Executive Committee Message

By Glenn Kameda, Palo Alto Buddhist Temple, JSC Facility Manager, Ministerial Affairs Committee Chair

I have observed and participated with and within the BCA organization for the past 40 plus years and have always been concerned with not only the issues but how we tried valiantly to resolve, reform, and move forward with pertinent and not so pertinent businesses on hand. On the one hand the organization’s responsibility and effort is to “communicate”, keep the membership informed and involved – the other hand was to ask a member to lead a committee to resolve issues and communicate the resolution to the issue. It seems that creating layers of bureaucracy to address issues complicated the communication process, and sometimes the response to improve the communication process was to ask an individual and/or committee to improve the communication process.

The BCA governing process is a matter of click/send to one or a matter of thousands in seconds, and yes, we can reply with our “monki” (dissatisfaction) in seconds that followed, and the radiation-emitting nuclear power plant, I cannot imagine how much the victims must be filled with uncertainty. As a Buddhist organization, we will support the victims to the best of our ability. In regards to the 750th Memorial for Shinran Shonin, it has been decided that the observance will begin as scheduled on April 9. The slogan of this observance is the aspiration of Shinran Shonin, “May peace and tranquility prevail throughout the world.” In accordance with his wishes, let us observe the Memorial as we keep in mind the pain and sadness of all the victims.

March 17, 2011
Bishop Shoshin Tachibana
Governor General
Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ka

Streamlining BCA’s Process and Organization

I send my deepest sympathy to the victims of the Tohoku-Pacific Ocean Earthquake that struck on March 11. I would like to extend my sincerest condolences to those who have lost their life and to the families who have lost loved ones in this tragic disaster.

Words cannot express the great deal of anxiety and sadness that the many evacuees and friends and families of those who are missing must feel. It is my hope that as many people as possible will be found.

To stay informed of the current situation in areas directly affected by the disaster and to provide the people with mental and physical support, we immediately opened up support, we immediately opened up Disaster Relief Center Headquarters in Kyoto (Hongwanji), Tohoku district (Sendai Betsuin), and Tokyo (Tsukiji Hongwanji) after the earthquake hit. Not only affected by the aftermath of the earthquake, but also by the unprecedented radioactive substance that followed, and the radiation-emitting nuclear power plant, I cannot imagine how much the victims must be filled with uncertainty. As a Buddhist organization, we will support the victims to the best of our ability.

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March 17, 2011
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Socho’s Message

The devastating earthquake and ensuing tsunami which struck Japan on March 11, 2011 (local time) has left, in its wake, a tragedy beyond our comprehension. The enormous loss of life, the damage to the infrastructure, and the effects on the livelihoods of so many people are tremendous. Our hearts and thoughts go out to those who are suffering as a result of this natural disaster.

On behalf of the Buddhist Churches of America, I express my deepest concern and sincere condolences to those who are suffering and who have suffered great loss. May the strength and support of your community, together with the support and wishes from our sangha members, as well as the people from throughout the world, offer you strength during this difficult time.

Gasoh, Socho Koshin Ogu
Bishop, Buddhist Churches of America

JAPAN EARTHQUAKE & TSUNAMI RELIEF FUND

Announcement by Governor General Shoshin Tachibana on the Tohoku-Pacific Ocean Earthquake and 750th Memorial for Shinran Shonin

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Gasoh, Socho Koshin Ogu
Bishop, Buddhist Churches of America

JAPAN EARTHQUAKE & TSUNAMI RELIEF FUND

On March 11, 2011 (local time), Japan was struck by a 9.0 magnitude earthquake followed by a catastrophic tsunami. On behalf of the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA), we extend our deepest concern and sincere condolences to those whose lives have been affected by the disaster.

The Buddhist Churches of America is currently collecting donations in the name of the Japan Earthquake/Tsunami Relief for this disaster. The funds collected by the BCA for this relief effort will be forwarded to the Hongwanji’s Social Welfare Department via the Hongwanji International Department. Donations for the Earthquake/Tsunami Relief Fund may be made in the following manner:

1. Donations may be made to your local BCA temple or church (checks should be made payable to the local temple or church). Donations made to the local temples and churches will be forwarded to the BCA Headquarters.

2. Donations may also be made using Paypal. Please visit the BCA website at www.buddhistchurchesofamerica.org

Please send your donations to the BCA Headquarters by April 20, 2011.

We thank you in advance for your support and donation.

Gasoh, Socho Koshin Ogu
Bishop, Buddhist Churches of America

President, Buddhist Churches of America

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March 17, 2011
Bishop Shoshin Tachibana
Governor General
Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ka
I’m so proud of the Buddhist reception as a minority.

By Rev. Shoukei K. Hanayama
Watsonville Buddhist Temple, Supervising Minister and President

Consider this, if the world is a village of one hundred people and thirty-three people are Christian, nineteen people are Hindu, thirteen are Islam, and only six are Buddhists, then twenty-four believe in more than one religion or none at all. According to some professors, American Buddhism is growing every year. However, the membership of BCA is less and less. When my grandfather, Dr. Shibuso Hanayama was Socho BCA, the membership of BCA was more than now. When he arrived at San Francisco airport, over 700 members came to welcome him.* You may know, the Japanese prime minister during World War II was Hideki Tojo. He named my grandfather in his will. One of his wishes was for my grandfather to “Please go to the USA to spread the Teachings of Buddhism!” After my grandfather retired from Tokyo University, he decided to come to the United States as BCA Socho. One of the reasons he did this was to repay Hoppa Hongwanji for the kindness he received when he was young. My grandfather was born in 1898, as the first son of The Hoppa Hongwanji temple, So-in-ji, a small temple of Hoppa Hongwanji as an assistant temple. My grandfather had several siblings, but they all passed away when they were young. He also lost his parents when he was young. He couldn’t have survived without help. The ex-Monshu, His Excellency Kousai Otani established a charitable school for young people at this same time. My grandfather graduated in the top of his class and went on to Tokyo University. He said, “The idea of being hungry gave the energy to study hard!” He received a doctorate degree and became a professor at Tokyo University.

After World War II, Dr. Shibuso Hanayama became a chaplain for war prisoners because he knew all of the Japanese Buddhism sects and he could speak English. Thanks to Hongwanji, my grandfather went to Great Britain to study English. He translated a lot of the Japanese tradition to GHQ (General Headquarters) and interpreted for war prisoners and American guards.

At that time the BCA was only for Japanese and Japanese Americans. Buddhist Temples could be established in America because of the Japanese immigrants. Many Buddhist temple members wanted to enjoy activities and traditions in the Japanese language as well as make and have Japanese foods. My grandfather used to say, “It was difficult to assign a new minister to a temple!” Most of the ministers had family and friends in the temple where he or she had been in for long time. He received a lot of complaints from ministers after he made new assignments. At that time, a lot of Buddhist temples couldn’t get an assignment because there were too many ministers in BCA. Now we don’t have enough

END

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THE BERKELEY BUDDHIST TEMPLE, with the theme of “A Century of Gratitude and Joy,” will hold its centennial celebration on Saturday, Oct. 22.

Berkeley Buddhist Temple to Celebrate Centennial

The Berkeley Buddhist Temple of America, the oldest Buddhist organization in the state of California, is preparing to celebrate its centennial. The Temple, located at 2121 Channing Way in Berkeley, is planning a series of events to commemorate its 100 years of service to the community. The festivities will include a centennial service at the temple, followed by a luncheon at the Oakland Marriott City Center, 1001 Broadway in Oakland.

To mark the temple’s centennial, several projects have been undertaken, including improvements for the onaijin, thanks to the generosity of Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai (Numata); the purchase of Reedley BWA ......................................................... $50
Tacoma BWA ...................................................... $100
San Jose BWA .................................................... $200

WANTED

Make a list of items with a short description and a mail to elise@fbfd.org or send to elise@fbfd.org (see below)

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

San Jose BWA .................................................... $200
Tassajara BWA ................................................... $100
Hoodsey BWA .................................................. $50

Correction

The Wheel of Dharma staff strives to be as accurate as possible with the information provided. If we make a mistake, we’re happy to correct it here—like in the March issue.

On the front page, the photo credit was omitted and should have been credited to Tony Nishiyama.

Buddhist Churches of America
Pre-War / WWII

Buddhist artificats:

Fresno, CA

APRIL 2011

Page 2

WHEEL OF DHARMA
Jodo Shinshu Throwing in the World

Throughout the year 2011 and the beginning of 2012, the 750th memorial services for Shinran Shonin will be observed in Kyoto, Japan. Many Shin Buddhists from the United States are planning to attend these services.

To commemorate this special event, the Jodo Shinshu Hongwan-ji-ha decided to launch many programs and projects to ensure the future of the Nembutsu movement. One of them is the English-language Jodo Shinshu Correspondence Course (JSCC) for non-Japanese speaking people residing outside of Japan. The JSCC office was established in Berkeley two and a half years ago under the Center for Buddhist Education. The JSCC is a two-year program. About 50 people have already completed the course and received their certificates. (See the excerpt below from an essay by Raymond Itaya.)

Because this is a cyber education program, we offer a face-to-face weekend seminar each August so that students can meet with other students and instructors. Last year we were privileged to have a special guest speaker from Kathmandu, Nepal. Reverend Sonam Bhutia is the first Jodo Shinshu minister actively sharing the dharma there as head of the Hongwanji Buddhist Society, Nepal. His temple has a membership of over 400 and had its official grand opening last March. Rev. Sonam was one of the highest level monks of the Tibetan tradition. Due to a wondrous karmic introduction to Jodo Shinshu, he became one of us and is now sharing his joy with people from many walks of life in Nepal, the birthplace of Shakymuni Buddha.

Rev. Sonam gave a very inspirational message to those who attended the JSCC Workshop. He also spoke in Fresno and San Mateo. In future issues of the Wheel of Dharma, we plan to share excerpts from a talk he gave to ministers at the Jodo Shinshu Center in February 2010. Many thanks to Helen and Alex Tagawa for transcribing Rev. Sonam’s talk.

In Gaisho,
Kodo Umeku

CROSSING OVER TO JODO SHINSHU

CBE wishes to send our thoughts and best wishes to the people of Japan in the wake of the disastrous earthquake and tsunami on March 11, 2011 and the continuing nuclear threat. Due to these events, the CBE Japan Tour is being rescheduled to a date later this year. The Buddhist Churches of America is currently collecting donations in the name of the Japan Earthquake & Tsunami Relief, using CBE’s Paypal system to facilitate immediate online donations. We are happy that we could assist in this manner.

WHEEL OF DHARMA
APRIL 2011 PAGE 3
Reflections on My First Year in the BCA Ministry

By Rev. Henry Toryo Adams
Oxnard Buddhist Temple

At this time last year, I had just arrived in the San Luis Obispo area from Japan. I was beginning my studies in Buddhism for the BCA and for the BCA Ministry, Buddhist Ministry, Buddhist Chaplaincy, and to pursue a graduate degree in Shinshu Center in Berkeley to take part in Minister’s Assistance Program SEMINAR and Minister’s Continuing Education. As a new minister, it is important for me to have a place where I can go to learn through conversations with experienced ministers.

By Joanne Yuasa
Ventura Buddhist Temple, B.C.A., Canada

TechnoBuddha Conference 2011: The Journey

By Rev. Henry Toryo Adams
Oxnard Buddhist Temple

By Joanne Yuasa
Ventura Buddhist Temple, B.C.A., Canada

The Institute of Buddhist Studies, a graduate Buddhist Seminary for Buddhists, located in the Soto Zen Buddhism tradition in Berkeley, CA, was established in 1963.

2011 IBS Spring Semester

The Institute of Buddhist Studies will be offering several new courses and a variety of returning classes.

EcoSangha Earth Day

San Jose Buddhist Church

The San Jose Buddhist Church EcoSangha will be offering April 24, an Earth Day Celebration at 640 North Fifth Street in San Jose. The event will include guest lecturer Reverend Doctor Mark Umoro, a professor at University of Oregon well-known for informative talks relating to Buddhism to ecology, who will speak at 9:30 a.m. for the Youth Service and 10-10:45 a.m. for the Adult Service. After services, Earth Day informational activities will be held in the Annex, including demonstrations such as worm composting, eco-friendly gardening tips, eco-friendly cleaning demonstrations, crafting with recyclables, etc.

The highlights of the event include a running video “The Ocean: A Synthesis” and a display of the winning entries of the eco-friendly art contest, Light snacks will be on sale and a fund-raising drawing will be held.

Any questions, contact Karen by email at kna1023@sbcglobal.net.

By Joanne Yuasa
Ventura Buddhist Temple, B.C.A., Canada

“Wow! I can’t believe you came all the way from Vancouver!”

For years, this weekend conference in San Jose has been a favorite of mine, and I fit the criteria, and when I heard that the keynote speaker for the conference would be Rev. David Matsunomo (Berkeley Buddhist Temple), it sealed the deal for me. My first Buddhist weekend in April 2010 was amazing, meeting like-minded and interesting people. The Shinshu Buddhism was so impressive that by the end of that conference weekend, I knew I’d be back for the next one.

Eleven months later, March 4, 2011, I boarded a plane and made my way back to the JSC. This was my third visit there in as many years, and every time, I felt welcomed and cared for by Rev. Umezu, Judy Kondo and the other BCA ministers. I have come to call the JSC “my temple away from temple.” And on that day, the welcomes were as warm as ever. Ironically, I was the first of the TechnoBuddhas to arrive that day, though I travelled the farthest. This year, temples from every district in California were repre- sented, with close to 60 TechnoBuddhas in attendance. We filled the IBS, sharing in the Jodo Shinshu tradition in light of this year’s theme: The Journey.

Our very dynamic and engaging keynote speaker, Riban Bob Oshita of the Sacramento Betsuin, grabbed our attention immediately by quoting a passage from the “Napoleon Dynamic.” As he began, “money is the most secure way to go down the road. A GPS receiver can determine your location, in some cases accurate to within a matter of feet. A GPS receiver can avoid heavy traffic or to compensate for operator error, service as a BCA minister. I am deeply grateful to you for your friendship and support. I am deeply grateful to Socho Koshin Ogai for all he has done to ensure that I have a supportive environment in which I can begin my ministerial service. Rev. Michael Endo has provided practical advice on the day-to-day responsibilities of a minister and wise counsel on matters of spiritual leadership. I am grateful to all the ministers of the Southern District and the BCA for their friendship and support. I am deeply grateful to Socho Koshin Ogai for all he has done to ensure that I have a supportive environment in which I can begin my ministerial service. Rev. Michael Endo has provided practical advice on the day-to-day responsibilities of a minister and wise counsel on matters of spiritual leadership. I am grateful to all the ministers of the Southern District and the BCA for their friendship and support.

As part of my ministerial orientation activities, I have had several opportunities to travel to the Jodo Shinshu Center in Berkeley and to the Jodo Shinshu Church in Portland. These trips have included in such a caring and dedicated community of colleagues. Among the many opportunities I have had to travel to and to learn and to be part of the IBS by the BCA members, the opportunity to travel to and to be part of the BCA is one of the most valuable experiences I have had during those years in the United States to begin my service as a BCA minister.

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Reflecting on the valuable advice and instruction that I have received from so many good and kind people, I realize that it is thanks to their kindness that I have been able to travel for my first year of service as a BCA minister. I am deeply grateful to the members of the Oxnard Buddhist Temple, the Buddhist Church of California in Los Angeles, the San Luis Obispo Buddhist Church, and the San Luis Obispo Buddhist Church for welcoming my wife Shoko and me into their Sanghas. As I have endeavored to find my way as a new minister, to serve the members of the Southern District and the BCA for their friendship and support, I am deeply grateful to Socho Koshin Ogai for all he has done to ensure that I have a supportive environment in which I can begin my ministerial service. Rev. Michael Endo has provided practical advice on the day-to-day responsibilities of a minister and wise counsel on matters of spiritual leadership. I am grateful to all the ministers of the Southern District and the BCA for their friendship and support.

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College Youth Retreat

By Harry Lee
George Mason University

Our Mason Buddhist Association was founded in October of 2009 by Chloe Brede and myself. After we welcomed our George Mason Campus Chaplain Rev. Kaz Nakata of Ekko to our association. During our school semester, Rev. Kaz leads our weekly Buddhist Meditation and Discussion at our Fairfax campus. Most of us did not grow up with Buddhism and its culture, but we could learn various Buddhist philosophies and teachings through the discussion and the book reading session with him. Actually we did not know who Shinran was until we used the book “Buddha’s Wish for the World” at our weekly session.

Last year we held two College Youth Retreat. One was at Ekko Temple and the other was at our campus. When we did the retreat at Ekko, Rev. Kaz invited Prof. B.N. Helder of George Washington University as our guest speaker and he spent over four hours to share his wisdom with us. We were so fortunate to have such a wonderful and energetic scholar in our Washington.

In America, issues of separation of church and state in its many dimensions, capital punishment, environmental issues, views on war and conscientious objection, gender issues, race issues, all involve spiritual perspectives and call for religious people to understand their faith and participate in resolving conflicts. Consequently, Shin Buddhism must address these issues as a world faith. It must show that it is more than just another view of salvation and the otherworld. Shinran requested his followers to throw his body into the Kamo river as food for the fish.14

In modern times Abbot Myōyō (1850–1903) of the Nisho Hongwanji attempted to reform the Sanga and bring it more in tune with the changing times of Meiji Japan. His daughter Kuji Takeo (1877–1928) is noted for her social and educational work and her selfless activities in the aftermath of the large earthquake that struck the Kantō region in 1923.

We need to highlight such people who brought the compassion and wisdom of Amida Buddha into society for the welfare of the ordinary person in order to illustrate how Shin Buddhism can contribute to society, as well as saving people for the next life. As a method of propagation, it is important to use history to illustrate and amplify the teachings of Shinran. Above all, by using history and viewing texts in the light of modern thought, we can bring to Western society the principles of Shinran’s teaching in a way that can reveal to them the depth of the Buddhist teachings and their meaning for the culture. A key point in propagation will be to deal with the issue of God in Western tradition. Shin Buddhist teachers must understand the various perspectives on the nature of God among Western theologians, the limits and problems of them.

We must stress that the basis of Shinran’s principles is his awareness of the eternal, cosmic reality Buddha. Infinite reality itself as Light and Life, which embraces us all with compassion and wisdom. We are ourselves a manifestation of that reality as the Vow works through us to open the spiritual eyes of the people we encounter with the truth for their lives. Shinran’s vision of the interdependence and oneness of all beings is a challenge for us, in whatever situation we are, to become channels for that compassion to reach others even in a small way. This is the true practice of propagation.

14Gajishō, chapter 16 (Shinshū Sōten Hannan Inki, 1988, pp. 936–37).

This article will be serialized and continued in the next few issues of the Wheel of Dharma.
Streamlining
Continued from Front Page
not commit to critical goals towards the Visits/Mission.

As a non-profit organization, we are heavily dependent on volunteers yes, we know that most volunteers have many priorities in their personal lives yes, many volunteers also have a strong commitment to their district-national and yes, we know all of the above, and still we are members and have support from the Center, organization, the districts, and to our individual temple, and to our membership.

There is an organizational saying to which I want to add – “If you fail to plan – you’re planning to fail.” I like to illustrate the BCA organization operation as a 1940’s motor vehicle and we are on a cost-effective, streamlined, less effort to operate, less maintenance cost — we need to trade in our 40’s car.

Recently, I served as an ad hoc committee, an Ad Hoc Strategic Planning group. We are reviewing and reassessing the Organization, asking Why, and How, and suggesting New Direction(s). “The Mission/ Vision statements from the past which is very relevant today, and we are going to focus on missions, goals, short-term, critical action plans with timelines, challenge obstacles, and ask ourselves what are the consequences if we are unable to surmount those obstacles.

We are going to ask you to partner with us (BCA National Board), to commit to a 5-year plan for our planning. The Strategic plan will address 1) Educational Critical goals, 2) Financial Critical goals, 3) Organizational Critical goals, 4) Ministry Critical goals.

We are looking at a 5 – 10 – 15 year plan. We will try our best to reach all members and 15 year. We are so successful. We will be a crawl. I am sure that you will have-- your cooperation, and organization.

The Strategic Plan Ad hoc group invites your assistance in developing our road map for the Visits. Your comments may be sent to, mgpl@bca.org.

Ekoji
Continued from Page 4
D. C., area. After his special lecture, Rev. Kaz’s wife, Michiko cooked Japanese Sukiyaki for us and it was so delicious. We stayed overnight at Ekoji and the campus was held with our special guest speaker, the President of the Sage Graduate College of Washington. He is known as a notable Buddhist Psychology Doctor. His lecture was very understanding about his experiences from all over the world. We were so fascinated to have him. We had 43 students for this retreat and we enjoyed the lot. It was so successful.

We always appreciate Rev. Kaz and Ekoji’s tremendous help and support to our association. We are so lucky to have Ekoji near our university. Palm together.
人生の問い

神とは何か、どういうのでしょうか。

答え 『神』といわれているものは、① 天地・山川・農耕・つかさどる神、すなわち支配神、② 山水・木・川などを自然に人格的に考え神、すなわち自然神、③ このをつつじせるもの、すなわち創造神、④ 帝・英雄、戦争などを功績のあった者をつくる神、すなわち軍神、⑤ 私をつくる神、すなわち祖先神、⑥ 祖母はわからないが、たたりの神、すなわち隠神神などさまざまな神です。

これらが共通して『神』とは、人間に超えた力を持ち、人間に威をもって影響をあたえると考えられている神の存在です。神の意志に基づかないものは許され、しかも人間の力によりさまざまな形で、神に与えられた力で、教えを聴いて、自然を模倣しながら行われます。

それにしても『神』とは『夫』からのものだ、または『代表』からのもの、というところであり、また『その表現』といわれるように、みずから現実の智慧に納め、さらに彼らかぎりはそれがとおってあるでしょう。

つまり、伝授は、神のように外には人間と人生を支配するものではなく、人間に内側から伝えられるもの、そして人間の心を変化をもたらし、かならずしなければならない方です。
日光焼による被害

米国仏教団よりのお願い

この度の東北関東大震災及び津波の被害を深く痛感しています。

米国仏教団では、震災後の復興に向けた支援活動を行っています。

「震災支援セール」を開催し、その収益を震災復興に使おうとしています。

来年も、震災復興の支援活動に協力いただける方々に感謝の意を表します。

合掌

米国仏教団

東京

2011年4月号

「東北地方太平洋沖地震」における

「観鷲聖人750回大還忌法要」に関する

浄土真宗本願寺派総長談話

去る3月11日に発生した東北地方太平洋沖地震の災害によって被災された皆様にお心よりお見舞い申し上げます。

また、この未亡人の災害によって野を失われた皆様、特にご家族の皆様に対し、心からお悔やみ申し上げます。被災された皆様の生活を支えるために、米国仏教団では各種の支援活動を行っています。

東北教区の住民の皆様へ感謝の意を表し、来年も震災復興を支援することを決意しています。

現在、浄土真宗本願寺派の会員全員が、震災復興に尽力することを決めています。

合掌

浄土真宗本願寺派

東京

2011年4月号

全員で頑張ろう

米国仏教団総合報告

小杭総長のメッセージ

日本時間の三月十日に日本を襲った地震とそれに続く大津波は、想像を超える被害をもたらしました。失われた多くの生命と、破壊された生活基盤に、我々がどのように助けるべきか、議論が広がっています。

ここに、被害を受けられた方々と、立ち上がりたい方々のご心を寄せて、米国仏教団を代表して、心よりお見舞い申し上げます。

仏教団の会員全員が、世界中の人々からお聞きいただく労を含み、これに地域社会の復興支援を通じて、この未亡人の困難から立ち上がる力を受け取っていただきたいと願っております。

合掌

徳山