The 2011 BCA Ministers’ Association and National Council Meeting took place at the Visalia Marriott on February 23-27, 2011. The Central California District hosted the meeting. Although it was not part of the original agenda distributed to the National Council delegates and BCA Ministers prior to the meeting, the National Council decided that the loan from California Bank and Trust that was used to help finance the BCA Jodo Shinshu Center (JSC) in Berkeley, California, should be paid off in a year. The loan currently is at $3.175 million. Richard Endo, BCA Treasurer, informed the National Council that available funds to pay off the loan may run out by the end of 2012. The BCA will send an appeal out to all BCA members for a single payment of $199 (or at $17/month for a year) to completely get rid of the loan. Rinban Rev. Bob Oshita, Rev. Dr. William Masuda, and Rev. Masao Kodani (among other ministers), expressed support for paying off the loan as soon as possible.

Along with the appeal would be an apology from the BCA for previous actions involving the Campaign BCA-The 21st Century that may have caused misunderstanding or distrust among the BCA members. President-Elect Ron Murakami reminded the delegates that some events surrounding the construction of the JSC (such as extreme weather conditions, unpredictable cost increases for construction materials and changes to the building plans after construction started) could not be avoided but added to the cost of the building. For a detailed account about how the cost of the JSC grew, see the special report written by Dr. Billy Saeki for the 2007 BCA Annual Report.

There are two loans to the Endowment Foundation that will need to be repaid. One loan, for $2.3 million is due in April, 2012, and the other loan for $1.2 million is due in March, 2013. Both loans may need to be renegotiated. However, those loans were difficult to obtain. The National Council voted to continue the Campaign for collecting pledge payments, major donations, and planned gifts. Active widespread solicitation for Campaign donations would stop.

The National Council discussed the Annual Giving proposal presented by Charlene Gird, from the Coordinated Fundraising Committee. This was also the main subject of discussion for the Town Hall meeting that preceded the National Council Meeting. The Council voted to have the Coordinated Fundraising Committee work on this proposal and bring it back to the National Board and Council. Richard Endo presented the proposed 2011-2012 BCA budget to the meeting attendees. The budget included additional money for the Communications Committee (a new BCA Committee that replaced the Wheel of Dharma Advisory Board and the Website Committee) and for the Bishop’s selection process and transition. Money was also needed to let the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) hire a much-needed administrative assistant. Ever since the IBS has moved into the BCA Jodo Shinshu Center, their enrollment has grown tremendously. The National Council approved the proposed budget. The per member dues will increase from $87.70 in 2010-2011 to $94.32 in 2011-2012.

Socho Ogai announced that Rev. George Shibata (Redley Buddhist Church) will retire at the end of this year. Rev. Jerry Hirano, serving the second year of his term as Gicho of the BCA Ministers’ Association, informed the council delegates that the 2011 Ministers’ Association cabinet includes Rinban Rev. Ken Fujimoto and Rinban Rev. Bob Oshita as the vice-chair, Rev. William Bitonese and Rev. Dennis Fujimoto as secretaries, Rev. Carol Hiakama as the treasurer, and Rev. Kazuki Nakata and Rev. George Shibata as the large members.

Jeff Frolick, member of the Endowment Foundation Board, reported that the Endowment Foundation investments made $1.4 million during 2010. The National Council delegates voted in three new Directors-at-Large. They are Richard Kunisaki (San Fernando/Oxnard), Kent Matsuda (Emmanji), and Tom Nishikawa (San Jose). The delegates voted to accept the change to the BCA Bylaws proposed by the Bylaws/Legal Committee to remove the position of the BCA Auditor from the National Executive Board and from the National Board.

Calvin Dui, chair of the BCA Social Welfare Fund told the National Council that the fund received over $31,000 in contributions during 2010. A grant of $5,000 was given to the Rakttrak Foundation to help provide supplies for Tibetan school children.

Next year, the BCA Ministers’ Association and National Council Meeting will be held on February 21-26, 2012 in Sacramento, California at the Doubletree Hotel.

The 21st Century Grand Raffle was held at the National Council Meeting Banquet in Visalia, CA on Saturday, February 26th. I’m pleased to congratulate and announce the following winners.

Grand Prize ($12,000): Ms. Donna Castro, Ticket #17673 Buddhist Church of Oakland
2nd Prize ($4,000): Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Iaya, Ticket #22191 San Fernando Valley Hongwanji Buddhist Temple
3rd Prize ($1,500): Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Iaya, Ticket #20536 San Fernando Valley Hongwanji Buddhist Temple
4th Prize ($3,000): Mr. James Yoshimura, Ticket #10289 Gardena Buddhist Church
5th Prize ($500): Durory Okamoto, Ticket #14242 Buddhist Temple of Alameda

We raised approx. $8,000 for the Jodo Shinshu Center in Berkeley, CA. Many thanks for participating and your continued support of the campaign!
The Shining Nembutsu Light of the Last BCA Pioneer

By Rev. Zuikei Taniguchi, Alenmaru Buddhist Temple

I

would like to share my recollections of the beautiful 107-year life of my Issei Nembutsu Dharma friend, Mrs. Yuka Matoba, who recently passed from this shore to the Other Shore of peace and tranquility.

In her 107 year Nembutsu life, she has had six children, 13 grandchildren, 21 great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren. At Mrs. Matoba’s funeral memorial service, I held her great-grandchild in my arms. I felt a special spirit in my heart that overlapped with Mrs. Matoba’s warm heart. I strongly believe she was the last Issei BCA member, and the last shining Dharma friend for all Japanese Americans.

Of course, Mrs. Matoba was the last Issei minister at Enmanji Buddhist Temple, and one of the founding members of the Enmanji Temple and their Fujinkai. To me, since 1964 until today, for 47 years, she extended her unchanging family friendship. Till today, whenever I travel from Alameda County to the direction of Sebostopol, my heart fills with bright Nembutsu feelings which I received from Mrs. Matoba. Till today, I received so much profound guidance from Issei minister friends.

When I visited Mrs. Matoba, she always held my hand with both her hands and gently touched her cheek. It was so quiet, she didn’t say anything, but when she was at her side, I received her warm Nembutsu heart without saying anything. Looking at her calm face, there were no attachments or anger. I really felt that after she became 105 years old, Amida Buddha’s compassionate heart was appearing through her form.

After Mrs. Matoba accomplished her 107 years long Jodo Shinshu Nembutsu life, I am now sensing her friendship in this way. Mrs. Matoba was Bo-dhisattva who came back from the Pure Land for me, and she taught me one important lesson through her actions. That is, Mrs. Matoba taught me that you do not need to become a great light, but keep a sincere and kind heart in your daily life, and make where you are standing a shining place.

I so gracefully I received so many lights from Issei pioneers, and that I could serve as a BCA minister. Mrs. Matoba was a myokonin in the BCA, and I learned a great deal about an ideal Nembutsu family from the five generations supporting her life.

Through my long years performing BCA minister’s work, I conducted many funerals and memorial services, but I had not before experienced such a warm and bright feeling at a funeral service. From the bottom of my heart, I really want to say oneleen and gratitude to Mrs. Yuka Matoba’s ethinc.

Through our BCA temples, we have received so many powerful supporting hearts from our pioneer Issei members. Mrs. Matoba was one of the last of her generation who has witnessed the beginnings of our BCA’s wonderful 110-year history. I will continue to preserve the legacy of the shining Issei Dharma light of our BCA pio-neers like Mrs. Yuka Matoba.

With Gassho Nembutsu

Mrs. Yuka Matoba

At the BCA National Council meeting in Vissalia, BCA recognizes retired ministers for their many years of service. From left: Rev. Shoyo Aiko Miyajti - 36 years served at Seattle Betsuin, Southern Alameda County, San Fernando Valley, San Diego, Orange County; Rev. Kenko Charles Hasegawa - 27 years: Idaho-Oregon, Stockton; Rev. Kanyø Okamoto - 35 years: Tri-State; Rev. Dr. Hoshu Matsumahara - Sacramento, Berkeley, Southern Alameda County, White River, Seelix; Socho Koshin Ogui and his wife Mayumi. At far left, Socho Koshin Ogui and his wife Mayumi. At far right, Michael Endo at the podium.

BCA Recognizes Retired Ministers

Rev. Harada Recognized for 25 Years of Service

Rev. Kenji Marvin Harada recognized for twenty-five years of service to the BCA. Above photo: Mrs. Mayumi Ogai (left), Gail and Rev. Marvin Harada, Socho Koshin Ogai.

$500,000 Endowment Chair Established

Seated: Mr. Noboru Hanu, standing: Iraqi ref left: Dr. Richard Payne, Phung Kim La, and K eng Yokaoka. Photo insert: Mr. and Mrs. Noboru Hanu.

On Jan. 26, long time member of the Buddhist Church of San Francisco, Noboru Hanyu, established a $500,000 endowed professorship at the Institute of Buddhist Studies in Berkeley, to honor his late wife Yarko, who passed away on Nov. 1, 2002. He attributes his lifelong association with the Buddhist Churches of America to the support of his loving wife.

“Chair is my way of expressing my appreciation to Yarco for her support and will keep alive her spirit of Dana for the Buddhist movement in America,” Hanyu said.

The BCA is a graduate seminary of Bud-dhist ministry, and Buddhist studies. The chair will be named the “Noboru and Yarko Hanyu Buddhist Chaplaincy Professional Chair,” and will be filled through Mr. Hanyu’s Living Trust. The BCA Endowment is part of the BCA 21st Century Campaign; therefore, the BCA Endowment Foundation will administer the assets of the fund. The BCA Dean’s office in consultation with the faculty and Board of Trustees will determine the recipient of the chair.

Hanyu, while being active at the temple has been taking many leadership roles in the Buddhist Churches of America. In 1975, he was awarded BCA Lifetime Service Award for his dedication to BCA for over 60 years. His vocation as the Institute of Buddhist Studies Dean’s Office in consultation with the faculty and Board of Trustees will determine the recipient of the chair. 1975, he was awarded BCA Lifetime Service Award for his dedication to BCA for over 60 years. His vocation as the Institute of Buddhist Studies Dean’s Office in consultation with the faculty and Board of Trustees will determine the recipient of the chair.
March 2011 • News and Highlights

Sharing the Dharma with Everyone

Each BCA temple and church is a safe and secure place. For many years, they have been offering programs through which members and their friends can appreciate the Dharma and learn the true meaning of life. At the Jodo Shinshu Center in Berkeley, the Center for Buddhist Education strives to achieve the same goal in broader communities. Our mission is to create opportunities to nurture future leaders who can help at their local temples or churches, and communities.

From February 18-20, 2011, CBE and the Institute of Buddhist Studies sponsored a special, first time International Conference on Other-Centered Approaches, dealing with psychotherapy based on Buddhist philosophy. People from several countries gathered at the JSC to share their appreciation for this approach and discuss ways in which these methods can help people today.

Crossing Over to Jodo Shinshu is a seminar for newcomers to Jodo Shinshu Buddhism, as well as longtime members who wish to refresh their knowledge. The keynote speaker, Rev. Patricia Usuki, was born and raised in Canada. She “crossed over” to Jodo Shinshu later in life and now serves as a BCA minister in Southern California.

Another popular program is the Pacific Seminar 21st Century. This is the revival of a major annual summer program begun by the BCA in 1952. It brought together scholars, ministers and lay members to seriously share and listen to the Dharma. With the opening of the JSC in 2006, the idea of a revival emerged. CBE and IBS are co-sponsoring this year’s event, The Path to the Pure Land. Speakers include Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara of the Hongwanji Office, Rev. Gregory Gibbs (Oregon Buddhist Temple), Rev. John Iwohara (Venice Hongwanji), Rev. Harry Bridge (Oakland), and Rev. Kodo Umezui (CBE). The Pacific Seminar will provide a great opportunity to spend some time with ministers and visit Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Practice and realization.

We hope to see you and share the Dharma at our future events.

In Gahcho, Kodo Umezui
Sitting Namo Amida Butsu
Rivers of blind passions, on entering the ocean- The Great compassionate vow
Sitting Namo Amida Butsu

By Rev. Dr. Alfred Bloom, Kailua, HI

D espite the developments within Buddhism there are a few things that are fundamental: one is that Shin Buddhism is distinctively different from other forms of Buddhism as it was begun by Shinran, an 18th century Japanese monk. Shinran’s understanding of Buddhism and its adaptation to Japanese society as a lay-oriented religion. However, above all, we must present the social, cultural implications and potentiality of the teaching in the context of American society, which is fashioned on its own principles of what a modern, democratic society should be. The problem lies in the fact that Shin Buddhism has been centered in the Japanese American community and is regarded in the wider society more as a Japanese or ethnic religion. The universality of Shinran’s teaching is obscured by the communal character of the temples. There are few programs directed specifically to instruct the non-Buddhist. For propagation in the future, it is urgently important to make clear the universal meaning of Shinran’s teachings. The Great vow of the Buddha, that is to say, the Universal Meaning of Nembutsu is saying it is not a special address by Socho Ogai, Bishop of the Buddhist Churches of America. There will also be special recognition of eight Nisei members for their outstanding service to the church. The luncheon reception at the college cafeteria will feature a video presentation that will showcase activities throughout the year. A special commemorative brochure will highlight the 75-year history of the church. Dignitaries will include representatives from all Buddhist churches from the Central California District. The public is invited to attend the church service and luncheon. The luncheon cost is $25 per person. A reservation form can be accessed through the Reedley Buddhist Church website; http://reedylbcc.org

Koso Wasan 43 CWS pg.371
"Shikantrasa" which is usually translated as "just sitting". Dogen states in his "Mumonkan" Universally recommended practices for Zen: "The mind I speak of is not meditation practice [in the traditional Buddhist sense]. It is simply the direct realization of bodhisattva bliss, the practice-realization of totally culminated awakening." In the Zen tradition, there is no difference between this type of sitting to our saying the nembutsu. This practice-realization of totally culminated awakening is shinjin.

To recite the nembutsu as a response or with a deep sense of gratitude that comes from something more then myself is my nembutsu practice. We may say this nembutsu comes from the mind of Amida to my mind. In a similar manner when I sit I recite the nembutsu, it is as my breath. Both are the manifestation of the great compassion that embraces us all. I sit in Namo Amida Butsu.
2011 Young Buddhist International Cultural Study Exchange (YBICSE)

Applications are now being accepted for the 2011 Hongwanji-sponsored Young Buddhist International Cultural Study Exchange (YBICSE). This program is funded in part by the Hongwanji in Kyoto, Japan. The exchange will be held from July 30 – August 7, 2011 (group will depart for Japan on July 29th from San Francisco International Airport), and provides an opportunity for youth representatives from throughout the world to gather and explore the historical and cultural heritage of our Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha tradition. Young adults from Brazil, Canada, U.S.A., and Japan will assemble at our mother temple, Hongwanji, in Kyoto and participate in joint activities intended to deepen their cultural and spiritual appreciation of our Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha tradition.

The Hongwanji Youth Exchange includes tours of many historical sites related to the history of the Hongwanji and the life of Shinran Shonin, as well as lectures on general and Jodo Shinshu Buddhism, the history of the Hongwanji, and a homestay opportunity. The homestay aspect of the program allows the students to experience living in members’ homes and through, and, during discussions and activities, develop an awareness of the Nembutsu in the everyday lives of the host families. Participants will also be able to take part in special events surrounding the 75th Memorial for Shiran Shonin at the Hongwanji.

Participation is open to interested students, age 16-25, who are currently taking an active role in their local temple YBA, Dharma School, YAC, etc. The number of delegates from each BCA is limited to 15 students. The cost per person is $1,500.00 (includes airfare, ground transportation, lodging and most meals). Applications are also available at the BCA Headquarters: 1710 Octavia Street, San Francisco, CA, 94115. For further information please contact Michael Endo in the Socho’s Office at (415) 776-5600, ext. 22, or via e-mail at shakendo@comcast.net.

Selection of Delegates: Selection of the delegates will be overseen by the BCA Center for Buddhist Education. The 15 delegates will be selected through a screening process by asking each candidate to submit an application form which includes his/her personal history, a resume of their participation in Jr. YBA, YBL districts. Upon arrival, representatives from the Bay District, Central California District, Coast District, Sacramento Jr. YBA, Southern District, and College YBA warmly greeted us. Our busy weekend began with opening service, followed by a discussion with our keynote speaker, Koichi Mizushima of the Sacramento Betsuin. He talked about the importance of leadership in each of the chapters in his uniquely entertaining and enjoyable manner.

Several fun icebreakers to get to know each other, Keith Sawada, YAC committee member led our first workshop. “Where are we and do we want to go?” We discussed the current controversy, what is Shin Buddhism and a YBA’s and YBAs districts, membership levels, and cabinet positions, as well as what we would consider to be our ideal Jr. YBA. All participants essentially came to the conclusion that we want to leave Jr. YBA in a better position than it was the previous year and hope that it continues to be a more effective organization after the current leadership leaves.

In our second workshop everyone bravely shared several problems or issues within our YBA programs and grouped them into certain categories. Common problems included lack of communication, lack of motivation, “too cool” attitudes, little respect for leaders, and members not listening. We then divided into breakout sessions with each group working to tackle several of the problems and present the solutions to the whole group. Some

2011 YAC Summer Retreat

(Hosted by the BCA YAC Committee)

July 4-10, 2011
Hosted by the Sacramento Betsuin
Ages 15-18 Years

May Peace and Tranquility Prevail Throughout the World

2011 YAC Summer Retreat

(Sponsored by the Youth Advocacy Committee)

July 4-10, 2011
Hosted by the Sacramento Betsuin
Ages 15-18 Years

Questions?
Rev. Patti Oshita, po@comcast.net
Rev. Patti Shingaki-Kuno, nikuno@comcast.net
Revs. Tim & Carol Castle, teamcastle@comcast.net
Sensei Grace Hottsu, bhottsu@globalnet.com
Sensei Koichi Mizushima, kmizushima@gmail.com

Yes, sign me up for the CBE 500 Club for 2010!

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第六十四回西部仏教徒大会

人生の問い

多くの宗教がありますが、その教えはどこで決まるのでしょうか。

宗教の問題を、ただ単に思い出という形でとり扱うことは避けましょう。宗教以外のなにかが支配して、私たちの運命が決定されるという考えは、私たちに立つものや、宗教の本質的なテーマをただ読み取せるような宗教もありますが、それは本当の宗教ではないかもしれません。

また、真実の宗教は、私自身の問題に、私このほんとにどうかに気づかせ、私をともに人生の諸問題を正しく判断し、それを乗り越えていくための、正しい知識をあたえられるものです。これこそ、正しく価値ある宗教ということになります。