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“Once upon a time, there was a caravan traveling across the desert. There were five hundred merchants in the caravan. The desert was like a vast ocean of sand. It was extremely hot during the day and freezing cold at night, blanketed by sand as far as the eye could see, with no rivers or lakes. The only places where a caravan could find water were oases, like tiny green islands in an ocean of dry sand. As they crossed the dessert, the caravan traveled from oasis to oasis to secure water. The caravan traveled with camels, which, unlike people, do not need to drink water frequently. One day, the caravan took a

KOKORO

NEW YORK BUDDHIST CHURCH



“Died for a Better Life”

September 2017

little longer to get to the next oasis than usual, and all the water they carried was consumed. When the caravan reached the mountainside, the young leader of the caravan told everyone, “The next oasis is over the mountain, but we need to feed the camels now. Please be patient for a while. We see some grass here, so let’s dig he ground and see if we can find some water here.” Some people started to feed camels and some people began to dig. They dug and dug, but there was not water. Everyone was disappointed. Then someone shouted, “Gold!” He had found gold, instead. They were overjoyed and forgot about their thirst, and started digging again. It seemed like enormous amounts of gold was reserved under the ground. The leader saw the camels were well fed and said, “Everyone, let’s move to the oasis before it gets too late.” He was concerned about the time needed to travel to the next oasis and people’s health without water. He knew the situation without water was critical, and could be fatal to everyone, but no one listened to him, and they continued to dig for gold, sweat dripping from their brows. The leader shouted, “Come on everybody! Let’s go!” But his warning fell on deaf ears. You can imagine what happened to the people in that caravan. Buddha said that if we are clingy and possessive, even about what very little we have, it’s not true contentment. In this story, the people were driven by their desires, drowned by their ocean of desires, and ended their lives in a tragic, self-centered, and greedy way. They died for a (supposed) better living. They died believing that wealth would bring them contentment. Buddha said, “True contentment is wealth.”
Namo Amida Butsu”



Reverend Earl Ikeda

Comments:

Buddhism is a path/teaching of awareness. Everyone desires some form of understanding and happiness, however, when we misunderstand why and how we can attain happiness negative results may happen. This example expresses the consequences which come about when we forget ourselves and the Three Poisons of “greed”, “anger”, and “ignorance/foolishness” overcomes us. Understanding, reflecting upon, and practicing the Buddha/Dharma, the Universal Truths, is the path to my personal awakening and everyday truths. One does not need to go far to understand that this is the way or means to awaken to

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truths. Just as darkness is all around, the Light of the Buddha is constantly embracing me/us as well. The Light of the Buddha brings upon the clarity to see through darkness.

Autumn Ohigan Service

NYBC will observe the Autumn Ohigan Service on Sunday, September 24, with a combined Japanese/English service beginning at 11:00 am. We reflect upon the Six Paramitas, the Six Practices, to be able "to cross to the other shore".

We invite members, friends, and anyone interested in the dharma to attend this important service.

Upcoming Temple Fundraisers

Each autumn NYBC sponsors our Autumn Festival. This fundraiser will be held on October 21. Further information will be provided during temple announcements and in this issue of KOKORO.

On November 4, a fundraiser focusing on traditional Hawaii foods will be held. The luncheon will include foods served at a Hawaiian feast call "luau" in Hawaiian.

May I ask members, friends, and those interested in the Buddha Dharma to attend and support our efforts to become more visible and involved with our community.

July Board Highlights

By Cheryl Ikemiya

Security issues – the New York City Police Department did a safety inspection and recommended additional lighting outdoors and extra security cameras especially near the Shinran Shonin statue, which was recently vandalized.

Photo exhibition of historic Buddhist sites organized by Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai were on display from early July through August in the front room of the annex building. BDK also provided pamphlets on the exhibition and other reading materials.

A special fundraising Hawaiian Luau Lunch is set for November 4, 2017. In addition to a delicious authentic Hawaiian meal, a raffle, silent auction and entertainment will be featured. Rev. Earl and Tony DiTomasso are planning the menu. The fundraiser will kick start our Fund for the Future campaign to renovate the Onaijin altar area in the Hondo main hall.

Visit by Rev. Sonam Wangdi Bhutia of Nepal Hongwanji – Rev. Sonam spoke at the Wednesday night meditation, led an all-day Saturday seminar and delivered dharma talks at both the Japanese and English Sunday services. Rev. Jerry Hirano from Salt Lake City and his wife Carmela Javalana Hirano attended the events on behalf of the BCA Bishop and the Center for Buddhist Education.

Affiliated Organizations and Committee Reports

Adult Buddhist Association – The Board will assist in organizing the Autumn Festival. All the profits go to the church. ABA affirmed that the White Elephant event remains the responsibility of the ABA and BWA.

Finance Committee – The Board approved a clarification of the Eitaikyo Fund Usage Policy to include the maintenance/acquisition of items necessary for services; items and maintenance required for the onaijin (altar); appropriate copies of the seiten (service books); repair or purchase of items necessary to the hondo to continue the perpetual care of those remains in the church's care. The Board approved (i) \$30,000 from the Eitaikyo Fund be allocated to jump start the Fund for the Future campaign to renovate the onaijin. The overall goal for this phase of the campaign is approximately \$250,000; (2) that \$35-40K be allocated from the general fund to cover the repairs to the bow window with additional funds from the investment reserve if necessary.

Membership – We have 10 new members so far this year. However, membership is not going up dramatically because of attrition. We are exploring more ways of increasing membership.

The scholarship committee selected Julia Funai for the 2017 Stanley T. Okada Scholarship.

秋のお彼岸（ひがん）法要

9月24日（日曜日）午前11時半より秋のお彼岸法要を勤めます。彼岸とはお浄土のことです。お彼岸は、六波羅蜜（1ほどこしをする、2戒律を守る、3たえ忍ぶ、4進んで努力、5精神統一、6真実の知恵である無分別智を得る）をおこなって、この岸から彼岸にわたらせていたくといわれています。みなさま、どうぞ秋の彼岸法要へお参りいただきますようにご案内申し上げます。

池田アール住職

ファンドレイジグ（お布施）のお願い

恒例の秋祭りが10月21日（土曜日）本堂でおこなわれますので、皆様のご協力を願います。また、11月4日（土曜日）ファンドレイジグの昼食会を予定しています。ぜひご出席いただきますようお願い申し上げます。食事は伝統的なハワイ料理、ラウー（luau）です。

池田アール住職

幸せを知る

ハワイ州カウアイ島カパア本願寺 マジマミエコ開教使

今月の法話は、ハワイ州カウアイ島のカパア本願寺のニュースレター「ワンネス・ONENESS」に掲載された、マジマミエコ開教使の法話「Died For Better Life」をご紹介します。

むかしむかし五百人ほどの商人の大集団（キャラバン）が、砂漠（さばく）の中オアシスをさがしながら行進していました。キャラバンはラクダに商品をつみ、飲み水を求めてオアシスからオアシスへ移動します。ラクダはコブの中に水があるので、水を飲まなくても何日も生きられますが、人間は1日になんども水を飲まなければなりません。砂漠には川や池はなく、どこを見ても砂だけです。そして昼は焼けるように暑く、夜は氷のように冷たい世界にかわります。砂漠で水があるのは、オアシスと呼ばれる水がわき出ているところだけです。オアシスを遠くから見ると、水のまわりには草がはえているので、小さな島が砂の大海に浮かんでいるようにみえます。

キャラバン隊が山のふもとに着いた時、水がほとんどありませんでした。若いリーダーが「オアシスは山をこえた所にあるだろうが、水なしで山をこえられない。ここには草があるから水があるにちがいない。」と言ったので、人々は水をもとめて地面をほり始めました。

しかし、どんなにほっても水はでてきません。その時一人が「金があった!」と叫びました。水のかわりに金を見つけたのです。人々は水をさがすことを忘れて、金を探しに地面をほりはじめました。リーダーは「ここには水がない。別のところへ前進しよう。」と何度も言いしました。しかし、金探しに夢中で誰も聞く耳を持ちません。とうとうリーダーが「水をさがさないと死んでしまうぞ。出発だ!」と叫びました。が、誰一人として彼の命令にしたがいませんでした。

この物語は、自己中心的な考えや欲が、命を失うことになることのたとえ話です。物語の人たちは、財宝があることが幸せになることと思い、自分の命があぶないことを忘れて、金をさがしたのです。仏様は「物によって人間が幸せになるのではない。満足（たること）を知ることが幸せになること。」と教えてください。人間の欲望（よくぼう）は限りなく、満足することがむずかしいものです。

南無阿弥陀仏

池田アール住職からコメント

仏教を学ぶことは、仏法を知ることです。誰もが幸せになりたいと思っていますが、なかなか幸せになれません。幸せになれない原因は、自分を反省することや、煩惱（欲、怒り、無明）に眼をふさがれていることを忘れていないからではないでしょうか。

仏は、信心に生きよと教えてください。信心に生きるとは、色々なむずかしいことを知ることではなく、無明の中にいる自分を知ることでしょう。

佛様の光は、いつでもどこでも私（我々）を照らしてくださっています。

南無阿弥陀仏

(Trans. Akemi Ishida)

Shotsuki Hoyo Memorial Services Schedule for 2016

Shotsuki hoyo is a traditional monthly service to remember your loved ones who died during that month, particularly in the intervals listed below. The Memorial Service provides a way to express your gratitude and recognize their continuing influence in your life. To arrange a shotsuki hoyo memorial service, please talk to Rev. Earl Ikeda or one of our minister's assistants.

2016... 1st Year	2015 ... 3rd Year	2011 ... 7th Year	2005 ... 13th Year
2001... 17th Year	1993 ... 25th Year	1985 ... 33rd Year	1968 ... 50th Year

The names of the persons we will be remembering this month and next are listed below.

September 2017 Shotsuki Hoyo Service Sunday, September 10		October 2017 Shotsuki Hoyo Service Sunday, October 1	
Arran, Glen 2003 Hashimoto, Masaru David 1997 Hino, Hisako 2001 Ikuta, Masayoshi 2012 Ishida, Takanobu 2014 Kamada, Shunichi Max 1967 Kamikawa, Karoku 1964 Kamita, Edward Katsumi 1998 Komiya, Shohei 1997 Lechtanski, Leo 2003 Miyazaki, Gentaro 1978 Mizobata, Keiko 1989 Moribe, Daisy 1987 Mozumi, Julia 2014 Mozumi, Sara 2014	Murahata, Joe Sueki 1999 Nagashima, Hideo 2000 Nakamura, Fujino 1981 Ochiai, Waichiro 1993 Sato, Masahide 1979 Shinozuka, Fujiko 1994 Soeda, Sadako 1997 Sugai, Toshiko Yoshida 2011 Tung, Mei-Jy 2014 Uno, Elsie 1993 Williams, Robert Gordon 2003 Yoshikami, Rev. Egen Iwasaburo 1999 Yoshikami, Mutsuko 1999	Amioka, Masako 1973 Araki, Genichi 1972 Davidson, Charles ---- Davidson, Ignatius ---- Davidson, Inez ---- Davidson, Stan ---- Hino, Hironobu 1978 Horita, Hisako 1909 Ishida, George G. 2014 Ito, Eddie M. 2008 Kamano, Yuki 1995 Kishi, Haru 2002 Kusama, Junko 1995 Laatch, Olivia 1991 Matsuda, Yone 1978 Matsumoto, Kinichi 2003	Mishima, Michiko 1997 Mitsuuchi, Kuma 1995 Mooney, Eiko 2011 Motooka, Mark 1981 Nakamura, Mayumi 2002 Nishimura, G. Guntaro 2014 Okajima, Robert Eiichi 2016 Okubo, Tome 1985 Sakioka, Jack 1991 Schroeter, Lydia 1993 Shirakigawa, Tonami 1926 Takayama, Makoto 2012 Tashiro, Shigezo 1954 Tono, Harry Yoshiaki 1991 Tsuji, Dorothy 2016 Wise, Blanche 1993 Wise, Lotus 1988 Yashiro, Masato 2014 Yasuda, Kentaro 2005 Yoshikami, Mitsuye 1987

NYC Obon 2017

By Tony DiTomasso

On Sunday July 23 friends and members of the New York Buddhist Church gathered in Bryant Park for our annual Obon Dance Festival. Bon Odori or the Obon Dance festival arises from a story told in the **Ullambana Sutra**.

In the Ullambana Sutra, the Buddha instructs his disciple Mahāmaudgalyāyana on how to obtain liberation for his mother, who had been reborn into the realm of Hungry Ghosts, by making food offerings to traveling monks on the fifteenth day of the seventh month. This practice is the basis of the [Obon](#) ceremony in honor of one's ancestors that is still observed widely in [Japan](#). Bon Odori represents the dance for joy the Manamaudgalyāyana performed after he learned of his mothers' release from this lower realm.

Our festival in Bryant Park was well attended, but we were nearly rained out. A steady hard rain was reduced to a drizzle as the program began. Within a few minutes the sun succeeded in breaking through the clouds.

In addition to Soh Daiko, there was a performance by the Tachibana Dance Group. Members of the community joined in dancing Japanese folk dances that were representative of daily life in Japan and meant to show gratitude for the struggles our ancestors made while trying to give us a better life. *Cont. on p. 7*

Sangha News

By Ruth Funai

In mid-May, **Ryo and Keiko Ohtaka** flew to Tokyo to see relatives and friends. During their three-week stay in Japan, they took a side trip to Hakodate, in Hokkaido, the northernmost island of Japan, taking the smooth and efficient bullet train (shinkansen). They spent several days seeing the sights and eating wonderful seafood! They rode on a cable car, learned about the historical significance of the area, (Goryokaku Battle), visited a dairy farm and tasted their milk since Hokkaido is known for their rich ice cream and saw much beautiful scenery. It was an interesting and very enjoyable trip.

The most memorable experience, according to Keiko, was that she forgot her tote bag on the train when returning to her sister-in-law's house where they were staying. They had rushed to catch the next train when she realized she didn't have it and had left it on the train which was just leaving the station! Luckily, only new postcards, a sun hat and a paperback book were in it. Her sister-in-law suggested they report it at the local train station which they did, assuming that nothing would come of it. Unbelievably, the station master checked the information on the computer and told them that the bag had been turned in at a nearby station which could be picked up on the next day! Not only was it amazing that the bag was turned in, the station master said that he would give them a round trip train ticket to pick it up! Only in Japan!

Chieko Nakagawa, who lives in Tokyo, enjoyed a pleasurable, comfortable ride on the train from Tokyo to Yokohama viewing much lush greenery and glimpses of Mt. Fuji. When she arrived there, **Keiko Ohtaka**, visiting from New Jersey, had come on a different train and was met by **Michiko Otsuki's** niece. They walked to her house and were greeted with much energy and enthusiasm by Michi, wearing her usual fashionable outfit. They paid their respect at the family obustudan (altar) where the ashes of Michi's husband and family photos were placed. She was as talkative as ever, being so happy to see them since her move from NY to Japan in May.

Michi then prodded them to move quickly to the



Keiko, Chieko and Michi, enjoying a visit together in Yokohama.

waiting taxi which would take them to the famous Otofu (tofu) restaurant, Ukai, an elegant establishment with the typically manicured Japanese garden surrounding the private rooms. Lunch was served by ladies in kimonos, who explained in detail the delicacies exquisitely placed before them. Otofu served in many variations in beautiful china created picturesque designs of the delicately delicious ingredients which was a feast for the eyes. They were fascinated and amazed with each course. Michi became animated during the luncheon and they chatted and laughed as only New Yorkers can do, including her niece. When the afternoon came to a close, they said good-bye after a most delightful and memorable time. Michi has since moved to an apartment for seniors near Tokyo where we wish her well.

Remember **Spencer Born** who attended NYBC before returning to school for his Masters degree? Guess where he is now? Beijing, China! He is in management with a language training center for adults teaching Chinese adults English. We wish him much success and, no doubt, he's getting much cultural enrichment!

Willow Grove O-Bon

The Obon season is a wonderful time of year as it makes us pause to reflect on the many people who have gone before us who affected us directly or indirectly through their having been among us. We treasure the memories of family, loved ones and those dear to us this time of year. There are also many individuals in the historical past who too need to be remembered and appreciated for their efforts as part of the interdependent nature of our life.

On Saturday, July 22nd New York Buddhist Church, Seabrook Buddhist Temple, Ekoji Buddhist Temple, Princeton Japanese Association and Highland Park Rotary Exchange students joined their energies at Willow Grove Cemetery to clean and prepare the small gravesite for an annual Obon service. Twelve grave markers were scrubbed clean of weeds, grass and brush, which had accumulated over the year, and cleared from the area. Rev. Earl Ikeda (NY Buddhist Church) assisted by minister's assistants Gary Jaskula (New York Buddhist Church) and Erick Ishii (Ekoji Buddhist Temple) guided us through a short service for those buried in the plot. Rev. Kenryu Tsuji established the holding of this annual service with the assistance of the eastern district temples and ministers. It has become an annual service for us for more than 40 years. There is also a strong tie between this gravesite and Fukui, Japan, as the first student enrolled at Rutgers during the Meiji period, Taro Kusakabe, was from Fukui and led the way for subsequent Japanese to leave Japan to broaden their knowledge in the West.

Willow Grove Cemetery is tucked away in New Brunswick, New Jersey,



At Willow Grove , Photo provided by Mariko Banas

which is a small college town surrounding Rutgers College. The cemetery is sorely neglected, with few visitors, which makes our annual visit so much more important. Members who attended this annual service were Mariko & Mike Banas, Yukiko Inoue, Keiko James, Kazumi Peska, Noah Hartwick, Olivia Wolensky, Alice and Julie Yamasaki, Sachiko Ogata, Ruth Funai, Marc Grobman, Dai Miyazaki and Nancy Okada. Following the service, we all gathered for a delicious lunch and comradery.

Autumn Festival Coming on October 21

The New York Buddhist Church will hold its Annual Autumn Festival on Saturday, October 21, from 10 am to 4 pm. The Adult Buddhist Association sponsors the NYBC fundraiser. The Autumn Festival is like an indoor garage sale and street fair featuring items for sale by members, neighbors and vendors. You'll find tables loaded with savory Japanese delights cooked by members of the Buddhist Women's Association/ Fujinkai. The festival also features entertainment including a martial arts demonstration, performances by the Tachibana Dance Group, and Soh Daiko's taiko drumming. Please donate new and used items for this sale. This is a good time to clear out your closet and donate goods for the festival. Donations are accepted on or after Sunday October 1. We do not accept books, clothing or electronics because they do not sell well. Rice cookers and other cooking equipment, however, are gratefully accepted. There is also a "Silent Auction" of special items. Whoever submits the highest written bid between the 10 am opening and the silent auction close at 2pm wins. NYBC members with goods to sell can rent a half table for \$20.00 or \$30.00 for a whole table. For non-members, rates are \$25.00/half table or \$35/whole table. Due to limited space, there is a maximum limit of one table/vendor. *Cont. on back page*

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Thus, we did the coal miners dance, the fisher men's dance and the tea pickers dance to name a few. Besides visitors to the park, members of Seabrook Buddhist Temple joined us in the festivities.

Our Bon Odori does not happen magically. Preparations for next year's festival will begin in the coming months. There is a lot of work involved, including obtaining required city permits, raising funds to cover costs, manual labor involved in set up and clean up, etc. We raise money for this event by publishing a booklet where members of the NYBC Sangha and nearby merchants are able to express their wishes for Obon. A member of the Sangha spends hours putting this booklet together

Our goal for next year is to have a larger booklet as costs for just about everything goes up annually. We also would like to see new people taking part in the planning and preparation for O-Bon in order to ensure that this important tradition continues to take place.



Above, Mariko Kato and Hiroki Hasegawa manning the Origami table in Bryant Park. Below, Members of the NYBC at Seabrook O-Bon.



KOKORO

www.NewYorkBuddhistChurch.org

212-678-0305

Resident Minister: Rev. Earl Ikeda

Kokoro is published by the New York Buddhist Church, a Jodo Shinshu temple. Opinions expressed in *Kokoro* are not necessarily those of the NYBC.

Subscriptions: *Kokoro* is mailed free to NYBC members, and to non-members for \$15/year. For subscriptions and mailing address updates, please contact:

Nancy Okada at 212-678-0305.

Contributors: Rev. Earl Ikeda, Ruth Funai, M.A. Koue Akemi Ishida, Karl Palma, Nancy Okada, Isabelle Bernard, Cheryl Ikemiya, Gary Jaskula, Mac Evans, Tony Di Tomasso, Brian McGurgan, Matthew Wise, Tony Armstrong, and the Buddhist Women's Association mailing team.

Articles and photographs are welcome and will be published subject to suitability of content and availability of space.

Send contributions to Kokoro
Editors: Gail Inaba, ginaba@optonline.net and Mariko Kato at mkatony@hotmail.com.

**Next Deadline is
Friday, Sept. 15**

Autumn Festival

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To rent a table, contact one of the chairpersons promptly as tables tend to sell out quickly. This year's chairs are Tony DiTomasso, and Renee Semenick. Tony can be contacted at 917 628 8608. We need volunteers to help with the event on: Friday, October 20, 5 to 8pm: to set up ; Saturday, Oct. 21, 9am: to continue set-up, and Saturday, Oct. 21, 4pm: to clean up after the sale, put away tables, and arrange

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chairs so the Hondo will be ready for Sunday's service. As a reminder we will be making announcements after our Sunday Services in the weeks leading up to the Autumn Festival. If you can assist at any of those times, please contact one of the chairs.



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**New York Buddhist Church
331 Riverside Drive
New York, NY 10025**

www.newyorkbuddhistchurch.org

