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HIGASHI HONGWANJI HAWAII BETSUIN BULLETIN

February 2015
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HIGASHI HONGWANJI MISSION OF HAWAII

At Higashi Hongwanji, we remain true to our origins as an open Sangha, welcoming anyone who wishes to learn more about the Jodo Shinshu tradition of Buddhism.

A registered 501(c)3 organization

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Editor: Ken Saiki

ON NIRVANA DAY

Rinban Kenjun Kawawata

February 15 is Nirvana Day, the day Buddha died. Therefore let's reflect on Gautama Buddha's life and his teachings that affect our lives.

When we hear about the Buddha, we think that he was not like us, as if he were some kind of superhuman or even a divine power. But we should not forget, he was a human being, the same as we are.



Rinban Kenjun Kawawata

Gautama Buddha was born a human being and died a human being. He was a son of the king and queen of the Shakya clan, and as a prince he had a beautiful wife and child. He had human sufferings and blind passions just as we have. He had everything in life: power, money and whatever he wished.

But he was always thinking about sufferings of sentient beings and how he could get away from the sufferings, and have peace of mind. He thought he couldn't have peace of mind by materialistic things or money or his status as the prince. When he was 29 years old he left his palace home and for six years sought to transcend all human sufferings. He visited the hermits who taught ascetic practices to learn methods of attainment, but he could not attain the state of mind that he was seeking. At that time in India people thought that ascetic practices could make them have pure minds and pure spirits that is called Nirvana.

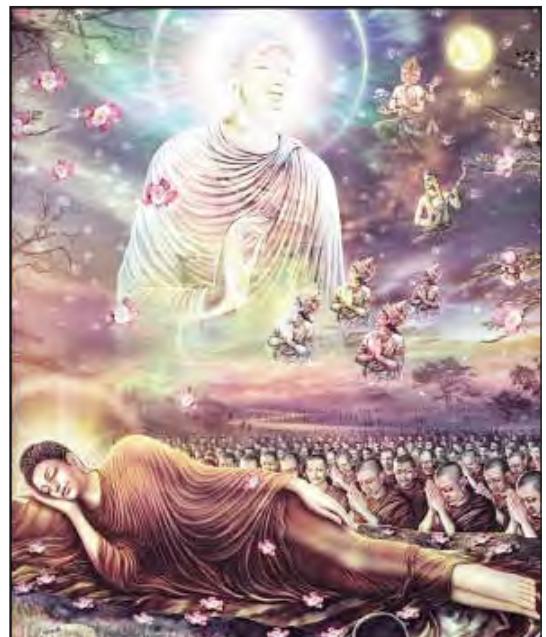
Finally he gave up the ascetic practices. He washed his body and went under the big Bodhi tree for meditation. He thought he would have to reconsider his way to attain peace of mind. It's said that in the early morning on December 8, when he saw a morning star, at last he became the awakened one at 35 years of age. After his awakening, he continued to spread the dharma for another 45 years.

When Gautama Buddha was 80 years old, he realized that he didn't have much longer to live. So he left Rajagriha for Kapilavastu, where he was raised.

This was his last journey. On the way to Kapilavastu, he stayed at a place called Kushinagara, and he received offerings of food from Chunda, a blacksmith. But in the food there was a poisonous mushroom. Only the Buddha got sickened by the tainted food and lay down under the Sal tree. It is said that the cause of his death was old age and food poisoning.

Buddha knew that the cause of his illness was the food that Chunda offered. He also knew that he would die very soon. So before he died, he told his disciples not to accuse Chunda of any wrongdoing. His offering was

(cont'd on p. 2)



NIRVANA DAY (cont'd from p. 1)

from his pure mind and it was right conduct. He said, "Don't look at only the results of the event." His attitude for offering to the Buddha was a beautiful deed. "Don't accuse him."

He gave his last message to Ananda and his followers, then passed away. So in our daily lives, we should always think of what are the best and right deeds and try to act with right conduct without thinking of the result.

In the last Sermon of the Buddha, he said, "Make Dharma as a light for your life and make yourself as a light

for your life; don't depend on anything else." He told Ananda that our world is constantly changing.

Our life is like walking in a dark night. You need a flashlight. We can just depend on own feet and the light of the Dharma. Our world, including our lives, is constantly changing and moving. We cannot imagine what will happen in the next moment. That's why we should continuously make an effort to listen to the Buddha's teaching and have a deep understanding of the truth and self.

Thank you in gassho.
Kenjun Kawawata

Little Differences: U.S. & Japan - Pets

Questions from the Higashi Hongwanji Hawaii District 2015 calendar for February focus on what our pets can tell us about ourselves. Who knows...pets may even be able to give us insight into how a nation as a whole thinks and acts.

Here in the U.S., pets have been part of the family for a long time. More than one in three American homes have a dog, cat or pet animal of some kind.

Japan, on the other hand, with its crowded conditions, hasn't been such a pet-friendly country until recently. In the past 10 years, however, Japan has experienced a pet boom, with more than a 20% increase in pet ownership, so that now nearly one-fourth of Japanese households have a pet.

With Japan's declining birthrate and aging population, an increasing number of households are without children, only pets. In fact, pets now outnumber kids under 16. For companionship, many Japanese claim they prefer pets over having children.

Whereas in the old days pets in Japan all had names like "Pochi" and "Tama," nowadays the most popular are human names, such as "Momo" and "John." Pets are now



Designer pet clothing can be found at many pet stores, such as this Godpiva line of dogwear. Godpiva is "A VIP dog" spelled backwards.

also taking on an increasingly important role in day-to-day life, helping the disabled, comforting hospital patients and as companions for the elderly.

Some pet owners, without children to cater to, will pamper their pets instead. Many restaurants allow pets to sit at the table with the rest of the family.

Foreigners visiting Japan are often surprised to see the wide range of accessories, especially clothing, sold in Japanese pet stores. Some lucky dogs are rumored to have their own clothes closets with designer outfits.

But pet owners are still in the minority. Leave it to the Japanese, though, to develop ways to help create harmony between pet lovers and non-owners in their crowded environment. Many new residential condos now feature elevators with a special PET (ペット) button. When pressed, the elevator will bypass all floors until it reaches its destination to avoid stopping at floors with small children and others who may be afraid of or allergic to animals, or those who are wary about animal-borne illnesses. When in "PET mode," the elevator also will run from 10 to 20 percent more slowly to minimize pet stress.

To let others know why an elevator passed them by, a PET ON BOARD (ペット同乗中です) message lights up on all floors. Cheaters who might be tempted to use the "pet express" without an actual pet in tow would quickly be outed by neighbors and no doubt be on the receiving end of the Japanese version of the "stink eye."

— Ken Saiki



PET buttons in elevators help keep the peace between pet lovers and others.

News on the *Betsuin Wireless*



The wide entree selection at the buffet table was a highlight of last year's New Year party.

Shinnenkai promises gala event packed with prizes and surprises

What are you doing on Sunday morning, February 22? Some of you may say you're going to church, some maybe watch Korean dramas, but how about going to a party?

Come to our annual *shinnenkai*, or New Year Party! Something different gets you out of the house, and maybe you can even win something useful.

If Robert Okazaki lived in Hawaii instead of California, he would be first in line playing games with us. If Rev. Ryo Masuda lived in Hawaii and not in Kyoto, he would be getting another plate of desserts, some made by Miki Kishida.

Our New Year gala is jam-packed with prizes, ono food to get you ready for the fun games and surprise entertainment. This year we'll see the first appearance of the Pupule Papayas, who'll wow you with eye-popping, unbelievable moves on stage.

Before the party begins, there'll be a short General Membership Meeting to take care of some business, such as election of board officers. The meeting starts at 11 am in the Otani Center, right after our 10 am Sunday service, which we hope you'll attend also.

Let us know if you're coming, so we can plan ahead. Also call us if you can help on our committee, or if you have prizes to donate. See p. 4 for additional information.

Japan smash hit *Thermae Romae* is February movie of the month

The story follows ancient Roman architect named Lucius (Hirosi Abe), who's having trouble coming up with ideas. One day, he accidentally slips through time that leads him to a modern-day public bath in Japan. Inspired by the innovations found there, he returns to ancient Rome and creates his own spa, bringing the modern ideas to his time.

The hilarious *Thermae Romae* was an instant box-office hit, earning Abe a Best Actor award in the Japan Academy Awards and becoming Japan's 2nd highest-grossing film in 2012. Also features popular actress Aya Ueto.

Showtime: 6:30 pm, Tues., Feb. 24, 108 min. Japanese audio with English subtitles. Free admission.



テルマエ・ロマエ

古代ローマの浴場設計技師ルシウス（阿部寛）は、生真面目すぎる性格から時代の変化についていけず、職を失ってしまう。落ち込んだ彼は、友人に誘われて公衆浴場を訪れるが、そこで突然、現代日本の銭湯にタイムスリップしてしまう。そこで出会ったのは、漫画家志望の真実（上戸彩）たち“平たい顔族”、つまり日本人だった。日本の風呂文化に衝撃を受けたルシウスは古代ローマに戻ると、そのアイデアを利用して大きな話題を呼ぶ。タイムスリップを繰り返すルシウスは、ローマで浴場技師としての名声を得ていくのだが……。風呂を愛する2つの民族が時空を超えて出会った時、世界の歴史が大きく動き出す。

受賞：第67回毎日映画コンクール TSUTAYA映画ファン賞日本映画部門を受賞、第36回日本アカデミー賞最優秀主演男優賞（阿部寛）。

言語：日本語、字幕：英語、映時間：108分、2月24日(火)午後6:30時、入場無料。

Mahalo for your member dues

Thank you to families who have already taken care of renewing their annual gojikai membership dues.

Timely submission of annual dues supports our temple activities such as our weekly Sunday services, study classes, community outreach programs and other services, and helps sustain them into the future.

For those who have not sent their \$75 annual membership dues yet, we would appreciate your continued support at your earliest convenience. Payment of annual gojikai dues also allows you to maintain a niche in our columbarium.

If you're not a member yet, please consider joining. Your membership will help us continue our mission to serve the local community as we have for the past 99 years, and counting!

Join in the calendar discussion

As you may know, the Higashi Hongwanji Hawaii District calendar for 2015 contains weekly questions to help you learn more about yourself.

Our hope is that you will share answers with family and friends, and on our District website at hhbt-hi.org.

While “taking up karaoke” and “hiking Mt. Fuji” were among answers posted on the website for “things to accomplish this year,” a common one was to “smile more.”

As Yoko Ono once famously said, “Smile in the mirror. Do that every morning and you’ll start to see a big difference in your life.”

Another quote: “A smile is the light in your window that tells others that there is a caring, sharing person inside.”

Smile!

Akemashite Ome-e-e deto Gozaimasu!

Happy New Year!

You're invited to attend our annual General Membership Meeting and Shinnenkai (New Year Party) on Sunday, February 22!



Higashi Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

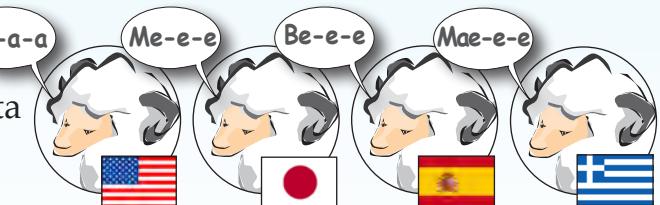
1685 Alaneo St. (corner N. Kuakini St.)

Sunday, February 22, 2015

Sunday Service

Hondo (Main Hall), starting at 10:00 am

Dharma message: Rinban Kenjun Kawawata



General Membership Meeting

Otani Center, starting at 11:00 am

Agenda includes year-end reports, election of board of directors and a look ahead to the coming year, as well as our Betsuin centennial & Goenki observance in 2016.

Shinnenkai (New Year Party) celebrating the Year of the Sheep

Otani Center, starting at 11:30 am

Sumptuous catered buffet, followed by entertainment (including world debut of the *Pupule Papayas*), fun games, exciting door prizes and special gift for our members age 80+. \$10 per person lunch fee, payable at the door.

If you'd like to join in the fun, please call us at the Betsuin at 531-9088 and let us know how many of you are planning to attend, the number of adults and children, and ages of the children. If more convenient you may email the information to betsuin@hhbt-hi.org or tell us the next time you visit the temple.

QUESTIONS? CALL 531-9088. HOPE TO SEE YOU AT THE PARTY!



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In this issue of WA...

- **Nirvana Day** p. 1
- **Little Differences: U.S. & Japan** p. 2
- **News on the Betsuin Wireless** p. 3
- **February movie** p. 3
- **Gojikai dues** p. 3
- **General Membership Meeting and New Year Party** p. 4
- **Acknowledgments** p. 5
- **Shotsuki listing for February** p. 5
- **Temple activities calendar** p. 6

TEMPLE ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

FEBRUARY 2015

2/1	Sun	10 am	Shōtsuki memorial service & Sunday school
2/8	Sun	10 am	Nirvana Day service
2/8	Sun	12 pm	Basic Buddhism study class 現代語で仏教を聞こう led by Rinban Kawawata in Japanese Fukuhara Conference Room
2/10	Tue	3 pm	Ukulele class/band practice
2/12	Thu	7 pm	ABCs of Buddhism study class led by Rinban Kawawata in English Fukuhara Conference Room
2/14	Sat	10 am	What on Earth Is Namuamidabutsu? led by Rev. Frank Childs
2/15	Sun	10 am	Sunday service
2/15	Sun	12 pm	Betsuin board meeting
2/17	Tue	7 pm	O-kō: Dharma discussion at Betsuin
2/22	Sun	10 am	Sunday service
2/22	Sun	11 am	General membership meeting & Shinnenkai (New Year's party) Otani Center
2/24	Tue	3 pm	Ukulele class/band practice
2/24	Tue	6:30 pm	Movie night: Thermae Romae
2/28	Wed	10 am	Shinran Shōnin memorial service

MARCH 2015

3/1	Sun	10 am	Shōtsuki memorial service & Sunday school
3/1	Sun	12 pm	Jimmy's Auto Basics led by Jimmy Hirakawa
3/8	Thu	7 pm	Sunday service
3/8	Sun	12 pm	Basic Buddhism study class 現代語で仏教を聞こう led by Rinban Kawawata in Japanese Fukuhara Conference Room
3/10	Tue	3 pm	Ukulele class/band practice
3/12	Thu	7 pm	ABCs of Buddhism study class led by Rinban Kawawata in English Fukuhara Conference Room
3/14	Sat	10 am	What on Earth Is Namuamidabutsu? led by Rev. Frank Childs Fukuhara Conference Room
3/15	Sun	10 am	Spring Ohigan service
3/15	Sun	12 pm	Betsuin board meeting
3/17	Tue	7 pm	O-kō: Dharma discussion at Kaneohe
3/22	Sun	10 am	Sunday service
3/24	Tue	3 pm	Ukulele class/band practice
3/24	Tue	6:30 pm	Movie night
3/28	Wed	10 am	Shinran Shōnin memorial service

Everyone is welcome to join in on our sutra chanting at 7 am daily (except Sundays & 28th day of the month) in the Betsuin Main Hall.