President Barack Obama delivered a speech in Selma, Alabama, on Saturday, March 7 for the 50th anniversary of “Bloody Sunday,” the famed civil rights march from Selma to Montgomery which resulted in a violent police action against non-violent protesters on the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

Bill, my husband, strongly recommended that I should listen to his speech, not just read the script. So I did and realized that he was right. The President’s speech was passionate and sincere. I was deeply moved by his words, even though I am not an American nor was I even born at that time.

President Obama often used the term ‘America’ in his speech, but the ‘America’ he referred to was not a geographical place or the ‘United States of America’ in 2015. It is the place that manifests hopes and aspirations that this country was founded on. It is the sincerest dream that everyone in this country lives equally, and receives the same opportunities for a better life. This is the wellspring of ‘America’ in his speech. He honored the men and women in Selma of fifty years ago who took that step to make the idea of America true and real.

“…….It is the idea held by generations of citizens who believed that America is a constant work in progress; who believed that loving this country requires more than singing its praises or avoiding uncomfortable truths. It requires the occasional disruption, the willingness to speak out for what is right and shake up the status quo.

That is what makes us unique, and cements our reputation as a beacon of opportunity. Young people behind the Iron Curtain would see Selma and eventually tear down a wall. Young people in Soweto would hear Bobby Kennedy talk about ripples of hope and eventually banish the scourge of apartheid. Young people in Burma went to prison rather than submit to military rule. From the streets of Tunis to the

Please see AMERICA, con’t on page 5
DHARMA SCHOOL NEWS

The Dharma school children have been busy getting ready for Hanamatsuri. The teachers have read the story of the birth of Prince Siddhartha explaining the significance of Queen Maya’s dream of the white elephant, Lumbini’s Garden, and the little prince’s edifying words as lotus blossoms appeared in his footsteps.

As part of the celebration of Prince Siddhartha’s birth, the children have been preparing a surprise for the little prince on his special day. They have been working hard on this project and hope that the Sangha will enjoy what they’ve created!

The teachers will continue to explain the concept of the Middle Way and will introduce the idea of the Buddha’s awakening under the Bodhi tree. These are difficult ideas for little ones (and big grownups, too!), so we hope that our parents will help us to reinforce these concepts.

Looking forward to seeing all of you at our Hanamatsuri!

Gassho,
Claire Hansen

Dharma Seeds Retreat 3
Anthony Gutierrez

The 3rd Dharma Seeds Retreat was held at the Betsuin in Los Angeles and our speaker for this event was Rev. Tatsuru Kigoshi from Japan. Although he mostly spoke Japanese during the sessions, his stories of his experiences kept us all hooked waiting to hear the next translation.

One story that caught my attention was of Rev. Daiei Kaneko, a student of Rev. Manshi Kiyozawa. He and a group of others, some from India, were traveling to a volcano in Japan. Rev. Kaneko was a little unsure about what Amida meant at the time. So they had finally reached the top of the volcano, as he and another began to look into the volcano the person from India was saying “amita, amita, amita!” He would come to understand that “Amida is that which has no Limitations.” The A in Amita means no or without, and mita means measure or limits. We sometime hear the Amitayus (Buddha of Infinite Compassion) or Amitabha (Buddha of Infinite Light). Anyhow, at that time he came to an understanding of the name Amida Buddha, The Buddha of Immeasurable Life and Light. I think it is amazing how an answer to a question we may have can appear to us at any time, we just have to Listen.

Rev. Kigoshi spoke of several people like, Rev. Manshi Kiyozawa, Rev. Haya Akegarasu, Rev. Kaneko, a pious Shinshu Follower (Myōkōnin) Saichi Asahara and others, one which was D.T. Suzuki a famous Zen Master. He told us that D.T. Suzuki was a professor at Otani University for 20 years. While he was there he was translating Jodo Shinshu teachings and began to have a great understanding of them, he has even said that he may have led people down the wrong path.

All of these people shared a common ground, they all lived the true essence of Jodo Shinshu which he quoted from Rev. Ryojin Soga as “The true essence of Shinshu is to be giving the opportunity to move toward

Please see DHARMA SEEDS, con’t on pg. 5

West Covina Buddhist Temple
19th Annual GOLF CLASSIC
Friday, May 8, 2015
Industry Hills Golf Club - “Babe” Zaharias Course
1:00 pm shotgun start

Show your support for West Covina Buddhist Temple by becoming a tee sponsor. Have your company or family name on one of our tee signs placed on the golf course and recognition in our golf program.

Proceeds from all levels of sponsorship will NOT be used to fund the tournament, but will go toward the financing of temple programs and activities.

You can also volunteer on the day of the tournament at the golf course.

For more information call Roy Takemura at (909) 973-2580 or email: rktakemura915@gmail.com
**WCBT Hanamatsuri**

West Covina’s Hanamatsuri Service will be held on Sunday, April 12, 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 will be held on the April 12 beginning at 1:00 PM at the Koyasan Buddhist Temple in LA. Everyone is encouraged to attend the LABTF service after WCBT Hanamatsuri Service.

**The Study Class**

The Study Class will meet on April 28 at 10:00 AM. Discussions will be based on selected topics that vary from week to week. The class normally meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month. For more information, please contact Rev. Miyoshi at (626) 689-1040.

**Mother’s Day Service**

A Mother’s Day family service will be held on May 10, at 10:00 AM. A special tribute to all mothers will be presented so please attend this special service.

**Tanjo-e & Hatsumairi**

The Tanjo-e and Hatsumairi (new baby) Service will be held on May 17 at 10:00 AM. There will be a special ceremony to acknowledge new additions to our Sangha. Please contact Rev. Miyoshi if you or your family member has had a new baby in the last year.

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**GATEWAY Staff**

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**West Covina Buddhist Temple Mission Statement:**

In the spirit of universal brotherhood, West Covina Buddhist Temple provides the opportunity for all to listen to and share the Teachings of the Buddha in order that we may awaken to our true selves, living our lives fully and dynamically.

**The Temple’s mailing address is:**  
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**APRIL**

Kevin Kawawata, Tyler Koji Isaksen, Susan Oshima, Lauren Miyake, Randy Maekawa, Nancy Maekawa, Jacob Kato, Adriana Kochi, Kellie Komoda, Kristen Hiranaka, Tammy Lespron, Yaeko Davis, Shakyamuni Buddha

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*Above:* WCBT hosted dinner for Rev. and Mrs. Kigoshi on March 21.  
*Right:* Merry Jitosho presented a nenju to Rev. and Mrs. Kigoshi. Rev. Kigoshi was the minister at Berkeley Higashi Honganji when she attended the temple. Their friendship has continued for over forty years.
Clockwise from top left: Dancers swing their hips to the Hukilau at Oldies Five-0; Fearless Oldies Leader Joanie Martinez poses under palm tree with Fearless Spiritual Leader Rev. Miyoshi; Many Sangha members worked hard at the reception table, sold drink and raffle tickets, tended bar and slaved tirelessly in the kitchen to create the delicious mini bentos.

First, second and third place winners of our 50-50 raffle pose with Rev. Miyoshi.
AMERICA, con’t from pg. 1

Maidan in Ukraine, this generation of young people can draw strength from this place, where the powerless could change the world’s greatest superpower, and push their leaders to expand the boundaries of freedom.

They saw that idea made real in Selma, Alabama. They saw it made real in America....”

The history of Selma is the history of people who truly relied on the founding spirit of America, inspired by it and expressed the idea through their action. President Obama also mentioned that through their life, the principle of this country has reached many more people beyond time and place. It is they who prove the principle of this country has a universal truth.

At the same time, he honestly admitted that progress has been made, but their work is not finished yet. It was amazing that he stressed that American needs to be self-critical and face their imperfections because that is the way for them to continuously keep marching and remake this nation to more closely align with ideals of this country.

The real principle of the America President Obama addressed truly reminded me of the 17th Vow of Dharmākara Bodhisattva. This vow is called “Vow of Praise of Amida’s Name by All the Buddhas (shobutsu shōmyō no gan),” and states as follows;

If, when I attain Buddhahood, the innumerable Buddhas throughout the worlds in the ten quarters do not all praise and say my Name, may I not attain the supreme enlightenment.

Applying this, sounds mythical and, therefore, it is difficult for us to relate to it. However, Rev. Ryōjin Soga states that Shinran Shonin found the wellspring of the history of Nembutsu in this vow. This is the vow about people who encounter the Primal Vow through Nembutsu. Once we are deeply moved by the aspiration of the Primal Vow, we cannot help but live in accordance with it. ‘Praise and say my Name’ is a symbol of our action how we live our lives reflected by the Vow. And this way of our life becomes an opportunity for many more people to encounter the aspiration of the Vow and give them strength to move forward. What this vow reveals to us is the moment of birth of those who express the aspiration of the Primal Vow.

The true principle of America in President Obama’s speech truly reflects the content of Nembutsu which has been carried on by countless numbers of people and handed down through the history of Buddhism.

Well...do I think President Obama is Buddhist? I do not think he ever claims so, but that does not matter. What matters is, through him and his speech, I was able to encounter the teachings which have been actively alive in this country.

1. Which of the following statements is not true:
   Shinran’s understanding of Pure Land Buddhism was that
   a. Amida was a mythical Buddha who promised salvation to anyone who repeated his name.
   b. it was a path that showed that awakening was available to anyone who is struggling to survive but who does not have the time or opportunities to study and train in monasteries.
   c. it is a teaching which brings about a true understanding of a life of suffering and the ignorance that creates it.
   d. Amida was a symbol of the Dharma itself.

2. Shinran Shonen was born in:
   a. 1173 in the village of Hino.
   b. 1573 in the city of Kyoto.
   c. 973 in the city of Osaka.
   d. 1373 on Mt. Hiei.

Buddha hood through the Nembutsu.” We just have to listen to the teaching of the people who have come before us to reach Buddhahood. Rev. Kigoshi gave an example from the saying on all the US Dollar Bill and also on Coins, “In God we Trust” instead it should be “In me God Trusts” or “In me Amida Trusts.” Instead we are resistant to just letting go and taking the easy path, we want to trust our own selves, our own human wisdom over the Buddha’s Wisdom. No matter what we choose Amida is always there and trusts in us and the decision we make.

Although there is a lot more than just my little memory of things, the above is what stood out to me, just Listen. The last thing I wanted to add was a few of the names mentioned were part of the Dobo Kai movement and the goal of this movement is to “Get us into the same mode of Listening to the Dharma always.”

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

DARMA SEEDS, con’t from pg. 2

Buddhism Quiz
Answers: a, a
Quote of the Month
Knowledge speaks, but wisdom listens
-Jimi Hendrix
アメリカで黒人の地位向上のきっかけとなった「セルマ大行進」から50年目を迎えた3月7日、オバマ大統領が舞台となるアラバマ州セルマを訪れ演説を行いました。

私は夫に強く勧められてインターネットを通じてその演説を聞きました。大統領の演説は熱と真摯さに満ち、心を揺さぶるようなエネルギーを感じました。

大統領は「America」という言葉を何度も口にします。しかしそれは地理的な場所としてのアメリカではなく、また今のアメリカという国の現状をそのまま肯定した言葉でないよう思えました。彼が語る「アメリカ」は建国の願いが形をとった場であります。あらゆる人々が平等の権利と機会を与られ、この国に生まれたことを心から喜べる、それがアメリカの原点でありましょう。

「アメリカは常に前進し続けます。その歩みは人々の愛国心によって突き動かされる歩みです。愛国心とはただ無批判にこの国の状況を讃美することではありません。この国の理念と願いにしっかりと立ったときに見えてくる矛盾、間違いに「違う！」と声をあげることなのです。これが他の国に並ぶことのないアメリカの特徴なのです。鉄のカーテンの向こう側にいた若者はセルマの人々を見てその壁を打ち崩したではありませんか。ソウェトの若者に希望の声が届いた時、それはアパルトヘイトを撤廃する力となりました。ビルマの若者は軍の支配に身を任せるより、誇りをもって投獄されることを選んだ。ウクライナの若者がその精神に触れた時、力をもたない人々が大きな権力を立ち向かう自由を勝ち取る勇さとなりました。

彼らはセルマの信念、願いが真実であるということを証明しているのです。
April
2 7:30 pm Howakai Shotsuki/Hanamatsuri
5 8:30 am Board Meeting
5 10:00 am Shotsuki Service
12 10:00 am Hanamatsuri Service
12 1:00 pm LABTF Hanamatsuri Service
    @Koyasan Buddhist Temple
19 10:00 am Sunday Service
26 10:00 am Sunday Service
28 10:00 am Study Class
28 7:00 pm Lecture Series 1

May
2 9:30 am NAD Local Retreat
3 8:30 am Board Meeting
3 10:00 am Shotsuki Service
5 7:00 pm Lecture Series 2
7 7:30 pm Howakai Japanese Service
8 11:00 am WCBT Golf Tournament
10 10:00 am Mother’s Day Family Service
12 10:00 am Study Class

2015年4月行事予定
2日 午後7時半 法話会祥月／花まつり
5日 午前8時半 理事会
5日 午前10時 祥月法要
12日 午前10時 花まつり法要
12日 午後1時 仏連花まつり
於高野山米国別院
19日 午前10時 日曜礼拝
26日 午前10時 日曜礼拝

5月行事予定
2日 午前9時半 南加リトリート
3日 午前8時半 理事会
3日 午前10時 祥月法要
7日 午後7時半 法話会
8日 午前11時 ゴルフトーナメント

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