

Hawaii Buddhist Women's News

HONPA HONGWANJI MISSION OF HAWAII FEDERATION OF BUDDHIST WOMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS

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Two Exchange Students to Travel to Japan

Amy Nishimoto

The Hawaii Federation of Buddhist Women's Associations will once again send two student delegates to Japan in late July to early August. This is in compliance with a resolution adopted by the 3rd World Buddhist Women's Convention in June 1967, to nurture "future leaders for Jodo Shinshu women's activities . . . and as a mission of good will." They are Lyssa Kei Nishikawa from Pukalani, Maui and Megan Pascual from Hilo, Hawaii.

Both women are presently attending the University of Hawaii at Manoa. In high school Lyssa was an athlete, captain of her school soccer and softball teams, and a talented performer, participating in many hula competitions and dancing internationally with her halau. Megan was a musician, playing the flute, violin, and viola as she performed in various

capacities in school and community functions, and actively participated in the 4-H Club, choir,

and taiko group at her temple. Both

students volunteered countless hours of service to their temples and to their communities, helping the elderly and those in need. Lyssa and Megan have both expressed an enthusiasm to learn about Buddhist culture in Japan, and upon returning from their trip, they will be able to share what they learned with members of our Sangha as they are invited to speak at our temples.

The Student Exchange Committee is presently planning an orientation meeting as a means to assist Lyssa and Megan to prepare for their trip. Final details such as flight information are forthcoming and will be forwarded to the Uniteds so that Hawaii, Maui, Honolulu, and Oahu members will be able to give them a true Hawaiian-style send off.



Megan Pascual



Lyssa Kei Nishikawa

HAWAII ISLAND UNITED BWA



The 58th annual Hawaii Island United Hongwanji Buddhist Women's Association Convention was co-chaired by Ruby Maekawa and Ellen Okano and held in the Sangha Hall in Hilo on October 28, 2012. The theme was "Path of Entrusting – Recite the Nembutsu".

The guest speaker was Chris Ridley, who has worked as the director of Social Services at Life

Care Center of Hilo since 1994. Ms. Ridley spoke to us about "Forgetfulness and Dementia". Most of us found this very informative and useful especially the ten warning signs of dementia and how to postpone showing dementia.

The new officers for HIUHBWA were installed. They are: President, Linda Nagai; First Vice-President, K.T. Cannon-Eger; Second Vice-President, Carol Tsunezumi; Recording Secretary, Gloria Ichishita; Correspondence Secretary, Yaeko Kunishige; General Fund Treasurer, Ellen Okano; Assistant General Fund Treasurer, Brenda Vida; Scholarship Treasurer, Theo Kushi; Auditors, Nora Koyanagi, Lani Yamami, Aiko Nakamura, Thelma Ryusaki and Eileen Usagawa; and Federation

Marge Elwell

Directors, Shigeko Nakasone, K.T. Cannon-Eger, Sally Tayama, Lillie Tsuchiya and Janet Saito.



The membership committee reported a slight decline in membership due to death, relocation and resignations but a small net increase of membership, coming to a grand total of membership of 667.

There was a delightful assortment of entertainment that captured everyone's imagination, from Okinawan Dancers, Puna Hongwanji Chorale, Halau, Musicians, Buddhist Comedy and a couple of sing-alongs. It was very pleasant to see old friends and to make new ones. ABIG mahalo to everyone who helped put this event together and to create new memories.

HONOLULU UNITED BWA

Homelessness, Family Promise—when you hear these words, what is your first reaction or thought? In the summer of 2011, we heard these words as we learned about the Interfaith Hospitality Network (founded in New Jersey in 1986) to assist homeless families. The Network program brings together religious congregations of various faiths to provide accommodations and meals for three to five families (up to 14 people) for one week every two or three months on a rotating schedule. Thus the Honolulu Hongwanji Council began its involvement in this community outreach program. During that one week, the host temple (either Jikoen, Moiliili or Betsuin) provided temporary sleeping quarters and members of the four temples (including Kailua), prepared

breakfasts and dinners for the families. Our Hawaii Betsuin BWA was not involved at its onset, but recently got involved in October and December of 2012.

On October 24, 2012, six Betsuin BWA members and two of their spouses, prepared and served a dinner of lasagna, chicken broccoli casserole, salad, rolls, fruit and dessert to four families being hosted at Jikoen Hongwanji. We sat and ate dinner with them. However, a few adults were not present due to working at late shifts, so remaining family members made food plates for them to eat when they returned from work later that evening. What we learned about this Family Promise program is that the adult participants have jobs, and if they

Sharyn Sekine

don't, during the day at the Family Promise office they receive job training skills and help in finding jobs or housing. The children all attend school and the non-school aged ones are cared for at the Family Promise office. The goal of this program is to provide

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KAUAI UNITED BWA

Jani Okura



Faithful Volunteers gather for Lonesome Graves Project

The Kauai United BWA held its annual Autumn Conference on October 7, 2012 hosted by Kapaa Hongwanji BWA. The ladies of the United reconnected with each other

while enjoying a spectacular luncheon. Rev. Bruce Nakamura and Rev. Kazunori Takahashi were the guest speakers. Rev. Takahashi held the audience spellbound

with a slide-show of the sights of his recent trip to India.



On November 10, 2012 we again met at the Kauai Veterans Cemetery in Hanapepe for our annual Lonesome Graves Project, where we decorated the graves of Veterans without families on island. Thanks to all the members and friends who supplied the beautiful flowers, and those who helped us to make this project a success each year! It is awesome to step back and see the decorated graves, and think about those individuals who fought so bravely for our country.

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families the support and resources they need to become self sufficient; hopefully within 6 months. They have been quite successful in doing this and it gives us volunteers a sense of hope and relief to know that these families can lift themselves up out of homelessness.

One of the volunteers (F.W.) said that she liked helping with Family Promise because it allowed her to contribute physically in a societal issue that she felt sorry about and yet was unable to offer good solutions. It also gave her a chance to communicate with some of the homeless and slowly get to understand the homeless problem on a more human level. Another volunteer (L.W.) had some sad but happy feelings. Sad, that there are families with children

that are homeless. But happy that they are taken care of with such a program. (W.Y.) believed that the families sensed the caring and effort it took on our part to provide the meals. She was touched with the "thank you" she heard which were quiet and sincere. I'm glad that I had a small part in helping these families and in showing them the spirit of Dana and although we were the ones providing the meals, they had given us something valuable in return—a compassionate feeling of respect, acceptance and caring for their homelessness. I hope our acts of kindness made a difference in their lives, and that more temple and BWA members will get involved in supporting Family Promise. For the past year and a half, many BWA members from Jikoen, Kailua and Moiliili have also participated with their temple members.

MAUI UNITED BWA



Yukari Murakami

Maui United BWA held its 2012 Fall General Assembly at Lahaina Hongwanji with Dr. George and Dr. Willa Tanabe as guest speakers. They gave an excellent and memorable presentation on "Japanese Buddhist Temples in Hawaii" which was based on the couples' recently published book. Assembly attendees were visibly impressed by the Tanabes' extensive knowledge of not only the Japanese Buddhist temples, but of the history, architecture, and art relating to Shin Buddhism and to general Buddhism. Copies of the book were available for purchase after the presentation.



OAHU UNITED BWA

Harriet Zakahi

The 54th Oahu United BWA Annual Convention was held on October 20, 2012 at Aiea Hongwanji Mission. Present were 119 members, five Oahu Ministers and three guests including Tamayo Matsumoto and Janet Honda from the Hawaii Federation of BWAs and Honolulu United President, Jean Fukumoto. The day began with a Memorial Service in remembrance of 19 members who passed away during the past year, many who were icons and pillars of their respective units.

At the General Membership meeting the following officers for 2013 were elected and installed: President Joan Masaki; Immediate Past President Janet Yoshida; Vice President Dale Shimaura; Recording Secretary June Asato; Corresponding Secretary Takako Desaki; Treasurer Susan Ushijima; Assistant Treasurer Mitsue Hanabusa; Auditors Janet Yoshida and Harriet

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Zakahi; Minister Advisor Rev. Mari Nishiyama. Lunch and entertainment followed. The keynote speaker was Dr. Michael Cheang whose topic was "Aging as a Women's Issue: Learning to Avoid the Life Cycle Squeeze." His presentation was timely and informational and he used his sense of humor to cite common and realistic situations that a woman may face today and also suggested ways to avoid them. The next Convention will be hosted by Waipahu BWA. An underlying goal of these conventions is for the Oahu United Members to "catch-up" with each other as well as meet new BWA friends. We believe that this goal was met.

In honor of Eshinni-sama's contribution to Jodo Shinshu, the front cover of the convention booklet was a Magnolia blossom her favorite flower.

Education

Committee Promotes AIDS Education

Carole Tsunezumi, Chair

In 1990, at the 9th World BWA Convention in Vancouver, Canada, a resolution to "support educational programs on AIDS and AIDS prevention" was adopted and more than 20 years have passed since BWA members and friends from East Hawaii participated in the Big Island's First AIDS Walk held at the Liliuokalani Gardens in Hilo, Hawaii on April 21, 2012. This event provided a great opportunity for the BWAs to participate in and to help promote AIDS Education to the public. (see Fall Newsletter 2012). Hawaii Island will again participate in the AIDS Walk on April 13, 2013.

Oahu - Life Foundation's 22nd Annual Honolulu AIDS Walk will be on Sunday, April 14, 2013. Maui AIDS Foundation and Kauai's Malama Pono will not have an AIDS Walk this year. Please call them to find out how the BWA might be able to help promote AIDS education.

It is a growing concern (especially among Asian Americans) that we educate our families and offer support to those dealing with this disease.

