The West Covina Family Retreat was held at San Luis Obispo Buddhist Temple from Friday, February 14 to Sunday, February 16. Thirty people attended and for some of them it was their first retreat. I was one of them and it gave me a great opportunity to get to know our Sangha members.

The temple is surrounded by breathtaking natural beauty. We savored the morning mist, the fresh air, and the sound of birds singing. It was definitely worth the four hour drive. Leaving our busy lives, we were able to devote ourselves to listening to lectures and learning about Buddhism.

It is a wonderful opportunity that we are able to take a break from our daily life to learn about Buddhism. However, we know that Shinran Shonin was unable to listen to the teachings apart from his daily life. Shinran Shonin was the one who left the monastery on the mountain and tried to find the way to encounter the teaching in the midst of his everyday life.

Does leaving the hustle bustle of Los Angeles to attend a retreat at a peaceful setting sound like a way to learn Buddhism? What is the real meaning for us to have the retreat in this way?

The most important benefit of this retreat was to help us see more clearly how we live our daily life. We are...
**Dharma School News**

The Dharma school students, teachers, and parents visited a retirement home to help celebrate Valentine’s Day with the residents of the home. The colorful valentines that the students and teachers designed and made brightened the holiday for the residents.

With beautiful weather and a wonderful program that Mrs. Pat Sato and TCS organized, families experienced a great time at the San Luis Obispo retreat. Many thanks to Dr. Metcalf for being the guest speaker!

The blooming of trees and longer days means that Ohigan is “around the corner”. Hope to see all of you at our Spring Ohigan service on March 16!

With Gassho,
Claire Hansen

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**Quote of the Month**

We don’t worry about the future. We worry about the present, because we know that if in the present moment we do our best, that is more than enough. That is all we can do for the future.

-Thich Nhat Hanh

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**Dharma School Visitation**

The retreat takes us out of our daily life and gives us opportunities to think about how we are supposed to live our life. During the retreat, we enjoyed what we were doing each moment and appreciated everything around us. At the same time, we were aware that we lose or forget those feelings of appreciation in our daily life. Bringing us to awareness is the foremost benefit we can receive from the retreat.

It is almost impossible to maintain appreciation and joy for living each moment after we go back to our busy life. However, now that we know what we lose in our everyday life, that awareness moves us to listen to the teachings more.

In closing, I would like to express my appreciation to Pat Sato and members of the TCS committee for planning and preparing the retreat. I would also like to thank Dr. Franz Metcalf for his thought provoking lectures. I am deeply grateful to Hisako and Dick Koga and the kitchen crews for their delicious meals. Thanks to Merry Jitosho, Frank Tanji, and Joanie Martinez for the great time we had at the evening activities. And of course, many thanks to all those who joined the retreat to make it very successful retreat. And lastly, I would like to thank the San Luis Obispo Temple and Rev. Naomi Nakano for the kind hospitality and the use of their beautiful facilities.
The Study Class
The Study Class will meet on March 11 and 25 at 10:00 AM. Discussions will continue to focus on the Shoshingo. The class meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month. For more information, please contact Rev. Miyoshi at (213) 219-6140.

Spring Ohigan Service
Spring Ohigan will be observed on March 16 at 4:30 PM. Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi will be our speaker. Please join us for this special service and stay for the complimentary otoki dinner following the service.

Oldies Dance XLVII
“Dancin’ and a Revvin’ at Oldies XLVII” will be held on Saturday, March 22. It’s our 47th Oldies with Steve Kikuchi & High Resolution providing 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 $15 or $18 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.

Special Dharma Message
There’s always a special reason to come to WCBT and on Sunday, March 23, there will be a special story just for the Dharma School children. Please bring your Dharma School age children on this day and remember that these stories are equally meaningful for adults as well. The Dharma is for everyone!

Cherry Blossom Festival
The West Covina Cherry Blossom Festival will be on Saturday, March 29, from 12:00 noon to 6:00 PM and will be held at South Hills Plaza, on the corner of Azusa Ave & Aroma Dr, more commonly known as the Marukai shopping center. 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 at (714) 271-3803 for more information. Keep that day open and come out to support the Temple and the Center.

WCBT Hanamatsuri
West Covina’s Hanamatsuri Service will be held on Sunday, April 6, at 10:00 AM. Everyone is invited to arrive early with flowers to decorate the Hanamido. There will be a special performance by the Dharma school children and light refreshments will be served after the service. We invite you to come and join us to celebrate the Buddha’s birthday!

LABTF Hanamatsuri
The Federation Hanamatsuri Service and will be held on the April 6 beginning at 1:00 PM at the Betsuin in downtown LA. Everyone is encouraged to attend the LABTF service after WCBT Hanamatsuri Service.

April Shotsuki Service
Please remember that the April Shotsuki Service will be held on April 13 since Hanamatsuri will be celebrated on the first Sunday.
he passed away shortly after that weekend. The following year when we returned to SLO to hear Dr. Metcalf again, I heard his lectures through different ears. I was able to internalize his words in a different way than I would have previously. Now we are back years later and I listen to him yet again through different ears. Each time I see him, my conditions have changed so I hear his lectures with an altered mindset. I am able to relate his talks to my situation at the time to hopefully improve my life.

Dr. Metcalf’s lectures about the Golden Chain helped me understand and realize the changes in the wording that were made some years ago. That doesn’t mean that I can recite it without reverting to the former version, but I’m trying. I have a better understanding of the changes that were made. These changes have made the Golden Chain more inclusive of all living things, bring about more intention on the side of the Sangha and Bodhisattva, put more focus on other’s happiness rather than your own, and hope for the true awakening of all people rather than being at rest in peace.

When we recite the Golden Chain and try to incorporate it in our daily lives, we are all connected by the Golden Chain. When this happens, the chain is essentially alive and full of energy because of the people who are practicing it. By integrating the Golden Chain into our lives along with the other Buddhist teachings that we hear every week, we will be able to embrace life and live in the present moment as we continue to strive for true awakening.

Dr. Metcalf turned the tables on us on Sunday morning as he challenged us to dissect and expand the meaning of the 5 Precepts (a concept that might be next year’s theme for Dharma School “hint hint”). It is easy to take these Precepts at face value: I vow not to harm through Killing, Stealing, Sex, Lying, and Drinking. However, when we broke off into small groups to discuss these Precepts and really examine what they mean, we were able to come up with a collective understanding of them. We based our interpretations on the 5 Mindfulness Practices as (1) Reverence for Life, (2) True Happiness, (3) True Love, (4) Loving Speech and Deep Listening, and (5) Nourishment and Healing. Rather than just simply telling us this is what some people have said about the 5 Precepts, he allowed us to talk about their meanings, which made it more relevant and applicable to us. Bravo, Dr. Metcalf!

Coming back to the retreat year after year gives us the opportunity to take a step out of our hectic daily routines to reflect on our lives. We are reminded to be mindful and aware of ourselves and others as we continue to incorporate the Dharma into our way of life.
STARTING, con’t from pg. 1

all attain perfect peace.” In the most current version it now reads, “and may we gain true awakening.” This encounter with change, although it does not come without the excruciating pain and agony of jump starting our long term memory storage noggins to adapt to the new version, it also comes with a golden opportunity to once again learn the Golden Chain. Now we must once again learn the Golden Chain. Not only learn how to recite it but also to be mindful of new Golden Chain and its new meaning.

During the course of the 2014 family retreat Dr. Metcalf dove into the verbiage of each versions of the Golden Chain and gave us his thoughts on what the changes mean to us today. On the lengthy drive back home I asked myself if changes can be made to our practice as Jodo Shinshu Buddhists, then what are we practicing and why are we practicing it? I concluded that making changes for the sake of jiving with impermanence was simply not what the new authors were going for in making the most recent changes to the Golden Chain. Rather the focus is on the Sangha and what our practice means in this moment. Always and forever considering what our words mean and not just reciting the Golden Chain and other texts as nicely and smoothly as we may be able to is essential. Just reciting text as a ritual just to recite it and get it over with would not give our practice any meaning at all.

Reverend Miyoshi also made this point of blind awareness with her analogy of the summer loving insect, the cicada. One would think these creatures that are active exclusively during the summer would know everything there is to know about summer but when in fact know nothing at all. Without contrast we are unable to see things as they truly are or in the cicada’s case that the four seasons even exist. I have also experienced this during my internship abroad in Japan. I am able to appreciate my nationality as an American because I was able to see it from a different part of the world and through the eyes of my Japanese heritage roots. Biologically we continue to evolve; consciously our ideas are always shifting the more and more of life we live. As the courageous Hisako Koga put it during her kanwa, “change is stimulating”. Change allow us to see what is from what was. This is also true each time we listen to the Buddha’s teachings. Reverend Kawawata, like all ministers, always encourages us to continue to listen to the Buddha’s Teachings. In doing so we continue to learn and grow just like an architect building a roofless brick storehouse. One brick at a time, layer upon layer is added. The storehouse is never complete. As long as he has the ability to receive bricks from the brick maker he keeps building. The architect does not wish to add a roof to complete the storehouse because as an architect building is all he knows. By completing the storehouse with a roof would mean he would no longer be an architect so he keeps building and sharing bricks with other architects.

It is the inner working of the Dharma that allows us to find and receive the Teachings even if it is in the form of those epiphanies on the long car rides home. We must continue to ask ourselves how are we practicing. Listen and question, listen and question, listen and question. On this path we will always, as Rev. Miyoshi puts it “start again” and “may we gain true awakening”. Namu Amida Butsu
From top: Some adventurous participants walk along the tidepools. Rev. Miyoshi coaches Frank Tanji how to hit the gong during the Shoshin-ge which was lead by Michelle Harrison. Joshua Gutierrez helps Rev. Miyoshi select kanwa speakers and the Sangha does Obon dances to the music of Michael Jackson.
On January 26, 2014, the West Covina Buddhist Temple Sangha bid farewell to Rev Peter Hata and his wife Diane because he has been re-assigned to the Betsuin in downtown Los Angeles. Rev. Peter was a long time Sangha member and for several years was involved in the Minister’s Assistant program. With hard work, training, education, and dedication he became an ordained Buddhist minister in 2012. Later that year he was chosen by the West Covina Buddhist Temple Board of Directors to become our resident minister.

Rev. Peter’s leadership has brought about many improvements to the Temple. He created the Temple’s Living Dharma website to take advantage of the then growing Internet technology to make more people aware of our Temple and the Dharma teachings it has to offer. Being the editor of the Temple newsletter, The Gateway, he spent countless hours writing articles and answering E-mails about Buddhism. Rev. Peter also created the Facebook account at facebook.com/westcovinabuddhisttemple. Also during his busy schedule, he had time to form two youth bands, the Lotus Band, and the Bodhi Tree Band and the choir group, the Dharma Tones. One of his last endeavors was to form a young adult Buddhist group.

Many thanks to Merry Jitosho and Karen Ezaki and all the Sangha members in Toban B for producing the farewell program and providing the luncheon buffet. Thank you also to the speakers who expressed their thoughts and feelings about Rev. Peter, including Rev. Fred Brenion, Anthony Gutierrez, and Don Frack and to the former Lotus Band members who could not attend, but sent e-mails of gratitude and congratulations.

To Rev. Peter and Diane, the Sangha will miss you and your leadership. We wish you and Diane the best and a successful and rewarding experience at the Betsuin.

On February 2, 2014 our Sangha gathered in the ESGVJCC social hall for a “Meet and Greet” with the newest member of our West Covina Buddhist Temple family, Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi. Brightly decorated with vases of spring flowers, elegant white cloth covered tables were heavily laden with fresh fruit, many kinds of finger foods, mini sliders and sandwiches, sushi, delicious sweets, and pretty containers of cold drinks prepared by Toban C, under the capable leadership of both Merry Jitosho and Karen Ezaki. Toban B’s members and their extended family, as well as all the sangha members who helped out with putting together this reception for Rev. Miyoshi outdid themselves in setting a beautiful and delicious buffet. Merry also organized fun icebreaker games that certainly helped make Rev. Miyoshi feel welcomed.

The warm reception our Sangha offered to our new Sensei was received humbly, graciously, and with a happy smile. If this is any indication, we can predict the beginning of a long and happy relationship between our West Covina Sangha and our new Sensei Miyoshi.

West Covina also hopes that sometime in the near future our Sangha will be able to say “Hello” to Rinban Briones, Rev. Miyoshi’s husband. No stranger to WCBT, Rinban Briones has been a popular guest speaker at our temple in the past.

In the meanwhile, Welcome to West Covina Buddhist Temple, Rev. Miyoshi!
West Covina Buddhist Temple presents

A Dancin’ and A Revvin’ @ Oldies XLVII (47)!

Saturday, March 22, 2014

Same ol’ same ol’ for the rest, but remember it is from 8 to midnite

At the ESGV Japanese Community Center
Tickets: $15 presale, $18 at the door
Music by High Resolution
Drinks available, must be 21 or over
Dressy Casual

For tickets and/or information
Call or Text:
Joanie: (626)300-8947
Lillian: (626)780-9866
or email: wfescrow@aol.com

NO HEELS on the dance floor unless ballroom dance shoes.

WCST/ESGVJCC is located about a mile north of the West Covina Fashion Mall. Parking in rear of buildings.
Dear Members and Friends,

The West Covina Buddhist Temple and its Board of Directors cordially invites you to attend the Spring Ohigan Service which will be held on Sunday, March 16, 2014. The schedule for the service is as follows:

Date: Sunday, March 16, 2014
Time: 4:30 P.M.
Dharma Message: Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi

We will be serving Otoki dinner immediately following the service.

Higan, meaning the Other Shore (of enlightenment), is a service is conducted on or about the vernal and autumnal equinoxes. At these times of the year, we endeavor to strengthen our commitment of the Buddhist life.
日常生活を知る
見義信香

去る2月14日から16日にかけて、サン・ルイス・オビスポ仏教会を会場とした家族リトリートに初めて参加させていただきました。朝霧や鳥のさえずり、緑の鮮やかさや明るく海面、都市の喧噪を離れて時間そのものがゆっくりと流れているように感じました。そうした恵まれた環境の中で、講義やディスカッションにじっくりと身を据え、充実した時間を過ごすことことができました。

さて、親鸞聖人は日常生活の中で仏法に出遇う道を選ばれた方で、浄土真宗は人里離れて山に籠って聞く教えではない、ということは皆さんもよく聞かれていいるかと思いますが、今回のような家族リトリートの大きな目的の一つは、多忙な日常生活から離れることにあることも事実です。このことに矛盾を感じる方もいらっしゃるかもしれません。「日常生活」を離れることが、実は日常生活を知るということなのかもしれません。今回のリトリートでは人とのふれあいや会話の温かさ、今いただいているものの素晴らしい、そして「今」に集中することが本当に満足する生活をもたらしてくれるのを教えてくれました。それは、実はどれもが普段の生活で忘れてしまっているか、気に留めずに脇に追いやってしまっていることといえるでしょう。リトリートを心から楽しむ時、同時に私たちは普段の生活で失っているもののが気付くのです。そのとき初めて、私たちの「日常の生活」の姿がはっきりと見えてくるのではないかでしょうか。目覚めが私たちを聞法の歩みに向かわせる一歩になるのではないかと思います。

日本語春のお彼岸法要

日本語春のお彼岸法要は3月6日午後7時半よりお勤め致します。また英語春のお彼岸法要は3月16日午後4時半よりお勤めいたします。法話は見義が担当いたします。英語法要にもご家族でお参りください。

センター桜まつり

今年のセンターの桜祭りは3月29日（日）に開催されます。今年は会場をSouth Hills Plaza（1420 S. Azusa Ave.）に移して開催されます。お寺は例年同様、この桜祭りに照り焼きチキンとお寿司をもって参加致します。この行事をもって寺の基金募集並びに地元への宣伝も兼ねて行うことができると思います。つきますまして皆様にお寿司の協力をお願い申し上げます。巻寿司でもお稲荷さんどちらでも結構です。当日朝11時半までにお寺に届けていただければ幸いです。ご協力お願い申し上げます。
March
2  8:30 am  Board Mtg
2  10:00 am  Shotsuki Service
6  7:30 pm  Howakai Japanese Service
9  10:00 am  Sunday Service
11  10:00 am  Study Class
16  4:30 pm  Spring Ohigan Service
22  8:00 pm  Oldies Dance
23  10:00 am  Sunday Service
25  10:00 am  Study Class
29  12:00 pm  ESGVJCC Cherry Blossom Festival
30  10:00 am  Sunday Service

April
3  7:30 pm  Howakai Japanese Service
6  8:30 am  Board Mtg.
6  10:00 am  Hanamatsuri Service
6  1:00 pm  LABTF Hanamatsuri @ Betsuin
8  10:00 am  Study Class
13  10:00 am  Shotsuki Service
20  10:00 am  Sunday Service
22  10:00 am  Study Class
27  10:00 am  Sunday Service

3月行事予定
2日 午前8時半 理事会
2日 午前10時 祥月法要
6日 午後7時半 法話会／春のお彼岸法要
9日 午前10時 日曜礼拝
16日 午後4時半 春のお彼岸法要（英語）
22日 午後8時 ダンス基金募集
23日 午前10時 日曜礼拝
29日 正午 センター桜まつり
30日 午前10時 日曜礼拝

4月行事予定
3日 午後7時半 法話会
6日 午前8時半 理事会
6日 午前10時 花まつり法要
6日 午後1時 仏連花まつり

気に入らん人がおったら、
こっちに自我があるということを
証明してくれる仏さんである
米沢英雄『本願はいのちなり』