BUDDHIST TEMPLE OF SOUTHERN ALBERTA

HikaritheLight July & August 2014

BIRDS IN THE PURE LAND

Our annual picnic was held at Elks picnic site in Indian Battle Park, surrounded by a thousand trees. On the day before the picnic it was raining. The next day it was gloomy and a bit chilly. The ground was still wet here and there but the air was very fresh and clean. The tree leaves were so beautiful. Smiling, a small girl came to me and showed me three tiny caterpillars moving slowly on her hands. I came closer to the trees and looked at the tree leaves carefully. I noticed many fluffy caterpillars moving and eating busily on the wet leaves. I saw tiny holes here and there on each of the leaves. Everything was still and quiet. I felt tremendous serenity and peace at the picnic ground.

When members and their families gradually gathered together and soon reached approximately sixty, we started the morning service in the same way as the Sunday service we conduct at our temple. We set up a small obutsudan shrine on one of the picnic tables with rice, flowers and incense as offerings. We began the service by singing Shinshu Shuka (Shinshu Anthem) first, reciting the Six Paramitas and chanting a sutra. Throughout the service I heard the beautiful voices of birds chirping and twittering over our heads. I had a strange image that these birds were singing and chanting together with us. I felt untold contentment. It was so serene and peaceful that after the sutra chanting I shared my thoughts with the participants, quoting a passage from Amida sutra.

In Amida sutra, the sutra of the Buddha of boundless compassion, many kinds of wondrously rare and beautiful birds of various colors appear. The sutra says that these birds are living and singing in elegant harmony in the Pure Land, the realm of enlightenment. Furthermore, it says that these are actually the manifestations of Buddha's heart of compassion and

whoever hears the voices of these birds will awaken to the newness of life based on the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha.

I appreciated the birds singing over our heads. I enjoyed the musical sounds that deeply penetrated in my heart. Indeed, I thought, they were also the manifestations of the Buddha in this mundane world and that made my heart calm and tranquil, urging me to listen to the voiceless voice of the dharma in the midst of my busy and noisy everyday life.

Although the weather was somewhat inclement, we were so contented and enjoyed with appreciation the beautiful nature, friendship and heart-warming food.

In Gassho. Yasuo Izumi, Minister Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta

Thank you to the former Monsu, Koshin Ohtani

On June 5th, 2014 our Monshu, a spiritual head of Jodo Shinshu Hongwanjiha, retired from his position and became the Monshu Emeritus (Zen Mon). I cannot help but express my appreciation to him for working tirelessly for nearly a half century to promote the true essence of Jodo Shinshu taught by Shinran Shonin not only in Japan, but also abroad. I had personally in Canada. As the Monshu, he was not authoritarian but very open and friendly with gentle smiles. During his travels in Canada, privately or officially, he was modest and humble. He (and later with his wife) was welcomed wherever he visited. Although he was quiet and somewhat shy, he expressed, in recent years, his rather strong views toward the future of Jodo Shinshu.

In his message on the 750th Memorial for Shinran Shonin he declared: "The present situation of the Hongwanji organization points out that there is an ever-widening

gap between our everyday life and the way we propagate the teaching and perform rituals, and it is difficult for lay members to participate in temple activities... I hope the activities by the temple and lay leaders will be well-suited to their areas and interaction with the local society will flourish." In his concluding words, he especially hoped that well-planned, ingenious activities will be promoted.

In our modern society in particular, people tend to propagate their religion too impressively and extravagantly in a showy manner, using media and computer technology. The depth of religion becomes lost. We must sincerely hear his words in our hearts, respond humbly to his vision, and hope and continue to listen to the dharma and Jodo Shinshu with deep appreciation. Again, thank you former Monshu-sama, Koshin Ohtani.

しみこみ

夏休みとなりました。夏休みの休暇を利用 して、旅行に出られる方もおられると思いま す。お寺は夏も一般に開放されておりますの で、お参りください。(但し、開教使は七月三 十一日より八月六日まで外出します)

み教えに耳を傾ける習慣は、簡単には出 来上がるものではないと思います。ある父親 は「しみこみ」と言う言葉を使って、この習慣 が出来上がるのではないか、と仰っていま す。その方は十九歳の一人息子さんを、わず several occasions to meet and talk with him か数日の患いで亡くされたのですが、亡くな る前の様子は普段と全く変わらず、「私は人 間の世界をこのたび終わり、仏様の世界に帰 っていきます」と、世話になった人達にお礼 を言って、父親も驚くほどに、落ちついて命 を終えたそうです。父親は、弔問客に「あの子 は、小さい頃からお経に親しみ、よくお寺参り をしていました。きっと、仏様のお慈悲が少し づつ、親も気づかぬほどに、体にしみこんで いたのでしょう」と。仏教の言葉では「宿縁」 と呼ぶことが出来ましょうか。

> 自分の死の様子は予測は出来ませんが、 仏様の、広大なるお慈悲を受け取り、喜ばさ せて頂くという習慣は身に着けておきたいも のです。合掌。泉康雄

BTSA NOTES

Obon season is upon us and, along with it, family reunions and summer get-togethers emblematic of this time of year. The BTSA has a full slate planned for July; please look over the various Obon-related activities reported elsewhere in this Hikari, including sensei's schedule for area cemetery visitations.

Please note the bon odori planned for July 19 at the Galt Gardens. The poster advertising this event will be displayed at various locations throughout the city. Handy postcards with an explanation of obon also will be available at different locations.

A general call goes out to all members for help to set up and, thereafter, clean up the decorations planned for the Gardens gazebo, including the stage that's put together each year.

A matter of urgent importance is expected later this summer or September when BTSA considers a potential request for a loan from our sister temple in Calgary. Because this involves sizeable money matters, it should be aired thoroughly in a meeting of the general membership. Please refer to an article describing this matter related to the renovation of the Calgary Buddhist temple and be prepared for in-depth discussions.

The Calgary temple was closed last month to begin its major restoration, with an ambitious completion date in time for the 2015 World Buddhist Women's Convention on May 30 and 31. In the interim, it has set up a temporary location for their services. Please refer to the temple website for updates: http://calgary-buddhist.ab.ca/

We avoided heavy cat-and-dog rainfall at our annual picnic on June 15, but there was a good share of the kitten-and-puppy variety for much of the morning. Sunshine broke through and there were extended moments of blue skies later on, but raingear was much in evidence. Nonetheless, a hardy turnout of about 60 persons enjoyed the delicious potluck smorg with the perennial KFChicken.

Thanks to Toban 2 for looking after the basics, like kitchen equipment and utensils, bottled water and rice; to everyone for adding their delicious contributions; to Roland and Brenda Ikuta for looking after bingo and prizes and to Roland's expert bingo calling; to Maya Ichikawa for overseeing the pinata-bashing by the children; and to Wayne Tsukishima for taking care of the KFC pickup. Izumi sensei's dharma message--reprinted in this Hikari-emphasized the wonderful opportunity to assemble together and to enjoy the moment despite the weather.

A footnote: the following week turned hot and summery, but the city had closed the picnic area in the river bottom because water had overflowed the banks of the Oldman River. Giving this a positive spin, consider ourselves grateful that we at least were able to get together to share the festivities together.

Speaking of the heavy rainfall, BTSA late in June sold 160 wooden chairs locked in the storage shed since the temple dedication. The connection to the rainfall is that they were bought by the Blood Tribe to replace some of their many items damaged by flood waters during the recent storms. The purchaser said that they are continuing to their search for even more chairs. Lucky that BTSA was advertising the chairs on Kijiji at the time. As a result, we were able to help those in distress and make much-needed room in the shed at the same time.

Looking beyond Obon, the resolution passed by the annual general meeting in March to suspend regular services after the Obon service on July 20 goes into effect at the end of the month. This means there will not be regular Sunday services beginning with the last Sunday in July (the 27th) through August. Toban duties will be suspended on those Sundays, but may be necessary in the event of a funeral. Regular services are scheduled to resume on Sept. 7.

Watch for more information about what's planned for September-both a movie night at the Movie Mill (in the morning) and a half-day event at the otera designed to promote healthful living.

Just a reminder that Hikari takes its annual August off; the next issue will be in September, in which the Obon donations will be listed.

Please have a safe, mindful and enjoyable summer.

Akira Ichikawa

CHAIR SCHEDULE July & Sept 2014

July 06

Chair: Joyce Shigehiro Audio: Brenda Ikuta Sensei at Obon, Brooks, AB

July 13

Chair: Kynan Gordon Audio: Tak Okamura Sensei at Temple Hill, Magrath Obon

July 20 BTSA

OBON & SHOTSUKI, 2:30 P.M. Chair: Roland Ikuta Audio: John Dubbelboer

July 26 (Saturday)

Sensei at Taber Cemetery

July 27

No formal services from this Sunday thru the end of August. Regular services resume Sept. 7

Sept 07 Chair: Jack Nagai

Audio: Akira Ichikawa

Sept 14

Chair: Katie Nakagawa Audio: Brenda Ikuta

Sept 21

Chair: Deanna Jones Audio: Tak Okamura

Sept 28

Chair: Joyce Shigehiro Audio: John Dubbelboer

"Genki desuka?" A DAY OF WELLNESS

The BTSA development committee is organizing a wellness day--called "Genki desuka?" (Are you well?) for Sept 27, 2014. This will be held in the afternoon from 1-4 pm. There will be various guest speakers and demonstrations.

Topics will include mindfulness meditation to reduce stress, chi gong, healthy eating for young families, blood pressure and blood sugar checks, why and how to complete a personal directive and enduring power of attorney and advanced care planning, message therapy, etc.

The committee is still organizing the speakers and working out the details. These sessions will be open to the public. Information will be provided and there will be hands on demonstrations.

Please look for updates in the Hikari and for posters to appear once the information is confirmed.

If you have any questions please contact Roland Ikuta at 403-317-0078.

WBWC UPDATE

The 15th World Buddhist Women's Convention with the theme, "Embraced by the Oneness of Life," is now less than a year away. Scheduled for Calgary on May 30 and 31, 2015, workshops, panel presentations as well as entertainment will be part of this busy weekend.

Keynote speakers are Reverend Patricia Kanaye Usuki (in English) and Reverend Nana Yanase (in Japanese). More information on both speakers can be found at http://www.wbwconvention.com/convention-program/keynote-speaker/ Workshops, panel presentations and entertainment will be part of this busy weekend. Final registration deadline is November 29, 2014

Registration fee is \$325CDN and covers: (1) food; (2) commemorative tokens; (3) convention souvenir program; and (4) convention operating expenses including venue costs.

Children's registration fee is \$325 CDN for those 7 years of age and older. Children 6 years of age and under are free if accompanied by an adult. When the adult/parent registers, please indicate in "Special Requests" child or children accompanying, age(s), and if a highchair or booster chair is required for meals. Please note that there will be no babysitting services provided at or during the convention.

Banquet Only tickets will be available in the fall of 2014 (while supplies last) at a cost of \$110.

Register for the Convention and / or banquet only (fall) at www.wbwconvention. com/registration/on-line-registration Each participant is asked to bring: (1) an onenju; (2) montoshikisho; (3).ID/ passport; (4) six omiyage (small gift/ souvenir) with a suggested value under \$5 USD to exchange at the banquet table.

Monto Shikisho: There are still 45 remaining for purchase at the price of \$50 each. Once depleted, another shipment will be ordered but will be sold at the price of \$60 each plus tax. Take the opportunity now to order a Monto Shikisho at the reduced price! If you are interested, please contact Noriko Ikuta at Ikutanoriko@gmail.com.

Totsy Nishimura

Calgary Buddhist temple renovation update



As many of the BTSA members are aware, the Calgary Buddhist Temple is undergoing a major renovation. They have raised a considerable amount from donations. They will require further loans to be able to finance their project. They have informally approached several temples, including the BTSA for loans.

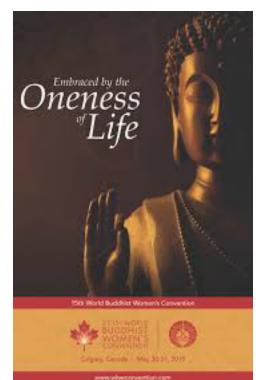
The BTSA board has considered their need and has two GIC's that have been invested that will

be coming to maturity. There is one GIC for around \$50,000 maturing in July and another for around \$110,000 maturing in November.

The board has requested a formal presentation and request from the Calgary Buddhist Temple Board of Directors. They are currently looking into various information including how to secure the loan, and the legality of a non-profit organization lending money for capital projects.

They will provide a presentation and make a formal request in the near future. Considering the large sum of money that may need to be loaned to the Calgary Temple, the board feels this is a matter that needs to be presented and voted on by the general membership of the BTSA.

It is expected that a special meeting to consider this request will be called in August or September. There will be notice given for the special meeting by email, through the Hikari and possibly via mail. Please be aware of the possible notice that will be coming.



Additional Yoga Class This Fall

Fall Yoga will include two separate classes taught by Val Kunimoto, both on Thursday mornings (dates TBA). If you are interested, please contact lorita.ichikawa@gmail.com or 403.327.1668. Each class will be limited to 15 participants and will be open to the community as well as BTSA members.

Gentle Restorative Yoga will be offered at 10:30 am. This relaxation-focused class begins with simple breathing practices to develop a deeper awareness of the breath. The class moves from gentle warm-up stretches into the stillness of restorative yoga postures supported by props releasing deeply held tension in the body's muscles and joints. Class ends with a guided relaxation to counter the effects of stress and create stillness in the mind and body. All participants should be comfortable moving from sitting on the floor to standing to supine positions.

Gentle Beginning Yoga - "taking the next step" will be offered at 9:00 am. This class will guide students through the basics of yoga - simple breathing practices, gentle warm-up stretches, standing and balancing poses, gentle backbends, and various forward bends and twists. Class ends with a guided relaxation to counter the effects of stress and create stillness in the mind and body. Each participant should work at their own pace, so modifications will be taught as needed.

Roland Ikuta

OBON SCHEDULE

The Obon season is upon us, a festive time to remember our ancestors and to gather together with family, relatives and friends to enjoy reunions. Amid the celebration, we commemorate the occasion with cemetery visitations and memorial services. Please be advised of sensei's schedule for the month to area cemeteries.

VISITATIONS

July 6 11am Brooks Cemetery visitation
(Obon service at Heritage Inn)

July 13 10am Magrath Cemetery visitation
11am Temple Hill Cemetery visitation

July 19 6pm Bon Odori, Galt Gardens, Lethbridge

July 20 1pm Mountain View Cemetery visitation
2:30pm At Temple Obon and July/August Shotsuki

July 26 11:30am Taber Cemetery visitation & Obon gathering (Saturday)

services

Please note Izumi sensei will not be available for regular Sunday services at the BTSA on July 6 and 13. Remember, too, that this will be the first year that the BTSA suspends regular Sunday services as of the Sunday following the BTSA Obon service on July 20 through August and to Sept. 7. Also, shotsuki service in September will be held on the second Sunday, Sept. 14 this year.



ODORI PRACTICE at the temple is held each Monday through July 14. There's still couple of sessions left to learn the dances that will be performed at the Bon Odori on July 19 at the Galt Gardens. Come out and learn the steps. Each practice session begins at 6:30 p.m. and runs for an hour.

photo: Lorita Ichikawa



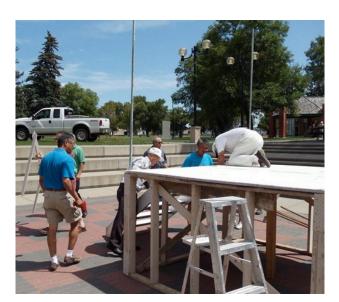
Under a bright and hot July sky, incense is burned by some of the many persons who attended the Obon service in 2013 at the Mountain View cemetery. photo: Akira Ichikawa

Calling all member-VOLUNTEERS!

Give BTSA a hand on July 19 to set up and clean up at the annual bon odori celebration at the Galt Gardens. We'll need lots of muscle to set up the yagura (stage), to hang cochin (lanterns) and to prepare tables for different groups offering and showing their wares. After the event is over, we'll need helping hands to tear down and pack everything away.

Please come to the gazebo at Galt Gardens at 1 p.m. to assist. With everyone helping, we should complete setting up within an hour or so.

All help is deeply appreciated.



Volunteers helping to set up the yagura (stage) during the 2011 bon odori at Galt Gardens. photo: File folder

Bon Odori Update

Planning is just about completed for the 11th annual Bon Odori at the Galt Gardens on Saturday July 19. Posters and cards designed by Maya Ichikawa are being distributed. Please see Brenda if you can help with distribution. The festivities will begin at 6 pm with a grand opening by the taiko groups of the Nikkei Cultural Society (NCS) led by David Tanaka, sensei. A welcome by Val Boras, this year's MC will follow. Izumi sensei will chant Aspiration and San Bujo and welcome the Mayor or a city of Lethbridge representative. The dances will then begin with continuous invitations to participation. Intermission will feature the taiko groups, both adult and youth, and the Jr. Minyo dancers, joined by the Sr. Minyo.

We have once again invited Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden to set up a bazaar table, provide children's activities and sell items from their kiosk. The Okinawa Culture Society will be on hand to sell musubi a snack food composed of a slice of grilled Spam on top of a block of rice wrapped together with nori (dried seaweed). Youth will operate the ever-popular kori (ice shave or sno cones) in different flavors with ice cream. The Lighthouse Japanese Restaurant will sell sushi and donburi, (a rice bowl with meat and vegetables). Dharma dogs (hot dogs with a Japanese touch) will not be offered this year, but may return in future. We will also have a crafts table to add to the fundraising efforts for the Women's Buddhist World Convention in 2015.

There is still time to join in the Monday odori (dance) practices each week, 6:30 – 7:30 for lots of fun and great exercise. Pat Sassa, coordinator, will see that you have a yukata (summer dress) to wear. Please plan to attend, not only the practices and festivities, but to volunteer for set up and take down. Set up begins at 1 p.m. on the Saturday of the Bon Odori and many are needed to put up the stage, lanterns, tables and posters. If you would like to help, please come out!

In gratitude, Lorita Ichikawa, Chair

BUDDHIST Q & A

Q. What is "Haka Mairi"? 墓参り

A. It is also called ohaka mairi. "O" is a honorific prefix to show respect to "haka", "a grave". "Mairi" means to visit. Therefore, "ohaka mairi" means to visit a grave to remember and show respect to those who had connection with us while they were alive and have died before us. The grave is a reminder of the impermanence of life and the interconnectedness to our loved ones. Without them we would not be here today. Again, without them we would not be able to really awaken to the life of impermanence. Once a year, at least, we, Buddhists, stand before the graves and express our deep gratitude to them. Obon time is a precious occasion of reflection and appreciation of life. (Y.I.)



The BON ODORI is a Japanese Buddhist folk dance performed outdoors in a circle around a Taiko on a raised platform, decorated with lanterns. Obon is a dance of joy, a time to remember and honour those who have passed on. It is a time to appreciate all that they have done for us and to recognize the continuation of their influence upon our lives.

2014 Membership Form

Full Membership (\$100 for each member)	OStudent 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 Hikar	i newsletter by Email only.
Please send this form and your rem	

Notes

*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 of membership does not include membership in the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada.

LET'S EXPAND THE CIRCLE OF THE DHARMA!

TOBAN UPDATE

470 40th Street South

Lethbridge, AB, T1J 3Z5

Contact lorita.ichikawa@gmail.com or 403.327.1668

JULY Toban 4 AUG Toban 3 SEPT Toban 2

OCT Toban 4 NOV Toban 3 DEC Toban 2

REGULAR EVENTS

Southern Alberta Buddhist Choir will resume in the Fall Contact: Katie Nakagawa 403. 327.4296 or katienak@shaw.ca

Tonari Gumi Will resume in the Fall.

Taiko Class Tuesdays, 7pm

Contact: David Tanaka at 403.330.1548 or david@eyesquared.com

The Lethbridge Karaoke Club will resume in September.

Please keep in mind our fall concert (date TBA).

PROGRAMS

Bon Odori Dance Practice Mondays, thru July 14, 6:30-7:30pm Contact: Pat Sassa 403.329.3105 or sassybachan@gmail.com

Ikebana Wednesdays, 10 - 11am running thru August Contact: Lilly Oishi 403.328.2159 or lilly.oishi@gmail.com

Memberships to June 25: 206

Shotsuki Donations

June 2014

Tammy Dietrich Randy Higa Shinko (Sheila) Higa Shirley Higa Neil Hinatsu Ray & Donna Journoud Yutaka & Chiyomi Matsuno Mark & Shelly Murakami Shig & Katie Nakagawa May Nishikawa Mac & Reyko NIshiyama Mitsuko Oga May Ohno Randy Ohno Tak & Jan Okamura Tosh & Joyce Saruwatari Tom Shimozawa Kazuko Takaguchi Jean H. Tatebe Shizuo & Dorothy Tomita Tak & Yoko Tsujita

Total - \$735

Other Donations

Fujio & Yoshiko Tsukishima

June 2014

Tammy Dietrich Keiko Higa Rumiko Ibuki Theresa Ichino Ikuta Family Kuni & June Ikuta Mak Ikuta Chizuko Kimura Ken & Amy Kurio Ken & Vickie Nakagama Bob & Jane Nimi Mitsuko Nishi Saburo & Kimino Nishi Yoko Nishimura Doreen G. Osaka Fumi Ota Jagjit S. (Jack) Panesar Irene & Asaye Sakamoto Florence Senda Nori Suaimoto Tamiko Sugimoto Noris & Sachiko Taguchi Brian Tajiri Tom & Tsuyako Tajiri Susan Takeda Reiko Takeyasu Toshiko Tanaka

Total - \$5,645

We try to be as thorough as possible but occasionally make errors. Please inform us if your name has been omitted from or misspelled in the donation lists. Anyone wishing his/her name not be acknowledged in print, please let us know so it won't be published. Thank you.















THE BUDDHIST TEMPLE OF SOUTHERN ALBERTA **children & youth dharma classes**

JUNE A busy month before summer break (No classes in July & August)



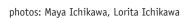


Abby McMeekin teaches the class to write Kanji characters.



Gillian Hestad (right) talks about ways to practice mindfulness.

Kynan Gordon (lower left) instructs a large group in Taiko.







HikaritheLight

Schedule 光 July & August 2014

Monthly Shotsuki Memorial Service 祥月法要 (service in English)

Please bring Homyo (Buddhist Name) of your loved one. 法名をご持参ください。

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				10 am Ikebana			
4			7 pm Taiko 1	2	6:30pm Choir 3	4	5
JULY: TOBAN	10:30 am Regular Service (Sensei in Brooks)	6:30pm Bon Odori		10 am Ikebana			
_ ∐	6	practice 7	7 pm Taiko 8	7 pm BTSA Board Meeting 9	6:30pm Choir 10	11	12
	10:30 am Regular Service (Sensei in Temple			10 am Ikebana			10:30am Dharma discussion "Explore Buddhism"
	Hill, Magrath)	6:30pm Bon Odori practice 14	7 pm Taiko 15	16	6:30pm Choir 17	18	6pm Bon Odori Galt Gardens 19
	1pm Mountain View Cemetery Visitation			10 am Ikebana		Correctional Centre	11:30 am Taber cemetery visitation
	2:30pm Obon & Shotsuki Service 20	21	7pm Taiko	23	24	visit 25	26
	No Service			10 am Ikebana			
	27	28	7pm Taiko 29	30	31		

*Rev. Izumi will be at the office every Sunday except August 3.

	Sunday	Mondo	ay Tue	sday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
0	No Service				10 am Ikebana			
			7 pm Taiko				1	2
700001	No Service				10am Ikebana 7pm BTSA Board			
Ś.		3	7 pm Taiko	5	M ['] eeting 6	7	8	9
	No Service		7 pm Taiko		10 am Ikebana			10:30 am Dharma discussion "Explore Buddhism"
	•	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	No Service		Zom Taile		10am Ikebana		Correctional Centre visit	
	1	7	7pm Taiko	19	20	21	22	23
	No Service							
	31		25	26	27	28	29	30

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