



GASSHO



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

Los Angeles, California

Summer, 2013

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GOING GREEN

Rev. John Iwohara

In our world we have created such a large carbon footprint that we must learn how to wean ourselves from our dependence on carbon based fuels like gasoline. Many of the machines we have come to depend on are fueled by gas, and in order to save ourselves and our planet we are being told that we need to move away from gas and become more green. Over the centuries, we probably noticed the pollution that we were creating but we probably didn't think too much about it. Even when the fluorocarbons we emitted sometimes made the air we breathed unhealthy, we basically learned to ignore it. But now, we have created so much that it is almost impossible for us to ignore, although we still try to do our best.



In living our lives, we have become dependent upon the technology that, ironically enough, was supposed to free us from the more mundane aspects of our lives. We have become so dependent, that even when we think it might be killing us, we still can't let go. Although we tend to define our world in terms of the technology that we have created, our world, however, is not just run by the machines we build. It is also run by the hearts that we have. The Buddha, having recognized this, told us that we need to be saved from a life fueled by GAS or the acronym for the three poisons of Greed, Anger, and Stupidity. It is not just our planet but also our hearts, it seems, that have to become more GREEN. In order to offset Greed, Anger, and Stupidity let us try to become more Grateful, Respectful, Empathetic, and Enthusiastic in our Nembutsu.

SUMMER IS HERE

Tom Yamaguchi, President

June 21 is the first day of summer. Kids are out of school.
Weather is changing. The sun is staying up longer.
AND Obon is right around the corner.
July 27th and 28th, to be specific.

Obon is that time of year, when we take time to remember all of those who have gone before us, and it is a time to share with all of those you love and cherish. It is a time to stop and reflect on those things and people around us. Stop to say "I love you", a time to say "thank you". It is a time, to do those things that make you HAPPY.

Come and Join your VHBT Family and bring your friends
Come and enjoy dancing.
Come and enjoy the food,
Just come and enjoy.

ALSO, Did you know that Venice was on HBO?

Yes. We were part of the Mini Series "East of Main Street – Milestones". You can see the trailer on You Tube..

Tonight, as I watched the video, I began thinking about life, and my goal in life. As I think, and what comes to my mind again and again, is being grateful for what I have. I have my health. I have a wonderful wife and kids. I have a loving dog. I have a great profession. I wake up each morning, being thankful my eyes opened. I still have my own teeth. I can walk. I can hear..."hurry up, you walk to slow." or, "you know the speed limit is 75 miles per hour (as I drive 55), or "your zipper is down." I can smell. There is so much to be thankful for. I try to live each day, and not have any regrets. Look at each day, as the next GREAT day of my life. Not to let the little things consume my life. So please come and spend the next GREAT day with me at VHBT.

In Gassho,



Supporting - One Veteran at a Time

By Genki Woman

*By Dianne Kujubu Belli, Executive Director,
The Institute for Healthy Aging at Keiro*

Going to the *Genki* Conference: Veteran's Edition was the best thing for me. I learned a lot from the Conference and I was able to meet staff from the Veteran's Administration who assisted me in qualifying for VA health benefits. I had applied for benefits previously and been turned down. This time, working with Charles Green (Associate Chief, Outreach; Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System), I was able to be approved for benefits almost immediately. The Conference and the entire experience were really good."



So said Ken Sogabe who attended the Conference presented by The Institute for Healthy Aging at Keiro, in partnership with the Japanese American Vietnam Veterans Memorial Committee (JAVVMC), the Japanese American Korean War Veterans (JAKWV), the Go for Broke National Education Center, and the Kazuo Masuda Memorial VFW Post 3670. The Conference was held on Saturday, April 6, 2013, at Keiro Senior HealthCare's Los Angeles campus. Ken Sogabe, a conference attendee was in Vietnam from May 1967 to December 1968 in the HHC 5th Trans Command, Qui Phong, Vietnam, as a specialist 5. He served as a personnel management specialist.

It was my pleasure and honor to speak to Veterans—our heroes," said Dr. Yoshikawa Thomas Yoshikawa, MD, the Deputy Chief of Staff of Geriatrics and Extended Care and Special Projects for the VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System, the day after the conference. "It is our job, especially those of us working in VA health care, to improve the health and quality of life of Veterans. If a little of the knowledge and information helped one Veteran yesterday, we have accomplished our goal." In fact, this goal was accomplished manyfold through the Conference and speakers.



As we approach Memorial Day, we should support not only the veterans who are living among us, but remember and honor those who did not make it home. On Saturday, May 25, 2013 at 11:00 a.m., the Annual Memorial Day Service for all Japanese Americans who gave their lives in our nation's wars, was held adjacent to the Japanese American National War Memorial Court (Memorial Court) at the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center (JACCC), located in Little Tokyo. This year's event will be jointly sponsored by the JAKWV and the JAVVMC. The keynote speaker was Robert Fumio Leong, former Chairman of the Cal Vet Board who served as a Captain with the 5th Special Forces Group and Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, Studies and Observations Group (MACVSOG) from 1968 to 1970. Robert is the father of Keiro's community resources manager, Brandon Leong.

Our community and nation are forever indebted to the Japanese American veterans, who served in peace time and in times of war.

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Southern District Conference Attendees from VHBT June 8, 2013 at Nishi Hongwanji



Veteran's Memorial Service Attendees at JACCC

GASSHO

FUJINKAI

Dianne Kujubu Belli

It's 11:13 pm the night after the VJCC Festival. I just finished dinner, after staying late at the office, making up time that I would have spent working over the weekend of the Festival. Joe just went to bed, having waited for dinner with me. He and everyone we know who worked at the Festival is "dog tired" today.

We had a conversation over dinner on why people volunteer. Is it the fame, the glory, the habit, the guilt?

When I entered "Why do I volunteer" into the Google search box, I found the PBS (public television) website page for kids. It said, "Volunteering takes up our time, energy, and sometimes, money. It can be hard work. It can find us doing and seeing new things, which can be challenging and even a little scary. So why does anyone even *go there*?"

Well, here's a reason:

Volunteering is good for others The world is not a perfect place, and many people, animals, places, and communities need help. Governments and professionals try to meet everyone's needs, but it's impossible for them to do it all.

This is why people become volunteers: because they can make a difference where someone or something needs help. If people never help each other and only care about themselves, the world becomes a crueler, sadder place. But when we volunteer our time, money, or talents, we help make our planet a better, happier home where people work together to make life easier for all."

The website went on to advise kids that there were a number of things that one gets in return for giving of one's time, talent, or dollars. So I went through the list and this is what I found about the recent weekend at the VJCC Festival:

- Making new friends: *The Festival always gives me the opportunity to reconnect with people that I may only see once a year. It reminds me of the generations of people who made it possible for the Community Center to exist, first as wooden buildings on a dirt lot, and now with the soaring addition of the newest building.*
- Gaining important skills and experience that will help you later in life: *I know after two full days in the wonton booth that it is easier to pack wonton by placing the six wonton in the tray and then placing the sauce cup than the other way around.*
- Making connections that can lead to a job or career: *I have a wonderful career at Keiro already, but the weekend gave me an opportunity to connect younger people with others who may help advance their careers.*
- Seeing more of your community and world: *I loved and appreciated the fact that friends from OCBC and Nishi went out of their way to come to the Festival.*
- Building confidence and self-esteem: *I realized that I am a veteran wonton wrapper. I know, without instruction, that one must pat the air out of the wonton, or they will puff up like puffer fish in the hot oil.*
- Exploring what you want to do with your life: *I had the opportunity to have meaningful conversations about topics ranging from appreciating the moment, to not-for-profit leadership and strategic planning, to health care reform, to retirement planning.*
- Feeling needed and important: *All Fujinkai members are needed and important, from the VJCC booth chairs (Tomoko and Janet and honorary Fujinkai MVP Roger Brown) to those members who could not attend the Festival. Without everyone, there would be no Fujinkai.*
- Feeling satisfaction at getting things done and helping others: *I hope that I was able to help in some way, all the ladies who worked for days and weeks to prepare for the Festival.*
- Meeting people who could be role models: *Everywhere I turned, I saw people at the Festival who were my role models. Could I be as patient? Could I be as strategic? Could I be as supportive? Many lessons to be learned.*
- Using your mind, body, and creativity: *We had to do things in a different way this year because of the refrigeration issues involved. The chairwomen were creative and ingenious, and everyone was supportive of trying something new.*
- Getting active and healthier: *Walking back and forth from the Temple to VJCC multiple times over the weekend was great exercise, and I do thank Janet and Roger for the healthy and delicious watermelon.*
- Relieving stress: *I am relieved that we encountered no problems at our booth.*

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BUDDHIST EDUCATION COMMITTEE (BEC)

Richard Modiano

The theme for the Venice Hongwanji 2013 Film Festival was "The Social Face of Buddhism." BEC screened documentary films that addressed the topics of the environment, war, tolerance and economic responsibility and talked about the Shin Buddhist response to these issues in conversations led by Rev. John. The Films screened were *The Fog of War*, *Sacco and Vanzetti*, *Inside Job* and *Koyaanisqatsi*

The theme for next year's film festival is Exile.

FUJINKAI

(Continued from page 4)

- Fighting boredom: *This is generally not a problem for me, because even chopping cabbage or frying wonton, when done with focus and intent can be fulfilling*
- Spending time doing what you really care about: *Doing something is fine, but it is the people in the booth that I care about.*
- Gaining an edge on getting into college: *Once upon a time, I received a VJCC scholarship and for this, I will always be grateful.*
- Feeling like you're part of a community: *We are all interconnected. Rather than ties that bind, these are ties that we relish.*
- Having fun! *No doubt.*

The PBS for Kids website concludes with "Hey...it looks like being a volunteer gives as much good stuff to you as it does to the people, places, or animals you're trying to help! That's the secret of volunteering. People who become volunteers usually lead richer, happier, and more satisfying lives than those who don't volunteer."

Keeping all this in mind, I am grateful for the opportunity to volunteer and grateful to all the Fujinkai ladies who feel the same way, giving of their time, talents, and dollars. We look forward to Obon!

DHARMA SCHOOL

Jayme Heyl

On Sunday May 12th 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. Special thank yous go to Barbara Fukuji for coordinating and the Century City Flowers for the beautiful roses.

On Sunday June 9th Dharma School hosted our annual picnic with WLA Buddhist Temple. We ate lots of yummy food, played in the playground, rode bikes, played lawn games and more! Everyone had a great time! Thanks to Emily Kariya, Judy Hopfield and Julia Ueda for coordinating the picnic.

On Sunday June 16th 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: Stephanie Gee, Madeline Hopfield, Andrew Oye, Brian Oye and Erica Tokirio and college graduates: Amanda Chen, Ryan Cohen, and Gregory Yamaguchi . As always we enjoyed chili, rice, and hotdogs for lunch! Thanks to Barbara Fukuji for coordinating the lunch.

We look forward to seeing new and old friends at our Obon! Have a great Summer!

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ABA

Carey Tokirio

Hello to all of you! It is hard to believe that half the year has nearly gone by in 2013. On April 21st, many ABA members were up before the sun came up to prepare for the ABA Country Style breakfast fundraiser. Many plates of char siu fried rice, scrambled eggs, sausage links and orange slices were served. A big thanks to the many volunteers who came out to prep, sell, cook, serve and clean at this fun and financially successful event. I would like to especially thank Mark Morimoto for his generous donations.

ABA has been very busy preparing for the Venice Japanese Community Center Festival the weekend of June 22-23 and the Venice Obon the weekend of July 27-28. With the combination of the convection ovens and the charcoal grills, ABA is looking forward to serving its popular chicken teriyaki plates at both events. Be sure to come visit and enjoy a few plates of the yummy chicken!

Lastly, a lot of planning has been taking place in preparation for the Venice ABA 50th anniversary service and luncheon to be held on Saturday, August 24th at the Temple. It is set up to be a fantastic and historical event. We are very excited to have both Reverends George Matsubayashi and Nobuo Miyaji planning to attend and sharing their memories at the Venice temple. Also, June Fujioka has picked out a special 50th anniversary shirt available to all members of temple. They are really nice so be sure to order yours when you are at the temple.

I would like to end by thanking all of the dedicated volunteers who make the ABA organization thrive and grow.

YABA

YABA is continuing our year with monthly Dharma Discussions on the first Wednesday of each month, as well as Sunday afternoon services, SundaYABA, at 1pm on the third Sunday of each month. We've recently had the opportunity to discuss some of the history of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism in the U.S. as well as learning more about the Tannisho and Shoshinge. Much thanks to all of you who've come to participate so far, everyone is welcome to attend. Our next SundaYABA is August 18

We are also busy planning to run Doughball at Obon this year, as well as plan our RetroBuddha seminar on September 14. The included flier has more details on the seminar, we're welcoming all participants who are YABA aged.

JR. YBA

On March 23rd, some Jr. YBA members attended Seminar 2 at OCBC. The theme was "Tangled in Buddhism" and all of the workshops were related to Disney movies. The next Seminar we attended was Seminar 3 at Gardena on June 9th. We took a survey about how important things such as looks and money meant to us. Then we compared our survey results with the adults' results and discussed our answers in our groups.

The day after the seminar, we prepared the dango mix for our Jr. YBA dango booth at the VJCC Festival on June 23rd and 24th. We will also be selling shaved ice at the Obon festival on July 27th and 28th.

We are making plans for the Jr. Y Rummage Sale on June 29th and we are accepting donations for the Rummage Sale on Friday, June 28th.

We are in discussion of attending the Southern District Conference in Arizona. It will be held on Sunday, September 1st.

GIRL SCOUT TROOP 5325

Junior Cookie Activity

For our Junior cookie activity, we spent a day at Knott's Berry Farm. Our day was filled with food, fun, and rides.

One of the highlights of our day was the rides. An especially exciting ride was Ghost Riders! Unlike the 45 minute wait, the ride was fast. As we went down, we were jerked around in our seats by the bumpy wooden tracks. All the people on the ride with us were screaming. We had a fun time on the thrilling attraction.

Another ride that we went on was Bigfoot Rapids. On the raft, everyone got splashed with water. We were all screaming because we didn't want to get our clothes wet. It took about an hour to for our clothes to dry off. Even though we got splashed with water, we had a good time.

Along with going on rides, Knott's Berry Farm had many things to offer. We ate lunch near the Pony Express. After some more rides, we sat down and ate some ice cream. Finally, after we were done going on rides, we played games, and didn't win any prizes.

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CUB SCOUTS PACK 79

Keiichi Ono

For the month of March

We had several activities, which kept us busy starting with our Blue and Gold Dinner on March 7th. At the Blue and Gold Dinner, we had our court of honors award ceremony and recognized our Webelos scouts who completed the Arrow of Light requirement. It was a fun day filled with fun skits, dinner and a cake-decorating contest.

Our annual Pinewood Derby Race was again hosted at the Temple on March 16th. This was the first time we tried having the event on a Saturday, which turned out great! Darren Hovey from Den 3 was the 1st place winner this year.

Our annual Scouting for Food Event was on March 23rd and 24th. We setup our booth again at Ralph's Market on Lincoln. Our scouts did very well and collected several boxes of can goods and cash donation to help those in need. The event was hosted to help the LA Food Bank, which was very successful.

For the month of April

We had a new event this year called the international dinner, which we held on April 18th and hosted by GinaMarie Walker. This was a really fun event for our scouts to learn about foods from other countries. Each scout had to make a dish from your selected country and share it. They also had to learn a few interesting facts about your country and creatively show them on an index card, choose a recipe, shop for the ingredients, prepare dish and bring to Pack meeting.

The 2013 Crescent Bay District Camporee took place the weekend of April 26-28th, 2013 at Tejon Ranch. Our Webelo's I and II from Den 3, 5, 7 and 8 attended Camp-o-ree. Camp-o-ree is a district wide opportunity for scouting units to join together in fellowship and to enjoy activities and events that puts Scouting skill to use in an outdoor setting. Typically, the Camporee involves scout patrol competitions, with events such as: hiking preparedness, [fire building](#), [knot](#) tying, [first aid](#), [emergency preparedness](#), [pioneering](#), [citizenship](#), [patrol mystery event \(team building\)](#), [outdoor cooking](#), [camping](#) or [orienteering](#). Our scout practiced hard for this event and won 1st, 2nd and 3rd place in several categories and won the overall competition. Pack 79 Webelo's have dominated the competition for the past 7 years a have held on to the trophy Camporee rug.

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CUB SCOUTS PACK 79

(Continued from previous column)

For the month of May

We had our Arrow of Light Ceremony on May 16th. The Arrow of Light is a very special award, which was presented to 23 Webelos II scout this year by their parents in front of the pack. Our scouts also receive an award certificate and a custom made arrow by John Buckley.

On May 18th, Our Cub Scout attended our Annual Fishing Trip, which was arranged by Ernie Bucher. Our scouts got to hang out with each other, check out the seal lions, seagulls and pelicans. Of course we always found a way to catch enough fish to make it the centerpiece of the outing. This trip was provided to our Pack by the Friends of Rollo. Friends of Rollo, which is a Non Profit organization sets-up to take groups of kids fishing to enjoy a day on the ocean.

We finished the month of May by having our scouts attend the Memorial Day Flag Placement at the National Cemetery in WLA on May 25th where we placed flags on head stones to honor and to remember our fallen soldiers who have served our county.

GIRL SCOUT TROOP 5325

(Continued from page 6)

Overall, our day was filled with rides, games, and food. We had a great time at Knott's Berry Farm.

Court of Awards

On May 22 we held our Court of ward ceremony where the girls received their badges and awards earned this past year. We also had 3 Brownies and 9 Juniors Bridge to their next level.

We heard from the 9 Juniors who earned their Bronze award (the highest award for Junior Girl Scouts). They prepared and delivered 100 lunches to the PATH organization. They made peanut butter and Jelly sandwiches, baked cookies, provided a fruit and granola bars for each lunch. The troop also celebrated 3 graduating Ambassadors. These girls have been in Girl Scouts for 11 years.

We then enjoyed a delicious Taco dinner with all the trimmings that was delicious!

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2013 CALENDAR OF MAJOR SERVICES & ACTIVITIES

JULY, 2013

- 7 VENICE OBON & HATSUBON SERVICE – 10 A.M.
- 20 OBON FESTIVAL SET-UP – 8:30 A.M.
- 27-28 VENICE OBON FESTIVAL
- 7/27-8/3 LABCC SUMMER CAMP

AUGUST, 2013

- 4 “A” BOMB/VIET NAM MEMORIAL SERVICE – 9:30 A.M.
- 24 ABA “50TH ANNIVERSARY” OBSERVANCE

SEPTEMBER, 2013

- 8 SUNDAY SUNDAY – NEW DHARMA SCHOOL YEAR BEGINS
- 15 FALL OHIGAN SERVICE & BOOK CLUB - 10 A.M.
- 21 ABA MEMORIAL SERVICE – 7:30 P.M.

OCTOBER, 2013

- 5 FALL TEMPLE CLEAN UP – 8:30 A.M.
- 19 FUJINKAI ESHINISAMA MEMORIAL SERVICE – 7:30 P.M.
- 27 DHARMA SCHOOL HALLOWEEN PARTY – 5 P.M.

NOVEMBER, 2013

- 9 ABA STEAK FEAST – 6 P.M.
- 10 EITAIKYO SERVICE – 10 A.M.
- 29 GENERAL MEMBERS MEETING – 7:30 P.M.
- 30 MOCHI TSUKI SET UP

DECEMBER, 2013

- 4 WASH MOCHI GOME – 7 P.M.
- 7 MOCHI TSUKI – 7 A.M.
- 8 MOCHI TSUKI WRAP UP & TEMPLE CLEAN UP – 8 A.M.
- 15 OSEIBO APPRECIATION SERVICE - 10 A.M.
- 30 JOYA-E END OF YEAR SERVICE – 7:30 P.M.

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REGULARY SCHEDULED SERVICES & MEETINGS

- FAMILY DHARMA SERVICE – Sundays, 9:30 A.M.
Student Dharma School Classes & Adult Service – Immediately following Family Dharma Service
High School Students Class
- TEMPLE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – First Friday of each month – 7:30 P.M.
(Except the General Member's Meeting scheduled for November 29, 2013)
- BUDDHIST WOMENS ASSN. (FUJINKAI) MEETING – Tuesday following Temple Board Meeting.
- ABA MEETING – 2nd Tuesday Following Temple Board meeting.
- *YABA MEETING – Every Wednesday – 7 P.M.*
- DHARMA SCHOOL STAFF MEETING – First Sunday of each month – 8:30 A.M.
- JR. YBA MEETING – First Sunday of each month following 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.
- VHBT BALLROOM DANCE CLASS – Every Sunday – 3:00 P.M.



VENICE HONGWANJI
YABA
YOUNG ADULT BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION
presents

RETROBUDDHA 2013

THE GOLDEN CHAIN

Get back to basics at RetroBuddha, Venice YABA's one-day seminar featuring Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara (Jodo Shinshu Center; Berkeley).

Focusing on the Golden Chain, we will learn more about Buddhism as we enjoy the community of fellow young adults.



When: Sat., Sept. 14, 2013 8am - 4pm
Where: Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple
Guest Speaker: Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara (JSC)

REGISTER ONLINE TODAY:

www.veniceyaba.org

Registration open until Sept. 7

南無阿彌陀佛



Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple

ベニス本願寺

OBON

お盆FESTIVAL祭り

ODORI – FOOD – GAMES 踊り・食べ物・遊び



SATURDAY, JULY 27, 2013

3:00 P.M. TO 9:00 P.M.

SUNDAY, JULY 28, 2013

1:00 P.M. TO 9:00 P.M.



ODORI BEGINS AT 6:30 P.M. – BOTH NIGHTS お盆踊りは午後6時半より

OBON/HATSUBON SERVICE お盆初盆会法要

SUNDAY, JULY 7, 2013 – 10:00 A.M.

2013年7月7日午前10時

**OBON ODORI PRACTICE EVERY MONDAY & WEDNESDAY
JUNE 24 TO JULY 22 – 7:00 P.M.**

お盆踊り練習6月24日から7月22日までの毎週月・水曜日