

LAST MONTH'S EVENTS

Wailuku Hongwanji Obon

A little wet yet shiny on Friday night. Many dancers still braved it in the rain.



Setting up for Lahaina Hongwanji's Obon. Emi Fujikawa & Carol Inaba work on the annual 'puzzle' of the altar lanterns. "Where does this go?"



OBON SET-UP



Ray & Haru Nakagawa assist mystery man up in the tree: Master of Lights-Clifton Akiyama.



What could Shinran be thinking about?



Tiana Takeda, Rochelle Fushikoshi help in decorating the dance ring.



Jane Agawa, Carol Inaba, Emi Fujikawa



Violet Nishijima, Alice Imano



Mission accomplished. Looking GOOD.



Karen Zaan, Emi Fujikawa, Jane Agawa, others fold Obon towels.



Kokoro and Hoken at practice session.



Happy Hoken in Happi.

FOOD PREPARATION



NEGI CLEANERS



DAIKON SLICERS



KONBU KNOTTERS



NISHIME MIXERS



Who's sleeping on the job?
Lucky Minori-chan gets to snooze.



Every grain of rice accounted for in SUSHI, SUSHI, SUSHI.



Megumi-san is our somen leader.



Ed Nakamura assists Andagi Chef Earl Zaan.

More food !!!



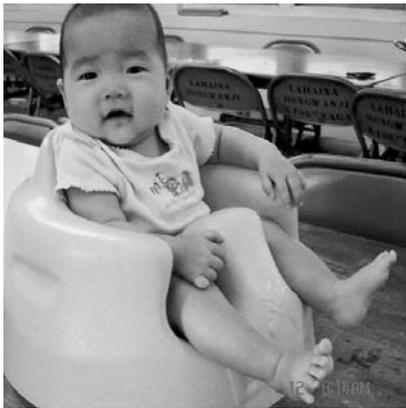
Meat grillers & slicers



BENTO packers – “don't forget the ume”.



Awesome line-up !



Minori-chan, “Things are getting lively here; I'm staying awake for this.”



CHOW FUN gang number 3?

Obon prep time is always busy, yet it is a grand experience. Families reunite. Folks who live away on other isles or on the mainland actually return to help again!
 Colleen/Ed Nakamura;
 Kay/Dwight Yamada;
 Robert Mizushima;
 Wayne Nishijima, Carol Saito
 ARIGATOU

And so, was Lahaina Hongwanji ready for Obon 2011?



The altar was waiting for the Hatsubon Service. The Nokotsudo, nearly complete, was dressed up.



Violet Nishijima & great-granddaughter Ivy were ready to dance!

O BON 2011

Thank you for workers, donors of funds & goods, good weather, Rev. Ai & family, Hatsubon speaker Rev. Shinkai Murakami, organist Alyce Yoshino, Hatsubon families, Maui Taiko, Dan Thompson, dancers, spectators ... and many more.



The buck starts here with our welcoming SCRIP guys Ernest Okimoto & Wayne Nishijima.

The scrips end up here at the FOOD CONCESSIONS, managed skillfully by Arlene Gerbig, Pat Endsley, Vivian Ichiki, and Yaeko Kawamura.



Student volunteers from Lahaina Intermediate School, supervised by Tony Griffith & Sharon Nohara, help out with SHAVE ICE and SODA / WATER sales.

Was it a successful Obon? Yes!



Koko-chan's smile says "YES". The expressions on Ayumu-chan's and Hoken-san's faces are not as easy to read?

- The temple was 'packed' for Hatsubon Service. A definite plus.
- We did run out of food concessions early on both nights. Was the crowd larger, or just hungrier?
- There were kind deeds bestowed among workers, such as --- Dawn Fujiwara's idea to get a substitute kitchen crew to ready the food for workers/dancers (thank you Dawn / Derrick Fujiwara & Haru Nakagawa). This enabled the 'regulars' to DANCE or OBSERVE the bon dancing.
- Another kind deed: Tony Griffith who worked very hard in the soda booth both nights went around to other booths with drinks for the workers. Ahhhh. Mahalo, Tony!
- We were so blessed to have extra help from Lahainaluna students (supervised by Art Fillazar) and from Lahaina Intermediate School students (supervised by Tony Griffith & Sharon Nohara). Thank you for the community service !
- The array of food for workers & dancers was pleasing to the palate and seemed to get 'thumbs up' from everyone.

Lahaina Hongwanji BWA

What keeps the 'energizer' Buddhist women going and going? Yes, you can account for some of it through a history and tradition of hard work. However, the photos selected for the 2011 Fall Newsletter seem to indicate an underlying theme of *COMPASSION ... GRATITUDE ... and WISDOM.*



There is **compassion** warmly expressed in the yearly tradition of hospital visitations in April and again in November. This year, the BWA Craft Club also made sewn items that were needed at a local adult daycare center.



Gratitude is exhibited in many ways by BWA members. The photo above shows final decorative touches being made for the luncheon to follow the Eshinni-Kakushinni Day Service. Homage and gratitude are bestowed in remembrance of the important contributions of Eshinni-sama and her daughter Kakushinni.



Emi Hashi and Michelle Soga

Wisdom comes in as the Fujinkai ladies traditionally support events such as the Federation BWA-sponsored Student Exchange program with Japan. This year, both students happened to be from Maui: Emi Hashi of Makawao Hongwanji and Michelle Soga of Kahului Hongwanji. Lahaina BWA members joined up with BWA groups from Makawao, Kahului and Wailuku to give the young ladies a warm send-off this summer. Emi and Michelle are BWA 'ambassadors' as well as the future of Buddhist women in Hawaii.



Gratitude is again felt and expressed in the care given to decorating for Obon --- in honor of and in appreciation of members memorialized at Hatsubon and for all others who continue to guide us.

Lahaina Hongwanji also expresses compassion for Japan, in the aftermath of the earthquake/tsunami/nuclear reactor disaster. As well, we are grateful for all of the people who represented Hawaii Kyodan and Federation BWA in Kyoto in May.



September 4, 2011, 9:30 am

MONTHLY MEMORIAL SERVICE

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Choir Practice after the service.

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## State Lay Convention

Sept. 9<sup>th</sup> through Sept. 11<sup>th</sup>  
Makawao Hongwanji Mission

Theme: "Facing the Future"

Registered delegates & observers from statewide Hongwanji temples will meet for: *Business Meeting / Election of Officers / Keynote Speech by Ramsey Taum on 'Sustainability' / Workshops / socialization & sharing of ideas and concerns.*

**No Sunday service at Lahaina Hongwanji on September 11<sup>th</sup>.**

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## Autumn Higan Service

September 18, 2011, 9:30 am

Guest Speaker: Rev. Bruce Nakamura  
Hilo Betsuin

"Higan is an abbreviation of 'To-Higan – literally meaning 'to arrive at the other shore'. In Buddhism, the world of illusion is referred to as 'this shore' and the world of enlightenment is called 'the other shore'. The term Higan comes from the Sanskrit word Paramita –

'the other shore', and suggests the Six Paramitas of charity, morality, patience, effort, meditation, and wisdom. Various sutras teach that six paramitas, or perfections of practice, are the way of reaching the other shore from this shore."

"In Jodo Shin Buddhism, the observance of Higan is simply the expressing of our gratitude to Amida Buddha for awakening us to his Boundless Compassion and Wisdom. Our part in this observance would be to put into action the Compassion which comes to us vertically from Amida Buddha and to apply it horizontally in our relation with man and other living beings on this earth."

*[The above passage is quoted verbatim from the website for Pure Land Shin Buddhism Dharma Practice Center.]*

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## Peace Day Service

Wednesday, SEPTEMBER 21<sup>ST</sup>

Any special event to be observed at Lahaina Hongwanji will be announced at the Sept. 4<sup>th</sup> or Sept. 18<sup>th</sup> Service.

### The Peace Poem

*[From United Nations cyberschoolbus.com]*

Peace remained by my side until I understood what she wanted from me – that I be free.

■ *Parque Ecologico / Poranbaga, Brazil*

We don't like it that our fathers must be soldiers and shoot other children's fathers.

■ *Engbrottsskolan / Ctvidaberg, Sweden*

The condition of the heart can alter the perspective of a person.

The condition of the hearts of a nation can alter the state of mankind – PEACE.

-- *Walnut Ridge Middle School / Walnut Ridge, AR, U.S.*

I wish I could have stopped what caused the first human to be violent to another.

Then maybe the world would still be living in peace.

-- *Asir Academy / Khamis-Mushayt, Saudi Arabia*

## 'FOOD FOR THOUGHT'

Obon was wonderful this year. Although hobbled with an uncooperative knee, I was pleased to see so many people I hadn't seen for awhile. A big MAHALO to all of you who were able to help with the setup and food preparation. Thank you for giving so willingly of your time to stage the event. Thank you, also, for your monetary and in-kind donations of food. So many people attended Obon on both Friday and Saturday nites that food items were sold out very early in the evening.

Preparations for Obon and the festival itself almost always disrupts our regular Sunday service schedule. This year was no different. Sunday, August 21<sup>st</sup> was our first regular service held in about three weeks !!! Maybe that absence from the dharma sharpened my appetite. Whatever the reason, I thought that Sensei's dharma message on the 21<sup>st</sup> was wonderful. Reverend Ai's message is included in this bulletin. It is good reading and worthy of thought.

When Sensei described watering the lawn during the days preceding Obon, and how that task made him think about the dharma, I thought to myself, "Okay, where is this going?" But soon thereafter, he compared the sun and the water to Amida Buddha's wisdom and compassion that is universal and without any discrimination. Sensei later spoke about *bonno* and attachment. He described in detail how he asked his grandfather whether Amida-sama or Shakyamuni Buddha was the greatest and how he sought advice from his college professor about what appeared to be contradictory passages in his readings. Becoming too attached to a single dharma learning is restrictive, and, in fact, a cause of suffering, one of the Noble Truths.

After hearing this, it brought to mind a stage production in which I had performed – and a scene very much similar to the kind of contradiction to which Sensei had referred.

The stage production was "Fiddler on the Roof". The opening scene has the villagers of Anatevka, a small farming village in Russia, gathering and becoming engaged in an argument. One of the villagers bought a horse that just couldn't work the fields. Many of the buyer's neighbors agreed that he had been cheated. The seller, on the other hand, denied that the horse was a hag. Many of the remaining villagers agreed with the seller. Soon each side began shouting out their accusations and eventually turned to Tevye to decide who was right. Tevye, after listening to the buyer and his supporters, proclaimed, "You are right". Of course, the seller and his supporters disagreed and told Tevye why they were right. Tevye nodded approval and proclaimed to the seller group, "You are right". But no one was happy with Tevye's proclamation. One of the villagers then asked, "How can both sides be right?" To which Tevye replied, "You are right too!"

I guess it's not terribly important that one side of any argument is right and the other wrong. I struggle with the philosophical merit of any argument, especially if I believe there is a right and a wrong side of the argument in question. Nowadays, I find that I place less importance in the right or wrong, to the extent that I can walk away from these discussions without feeling any loss. Is this wisdom? Perhaps, but I think it's more like it really doesn't matter. NAMO AMIDA BUTSU.

-- 'Noosh' Nishihara, Kyodan President

## September Dharma Message *by Rev. Ai Hironaka*

First of all, I would like to thank every one of you for helping and supporting our Bon Dance. President Noosh Nishihara, thank you very much for taking time for us even with big pain in your knee. Fujinkai ladies, thank you very much for your hard work, especially cooking for the food booth. I understand that Mrs. Aileen Cockett amazingly cut the katsuo and aku fish for sashimi nicely. I thought, “she is a genius”. So, it was my first time to be able to be part of Lahaina Hongwanji Bon Dance. I was really impressed by the decorations of the temple yard – beautiful and soft lawn, chochin lantern on top of the poles, Coca Cola truck, and so forth. I wish the truck could remain here forever .... free soda anytime at Lahaina Hongwanji ... I am just dreaming. And, there was enough time to hold the Hatsu Bon Service. Sometimes, the time allowed for the service portion is cut shorter and shorter, for the Dance. But, the Bon Service is the main thing for the day. I could not help to stop to respect and appreciate all the ministers who were here before me for this tradition at Lahaina Hongwanji. Again, I thank all the members of Lahaina Hongwanji, and our neighbors, for their patience with the noise that we made.

It was very exciting to be able to be part of Lahaina Hongwanji Bon Dance. Each temple has a different and unique idea of how to run Bon Service and Bon Dance. So, I was a little nervous waiting for this day. When I got nervous, I went outside and watered the lawn to help Mr. Neal Fujiwara’s work. Since I came to Hawaii, I did not have a chance to water a lawn. To just look and see someone watering the lawn ... it is ordinary scenery, and some people do not like to do that. But I was able to think of so many things peacefully while watering the lawn. Although my children sometimes bothered me, it was too hot so soon they got tired and went home.

Somehow, I don’t have to think of anything negative while I was watering. Just face to face with a lawn, I tried talking to the grass, but the lawn doesn’t answer. Some parts are so green and soft, some parts still brown and dying. My way of watering is ... I give water to the brown part a lot. Some may say giving water to the green part is a lot better. How do you water?

I was thinking in this way – if I am Amida Buddha, how would he water the lawn? I thought he might give water to the brown parts a lot because they need water more than the green parts. Because the brown part needs more water, I was doing it that way, as I tried to copy Amida Buddha’s compassionate heart. Then the sun was becoming so strong and it was making me very hot. When my neck began to feel suntanned and sore, I realized the working of the sun. The sun does not discriminate. Whatever the sun can reach, it shines on everything equally – including my balding head. In Tanni-sho it is stated, **“Amida’s Primal Vow does not discriminate between the young and old, good and evil; true entrusting alone is essential.”** Whether green or

brown, the sun reaches out to everything, without any thought or choice. I thought ... it is that way with Shin Buddhism too. So, which way shall I follow then??

When I was studying Buddhism, I often thought that this teaching and that one are contradictory. Which is correct? For example, Buddhism never allows killing of others, including vegetable life, not only human life. However, Shinran Shonin mentions in Tanni-sho, ***“We do not kill, not because our thoughts are good but because we do not have the karma to kill even a single person. Yet, even though we do not want to injure anyone, we may be led to kill a hundred or a thousand people.”***

As I watered the lawn, it was kind of enjoyable to make my decision which way to follow – more water for the brown area or equally to all the lawn – just like the Hou-U, or Dharma Rain which occurred when Shakyamuni Buddha was born. “Which way is correct?” It is a very important question. Because of this question, Buddhism has so many groups – not only Buddhism, but Christian religions also.

Later on, I recalled the saying from my grandfather, who was the Shinshu Minister. He said that “Which way of teaching is correct? This question is wrong. Both ways of teaching are so precious and so sacred. It is not that one side is correct, the other side is wrong. Both sides are correct and true. You have to get the core of the teaching. There is no contradiction. Hahaha.” At that time, I guess I was too young so I could not understand. But, when I was a student at Ryukoku University, I encountered the teaching from Lankavatara Sutra; it expounded that,

***“If one takes one side of a two-sided issue and has an attachment to it, even though it were good and right, it would turn into wrong ... The teaching of the Buddha is the middle way, removed from these two biases.”***

We as Shin Buddhists --- some may say it is very difficult and hard to understand. I may say it is true, if we try to understand Shin Buddhism academically. It may take over one hundred years. It may require study of Sanskrit, Chinese, Japanese, and reading all of the eighty-four thousand teachings and sutra and background of these countries. There is no end. But this is not Shin and all of the Buddhist ways. Buddhism is for common people, especially like me. Buddhism is for those who have Bonno or evil passion or attachment. So, we need to get away from attachment. This is also the essence of Buddhism.

If we are attached to one side, we cannot see the other way. What my grandfather was trying to say is that both teachings are sacred. Buddhism is the middle way, removed from the two biases.

So, through watering the lawn, I was able to embody the teaching of Shinran Shonin. Since then, I tried to give water like the sun shines or the Dharma rains by also giving water to the brown part, just like my own son. I hope everybody enjoyed our Bon Dance. Namo Amida Butsu.