



February 2009

Environment from A Buddhist Eye The following is a summary of Rev. Izumi's talk at a forum hosted by the Southern Alberta Community of Environmental Educators.



There is a story about when Siddhartha Gautama attained Enlightenment, which happened almost 2500 years ago. At the moment of his enlightenment under the Bodhi tree, his right hand quietly extended downward and touched the earth on which he was sitting. This was a gesture to show that the great Earth was witness to Buddha's Enlightenment.

And then the Buddha uttered, "How wonderful it is! I see the Buddha-nature everywhere; mountains, rivers, trees and grass, all possess the Buddha-nature!" For the Buddha all living beings, including mountains, rivers and trees and grass, have jewels inside and they are all shining to make him truly live. He discovered that all living beings are there to sustain his life. In his discovery the Buddha and the earth, mountains, rivers, trees and grass became one. In the life of oneness, the Buddha saw and acknowledged that all living things appear and exist inter-dependently. Everything is connected. Everything co-exists. With the eyes of oneness, everything is shining and precious.

This is the realm of true awakening which is beautifully described as the Pure Land in the Amida Sutra. In this sense, the Pure Land is an ideal environment for animate and inanimate things as well. The Amida Sutra describes the beauty of the Pure Land as follows: In the midst of the land there is a lake of pure water of the eight excellent qualities, fresh and sparkling. Waves of the lake lap softly on shores of golden sands. The beds of the ponds are of gold, silver, beryl and crystal. Above these stand pavilions adorned with gold, silver, beryl, crystal, sapphire, rosy pearls, and cornelian. In the ponds are lotuses as large as chariot wheels – the blue ones radiating a blue light, the yellow a yellow light, the red a red light, and the white a white light. They are marvelous and beautiful, fragrant and pure. Again, in that land there are always many kinds of rare and beautiful birds of various colours. In that land when soft breezes waft through the rows of jewelled trees and jewelled nets, they produce harmonious sounds.

The eight excellent qualities which the water of the ponds in the Pure Land possess are: pure, cool, sweet, smooth, moistening, comforting, thirst-quenching, and nourishing. When the water is polluted living beings get sick and die. When the water has the good qualities mentioned above, flowers bloom with its own beauty. Trees and grass grow beautifully in the mountain. Humans, animals, fish and insects are able to enjoy together to live in harmony.

We, individually and collectively create our environment. We must try to live harmoniously and unselfishly. We must try to live by respecting and caring for the environment and by knowing that all living things are precious. We must not waste things around us carelessly. Even a sheet of paper and piece of cloth must be received with gratitude. We must not use them selfishly or for unworthy purposes.

Here is a simple old story of "recycling" which happened in the time a historical Buddha was living in India:

A king offered one of Buddha's disciples five hundred garments as a token of appreciation of the teaching. The king asked the disciple what he was going to do with these garments. The disciple replied: "Oh, King, many of the brothers are in rags; I am going to distribute the garments among the brothers." "What will you do with the old garments?" asked the king. The disciple answered, "We will make bed-covers out of them." "What will you do with the old bed-covers?" the king asked. "We will make pillow-cases." replied the disciple. "What will you do with the old pillow-cases?" asked the king. The disciple answered, "We will make floor-covers out of them." "What will you do with the old floor-covers?" asked the king. The disciple answered, "We will use them for foot-covers." "What will you do with the old foot-covers." asked the king. The disciple answered, "We will use them for foot-towels." The king asked, "What will you do with the old foot-towels?" The disciple answered "We will use them for floor-mops." The king asked, "What will you do with the old mops?" "Your Highness, we will tear them into pieces, mix them with mud and use the mud to plaster the house walls." replied the disciple.

It is time that we, modern people, realize that everything including air, water, natural resources and every article that allows us to live must be used with respect and good care in some useful way. These things are not "mine" but "ours" and they may only be entrusted to us temporarily.

In Gassho,
Yasuo Izumi, Kaikyoshi-Minister

**BUDDHIST TEMPLE
OF SOUTHERN ALBERTA**

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環境問題

最近、市立図書館で 宗教者をパネリストとして環境問題の話し合いがもたれました。

浄土真宗のみ教えを聞きますと、お浄土という言葉が度々出てきます。文字どおり、淨く美しい処で、仏様のお悟りの世界を表わしています。その意味では、お浄土こそ理想的な環境と言えましょう。お浄土の風光を、今の世の中と照らしてみる、ということも大切なことではないでしょうか。

阿弥陀経の中には、お浄土が理想的な環境として美しく描かれています。たとえば、八功德水(八種類の功德ある水)という言葉が出てきます。つまり、すばらしい水とは、澄んで淨く、清くて冷たく、おいしく、やわらかく、湿り気があって、人に安らぎ、うるおい、健康を与えるというものです。環境と水、という問題一つをとっても、考えさせられます。私たちは、水があることを当たり前のようにして使っていますが、水が濁って汚染されれば、生き物は病気になり、それがもとで死ぬということがあります。花も美しく咲くことが出来ません。木も立派に育ちません。魚も安心して泳ぐことが出来なんでしょう。私たちにあって、理想の環境造りは、お浄土の光を受けながら、私たち一人ひとりが、ともに造り上げていくものである、と言えます。今与えられているもの、それはたとえ、一枚の紙、一片の布であっても、手を合わせ、大切に、注意深く使っていくと言うような、案外簡単なことが、よりよい環境造りの鍵であると言えるのではないのでしょうか。合掌いずみ

PRESIDENT'S NOTEBOOK

David Major

Congratulations to everyone for persevering through the last few months while the temple was being completed. We have taken possession but there are many little 'fixes' that remain. We still need to complete the overhead lights, the audio-visual system, the split-seat toilets, new shelving units, etc, etc. We found out that the locks were not installed correctly and it will take another five weeks to get the right ones. So it will be a few months before construction is finished.

I want to thank everyone who has contributed to the building fund. This was a low-key fundraising effort and you have responded far beyond our expectations. I remember being impressed by the donor board at Raymond Hondo because of the contribution the early pioneers had made to the Jodo Shinshu temples in the thirties. Now I see that spirit is every bit as alive today.

The Programs and Operations Committee, led by Lorita Ichikawa and Pat Sassa, have, with the help of many others, set up five Tobans. Each Toban has two or three leaders and their teams who will look after the Otera for one month. The Tobans will be responsible for Otera maintenance and any cooking that is required during their specific month. This includes men as well as women.

Roy Sassa has been appointed building manager. This means that Roy will keep track of keys, contact the fire inspector for annual inspections, have the fire extinguishers checked etc. If there is a breakdown he will contact the proper repair company. Please don't ask Roy to be the janitor. The Tobans will be responsible for that. Anthony Richardson has undertaken the snow removal.

There are a lot of coming events that will be of interest. There is a BTSA Fundraiser at the temple on February 23rd. Activities will include a dinner catered by the Regent Restaurant and an auction of a wide assortment of donated items. This fundraising dinner was made necessary by the demand for tickets for our first fundraising dinner. A lot of our members were unable to get tickets so the fundraising committee decided to hold a second dinner. Please contact Jan Okamura (403-327-0464) for tickets. The cost of \$50 includes a \$25 tax-deductible donation.

Our second BTSA Chow Mein Supper will be on March 28th. Leading up to this we will be making mein and manju. We aren't sure yet how labour will be assigned. With our larger membership we may get too many volunteers so the first supper will be a trial and error for the organizing team.

The user groups will once again use the multi-purpose room starting in February. User groups are urged to think about their needs for the storage rooms at the east end of the multi-purpose room. Please contact Fudge Takeda (403-345-3171) if you want to reserve a meeting room or the multi-purpose room. Making a reservation will ensure that there are no conflicts.

The BTSA Annual General Meeting will be held on March 8th after the morning service. We invite everyone who is interested to consider contributing to our board of directors. I am leading a

nominating committee that will ask people to put their names forward, so please contact me (403-328-4957). I hope that many people step forward and voice their opinions as to where they think the BTSA should be headed.

On the last weekend of April we will hold the Dedication Service for the new BTSA temple and the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada (JSBTC) will hold its Annual General Meeting. There will be a lot of members from other temples coming to see our new temple so please contact John or Donna Dubbelboer (403-381-7643) to tell them that you want to participate in the banquet. The committee organizing this event expects so many people that they have reserved the Exhibition Pavilion to accommodate everyone. This will be an exciting and historic weekend so mark it on your calendar.

As the building completion nears, I will take this opportunity to thank our Building Committee, Tak Okamura and Dave Kunitomo, for the hundreds of hours that they have put in over the past year to make sure that this new facility came into being. Additional thanks to Robert Takaguchi and Gordon Saruwatari, assisted by Judy Takaguchi, for the countless hours they put in managing our finances. Thanks as well go to Akira Ichikawa and Pat Sassa for going above and beyond the call of duty to help keep us moving forward. These members have endured far more stress than they will admit. And, of course, to all of the BTSA board members who have sat through our lengthy board meetings each month and who have all given freely of their time. Also, my thanks go to several members who have quite regularly attended our board meetings. Your input helped to hold our feet to the fire and kept us on an even keel. Thanks to Glen Tanaka for lending us the Fairfield Appliances cube van whenever we asked. When you need to replace one of your appliances, please stop by Fairfields and talk to Glen.

Attempting to thank people by name is risky because someone will inevitably be left out. To all of you who have made a contribution large or small over the past two years, you have my deepest gratitude. Thanks to our families who have endured any monku monku for the past few years.

BTSA FUNDRAISING UPDATE as of January 21, 2009

The BTSA now has an official status as a charitable organization. Official tax receipts can now be issued by the BTSA for any charitable donations. Any one wishing to donate to the building fund can make a one time donation or pledge their donation over the next 3-5 years. A plaque with the donors name will be included in our donor wall. The target for the fund raising committee is around \$1,000,000. The donor levels are as follows:

DIAMOND \$25,000 or greater
EMERALD \$17,500 to \$24,999

PLATINUM \$10,000 to \$17,499
GOLD \$5,000 to \$9,999

SILVER \$2,500 to \$4,999
BRONZE \$1,000 to \$2,499

(New donors indicated in bold print)

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- Rev. & Mrs. Yasuo Izumi
- Richard & Sue Kanegawa in memory of Mr. & Mrs. Sakuji Kanegawa and Mr. Stan Kanegawa
- Noris & Sachiko Taguchi & daughters Louise, Patricia, Teresa & Karen
Additional donation in memory of Kohei & Hashime Taguchi and Tayeko Terakita
- Mrs Aiko Yoshihara & Family in memory of Motoharu Yoshihara
- Family of Muneo & Toshiko Takeda
- Coaldale Buddhist Church (\$50,000)
- Tsuyoshi & Mariko Hironaka
- Rosemary Buddhist Temple
- Sumie, Ken & Jim Tsukishima in memory of Mitsugi (Father), Sagami & Hisataro Tsukishima (Grandparents), Kaisu & Yoshino Hironaka (Grandparents)

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- Tashiro & Okuma Families in memory of Kaz, Hatsue & Yoichi Okuma and Yasu & Eiji Tashiro

- Roy Takeda, Barbara Takeda, Gary & Beverly McIlroy in memory of Nancy Takeda, our parents, grandparents, great grandparents, great great grandparents Fusajiro & Yoshi Takeda
- Kaz & Nobs Sugimoto
- Grace Nishimura and family in memory of Takenori Nishimura
- Yoshio Tanaka in memory of Kimiye Tanaka
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- Hajime (Harry) Sugimoto
- Jim & Daisy Oshiro in memory of our deceased family & friends
- Chizuko Kimura in memory of Toyoichi & Haru Matsuno and James T. Kimura
- Roy & Minnie Nakatsuru in memory of Osamu & Mayuno Nakatsuru, Denichiro & Iku Kitagawa
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- Miyo Hoyano
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- Satoru & Grace Ichikawa
- Karen Miyakawa in memory of Chiyotoshi Miyakawa
- Toshiko & Tsuyako Iwamoto

- Brian & Holly Sekiya
- Ichio & Rumiko Ibuki & Children (Debra, Wendy, Shauna, Mitchell)
- Atsu & Jim Hagihara
- Katie Nakagawa in memory of Stacey Koyata
- Kaz & Tosh Kanashiro in memory of Masuko Kado
- Sonia Sitz
- Kathy & Keith Turnbull & family, Marjene & Brian Turnbull & family in memory of Kimiko & Todomu Matsunaga and Ichirohei & Kin Hisaoka
- Roy & Hifumi Sato
- Toshiko & Sway Nishimura
- Makio & Reyko Nishiyama in memory of our parents Takashi & Chiaki Karaki, Kohei & Hide Nishiyama
- George Tokuda in memory of Masao & Emiko Tokuda
- Bob & Eiko Shigehiro in memory of Saburo & Shizuko Shigehiro
- Bob & Sharon Imahashi
- Fujio & Yoshiko Tsukishima
- Kiyoshi & Kimie Moriyama
- Frank & Kay Osaka in memory of our parents
- A.K. Otsuka in memory of the Amemori Family
- Yumiko Osaka in memory of Hughie Osaka
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- **John & Rita Aoki**
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- **Peter & Terry Savage in memory of Gunjiro & Ayano Ikeda and Heromu Roy Ikeda**
- **Grant & Doris Jeffery in memory of Tanekichi Imahashi and Lori Takaguchi**
- **Kiyoshi & Miriam Mori in memory of family members**
- **Yoshiko Kishiuchi and Michio Kishiuchi**

The BTSA greatly appreciates the contribution from the above in starting the fund raising drive. To date we have raised \$1 million in donations or pledges. To make a contribution or pledge contact: Jim Tsukishima 403.327.1279 mtsfarm@telus.net Roland Ikuta 403.317.0078 Rolikuta@shaw.ca or send cheques to Robert Takaguchi P.O. Box 1249, Raymond, Alberta T0K 2S0



BUDDHIST TEMPLE OF SOUTHERN ALBERTA

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THE BUDDHIST TEMPLE OF SOUTHERN ALBERTA
children & youth dharma classes

SUNDAY SERVICE for children

A Sunday service designed for children has started in the dharma classroom coinciding with regular service at 10:30am. When arriving at the temple, parents can bring their children straight to the dharma room at the far North side of the building. Having their own space allows the younger crowd more freedom (as they will sit on pillows on the floor) and gives parents a break from keeping constant watch in the main hondo.

During the brief service children will learn basic Buddhist rituals such as gassho, offering incense and bowing, about the elements of the Obutsudan, and becoming familiar with the story of Buddha and gathas.

Request to older youth

Any interested youth 10 years and older are encouraged to attend the childrens' service. The younger kids are always excited about the presence of older youth and will learn through demonstration and stories.

If you would like to be added to the Dharma Class email list or need further information please contact Maya at 380-4330.



Dharma students enjoy their new classroom and create peasant hats (based on Shinran Shonin's) for Hoonko service held on the last Sunday of January 2009.



Message from the RELIGIOUS COMMITTEE

Welcome to the monthly report from the Religious Committee. This committee was formed out of a strategic planning day in 2008. It exists to coordinate BTSA religious matters and provide a liaison between the Sangha, the minister and the Board of Directors regarding religious programs. The Terms of Reference for this committee were accepted by the Board of Directors on November 12th, 2008. Committee members include Renae Barlow (chair), Sensei Izumi (Advisor), Jim Tsukishma, Lorita Ichikawa, Mac Nishiyama, Reyko Nishiyama and Harry Sugimoto.

The Religious Committee is responsible for the following:

- Soliciting, reviewing and making recommendations regarding the wants and needs of the Sangha in relation to religious programs.
- Ensure teachings are accessible by everyone in the community.
- Attracting new members.
- Ensuring children and youth programs are readily available.
- Assisting Sensei as a sounding board for religious propagation.
- Promoting a spiritual experience that appeals to wider group of participants.
- Ensuring orientation of new members.
- Encouraging sangha participation in spreading the word about Buddhism.
- Ensuring programs address "Attraction of new members", "Retention of current members" and "Growth of Sangha".
- Reviewing and approving religious educational materials for circulation to new and existing members.
- Providing an annual service schedule that provides a monthly theme that will also serve as a guide to subjects for dharma school and study groups.

Our goals for this first quarter of the year include:

- 1) Creating new member orientation procedures
- 2) Co-Creating Service Schedule with Rev. Izumi
- 3) Working collaboratively with Programs & Services Committee
- 4) Developing a feedback mechanism for Temple members

As you can see, this is a busy committee. We welcome anyone who would like to join us in helping to ensure the BTSA grows as a vibrant inclusive community in Lethbridge. If you would like to join, please call Renae at 328-1580 or email renaeb@telus.net

In Gassho, Renae Barlow

2009 February and March Schedule

2月と3月の予定表

Sunday Regular Service starts at 10:30am

*Study/Discussion group will be held English Regular Service.

FEBRUARY

- 01 (Sun) 10:30am Monthly Shotsuki Memorial Service 祥月法要
 08 (Sun) 10:30am Regular Service
 11 (Wed) 7:00pm BTSA Board Meeting
 15 (Sun) 10:30am Nirvana Day Service 涅槃会
 22 (Sun) 10:30am Regular Service
 23 (Mon) 5:50pm Fundraising dinner ファンドレイジング デイナー
 29 (Sun) 10:30am Regular Service

MARCH

- 01 (Sun) 10:30am Monthly Shotsuki Memorial Service 祥月法要
 08 (Sun) 10:30am Regular Service
 11 (Wed) 7:00pm BTSA Board Meeting
 15 (Sun) 10:30 am Regular Service
 22 (Sun) 10:30am Spring Equinox-O-Higan Service お彼岸会
 29 (Sun) 10:30 am Regular Service

2009 AT A GLANCE

FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL
1-2.....Mein Making	2...Manju Making	12.....Hanamatsuri Service
6-7.....Mein Making	8.. Annual General Meeting	25.....Dedication Banquet
11..... Board Meeting	14 Manju Making	26.....Dedication & Memorial Service
13-14 Mein Making	27 Manju Making	25-26 Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada AGM
23.....Fundraising Dinner and Silent Auction	28 Chow Mein Supper/Bake Sale/Bazaar	
MAY	JUNE	JULY
3 Parent's Day Potluck Lunch	21 Picnic	18 Bon Odori and Bazaar 19 0 Bon Service
OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
17 Chow Mein Supper/Bake Sale/Bazaar	13-15 Alberta Buddhist Conference 21-22 Mochitsuki 29 Noodle Making	31 New Year's Service Bell Ringing at Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden

Memorial Donation as of December 20/08 - January 26/09

Ichio & Rumiko Ibuki	Sway & Totsy Nishimura	Setsuko Matsugi
Tomiko Kobayashi	Tomi Hisaoka	Tom Tajiri
Judy Fukushima	Fujio & Yoshiko Tsukishima	Sue Kado
Shizuo & Dorothy Tomita	Tom & Marie Hirashima	Shirley Higa
May Nishikawa	Frank & Kimi Ohno	Tak & Jean Oga
May Ohno	Shig & Katie Nakagawa	Yosh & Florence Senda
Chizuko Kimura	Total.....\$1105.00	

HOONKO DONATIONS 98 donations for a Total\$6185.00

2009 Buddhist Memorial Service 仏教徒の年忌法要

Year of Death (死亡年)

2008	First annual memorial	1 year from death
2007	3rd anniversary memorial	2 full years from death
2003	7th anniversary memorial	6 full years from death
1997	13th anniversary memorial	12 full years from death
1993	17th anniversary memorial	16 full years from death
1985	25th anniversary memorial	24 full years from death
1977	33rd anniversary memorial	32 full years from death
1960	50th anniversary memorial	49 full years from death

A memorial rite marking the death of the deceased not only calls for the adornment of the shrine and the reading of the sutra but also is a precious occasion for recalling the cherished memories of the beloved and the most of all to realize the blessings of the Light of Wisdom and Life of Compassion which embrace us all. (from Jodo Shinshu Handbook for laymen) **On the first or near the first Sunday of every month, the BTSA observes a monthly memorial service in memory of those people whose date of death (meinichi-命日) falls in that month. Please bring a Homyo of your loved one.**

REGULAR EVENTS

*Please feel welcome to join the **Study/Discussion Group** on Sundays right after morning service and tea. In February the group will be discussing the theme of the month - Nirvana. February 15 is Nirvana Day (NEHAN-YE), the day on which Shakyamuni Buddha passed away and entered Parinirvana, thus culminating 80 years of life - 45 of which were spent in the propagation of the Buddha-Dharma. The Sanskrit word literally means "a blowing out as of a flame" or "extinction of worldly illusions and passions." It can also mean "extinction of ego" and "joining others and becoming one"

Please contact Renae Barlow (renaeb@telus.net) or Rev. Izumi (403.382.7024)

Taiko Class

Tuesdays 6:30 - 8:30pm
 Please contact David Tanaka
 403.330.1548 or david@eyesquared.com

Southern Alberta Buddhist Choir

Thursdays 7:00 - 8:30pm
 Please contact Lorita Ichikawa 403.327.1668

ANNOUNCEMENTS

To: The members of the BTSA

From: The Treasurers

It was quite a learning experience in 2008 for Gordon & myself, and I don't know if we have cleared all the hurdles yet. First of all we would like to thank all the members for their generous donations. It was overwhelming and gratifying for the support that we received. The "Tax Receipts for 2008" have been sent out. If you have questions or you believe the amounts are incorrect or if receipts are missing, please call me (Robert Takaguchi) at 403-752-4012.

After having discussions with the accountant, we have decided to only send out "Tax Receipts" once a year. Whether it be a Building Fund receipt or a normal years donation, you will receive the receipt at the end of the fiscal year. This decision was reached to make the book keeping more expedient and more accurate.

In Gassho,
 Treasurers Gordon Saruwatari & Robert Takaguchi

O-Chigo Parade

"Chigo" refers to children ages three to twelve. ("o" is an honorific prefix.) According to tradition, noble households sent their children to temples for their education. While attending, children participated in the temple festivals and ceremonies, often dressing up to represent celestial beings.

Both boys and girls wear a robe with long, wide sleeves worn over a hakama or loose trousers, and the ancient make-up of the nobility which consists of two black dots just above the space between the eyebrows. The costume is differentiated between boys and girls by a stiff hat for boys and a crown of the phoenix bird for girls.

The BTSA will provide an opportunity for children to participate in this ceremonial procession at its dedication ceremony to be held on April 26, 2009 at 9:45am at BTSA. (Please come by 9am for preparation and photos in the dharma room.)

Those who are interested in participating in O-Chigo Parade please contact Maya Ichikawa, Brenda Ikuta or Rev. Izumi