an ocean away, complicating the challenges of caregiving. Rose Nakamura, 80, saw this pattern often with members of her Buddhist temple in Oahu: not wanting to inconvenience other relatives, the elderly often would stop attending services when they could not longer drive. In 1989 she founded Project Dana (projdana@hawaiiantel.net), a modest program to connect older members of the community with volunteers who provide companionship, run errands, and generally embody the Buddhist principle after which the project is named: “Dana is about extending compassion and care, without any reward or recognition,” says Nakamura, who for 20 years has done just that. Today, Project Dana serves more than 1,000 kuyopa, or elders. Says Nakamura: “Caregiving is everybody’s business.”

Excerpted from January/February 2009 AARP The Magazine

FEBRUARY 13: (Note change from 2/16) INSPIRED BY SHINRAN SHONIN! Monthly Appreciation Gathering (Go Shinran) The public is invited to join in a monthly appreciation of Shinran Shonin’s life and teachings and their relevance today, in 21st century America. NOTE: Please check website calendar for exact dates and times for each month.

FEBRUARY 20-22: THE DHARMA OF MUSIC: A weekend workshop for BCA temple music coordinators. Traditionally, a BCA temple’s 2nd–3rd Wave gathas will be shared, a music network will be strengthened, creative approaches to youth and children’s programs will be discussed, and a new temple resource clearinghouse will be started. Registration closed 2/12. Call to check availability.

MARCH 14: LOOKING FOR GUIDANCE IN THE BUDDHA-DHARMA: Perspective on Jodo Shinshu Bud- dhist temple activities. It will also serve as a temporary facility for religious activities. It will also serve as a place for cultural events. It will also serve as a place for youth and children’s activities.


MARCH 21: CENTRAL CALIFORNIA INTERACTIVE BUDHIST TEMPLES: Chanting, Dharma, Music and More. Demystifying Jodo Shinshu Buddhism (D) Hosted at the Fresno Betsuin Buddhist Temple. Rev. John Ishikawa will lead a discussion on the various customs and traditions of our Jodo Shinshu temples. John Turner, a Minister’s Assistant at Orange County Buddhist Church, will perform and discuss sutras from his original CD, “Buddhism: The Musical,” which is about Buddhist messages in popular music. Rev. Kodo Umezu, CBE Director, will facilitate the lively Buddhist discussion. This forum is part of a series designed for the Central California Sangha. Check for further details online in January.

MARCH 25: GOLDEN YEARS ROUNDTABLE (MAP) 1st Wave (A) The BCA CBE provides a series of continuing education seminars for certified BCA ministers’ assistants. Under the direction of Rev. Kodo Umezu, CBE Director, MAP incorporates the guiding vision of the BCA Office of the Bishop and input from other BCA ministerial committees and mentoring ministers. The seminar curriculum utilizes an array of Jodo Shinshu resources and talents honed in and around the JSC, including Institutes of Buddhist Studies faculty and Nishi Hongwanji-ha and BCA temple ministers. Each MAP group or “wave” proceeds through training as a cohort.

MARCH 26: MINISTER’S ASSISTANT PROGRAM (MAP) 2nd Wave (Dana Betsuin) and 3rd Wave (Bukko) (A) Sex 6/16.


MAY 12-14: MINISTER’S CONTINUING EDUCATION SEMINAR Continuing education seminars for BCA ministers. Rotation invitations arranged through the BCA Office of the Bishop.


MAY 16: INTERACTIVE DHARMA FORUM – Hosted at Fresno Buddhist Temple, 1:30 – 4:30 p.m. Speaker is Prof. Dr. Keitaro Yamamoto. Details online.


JUNE 12-15: EASTERN DISTRICT MINISTER’S AS- SISTANT PROGRAM (MAP) (A) Sex 6/16 description. This training seminar takes place on the East Coast to make it more accessible to ministers’ assistants in the Eastern District and surrounding areas.


JUNE 26-28: PACIFIC SEMINAR 21st Century: Shinran and His Teachings Presented by the Institutes of Bud- dhist Studies and CBE. Explore the significance of the “Ango Shuraku of the Buddha of Immeasurable Life,” as discussed in Shinran Shonin’s major work, “Kyo-Gyo-Shin-Sho.” Registration and other details online.
Seattle BWA Centennial

President's Message

Budget & Finance Committee led by BCA Treasurer Richard Endo has worked hard to develop a budget that is affordable. The delegates to this year’s National Council meeting will need to weigh value and compliance to the most part, the founding of the organization, I wish to commend our leaders and guidance. The publication of an album continued to reminisce before the audience, though in their place sat a sea of solemn, meditative faces. The coverage was relatively short, a several minute fade to credit barage of images from the weekend’s Sunday morning service and its group photo. The clips ranged from children donned in traditional Japanese garments to a candlelit Obutsu- dan, the austere Golden Buddha overlooking a sea of spectators, young and old alike. Even the Buddha was seventy-five years in the making, the making being the result of what I have done,”” said Henry Shibata (BCA Executive Director, chairperson of the Ministers Association). The morning, was undoubt- edly the Saturday night reunion service and its group photo. The delegates to the National Council meeting will need to weigh value and services. The Sangha aligned with the front, its elder members positioned at the front of the massive gathering, their families stationed behind. For the most part, the founding of the temple were long deceased, though in their place stood a sea of young faces, the result of what I am today is the result of what I have thought, what I have said and therefore, what I have done.”’ said Bishop Oguri with a smile upon his face. “What I will be is the result of what I think.” More poignant words were never uttered.

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今月の法話
坊主バー

私は十六年前、朋友と共に大阪のミナミで『坊主バー』というお店に立ち寄り、そこで初めてこの飲酒の壁を越えて飲酒を楽しんだことがあります。当時は、東京の飲酒文化と違い、大阪の飲酒文化は、地域的な特色が強く、どこかに違和感を感じたのですが、それでも清新な雰囲気があり、良い思い出になりました。

その後、大阪府警で刑事をやってきたのです。そこで長い年月を過ごし、時間の流れを感じながら、自分の人生を考える機会をとりました。七年半後、私は大阪地方裁判所に出頭し、刑事裁判に関与する機会を得ることができました。それからの年月は、多くの穏やかな日を過ごすことができ、本当に素晴らしい時間でした。

こんな方でもあります。十年以上前から、大阪の『坊主バー』のお客さんが、会社からストラストされた中年の方も、よく店に来られて仕事のことを楽しんでいることを示してくれました。その後、「仕事を見つける」と東京に行き、いくつかの仕事に就かれたのです。三年前に売却被られたのでしょうか、「自由にやる」と言葉を出して、得度を受けて東京中央で『坊主バー』を始め、今の人気を博しています。

このような「開かれた場」を主宰し、私自身が本当によかったなあと思っています。仏教に、念仏者であることとに大きな自信があり、信者の方々に感謝の気持ちを伝えたいと思います。今後も、『坊主バー』で開かれた場の心を大切にし、新しいことに挑戦していきたいと願っています。
過去に学び 未来を築く

小林総長は、今までの教団の理事長夫妻に対しての感謝の気持ちを表し、同時に意見交換をしたいという願いのもと、一月十五日に浄土真宗センターで会合を持った。

これは初めての試みであり、七名の元理事長夫妻が参加することができた。講堂で一緒に仏教講座の出席者を集め、そのあと座談会や交流会をやって、今までの経験を語りあわせ、これからの方々を一緒に築いて行きたいと希望を述べた。

会合のあとは、近くのレストランで懇親会を開き、午後七時半からは、センターの報恩講座夜講教（お達し講義）の準備にあった。

蓮如上人、顕如上人

浄土真宗センターへ

オールナイト ネオンサイン

Namo amida butsu - Namo fukashi no nyorai -

Kimyo Jinjyo nyoral -

コールナイト ネオンサイン

オールナイト教団では、七月二日（この月から七月二日までの期間にかけて）にオールナイトネオンサインと題して、お仏頂の成就をお祝いした。