RIMBAN’S MESSAGE

THOUGHTS ON BEING RIMBAN

(continued on page 3)
CONCEITED MINDS CONTAMINATE THE PURE MIND

by Rev. Kazuaki Nakata “Rev. Kaz”

I will make the assumption that our Jiho readers are aware of the Seven Masters (highly praised monks) in Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. Nargar-juna in India was selected as first master. Second was Vasubandhu in India, followed by the three Chinese masters - Tan Luan, Dao Cho, Shan Tao, and the two Japanese masters - Genshin and Genku (Honen Shonin). Our Jodo Shinshu founder, Shinran Shonin stated in his writings, how these seven masters had influenced the formation of Jodo Shin Buddhist teachings. At this time, I would like to share with you the life of Genshin.

The sixth master of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism, Genshin was born in the Nara prefecture of Japan in 942. His father, Masachika Urabe died when Genshin was seven-years-old. His mother, Seiwa-shi-jo put great care in her efforts to raise Genshin. In 955, when Genshin was 13, he was ordained as a Tendai Buddhist monk at Mt. Hiei under the Great Master Ryogen’s authorization. Great Master Ryogen was a well-known monk who had helped to regrow the membership of Tendai Buddhism.

Soon after Genshin joined the monastery, he studied the Buddhist teachings intensely and memorized many chanting sutras (Buddhist texts). He was such a brilliant student as well as a teacher, that, at the age of 15 years, he was selected as a lecturer. He gave his lecture series (Essence of Tendai Teachings) at gatherings of noble clans in Kyoto.

One day, Genshin was lecturing at the palace of an emperor. The emperor was so enthralled by Genshin’s outstanding lecture, that the emperor offered words of praise to Genshin. She sent her letter and returned the gift to her son. Genshin was shocked by his mother’s letter. Nonetheless, he reflected deeply on his deeds and eventually chose to focus only on his monastery life.

We, as human beings, generally want to be praised by others for our efforts. If someone praises us, we are pleased and may feel “Oh! I am great! I am better than others!” We call such feelings “the conceited mind” in Buddhism. On the other hand, if no one praises us, we create “the angry mind”.

Buddhism is known as the eastern psychology. “The conceited mind” was studied and analyzed by ancient Indian Buddhist scholars for hundreds of years. In India, the conceited mind was called “mana” in Sanskrit and the scholars determined mana has seven levels. I would like to share the first three levels this time.

**Level 1 mana** – One who feels good by seeing someone who is inferior to him. Or one looks down upon another who may have similar qualities as him.

**Level 2 mana** – One who believes that he is better than someone who has similar qualities as him. Or one who thinks he is equal to someone who is superior to him.

**Level 3 mana** – One who regards himself better than one who is superior to him.

Personally, I have never experienced a Level 3 person. There may, however, be some Level 1 or Level 2 individuals around us all. Perhaps, you may be recognized as a Level “X” by others.

As a college student, I studied Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. By memorizing the sutras, I felt myself becoming smarter and a great student. One day, I was boastfully telling a classmate how I was able to memorize the sutras. My professor overheard this said to me “You are not suitable to become a minister.” I asked the professor as to why.

“By saying you are superior to others, you are officially saying you do not understand the essence of Buddhism. Buddhism does not judge better or worse by measuring how much you learned Buddhism. If such person becomes a minister, temple members will be confused and misunderstood Buddhism by your teaching approach. For Buddhist, it is quite different approaches between mastering Buddhism education and attaining the enlightenment.”

(continued on page 3)
Rev. Koho Takata, L.A. Betsuin’s New Minister

The LA Betsuin has added a new face to its ministerial staff. Introducing: Rev. Koho Takata.

Rev. Takata comes to the Betsuin by way of the Arizona Buddhist Temple. He began his career as an overseas minister (kaikyoshi) in 1995 at the Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin on Oahu and then on to the Kapaa Hongwanji on the island of Kauai. While part of the Hawaii Kyodan, Rev. Takata served as the executive assistant to the Bishop as well as the acting director of the Buddhist Study Center. In 2011, he transferred from the Hawaii Kyodan to the Buddhist Churches of America on the mainland where he served at the Arizona Buddhist Temple.

Rev. Takata was born and raised in Toyama in his family temple where he is the second son of the 19th generation of the Jokoji Temple which was founded in 1444.

His wife, Yuka, also from Toyama, also comes from a temple family at the Myomanji Temple. Together they have two daughters. Twelve-year-old, Kaylee Mai who has enjoyed modern ballet and nine-year-old Shanti Eri has been in to gymnastics.

As a student at Ryukoku University, Rev. Takata was introduced to surfing. While in Hawaii, he was able to continue with the surfing. When he transferred to Hawaii, he brought along two surfboards, but, alas...no ocean. Now that he is Los Angeles, he may now be able to use his surfboards.

Welcome to Rev. Takata and his family to the Los Angeles Honpa Hongwanji Betsuin.

Issei pioneers, as their plea to hear the Dharma resonates … “Our burning desire to hear the Teachings is about to explode from every pore in our body...”.

I began my path to the ministry as a student at the Institute of Buddhist Studies almost 19 years ago. As I reflect on my new responsibilities, it has given me yet another opportunity to truly reflect on the countless causes and conditions that enabled me to be who and where I am.

I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to our Komon (senior advisors) and the Board of Directors for having the confidence and trust in me and to all of you who have expressed your kind and enthusiastic support. My sincerest appreciation to Southern District ministers for their support and guidance throughout the years. I would especially like to express my humblest appreciation and gratitude to our former Rimbans who were so gracious and kind to me, Rimban Shoki Mohri, Rimban Seikan Fukuma, Rimban George Matsubayashi and Rimban Hiroshi Abiko. Lastly, I would also like to convey my sincerest gratitude and appreciation to Bishop Kodo Umezu for the trust and confidence he has in me. Lastly, to my best friend, companion, colleague, inspiration and love of my life, Nobuko AKA Rev. Miyoshi, whose always been by my side.

Thank you,
Namo Amida Butsu

I then recalled the story of Genshin. I am not comparing myself to Genshin, but I realized that everyone has a “conceited mind” lurking inside. One day, it will surface to the top of our mind to contaminate our mind.

After the professor had put me in my place, I took to studying diligently in order to become a minister. If my professor had not warned me, I might have become a person who looks down on others.

Please be wary so as not to be contaminated by a “conceited mind.”

Gassho

L.A. BETSUIN
BOOK CENTER
BOOKS, OBUTSUDAN, NENJU, INCENSE, CANDLES, HAPPI...
SUNDAY: 9:00 AM - 12:30 PM
WEEKDAYS - BETSUIN OFFICE PERSONNEL WILL ASSIST WITH PURCHASES
Email: labetsuinbook@hotmail.com
Have you seen the two beautiful planters at the entrance to the temple from the west parking lot? The first day of bon odori practice was the first time they caught my eye. I was then told that they had been there since November 2012, and that there was an article in the JIHO about them! In case you missed it, please take a look at them, the next time you are in the area.

The two planters, with desert palms in the center, surrounded by benches, were built and completed in November 2012. Their completion marked the culmination of Darren Kawasaki’s Eagle Scout project. It was a project that Darren and his father, Ken Kawasaki, visualized, planned, and built for the beautification of their temple. Of course, all the Boy Scout Troop 738, scouts, parents, and assistant scout masters, helped with the construction. Rev. William Briones feels the planters have made the temple a more welcoming place.

Much thought went into the project, followed by the accumulation of materials and finally, the building of the planters. The planters fit harmoniously, in style, size, and color, at the entrance to the temple. The palms were planted carefully above cinder blocks on the bottom, filled with sand, surrounded by a plastic barrier, with PVC pipes added for irrigation, layered on top by a concrete board, leveled, cross pieces of stacked wood, benches built on three sides of each planter, soil, sifted and added, before the final topping off with bark on the base of the palms. The PVC pipes are hooked up to a soaker hose and controlled automatically.

Thank you, Darren, for the lovely planters.

* * *

“Boy Scout Troop 738 Formed”, JIHO, Special Issue, Nov. 1, 1969

At the organizational meeting of parents and boys interested in the formation of the Boy Scout movement at the Los Angeles Buddhist Temple, it was decided to petition the Boy Scout Headquarters and the Betsuin for such formation.

Within a week, the approval was obtained from the Scout Headquarters for the formation of the troop and the Troop Number 738 was granted. There are seven boys in the troop at the present time with the potential to increase as it initiates its program.

The cooperation of the parents and especially the Betsuin officers have been most heart warming. The Betsuin has donated the Troop flag and also loaned the troop funds to carry out the scout program for this year.

The following have assumed positions in this new youth movement:

Shoichi Sayano - Scoutmaster
Dr. Edward Nakao - Committee Chairman
Rev. Shoko Masunaga - Institutional Representative
Dr. Masayoshi Itatani - Advancement Chairman
Kay Hatakeyama - Treasurer
Noboru Ishitani and Rev. Seitetsu Fujiwara - Committee Men
Mrs. Rose Nakao - Secretary.

* * *

After many years of dedication by Kayo Uno, Michi Matsunami, and Eiko Masuyama, the work of scanning the printed Jiho has been completed. A total of 358 issues ranging from 1939 through 2002 have been scanned and PDF files have been created.

In addition, many of the issues since 2003 have been created digitally and with the help of Elaine Fukumoto and Tomoko Ama. Those issues have been gathered and consolidated into the collection. The advantage of those 62 issues is that they can be researched readily.

Another “thank you” goes to Gary Kawaguchi who donated the funds to purchase the oversized scanner which was necessary to start this project.

All 420 issues are accessible via the internal website by using the link:

http://hako/media/archives/jiho/

You must be connected to the Betsuin’s network to view.

— by Bruce Hatakeyama

(continued on page 6)
BWA 2013 SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

Each year, dharma school high school seniors may submit essays that reflect what they have learned as a Jodo Shinshu youth. For the graduating class of 2013, Kellie Miyashima has been awarded with the Buddhist Women’s Association (BWA) Scholarship.

The following is Kellie’s essay:

Buddhism in My Everyday Living

Jodo Shinshu is one of the leading factors of my entire life and how I live in my everyday life. It has affected what friends I have, how I treat nature, and basically who I am today. A great deal of Buddhism has taught me about interdependence and independence and the Eightfold Path we were meant to follow. It is important to follow the teachings of the Buddha in order to live a successful life.

The Eightfold Path consists of Right Speech, Action, Livelihood, Effort, Concentration, Mindfulness, View, and Intentions.

Right Speech is to say words that aren't hurtful and only nice things. As a teenager, it is difficult to follow this what with the everyday annoyances one must put up with, but I persevere.

Right Action means to not commit unwholesome actions. I accomplish this by not harming others with anything I do.

Right Livelihood is to earn a living in a righteous way which I do through jobs I have had.

Right Effort is to direct ourselves to do things without selfishness. I do this by opening my heart to everyone without expecting anything in return.

Right Mindfulness is to cherish only the good and pure thoughts that arise in our minds. When I have bad thoughts, I try to get rid of them by thinking of other things so as to not nurture them.

Last, but not least is Right Meditation or concentration which is to concentrate on all the of the Buddha’s teachings.

Interdependence, one of the Buddha’s teachings is the ability to rely on other people and other things and for them to rely on you. It is based on mutual independence. It is basically like the circle of life, where humans need to rely on each other for life and rely on animals and plants to survive. An example I use in my own life would be my friends. When I need to go somewhere, because I do not have my license just yet, they drive me. When they need food, I feed them. It is a symbiotic relationship in which we need the other to survive. A example of a relationship with plants and animals is that we eat them to survive. We thank them when we eat them by doing gassho before eating each meal. Independence is being yourself without others around. You need to learn to be by yourself and learn about who you are without others around. You need to learn to be by yourself and learn about who you are without other influences. By learning who you are, you are able to find what relationships you need in order to live a happy life through interdependence. Independence and interdependence go hand in hand and you can’t have one without the other.

These lessons contribute to my everyday living. Without the Eightfold Path I would not live as wholesomely a life as I do today. Without having learned about independence and interdependence, I would not have learned how the world is connected. My way of living is based on Jodo Shinshu.

KELLIE MIYASHIMA

Dharma School Attendance Awardees

High school graduate, Ryan Kamiya with mother, Rose Kamiya and former Rimban Abiko.
ABA AT THE HOLLYWOOD BOWL
by Joanne Nakamura

On Independence Day eve, 98 Nishi ABA family, friends, and Gardena ABA members enjoyed an evening at the Hollywood Bowl.

A patriotic musical production by the LA Philharmonic Orchestra, Coplands Rodeo "Buckaroo Holiday," John Williams "Sum-mon the Heroes," "America the Beautiful" and an all-join-in-the- whistling version of "Colonel Bogey March" were a few of the selections played. Conductor Sarah Hicks closed this first portion of the program with a medley of songs associated with the different branches of the US armed forces. Veterans were asked to stand when their song was played. This acknowledgement enhanced the celebration of the meaning of the 4th of July.

Josh Groban performed during the second half of the program. He entertained the audience with his warm baritone voice and demonstrated his versatile talents on the piano and drums. He sang sets of songs ranging from pop and rock to classical and ending with an encore performance of "Smile".

The evening reached its climactic ending with a blend of spectacular pyrotechnics and patriotic march music. The LA Philharmonic Orchestra and fireworks were completely in sync to "Semper Fidelis" and "Stars and Stripes Forever."

What a memorable evening. Shared with great people, terrific music, a wonderful entertainer and an impressive show of fireworks, all in one night!

The Nishi ABA has enjoyed this outing every year. You are invited to attend the Hollywood Bowl next year on July 3, 2014.

(DID YOU KNOW? - continued from page 4)

It should be noted that the entire project was inspired by, programmed by, and supervised by a very thorough and exacting Bruce Hatakeyama. There are still some issues of the JIHO that are missing...earlier editions and the 1970-1980s. Please donate issues to office for the archives.

* * *

There is a Jodoshinshu temple in London, England, known as the Three Wheels Temple and Community. Rev. Dr. Taira Sato founded the temple, as an affiliate of Shogyoji (home temple in Kyushu) in 1994 and acts as the director. He and his wife, Hiroko, direct the temple activities.

Rev. Dr. Sato has the distinction of being the last disciple of D.T. Suzuki of the Zen tradition, and was one of the pall bearers at his funeral.

Rev. Dr. Sato was the keynote speaker at the 2010 BCA Ministers' Association Summer Fuken Seminar, August 9 – 11, held at Reno. The theme of the conference was "Dendo – Propagation." Rev. Dr. Sato is author of "Great Living: In the Pure Encounter Between Master and Disciple."

Note: Having learned of the Three Wheels Temple, Kayo Uno and Eiko Masuyama were hoping to visit the temple while visiting London but scheduling was not possible.

* * *

Thank you to Sei Shohara (WLABT) for the bookends, donated to library. The library is in need of additional bookends.

HOLLYWOOD BOWL
L-R: Glen & Susan Saita, Michael & Vance Ikkanda

Kenny Iromura and Grant Hayashi flipping burgers for the Family Fun Day.
FLOODING IN BETSUIN LOWER LEVEL

by E Fukumoto

Some time during the early morning hours of Memorial Day, an irrigation pipe broke in the front garden of the Bet-suin temple. The water flowed north, towards the back of the building, down into the lower level patio, and seeped into the patio doors. The water continued on through the classrooms into the hallways partially into the Lotus Room and the Nishi Center/dharma school office.

Though it was a holiday, by chance, Ken Kawasaki had business at the temple and went down to the lower level and discovered the water.

From that moment on, over the course of the next eight weeks, came the process of clean-up and restoration. Noisy fans, dehumidifiers and filtering machines were placed throughout the affected areas. Nishi Center, the BWA, and the dharma school teachers had to pack up all the contents of the rooms. Workers had to remove the furniture, built-in cabinets, and flooring. Much of the furniture and the hundreds of boxes were placed in the basement and in several storage pods in the parking lot. The Nishi Center children had to be relocated and were “schooled” in the kaikan.

During the restoration process, carpeting and tiles had to be removed, holes were cut in walls to dry out the walls, and for many days, the whole lower level was sealed for asbestos abatement. Following all the clean-up, the new flooring had to be put in and walls had to be restored and painted and the built-in cabinets had to be re-installed. Nishi Center was then given one day to vacate the kaikan and get back into the classrooms because... Obon preparations were to begin the following day.

By the next day, everything was in place and Obon preparations began.
HATSUBON SERVICE – First Obon Service

At the end of the Hatsubon service now former Rimban Abiko extinguishes candles placed before the names of the deceased, those who have passed during the previous year.

L-R: Rev. Mas Kodani (Senshin), Rimban and Mrs. Abiko

Gary Kawaguchi (front) and Terry Itomura grilling beef for the Boy Scout Teriyaki Beef booth.

Produce galore in the Farmer’s Market
OBON 2013 - KANGI-E, “A GATHERING OF JOY”

Pre Bon Odori Service in the Yagura

Let The Dancing Begin!

Senshin’s George Abe, keeping the beat...

“It's a fool who dances and a fool who watches… If both are fools, you may as well have fun dancing!”

I ❤️ BON ODORI
L-R: Jon Omokawa and Alan Hatakeyama manning the BINGO activities in the kaikan

Nishi Center dancing cuties on stage

Grateful Crane Ensemble crooning on stage

Thunderous sounds of LA Matsuri

Grand Prize raffle winner, Keith Inatomi with Rimban Abiko

So. District Buddhist Conference @ Betsuin
L-R: Reverends Mas Kodani, Lee Rosenthal, Jon Turner, Yushi Mukojima, and Akio Miyaji

Recipients of 10-year dharma school teaching certificates from BCA
L-R: Kelly Fukumoto, Lina Okita, Rev. Briones
IN MEMORIAM

The Nishi Betsuin extends its deepest condolences to the families of the following members who have recently passed away. May the family members find solace and comfort in the Nembutsu.

--Namo Amida Butsu

June 2013
4 Ben Tsutomu Sawai
9 Naoshi Suzuki
20 Hiroto Robert Yamane
22 Shunichi Nakashimo
24 Yoshiko Tashima
30 Kiyoshi Morikawa

July 2013
2 Taketsugu "Tak" Yoshida
3 Taeko Hiroshige
5 Genta Morimoto
5 Henry Kazuo Osaki
16 Michiko (Ginger) Hanamoto
17 Masao Tokihiro
22 Kiyoshi Shimabukuro

JODO SHINSHU IN EVERY DAY LIVING

Saturday, September 21, 2013
9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

SPEAKERS:

ENGLISH
Rev. Don Castro
Rimban Seattle Betsuin

JAPANESE
Rev. John Iwohara
Venice Hongwanji

Registration Fee: $10 Includes Obento Lunch
To reserve a seat and to order a bento lunch, please send in your name & check payable to:
LA Hompa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple
LA Betsuin Higan Seminar
815 E. 1st St. Los Angeles, CA 90012
by September 15, 2013

This seminar has been made possible by the LA Betsuin Buddhist Education Committee

BON ODORI EXERCISE CLASS

BETSUIN
Lotus Room

2nd & 4th Tuesdays of the month
6:30 - 8:00 PM
1st & 3rd Sundays of the month
8:30 - 10:00 AM

For further information, leave a message for Eiko Masuyama at the Betsuin office: 213-680-9130

EXERCISE CLASSES

THURSDAYS @ 11:00 am
LA BETSUIN KAIKAN
$6.00 per class
Especially geared towards older individuals to promote fitness, balance, prevent falls, etc:

TAI CHI

DAIJO FEDERAL CREDIT UNION
daijofcu@hotmail.com

BEGINNING BUDDHISM STUDY CLASS

1st & 3rd THURSDAYS from 6:00 PM
3rd TUESDAYS from 7:00 PM for age 30s/40s
LED BY: Rev. William Briones

TUNE IN TO
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