Dr. Blum's Keynote Lecture

By Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto
Berkeley Buddhist Temple/IBS

Dr. Mark Blum, associate professor at State University of New York, Albany, where he is a specialist in Buddhist thought and culture in the East Asian Studies department. Prof. Blum has authored a book on Rennyo, as well as numerous articles on subjects including Pure Land funerary practices, Buddhist ethics and the writings of Kiyozawa Manshi. His English translation of the Nirvana Sutra, a major Mahayana Buddhist text will soon be published.

During this year’s ministers’ summer seminar, Prof. Blum spoke on the topic of “Karmic Evil Today.” He began by tracing the contours of the notion of evil in Western culture, religion and philosophy in order to show that the idea of evil has many origins, meanings and consequences. As a result, he concluded that “evil” is a four-letter word and cautioned against its overly extensive use. Next, Prof. Blum took up the question of evil in Buddhism by considering a number of possible early sources for the later Chinese concept of ṣaṃskāra, such as avidya (spiritual ignorance), or duḥkha (core unhappiness). His conclusion here was that ṣaṃskāra is also a broad and multi-layered concept, perhaps even pointing to the opposite of nirvana.

Finally, Prof. Blum looked at Shinran’s use of abakan, a term most often translated as the “evil person.” He then examined the idea of evil has many origins, meanings and consequences. As a result, he concluded that “evil” is a four-letter word and cautioned against its overly extensive use. Next, Prof. Blum took up the question of evil in Buddhism by considering a number of possible early sources for the later Chinese concept of ṣaṃskāra, such as avidya (spiritual ignorance), or duḥkha (core unhappiness). His conclusion here was that ṣaṃskāra is also a broad and multi-layered concept, perhaps even pointing to the opposite of nirvana.

Continued on Page 6

BCA Ministers Association “Fuken”

The 2009 BCA Ministers Association Fudōmyōchō Suttei “Fuken” (propagation research meeting), hosted by the Bay District Ministers Association, was held at the Jodo Shinshu Center on Aug. 11 to 13. With the cooperation of Center for Buddhist Education, the Bay District MA was able to arrange to have Professor Mark Blum of the State University of New York at Albany as our lecturer (see summary by Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto).

In preparation for the BCA commemoration of Shinran Shonin’s 750th memorial anniversary in San Jose on Feb. 27 to 28, 2010, Rev. Zuiketsu Taniguchi introduced the special musical chanting liturgy composed by the Hongwanji. Led by Rev. Taniguchi the new format was used for each of the morning and afternoon services.

Hoshin Seki of the American Buddhist Study Center, New York, introduced the recent publication of a collection of essays by Gomonzushi Koshin Ohtani that have been translated into English. The ABSC has spearheaded the project, and has arranged to have a major publishing marketing agency promote the distribution and sales of the book “The Buddha’s Wish for the World.”

The newly instituted Ministerial Training and Development Committee represented by Rev. William Masuda and Rev. Marvin Harada gave an update on the issues that their committee is addressing. They fielded questions, concerns, and suggestions regarding all phases of the ministerial recruitment, training and certification process.

An optional evening activity called “Kaidan” (one of many) was organized by Rev. Kenjiro Nakagaki, and Rev. Kako Nakagawa. This traditional Hongwanji Dharma dialogue – debate format entails a topic – response format on specific doctrinal themes taken from the Anjō Rendai (安心論題 A Brief Introduction to the Topics for Discussion of Peace of Mind). The format entails initial formal exchanges, subsequent periods of follow-up commentaries, and eventual open discussion is invited. The selected topic for discussion was Ni-ka-i-ju-cho (二種深信 Two Modes of Profound Faith). The discussion began in Japanese, and for the open discussion it converted into English in terms of how this subject can be presented in an English-speaking context.

The semi-annual general meeting of the Ministers Association was held as the concluding program of this year’s Fuken, with Rev. Hiroshi Akiba, MA Chairperson presiding. An update of the preparations for the BCA’s Shinran Shonin 750th Anniversary Memorial event was presented. Ministers were reminded of the Dharma School Art project, and Haiku/Tanka composition contests. A resolution nominating Mesdames Kimie Hisatsune, Yumi Hojo, and Jane Imamura as BCA Life Achievement honorees for their contributions to music in our Shin Buddhist temples in America was unanimously adopted. As a final agenda item the MA elected Rev. Jerry Hirano of Salt Lake to become its next chairperson. Rev. Hirano and his cabinet continued on Page 6

Impermanence

Life is constantly changing and nothing has permanent nature. Renyo Shonin states “I may precede you in death, or you may precede me. Death may come to us today or tomorrow, no one can foresee.” This impermanence of life was reinforced inside me with the recent passing of my mother into the Pure Land. She was a wonderful lady who enjoyed life to the fullest. Though she is no longer physically among us, she lives on in our hearts, thoughts and actions. She lives in me, my sister, her grandchildren, and her great grandchildren. She is more than a memory. She is part of me.

A dear friend shared a story with me that had been given to her by Reverend Marvin Harada. Part of that story expresses my sentiment: “Your Mother is always with you. She’s the hand of your feet, she’s the eyes you remember, flowers you pick and perfume that she wore, she’s the cool hand on your brow when you’re not feeling well, she’s your breath in the air on a cold winter’s day, ... She’s the place you come from, your first home, and she’s the map you follow with every step you take.”

Reverend in Gasho and Appreciation,
Namu Amida Butsu

Continued on Page 6
Nembutsu Mindfulness, Harvard Law School and the Win-Win Situation

By Henry Adams

For me, one of the most meaningful aspects of study at Chuo Bukkyo Gakuen (Chubu), the Hong-wanji Seminary in Kyoto, is participating in the daily morning service held in the Buddha Hall on campus. While classes are in session, one of eight liturgical teams takes a turn each morning Monday through Friday leading the entire student body in a one-hour service. When I started my studies at Chubutsu in late April, the bulk of my attention when my team was leading the service was focused on my personal anxieties and my difficulties kneeling on the floor in the seated posture: Are my shoulders relaxed? Am I holding the sutra book correctly? Are my knees and feet in the correct position? Am I bowing at the right time? Am I chanting at the correct pitch and tempo? My knees hurt! Am I holding my sutra book in the prescribed manner? My ankles are killing me! Okay, here comes the ugly section—be sure not to be the only one who carries on chanting when the rest of the assembly is supposed to be silent. Oh no! My legs are asleep! What if I’m in the only one who can’t stand up when it is time for my row to file out? and so on and so forth.

Looking back now, having completed on my third semester of study at Chubutsu in late July, it occurs to me that the object of my attention during morning service as chanted in an important way. My legs still hurt, and I still struggle to stay on pitch and tempo, but over the past fifteen months, I have become more aware of the fact that I am sitting before the Buddha. During the course of my ministerial training here in Kyoto, I have frequently heard the expression, “Myself as I see by the Buddha.” This teaching encourages us to consider our own inner peace and to contemplate the manner in which one lives from the perspective of awakening. It is during services that I feel most acutely aware of my condition as I sit in the presence of the Buddha. I wouldn’t say that I’ve changed all that much as a person in the past year, but the direction of my life has certainly shifted. When your destination is decided the manner in which you proceed and the pace at which you experience in your life become very important.

I grew up in a small Minnesota town about 50 miles west of the Twin Cities. From my hometown, the most convenient route into the city involves taking a rural road flanked by a series of country roads through miles of idyllic-looking cornfields punctuated by an occasional lake or swamp. When driving down these roads at night, it’s easy to become lost. I remember one evening when I got exceptionally turned around and spent over an hour driving around on the back roads trying to find my way. Suddenly, as I came over a small hill and cleared a dense row of trees, I saw a large building with a light shining brightly

Chubutsu Report: Finding our Way

41st BCA FBWA Conference in Sacramento

The Northern California Bud-
dhist Women’s Association has been busy planning and preparing for the 41st BCA Feder-
ation of Buddhist Women’s Associa-
tions Conference to be held Oct. 9
 to 11, at the Doubletree Hotel in Sac-
ramento. Over 450 are expected to attend
the conference. The conference theme is “Looking Back - Looking Ahead:
Passing on the Legacy” (Kako to Mi-
ra WO Mitsumoto). The keynote speakers will be Reverend Diane Johnson of the Myokoin Temple, Anchorage, Alaska, and Reverend Mariko Nishiyama of the La-
shinai Hongwanji Temple, Maui, Hai-
waii. The FBWA will be commemorat-
ing Shoshin Shonin’s 75th Memoriali-
sation Service on Saturday, October 10. A variety of workshops will be held on Saturday afternoon. Optional tours will be available on Friday after-
noon, along with a Friday evening mixer, an energy session, and Japanese Folk Dancing.

Conference registration is $140 per person. The special hotel rate is $110 per night plus taxes until Sept. 9, 2009.

Contact the hotel for reservations and information (916) 929-8855 or 800-222-8735 or www.sacrame-
to.doubletree.com Use the hotel code: BCA, Federation Buddhist Women’s Associations.

The Doubletree Hotel is located at 2001 Point West Way in Sacra-
mento. Hotel parking is free. Regis-
tration forms are available from your local BWA chapters and online at the BCA website www.bcahub.org under ‘FBWA Conference.’ For more informa-
tion about the conference, please contact Virginia Uchida at (916) 421-3538 or uchida9@comcast.net.

Rev. Hakushi Hiroshi Futaba
May 13, 1924 – July 30, 2009

Rev. Hakushi Hiroshi Futaba, BCA Minister Emeritus, passed away on July 30, 2009 at the age of 85. Reverend Futaba was born on May 13, 1924 in Yokkaichi, Mie, Japan. The youngest son and the fifth of six children of Fumio and Motoko Futaba. Rev. Futaba graduated from Ryukoku University in 1948. Reverend Futaba came to the United States in 1950 as one of the first Buds-
hist ministers sent from Japan after World War II. During his 44 years of service as an active minister with the Buddhist Churches of America, Reverend Futaba studied English at San Francisco State University. Rev. Futaba served at the Buddhist Church of Oakland, the Tacoma Buddhist Temple, the White River Buddhist Temple, the Bud-
hist Church of Parlier, the Hanford Buddhist Church, and the Guadalupe and San Luis Obispo Buddhist Churches. He concluded his long and dedicated career as a BCA minister by serving as Rinban of the Buddhist Church of Sacramento Bet-
uin. Retiring from the Sac-
rance, Betuin, and BCA ministry in 1994, Rev. Futaba was bestowed with the title of BCA Minister Emer-
itus. A Buddhist Churches of America and Buddhist Church of Sacramento co-
sponsored funeral service was conducted at the Sacra-
meco Union on August 5, 2009. Officiated by Socho Koshim Ogui of the BCA.

Rev. Futaba was sur-
revived by his wife of 52 years, Shiyoko, children, Joy, Sidd, Len and Don, and Pati, and grandchildren, Teres, Kristen and Kyle. He is also survived by his sisters Susie Saigusa of Hawaii. Reverend Futaba was preceded in death by his parents, Fumir and Mi-
dori Futaba, brothers, Kenn-
ko and Kengo, and sisters, Kaori and Suzuki.

Rev. Futaba will always be remembered for his re-
freshingly sincere, kind and humorous nature. And as our Dharma teacher and fel-
low Nebumosha traveler, we will always be indebted to Rev. Futaba for dedicating his life to sharing the Nenbutsu teaching with us.
ABCs of Dharma Retreat
Promotes Teacher Resources, Collaboration & Reflection

ABCs of Dharma - Sharing The Path - In the Classroom, Family & Beyond was presented by the Center for Buddhist Education on Aug. 14 to 16, at the Jodo Shinshu Center.

Participants gathered from Spokane, WA, Vancouver, Canada, as well as from Anaheim, San Francisco and Oakland. A variety of interactive learning activities took place: flower arranging, cooking and eating shaka-sha-lo together, "rajio taiso" exercise, dharma games and crafts, chanting, dharma talk, storytelling, a discussion of "Children Full of Life," a documentary about a compassionate teacher in Japan; and lesson planning via internet at www.BCADharmaSchool.wikispaces.net.

Topics for the workshop included: How do we nurture wisdom and compassion in our children today? How well are we meeting the needs of our children? What are some areas we can improve on or explore further?

In addition to guest speaker Rev. Dr. David Matsutomo, FDSTL president, Tad Shihata shared curriculum materials currently available through BCA and FDSTL. Maya Tsuji Lawrence, a retired school counselor, presented the developmental stages of children. In the Techno Dharma section, Janet Umezu, longtime Dharma School teacher at the Oakland Buddhist Church, utilized the projection capabilities in the JSC kodo to present the www.BCADharmaSchool.wikispaces.net website.

This valuable new tool for sharing, accessing and collaborating on lesson plans was developed by Max Nishimura of San Jose. She refers to the "IBS - BCA Center for Buddhist Education" in her talk, "supporting Nishimura's appeal to all dharma school teachers, to join the website and share their lesson plans and ideas.

A summary of the ABCs of Dharma workshop and resource information will be available at www.BCADharmaSchool.wikispaces.net and on the BCA CBE website at www.bcademaswikispaces.net.
By Rev. Charles Hasegawa Stockton Buddhist Temple

T he voiceless voice of the deceased continues to echo throughout our lives in the memory of loved ones, a constant reminder of the times of anxiety and pain, a woman in her 70’s finds great comfort in hearing the encouraging words of someone she did not know, and along with many others, discovers the strength that is provided in remembering her loved ones. Not that remembering the deceased “works” to alleviate pain and uplifts one’s frail mental and emotional state, it simply is the nature of our loved ones to continue to pray for and wish for the well being of their loved ones. This is what the Buddha is said to said in the Su-tra on One’s Heavy Indebtedness to the Buddhas of the Land of the Buddhas a long 600 years before Shinran Shinran, regarded as the father of Buddhism in Japan, said the same thing 600 years before Shingon Shonin says, “...in this impermanent world of burning house, all things are empty and vain, and therefore untrustworthy. Only nembutsu has true value and sincere.” Prince Shokoku, as stated by the university of Hawaii Center in Berkeley.

With the images of those individuals and others floating in my mind I chant the sutras. While I am doing that I sense an immediate participation of all of them who are together with me in chanting and having their palms together in perfect harmony. At such times, too, I am reminded of all the people who are practicing compassion to our broader community. Through attrition, our numbers change and volunteers leave for various reasons. So, for those who are interested, Stanford Hospital has yearly training sessions in the early spring. Watch for the dates in the Sangha Guide in the latter part of the year. Acknowledged thanks and appreciation to all volunteers, past and present, for their time and effort in this worthy program.

Let Us Listen to the Voiceless Voice of Our Loved One

By Ann Okamura Palo Alto Buddhist Temple

O n the day our nation celebrates the adop- tion of the constitution of the United States of America, five young men from the Seattle Betsuin Buddhist Temple Troop 252, were honored on June 14 for earning scouting’s highest rank – Eagle Scout.

Thomas Hoshino, Nolan Koza, Miles Kubota, Quinn Nakano, and Jason Yokoyama joined a distinguished fraternity of Eagle Scouts that includes U.S. Commerce Secretary Gary Locke, former Microsoft Execu-
tive Scott Okki, and the late NASA Astronaut Ellison Onizuka.

Earning the rank of Eagle Scout is a performance based achievement, whose standards have been well-maintained over the years. A scout must successfully complete requirements in citizenship training, character development and personal fitness before their eighteenth birthday.

Not every boy in scouting earns the Eagle Scout rank; only about 5 percent of all Boy Scouts do so.

Thomas Hoshino is the son of Lori and Alan Hoshino of Bellevue. He is a 2008 graduate of Bellevue High School and is finishing his sophomore year at Bellevue College. He earned the Eagle Scout rank; and is active with the Seattle Betsuin Buddhist Association and a Youth Minister’s Assistant. The Seattle Betsuin Buddhist Temple Troop 252 honored Thomas on May 8. Since surveys show that a high percentage of patients feel religious during their hospital stay, the role of the volunteer becomes a very important part of their healing.

Rev. Masuda noted in his talk, of the growing diversity within the Buddhist volunteers; Vietnamese and Chinese, along with Japanese Americans and the different segments that they represent. and it is amazing that 14 volunteers representing the teeth in our immediate area are actively participating. They are from the San Jose Buddhist: Linda Iwasaki, Molly Nakasaki, Lillian Kanzaki, Sumi Tanabe and newcomer, Meri Mitsuyoshi; San Mateo Temple: Tosh Kujio, PAR: Jeanette Atakawa, Dr. Doreen Don Gee, Joyce Miyamoto, Ann Okamura, Yuji Okano, Joanne Sweet and Janice Styles; Buddhist temples: Emily Huang, Lucy Hung, Jen Chen, Ling Yun Zhu and Sara Zhao.

Established in 2003, this group represents thousands of hours of commitment practicing compassion to our broader community. Through attrition, our numbers change and volunteers leave for various reasons. So, for those who are interested, Stanford Hospital has yearly training sessions in the early spring. Watch for the dates in the Sangha Guide in the latter part of the year. Acknowledged thanks and appreciation to all volunteers, past and present, for their time and effort in this worthy program.

 corrections
The WOD staff strives to be as accurate as possible with the information provided. If we make a mistake, we’d like to correct it here—like in the August issue. The caption in the August issue article, “I’m nursing in the Buddha-Dharma Retreat” at Koji-An Zendo: Also in the photo are Roy Batchelor and Pat Nagamori whose names were inadvertently omitted.

Stanford Hospital Volunteers’ Graduation

From left to right: Reverend Dr. William Masuda, Jack S. Bateman Scholarship, Jason Yokoyama, Emily Huang, Lucy Hung, and Meri Mitsuyoshi (San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin member). This picture is taken inside Ling Yun Zhu (acupuncturist/Chinese traditional medicine).
Florin’s 90th Anniversary

“Remembering Our Past, Embracing the Future”

By Andy Noguchi & Twila Tomita

F

amily dedication, building community, and sharing the Dharma are the building blocks of our BCA temples. The Florin Temple at 7235 Pritchard in Sacramento remembers the important past and embraces a bright future at its 90th anniversary slated for October 25.

Florin invites all members and friends to join the celebration (see the front page). The website is www.floринbuddhist.org or call (916) 383-1831 for more info.

On Oct. 25 at 10 a.m., a special round table discussion will be held at what will be the newly opened auditorium that will be open to the public. The auditorium will be open to the public.

On Oct. 25 at 10 a.m., a special round table discussion will be held at what will be the newly opened auditorium that will be open to the public.

An honor roll of temple members to be recognized for past service lists George and Myrtle Furukawa, Myrna Hitomi, Lois Nakashima, Shig. Okimura, and many other BCA temples, Florin owes its existence to many of these individuals. George served as temple president, and my temple advisor, and in many other roles while Myrtle often led the ever-active Buddhist Women’s Association. They are often described as “the first ones there and the last to leave” in helping church functions. Even while facing health challenges, George & Myrtle are still there offering sage advice and pitching in.

Myrna Hitomi has been an invaluable rock of support in many vital church functions. She has coordinated the essential oto-butsu refreshments and socials for decades.

In these surrounding, she embodied the power of Dharma, the joy the dynamic power of Nenbutsu Wisdom do hand-in-hand.

It is very important to remember to Amida Buddha, a fitting emblem of the Jodo Shinshu official crest of the Jodo Shinshu Church.

Win-Win

Continued from Page 2

“remembering Our Past, Embracing the Future” with religious leaders who have been working on the events for many years. The past year has already seen many vital church functions. She has coordinated the essential oto-butsu refreshments and socials for decades. Whenever there’s the need for an important construction project, Shig has “stepped up.” He has also started many efforts including the building of the annexes for the old temple, storage rooms in the YBA hall, and a study pergola structure.

The late Walt Otani was a visionary leader always thinking of ways to better the church and planning for the future. He spearheaded Florin’s Nokoturi (columbarium) project knowing this was an important way to provide for loved ones and a place for families to show their respects through the years. Beyond being a talker, Walt was a real “dooer.” Once he started an important project, he made sure it got completed. Although Walt was often a “behind the scenes” sort of guy, his leadership in doing “good” was widely recognized. Though there were previously 3 organs in the church, Lois’ organist for about 70 years. She is known for her self-taught organist and admits to confined with other female inmates. Though there were previously 3 organs in the church, Lois’ organist for about 70 years. She is known for her self-taught organist and admits to confined with other female inmates. Though there were previously 3 organs in the church, Lois’ organist for about 70 years. She is known for her self-taught organist and admits to confined with other female inmates. Though there were previously 3 organs in the church, Lois’ organist for about 70 years. She is known for her self-taught organist and admits to confined with other female inmates. Though there were previously 3 organs in the church, Lois’ organist for about 70 years. She is known for her self-taught organist and admits to confined with other female inmates.

Continued on Page 6
Continued from Front Page

providing our district chairpersons will be installed during next year’s BCA Board of Directors meeting. Requesting Bo
during the closing service Socho

The registration fee is $100

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Dr.参加 saw this as a

By Lindsay Guarra

For more details please contact the

July 1, 2009, their gifts will be

A Buddhist can become the MOST

At this point in life.

In this way, our encounter with the Buddha when we enter the hall to take part in a service is an opportunity to consider our lives and how we are living from moment to moment. As we hear the words of the Buddha that have been passed down in the verses we chant, the light of the Buddha’s compassionate wisdom illuminates our path.

Namo Amito Butsu.

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Namo Amito Butsu.
安穏なるれは祈りか？

【安穏なるれの法話】

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親鸞聖人750回大遠忌記念行事

親鸞聖人750回大遠忌記念行事

本報の親鸞聖人750回記念行事の一として始まった教育講座

2009年度教化標語
世の中安穏なれ
2009年 9月号

広がる若人の友垣の輪

写真は、国教団での教化活動の一例です。

第一回英語通話教育愛好生セミナー開催

二葉名誉開教使教広逝