

Hikari the Light



March 2009

Casino

"If the single thought of joy out of entrusting mind to Amida, true and real, is awakened, though blind passions are not severed, one will be able to experience a realm of peace and bliss." –Shoshige



I often receive calls from strangers inquiring about the location of our new temple and I usually answer, "one block south of the casino building near Highway No. 3". However, those who do not gamble ask, "Where is the casino?", and those who like to gamble ask, "Which casino are you referring to?" Now I realize that our new temple is actually in the vicinity of two casinos. I do not gamble, however I sometimes go to the casino for lunch since it is within easy walking distance. I do not gamble because it has been my experience that I rarely, if ever, win. When I was attending school in Tokyo I sometimes played pachinko just to pass the time; I do not recall ever winning. Sometimes, I played mah-jongg with friends for small amounts of money - but I always lost. I know I am not good at gambling. I remember someone once said that a human life is a gambling of gain and

loss. No wonder I am not successful man, at least in material sense.

I think the casino symbolizes our secular life in that we are always caught up by "gain and loss" and "victory and defeat." When we gain or get ahead, we are happy and we love what we are doing. However, when we are defeated we are sad and we hate what we are doing. This is our secular life - our mundane world. "Mundane" means routine, that is we keep repeating the same pattern of "gain or loss", victory or defeat", "laughter or tears" and "love or hate" from morning till night just like a pendulum that swings ceaselessly from right to left and left to right. The pendulum of secular life is suspended from our ego attachment. Our ego attachment creates the world of duality in which we are caught up in the swinging between gain and loss or victory and defeat and thereby struggle, worry and fear. Our attachment to ego is creating the secular and mundane world we live in right now and it will continue to create our future.

We must meet and hear Amida's Vow. Amida's true and real call beckons ego-ridden beings, such as ourselves, out of the realm of dualistic delusions. Shinran Shonin joyfully proclaimed that when one has boarded the ship of Amida's Vow of great compassion, our struggles, uneasiness and fears, along with our dualistic mind will all be transformed, without negating the secular and mundane life, into enlightenment of oneness. Those who hear Amida's Vow

expressed in Namo Amida Butsu while in this secular and mundane world are the ones who become truly successful and happy individuals in this life.

In Gassho,
Yasuo Izumi, Kaikyoshi-Minister

仏様はどこに

若い人から「仏様は一人ひとりの心の中にあるのではないのですか。何故、仏像を拝むのですか」と訊ねられました。結構多くの方は、仏教徒は「仏像を拜んでいる」と思っておられるのではないのでしょうか。私たちは、仏像を通して、仏様の心を拝んでいるのです。では、その仏様は私たちの心の中にいらっしゃるのですか、それとも外にいらっしゃるのですかと、問われますと、皆様はどう返事をされますか。私は、「仏様が私の中にいらっしゃるのか、外にいらっしゃるのかよく分かりませんが、仏様は私とともにいて下さることは確かです」と返事をいたします。

私という存在は、毎日、考えたり、思ったり、話をしたり、行動したり。。。しています。仏様のみ教えではこれを「業」(行為)といいます。私は「業」そのものなのです。そして残念ながらあまりほめられた私(業)ではありません。み教えを聞かしていただいて、そのことがわかってきました。南無阿弥陀仏の仏様の呼び声の中に、自分が少しづつ見えてきました。お経には、仏様という方は「もろもろの生きとし生けるものために不請の友となる」とあります。私が、どうぞお出で下さい、とお願いする前から、私とともにおられて、いつも心配して下さいているのです。合掌。いずみ

**BUDDHIST TEMPLE
OF SOUTHERN ALBERTA**
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PRESIDENT'S NOTEBOOK

David Major

This will be my last President's Update. I want to thank all of the members and the directors of the Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta for their generosity and efforts in the past several years. Each of you deserves credit for taking some enormous strides toward amalgamation. This has been an extraordinary example of cooperation and compromise. We have come a long way. In the past four years we have agreed to proceed with the amalgamation of four temples. We put into place a framework for cooperation; we have sold the existing temples and built a new one. In short, we have done what many said was impossible.

Lest we get too complacent though, we still have lots of work to do. The next steps are to strengthen and build our membership. Not everyone who was a member of the original temples has joined the Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta so we have to reach out to them. Inclusion has to be our new motto. We cannot be satisfied that a high proportion of members have joined. We need to enlarge our circle so that everyone finds a home in the new temple.

I used to wonder why there was no distinction in the word "Sangha" to distinguish the people versus the place. It can mean the temple building and it can mean the congregation. More recently I have realized that being part of the Sangha means that I have to be "of this Place". This means I have to feel a sense of belonging to the physical geography of the temple as well as to the other members of the congregation. I cannot be a member of the Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta if I don't feel that I am of southern Alberta. So my head and my feet both have to be here. My head or my heart cannot be somewhere else and my feet in Canada.

I am an immigrant but still I feel that I am of southern Alberta. This is necessary to be a member of the Sangha of the Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta.

Another important aspect of being part of the Sangha is the Canadian understanding of harmony. Harmony happens when we allow each other to hold and to voice a variety of opinions. We talk and negotiate until we find a place of compromise that allows everyone to feel "of this place". Harmony happens when everyone feels that they have carved out a place in the Great Circle and that they feel at home in "this Place", both geographically and demographically. That is how the Sangha has to develop in the Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta so that we include everyone.

It is time for a new skill set in the Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta. The engineers and project managers have built the skeleton and now we need the sociologists to help us strengthen and broaden the Circle. Canadians are masters at building complex associations and consensus so that new comers feel at home in "this Place". The future of the Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta, indeed of the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada, depends on the success of this endeavour.

I urge all of our members to embrace this new direction. We have three responsibilities. The first is to work hard and with humility to contribute to the well being of the Sangha. Second is our responsibility to ourselves. We need to express our ideas and opinions to the directors and the other members so that we can all benefit from our collective wisdom. Third is our responsibility to the community at large. Jodo Shinshu Buddhism has the potential for helping many people in our community who are seeking the peace and enlightenment that Buddhism offers. Each of us has the responsibility to open our hearts and share our knowledge to those who seek answers.

TOBAN UPDATE

The Toban system consists of five working groups that keep the temple running smoothly. Tasks include day to day maintenance and set up, cleaning, preparation of the naijin for services, refreshments and meals for meetings, services and special events. Thanks to the Toban leaders, who coordinated activities for the months of January and February as we moved in and began to adjust to the new temple.

Toban 1 will be responsible for the month of March. Please help out as much as you are able.

Members include:

Lilly Oishi, Toshiko Nakahama, Janet Hinatsu, Neil Hinatsu, Fudge/Hector Hinatsu, Marie/Tom Hirashima, Lorita/Akira Ichikawa, Maya Ichikawa/Marko Hilgersom, Andrew Ichikawa/Tahirih Rempel, Sam Kounosu, May Nishikawa, Kim/Frank Ohno, May Ohno, Setsuko/Kaz Ohno, Jean Okamura, Terry/Peter Savage, Toshino Shigemi, Chuck/Tom Tajiri, Mas Terakita, Reiko Takeyasu/Elmer Bollick, Jean Tatabe, Dorothy/Suzi Tomita, Yoko/Tak Tsujita

Manju-making dates are March 2, 14, 27 and April 4. Please pick up bagged sugar and azuki beans for preparation, if you haven't already done so.

Chow Mein Supper Work Schedule is posted on the side of the refrigerator. Please sign up to work many hours as you can. This will provide a balanced workload to complete the tasks.

NEW TEMPLE DEDICATION EVENTS April 25 & 26

Banquet Saturday, April 25, 2009

Main Pavilion, Exhibition Grounds

5:00 PM Cash Bar/6:00 PM Dinner with music by the Herb Hicks Trio with Andrew Ichikawa

Entertainment to follow

RSVP by April 2, 2009

Reserve now with John or Donna Dubbelboer
27 Mt Blakiston Pl. West, Lethbridge, AB T1K 6M4
403.381.7643 or email: jdubbelboer@shaw.ca
Additional registration forms will also be available at the temple.

There is no charge but donations will be gratefully accepted

Dedication Service Sunday, April 26, 2009

Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta

9:00 AM Ochigo preparation and photos - dharma room

9:30 AM Seating for Service

9:45 AM Ochigo Procession*

10:30 AM Service with Reverend S. Makino,
Toronto Buddhist Temple

Lunch Following Service

*Nine ministers will participate. Children (Chigo) ages three to twelve are welcome to join in this ceremonial procession. Ceremonial costume will be provided as will guidance for dressing the children. Please contact Rev. Izumi (yasuo123@telus.net), Brenda Ikuta or Maya Ichikawa (scratchykawa@gmail.com) for more information if you are interested in having your child or grandchild participate in the Ochigo procession.

MUSICAL DHARMA

Katie Nakagawa and Lorita Ichikawa, with the generous assistance of the Living Dharma Centre, were among 30 music and choir directors who attended The Dharma of Music workshop at the Jodo Shinshu Center and Buddhist Temple in Berkeley, February 20-22. A weekend of workshops, services and activities was filled with singing and music-making while learning gathas old, new and remixed. Musical Dharma included discussion of Jodo Shinshu origins, history, traditions and innovations. Participants were encouraged to try new ideas and

introduce a variety of gathas into temple services. The workshop was presented by the Buddhist Churches of America, Center for Buddhist Education.

An e-mail network has been set up to continue sharing music, ideas and various activities. Interested music coordinators from the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada will be offered resources from this workshop and invited to be part of the music dharma network. Those interested are asked to contact:

Lorita at 403-327-1668
or lorita.ichikawa@gmail.com



NEW ACTIVITIES

Two new temple activities, Gentle Yoga for Seniors and Creative Movement and Art for Children, will be offered in May and June. These classes are open to both BTSA members and the community.

Gentle Yoga, led by Val Kunimoto is for older seniors and would be especially helpful for those with limited physical abilities. The class will allow participants to relax physically and mentally using gentle exercises while sitting in a chair, standing, lying down or using a wall for support. It will include breathing, gentle stretching, sitting meditation, and full relaxation. It is not expected that participants have any previous experience. The Gentle Yoga series will be offered for five Mondays, May 4, 11, 25 and June 1 and 8 from 11 am to 12 noon.

Creative Movement and Art, led by Tasha Damiant, is focused on helping each child reflect his/her own unique creativity. The class integrates yoga, improvised movement, art, meditation and quiet time. Children will be from 6 to 10 years old. Parents may attend with their child, but this is not a requirement. The Creative Movement and Art series will be offered for six Fridays, May 1, 8, 22, 29 and June 5, 12 from 1:30 to 3:30 pm.

Both Val and Tasha are highly qualified leaders, with extensive experience in their respective areas and have generously offered their time for BTSA. Interested participants are asked to register for the entire series and brochures will be available shortly. There is no fee for these classes, however suggested donations will be used for materials, supplies and leader honorarium.

For further information contact lorita.ichikawa@gmail.com or Lorita at 327-1668.

BTSA FUNDRAISING UPDATE as of February, 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

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(New donors indicated in bold print)

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- Grace Nishimura and family in memory of Takenori Nishimura
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The BTSA greatly appreciates all contributions. 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

PLEDGE FORM I wish to support the Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta

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TOTAL CONTRIBUTION _____ I wish for my pledge to remain confidential _____

_____ Monthly Instalments of \$ _____ for _____ years _____ Yearly instalments of \$ _____ for _____ years

_____ One-time Donation of \$ _____ Notation (eg. *In memory of*) _____

Signature _____ Date _____



During the month of February, the dharma class began meeting for a Sunday childrens' service that coincides with the 10:30am service in the main hondo. It has been an enjoyable experience with regular attendance. The ages have ranged from one to seven years of age. These services will continue. Children can come straight to the dharma room at the North side of the temple. Older youth are encouraged to come as well to assist dharma teachers, read stories and contribute ideas.



Dharma students enjoy the parachute in the common area. Charlotte reads a book to engaged listeners.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO CHAIR A SERVICE?

Would you like to participate a little more in the temple service? Would you like to be the chair of a service? It's easy. Chairing a service essentially means you are leading the congregation through the steps of the service. The Religious Committee has developed a step-by-step guide which is easy to follow.

It provides the order of service, choice of gathas and outlines the choices of recitations. Chairing a service is wonderful way to be engaged in your temple. Call Renae at 328-1580 or email renaeb@telus.net to have your name added to the schedule. She will also guide you through the process (if this is your first time) and be on hand at the service to help out if needed.

BUDDHIST WORD OF THE MONTH MONTO SHIKISHO (sash)

This is equivalent to the wagesa that a minister wears (note Rev. Izumi's in the above photo). It is a decorative shoulder cloth, symbolic of a monk's patchwork robe, that is worn by lay members of the Jodo Shinshu sect. There is a front and a back to a Monto Shikisho to wear it correctly. Everyone is encouraged to wear their Monto Shikisho at service.



GALT MUSEUM BUDDHIST SHRINE PROJECT

Research into history reveals importance of Taber Buddhist Church

Earlier this year, the Galt Museum & Archives received a donation of the Taber Buddhist Church Shrine – as a result of the closure and sale of Buddhist churches in Taber and Raymond and two Lethbridge-based churches as the congregation prepares to consolidate under one new roof in Lethbridge.

A \$12,000 project grant from the Alberta Museums Association to document and register the Taber Buddhist Shrine and the surrounding spiritual and cultural community has presented Summer Collections Assistant April Matisz a challenging but rewarding task – she discovered early on that the Taber Buddhist Church has been researched far less extensively than the Lethbridge or Raymond churches.

To begin, Matisz researched anything she could find about the Taber Buddhist Church, and received advice and resources from professors in the History, Sociology, Native American Studies, and Religious Studies departments at the University of Lethbridge to establish the best way to organize and conduct the project. David Major, president of the Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta (BTSA), helped Matisz get in touch with many of Church's past members and reverends.

“We are extremely grateful to everyone involved for their generous support,” says Collections Technician Kevin MacLean who is supervising the project work. “The project, to date, represents one of the steepest learning curves ever experienced by the Collections Department. No artifact research program of this scale or scope has ever occurred in the past. In addition to developing a research methodology and a list of relevant contact persons, April has also developed a list of questions tailored to the unique histories of each of the interviewees.”

All the initial work is paying off. In recent weeks, Matisz has conducted interviews in Lethbridge, Coaldale, Taber, Bow Island and Calgary with people ranging in age from 60-90 who have provided hours of stories, information and personal, church-related photographs dating back to the Church's inception.

“Perhaps the most interesting thing I've found is how the Buddhist churches in Southern Alberta acted as social as well as spiritual hubs,” says Matisz. “Many Taber Buddhist Church members were farmers, living in the remote countryside. Church events and activities provided entertainment and a place for people to socialize.” Many such events occurred before personal television sets were available.

“In the 1950's, the Buddhist Churches in Southern Alberta would invite a film projectionist to show Japanese films,” says Matisz. During this time churches would also hold concerts, dancing and plays during the long winter months, and were very popular among the Taber, Raymond, and Picture Butte Buddhist Churches.

For the remainder of the summer, Matisz will continue to interview others to complete the background history and importance of the Taber Buddhist Church. She will then research, catalogue and report on all of the Shrine items included in the donation. Eventually, the Shrine, the photographs and research materials will be incorporated into a permanent display at the Galt Museum to further visitor appreciation of Japanese Canadian culture and the region's rich human diversity, and to enhance the Museum's reputation as a topical research, study and educational centre.

The Buddhist Shrine compliments the existing, nationally significant Japanese Canadian collection at the Galt Museum. It totals over 1000 objects ranging from materials referenced in Joy Kogawa's acclaimed book *Obasan* to artifacts associated with the area's Japanese pioneers. Based on the strength of the collection, the Galt was able to develop the 2002 temporary exhibit *Nikkei Tapestry*. This exhibit highlighting the story of the Japanese in southern Alberta is the basis of a traveling exhibit, *Nikkei Journey*, currently under development at the Galt.

For more information call April Matisz at 403.320.3154 or amatisz@galtmuseum.com. Galt Museum & Archives activities available at www.galtmuseum.com or call 320-GALT.

Memorial Donation as of Jan 27/09 to Feb 26/09

Judy Fukushima	Shirley Higa	Tom & Marie Hirashima
Jim & Aya Hironaka	Tomi Hisaoka	Ichio & Rumiko Ibuki
Sue Kado	Tomiko Kobayashi	Setsuko Matsugi
May Nishikawa	Sway & Totsy Nishimura	Mac & Reyko Nishiyama
Tak & Jean Oga	Frank & Kimi Ohno	Lilly Oishi
Roy & Pat Sassa	Peter & Terry Savage	Nobby Sudo
Mas & Miyo Sunada	Noris & Sachiko Taguchi	Tom Tajiri
Roy Takeda	Reiko Takeyasu	Morison Tanaka
Cliff & Mary Thomas	Shizuo & Dorothy Tomita	Joy & Sumi Tomiyama
Wanda Tomiyama	Fujio & Yoshiko Tsukishima	May Ohno
Shig & Katie Nakagawa		
Total.....	\$1360.00	

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.**

2009 March and April 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.

MARCH

- 01 SUN 10:30pm** Monthly Shotsuki Memorial Service 祥月法要
08 SUN 10:30pm Regular Service / BTSA Annual General Meeting
11 WED 7:00pm BTSA Board Meeting
15 SUN 10:30pm Regular Service
19 THURS 2:00pm Talk at Lethbridge College
22 SUN 10:30am Spring Equinox Ohigan Service 彼岸会
28 SAT Spring Bazaar
29 SUN 10:30am Regular Service
31 TUES 8:30am Talk at Lethbridge College

APRIL

- 05 SUN 10:30am** Monthly Shotsuki Memorial Service 祥月法要
12 SUN 10:30am Buddha's Birth Day-Hanamatsuri 花祭り
19 SUN 10:30am Regular Service
22 WED - 24 FRI Ministers' Meeting
25 SAT JSBTC AGM & BTSA Dedication Banquet
26 SUN Dedication & Memorial Service

Any questions or requests?

Please contact your minister- (403)-382-7024

REGULAR EVENTS

*All are welcome to join the **Study/Discussion Group** on Sundays after morning service and tea. The purpose of meeting is to deepen our understanding and appreciation of Buddha's teachings, study the Dharma and facilitate discussion. (勉強会)

Please contact Renae Barlow (renaeb@telus.net)
 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

Chow Mein Supper & Bazaar

The BTSA's Chow Mein Supper and Bazaar will be held March 28, 2009 from 4:00-6:30 p.m. Tickets are \$9.00.

The Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada Women's Federation have been collecting used stamps from Canada as well as other countries for a number of years. The stamps are given to the **Save the Children Fund**. In 2007, \$155 was received from the stamps collected - for every dollar raised the Federal Government contributed three dollars so \$155 grew to \$620. We also collect foreign coins for UNICEF.

Please save your stamps and coins and give them to Donna Dubbelboer or Reiko Bolick before the JSBTCWF AGM in April.

Nenju (Juzu) Repair Workshop 念珠(数珠)修理

Friday, April 25 Dharma School Class room
 2:00pm to 4:00pm. Everyone Welcome!
 Do you have a broken Nenju? Please bring it and learn how to repair it at the workshop.

Nomination for the BTSA Board is open now!

Please nominate anyone you think is a good candidate for the BTSA Board. Please contact BTSA President, David Major. Nominations will also be accepted at the BTSA Annual General Meeting which will be held after Sunday Service on March 8.

To: The members of the BTSA

From: The Treasurers

Gordon Saruwatari & Robert Takaguchi

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.

2009 COMING EVENTS

MARCH

- 02** Manju Making
08 Annual General Meeting
14 Manju Making
27 Manju Making
28 Chow Mein Supper
 Bake Sale/Bazaar

APRIL

- 12** Hanamatsuri Service
25 Dedication Banquet
26 Dedication
 & Memorial Service
25-26 Jodo Shinshu Buddhist
 Temples of Canada AGM

MAY

- 03** Parent's Day Potluck Lunch

JUNE

- 21** Picnic and Keiro-kai

JULY

- 18** Bon Odori and Bazaar
19 Obon Service

OCTOBER

- 17** Chow Mein Supper/Bake
 Sale/Bazaar

NOVEMBER

- 13-15** Alberta Buddhist Conference
21-22 Mochitsuki
29 Noodle Making

DECEMBER

- 31** New Year's Service Bell
 Ringing at Nikka Yuko
 Japanese Garden