



Wahiawa Hongwanji Mission

FEBRUARY 2014

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Website: www.wahiawashinbuddhists.org

President: Mr. Glenn Hamamura

Minister: Rev. Kojun Hashimoto (emergency calls only— cell # 772-1904)

SAKURA

Starting in mid-March, the internet is flooded with amazing pictures of all varieties of sakura. One of the best known symbols of spring in Japan are the magnificent pink Japanese cherry trees.

One of the earliest cities to blossom is Tokyo – this year its sakura trees are expected to be in full bloom by the end of March.

Depending on the city, Japanese cherry trees may bloom even through May.

As the official Japanese school year starts in April, the first day back at school or work after the holidays usually coincides with the blooming of the sakura.

You will always see many locals picnicking under the cherry trees every season – the tradition is called *hanami*, and dates back to the 8th century!

Because the cherries blossom in bunches, they are symbolically associated with clouds, and stand for ephemeral nature of life in Japanese culture that's highly influenced by Buddhism.

Sakura are often featured in Japanese art, movies, anime and manga.

Even though the sakura is the unofficial national flower of Japan, today they have spread to many other countries as well, mostly due to the Japanese diaspora.

The blooming of the sakura is definitely one of the most beautiful sights every spring wherever you find them!

Each year, the National Cherry Blossom Festival commemorates the 1912 gift of 3,000 cherry trees from Mayor Yukio Ozaki of Tokyo to the city of Washington, DC. The gift and annual celebration honor the



lasting friendship between the United States and Japan and the continued close relationship between the two countries.

Wahiawa Sakura

The sakura in Wahiawa usually bloom in January and part of February, depending on the weather.



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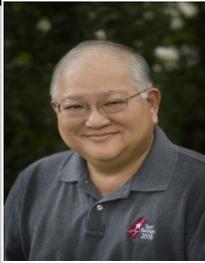
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WHM newsletter is published by friends of the Dharma. Volunteers are welcome to serve on the committee. Please send comments and change of address to WHM office or email at news@wahiawahongwanji.org. Roy Higa, Editor



President's Message

Glenn Hamamura

We are off and running into 2014. February provides an opportunity for all temples to meet at the Giseikai (Legislative Assembly), which has been a key element of the Hongwanji's governance structure for over 100 years. Each temple sends representatives to a 2 day meeting held during the first weekend in February (first full week). There are typically 100 to 150 attendees, each temple gets delegate seats (votes) based on size, and can also send observers. We have found that this is an excellent way to maintain our connections with other temples and ministers, so that we can continue to learn from each other, and to obtain assistance when we need help. The key element of the meeting is the approval of the Hawaii Kyodan budget, which includes funding for operations, salaries for HQ personnel, and projects. I'll provide a summary in next month's column.

As I write this column, the office staff and officers have been busy sending out the memorial service list for 2014, along with the Gojikai dues letter. Gojikai is the membership dues that we ask for annually. This year, we are asking for a minimum of \$150 for the year, as I had discussed in my correspondence last year. Please note that this is a donation (tax deductible) and if there are special situations that would preclude this level of payment, please just contact us through the office, and we can discuss any exceptions. In particular, if our temple member is in a care home, or in long term hospitalization, please let us know, and ask for a consideration on the dues. Some of our families prepaid their 2014 Gojikai in 2013. Thank you. If you get another letter, you don't have to pay twice, of course, we just were not able to adjust the mailing to your specific situation. We will also be sending out the donation summary letters for 2013 by the end of January, and this can be used as documentation for your taxes if you deduct for charitable donations.

Beginning in January, Reverend Hashimoto has been assigned to assist the Waialua Hongwanji, in addition to his responsibilities at Wahiawa. This is due to the impending retirement of Reverend Mary David, the Mililani Hongwanji minister, who also covered Waialua. I know that the Waialua members will enjoy Reverend Hashimoto's support, and this also provides us an opportunity to form a closer collaboration with the members of Waialua. I will be working with the Waialua president in the near future to see if there are opportunities of mutual benefit for both temples. Several members of our temple grew up in Waialua, and ties to that town continue to be close.

Final note – our annual New Year's party is coming up soon – it will be held on Sunday February 16, beginning at 10:30 am at our Social Hall. Please sign up at the office, or call in your reservation (622-4320). There is a small charge for lunch, unless you reached 75 years of age in 2013, are 88 years or older, or joined the temple in 2013. If you fall in one of these 'free' categories, please let the office know when you sign up. For our new members, what I usually tell them is that this is the only chance you will have to get a free lunch until you have reached the age of 75, so don't pass it up. No, we don't give rain checks for new members who joined in 2013 for another year in the future.

Let's have a great 2014. Join us in some of these activities.

In Gassho,

Glenn Hamamura



REVEREND'S MESSAGE

Dharma Talk Theme for this month is Ho-Shi "Service"

What "Gassho" means?

One Buddhist practice is to stand in front of the Buddha in Gassho. Why do we put our hands together to the Buddha?

I read a book written by Akiyoshi Takagi a few days ago. I found the answer in his article. I would like to share his article with you today.

"I feel the ease of the Name through placing my hands together in the Nembutsu.

"The significance of placing one's hands together in Gassho is not for the purpose of praying for something. Rather, since it is to express one's gratitude, it is a way of showing respect towards someone or something.

"Gassho is to express gratitude. This is not a physical act only, but it can also be done with the heart. Normally, I use my hands to hit or slap others and to push them away. I use my mouth to complain, voice my dissatisfaction, and to speak ill of others. Rather than praising others, protecting them, and showing kindness to them, I use my hands and mouth to mostly express unpleasantness towards them.

"However, when I place my hands together in Gassho and intone Namu Amida Butsu, I realize that I am not able to speak ill of others. With my hands in Gassho, I am not able to hit or slap others. In this way, because I am embraced within the working of Namu Amida Butsu, Amida Buddha's aspiration, all of me—my hands, my mouth, my entire body—is protected by Amida.

"I am sometimes asked, 'Will something good happen to me if I recite Namu Amida Butsu?' On those occasions, I asked them, 'What do you mean by something good?'"

"Some have answered that for them 'something good' means that they want to recover from some illness or to have some problem resolved. However, these kinds of things are not benefits or merits in the Buddhist sense.

"The saying of Namu Amida Butsu is not a requirement or condition for something good to occur. Since good things do occur, are they not opportunities to be able to look at them closely and respond by saying the Nembutsu?"

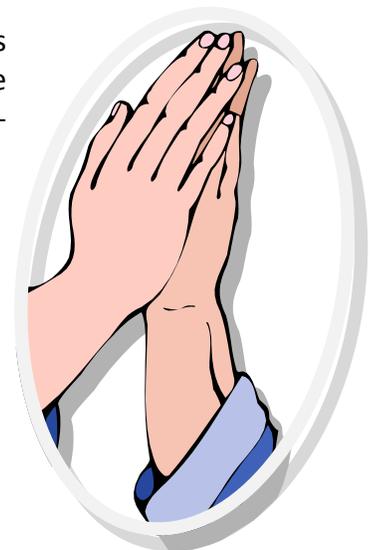
"I prefer to think that my being enabled to intone the Nembutsu as opportunities to feel that I am embraced by Amida. For me, is this not the 'something good'?"

"So, when I put my hands together, I might not get good things. But I can feel relaxed because I do not think anything. I just feel that Amida Buddha embraces me. It is like the mother embraces her baby tenderly."

Through his article, we realize why we put our hands together and even though we cannot see that we are receiving something from Amida Buddha, we can feel that we are receiving by practicing Gassho.

So, let us put our hands together and recite the Nembutsu to feel something good.

Namu Amida Butsu,
In Gassho,
Rev Hashimoto



Buddhist's Thoughts

Promoting Democracy

Adapted from Foreign Policy Association magazine, 2012

It was July 4, 2012 and another beautiful day in paradise. Cheryl was preparing a traditional Independence Day cookout dinner and I thought about democracy and Buddhism.

Like so many things, democracy is taken for granted in the United States. I belong to a discussion group of eight men who, once a month, discuss a controversial topic is discussed. Each volunteered to lead a topic and I chose, "Promoting Democracy."

Since 1974, the number of countries meeting the minimum criteria of democracy has increased from 25% to 60%. What is that minimum criteria? This criteria is "... that all the people of a society can participate in choosing and replacing their leaders in regular, free and fair multiparty elections". It was noted that the Middle East has an exceptionally high preponderance of authoritarian regimes.

Why are democracies so good for our country? Democracies don't fight each other. All threats come from authoritarian regimes like North Korea, Iran, China and Russia. Democracies make better trading partners and are more reliable in adhering to their commitments. Commitments are sustained and grounded by public opinion. It is the foundation for peace and security.

Education and literacy are key elements for any kind of democracy. In order to have a democracy, the public must be well informed to make effective decisions. This implies a relatively literate society. In the Middle East illiteracy is still very high. In many authoritarian countries, education is suppressed. As an example, in Morocco, where women are still very much repressed, illiteracy is at 85%.

How is democracy promoted? Many advanced democratic countries like the United States, provide other countries in need with aid. This aid is first targeted toward basic survival needs like sanitary water access, food, and health. Education is also a big part of this program along with student exchanges to promote better cultural understanding. There is direct governmental funding, however, a big part is played by non-governmental agencies (NGO). Through these agencies like Doctors Without Borders, American Red Cross and Green Peace, funding

and assistance are managed into poorer countries. NGO are generally non-profit and go after government funding but are not run by the government.

What is a key challenge in providing aid to oppressed countries? In 1648 at the end of the Thirty Years War, the Treaty of Westfalia stated that "the territorial integrity of sovereign states...including determining their own policies and structures" cannot be interfered with. This "principle of non-intervention" is the basis for diplomatic relations. Aid can be provided but how it is distributed and used may not necessarily have the intended outcome.

Promoting the U.S point of view may not be as simple as it appears on the surface. When there's a revolution like in Syria, an outside country cannot interfere with what's going on unless asked by the country in question. There is currently a fevered debate about how aid to Syria can be provided. Human rights are being violated and many feel there should be more military intervention. At what point should this occur, as it would be looked upon as an act of war? This is why a United Nations approach is necessary and, it takes time.

After a successful toppling of an authoritarian government, outside countries may be asked to oversee an election but cannot interfere with how a government is set up. So it takes years for a government to be established, free elections set in place, and a people to actually take part.

In 2011 the "Arab Spring" took place starting in Tunisia. Protests sprang up against the authoritarian governments in Libya, Egypt, Bahrain, Syria, and Yemen. With increased communication and world awareness, tolerance for living under a suppressed regime is wearing away. And yet, it won't be so easy to establish a stable government in its place as evidenced even today. The key ingredients are: 1) an educated populace, 2) free elections, 3) stable infrastructure, and 4) opposing parties that are free to dialog and disagree.

The ideal of a democracy is to be able to get many ideas and figure out a way to implement the best ones. So when elections are won by 2-5%, that is a "normal" thing and should be celebrated. I always thought that if people didn't think the way I thought, something was "wrong." In actuality, having the discourse over many ideas and a methodology to argue these ideas is what optimizes a community and society.

Continued on the next page...

Continue from the previous page...

So how much does the United States spend in promoting democracy? The entire state department budget for core diplomacy is about \$59B or 1.56% of the federal budget*. Foreign aid to countries promoting education, healthcare, and food aid totals a whopping \$2 billion! By comparison, the military budget request for 2013 is \$672.9 billion or 17.7%. Isn't it interesting how our priorities are aligned? We have a long way to go in helping to balance the way of life for all peoples in the world.

In reflection, this is exactly what Shakyamuni Buddha taught 2500 years ago. The Four Noble Truths about life is fundamentally about facing reality and dealing with it through the Eight fold Path. The Eight fold path are principles for good living: wholesome view, wholesome thought,

wholesome speech, wholesome conduct, wholesome livelihood, wholesome endeavor, wholesome mindfulness, and wholesome meditation.

So when election time comes around and you are disgusted with the political ads, take a hard look at what is being said and then VOTE what you think is right. If you don't vote, only a small minority actually get what they want and everyone else loses. Be grateful that the United States is the "grand experiment" in democracy...it is still less than 250 years old.

In Gassho,
Rod Moriyama

*http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2013_United_States_federal_budget



Sunday February 16, beginning at 10:30 am at our Social Hall.
Please sign up at the office, or call in your reservation (622-4320).
There is a small charge for lunch, unless you reached 75 years of age in 2013, are 88 years or older, or joined the temple in 2013.

WANTED! A FEW GOOD ...
Volunteers (men and women) to assist the BWA with light cleaning of the Columbarium on Wednesdays and the temple on Saturdays, starting at 8:00 am. Come and enjoy the light exercise, fellowship and refreshments.
Please contact the temple office at phone 622-4320.



BWA MONTHLY BRIEFS

The BWA held its recent monthly meeting and annual installation of officers on Jan. 12, 2014, at the Wahiawa Botanical Garden, followed by a continental breakfast.

Highlights:

Dharma Shaka . . . This year the BWA voted to support the Dharma Shaka, as well as the JR YBA and Dharma School. This newly formed family program is for parents and their children and is open to all temple families.

Martin Luther King Parade Some of WHM BWA's younger members and their children will represent Wahiawa in the MLK Parade in Waikiki on Monday, Jan. 20, 2014. The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Coalition Hawaii promotes this as a "day of national and community service, time to reflect on principles of interracial cooperation, equality and social change through nonviolent resolution of conflict, dedication to global peace, and social justice...." This is a message of interdependence that is also a foundation of Shin Buddhism. The Hongwanji slogan for this year: "Path of Entrusting. . . .Share Peace," makes this a perfect opportunity for us to walk the path of peace with other organizations in our community. Federation President, Janet Honda is encouraging all members of all units to participate. Bishop Matsumoto and his family as well as our own minister, Takako and their children will be among those walking, .

BWA New Year Party Vote was taken to have this year's NY Party at the Pacific Beach Hotel on Saturday, March 1, 2014. Transportation by Robert's Hawaii is being arranged by Aaron Kimura, son of BWA member, Margaret Kimura. Members who have not yet signed up are encouraged to call the temple office immediately, as reservations are being taken on a first come/first serve basis. Leave your name and phone number, and a member of the planning committee will return your call. Office hours are 8-12pm, M-F. Please don't be left out! Pick up that phone and plan to join us for a great brunch and a wonderful day in Waikiki. Last day to sign up is Friday, Feb. 7, 2014, provided space is still available.

Get-Acquainted Dinner A real fun time was enjoyed by all who attended an informal dinner at Dot's Restaurant on Friday, Jan. 17, 2014 evidenced by the laughter, chatter and extreme noise level! The purpose was so our senior and junior members could get to know one another better, and that they did! They found out that many of our members knew Jackie's

mother, and there are teachers among our senior group, who taught several of our junior members in school. The juniors also found out, much to their surprise, that the senior members are not as "quiet and innocent" as was assumed! It sometimes got a little "risqué" during the course of the night! Requests were made for more of these "Girl's Night- Out" outings in the future, perhaps even one with spouses.

New BWA Member We have a new member, Joanne Parker. Joanne is the daughter of former BWA member, Jean Shimaura. Welcome, Joanne!

Correction Oops! An error was made! Newly elected Corresponding Secretary for 2014 is Karen Pang. Assistant Corresponding Secretary is Ethel Nakagawa. Unit Directors are: Barbara Higa, Patsy Kaya and Doris Matsooka.

Next Meeting Date The next WHM BWA meeting will be on Sunday, Feb. 9, 2014. (Anyone who has still not paid yearly dues should send in their \$15 check to: WHM/BWA, Attn: Louise, ASAP!)

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Dharma Shaka The new name for our family/youth group, originally known as the Ohana Project. Lana Bender and family will serve as the first Chair Family; with Caitlin Ohashi and family keeping minutes; Amy Kanemaru and family keeping track of finances; and Char Acohido and family planning the programs. Rev. Kojun and Takako Hashimoto and family will serve as advisors. Their first undertaking will be a "Get-Acquainted BBQ Cook-Out," scheduled for Sunday, Feb. 2, 2014, from 10am to 1pm at the temple. All temple families interested in joining can call the temple office and leave their name and telephone number. The requirement is for parent/child participation, as the goal is to have families learn, grow and walk together, "*the Buddhist way.*"

Takedaiko Class officially started last Sunday. All members, including children and adults, made their own "bachi," with the generous help of Richard Nakasone, Richard Fujimoto and Carl Nagatori. If you are interested in joining the class, please call the temple office and leave your name and phone number. Tuition is \$50.00 for 10 classes, and classes are held every Sunday. Last class for this session will be on March 16, with a new class starting on March 23. Class times vary, depending on temple schedule of activities for Sunday. Interested parties can pick up the current class schedule from the office.

TEMPLE NEWS

Different Perspectives Under One Buddha

We were fortunate to have the opportunity to listen at our services to Dharma speakers outside of our Nishi Hongwanji focus. They brought in fresh ideas that stimulated our thinking of the Dharma.

On December 15 at our Bodhi Day service was Rev. Shuji Komagata from the Aiea Taiheiji Soto Mission. His name is familiar to us because he is a Wahiawa boy since his father was the minister at the Ryusenji Soto Mission down the street. As a youngster he was immersed in the teachings and trainings of the Soto Zen school

He felt it was important to have Zen thoughts in our daily lives. For example, devote yourself to one thing like physical or mental well being. Focus on getting up, washing your face, drinking tea or even meeting people. Your whole mind, body, and spirit is devoted to each step in completing that task. Not just going through the motions.

Daruma, the Bodhidharma who built Buddhist temples in China, asked the emperor, "How many merits have I earned?" The emperor replied, "No merits at all." When we do things in our lives, we shouldn't have pre-set merits. Kind deeds to someone else should be foremost in our minds. When we help others, we are liberated from frustration and suffering. All the work and effort paid off. We are all on this journey together to become liberated.

On the other hand, at our Ho'onko service on January 19 was Rev. Hiroko Maeda from Kaneohe Higashi Hongwanji. She shared her struggles with Buddhism that were the complete opposite of Rev. Komagata's experience. Many of us share the view that children born into temple families will automatically become ministers like their parents.

Rev. Maeda did not understand what went on at the temple in Japan during special services and did not care for the temple and its activities. Therefore, the religion, Buddhism, and funerals had no meaning. After high school she ran away to college to distance herself from the temple.

Her experiences in Hawaii led her to have a deeper understanding of Buddhism when she attended a convention on the Big Island. She was fortunate to meet Rev. Fujimori from Kauai Higashi Hongwanji who had a passion for Buddhism. At the convention she found out how wrong her prejudices about Buddhism and the temple were and

found a new, wide world.

Rev. Maeda explained that our way of living this life is like a pair of scissors. When we encounter difficult situations or people, we should use our "invisible" scissors to cut off these relationships. Instead encourage yourself to meet new people. She found that Rev. Fujimori was living the Teachings.

In Japan the chanting had no meaning for her but at this convention all the participants from Hawaii, the mainland, Canada, and Brazil chanted in one voice—that broke down her prejudices.

This profound encounter changed her life. She returned to Japan to study Shin Buddhism and the meaning of life. She continues to study in Hawaii and encourages us to face our true self through the Nembutsu Teachings.

Truly two different perspectives, and yet, both encourage us to seek the Dharma as we travel on this path of the Nembutsu - the Path of Entrusting.

Sangha Day - "Plantation Days"

Oahu Hongwanji Council will be celebrating Sangha Day and the 125th Anniversary of Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii with the theme - "Plantation Days" at Waipahu Hongwanji on March 2. Relive yesteryear by attending Session A with Barbara Kawakami, author of *Immigrant Clothing*, who will share her vast knowledge of plantation life. In Session B the students will be able to make two plantation toys and learn how to play with bean bags.

A special \$6.00 custom made bento of plantation food will be served at lunch and at the same time you will have the opportunity to participate in "mochitsuki" or making mochi like in the old days.

Sign-up at the temple clipboard or call the temple office between 8:00 - 12:00 to put your name in. Come and join in the celebration!

Dharma News

February 2 - Dharma Sunday with May Kanemaru as the MC.

February 9 - 16-23- Dharma School

St. Stephen's Food Collection

Thank you for your generous donations to the Food Pantry, especially at this time of the year. Please turn in your canned goods on February 2, Dharma Sunday, for the St. Stephen's Food Pantry. Let's work together to help the people in the Wahiawa community. A person's or family's day will certainly be brightened with your contributions. Remember, peace begins with YOU.

<i>Temple Donations (Memorial Services)</i>	<i>Temple Donations (Memorial Services)</i>
Hirofumi Akahoshi	Family of Haruyo Nakamura
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Kenneth Munetake Family
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Family of Matsuko Muranaka
Carol Mutter
Frances Nagaki
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<i>Gojkai Dues (2014)</i>
Lorna Evans
Alice Hiroe

<i>Ho'onko Service</i>
Helen Kanbara
Linda Yoshikami

<i>Columbarium</i>	<i>In Memory Of</i>
Donald Hashimoto	Kazuei, Masayo & Betty Hashimoto
Alice Hiroe	
Robert Kiyuna	Yutaka and Fusayo Nakatsukasa
Betsy Miyamoto	
Osaisen	
Edna Saifuku	Matsuno Teranishi
Edward Sakima	
Yukie Tsujimura	Keiso Tsujimura

Acknowledgements

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Katherine Fujikawa
Lillian K. Doi, Trustee
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Dennis Shiroma
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Neal Tomita	
Peggy Tsukida	Hichiro Tsukida
Tsukiji Hongwanji	
Wahiawa Lions Club	
Linda Yoshikami	Kelly Yoshikami

February 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
<p>2 Super Bowl / Groundhog Day</p> <p>9a-10a Sunday Service</p> <p>10a-1p Dharma Shaka BBQ (WHM Social Hall)</p> <p>10a-11a Sangha Strummers (BWA RM)</p> <p>2p-3p Take Daiko (WHM Social Hall)</p>	3	4	5	6	7	8
<p>9 9a-10a Sunday Service</p> <p>10a-12p BWA Meeting (Fujinkai/BWA Room)</p> <p>12p-2p BWA District Lucheon Meeting (WHM Social Hall)</p> <p>3p-4p Take Daiko (WHM Social Hall)</p>	10	11	12	13	14	15
<p>16 9a-10a Sunday Service</p> <p>10:30a-1p New Year's Party (Social Hall)</p> <p>3p-4p Take Daiko (WHM Social Hall)</p>	17 Presidents' Day	18	19	20	21	22
<p>23 9a-10a Sunday Service</p> <p>10a-11a Sangha Strummers (BWA RM)</p> <p>10:30a-12p WHM Board Meeting</p> <p>4p-5p Take Daiko (WHM Social Hall)</p>	24	25	26	27	28	Notes:

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RECOGNIZING A STROKE

Sometimes symptoms of a stroke are difficult to identify.
Unfortunately, the lack of awareness spells disaster. The stroke victim may suffer severe brain damage when people nearby fail to recognize the symptoms of a stroke .

Now doctors say a bystander can recognize a stroke by asking three simple questions:
S - Ask the individual to SMILE.
T - Ask the person to TALK and SPEAK A SIMPLE SENTENCE (Coherently - i.e. It is sunny out today)
R - Ask him or her to RAISE BOTH ARMS.

New Sign of a Stroke ----- Stick out Your Tongue

NOTE:
Another 'sign' of a stroke is this: Ask the person to 'stick' out his tongue.. If the tongue is 'crooked', if it goes to one side or the other that is also an indication of a stroke. If he or she has trouble with ANY ONE of these tasks, call 911 immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher.
