



# Buddhist Thoughts

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Rev. Hirano's contact numbers: Office: 363-4742,  
home: 299-8727, emergency 718-5755

## All Things Have Their Place

J.K. Hirano

Euclid Park in Ohio  
Autumn leaves falling  
Each leaf falls in perfect time

There are times when I have wondered how a grumpy old man such as myself was lucky enough to have met with the Nembutsu and become a Jodo Shinshu priest. I am not the type of person to humbly bow and thank the world for each and every moment I am given. As many of you will attest to, I do not suffer fools lightly. In reality, I should realize that I am the most foolish of the foolish. Yet, when I perceive something has not met my perception of right and wrong, I am the first to complain. As I complain, I enjoy the feel of voicing my righteous indignation. Complaints seem to take over my being; I bask in my foolish ego.

However, among this rubble of complaints, I have been allowed to live a wonderful life. This summer I had two experiences that allowed me to see just what a wonderful life I have had. Both of these insights were given to me by two strangers. The first of these teachers was a black jack dealer in Las Vegas.

At my Bachelor's Party in Las Vegas, I was sitting at a black jack table with my good friend Wendell Hamamoto. I go to a casino and enjoy sitting in front of a slot machine, losing myself in the dialogue between me and the beeping sounds of the machine. However, during a respite from the machines, I joined my friend Wendell at a black jack

table. Wendell enjoys interacting with the dealer and other players. He enjoys the human side of gambling compared to my desire for solitude. As we sat at the table, he told the dealer, "We're here for his bachelor's party," pointing to me. The dealer smiled. Wendell added, "It's his third time." In my mind, I thought, "Oh no, what's the dealer and other players going to think. This guy must really be a loser to have been married three times. Why did Wendell say that!?" Without pause, the dealer looked at me and said, "You're a very lucky man to have been loved so much." All of us at the table laughed, but a light went off within me. I am a lucky man. I might be losing and not so lucky at gambling, but in life, I have been truly lucky.

On contemplating my third marriage, I thought about the fact that I am not very good at marriage. I have tried twice before and both have been failures. Or at least, so I had thought. As a result I was rather negative in viewing marriage for myself. It was something that may be fine for others, but I really wondered if it is right for me. However, failure is the description my ego had given my past marriages. Is loving someone else and receiving their love in return, even for a short time, ever a failure? On this third try, I had met someone who has offered me another chance, just as I continue to

gamble, although I am not very good at it. Marriage, when it is right, is one of the most peaceful and stabilizing relationships we have created as humans. It allows us the opportunity to see our lives, and ourselves, beyond our own ego centered viewpoint. Whether or not we do this is up to each person in the relationship. Marriage does have its benefits and I have been given this opportunity one more time, by a woman I believe to be the right one for me.

My ex-wives had tried to create a union that would last, but because of the grumpy old man that I am, neither had worked out. Up until this revelation, I had been thinking that I am not very lucky in gambling or love. Yet, this black jack dealer, had shed a positive light on my negative beliefs. I have indeed been a lucky man to have been loved by others, to the point that they were willing to share their lives with me. This third try at the ring of marital bliss was something I have been blessed with, better than hitting a monetary jackpot. My life is just right for me.

The second teacher I met was an ex street hustler from Cleveland, Ohio. At our annual BCA ministers research seminar, Socho Ogui had invited a former student of his from the Cleveland Sangha to speak with the ministers. This former street hustler's name was Craig Jisui Horten. I do not have the time to get into his entire dharma talk. However, it was one of the most enlightening English Dharma talks I had ever heard.

Sensei Horten, before encountering the Nembutsu teachings, had never been outside of Cleveland, Ohio. He didn't know any Japanese people, for that was something outside of his neighborhood. Yet when he began going to the temple, he felt the teachings spoke to him. During his Dharma talk, he spoke of how he likes to wake up early in the morning to the sound of the birds. He talked about one early morning waking up and walking outside to a park near his home called Euclid Park. As he listened to the birds and watched the autumn leaves falling in the park, he realized that none of the leaves fall at the wrong time. As they fall, each leaf, falls in the right place, like a piece to a puzzle. As he explained this scene, I felt

a light go off within me. This is the essence of the dharma in all its glory.

There is a famous poem by the poet Ryokan (1758-1831) it is used by many Buddhist priests in their Dharma talks.

Maple leaves fall  
Showing the front,  
Showing the back.

Yet, how many of us can live the life of a maple leaf, showing the front and back. This is almost an unattainable goal, something we can only strive for. Yet, in realizing the leaves falling in perfect time, we have been shown the beauty of our everyday lives. As Sensei Horten described his observation of the leaves in Euclid Park, the haiku I began this article with, naturally formed within my mind. I had met my first non Japanese myokonin. *Myokonin* are described and identified throughout Jodo Shinshu history, as individuals with a deep understanding of the Nembutsu teachings. Most were not formally educated in Buddhism, yet through their life experience, come to a deep spiritual understanding. Myokonin literally means "wonderful, exquisite person." Through listening to this Dharma talk, I had seen that Jodo Shinshu indeed has a place in America. The seeds planted by our Issei ministers are beginning to blossom into the nembutsu flowers within this land. Even a grumpy old man,

such as myself, is embraced and given life through Namu Amida Butsu. Horten Sensei's dharma name *Jisui* means "compassionate water." I have been allowed to take a drink from the compassionate water of Life. Jodo Shinshu and the Nembutsu teachings are not something held within our established temples. It is something that we will find everywhere. It is life as it is. At a black jack table in Las Vegas and within a small inner city park in Cleveland, when we are allowed to open our eyes to it and drink the compassionate water. Like the "ahhhh" of refreshment after a refreshing drink of water, all I can say is Namu Amida Butsu.

## Paul Terashima

**O**n July 29-31, the 35<sup>th</sup> Mountain States District Conference was held at Park City, at the Best Western Landmark Inn. The theme for this year's conference was "Seek The Teaching and Share It With Others". This year, we had a panel of four people who changed their religion to Buddhism. The panel consisted of Christine Clifford, Carmela Javellane and Ivan Van Laningham from the Salt Lake Temple and Annetta Koga from the Ogden Temple.

We had the young Jr and high school people attending this panel discussion. It was very interesting to listen to each panel member explain why and how they thought Buddhism was the right religion for them. I found it very interesting why they believed that Buddhism was the right religion for them, since I grew up as a Buddhist. I've had contact with other religions, but the panel gave me a different view of Buddhism and I thank the whole panel for this.

We have thanked Karen Tohinaka and her committee for doing such a great job putting this conference together. They had great activities for all the age groups. The food was great and it seemed that everyone had a wonderful time. We had more than two hundred people attending this conference. Thank you again Karen and your committee for such an enjoyable conference.

August 18, Scott Watanabe and the basketball players refinished the gym. Again, they did a great job. They should, since they have been doing it for as long as I can remember. I know Mike Furubayashi and I started refinishing the floor when we had the Oriental Basketball League. I got Scott, Gary Koga and the older basketball players to refinish the gym floor. Now Scott and the basketball players have taken over and have refinished the gym floor on their own. They have donated all the time and equipment to do the job. The Temple thanks this group of men for their hard work in keeping the Temple in excellent condition. These men also volunteer to bar-b-que the chicken every year at our Obon and Food Bazaar. Most of these men are not Temple members, so the Temple is very lucky to

have them. Thanks Scott for taking the initiative to make these things happen.

If you notice that the Temple have new glass backboards. The Temple has to thank Scott Watanabe for them.

The winners for the 2005 Special Awards are Jan-Richard Matsuno, Feb-Dr David A Lusty, March-Al Tokunaga, April-Richard Sekiguchi, May-Reiko Mitsunaga, June-May Matsuda and July-Andrew Kyed. Thank you for supporting the Special Awards.

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## BWA News

Yoshiko Uno

**W**e want to thank all who helped make our Obon a successful event.

**Our Mountain States Conference held at Park City on July 29-31** was enjoyed by all. The panel discussion with panelists: Kristine Clifford, Ivan Van Laningham, Carmela Javallana, and Annette Koga was informative. I think many of us who are members do not take the teachings of our religion as seriously as our new members. I know that I haven't. It was inspiring to learn that our new members value their participation as members of our temple. We want to thank them for sharing their thoughts and feelings with us. Also we want to thank Drs. Tami and Brian Fukushima for their presentation on Asian health issues. As Asians we are a higher risk for some diseases than the rest of the population and they gave us some valuable information.

We held our annual **Steak Fry on August 14th at Sugarhouse Park**. We had about 75 people attending. It was enjoyed by all. As usual we had a great variety of dishes to feast upon. BWA provided the steaks and sausages. We want to thank: Ruby Doi for purchasing the steaks, Jane Sakashita for ordering the sausages, Terry Fujunami for setting up the tables, Carl & Yuriko Dennison for helping with the supplies and corn, Yuki Okubo, Chie Sugaya, Jeff Watanabe, and Ray Uno for helping with the

corn. Takeko Doi and Ruby Doi donated all the corn. Henry Kuramoto, Neil Chow, Jeff Watanabe, Carl Dennison and Ray Uno helped with the grilling. **THANK YOU to all who helped and contributed to make our annual outing a success.**

Brenda Koga is looking for volunteers to help with the fund raiser for the Homelss Shelter. A **Chilli Cook-off** is held annually to support the shelter. Please contact Brenda if you would like to help.

The **Federation of Buddhist Women's Conference - October 7-9th** will be held in **Fresno**. If anyone is interested in attending, please contact myself or go to our Temple website for more information. We would like to have more people attend and will try to help in making arrangements.

**Our next meeting will be September 18th after service.** We encourage all to attend. A light lunch will be served. We will discuss plans for our **October 1st Food Bazaar**.

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## Dharma School Update

Karen Tohinaka

**T**hank you to all who attend the Mountain States Conference in Park City. The Panel discussion and presentation on Aging were great. A big thank you to all who were on the panel Ivan, Carmella, Christine, and Annette and Brian Fukushima and his wife for the presentation on aging. Ichiro Doi and Carl Dennison did a great job in running the bingo game which everyone had fun at winning prizes and gift certificates. Congratulations to Joy Furubayashi for winning the big prize. Special thanks to the store and restaurants who donated the gift certificates: Koyo, Yamasaki, and Oriental Food Market.

Just a reminder that the Dharma School picnic will be on September 11<sup>th</sup> from 11am-3pm at West Bountiful Park. The address is 550 West Pages Lane (1600 No.) **Salt Lake** – exit 400 No. Bountiful (#321 exit), turn west and then first right (800 West – headed north). Go to Pages Lane and turn east. Please bring a salad. Looking forward to seeing you all there.

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## Jr. YBA

Bruce Fong

**W**elcome back to Dharma School!

The Jr. YBA is selling purple “Namu Amida Butsu” wristbands for \$3.00 each. They are available in Small, Medium and Large sizes. See any of the Jr. YBA members or advisors to purchase one.

We will continue to take Scrip orders during the year. Scrip are gift cards and certificates to restaurants, retail stores and gas stations in the area. They make great gifts for birthdays, thank you's, or any special occasion. An order form is included in the Buddhist Thoughts each month.

We will be taking orders:

September 25<sup>th</sup> (Ohigan)

October 9<sup>th</sup>

October 30<sup>th</sup> (Halloween party)

November 13<sup>th</sup>

November 20<sup>th</sup> (Eitaikyo)

December 4<sup>th</sup>

December 11<sup>th</sup> (Bodhi Day)

Orders are available for pick-up the week after orders are submitted. We thank the Sangha for their continued support of our efforts.

There will be a Jr YBA meeting on September 25<sup>th</sup> to elect officers and discuss activities for the new year.

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## Temple Building Update

Report from Special Meeting

## Brenda Koga

**O**n June 25, 2005 a special meeting regarding the direction of the temple building project was held at the temple. Prior to that meeting a letter was sent to all contributors to the building fund inviting them to participate in the meeting and decision making process.

Information was shared to update the attendees on the history and progress of the project with a report on the current status of the building project. Initially, the building committee was formed to address issues resulting from a growing membership. However, since that time the membership has stabilized and in fact, is actually on the decline. Financially, the temple building fund is not adequate to support the construction of a new building without acquiring major debt, which the board and membership has strongly opposed since the inception of the project.

Participants were invited to ask questions and several options were discussed regarding the future direction of the building committee in addressing the needs regarding the facilities. Those options included 1) relocating to build a new facility or to occupy an existing building that meets the congregation's needs, 2) stay on the current site and remodel the existing facility or 3) stay and build a new temple.

At the conclusion of the meeting the participants voted to stay at the current site and remodel and upgrade the current facility. Thus, the building committee has initiated an assessment of the temple needs spearheaded by **Ernest Kyed**. The committee will prioritize those needs and begin to address them using resources within our membership as much as possible to keep costs to a minimum. Further questions or concerns should be directed to **Brenda Koga or Paul Terashima**.

Anyone interested in assisting with these projects should contact **Ernie or Brenda Koga**.

## Wes Koga

**T**he YBA extends a very heartfelt "Thank You" to the following people who worked so hard to make the YBA concession stand successful at Obon:

Purchasing necessary supplies: Dave & Erin Sekino

Cooking the azuki beans: Maya Chow, Connie Sakashita, Erin Sekino & Debbie Koga

Preparing snow cone syrup: Erin Sekino & Debbie Koga

Setting up snow cone flavor bottles: Sharon Matsuura & Erin Sekino

Setting up the trailer with supplies: Sean Sekino, Shawn Koga, Keith Chow, Michael Fong & Erin Sekino

Concession stand workers: Michael Iwasaki, Emily Iwasaki, Nick Sueoka, Tyler Koga, Sidney Furubayashi, Allison Spehar, Sean Sekino, Andrew Sekino, P.J. Nakamura, Eric Koga, Blake Akimoto, Alicia Matsuura, Shawn Koga, Michael Fong, Cory Sakashita & Keith Chow

Donation of hot dogs: Troy and Judy Watanabe

A big thank you to those who stayed to clean up after we were already so tired!— Connie Sakashita, Cory Sakashita, Erin Sekino, Sean Sekino, Shawn Koga, Keith Chow, Michael Fong, Blake Akimoto, Chad Tohinaka & Debbie Koga

A special thank you to Erin Sekino for scheduling the concession shifts, supplying cleaning supplies, coolers, utensils, towels, and a lot of hard work and dedication!

## Obon Report

Bruce Fong

The annual Obon Festival was held on July 9th. Hot temperatures did not deter the crowds from making the weekend a huge success. The energetic crowd danced and celebrated well into the night and lingered in the street long after the dancing ended! Last year's successful mini-food bazaar was tried again this year. Drawing from last year's experience, a few small changes were made in the way that food was prepared and served. In an effort to speed the lines along, the somen crew pre-cooked and refrigerated the noodles the night before the Obon. This also eased the workload in the kitchen on the day of the Obon.

The BWA along with a few Dharma School parents arrived early in the morning to prepare the sushi. These volunteers deserve special recognition for their dedication. At every Obon and Food Bazaar, these same volunteers arrive at 4am to start cooking 250 pounds of rice and laying out tables for preparing the sushi. They work until 10am after all the sushi rolls have been cut and assembled into take-out packages. Many of these dedicated volunteers help in the kitchen throughout the day before taking time to enjoy dinner and dancing. Their hard work is greatly appreciated!

This year, the Ogden Buddhist Temple was kind enough to lend us their huge propane grill for barbequing chicken. Having the grill meant that only 3-4 barbequers were needed to cook about 200 chicken and shrimp skewers per hour. The barbeque crew started at noon and easily kept pace with the demand for chicken and shrimp skewers until 8pm.

Held over from last year were teriyaki meatballs, edamame, Oriental salad, and fruit salad. The salads were again prepared fresh throughout the day.

The food servers were up to the task this year, as the only noteworthy line occurred when large crowds arrived in the hour just prior to the Taiko drum performance and Obon dancing. With the exception of some teriyaki chicken skewers, all

of the food was completely sold out by 8pm. Way to go food servers!

Again, most of the comments have been highly favorable, and the quality of the food has increased from previous years. Last year we reported that gross food sales were increased 15-20% over previous years. We are happy to report that food sales increased an additional 15% over last year. Thanks to all the food preparers, handlers and cleaning crews for putting forth the extra time and effort necessary to turn out quality products!

The Obon committee is also extremely grateful to the many, many needed donations received in recognition of this important event that helps sustain our temple. Thanks to all those who gave monetary donations in recognition of the Obon and Obon practices. Also, many thanks to Quality Produce for their generous donations of fruit and vegetables.

Although the Obon is our temple's second largest fundraising event, it is even more important and gratifying to see all the organizations working together to make a truly festive and fantastic day. There was a lot of long, hard work involved but very few complaints. The dedicated and hardworking membership is the true strength of our temple!

Many thanks to the temple's general membership, BWA, Dharma School, YBA, Jr YBA, Building Fund committee, and the many non-members who showed up to volunteer! Our temple's largest fundraising event, the Food Bazaar, is nearly upon us. Please step forward to help wherever you can.

With Gassho,  
Bruce Fong and David Sekino  
2005 Obon Chairpersons

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## BWA Donations

Yuriko Dennisho

Tamura Kuramoto Donation-Steak Fry Picnic  
\$20.00

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Kiyo Okumura Donation-Steak Fry Picnic  
\$25.00

David Shiraiwa & Fusae Nakanishi Special  
\$60.00

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## September Toban

*Jane Sakashita	*Carl Dennison
Yuriko Dennison	Jeff Kida
Cynthia Kida	Rolen Yoshinaga
Rae Louie	Shig Nagata
Setsuko Nagata	Phillip Sakashita
Connie Sakashita	Mike Furubayashi
Connie Nakahara	Dot Richaeda

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**Salt Lake Dharma School – please bring a salad**  
**Ogden Dharma School – please bring a dessert**

**Directions:**

**Ogden** – exit I-15 at Centerville (Exit #322), turn west on (Parrish Lane) and take first left (1250 West – headed south). Go to Pages Lane and turn east.

**Salt Lake** – exit 400 No. Bountiful (#321 exit), turn west and then first right (800 West – headed north). Go to Pages Lane and turn east.

**Call LaVerne Kyed at 557-1548 if you get lost**

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## Dharma School Back-To-School Picnic

**Sunday, September 11<sup>th</sup>,  
2005  
11 a.m. – 3 p.m.**

**West Bountiful Park\*  
550 West Pages Lane (1600  
No.)  
West Bountiful**

(\*Please note the change in location from  
last year –  
see map on back)

**Fun and games for all ages – all temple  
members invited!**

August/September  
Shotsuki Hoyo  
September 25, 10:00 a.m.

Deceased	Date of Death	Next of Kin
Akimoto Hideko	8/8/82	George Akimoto
Akiyama, Takeo	8/26/85	Genevieve Akiyama
Doi Sekizo	8/27/67	Ichiro Doi
Hirase Torae	8/5/89	Eunice Yamane
Imada Izumi	8/2/52	Shizuko Imada
Kano Dessie	8/12/94	Lynn Kano
Kuwahara Alice	8/12/84	Arnold Kuwahara
Matsuura Hana	8/26/45	Doris Matsuura
Ninomiya Tasuo		Yoshiko Ninomiya
Sakashita Etsuno	8/24/73	Hiroshi Aramaki
Sakashita Fukutaro	8/2/55	Hiroshi Aramaki
Sakinada Shoji	8/29/85	Henry Haraguchi
Sugita Denzo		Jerry Tsuyuki
Taknaka Matsuzo	8/5/67	Takenaka Family
Tersawa Kuniko	8/2/91	Kazuko Terasawa
Akino Hideshima	8/14/00	Tad Hideshima
Fred Toshiyuki Seo	8/11/01	June Seo
Milja Park-Yea	8/12/01	Evelyn Matsumura
Mitzie Tsuyuki	8/13/02	Mark Tsuyuki
Wallace Doi	8/28/67	Mary Doi
Mitsuno Hata	8/11/88	Suzanne Hata
James Konishi	8/25/04	Jeanne Konishi

Hiroshi Mitsunaga	9/24/03	Faye Eng
Shizuye Susie Nakai	9/4/04	Eleanor Sasaki
Hiroshi Ikegami	9/27/04	Rick Ikegami

## September

Akimoto Fukuichi	9/24/54	George Akimoto
Akimoto Setsuko	9/1/83	George Akimoto
Date Tsune	9/9/70	Hiroshi Mitsunaga
Doi Emiko	9/11/70	Ichiro Doi
Endo Yoshiko	9/10/87	Xan Matsuda
Fujii Naka	9/2/92	Ritsuko Hayashi
Fujinami Kichi	9/26/95	Mitsuru Fujinami
Fukunaga Koma	9/27/92	Ben Fukunaga
Hirase Hikotaro	9/11/53	Eunice Yamane
Inouye Mika	9/5/33	Miye Aoki
Iwata Chubei	9/13/66	Tsuruko Imai
Kasubuchi Isa	9/12/68	John Kasubuchi
Kasubuchi Otomatsu	9/19/28	John Kasubuchi
Kato Kikuyemon	9/1/49	Dan Tsukamoto
Masuda Haruko	9/22/85	Edna Shiotani
Masuko Hisao	9/28/68	Matsue Kasubuchi
Mitsunaga Masami	9/13/34	Hiroshi Mitsunaga
Mori Masumi	9/20/83	Marilyn Bouyer
Niwa Shozo	9/19/83	Pat Ninomiya
Ogi Toru	9/22	Tomoko Ogi
Sudoko Kotomi	9/20/94	Jun Sudoko
Takagi Michael	9/3/89	Nancy Takagi
Tsuyuki Kimiko	9/20/62	Jerry Tsuyuki
Usui Fumiko	9/17/84	Nancy Hikoeda
Endo Michiye	9/26/00	Stan Endo