Changing Our World for the Better

Kusakabe Taro, who came from what is now Fukui, Japan, is interred at the Willow Grove Cemetery. He was born on April 18, 1870. He was chosen as a government student abroad and studied at Rutgers Preparatory School, now known as Rutgers University. As he was completing his studies, he became ill and died, at the age of 25, two months short of his graduation. Nevertheless, Rutgers awarded him his diploma posthumously because of his excellent grades. He was the very top student at the school. Besides Kusakabe Taro, at this cemetery, there are memorials for six other Japanese students who died under similar circumstances.

By Erick K. Ishii
BCA National Board Auditor
Ekoji Buddhist Temple

Socho and Mrs. Ogui Attend 2010 Tule Lake Pilgrimage

S ocho Koshin Ogui and Mrs. Mayumi Ogui of the Buddhist Churches of America, attended the 2010 Tule Lake Pilgrimage in Klamath Falls, Oregon on the weekend of July 3–4. Over 300 former internees, their families and friends attended 4th of July weekend-end long event. Many made the journey by chartered bus and some by private cars.

During their visit to Klamath Falls, Socho Ogui, together with Rev. Dennis Fujimoto of the Idaho-Oregon Buddhist Temple, and Rev. Saburo Masada, retired Methodist minister from Fresno, California, officiated over a commemorative memorial service at the Linkville Cemetery in Klamath Falls on July 3rd. Mr. Jinn Yamaichi of the San Jose Buddhist Church, Betsuin, served as chairman for the service. The 300+ attendees gathered and extended prayers and offered incense as they remembered those who died in camp or who subse-
quently passed on.

In his aspiration during the memorial service, Socho Ogui stated, “May we forever be mindful of the spirit and courage of those interred. And may we always be respectful of the sacrifices they made so that we may enjoy justice and freedom here in America and in the world.”

Following the service, Mr. Yamaichi, who was interred in Tule Lake, provided a private tour of the Tule Lake campsite for Socho and Mrs. Ogui. As they entered and drove around the campsite, their eyes were quickly drawn to the remaining barbed wire fence which once encompassed the compound. Other remnants of the camp included a gravestone of those who died while incarcerated, an enormous concrete sewer box, and the foundation stones of the guard tower which once stood watch over the camp, all grim reminders of this former prison for internees and the injustice experienced by the Japanese and Japanese Americans during World War II. Heating the stories of the camp experience from Mr. Yamaichi, a living voice and internee, proved to be a very moving and emotional experience for Socho and Mrs. Ogui. At one point during the tour, Socho and Mrs. Ogui were overcome with emotion and were unable to speak. During the tour of Tule Lake, Socho Ogui made the comment, “Wind, dust, wild grasses and tumbleweeds remain, this site still talks to us, reminding us what the Japanese and Japanese Americans had to go through.”

The site served as one of 10 concentration camps which housed 110,000 men, women and children of Japanese ancestry during World War II. Tule Lake became the largest and most controversial of the War Relocation Authority’s camps when, in 1943, it was converted into a

By Michael Endo

Continued on Page 6

Seed of Shinjin

This article is the last of the continuations of Dr. Tanaka’s keynote address presented in February, at the BCA commemoration of Shinran Shonin’s 750th memorial anniversary commemoration symposium.

By Rev. Dr. Kenneth Tanaka
Musashino University.
Tokyo, Japan

I am beginning my speech to one, I wish to talk about one of the numerous dedicated BCA members who lived a life of Nembutsu. Her name is

Setsuko Iwamoto, an elder sister of Doug Iwamoto, a past BCA president and an old YBA buddy of mine from Salinas. Setsuko was diagnosed with muscular dystrophy as a child, due probably to a high fever while in camp during the war at Poston, Arizona. In reminiscing about her elder sister, Doug writes:

Setsuko had a good outlook of life. She knew she could not be like everyone else, but knew she could help make other people’s lives better and happy. I know I could not have gotten through high school without her helping me to try my best.

Setsuko passed away on July 11, 1988 it sure does not feel like twenty-two years have gone by. I miss all the good times we had in her short life. The words in the White Ashes, where in the morning you can feel great but by night you can be gone, leaves me to think life is short, live it right.

Whenever I visited their house, Setsuko spoke so passionately about Buddhism, especially about her Sunday School classes. I was still in my teens but was so impressed by her concern for the children and dedication to the church.

Her family was able to dig up some of her writings. Let me share two of them with you.

Continued on Page 6

Continued on Page 6

March 30, 1975
This morning I would like to discuss the meaning of the word of Shinjin. The word simply translates into faith, but there is a deeper meaning of this word, that of “seed of faith.” In Jodo Shinshu Buddhism this “seed of faith” is in each of us.

Today I am passing out a small packet of flower seeds to each of you. There is a similarity in watching flowers grow and your growing faith and belief in Buddhism. I would like to see many of you take these seeds home and plant them in a flower pot. Like planting the flower seeds, each must make the “seed of faith” grow within each of us by our willingness to believe and understand the true meaning of this teaching. In the following year, she

Continued on Page 6

Continued on Page 6

Continued on Page 6

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Continued on Page 6
Rimban Hoshu Matsubayashi
Honored at Retirement Events

By Rev. Dean Koyama
Mountain View Buddhist Temple

We have just concluded our Obon festivities here at the Mountain View Buddhist Temple. It was marked with wonderful food, wonderful dances, a colorful crowd and wonderful weather. But one of the most memorable Obons for me was when I was a ministerial student and visited Tottori Prefecture. I received an invitation from a former BCA minister, Rev. Tsugura Kinugasa (who served at the Los Angeles Hongwanji from 1978 to 1980) to visit and participate at the Obon observances of his temple, Gansho-ji. Gansho-ji is a famous temple because it is the home temple of the myokosan, Genza.

The Obon dance at Gansho-ji was so much fun. They played only one song all night and the dance was only a few steps so that even I could dance without any practice. The members would dance for a while, drink a little, go back and dance again. Various people would get up and help sing the song. Sometimes they wouldn’t know or would forget the words (because of the sake), so they would make them up on the fly. It truly was a festival of joy.

But what was so interesting were the Obon services. Unlike here, where everyone comes to the temple for one service, the minister in Tottori visits each member’s home. I was surprised to find out that not only Rev. Kinugasa had to help out. He and his father and mother had to help out. Each had to visit between 15 to 20 homes each day for the next three days. Rev. Kinugasa thought it would be good for me to experience home service if a person is observed in Japan by joining him, as he would go from house to house.

At the first home, Sensei announced at the genkan (front entrance of the house) in a hearty voice, “Gansho-ji dea!” (I’m from Gansho-ji Temple). The family came and welcomed us in. We proceeded immediately to the O-butsudan (family altar), chanted the sutra and had a formal but equally memorable luncheon to commemorate Sensei and Mrs. Matsubayashi’s retirement.

Various temple organizations made presentations to Sensei and Mrs. Matsubayashi, and everyone had a chance to socialize as they tasted many different dishes prepared by church members. The event coincided with the last day of Dharmas School and a beautiful sunny day so the event was particularly festive and celebratory.

The Fullness of Obon

By Joyce Nakatsu

Summer is approaching and, with it, Bon Odori season. The BCA Scouting Committee is proud to again sponsor the Bon Odori patch program for all Scouts and Camp Fire youth who participate in Bon Odori.

The requirements for earning the patch are simple as in previous years. They include learning about the meaning of Obon, learning about the music and dancing equipment used in the dances, attending practice and dancing in a Bon Odori.

Dancers earn a large patch and “rocker” the first year they participate in the program. Every year after that, they earn a “rocker” patch with the year of participation.

Of course, continuing dancers can order large patches for their new uniforms as they move up in Scouting or Camp Fire level.

“We hope you will encourage your youth to participate in the Bon Odori patch program. It is a fun way for youth to learn about Obon and the joys of participating in the Bon Odori.”

By Cathy Fujimori
NCBWA President

The BCA Federation of Buddhist Women’s Associations (FBWA) will hold its annual Delegates Meeting in Sacramento, Oct. 4, from 6:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Sacramento Betsuin. This one-day event will be held by the Northern California Buddhist Women’s Association. “The Delegates meeting will be held in the morning. The most important issue to be discussed will be to decide which district in the BCA FBWA will be the main host for the 16th World BWA Convention in 2019.”

In the afternoon, a stimulating program consisting of small discussion groups is planned. The FBWA, in partnership with the Center for Buddhist Education and eight BCA ministers, has planned a special educational event. With the 57th Shinnun Shoin Memorial Service and the 14th World Buddhist Women’s Association Convention being held in May 2011 in Kyoto, Japan, the FBWA is continuing to carry out its theme, “Looking Back – Looking Ahead: Passing on the Legacy.”

Using the topics from Monshu Koshin Ohban’s book, “The Buddha’s Wish for the World,” we hope to have lively and enthusiastic personal discussions about the Nembutsu teachings and its application to our lives and to share it with others. A minister will lead each small discussion group and two BWA members will be the facilitator and recorder respectively. We plan to have at least two discussion groups in the Japanese language and six groups in English. It is hoped that these will nurture further such discussion groups at the home temple.

Signups for the discussion groups will be done in the morning on a first come, first served basis. Each group will have its own limited sign-in sheet, and it will be closed when that group is filled.

The registration forms for this meeting were mailed to the District and Chapter Presidents in May 2010. Each delegate registration fee is $40, which includes the program, continental breakfast, and bento lunch. The deadline to register is September 1, 2010. If you are a non official delegate and would like to attend, you may submit your registration via your District or Chapter President.

If you need a registration form or have questions, please contact Joyce Nakatsu, email: joyhenak@syix.com, phone (530) 743-3029 or Hiroko Tsuda, email at jmtda@biglog.net, or phone (916) 427-0890.

Bon Odori Patch Program

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We hope you will encourage your youth to participate in the Bon Odori patch program. It is a fun way for youth to learn about Obon and the joys of participating in the Bon Odori.

For more information or an order form, contact Tara Mochizuki at taramoch@pacbell.net or calling (415) 731-8873.

Rimban Hoshu Matsubayashi (the Bishop), and the Southern Buddhist Churches of America.

Its Bishop), and the Southern Buddhist Churches of America. The latter was announced at the 16th World BWA Convention in 2019.

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Thank you for your support!

We appreciate your CBE 500 Club memberships, participation in the Dharma Car Donation program, temple fundraisers, volunteer hours, and more! To find out how you can help CBE, please visit: www.buddhistchurchesofamerica.org

Click on CBE

Public Lectures

Rev. Sonam Wangdi Bhutia
Chief Priest, Hongwanji Buddhist Society
Catholic Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii

FROM TIBETAN BUDDHISM TO JOGO SHINSHU

Formerly a Tibetan Buddhist monk, Rev. Sonam was introduced to the Nembutsu path by the late Mr. Khenshibi Mulchido. In 1990 he decided to take this Nembutsu path and was ordained as a Hongwanji priest.

Aug. 8 (Sun) 9 am – 10:20 am – Jodo Shinshu Ctr. (JSC)
Prepared in conjunction with the JSC August JSC Workshop. 2310 Durant Ave. Berkeley, CA.

Aug. 13 (Fri) 7 pm – San Mateo Buddhist Temple, 250 Garden St., San Mateo, CA. Ph: 650.342.2562.

Aug. 15 (Sun) 9:30 am – 10:30 am – JSC as part of ABC’s Welcome Back Berkeley.

Aug. 15 (Fri) 7 pm – Fresno Family Dharma Ctr. 2720 E. Olive Ave., Clovis, CA. Ph: 559.442.6204

Aug. 15 (Sun) 9:30 – 10:30 am – Jodo Shinshu Ctr.
At the ABC’s of Dharma School workshop at JSC.
Prepared by CBT, JSC’s Boston team.
Read more at www.buddhistchurchesofamerica.org

On August 16-20, BCA will participate in the 2010 Pacific Seminar 21st Century: Shinran’s Path in America.

Pacific Seminar 21st Century - Shinran’s Path in America - Past & Present

On June 25-27, 2010, over 50 people gathered at the Jodo Shinshu Center for this year’s Pacific Seminar 21st Century, presented by the Institute of Buddhist Studies and CBE. “For much of its nearly 120 year history in America, members of the Shin Buddhist community have had to triumph over numerous internal and external crises... By exploring the path of the Nisei, their life challenges and spirituality, (we) give voice to the faith, devotion and sacrifice that have helped shape the consciousness of American Shin Buddhism,” wrote Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto, in his introductory message.

As we browse through the many temple newsletters arriving each month, especially in the summer months, we at CBE can’t help but feel the pulse of the BCA temple sanghas in motion. In the pages of the monthly newsletters -- we witness the endless lists of names: upcoming Hatsubon and Shotoku Hoyo memorial gifts, lists of bazaar donations, timetables for food prep, booth construction and more. Wrapped in the minister’s dharma messages, we can appreciate that each temple has its own history and personality. We are reminded that these rituals are part of the ongoing rhythm of our BCA “nembutsu history.” Along with the constant waves of newsletters -- we are seeing evidence of nembutsu power transcending our histories – our lineage from Hongwanji in Japan, or BCA in America -- as we collaborate with Shin Buddhists nationally and internationally, from Nepal (Rev. Sonam); and the UK (Caroline and David Brazier of Amida Trust, on an upcoming conference in 2011). And we are diving deeper into our Hongwanji traditions: responding to a renewed interest in chanting, we have partnered with the Honpa Hongwanji of Hawaii, and the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada to reprint the fuller version of the Shonshinge chanting book, (A TRUE PURE LAND TEACHING JODO SHINSHU SONG OF TRUE SHINN and THREE PURE LAND POEMS by Gotooku Shinran). And, we struggle to navigate new roads with the Hongwanji Tokudo ordination process... These are exciting times! As we dance and listen to the music, “Kangi E” or “gathering of joy” – becomes clear. Thank you for your participation and generous support! — Rev. Kodo Umezu, CBE Director

Obon, Temple Newsletters, “Nembutsu History”

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Ph (510) 809-1460 www.buddhistchurchesofamerica.org Email: director@cbe-bca.org

August 2010 & Beyond

Ph: (510) 809-5480 Email: director@cbe-bca.org

August 16 (Wed) December: On the 15th of the month, EXCEPT Aug. 20th – 5 pm Monthly Shin Buddhism Appreciation Day (Kamakura Kyo) join us for a single meditative discussion on Shinran’s teachings in our Sangha room at 2:30 PM.

August 26-27 (Mon-Fri) 9:30 am – 9:30 am Walking Up to the Dharma! Experience traditional & alternative temple practices. A guest minister each day. Direction 540/287.

August 7-8 (Sat-Sun) 2 days JSC August Workshop An option for JSC students. Meet instructors, other students and hear lectures. Additional JSC fees apply. (510) 809-3404. Email: JSC-shinbuddhism@berkeley.edu

August 7 (Sat) 1pm – 3 pm A lecture by Prof. Carl Landefield (Stanford University): Zen & Pure Land Buddhism - Presented in conjunction with the JSC All-Asia Shitzu, FLB.

August 13-15 (Fri-Sun) ABCs of Shinran School Teachers’ Seminar One Upaka Phoenix Ridge, Location of the Dharma Hall. Please confirm travel arrangements. Rev. Sonam Wangdi Bhutia (Kamakura) Space is limited. Please email: (510) 809-5480. Email: JSC-shinbuddhism@berkeley.edu

September 25 (Sat) 4th Annual Rally Sunday Seminar: 8:30 am – 10:30 am The Sound of Enlightenment – Speaker: Guests Priests Peter Rove & Rev. Jon Inouye. Read details online. Registration 542

October 10 (Sat) Engaged Buddhism in the Age of Obama With Rev. Maru Uzum, Rev. Koko Kiyama & others. At the New Park Buddhist Church. Co-sponsored by American Buddhist Storries Ctr. and BCA.


“I particularly enjoyed the provocative discussions with Rev. Tetsuo Unno who helped me gain a deeper understanding of the importance of the experiential and emotive aspects of understanding the Nembutsu teachings that is integral to a life of gratitude and shinjin... Ms. Anne Spencer spoke as a new member/convert and expressed her profound appreciation to the Nisei and their experiences in creating a sangha that is so accepting... One knows when one has been fully accepted into the temple family by having one’s name shows up on the Toban or Bazaar work shifts – without being asked... it is at that moment that one has arrived as a full Sangha member.” - Steve Terusaki /BUSSHIN Newsletter

Keynote Speaker, Rev. Tetsuo Unno shared his observations of Issei Nisei responses to the camps.
Okagesama De (because of your honorable shade)

By Rev. Kenya Okamoto
Tri-State Buddhist Temple

I have been receiving information from Los Angeles High School about my 50th year class reunion to be held in 2011. How fast time flies. One of the things the organizing committee asked for is “What have you done since graduating from LA High?”

I have been thinking about what I should write. I will retire from the BCA on August 31, 2010, so I have been thinking about what I have done in the 35 years I have been a Buddhist Temple. Kaikyoshi at Tri-State/Denver done in the 35 years I have been a Buddhist Temple. My wife Judy is truly a Bishop Kenryu Tsuji assigned me to Tri-State Buddhist Temples on September 1, 1975. I have been here ever since. Okagesama de.

Many people ask me: “What are you going to do when you retire?” So far my response has been “I don’t know, I have never been retired before.” This year, Rev. Hoshu Matsubayashi and Rev. Charles Haeggum are also retiring. Rev. Matsubayashi was one of my professors when I was a student at IBS in 1972-1973. I met Rev. Charles Haeggum during my studies in Kyoto, Japan in 1973-1975. Bishop Kenryu Tsuji assigned me to Tri-State Buddhist Temples on September 3, 1975. I have been here ever since. Okagesama de.

Because of the “honorable-shade/protection” of so many Dharma Friends over the years, I have been allowed to live the life of a Jodo Shinshu Kaikyoshi here in Tri-State/Denver Buddhist Temples. My wife Judy is truly a Buddhist priestess, as Rev. Hoshu Matsubayashi told me when I was a student at IBS. With my lucky side, I could not have gone thru IBS, two years of study in Kyoto and 35 years as Kaikyoshi. Okagesama de.

What am I going to do when I retire? I will continue trying to live the life of Nembutsu as taught to us by Shinran Shonin. Okagesama de. Namamubutsu.

Hakuna MaBuddha – Bay District Jr. YBA Retreat 2010

By Kristin Montgomery
Palo Alto Buddhist Temple

This year’s Bay District Jr. YBA Retreat San Luis Obispo retreat included its traditional meditative morning walk, silent breakfast, late nights catching up with friends, and, of course, early morning services. However this retreat was a bit different. This year San Luis Obispo Buddhist Temple was invaded by Disney! From the princess themed workshop groups to the tiaras and dresses leaders wore, we had a blast remembering all the classic movies we grew up with. Our workshops that were touched with Disney magic followed with “The happiest place on earth” slogan.

San Mateo offered a workshop called “One Man’s Journey” based on the plots of movies such as the Lion King, Up, Toy Story, and many more. We split up into groups and each group chose a movie and an Eightfold Path at random to have a skirt around. Familiar characters were used to act out and demonstrate how we should apply the Eightfold Noble Path to our everyday lives.

Palo Alto planned a workshop around the idea that the first step towards happiness is knowing, loving, and accepting yourself. Each participant took an Enneagram personality test and met with others of similar types. We discussed how we could apply that knowledge to be more productive and positive when interacting with ourselves and others.

The workshop Oakland organized focused on music. We examined lyrics in Disney songs as well as in popular songs we listen to today. Reverend Harry Bridge led the workshop and he helped us find Buddhist messages in the songs we listened to. We all learned that we could find these messages anywhere if we pay attention.

All in all we had a relaxing, educational, and of course fun weekend. As always we valued that time together because for many of us it was our first retreat as Jr. YBA members. And what a way to say goodbye and thank you. We all had so much fun and learned so much about Buddhism, ourselves, and each other. Co-presidents Miharu Okamura and Chloe Tagawa said it best when they quoted Pocahontas: “You think the only people who are people, are the people who look and think like you. But if you walk the footsteps of a stranger, you’ll learn things you never knew you never knew.”

San Jose Betsuin EcoSangha

Earth Day 2010

By Karen Akahoshi
San Jose Betsuin

The San Jose Betsuin’s EcoSangha held its second annual Earth Day event on May 2. Duncan Ryan, Williams, Ph.D., U.C. Berkeley professor and scholar on Buddhism and ecology, was the guest speaker at both the Betsuin School and the adult services.

Earth Day activities followed the services in the annex. New this year were the Earth Day poster/essay contest, crafts made using recycled items, eco-friendly gardening tips, a bamboo presentation, a new gyre (ocean garbage patch) video and an exhibit from Mothers Milk Bank. A large area in the annex was designated for recycling, including

Continued on Page 6

San Francisco Buddhist Temple

May Peace and Tranquility Prevail Throughout the World

Center for Buddhist Education
San Mateo Buddhist Temple presents

Tibetan to Jodo Shinshu

One Man’s Journey

Rev. Sonam Wangdi Bhutta

Honganji Buddhist Society, Nepal

August 13, 2010

Friday night at 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm
San Mateo Buddhist Temple
23. Claymont Street
San Mateo, CA 94401
(650) 863-6256
kennh@rogerspoultry.com

Rev. Sonam Wangdi Bhutta will give a brief overview of his life and his journey to Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. He will answer questions about Tibetan Buddhism with Questions/Answers to follow.

Rev. Sonam is the chief priest at the Hongwanji Buddhist Society, Nepal. Formerly a Tibetan Buddhist monk, Rev. Sonam studied at the Lhasa Tibetan Path of Wisdom ordained as a Jodo Shinshu priest in 1999. He represents the Nepalese branch and has been engaged in social welfare activities in Nepal since 1998.

In 2006, the Hongwanji granted permission for his name and the institution he headed by Rev. Sonam (formerly called the Green Life Buddhist Society, Nepal) became the Hongwanji Buddhist Society, Nepal, or Kathmandu Hongwanji. Their website (in Japanese) is http://gijishakai.or.jp/
Concerning Shinran’s and Eshinni’s marriage, I would like to offer a tentative hypothesis that this was a wife-centered marriage rather than a husband-centered marriage. This is exactly the opposite of what we typically assume about these two figures. In the life of Shinran, as the dominant figure and Eshinni and their children as following him obediently. In medieval Japan there were a variety of styles of marriage but, to oversimplify the issue, we could describe some marriages as wife-centered and some as husband-centered. If the husband provided the bulk of the home base and most of the resources for the marriage, it was considered wife-centered, and the wife would have considerable say in decisions about the family. This seems to have been the case in Shinran’s and Eshinni’s marriage. He was perhaps from an impoverished aristocratic family, and she from a moneyminded gentry family. Certainly her family home was Shinran’s base when he was banished to Echigo in 1207, and her family ties in the Kantō region may have facilitated his move there. If this was indeed a wife-centered marriage, it would explain why Eshinni felt free in old age to return to her home place and why four of their grown children apparently followed her there. The surprise is not that she left Shinran, but that he did not move with her from Kyoto to Echigo. Even while living separately, Eshinni remained in contact with their daughter Kakushinni in Kyoto and exerted an influence on her. In fact, the first two letters in Eshinni’s collection indicate that she intended to leave Kai Shinbunsan seven or eight years before Shinran’s death. However, that Shinran’s and Eshinni’s marriage was wife-centered is not to suggest that she looked down on him. On the contrary, her letters reveal that she had great reverence and respect for him. But comprehending the structure of their relationship does help us understand that it was more of a reciprocal relationship than a one-sided arrangement with Shinran in the dominant role. To explore the psychology of this relationship, I would like to extrapolate from the brief episodes in their lives that made a strong impression on them. Specifically, these were dreams that each of them had, which they took to be important revelations. The first is Shinran’s dream in 1207 when he left the monastery on Mt. Hei and secluded himself at the Rokkakudo chapel in this area. In the dream, Kannon, the bodhisattva of compassion, appeared and declared in a verse that he would become Shinran’s female lover and partner and lead him to the Pure Land at death. This revelation marked the turning point in Shinran’s religious life. The image of Kannon was put up by his students on Mt. Hei and became a devoted follower of Hōnen’s Pure Land teachings. We also know that within a few years of the dream he took as his partner and wife Eshinni and took her as his wife. Shinran himself never explained this dream in terms of the actual events of his life, but we know that he treasured the verse revealed in the dream and bestowed copies of it on his closest followers. Next let us turn our attention to a dream of Eshinni’s that is recorded in Letter 3 of her collection of letters. According to it, while she and her family were living in the Kantō region Eshinni had a dream in which she saw two Buddhist images hanging down from the crossbar of a temple gate. One had no discernable features where the face would be, but only a bright light. The other was faintly visible in both face and body. Perplexed by this, Eshinni asked someone in the dream how these figures were. The person responded that the one with light for a face was a Buddha, the other was a bodhisattva. Eshinni then asked who the figure was, and the person replied that it was Shinran, who was none other than a manifestation of Kannon, the bodhisattva of compassion and the other attendant bodhisattva of Amida Buddha. This revelation about Shinran shocked Eshinni, and she immediately woke up from her dream. She kept this revelation a secret and did not share the news; she did not even speak to her husband about the dream and disclosed it to her daughter Kakushinni soon after Shinran’s death. Eshinni says in her letter that she never again looked upon Shinran as an ordinary person after the dream. This is a fascinating pair of dreams, and of course what connects them is the idea that Kannon, the bodhisattva of compassion, appears miraculously in this world to guide others to enlightenment in the Pure Land. In the case of Eshinni’s dream, Kannon is specifically identified as Shinran and, even while living in a husband-and-wife bond with him, she regarded him as constantly active in guiding her to enlightenment. In the case of Shinran’s dream, we do not have an explicit identification of Kannon as Eshinni. It is hard to believe that that idea did not cross his mind at some point. He treasured the verse that was presented in the dream long after he first met Eshinni, and even while living in a husband-and-wife bond, including it seems to Eshinni. The point is that Shinran and Eshinni may have considered each other to be a manifestation of the bodhisattva of compassion throughout most of their life, and they may have been phenomena towards enlightenment in the Pure Land by the very presence and company of each other. Even in the most intimate aspects of their relationship, they may have experienced through each other an interdependent and reciprocal soul originarizing in the Buddha and lifting them toward full awakening.

This idea is fairly significant. The typical belief in many forms of Buddhism is that bonds of human relationships are an obstacle to attaining enlightenment. The classical example that is frequently cited is Sakyamuni Buddha himself, who left his wife and son in order to pursue enlightenment. The belief underlying this view is that true awakening can occur only if one’s mental and emotional bonds to the world are in fact transcended. The example of Shinran and Eshinni, however, offers an alternative paradigm to this view, one that is grounded in the principles of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Here the bonds of human relationships are treated not as an obstacle in the path to enlightenment, but rather as the very medium in which enlightenment can be actualized. In this case, husbands and wives do not obstruct religious advancement in each other, but they in fact nurture, support, and enhance it. Moreover, they see in each other the compassionate workings of their own true nature and return gratitude for their mutual and reciprocal awakening. This is, I believe, the significance of Shinran and Eshinni’s example in Shin Buddhism.
EACH MEMORIAL DAY most American cemeteries or veterans groups place American flags at the graves of all those who served in the Armed Forces in any of America’s wars and conflicts. Some cemeteries will also place a Gansho-Ji’s “wind chime” on the indi-

volent graves of all veterans, regardless if they are Christian, Buddhist, Jewish or other religious affiliation.

In respect of Americans of the Buddhist faith who have

Buddhist Soldier Grave Marker

that no one was home. He told me to go ahead in and conduct the service anyway. To my surprise, I found the front entrance door unlocked. Once again, I announced, “Gansho-Ji don’t tolerate such things.” I walked into the main room and found the O-butsudan. I lit the candle and burned the incense, chanted the sutra, and began to work. I got up to leave, but just then I caught sight of a tray with a glass of mugi-cha. I picked it up after hearing the chanting began, came down the stairs and sat in silence, burned incense and offered the tea and envelope to a person who looked Japanese but had a strange accent, I became even more impressed and humbled. He could have taken the easy way out. He could have stayed upstairs and pretended to stay asleep. Here, he had the awareness and kindness to offer me in his very polite manner, his appreciation for my conducting the service. For him to have learned to do this can only be attributed to the upbringing he received from his family and ancestors. It was a tribute to them.

Although there may have been only one small boy in one house and no one in another, while I chanted the sutra for Obon, the houses indeed were never empty.

Nemondacho, nemondacho.

meaning of the Nembutsu. Setsuko’s words are heartfelt and full of concern for her students. As I hear these words, I am challenged to ask myself, “How well am I taking care of this seed of faith?” So, I ask you, how is your seed of Shinjin faith? As a recent convert, the Buddha’s Wish for the World, the Gomusho poses a question, “Why do you suppose we are alive?”

I would answer: to let the inner peace of the seed of Shinjin faith to flower within and to work toward outer peace. As a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist that is my fundamental concern, for it is the engine of my life in order to raise my family, to go to work, to volunteer at the temple, and to keep on living fully until our time comes. And at the end of the day, what is of true worth is the sense of inner and outer peace of Shinjin faith, which reaches us through the evening sermons and the evening sermons of the “Three Treasures,” “Hard is it to be born into human life; now we are living it. Hard it is to hear the teachings of Buddha; now we are hearing it. If we do not awaken ourselves in the present life, when will we ever be awakened?”

When the spirit of Shinjin faith begins to bloom within, we begin to gain glimpse of the realm of “infinite light and infinite life” which we call Amida, with no evaluation of persons or beings, a deep sense of the beauty of nature (such as the rolling California hills dotted with green Oak trees). We also experience a profound food for the thought that we are able to have and enjoy, such as, the juicy enchiladas topped with guacamole with Spanish rice on the side (Ola!Ola). We, further, cannot but express the deep caring for the earthquake victims in Haiti. And, perhaps most relevant to my talk today, we experience the joy of a common bond and oneness with another human being, especially with people differing from ourselves in every possible respect. Through these experiences, we come closer to appreciating the kind of spiritual fulfillment and joy that Shinran, the founder of the Jodo Shinshu movement, and even had the mugi-cha and donation envelope prepared. And as I reflect, especially often never know.

This year one of those thoughts is “Leave the things you touch better than you found them”. It is such a simple principle that we all learned at one time or another in our lives. As a sangha, and individuals, we should seek the compassion that will enhance the lives of all people. We touch the lives of others in a way we never knew.

Being a member of the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA), we need to ask ourselves this question ‘Are we leaving BCA better than we found it?’ If you are concerned, you need to ask yourself this question ‘Are we leaving our lives better than we found them?’

ECO-SANGHA
Continued from Front Page

Focus attention items that could be recycled. New items for recycling were leftover or expired medicine and medical equipment, all donated to Flying Doctors.

Eco-Sangha’s primary goal is to educate the sangha and encourage them to rethink, recycle and reuse. Facilities use guidelines have been distributed to all temple organizations to support that goal.

The following is their mission statement:

As Buddhists, the Eco-Sangha of the San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin recognizes our oneness and interdependence with all life. From this position of Oneness, we ask what we can do for our environment. Our goals are to promote:

• understanding of the inherent ecological Buddhism
• ecologically friendly behavior through the established guidelines
• recognition of the profound implications of our behavior on future generations

Eco-Sangha wants to invite other BCA temples to establish their own EcoSangha organizations.

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Tule Lake
Continued from Front Page

high-security Segregation Center to imprison 12,000 Japanese Americans who were deemed “disloyal” to the United States. This year’s pilgrimage was “Sharing the Untold Stories of Tule Lake”. The weekend provided an opportunity for those who were incarcerated at Tule Lake to tell the stories of their experiences and the impact of the incarceration on their lives.
限りなき命と光

今月の法話

金子大栄先生の書簡

次に引用する書簡は、若湯におられる先生のお母さんが病院に教えられたとき、おじいに申してみてもお言葉が書きられないと訴えられたお手紙に対する先生の御返書の一節です。

「私たちの心は美しい時は美しいだけであり、悲しい時は悲しいだけにしかできていないです。生きたい時は、生きたいと思う思い方を追い越して生きて、死んだことを知りたいというのが現状といわばなりません。　

金子大栄先生の書簡

キャンペーン事務局よりの報告

六月末で七千六百名以上の方々より 合計八千万五千万円の寄付（店舗の寄付）が寄せられています。これは目標の六十二パーセントです。

「どうか、会員全員が参加し、この目標額に一日でも早く達成できるようさらなるご協力をお願いいたします。」と、事務局から法輪教への声がかけられています。