



GATEWAY



May 2013 - - Vol. XLVII No. 5

Living Dharma News

www.livingdharma.org

New on the website is coverage of our recent SLOBT Retreat which featured keynote speaker Rev. Ken Yamada (and many members of the Berkeley Sangha). It's basically the same article that was published in the Gateway...but the photos are much larger on the website...many fond memories.

Gassho,
Rev. Peter Hata

Selected E-mail

From = Maddie
Subject = Discrimination in Buddhism
Message = Hello, I am in year 9 at school. In R.E I am currently doing a project about different religions including Buddhism. Your website has been very helpful for general information however I was wondering if you could help me answer my question: Is there any type of gender discrimination in Buddhism?
I have been to other websites and found some information but your website seemed more reliable. Thank you, any help would be much appreciated. Please could you email any responses back to this account too.

Dear Maddie,

Thanks for visiting our Living Dharma Website. As to your question, if by "Buddhism" you are referring to the institutions of Buddhism such as sects, schools, organizations and so forth, in our Higashi Honganji school, with its headquarters in Japan—which as you may know is a traditionally male-dominant society—there probably is some discrimination, though it may often be subtle.

Of course, subtle or not, there have been many difficulties women have had to face in Buddhism, even going back 2500 years to Shakyamuni Buddha's original Sangha (community of monks). For reasons that are
Please see L.D. NEWS, con't on page 4



Above: Mitzi Wexler gasshos in front of the Hanamido and Baby Buddha at WCBT's 2013 Hanamatsuri Service (more Hanamatsuri pics on pages 2 and 4)

17th Annual WCBT Golf Classic

One could not have ordered a more perfect day for the 17th Annual WCBT Golf Classic. This year's tournament was held on Friday, April 19, 2013, on the Eisenhower "Ike" Course at Industry Hills.

Sixty golfers began the day with a three-hole putting contest followed by scramble format golf on a difficult yet beautifully manicured golf course. The course was enhanced by the tee

sponsor signs placed at the tee areas throughout the course. The tournament also included Closest-to-the Pin contests, a Most Accurate Drive contest and a Hole-in-One grand prize for \$10,000. Following the tournament, there was an award banquet in the Cherry Hill Banquet Room and Raffle Drawing.

The results of the tournament were as follows:

Low Gross Winning Team (64) – Jerome Thibodeau, Jimmy Thibodeau,

Please see GOLF, con't on page 4



Above: At WCBT's Golf Classic Banquet, Jack Wear presents prize money to the Group 3 Winning team of Harry Taguchi, Aki Kamimura, Kathy Taguchi, and Lillian Nishihara.

Temple Event Highlights:

- May 6-14 World Dobo Convention
- May 12 Mother's Day Service
- May 19 Tanjo-e/Hatsumairi
- June 1 Oldies Dance 45
- June 23 Dads & Grads Service
- June 29 OBON FESTIVAL
- Please See Temple News



T H E G A T E W A Y

DHARMA SCHOOL NEWS

Assorted April Pics

There's no stopping the passage of time, and so our annual Obon Festival will be upon us on June 29th! It is a wonderful opportunity for us and all our friends to enjoy dancing in memory of those who have gone before us. Our Dharma School has been fortunate to have the support of the adult Sangha who donate prizes (new toys, crafts, games) for the children's raffle booth. The hopeful winners range from pre-school to all elementary levels. Donated prizes may be given to Rev. Peter or Diane Hata on any Sunday (a gentle nudge to come to service).

We have not jumped so far ahead that we have forgotten our moms. Please join us for a special Mother's Day Service on May 12th. There will be a sweet appreciation given to these great ladies.

In honor of Earth Day (everyday is Earth Day) here are some reminders to answer, "What goes in each cart?"

RECYCLABLES:

Aluminum cans, Magazines & newspaper, Cereal & cracker boxes, Plastic hangers, Metal hangers, Junk mail

TRASH:

Dirty aluminum foil, Wax coated paper, Foil chip bags, Ceramic dishes & mugs, Soiled food containers, Laminated paper

With Gassho,
Diane Hata

Quote of the Month

A person called our temple this morning—she still wanted to learn about Buddhism despite her bad experiences: one place didn't like her questioning what they did, another place wanted \$150 at the door and an Asian immigrant place gave her nothing but "We don't want you here" looks. At our temple, we welcome your questions, you don't have to pay to attend our religious activities, and we definitely want diversity of all kinds.

-Rev. Patti Nakai



Starting at the top: The Dharmatones perform at WCBT Hanamatsuri Service; Kevin Kawawata holds the birthday cake while the sangha sings "Happy Birthday" to Buddha; Rev. Peter conducts the very well-attended lecture series "Introduction to Buddhism"; and proud parents Anthony and Monic Gutierrez pose with daughter Jaylene in front of her winning self-portrait in the three-year old category of this year's Federation Hanamatsuri poster contest.



T H E G A T E W A Y

T E M P L E N E W S

Mother's Day Service

A Mother's Day family service will be held on May 12, at 10:00 AM. A special tribute to all mothers will be presented. Our guest speaker will be Kevin Kawawata so please attend this special service.

Tanjo-e & Hatsumairi

The Tanjo-e and Hatsumairi (new baby) Service will be held on May 19 at 10:00 A.M. There will be a special ceremony to acknowledge new additions to our Sangha. Please contact Rev. Peter if you or your family member has had a new baby in the last year. If interested please see enclosed flyer.

Oldies Dance XLV

"Be Alive! Dance at Oldies XLV (45)!" will be held on Saturday, June 1. 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.

Bon Odori Practices

Bon Odori (dance) practice will begin in June, every Tuesday and Friday, from 7:00 to 8:30 PM. All you need to bring are your kachi-kachi (castanets) and tenugui (Japanese towel) or fabric of equivalent size. The fans will be provided. The dates again are June 4, 7, 11, 14, 18, 21 and 25. Everyone is invited to join in the fun. See you there!

Dads & Grads Family Service

A Father's Day & Graduation Family service will be held on June 23, at 10:00 AM. All graduates will be honored so please contact Diane Hata or Rev. Peter with the names of graduates in your family. Join us for this special event.

OBON FESTIVAL!

Obon 2013, on June 29, is just a few weeks away but we're preparing to make this our best Obon ever!

Set-up will begin on Friday, June 28, at 1:00 PM. We'll need help setting up outside and inside the gym as well as food prep and general hands-on help.

In the mean time, we are accepting donations for rice, chili and children's and regular raffle prizes. Age for inarizushi will be passed out before Obon for those volunteering to make sushi. Raffle tickets will be sent out and don't forget those great homemade dessert for our popular dessert booth.

Sign-up sheets will be passed around at Sunday Services or contact Merry (714) 271-3803 to see how you can help.

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.

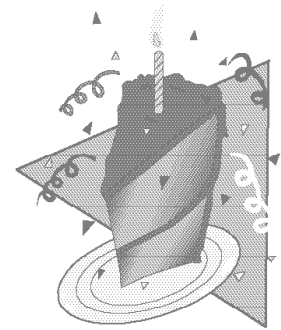
The Temple's mailing address is:

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Facebook: [facebook.com/westcovinabuddhisttemple](https://www.facebook.com/westcovinabuddhisttemple)

E-Mail: dharma@livingdharma.org



May Birthdays

Dina Mayeda, Stacey Miyashiro, Teri Ezaki, Say Masai, Ted Hamachi, Rev. Peter Hata, Mary Hatakeyama, Kay Sakaue, Garrett Hamachi, Kaylin Kanemaru, Claudia Haraguchi, Sara Kawai, Chimako Matsukiyo, Cheryl Teragawa

Oldies XLV





T H E G A T E W A Y

GOLF, con't from pg. 1

Fred Ige and Roy Takemura
Group #1 Winning Team (65) – George Sugimoto, Lisa Sugimoto, Dick Goto and Sumio Sato

Group #2 Winning Team (70) – Ken Sato, Steve Murata, Gary Kanemoto and John Nehrig

Group #3 Winning Team (72) – Lillian Nishihara, Kathy Taguchi, Harry Taguchi and Aki Kamimura

Room for Improvement Team (82) – Tom Pearey, Sam Furuta and Rev. Alfred Tsuyuki

Three-Hole Putting Contest winner – Howard Kunihiro

Closest-to-the Pin #5 – Larry Saika

Closest-to-the Pin #15 – Sumio Sato

Accuracy Drive Contest – Lee Ezaki

The day's excitement closed with the raffle drawing for many great prizes and the winner of the Grand Prize iPad Mini was WCBT member and Golf Committee Chair Roy Takemura. Congratulations to all the winners!

The success of this classic was possible with the hard work of the golf committee members of Rev. Peter Hata, Barbara Shirota, Lillian Nishihara, Jack Wear, Steve Underwood and Chair Roy Takemura. Thank you to Richard Kagawa, Mei Ling Chen, Diane Hata, Emi Wexler, Mitzi Oshita, Tami Kitaura and Joy Kitaura with registration and passing out of the player's goodie bags; Steve Underwood and Jack Wear for conducting the putting contest; Barbara Shirota, Tami Kitaura, Joy Kitaura and Lillian Nishihara for the raffle drawing; Jr. YBA for putting together the player's bags; Dick Koga for donating the fruits; to all the Sangha members who made the spam musubis; and Rev. Peter Hata and wife Diane as the witness for the Hole-in-One contest. Rev. Hata reported he did not witness a \$10,000 hole-in-one shot (more shots probably came closer to hitting Diane and him!).

Of course, the tournament's financial success would not be possible without the participants, sponsors and raffle prize donors. We look forward to your support and participation for the 18th Annual WCBT Golf Classic in 2014.

Thank you!

L.D. NEWS, con't from pg. 1

unclear, when Prajapati asked the Buddha for permission to become a nun and join the Sangha, the Buddha declined. Of course, at that point in Early Buddhism, there were no Buddhist nuns, only monks. But still, Prajapati was excluded from the Sangha despite her being not only the Buddha's aunt but his stepmother when his birth mother, Maya, passed away after giving birth to him. It is said she cried deeply from the rejection.

What's even more surprising though is that Prajapati then made a bold decision. According to the East Asian Studies scholar Dr. Lori Meeks, despite the Buddha's refusal, "Prajapati decided that she and her followers would shave their heads, don the saffron-colored robes of renunciants, and follow the Buddha to Vaishali. The trip, which they made on foot, and without male protection, required them to cover a distance of 150 miles. It is said that they arrived at Vaishali where the Buddha was then preaching, 'with swollen feet and covered in dust.' The trip had been very difficult. Seeing Prajapati and her followers in distress, the Buddha's close disciple Ananda inquired, 'Why are you crying?' Prajapati explained the Buddha had refused to permit women 'to renounce their homes and enter into the homeless state.'"

Ultimately, Ananda intercedes for Prajapati and tells the Buddha that he owes a great deal to Prajapati: "She was your aunt, nurse, and your foster mother." In the face of these compelling arguments—and possibly, seeing Prajapati's determination—the Buddha finally relents and admits Prajapati into the Sangha. As Dr. Meeks says, "What is most notable here is the boldness of her suggestion, especially at this early point in Buddhist history. Social equality between men and women would have been unthinkable during in Prajapati's time. And yet she had the courage to resist a ruling, by the Buddha himself, which she viewed as discriminatory."

While I agree with Dr. Meeks that Prajapati's story is indeed an empowering one for Buddhist women, I believe it would be a mistake to interpret this solely within the context of the issue of gender discrimination. I think Prajapati's story is ultimately not so much a testimony to women overcoming discrimination as it is a testimony to

the power of the Dharma, to the truth of the teaching of impermanence. Prajapati deeply encountered impermanence through the death of her sister and the death of her husband. But then, having heard the Buddha's teaching of a way to transcend the anxiety of death, she was sincerely drawn to the refuge she found within the teaching, and I believe this is what gave her the determination to walk 150 miles. So in this sense, Prajapati's story should not only be a source of inspiration for Buddhist women around the world, it is a testament to the power of the aspiration to become a buddha. This aspiration for buddhahood, for enlightenment or awakening, is universal. When it arises within us, male or female, we are also moved to take refuge. Therefore, all of us, male and female, can learn from Prajapati's example.

Still, Maddie, to refer back to your question, "Yes, there is still some discrimination against women in Higashi Honganji." Of course, in the 21st century, women are no longer excluded from the Sangha, and whatever discrimination there is would vary depending on specific temple, etc., but they probably still find it difficult to reach the highest positions of leadership. But despite that, following Prajapati's example, female Buddhists who sincerely listen to the Dharma will—when moved by the power of the Dharma—change the face of Buddhism just like Prajapati did in ancient times.

Best Wishes,
Rev. Peter Hata

From: "Maddie Sanz"

Thank you for taking the time to respond. All of the information was extremely helpful, I now have a much better understanding of the question. Thank you!
Maddie

From = Ruby

Subject = White Ashes

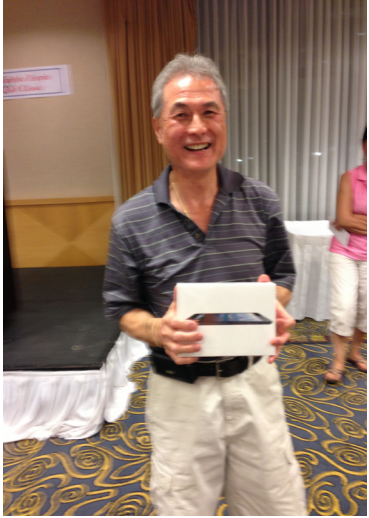
Message = Where can I find the letter about white ashes? My Japanese friend read that letter at my husband's funeral and I would like to have it for myself. She is dying now herself and can't tell me where the letter is. Thank you.

Please see L.D. NEWS, con't on pg. 6



T H E G A T E W A Y

Golf & Hanamatsuri Pics



(Howakai Hanamatsuri)





T H E G A T E W A Y

L.D. NEWS, con't from pg. 4

Dear Ruby,

Thank you for writing. Please allow me first to express my condolences to you for the loss of your husband, and now the coming loss of your friend. You had a true friend in your good husband whose life and death is now a continuous teaching of the life of the Dharma. You have a true friend in the Dharma who pointed out that teaching to you through the reading of "White Ashes." Now you have the wonderful opportunity to be a true friend to her in sharing that same Dharma. The Buddha's teaching of the dependence of all life together is being made known here. Together, you are all teachers of the Dharma to each other and to all.

The letter on "White Ashes" was written by Rennyo who was the eighth Monshu, or leader of the Hongan-ji (The Temple of the Primal Vow), a direct descendent of Shinran Shonin, the founder of Jodo Shinshu. Rennyo was born in 1415 and died in 1499. When he grew up the Hongan-ji had become a minor group, no longer effective in bringing forth the message that Shinran had developed through his life experiences. The Hongan-ji could so easily have disappeared. Rennyo threw himself into the work and facing the difficult challenges of his time, developed the teachings for this time and situation, explaining what was difficult and making it simple. At the end of his life the Hongan-ji had reformed itself and became one of the most vibrant schools of Buddhism that continues to this day. Rennyo is often referred to as "the restorer", even as the "second founder." One of the things he did in helping Hongan-ji to grow was to write letters to the fellow followers to help encourage and instruct them. These letters were collected together and have been read since at many of our services ever since. The letter "White Ashes" is one of his most poignant and beloved because it gets right to the heart of our daily condition. In his time, as in ours, our lives are shaped and torn about by various forces. We can have everything now, and lose it all in a matter of moments. He did not hide or sugar-coat the truth but brought it forth for us all to consider.

There are many translations of his letters. If you look for it, it is the 16th letter of the 5th collection of the "Gobunsho" or "Ofumi." Here is the translation from the "Letters of Rennyo" (Shin Buddhist Translation Series), I hope this will meet your needs. We should all consider this letter to have been written to each



of us because Rennyo wrote it for all fellow followers:

"When I deeply contemplate the transient nature of human life, I realize that, from beginning to end, life is impermanent like an illusion. We have not yet heard of anyone who lived ten thousand years. How fleeting is a lifetime!

Who in this world today can maintain a human form for even a hundred years? There is no knowing whether I will die first or others, whether death will occur today or tomorrow. We depart one after another more quickly than the dewdrops on the roots or the tips of the blades of grasses. So it is said. Hence, we may have radiant faces in the morning, but by evening we may turn into white ashes.

Once the winds of impermanence have blown, our eyes are instantly closed and our breath stops forever. Then, our radiant face changes its color, and the attractive countenance like peach and plum blossoms is lost. Family and relatives will gather and grieve, but all to no avail?

Since there is nothing else that can be

done, they carry the deceased out to the fields, and then what is left after the body has been cremated and has turned into midnight smoke is just white ashes. Words fail to describe the sadness of it all.

Thus the ephemeral nature of human existence is such that death comes to young and old alike without discrimination. So we should all quickly take to heart the matter of the greatest importance of listening to the dharma, entrust ourselves deeply to Amida Buddha, and recite the nembutsu.

Humbly and respectfully."

[Rennyo]

Ruby, thank you for writing. Please be strong in the teachings. We know, through the teaching of the White Ashes, that life is ever challenging, but that through the entrustment of our heart-minds to all that Amida Buddha represents, relying on the Nembutsu as that expression we can face the winds of impermanence with peace.

With the deepest gassho,
Rev. Frederick



T H E G A T E W A Y

仏教 Q&A

問い 『お文（ふみ）』に「後生（ごしょう）の一大事を心にかけて」と何度も出てきますが、死後の救いを願うことなのですか。

答え 蓮如上人は、特に「後生の一大事を心にかけて」と繰り返し教えられます。後生とは「後世（ごせ）」ともいわれ、今生（こんじょう）・現世に対して言われる言葉です。

「仏教では、後生、後生といって死んだ先のことばかり言うから若い人に嫌われるのだ。もっと現実的に、生きている現在のことを教えなくては現代に通用しない」とよく言われます。

確かにその通りですが、それでは「死んだらおしまいだ」と言って、ほんとうに現在を安心して生きていけるのでしょうか。

この人生が「旅」だとします。この人生の行きつく先はどこでしょうか。真っ暗な死の闇の世界で終わるのでしょうか。私たちが外国旅行に出かけ、めずらしい風景や食べ物をいただき、楽しく過ごしていても、やがて旅行が終わって帰っていく国と家庭が無かったらどうでしょうか。楽しく、安心して旅してはおれないのではないのでしょうか。

「後生の一大事を心につけてよ」とは、人生の旅を終えて安心して帰っていくことのできる世界、魂の故郷が明らかになっているかということです。決して、この世は苦しい辛いところだから、死んでからいい世界に生まれて幸せになることを教えるのではありません。帰るべき世界がはっきりすれば、ただ今の現在を安心して、精いっぱい喜びの人生として生きられるのであります。

この人生の旅は必ず終わります。し

かもいつ終わるかわかりません。明日終わるかも知れない。そうすれば、後生は遠い先の話ではなく、今日のただ今に来ているのでありましょう。「後生」とは「最後の生」という意味だと教えてくださった人があります。実はだれにとっても、今日、ただ今が「後生」、即ち最後の大切な一瞬一瞬の時を生きているのでありましょう。もう後の余裕がないという「無後心」、セツパつまつた生死（しょうじ）の厳頭に立たされた自覚でありましょう。

私たちは、まだまだ後があるという「有後心（うごしん）」に立って生きていますから、今の生き方がなまぬるいのでしょうか。死を今の足下に自覚した時、初めて大いなる生命（いのち）のはたらきに触れて、生きていることの有難さ、スバラシさに目覚めて、私たちの生命が生き生きと輝き出すのでありましょう。私たちの人生に逃れることのできない老・病・死を常に足下に見据えながら、帰るべき世界を明らかにする。そこにほんとうの意味で「現在の生」を大切に生きることになるのでしょうか。

（真宗大谷派大阪教区ウェブサイト「銀杏通信」より引用）



お寺ニュース

母の日家族礼拝

5月12日（日）午前10時より、母の日家族礼拝をお勤めいたします。例年のように、メンバーの方による母の日のメッセージがございます。どうぞ皆様と一緒に御参り下さい。

親鸞聖人誕生会 並びに新生児初参り法要

本年の親鸞聖人誕生会並びに新生児初参り法要は、5月19日（日）午前10時より厳修いたします。親鸞聖人のご誕生をお祝いし、合わせて新生児の初参り法要をお勤めいたします。皆様のご家族、お知り合いの方に0歳から6歳までのお子様がいらっしゃいましたら、どうぞお申し込み下さい。初参り参詣をご希望の方は、幡ピーター開教使までお知らせ下さい。

盆踊り練習

本年度の当寺院のお盆祭り（6月29日）もいよいよ近づいて参りました。今年の盆踊り練習は以下の予定にて、ほぼ毎週火曜日と金曜日の午後7時から8時30分まで行われます。どなたでも歓迎いたします。どうぞお誘い合わせの上、お気軽にご参加下さい。

5月31日（金）
6月 4日（火）
7日（金）
11日（火）
14日（金）
18日（火）
21日（金）
25日（火）

（6月28日は練習はありません。）



5月祥月法要 / 法話会

5月2日（木）

午後7時30分より

East San Gabriel Valley
Japanese Community Center, Inc.

West Covina Buddhist Temple
1203 W. Puente Avenue, West Covina, CA 91790
P.O. Box 1616, West Covina, CA 91793

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 **GATEWAY** 

May 2013 - - Vol. XLVII No. 5

May

- 2 7:30 pm Howakai Japanese Service
- 5 8:30 am Board Mtg.
- 5 10:00 am Shotsuki Service
- 6-14 World Dobo Convention
- 12 10:00 am Mothers Day Family Service
- 19 10:00 am Tanjo-e/Hatsumairi Service
- 21 10:00 am Bonbu Class
- 26 10:00 am Sunday Service
- 28 10:00 am Bonbu Class

June

- 1 8:00 pm Oldies Dance
- 2 10:00 am Sunday Service
- 6 7:30 pm Howakai Japanese Service
- 9 8:30 am Board Meeting
- 9 10:00 am Shotsuki Service
- 11 10:00 am Bonbu Class
- 16 10:00 am Sunday Service
- 23 10:00 am Dads & Grads Family Service
- 25 10:00 am Bonbu Class
- 28 Obon Set-up
- 29 2-9:00 pm OBON FESTIVAL
- 30 9:00 am Obon Cleanup

5月行事予定

- 2日 午後7時半 日本語祥月法要 / 法話会
- 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 母の日家族礼拝
- 19日 午前10時 親鸞聖人誕生会 / 初参り法要
- 26日 午前10時 日曜礼拝

6月行事予定

- 1日 午後 8時 オールディーズ・ダンス
- 2日 午前10時 日曜礼拝
- 6日 午後7時半 日本語祥月法要 / 法話会
- 9日 午前8時半 理事会
- 9日 午前10時 祥月法要
- 16日 午前10時 日曜礼拝
- 23日 午前10時 父の日家族礼拝
- 28日 お盆祭り準備
- 29日 午後 2時 お盆祭り
- 30日 午前 9時 お盆祭り後片付け

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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