



To promote a greater understanding and appreciation of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism and to continue to live the Nembutsu as a warm and friendly temple

YABA SUNDAY OR “On Howa and Kanwa”

Rev. John Iwohara

For the last several months now our Venice Hongwanji Young Adult Buddhist Association (YABA) has hosted an afternoon service on the first Sunday of every month. Recently, however, the group decided to try something “new” with their program and introduced *kanwa* as part of the program. Prior to the addition of the *kanwa*, the YABA would select the topic for the service and I was asked to give a Dharma Message or *howa* on that topic. The YABA then set aside time, after the service, to discuss the topic amongst all the people who attended the service. This last month, however, the *kanwa* was added to help YABA members think about the topic of the service prior to the service.

Prior to the service, I was fortunate enough to talk with the YABA member who was going to give the first YABA *kanwa*. During that conversation we talked about what he was planning to talk about and I shared with him some of the doctrinal points of Jodo Shinshu that I thought he was hinting at to let him know that he was not saying anything “incorrect” and to give him more things to think about in preparing his talk.

As with trying anything for the first time it requires a lot of courage. But, fortunately for all of us, YABA is not lacking in courage. Just starting YABA took a lot of courage. Just like standing in front of people and sharing your heart has to be. It is so nerve wracking that sometimes you forget to say some of the things you want to say. “It” happened this time as well. After the service and the discussion, I was told that our YABA speaker forgot to mention, in their message, what they had initially thought was a very critical element of the message. In being told this, I told him that this, too, in and of itself can be a lesson. It can become a lesson if we hear and listen to what we are being told about ourselves. In forgetting to say something “critically important” we can be taught that we sometimes also forget about some of the more important things in our lives. This often includes our spiritual life and may also include the things we might label as integrity, sincerity, appreciation and gratitude to name a few. These also tend to be the things that a spiritual life reminds us to include in our lives. Like the message where we might forget to say something “critically important,” for the most part the people listening to the message probably would not even notice that something was “not there.” In fact, it probably seemed like nothing was missing at all. The difference is only appreciated when we are able to see what the message or our lives could have been if this something “critically important” was included. For me, because I was reminded of all this, the last YABA hosted Sunday afternoon service and discussion was, indeed, a very meaningful and special service to have participated in.

In the main part of my article I introduced the terms *kanwa* and *howa*. Literally, *kanwa* can be translated to, “appreciation/feeling-message/talk.” This is a message where the primary focus of the talk is to share your appreciation and experience with the *Nembutsu*. *Howa*, on the other hand, is often translated to “Dharma-message.” Although the difference between *howa* and *kanwa* may not seem that great, there is a difference. Of the two, the *howa* is much more structured. Although the *howa* will include the speaker's appreciation and experience with the *Nembutsu* as part of the message (because there is a difference between *howa* and lecture), the *howa* has to share the Dharma. In other words, the message has to be constructed in a way so that people hearing the message can leave knowing or understanding the Dharma more fully, and not just having a better feeling or appreciation for it. That is why the *howa* has to begin with a *go-sandai* (scriptural passage) that the message is going to focus on. Within the Hongwanji-ha tradition, the *howa* is limited to those who have been “certified” to give such messages. Part of the reason for this is to help assure that there are no doctrinal discrepancies or errors given in the message. It is also a vehicle for transmission. This reason emphasizes the “certification.” Another, and probably more important reason, however, is to highlight the responsibility that one has to take in giving the message. The message has to also be an expression of faith.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Tom Yamaguchi

I would like to thank everyone for making the first six months of my term as president a smooth transition. Following in the footsteps of Dale Noriyuki made the transition smoother too. He is such a great leader.

As I took office back in January, I had no idea of all of the work that goes into running a temple. I am so grateful of having the support of so many people who take on so many of the job responsibilities to make the temple run. I appreciate Reverend John, for all of his work with the dharma school, expansion of services for the YABA, Japanese services, regular morning services, mentoring and holding seminars to teach Jodo Shin Shu teaching. The list goes on.

I did not know the full scope of all the inner workings of the temple. If I had to do it all myself, I would be in a retirement home now. Thanks to all of you who do all of what you do to make the temple function. That is what makes Venice so special. We are all one big family.

I am so lucky to be surround by: a great supporting family, a great VHBT family, a great Reverend, and an understanding wife. How can I be anything but HAPPY. Yes, you can call me "HAPPY TOM"!

Next on the schedule is OBON. Let's have everyone come out and dance, eat and remember all of those who have passed before us.

YABA SUNDAY Or "On Howa and Kanwa (Continued from page 1)

The *kanwa* shares many of the same "responsibilities" as is found in the *howa* and because of this has also been a very important part of the tradition, just as having discussions have been. The *kanwa*, however, is not necessarily meant to transmit the Dharma; instead, it might be described as an expression of why you would want to transmit the Dharma or as the expression of joy that the Dharma was transmitted to me. Because of this it is "freer" than the *howa*. Every now and then a person "qualified" to give a *howa* will switch to a *kanwa* for these reasons.

Although the *kanwa* and *howa* are not necessarily "new" to the transmission of Jodo Shinshu, the YABA in "introducing" the *kanwa* to the afternoon service all helps us to see that the *kanwa* and *howa* are not old either.

FUJINKAI

The Fujinkai mothers who attended the Mother's Day Service and Luncheon wish to thank Dharma School for the special occasion! Yum---

We will be attending and participating in the Southern District Conference at Gardena Buddhist Church June 9.

Fujinkai ladies will join the rest of the temple in remembering and honoring loved ones who have passed away during the special Memorial Day weekend services.

On May 29, ladies and friends will take a day trip to Pechanga Indian Casino for a fundraiser.

Rest up, ladies. As usual, we will be participating in the VJCC Festival in June..lots of prep time and work! And the Obon Festival will be in July – more prep time, more work, and don't forget *odori*, too!

More information later regarding Fujinkai's *kazari* for the Tanabata Festival this summer.

Also, our religious chairs, Barbara Fukuji and Alice Ogawa, and their planning committee are planning a big conference at VHBT in October with interesting workshops for all members to participate and enjoy.

Lastly, Fujinkai ladies attend and encourage everyone at the temple to attend ongoing services and get-togethers as follows:

- Jorei Fukyo – Japanese language service. 1st Sunday of each month at 12 noon.
- Meinichi – 16th day of each month at 7:30 am. *Okayu* and *shojin ryori* potluck after the service.
- Tsuki Tsuito Hoyo – 3rd Saturday of each month at 9:30 am. Memorial service for persons who are listed in the Eitaikyo book for that month.

ABA

Greetings to all of you! 2012 seems to be moving along so quickly and for the ABA membership it has been very busy and fun!

First off, I wanted to let you know that one of our veteran ABA members, Kenji Koda "retired" from his role as Treasurer and three of our best members in Tomoko

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ABA

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Fukuda, David Nishina and Joyce Enomoto-Rosengrant are assuming his role as Co-Treasurers. I, along with the rest of the ABA organization would like to thank and acknowledge Kenji for all of his hard work. We intend to keep Kenji as busy as ever!

On April 22nd, we held our annual ABA Country Style breakfast fundraiser featuring Cyndy Uehara's homemade "chashu" in our fried rice along with fried eggs, link sausage and orange slices. Yummo! We would like to thank Mark Morimoto for his generous donations for the event. It was a very successful event thanks to all of you. Our Treasurers reported that we netted \$2,442 after expenses from the Country Style Breakfast. ABA will be donating 50% of the proceeds to the Temple Operating Fund.

The next two months will be quite busy with the Venice Japanese Community Center Festival in late June and annual Obon Festival in July. We will have the convection oven and charcoal grills running full throttle cooking up the famous Chicken Teriyaki plates. We could use all of your help if you are available!

Not to get ahead of myself but a "little birdie" told me that the Venice ABA organization will be celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2013. Wow, that's amazing! It will be exciting to begin planning now for such a historical event. Lastly, it is hard to believe that we are almost halfway through the year. It has been a gratifying and humbling experience for myself to work with such dedicated and committed ABA members and friends of the Venice temple.

JR. YBA

On February 20th, we had our Souplantation fundraiser. We had a very good turnout and many of our church members came to support us.

In March we held our Rummage sale at the temple and we received many great donations to help make our fundraiser a success. We also participated in the Southern District Basketball tournament. We heard that Kelsey and Dustin's team did well.

April was a busy month for Jr. YBA. We held another workshop meeting to discuss the workshops for the Southern District Conference, which we will be hosting With WLA Temple in September. We are working very
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DHARMA SCHOOL

Jayne Heyl

Dharma School would like to welcome new students: Tayah Bulbuka (1st Grade) and Kai Gonzalez (Preschool)!

On March 17th we hosted Family Fun Night at the temple. Once again we had a Wii bowling tournament where preschoolers through adults got to test their Wii bowling skills on 3 Wii stations around the social hall. Dharma School Students- Alyssa Kawano, Emily Kawano and Casey Uematsu earned prizes for their great bowling. We had a delicious potluck dinner and got to celebrate Casey's birthday with a big cake! Thank you to everyone who donated food and prizes! Also thank you to Tom Yamaguchi and Mrs. Sato for planning this event!

On Sunday May 13th Dharma School Staff hosted Mother's Day Service and Lunch. Thanks to everyone who prepared the lunch, came to eat the lunch and especially those who helped clean it up. Also this year all the kids in attendance decorated cupcakes to share with everyone for dessert. They were colorful, beautifully decorated and yummy too! Thank you to Julia Ueda for coordinating!

On Sunday June 17th Dharma School hosted Dads & Grads Service and lunch. At this service we honored all of our dads, as well as presented special recognition to high school graduates: Sean Iwohara, Shelby Yamada, and Dustin Noriyuki and college graduates: Jill Hopfield, Kayla Ueda, Ryan Sharp, Kevin Cohen, and Kevin Ozaki. As always we enjoyed chili, rice, and hotdogs for lunch! We look forward to seeing new and old friends at Obon! Have a great Summer

JR. YBA

(Continued from previous column)

hard to make this a huge success. In this month, we helped with stapling and mailing our temple newsletter, the Gassho. We also assisted with the Temple clean up.

In the Month of May, we are participating in the Japanese American Cultural Center clean up.



CUB SCOUT PACK 79

Keiichi Ono

For the month of February,

On Sunday February 5th: Several of our scouts celebrated Scout Sunday at the Temple. This is a special service by Reverend John dedicated for Cub Scouts, Girl Scout and Boy Scouts to celebrate the birth of scouting. 40 of our Cub Scout participated in the event and received a special Scout Sunday patch.

On February 19th. – We had our annual Blue and Gold Dinner at the VJCC. The blue and gold banquet is a birthday dinner for the Cub Scouting program, held during February. The anniversary month of the Boy Scouts of America, which was organized in February 1910. The Cub Scouts was organized 20 years later in 1930.

For the month of March,

On Saturday March 3-4th: There was a pack outing to the Sea World Scout Campout were 58 people (20 cub scouts) attended the event and attended various classes and slept with the turtles at Turtle Reef.

On Thursday March 15th and 16th: We had our annual Pine Wood Derby Race at the Temple. Den 3 and Den 8 was in charge of the event. We had some great looking and fast cars this year. We also had a snack stand where we sold food and baked goods. 1st Place Winner was: Darren Hovey (Den 3), 2nd Place Winner was: Kai Kishi (Den 2), and 3rd Place Winner was: William Landin (Den 2).

On Saturday March 24th and March 25th: We had our annual Scouting for Food Event at Ralph's supermarket on Olympic and Barrington in West LA. This Cub Scout community service project benefits the Westside Food Bank. Our scouts braved through the rain and still collected 64 boxes of food and cash donation of \$561.25.

March 25th: The temple had their Spring Ohigan Service on March 25th where we had 8 of our scouts show up.

For the month of April,

April 8th: The temple also had their Hanamatsuri Service on April 8th where we had 3 of our scouts show up.

On April 27-29: The 2012 Crescent Bay District Camporee took place this year at Tajon Ranch. At Camporee, our Webelos scouts had the opportunity for BB gun shooting, Archery, and Tomahawk Throwing. Out of the 17 dens that competed this year, Pack 79 came home with several medals and was again victorious to bring home the Trophy Rug as the overall winner of the competition

GIRL SCOUTS TROOP 5325

On Monday 7th we had a Curry Sale at the temple for Girl scouts. The Curry Sale was a fundraiser towards our Sliver Awards. We gathered on Sunday before the Curry Sale to do all of the prep work. Morgan, Paige and I peeled all of the vegetable and cut them in to pieces. We also peeled three chickens to put in the curry. From the hard work and the amazing parents and troops members, we sold 118 orders of curry. Thank you for the support!

Joy Watanabe

International Day Mar. 9, 2012

The Juniors selected Madagascar for our Troop's country for International Day this year. They made "Lemur eye" swaps for our craft and created a country board to display various facts from typical clothing and head dresses, a kids life in Madagascar, to holidays and the recipe for Malagache Chicken curry which they prepared from scratch to give as samples for other scouts to taste. It was a great hit!

VHBT YOUTH VOLUNTEERS HELP CLEAN UP JAPANESE AMERICAN WAR MEMORIAL COURT

- Dianne Kujubu Belli

"I was 19 years old when I went into the Army and I spent my 20th birthday in Vietnam." These words from Temple member, Danny Nakagiri can only give us a glimpse of what going to war has meant to generations of young men and women and their families.

To try to learn about the experiences of veterans who went to war, 18 young volunteers, including four from the Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, participated in the "Spit and Polish Day" at the Japanese American National War Memorial Court at the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center on Saturday, May 12, 2012. They cleaned, scrubbed and polished the court in preparation for the annual Memorial Day weekend service. Volunteers from VHBT included Derrick and Tyson Amano, Dustin Noriyuki, and Katie Rosengrant. The Memorial Court is the only place in the country dedicated to the memory of the more than 1,200 Japanese Americans who gave their lives in over a century of service to America.

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WAR MEMORIAL COURT CLEAN UP

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After the young volunteers cleaned up the Memorial Court, they had the opportunity to ask questions of Japanese American veterans from World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War, including VHBT members, Sam Shimoguchi (Korean War), and Danny Nakagiri (Vietnam War).

Danny shared that upon receiving his draft notice, he enlisted to become a helicopter mechanic. Little did he know that helicopter mechanics not only repair helicopters but serve as crew chiefs and door gunners, flying missions sometimes daily, sometimes weekly. He served with “A” troop 2/17 Cavalry, 101st Airborne Division, and was stationed in Vietnam for one year, from July 1968 to July 1969. The 101st airborne is a very proud and decorated unit. During his time there, Danny’s unit received a Presidential Unit citation and Vietnamese Gallantry Cross. Danny himself received two Bronze Stars, Army Commendation, Vietnam Service, Vietnamese Campaign and National Defense commendations.

At the Spit and Polish Day, all the veterans shared that the effects of war don’t end when the actual war ends or the soldiers come home. Vietnam War vet, David Miyoshi, shared that he suffered from post-traumatic stress syndrome for many years, and Danny himself continues to suffer from the effects of exposure to Agent Orange.

Preparing for the annual Memorial Day weekend service is especially meaningful to VHBT, because the VHBT Board voted on December 4, 2009, to participate in the Japanese American Vietnam War Killed in Action (KIA) adoption program. In this program, community organizations/ temples/ churches “adopt” the names of 8-12 KIA and honor and remember them.

The KIA adopted by VHBT include:

- Edward M. Amato, SP4 of Commack, NY, who was 23 years old when he was killed, six months after he started his tour of duty.
- Bruce J. Mori, Pfc. of Los Angeles, CA, who was 20 years old when he was killed due to multiple fragmentation wounds, 39 days after he started his tour of duty.

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WAR MEMORIAL COURT CLEAN UP

(Continued from previous column)

- Masashi Nakashimo S/Sgt of Santa Barbara, CA, who was 23 years old when he was killed a year and half after he started his tour of duty. He received a posthumous promotion.
- Rockne Masayoshi Noguchi, Pfc. of Honolulu, HI, who was 20 years old when he died of multiple fragmentation wounds, 7 months after he started his tour of duty.
- Terry Y. Ogami, Cpl of Reedley, CA, who was 21 years old when he died. He received a posthumous promotion. Terry has a special connection to VHBT, as his uncle and aunt, Sam and Dolly, and their children lived in the house on Culver Blvd., which was sold to the Temple for its original location, and Danny Nakagiri had met him several times because Danny was a friend of Terry’s cousin, Dean.
- Takeshi Yabiku, Sp4 of Los Angeles, CA, who was 22 years old when he died of gun or small arms fire.
- Naoto Yamashiro, Sp7 of Honolulu, HI, who was 43 years old, after 20 years in the service.
- Douglas Yuki, Sp4 of Altadena, CA, who was 22 when he was killed in an accidental homicide.

Thank you to the young members of VHBT for participating in the “Spit and Polish Day,” and thank you to all veterans for serving our country. “Spit and Polish Day” organizer, Ken Hayashi, advised the young volunteers that while they may not serve their country in the same way that the veterans had, they can still serve their community through their continued volunteer work.





2012 CALENDAR OF MAJOR SERVICES & ACTIVITIES

JUNE, 2012

- 12 – 13 SO. DISTRICT MINISTER'S FUKEN
- 17 DAD'S & GRAD'S SERVICE – 10 A.M.
- 23 & 24 VJCC NATSU MATSURI
- 25 OBON ODORI PRACTICE BEGINS
- 26 FUNERAL WORKSHOP – FUKUI MORTUARY – 7 P.M.-9 P.M.
- 28 FUNERAL WORKSHOP – KUBOTA NIKKEI MORTUARY – 7 P.M. – 9 P.M.

JULY, 2012

- 5 BUDDHIST EDUCATION COMMITTEE (BEC) MEETING – 7:30 P.M.
- 7 VENICE OBON FESTIVAL SET UP – 8:30 A.M.
- 8 OBON – HATSUBON SERVICE – 10 A.M.
- 14 & 15 VENICE OBON FESTIVAL
- 22 DHARMA SCHOOL KID'S SERVICE – 9:30 A.M.
- 7/28 – 8/4 LABCC SUMMER CAMP

AUGUST, 2012

- 5 "A" BOMB/ VIET NAM MEMORIAL SERVICE – 9:30 A.M.
- 6 – 9 BCA MINISTER'S FUKEN (SO. DISTRICT HOST)

SEPTEMBER, 2012

- 1 & 2 SO. DISTRICT JR. YBA CONFERENCE – VENICE & WLA HOSTS
- 15 YABA – "RETRO BUDDHA" SEMINAR – 8 A.M.-4 P.M.
- 16 FALL OHIGAN SERVICE & BOOK CLUB – 10 A.M.
- 22 ABA MEMORIAL SERVICE – 7:30 P.M.

OCTOBER, 2012

- 12 – 14 BCA NATIONAL FUJINKAI CONFERENCE – SAN JOSE
- 20 FUJINKAI ESHINISAMA SERVICE – 7:30 P.M.
- 28 DHARMA SCHOOL HALLOWEEN PARTY – 5 P.M.

NOVEMBER, 2012

- 3 YABA SAKE TASTING – 7 P.M.
- 10 ABA STEAK FEAST – 6 P.M.
- 11 EITAIKYO SERVICE – 10 A.M.

DECEMBER, 2012

- 1 MOCHI TSUKI SET UP – 8:30 A.M.
- 8 MOCHI TSUKI – 7 A.M.
- 9 MOCHITSUKI WRAP UP & CLEAN UP – 8:30 A.M.
- 16 OSEIBO APPRECIATION SERVICE – 10 A.M.
- 30 JOYA-E END OF YEAR SERVICE – 7:30 P.M.

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2011-12 CALENDAR OF MAJOR SERVICES & ACTIVITIES

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REGULARLY SCHEDULED SERVICES & MEETINGS

- FAMILY DHARMA SERVICE – *Sundays 9:30 A.M.*
Student Dharma School Classes & Adult Service – Immediately following Family Dharma Service
High School Student Class – First Sunday of each month following Family Dharma Service
 - TEMPLE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – *First Friday of each month, 7:30 P.M.*
(Except the December General Member's Meeting is scheduled for 11/30/2012 at 7:30 p.m.)
 - BUDDHIST WOMENS ASSN. (FUJINKAI) MEETING – *Tuesday following Temple Board meeting*
 - ABA MEETING – *2ND Tuesday following Temple Board Meeting, 7:30 P.M.*
 - YABA MEETING – *Every Wednesday 7:00 P.M.*
 - DHARMA SCHOOL STAFF MEETING – *First Sunday of each month, 8:30 A.M.*
 - JR. YBA MEETING – *First Sunday of each month after Family Dharma Service*
 - MONTHLY YABA SERVICE – *First Sunday of each month. 1 P.M.*
 - DAILY MORNING SERVICE – *Everyday except Mondays & Wednesdays, 9:30 A.M.*
 - JOREI FUKYO – *Monthly Japanese Language Service. First Sunday of each month – 12 Noon*
 - MONTHLY TSUKI TSUITO SERVICE-*Fourth Saturday of each month - 9:30 A.M.*
 - MEINICHIKO SERVICE – *16TH of each month, 7:30 A.M.*
 - CUB SCOUT PACK 79 PARENT'S MEETING – *First Thursday of each month, 7 P.M.*
 - CUB SCOUT PACK 79 MEETING – *Every Third Thursday of each month, 7 P.M.*
 - TAI CHI CLASS – *Every Tuesday, 10 A.M.*
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2012 SOUTHERN DISTRICT OBON ODORI SCHEDULE

JUNE

9	ARIZONA BUDDHIST CHURCH	6:45 P.M.
23 & 24	SUN VALLEY BUDDHIST CHURCH	7:00 P.M. & 6:30 P.M.
30	SENSHIN BUDDHIST TEMPLE	7:00 P.M. & 9:00 P.M.
30	WEST COVINA BUDDHIST CHURCH	7:00 P.M.
6/30 & 7/1	SAN FERNANDO BUDDHIST TEMPLE	7:00 P.M. & 6:30 P.M.

JULY

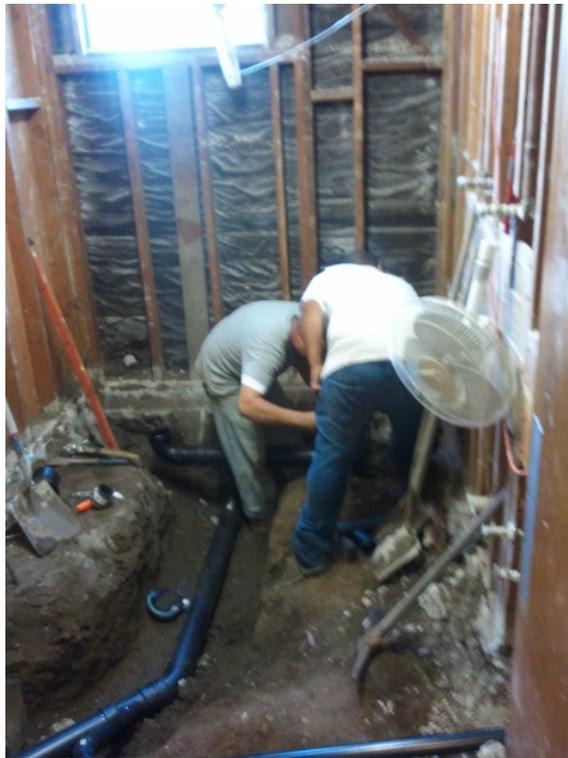
7 & 8	L.A. BETSUIN (NISHI HONGWANJI)	7:00 P.M. & 6:30 P.M.
14	OXNARD BUDDHIST TEMPLE	6:00 P.M.
14 & 15	PASADENA BUDDHIST CHURCH	6:30 P.M.
14 & 15	<u>VENICE HONGWANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE</u>	6:30 P.M.
21 & 22	ORANGE COUNTY BUDDHIST CHURCH	7:00 P.M.
22	GUADALUPE BUDDHIST CHURCH	3:00 P.M.
28 & 29	VISTA BUDDHIST TEMPLE	6:30 P.M.
28 & 29	WEST LOS ANGELES BUDDHIST TEMPLE	6:30 P.M.
28 & 29	HIGASHI HONGANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE	6:30 P.M.

AUGUST

4 & 5	GARDENA BUDDHIST CHURCH	6:00 P.M.
4	SAN DIEGO BUDDHIST CHURCH	6:30 P.M.
4	SAN LUIS OBISPO BUDDHIST TEMPLE	6:30 P.M.
11	LAS VEGAS BUDDHIST SANGHA	12:45 P.M.



MESSAGE FOR MEN ONLY



MEN AT WORK FOR MEN