Northwest District to Host Ministers, National Council, NW District Convention

The BCA’s Northwest District Council will host the ministers and National Council meetings from Feb. 18-23 with the theme “Dana for World Peace” at the Hyatt Regency Lake Washington in Renton, Washington. You will not only attend one of the most important events in the BCA calendar, but also hear the election of six new lay Executive Committee members by the National Board, including a new BCA President. In addition, the Institute of Buddhist Studies and the Center for Buddhist Education will host a symposium titled “Prayers for the World” at the Hyatt Regency Lake Washington.

This year’s ministers and National Council meetings are being held along with the 73rd Annual Northwest District Convention. The events will begin with the Ministers Association meeting on Feb. 18 and the Ministers Association meeting Feb. 19-20.

From 1 to 5 p.m. Feb. 20, the IBS and CBE will present the symposium, which is free and open to the public.

It will consist of three presentations: “Living with Prayers for the World: As We Take Amida Buddha’s Vows As Our Own” by Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto, president of IBS; “Shin Buddhist Thoughts on World Peace in the Age of Buddhist Modernism” by Rev. Dr. Mitsumi Fujiwara Wondra, resident minister of Orange County Buddhist Church; and, “How Shinjin Education will host a symposium titled ‘Prayers for the World’ at the Hyatt Regency Lake Washington. The Cherry Blossomz offered to teach themselves The Cherry Blossomz “with a z” — after growing up in different temples. The Cherry Blossomz perform at the 16th World Buddhist Women’s Convention banquet on Aug. 31 in San Francisco. Shown, from left, are Miko Shudo of the Oxnard Buddhist Temple, Lisa Horikawa of the Florin Buddhist Church and Emily Yoshihara of the Orange County Buddhist Church. (Courtesy of Mark Shigenaga)

For the 10th anniversary of TechnoBuddha in 2017, Lisa Horikawa (Florian), Miko Shudo (Oxnard), and Emily Yoshihara (Orange County) did something they had never done before. They presented a new, original gatha at morning service.

Developed with Miharu Okamura (Oakland), “Namo Amida Butsu” is a contemporary gatha that looks to the Nembutsu as a source of guidance in our lives when we experience tough times. It was also an opportunity for the three friends to come together as Buddhist musicians — who named themselves The Cherry Blossomz “with a z” — after growing up in different temples. Before its TechnoBuddha premiere, the Cherry Blossomz offered to teach “Namo Amida Butsu” to attendees who wanted to learn in advance, and many people came to the Friday night rehearsal session.

“That felt good because on Saturday morning, we had those people who already knew the song,” Horikawa recalled. “As performers, we feel that support, that energy, that love, and that really helps us because even if we’ve been doing this for a long time, it’s still scary.”

The gatha became a highlight of TechnoBuddha for many attendees, including Bishop Rev. Kodo Omezu. After the service, he asked The Cherry Blossomz to save the dates for the World Buddhist Women’s Convention (WBWC) — two years in advance.

Below 2017 and 2019, they performed as The Cherry Blossomz or with other groups, including singing the national anthem at Los Angeles Dodgers and Los Angeles Clippers games. When the date finally arrived to sing
BISHOP’S MESSAGE

As Fujii Sensei Wrote, Let Us Be Guided by Buddha’s Light

The February, Share Nembutsu With Loved Ones

We Can Think, Say, Act With Kindness in Our Lives

Like the Buddhist Churches of America
Thich Nhat Hanh, Vietnam-

nombre monk and master, has commented that "the best way to take care of the future is to take care of the present moment."

As the end of my term as BCA President approaches, I am humbled by the commit-

ment of hundreds if not thousands of our members devoted to taking care of BCA’s present moment.

I have far too many people to thank for the progress we have made together to fit within this article. I intend to address this in my final column appearing next month. Instead, I will highlight some BCA achievements that may well im-
pact the future of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism.

The broad strokes of this tale are summarized in "A Dog, the Pope, and the Buddha," which appeared in the January 2020 edition of our Wheel of Dharma, while the heart of this achievement is eloquently described in the companion piece by Rev. Dr. David Ryoe Matsumoto, president of IBS.

The details of this odyssey can be found in the Bloomquist Report to the 2020 National Council.

BCA Archives. Senior librarians at UCLA tell us that our BCA Archives is the most important archival collection of Japanese American and Buddhist-related 20th century history in the world. I had the privilege of working together with our BCA Archives and Histori-

cal Preservation Committee to safeguard our collection and ensure its future growth for all of us, and for future genera-
tions to house and maintain our collection. Through the support of the Exec Com, NB, and NC, our entire collection was transferred to its new home at UCLA, where it will be digitized for online access by the public and will be maintained in perpetuity. It will continue to grow in the future with new contributions from all of our temples and churches.

The BCA Archives at UCLA will open each floor session with a reciting of the "Namo Amida Butsu," the "best way to take care of the future is to take care of the present moment."

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The Mountain View Buddhist Temple held its annual Eitaikyo service and Keiro Kai luncheon on Nov. 17. The temple recognized three individuals who turned 100 years old: Mr. Clark Nakamura, Mrs. Haruko Nakano and BCA President Stacey Kawabata. (Courtesy of Eric Arakaki)

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Alameda Sangha Celebrates Mrs. Terao’s 100th
By Jackie Ito-Woo
Buddhist Temple of Alameda

A crowd of approximately 135 people turned out at the Buddhist Temple of Alameda to celebrate a milestone -- the 100th birthday of Mrs. Joyce Terao, wife of the late Resident Minister Rev. Eiju Terao, on Dec. 15.

Rev. Terao was the Resident Minister at the Alameda temple from 1961 until his retirement in 1978.

Mrs. Terao has been an integral part of the temple and its activities ever since the Teraos arrived. She created the recipe for the beef curry dish, served for decades at the curry booth at the temple’s bazaar, and contributed generations, sharing their tributes to Mrs. Terao. Morgan Hashimoto, Amy Tomine and Jean Sato.

Dorothy Okamoto orchestrated a “Happy Birthday” tribute with the participation of Kenny Narahara, Hiko Shimamoto, Howard Shintani, Mas Takano and Ron Tsuchiya. “I am just overwhelmed and full of gratitude for the beautiful, heartfelt party given to me. Your kind and warm friendship over the years has made me very happy. I am forever grateful to all my friends and to the Buddhist Temple of Alameda,” Mrs. Terao said.

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The Awesome Sangha
By Richard St. Clair

Editor’s note: Richard St. Clair is a composer, musician, poet and student of Buddhism. He is also an administrative assistant at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. St. Clair said his Dharma practice is listening deeply to the teachings of Shakyamuni Buddha and especially Shien-an Shounin and Rennyo Shonin. “My faith in the saving power of Amida Buddha is my rock,” St. Clair states.

A gift of the Buddha sublime,
Thou Sangha, Amida’s great gifts,
Leads to Salvation all being admir’d
In samsaric seas since endless time.

My Dharma friends here are a treasure
Gifted me by Amida’s Great Love,
From His Lotus Seat reigning above
He blesses us all without measure.

The Sangha is a great Jewel,
Along with the Buddha and Dharma,
Leading us through the thicket of karma,
The way out of life’s trials cruel.

This timeless gifts, a true blessing,
The community of our Sangha true;
Its vision of the Pure Land, its view
Offers guidance, our problems addressing.

Together we listen deeply, and,
Surrendering to Amida’s Other Power,
In His presence we neither tremble nor cow
As He takes us with Love by His Hand.

I thank Amida, my Savior and Lord,
This great Shinjin from Him I’ve acquired
Through His Prevalent Voice, and I ENJOY Praising Him with many a joyful word!

Namu Amida Butsu
Namu Amida Butsu
Namu Amida Butsu

Thank You, Amida Buddha
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Alameda Sangha

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Technobuddha ‘Vision 2020’ Set March 20-22
By Brandon Yanari
Palo Alto Buddhist Temple

It’s time for the 13th annual Technobuddha conference! The Technobuddha conference is an opportunity for young adults (ages 21-39) to meet other young adults interested in Buddhism and BCA and Hongwanji. The program continued with three people, representing different

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**Richard Endo**

Continued from Page 1

A conversation with Richard was in an active young person in Oakland. 
Rev. Dr. Yamaoka urged him to study for the ministry, but Rich had just gotten a new job and was planning to get married to a family. So, he promised that, although he could not become a BCA minister, he would do all that he could to support the ministers, the Buddha's teachings and the BCA. That is exactly what he did throughout his life.

Richard Endo showed what it means to take refuge in the Three Treasures. An unwavering responsibility, he took on a range of leadership roles to support the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. Time and time again, Richard demonstrated a willingness to step forward and accept the new challenge, "Rich's generous words, full of unconditional compassion, gave me the encouragement I needed to step forward and accept the new challenge," Rev. Yushi Mukojima remembered.

For Rev. Mukojima, Richard Endo was the epitome of a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist: "I was always working to redirect people's actions to positive ends. He was an active young person in the broader religious world. He was, for many years, a Deep River School teacher and leader of the Federation of Buddhist School Teachers. Rev. Dr. Yamaoka, president of the San Jose Betsuin and Acting Chair of the IBS Board of Trustees, remembered working with Rich to plan a federation conference. At that time and for many years after, Rev. Sakamoto said, "Richard would bring his calm analysis and organizational skills to the many responsibilities he would accept."

Indeed, Rich was enjoyable to be around. He was fun and friendly. He also exhibited sincerity, self-effacing humor, clarity of purpose and the audacity of hope. Because of who he was, Richard made a difference in his life.

BCA President Rev. Stambul served with Rich Endo on a number of BCA committees and boards. Stambul said, always challenged to contribute to the BCA Zaidan fund. His challenges, whether for $10 or $20, were always successful. When they last saw each other, Rich gave Stambul $30 and made him promise to increase the challenge at the next BCA meeting. "The $30 he gave me are still in my wallet. I keep it to fulfill my promise to Rich to present the bills to the February 2020 BCA National Council, so that others will match his contribution," Stambul adds. "And I also hold on to those bills because they remind me of Rich Endo."

Richard Endo also made a difference at the BCA Endowment of the Institute of Buddhist Studies, helping to navigate IBS through financial challenges and its application for accreditation. Not, thanks to his efforts, and that of many others, IBS is prepared to venture toward new horizons of scholarship, ministerial education and engagement in the broader religious world.

Richard Endo served the Mountain View Buddhist Temple for decades, including four terms as temple president. In 1998, Rev. Russell Hamada passed away suddenly and tragically. Temples minister, recalled when he was interviewed for the position. He was very anxious and wondering whether he was up to the task. Sensei, don't worry. Just come. They need you, and you will see how much you should have worried on Rev. Mukojima's face. "He never said that a project was full of unconditional compassion, gave me the encouragement I needed to step forward and accept the new challenge," Rev. Mukojima remembered.

For Rev. Mukojima, Richard Endo was the epitome of a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist, particularly leading by example, by living his life filled with the feeling of gratitude. Richard genuinely cared about others and treated everyone with dignity and respect.

Richard Endo was many things to us—a loving husband, father, grandfather, brother and son. He was a leader, a fellow Nembutsu follower, "a model of how to graciously and courageously live and serve others," and a true friend.

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**NW Convention**

Continued from Page 1

Can Help Us Live in the 21st Century” by Rev. Dr. Takashi Sugahara and Crystal Inge and for Yoshihara. The Northwest Convention, beginning Feb. 20 that continues with business meetings and workshops on Feb. 21 and Feb. 22, ending with joint sessions and a combined events banquet on the evening of Feb. 22. A BCA National Eritaike service is scheduled the morning of Feb. 23.

The Northwest Convention, which is open to all including NCM Boosters, begins the evening of Feb. 21.

**CherryBlossomz**

Continued from Page 1

“Namo Amida Butsu” at the BWBC on Aug. 31, their gatha truly global.

People from Brazil, Japan, Hawaii and across the country came up to congratulate CherryBlossomz on their performance at the banquet, and several temples told them they planned to adapt the song for their groups.

CherryBlossomz President narrative: "He had a special way of communicating the indications or the results of our practice. We know that compassion is the heart of the Buddhist message. We wish to share the Dharma and lead others to the Dharma. As human beings, we desire to be a Bodhisattva, but we fail because we are selfish human beings. If that is what we do? Even with our human hindrances and limitations, we can live in kindness, that is to think, say and act with kindness. We have to be kind to our- selves and take care of our mind and body. We have to know our family members, relatives, friends and community. We are just ordinary people, living ordinary lives. We can go beyond our selfish ego-self. Perhaps kindness is not only for me, but also how we live and share our lives. We can practice kindness, to give a smile at a stranger; to say a kind word to a friend; to give a hug to your family members; and any number of small and significant ways. This is the time to do old grudges, to drop unkind words, and to stop hurtful actions.

To quote a retired minister, who shared a wonderful story, "Namo Amida Butsu, with gratitude and kindness beyond your limits."

**Rev. Miyamura**

Continued from Page 2

We know that compassion is the heart of the Buddhist message. We wish to share the Dharma and lead others to the Dharma. As human beings, we desire to be a Bodhisattva, but we fail because we are selfish human beings.

What are we to do? Even with our human hindrances and limitations, we can live in kindness, that is to think, say and act with kindness. We have to be kind to our-selves and take care of our mind and body. We have to kind to our family members, relatives, friends and community. We are just ordinary people, living ordinary lives. We can go beyond our selfish ego-self.

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**Bishop’s Message**

Continued from Page 2

The world of light. By so understanding our light, we are able to walk together as fellow travelers. Let us answer to the call, Namo Amida Butsu. Buddha is nothing but the unbridled desire for us to be freed from the cycle of suffering. Buddha is always working to redirect us to the World of Light. Buddha is Namo Amida Butsu

Buddha itself. Shakayamuni Buddha. Shinran Shonin, Rev. Fuji and others who have left us before dwell in or to the world of light.

As Fuji Sensei wrote, only human beings as遥远 are we able to find the way to transcend the endless cycle of suffering. Let us turn toward a place to hear the Buddha’s words and to use each of us to live a settled life illuminated and guided by the Light of the Buddha.

Namo Amida Butsu
By Rev. Shitoku A. Peal

Our own volition, just like our whole life, is conditioned by our own variability. We are centered around an illusory “ego” to which we ascribe a power that is obviously just as illusory. It is from this ego-centeredness that humankind draws its value judgments and ethical actions. These individual calculations are experienced by us as an ego-screen that darkens our sight of Light/Wisdom/Compassion.

We don’t see this Light because we prefer not to see it. After all, we find our own visions and plans more important than the Universe and the center of Buddha’s Compassion. However, if we realize our true place in this world of suffering, we can let go of all our meddlesome illusions in a spiritual level. Only then can we distance ourselves from our ego-thought, and no longer consider ourselves to be the center and standard of the Universe. In this “letting go,” we leave our own calculations and worries behind; we abandon all dualistic and fragmented thought.

The great realization is thus not experienced as the final result of our own volition or our striving, but as the result in time-and-space of the infinite activity of Amida’s Vow-Power to liberate all beings from their world of suffering.

In a practical sense, it thus makes an “allocation” of all our ego-views, rather than a ‘belief’ in something or a set of ideas. This “abandoning” or “letting go” is expressed in Sino-Japanese by the word Shinjin, which literally means “Entrusting-Mind.” As a religious concept, however, it is virtually impossible to translate. It is correct to say that it is an inner attitude of complete or perfect entrusting. However, it is certainly not a blind belief nor an intellectual or emotional attitude.

Shinjin is the decisive – unique – moment in which the “I” surrenders to Shinjin – the sincere, deep and joyful surrender of our own salvific calculations to the tidal wave of Amida’s Compassion – the decisive and definitive awakening through which we are suddenly, sometimes even brutally, confronted with the close mutual bonds that are binding us to all beings and things in the Universe.

Together with this new awareness of forming an infinite unity, an immense feeling of humility awakens in our mutual and the true position we take in this world and, finally, realizing how little and illusory our spiritual struggle has been, a boundless gratitude and respect grows in us, not only in relation to Amida Buddha and all that he represents, but also in relation to all beings who no longer are experienced as separate from Buddhahood.

It is these feelings of humility and gratitude that become predominant in our daily life.

This spiritual complexity of unity and co-responsibility and gratitude is expressed by Shin Buddhists in the wording of the Name of the Infinite Buddha.

NAMU AMIDA BUTSU

This wording is not a magical or meditative formula – nor a “mantra” or “dharani” as some are inclined to think and as might be the case in some other forms of Buddhist practice.

Keiro Kai

Continued from Page 3

the Sangha is here.

The luncheon began with opening remarks from the master of ceremonies, NBCN Bay Area’s morning traffic anchor Mike Inouye, followed by the opening flag ceremony.

After a welcome address to the Keiro Kai from Craig Hamasaki, opening Gasho by Rev. Yuji Mukojima and a toast to the Keiro Kai from Craig Hamasaki, lunch was served.

Wishes of appreciation to the Keiro Kai were given by Stacey Kawaraba, the Moun- tain View YBA President. The temple also recognized three individuals who turned 100 years old: Mr. Clark Nakamura, Mrs. Hatsu Nakano and Rev. Ensei Nakoda.

Unfortunately, Mr. Nakamura and Mrs. Nakano were unable to attend. The temple presented the three members each with a nenju as a token of appreciation.

The Dharma School students, Girl Scouts and BWA also presented Rev. Nakoda with birthday cards and gifts to celebrate his birthday.

The temple also presented a certificate from the Buddhist Churches of America to recognize Rev. Nakoda on his 100th birthday.

As an attendance was another Centenarian — Mrs. Ryo Shishido, who is 102 years old. Also after the special recognitions, Jun Daiko, the temple’s taiko group, entertained the audience.

The celebration ended with a performance of “Tancho Bushi,” led by the Mountain View Buddhist Temple Senior Group.

Rev. Nakano

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loved ones kindness, gentleness and thoughtfulness. It is a most difficult time when we must depart from their presence. This couple lived a life of Nembutsu and with love.

Live by the here and now – the present – that we must convey our entrusting to our loved one and to Nembutsu. It cannot wait. Once our loved ones have departed from us, there is only our Nembutsu to commu-nicate our love to them. While there is still the time to hold their hands, thank them for the life they shared and for their devotion to Nembutsu, let us try to say affectionate words to express our love to them. However, we have Namu Amida Butsu in gratitude and thankfulness to them for sharing in distilling for happier times.

We share Namu Amida Butsu, but in this state of feeling courageous, try to tell our loved ones how much we appreciate and cherish our lives with them. It is the month of love.
「真宗は時機相応の教えなり」という意味を解釈し、この主な教えは時機相応の教えなりとされている。この教えは、真宗の教えの一部で、時機に応じて教義を変える必要があるという思想を表している。

現在の社会状況において、時機相応の教えが必要であるとされている。それは、時代の変化を反映し、教義を変えることが必要であるとされている。

この教えが、新しい社会状況においてどのように解釈されるのか、今後の研究が期待されている。
1月25日ロサンゼルス別院で冬のパシフィックセミナーが開催され、約200名が参加した。セミナーのトピックは節談説教でカリフォルニア大学バークレー校のブラム・マーク教授が講義をした。また南部教区の開教使による法話リレーが日英で行われ、参加者は聞き入る。日本語での講義と法話リレーには約30名が参加。「ご法話の内容はバラエティに富んでいてとても楽しく、ありがたく聞かせていただきました。」と歓喜した。今年8月19日にはロサンゼルス別院で直林不退師による節談説教の実演と、相愛大学教授、釈徹宗師とブラム・マーク教授が講演を行う予定にしている。

総長コラム
米国仏教団総長 梅津廣道

私の同級生で藤井道栄先生が去る12月11日に訪日中に急に亡くなられました。その知らせを受けたときは本当に驚き、今でもまだ信じられない思いです。四十数年前に日本から開教使として来られ、長きにわたり日夜宣布活躍していた彼がいなくなり、本当に寂しくなりました。藤井家の皆さまに心よりお悔やみを申し上げます。

藤井先生と親鸞聖人の関係については、『親鸞聖人の教え』の中で記述している。藤井先生は親鸞聖人を尊敬し、親鸞聖人の教えに親わりながら、自らの思考を加えて新しい解釈を加え、実践を重ねながら進めてきました。藤井先生の法話は、親鸞聖人の教えに根ざしながらも、現代の状況に応じて新しい解釈を加えることを特徴としています。

藤井先生のご遺志を引き継ぎ、未来の仏教の発展に貢献したいと考えています。藤井先生の教えは、現代の社会状況に応じて伝統的な仏教教義を再解釈し、新しい解釈を加えていくものであり、今後もその精神が存続し続けることを心から願っています。