



LAST MONTH'S EVENTS

SPRING HIGAN SERVICE



Rev. Ai Hironaka, Rev. Blayne Higa

Officiant: Rev. Ai Hironaka
Emcee: Carol Inaba
Organist: Alyce Yoshino
Guest Speaker:
Rev. Blayne Higa

The guest speaker was introduced with an impressive list of 'credits':

- Director, Development of Community Relations at Pacific Buddhist Academy
- Assistant Chaplain, Pacific Buddhist Academy
- Master's degree in Public Administration, as well as a degree in Urban and Regional Planning
- Bachelor of Arts, Willamette University
- President, Moiliili Hongwanji
- Chairman, Hawaii Kyodan Social Concerns Committee
- Advisory Council, Police Department

HIGHLIGHTS of Rev. Higa's dharma message:

- His bumpy ride (due to weather) to Kapalua Airport made him recall that he was being sustained by something other than himself – like the "other power".
- Account of what started him on his "journey to receive Tokudo".
 - "3 to 4 years ago my stepfather was diagnosed with cancer. My mother was the primary caregiver. As I watched my mother go through the motions of caregiver, I observed that there was great love. It was real – that perfect sacrifice for someone else. I was blown away by that love."
- Rev. Higa's impressions of his Tokudo experience:
 - "like Buddhist boot camp"
 - "highly structured. No contact with outside world for 11 days."
 - "learn to embrace the experience of the present"
 - Mention of concept, "ondobyo ondogyo" [additional information from Internet: "The Shinshu phrase ondobyo ondogyo is used here (referring to written passage on that website) to mean 'fellow travelers' and described Shinran's explanation that he was 'neither monk nor lay person'. This revolutionized Buddhism around the world after that (13th Century)."]

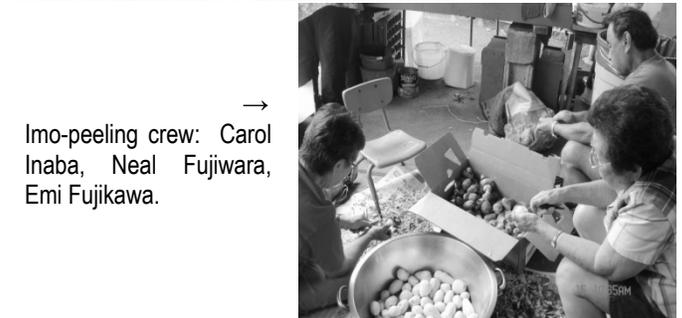
SPRING BAZAAR

Yes, fundraisers take a lot of planning, purchasing, preparation, perseverance, and people power! Somehow, we were fortunate to have it all again. People power is the most important aspect, and we are always so grateful for all the kokua from members, families, and friends.



← Imo digging crew at Mr. Nakamura's garden in Kahana: Kent Nishijima, Carol Inaba, Mr. Nakamura, Sharon Nohara.

[cameraman – 'Noosh' Nishihara]



→ Imo-peeling crew: Carol Inaba, Neal Fujiwara, Emi Fujikawa.



← Green Onion crew: In foreground, Sue Arakawa & Doris Fujii. In background, Toshiko Watanabe, Alice Imano, Vivian Ichiki.



→ Konbu-knotting duo: Vivian Ichiki, Karen Zaan

The photographer was also on work crews, so some photo opportunities were missed. However, all labor was duly observed and definitely appreciated !! MAHALO to all.

More **BAZAAR PHOTOS**



←
Daikon-slicers: front to back, Fumie Shinyama, Doris Fujii, Alice Imano, Jane Agawa.



→
Nishime Chefs: 'Herbie' Nishijima and Neal Fujiwara



←
Nishime Packers: Front to Back on left, Megumi Hironaka, Violet Nishijima, Carol Inaba, Alice Imano. Front to Back on right, Shirley Tobita, Phyllis Ross



→
Chow Fun crew: L to R, Wayne Kusunoki, Clifton Akiyama, Donald Fujii. (not pictured: Tom Fujita, Garrett Goo, Donald Terada)



One Paddle, Two Paddle Sensei - Rev. Ai Hironaka

BAZAAR, continued ...



←
Chow Fun Movers and Shakers: L to R, Noreen Fujiwara, Tara Otomo, Barbie Otomo, Garrett Goo, Tom Fujita.



→
Teri Beef and Hot Dog Grillers: Randy Arakawa and Shane Agawa



←
Teri-Beef Grill Team: 'Sen' Fujiwara, Mike Arakawa

[Not pictured: Master Slicer, Richard Arase]



→
Chicken Katsu Fry Guys: Terry Aoki and Randall Morikawa



←
Bento Packers: On left, Sharon Nohara, James Nishimoto, Sakae Kawaguchi. Front right,



→
Specialty Spam Chef: Ken Tobita

Last but not least, **BAZAAR**



←
Homemade Guri Guri Girl:
Koko-chan

Guri-Guri made by
Megumi Hironaka.

→
RUMMAGE ! One
man's toss-outs make
another's retro décor.

Crew: Aileen Cockett,
Sylvia Neizman, Faith
Corales, Denise
Fleetham.



← SALES !!
Crew: Milton Nohara, Pat
Endsley, Elsie
Shimomura, Vivian Ichiki,
Yaeko Kawamura, Dawn
Fujiwara, and Derrick
Fujiwara

Missed photo ops: CRAFTS and
BAKED GOODS. Crafts Crew: Emi
Fujikawa, Carol Inaba. Baked Goods,
etc.: Merle Fujiwara, Charlene Ideta,
Jane Agawa PLANTS: Irene
Kosaka, Corrine Serrano

Thanks To Volunteers [from Internet]

Give thanks today for Volunteers
Hoots and hollers, claps and cheers !
Your time, your talent, you share it all
All we have to do is call !
Your mind is open, you have a big heart
You always pitch in to do your part !
How you find the time, we'll never know
Your dedication truly shows !
It's amazing all the work you do
You're caring people through and through !



UPCOMING EVENTS



First Wednesday Movie Nite
APRIL 3RD – (time)
(place)

Showing: LIFE OF PI

*About: A young man survives a disaster at sea and is
hurtled into an epic journey of adventure and discovery.
While cast away, he forms an unexpected connection
with another survivor: a fearsome Bengal tiger.*

HANAMATSURI

Sunday, April 14, 2013
Lahaina Hongwanji
9:30 am

Guest Speaker:
Dr. George Tanabe



Maui United Buddhist Women's Association
Spring Hospital Visits / General Assembly / Luncheon

Date: Time:
DANI'S



MINI-ODORI
(Bon Dance Practice)
4/20/13 & 5/18/13
7:00-10:00 pm
Kahului Community Ctr.
Annex





NEWS FROM RELATED LINKS

Honpa Hongwanji Mission

HEADQUARTERS UPDATE – March, 2013

UH Hilo Distinguished Alumni Award Given to Bishop Eric Matsumoto The University of Hawaii, Hilo honored Bishop Eric Matsumoto, Dr. Larry Kimura and Ms. Valerie Takata as Distinguished Alumni. The presentations occurred at an Awards Banquet held on February 22nd at the UH Hilo Student Center Dining Room.

Hawaii District Holds GathaFest

- February 24, 2013 at Kona Hongwanji
- Attended by approximately 200 Sangha members from Hawaii Island temples.
- GathaFest Theme: “Change in Style” “Participants were encouraged to get creative with their song selections and/or instruments, or they could choose traditional gathas.”
- Examples of “changes”:
 - Honokaa: Dharma Band performed 2 numbers accompanied by keyboard and guitar.
 - Hilo Betsuin: Two original gathas written and composed by BJ Soriano, accompanied by ukulele.
 - Kona Hongwanji / United Jr. YBA Gathas with “Buddhistic” words re-written by Daren Katayama, to familiar tunes such as “Beautiful Sunday” and “Lean On Me”.
 - Gatha sung by all attendees “Everybody Was Sutra Chanting” – adapted from “Everybody Was Kung-Fu Fighting” by Daren Katayama.

Kahuku Hongwanji Mission Closed Its Door

Members and friends of Kahuku Hongwanji (Minister: Rev. Kojun Hashimoto) gathered at the temple to observe its closing service on December 31, 2012. “For many years the Kahuku Hongwanji Mission provided spiritual comfort and consolation to the Japanese workers at the Kahuku Plantation. The Hongwanji Mission was established in Kahuku with ministers from Betsuin traveling to Kahuku. Due to the fervent desire, a decision to build a temple was made in October 1901. Construction was completed in July 1902. The closing of Kahuku Hongwanji Mission was formally approved at this year’s Giseikai.”

Sadako Crane Exhibit Update

- An actual crane/tsuru folded by Sadako Sasaki (Hiroshima) has been donated to Hawaii by her family. *[from Internet website: “Sadako Sasaki was born on January 7, 1943, and her short life was over on October 25, 1955. When she was only two years old, the atomic bomb was dropped by the United States on Japan. Sadako lived near Misasa Bridge in Hiroshima where the bomb was dropped on August 6, 1945. She was unfortunately a victim of the bomb, but at the age of two, this was not known.” Facts from website:*
 - *Sadako was hospitalized on February 21, 1955. She had leukemia as a result of the atomic bomb.*
 - *Her best friend, Chizuko Hamamota, visited Sadako in the hospital. She made a paper crane by folding a piece of golden paper – telling Sadako about the Japanese belief that the folding of 1,000 cranes could have a wish granted. Sadako began folding cranes but was only able to complete 644 before she died. Sadako’s friends finished the remainder of the cranes which were buried with her.*
 - *A statue representing Sadako was built in 1958 at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial. The plaque on the monument reads, “This is our cry. This is our prayer. Peace in the world.”*
- Since September 2012, Honpa Hongwanji has been working with other community organizations to realize the goal of creating a permanent display for the crane at the Valor of the Pacific Monument. Support is needed now to create this display with the message of world peace. Honpa headquarters will be sending detailed information to Temples and Affiliated Organizations on how donations can be forwarded for this worthy cause: the promotion of world peace and harmony.



Denise Fleetham's DANA DAY Message



Dana, which is the perfection of generosity and the readiness to give oneself up to the service of others – charity in the broadest sense.

In Shin Buddhism, coming to settled Shinjin is IT.

So I am trying to define and figure out my obstacles to SHINJIN. Master Rennyō calls that “clearing the channels of faith, so that the waters of Amida’s Dharma can flow”.

To help us understand I am going to quote a few of Master Shinran’s Hymns:

*60 As a mark of not apprehending Buddha-wisdom,
People doubt the Tathagata’s various kinds of wisdom,
Believe in the recompense of good and evil, rely on their practice
Of the root of good, and hence remain in the borderland.*

*People who perform various good acts in self-power
All doubt the inconceivable Buddha-wisdom;
Hence, by the law of receiving the results of one’s acts,
They enter a prison made of the seven precious materials.*

Shinran is referring to Buddhists who RELY ON THEIR GOODNESS. Sometimes I feel that my goodness will continually propel me forward on the spiritual path until I reach the top of the mountain with my Karmic merit.

But in doing this, Master Shinran says I am committing the offense of doubting the Primal Vow.

This is just one example of doubting the Primal Vow. Another would be:

If I become a monk, or a priest, or a nun, so that I will become a “better” Buddhist. In doing this, I am involved in a self-power attempt to climb the mountain of enlightenment.

If I donate money to the Sangha, or some other charitable cause, so that I will become a “better” Buddhist, is another essence of a self-power attempt to climb the mountain of enlightenment.

Master Shinran’s Dharma truth is that this underlying motive – the motive to improve one’s spiritual life by self-power practices and good acts – will actually PREVENT a person from achieving his or her goal of Buddhahood.

Why? Master Shinran says my good acts and practices are spiritually perverted. Everything that I do is polluted by our own self-interest, coming from my monkey mind.

This is not easy for me to understand.

BOMBU, I am a spiritual idiot.

This is called “The Second Pillar of True Shin Buddhism”. It says that we cannot achieve our aspiration for Buddhahood, no matter what we do, nor for how long we do it.

This is such a deep truth that I need to hear it many, many times before it REALLY sinks deep into My mind, and then I bear witness to the TRUTH of this part of Master Shinran’s Dharma message.

Then my heart opens up, as I realize how unable we are to save ourselves. So I turn to Amida to save me, as a little child would ask to be carried by my parent.

Naturalness: A Classic of Shin Buddhism [paperback] Kenryo Kanamatsu (Author) Written 1949

From chapter I, entitled "Pure Feeling", section 1:

Buddhism is a religion of "Enlightenment" (satori) as is shown by the term Buddha, which means the Enlightened One. When man attains Bodhi, i.e. the awakening from the self-obscured ignorance to the perfection of consciousness, he becomes a Buddha. In other words, Bodhi or Enlightenment is the freedom from ignorance that darkens our consciousness by limiting it within the boundaries of our personal self, and obstructs our vision of truth.

When I have a problem or challenge or a friend has a challenge I explain it like this: *[demonstration]*

Paper held in front of person's face: Q – "What do you see?" A. – "A piece of paper."

Subject is asked to step back: Q – "What do you see?" A – "You holding the paper."

Demonstrator goes down aisle (in temple): Q – "What do you see?" A – "I see you, other people, light."

WE see only ourselves and our problems.

So if we take the focus off ourselves and give through Dana, What might happen?

From chapter I, section 2:

The spirit of renunciation is the deepest reality of the human heart. Our self can realize itself truly only by giving itself away. In giving (dana) is our truest joy and liberation, for it is uniting ourselves to that extent with the Infinite. We grow by losing ourselves, by uniting. Gaining a thing is by its nature partial, it is limited only to a particular want, but giving is complete, it belongs to our wholeness, it springs not from any necessity but from our affinity with the Infinite, which is the principle of unity and perfection that we have in our inmost heart. Our abiding happiness is not in getting anything, but in giving ourselves up to what is greater than ourselves, to the infinite ideal of perfection ...

In the 6 years that I have been coming to this church, I have seen the Women of the BWA give through Dana. You all have been my teachers. You give without SELF-CALCULATION, thinking about how much good karma you are (hopefully) going to acquire – or the expressions of gratitude you will hear from those you helped. You do it selflessly without ego, without thoughts and feeling about what a good, spiritual Buddhist you are.

You have taught me, The Name "namu-amida-butsu" completely embodies all the myriad good deeds and practices; hence it is surely trustworthy.

You have taught me to rely on Amida Tathagata and to entrust myself and to attain birth in the Land of Utmost Bliss.

There is no need for effort on my part.

When we just realize deeply that Amida Tathagata himself graciously made the Vow to save those of us who, as wretched beings burdened with the most deeply rooted evil, can only go to hell, and when faith is awakened in the one thought-moment of taking refuge, then – surely prompted by the unfolding of past good as well – other power faith is granted through the wisdom of the Buddha.

Consequently, the Buddha's mind and the mind of the ordinary being become one; the person who has attained such a state of mind is called a practitioner who has attained faith.

Beyond this, we must bear in mind that, simply by saying the nembutsu, sleeping or waking, no matter where or when, we should express our gratitude for the benevolence of the universal vow of great compassion.

Dharma friends, as I have said so often, this unique Dharma message – this paradigm leading to Buddhahood – is so SIMPLE, SIMPLE, SIMPLE. It was made that way by Dharmakara Bodhisattva after many ages of profound thought, and consultation with countless Buddhas in the ten directions.

It was made SIMPLE because so many people are simply not able to comprehend anything that is NOT simple. That's why the early Shin Sangha had so many people of no learning, and no capacity to understand complicated teachings – or do complicated self-power practices.

And yet – as so many people of SHINJIN can attest to – that very simplicity has made the message of Shin Buddhism “the most difficult of all difficulties” – the most difficult Dharma message for human beings to cling to, and truly believe in.

But – as I have seen over and over again – in my own life, and in the life of so many others, that when a person's karma finally ripens, the veil falls away from the eyes of their heart, and this pristine Dharma FINALLY makes total sense. Then the person receives it. Then the person truly and finally takes refuge in Amida. Then the person is ready, at long last, to receive Amida's incomparable and inconceivable gift of SHINJIN.

~~~~~ end of dharma message ~~~~~

[ Excerpts from: **DHARMA TREASURES**, *Spiritual Insights From Hawaii's Shin Buddhist Pioneers – with English Translation of Nembutsu Poems and Commentaries by Tatsuo Muneto* ]

From Haru Matsuda, born 1892, Yamaguchi, Japan → → → →

- “lived the life of a young mother in the 1920's” (Kona)
- Mrs. Matsuda's thoughts: *“Unlike my friends, my heart is unsettled and full of questions. How can I clear my mind?”*
- Seeking aid from Kona Hongwanji's resident minister, Rev. Kenkyo Murota, Mrs. Matsuda was told: *“Are you trying to fix your mind by your own self? That's ridiculous, like trying to squeeze size six feet into a pair of size five shoes. You know that it's impossible to shrink your feet, so that they'll fit into a size five shoes!”* Haru asked, *“Then, what can I do?”* Rev. Murota replied, *“A pair of size six shoes have already been made by the shoemaker, and they're waiting for you.”*

[Rev. Muneto's words] In the following poem Haru expresses her great surprise and unfettered joy in discovering that the gift of the Primal Vow has been prepared just for her:

In wearing shoes  
I was given a pair  
that were already made  
to fit my feet perfectly.

*Kutsu haku ni  
ashi kezurazu to  
aishi kutsu  
ashi ni awase te  
motome rare kasha.*

~~~~~  
Nami Sogi, born 1894 in Fukuoka, Japan → → → →

- Came to Hawaii as picture bride in 1912.
- With her husband, raised 5 children, in the coffee plantations of Keopu, Kona during the depression.
- “Attended temple services, thinking that listening to the teaching would make her life more bearable”

[Muneto] “Nami realized that her misconception was in believing that *her efforts* to listen and understand would lead to salvation. ... To acknowledge [Amida Buddha's compassion] meant none other than to listen with an open heart and mind.”

Nami's poem: *Amida's intent to save me
comes before my listening.
Hearing this, awakening
naturally followed.*

~~~~~  
Chiyono Sasaki, born 1897 in Ka'u, Hawaii → → → →

- Hard, rocky early life on Kona coffee farms.
- “No matter how much she listened to the teaching, nothing could quench her spiritual hunger.”

[from “Settled Mind”]

*I listened, believed and calculated  
with my self-power mind,  
not realizing that it was the self-power mind  
that pushed true compassion away from myself.*

Dharma Message from Rev. Ai Hironaka

*Delivered at the March Memorial Service*

This past Thursday, Noosh-san and Phyllis-san's brother Harvey-san took me to golf at Wailea Golf Course. I had to officiate a Burial Service at Maui Memorial Park. As soon as I finished the service, I drove to Wailea Golf Course. Since last June or July, when Ministers from Hiroshima visited Lahaina Hongwanji, I haven't had the chance to play golf. I was so excited. I put my golf bag and shoes in the van the day before. When I was driving to Maui Memorial Park, I felt that I forgot something. Bag in the back, what is missing ... ? Yes, I forgot to bring my golf clothes!!! I was wearing my my shirt and tie, I cannot play with this clothes. I quickly called my wife and said, "*I forgot my golf clothes.*" "*What? You told me to put it in the plastic bags!*" "*Anyway, I forgot ... I have no time to get back ...*" "*What shall I do?*" "*Can you take it to Noosh-san's house?*" "*OK.*" I was so stupid. When I received the bag from Noosh-san, I changed my clothes at the parking area. I think I was so happy to be able to play golf so the smile naturally came out on my face. Imagine an adult changing clothes at parking lot and smiling by himself ... How shameful ... But, it was my happiest time and I think all the golfers can understand my feelings.

In the meantime, I was wondering if I can hit the ball straight. But, even if I golf every week, I cannot hit straight anyway. But, I think all the golfers dream and think of best score like Tiger Woods – until you hit a ball at first tee and the company kindly says, "*You can have Mulligan ...*" I was able to hit Mulligan by kindness from Noosh-san and Harvey-san that day. I was able to fully enjoy playing golf.

I don't know why but, when I play golf I don't think about any other business. Of course I am always on call so once in a while I must quit during the round and rush to religious emergency. I saw it happen to other Reverends too. But basically I can just relax, joke with each other and sometimes talk about serious issue with peaceful mind. I can forget all the things on my shoulder for a while and refresh my mind. But, as soon as I get back to my van, I hear the voice, "welcome back to real world" and start thinking about tomorrow's schedule and other business. And I have an audible sigh.

In our daily life, we encounter similar things. Today is the monthly memorial service. When we lose close family and friends, some people try not to think of the person because of the sadness. Even if we are at enjoyable occasion, we sometimes think, "*Oh, he used to love to come to this bar.*" "*Oh, my wife loved to come to this restaurant when she was still alive.*" I too, every time I see Japanese candy called "Chelsea" it reminds me of my Grandma's offer. "Kappou-gi" Japanese white apron – it recalls my memory of Grandma ... she worked at the kitchen of my grandpa's temple. When I see the Basque Beret Hat, it reminds me of my Grandpa. Because whenever he goes out of temple, he always wears the beret hat, whether he wears Japanese clothes or western clothes, he wears the Basque Beret Hat. I still remember the smell of the hat. It did not smell good but, somehow I liked that before. Actually I miss the smell of my Grandpa's head. So, in my daily life, even if I am spending my happy moment, with this candy and Beret Hat it makes me sometimes sad. It takes only one moment.

For the people who lost children, whenever they see young children, it gives a moment of lament. For the people who lost their beloved parents, seeing those who still have parents gives moment of sorrow sometimes. For me, it is ordinary scene, but not always for others. Each of us, every single person has own view of this world.

When people die, they leave property, assets and estate for the family. One day, a wealthy lady passed away who was ninety years old. After she passed away, her niece came to visit the house and asked the lady's daughter, *"I want to have some memento of Grandma."* The daughter was wondering what kind of inheritance she wants and asked *"What would you like to have?"* The niece responded, *"I would like to have her pajama."* The daughter says, *"What? Pajama? We only have the used one that she wears."* The niece said, *"That's the one I want to take."* Then she carried the pajama very importantly and left to go home. The daughter was surprised and thought that money and fortune are only that. Succeeding the heart and mind of the Grandma is the most important and valuable thing. The young niece taught me very precious thing ... The lady who passed away was very gentle and calm person. She was very caring person and she took care of her mother devotedly and kept saying in appreciation, *"Thank you very much for giving birth to me. Thank you for raising me."*

To develop such kind action and behavior, there is always the mother's love ahead of time. Because of the mother's Love for the lady, the lady was able to act like that. Because of the lady's loving and kindness, the niece behaved like that.

With this story, I was thinking of my recitation of Nembutsu, Namo Amida Butsu. Because of that Amida Buddha completed his Vows to save me with his great mind of compassion, and keep saying to me, *"Please entrust me. I saved you."* There is always his working on me ahead of my mind, so I now can peacefully look up to his confirmation.

Sakyamuni Buddha says:

*Lay followers should always keep in mind that sooner or later they will be obliged to part with their parents and families and pass away from this life of birth and death; therefore, they should not become attached to things of this life but should set their minds on the world of Enlightenment, wherein nothing passes away.*

The daughter used to sleep in the mother's bed until half a year after the mother passed away. But now she realized that, *"Sensei, it is still sad and sorrowful. Parents are so precious and appreciated. But now, I realize the fact that the most valuable thing she left for me is the connection between temple and myself. I want to walk the path that my mother walked."* Because of the mother's rejoicing of Nembutsu life, the daughter is now beginning her first step of the life of listening to the Dharma. I believe, in this way she will meet the true mother.

Those who are born later, we should carefully seek the true mind and heart of Nembutsu of those who were born before. Not only money, fortune and wealth. And will try to stop this activity. Will continuously hand this working on to next generation. Our ideal is all of us will attain Buddhahood, and save other people who suffer in this world of living and dying.

We human beings, we spend the life of agony and anguish – a life which only oneself knows. But it is not only for myself. Your family and your friends, all of us. If we fully understand we are all friends and living equally in a non-discriminating world by the Buddha's Great Wisdom and Compassion, we can live as a part of Sangha in peace.