On Saturday June 10th, the second retreat for the Dharma Seeds Program II “Planting Nenbutsu Seeds in America” was held at the Los Angeles Betsuin, focusing on the theme “General History of Mahayana Buddhism”. At our February retreat in Berkeley a few members were unable to attend. That was not the case in Los Angeles as all 12 members and 7 ministers made the gathering.

The activities began with an Opening Service and Shoshin-ge Dobo Hosan led by West Covina members Joanie Martinez and myself. The opening and welcoming remarks were presented by Bishop Ito, after which we assembled in the social hall of the temple.

After brief introductions, the morning session was an in-depth review of...

Under the clear summer sky, the WCBT had an extremely successful Obon Festival on Saturday, June 24th. We were fortunate to see many people with their children and grandchildren enjoying shave ice, chicken teriyaki, cultural demonstrations, games and of course Bon Odori.

This year’s Manto-e service, there were more people than I expected. Some of the participants were non-members and just happened to know and attended the service to show their respect and gratitude to their loved ones. They reminded us that the Obon Festival is not only a cultural event, but also a religious one that widely offers an opportunity to experience a sense of interconnectedness to everyone.

I would like to thank the dedicated and hardworking Sangha members and their families and friends whose positive energy created a joyful atmosphere for the festival. I would also like to express my deepest appreciation to the Obon co-chair, Mr. Bruce Whang and Mrs. Merry Hiroshima (Jitosho), and the Obon committee for their tireless work and devotion.

In Gassho,
Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi

Please see SHAKYAMUNI, con’t on page 4
The Dharma School game booth was very busy during Obon. Children enjoyed the various games and the challenge of winning the "big prizes". The stuffed animals (especially the cute turtles) were sought after eagerly. The children’s raffle was also a big hit. Thank you to all the Sangha members who contributed to our raffle.

We appreciate the help of Mrs. Deanna Ormseth, Mrs. Diana Hata, Mrs. Laurie Kobayashi, Joy Ormseth, Jonathan Ogino, and Andy and Tyler Kobayashi. A special thank you to Lauren and Brian Yanase who were very instrumental in setting up the booth and working during the entire Obon. They all did a superb job on a very hot Saturday!

Dharma School also had a display in the gym. It explained the activities of the children during the year and had pictures of various functions. Thank you to Mrs. Laurie Kobayashi for creating the display!

During this Obon season we are reminded of our departed loved ones. We are grateful for their love and guidance and thank them for being our teachers. The concepts of interdependence and impermanence are what our Dharma School will emphasize during the lessons of the summer. We hope you all have a chance to attend other Obon festivities!

Happy Summer and try to stay cool!

Gassho,
Claire Hansen
The Study Class
The Study Class will meet on July 11 and 25 at 10:00 AM. Discussions will be based on selected topics that vary from week to week. The class usually meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month. For more information, please contact Rev. Miyoshi at (213) 219-6140.

Obon & Hatsubon Service
Obon & Hatsubon Service will be held on July 16 at 4:30 PM. Come and join us for this important Service and remain for the complimentary otoki dinner that will follow the service.

Betsuin Obon Festival
The Betsuin Obon will be held on the weekend of July 29-30. WCBT will again be selling our delicious tamales. Sign-up sheets will be at upcoming services so please find a time you can help out in the tamale booth and join in the dancing and festivities at the Betsuin Obon.

Las Vegas Trip
Once again Pasadena Buddhist Temple has invited WCBT members to join their Las Vegas trip on August 4-6. The price of $205 (double occupancy) or $225 (single occupancy) will include bus transportation, driver tips, games and cash prizes on bus trip, 2-nights accommodations at California Club Hotel and Casino and meal coupons (for 2 breakfasts, 2 lunches and 2 dinners that can be used at Cal Club or Main Street). Luggage handling also included.

The bus will depart from Pasadena Buddhist Church on Friday, August 4 at 8:30AM and will stop at ESGVJCC at 9:15AM. On Sunday, the bus will leave the California Hotel promptly at 11:00AM for the return trip. Contact Jeannie Toshima at 562-305-6018 or jeannie_toshima@me.com by July 1 if you are interested in going.

August Schedule
The August board meeting will be held 8:30 AM on July 30. August Shotsuki Service will be held on August 6 at 10:00 AM. We will then take our annual summer break so there are no Sunday Services on August 13, 20 and 27. Services will resume again on September 3.
SHAKYAMUNI, con’t from pg. 1

the previous retreat. Our moderator, Rev. Peter Hata, presented a thorough reappraisal of the material we received from Dr. Michael Conway. Rev. Hata did an excellent job of condensing over 8 hours of lectures into a 2-hour session. The main focus of Dr. Conway’s presentation was the early transformation and awakening of the Buddha. And contrary to popular belief, the emphasis of the teaching of the Buddha was not to calm us or make us feel good. According to Dr. Conway, the teaching of Buddhism is to basically make us feel uncomfortable; to make us look within ourselves to see our own delusions, and to encourage us to see how easily we see faults in others but ignore those same faults within ourselves. I can attest to that in my own personal journey. Looking inside ourselves is difficult and, in my case, very often painful. I’ve learned that it’s almost impossible to see others if I can’t see myself, and that’s hard. Buddhism is not a teaching to change someone else; it’s to change us. That may be why the phrase “Buddhism is a tough sell” was coined by 1st Dharma Seeds Program member (and West Covina Temple President) Johnny Martinez.

Late in the morning session Rev. Hata reviewed the conflict between Siddhartha and Mara the Tempter under the Bodhi tree. The battle for Siddhartha’s mind was fierce and Mara employed his sons and daughters as well as many other weapons to disturb the mind and concentration of Siddhartha, but he remained calm. When Mara faced Siddhartha, he faced not only an adversary, but he faced his own extinction, if defeated. But when Siddhartha faced Mara, he faced himself and saw his own ignorance and ego. In spite of the many attacks he was able to ignore the defilements, deceptions, and temptations employed by Mara to prevent him from completing his meditation and obtaining enlightenment.

During the afternoon session, presented by Rev. Fredrick Brenion, we were asked to consider the concepts of convention and truth. As it was presented to us, we contemplated what is and what is not. And, if that wasn’t enough, we were asked to consider what both is and is not, and what neither is and is not. Needless to say, the session was very challenging and difficult to grasp. But Rev. Brenion was patient, energetic, and very animated in his presentation, which made the material easier to understand.

With a short amount of time remaining before the afternoon service Rev. Brenion opened up the floor to questions and that is when the session became very spirited. One of the Berkeley members expressed concerns about the practice of the reciting the Nembutsu; what it means and what it says about us as Buddhists. Before Rev. Brenion could reply several other members expressed similar concerns and I found myself listening to a passionate discussion of one of the basic tenets of our tradition. Several members and ministers commented on the topic and all made valid points. I can only imagine the Dharma messages that many temple Sangha’s will benefit from as a result of the discussions that afternoon.

Being relatively new to Buddhism as a teaching there are many things that I don’t clearly understand, so it was enlightening to learn that I’m not alone in my confusion about what some of the practices and traditions are about. Not only that, but it was reassuring that no one said that anyone was wrong for expressing the way they felt. That was refreshing because being from a Christian background there were any number of practices that I was told to do and that bad things or negative consequences would certainly occur if I didn’t do as I was told. Buddhism isn’t like that and for that I’m grateful.

午後の部も終わりに近づいた頃、参加者の一人から質問が出ました。それが一気に会場を活発な意見交換の場にしてくれました。それはバークレーからの参加者の念仏に関する疑問でした。浄土真宗の根本が称名念仏であると学んでいるが、はっきり言ってその念仏がわからない、というところでした。すると、私も同じような思いを抱いているという声があちらこちらから上がっていたのです。それから、他の参加者や僧侶がそれぞれの思いを発言してくれました。参加者の意見を非常に興味深く聞きながら、法話を聴聞することを通して得られることができ、こうした形で意見を交換し合い、理解を深めていくことを通して得ることもできただけと感じました。

仏教を学び始めて日の浅い私にとっては、講義の内容全てを理解することはできませんでした。だからこそ、私だけでなく他の参加者も私が抱いたことと同じ疑問をもっているのだ、とわかっていたことは大きな収穫でした。また、各自が思っていないことを自由に表現できること、そして誰もその正誤を批評しないということの素晴らしさを再確認しました。それはキリスト教徒として育てられ、何をすべきかを常にききと示されて、それに従わなければこんな罰が待っている、と思われていた私が到着した。参加者の念仏に関する疑問でした。それはバークレーからの参加者の念仏に関する疑問でした。それはバークレーからの参加者の念仏に関する疑問でした。それから、他の参加者や僧侶がそれぞれの思いを発言してくれました。参加者の意見を非常に興味深く聞きながら、法話を聴聞することを通して得ることもできただけと感じました。
Dear Members and Friends,

The West Covina Buddhist Temple and its Board of Directors cordially invites you to attend the Obon and Hatsubon Service which will be held on Sunday afternoon, July 16, 2017. This is a combined memorial service not only for those members who specifically have lost a loved one in the previous 12 months (Hatsubon means "first Obon service"), but also a universal memorial service for all our loved ones who have passed on.

The schedule for the service is as follows:

Date: Sunday, July 16, 2017
Time: 4:30 PM
Dharma Message: Rev. Frederick Brenion (English)

Associate Minister of North America District

We will be serving Otoki dinner immediately following the service.

The Obon Service is held to remember our ancestors and to celebrate our life and is one of the most important observances of the year. Please join and gather again this year to resolve to deepen our understanding of Buddhism.

Gassho,
Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi, Minister
Mr. John Martinez, President of the Board of Directors
**OBON 2017**

**Obon co-chair**  
Bruce Whang

WOW! We did it! The Sangha of West Covina Buddhist Temple just experienced an epic Obon! On behalf of Merry Hiroshima (Jitosho) and myself, we would like to overwhelmingly give thanks to the various Obon Committee members for an awesome task, well executed! As always, everyone gives 110% + for one day of celebration. This year was well above expectations!

I have to say that on Saturday, the day of Obon, I had some concerns whether or not we would be ready on time. For me, the major tasks were completed; the yagura, lights, and lanterns were in place. A big thanks to the men that came to my rescue, as always. With their assistance, the yagura and lights looked great. Tor Ormseth, Danny Iwama, Mark Yoshihara, Phil Underwood, and Michael Jitosho (Thanks for the dismantling of the yagura and lights!), a big THANK YOU for ALWAYS being there when I need assistance. And Johnny, you are my go to Bro! A personal thanks to my cousin Craig, for coming down and helping me, again, with set up! I’ll try to make it to your Oregon Obon, on the first Saturday in August.

My charge was booths and lighting and whatever else needed to be taken care of. But again, a big thanks to those with booths who set up their own with what they needed. Not only did the booths take care of themselves, but every station took charge of what they needed to do and did it brilliantly. You are all great.

A special acknowledgment to the most experienced members of our Sangha that handled the information booth. Barbara Shirota, Larry Oshima, Ted Hamachi, and Henry Miyashiro. For the duration of the Obon, and before and after, they prepared and directed people to where they wanted to go, prepared for raffle events, and other unnoticeable services that aided in our Obon’s success! Thank you for your efforts and dedication. Others that I would also like to acknowledge for their dedication and unavering support are as follows: Tina Asano for her wonderful support and assistance throughout the event, Jennifer Higa(WCBT), Gail Kusano(OCBC), Pat Kasahara(SFBC) for their graceful dance instruction, George Abe for keeping the rhythm for the many dancers with his taiko drum magic, Richard Hiroshima for documenting our Obon festival with his awesome photography skills, Brittany and Jillian Kato, Allysa Arnheim, Nick Rossenblum, Issac Jacquez, Adolfo Rodriguez, and Yazmín and Stephanie Whang, the young ones who made sure the food orders were delivered expeditiously.

The dedication and effort of each member of the Sangha who participated in Obon is truly exemplary and should be applauded. Everyone knows his or her job and what needs to been done. Do I really need to be there?

As I walked around during Obon, it was very satisfying to see the young to the more mature, smiling and enjoying time with family and friends. I don’t think I even heard one crying child, or adult. Moreover, it was not just temple family members that attended Obon, but people from the community. People visiting with those friends not seen in a while, enjoying the festivities and each other’s company. Some were on the grassy area, others were engaged in bingo and eating excellent food in the social hall. But all seemed to be happy and content.

Obon: The celebration and honoring of those who have come before us, that have helped us to know and develop our ways of thinking and living.

We have done something to be proud of!

To the members and family of the West Covina Buddhist Temple Sangha and volunteers that made our Obon so successful, a heartfelt THANK YOU!

P.S. To our fearless leader, Reverend Miyoshi and Dick and Hisako Koga: Our Obon wouldn’t be the same without you!
Scenes from OBON 2017!
Quote of the Month
It is time for parents to teach young people early on that in diversity there is beauty and there is strength.
-Maya Angelou
釈尊の源泉を尋ねて
（ダルマ・シーズ研修会）
アンダーウッド・フィリップ

6月10日に別院で開会された第2回ダルマ・シーズ研修会に参加してきました。今回のテーマは「大乗仏教歴史概論」でした。先の2月にワークショップで行われた第1回研修会では仕事の都合などで参加できなかった人もいましたが、今回は12名の参加者全員が揃いました。

開会式では正信僧がお勤めされ、ウェストコヴィナからの参加者であるマルティネス・ジョニーと私が調声と音役を勤めさせてもらいました。伊東監督からの挨拶の後、一同は階下に移り日程が始まりました。

午前の部は前回の研修会の復習です。幡ピーター開教使が進行役を務め、前回の講師であるコンウェイ・マイケル氏の講義内容を振り返りました。8時間に及ぶコンウェイ氏の講義を2時間でまとめることは容易なことではありませんが、幡開教使は要点を踏まえていました。「大方が仏教に抱くイメージに反して、仏教は気持ちを穏やかにしたり、癒しを与えてくれる教えではない」とコンウェイ氏は強調しました。むしろ、仏教とは私たちが恋しく聞きたくないことを明らかにする教えである、と。氏は、自身に目を向け、私たちが執着している迷いに目を覚まさせることができる仏教の教えであることを明確にしてくれました。迷いは私たちの目のまわり、その結果相手の間違いははっきりと見えて批判するのに、自分が同じ間違いをしていることに一向に気がつかない、それが私たちの姿です。その姿は自分を正面から向き合うよう促してくれるので仏教であると教えてもらいました。講義を聞きながら改めて私自身の姿勢が問われているような気がしました。自己を見つめるということは言葉でいう以上に難しいことです。私にとってはたいていの場合それは痛みを伴うような経験です。自分を明らかにすることがなければ、人をあまりに見ることとも到底叶わないということを学びました。仏教は他人を変える教えではなく、自らが変わる教えだからです。ダルマ・シーズの第1期生であるジャニー・マルティネス氏の「仏教は“売り込みがとても難しい”」という言葉を思い出すと。

幡開教使はシッダールタとマーラの対決のシーンを紹介してくれました。シッダールタがマーラと対面した時、そこに見えたのは自身の無明性と我執でした。それは本当に対照するべき問題の本質が彼の中で明らかになった瞬間でした。

午後の部はブレニオン・フレデリック開教係の講義を聴講しました。講義では因習と本質の概念について。「釈尊」4頁に続く）
July

2  8:30 am  Board Meeting
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  Obon/Hatsubon Service
23  10:00 am  Sunday Service
25  10:00 am  Study Class
29-30  12-9 pm  Betsuin Obon
30  8:30 am  Board Meeting
30  10:00 am  Sunday Service

August

3  7:30 pm  Howakai Japanese Service
4-6  Las Vegas Trip
6  10:00 am  Shotsuki Service
13  No Sunday Service
20  No Sunday Service
27  No Sunday Service

2017年7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
9日 午前10時 日曜礼拝
16日 午後4時半 お盆／初盆法要
23日 午前10時 日曜礼拝
29-30日 別院お盆フェスティバル
30日 午前8時半 理事会
30日 午前10時 日曜礼拝

8月行事予定

3日 午後7時半 法話会
4-6日 ラスベガス旅行
6日 午前10時 祥月法要
13、20、27日 日曜礼拝休み

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拝まない者も おがまれている
拝まないときも おがまれている
東井義雄