



“The Calling Voice”

Ka Leo Kāhea

VOLUME 2 • ISSUE 1 FEBRUARY 2022

Official Publication of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

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Hilo Betsuin Builds the Future with Hilo Hongwanji Preschool

By S. SANAÉ TOKUMURA

HONPA HONGWANJI
HILO BETSUIN

Hilo Hongwanji Preschool (HHP), located on the grounds of the Honpa Hongwanji Hilo Betsuin (HHHB), is a private preschool that has served the entire Hilo community since 1928.

Graduates of the school have since grown up to run major companies, own businesses, make Hawaii

FYI

Building the Future with Hilo Hongwanji Preschool Capital Campaign will remain active until summer 2022 to accommodate donors who wish to support this effort. Contributions will assure this preschool will continue to build new leaders for the next 100 years. Please contact Sandy Taniguchi at (808) 961-6677 or sandytaniguchi@gmail.com if interested in this opportunity.

laws and provide Hawaii's many communities with leadership and philanthropic support.

The groundbreaking ceremony of a \$4.5 million expansion of the school was held on Jan. 30, 2022.

At the most recent Build-

ing the Future with Hilo Hongwanji Preschool Capital Campaign cabinet meeting, campaign totals indicated that the expected project cost would likely be met by the campaign's pledges and cash. What makes this even more amazing is that the



The \$4.5 million expansion of the Hilo Hongwanji Preschool is shown in this artist's rendition. (Courtesy of Engineering Partners and Hilo Hongwanji Preschool Capital Campaign)

entire campaign is being conducted during the pandemic.

Since early 2021, capital

campaign chairs Ivan Nakano, Karen Maedo and Dr.

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In 2012, the Government of Japan recognized the Rev. Yoshiaki Fujitani for his contributions to Hawaii's Japanese American community by presenting him with The Wooden Cup with the Chrysanthemum Crest. Shown, from left, are: Rev. Yoshiaki Fujitani, wife Tomi Fujitani, Michiko Shigeeda, the wife of then-Consul General of Japan Toyoei Shigeeda, and Consul General of Japan Toyoei Shigeeda, at their Japanese Consulate residence. (Courtesy of Karleen Chinen)

ALOHA 'OE, REV. YOSHIAKI FUJITANI He Chose to Become a Minister Because He 'Saw the Need'

Editor's Note: The following remembrance by Karleen Chinen, the former and longtime editor of The Hawaii Herald, appeared in June 2021 in The Hawaii Herald. It is being reprinted with the permission of Karleen Chinen.

This is Part 2. Part 1 appeared in the first issue of Ka Leo Kāhea in November 2021.

By KARLEEN CHINEN

COMMENTARY
SPECIAL TO THE HAWAII HERALD

Yoshi's military service enabled him to complete his education at the University of Chicago on the GI Bill. He earned a master of arts degree in the history of religions and decided to become a Hongwanji minister. His father had suggested Buddhism as an area of study prior to his departure for Chicago. But, he wasn't simply following his father's advice. In his essay in JEAH, Vol. 3, Yoshi wrote that he had done some serious soul-searching while in the Army and in college. It led to his decision to become a Buddhist minister.

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"I began to feel that unless the Nisei came back to Hawaii to continue in the spread of Buddhism, then Buddhism would disappear. So, I thought I have to learn Buddhism so that I can be of some help. It was not because I was spiritually prepared, but because I saw the need," he wrote.

One of his early and most influential teachers in Japan was Dr. Gadjin Nagao, a noted scholar at Kyoto University. He also studied the various denomina-

Legislative Assembly (Giseikai) Set for Feb. 11-12

Annual Meeting of HHMH Leaders, Ministers Will Be Held on Zoom

The 110th Legislative Assembly (Giseikai) will be held on Feb. 11-12, 2022.

Because of the current situation with the COVID-19 pandemic, the Legislative Assembly (LA) will be held entirely via Zoom for the second year in a row.

The Legislative Assembly (Giseikai) is the annual meeting of ministers and leaders of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii (HHMH or Hawaii Kyodan). It is usually held in early February. HHMH ministers, officers, and board of directors attend this meeting. All active HHMH ministers attend as voting delegates. Lay voting delegates are elected to represent each district. Observers from each district are allowed.

The Legislative Assembly is the most important legislative body within the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii. The LA typically meets once a year in February, although special sessions may be called for unusual situations.

This year, the Legislative Assembly will consider the following resolutions:

1. 2022-1 2022 HHMH Budget
2. 2022-2 HHMH Bylaws Amendment Relating to Article VII: Board of Directors
3. 2022-3 Consolidation of Papaaloa Hongwanji and Honohina Hongwanji
4. 2022-4 Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii Statewide Newsletter
5. 2022-5 Honpa Hongwanji Statewide

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Honoka'a's 'Feeding Our Keiki & Kupuna' Marks Third Anniversary

By CATHERINE TARLETON

In February 2022, the Peace Committee of Honoka'a Hongwanji Buddhist Temple will celebrate the third anniversary of "Feeding Our Keiki & Kupuna," an all-volunteer community labor of love. To date, the

program has served more than 30,000 meals.

What started in 2017 as a cultural education cooking class for kids, in partnership with the Hāmākua Youth Center, expanded in 2019 into a weekly hot meal and grocery bag service for the community. After the onset of COVID-19 in March

2020, the program had to scramble when the need for meals increased from about 70 to more than 400 per week.

They converted the buffet dinner into a drive-through and walk-up routine. Social distancing, strict masking, improved ventilation and frequent

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Approximately 40 to 50 volunteers help each week with the Honoka'a Hongwanji Buddhist Temple's "Feeding Our Keiki & Kupuna." The distribution crew hands out the meals and grocery bags each Friday for the program. (Courtesy of Miles Okumura)

What's the Buddhist Role of Interdependence in Hunger



By **REV. ERIC MATSUMOTO**
BISHOP
HONPA HONGWANJI MISSION
OF HAWAII

On Dec. 11, 2021, the Bay Area Buddhist Association

sponsored an online presentation on the topic of “SDGS & Buddhism Goal 2: Zero Hunger. What can we do now for our future? — From Buddhist Perspectives.”

The main speaker for the event was the Venerable Dr. Bikkhu Bodhi, a New York-born American Buddhist monk of the Theravada tradition who lives in New York at the Chuang Yen Monastery and is the founder of the Buddhist Global Relief, a nonprofit supporting hunger and poverty relief for poor communities around the world.

Panelists included Rev. Konjin Godwin, Director of Soto Zen Buddhism Interna-

BISHOP'S CORNER

tional Center, and the abbot of Houston Zen Center, Rev. Noriaki Ito, Bishop of the Higashi Honganji North America District, and myself.

According to the Bay Area Buddhist Association, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aim — both in the present day as well as in the future — at a society in which no one is left behind.

This is a comprehensive and inclusive way that looks to resolving the 17 related topics that 193 countries of the United Nations have identified including poverty and hunger, correcting inequality, environmental

conservation, and the realization of a peaceful society.

We are planning to hold Buddhist interdenominational events to learn about how Buddhism relates to the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We hope that through this project, ministers and members will learn about Buddhism and the SDGs from each other.

I would like to share some of what I shared as a panelist from Hawaii of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, but also would like to add a few more thoughts. Needless to say, from a Buddhist perspective, regardless of our

religious affiliation or even if we do not have one, we should go to Enlightened Wisdom and Compassion for guidance and inspiration.

One of the most fundamental truths, according to the Buddha-Dharma which is increasingly gaining prominence, is interdependence. In the past, it was more common to address issues, concerns and problems individually and separately, but, the recent tendency is to see that many issues and concerns are interrelated and interconnected (and rightly so for them).

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Rev. Higa Receives TIAH Flame of Hope



Rev. Blayne Higa of the Kona Hongwanji Buddhist Temple was recently honored with the Flame of Hope Award from The Interfaith Alliance Hawai'i.

This award seeks to recognize a Hawai'i resident, who through his or her witness and actions has ignited or fanned a flame of hope in Hawai'i.

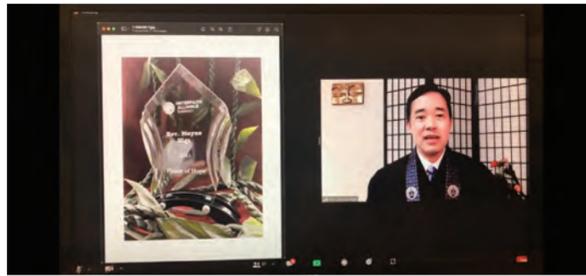
The TIAH event, which was held virtually on Dec. 4, 2021, honored the 2020 and 2021 award recipients. The theme of the 19th annual event was “Sharing

Kindness in Difficult Times.”

Rev. Higa was introduced by Rev. Masanari Yamagishi of the Kamuela Hongwanji, who called Rev. Higa his “good Dharma friend” and cited his “Aloha spirit” when both were in Berkeley in 2017. At the time, Rev. Higa was attending the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) and Rev. Yamagishi was in the Hongwanji's International Ministerial Orientation Program (IMOP), a three-month program at the Jodo Shinshu Center in Berkeley, California.

“Rev. Blayne Higa is a wonderful minister,” Rev. Yamagishi said. “He has a gentle mind and heart.”

Rev. Yamagishi said Rev. Higa's welcoming Aloha spirit was similar to the Buddha “never abandoning anyone in need.”



FYI

To view The Interfaith Alliance Hawai'i 2020 and 2021 community awards celebration, go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e55P-DSku28>

“Mahalo to my colleague Rev. Masanari Yamagishi for your kind introduction,” Rev. Higa said. “Thank you to my friends of The Interfaith Alliance Hawaii for this honor. I am deeply humbled to receive this award.”

“As a disciple of the Buddha, I strive to embody the teachings in my thoughts, through my words, and by my actions,” Rev. Higa continued. “And I believe that Wisdom

unfolds as Compassion in so many seen and unseen ways.

“In my ministry, I am guided by the Buddha's teaching of how, ‘Thousands of candles can be lighted from a single candle, and the life of the candle will not be shortened. Happiness never decreases by being shared.’

“If each of us in our own imperfect ways sincerely lived the highest aspirations of our faith, can you imagine the world that we could co-create together?”

“Each of us carries within a light — a ‘flame of hope’ — that needs to be kindled and shared with

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Kapa'a Interfaith Association Receives TIAH Award

The Kapa'a Interfaith Association was presented with the “Challenging Religious or Political Extremism Award,” from the The Interfaith Alliance Hawaii (TIAH).

The award seeks to recognize a Hawai'i-based organization or institution that — through its witness and actions — has effectively challenged religious or political extremism in Hawai'i in the past year.

The award was given to the Kapa'a Interfaith Association at the TIAH 2020 and 2021 Community Award Virtual Celebration on Dec. 4, 2021,

The Kapa'a Hongwanji Mission and the Kauai District Hongwanji ministers are part of the Kapa'a Interfaith Association.

A Surprise Encounter



Editor's Note: This is a part of the story “A Surprise Encounter” which Rev. Shindo Nishiyama wrote as a narrative series last year for Jikoen Hongwanji Newsletter and re-edited for this Ka Leo Kāhea.

REV. SHINDO NISHIYAMA
JIKOEN HONGWANJI MISSION

One afternoon, Shindo went for his daily walk in Kamehameha State Park, near Jikoen Temple in Kalihi. Under the shade of one of the large Hawaiian shower trees, he saw a man sitting. When Shindo passed in front of him, the man called, “Hello.” Shindo stopped to talk with him.

Buddha: Aloha! Can I ask you something? What is your name?

Shindo: Aloha! My name is Shindo Nishiyama. How can I help you? And what is your name?

Buddha: My original name is Siddhartha Gau-

tama, but now people call me Buddha.

Shindo: What? Are you Shakyamuni Buddha?

Buddha: Yes, I am. I was born in Lumbini Garden over 2,500 years ago.

Shindo: I know you were born around 566 B.C.E., but why are you here in Hawaii?

Buddha: I came to see what the world is like and how people are living today.

Shindo: Buddha, I have several questions for you. I've been wondering about the meaning of Nirvana. Can you explain it to me?

Buddha: Okay. But, it is very difficult to understand the concept of Nirvana. Many people imagine Nirvana as a beautiful garden with gentle breezes, colorful flowers and a perfectly blue sky where there is peace and love for all. But Nirvana is not a place. It is not somewhere you go, such as heaven or the afterlife. Nirvana is here all the time, however, it is very hard to realize it due to our ego and blinding passions.

Shindo: So, what does Nirvana mean?

Buddha: Nirvana, literally means “extinguishing or blowing out the Fires of Desire.” It is an indescribable thing, but I can say that Nirvana is completely opposite of your life right now. There is no

discrimination, hatred, jealousy, blind passions, and anger. There is no good or bad, beautiful or ugly, young or old, strong or weak, smart or dull, rich or poor. In these ways, Nirvana is the opposite of this life you live in.

Shindo: So how can I realize Nirvana?

Buddha: The path to Nirvana begins with listening to the Buddha Dharma and hearing the name of the Buddha, Namō Amida Butsu, arising from your heart. It is the path of expressing your joy and gratitude for the precious gift of your life. By listening to the Dharma you have the opportunity to see beyond your blind passions and awaken to Namō Amida Butsu. So, Shindo, please continue to walk on the path of awakening and open your heart to the Buddha Dharma. It leads you to the Name That Calls, Namō Amida Butsu.

Shindo: I will keep your guidance in my mind. Thank you, Buddha.

Buddha: You're welcome.

Shindo: I understand well. Buddha, I am so glad to have encountered the Buddha Dharma. Now I know that it has no hidden meaning. It clearly shows us how to live in this unrepeatable life! I am so lucky!

Buddha: Shindo, re-

member that your life is not only yours. You are connected to all other lives in this moment. Not because of you, but because of others, you are living in this moment. Please don't forget that you are not alone. The Dharma and the calling name of Amida Buddha, Namō Amida Butsu, are always with you, always embracing you with unconditional love. Please recite the name in joy and gratitude for every moment you grasp the preciousness of your life.

Shindo: Yes, I will keep it in my mind always. I am not alone because of Namō Amida Butsu.

Buddha: I had a very nice time in Hawaii. Please tell your temple members to listen to the Dharma and stay on the path to a meaningful life.

Shindo: Yes, I will tell them that. Are you able to return to Hawaii again in the future?

Buddha: Maybe, but you can meet me in the Buddha Dharma anytime and anywhere with Namō Amida Butsu.

Shindo: Yes, I understand. Thank you so much!

Buddha: Mahalo and Arigato for your help during my stay in Hawaii. Hawaii is a very unique place in the universe. It is so beautiful. And I loved the ono mix of foods! I love it here! I shall never forget!

Shindo: Namaste and Mahalo!

Buddha: Shindo, I shared with you the path I followed to become the “Awakened one.” Please follow the Path of the Dharma, and you will be true to me. I am so happy that you are one of my

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The Ka Leo Kāhea provides a variety of articles on Jodo Shinshu Buddhism for Hawaii residents.

The Ka Leo Kāhea, a quarterly newspaper published by the Honpa Hongwanji of Hawaii, features organizational news and experiences by Jodo Shinshu members, and a variety of articles relating to Buddhist principles.

Editorial rights are reserved to postpone, edit, or withhold from publication anything submitted which does not meet those specifications or the specifications of the editorial staff.

The meaning of any submission will not be altered, but we reserve the right to correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation when necessary.

Editor: Rev. Eric Matsumoto
Managing Editor: Jon Kawamoto
Print Production: Jeffrey Kimoto

2022 Theme 'Building Healthy Sanghas' Rings True



BY WARREN TAMAMOTO
PRESIDENT
HONPA HONGWANJI MISSION
OF HAWAII

hard to update our mailing list for the second issue. Please thank them when you have a chance.

It is rare for me to have any discussion these days without at some point touching on the topic of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a retired physician, I feel that it is my responsibility to share information about the COVID-19 pandemic with you. Safe and very effective vaccines are available and approximately 63 percent of the U.S. population has been vaccinated. A year ago, we would have been overjoyed with this achievement and

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Omicron appears to be infecting even those who have been fully vaccinated.

This reminds us of the Buddhist truth of impermanence. The Buddha said, "Everything changes, nothing remains without change." A new variant of the coronavirus, which is more contagious but less deadly, has appeared.

We humans need to adapt in order to function well as a society. To be very clear, the vaccines are proven to be very safe and very effective. They do not provide complete

ing the safety measures that you are now very familiar with. They don't work perfectly, but they do work. By protecting yourself, you protect others.

Our theme and slogan for 2022, "**Building Healthy Sanghas — Connecting with Others**" is particularly appropriate under these conditions. Buddhism teaches us that everything and everyone is interconnected. No one is completely independent of other people or the environment surrounding them. We are connected with and dependent upon

members can respond by word, by voice or by action. Open communication with and between Sangha members strengthens our connection and in turn strengthens our temples. Many of our temples today face severe financial stress and manpower shortages. Please think about ways that you can help your temple as we try to navigate our way through this pandemic.

For two years, ministers and members of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii have done their best to keep their temples operational while following city and state directives. We have done this partly in response to directives from the Bishop's office. But we have also done it because we care for our families, our temples and our community. We have worked to keep our Sangha community healthy, although our typical temple activities and services, fundraising drives, and social activities have been severely restricted.

I would like to say "thank you" to the ministers and lay members of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii for all that you are doing to support your temples under very difficult conditions and continuing to share our Jodo Shinshu Buddhist values with the community that we serve.

Aloha, and best wishes for a happy, healthy and peaceful 2022!

Namo Amida Butsu.

For two years, ministers and members of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii have done their best to keep their temples operational while following city and state directives. We have done this partly in response to directives from the Bishop's office. But we have also done it because we care for our families, our temples and our community. We have worked to keep our Sangha community healthy, although our typical temple activities and services, fundraising drives, and social activities have been severely restricted.

Aloha everyone! Welcome to the second issue of the newsletter of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, Ka Leo Kāhea (The Calling Voice).

I hope that you enjoyed reading our inaugural issue and that you look forward to receiving future issues. We received very positive feedback after the first issue. Thank you for your encouragement. Please continue to share your thoughts — through your temple leaders, by email at newsletter@honpahi.org or by regular USPS mail. And by the way, your donations to support this newsletter are greatly appreciated!

We are aware that there were problems with reaching all of our Sangha members. Our headquarters staff did a remarkable job of getting the mailing addresses together for the first issue and are working

we would have expected to have better control of the coronavirus pandemic.

However, conditions have changed. The virus itself has changed. It has mutated. The omicron variant is much more contagious than the delta variant and over the two months since first being reported, has become the dominant coronavirus.

immunity, but they are excellent at reducing your chance of ending up in the hospital or dying from COVID-19 respiratory failure.

I strongly encourage vaccination and the booster doses if you have not already done so. Also, please continue to keep yourself, your family and community safe by follow-

the air that we breathe and water that we drink. We are interdependent, even with people that we do not know or have direct contact with.

In the context of our temples and our Sangha, "connecting" implies action by two parties. For example, as ministers and temple leaders reach out to temple members,

Volunteers Help in Kapa'a Interfaith Thanksgiving Lunch

BY MADISON DOO
UNITED JR. YBA OF KAUAI
PRESIDENT

On Thanksgiving day, volunteers from churches across Kapa'a came to help in the Interfaith Association's free community Thanksgiving lunch.

At around 10:30 am, Mark's Place, a local restaurant on Kaua'i, parked its vehicles and wheeled in pans upon pans of Thanksgiving food into the Kapa'a Hongwanji Mission Temple's Social Hall.

In preparation for their arrival, temple members lined up the tables and counters. The many volunteers created a food line and began prepping the Thanksgiving plate lunches.

Within minutes, people were bagging the lunches and bringing them outside to be packed into cars and delivered.

Four tables were set up outside the hall with a number on each. One, two, three, and four marked how many plate lunches were in a bag. The tables quickly filled, and we were ready for the pick-ups to begin. We waited for some time and watched as the Mark's Place volunteers packed the plate lunches. Cars soon formed a line, and the volunteers met them at their window. They handed them a packet of paper with delivery information: directions, names of families, and the number of meals needed. The cars pulled forward and passed my cousin and me a yellow

piece of paper.

On the paper were the number of meals they needed in their car. We shuttled the bags and placed them into the trunks and backseats of all the vehicles. When cars lined up back to back, it got a little chaotic; we rushed from the tables to the cars with two to three bags in each hand, quickly counting and recounting the meal bags.

"I felt that the hardest part of the lunch delivery was finding the right amount of plates in each bag that I needed," said Taryn Ramil, my cousin who helped pack the cars with me.

She added: "While it was overwhelming at times, I really enjoyed helping out!" After about two hours,



A volunteer loads bags of lunch during the Interfaith Association's free community Thanksgiving lunch in Kapa'a. (Courtesy of Dennis Fujimoto)

the cars slowed down until there were no more packets to hand out. About four meals were left sitting on the tables, so we donated them to the nearby homeless people.

We've attended and

volunteered with the Kapa'a Interfaith Association free community Thanksgiving lunch for three years so far, and we're glad and excited to do it. We're grateful for the meals and feel good about helping out.

HHMH Launches Fundraising Drive for World Peace Flame



Shown, from left, are Wayne Miyao, Bishop Eric Matsumoto, First Lady Mrs. Dawn Amano Ige, Yuji Sasaki of Sadako Legacy, Superintendent Jacqueline Ashwell of Pearl Harbor, and Carole Hayashino of the Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii, at Pearl Harbor, Honolulu, Hawaii, for a 2017 paper crane ceremony. (Courtesy of Pieper Toyoma)

In 2012, the Sadako Legacy of Japan, headed by Masahiro Sasaki, older brother of Sadako Sasaki and Yuji Sasaki, nephew of Sadako, the 12-year-old who died of leukemia due to radiation from the Hiroshima atomic bomb blast, announced their plans to donate an origami paper crane actually folded by Sadako herself to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, as their contribution to fostering world peace.

The presentation

ceremony was held in 2013 after a successful fundraising campaign spearheaded by the Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii, the Hiroshima Hawaii Sister State, and the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii to help pay for the expenses of a special nitrogen filled container to house and preserve the delicate paper crane.

In 2022, the wish of Sadako Legacy is to bring a flame from an

ember of the Hiroshima atomic bomb blast — which has been preserved for 80 years to Hawaii.

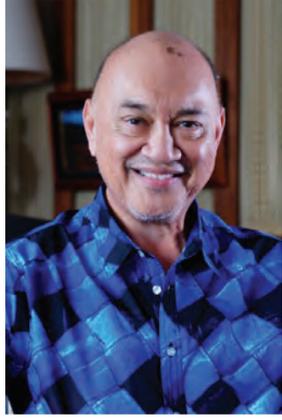
Originally kept by the Yamamoto family of Fukuoka, who lost relatives in Hiroshima, the flame was originally a symbol of the anguish and the suffering felt by the family and many others. However, at one point, a transformation occurred. The Yamamoto family realized

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HMMH Produces Special 'Living Treasures of Hawai'i' TV



Puanani Burgess



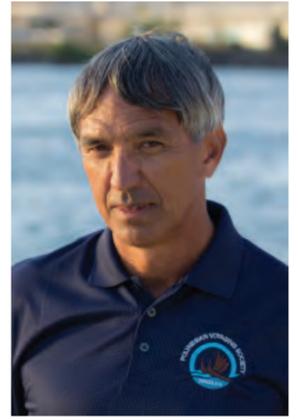
Robert Cazimero



Rev. Yoshiaki Fujitani



Lilian Yajima



Nainoa Thompson

In lieu of holding an in-person Living Treasures luncheon in February of 2021, the Living Treasures of Hawai'i Selection Committee decided to produce an hour-long special television program narrated by Dennis Sekine, to honor five past recipients of the award.

Puanani Burgess, Robert Cazimero, Yoshiaki Fujitani, Nainoa Thompson, and Lilian Yajima were profiled and delivered inspiring and heartwarming messages. They discussed the personal significance of the award, how it changed their lives moving forward, and aspirations for the future of Hawai'i.

The Committee extends its deepest appreciation to the numerous supporters,

FYI

"Living Treasures of Hawai'i: Life and Light – Wisdom of Hawai'i's Treasures" can be viewed on the Hawaii News Now website: <https://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/page/the-living-treasures-of-hawaii-light-and-life/>

It can also be viewed on the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDuOZdicW9mWq-DN1f19Pyg>

including the primary sponsors: Duane and Susan Kurisu, Island Insurance Hawai'i, KTA Super Stores, Kamehameha Schools, Hongwanji Mission School, Pacific Buddhist Academy, and Wells Fargo Bank.

The special program

"Living Treasures of Hawai'i: Life and Light – Wisdom of Hawai'i's Treasures" aired on KFVE and KHNL on May 27 and May 30, 2021.

A special mahalo goes to committee member Jill Kuramoto and RKT Media for producing a highly professional and cost-effective program. It was the first time that Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii produced a program to air on a major television network.

Our goal was to share with the public what makes the Living Treasures of Hawai'i program unique, explain the history of the program together with some information about the Mission and most important, to provide some inspiration

to the community during this most challenging time of the pandemic.

We are very happy to report that the program was viewed by a television audience of more than 30,000 people. Online, there was an audience of nearly 600 that viewed the livestream through Hawai'i News Now's website, more than 3,000 people viewed it through the livestream on Facebook and close to 190 people have viewed it on the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawai'i YouTube Channel.

The feedback we have received for the program has been overwhelmingly positive. The program can still be viewed on the Hawaii News Now website:

<https://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/page/the-living-treasures-of-hawaii-light-and-life/> and the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDuOZdicW9mWq-DN1f19Pyg>

The Committee (chaired by Jon Matsuoka and members: Cynthia Alm, Rev. Daido Baba, Derrick Inouye, Jill Kuramoto, Cecilia Lindo, Jonathan Johnson, Bishop Eric Matsumoto, and JoAnn Yosemori) looks forward to continuing the mission of recognizing Hawai'i community luminaries who perpetuate our island's distinctive cultural and artistic heritage and enrich our society through selfless giving and sharing.

Lonesome Grave Project Endures at Kaua'i Veterans Cemetery

Editor's Note: This article first appeared in The Garden Island and is being reprinted with the permission of Dennis Fujimoto of The Garden Island.

BY DENNIS FUJIMOTO
THE GARDEN ISLAND

HANAPEPE — There was just a smattering of flowers and some American and Hawaiian flags flying in the warm Hanapepe morning at the Kaua'i Veterans Cemetery.

"Normally, this place would be choked with flowers and people," said cemetery caretaker Junior Leones who was trimming palm fronds following his morning of mowing the grounds. "But the cemetery expansion project is going on. It was supposed to have been completed, but there are shipping delays. The materials they need are stuck."

This world of dust, construction noise, and

scores of roped-off areas was broken with the arrival of more than two dozen volunteers with the Kaua'i United Hongwanji Buddhist Women's Association, including a contingent from Kapa'a who were victims of the no contra-flow lanes.

"This is done so every grave has at least greenery," said James Yamamoto. "Greens and flowers."

Roberta Yanagawa of the Kapa'a Hongwanji Mission said the Lonesome Grave project is done annually, and the graves are decorated on the day before the Veterans Day Service that traditionally fell on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month. Volunteers arrived from the West Kaua'i, Lihu'e, and Kapa'a Hongwanji temples armed with buckets and loads of greenery and hardy flowers.

In 2011, for the second consecutive year, the traditional service was not held because of the COVID-19 health and safety

protocol, and the ongoing construction of the cemetery expansion project. The traditional Veterans Day Parade was also canceled, and the golf tournament that replaced the first year of the parade cancellation was also canceled.

Instead, individuals and families braved construction to visit the cemetery that was adorned with lei from employees of the Grand Hyatt Kaua'i Resort and Spa that were in Hanapepe at sunrise with their load of lei for placement on individual gravesites.

Over at the Veterans Memorial Highway fronting the Kaua'i Veterans Center, the East Kaua'i Lions Club hosted a flag-waving to draw attention to the "Thank You, Veterans!" message that appeared on the chain-link fence.

According to information from a Buddhist newsletter, the Lonesome Grave service project was started in 1998 when Barbara Funamura, a member of the Koloa



More than two dozen volunteers with the Kaua'i United Hongwanji Buddhist Women's Association, including a contingent from Kapa'a, took part in the annual Lonesome Grave Project at the Kaua'i Veterans Cemetery on Veterans Day. (Courtesy of Dennis Fujimoto)

Hongwanji Mission, suggested that all graves at the Kaua'i Veterans Cemetery be decorated for the annual Veterans Day Service.

"All" includes those graves whose relatives or family are not physically able to come and tend to the graves.

Funamura felt that potted marigolds should be used to honor Gold Star Mothers.

"Many years have passed

since the first Lonesome Grave Project, but the tradition continues," the newsletter states. "We may no longer use just marigolds, but members, families, and friends of the West Kaua'i Hongwanji, the Kapa'a Hongwanji, and the Lihu'e Hongwanji temples still gather each Nov. 10 to decorate with flowers and greenery to ensure there is no 'lonesome grave' at the Kaua'i Veterans Cemetery."

Giseikai

Continued from Page 1

Online Calendar

6. 2022-6 Annual Endowment Campaign

7. 2022-7 Permanent Annual Subsidy to Pacific Buddhist Academy

8. 2022-8 Capital Funds for Hilo Hongwanji New Preschool Construction

9. 2022-9 Condolences and Appreciations (pending)

The Legislative Assembly also provides an

opportunity for ministers and lay leaders from every district to get to know one another on a personal basis and share ideas. Zoom, unfortunately, is not the best way for individuals and small groups to share thoughts. One of the highlights of the in-person Legislative Assembly is the Opening Service. The combined voices of Hawaii Kyodan ministers and lay leaders chanting and singing fills the Hondo. It is an unforgettable experience. We look forward to a time when we will be able

to gather again as a group in one room.

The Living Treasures banquet presentation is usually held following the close of the Legislative Assembly on Saturday. Because of the COVID-19 situation, the Living Treasures banquet presentation has also been canceled for this year. Recipients of the Living Treasures honor will be recognized at the next in-person Living Treasures and HK Aloha Luncheon (hopefully in February 2023).



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BUDDHIST STUDY CENTER PRESENTS
2022 SPRING SEMINAR

**DHARMA THROUGH
the Eyes of Youth**
MARCH 25 & 26

Friday, March 25 | 7:00 - 8:30pm

Panel Discussion
Jr. YBA Youth-led activity
Q&A after Discussion

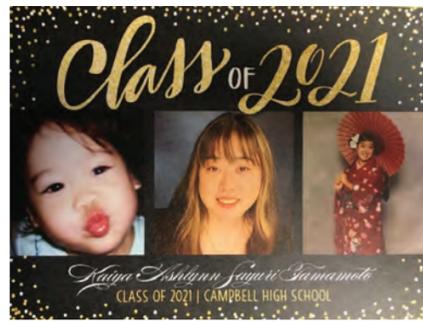
Manami Alspach Chihiro Okawa Kana Suzuki Jay Yokoyama Naho Umitani

Saturday, March 26 | 10:00 - 11:30am

Jacob Chang
Panelists
Wayne Yoshioka
Dwight Matsuo
Wayde Toyama
Q&A

Jacob Chang Wayne Yoshioka Dwight Matsuo Wayde Toyama

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The United Oahu Jr. YBA had an eventful year in 2021 and here are photos that highlight some of the milestones. Above left and second from left, an installation of officers was held July 4 at Aiea Hongwanji. Shown in far left photo, from left, are: Rev. Kosho Yagi, President Kana Suzuki (Pearl City Hongwanji), Vice President Kaiya Tamamoto (Aiea Hongwanji), Secretary Danny Noia (Mililani Hongwanji), and Treasurer Chad Okawa (Aiea Hongwanji). Third from left, members attended the virtual 64th Junior YBA State Convention on June 17-19 and hosted by United of Honolulu. Above far right, United Oahu Jr. YBA took part in a food drive in November and December. Shown, from left, are from Aiea Hongwanji: Claire Tamamoto, Chad Okawa, Rev. Yagi, and Kayla Koyanagi. Second row, at far left, members attend an in-person meeting on July 4. United Oahu Jr. YBA offers congratulations to the Class of 2021 -- Kaiya Tamamoto from Aiea Hongwanji, second photo from left, and Jay Acohido, from Wahiawa Hongwanji, second photo from right. At middle right, members take part in the F.O.O.D. (Feed Our Ohana Day). Shown, from left, are: Jan Koyanagi, Kana Suzuki, Kayla Koyonagi, Claire Tamamoto, and Yumi Suzuki. In bottom photo at right are Kana Suzuki and Kayla Koyonagi. (Courtesy of Aryn Ishikawa)

United Oahu Jr. YBA Happenings 2021

UNITED OAHU JR. YBA

Can you believe how time flies! We are finally back to school, some in person and some continuing to have a form of digital classes. We've learned how to continue to move forward through the pandemic and make adjustments as we settle into our "new normal."

First, our congratulations to the Class of 2021! The United of Oahu had two graduates:

Kaiya Tamamoto from Aiea Hongwanji and Jay Acohido from Wahiawa Hongwanji

Our juniors attended the 64th State Convention, held virtually June 17-19, and hosted by the United of Honolulu. It was an excellent event with more than 50 attendees that included our active members, advisors, ministers, guest speakers and others.

We were honored to have Bishop Rev. Eric

Matsumoto in attendance for the weekend and our workshop guest speakers, Koichi Mizushima from the Buddhist Church of Sacramento who is the BCA Youth Coordinator, and Dr. Brent Tamamoto (former Jr. YBA member) who owns a pediatrics clinic in Aiea and stays very active in the community as well as the Honpa Hongwanji.

We appreciate their presence and the time that they spent with us during our convention. Our Federation summer newsletter can be found here: <http://bit.ly/summerseren20-21>

During the summer convention, we had various contests and recognitions. Danny Noia of Mililani Hongwanji, Kana Suzuki of Pearl City Hongwanji and Chad Okawa of Aiea Hongwanji were recognized Oahu United's Outstanding Jr. YBA award. The Outstanding Junior YBA Member award is discussed and selected by the advisors, recognizing the members who go above and beyond

the expectation of the group.

Chad also won first place in the essay contest and Kana was second place. Chad was awarded Mr. Jr. YBA. Kana got runner up for Miss Jr. YBA.

The United was voted by its peers to win the Model United award, which was presented digitally via PowerPoint slide show instead of our traditional binder book.

This presentation showcases the activities for the year with creative pages of pictures, descriptions and evaluation of each. Even through the pandemic, the juniors showed their resiliency by continuing to have events like our fall fundraiser and participated in many community activities including the Peace Day bell ringing and local food distribution.

The Model United submissions can be seen here: <https://www.jryba-convention64.com/contests-1>

Looking toward the upcoming 2021-2022 year, our juniors chose their new officers for 2021-2022. We had installation service on July 4 at Aiea Hongwanji, where the United ran the Sunday service and we were able to have our first in-person meeting in over a year! Congratulations to:

President: Kana Suzuki (Pearl City Hongwanji)

Vice President: Kaiya Tamamoto (Aiea Hongwanji)

Secretary: Danny Noia (Mililani Hongwanji)

Treasurer: Chad Okawa (Aiea Hongwanji)

Some other activities we were able to do this summer included: a beach day at Auntie Gay's Beach house with the United of Honolulu; helped out at Ewa & Mililani Hongwanji's Obon drive-thru; and had a food drive and participated in community food distribution. Upcoming activities include our Hawaii Buddhist Youth Month fundraiser, Peace Day, Jr. YBA Federation meeting, and

Young Enthusiastic Shinshu Seekers (YESS) Camp, which is open to all Buddhist Youth ages 13-23.

We had a successful fall fundraiser for our Hawaii Buddhist Youth (HBY) month and a portion of the proceeds will be given to the Ronald McDonald House, the philanthropy chosen at the 2021 State Convention.

We are looking forward to more meetings in person and doing activities together in 2022.

We continuously look for new members to join in the fun and Jr. YBA is open to any student from seventh-grade through one year after high school graduation.

Please contact our advisors Gay Tanaka or Aryn Ishikawa via Aryn.M.Ishikawa@gmail.com if you are interested to learn more.

Follow us on Instagram!

Jr. YBA of Oahu @jrybafoahu and Hawaii Federation of Jr. YBAs @hawaiifedjryba

PBA Welcomes Inaugural Advisory Council Members

By JOSH HERNANDEZ MORSE
HEAD OF SCHOOL
PACIFIC BUDDHIST ACADEMY

The final weeks of 2021 were exciting for PBA.

I will not pretend I am ever perfect at nailing participation in PBA Spirit Weeks — the last week of PBA's Cycle 3 was Spirit Week at PBA, and I was rescued for both Monday's "Red & Green Day" and Tuesday's "Festive Mask Day" by students who pointed out the hoodie hanging in my office is cranberry-colored and another who gave me an extra winter holiday-themed face mask — but the end of the calendar year at PBA is simultaneously joyful, cookie-dense, and abuzz with students excited but stressed as they finish off summative projects in math, humanities and peace studies seminars and look forward to the long winter holiday.

This year's close to the calendar year was particularly interesting as PBA students met with three inaugural members of the PBA Advisory Council.

All three of the Advisory Council members are

previous honorees of PBA's Lighting Our Way event program. The Advisory Council Program, an initiative spearheaded by PBA trustee Lisa Leong, gives PBA the opportunity to connect in meaningful ways with very influential leaders in Hawai'i. Members of PBA's Advisory Council can connect with our school in various ways; the first four members of the PBA Advisory Council chose to meet with students directly.

Consultant and community activist Aunty Puanani Burgess met with PBA senior Naho Umitani for a "kukakuka," or deep conversation, as Naho readies for life after high school and her pursuit of a future law degree.

"Aunty Puanani shared her personal story with me about studying to be an attorney and how she ultimately charted a different path after realizing the adversarial nature of law did not mesh well with her life goals," Naho said. "It's not that I think of myself as an adversarial person but speaking with someone as wise as Aunty Pua made me realize it will be OK, and important, even, to consider my own nature as I



Dr. Maya Soetoro-Ng, a new member of the Pacific Buddhist Academy's Advisory Council, speaks to PBA students. (Courtesy of Megan Lee)

chart my own path."

As a leader in education, Dr. Doris Ching's connection with PBA students in a late November virtual meeting focused on a group of seniors in the midst of the college application season.

"We were so impressed with Dr. Ching as a trailblazing Asian American leader," said PBA Director of Advancement Megan Lee, "and I just thought she would really inspire PBA seniors with her energy, wide-ranging experience, and endless aloha."

"We wrote a thank you

card for Dr. Ching right after our virtual meeting with her," PBA senior Logan Chang said, "but she beat us to the punch. Her thank you card arrived in the mail the day after we met with her, it seemed, and it included individual messages for all seven of us! I have to think that kind of gratitude explains her wide-ranging success."

Distinguished peace innovator Dr. Maya Soetoro-Ng, meanwhile, was able to come to the PBA campus in person, where she first offered a message focused on the need for peace leadership now, the

vital role PBA plays in educating students dedicated to these practices, and practical ways high school students can make contributions. She followed up her temple talk by meeting with PBA's freshmen class in its Buddhism and Peace seminar, a class that is part of PBA's Peace Core curriculum.

"When Aunty Maya asked how she could help us with our school's peace mission, Riho asked if she could connect us with other leaders from the community," freshman Addison Hernandez said. "Next thing you know, Aunty Maya is saying she can connect us with leaders working to end homelessness in Hawai'i, and maybe even some elected officials. She was amazing. It's really exciting to meet with people like Aunty Maya!"

The fourth member of the PBA Advisory Council, Mr. Fred Nonaka, was, as many of you will remember, a long-time board chair at PBA. With the high COVID-19 case numbers in this latest peak phase of infection, Mr. Nonaka has

SEE PAGE 8

Rev. Fujitani

Continued from Page 1

tions of Buddhism, focusing, eventually, on Jodo Shinshu Buddhism, the tradition he had grown up in and of which his father was a minister.

Before returning to Hawai'i in 1956 as an ordained Honpa Hongwanji minister, Dr. Nagao shared some advice with him: "When you go back to Hawai'i and work in your position as a minister, don't think in terms of teaching with great sermons. Real teaching has to come from your being, your lesson. You have to live your lesson, not just talk about it."

I often wondered whether Dr. Nagao knew about the wealth of life experiences his young apprentice had already accumulated by then. Those experiences had molded him into the young man he was when he arrived in Kyoto. Yoshi took Nagao-Sensei's words to heart and lived them throughout his life. He touched so many lives in Hawai'i, Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike. Although at his core he believed in the teachings of the Buddha, he saw himself as not just a Buddhist minister but also as a human being.

Having grown up in Hawai'i had a lot to do with that, for he was surrounded by people of all ethnicities and from all stations in life, most of whom were contributing something to the community. It helped him see with his own eyes how our lives are all interconnected, just as he had learned from Mr. Sugimoto. Thus, as bishop, he welcomed insurance man Paul Yamanaka's suggestion in 1976 that the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii start a "Living Treasures of Hawai'i" program to honor and thank people who have contributed to making Hawai'i a more humane society, regardless of their faith or ethnicity. Yamanaka suggested that a Hawaiian-Japanese-German man named Charles Kenn be named the first "Living Treasures" recipient for his selfless sharing of Hawaiian culture with others.

I asked Bishop Eric Matsumoto, Hawaii Kyodan's current bishop, if he had a special memory of Rev. Fujitani. Both were island-born sons, as were former bishops Kanmo Imamura, Chikai Yosemite and Thomas Okano.

"You're a minister for the community, too," Bishop Matsumoto remembered Yoshi telling him. "These insightful words of former bishop, Rev. Yoshiaki Fujitani, impacted me greatly," Matsumoto said, adding that they left "a lasting impression" that guides him to this day.



Varsity Victory Volunteers veterans, from left, Yoshiaki Fujitani, Ted Tsukiyama, Akira Otani and Takashi Kajihara were recognized by the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa on Feb. 26, 2015, near the sculpture that honors the VVV at the Queen Lili'uokalani Student Services Center. Of the four pictured, only Takashi Kajihara survives; Akira Otani, 100, and Yoshiaki Fujitani, 97, died in 2021, and Ted Tsukiyama, 98, died in 2019. (Courtesy of Karleen Chinen)

"It added a greater dimension to my ministry of sharing the Buddha-Dharma. Needless to say, Rev. Fujitani himself lived those words in that he was not only a minister to our Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji Shin Buddhist community and Buddhist Sangha in Hawai'i, but also to the larger community, including the interfaith community," Matsumoto wrote.

"I believe he was guided and inspired by the depth and breadth of Amida Buddha's wisdom and compassion," he said. "He will be remembered and sorely missed for his leadership, foresight, broad vision and inclusivity as one of the most distinguished interfaith leaders of Hawai'i."

Yoshi was an early leader in Hawai'i's interfaith community. In JEAH, Vol. 3, he recalled his epiphany while the minister of Wailuku Hongwanji on Maui.

"It must have been in 1959 when Father Putman of Christ the King Catholic Church in Kahului entered our temple and offered incense, actually participating in a Buddhist funeral ceremony being held for the mother of one of his parishioners. Up to that very moment, it had been common knowledge that Catholics by church law were forbidden to set foot in a non-Catholic place of worship. The startling lesson I learned was that even people of different faiths can respect each other's beliefs and have an amicable relationship.

"I took that lesson to Honolulu, where one of the earliest events I attended in the community was the first Union Thanksgiving Service comprised of a group of interfaith clergy and held at the St. Clement's Episcopal Church on Wilder Avenue on Thanksgiving Eve, 1960. The rector there was the Rev. Paul Wheeler. Included

were clergy from the Unitarian church, Jewish temple, Methodist church, Soto (Buddhist) Mission and the Catholic church. An interesting aspect of that first gathering was that the Rev. Ernest Hunt, a Buddhist, who was to give the first interfaith Thanksgiving message, could not be present and so his message was read by Rev. Wheeler, an Episcopalian Christian. The tradition of this interfaith service has continued to the present, with the participating temples or churches taking turns in hosting. A unique consequence of that arrangement is that unprecedented things occur, as in my case when I was the speaker when the service was held at Temple Emanu-El. There is no doubt that such a gathering has brought stability, respect and friendship to our community."

When he was still driving, Yoshi was an active participant in the Interfaith Alliance Hawai'i, where he regularly attended a morning program called the Interfaith Open Table. He was also a devoted supporter of the Samaritan Counseling Center Hawaii and Project Dana, the interfaith caregiving support program. Additionally, a lecture series at Chaminade University of Honolulu, a Catholic college, was named the Fujitani Interfaith Dialogue Program in honor of Yoshi's contributions to Chaminade's Buddhist Studies Program.

In the fall of 2012, the Government of Japan recognized Yoshi's contributions to Hawai'i's Japanese American community by awarding him The Wooden Cup with the Chrysanthemum Crest. Several of Yoshi's Buddhist and non-Buddhist friends joined him and his family at the Japanese Consulate to witness the auspicious event.

Gratitude was at the core of Yoshi's being. He was always grateful, guided, he said, by the Four Gratuities or Obligations — gratitude to parents, to one's country, to all beings and to the Buddha.

On one of our lunch outings, he wrote in my notebook the words of former Honpa Hongwanji Bishop Shojitsu Ohara: "Hima no toki wa ware wa yama wo miru. Isogashii toki niwa yama ga ware wo miru," meaning, "Only when I have time, I look at the mountain. But when I'm busy, the mountain is always looking at me." The "mountain," he explained to me, was Amida Buddha, who was always looking after him with compassion. And for that, he was always grateful.

Whenever we went to lunch, without fail, he would always put his palms together in gassho, his hashi (chopsticks) resting in the valley between his index fingers and his thumbs. With his eyes closed, he would quietly express gratitude, saying the word, "Itadakimasu," meaning "I humbly receive this food," before taking even a nibble . . . and then "Gochisōsama" — "Thank you for this meal" — at the conclusion of our lunch.

For the last few years, Drusilla, my sister Joyce and I organized lunch outings with him — and Tomi, when she was still at home. When I called him to remind him about our lunch date, he always reminded me that he would need a ride because he no longer drove. "No worry," I assured him. "We'll come and get you and take you home."

We usually went to Tokkuri Tei in Kapahulu, where he enjoyed the Ahi Natto Donburi, or Kahala Sushi, so he could enjoy a platter of sashimi with a bottle of beer. Our fathers had already passed on, so

watching Yoshi enjoy his sashimi made us happy, like we were watching our own dads eat.

Our last meal together was early last year at Kahala Sushi. And then COVID shut everything down. Every so often, I would pick up a take-out order of sashimi from Ahi and Vegetable and take it to his house.

We last saw him in person in October for a belated birthday celebration, which, thanks to COVID, turned into a "drive-by." His birthday presents were things we knew he could use or would enjoy: a platter of sashimi and inarizushi, sanitation supplies and face masks, Peet's Coffee and his favorite beer. With signs and streamers, we drove one decorated car at a time into the garage, where he was seated, and passed our gifts to his daughter, Pat, through the window. We waved and called out to Yoshi, wishing him a belated "Happy Birthday!" He was smiling and waving back at us. Before leaving his garage, Pat gave us some of his favorite Cherry Vanilla cake, which she had baked — a gift of gratitude from Yoshi.

Seven months later, with all of us now fully vaccinated and with life returning to some semblance of normalcy, we were planning an in-person get-together with Yoshi and our fellow Editorial Board member, Mike Okihiro. And then came Pat's text on May 17 about her father's passing.

Many times when Yoshi and I talked on the phone, I reminded him that he had to live to 100 so we could have a REALLY BIG party. He tried hard, but he was tired. He'd had a good life and he was grateful for that. I think he wanted to be with Tomi again.

In the weeks since Yoshi's passing, I have found myself reflecting on Rennyō Shōnin's "Letter on White Ashes," which Hongwanji and other Buddhist ministers usually read at funeral services. I had heard Yoshi read it several times in the past and I remembered how it had moved me. I remembered the peace I had felt in hearing his meaningful recitation of those words: "In silently contemplating the transient nature of human existence, nothing in our world is more fragile and fleeting than our life ... By so understanding the meaning of death, we shall come to fully appreciate the meaning of this life which is unrepeatable and thus to be treasured above all else."

Yoshi, with heartfelt gratitude, we thank you for sharing your life with our community and the country. Most of all, mahalo nui loa for your friendship. I was blessed. Aloha 'Oe ... I will see you again.

Rev. Nishiyama

Continued from Page 2

Dharma friends. Remember, the Dharma, like a friend, will show how to live your life without any doubts. Don't depend on superstitious things. The Dharma will show you what is most important in your spiritual life. The Buddha Dharma guides you to accept that everything in life is changing and momentary. We are born

alone, live alone, and die alone due to this impermanence of life. But the Dharma is always living with you. It is what is most dependable and will never abandon you. Amida Buddha's Name is unconditional love, Namo Amida Butsu. It reminds you that you are most precious and embraced by Amida Buddha's Infinite Life and Light.

Shindo: Thank you, Buddha. I have one request. Today's world is

full of discrimination and racism, especially in America. Do you have any guidance for me in the face of this situation?

Buddha: Shindo, discrimination begins in our mind, and it is the result of our ignorance. If we are to change, we must understand that we are all different, thus we are all precious. No one is the same as you and me. I was born in India, and you were born in Japan. We have very unique family

histories, but both are equally special. We are different, but our lives are precious, each unto itself. Think about flowers. There are many different kinds of flowers. No two are exactly the same but they bloom just as they are. They are peaceful and beautiful in nature. We, like flowers, are part of nature, living together every moment. There are no two individuals exactly the same. No good or bad. No high or low. We are all equal in

life. We all live together dependent upon each other. When we discriminate against others, we discriminate against ourselves.

Shindo: Thank you, Buddha, for your guidance.

Buddha: Namo Amida Butsu and Aloha!

Shindo: Namo Amida Butsu. Thank you, Buddha, for everything you have given me. I shall never forget your stay in Hawaii. Namaste, Sayonara and Mahalo!

Bishop

Continued from Page 2

I wonder, could this be the result of the influence of the Buddhist teaching of interdependence? As we are guided by the Dharma, we come to realize a fundamental emphasis in Buddhist teachings that everything happens or occurs because of causes and conditions.

A Buddhist contribution is that we must include looking at the causes of a concern and not only the conditions. Maybe an example might help to clarify.

In our efforts to address hunger, the saying most commonly attributed to Anne Isabella Ritchie or commonly known as the Chinese proverb — “Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach a man how to fish and you feed him for a lifetime” — makes the point.

For many of us, we might focus on the condition of someone being hungry more than the cause or reason a person finds himself/herself/themselves in that situation of being hungry or hunger. Of course, we need to address both in that especially if a person is starving you must feed him/her/them first, but the long-term solution rests in addressing the cause and how to make things different for a more lasting and beneficial solution.

On the topic of hunger, besides the obvious lack of food, there is the issue of what is known as “hidden hunger,” which is not the lack of food, but the lack of the proper type of food, nutritious food.

The body needs both calories and nutrients. Dr. Terry Shintani, an American physician, nutritionist and author from Hawaii, concluded that the type of food that is consumed is very important. It is not only the quantity and caloric intake that needs to be sufficient for a healthy body, but the nutritional value of food is also essential.

For too many Indigenous Peoples of Hawaii, they had to resort to eating fast foods and/or junk food and that results in all sorts of health problems including obesity.

Foods such as fresh vegetables and fruits that would result in a healthier lifestyle are out of reach to many because of their economic disadvantage and the unavailability of such foods. The healthier foods



Bishop Rev. Eric Matsumoto, in the photo at left, holds a bag of produce grown at a farm in Oahu that is supported by donations from the HHMH's Social Concerns Committee. At right, on a visit to the farm in 2018, Bishop Rev. Matsumoto speaks with Kamuela Enos, who as of 2019 was Kauhale Director of Social Enterprise, and Dexter Mar, Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin board president until Jan. 30, 2022. (Courtesy of David Atcheson)



were beyond what they could afford. In some cases, the lack of knowledge about healthy food preparation of various kinds of food was also a factor. Thus, many are caught in a vicious cycle.

However, there is hope. Recently, there has been a growing interest and endeavors to break this cycle and also promote sustainability in the Islands.

The Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii helps to support a certain farm with periodic donations from our Social Concerns Committee. Our impact is minimal (as we are a small organization), but we feel it is important to try to bring about positive change.

The farm, which is located in one of the economically challenged areas of the Island of Oahu, has as its purpose to not only grow produce, but it also offers an educational program where young people can earn a degree in farming and other food-related fields, while promoting sustainability in the Islands.

It is primarily because of this educational component that the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii supports the farm. At the same time, we also continue to support food banks throughout the Island Chain, which provides food to those who are in immediate need.

Additionally, many of our temples, organizations and affiliates have food-serving programs and participate with other community organizations in helping those in need.

We must transition from a self-centered mode of thinking and being to one that is more inclusive of others. We must go beyond even our human centeredness to a global perspective.

This is just a very general observation, but I found a

stark contrast between Chinese landscape paintings versus Western paintings, which incorporate man-made buildings and nature.

In Chinese landscape paintings, man or humans occupy a very small place in the paintings whereas in Western American paintings, manmade objects are very prominent.

Interesting, isn't it? Ideally, every thought, word, and action should be one of “Simultaneously, benefiting self and benefiting others” equally. This would be the ideal way of life. Although the goal is impossible for a spiritually foolish being (“bonbu”) like myself to attain, we should keep it in mind and aspire toward it.

Another way to approach getting rid of hunger is perhaps found in the Japanese word “mottainai,” which in the average person's mind means “not to waste,” but actually has a deeper Buddhist connection and meaning. Not wasting food is another key to reducing hunger, as so much food is wasted in America.

In Hawaii, the use of “doggy bags” or take home containers is very common as people take home food they could not finish from a meal. However, it is not for their pets, but their own lunch the next day. The goal is reducing food waste because it is “mottainai” to waste precious food.

Another inspirational episode comes from the life of the historic Buddha, Sakyamuni, found in the book “Teaching of Buddha” published by BDK.

It might just be the oldest recycling story in the world. In short, Queen Syamavati offered Ananda 500 garments for the Buddhist clergy, which he humbly received with

gratitude.

King Udayana was suspicious of Ananda's sincerity and asked what he was going to do with so much clothing. Ananda's response was that he was going to gratefully share them with the other Sangha members who were in need of new garments.

“What are you going to do with the old garments?” King Udayana inquired.

“We will make them into bed covers,” Ananda replied.

“What will you do with the old bed covers?” the king asked.

“We will make them into pillow covers,” Ananda said.

The two continued with their questions and answers for a while, until the King was finally convinced that Ananda and the Sangha were quite sincere and also not wasteful.

The moral of this story is that “Nothing can be strictly called mine. What comes to a person comes because of a combination of causes and conditions; it can be kept only temporarily and, therefore must not be used selfishly or for unworthy purposes. Every article entrusted must be used with good care in some useful way, because it is not ‘ours,’ but only entrusted to us temporarily.”

Finally, I would like to conclude by sharing a parable which seems to be commonly found in many cultures and religions in one variation or another.

However, I am a Buddhist, a Pure Land Buddhist at that, and so I will share the version I found in the Tibetan Buddhist Encyclopedia.

In summary, the parable is about a traveler who visits the Land of Utmost Bliss, the Pure Land of Amida Buddha and the Land of Incessant Suffering or what

is commonly referred to as hell.

He visits each place during mealtime. At first, the traveler is quite perplexed in that at both places there are tables upon tables of delicacies.

The same eating utensils are provided to each and every individual. However, the noticeable difference was that in the Land of Incessant Suffering, people were pale, starved and fatigued. They did not look happy at all. In contrast, in Sukhavati, the people were happy, well fed and contented. He could not figure out the difference until it was time to eat.

In the Land of Incessant Suffering, people were concerned only about themselves or oneself and so they exerted all their energy in trying to feed themselves, but the utensil was just too long for a person to feed himself/herself/themselves and thus they could not eat a single bite of the delicious food before them.

However, in the Pure Land, the people were not self-centered and were compassionate and kind. Although the utensils they used were too long to feed themselves, it was the perfect length to feed the person opposite oneself and thus that is what everyone did. They fed each other.

The difference between the Land of Incessant Suffering and the Pure Land was the thinking and actions of its inhabitants.

When we are driven by our selfishness and/or self-centeredness, we create all kinds of negativity. But when we are guided and inspired by kindness and compassion, much positivity arises and eventually in some form or another that positivity will return to one as happiness. As the Buddhist saying goes “Happiness never decreases by being shared.”

A final note is that we must begin now. It will take time for measures to make an impact. One of the priorities is the education of the younger generations. They must be exposed to and integrate a different perspective from the one that most of us in the West grew up with.

We are part of the problem, but people are also part of the solution. Let us be guided by Buddhist concepts and perspectives based on Enlightened Wisdom and Compassion.

In gassho.

Honoka'a

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disinfecting helped reduce the chance of transmitting any illness. Through more than 3,000 volunteer shifts, there have been no reported incidents of COVID-19 illness or spread among the volunteers.

In addition to serving a hot dinner for 200 to 300 people, volunteers also distribute about 3,500 pounds of groceries and produce weekly. Delivery crews on five different routes take meals and grocery bags to kupuna and shut-ins. They also provide children's book for the keiki, and special groceries for those without access to kitchens.

Each week, 45 to 50 volunteers work on seven different crews: to receive and load groceries; carve meat; prep and cook; plate



Above left: George Myklebust and Janet Saito make up one of the five delivery crews that bring meals and groceries to the keirokai (elderly) and shut-ins. Above right: After the prep crew prepares meals, the plating crew come in mid-afternoon. The food is then brought upstairs for distribution during the afternoon drive through (and walk up) distribution. (Courtesy of Miles Okumura)



the meals; distribute meals and groceries; and then clean up.

For additional COVID safety, the different crews work in isolation from one another, scheduled and located separately. The only continuous hot meal service

of its kind in the Hāmākua area, the program has provided meals on Thanksgiving Fridays, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day.

Numerous organizations have supported Feeding Our

Keiki & Kupuna, including churches and foundations such as Honpa Hongwanji's Committee on Social Concerns “Hawaii Community Foundation, the Kohala Center, Marin County Foundation, Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, the United Methodist Church of Honoka'a, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, and Keck Observatory. Community members regularly donate money and items such as eggs, fruits and vegetables from their farms and gardens.

The program also sub-distributes food to other community groups such as the United Methodist Church of Honoka'a, Hāmākua Youth Center, Papa'aloa Hongwanji Buddhist temple, Honoka'a Senior Living Center, Hāmākua Health Center, the Salvation Army and others.

In April 2020, committee member Bernice Kalani

received notice that a donor had more than 1,000 frozen chickens to give away. Kalani immediately found a truck rental company willing to discount its rate, and recruited a crew of volunteers to haul the chickens to the parking lot for distribution the next morning.

“The Peace Committee's mission and vision is to promote peace, compassion and awareness of universal interdependence,” she said. “This is an example of the temple practicing engaged Buddhism.”

Peace Committee Chairman Miles Okumura co-created the program with community supporter Ravi Singh. They have worked closely with the Food Basket, local farmers, wholesale grocery and produce providers, and more than 120 different

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Honoka'a

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volunteers.

Professional chefs have stepped up to help as well. Chef Sandy Barr-Rivera, former executive chef at Merriman's Waimea and culinary instructor at Hawai'i Community College, leads the Prep Crew and supervises preparation of stew (featuring venison from Maui), chili (with local beef), spaghetti with whole wheat pasta, and pork adobo (a community favorite). Jim MacKenzie (formerly of "3660 On the Rise") has become a regular chef on Fridays, and Chef Jasmine Silverstein of Sweet Cane Cafe in Hilo helps prepare pork adobo. Singh himself is known for enthusiastically preparing his popular vegan and vegetarian Indian fare.

"The chefs are a joy to work with," Singh said. "We also have wonderful people like Eric Burkhardt who runs the Plating Crew. He worked the front office for a fine dining restaurant on the mainland and oversaw a 40-person waitstaff. Ana Schaaf directs the packing crew for grocery bags; Lynn Higashi leads the distribution crew, and Mat and Rachel Steury head up the evening clean-up crew."

For the second anniversary in February 2020, Feeding Our Keiki & Kupuna received extensive television news coverage. Parker School 10th-grader Emily Atkins, who works in the kitchen and distribution center, and was featured on KHON. (<https://www.khon2.com/local-news/Hāmākua-community-meal-program-celebrates-2-year-anniversary/>)

Other young volunteers include Eagle Scout Nick Newland, 15, who runs the meals from kitchen to parking lot and sisters Sophia and Rowan O'Brien, of Honoka'a High School, who work on the clean-up crew. Jason Rodriguez, a junior at Honoka'a High School, helps deliver meals to the elderly. While a senior at Hawai'i Preparatory Academy, Tayson Hirayama (now at University of Washington) regularly washed dishes. For a senior leadership project, he set up a program of additional food distribution in neighboring Waimea.

"When the media shares our story across the state, we hope it encourages others to step up to help those in need," Okumura said.

Singh said the feeding program is about addressing food insecurity, and more



FYI

Feeding Our Keiki & Kupuna welcomes new volunteers to join its Sangha and can always use donations of fresh produce, simple items (paper bags, egg cartons) and children's books. Donations can be made using PayPal at www.honokaahongwanjibuddhisttemple.org. Checks (for "The Peace Committee") can be mailed to: Honoka'a Hongwanji; P.O. Box 1667, Honoka'a, HI 96727. For more information, contact Miles Okumura, misterokumura@yahoo.com, (808) 640-4602.

important, building community.

"When people are breaking bread together, they can take on bigger problems," Singh said. "When we get together and leverage resources, it's not about economic need, it's about building community. Community can solve any problem."

Okumura said "more

Above left: Honoka'a Hongwanji's Rev. Masanari Yamagishi helps each Friday distributing 200 to 300 meals and up to 140 bags of groceries. He sometimes works with the delivery crews dropping off meals and groceries to the elderly in the community. Above right: Bags of groceries and produce are organized on Friday morning by the packing crew. Over 140 families receive them along with frozen meat, eggs, and sometimes fresh produce and dairy products. Between 3,000 and 4,000 pounds of food are distributed weekly. (Courtesy of Miles Okumura)

than 80 percent of our team are newly involved with the temple and have become part of our 'New Sangha.' Some are from other faiths — Sikh, Methodist, Catholic, and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. All are practicing universal Buddhist values, including Dana (selfless giving).

"As our Reverend Yamagishi works with the Feeding program, he engages with the Sangha, while providing service to the community at large. When working on the delivery routes, he visits our keirokai members and others in the community. All of this is helping Honoka'a Hongwanji establish itself as a Buddhist

Community Center, casting off an image as 'the Japanese church,'" Okumura said.

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Donations can be made using PayPal at www.honokaahongwanjibuddhisttemple.org. Checks (for "The Peace Committee") can be mailed to: Honoka'a Hongwanji; P.O. Box 1667, Honoka'a, HI 96727.

For more information, contact Miles Okumura, misterokumura@yahoo.com, (808) 640-4602.

Hilo Preschool

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Keith Yamakawa have presided over regular monthly meetings when solicitation of the Sangha and key parts of the general community began.

On Zoom and in person, the three campaign chairs consulted with the campaign's Director of Development Sandy Taniguchi, Segment Chairs Art Taniguchi, Roland and Jan Higashi, Alison Tateishi (Preschool Director), Lissa Onishi, the campaign's Consultant Sanae Tokumura, ACFRE, APR and Rinban Rev. Kazunori Takahashi.

"We don't know if we were brave or plain crazy to launch this drive during COVID, but we just knew we had to do it," Ivan Nakano said.

Nakano's lifelong devotion to a childhood friend, former KTA Super Stores President and CEO Barry K. Taniguchi, drove him to keep pushing the project forward despite Barry's unexpected death in September 2019.

"We lost Barry just when we were getting this off the ground," Nakano said.

Founded as Kilauea Day Care in its current location, the school has graduated thousands of students in its 95-year history. For many years, expansion of the popular preschool had been the favorite "talk story" subject of preschool grads and lifelong Hilo Betsuin leaders Taniguchi



Shown above are some of the smiling faces of students at the Hilo Hongwanji Preschool. (Courtesy of Hilo Hongwanji Preschool)

and Nakano.

After bearing the initial shock and grief of losing his best friend, and despite pandemic restrictions, Nakano pushed hard for the project with former lifelong Hilo Betsuin members former educator Karen Maedo and Dr. Keith Yamakawa. All three are Hilo Betsuin directors and former presidents. The trio passionately believed that the project was long overdue and absolutely needed for Hilo families.

The preschool's consistently award-winning program has made it a popular option in the Hilo area. HHP has a perennial waiting list. The mission of Hilo Hongwanji Preschool is to provide for the healthy development of the whole child — socially, mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually. HHP promotes learning experiences that involve nurturing the openness, naturalness and unobstructed freedom of curiosity with which all children are born.

The culture at HHP



emphasizes that "although we are all unique individuals, we are linked by the flow of life to each other and to all living things."

A core belief at HHP is that the total integration of mind, heart and body is the path leading to creating mindful and happy children. Key spiritual concepts are provided by ministers in the temple, providing a rich, solid, early attitudinal and spiritual foundation. HHP imparts this appreciation and awareness of life as the most precious gift, to be lived in gratitude, aloha and compassion.

Building the Future with Hilo Hongwanji Preschool Capital Campaign will remain active until summer 2022 to accommodate donors who wish to support this effort. Contributions will assure this preschool will continue to build new leaders for the next 100 years. Please contact Sandy Taniguchi at (808) 961-6677 or sandytaniguchi@gmail.com if interested in this opportunity.

emergency room physician in rural hospitals and clinics on the Big Island. At times, he was the only physician serving rural districts in Hawaii island.

The TIAH also awarded organizations and individuals in the following categories: Healing Role in Hawai'i; Encouraging Non-Violent Civic Participation; Facilitating Community Activism; and Challenging Religious or Political Extremism.

Hawaii, who shared his light selflessly and who was a good spiritual friend and guide to many.

"Thank you for all that you do in our community to advocate for social justice, inspire hope, and demonstrate true faith in action which transforms lives.

"With deepest gratitude. Mahalo."

A second Flame of Hope Award was given to Hawaii Lt. Gov. Josh Green, who began work as a family and

Sadako Legacy

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that nothing positive would come about by clinging to these negative feelings. That's when the flame took on a new meaning, a new significance as a flame for peace.

The family transferred ownership of the flame to the city of Yame, Fukuoka, which has preserved it as a symbol for the aspiration for world peace.

Sadako Legacy aspires to bring this flame for world peace to Pearl Harbor (or some other site), building a small monument to house the flame so that the millions who see it will also come to embrace the aspiration for world peace for all peoples of the world without denying the suffering which war causes for one and all.

As of the writing of this article, the project has not been approved by the U.S. National Park Service. It is still only a wish of its organizers.

In addition, the Sadako Legacy also plans to produce a documentary that captures the journey of Sadako's paper crane in promoting world peace. The documentary will include people from Hawaii. It will be in both English and Japanese.

In order to realize these two projects, a fundraising effort is underway in Japan and Hawaii. The total goal is to raise approximately \$45,000. Organizers and supporters in Hawaii hope to raise about \$18,000.

As part of the fundraising drive, on a first-come, first-serve basis, donors of



This peace packet, which contains five origami pieces of paper, will be given to those who donate \$10 or more to the Sadako Legacy project fundraiser. (Courtesy of HHMH)

\$10 or more plus postage and handling may receive a peace packet —which contains five origami pieces of paper — on which a personal peace message can be written and folded into a paper crane. Instructions on how to fold a paper crane are also included and a message from Sadako Legacy is part of the packet. More details will be made available on the HHMH website at <https://hongwanjihawaii.com/>

Co-chairs for the fundraising are Wayne Miyao of Hiroshima Kenjinkai in Honolulu and Arthur Taniguchi of Hilo Betsuin of Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii. Another key person is Rene Mansho of the HHMH Peace Day Committee.

We, the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii and our partners, humbly ask the people of Hawaii for your support in this important fundraiser for world peace which will help to make the documentary and the monument for the flame for world peace a reality —so that world peace can become real in our lives and world!

Rev. Higa

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others.

"It is our thoughts, words, and actions that keep the darkness at bay and brings the light of healing and love into our troubled world.

"As I receive this award, I uplift the memory of the late Rev. Yoshiaki Fujitani, former Bishop of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of

PBA

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not been able to travel, but we look forward to welcoming him to the PBA campus so the students can talk story with him and hear his tales about the early days of our beloved high school.

I want to express gratitude to these incredible

women and to Mr. Nonaka for making time for our PBA students. These are early days for the PBA Advisory Council, and we look forward to welcoming future Advisors to help us advance our school's mission of enlightened learning — stellar academics, grounding in Buddhist values and our commitment to peace practice today.