By the time you read this, we’ll have uploaded the wonderful article on Rev. Kawawata’s Farewell Luncheon, which was the combined work of Gateway contributor Claudia Haraguchi, staffer Hisako Koga, and photographer Elaine Harada. Also, look for a recently “re-discovered” report on a previous San Luis Obispo retreat featuring an informative talk on the central importance of the Bodhisattva path in Mahayana Buddhism by Rev. Akinori Imai.

Gassho,
Rev. Peter Hata

Selected E-mail
From = julianne
Subject = classes
Message = Interested in studying but unsure where to Start. Do you offer classes?

Please see L.D. NEWS, con’t on page 5

My Visit With Renato-sensei
By Rev. Peter Hata

On Thursday, Dec. 20, Rev. Renato Landim de Souza, resident minister of one of our Higashi temples in Brazil District, visited WCBT. He was accompanied by Rev. Hasegawa, who helped at times to interpret. Renato-sensei speaks both his native Portuguese and fluent Japanese, but sometimes has a little trouble in English (though his English is quite good).

We spoke for over 2 hours about the challenge of trying to encourage his strongly ethno-centric sangha towards a more inclusive and diverse one. His home temple, comprised of an almost exclusively ethnically Japanese Sangha, have resisted his attempts to incorporate more Portuguese language into the services. Noticing that there...
The Los Angeles Buddhist Church Federation (LABCF) is encouraging all Dharma School students to participate in an art contest in conjunction with the Hanamatsuri celebration on the April 7, 2013. The theme is “This is Me.” Special art boards will be distributed to all children interested, as well as the entry forms. Original artwork may include drawings, writing words/phrases… whatever the creative energy produces!

All entries must be turned in to Rev. Peter Hata by February 28, 2013. Everyone will be able to enjoy the art display at the Jodoshu Temple (right across from Higashi Betsuin) on April 7th from 1:00 p.m.

Our Dharma School students are already accustomed to fun art projects. We will be carrying Valentine centerpieces to Covina’s Atria Retirement Home following the pet memorial service on Sunday, February 10th. The Year of the Snake is certainly turning in to a busy one. Hope to see you all at the Family Retreat in San Luis Obispo during the President’s weekend, also!

With Gassho,
Diane Hata

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**Quote of the Month**

*Ed Note: In the Sutta Nikaya, Alavaka the demon asks the Buddha questions and based on the Buddha’s answers, Alavaka is converted and asks to join the Sangha. Alavaka: What well practiced will happiness bring? What taste excels all other tastes? How lived is the life they say is best?”

The Buddha: “Faith is the wealth here best for man; Dharma well practiced shall happiness bring; Truth indeed all other tastes excels; Life wisely lived they say is best.”

-Sutta Nikaya
Board Meeting
The February Board meeting will be held on February 3 at 8:30 AM, before service. All board members are asked to attend.

Pet Memorial Service
A special service will be held on February 10 at 10:00 AM to remember our animal friends. Everyone who has lost a pet is invited to pay tribute to them on this special day.

Bombu Class
Bombu class will be held February 12 and 26, every second and fourth Tuesday of the month at 10:00 AM. See Rev. Peter for more details.

Family Retreat
The 2013 Family Retreat will be held on President’s weekend, February 15-17, at the beautiful San Luis Obispo Temple. Rev. Ken Yamada from Berkeley Higashi Honganji will be our guest speaker to help us discuss the theme “Interdependence.” Don’t miss out on this memorable experience. It’s always the perfect weekend getaway set in a beautiful location, with stimulating discussions with friends—and we will be joined by members of Berkeley Higashi Honganji, outdoor activities, and plenty of delicious food. The fee for adults is $35, 6-12 years is $15 and 5 and under are free. This includes all meals and free lodging at the temple, or you may wish to stay at a nearby motel. See Rev. Peter for more info.

Cherry Blossom Festival
The West Covina Cherry Blossom Festival will be on Saturday, March 16, from 12 noon – 7:00 PM and will be held at the ESGV JCC. The Temple will be selling delicious chicken teriyaki as a fundraiser. Work schedule sheets will be available for sign-up at the services or contact Merry Jitosho for more information. Keep that day open and come out to support the Temple and the Center.

Spring Ohigan Service
Spring Ohigan will be observed on March 17 at 4:30 PM. Please join us and stay for the complimentary otoki dinner following the service.

Oldies Dance XLIV
“Let’s Dance Some More at Oldies XLIV!” will be held on Saturday, March 23. Can you believe it’s our 44th dance? Steve Kikuchi & High Resolution will be back again to provide our favorite hits from the 60’s, 70’s and 80’s. The dance begins at 8:00 PM and will end at 12:00 AM with lots of dancing and fun in between. Presale tickets are $12 or $15 at the door. For info and song requests, call Joanie at (626) 300-8947 or Lillian at (626) 780-9866.

Your Toban chairs will contact you about work shifts and assignments. Plan to come by the center about 6 PM to help with the set-up. Donations are welcome for raffle prizes and drinks. Sign-up sheets for drinks will be at the Sunday service.

Study Center Lecture Series
The WCBT Study Center Lecture Series continues in April with “Introduction to Buddhism.” The lectures will be held on April 8, 15, 22 and 29, every Monday evenings at 7:00-8:30 PM. More information will be in the March Gateway or contact Rev. Peter.
EITAIKYO, con’t from page 1

read in the service represent more than a simple list; they are really an expression of the wishes of these families to preserve the temple as a learning place for the Dharma. Interestingly, he mentioned in his talk that when he was searching the internet for more info, he typed in “eitaikyo service” in the Google search page, and was very surprised that, out of the many links listed [1,830 links, to be precise—Ed.], the very first link was to an essay entitled, “Eitaikyo Service: The Perpetual Sutra, by none other than WCBT’s previous minister, Rev. Ken Kawawata. Rev. Hasegawa praised the clear and deep explanation Kawawata-sensei gave in that essay; “eitaikyo” not only means “perpetual memorial service,” it also means “perpetual sutra” or “perpetual teaching”; the real intent of the Eitaikyo is to perpetuate the teaching itself.

Ultimately then, while Eitaikyo is similar to other memorial services held at WCBT, Hasegawa-sensei clarified that its special focus is to express our thanks to all those who have endeavored to keep the temple itself—and of course, the Dharma it is a learning center for—alive and well.

After the service, chair Richard Kagawa called temple president Johnny Martinez to the podium to lead the General Meeting. After a short introduction of the purpose of the meeting, Rev. Peter gave the annual Temple Report. During the early and middle months of 2012, the Sangha was well aware of the approach of the 750th, or Goenki Memorial for Shinran Shonin which, since it occurs only once every 50 years, would be for most of the Sangha a once-in-a-lifetime event. It indeed was a truly memorable and educational event but, as Rev. Peter pointed out, probably for the WCBT Sangha, the most significant event of 2012 was the Farewell Banquet for Rev. Kawawata in December. As Rev. Peter said, “Rev. Ken devoted 14 years of his life to advancing our programs here at WCBT and for both Rev. Fred Brenion and myself, we know we could not have become ministers without his encouragement and support.”

Rev. Peter also expressed his thanks to all of WCBT’s members who helped in the various fundraisers of 2012 which provided financial support for our temple. “Thank you very much and I hope you can give us your support and help this year,” he said. In regards to his being WCBT’s newly-appointed resident minister, he made reference to the Buddhist teaching of interdependence, and that even though ministers are called “sensei” or teacher, that he is learning as much or more from the Sangha than they may be learning from him. And therefore, he asked for the Sangha’s support and guidance.

Rev. Peter closed his report by stating, “The Buddhist emphasis on interdependence teaches us that we are here enjoying listening to the Dharma because of the people we honor at this memorial service...And, if we simply enjoy listening to this Dharma together and let it guide our actions, our temple’s future is very bright.”

Following the temple report, Treasurer Frank Tanji then passed out copies of the annual budget for temple members to study. After some back and forth discussion and after all questions about the details of the budget were addressed, the next item was to approve the incoming slate of WCBT’s Board of Directors.

The nominated Directors names were announced and, in the absence of any opposing votes, the incoming directors were sworn in by Rev. Peter in front of the temple’s altar. The directors for 2013 are:

President        John Martinez
1st VP           Merry Jitosho
2nd VP           Roy Takemura
3rd VP           Tatsuno Okamura
Recording Sec.   Barbara Shirota
Corresponding Sec. Mitsue Oshita
Treasurer        Frank Tanji
Director         Richard Kagawa
Director         Hisako Koga
Director         Dick Koga
Director         Lillian Nishihara
Director         Joy Kitaura
Director         Masato Sakaue
Director         Ruby Kagawa
Director         Bruce Whang
Director         Claire Hansen
Director         Claudia Haraguchi
Director         Pat Sato
Dharma School    Diane Hata
Sangha Teen/Jr. YBA Denise Underwood
Sangha Teen/Jr. YBA Tor Ormseth
Sr. YBA          Cheryl Teragawa

After the swearing-in ceremony, the hondo was set up for the Eitaikyo luncheon, which featured a delicious bento-style Japanese lunch served by the Jr. YBA, augmented by some tasty bento-style green beans, miso soup, and plenty of desserts.

Special thanks go out to guest speaker Rev. Hasegawa for his very informative talk, to Treasurer Frank Tanji for his detailed financial report, to Johnny Martinez and the incoming Board of Directors for their commitment to serve WCBT, to the Jr. YBA for a great luncheon, and to chairperson Richard Kagawa and Toban A for helping coordinate this event. With the interrelated changes currently taking place at WCBT, and with the focus on past, present, and future at this service, this was a most memorable Eitaikyo, and one which gave its participants the opportunity to appreciate all that our temple offers.

Special Thanks For Donation

WCBT would like to thank Anthony Gutierrez and Dean Hata for their recent donations to assist the temple’s transition into the digital age. Anthony donated a Best Buy gift card which was used towards the purchase of an Apple iPod Nano. This small device (3 × 1.5 × 0.2 inches and weighing 1 oz.) replaces the huge boombox the temple had been using (and which no longer fits in our cabinet) for gatha playback whenever pianist Merry Jitosho or the Bodhi Tree Band weren’t available. Dean donated one of his iPods to the temple, which will be used for Bodhi Tree and Dharma tones rehearsals.
is interest amongst some Portuguese-speaking locals (i.e., not ethnically Japanese), Renato-sensei has tried to incorporate some Portuguese sermons into his Dharma talks, but his Japanese-dominant Sangha wants only Japanese spoken. Suprisingly, he has to actually ask their permission (very politely) to speak even 5 minutes in Portuguese. He said that if he didn’t ask them first, they’d probably kick him out. Most likely, this is due in part to Japanese immigration in Brazil being a more recent phenomenon and to the still close-knit nature of Japanese communities in Brazil; Renato-sensei for example mentioned that there are Sanseis in Brazil (3rd generation immigrants) that only speak Japanese, whereas here in America, there are relatively few Sanseis that speak any Japanese at all.

He was very interested in the way we use music at WCBT, and in the history of our Lotus and Bodhi Tree youth bands and Dharmatones choir. Then, when I showed him the “Three Gathas” video from our website—the video produced by WCBT featuring our four North American Sanghas singing “I’m a Link in the Golden Chain,” “A Special Place,” and “Shinran Sama” accompanied by the Bodhi Tree Band—tears of joy welled in his eyes. He was very moved by the sight and sound of all 4 NAD sanghas singing together in harmony.

I found Renato-sensei to be a very warm, and extremely dedicated Higashi minister whose energy to share the Dharma was inspiring.

We both pledged to keep in touch—if you’re going to the World Dobo this May, you will be able to meet Renato-sensei—and to work as hard as we could to promote the Dharma in our respective sanghas.

L.D. NEWS, con’t from page 1
Dear Julianne,
Thanks for visiting our Living Dharma Website. As to your question, yes, besides our regular Sunday Services, we do offer a wide variety of classes. These range from evening study classes (usually a series of four classes) on topics from beginner to advanced, to our weekday Bomu Study Classes (we are currently studying one of the ancient sutas of our particular tradition). In general, people coming to our temple that are new to Buddhism are often more comfortable attending a Western-style class in English than a Sunday Service where there naturally are elements of Buddhist rituals like sutra chanting (that are not done in English).

Our classes for this year are in the process of being finalized, but the first class series will be an Introduction to Buddhism. It will discuss the core teachings of Buddhism that are common to all Buddhist schools and traditions. It is scheduled to begin on Monday, April 8, at 7:00 pm. Coincidentally (auspiciously?), April 8 is also the Buddha’s Birthday.

Regarding keeping informed, if you’d like, you can add your name to our Gateway Newsletter e-mail list. You’ll not only get our monthly newsletter, but also up-to-date notifications of special events and of course, upcoming classes. There’s no charge, and we never share your e-mail with others.

Alternatively, you can always check our Facebook Page (Facebook.com/westcovinabuddhist-temple) where we announce upcoming events in advance, or our website’s calendar, which actually has our schedule for the entire year (http://www.livingdharma.org/Calendar.html), though some events like our upcoming classes have yet to be added to it.

Thanks for your interest,

Dear Anthony,
You have given an excellent question! One of the difficulties in translating from one language to another is what words to use, particularly if there is no exact one-to-one equivalency. A concept in one language may not have an equal one in another, or even be present. This is perfectly normal. Languages reflect a people’s culture and history. To know a language is to know a people! Still, when faced with such a situation, how does one get across the meaning? You may have to use many extra words to convey the meaning. It may not be an exact fit but the translator hopes that it will get close enough to do the job.”

Hongan” is a very important word in our Jodo Shinshu tradition. The name of our temple in Kyoto is the Hongan-ji – the Temple of the Primal Vow. Have you ever wondered why its name is Hongan-ji and not the Shinran-ji, or the Shinjin-ji, or even the Nembutsu-ji? Is not our founder, Shinran Shonen, the most important person to us? Isn’t Shinjin the foundational experience of our spirituality? Or isn’t, above all, the Nembutsu, our central practice? No. It is the Primal Vow, Hongan, which is most important. It is what filled Shinran with abiding peace. It is what brings forth the root of...
Shinjin. It is what elicits the Nembutsu as our everlasting response. All our teachings, all that we are, all that we are about, revolve around this. Our history as a Sangha is an expression of this. When Rennyo talks about “Faith is fundamental,” he means faith, trust, in the Hongan, that it was made and given for you. Dr. Haneda, in his essay, “What is Hongan?” which appears on our website, takes a very sound approach to the use of different words to express Hongan.

Of course, the word “Hongan” does does appear in the Larger Sutra. The Larger Sutra is a story presented to us to consider and ponder on its meaning and implications for us. The word “Hongan” comes from those who have so considered the text. Shinran had the insight to focus on the 18th vow of Dharmakara. He saw that it was the fundamental vow for those who were in the worst possible spiritual state, the vow that unlocked all the doors for him, and for us. We can see the 18th vow of reaching out to all those who can’t reach, that this is at the heart of Dharmakara’s original, basic, primal, intent to reach everyone. It is the deepest expression of Karuna, or Compassion, and of Prajna, or of Wisdom. All the vows are an unfolding of this, but it is in the 18th vow that we can see the deepest expression of it all and it touches us to our core. In my understanding of the Sutra, the story is to awaken the same impulse within us so that we too form the same primal vow within us as we reach out to others with the heart of the Dharma.

Gassho,
Rev. Frederick
担当開教使のお知らせ

2013年1月より、長谷川智行北米開教監督部嘱託が、日本語法話会並びに日本語祥月の担当開教使として着任することになりました。皆様や幡ピーター駐在開教使と共に、楽しく充実した会を作っていきたいと思います。

どうぞご指導、ご協力頂きますよう、よろしくお願い申し上げます。

2月祥月法要 / 法話会
2月7日（木）
午後7時30分より

家族リトリート

来る2月15日（金）～17日（日）に家族リトリートをサンルイス・オビスポ仏教会にて開催いたします。ご講師として山田ケン開教使（バークレー東本願寺）をお招きし、「縁起」をテーマとしてご法話を頂く予定です。講義、座談、野外活動など家族と一緒に楽しむいただける予定が組まれております。

参加費は$35で、宿泊費は、お寺に宿泊される場合は無料です（近隣のホテルにも宿泊可能ですが、別途宿泊費がかかります。）日常の喧騒を離れ、仏法に耳を傾ける絶好の機会です。是非お誘い合わせの上ご参加下さい。

お寺ニュース

2月祥月法要 / 法話会
2月2日（木）
午後7時30分より

仏教 Q&A

問い：人が亡くなって、お葬式さえすれば、中陰（ちゅういん）の仏事やその後の月忌（がっき）勤めとかは必要ないのではないですか。

（32歳・女性）

答え：最近、葬式さえ済ませば中陰勤めは無しで、満中陰（まんちゅういん）法要は勤めても、その後の仏事は省略という若い人たちがたまにおられるようです。

これは、葬（ほうむ）り去れば終え、亡くなった者とはもう関係ないとでも思われているのでしょうか。それは生きているものや家族の中心の考え方で、亡き人の死を無顧にすることではないでしょう。

仏教では中陰と言って、死後四十九日間、一週間ごとに亡き人を懐びつつ仏事を勤め、さらに満中陰の法要が終わった後、毎月の命日に勤めをしてゆくという仏事を大切にして参りました。

これは、単に亡き人が死後迷わず成仏するよう供養してあげることではありません。七七日間（じしにかい）、身近で大切な人の死をさえぎり、そこにある人々の願いを聞き、生きている私が仏さまの教えに従（う）わせていただく大切な教義なのです。

亡き人は生命を捨てて、私たちは人生を掛けて、私たちが人生の真の願いを聞き、生きている私たちに仏さまの教えを教えてください。生きている者が仏さまの教えに従うことが大事です。

それは、「お前の人生にも必ず終わりが来るぞ。しかもその終わりはいつ来るかわからんぞ。その死をいつ起こしてきたかを知っておき、身をもって呼びかけておられます。

この機会こそ、死なないつもりで思うかと、空しく人生を過ごしている日ごろの私の生きざまを振り返り、目を覚ます好機ではないでしょうか。これは亡き人の生命を懸けた贈り物であるし、

この贈り物を無駄にすれば、亡き人も助からない。「私の死を絶として、真実のいのちに目覚め、生まれた意義と生きる喜びを見つけてほしい」という亡き人の願いを聞き、仏さまの喚起の声が聞える身になってこそ、亡き人も真に助かるのだろうと。

七七日間の仏事も、月忌勤めも、「お経」をいただき、親鸞さま、蓮如さまの真実の言葉を聞いていただいて、亡き人とともどもこの私が、生と死を貫いて、しかも生と死を包んで、私たちは生と死をつなげて「真実の生」に目覚めさせていただく大切な法縁です。

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2月祥月法要 / 法話会
2月7日（木）
午後7時30分より
February 2013    -    Vol. XLVII   No. 2

February
3 8:30 am  Board Mtg
3 10:00 am  Shotsuki Service
7 7:30 pm  Howakai Japanese Service
10 10:00 am  Sunday Service
12 10:00 am  Bonbu Class
15-17  WCBT Family Retreat
24 10:00 am  Sunday Service
26 10:00 am  Bonbu Class

March
3 8:30 am  Board Mtg
3 10:00 am  Shotsuki Service
7 7:30 pm  Howakai Japanese Service
10 10:00 am  Sunday Service
12 10:00 am  Bonbu Class
16 12:00 pm  ESGVJCC Cherry Blossom Festival
17 4:30 pm  Spring Ohigan Service
23 8:00 pm  Oldies Dance
24 10:00 am  Sunday Service
26 10:00 am  Bonbu Class
31 10:00 am  Sunday Service

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Eitaikyo Pics  2  Temple News  3  Acknowledgments  6  Japanese Page  7

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