



July/August 2011

Who is in a cage?

While I was putting old books away I found a well-thumbed children's song book. When I opened it, all fond memories came back to me. In the summer break during school years, I used to visit remote areas of Japan with my friends to hold gatherings for children and spend time with them by showing paper plays, presenting hand-made puppet stories, playing games and singing songs. One of the songs we often sang and played was *Kagome* which means "cage". The English translation goes like this:

Kagome, Kagome, hello Mr. Bird in the cage. When do you come out of it? In the dark before daybreak, cranes and turtles have slid away! Who is standing just behind?

It is a short and simple, somewhat meaningless, song. Just imagine several children, hand in hand in a circle, singing while walking leisurely around a child sitting in the centre of the circle with eyes covered. When the song ends, the child who is "it" has to guess who is standing behind him or her. If the guess is right, then that person is "it" and moves to the centre. But, if the guess is wrong, the first child continues to sit in the centre and the song is repeated. It is a kind of hide-and-seek song. We would sing loud and play together until dark. I wonder how children in Japan spend their time these days. I wonder if they are taught this kind of song by their parents or teachers. At any rate, I used to sing and play together so innocently with children that I never questioned the

song's real meaning. Many children's songs in Japan have a Buddhist flavour. It was much later that I found that the song was also deeply influenced by Buddhism. Let me share the meaning behind the words.

Hello, Mr. Bird in the cage. Mr. Bird in the cage is none other than you or me. We are sitting in the center of the circle covering our eyes. We are not able to see the world beyond ourselves. Buddhism is the teaching for us, you and me, who must first investigate ourselves in the light of Amida Buddha. We, however, tend to listen to the teachings merely to gather information as if it were a fire on the other shore.

When do you come out of it? This is a calling of Amida Buddha of wisdom and compassion to us, individually and personally. The Buddha is asking us, "How long do you want to stay there?" He is calling "Please come out!" The Buddha wants us to get out of the world of delusion, created by our ego-mind.

In the dark before daybreak, crane and turtle have slid away. Our ego-mind creates a dualistic world, you and I, who are symbolically described as crane and turtle. The crane is elegant with long legs and able to fly. The turtle is not elegant with short legs and walks slowly. We always compare ourselves to others, compete and struggle against each other and get frustrated. The concept of I and you is just for our convenience. But we become attached to one side, Me. We create the cage of "Me" and are bound by it. Without knowing ourselves, we continue to stay in the cage, in the dark night of ignorance. But by some kind of encountering and opportunity, our ego-self, creator of the cage, is reflected and broken through by the light of Amida. We are thrown to the realm of a truly bright and broad world, the world of oneness by the power beyond the small ego-self.

No more comparison. You are O.K. and I am O.K. as we are. Crane is beautiful. So is turtle. We are not bothered by comparisons any more.

Who is standing just behind? Who is behind us? Although we are not able to see with our eyes, Amida Buddha is there. Infinite wisdom and boundless compassion have been behind us, with us, calling us and nurturing us all the time. We are returning to the realm of true awakening together hand in hand! *Namo Amida Butsu!*

In Gassho,
Yasuo Izumi, Minister of BTSA

「情報集め」

二ヶ月ぶりで妻がポートランドから戻ってきました。娘の一人が妊娠中に足を折り、その手伝いに行ってきたのです。無事に女兒を出産しました。いろいろな土産話の中で、考えさせられる話を聞きました。足を折りましたから、当然、救急車で病院に運ばれました。救急車の中でのことです。三ヶ所の複雑骨折で一部が皮膚から出ていたということなのですが、係りの人は、手当はさておき、まず健康保険の情報について訊ね、書き込んだ後、署名をしてください、と言ったというのです。手続き上必要なことなのでしょうが、聞きながら少々驚きました。そして、仏典に出てくる、毒矢に刺さった男の話の思い出しました。ある男が毒矢に刺さり、友達がその毒矢を抜こうとするのですが、その男は「待て、抜く前に、誰が毒矢を放ったのか、矢はどのようなものが使われているのか」と次々に質問するのです。そして、男の曰く「これらの情報を知った後に矢を抜くように」と。「情報集め」は昔も今も変わらないようです。

「仏教徒になる」あるいは「仏教徒である」ということは、仏教の情報を集め、その知識を持ち、賢くなるということではではありません。「私は、まず何をすべきか」を知り、仏前で「自己を問う」というところにあるのです。いよいよ、み教えに耳を傾けましょう。合掌 泉

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BTSA NOTES

July marks the beginning of the Obon season which is particularly significant to Jodo Shinshu Buddhists to remember those who preceded us in death and to honor their memory with gratitude. By the time this Hikari is received, Izumi sensei probably would have begun his visitations to area cemeteries with Brooks on July 3.

Visitations also are scheduled July 10 at Magrath at 10 a.m. and on the same day at 11 a.m. at Temple Hill (Raymond); July 17 at Mountain View Cemetery in Lethbridge at 1 p.m., followed by the Obon service at BTSA at 2:30 p.m.; and July 24 at Taber Cemetery at 1 p.m.

It is a joyous time for family reunions, complete with the bon odori (dance) on July 16 at Galt Gardens which is open to the public. We look forward to everyone's participation in what is referred to as a "dance of joy", so called because a disciple of the Buddha broke into an improvised dance when he learned his deceased mother was released from an after-life realm of hungry ghosts. Odori practices at the temple continue Mondays at 6:30 p.m. through the Monday of the week the event.

A friendly request to every member for all the help we can get to set up the yagura (the stage holding the drum and instructor) and related decorations at the Galt Gardens at 1 p.m. on July 16. Helpers for the various activities also will be needed.

Additionally, please keep in mind that the monthly memorial (shotsuki) services for July and August will be held in conjunction with the Obon service on July 17. The occasion also will observe hatsubon (first Obon following the death of a family member).

Threatening skies didn't deter about 75 members and friends from the annual picnic at the Rotary Sports Park shelter in north Lethbridge. The rain let up long enough to allow everyone to have a pleasant meal, following a brief Sunday service; to visit and chat with one another; to permit youth and tots to play games and whack a piñata; and to enjoy bingo.

Thanks to a number of people for making the picnic a success:

- Roland Ikuta for coordinating all the events, including calling bingo games with the aid of three young helpers, for getting the prizes and for looking after the KFC order.
- Toban 3 under Pat Sassa's guidance for the rice, takuan, tea and the numerous items—plates, forks, spoons, etc.—to insure a pleasant experience.
- Maya Ichikawa for looking after children's activities.
- everyone contributing to the potluck lunch with delicious dishes.

We were one of the first groups to use this new facility, still with

incomplete playground areas which must have been tempting to but out of reach of the youngsters. Radiant heaters helped ward off the cool air, and the undercover spacious area kept away the raindrops which were few during our time there. As if on schedule, however, heavy rains returned just as everyone was leaving the grounds.

BTSA thanks Mark Saruwatari for keeping the lawns trim, as he has done since the temple opened. Please be reminded that Mark looks after only the grass. Lumbini's Garden is tended by volunteers. Thanks to Jan and Tak Okamura who did most of the weeding this spring, along with Joe and Sumi Tomiyama, Pat and Roy Sassa, Sway and Totsy Nishimura, and Izumi sensei.

The board at its June meeting :

- decided several building actions: to have a temple doorbell with a turnoff switch installed for an estimated \$500 to \$600; to install retractable spray hoses on the sinks on the kitchen island; to get estimates to rewire electrical outlets in the multipurpose room and to install lights over the woks, both to facilitate our fund-raising event activities;
- agreed to award a reimbursement grant of \$1,000 to any successful BTSA applicant of the Japan Youth Tour sponsored by the JSBTC;
- approved \$400 for providing transportation on a trial basis for and to encourage attendance from members in Taber and Coaldale to one special temple event if there are at least eight persons who show an interest;
- voted to invite Dr. Jeff Wilson, assistant professor of religious studies and East Asian studies, specializing in Buddhist traditions, at Renison University College, University of Waterloo, Ontario, to speak at the temple on Oct. 21; and,
- decided to purchase a Donarius software package for BTSA use through the JSBTC.

Details of the foregoing are available in the BTSA minutes which are on file in the temple board room and open to all members.

Reminders that this issue of the Hikari is for July/August and there will not be a separate August edition. The next issue will be the September number. The board meets on July 13 and takes a break during August. Its meeting thereafter will be on September 8.

September will be a busy month and greater details will be forthcoming about Socho Grant Ikuta's Sunday talk on Sept. 18, following a JSBTC ministerial meeting during the week of Sept. 13; news about BTSA's casino turn on Sept. 13 and 14; and the next movie night on Sept. 24.

Akira Ichikawa

DON CASTRO Sensei of Seattle; ABC Guest Speaker



Don Castro sensei of the Seattle Betsuin is the featured speaker for the 33rd annual Alberta Buddhist Conference that runs on Oct. 28 through 30 at the Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta.

Castro sensei, the rinban or head minister of the temple, has been a Buddhist minister for 32 years and served at temples in San Francisco and Sebastopol, California before transferring to the Seattle Betsuin in 1986. Visit the temple site: <http://www.seattlebetsuin.com/>

At his suggestion, the ABC organizing committee selected a theme that emphasizes the value of giving in society: "Pay It Forward: Dana in Daily Life." (Japanese: "Ho-on Kansha" 報恩感謝 ほうおんかんしゃ) Sensei also has been closely connected with ecological concerns as they relate to Jodo Shinshu. Visit his EcoSangha site - <http://ecosangha-seattle.blogspot.com/>

The ABC has asked sensei to speak three times, including a public lecture on the first night of the ABC. James Martin sensei of the Calgary Buddhist Temple and our resident minister, Izumi sensei, also will participate in presentations and discussions. Detailed information will be available as the time for the conference approaches.

Meanwhile, members and others are asked to register, the entire cost being \$65, which includes lunch and a banquet on Saturday and a lunch on Sunday, all meals catered. The fee also includes several coffee breaks and loads of Sangha fellowship.

Please see the accompanying form to register.

Chow Mein Supper Addendum

The chow mein supper on May 14 netted \$16,932.08, on a gross income of \$20,647. Thanks to everyone for their untiring work during this major temple fund-raiser. We also acknowledge with gratitude donations of \$500 from Regent Restaurant (Wayne Kwan) and \$200 from Norris Hironaka to the event.

ALBERTA BUDDHIST CONFERENCE

October 28, 29 & 30, 2011

Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta
470 – 40th St. S.
Lethbridge, Alberta T1J 3Z5

PAY IT FORWARD: *Dana in Daily Life*

REGISTRATION FORM (Please Print)

First Name(s): _____

Last Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ Postal Code: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Church / Temple: _____

Children's Names & Ages (if applicable): _____

Special food requirements or additional information: _____

Cost is \$65/person for the entire Conference

Children under 3, free; ages 3 to 10, \$10; over 10, \$30, same as the cost of an additional meal. Please indicate if a vegetarian meal is preferred for the banquet.

(Cheques payable to: Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta)

Please email or mail registration prior to October 14, 2011:

ABC Registration

c/o John/Donna Dubbelboer

Email: jdubbelboer@shaw.ca

27 Mt. Blakiston Place W.

Phone: 403-381-7643

Lethbridge, AB T1K 6M4

Hotel Information: Rooms has been reserved until Oct. 14, 2011 at two motels near the temple. Please indicate you will be attending the ABC. (1) **Hampton Inn & Suites**, 4073 2nd Av. S., Lethbridge T1J 1Z2, Tel: 1-403-942-2142, Fax: 1-403-942-2707, \$109 per night plus applicable taxes for conference delegates. (2) **Quality Inn & Suites**, 4070 2nd Ave South, Lethbridge T1J 3Z2, Tel: 1-888-331-644, Fax: 1-403-331-6442, email: gm.cn828@choicehotels.com, \$ 95.99 + tax per night, based on double occupancy.

2011 Membership Form

- Full Membership (\$100 for each member) Student Membership

Last Name: _____ First Names(s): _____

Last Name: _____ First Names(s): _____

Home Address: _____

City, Province, Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ Cell: _____

Email: _____

- Check to receive The Hikari newsletter by Email only.

Please send this form and your remittance to:
Buddhist Temple of Southern Alberta Treasurer
470 40th Street South
Lethbridge, AB, T1J 3Z5

LET'S EXPAND THE CIRCLE OF THE DHARMA!

CHAIR SCHEDULE July & August 2011

Jul 03

Brooks Cemetary

At BTSa

Chair: Sway Nishimura

Audio: John Dubbelboer

Jul 10

Magrath/Temple Hill Cemetary

At BTSa

Chair: John Dubbelboer

Audio: Akira Ichikawa

Jul 17 Obon 2:30pm

Shotsuki for Jul & Aug

Chair: Brenda Ikuta

Audio: Sway Nishimura

Jul 24 Taber Cemetary

At BTSa

Chair: Mas Terakita

Audio: Lorita Ichikawa

Jul 31 (Rev. Izumi is away)

Chair: Robert Takaguchi

Audio: Roland Ikuta

Aug 07

Chair: Pat Sassa

Audio: Tak Okamura

Aug 14

Chair: Sway Nishimura

Audio: John Dubbelboer

Aug 21

Chair: John Dubbelboer

Audio: Akira Ichikawa

Aug 28

Chair: Brenda Ikuta

Audio: Sway Nishimura

TOBAN UPDATE

Toban Schedule

Please help out anytime you are available but especially when your Toban is scheduled.

July Toban 1

August Toban 2

September Toban 3

Toban 3 Thanks to Lila Takeda for pitching in with Pat Sassa to coordinate Toban 3 in June.

Happily, Pat will once again take on the leadership of Toban 3.

Toban 1 is up for the month of **July** and along with regular tasks will prepare and serve supper following the O Bon Service. Several memorial services have been booked as well as a wedding July 15, events requiring naijin preparation.

PROGRAMS including Yoga and Breathing will continue in the fall. Watch for specific dates in the September Hikari.

Informal Sunday services will be held at BTSa during July when Izumi sensei is attending cemetery visitations. The chairs are asked to have something ready for a dharma message, e.g., reading an article or a talk prepared by a member, or arrange to have someone give a talk. Apologies for any inconvenience caused by June's Hikari when we noted there would be no regular services in the July calendar.

MC designates: if you're unable to chair on your assigned date or have made other arrangements on your own, please inform Sway Nishimura, religious chairman. Thank you.

BUDDHIST Q & A

What is a juzu (数珠)?

Juzu is also called nenju (念珠). The juzu is made by stringing together 108 beads. Buddhists usually use a small juzu or nenju with smaller number of beads. It is a reminder of a human's blind passions of which there are 108 in accordance with Buddhism. The string is a reminder of Buddha's compassion. The juzu or nenju is an important article for Buddhists in showing respect and gratitude to Buddha's teaching and must not be thrown around. Rennyō of the Hongwanji encouraged us to use juzu or nenju when we receive the food of Buddha's teachings. Japanese put an "o" before the noun to express respect. Thus we call this article o-juzu or o-nenju. (Y.I.)

BON ODORI Practice



BUDDHIST TEMPLE OF SOUTHERN ALBERTA



JAPANESE SUMMER DANCE FESTIVAL AND BAZAAR

TRADITIONAL JAPANESE DRESS . MUSIC & DANCING
GLOBAL DRUMS! U OF L TAIKO GROUP . KIDS' ACTIVITIES
SNO-CONES . JAPANESE FOODS . T-SHIRTS



Shotsuki Hoyo

June 2011

Shinako Higa

June Hinatsu

Ayako Imahashi

Mitsuyoshi Ito

Katoye Maruno

Yutaka & Chiyomi Matsuno

Mr & Mrs Mark Murakami

Shig & Katie Nakagawa

Mitsuko Oga

Frank & Kimie Ohno

Lilly Oishi

Tak & Jan Okamura

Yoshiye Shirakawa

Noris & Sachi Taguchi

Reiko Takeyasu

Masaye Tanaka

Shizuo & Dorothy Tomita

Joe & Sumi Tomiyama

Fujio & Yoshiko Tsukishima

Aiko Yoshihara

Total \$880.00

Anyone wishing his/her name not be acknowledged in print in the donation lists, please inform us so it may be omitted. Thank you.

World Buddhist Women's Conference and the 750th Shinran Memorial in Kyoto

Six BTSA members—Florence Senda, Sumi Tsukishima, Yoko Tsujita, Donna and John Dubbelboer and Jim Tsukishima—were among 46 Canadians attending the World Buddhist Women's Convention and the 750th commemoration of Shinran Shonin in Kyoto on May 16 and 17.

About 4,000 people came from Canada, the United States, Hawaii, Brazil, and, of course, Japan which provided the majority of delegates.

May 16 was spent at the Kyoto Pulse Plaza (Kyoto's Convention Center) with various workshops and activities such as kimono wearing, calligraphy writing, flower arrangement, tea ceremony, scented sachet making, and magic shows, followed by a marching band performance. A very simple boxed bento was provided for dinner followed by entertainment of Odori dancing by an all male dance troupe and performances by the various districts represented. The Canadian delegation sang two songs: "Namu Amida Butsu" and "I Believe" (the theme song from the Vancouver Winter Olympics).

May 17 was the Official Day for the WBW Convention. In the morning, there was an opening service followed by keynote addresses by Monshu Ohtani Koshin and Lady Ohtani Noriko. After the service, speakers followed, including Kaz Kobayashi of the Kamloops Buddhist Temple.

In the afternoon, a report was made on the WBW Delegates' Meeting held on May 15, followed by closing ceremonies where a video presentation prepared by Fujii Sensei and Toronto was shown to promote the 2015 Convention along with a brief speech by Grant Ikuta Socho. The WBW Association Flag was passed from the Japan Chapter President to the representative for Canada to much waving and cheering.

And so, a very successful 14th WBWC closed with final remarks of appreciation for everyone's participation and a safe journey home.

Earlier, on May 15, the Canadian contingent traveled to the Nishi Hongwanji-ha (our mother temple) to attend Shinran's 750th Memorial. Nine individuals represented Canada in the Engi (parade) prior to the service. It was a magnificent service to commemorate this auspicious occasion and those in attendance felt honored to be there.

Submitted by Donna Dubbelboer



CANADIANS at the 750th Memorial Commemoration of Shinran Shonin in Kyoto, led by Senseis Y. Miyakawa and T. Fujii.



CANADIAN DELEGATES to the World Buddhist Women's Conference in Kyoto, held in conjunction with the World Buddhist Women's Conference in May, 2011.

*The Buddha-dharma
does not reside
in fame and profit-making*

– Zuiken



THE BUDDHIST TEMPLE OF SOUTHERN ALBERTA
children & youth dharma classes

June 26 the Dharma class prepared Dharma Dogs and Sno-cones for lunch. The temple will be selling these items at the upcoming Bon Odori festival in July. A special than you to Roland and Brenda Ikuta for providing all the groceries and supplies, Sheila Oishi for caramelizing the onions just right, and Charlotte and Kendall for picking up the slack!



Washing hands



Cutting nori



Cutting Daikon



A lesson in making sno-cones



Watching over the grill

ANNUAL BTSA PICNIC JUNE 19



July & August 2011 Schedule 七月と八月の予定表

Monthly Shotsuki Memorial Service 祥月法要 Please bring Homyo (Buddhist Name) of your loved one. 法名をご持参ください。
July 17 Obon Service together with July & August Monthly Shotsuki Memorial Service 七月、八月祥月法要も併せて厳修されます。
There will be informal services at 10:30am every Sunday during August. Everyone Welcome!

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
JULY			7pm Taiko			1	2
	11am Brooks Cemetery Visitation 10:30am service @BTSA 3	6:30pm Bon Odori practice 4	7pm Taiko 5	6	7	8	9
	10am Magrath Cemetery Visitation 11am Temple Hill 10:30am service @BTSA 10	6:30pm Bon Odori practice 11	7pm Taiko 12	7pm BTSA Board Meeting 13	14	15	6:30pm Bon Odori in Galt Gardens (ceremony at 7pm) 16
	1pm BTSA Cemetery Visitation 2:30pm BTSA Obon Service 17	18	7pm Taiko 19	20	21	22	23
	1pm Taber 10:30am service @BTSA 24 31	10:30am Regular Service 25	7pm Taiko 26	27	28	29	30

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
AUGUST		1	2	3	4	5	6
	10:30am Regular Service 7	8	7pm Taiko 9	10	11	12	13
	10:30am Regular Service 14	15	7pm Taiko 16	17	18	19	20
	10:30am Regular Service 21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	10:30am Regular Service 28	29	30	31			