



December 2018

## Persimmon



**After each Sunday Service**, we usually get together for refreshments prepared by the toban group. It is a relaxing time. Over a cup of tea or coffee with home-made baked goods and various fruits, we leisurely chat with one another. Recently, I saw several cut persimmons on the table. I love persimmon. Unfortunately, Alberta is too cold to grow persimmons. We must import them from Japan, California or China. Persimmon is often used as a seasonal reference of autumn in Japanese haiku-poems.

Eating a delicious persimmon, I remembered a well-known haiku-poem with a persimmon as the subject. The poem was composed by Shiki Masaoka, one of the greatest haiku-poets in Japan in the late 1800s. Shiki was his pen-name. He is still popular in the haiku world. This particular haiku with which perhaps most Japanese are familiar, goes like this: "Eating persimmon I hear the sound of the bell coming from Horyuji." (kakii kueba kanega naru-naru houryujii). This is all. The haiku is very simple with 5-7-5 syllables. And yet when we learn his physical condition at that time, we can see the poem from a different angle, one with deep meaning. The poem is very inspirational.

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Horyuji is a temple in Nara, ancient capital city of Japan, built by Prince Shotoku in 607. Prince Shotoku is considered a teacher of Japanese Buddhism. We often see a scroll of his image on the wall in the najjin, the inner area of a Buddhist temple shrine. Shiki was born in Shikoku island of Japan in 1867. The poem was written when he was on his way to Tokyo to work there. He stopped in Nara where Horyuji is located. Sitting alone on a bench of a small teahouse on a quiet evening, he listened to the faint sound of the temple bell coming from Horyuji.

Listening to the sound of the bell, he felt loneliness at being away from home and family. Feeling the passing of time, the haiku-poem came to him. He felt the fragility of his life, human life. At that time he was suffering with tuberculosis, a lung disease which was fatal in those days. Soon after arriving in Tokyo where he briefly worked, he died at the young age of 34.

I like the sound of the bell, especially the temple bell I used to hear at the end of the year in Japan. Listening to the sound of bell I would feel I was drawn into serenity and peace. I am sure Shiki felt serenity and peace in his fragile nature condition. I am sure that he knew his own death was near but found spiritual peace and tranquility in the sound of the bell as if the temple bell would accept him as he was. Human death and dying, suffering and sorrow which are unavoidable and which we do not want to think about, are drawn and absorbed by the sound of bell. In the Jodo Shinshu way, the sound of namo amida butsu, a call of Amida Buddha, accepts us as we are - our struggle and loneliness, our worries and frustrations and so on. I hum, "Eating persimmon I hear the sound of the bell of Horyuji." His simple and yet profound haiku-poem reverberates in my heart and mind beyond time and place.

In gassho,  
Yasuo Izumi, Minister  
Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta

### 「除夜の鐘」

今年も12月となりました。静かに一年を振り返る時間を持ちたいと思います。16年前にレスブリッジに再赴任した際、当地にある日加友好日本庭園の鐘楼堂につるされた、立派な鐘を見ました。すぐに「除夜の鐘」のことを思いました。日本の美しい伝統を、カナダのアルバータ州で生かすことが出来る!と思いました。マイナス25度近くの寒さと吹雪で二度キャンセルになったこともあります。お陰で毎年続いています。

「除夜」は「夜を除く」と書かれています。それは、「無明の夜を除く」ということです。心身を悩ます煩惱。この煩惱にまみれた我々の日々の姿は、仏様の智慧の眼から見れば、まことに闇の中を右往左往しながら生き、そして空しく死んでいく姿と映るのでしょうか。「除夜の鐘」の音は、仏様が私たちを目覚ます声なのです。ある明治の哲学者が「もの来りて我を照らす」と言っていますが、この「もの」とは、「声」であり「音」のことです。仏様が「声」となり「音」となって、私たち近づき、照らし、包みこんで下さる、ということです。今年も除夜の鐘つきが出来るようです。合掌。

南アルバータ仏教会

開教使 泉康雄



# Important Message to the Membership From the Temple Board

The Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta has been so very fortunate since it's amalgamation. It has a wealth of members who volunteer their time, abilities and knowledge to ensure Temple activities occur every year. As our members become older however, our volunteer base has also become older. This year a number of volunteers have stated they would like to step down from their roles. While we still have access to our mentors and knowledge base, we would like to encourage others, especially our younger generations and the newly retired, to step forward to ensure the longevity of our Temple.

## MC for Sunday Service / AV Operator

We need about 3 more people to volunteer to MC Sunday Service. There is a standard format to follow which is available at the podium. The current MC's would be happy to help the new volunteers the first time they MC. We would like to thank Sway Nishimura and Flo Senda who have done such an excellent job at MC up until now.

The new AV system is about to be installed over the next 3-4 weeks thanks to Ross Jacobs. This system will have the ability to record and transmit the services over the internet. Once the new system is operational we will have several training sessions for those who are willing to run the AV. To this point we have 5 people who have volunteered to help but it would be ideal to have another 3 people trained.

## Chow Mein Supper Coordinator

Brenda Ikuta has agreed to take on one of the Chow Mein Supper coordinator positions but we are looking for 2-3 more people to take this on. The current coordinators Pat Sassa, Jan Okamura and Judy Takaguchi have done an amazing job for the BTSA over the past 8 years. They are willing to teach the next set of coordinators the main organizing work that is needed to run the major fund raising event for our temple. At this point with several subgroups organizing things such as the Chow Mein noodle cooking, Sweet and Sour pork cooking, meal packaging etc the coordinators mainly have the responsibility of making sure everything is running smoothly and all the details are looked after.

## Obon Chair Person

The Obon committee has been chaired by Lorita Ichikawa who would also like to step down as committee chair. She is willing to stay on the committee but we are looking for some one else to chair it. We thank her for organizing this event so well. We will be holding the next Obon committee meeting in mid January and are looking for new members. From the main committee we hope to select a new chair person.

## Temple Coordinator

The temple coordinator positions are a new responsibility to help temple members who would like to rent the temple. We have changed the rental policy so that only members can rent the temple. They require a rental coordinator who can get the

agreement papers signed, receive the rental and damage deposit cheques and to sign in and out the group to make sure the temple is in good order after the event. The board has decided that this should be a paid position and the coordinator is to receive \$50 each time they coordinate a rental.

Please contact either Roland Ikuta 403-317-0078 / rolikuta@shaw.ca or Akira Ichikawa 403-327-1668 to express your interest in the positions or committees listed above.

These are important positions that need to be filled in the immediate future in order for the temple to continue to run smoothly. Thank you.

## Translation 18

*This is a continuation of translations of Kudensho (Note On Oral Transmission) begun in the September, 2016 Hikari. Kudensho is a Jodo Shinshu historic text believed to have been written by Kakunyo (1270-1351), a great-grandson of Shinran, and translated by Rev. Phillip Eidmann and Rev. Yasuo Izumi.*

### The Primal Vow of Amida Buddha Being Originally for Ordinary Man and not for the Sage

Shinran Shonin mentioning that the story was a transmission from the Late Honen, said to Nyoshin:  
"People in the world think that 'Even a man of blind passions gets birth, how much more so the good man does.' This matter subverts the Primal Vow of Amida Buddha at a distance and differs from the golden words of Shakyamuni's coming into this world more recently. The reason is that the hardships of five kalpas of meditative thought, and the forbearance and patience of the myriad practices of the six paramitas<sup>1</sup> are still all for the essential emancipation of ordinary man and are not all for the sages.

This being so, an ordinary man is the one who will get birth in the Fulfilled Land riding on the Primal Vow. If it is hard for the ordinary man to get birth, the Vow will have been established in vain and the power will be useless.

However, combining the vow and the practice, Amida perfected for sentient being in the ten quarter the great and rich benefit. Because of this, since he declared himself fully enlightened ten kalpas now have passed. How could the true testimony of various Buddhas, numerous as the sands of the Ganga, who testify to this, be a vain and blind teaching? Accordingly, in the holy commentary it says: 'All good people and ordinary people of blind passions obtain birth.'

This shows, too, that the ordinary man of blind passions is basic and the good ordinary man is an added aside. Therefore, if the good or ordinary man who are those who get birth, how much more so ordinary men of blind passions who are exclusively those of the true potentiality for birth."

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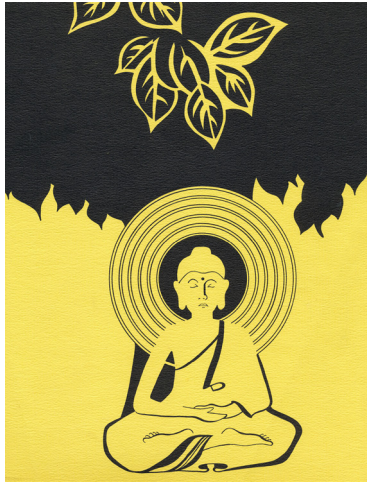
1. Six paramitas: Generosity, Discipline, Patience, Endeavour, Meditation and Wisdom

## Bodhi Day

Sakyamuni Buddha's enlightenment will be observed Dec. 9 at the regular Sunday service that day. The Sunday closest to Dec. 8 when it's claimed that Sakyamuni achieved buddhahood under the bo tree in present-day India is designated Bodhi Day

Tea and a special cake to commemorate the occasion will be served following the service. The service also completes the regular Sunday services for the year, with the temple being closed until the new year.

Please note that Izumi sensei will preside at the year-end ceremony known as Joya-no-Kane at the Nikko Yuko Garden on Dec. 31. Please see a related article elsewhere about the bell-ringing finale to 2018. The following day—New Year for 2019—will be observed at the temple with a service at 10:30 a.m.



## Final Appeal for JSBTC Day



BTSA's appeal for JSBTC Day donations concludes in December. JSBTC Day which was observed formally at the Oct. 28 Sunday but donations are still welcome to help in the propagation activities throughout Canada.

BTSA will credit the donors and issue receipts at the end of the year that include donations made to JSBTC on JSBTC Day. Donors should write their cheques payable to BTSA, indicating "JSBTC Day" in the memo area of the cheque. JSBTC thanks all donors in advance for observing this procedure.

## ANNUAL FOOD BANK APPEAL

The BTSA board has approved the annual Food Bank request for this year. As in the past, the box in the multipurpose room beckons to members and friends to have it filled with donated non-perishable goods. BTSA again will estimate the amount collected in February, 2019, and match the estimate with a cheque made out to the recipient organization; for this round, it'll be the Lethbridge Interfaith Food Bank. Here is a list of most wanted items.

### Non-Perishable Food Items

Canned fruit/vegetables  
Meat/salmon/tuna (canned)  
Soup (cans & mixes)  
Canned pasta/stew  
Spaghetti sauce  
Unsweetened juices  
Baby food in jars  
Boxed cereal  
Infant cereal  
Baby formula  
Pork & beans (canned)  
Peanut butter  
Jam  
Macaroni & cheese  
Hamburger Helper

### Non-Food items

Financial contributions  
Grocery gift cards



## Joya no Kane

Weather permitting, the annual year-end Buddhist bell-ringing ceremony, Joya-no-Kane, will be observed on new year's eve this year at the Nikka Yuko Garden bell tower site. Last year's cancellation because of extreme cold was the first since the bell-ringing was inaugurated. (Accompanying photo is from 2016).

Co-sponsored by the BTSA and the Garden, the public is invited to take part in the ceremony which begins around 11:30 p.m. There is no admission fee to the grounds for the event. However, cancellation looms if the temperature falls below -15 C.

For the Garden, the bell-ringing has become part of its Winter Light Festival. While the standard Buddhist ceremony in Japan involves tolling the bell 108 times, the Garden number will vary with the turnout. The number 108 represents the number of earthly desires responsible for human suffering. Each strike of the bell is said to expunge one desire. In so doing, the claim is that an individual will be purified as the new year begins.



# 2018 Membership Form

- Full Membership (\$100 for each member)
  Student Membership\*

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Names(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Names(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, Province, Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Cellphone No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

- Check to receive The Hikari newsletter by email only.

Please send this form and your remittance to:  
 Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta Treasurer  
 470 40th Street South  
 Lethbridge, AB, T1J 3Z5

**\*Note**

Student membership is limited to persons 18 years or older who are currently registered in a recognized educational institution. It is free of charge with a valid student ID card. Student Members are not entitled to vote at general meetings or to hold office in the BTSA and this category does not include membership in the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada, the national organization.

## LET'S EXPAND THE CIRCLE OF THE DHARMA!

**Membership as of Nov: 193**

**Shotsuki Donations**

November 2018

- Dorene Gordon
- Chiduka Hamabata
- Nadine Hamabata
- Shirley Higa
- Neil Hinatsu
- Dave & Val Kunimoto
- Mark & Shelly Murakami
- Shig & Katie Nakagawa
- May Nishikawa
- Sway & Toshiko Nishimura
- Ken Ohno & Nancy Eng
- Setsuko Ohno
- Tak & Jan Okamura
- Roy & Pat Sassa
- Tom & Mitsuko Shigehiro
- Tom & Fumi Shimozawa
- Emily Stitt
- Harry Sugimoto
- Kazuko Sugimoto
- Robert & Judy Takaguchi
- Fugi Takeda

- Shizuo & Dorothy Tomita
- Joe & Sumiko Tomiyama

**Total - \$900.00**

**Other Donations**

November 2018

- John & Donna Dubbelboer
- Judy Fukushima
- Rumiko Ibuki
- Akira & Lorita Ichikawa
- Dr. Roland & Brenda Ikuta
- Rev. Yasuo & Sachi Izumi
- Dave & Val Kunimoto
- Ken & Amy Kurio
- Irene Masuda
- Shig & Katie Nakagawa
- Sway & Toshiko Nishimura
- Yoko Nishimura
- Doreen Oakes
- Heidi Oishi
- Rocky & Jean Oishi
- Sust & Neva Oishi
- Jagjit S. & Jeet Panesar
- Roy & Pat Sassa
- Florence Senda

- Tom & Mitsuko Shigehiro
- Harry Sugimoto
- Fugi Takeda
- Glen & Pamela Tanaka
- Masaye Tanaka
- Joe & Sumiko Tomiyama
- Tak & Yoko Tsujita
- Sumie Tsukishima

**Total - \$4,075.30**

Please inform us if your name has been omitted from or misspelled in the donation lists. Anyone wishing his/her name not to be acknowledged in print, please let us know so it will not be published. Thank you.

## U of L Wellness Balance Fair

BTSA manned a table Oct. 31 for the third and perhaps last year at the University of Lethbridge Wellness Balance Fair. The main attraction was sensei writing out visitors' names in Japanese calligraphic characters. Each sheet was enclosed in a recent issue of the Hikari. Other Jodo Shinshu reading materials were also available for visitors to take.



## DHARMA CLASS Activity

Dharma students used air-dry clay to create figures holding hands in a circle around the Buddha.

*May every link in Amida Buddha's Golden Chain of Love be bright and strong and may we all attain perfect peace.*

*Namo Amida Butsu*



## REGULAR EVENTS

**The Lethbridge Karaoke Club** Wednesdays @ 1:30pm  
Holiday break from Dec. 19 to Jan. 2  
Will resume weekly practice on Jan. 9, 2019  
Contact Nao 403.327.7357

**NCS Adult Taiko** Tuesdays @ 7pm  
Contact David Tanaka 403.330.1548, david@albrio.com

**Minyo Dance I** Tuesdays @ 4pm  
Winter break: Dec. 11 - Jan. 8

**Minyo Dance II** (Beginners Level) Mondays @ 6pm  
Winter break: Dec. 10 - Jan. 7  
Contact Pat Sassa, sas7@telus.net

**Tonari Gumi** Tuesdays @ 1 pm  
Contact Heidi Oishi 403.330.6461 or  
heidi.oishi@gmail.com

## TOBAN UPDATE

Appreciation to **Toban 4** for November activities. **Toban 3** is up for the month of December, in which we will only have two service Sundays during the month. Everyone is invited to donate baking and crafts to the Bodhi Day Bake and Craft Sale to start off December.

### Schedule

Dec Toban 3  
Jan Toban 4  
Feb Toban 2

### Soup Kitchen 2019

March 20 | April 23 | May 21 | June 5

Contact: Lorita at 403.327.1668  
or lorita.ichikawa@gmail.com

## Bodhi Day Bake and Craft Sale



## Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta

(470 - 40th Street South)

**Saturday, December 1, 2018**

Open from 1:00 p.m. *while supplies last*

*Looking for something different?*

Check out our much sought after specialty food items, crafts, and wonderful home baking for the holidays.

Visit us at <http://thebtsa.com/> or our [Facebook](#) page



Shinran Shonin (kiri-e art) by Daido Kato

Shinran Shonin  
Ho-onko is Jan. 13, 2019

## CHAIR SCHEDULE December 2018 & January 2019

Services begin at 10:30 a.m. unless otherwise indicated.

**Dec 02** SHOTSUKI  
Chair: Roland Ikuta  
Audio: John Dubbleboer

**Dec 09**  
Chair: Katie Nakagawa  
Audio: Brenda Ikuta

**Dec 16, 22 & 30**  
NO SERVICE

**Dec 31** (Monday)  
Joya No Kane, 11:30 p.m.  
New Year's Eve, Nikka Yuko  
Garden (weather permitting)

**Jan 01** NEW YEAR'S SERVICE  
Chair: TBA  
Audio: TBA

**Jan 06**  
Chair: Ross Jacobs  
Audio: Akira Ichikawa

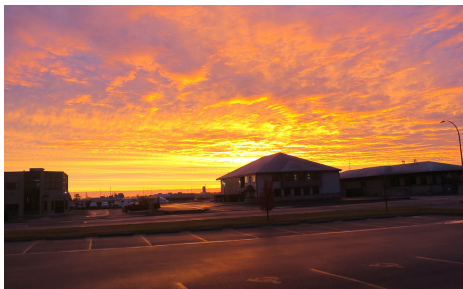
**Jan 13 @ 2pm** HO-ONKO & SHOTSUKI  
Chair: Roland Ikuta  
Audio: Ross Jacobs

**Jan 20**  
Chair: Harry Sugimoto  
Audio: Tak Okamura

**Jan 27**  
Chair: Kynan Gordon  
Audio: John Dubbleboer

## Mein-Making

Early morning mein-making took place Nov. 3 in preparation for this year's Bodhi Bake and Craft Sale set for Dec. 1. Workers assembled as a beautifully-colored sunrise welcomed them. BTSA thanks all members and friends who turned out to lend their hand.



Autumn sunrise greeting



Cutting dough cakes



Beehive of activity



Three woks operating



Cooling and bagging finished mein



Weighing and packaging

## Haines talk

*BTSA Member Jeff Haines gave a talk at the Oct. 21 Sunday service. Jeff, who is a student studying for the ministry, teaches in Brooks, AB. The Hikari printed the first half of his talk in the November issue. Below is its continuation and conclusion.*

As is seen here the realization of Amida Buddha and specifically shinjin can have great benefits for the individual willing to learn and challenge themselves to reflect on their interactions with others. With continued exploration of shinjin it's the realization of our impacts on ourselves and others that we strive to improve. One of my favourite books I have read so far was by Takamoro Shigaraki entitled Heart of the Shin Buddhist Path. He states that "living in shinjin means basically that we learn the Buddha-dharma and say the nembutsu, wishing to attain Buddhahood ourselves; further, we engage in action for the sake of all other persons and living beings in order to allow them to realize true happiness. The fervent aim of our lives is both our attainment of Buddhahood and the attainment of enlightenment by others"

This wonderfully encapsulates the second benefit of Shin Buddhism for North American society. Once we, as individuals, begin to self-reflect on our own choices, our own comments and our own behaviours we see ourselves much more interconnected with each other. As Kenneth Tanaka states in his book Ocean: An Introduction to Jodo-Shinshu Buddhism in America, "each of us is part of a cosmic, interdependent network of caring forces, seen and unseen, that protect and support us physically, socially and spiritually. The sacred story of Bodhisattva Dharamkaya (Amida Buddha) symbolizes these compassionate forces." This would logically lead us to not only reflect on individual needs but those needs of others, locally and globally. Thus, becoming more aware of our interconnection on a global scale would potentially lead to action about things that impact us all. Nothing is impacting us all more greatly than climate change. As a recent headline read "World Scientists' warning to humanity: a second notice". In the article two lines spoke to the action and self-reflection needed as we move forward. These were "humankind is still facing the existential threat of runaway consumption of limited resources" and "if the world doesn't act soon, there will be catastrophic biodiversity loss and untold amounts of human misery." I could say that my concern, as an individual, for this potential crisis is because I have three daughters. Three daughters who must face the future challenges that the previous generations have created. But, I feel great compassion for those throughout the world who are suffering from climate change. The increased intensity of hurricanes in Central America or the flooding in Southeastern Asia. They all have daughters, they all have families and loved ones. It is this connection of mutual compassion and concern that drives me to want to help. I feel it is important to acknowledge the truth of the situation and begin to recognize what might be done to alter the path of climate change.

The focus of Shin Buddhism is an attempt to see clearly the ultimate truth of reality which we call Amida Buddha. Thus, Shin Buddhism is potentially beneficial to North Americans as it address both individual and societal patterns that have been set forth. It would challenge each person to see themselves differently and in how we relate to the world at large. As Monshu Koshin Ohtani stated "today, as the destruction of the

global environment continues and the nature of our family life comes under critical review, we realize that a religion that stops at only solving one's own pain and anxiety can no longer be called authentic." These sentiments are what North Americans need to hear and the world will benefit from through Shin Buddhism.

I ask you now to join me in gassho with your hands together as one, as we recognize the great potential and compassion of Amida Buddha.

Namo Amida Butsu  
 Namu Amida Butsu  
 Namu Amida Butsu



A tasty variation

## Baked Potato Lunch

On Sunday, November 4th about 80 people joined us for our Baked Potato Lunch. Generous donations netted a profit of over \$400 for our new audio/video system scheduled for installation in the coming months. Thanks to everyone who prepared the lunch - special thanks to Harold and Chris Perry who donated the potatoes and Jim Tsukishima for facilitating that kind donation!



With variety of toppings



Preparing potatoes



Oven-baked potatoes



Tasty ham as side dish



Buffet Line



Members & Friends at lunch



DECEMBER: TOBAN 3

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>*OFFICIAL BTSA ACTIVITY</b> <b>10:30am</b> Shotsuki Monthly Memorial Service* 2	6pm Minyo II 3	1pm Tonari Gumi 4pm Minyo I 4	1pm Karaoke 5	6	Spiritual Care Mtg. at CRH 7	1 10:30am Explore Buddhism & Jodo Shinshu* 8
<b>10:30am</b> Jodo-E (Shakyamuni Buddha's Enlightenment Day)* 9	6pm Minyo II 10	1pm Tonari Gumi 4pm Minyo I 11	1pm Karaoke 2pm LCC visit* 7pm Board Mtg* 12	13	14	10:30am Explore Buddhism & Jodo Shinshu* 15
No Service 16	17	18	1pm Karaoke 19	20	21	22
No Service 23	24	25	26	27	28	29
No Service 30	11:30pm Joya No Kane at Nikka Yuko Garden (weather permitting) 31					

JANUARY: TOBAN 4

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		10:30am New Year's Day Service 1	2	3	12pm Spiritual Care Mtg. at CRH 4	5
10:30am Regular Service* 6	6pm Minyo II 7	1pm Tonari Gumi 4pm Minyo I 8	1pm Karaoke 2pm LCC visit* 7pm Board Mtg* 9	10	11	10:30am Explore Buddhism & Jodo Shinshu* 12
2pm Hoonko/Shotsuki Monthly Memorial/ New Year's Party* 13	6pm Minyo II 14	1pm Tonari Gumi 4pm Minyo I 15	1pm Karaoke 16	17	18	19
10:30am Regular Service* 20	6pm Minyo II 21	1pm Tonari Gumi 4pm Minyo I 22	1pm Karaoke 2pm LCC visit* 23	24	25	10:30am Explore Buddhism & Jodo Shinshu* 26
10:30am Regular Service* 27	6pm Minyo II 28	1pm Tonari Gumi 4pm Minyo I 29	1pm Karaoke 30			