



“The Calling Voice”

Ka Leo Kāhea

VOLUME 1 • ISSUE 1 NOVEMBER 2021

Official Publication of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii



Welcome to Inaugural Issue of ‘Ka Leo Kāhea’

BY REV. ERIC MATSUMOTO
BISHOP
HONPA HONGWANJI MISSION OF HAWAII

I would like to extend my heartfelt greetings to all of you! I, also, express my deepest gratitude to you for picking up this inaugural issue of the official newsletter of the Honpa

BISHOP'S CORNER

Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, “Ka Leo Kāhea” or “The Calling Voice.”

Please allow me to introduce and explain the logo for this statewide newsletter. It may look familiar to many of you as it is adapted from the Buddhist Study Center logo which was featured on the Metta newsletter, but with some additional symbols.

First, the background of the light purple colored ocean without a solid border expresses the limitless and boundless ocean of Dharma or Supreme Enlightenment. The white lines depict waves which express the dynamic nature of Wisdom and Compassion which is continually in motion like the waves in the oceans.

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In 2012, the Government of Japan recognized the Rev. Yoshiaki Fujitani for his contributions to Hawaii's Japanese American community by presenting him with The Wooden Cup with the Chrysanthemum Crest. Several of his friends from Hawaii's interfaith community attended the presentation at the Japanese Consulate. Pictured from left are: wife Tomi Fujitani; Maryknoll Sister Joan Chatfield; the Rev. Yoshiaki Fujitani; Bishop Stephen Randolph Sykes of the Inclusive Orthodox Church; Bishop Eric Matsumoto of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii and his wife Tamayo; Edna Muneto and the Rev. Tatsuo Muneto, then rimban (chief minister) of Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin. (Credit: Karleen Chinen).

ALOHA ‘OE, REV. YOSHIAKI FUJITANI Former Bishop Lived Life of Gratitude and Aloha

Editor's Note: The following remembrance was written by Karleen Chinen, the former and longtime editor of The Hawaii Herald. It appeared in June in The Hawaii Herald and is being reprinted with the permission of Karleen Chinen. This is Part 1. Part 2 will appear in the second issue of Ka Leo Kāhea.

BY KARLEEN CHINEN
COMMENTARY
SPECIAL TO THE HAWAII HERALD

A minister. A former bishop.

Keiki o ka ‘āina — a child of Hawaii. Son. Brother. Husband. Father. Grandfather. A grateful World War II veteran. A man of great foresight and compassion. A gifted and thoughtful writer. A lunch buddy and, most of all, a precious friend. In his 97 years of life, Yoshiaki Fujitani was all of those, and more.

On May 17, the Rev. Yoshiaki Fujitani passed peacefully into Amida Buddha's Pure Land, just as his wife Tomi had 14 months earlier. The Fujitanis were not victims of COVID-19, although the isolation may

have accelerated his demise, for it kept the congenial man who had such a natural way with people confined at home.

I knew of Rev. Fujitani long before we became friends. At the time, he was the bishop of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, a position he held from 1975 to 1987.

I met him after he had retired as bishop and had taken on a new role as the director of the Buddhist Study Center. He had asked me to talk about my

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Lay Convention 2021— Just a Click Away

Theme Is 'Dharma Visibility, Relevance, and Engagement'

BY JEAN HESELDEN
MAKAWAO HONGWANJI MISSION

Hosted by the Maui United Lay Association, the 58th State Lay Association Convention was held on Sept. 10-11, 2021, in a virtual format using the Zoom platform.

Our theme was “Dharma Visibility, Relevance, and Engagement.” For the second year in a row, while the restrictions imposed by the COVID pandemic caused us to miss the face-to-face interaction of in-person meetings, we saved considerable time and expense for travel.

In the Friday evening sessions, we elected the Directors, Officers, and Advisors for 2021-2022, approved resolutions to support establishing the statewide Honpa Hongwanji newsletter in print and electronic formats, statewide online calendar, and an annual endowment campaign. We approved a resolution of appreciation and condolence for Mr. Yoshio Kijima, a pioneer member of the Makawao Hongwanji. The host for the 59th State Lay Association Convention was announced as the United Lay Association of Oahu.

Saturday's opening service was a skillful blend of pre-recorded music, ringing of the temple bell, chanting, and recitation, along with live streamed welcome messages by Bishop Matsumoto and Honpa President Warren Tamamoto, and an energizing

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Our Organization's Focus Is on Buddhist Education Activities

“Education is not preparation for life, education is life itself.”
— John Dewey

BY DEBBIE KUBOTA
COMMISSIONER, HONOLULU
DISTRICT BUDDHIST EDUCATION

John Dewey was an academic philosopher and was famous for his role in progressive education, which emphasizes the need to learn by doing.

This quote brings awareness to the kinds of educational opportunities we can find in everyday living. As long as we are

alive, we never stop learning. Every day brings new moments for learning.

When this awareness is applied to our Buddhist education activities, we realize that sharing the Dharma can take on many forms from teaching our youngest preschoolers in Dharma School to sharing the Dharma with the oldest centenarians of our Sangha.

By providing examples from everyday experiences, we can educate our Sangha about living a life with Buddhist values. Experiential activities, such as having temple services or activities outdoors while enjoying the scenery of our beautiful

Hawaiian islands, promotes being one with nature and provides an unparalleled backdrop for learning. Being outdoors — sitting quietly and listening to the birds chirping, the leaves rustling in the breeze, the waves crashing on the shore, the river rushing over the rocks adds to the ambiance of the mindful educational offering.

As parents, Dharma School teachers, Buddhist educators, ministers, and temple/district leaders, we always strive to convey the ideal messages and say the right things to our children,

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The group from the Commission on Buddhist Education experiential meeting poses at Wa'ahila Ridge State Recreational Area in St. Louis Heights from August 2019. (Credit: Debbie Kubota)

On This Occasion, Let Us Hear ‘The Calling Voice’



“Ah, hard to encounter, even in many lifetimes, is the decisive cause of birth, Amida’s universal Vow!” — “The True Teaching of the Pure Land Way”

By Rev. YUIKA HASEBE
PRESIDENT OF THE STATE
MINISTERS ASSOCIATION
HONPA HONGWANJI MISSION
OF HAWAII

I would like to extend my congratulations on the inaugural issue of “Ka Leo Kāhea” (“The Calling Voice”) and thank Bishop Eric Matsumoto, Mr. Warren Tamamoto, and the committee for all of their hard work.

I often ask myself one question, which is: “What is a reason Amida Buddha established the Vows?” The answer is always the same. It is for me to be saved. Every time I ask this question, I hear the same answer. As I reflect on this answer, my heart fills with a feeling of humility and gratitude, and a powerful deep warmth embraces me.

In a letter, Shinran Shonin wrote:

“There was a time for each of you when you knew nothing of Amida’s Vow and

did not say the Name of Amida Buddha, but now, guided by the compassionate means of Sakyamuni and Amida, you have begun to hear the Vow. Formerly you were drunk with the wine of ignorance and had a liking only for the three poisons of greed, anger, and folly, but since you have begun to hear the Buddha’s Vow you have gradually awakened from the drunkenness of ignorance, gradually rejected the three poisons, and come to prefer at all times the medicine of Amida Buddha.”

When we think about our every day, we see that they are filled with poisons of greed, anger, and ignorance. We often compare ourselves with others and feel greed when we see others as being better than us. We feel arrogant when

we see ourselves as better than others. We live our lives based on our comparisons. We are self-centered and blame others. We always want to live more peacefully and harmoniously, however, the problems and suffering are always there in our lives. Who made our life full of suffering? It is true as Shinran Shonin said. Unless guided by the compassionate means of Sakyamuni and Amida, how can we see where our sufferings and problems come from?

Hearing Amida Buddha’s Calling is none other than hearing the truth. Living with the Calling Voice means to live a life of constant realizations, which are revealed by the great working of Compassion and Wisdom. The

Calling is a call that awakens us to our true self. We start to realize how deeply we have struggled with our passions and how we have blindly and egotistically lived without knowing it. By sincerely listening to Amida Buddha’s Vows, we are gradually able to know and learn about ourselves, and it opens our eyes and changes what we see. We may not see what we want to see, but it reveals what we need to see.

When do we hear the Calling Voice? The Calling Voice is always here, all the time, and everywhere in our lives. There is no limit and no place that the Calling cannot reach. It means we hear the Calling every single moment and day of our lives.

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YESS Camp Is Valuable, Vital Activity for Young Members

Special Event, Now in 39th Year, Impacts Lives of Youth

By DWIGHT MATSUO AND CRISTINA GERVAIS
YESS CAMP 39 CO-CHAIRS

As “young” Sangha members who grew up at temple, we were fortunate to be involved in youth activities like Jr. YBA and YESS Camp that added significant value to our lives and allowed us to impact the lives of other young Sangha members.

Through YBA and YESS Camp, we have developed personal skills, formed lifelong friendships, and have begun to give back to the Hongwanji through involvement in Hilo Betsuin, Monshinto Task Force, Project Dana, Jr. YBA (as an assistant advisor) and YESS Camp.

Youth activities are the fertile soil where future Hongwanji leaders take root, are richly nourished, and grow into the sturdy trunk and far-reaching branches that will serve as a strong

foundation for the Hongwanji. It is the deep Dharma discussions, engaging activities played, constant self-discovery, and connections formed that serve as the nutrient-rich fertilizer for that soil.

We are truly grateful to be able to carry on some of these very special activities, like YESS Camp, which is now in its 39th year! We would like to focus on YESS Camp because we are the co-chairs (shameless plug) and because it is valuable to attendees and planners alike.

YESS Camp is an annual camp where youth escape the pressures of everyday life, engage in Dharma lessons, learn life skills, safely and freely express themselves, and form deep connections with other Hongwanji youth.

Campers “rough it” for three days and two nights at a campsite like Palehua (formerly Timberline) where showers are cold, insects crawl wherever they like, and where campers are surrounded by all of nature’s glory. Phones are prohibited at camp, encouraging campers to be present and engaged in all of the fun activities.

One of the first activities is the counselor skit, where counselors introduce



YESS Camp is an annual camp where youth escape the pressures of everyday life, engage in Dharma lessons, learn life skills, safely and freely express themselves, and form deep connections with other Hongwanji youth. Above, campers take part in a candlelight ceremony at night, and at right, work together preparing meals in the kitchen. (Credit: Dwight Matsuo and Christina Gervais)

themselves and the camp theme by showcasing their personalities, quirks, and hidden talents through a

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Young Buddhist Leadership Seminar Held

Editor’s Note: Jake Chang, former Youth Specialist and originally from the Big Island District, and Dwight Matsuo, YESS Camp Counselor Co-Chair, organized a team that included Kerrie Wong to hold an online seminar to impart leadership skills and knowledge to young adults within a Buddhist context.

By JAKE CHANG
FORMER YOUTH SPECIALIST

On July 17-18, the Buddhist Study Center sponsored the first Young Buddhist Leaders Seminar.

The two-day event was designed to develop leaders for the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii and related activities such as YESS Camp.

The first day focused on activities at both the community level and temple level. In the morning, we were very fortunate to have

Cyndi Osajima, and Dr. Wayne Iwaoka, join us to talk about Leadership, and Project Dana.

The conversation led to an open discussion about the importance of volunteerism. In the afternoon, we had a brief lesson about the history and structure of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii.

After that, we had a panel discussion featuring Rev. Kerry Kiyohara, Rev. Satoshi Tomioka, and Wayde Toyama on the topic of an “E-Sangha.” The discussion focused on the different things and experiences that Makawao Hongwanji, Puna Hongwanji and Kahului Hongwanji each did during the pandemic.

The second day focused on activities and exercises centralized around personal growth and leadership development.

Dwight Matsuo led the group on a “manifestation meditation,” a visualization exercise about your

personal goals, and focusing on positive energy to help you achieve them. Following the “manifestation meditation,” we also did a quick exercise helping participants start a gratitude journal. We then shifted to leadership development activities, led by Preston Matsuo. First, we did an exercise on impromptu speaking, to improve our public speaking and interview skills. Finally, we ended the weekend with an activity that helped us recognize and focus on leadership values that are most important to us.

A BIG mahalo to the Buddhist Study Center for sponsoring and supporting this event, and to the committee that helped put it all together and make it a fun and worthwhile event!

Last but not least, a big mahalo to ALL the participants, for participating and sharing your knowledge and experiences! We hope to do this again in the future.

Ka Leo Kāhea

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The Ka Leo Kāhea provides a variety of articles on Jodo Shinshu Buddhism for Hawaii residents.

The Ka Leo Kāhea, a quarterly newspaper published by the Honpa Hongwanji of Hawaii, features organizational news and experiences by Jodo Shinshu members, and a variety of articles relating to Buddhist principles.

Editorial rights are reserved to postpone, edit, or withhold from publication anything submitted which does not meet those specifications or the specifications of the editorial staff.

The meaning of any submission will not be altered, but we reserve the right to correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation when necessary.

Editor: Rev. Eric Matsumoto
Managing Editor: Jon Kawamoto
Print Production: Jeffrey Kimoto



By **WARREN TAMAMOTO**
PRESIDENT
HONPA HONGWANJI MISSION
OF HAWAII

Aloha everyone! I hope that you will enjoy reading this inaugural issue of our statewide newsletter, “Ka Leo Kāhea” (“The Calling Voice”).

The name for our newsletter, “Ka Leo Kāhea” (“The Calling Voice”) is a reference to our Shin Buddhist teaching that reminds us of “Namo Amida Butsu,” which is the voice/sound of Amida calling to us and at the same time, it is our voice

Aloha! We Hope You Enjoy ‘Ka Leo Kāhea’

calling to Amida in response to Amida’s calling voice.

The use of the Hawaiian term is intentional — it is unique and it recognizes our connection to our Hawaiian host culture while providing a thoughtful reminder that Amida Buddha is always calling to us, guiding and comforting us. This newsletter, which is mailed to every member of our statewide Sangha, is a product of our desire to connect people with each other and share the Dharma.

The benefits of having a statewide newsletter include:

Allowing Bishop Eric Matsumoto to share his message with every member of the Hawaii Kyodan. Hawaii Kyodan leadership and state committees will also inform our readers of important news and new initiatives. This newsletter will serve as the official newsletter of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Hawaii and will be a part of our permanent record. Once the newsletter is published, it will be available to anyone at any time in a digital format.

Creating a sense of unity in the Hawaii Kyodan by sharing information between members, temples and districts. Our Sangha is very active in our respective communities. We can publicize our successes and learn from each other.

Documenting and sharing the values of Shin Buddhism with our Sangha so that they can feel and understand the impact of the teachings on their everyday lives. We plan to share the Dharma in several ways-for example, minister and lay person Dharma messages, short stories, poems and even comics or art. Portions of this newsletter can be shared online in a variety of formats such as via temple websites, Facebook

and Instagram.

The idea for a statewide newsletter is not a new idea. It has been discussed in the past and we have decided not to proceed for various reasons, including financial considerations.

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented us with an opportunity to reassess our situation. Ministers and lay leaders have done a remarkable job by learning to share our online message via temple websites, Zoom, YouTube and Instagram.

At the same time, we are aware that the majority of our members do not have access to online resources. We are very fortunate that we have the help of two freelance editors, Jon Kawamoto and Jeffrey Kimoto. They have years of experience in putting together the Buddhist Churches of America newsletter, “Wheel of Dharma.” We could not have pulled this together in such a short

time without their guidance. Thank you, Jon and Jeffrey! Thanks also to our headquarters staff for responding so well to the added workload that they have shouldered in producing this newsletter.

Ultimately, the success or failure of this newsletter will depend on the quality of the newsletter and upon you, our reader. The contents of this newsletter should inform you and interest you. It should remind you that Amida Buddha’s Compassion surrounds us at every moment.

We encourage you to participate by submitting stories and interesting articles. We would like to hear your suggestions for improving our newsletter.

In the long run, if you find that “Ka Leo Kāhea” has turned into “our newsletter” rather than “you guys’ newsletter,” then I am confident that we will be successful.

In Gassho.

‘Compassion’ and ‘Aloha Spirit’ Are Allied in Spirit, Form

By **REV. TATSUO MUNETO**
RETIRED MINISTER

Ever since Buddhism was brought to Hawaii in the late 19th century, its numerous followers and their families have practiced compassion, the main feature of Buddhism. Compassion was shared mainly with families and neighbors; it was a Buddhist way of life among the Japanese immigrants.

Today this compassion extends to all community affairs, blending well with the unique quality of Hawaiian culture called the Aloha spirit. Compassion and the Aloha spirit are closely allied in spirit and form.

Compassion, in Shin tradition, is represented by two Japanese terms “*Ji*” (Loving-kindness) and “*Hi*” (Empathy). Buddhists expect others to be in peace and happiness. And they feel deep sorrow and empathy when they see people in suffering. The spirit of compassion reaches out to ease hardships and sufferings of others and to give them comfort.

“Aloha” is used in greeting people, as well as saying “Good-bye.” It is frequently used by local people to express their good will, kindness and love. In Hawaiian, “*Alo*” means “presence,” and “*ha*” stands for “breath.” The deep breath of life responds upon seeing the suffering and sorrow of others. In such a way, Buddhist compassion and the Aloha spirit are essentially very similar in spirit and in practice.

Both the giver and the receiver in these traditions rejoice in sharing kindness in the truest sense of the word. The giver provides compassion and the Aloha spirit from his heart without expecting anything in return. The receiver long remembers the kindness. Thus, Buddhist compassion and the Aloha spirit make an unforgettable impression on the life of the receiver.

Let me relate to you how a high school graduate received the experience of Aloha and compassion unexpectedly, making a deep impact on his whole life. The name of the student was Masaji Marumoto. His inspiring story



Hawaii Supreme Court Justice
Masaji Marumoto
(Credit: Rev. Tatsuo Muneto)

took place in downtown Honolulu back in 1924. As you know, he became the first Asian to become a judge of the Hawaii Supreme Court. Now, here is his story.

Raised in Kona, Masaji moved to Honolulu at age 12 to further his education. He graduated from McKinley High School and Hongwanji Japanese School in 1924. He had no plan to go to college because he lacked the funds to do so. However, Bishop Yemyo Imamura of Honpa Hongwanji obtained a four-year scholarship for Masaji from the Prince Fushimi Scholarship Society. It enabled him to attend the University of Chicago, which he finished in three years, and

his first year at Harvard Law School.

With great hope for the future, he was ready to sail from Honolulu to the West Coast. The day before his departure, Masaji went to the steamship company to buy his ticket. But he was told that no ticket could be issued because there was no certificate of citizenship from the Immigration Office.

The next day, he went back to the company at 8:30 a.m., confident that the certificate would be there, for the ship’s departure at 10 a.m. Again, he was denied a ticket because the certificate was not there.

In total despair, he walked out, sat down on the broad steps of the building, and cried. It so happened that Mrs. Ross, the wife of the Circuit Court judge in Kona, was in Honolulu, walking by at that early hour, and recognized Masaji. For Mrs. Ross, Masaji was not a stranger. She had met him in Kona a few months before. How did a Caucasian woman and young Masaji meet each other?

After graduating from McKinley High School and Hongwanji school in May

1924, Masaji visited his father in Kona. Masaji’s father had a special dinner for his son, and invited the manager of American Factors and Mr. Ross, Judge of Kona Circuit Court. Mrs. Ross met Masaji at that time and remembered him as a young, bright Japanese boy. It was a coincidence or through karmic circumstance called “En” in Japanese Buddhism that Mrs. Ross found Masaji, who was crying in front of the steamship company building. She asked him what had happened and he explained.

Understanding the urgent situation, Mrs. Ross took Masaji to a trust company a block away, where she knew the president. He was the business leader in the community and was able to contact the Immigration Office and get the certificate delivered just in time for Masaji to board the ship.

This act of kindness exemplified the Aloha spirit. When Mrs. Ross saw that Masaji was in great distress, she acted on her compassion and

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BWA to Celebrate 50th Anniversary of Exchange Program

By **LOIS TOYAMA**
BUDDHIST WOMEN’S
ASSOCIATION

The end of the year 2021 finds the BWA celebrating the past and planning for the future. We are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Student Exchange Program with Japan as we look forward to our State Convention in Maui in April of 2022 and to the World Buddhist Women’s Convention in Japan in the spring of 2023.

Each year, the BWA hosts an exchange program with young women from Japan. One year, we hosted



In this photo from 2017, Zoi Nakamura of Hilo and Brandi Yamamoto of Kauai enjoy a visit with Midori Kunisaki of Fukuoka as part of the BWA’s Student Exchange Program with Japan. The Student Exchange Program will celebrate its 50th anniversary at the State Convention in Maui in April 2022. (Credit: Lois Toyama).

two women from Japan, and the next year, we sent two women to Japan, where they were hosted by Japanese BWA members for a stay of approximately two weeks. The program began in 1971, and this year marks its 50th anniversary.

Last year, shortly before the lockdown because of the pandemic, the Federation held a reunion of former participants in the program. Also present were some who had hosted students from Japan.

In a group sharing of their experiences, participants expressed the profound influence that the exchange had on their lives. Some felt that their view

of what they could do in life was broadly expanded; they developed confidence. Some developed lifelong friendships. Many felt that it was the experience of a lifetime.

Many of these women are now community and temple leaders. We collected photos and stories of those who were not able to attend and compiled them into a scrapbook which will be stored in the BWA archives.

We would like to express our deepest appreciation to the members of Japan’s BWA for hosting our students and for making such a

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By **REV. KEVIN KUNIYUKI**
FORMER DIRECTOR OF THE
BUDDHIST STUDY CENTER

Warren Tamamoto, president of Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, to better inform its members and to contribute to the furthering of Buddhist education on a statewide basis, has initiated a project to provide a quarterly newsletter to the members of temples that are a part of the Mission in the State of Hawaii.

And in support of this new idea, the staff of the BSC has worked out an arrangement where a portion of the BSC budget allocated to Metta will help fund the publication of the statewide newsletter. In exchange, the Metta will be

Trying Something New and the Vision of the BSC

a part of the newsletter that will expand its coverage statewide.

Since our readership has expanded beyond Metta subscribers, I thought it was timely to review and inform longtime friends and now, our new friends, about the vision and of the Buddhist Study Center (BSC), the Commission on Buddhist Education (CBE), Office of Buddhist Education (OBE), and the MTC Ministerial Training Committee (MTC).

All four entities function under the auspices of the BSC. In addition, you might not have realized that furthermore, Junior Young Buddhist Associations (Junior YBA), YESS Camp, and Young Adult programs like the BSC Fellowship Club and Young Buddhist Leaders Seminars also function under the BSC.

So, here is the BSC CBE/OBE MTC vision statement:

The vision of the BSC is to support Shin Buddhist Learning Communities in nurturing the spiritual transformation of the individual.

And the operative phrase

within this Vision Statement is “Shin Buddhist Learning Communities.” Shin Buddhism differs from other Buddhist traditions in that although it shares the same goal of other Buddhist traditions, i.e., to become a Buddha, it differs in that it assumes that most humans are unable to attain that transformation through discipline and traditional Buddhist practice.

This assumption arises from an understanding of the strength and self-deceptive quality of the judgmental self-centered human mind combined with the electrochemical nature of the brain that is dependent on habit and conditioning.

Those habits and conditioning, in many cases, functions without the person’s awareness and are difficult to change. The life of a Shin Buddhist is marked by developing awareness of the true nature of the self, combined with a constant engagement of Buddhist concepts and values.

Through this process, an individual develops an acceptance of their life and

the nature of this world that leads to peace of mind. The net result is that one lives in the present moment, fully employing all the spiritual, emotional, and rational tools offered not only by Buddhism and science, but all teachings that are grounded in seeking a compassionate understanding of the universe as it is.

The ego-self continuously judges and makes discriminations of everything outside of it and sets the conditions for suffering by creating expectations of what is “good” and “bad.”

This state naturally developed because in order to survive, our species developed the ability to discriminate between what was of benefit to us and what was not, i.e., what is “good” and what was dangerous or detrimental or “bad.”

And to further clarify the cause of suffering: It is almost entirely caused by our emotional reaction to all things external and internal to the self and our lack of understanding of what is happening within us. In Buddhistic terms,

they are the Three Poisons, Attachment, Aversion, and Ignorance. A further complication is that there are emotions that are entirely internally generated and made habitual of the electrochemical nature of the brain.

As a result, most humans are incapable of attaining a high level of emotional maturity and peace of mind through discipline and practice. Although it must be acknowledged that many of those practices help add to the quality of one’s life and for some remarkable people, complete spiritual transformation.

Shin Buddhism’s solution to this dilemma is a psychological dynamic of being aware of the nature of one’s interdependent existence and one’s true nature, through the experiences of regular everyday life with all its contradictions and challenges. This was and is different from monastic practice.

So, the Shin Buddhist solution assumes that humans learn best through regular life experiences and

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‘Community-Building as Practice’ at Makawao Hongwanji



On Sept. 22, beginning at 4:30 a.m., Makawao Hongwanji Sangha members, organizations like the Scouts and Cub Scouts, Jr. YBA, Judo Club, and friends made 1,000-plus orders of the temple’s signature Bon Dance Food. (Credit: Rev. Kerry Kiyohara)



Sangha Members, Friends, Organizations Made More Than 1,000 Orders of Temple’s Bon Dance Food

By **REV. KERRY KIYOHARA**
MAKAWAO HONGWANJI MISSION

Makawao Buddhist Temple’s tradition of “community-building as Buddhist practice” has been the foundation of the Makawao Hongwanji Mission since 1907.

On Sept. 22, beginning at 4:30

a.m., Sangha members, affiliated organizations like the Scouts and Cub Scouts, Jr. YBA, Judo Club, and friends of the temple gathered to prepare, cook, package, and distribute 1,000-plus orders of the temple’s signature Bon Dance Food: chow fun, pork and chicken teri bento, cone sushi, SPAM musubi, homemade cookies, manju filled with Okinawan purple sweet

potato, and peach and guava jams!

Rolling up one’s sleeves, putting on an apron, and learning to get along with the diverse tapestry of people who are the heart of Makawao Hongwanji, setting aside differences, and simply working together is a subtle and yet profound experience in letting go of one’s ego-self.

Working together to benefit the

temple, we “try to” enjoy the “hard labor” of food prep and service, and clean-up — perhaps grumbling a bit — but at the end of the day, we feel good because we know we are part of a greater community.

We are profoundly grateful for the members, friends, and supporters of Makawao Buddhist Temple and the Makawao Hongwanji Mission!



GINNY YAMAMOTO SYPHAX'S FATHER, MR. MITSUO YAMAMOTO, CRAFTED A "SIX-CHARACTER NAME" ("ROKUJI MYOGO") THAT WAS DELIVERED TO MAKAWAO HONGWANJI MISSION. (Credit: Rev. Kerry Kiyohara)

The Gift of Faith: Creating Dharma With Your Hands

By **REV. KERRY KIYOHARA**
MAKAWAO HONGWANJI MISSION

We are profoundly grateful to Ginny Yamamoto Syphax, whose father, Mr. Mitsuo Yamamoto, handcrafted a wonderful “six-character Name” (“rokuji myogo”), which was delivered by Ginny’s friend, who gave it to Wayne Nishida, who dropped it off at the temple!

The level of craftsmanship, attention to detail, and desire to share one’s Faith with all

people are remarkable, and a reminder of the power of “sahō” 「作法」 which can be literally translated as “create Dharma.”

Dharma is most often translated as “the Teachings” but also means reality, and thus “sahō” is not simply the “how to” protocols of rites, rituals, and ceremony.

This remarkable “go-honzon” (honorific object of reverence) is more than a symbol of NamoAmidaButsu, the Name, it is the embodiment of the Faith of Shinjin, the True Cause of Birth in the

Pure Land, thus becoming one with Amida Buddha.

As Shin Buddhists, let us aspire to follow in the footsteps of Ginny’s father, and create the Dharma, the reality of the Faith of Shinjin, through our thoughts, words, and actions, and then share it as widely as we can.

Mahalo to Ginny’s dad for a wonderful and inspiring reminder of how each and every one of us can “make Dharma” through living NamoAmidaButsu! in each moment of this unrepeatable life. NamoAmidaButsu!



The Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii will soon form the Commemoration Committee to plan three observances in Hawaii -- the 850th anniversary of the birth of Shinran Shonin in 2023, and the 800th anniversary of the establishment of the Jodo Shinshu teaching in 2024. The year 2024 also marks the 135th Anniversary of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii. (Credit: Rev. Toshiyuki Umitani)

HMMH Forming Committee for Shinran Shonin Events in 2023

BY REV. TOSHIYUKI UMITANI
GENERAL CHAIR
HMMH 850TH & 800TH
COMMEMORATION

The year 2023 will mark the 850th anniversary of the birth of Shinran Shonin, and 2024 will be the 800th anniversary of the establishment of the Jodo Shinshu teaching.

Accordingly, the Honpa Hongwanji in Kyoto will observe commemorative services for those occasions. The celebration at Honzan will take place during the months of March, April, and May in 2023.

Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii will soon form the Commemoration Committee to spearhead the planning of the observances in Hawaii. This is still tentative, but the objective of the Commemoration Committee is threefold.

The first objective is to hold the special service or conference to celebrate the anniversaries. Nothing is set in stone, but we envision this gathering to be held sometime in 2024. This is because here in Hawaii, the year 2024 marks the 135th Anniversary of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii. Therefore, for us, it is not only a Joint Celebration (850th/800th) but a Triple Celebration (850th/800th/135th).

The second objective is to coordinate a special tour to Japan to attend the Joint Celebration at Honzan in the spring of 2023. Honzan is inviting as many fellow Nembutsu followers as possible from the overseas districts to this once-in-fifty-year occasion. Japan is also hosting the World Buddhist Women's Convention in May 2023. We will work with BWA and assist your participation in

the Celebration at Honzan.

The third objective is to hold educational events to share Jodo Shinshu teachings with the members and the public, as well as to raise their awareness of the significance of Shinran Shonin and the Nembutsu teaching. We feel holding such educational programs is very appropriate for the celebration. Coincidentally, the themes of Hawaii Kyodan are "Sharing Joy Together" in 2023 and "Sharing Nembutsu Moments" in 2024.

The coronavirus pandemic is far from over yet. Only time will tell what the future looks like. Therefore, the Commemoration Committee will carefully take all the factors into consideration and plan the celebration in a way that we can safely and comfortably participate.

The slogan of the Joint Celebration at Honzan is 「ご縁を喜び、お念仏とともに」 "Life of Nembutsu enables us to appreciate every encounter." Indeed, the Nembutsu is the Light of Wisdom and Compassion that breaks through our blind passions of greed, anger, and ignorance. It penetrates our self-centered and judgmental minds and leads us to a deeper awareness and joy of the life that is warmly within Amida Buddha's great embrace. With a secured and settled mind, we are made aware of the preciousness of every encounter, every moment, and the lives of every one of us.

Without Shinran Shonin, we would not have been able to encounter this wonderful teaching of the Nembutsu. And, we would not have been able to meet each other as the Hongwanji Sangha. Let

SEE PAGE 7

PBA's Walk/Run for Peace Supports Tuition Assistance

BY MEGAN LEE
DIRECTOR OF ADVANCEMENT
PACIFIC BUDDHIST ACADEMY

PBA is the first college preparatory Shin Buddhist high school in the United States with the mission to prepare students for college through academic excellence, enrich their lives with Buddhist values, and develop their courage to nurture peace.

In September, PBA held its annual Walk/Run for Peace (WR4P) fundraiser. The WR4P is a community tradition stretching back seven years to former Director of Advancement Rüdiger "Rudy" Rückmann.

The team has grown annually, both in numbers of participants and total donations raised. All proceeds support the school's tuition assistance program to make the college-preparatory curriculum available to the most socio-economically diverse population of students possible. With about 40 percent of families receiving financial support, the need to advance the tuition assistance program is evident.

This year, the fundraiser was held in September to coincide with Peace Day Hawaii and U.N. International Day of Peace, which is held annually on September 21.

PBA's connection to Peace Day dates back to 2007, when representa-



In September, PBA held its annual Walk/Run for Peace (WR4P) fundraiser to benefit tuition assistance for students. The fundraiser was held to coincide with Peace Day Hawaii and U.N. International Day of Peace, which is held annually on September 21. (Credit: Megan Lee)

tives from PBA and the Jr. Young Buddhist Association lobbied the Hawaii State Legislature to establish the state holiday. House Bill No. 346 was passed, and was dedicated "to promote peace programs, improve international relations and increase educational awareness of peace."

PBA and the temple communities of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii (HMMH) have observed Peace Day on or about September 21 ever since. Observations have included marching with groups on the Big Island, joining together for interfaith services with the Interfaith Alliance Hawaii, and marching with the Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin to ring the Nagasaki Peace Bell.

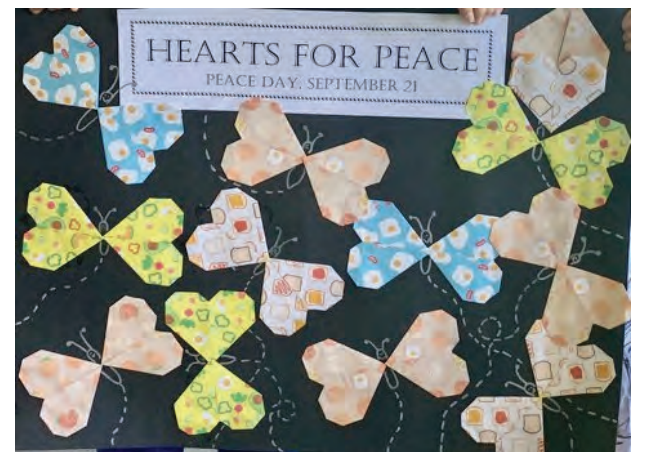
Joining as a school and temple community for engaged walks such as the

WR4P has an important lore at PBA. The "Ministers Walk," organized by the Ministers Association of the HMMH, took place in 2013 when PBA was fundraising for the Weinberg Building.

"That walk started it all," reminisced former and founding Head of School Piper Toyama. "Students and ministers put the Dharma teachings into action. It was the first time anything like that was done in the Hongwanji."

This fall, new Director of Advancement Megan Lee organized the WR4P to accommodate for the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants walked in small groups and had the option to complete their milage from the comfort of their own neighborhoods.

SEE PAGE 6



The Oahu District temples held an activity for Peace Day on Sept. 21. They created origami hearts that were displayed on Peace Day in their temples. Honolulu District temples also participated. Above left, are the origami hearts made for the Ewa Hongwanji hearts poster and, above right, the hearts created for the Aiea Lotus Daycare hearts poster. (Credit: Carolyn Uchiyama)

Gathering for Peace Day in Hawaii

BY CAROLYN UCHIYAMA
PRESIDENT
OAHU HONGWANJI COUNCIL

September 21 is a special day in Hawaii. We are the only state in the Union that celebrates Peace Day as a legislated holiday.

The members of the Hawaii Junior Young Buddhist Association (Jr. YBA) of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, aided by Rep. Jon Riki Karamatsu, introduced House Bill 346 to the State Legislature in 2007. On April 18 of that year, Gov. Linda Lingle signed the bill making September 21st Peace Day in Hawaii. The purpose of Peace Day is to promote peace programs, improve international relations, and increase the awareness of peace.

Fast forward to 2021. Hawaii is in the grips of

COVID-19 with limited opportunities to attend services, gather as a Sangha, and celebrate occasions such as Peace Day. How can we accomplish the task of promoting peace, invigorating our various Sanghas, and celebrating Peace Day on September 21th?

The Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple Girl Scouts used origami hearts to create their peace projects. This idea was the seed which germinated here in Hawaii and grew into 14 unique pieces of art.

Temple organizations were asked to create a peace wall hanging. They were provided with a poster board, origami paper, and origami heart folding instructions. Each group was also asked to include words of peace or wishes for peace on some of their hearts.

Gathering in small

groups, in compliance with the mayor's COVID restrictions, the Sanghas were invigorated by the opportunity to work together after almost 18 months apart. Using their artistic abilities, they were able to complete their projects with a sense of purpose and joy. These works of art will be displayed at their temples in celebration of Peace Day on September 21.

These various Sanghas are within our Buddhist community and include a preschool, some Buddhist Women's Association (BWA) units, Dharma school students and parents, adult daycare clients, a Tai Chi group, and Sangha volunteers.

Like Indra's Net, these Sangha groups collaborated and worked together to produce Peace Day "jewels" which reflect and project our desire for peace.

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YESS Camp

Continued from Page 2

storytelling performance.

Then there are three Dharma talks and discussions. These talks range from topics like *arigatai*, to the path of the Buddha, to perspective — how hardship led to clarity and opportunity. Dharma talk speakers help campers understand the Dharma by sharing personal experiences that campers can relate to; speakers also come from many different backgrounds to help connect the Dharma to a wide range of campers.

To keep campers blood flowing, fun interactive games are planned. From blindfolded team painting, to untangling a human knot, these activities provide opportunities for campers to exercise their muscles as well as teamwork, leadership, and communication skills. When untangling a human knot, leaders emerge and guide their team through their own tangled limbs. During blindfolded painting, campers who can see must empathize with the blind and find effective yet efficient ways to guide them to the end design.

To reinforce the camaraderie formed through the activities, campers participate in cabin bonding, where campers share deep thoughts, feelings, and experiences in a safe space. Campers trust one another not to share what is said in cabin bonding and respect each other's opinions, values, and right to speak. Many campers share that they've never had such a safe outlet where they can express themselves and have shared things they've never shared with anyone else. When campers hear of others going through similar situations they support each other and gain self-confidence, helping them overcome challenges in their lives and forming deeper connections with one another. Although there are many benefits for the campers, the counselors have a lot to gain as well. Through planning YESS Camp, counselors get to stay connected to the Dharma, have access to personal development opportunities, and sharpen their teamwork, leadership, and communication skills.

In the planning phase, YESS Camp meetings are twice a month and counselors plan regular fun events like movie nights, game nights, outings (pre-COVID-19), and go together to Hongwanji events like bon dance.



In top photo, YESS Camp participants listen to and discuss a Dharma talk, and in the above photo, a camp counselor huddles with campers. At left, the students gather around a camp fire. (Credit: Dwight Matsuo and Christina Gervais)

Youth activities are the fertile soil where future Hongwanji leaders take root, are richly nourished, and grow into the sturdy trunk and far-reaching branches that will serve as a strong foundation for the Hongwanji.

Although all of the counselors are very good friends, YESS Camp has helped to keep bonds strong through working on a project together and by facilitating communication.

Some of the events planned, like YAR (Young Adults Retreat) and YBLS (Young Buddhist Leadership Seminar), are geared more toward personal development. The Young Adults Retreat is like a YESS Camp for counselors where the Dharma talks are geared more toward skills like resume writing, time management, and project management. The goal of these talks is to help counselors further develop soft skills that will be useful in event planning (like YESS Camp), their future careers, and in their future Hongwanji leadership roles. Then counselors can take the skill they learned from the talks and apply them to fun games like those played at YESS Camp. Counselors also practice their skills

through the YESS Camp planning process by being part of a committee, leading a committee, or by being a co-chair of camp.

We looked closely at just one youth activity and the great gifts we've received from it. We are sure that there are many others in the Hongwanji community who have had similar experiences through youth activities like YESS camp.

We hope that the Hongwanji and future generations will keep youth activities like these alive to share the Dharma and skills we learned with many more; and consequently keep the Hongwanji alive as well.

We'd like to thank the Hongwanji, BSC, Rev. Sandy, Rev. Kevin, Bishop Matsumoto, Jake Chang, and all of the many ministers, mentors, and helpers that have supported programs like YESS Camp and given the youth such wonderful opportunities, we wouldn't be where we are without you.

severance, and sense of gratitude to those who had given him kindness and support over many years.

Judge Marumoto passed away in 1995. At his funeral service, his son Wendell offered words of appreciation to more than 300 people who gathered in his memory. In his message, Wendell mentioned that his father had never forgotten the special kindness of Mrs. Ross who was just walking by and saw Masaji crying. Her Aloha spirit and compassion had a great impact on Masaji's future.

Hawaii continues to grow as a multicultural society. Each culture and

tradition interact with other cultures. Living together in this way creates a sense of interconnectedness. The Aloha spirit is a common Hawaiian quality.

Bound with the practice of compassion, Buddhism can become a truly living religious faith in Hawaii. In the past, Buddhist compassion was practiced solemnly and quietly, but now it must be expressed more openly through the Aloha spirit in thought, word and deed by today's Buddhists. Thus, compassion will serve as a strong model for living in harmony and peace. Namō Amida Butsu

Lay Convention

Continued from Page 1

message from Chris Richardson, the 2020-2021 President of the State Lay Association.

In an inspiring keynote address, Rick Stambul challenged us to confront anti-Asian racism and hate in the 21st century with love, not hate, and to elevate ourselves in the process.

In his call to action, Stambul dared us to see a Shin Buddhist path to face racism and declared that silence enables hate. Community involvement and social concerns are integral parts of our Jodo Shinshu tradition to keep in mind. Stambul, a past President of the Buddhist Churches of America, delivered his address from his home in Southern California. It was also live streamed on YouTube.

Our morning discussion panel featured younger adult members of our extended Maui Shin Buddhist ohana discussing how they connect with the Dharma and potential methods for growing our sanghas. The panel members joined us from their current homes in Colorado, California, and Maui. Our moderator Mike Munekiyo was based in Wailuku.

The afternoon workshop

sessions were held in separate Zoom breakout rooms. The workshops focused on Vista Buddhist Temple's successful membership growth methods in San Diego County presented by Terri Omori, who is the President-elect of the Buddhist Churches of America; Jin Shin Jyutsu as a method to harmonize the life energy of the body presented by Sandy Dioso of Maui; the histories and futures of Lahaina and Lana'i temples presented by Sharon Nohara and Chris Richardson; Finding the Hero Within Yourself presented by Deidre Tegarden, the Executive Director of the Maui Nisei Veterans Center; and Podcasts as a Dharma propagation method presented by technologist and independent journalist Ryan Ozawa of Oahu.

In the closing service, Bishop Eric Matsumoto officiated the installation ceremony for new statewide officers, which was live streamed on Zoom. Rene Mansho of the Oahu District, sworn in as our statewide Lay Association President for 2021-2022, represented the entire slate of 2021-2022 Directors, Officers, and Advisors. Oahu's planning committee asks that we save the dates Sept. 16-17, 2022, for the 59th Annual State Lay Association Convention.

The Children's March teaches us that anyone, of any age, from anywhere, can change history in the face of racism.



Rick Stambul, the immediate past President of the Buddhist Churches of America, was the keynote speaker for the virtual 58th State Lay Convention held Sept. 10-11. In his call to action, Stambul dared the audience to see a Shin Buddhist path to face racism and declared that silence enables hate. (Credit: Jean Haselden)

PBA

Continued from Page 5

"The event was a great chance for me to get outdoors while helping students like me who receive financial aid to attend PBA. Having a more diverse group of students from all backgrounds will help strengthen our Sangha for future years to come," PBA

senior Naho Umitani said. As WR4P totals are still being calculated, those who feel so moved are welcome to continue to donate on behalf of the event at <https://pacificbuddhistacademy.org>.

For those who are interested in learning more about the PBA, please contact the office at (808) 532-2649 or office@pbahi.org.



14TH BWA HAWAII STATE CONFERENCE

April 23 - 24, 2022

Wailuku Hongwanji Mission -- Wailuku, Maui
Building Healthy Sanghas -- Connecting with Others

Flyer # 3
April 2021
(rev. 1)

Schedule

Friday, April 22, 2022
Informal dinner and talk story

Saturday, April 23, 2022
Opening
Continental Breakfast
Business Meeting
Keynote Speaker
Lunch
Craft/Sales Tables
Workshop Sessions
Dinner

Sunday, April 24, 2022
Continental Breakfast
Service
Keynote Speaker
Panel Discussion
Closing

Workshops and Speakers

Keynote Speaker, Saturday
Deidre Tegarden, Maui
"Connecting with Others"

Keynote Speaker, Sunday
Janet Umez, California
"Diversity and Acceptance"

Workshop Sessions, Saturday:

- Digital Social Media
Reverend Kerry Kiyohara
- Hawaiian Women's Fashions
Agnes Terao-Guiala
- Role of Women in Buddhism
Reverend Yuika Hasebe
- Buddhist Vegan Cuisine
Ayako Lux Hashimoto
- Enhance Fitness Program
Marie White

Panel Discussion, Sunday
Diversity and Acceptance

Pop-Up Sales Tables

- Opportunities to spotlight talents of your members and to buy omiyage for friends back home!
- Pop-up sales location will be secured during non-sale times. No refrigeration will be available.
- Interested units should coordinate with their District President as space will be limited.
- District Presidents should email Colleen Suyama at csuyama001@gmail.com for details and reservations.

DEADLINES TO REMEMBER

Hotel Registration at Conference Rate, must use their form: **October 23, 2021**
Pop-Up Sales Tables: **November 5, 2021**
Conference Registration at \$150 per person: **January 7, 2022**

Rev. Muneto

Continued from Page 3

rescued Masaji from his dire situation. As a result of her kindness, Masaji was able to embark on his life-changing journey to Chicago.

After being the first Asian student to graduate from Harvard Law School, Masaji returned to Honolulu in 1930 and began his law practice in town. Years later, he became the first Asian American to serve on the Hawaii Supreme Court. What enabled him to assume these distinguished positions were his intellect, per-

Bishop

Continued from Page 1

From the vast formless Dharma ocean blooms a recognizable symbol, the lotus, the flower of Enlightenment and a symbol of Buddhism. In the center of the lotus appears the wisteria crest of the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji denomination which represents Jodo Shinshu, both the Teachings and the organization including the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii.

It is also the symbol which represents Amida Buddha (or Namō Amida

the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii is essential as we move forward into the future. More than ever, we must connect with each other within our organization, with others in the larger community and the world community.

Finally, it is the third “C” of compassion, Amida Buddha’s compassion which connects all of us along with the teaching of interdependence (wisdom). Amida Buddha’s compassion is reaching out to all life, all existence. In the eyes of Wisdom and Compassion, all life, all existence, is equally precious.

The purpose of this newsletter can be expressed by the three 'CCCs' of 'Communication, Connection and Compassion.'

Butsu) as shared by Shinran Shonin. As this is the statewide newsletter of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, the eight major Hawaiian islands are depicted. The five petals of the lotus could also represent the five districts (Honolulu, Oahu, Maui, Kauai and Hawaii Island) of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii and the aspiration that the Buddha’s Teaching spreads throughout our beautiful Hawaii Nei.

The color purple commonly used in Hongwanji circles represents the nobility of the Dharma or the Buddha’s Teachings and, in particular, Amida Buddha’s Primal Vow which discriminates against none.

The color spectrum from blue to green represents the blue of Hawaii’s ocean and sky and the green of the lush flora associated with Hawaii’s a’ina (or land). It represents a greener Hawaii with sustainability and the well-being of all forms of life. The colors of blue and green have a calming, cooling and serene effect on us just as the workings of the Dharma. I hope you will vividly keep the symbolism of this logo with its hopes, aspirations and purpose in mind.

The purpose of this newsletter can be expressed by the three “CCCs” of “Communication, Connection and Compassion.” In all areas of living, the first “C” of communication is vital whether it be between people and/or entities. Thus, one of the primary goals of this statewide newsletter is improved communication among us. It is hoped that through this newsletter we will become better informed of what we each are doing including headquarters.

The second “C” of connection is also crucial. For us to have a strong sense of unity, belonging and purpose, we need to be or feel connected. While we may have individual or separate initiatives and endeavors including projects and programs, to understand that we are all part of the same organization known as

Wisdom and Compassion as Namō Amida Butsu is aspiring for the peace, happiness and well-being of one and all with no exceptions! This is the compassion and also the “Calling Voice” of Sakyamuni Buddha and especially Amida Buddha which is so dear to Jodo Shin Buddhists that is the title of this newsletter which in the Hawaiian language is rendered as “Ka Leo Kāhea” with “Ka Leo” meaning “voice” and “Kāhea” meaning “calling.”

Thus, Ka Leo Kāhea is translated as “The Calling Voice.” First and foremost, it refers to the calling voice of the two Honored Ones especially of Namō Amida Butsu, the Buddha’s Name which calls to us (to entrust), but is also the call or communication between ourselves to become aware of what we each are doing for the betterment of our organization and the State of Hawaii and thus feel more connected to each other and with one another.

I would like to end by expressing my deepest gratitude to our Immediate Past President Mr. Pieper Toyama with whom this idea first jelled and our current State President Dr. Warren Tamamoto who brought to fruition the inaugural October 2021 and January 2022 issues with the support of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii Executive Board and the Board of Directors.

Also, a special note of appreciation to our Business Manager Mr. Derrick Inouye, Executive Assistant to the Bishop Rev. Daidō Baba and (at the time) Buddhist Study Center Director Rev. Kevin Kuniyuki and our production staff of Mr. Jon Kawamoto and Mr. Jeffrey Kimoto for their support and hard work for this statewide newsletter endeavor.

Let me conclude by saying thank you, once again, and by reciting Namō Amida Butsu, the Buddha’s Name which I call (in gratitude) in response to the Buddha’s Name which calls to us (to entrust), Namō Amida Butsu.

generations of ministers and lay members who transmitted the teaching.

Please look forward to further updates. Your active participation and cooperation are greatly appreciated. Namō Amida Butsu.

Rev. Fujitani

Continued from Page 1

work on the Herald with a small group of people.

Many years would pass before we were reunited when I began working with the newly formed Hawaii Nikkei History Editorial Board, editing what became “Japanese Eyes, American Heart: Personal Reflections of Hawaii’s World War II Nisei Soldiers” in the mid-1990s. During that period, we became first-name friends. I mean no disrespect by calling him “Yoshi,” but that’s how he wanted us to address him. Of course, whenever I introduced him to others, it was always as the Rev. Yoshiaki Fujitani, former bishop of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii.

Many times, I saw him walk up to people he had never met before with his outstretched hand and a warm smile. “Hi, I’m Yoshi,” he would say, immediately putting them at ease. His personality and his myriad of life experiences made him so approachable.

Learning to address the Nisei members of our Editorial Board by their first names was not easy for the Sansei board members back then — Drusilla Tanaka, Cary Miyashiro, Mimi Nakano and myself — for we genuinely respected all of the Nisei on the board: Hideto Kono, Ed Ichiyama, Bob Katayama, Bob Sakai, Ted Tsukiya, Jane Komeiji and, of course, Yoshi, along with Bishop Ryokan Ara of the Tendai Mission of Hawaii. Except for Jane, an educator and a published author, and Bishop Ara, all were World War II veterans who had served their country and then had given even more to the community in government service, education, the legal profession and religion, as well as to their respective veterans clubs and cultural organizations, even in retirement.

Bishop Ara had assembled the 442nd and MIS veterans with the assistance of Hideto Kono, retired director of the state Department of Planning and Economic Development. The 100th Battalion was represented by the Sansei descendants. Between the generations, our respect for one another was mutual: We all treated each other as equals and friends.

Yoshi was born on Aug. 15, 1923, in the town of Pa’uwela on the lower slopes of Haleakalā. He was the second child and the first son of the Rev. Kodo and Aiko (Furukawa) Fujitani’s eight children. Rev. Fujitani was the resident minister of Pauwela Hongwanji, serving people in the rural East Maui communities of Pa’uwela, Ha’ikū and Kuiaha and even further out, in Pe’ahi, Mālika and Kailua.

Although Yoshi had grown up in a temple setting and had learned the Hongwanji rituals, he didn’t live his life in a Buddhist bubble. His mother had a lot to do



In above photo, Yoshiaki Fujitani is shown with his parents, Aiko and Rev. Kodo Fujitani in 1947 at the Moiliili Hongwanji in Honolulu. At left, in June 1944, Yoshiaki Fujitani visits father, Rev. Kodo Fujitani, who was incarcerated as an enemy alien at Santa Fe, New Mexico. (Credit: Yoshiaki Fujitani family)

are many hands shoring up the garden bed, which is me, to ensure a healthy physical, mental and spiritual life.”

Yoshi was 12 when his father received a new assignment as the resident minister of Moiliili Hongwanji Mission. The Fujitani family moved to Honolulu, where Yoshi grew up among kids of all ethnicities and began living the life of the quintessential Nisei. He attended Washington Intermediate School and then McKinley High School, where he was greatly influenced by people like the school’s principal, Dr. Miles E. Cary, who exposed the students to participatory democracy.

After graduating in 1940 at the age of 16, he entered the University of Hawai’i and enrolled in ROTC, a required course at the time.

When the bombs fell on Pearl Harbor on the morning of Dec. 7, 1941, Yoshi and his fellow ROTC members reported for duty.

World War II set him on a path not traveled by any of the Honpa Hongwanji ministers. UH ROTC led to his service in the Hawai’i Territorial Guard, the Varsity Victory Volunteers and, eventually, the Military Intelligence Service, where he initially did translation work in the Pacific Military Intelligence Research Section.

After Japan’s surrender, his unit was sent to Tōkyō to collect documents believed to be of value to the military. He used his time in Japan to also visit his maternal grandmother in Toyama and to spend time with his cousins in Tōkyō.

While those were happy moments, he also remembered incidences in Tōkyō that saddened him.

“Once, I was approached on the street by a father who asked for whatever I could give him so that he could feed his children. The begging didn’t bother me, since I understood the circumstances,” he wrote in JEAH, Vol. 3, published in 2013. “What bothered me the most was that these suffering people, ostensibly our enemies, looked so much like me. I am an American, I affirmed, but I was also Japanese, I realized.”

Next: Yoshiaki Fujitani’s decision to become a Buddhist minister.

Education

Continued from Page 1

students and audiences.

But do we also realize that our “observers/learners” are not only listening to our lessons, but also watching our actions? If we’re standing up in front of the congregation and the microphone doesn’t work, how do we handle that? When we get stuck in traffic and we’re late to an appointment, how do we act? If we’re eating in a restaurant and spill food on our shirt, do we get mad? When we react to situations, do we respond as if the glass is half-empty? Or is it half-full?

Although not always in our consciousness, our reactions to these situations provide behavioral models to those that observe us. Do we appreciate the little things in life that we sometimes take for granted? Living a life of gratitude and showing our appreciation every chance we get really makes us humble and realize that we are only a small part of a larger universe.

Remembering that our actions can speak louder than our words is important as we build the future of the Hongwanji in Hawaii. Our Dharma Schools are the key to our future. We all need to support each other as we nurture the youngest Sangha members by providing meaningful educational programs and activities to build a foundation of Buddhist values. Opportunities which encourage fellowship, sharing, positive interactions, relationship building can lead to lifelong friendships, instilling Jodo Shinshu principles and dedication to our Hongwanji organization. Dharma School gatherings, YESS Camp, Jr. YBA, TechnoBuddha (BCA conference), YBICSE are activities that have everlasting effects on our youth and young adults. As Rosa Parks said, “There is no future without education.” This is something that



A Honolulu Dharma Schools activity was held at Kailua Beach in March 2020. (Credit: Debbie Kubota)

we all need to keep in mind as we plan our temple and district activities. We must remember our youth, as they are our future.

The Commission on Buddhist Education (CBE) represents each district in our organization. Our commissioners — Reverend Satoshi Tomioka (Hawaii Island), Reverend Arthur Kaufmann (Kauai), Reverend Kerry Kiyohara (Maui), Susan Oshiro (Oahu) and Debbie Kubota (Honolulu) are always available to provide support when planning your district and temple educational offerings.

They are key individuals who work hard to promote activities and resources which help to bring Jodo Shinshu to life

quotes, and Dharma School Projects/Resources at your fingertips whenever you need to plan a lesson, Dharma message or educational offering.

Please help us by adding to the list — send your resources directly to Kerrie Wong (Assistant to the Director) kwong@honpahi.org at the Buddhist Study Center.

Let’s all work together on aligning educational offerings with our life experiences. Sometimes a simple lead-in question like “Have you ever?” “What would you do if?” “Can you believe that this happened?” “What was your best memory of?”

I love it when we can bring about many great discussion points that can be related to Jodo

Let's all work together on aligning educational offerings with our life experiences.

in our daily activities. Annual district Nembutsu Seminars ensure that our Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii’s (HHMH) five-year theme (“Building Healthy Sanghas”) and slogan for the year (2021) “Nurturing Empathy and Respect” are promoted.

The CBE has worked hard to develop a list of Shin Buddhist Media and Educational Resources accessible to all on the HHMH website (<https://hongwanjihawaii.com/shin-media-resources/>). You will find books, music, movies, short videos,

Shinshu principles and Buddhist values. When your participants are engaged and enthusiastic, then you know you are successful! Please share your successes with your Commissioners. We would love to hear about them!

Debbie Kubota is: Dharma School teacher, Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin; President, Honolulu Hongwanji Dharma Schools; Commissioner, Honolulu District Buddhist Education; and Chair, Commission on Buddhist Education.

BWA

Continued from Page 3

difference in their lives as well as to our Hawaii hosts who welcomed our guests from Japan with aloha.

Mahalo also to the BWA members who have helped to organize the program over the past half century and to the student participants. The program is on hold now because of the pandemic, but check with your temple BWA’s if you know someone who would like to participate in the future.

Maui is setting out the welcome mat for the 14th BWA Hawaii State Membership Conference, which will be held April 23-24, 2022. As the host of this event, which is held only once every four years, the five Maui temples have been in monthly planning sessions since January 2020.

With the theme of “Building Healthy Sanghas — Connecting with Others,” the program spotlights thought-provoking, challenging topics. As Saturday’s spotlighted speaker,

Deidre Tegarden, Executive Director of the Nisei Veterans Memorial Center on Maui, will address the topic of ways to Connect with Others. On Sunday, Janet Umezu of California, will speak on Diversity and Acceptance, challenging topics for today’s society.

Breakout sessions will feature the role of social media in our world of today. Women’s impact on Buddhism is another session to challenge BWA members. Other breakouts will feature Hawaiian women’s fashions, Buddhist vegan cooking, and enhanced fitness.

Among the many opportunities to mingle and interact with each other is the lure of admiring what others have made and brought to the conference to sell at pop-up sales tables.

The 2022 BWA conference promises to be a mix of thoughtful presentations and joyful person-to-person interactions.

This is an event not to be missed!

We hope the current increase in COVID-19 cases will subside to make

it possible once again for BWA ladies to talk and laugh with each other. If the rate of infections does not allow for the person-to-person conference, a virtual conference may be held. The conference, whether in person or online, will need everyone’s support. If you have not already done so, sign up with your temple and district units to come to Maui for the 14th State Membership Conference!

The World Buddhist Women’s Convention will be held in conjunction with the Joint Anniversary celebration of Shinran Shonin’s birth and the founding of Jodo Shinshu. There will be morning and afternoon services held at Honzan on May 10, 2023, for the joint celebration. The World Buddhist Women’s Convention will follow on May 11-12, 2023.

Planning is underway, so be sure to check with your temple BWA for more details. Don’t miss this very special event! Better yet, join your BWA so that you can be part of these meaningful and fun activities!

Rev. Kuniyuki

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coupled with world views and values based on Buddhist principles. The workings of the mind that is ego and emotion driven is undependable compared to the compassionate mind of Amida Buddha that guides us when we open our minds and hearts to its power.

And the best way to live this sort of practice is right in the middle of everyday life, together with other people. Furthermore, to ease the way, it is even better for people of like values to form a community so that they can support and provide feedback to each

others, YESS Camp, Young Buddhist Leaders Seminar, BSC Shakuhachi Club, Dharma Study Tour, Commission on Buddhist Educations, Dharma Educators Conferences, etc., are the gathering points of other small Shin Buddhist Learning Communities.

In many cases, the same people might be a member of a larger community. And that is a good thing because then all the Shin Buddhist Learning Communities support and feed each other.

For example, one powerful example is Wayde Toyama, who was a Junior YBA member from Kahului Hongwanji Mission, attended YESS Camp as a camper, then became a YESS Camp

One powerful example is Wayde Toyama, who was a Junior YBA member from Kahului Hongwanji Mission, attended YESS Camp as a camper, then became a YESS Camp Counselor.

other. The community is the context in which one can become aware of interdependence, make the mistakes of a human being and be witness to human mistakes.

As equally important, the community is also the context to experience the positive results having certain world views and values. It is also in that community that the stories of wisdom and compassion can be told to inspire and affirm the Buddhist teachings and the abiding presence of Amida Buddha. Therefore, the hero of a Shin Buddhist narrative is the community rather than a single member of that community. A more informative designation is that it is a *Shin Buddhist Learning Community* because “lifelong learning together” is the dynamic that impels it.

And, in turn, all the component activities of the BSC like Summer Session, Ministers Seminars, BSC Fellowship Club, Junior Young Buddhist Associa-

Counselor. At the same time, he helped to restart the BSC Fellowship Club as its first president, became a manager for Enterprise Rent-A-Car back home on Maui, started a family and is now president of Kahului Hongwanji Mission besides being a Junior YBA Adviser and supporter of Youth and Young Adult activities.

So, indeed, if we continue to nurture the concept of a network of Shin Buddhist Learning Communities into mutually supportive and reinforcing groups of people who embody the ideals of our religion, then we will not only help people with their life journey, quite naturally, involvement and as a result, membership of our associated organizations, including temples will grow.

This I believe is the net result of the Vision of the Buddhist Study Center (BSC).

Rev. Kevin Kuniyuki, who recently retired, was the Director of the BSC from 2012 until Sept. 30, 2021.

Rev. Hasebe

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When a baby is born, when you bake, when you water the garden, when you have fights, when you are upset, and when you face fear, you can hear the Calling. The Calling Voice can be heard within the drop of dew on the leaf, the conversation between people, through reading, and of course, through the gesture of placing our hands together: gassho and Nembutsu, Namu Amida Butsu.

We have been called for over kalpas of many years.

The working of Great Compassion and Wisdom has never given up on us, and finally, at this moment, we are now able to listen.

As Shinran Shonin wrote, we are encountering the teaching now which is indescribably hard to encounter. It tells us how vast and dynamic Great Compassion works, and how deeply and strongly we are embraced.

On this auspicious occasion of the inaugural issue of “Ka Leo Kāhea,” let us place our hands together, and solemnly and calmly hear the Calling Voice, which always embraces us and is embracing us now.



Enjoy reading the inaugural issue of Ka Leo Kāhea? Please support our quarterly publication with a donation. You may use the QR code or mail a check to HHMH.