

Gassho

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

年頭の辞

新しい年のはじめにあたり、ご挨拶申し上げます。

まず、2022年2月に始まったロシア連邦のウクライナ侵攻に対して、私たち念仏者は親鸞聖人がお示しくくださった「世のなか安穏なれ」のお言葉を改めて深く心に刻み、武力による他国の主権の侵害を強く非難するとともに、一刻も早くウクライナに平和が訪れることを願ってやみません。

さて、昨年も、世界では新型コロナウイルス感染症の流行が続きました。新型コロナウイルス感染症によりお亡くなりになられたすべての方々に、謹んで哀悼の意を表しますとともに、罹患されている皆様、後遺症を患われている皆様に心よりお見舞い申し上げます。また、医師や看護師をはじめとする医療従事者の方々、ライフラインの維持に努めておられる方々に深く敬意と感謝を表します。

新型コロナウイルス感染症の流行は、科学技術が発達し、医療も進歩した世の中にあっても、私たちの予想できない事柄が現実にかかるということを知らしめました。仏教を説かれたお釈迦様は、この世を諸行無常であると示されました。約2500年たってもそのことに変わりはありません。そして、この真理をそのままに受け入れることができず、悩み苦しむ私たちの姿も変わることはありません。

それ故にこそ、新型コロナウイルス感染症の流行以前も以後も変わることなく、親鸞聖人が説かれた浄土真宗のみ教えが、日々悩み苦しむ私たちの生きる支えとなります。阿弥陀如来を中心とするお寺の集まりは、み教えを聞く場であると同時に、同じみ教えを依りどころとする私たちがお互いに支え合い助け合って、安心して集うことのできる場でもあります。

皆さまには、今後も様々な工夫を凝らして、広くみ教えを伝えられることで、お寺に多くの方が集まり、その誰もが心穏やかに過ごせる場所となりますことを願っております。そして、引き続きお寺の活動にご理解とご協力を頂きますことをお願い申し上げます、年頭のご挨拶といたします。

2023年1月1日
浄土真宗本願寺派
門主 大谷光淳



New Year's Greeting

Happy New Year, everyone! At the beginning of this New Year, I would like to extend my best regards to you all.

In view of the Russian invasion of Ukraine that began in February 2022, as Nembutsu followers who have deeply inscribed in our hearts and minds Shinran Shonin's message of "May there be peace in the world," we firmly stand against the military infringement of the other nation's sovereignty, and also aspire for immediate return of peace in Ukraine.

Over the last year, COVID-19 continues to be a global pandemic. I would like to offer my deepest condolences to those who fell victim to the disease and express my sympathies to those who are undergoing treatment. I would also like to express my respect and sincere gratitude to the doctors, nurses, and other frontline medical professionals who have been engaging in the treatment of infected people, as well as all essential workers who have made it possible for us to continue with our lives.

The pandemic has forced us to learn firsthand that we will continue to be confronted by unexpected situations even in modern times despite technologies both in science and medical fields being highly developed. Sakyamuni Buddha, who passed on the Dharma to us, made clear that there is no life nor entity in this world that lasts forever. This truth, the principle of impermanence, has never changed even in this time and age approximately 2500 years since his time. Another fact that does not change is our inability to accept this truth as it is, and because of this, we continue struggling.

This is the very reason why, regardless of the pandemic, we can rely on the Jodo Shinshu teaching clarified by Shinran Shonin, which guides us as a spiritual foundation that enables us to move forward even when being overwhelmed with difficulties. A gathering at the temple with Amida Buddha as its center provides a great opportunity to receive the Dharma as well as an occasion in which people can support and reassure one another as fellow practitioners who follow the same teaching.

I hope you will continue to share the teaching within the greater society through various ways and your temple will or continue to serve as a place where people can gather and find comfort in its activities. I humbly ask for your understanding and cooperation in support of your temples. I would like to conclude my new year's greeting with my heartfelt appreciation to you all.

January 1, 2023

OHTANI Kojun

Monshu

Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha





Sensei's Message



“The phrase in the Ho-onko shiki, “Always keep in mind that recitation (of ‘Namo Amida Butsu’) is an instinctively cheerful activity” refers to reciting “Namo Amida Butsu” joyously rather than reciting it from a sense of duty. That’s because “Namo Amida Butsu” recited with shinjin (with a sense of being in Amida Buddha’s embrace) is an act of celebration.”

Turning the Corner in 2023!

Happy New Year!

I know that some people may have hesitations and that is ok. You have to make the right decisions for you and no one else. The temple is working hard. When opportunities arise like Obon comes don't get caught in your head, but think about where you are and who you are sharing it with. It is easy to lose our temper. It is easy to take time for granted. It is sad and easy to miss seeing the value of the moments that slip by. This is what it is to be human. Do not over think the things that are out of your control. Again, what an exciting time to be Alive! Take a moment to reflect upon your heart and the heart of others. Use your energy wisely. Work together.

When you come to the temple, reconnect. Think about the heart of the people who have done so much for you. Think about the wishes that have been made and the ones you have received. Join in. Dance for Joy. Put Your Hands together in Gassho and Bow.

The passage I began with is from the book *Heard and Recorded During Master Rennyō's Lifetime*. This passage makes me feel like we all forget the feeling of comfort and hope that is given through Amida Buddha's effort and the Jodo Shinshu Tradition passed onto us by Shinran Shonin. I remember when growing up I usually recited Nembutsu when I heard the minister lead everyone. Were you the same? I took

many of these occasions for granted. This May many of us will be taking a trip to celebrate Shinran Shonin's 850 birthday as well as the 800th Anniversary of the Jodo Shinshu Teaching. Shinran spent his youth searching. He labored over various practices to find an answers to his human suffering. He then found his teacher Honen and realized the Nembutsu path to be the right one for him. When we go to the temple, it is hard for us to appreciate that the answer is given to us in the beginning. Say Nembutsu when you find your reason. Say it when finding we are all perfectly imperfect. Say Nembutsu or Namu Amida Butsu for joy and happiness. When it becomes a spontaneous gesture of settlement within, say it for the future generations.

2023 is our opportunity to participate while looking within. I find that I am relearning the simple things like being in crowds. What are you discovering about yourself? What are you relearning? Move forward by participating and interacting with others. You have the chance to learn a lot about yourself through these valuable moments. As we are able to come together more often, let us all do our best to accept one another and deepen our relationships. Share in our joys and struggles. Share your celebrations. Share your life. When you find your reason, share by saying Nembutsu. We are perfectly imperfect and have a lot to share. Namo Amida Butsu!

**In Gratitude and Appreciation,
Rev. Kory Quon**





President's Message

Akemashite Omedeto! As we hop into the Year of the Rabbit, I would like to express my gratitude to all of you for the past 2 years. Despite the many challenges we all faced, together we kept our Temple thriving as we found ways to continue to Serve our Sangha with a variety of programs, events and services, even during times when we could not gather in person. This was a massive effort from all of us: leaders, volunteers, participants and guests and I am grateful and proud of our accomplishments. #SanghaStrong.

2022 brought back some of our traditional activities, including our Mochi Tsuki and Dharma School Halloween Party and our 2-day in-person Obon Festival which was extraordinarily successful and filled so many of us with happiness and gratitude. We also saw the introduction/return of new activities like the BWA Chirashi Sushi Sale, and ABA's UdonFest. In person Otoki also returned following many of our major services, and we have even reintroduced non-bento Otoki (I know I was getting a little tired of eating out of bento trays, though they are delicious). Our Buddhist Education Committee hosted a Tri-Temple Seminar on creating a green environment in a Jodo Shinshu Temple. And we were happy to participate in the Venice Japanese Community Center's Summer Festival where we did our part by hosting several game booths for those young and not as young. This helped us draw many new faces to the Temple and we have experienced a significant increase in Temple membership during the past 2 years.

Thanks in part to everyone's support, our Temple underwent some much needed enhancements: we replaced the Temple roof, upgraded our Onaijin with new Uchishiki and Mizuhiki (altar cloths) along with the Tocho (decorative cloth that frames the Buddha), and more. Plus, thanks to our Boy Scouts (Trent Nishimura and Koh Mihashi), we have new doors for the rear of the Temple (thanks Trent) and an upgraded

parking lot fence (thanks Koh) who chose the Temple to complete their Eagle Scout projects. Our Garden Crew works hard each month (thank you to Joyce Enomoto, Kei Fukuda, David Nishina, Kay Obana, Billy Saeki and Tom Yamaguchi) to keep our grounds beautiful.

Our Temple offered services virtually and now in hybrid fashion, as we worked to make sure everyone had access to the Teachings during the Pandemic. Our Zoom participants have come from 12 states and Japan, helping us to share our Services with members and friends all over. Our Keiro members who aren't as mobile also are able to join from their home. We also now offer a Tuesday morning Service for our members. Since our Hatsubon Service in July, Otoki following our major Services is offered in person, rather than drive-through pickup.

We are so lucky to have such an amazing Sangha. I am especially thankful for our younger Sangha, particularly our youth organizations. Our Dharma School now has over 40 registered students, and found a way to hold classes in person, via Zoom or both. They held their traditional Sundae Sunday to kickoff the school year, and the Halloween Party tradition continued, first a drive-thru version until it was safe to hold an in person party this year. Our Sangha Teens are going strong, having re-started with a host of activities. They also were key in the Haunted House design. Our Jr. YBA were a big help providing some much needed young energy and muscle in helping with set up activities for Obon, Mochi Tsuki and more. Cub Scout Pack 79 and Girl Scout Troop 5325 are thriving and were a big part of our Temple activities. The Cub Scouts, for example, held their traditional Pinewood Derby that was broadcast to family members in Japan and Europe too, and they held canned food drives to help out our local food banks. The Girl Scouts led activities like making Hearts for Love and Cranes for



Ukraine, collected coats and blankets and packed toiletry kits for the homeless. They also provided the majority of volunteer support for our Senior Dana Deliveries Program, helping to deliver care packages to our Keiro members and friends. A big thank you to all of you- you are a critical part of the future of the Temple.

We also have worked hard to make sure our Keiro members and friends remain connected to the Temple and Community. We continue to provide Zoom access for our Services (thanks to Carey Tokirio, Ron Gee, Sandy Saeki, Tommy Nakagiri, Tom Yamaguchi, and Barbara Fukuji for handing AV duties); our Senior Dana Deliveries Program has become the Temple's signature offering (huge thanks to Aleyna Minamoto for leading this effort, with the help of Janet DaVall and Michelle Orne). The BWA has revived the Senior Outreach Program, and held a Welcome Back Brunch this Summer, with many activities planned in the coming year. We also launched our Caregiver Initiative, designed to provide support to individuals and families providing care for a loved one. Big thanks to the Keiro Organization for helping us provide these programs via the Keiro Grants Program.

#Wow!- during my time as president, all of you had to accept my overuse of hashtags to help focus us in meeting some key objectives:

#minnanakayoshi, #everyonetgether- this started in part to share our voices against anti-Asian hate, but also to guide us in working together as a Sangha, young and less young, members and friends, and to communicate that we welcome everyone to the Temple in a warm and inclusive environment;

#SanghaStrong- during the darkest times when we were not allowed to gather in person, we found creative ways to make sure we could provide programs and services to our members and friends, especially our seniors. Our Senior Dana Deliveries Program, led by Aleyna Minamoto, has helped us reach out to our Community elders, especially during periods of isolation. Our Virtual Sangha helped us fill the void in the Hondo when in person attendance was prohibited, and provided some comic relief in the process.

#TogetherAgain- this was our theme for our 2022 Obon Festival- a two-day in person event that was

tremendously successful. We were one of only a few Temples nationwide to host an in-person Obon Festival, but what was so gratifying was the huge effort by everyone to create a weekend that was enjoyed by so many. The joy and gratitude expressed by guests and volunteers alike was all you needed to feel good about what we accomplished. And, we did it together as a Sangha.

#ServeOurSangha- in this context, Sangha means members, friends, young and less young, basically everyone. This was our primary objective as a Temple, and together, we have made exceeded expectations in meeting this goal.

#LetsKeepGoing- rather than rest on our past accomplishments, we have positioned ourselves well for the future, and our next challenge is to continue to offer a variety of programs and services for our Sangha and to keep enhancing our Community footprint as well. I know we can and will make this happen. Let's all work under the leadership of incoming Temple President Tommy Nakagiri to keep this momentum moving onward.

#Pride&Gratitude (final hashtag, promise)- these are my feelings about Venice Hongwanji today. Thank you to Rev. Kory and family for making sacrifices to help advance our cause- none of this would have happened without his support. And thank you again to all of you for your unending support of the Temple. As I have said before, when you see or hear about all we have going, how can you not want to be a part of this?

On a personal note, this is my final message as Temple President and I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to all of you for making all of this happen, and helping our Temple thrive, even during the tough times of the Pandemic. None of this would have been possible without your support, and I greatly appreciate your allowing me to be a part of this. Let's celebrate all that we accomplished together, but let's work to keep our Temple growing and thriving in the years to come. **#LetsKeepGoing #Arigato**.

In Gassho






Dharma School

Dharma School's first classes began in October. Julia Ueda led the class for the younger students on Oct. 9. The theme for October was the Altar and the kids learned about the different items on the altar followed by putting together a picture of the Buddha for an Obutsudan. The Oct. 16th class was taught by Janis Ozaki and the kids played a game, Obutsudan Trivial Pursuit, in which they collected pieces of the altar by answering questions correctly about the altar and temple.



The big event at the end of October on the 30th was the Dharma School Halloween Party. Over 70 kids and adults joined us in person for the first time since 2019. There were games outside in the temple's parking lot as well as tables and chairs for the delicious potluck dinner. Once again we had the costume contest for kids and adults too. The new attraction this year was the haunted house that the Sangha Teens put together inside the temple. They did an amazing job with all the planning and decorations. Hope that those that were there got a chance to experience it. Thank

you so much Sangha Teens for making our Halloween Party even a greater success! Thanks also to all the families that contributed to the dinner and helped us throughout the entire evening.



Gratitude was the theme for the November Dharma School classes. The Middle/High school class was led by Emily Kariya on Nov. 6 and the Preschool/Elementary School class by Judy Hopfield on the 20th. The kids in Judy's class made a book about the Four Gratuities. Using crayons, stickers and cut out pictures, they filled their books showing gratitude to parents and family, all living things, country and the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.

There are no Dharma School classes scheduled in December due to Mochi Tsuki and Oseibo Taikai, but we hope that we will see many students at Oseibo Taikai on the 18th. Our next classes will be Jan. 8 for Middle/High School and the 15th for Preschool/Elementary School. We wish everyone a nice holiday season and New Year!





DHARMA SCHOOL HALLOWEEN PARTY

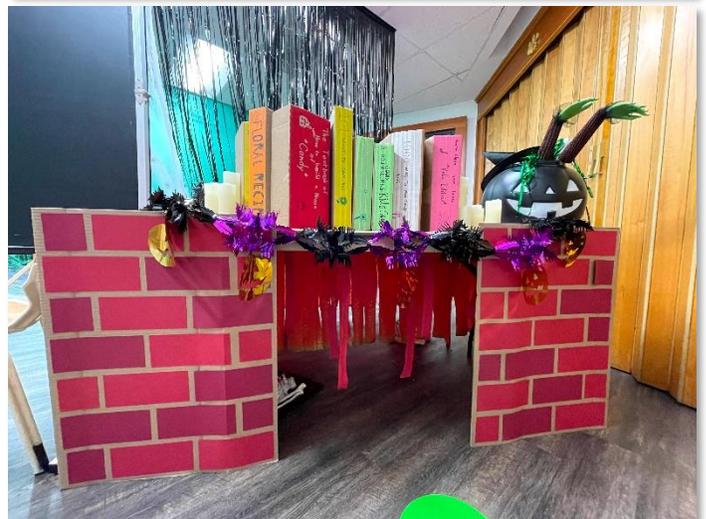




Sangha Teens

For the months of September and October of this year, our sangha teens put together a Hansel & Gretel + Encanto themed haunted house. We had multiple fun meetings together on the topic of the event with pizza and salad and came up with many ideas to make this house not only kid friendly but one to remember.

We first started coming up with ideas for possible themes of the house. Something that wasn't too scary because we'd have little kids inside though. Everyone brought something to the table and eventually we settled on two themes: Hansel & Gretel and Encanto. We then began planning out where everything would go and which way the path would lead by placing these huge plastic poles down. To construct the poles it took a little bit of figuring out and a youtube video. Then we imagined a path for the house and started placing the big poles inside the temple to craft the route in and out of the "haunted house".



Sangha Teens continued...

Meeting after meeting, bringing more creativity every time we got together, we kept shooting out ideas to further decorate the experience such as a gingerbread house on the side of the wall (for the Hansel & Gretel part), an oven so it seems like you get “baked” as you go through, a flying ghost for jumpscare purposes, doors with the nameplates of each of the Encanto characters, and even live actors with candy (us! The Sagna teens ourselves)!

After building everything and discussing our places within the house, all we had to do was wait for the big day to arrive, and when it did there were a lot of people. And a lot of children. We hosted many rounds of kids coming in and out, some even decided to go back through the dark maze we worked very hard on. In between was the lunch break and that was our time to marvel at our creative endeavor and enjoy all the fun activities the Dharma School planned for everyone. This year's Halloween party was filled with fun. Sanga Teens hopes everyone had as much fun in the haunted house as we did constructing it. Thank you for coming!





Mochitsuki

By Trent Nishimura

During the Temple's Annual Mochitsuki in 2022, Jr. YBA members assisted on the night before by preparing the tables on which mochi would be made. On the day of the event, Jr. YBA members assisted from morning to evening, moving tables, dusting mochi, and helping during the eventual cleanup. The VHBT's 2022 Mochitsuki event was a great success and Jr. YBA is glad we could help out. Mochitsuki is a wonderful annual event and we hope for a great Mochitsuki next year!



Buddhist Women's Association

Fujinkai participated in many in-person activities in the third quarter of 2022, as the Temple opens up with relaxed COVID protocols: No more temperature checks or proof of vaccination required, but masks and signing-in are still necessary to keep infections to a minimum and for contact-tracing.

Thank you to the Fujinkai ladies for organizing and packing items for the Dana Deliveries on Saturday, July 30 for delivery on Sunday, July 31, 2022!



The VHBT BWA Panda Express Fundraiser on Friday, August 19, 2022, raised \$566.43, which represented 28% online sales from California, Colorado, and New York. The Fujinkai thanks everybody for their support and great appetites!



Ayako Masada and Linda Oshinomi represented the VHBT BWA at the Special Southern District BWA meeting on Friday, August 26, 2022 via Zoom. First, SDBWA agreed to align toban for leadership and conferences with SD Ministers' Association, which is to keep the rotation to single Temples. VHBT BWA will sponsor the 2027 conference, and will back in the rotation in thirteen years. Second, SDBWA added to the Resolution that each FBWA Chapter be encouraged to make an annual contribution via the Dharma Forward campaign of support the Institute of Buddhist Studies' Eshinni/Kakushinni Professorial Chair.

The Fujinkai Charashi Sale on Saturday, September 17, 2022 brought many Fujinkai members to the Temple to cook the vinegar and sugar su; wash, chop, and bag carrots, gobo, takenoko, shiitake, and kamaboko; and prepare kinshi tamago, the thin-sliced scrambled eggs, on the Thursday and Friday before. Many other Temple members came from 5:30 am on Friday to wash and cook the rice, and all pitched in to assemble the chirashi boxes and garnish with red ginger and green parsley. The Temple placed its order for sixty chirashi, which helped feed the in-person attendees at the Ohigan Service on Sunday, Sept 18.



BWA continued...

Northern California hosted the 46th Federation of Buddhist Women's Associations (FBWA) Conference, from Friday, October 14 through Sunday, October 16, 2022 via Zoom. The conference theme, "Winds of Change" or "Jidai no Shinka ni Kiku" focuses "on the younger generation and how to engage and encourage them to look to the future of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism in America and participate in their Sanghas and become Buddhist Women's Association (BWA) members in the future." FBWA welcomed as keynote speaker on Friday, Dr. Paula K. R. Arai, who will join the faculty at the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) as the first Eshinni and Kakushinni Professor of Women and Buddhist Studies in January 2023. Dr. Arai spoke to the topic, "Receiving and Giving: Buddhist Women Past, Present and Future."

The Fujinkai sponsored its second Virtual Lumbini Boutique from October 1 through October 31, 2022 at www.32auctions.com/2022Lumbini. Preliminary figures show that the Fujinkai raised 1,810.00, or 90.5% of its adjusted goal of \$2,000.00.

In preparation for the Fujinkai Virtual Lumbini Boutique in October, Ken Chen took photos of the donated items in May and August, and posted them to the www.32auctions.com/2022Lumbini website. Phyllis Hayashibara added descriptions and prices, and coordinated the pick up at the Temple in November with the assistance of Fujinkai members.

The Fujinkai appreciates all the support from Temple members, family members, and friends in the community who purchased items from the 2022 Virtual Lumbini Boutique.





Girl Scout Troop 5325

Local JA History for Kids

By Jennifer Yamashita

This past summer I worked on my Girl Scout Gold Award, the highest award in Girl Scouts. It involves creating a service project that addresses an issue in the community. For my project, I sought to address the issue of how Japanese-American history, especially local Japanese American history (as in the Venice/WLA area) is hardly recognized or taught in schools. So, I created an online adventure directed towards kids to help teach them about different local Japanese American historical sites. I

included the Venice Japanese American Memorial Monument, Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, Venice Japanese Community Center, Sawtelle Japantown, Aloha Mural on Centinela Ave., and West Los Angeles United Methodist Church. In my story on the website, the user and his/her “friends” find a time machine, thanks to the help of Arnold Maeda, and



travel through time to these different locations to learn about their prominence in the Japanese American community. At each of these sites there’s an activity, or game, to help the user learn a little about the site. For instance, in one section kids go back to 1945 and help Arnold Maeda pack for the internment camps, and learn about his story of having to leave his dog behind. When they “visit” the Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, children learn about the story of how Reverend George and others in the community came together to help push the yagura 1.5 miles to the temple from Sam Obana’s house. Additionally, they learn a little bit about the Obon Festival and how it brings the community together. Through this story and the activities, kids learn about different parts of the history of the area, hopefully making them interested in learning more stories about their community’s past. If you have any interest, please check it out at

<https://sites.google.com/view/adventures-in-ja-history> or scan the QR code or follow on Instagram at @adventures_in_ja_history.



Adventures in JA History

sites.google.com



Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple
12371 Braddock Drive, Culver City, CA 90230

WINTER 2022

Girl Scouts continued ...

Silver Awardees

Hailey Sim and Catherine Strobel: We did our Silver Award on raising awareness for the war in Ukraine. Together, we worked on various projects to spread and shine light on the battles in Ukraine. We folded 1000 cranes to donate to a volunteer organization that supports Ukraine by sending over supplies and other methods of relief. Hailey created an informational slideshow to share with others and educate them on Ukraine, not just about the war. She also created an animation and uploaded on YouTube that was inspired by her own experiences and others on the war. Catherine, sent the cranes to the organization, she also made different cards and envelopes to send to Ukraine, in addition she also spread the information on the slideshow through her summer camp and schools.

Mia Rubacalva: My Silver Award Take Action project was creating a club at my middle school to raise awareness for mental health issues in kids and teens, especially since returning to school from the pandemic. I created multiple presentations to show during weekly club meetings during lunch. Over the summer, I prepared lesson plans for the club to run during the next school year. This project benefited the students who attended the meetings because they got a chance to learn why it is important to prioritize mental health/different ways to maintain your mental wellbeing, and it gave me experience with leading discussions and starting school events in the future.

Shelby Weiss: I did my Silver Award at my old Elementary School, Playa del Rey Elementary. I met with teachers to find out what they needed done and they said more outdoor learning spaces for the students. So, I decided I would make a bench for the students to study at outside. I did many fundraisers to get money I needed for the supplies. Once I got all the supplies I built the bench and set it up at the school in a shaded area.



Pictured above: Hailey Sim, Catherine Strobel, Mia Rubacalva, Shelby Weiss and Leader Stacy Weiss



Girl Scouts continued ...



Investiture/Rededication Ceremony, October 24, 2022



New Daisies with leaders Dianne Belli and Monica Haley





Cub Pack 79

Our family camp this year just so happened to be Halloween weekend. Which allowed our pack to hold our very first “Tent or Treat” event at the campsite wear scouts trick or treated around everyone’s tent for Halloween goodies. The scouts needed the extra sugar to help them get through the busy weekend as the scouts participated in BBs, archery, rock climbing, and zip lining at the camp. Nothing beats a day full of activities, eating smores, and camping under the stars.



At our November pack meeting, special guest Kinnara Taiko troop provided a wonderful Taiko presentation and performance for the scouts. They learned about the different types of drums, how they are made, and the different sounds they make. We were also treated to a bonus Shishimai lion dance performance. At the end of the presentation the audience had the opportunity to play the taiko drums as well. The Kinnara troop leader, Johnny guided us as we went from audience members to performers. Everyone had a great time, and dare I say we have a few future taiko drummers in the making.



Cub Pack 79 continued ...

Mochitsuki is back!!! And the scouts loved it. Not only do they get to see how one of their favorite snacks are made but they were able to learn the history and meaning of mochitsuki in Japanese culture. The scouts helped out at every station to get the full experience of making mochi and the best part is at the end when they get to try the hot fresh mochi with some shoyu and sugar, yummy!



At the end of January, the pack will be starting their Scouting for Food campaign where we will be collecting non-perishable goods to deliver to a local food bank. With everyone's help last year we were able to deliver over 1000 lbs of food to the Westside Food Bank.

We continue to welcome new families and scouts to Pack 79. We also welcome girls and kindergarteners as well, and are looking for interested families to embark on this new adventure with us! If you or family members/friends would like to learn more about Pack 79 please reach out to us via email or check us out on social media:



<https://www.facebook.com/culvercubpack79>

[Culver Cub Pack 79 - YouTube](#)

<https://www.culverpack79.com/>

cubpack79@vhbt.org





ABA was very busy in November and December, with our ALL YOU CAN EAT UDON FEAST, and our Reboot of our Mochi Tsuki.

The Udon feast was a new venture, and was enjoyed by many, and filling many stomachs to the brim with Udon. Thanks to Joe Belli and his team of chefs, the event was a success. (It was so popular that it made it into the Rafu Shimpo.) It was great to have members and friends, enjoying food, beverages and friendships. It had been quite awhile, that we were able to get together, to catch up, and make new memories. Please enjoy the article from the Rafu.

It's All About the Broth

At Venice Hongwanji, the dashi makes a warm bowl of udon even better.

By GWEN MURANAKA
RAFU SENIOR EDITOR

At Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, Joe Belli watches over the dashi, simmering gently in a large stockpot, the aroma wafting through the temple kitchen. Venice recently held an all-you-can eat Udon fundraiser and the centerpiece was the dashi, a dark soup with deep umami flavor.

A dozen temple members boiled 150 pounds of noodles, donated by Gary Kawaguchi of Upper Crust Enterprises. Besides Belli, David Nishina, Judy Yamaguchi and Vicki Tokirio worked to produce 60 gallons of broth. Hungry diners brought their own bowls and enjoyed udon with toppings including homemade chashu, eggs, green onions and flakes of salmon.

Belli explained that the dashi, a long-held secret, was created by the late George Asawa, a chemist and former president of the Venice Japanese Community Center, who hailed from an artistic family. Asawa's sister was the famed artist Ruth Asawa and his son Brian was an opera singer.

Belli explained the history of the Venice dashi and graciously shared the recipe crafted years earlier by Asawa:

"I inherited the dashi broth recipe from George Asawa in 2000, that's the year I



Joe Belli stirs a pot of dashi at Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple.

started making the dashi broth for the Venice Japanese Community Center. For years prior to 2000, George had made the dashi broth for the Venice Japanese Community Center's annual Summer Festival. George developed this simple fish and seaweed base broth because it was easy to make, mistake-proof, fast and not real expensive.

"With two burners going, we are able to produce 10 gallons of the broth every 50 minutes. In about 2005, the VHBT Buddhist Woman's Association asked me to 'help' make the dashi broth for the Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple's annual Obon. I



Mom Krystina Knox with Makaya (left) and Amaya enjoy a bowl of noodles.

gladly accepted the job. That first year, they were all over me about my techniques and

the ingredients in George's recipe, but in the end the BWA and the Obon-goers were ecstatic about George's recipe.

"At the temple's annual Obon I don't work alone; we have approximately six temple members making the dashi broth and about eight noodle-boilers boiling the udon.

"George gave Jun Oyama (of VJCC) and I the recipe verbally. Neither Jun nor I are cooks, so that first night of making the dashi broth was rough! Here's the recipe that George gave us...nothing's changed."

George Asawa's Dashi Broth Recipe 1 each 5-gallon batch

1. PUT: All 4 pre-measured ingredients in one wood box marked UDON to ensure no ingredients are left out:

- a. 3 pieces of black seaweed 6" x 10" (kombu) in zip-lock bag.
- b. Small zip-lock bag dashi powdered fish (200 grams).
- c. Large zip-lock bag shaved bonito (120 grams).
- d. Plastic bottle of soy sauce 50 oz, mirin 3 oz, and sugar 100 grams.

2. BOIL: 3 gallons water and 3 pieces of 6" x 10" black seaweed (kombu), bring to boil.

3. ADD: 200 grams dashi (small bag dried fish powder), stir in dashi and simmer for 30 minutes.

4. SKIM: With ladle, skin foam off top of cooking dashi immediately after dashi is added. Discard the skimmed foam.

5. ADD: 120 grams shaved bonito (large bag) simmer for 10 minutes.

6. SKIM: With ladle, skin foam off top of cooking dashi immediately after shaved bonito is added. Discard the skimmed foam.

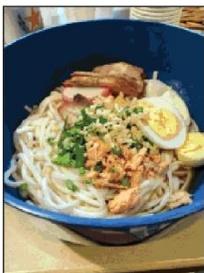
7. STRAIN: Through cloth into matching set of matching stainless (8 gallon) pot.

8. ADD: 50oz. liquid mixture (plastic bottle, 50 oz. soy sauce, 3 oz. mirin, 100 grams sugar).

9. ADD: Water bring to 5 gallons, (measure with wood stirring stick with 5 gal. line drawn on stick).

10. SIMMER: 10 minutes.

11. Done.



A bowl of udon is an Obon favorite.



ABA continued ...

A few weeks later, we joining together to re-boot our famous mochi tsuki, cleaning, steam cooking sweet rice, grinding the cooked rice into large mocha balls, and then pounded by hand. Follwing the pounding in the Uzu granite stone with special mallets, the large mochi came over to the team of mochi cutters, and a team of mocha formers, rolled the rice mocha into perfect shapes. Then cooled. There are some photos at the end of this article.

Thank you to everyone who helped at each event. It was through your work and efforts , that made the events successful. Now we can all enjoy the mochi in the new year. Year of the Rabbit.

For 2023, I will be continuing as president of ABA, and ask for your help in 2023.

Gassho,

Tom Yamaguchi, ABA President





VHBT Membership

Enjoy the many benefits of being a Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple member!

Why Membership?

- Attend religious services and educational programs
- Access to temple organizations
- Enjoy optional participation in fun group bonding activities, programs, and fundraising efforts

New Members receive:

- Welcome booklet and Temple Meet and Greet
- Subscription to the temple's Gassho newsletter
- First hand notifications of temple events and activities

And now, adults under 30 can now join for only \$50!

For more information, visit www.vhbt.org/membership

You can even join online!

2022 Memorial Service Schedule by Years

Memorial services for those who passed away in the following years:

2021: 1 year
 2020: 3 year
 2016: 7 year
 2010: 13 year
 2006: 17 year
 1998: 25 year
 1990: 33 year
 1973: 50 year



TEMPLE MEMBERSHIP

The Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple thanks the following members for their 2022 dues received through December 31, 2022. The asterisks () identify our Honorary (Keiro) members who made membership donations. As we continue our membership drive for 2022, we want to thank all of you for continuing to support the Temple through your membership dues.*



***Yuri Amamoto**, Joe & Dianne Belli, Ken Chen & Sheri Nagata, Martin & Robyn Cohen, Bryan & Aileen Cooke, Tom & Janet DaVall, Wayne & Karen Eguchi, ***June Fujioka**, Kei & Tomoko Fukuda, Kristina Fukuda, Ron & Barbara Fukuji, Chisako Fukumoto, Ron & Iris Gee, Glenn Hamashita, Janice Hankawa, Eugene & Phyllis Hayashibara, John & Patti Heyl, Jill Hopfield, Joe & Judy Hopfield, Mildred Ichinotsubo, Leonard & Gwen Imada, Shirley Inada, Stacy & Joyce Ino, Gerald Iseda, ***Minako Iseda**, Nelson & Sharon Ishida, Osami Ishida, ***Rikio & Fumiko Ishikawa**, Calvin Ito & Sharon Yoshimi, ***Dale Ito**, Jon & Joan Ito, Justin Ito, Sachiko Ito, George & Sachi Johnston, ***Hiroshi Kadomatsu**, Emily Kariya, Yoshiko Kariya, ***Sammy & *Chieko Kishimoto**, Jimmy Kita & Gail Higa, ***Sanaye Kita**, Sam & May Kiyohara, Matthew & Jennifer Kobata, Shinobu Koda, Frank & Elaine Koyama, Gary & Leticia Kurashige, ***Milnes & *Nori Kurashige**, ***Tom** & Delcene Kuwata, Joseph & Lynne Lasecki, Orr & Kimberly Limpisvasti, ***Ayako Masada**, Amanda Matsubara, Erik & Cindy Matsubayashi, Eric Matsumura, Evann Matsumura, Irene Matsumura, ***Alan & Jane Matsuzaki**, Charles & Sue Mayeda, Mark Mayeda & Deborah Ching, Richard Modiano, Mark & Diane Morimoto, ***Victoria Morimoto**, Daniel Motobo, Jackie Motobo, Brian & Mariko Nakagiri, Cheryl Nakagiri, Dan Nakagiri, Tom Nakagiri, ***Jean Nakamoto**, Edgar Nakamura, Hiroko Naruo, ***John & *Judy Nawa**, Ted Nishimura & Eva Nakasone, David Nishina, ***Fusae Nishina**, ***Yayeko Nishina**, Jeff & Sachie Nitta, Tony & Kori Nobuyuki, Dale & Gail Noriyuki, Dustin Noriyuki, ***Kay & *Kimi Obana**, Fusako Ogasawara, Jino Ok & Aleya Minamoto-Ok, Quinn Okamoto, Margarita Oku, ***Tatsumi Omote**, ***Fujiko Oriba**, Craig & Linda Oshinomi, ***Mitsuko Ota**, Robert & Leah Oye, Ron & Janis Ozaki, John & Valda Palacios, Janet Petersen, Adan Pulido & Stephanie DaVall, Ken Rosengrant & Joyce Enomoto, Billy & Sandy Saeki, Ichiko Sakamoto, Merle & Gail Sharp, Mabel Shimasaki, Mark & Sharlene Shinmoto, Catherine Silman, Ken & Sue Sogabe, Kiyoe Suzuki, ***Norm & *Yoshie Tachiki**, Dave & Arlene Tademaru, ***Kagemi Takata**, Randy & Mari Tamura, Michael Tanaka & Jill Ishida, Etsuko Nancy Taylor, Carey & Vicki Tokirio, Karen Tokubo, ***Grennie Uchida**, ***Yasushi Udagawa**, Dean & Julia Ueda, Kayla Ueda, Kelsey Ueda, Don Uehara, ***Yoshiko Uyeno**, Ron Wakabayashi & Jane Wong, Lance & Barbara Wakasa, ***George & Sheryl Yamada**, Tom & Judy Yamaguchi, Robert & Peggy Yamamoto, Gail Yoneda, ***Sakaye Yoneda**, Kenzo & Annette Yonemitsu, Art & Roseann Yoshida, Spencer & Courtney Yoshikawa

Membership Categories:

FAMILY MEMBERS	INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS	SENIOR MEMBERS
Family Membership (Includes children under age 22 yrs) \$500	Individual Membership (Single Adult age 30 and older) \$250	Senior Membership* (Keiro – age 80 yrs. during or after 2018) \$125
Young Family Membership (Family under age 35 yrs.) \$350	Young Adult Individual Membership (Single adult under age 30 yrs.) \$50	Senior Membership* (Keiro – age 80 yrs. before 2018) Complimentary



Thank You for Your Donations

October 2022

Eitaikyo: Gerald Iseda, Norm & Yoshie Tachiki

Funeral: Gerald Iseda, Patti Kirio

Memorial: Ron & Janis Ozaki, David Tademaru & Arlene Ozaki, Kelli Tademaru

Nokotsudo: Robert Fujimura

Special Donation: Anonymous, Rikio Ishikawa (2), Amy Kadomatsu, Patti Kirio, Chiyeko Kishimoto, Jean Nakamoto, Fujiko Oriba, Joseph & Sachiko Watari, George Yamada, Rob Yamamoto

Wedding: Dale & Gail Noriyuki

November 2022

Memorial: June Fujioka, Patti Kirio, Veena Sanyal Elguea, April Yamamoto, Sally Yamashita

Special Donation: Anonymous, Kazuko Endo, Gerald Iseda, Rikio Ishikawa, Sharon & Nelson Ishida (2), Pauline Itow, Amy Kadomatsu, Sammy Kishimoto (2), Thomas Kuwata, Irene Matsumura, Katsuko Nakagawa, Richard Nakashima, Tatsumi Omote, Jean Tsunemoto (2), George Yamada, Rob Yamamoto

December 2022

Eitaikyo: Shinobu Koda, Milnes & Noriko Kurashige, Jacqueline Motobo

Memorial: Joann Fellner, Jimmy Kita, Sam Kita, Shinobu Koda, Bruce Morimoto, Joanne Tokeshi, Judy Yamaguchi

Special Donation: Anonymous (2), Jacquelyn Doi, Kazuko Endo, FIA Insurance, Barbara Fukuji, Akemi Hayashibara, Jill Ishida, Sharon & Nelson Ishida, Rikio Ishikawa, Yoneko Itow, Hank & Joy Iwamoto, Amy Kadomatsu, Kubota Mortuary, Aileen Kuda, Ayako Masada, The Moritas, Jacqueline Motobo, Richard Nakashima, Hiroko Naruo, Fujiko Oriba, Joanne Oriba, Tereza Ouchida, Leah Oye, Catherine Silman, Jean Tsunemoto, Waves Hair Salon, George Yamada, Rob Yamamoto

Thank you for your generosity

