BUDDHIST TEMPLE OF SOUTHERN ALBERTA

HikariheLight

Are We Heading To the Path of Spiritual Liberation?



On a recent Sunday, members and friends of the Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta gathered together at Pavan Park and enjoyed the annual picnic. The picnic site of Pavan Park is a rural setting surrounded by mountains and valleys and a thousand trees. Oldman River is running at the base of the park which, along with its picnic ground, is approximately 15 km away from the city of Lethbridge.

According to the weather forecast, light showers were expected. Fortunately, however, it was nice and beautiful with occasional winds throughout the day. We were able to hear and enjoy birds chirping. Prior to the picnic we had an open-air morning service. The sound of chanting and singing filled the air around. Being away from the busy and noisy everyday life, we truly enjoyed a moment of refreshing experience. During the picnic, I had one interesting conversation with one of the senior women. She is always cheerful and brave despite having lost her husband several years ago.

As soon as she saw me she said with her usual smile, "Sensei, today I got lost on my way driving to this place."

"Is that so! But this is not your first time, is it?" I asked.

BTSA Minister: Rev. Yasuo Izumi 403.382.7024 • yasuo123@shaw.ca 470-40 St S • Lethbridge, AB T1J 3Z5 403.327.1260 • www.theBTSA.com "No, it is not my first time to visit here. I came here more than a few times. So I thought that I knew the way and there would be no difficulties coming here. But, you know, on the way there was a detour sign. While I maneuvered and was driving on an unfamiliar road, I saw several cars. I thought that they were also heading toward the same place. So, I followed them. Do you know where I ended up?"

Curious, I asked her,"Where?"

"A reformed church! They were heading to their own church for Sunday service!" she laughed.

"Really! Oh, you indeed got lost!" We both laughed. She continued saying, "When I knew that I really got lost, I asked one lady who passed by and was able to get on the right path to come here."

In our journey of life we sometimes experience this kind of unexpected happening, perhaps more complicated and serious happenings, and we are at a loss. I think that as soon as we know that the way we are heading might be the wrong direction, we should ask someone who knows the way.

Let us remember that our spiritual teacher, Master Shinran (1173-1263) encountered, amid his turbulent life, the Nembutsu teaching, Amida Buddha of boundless compassion, through his teacher Honen (1133-1212) and found the path of spiritual liberation in his life.

Namo Amida Butsu,

Yasuo Izumi, Minister Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta

お盆

懐かしいお盆がやってきました。お盆は 毎年やってきますが、歳を重ねるたびに、「 お盆」という言葉は、何かいよいよ懐かしさ をもって迫って来ます。

もう十数年前になります。開教使をしてい る私を、いつも慈愛をこめた眼をもって接し ていてくれた先輩がいました。後でわかった ことでしたが、その方の奥さんは、お寺出身 の方でありました。彼は、時々、近くの日本料 理屋に誘ってくれ、遅くまで仏教のことや、お 寺のことなどを語りあいました。その日も、彼 と料理屋で話をしておりました。しかし、その 日は、私が話をするより、彼が話をし、私は聞 き役でした。「最近ね、どうも声がハッキリ出 ない感じでね。先月、喉(のど)に魚の小骨が ささって、それからどうも調子が悪いんだ。 お医者さんに行ったけれど何でもないとい われたんだが。。。。」。そのような話を聞い てから2、3ケ月が経ったでしょうか。奥さん から電話があり「急に入院しました」という連 絡を受けました。本人には、お医者さんから 喉頭ガンであることを知らせたそうでありま す。当時、彼は60歳になったばかりであり ました。そして数か月後には帰らぬ人となっ たのです。お葬式のとき病院から数人の看 護婦さんが参列していました。珍しいことで す。看護婦さんたちから私は聞きました。「あ の方は、入院中よく私たちに"有難うござい ます"とお礼を言っておられました。自分の 体をさすってまで"有難う"と言っておられま したが、心の優しい方だったのですね」。 彼逝きて今年はもう17回忌になります。 合掌 泉康雄 (南アルバータ仏教会開教使)

Obon 2016

Obon--one of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism's three important holidays--will be observed during the month of July at BTSA and area cemeteries.

Services begin the first Sunday of the month in Brooks, with Izumi sensei officiating. In successive Sundays, cemetery services will be held at Temple Hill near Raymond, Magrath, the Mountain View cemetery in Lethbridge, and Taber. Please refer to the accompanying schedule for dates and times.

Rev. Shigenori Makino, retired minister from Hawai'i will be the guest speaker at the BTSA service on July 17, Lethbridge.

Obon odori is scheduled for July 16, beginning at 6 p.m., at the Galt Gardens in downtown Lethbridge.

The Calgary Buddhist Temple will be observing its obon on Aug. 28, and it has invited BTSA to attend. If sufficient numbers of members might be interested, a plan to retain bus service is being considered. Please see a related item.

Finally, keep in mind that there will not be regular Sunday services at BTSA after Obon. The regular services will resume Sept. 4, with the monthly memorial for that month scheduled on Sept. 13 (the second Sunday).

OBON Schedule

Throughout the month of July, Obon will be observed at local cemeteries and the BTSA. Please keep in mind that Izumi sensei will be officiating at all the services. Special guest, Rev. Shigenori Makino, will be at the bon odori and the BTSA cemetery service and obon service.

July 3(Sun)	11 am	Brooks Cemetery visitation (Obon service at Heritage Inn)
July 10 (Sun)	10 am 11 am	Magrath Cemetery visitation Temple Hill Cemetery visitation
July 16 (Sat)	6 pm	Bon Odori at Galt Gardens
July 17 (Sun)	1 pm 2:30	Mountain View Cemetery visitation BTSA Obon/Shotsuki Service at BTSA Temple

July 23 (Sat) 1 pm Taber Cemetery visitation





Obon HELP

A call for help is issued to set up the bon odori stage (yagura) and decorations at the Galt Gardens on July 16. All those who can give us a hand are asked to assemble at the Gardens at 2 p.m. Members with construction skills are asked to bring their tools to assemble the stage upon which the Odaiko (large drum) will be placed. The drum accompanies the music to which the participants dance.

We ask that those able to help dismantle stay until the end to help out again. Thanks in advance to all those who can lend a helping hand.

Before the dance, another request will be made by email or telephone to set up the temple for the Obon service on July 17. Those who are able to assist opening the dividers, putting out more chairs and setting up tables are asked to do so. Tentatively, we will try to schedule this for Friday, July 15.

DANCERS If you need assistance with dress on the 16th, please meet at the temple at 4pm.

Photo: John Dubbelboer

Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta Guest Speaker Series

OBON JULY 16 & 17, 2016



Speaker: Rev. Shigenori Makino

Shigenori Makino Sensei is a retired Jodo Shinshu minister living in Hawaii. He served at the Toronto Buddhist Temple from 2008 to 2010, and was the Bishop of the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada when the BTSA was dedicated in 2009. He gave the keynote dharma talk at the dedication. Even in retirement, he has been active in the Jodo Shinshu movement in Hawaii.

Makino Sensei will be present at all of our Obon activities (see details below) and will give a talk at our Sunday Service.

Obon season is a time to express gratitude to the loved ones who have passed on before us. We will be celebrating the impact they have on our lives in the following ways

Odori (dancing) on Saturday, July 16 at 6:00 p.m., Galt Gardens (downtown Lethbridge)

Cemetery Service on Sunday, July 17 at 1:00 p.m., Mountain View Cemetery, Lethbridge, Alberta

Obon Service on Sunday, July 17 at 2:30 p.m. at the Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta, 470 – 40th Street South, Lethbridge, Alberta.

These are free events. Everyone is welcome.

To get more information, check out our Facebook page, our website www.thebtsa.com, or email us at board@thebtsa.com



Bon odori practice sessions have been going on at the temple since the beginning of June. Dancers have been assembling each Monday to learn the steps and movements to dances that will be held at the July 16 bon odori in Galt Gardens. There's still time to catch the remaining practices.

Gratitude Card



The above card will be available to bon odori dancers and onlookers who may wish to tuck them in their obi or their person during the event. It is another way to express gratitude to those being remembered during the Obon season.

August trip to Calgary

The Calgary Temple has invited members of the BTSA to come to see their new renovated temple. They are making special arrangements to have us come during their Obon on August 28th. The BTSA plans to arrange transportation if there are enough interested people. We would leave the Lethbridge temple at 10:30 AM to attend their service at 3 PM. The Calgary Temple will provide supper and we would return to Lethbridge. It is expected that we would return to Lethbridge by 9 PM. We will post a sign-up sheet at the entrance of the hondo for those interested in going, or contact Roland Ikuta at Rolikuta@shaw. ca or 403-317-0078. It is expected the cost of the transportation would be around \$30 per person.

2016 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, T1 J 325

*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!

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Membership to June 24: 202

Shotsuki Donations

June 2016 Dorene Gordon Randy Higa Shinako (Sheila) Higa Shirley Higa Neil Hinatsu Ray & Donna Journoud Yutaka & Chiyomi Matsuno Mark & Shelly Murakami Shig & Katie Nakagawa May Nishikawa Randy Ohno Tak & Jan Okamura Tom & Fumi Shimozawa Noris & Sachiko Taquchi Shizuo & Dorothy Tomita Tak & Yoko Tsujita

Fujio & Yoshiko Tsukishima Lori Yokoyama-Redgun Total \$545 Other Donctions

May 2016 Joyce Adachi Roy & Nancy Adachi Yosh & Sue Aimoto Alberta Serious Incident Response Team Anonymous John & Rita Aoki Sunao & Kaye Ayukawa Ayako Endo Judy Fukushima Gloria Gilmore Dorene Gordon Keiko Higa Shinako (Sheila) Higa Shirley Higa Kaz & Yori Hiraga Marie Hirashima Tomi Hisaoka Rumiko Ibuki Akira & Lorita Ichikawa John & Amy Jackson Sue Kado Tom & Lily Kaga John Kamitomo Tosh & Kaz Kanashiro Etsuko Karaki Irene Karia Isamu & Sharon Kawade Michie Kawasaki George Kimura Hiroshi Kitagawa Sue Kitagawa Kiyo Koyanagi

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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.

BTSA Notes

The busy Obon season begins this month in southern Alberta with Izumi sensei planning visits to area cemeteries. While the season recalls mid-summer leisure of dancing in the park, it also evokes memories of loved ones no longer with us.

Don Castro sensei of the Seattle Betsuin writes "I can't think of a Buddhist holiday that is so sweet and sad at the same time, especially to our Hatsubon families, Hatsubon being the first Obon after a loved one has died."

And, so it is with those in our BTSA sangha observing Hatsubon. In keeping with Castro sensei's words, "The solemnity of the Obon service is balanced by the Bon Odori dancing which acts as a reaffirmation of the joy of life. Having both the sadness and joy gives us the full range of our human experience."

Thoughtful and insightful words, indeed. With the gaiety and festivities of the bon odori foremost, it's worth recalling the origin of Obon as a time to remember with gratitude family members and friends who have preceded us in death but whose lives continue to influence ours in numerous, perhaps undetectable, ways.

As one of Jodo Shinshu's key memorial services, Obon helps us focus attention on the interconnections and oneness of our lives.

At the same time, more mundane matters intrude as BTSA plans the bon odori and its Obon service. But, that too is part of life. Please refer to the article on Obon 2016 in this issue and all the assistance we require to insure the successful execution of our annual bon odori at the Galt Gardens and the Obon service at the temple the following day. We look forward to our sangha's help.

After Obon on July 17, the temple shifts to its summer schedule and suspends regular Sunday services until Sept. 4. However, during this period, Izumi sensei will be available to anyone needing to speak to him or to get in touch with him, and the temple will continue to look after funerals and memorials that may be necessary.

Please note also that this issue of the Hikari is designated as July/August, and there will not be a separate edition published for the month of August.

BTSA's major activity during June was its annual picnic, referred to in Izumi sensei's message on the front page. A great turnout of about 90 members and friends enlivened the event--recounted in pictures elsewhere in this issue--despite threatening weather and occasional high winds. It was wonderful to see so many enjoying the camaraderie at the John Martin Recreation Centre in Pavan Park.

In the coming months, plans include a visit to the Calgary Buddhist Temple during its Obon service on Aug. 28 and a wellness day on Sept. 10. Greater details about the latter will be available in the September Hikari.

Akira Ichikawa

CHAIR SCHEDULE July & September 2016

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

July 03 Chair: Deanna Jones Audio: Tak Okamura

July 10 Chair: Joyce Shigehiro Audio: John Dubbeloboer

July 17 BTSA OBON/SHOTSUKI 2:30pm Chair: Roland Ikuta Audio: Sway Nishimura

Sept 04

Chair: Jack Nagai Audio: Sway Nishimura

Sept 11 SHOTSUKI Chair: Kynan Gordon Audio: Akira Ichikawa

Sept 18 Chair: Ross Jacobs Audio: Brenda Ikuta

Sept 29 Chair: Robert Takaguchi Audio: Ross Jacobs

- Please see Obon schedule for July elsewhere
- No formal services from BTSA Obon thru the end of Aug.
- Regular services resume Sept. 4

MC designates: if you are unable to chair on your assigned date or have made other arrangements on your own, please inform Sway Nishimura. Thank you.

BUDDHIST Q & A

Q. Why do we observe the first seventh-day service after a funeral service?

A. There are many interpretations about this. According to the Jodo Shinshu Handbook for Laymen, (which a copy is available in our Library), "This Buddhist custom is based on the idea that a person enters his (or her) next rebirth after a period of seven times seven (49) days. In Jodo Shinshu the follower is born in the Pure Land and will attain Buddhahood instantaneously with death. But the custom itself was adopted from general Buddhism in order that the seventh-day rites may become an occasion to cherish the memory of the deceased and also be an opportunity to hear the Dharma and awaken to the compassion of Amida Buddha."

The number "seven" symbolizes perfection or enlightenment in Buddhism, coming as it does after the six realms of delusion and suffering that are states in which we live. The self- examination of the present situation will lead us to the future direction. Actually, It is not only the seventh-day memorial service but all kinds of Buddhist services, including Obon service which is coming soon, that are opportunities for us to listen to and meet with Amida Buddha's call, Namo Amida Butsu, which is working for our spiritual freedom, to liberate us to enlightenment. (Y.I.)

REGULAR EVENTS

Tonari Gumi Tuesdays, 12-3pm will resume Sept 8.

The Lethbridge Karaoke Club Wednesdays, 1:30pm will resume on Sept 7. Thank you! Contact Nao 403.327.7357 or Tad 403.942.7783

Adult Taiko Tuesdays @ 7pm

Contact: David Tanaka 403.330.1548 or david@albrio.com

Minyo dancers Tuesdays, 4:30pm will resume after Bon Odori. Contact Pat Sassa 403.329.3105

PROGRAMS

BTSA Children's Taiko continues Sundays except when there are monthly memorial or special services. Taiko is after regular services, Dharma class and tea. Kynan Gordon will call extra practice in preparation for the Bon Odori.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Condolences

Mr. Osamu Taniguchi (81) passed away on June 5, 2016

Bon Odori Dance Festival is Saturday July 16 beginning at 6 pm opening with Nikkei Cultural Society (NCS) Taiko. Sheila Oishi is the Festival MC. The Lighthouse Restaurant and KOKO Restaurant will be selling Japanese food, along with the Okinawa Cultural Society (OCS). Youth will make cooling Kori (snow cones). Water and snacks will also be available. Staff of Nikka Yuko Garden have been invited to sell kiosk items and will have activities for the whole family. BTSA craft sales will include hachimaki (head bands), aprons and other items. Thanks to Maya Ichikawa for poster and card and advertising design and those helping with the distribution. For further information contact Lorita.

Correction Apologies for misidentifying Heidi Oishi in the caption to the Lethbridge Soup Kitchen photograph appearing in the June Hikari.



WELLNESS Day September 10, 2016

This is a notice to all temple members that we will be hosting our second annual "Genki Desuka " or wellness day on Sept. 10, from 1 to 5 p.m.

We will be having sessions on Qi Gong, Meditation, Yoga, Blood Pressure measurement, BMI and blood sugar measurement, how to have healthy snacks, Massage therapy, Coloring, and hopefully Reflexology.

This time we would like people to sign-up ahead of time for the sessions they are interested in. Each session will take 30 minutes so participants will be able to participate in 6 out of the 8 sessions as there will be a 10 minute break between sessions.

The sign-up will be available at the temple (Hondo entrance) or by emailing Roland at Rolikuta@shaw.ca. We will have further information on our website and in the September Hikari.

TOBAN UPDATE

Thank you to **Toban 4** who provided a light lunch for Shotsuki, served weekly tea and cookies and handled the monthly cleanup for June. Appreciation to all who contributed to the potluck picnic on June 19; to **Toban 4** for preparing the rice, takuan, tea and organizing all the food and utensils; and to Roland and Brenda for the Bingo gifts.

Toban 3 is up for the month of July, where the main event is the supper following Obon service (2:30 pm) on July 17. Tea and cookies will be served after regular service July 3 and 10.

Toban Schedule: Each Toban serves four separatemonths during the year, along with all-temple events.July: Toban 3Aug: Toban 2Sept: Toban 4

Contact 403.327.1668 or lorita.ichikawa@gmail.com

Soup Kitchen



Members of Toban 3 and friends taking a coffee break from their Lethbridge Soup Kitchen turn on June 22. From left, around the table, are Emily Stitt, Pat Sassa, Marion Pashkowich, Joe Tomiyama, Akira Ichikawa, Sumi Tomiyama, Marion Tomiyama, Eileen Sameshima, Deanna Jones and Kim Walker. The menu included spaghetti and meatballs, tasty bread, salad, dessert, punch, coffee or tea.

Annual Picnic

Despite blustery weather, about 90 members and friends turned out for the annual BTSA picnic June 19 at the John Martin Recreation Centre at Pavan Park. The shelter protected everyone from the strong winds that abated as the day proceeded.

Following a brief Sunday service by Izumi sensei, a wonderful potluck lunch was served with KFC treats provided by the temple. Toban 4 augmented the fare with rice, takuan, tea and coffee.

Highlight for the children was whacking the pinata and scrambling for the sweet candy innards when the pinata was ripped open. They also played on the park equipment and kicked soccer balls during the picnic.

The day's activities concluded with bingo, called by Roland Ikuta. Plenty of prizes were handed out, with leftover KFC pieces being among the most highly desired.

Our thanks to all who attended and brought mountains of delicious contributions. Thanks also to all the volunteers to help set-up and clean up.

FOR CHILDREN ONLY



Have you ever seen a bird with one body and two heads? I have never seen one myself, but the Buddha once talked about such a bird to one of his disciples.

Once, in the foot of the Himalayan Mountains, there lived a very rare bird with a body and two heads. Initially, both heads were friendly with one another. Then one day, one of heads noticed the other head eating some fruit. The head who saw this asked the other head, "You seem to enjoy eating that fruit. That fruit must be really sweet. Will you please share some with me? I am very hungry." But the head who was eating the fruit said, "These are mine, all mine. I found them myself. You should put in more effort." The head who was told this got upset, became jealous and said, "If you are so mean and won't share them with me, I will eat poisonous fruit." Saying this, the head ate poisonous fruit and the whole bird died!

The Buddha said, "We live together. Nobody can live by himself or herself. Whether you believe it or not, this is how our lives go. Many people in this world are selfish. They think only of themselves. They do not share what they have with others. When things fall out of favour with them, they start to blame others. Please remember that sharing always brings joy. Pease do not be like the bird with one body and two heads."

The Buddha is giving us good advice, don't you think? If you agree with what the Buddha said, make sure you practice sharing every day of your life. (Y. I.)



Portable butsudan





Kitchen Preparations

"Groaning" buffet table











Izumi sensei joins the kids' soccer game

Hitting the Pinata



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