By Rinban Bob Oshita, Sacramento Betsuin

The 2012 National Ministers' Association Meeting and the BCA National Council Meeting were hosted by the Northern California District at the Doubletree Hotel in Sacramento. This year, in conjunction with the meetings, Northern California held three fundraising events for the Jodo Shinshu Center. On Feb. 22, there was a kick-off golf tournament at the Lincoln Hills Golf Course and on Friday evening, Feb. 24, a Poker Tournament & Wine Tasting event was held at the Sacramento Betsuin. These three events were able to generate almost $7,000 to help with the debt relief.

This year, during the National Council Meeting, the YAC Council Meeting for our Bishop, Socho Koshin Ogui, they also came to thank Socho Ogui for his visionary creation of the Youth Minister’s Assistants Program and his support for the many YAC activities.

Friday morning, the National Council Opening Service was officiated by some of the Ministers’ Assistants from the Minister’s Assistants (MA) Program created by Socho Ogui. An inspiring message of self-reflection and mindful awareness was given by a Minister’s Assistant, Dr. Carmella Hirano, from the Salt Lake City Buddhist Temple. The Saturday morning Service was led by 40 Youth Minister’s Assistants (YMA) from throughout BCA, with Valerie Chun (from the White River Buddhist Temple) sharing how she has been able to apply essential Dharma lessons to her life in the working world as a Boeing Design Engineer. The Minister’s Assistant Program and the Youth Minister’s Assistant Program are two of the most innovative programs created by Socho Ogui to try to establish Jodo Shinshu as a major religious tradition in America. During the meetings it was discussed that although BCA is down 425 members this year, the dues assessment per member for the coming year will be around 2% less. Bishop and Mrs. Eric Matsunuma and three delegates, Fred Nonaka and wife, and Richard Onishi from the Hopma Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii attended along with the President of the Canada Kyodan, David Ohori and his wife, Monica, joined us for this year’s meetings.

The budget for the coming year was accepted and the National Council Meeting closed with a video of gratitude from the people recovering from the devastation of the Tohoku area of Japan last March.

The head of the BCA Ministers’ Association, Rev. Jerry Hirano with his officers and the Minister’s Assistant, Dr. Kent Matsuda (Enmanji) president-elect, Susan Nakata, Eastern District, (treasurer), Socho Koshin Ogui, Dr. Kurt Rye, Central California, (treasurer-at-large), Rev. Dean Koyama, Coastal District, (vice chair), and Rev. Kazuo Nakata, Eastern District, (treasurer-at-large).

Incoming National Board officers, from left to right: Ken Tanimoto (Watsonville) vice-president, Pauline Sakuma (Seattle) secretary, Ron Murakami (White River) president, Socho Koshin Ogui, Dr. Kent Matsuda (Enmanji) president-elect, Susan Botteri (San Mateo) vice-president, Alan Kita (Gardenia) treasurer.

Diversity in Oneness, Oneness in Diversity
The BWA’s Celebrating uniqueness, blending in, the Vine’s
“Nakai no Itsukushi: Shumi Nari!”

By Ron Murakami
BCA President
White River Buddhist Temple

By Ron Murakami
BCA President
White River Buddhist Temple

By Ron Murakami
BCA President
White River Buddhist Temple

Continued on Page 6

The history of this President’s column is relatively short-lived. As told to me by Rev. Ron Kobata, our Wheel of Dharma editor, Dr. Gordon Bermant started this column in 2006 soon after he began his term as Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) president, to provide a vehicle for sharing his thoughts with our BCA Sangha on a wide variety of subjects. Since inception the president has exercised a great deal of freedom with the contents and we’ve proceeded with no written guidelines, but have relied on common sense.

Fortunately we’ve retained that spirit of individuality, which is appropriate because this article has come to reflect the personality of the person in office and thus offers a unique perspective with which we can communicate our thoughts.

Using the term BCA Sangha is a liberty I’ve taken to express the feeling I hope all of you will adopt as a way of seeing BCA members and supporters as part of the greater collection of Jodo Shinshu followers. We stand to benefit by recognizing our common endeavors rather than feeling we’re primarily a part of an individual temple or church within the collection of Jodo Shinshu organizations spread throughout the continental United States. My personal feeling is that as BCA president I have a great responsibility to see that my submissions for the President’s Message includes mention of national...
I ellow Daifuku Friends. It has been eight months since I arrived in the U.S. to begin my ministry with the BCA as the resident minister of the Florin Buddhist Church. I am enjoying my new life, home, and sangha.

The past eight months have redefined my interactions quickly for me because of being involved with many special events such as Nisei Week, Nisei Student Veteran’s Recognition Day, and Northern California BWA conferences, and most recently the Northern California District Council hosting both the BCA National Council and Federal Officers and the JSC Teachers League conferences. Though it has been very busy being involved in all of these activities I have enjoyed working with all of the members in preparing for these events.

Having to adjust to life in America and developing my English is a major challenge for me and my wife Namiko. Even though I spent a year in Rochester, NY as an exchange student from Japan when I was in high school that was fourteen years ago, and since I did not have many occasions to use English in Japan I forgot a lot of what I had learned. In looking back on my life it has been filled with changes. Since my birth and early childhood in Tokyo, I think I’ve moved eight times before coming to the United States. I don’t recall completing a whole school year in any one place, until I entered college in Kyoto. I don’t know if you’re aware that Japan has many regional dialects, but because our family moved around the country, one of the tasks I had to get used to was trying to understand regional dialects. As a result I had a difficult time making new friends in the U.S. I was often sad at not having friends from childhood.

Being involved with a band also meant many adjustments to changes in both our performances, lyrics and music. So I’ve felt that my entire life has been a constant series of changes that required a lot of strength and effort to adjust to. However, although we may think that we should change, there are so many instances when we cannot change ourselves as we wish. Shinran Shonin spent twenty years in the Tendai monasteries of Mt. Hei to “change himself get rid of blind passions” to become a “good” person. He struggled to follow the religious practices and disciplines, but realized no changes or improvements in his sense of being. On the contrary, his illness and despair became even more apparent. Rather than eliminating more Poisons of ignorance, greed, and anger, his attempts at living in accord with the Buddhist Dharma seemed to intensify the effects of the Three Poisons. As Shinran Shonin was struggling with his frustration and despair at his inability to change, improve himself by following the prescribed self-powered practices, he had the good fortune of encountering the Pure Land teachings of the Nembutsu Path as preached by Honen Shonin. Based upon the Primal Vow of Amida Buddha to propagate the Pure Land compassionate and unconditional love and compassion, the heart of the Buddhist Dharma does not demand that “You must change!” Shinran realized a path of liberation for those who realize the impossibility of changing themselves by their own efforts. The Nembutsu Path is the path by which we are transformed by the Buddhist Dharma. For the sake of the change, the Buddhist Dharma changed into the form of Myōko Namo Amida Butsu. This is the Call of the Buddha assuring that, “If you cannot change, I will make the change for you. If you believe as you are, leave it to me.” As I described my life’s journey above, I’ve felt that my entire life has been a constant series of many times to fit and adjust to different places and situations. To bear the assurance that, “You are fine just as you are.” From a source of peace, comfort, and energy to live each day fully as I have it. My personal response to this encouragement is, “Thank you.” That is why we say the Nembutsu Path is the life of Namo Amida Butsu.

Continued on Page 6

“One of The Best Decisions I Ever Made” (Part 1 of 3)

By Brady Kameshige
Idaho-Oregon Buddhist Temple


As Rev. Bob mentioned, my name is Brady Kameshige, and I’m from Seattle Washington. I’m originally from Ontario, Oregon and grew up attending the Idaho-Oregon Buddhist Temple. Which is home of the great Reverend Dennis Fujimoto! He’s the man. And he’s there tonight, good to see ya Rev. All right, good to have some home support. Hah, anyway, it’s great to be here this weekend, and it’s really nice to see so many people here tonight in support of Bishop Kushin Ogúi’s final National Council Meeting and Retirement Banquet. Besides me when I say that it is only a great honor to have this opportunity to say a few words to all of you… the leaders of BCA! I know a lot of you are probably wondering who I am, or thinking, “What is this kid doing up there? He’s no minister or anyone famous!” So to answer that, I’m up here because I have been privileged enough to have attended the first ever BCA Youth Advocacy Committee Retreat back in 2005. Since then, I’ve been able to attend many other BCA sponsored youth events, all of which were made possible by the generous support from members and temple leaders like yourselves…and most definitely, from the great support from Bishop Ogúi.

It is of this because I’ve been asked to share with you a few experiences and reflections on these events, and how they’ve impacted my life, and others as well. There are many youth retreat participants here tonight, and it’s great to see all you again. We all relate to the one who they thought they could convince to give speech. Actually, if I had it my way, I’d rather have all of you guys speak up and say a few words on how you’ve benefitted from Socho Ogúi’s support… but that would make this a long 15 page story.

All right, it all started about seven years ago. It was the Summer of 2005. With the inspiration and support from our Bishop, Socho Ogúi, the BCA held its first ever Youth Advocacy Committee Retreat. At that time, I was just in high school, and I remember seeing the flyer for this event, on the bulletin board in my church. At first glance, I didn’t think much of it, and I really didn’t know what it was all about. But then my church’s student leaders started telling me about this to let me take a look and I really considered going. And then they even said they’d pay for most of it. So I took their advice, and read over it a little more. And it got me thinking, “well seven days? it’s in Sacrament! We’ve never been over there before!”

But then some of my church leaders started telling me to look at it a little more serious and consider going. And then they even said they’d pay for most of it. So I took their advice, and read over it a little more. And it got me thinking, “well seven days? It’s in Sacramento! We’ve never been over there before!”

So you gotta remember, this is the middle of summer, school out, and summer basketball and football hasn’t...
March 2012 • News and Highlights

SHINRAN’S QUEST: Understanding Himself to Understand the Human Condition

What problems was Shinran facing in his personal and social life and what solutions did he discover in the sutras? How do these problems and solutions apply to us today? What do these problems and solutions mean for human beings as a whole, regardless of time or place? These are the issues that will be addressed in the upcoming Pacific Seminar 21st Century, “Shinran’s Quest: Understanding Himself to Understand the Human Condition.”

A key component of the event will be the relationship between the doctrines in Tatsushii and the Nirvana Sutra and how this perspective was used by Shinran to understand the core teachings of the Larger Sutra and the Contemplation Sutra. This way of studying Shinran is something that is rarely if ever discussed in English language materials. Join us as Dr. Mark Blum of the State University of New York (SUNY) at Albany examines this perspective on Shinran and Shin thought.

The Pacific Seminar 21st Century is being supported by a generous donation from the Sudoana Fund, a charitable fund founded by the Unno family in memory of Rev. Enryu Unno, their father and grandfather, and a former BCA minister. We will be joined by Rev. Dr. Mark Unno, who will give a brief message from the Unno family to the participants. On Sunday, we will have an interesting session with Rev. Dr. Unno and Dr. Blum on how they see Jodo Shinshu in America today and tomorrow. Please reserve the weekend to come and join in “Shinran’s Quest” at the Jodo Shinshu Center in Berkeley.

Dr. Mark Blum is Professor of Japanese Studies at the University at Albany, State University of New York (SUNY). He taught in the Faculty of Literature and Philosophy at the University of Kyoto (SUNY) at Albany examines this perspective on Shinran and Shin thought. His latest book is "Rennyo: A Life of Shinjin Winter Pacific Seminar 21st Century (Oxford University Press, 2006); "Understanding Himself to Understand the Human Condition" (www.BuddhistChurchesofAmerica.org) of the Southern District Ministers’ Association (SDMA). Dr. Blum met with ministers in the SDMA and they agreed to host the event at the LA Betsuin.

At the event date came, the Shinran’s Quest participants grew to over three times what we had expected! We were surprised, happy, and also a bit concerned about how we would carry out all that needed to be done. However, thanks to the leadership of Rev. Briones, more and more volunteers stepped forward and got involved. When Yumi and Eddy arrived in LA to help on the day of the event, everyone knew what was happening and what they were expected to do. There were over 30 people, including ministers and members, assisting us with various tasks.

If you get four people to move one table, the workload is lighter. But you cannot succeed if everyone tries to move it in their own direction. If everyone understands the project and mission, however, a big job can be accomplished quite smoothly.

In our local and national organizations, we can be more effective if everyone shares the same founding spirit, vision, and mission. This is called fusion. With this outlook, we can move even a massive mountain.

The success of the Winter Pacific Seminar 21st Century is an example of organizational fusion. Everyone was in sync. On behalf of the Institute of Buddhist Studies and the BCA, I would like to express our appreciation to the SDMA, the Southern District Buddhist Education Committee, and to each and every person who made the seminar possible and meaningful.

I would like to conclude my short message by saying that when the heart and mind of Buddha and ours become one, a fusion takes place. In this fusion, we find a mind of true settlement in this life.

In gassho.

www.BuddhistChurchesofAmerica.org

Institute of Buddhist Studies and Center for Buddhist Education present: Pacific Seminar 21st Century Shinran’s Quest: Understanding Himself to Understand the Human Condition

Dr. Mark Blum
Professor, University of Albany, State University of New York

July 6-8, 2012
at the Jodo Shinshu Center, Berkeley, California
Registration Donation: $125 due by June 1
Early Registration: $100 due by May 1
Student Rate: $50 with student ID
For more details and online registration, visit
CBE 2012 Japan Tour

CBE 2012 Tentative Calendar of Events

March 2-4: TechnoBuddhaConference: “Who Am I?”
March 22-24: Minister’s Assistant Program (MAP II & III)
March 29-30: BCA 2012 Japan Tour
April 10-13: International Hong Kong Overseas Propagation Exchange (HOPE)
April 11: Public Event: Dharma Messages by HOPE Ministers
April 19-21: Minister’s Assistant Program (MAP I & III)
May 4-6: Crossing Over to Jodo Shinshu Buddhism
May 10-12: Japanese Seminar * June 22-23: Women’s Seminar
May 6-8: Pacific Seminar 21st Century: “Shinran’s Quest”
July 21-27: Young Buddhist’s Int’l Cultural Study Exchange (YBIocene) Reunion
July 27-29: College YBA Retreat (at San Luis Obispo)
July 30-August 3: Waking Up to the Dharma
August 3-5: Jodo Shinshu Correspondence Course Workshop
October 19-21: College YBA Seminar
October 22-24: Women’s Seminar
November 3: Japanese Seminar * November 9: College YBA Seminar
October 22-24: Chaplains’ Advanced Training Seminar (CATS)
November 3: Japanese Seminar * November 9: Baby Boomer’s Seminar

Dates and programming subject to change
**Examining a Life of Shinjin**

By Haru Matsumune

Two hundred people gathered for the inaugural Winter Seminar 2012, in a room. The celebration was held on the 100th anniversary of Buddhism in Utah at the Calvin L. Rampton Salt Palace Convention Center including a service, luncheon and Benediction. The keynote speaker was Rev. David Matsumoto, director of the Center for Contemporary Shin Buddhism Studies at the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) and resident minister at the Berkeley Buddhist Temple. The all-day seminar included a lecture, Q&A session, workshops, and a panel presentation to examine and discuss the theme: “A Life of Shinjin.”

Rev. William Briones (LA Betsuin) began his welcome message by quoting Shinran Shonin: “It is simply shinjin that is inaccessible, inexplicable, and indecipherable.” Thus, the Winter Seminar addressed an experience that transcends human conception, is beyond explanation, and cannot be described in words.

In his keynote address, Rev. Matsumoto observed that: “In considering the range of descriptions and explanations of shinjin in Shin Buddhism thought, it is suggested here that the word “shinjin” signifies the entirety of the religious life of the follower of the nembutsu, and points to the complexities and subtlety of the Buddhist path.” *A life of shinjin* is the unique and nuanced experience of “becoming

**Buddhism: A Paradigm for Society**

**Rev. Jerry Hirano Receives 25th Anniversary Recognition**

The Institute of Buddhist Studies began its 2012 Spring Session with a total of 72 students.

Of the total number of students 36 are IBS students, 13 are in the common MA program (degree jointly given by IBS and GTU) of which two are ministerial, 13 chaplaincy, and one general on leave of absence; nine MBS program of which six are ministerial, one ministerial on leave of absence, two chaplaincy; two, Buddhist Church of Florin; four, Emoto Practice; three, Kyoshiki Certification Program; and nine auditors, two ministerial and seven general.

Of GTU students, there are 36 of which 21 are onsite students. Of the students 18 are MA, two Ph.D., and one auditor. There are 17 students taking online courses of which six are MA, and one special student.

The IBS is currently at the point of providing a wide range of Buddhist ministerial education and Chaplaincy education to a wide variety of students. We hope that our endeavors, with the support of the BCA, will be able to contribute to the Buddhist world the meaning of the dynamic workings of the Dharma,” said Dr. Richard Payne, IBS Dean.

**Saving Success**

By Ron Murakami

BCA President, White River Buddhist Temple

With this issue I’ve asked our Wheel of Dharma editor to start a Sharing Success column as a way of helping our BCA temples gain and keep members, and for directly benefiting existing members. We’ll share ideas already in use since they’ve been time-tested and can thus save us the effort of creating similar ideas and may inspire us to even improve on them as we adapt them to our temples and churches. We do many things well and I’m hoping we’re willing to share our success to benefit our larger BCA Sangha. Each month this section will summarize one or two ideas and lists contacts if more information is desired. We’ll start with ideas from temples I’ve personally visited but I’m hoping the bulk of ideas will be submitted by our BCA temples in response to an external call to see what points come up for lay-persons and clergy-persons. In some cases the ideas aren’t new but have unique implementations that make them particularly appealing.

• The Oregon Buddhist Temple participates in “Buddhist Day in the Park” the first Saturday of June. This is the event referred to as “Change Your Mind Day” by Buddhist groups in other parts of the country. The groups gather together, and have informational tables, to themselves, and children’s programs and a keynote address. In 2011 Rev. Gibbs gave the keynote address. Oregon Buddhist Temple has found that interested parties come to the temple the next day and, in some cases, become long-term members. (The original description of this idea was submitted by Rev. Gregory Jundo Gibb, Resident Minister of Oregon Buddhist Temple.)

• The Tacoma Buddhist Temple employs assigned greeters to welcome first-time visitors and ease their participation in service. The greeters only provide a smiling face but explain the parts of the services as they sit with the guests. The guests are introduced toward the end of service and, if interested, are offered the opportunity to pose questions to the Resident Minister or the Minister’s Assistants. Among those assigned to be greeters are members of the temple board since it’s felt that other members might have other responsibilities and therefore aren’t willing to volunteer. The Tacoma Buddhist Education Committee assigns greeters in advance for each service. We’ve found that the greeters are also a strong source of involvement for the greeters. (Tacoma Buddhist Temple member Jeff Hiroto, President David Yotsuuye, and Minister’s Assistant Ted Tamaki provided inputs for this idea.)

**SavetheDate!!! September 15, 2012**

**SAVE THE DATE!!! September 15, 2012**

The joint temples of Utah—Salt Lake, Ogden and Honeyville will be hosting the 100th anniversary of Buddhism in Utah. The celebration will be held at the Calvin L. Rampton Salt Palace Convention Center including a service, lunch and Benediction. Please join us on this momentous occasion. For further information please log on to www.utahbuddhism.org.

**May Peace and Tranquility Prevail Throughout the World**

**Buddhist Church of Florin** 7220 Ponderosa Road Sacramento, CA

**Keynote Speakers**
Rev. Yoshi Nagayama (Japanese) Buddhist Church of Florin Rev. Yudoh Matsumoto (English) Buddhist Church of Florin

**Workshops**

**Event is from 8:00 am – 3:00 pm**
Registration fee is $45 per person, includes lunch. Deadline for registration is March 31, 2012.

**Registration Information** Peggy Okabayashi (916) 686-5621

**SAVE THE DATE!!!**

**MC District Council and MC Buddhist Women’s Association Annual Conference**

“Women, Peace and Tranquility”

**Panelists**
Socho Koshin Ogui, Rev. Jerry Hirano, and Carmela Hirano.

**Continued on Page 4**

**Socho Koshin Ogui presenting the retirement certificate to Rev. Jerry Hirano for his 25 years of service. From left: Socho Koshin Ogui, Rev. Jerry Hirano, and Carmela Hirano.**

**SAVE THE DATE, APRIL 21, 2012**

**NC District Council and NC Buddhist Women’s Association Annual Conference**

“Women, Peace and Tranquility”

Buddhist Church of Florin 7220 Ponderosa Road Sacramento, CA

**Keynote Speakers**
Rev. Yoshi Nagayama (Japanese) Buddhist Church of Florin Rev. Yudoh Matsumoto (English) Buddhist Church of Florin

**Workshops**

**Event is from 8:00 am – 3:00 pm**
Registration fee is $45 per person, includes lunch. Deadline for registration is March 31, 2012.

**Registration Information** Peggy Okabayashi (916) 686-5621

**Walking the Path of Enlightenment 100 years of Buddhism in Utah**

**SAVE THE DATE!!! September 15, 2012**

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Factors for Growth

The growth of American Buddhism can be attributed to four factors. The importance of religion, America values religion to a much higher degree than most other Western countries. Many people generally respect religious professionals, who also play vital leadership roles in the community. Parents make a concerted effort to provide religious education for their children, for religion is regarded as superior to the materialistic West. Consequently, the appeal of Buddhism lay in the fact that it was one of the superior Asian religions that could more effectively respond to the spiritual demands of the industrialized West.

Societal openness. The second reason for the growth of American Buddhism lies in the fundamental sociopolitical changes that took place in the 1960s, with greater openness toward religions other than Protestantism. For example, John F. Kennedy, a Catholic, was elected president, and the Catholic Church itself underwent the liberalization process of the Second Vatican Council. And the new immigration laws of 1965 facilitated the arrival of more people from non-Western countries.

Spirituality. The third factor in this growth has to do with the change in the very nature of American religiosity, wherein people are more attracted to spirituality than to organizational religion. More people are heard saying, “I am not religious, but I am spiritual.” A noted scholar of religion defined spirituality as “personal experience tailored to the individual’s own quests,” and he went on to define spirituality in five key terms, connectedness, unity, pure unhappiness, harmony, and centeredness. This differs from the five terms that characterize traditional religion, which are God, sin, faith, repentance, and morals.

Buddhism, as presented in America, is characterized more by the former set of terms than the latter, which makes it more in accord with the changing trend. As part of this attraction to spirituality that stresses personal experience, Buddhism has been particularly effective in the following three areas.

First, the healthy attitude of Buddhism when dealing with the suffering, in such as old age, death, and “losing” Buddhism sees suffering as a natural part of life that needs to be understood, accepted, and turned into a springboard for living a more full and meaningful life. Second, Buddhism gives much more value to the personal understanding of the individual, for the teaching cannot make sense if it is not brought to bear directly to the experience of the individual. This is the reason why many American Buddhists are particularly fond of these famous words of the Buddha: “Do not accept a statement on the ground that it is found in our books . . . or because the teacher said so.”

The third area of spirituality lies in people’s attraction to meditation. This is probably one reason for the growth of American Buddhism. Many find Buddhist meditation easy to do, mentally therapeutic, and spiritually fulfilling. In people’s attraction to meditation, in particular, is the main practice in Zen, Therasa, and Tibetan schools, which offers the largest number of converts.

The Dalai Lama’s influence.

The fourth reason for the growth lies in the positive image of one individual, the fourteenth Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso. He is well known as a Nobel Peace Prize laureate and an exiled leader of Tibet, but his impact in the West has been enormous. He is highly loved and respected by the thousands who flock to hear his talks during his numerous American visits. The popularity of the Dalai Lama lies in the fact that he is regarded as a spiritual leader who is peaceful, tolerant, and accessible, thus helping to foster a new and refreshing form of American religiosity.

Annual conference shares Buddhist traditions, beliefs

By Chelsea Bannach

The Spokane Buddhist temple will be a host to the 750th Memorial Service for Shinran Shonin, the 12th century Japanese Buddhist monk, during the 65th Annual Northwest Buddhist Convention this weekend in Spokane.

Kekai Komori, president of the temple, said at a convention workshop that the event occurs in a different city.

In most attendance were Buddhists, but some were just curious to learn a little more about the many traditions, beliefs and practices of Buddhism.

One common misconception is that Buddhism is worshiping as a God. “Buddha was a real person,” said Anne Paulin, an event organizer.

Another misconception is that Buddhism is all about sacrifice and suffering. “It’s not that way,” the speaker said.

The speaker said that the true spirit of Buddhism is “peace and compassion.”

By Seigen Yamaoka

The auspicious 750th Shrinan Memorial for Shinran Shonin came to the Honganji-ji at the 2012 January Hosonko Service. No. 10, 2011, my wife and I together with sister-in-law, June Matsuyama, Rev. and Mrs. Ori Fukitaka, retired from Canada; and Rev. Shimomura Makino, retired from Hawaii; attended the 750th service as special guests as retired overseas ministers.

Without question it was a unique pleasure to attend the service, since I also attended the 700th Service 50 years before as a student at Bryokko University in Kyoto. The rituals were impressive both times, however, the years something has slightly changed.

50 years ago, when I entered the Hondo, I could hear individuals saying the Nembutsu at the sides of the room. It was a free flowing wave of voices expressing their joy and gratitude at being a part of this special moment. There was a reverence, devoid of the murmuring of conversations that usually happens at any gathering. It was an awesome feeling to be a part of this service full of “Namanda, Namanda . . .”

50 years later, as we entered the Hondo there was noticeable conversations going on until the service began. There was marked silence among the audience once the service started. Then, I heard a deep, clear voice, saying “NAMANDA, NAMANDA . . .” It was a voice coming from a lady sitting in the special guest section. I could not take my eyes off from her. She was an elegant dressed lady with white hair, but her voice was loud, clear and respectful of the service procedure. She was a single voice of joy and gratitude throughout the service, in the silence among those who attended the service.

Over the years a change occurred in that there was more of an orderly control over the service. The free flowing Nembutsu became the Nembutsu of recitation when the chairperson says, “Gasodo, Nembutsu,” that is, “Palm together, say the Nembutsu, and Bow.” Over the years it may be that the free flowing Nembutsu style was changed to a more silent, controlled and respectful service.

Yet, when I listened the clear single voice of Namanda, I felt the significance and meaning of the 750th Memorial Service for Shinran Shonin. Namanda, Namanda . . .
President’s Message

Continued from Front Page

activities that may be of
distinction to all information, the
organization of national and
international Shin
English. I believe this marks a
change of leadership within BCA.
In his retirement speech, Bishop
Socho’s request to combine the two
rather than shoveling dirt and
reducing the Jodo Shinshu
organization for providing a
wonderful time visiting three Southern
Temple in mid-February, I can
largely to thank their members.
for support of BCA and
Mukojima explained the
connection between two AAAs:
the auto club and Rev. Matsu-
Mukojima’s Awareness, Authenticity,
and Appreciation.
Since our last meeting, we
have encountered Robert as the gracious
host of tours of the building. BCA
and its affiliated organizations, always
have been friends, and I am the better
off for it. That relationship has helped
me to be a better teacher, and I hope
that you, as members of BCA, will
benefit from the relationship as well.
I have become friends, and I am the better
accomplished during his eight years of
service to BCA.
and his grandparents, Isao and
Mary Kameshige (Ontario, Oregon) also
attended the celebration. Robert is a
junior in high school when he attended
the first ever YAC Retreat in 2005. He
was among the first wave of young
Buddhists to be exposed to the practice
of Buddhism. He became a recognized
member of the BCA Southern District,
under the leadership of Bishop
Brady. He is currently serving as a
member of the BCA Southern District
Executive Committee.

Dr. Bloom

Continued from Page 4

individual differences in
capacities and roles that enable
us to realize our true nature.
In fact, the Buddhist perspective on
diversity focuses on enabling us
to bring meaning into others’ lives.
We are not suggesting that
Buddhism de-sacralized the
world we want to help create.
In his workshop, Rev.
Raisan (San Fernando Valley
Hongwanji) explained the
dharma reflected in the
poetry of Kobayashi Issa.
Rev. Iwahara (Vesuvio
Hongwanji) and Rev. Yusho
Mukojima (San Diego) con-
derived a chanting session
of Irya Retsan from Zenji’s Oey
Retsan.
Everyone then reconvened
for the panel session, moderated
by Rev. Kodo Umezoe, which
featured workshops by Revs.
Henry Adams (Ontario),
Henry Iwahara (Venice
Los Angeles), and Revs.
Adams and Robert. The
workshop on the connection
between two AAAs: the
auto club and Rev. Matsu-
moto’s Awareness, Authenticity,
and Appreciation.
Rev. Iwahara described how
one of his teachers at Ryikou
University addressed his
concern about recognizing
whether or not one “had
socho’s” Not having been raised in
the Buddhist tradition, Rev.
Usuki and Rev. Adams related
how they encountered Shinran’s teachings.
Thank you to IBS and BCA
Center for Buddhist Education for
spreading the word about BCA
through the Buddhist Southern
District’s Members’ Association and
the Southern District Education Committee
for their organizational efforts,
and to LA Nishi Betsuin for hosting this
event.
With all the downtown
energies and the spring-like weather, the
causes and conditions (sangha) were
just right for self-reflec-
tion.
Continued from Front Page

Shinjin

Continued from Page 4

true selves.” To illustrate this
process, Rev. Matsumoto
cited the following haiku poem:
“Ah! How bittersweet! / Is the
bitterness at the root of
presumption.” That is, with
the sun, wind, and other
circumstances, the bitterness of
presumption naturally transforms
into sweetness. So, too, are we
transformed—little by little—
by a growing awareness of
ourselves as “foolish beings” and a
depening sense of acceptance for
being allowed to live, sono mama,
just as we are.
In Mahayana Buddhism there is
the principle of “Upaya” which
means teaching people according
to their abilities and taking into
account their individual
differences. It suggests a person-
centered approach to education.
As also the ideal of the
Buddha-to-be, the Bodhisattva, expresses
as a virtue, compassion to others as a
way to fulfill ourselves. It teaches
that there is no given meaning to life except
in bringing meaning into others’ lives.
The question we should be
asking is not: what is the
meaning of my life? But, rather:
what am I meaningful to others?
There is no meaning to my life
that does not include others.
was seeking solutions based in the
historical, a non-abstract standard, we should
consider the impact our actions
have on others.
Buddhist education is about
humaneness, less violence and
compassionate efforts to
improve life. In the context of our
temporary individualistic and
competitive lives, Buddhism can help us to
derstand the interdependence of life and our
mutual responsibilities. It can provide a
spiritual context for re-establishing ourselves to
the fundamental values that have
undergirded the ideal of the
American dream and give it a
new reality in contemporary
life.
Reprint with permission from the
H燹 Press. This article concludes the
series.

Shinjin Continued from Page 4

In Shin Buddhism, Shinran rejected
the teachings of the Buddha’s
teachings. In Shin
Buddhism, Shinran rejected the
the Way. People might claim
something to do not have
nothing that he claimed for himself.
There is a spiritual
basis for human dignity and
rights.
Another aspect is the
Continued from Front Page

Robert Noeguchi

Continued from Page 2

campaign. He became a recognized
presence at the meetings of the
districts and the National Board.
and the unique and unconditioned
support of Socho Oguri to nurture the
Dharma within the young members
of BCA. His presentation will be published in
the Wheel of Dharma for our readers to
enjoy.
It was a special few days praising the
legacy of the Buddha. Robert
and his brother, operate a farm
in Ontario. And they grow
a host of vegetables and
grapefruit. In Ontario. And they
grow oranges, corn, potatoes,
heat, etc... it’s a lotta work.
And it’s hot. And so, my
dad being the boss and all,
I know that he thoroughly
does what I do. And I knew,
that if I didn’t go to this
retreat, I’d be home,
me up at the crack of dawn to

Dr. Bloom:Continued from Page 4

individual differences in

continuing to live, against

Brady & Socho

Continued from Page 2

But in the end, attending that Retreat
was one of the best decisions
I’ve ever made.

PAGE 6 WHEEL OF DHARMA MARCH 2012
本堂の中心で愛をさけぶ

ローダ仏教会

話し合い

この場を盛り上げるために、生花を準備したり、好きな花の香りを揺らしたりする季節もある。また、日本教の各種シーン、特別な季節の行事もある。

好きな花の愛の告白の日、春の暖かさで、光を浴びるカップルに、心に寄り添うもの。

3、読経

仏教の教えは、万法に現れる。喜びも苦しみも、すべてのものがある。

4、相手を尊敬

仏教の教えは、万法に現れる。喜びも苦しみも、すべてのものがある。

5、愛

仏教の教えは、万法に現れる。喜びも苦しみも、すべてのものがある。

この場に集っている皆さんも、それぞれの思いを伝え、お互いに理解し、尊重し合えてほしいことを願っています。

愛をさけぶためには、相手を充分に理解し、尊重することが重要です。それぞれの思いを伝えるとき、相手の気持ちもよく考えることが大切です。

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2012年開教使会議＆米国仏教団年次総会
新しい出発に向けて

春の日差しを感じさせるサラレントのダブルツリーホテルにて、2月23日に開教使会議、24日と25日に米国仏教団年次総会が開催されました。ダストとしてワヒ教団からはエリック・マツモト総長、マツモト夫人、フロディック・ノカミ、リチャード・オオナたち、カナダ教団からはデビッド・オオホリ理事長とオオホリ夫人が参加されました。24日の開催式はミニアドアリスタントによるサービスで、グレース・ハタノ開教使助手が導師を務め、マリチェ・ヒラノ開教使助手による法話が行われました。また25日の朝のサービスはユースミニアドアリステントにより行われ、司会、お勤め、法話の全てを彼らが務めました。上掲の写真は彼らによるお勤めの様子です。

会議では、各教区・各委員会からのレポート、2012年の予算と新役員の承認、新しいプログラムであるDharma offeringについての話し合い等が行われました。新総長に梅津広道開教使、新理事長にロン・ムラカミ氏（ホワイトリバー仏教会）、副理事長にスーザン・ボタンさん（サンマテオ仏教会）とケン・タニモト氏（ワッソンビル仏教会）、書記にポーリーン・サクマ氏（シアトル別院）、会計にアラン・キタ氏（ガーデナ仏教会）、次期理事長にケント・マツダ氏（園満寺）が承認されました。そして教団本部事務長のヘンリー・シバタ氏が退職され、新しくケン・タニモト氏がBAC本部の手伝いをされ、またBAC財団のフォンと一緒にさんとヒロコ・ヤマオカさんが退職しました。

他に、浄土真宗センターのためにカナダ教団より6500ドル、ハワイ教団より5000ドルを寄付する各団体が報告されました。また、昨年の東北地方の地震災害復興のために100万ドルを超える義捐金をBACとして送りましたが、その震災復興の様子を紹介するビデオが会議の最後に放映されました。

なお、昨年の12月にてBAC21世紀キャンペーンが終了いたしました。「BAC21世紀キャンペーン」に、おおよそ1900万ドルのご寄付をいただきましたこと、皆様のご協力に感謝いたします。約束されております寄付に関しては引き続きBAC本部のミナ・フジモトさんが受け付けております。よろしくお願いいたします。

24日の日にサラレント別院にてデニーズリングのためのポーカートーナメントやワインの試飲会が行われました。また会場ではブログ開教使と菅原開教使によるベースギター演奏や青山開教使のハーモニカ演奏などの余興が行われ、足を運んだたくさんの人々の目と耳、味覚を楽しませました。

最終日の25日の夜には小杭総長の引退パーティーが盛大にとりおこなわれました。ハワイ教団のエリック総長夫人より生花のレイが贈られ、総長、マユミ夫人、愛娘のあやかさんの献身的なBCAへの貢献に参加者の皆さんから大いなる拍手が送られました。また昨年末に長年にわたる開教使生活を終え、引退されましたジョージ・シバタ開教使がBCA教団ならびに本山より表彰され、さらにソルトレイク仏教会のジェリー・ヒラノ開教使が勤続25年で表彰されました。

65年に入ると念仏への熱き思い

2月17日から19日の3日間かけて、「阿弥陀様のお慈悲の下で」というテーマで第65回北西部教区仏教伝布大会が、ワシントン州のスポケン・デニーズホールにて開催されました。18日と19日には、ミニアドアリスターのグレース・ハタノ開教使助手によるレッスンも行われ、参加者と開教使をもとより深い知識の習得に励みました。

この仏教伝布大会は今年で65回目となります。また、「地球温暖化への対策」をテーマにしたワークショップも開催され、参加者の皆様に今後の地球温暖化対策の重要性を理解していただきました。