Three Gathas, the movie featuring the singing of Higashi’s four California temples and the music of WCBT’s Bodhi Tree Band, is now on our website. There’s a link to it right on the homepage. Only a small percentage of our Sangha actually saw the finished product, so hopefully everyone can now see it. It definitely gets two thumbs up; my thanks go to all who participated in it and helped with its production. One note: even though it is a highly compressed version of the original movie, as a “music video” it is still a larger file than the other video on the site, the Brief History of Buddhism, which is a “narrated slide show,” so it might take a little longer to stream. Depending on your internet connection speed, you may need to download the movie before playing it. Let me know if you have problems viewing it—it might be possible to make an even smaller version.

Gassho,
Peter Hata

Steve Jobs: Connecting the Dots

Steve Jobs, the co-founder of Apple Computer, passed away on October 5, 2011 and, as we witnessed on practically every news broadcast, there were global expressions of sadness and naturally, gratitude for all his cool inventions. In a LA Times feature article, there were even quotes from Apple faithful in Beijing.

Your time is limited, so don’t waste it living someone else’s life.

For example, an Elementary school teacher named Xiuqing Yang said, “Not everything from America is great, but everything from Apple is great.” And of course, outside Apple stores, many people placed candles and flowers. This kind of sentiment gets our attention since CEOs don’t normally receive such an outpouring of grief and gratitude when they pass away.

But as great as Steve’s technological accomplishments were, what I’d like to discuss is the well-known Commencement Address he gave to the 2005 graduating class at Stanford University. First of all, I think it was an unusual commencement address. Steve, after all, was a very, very successful CEO—Apple is the number one brand globally, ahead of Coca Cola, Microsoft, Google, IBM, and McDonalds. You also may have heard that, in terms of cash on hand, Apple has more than the U.S. Government—well, nowadays, that might not be so impressive!

But he didn’t really talk so much about being successful in business; his
As a follow-up to our theme, **mot-tainai**, we are trying to use items such as egg cartons, empty water bottles, and paper bags for our fall art projects. It truly forces us to bring out our inner creativity. Speaking of creativity, we are going to witness artistic creativity during our visit to the Japanese National Museum on Sunday, 10/23/11. Most importantly, we hope to learn more and appreciate the steadfast spirit of our grandparents who lived (some hardy individuals at our temple continue to attend services each Sunday!) and survived the difficult times during WWII when U.S. citizens of Japanese ancestry were forced to live in “relocation centers.”

With Gassho,
Diane Hata

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**Quote of the Month**

I often think how wonderful if only I could entrust myself to the causes and conditions which formed me. Then, I could live life as it flows, liberated and free, just as the wind blows me from place to place. That is the ultimate bliss. I think the Buddha lived fully each moment accepting all things as they are. He fulfilled his realization by living it.

-Rev. Ichijo Ogawa
November Birthdays
Travis Hamachi, Erika Harguchi, Kyle Sato, Brandon Kanemaru, Jennifer Higa, Hisa Konno, Jill Kato, Jean Nakatani, Wesley Kawaguchi, Frank Tanji, Andrew Kochi, Lauren Oshiro
JOBS, con’t from page 1

speech consisted of three short stories and was really a kind of Dharma talk. Jobs was probably not a practicing Buddhist but he and his wife were married in 1991 by a Soto Zen monk named Kobun Chino Otogawa, and Otogawa-sensei was known to be Steve’s good friend and spiritual mentor. In any case, his stories were each powerful illustrations of the core teachings of Buddhism.

His first story was called “connecting the dots,” and basically, it’s about how he dropped out of Reed College in Oregon. However, in speaking to the Stanford graduating class, he of course was not advocating dropping out but rather, the importance of “dropping in” on one’s interests. As he puts it, “After six months, I couldn’t see the value in it. I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life and no idea how college was going to help me figure it out.” Another factor that led to his dropping out was that Reed, being a very expensive private school, was draining his parent’s limited finances. Steve states that, “It was pretty scary at the time, but looking back it was one of the best decisions I ever made. The minute I dropped out I could stop taking the required classes that didn’t interest me, and begin dropping in on the ones that looked interesting…I loved it. And much of what I stumbled into by following my curiosity and intuition turned out to be priceless later on.”

You have to trust in something—your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever.

Jobs then talked about how Reed College was known for having maybe the best calligraphy instruction in the country. He sat in on a calligraphy class and learned about what makes great typography. Of calligraphy, he said, “It was beautiful, historical, artistically subtle in a way that science can’t capture, and I found it fascinating.”

Interestingly, 10 years later, when the first Macintosh computer was being designed, Steve’s calligraphy experience was put into the first Mac. “It was the first computer with beautiful typography. If I had never dropped in on that single course in college, the Mac would have never had multiple typefaces or proportionally-spaced fonts. And since Windows just copied the Mac, it’s likely that no personal computer would have them. If I had never dropped out, I would have never dropped in on this calligraphy class, and personal computers might not have the wonderful typography that they do. Of course it was impossible to connect the dots looking forward when I was in college. But it was very, very clear looking backwards ten years later.” He goes on to say, “You can’t connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backwards. So you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future. You have to trust in something—your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever.”

This story is interesting for two Buddhist themes it contains. One of course is what Steve called “connecting the dots,” which I think illustrates the key Buddhist teaching known as dependent co-arising. All things, including who we are, arise dependently due to myriad causes and conditions, not independently as we think. Nothing arises completely of its own power. In his story, Steve recognized that the creation of the Macintosh’s highly influential typographic innovation was not due only to his inventiveness, but due to a complex web of factors such as his parent’s inability to afford his tuition, Reed College’s unusual offering of a calligraphy class and probably, the instructor of that class, who left a lasting impression on the young Jobs.

I think the other Buddhist theme that this story references is the idea of trust. As Steve says, “You have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future. You have to trust in something—your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever.” Isn’t it unusual for a CEO to be talking not about trusting a market analysis or financial spreadsheet, but about trusting some reality or truth entirely beyond his control? I think Steve’s understanding of how the “dots connect” reflects an appreciation of this truth of dependent co-arising—that there is an interdependent reality that is much greater than the self—and thus, I think his story in some ways expresses the Buddhist attitude of “bowing” of realizing our ego-self doesn’t possess the kind of control it thinks it has. When Steve says, “You have to trust in something,” that “something” is ultimately a power that is beyond our self-power.

Jobs calls his second story “love and loss,” and as you’d expect, the “love interest” here is not a woman, but computers. Steve explained how this love created the Macintosh and led to the growth of Apple into a multi-billion dollar company. But then when a disagreement arose with the Apple Board of directors regarding the company’s direction, Steve got fired. He says, “At the age of 30 I was out. And very publicly out. What had been the focus of my entire adult life was gone, and it was devastating. I really didn’t know what to do for a few months…I was a very public failure, and I even thought about running away from the valley. But something slowly began to dawn on me—I still loved what I did. The turn of events at Apple had not changed that one bit. I had been rejected, but I was still in love. And so I decided to start over.”

“I didn’t see it then, but it turned out that getting fired from Apple was the best thing that could have ever happened to me. The heaviness of being successful was replaced by the lightness of being a beginner again, less sure about everything. It freed me to enter one of the most creative periods of my life.” He explains how he started a company named NeXT (from which the Macintosh’s very successful OS X was later derived), and Pixar. Pixar, of course, created Toy Story, Monsters, Inc., Cars, Finding Nemo, etc. And as it turned out, Apple without Jobs had been floundering and, about 10 years after they had fired him, Apple bought NeXT and with that acquisition, Steve.

Please see JOBS, con’t on page 5
Jobs returned to Apple. The rest is history; after Jobs returned to Apple, he launched one mega-success after another.

Steve analyzes the turn of events this way: “I’m pretty sure none of this would have happened if I hadn’t been fired from Apple. It was awful tasting medicine, but I guess the patient needed it. Sometimes life hits you in the head with a brick. Don’t lose faith. I’m convinced that the only thing that kept me going was that I loved what I did. You’ve got to find what you love… Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven’t found it yet, keep looking. Don’t settle.”

There is a very important Buddhist theme here, which Steve alludes to when he states, “The heaviness of being successful was replaced by the lightness of being a beginner again, less sure about everything.” I think we can assume that Apple’s Board meetings must have at times been quite contentious and Steve seems to admit that his firing was not entirely unjustified. But most importantly, in his Stanford address, he says, “It was awful tasting medicine, but I guess the patient needed it.” When things don’t go our way, the tendency of our ego is to blame it all on other people. But Steve accepted his responsibility. And actually, as Buddhists, don’t we also need to see ourselves as “patients” in need of life’s “medicine?” Because of seeing his true self, being fired turned into a positive thing because it freed him to enter a new creative period of his life, to have the “lightness of being a beginner again.”

He realized he still loved his life’s work, or maybe we can say, it was because he was fired that he was able to clearly see what he was really meant to do. Often, the most devastating, negative experiences can also lead to new energy and creativity. This expresses the twofold working of impermanence; only when the self is negated do life’s unlimited possibilities unfold. This is experiencing a new life. Re-discovering his love gave Steve the energy to start all over again.

**The heaviness of being successful was replaced by the lightness of being a beginner again, less sure about everything.**

And of course, Jobs’ advice, “Don’t settle,” is priceless wisdom for all young people; you must discover what it is you truly love doing. The reason is that, if you truly love what you do, you will be a lifelong seeker and student. Even if you should reach a point of being considered an “expert,” you continue to possess the attitude of a student. And, as is often stated in the field of education, “The best teachers are also the best students.”

Jobs’ third story is probably his most well-known. It concerns death. As most of you know, in 2004, a year before he gave his Stanford address, he had been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, one of the most deadly forms of cancer. His doctor told him he had three to six months to live. As Steve says, “My doctor advised me to go home and get my affairs in order, which is doctor’s code for ‘prepare to die.’ It means to try to tell your kids everything you thought you’d have the next 10 years to tell them in just a few months…It means to say your goodbyes.”

But later that day, his doctors did a biopsy and discovered he had a rare form of pancreatic cancer that is curable with surgery. Steve did have the surgery, and at the time of this speech, he thought he was cured. As it turned out however, the cancer came back because, in the years following this speech, not only did it become apparent he was not in perfect health—he began to look very thin in his public appearances at Apple events—it also seems the apparent cause of death was related to his earlier cancer. But nonetheless, having come so close to dying, his words to the Stanford graduating class regarding his brush with death were very powerful and to the point: “No one wants to die. Even people who want to go to heaven don’t want to die to get there. And yet death is the destination we all share. No one has ever escaped it. And that is as it should be, because Death is very likely the single best invention of Life. It is Life’s change agent. It clears out the old to make way for the new. Right now the new is you, but someday not too long from now, you will gradually become the old and be cleared away. Sorry to be so dramatic, but it is quite true. Your time is limited, so don’t waste it living someone else’s life.”

Here, Jobs is of course sharing the Buddhist teaching of impermanence. Impermanence is a negative teaching: this is the truth of constant change that negates our ego’s desire to resist aging, illness and death. As Steve said, “No one wants to die.” However, impermanence is also ultimately a positive teaching if we can accept this truth and live awakened to it. If we can accept this truth, the Buddhist teaching of impermanence becomes a wonderful gift, because it enables us to truly appreciate and enjoy each moment of our lives, and live life to the fullest.

I think all three of Steve’s stories relate in one way or another to core teachings in Buddhism. Thus, “connecting the dots” really means understanding we do not live separate lives but are actually all part of an interdependently co-arisen, ever-changing reality. And that, in order for this dynamic and creative truth to energize our lives, we often need to be “hit in the head with a brick.”

Because he had a realistic view of death, I hope that Steve Jobs found it easier to accept his own death towards the end. He lived life fully, and therefore, he did not have to say, “If only I had created this or that.” He could calmly let go. In his short time after returning to Apple, his creativity was amazing: the iMac, iPod, iTunes, MacBook, iPhone, and iPad. Essentially, I think Steve lived a life awake to the...
JOBS, con’t from page 5

truth of his mortality. Living with that truth energized his creativity.

But as great as all his technological achievements at Apple were, I wonder what his lasting legacy will be, say, a generation, or two, or three from now. Personally, given the truth of impermanence, I think it’s possible that eventually Apple will be replaced by a new young startup company that will create the next “Big Thing.” That’s just the way it goes. But I also think it’s possible that, long after Apple Computer ceases to exist, Steve Jobs will be remembered for his Stanford Commencement Address. In this talk he shared the Buddha-dharma itself.

The Buddha-dharma is the truth that is eternally working to bring us to buddhahood, to live awakened to the impermanent and interdependent nature of all life. All we have to do is listen to it; all we have to do is, “connect the dots.”

Gassho,
Peter Hata

L.D. NEWS, con’t from page 1

You are more than welcome to talk to our head minister, Rev. Ken. You can always come to our temple for services and talk afterwards or beforehand. Or if you would like to submit your questions for sharing, that would be all right too. Whatever would be comfortable for you. Do take care. Even in our darkest hours the light of the Dharma shines through though we may not always be aware of it. You are not alone.

Sincerely,
Frederick

To: dharma@livingdharma.org
From = Joseph Waddle
Subject = Becoming Buddhist
Message = I am interested in becoming a Buddhist. I have been on websites and read a lot of stuff. I would like to meet others who are practicing I would welcome a call.

Dear Joseph,
Thank you for writing. I am glad you are interested in becoming a Buddhist. Like you I’ve read a lot of stuff - I am a librarian! But it is best to meet with a Sangha for mutual encouragement and sharing. Judging from your preface number you are just about midway between our three temples in the Los Angeles metropolitan area! Those would be us, at West Covina Buddhist Temple, the Higashi Honganji Buddhist Temple in Los Angeles on 3rd St. in Little Tokyo, and the Newport Beach Buddhist Temple in Costa Mesa. On our website there’s a link page that will take you to the other temples, and on our main webpage there’s a map link to us. Anyway, becoming a Buddhist is really very much just learning to listen to the Dharma everyday in your daily activities and encounters. How you experience others and yourself will open up questions and answers that will lead you into deeper understanding. In that sense we are all always “becoming” a Buddhist! Please stop by and give us a visit!

Sincerely,

Frederick

From = Fe Marie
Subject = Sunday service
Message = Hello,
I was just wondering what your Sunday services are like. I need to conduct an ethnographic assignment for my anthropology class for CSU Fullerton, and I need to observe a religious ritual that is different from that I know of.

Dear Fe,
Thanks for visiting our Living Dharma Website. As to your question, you are welcome to attend any services of ours. Check the calendar page for dates/times. You can see some of our rituals on our 50th Anniversary Page. However, these are from our 50th Anniversary, so our normal services are not such big events.

Best Wishes,
Peter Hata
The Living Dharma Website
Kiku Crafts & Food Fair
Sponsored by West Covina Buddhists Temple

Sunday, November 6, 2011
10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Asian inspired crafts, clothing, jewelry, giftware, unique wood items and delicious food!

Come for some holiday shopping, Stay for the fun and food!

There will be no central cashiering. Each vendor will handle their own sales and not all vendors take credit cards.

East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center (ESGVJCC)
1203 West Puente Ave
West Covina, California

For more information go to: livingdharma.org/CurrentEventsWCBT.html or call 909-626-6131
拝啓 晩秋の候、みなさまにおかれましてはお元気にお過ごしのことと存じます。さて今年も報恩講の季節がやってまいりました。報恩講は親鸞聖人のご命日法要で私どもの信仰生活を見直す機会とされてまいりました。本年は左記の如く法話会におきまして日本語報恩講法要並び十一月祥月法要を併せて厳修いたしますのでご案内申しあげます。

日本語報恩講法要
二〇一一年十一月三日（木）
午後七時半

坂啓史師
（東本願寺北米監督部）

以上の予定となっております。どうぞお家族お揃いで法要をお参りください。

ウエストコビナ東本願寺
開教使 河和田賢淳
理事長 マルチネズ・ジャン

Hoonko Service is the memorial service of our founder, Shinran Shonin. We gather to express our appreciation to Shinran Shonin for showing us the teaching of Nembutsu.

October 15, 2011
Dear Members and Friends,

The West Covina Buddhist Temple and its Board of Directors cordially invites you to attend the Hoonko Service which will be held on Sunday, November 20, 2011. The schedule for the service is as follows:

Date: Sunday, November 20, 2011
Time: 4:30 P.M.
Sermon: Bishop Noriaki Ito
(Higashi Honganji Los Angeles Betsuin)

We will be serving Otoki dinner immediately following the service.

Hoonko Service is the memorial service of our founder, Shinran Shonin. We gather to express our appreciation to Shinran Shonin for showing us the teaching of Nembutsu.

Gassho,
Rev. Kenjun Kawawata
John Martinez, President
Board of Directors

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Gassho,
Rev. Kenjun Kawawata
John Martinez, President
Board of Directors
報恩講

この11月はご本山と同様に報恩講が北米の各お寺で厳修されます。報恩講はご存知のように親鸞聖人を偲び、ご命日を機に報恩講を厳修する機会としてお参りされてきました。聖人は弘長2年（1262年）11月28日、90歳で京都にて去られました。その後、聖人を偲び、徳をたたえる為に、毎月28日に念仏の集まりが行われるようになりました。これがさらに大きく広がって、本願寺第三世の如来上人によって報恩講の基本となる形ができあがりました。聖人のご恩に報い、念仏の教えを一層深く味わわれたことから「報恩講」と呼ばれるようになったのです。

本山の報恩講は11月21日から28日の聖人のご命日まで1週間お勤めされます。そして法要とともに総会所において法話が毎日お話しされます。また末寺でも3日間から1週間報恩講がお勤めされ、毎日法要には法話が話されたことでした。しかし今日は状況も変わり、通常1日または2日で報恩講をお勤めされることが多いです。

こどもの頃の自坊の報恩講では、二日間多く御門徒の方々お参りされ、法要前または法要後お精進のお供をお伺い頂いたものです。その頃はなぜ野菜ばかりのお料理を美味しいと言わせながら頂くのを心に不思議に思っていたのです。法要中はお寺の境内でいつもの様に遊びながら正信偈のお勤めを聞いていたことでした。しかし歳をとる今になってあの煮物の味が恋しくなるのです。またその様に親鸞聖人の教えに素直になずける自分がいる事に気づかされます。

今このアメリカで日本のご本山や自坊と同じ様に報恩講をお勤めし、正信偈に恩徳讃大なる音声をあげるとき800年間伝えられてきた感動を感じます。それは親鸞聖人が大いなる音声を出し、真実の教えに出会った時の同じ感動と感謝が伝えられているからなので、お念仏の教えに出会った多くの人々が同じ感動を味わって来たのです。真宗門徒の一年は報恩講に始まり報恩講で終わると言われます。この感動を忘れずに新たな仏法聴聞の一年を送りたいと思います。（河和田記）

お寺ニュース

法話会報恩講法要

報恩講法要

報恩講法要

英語祥月法要／七五三お祝い

11月13日午前10時より英語祥月法要がお勤めされます。また七五三のお祝いが法要後行われます。七五三にあたる子供さん、お孫さんをつれてお参りください。七五三は日本の江戸時代より行われてきた伝統的な行事で子供さんのより健全な成長を願って行われてきました。私たちはこどもたちの健やかな成長と幸せを願っています。ご家族ご一緒にお参りください。

報恩講法要

今年の英語報恩講は11月20日午後4時半より厳修致します。ご法要に北米開教監督部より伊藤啓史師をお招きしております。法要後お齋のご接待もございますので、皆様でお参りください。ご案内申し上げます。

2011年度会費納入のお願い

今年も年末を迎えようとしております。もし本年度のお寺の会費を納め忘れられておられる方がいらっしゃいましたらお納めいただきますようお願い申し上げます。

家族会費：125ドル
個人会費：100ドル
また賛助会員費もございます。

チェックをWCBT宛にされ郵送いただけるようお願い申し上げます。

みなさまのご協力に心より御礼を申し上げます。合掌
November
3 7:30 pm Howakai Japanese Service
6 10:00 am Kiku Crafts & Food Fair
6 10:00 am Sunday Service
8 10:00 am Bonbu Class
13 8:30 am Board Meeting
13 10:00 am Shotsuki Service & Shichigosan Celebration
20 4:30 pm Ho-on-ko Service
22 10:00 am Bonbu Class
27 10:00 am Sunday Service

December
1 7:30 pm Howakai Japanese Service
4 8:30 am Board Meeting
4 10:00 am Shotsuki/Bodhi Day Service
6 10:00 am Bonbu Class
11 4:00 pm Year-end Service
18 7:00 am Mochitsuki

11月行事予定
3日 午後7時半 法話会
6日 午前10時 菊クラフトフェアー
6日 午前10時 日曜礼拝
13日 午前8時半 理事会
13日 午前10時 祥月法要/七五三お祝い
20日 午後4時半 報恩講法要
27日 午前10時 日曜礼拝

12月行事予定
1日 午後7時半 法話会/忘年会
4日 午前8時半 理事会
4日 午前10時 祥月法要/成道会法要
6日 午後1時 同信会（座談会）
11日 午後4時 年末法要
18日 午前8時 餅つき

今、いのちが
あなたを
生きている
宗祖親鸞聖人750回御遠忌テーマ