

Hawaii Buddhist Women's News

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

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Mahalo! Rev. and Mrs. Nishiyama

Our Hawaii Federation Minister Advisor, Rev. Shindo and Mrs. Suzue Nishiyama, were honored at the recent Giseikai and Living Treasures Banquet for 25 years of service to the HHMH. They are shown here with Jikoen President and BWA member, Doris Oshiro. Congratulations! In addition, Reverend Nishiyama will be assigned to Honpa Hongwanji Hilo Betsuin as its Acting Rimban as of May 1, 2017 while continuing to serve at Jikoen Hongwanji Mission as its resident minister.

Education Committee Spring Report

Kiyo Masuda, Education Chair

Kauai United BWA

The Kauai UHBWA Fall Conference was held on October 30, 2016 at the Lihue Hongwanji Mission, hospitably hosted by the Lihue Hongwanji Women's Association. BWA members and guests from West Kauai Hongwanji and Kapaa Hongwanji enjoyed a memorable Sangha day. This year the topic for the educational seminar was on homelessness in Kauai. The keynote speaker, Stephanie Fernandes, director of the Mana'olana Emergency Homeless Shelter and Transitional Housing Program gave an informative talk on the present situation of the homeless and the work her organization is doing to improve the lives of the disadvantaged. The HHMH Federation of BWA education grant made it possible for the members of the Kauai United BWA to broaden their knowledge and understanding of their greater community and also to restock supplies for its recycling project.

Honolulu United BWA

The Honolulu United BWA held its combined General Membership meeting and Educational Seminar on October 15, 2016 at the Hawaii Betsuin. True to its 2016 theme, "Reach Out-Make Connections," this day was devoted to learning about Islam, one of the major religions of the world. The presenters were ladies from the Manoa Mosque. The educational event began with an introductory talk by Michele Ouansafi, followed by a panel discussion on the religion and culture of Islam and living in Hawaii as a Muslim woman. The day culminated with the attendees sharing a sample of their respective Japanese Buddhist and Islam Middle Eastern cultures with hands on, how to activities: how to wear a hijab, how to draw henna, how to wrap with furoshiki, and fold origami. As aptly stated by Donna Higashi, "...we hope to better understand each other so that peace and understanding will always be fostered, and the BWA can be seen as a group willing to reach out to the general community." Mission accomplished.

Maui United BWA was much inspired by the initiative taken by the Honolulu chapter and with its support and advice, the Maui chapter is planning an event with the Maui Mosque for its 2017 educational seminar.

HAWAII ISLAND UNITED BWA

Linda Nagai

Our 62nd Annual Convention, hosted by Hilo and Papaikou BWAs, was held on Saturday, September 17, 2016, at the Hilo Betsuin Sangha Hall. The booklet cover featured a brilliant sunrise peeking over the horizon and illustrated very well, the 2016 slogan, "Embrace Change: New Vision"; while the back cover's photomontage showed various BWAs creating engagement through activities involving the community and Sanghas around Hawaii island.

We were fortunate to have had Mrs. Irene Nakamoto, Federation BWA president as our guest speaker. Her inspiring, energetic message evoked feelings of gratitude, self-reflection and dana in many of us.

Seven new members were recognized during the General Membership meeting: Billie Vieira and Sandra Tomiyama (Hilo); Ro Kahoopii (Honokaa); Barbara Iwanaga King and Setsuko Matsuoka (Kona); Helen Kobzi (Naalehu); and Noriko Kawagoe (Papaikou). Resolutions of Appreciation and Congratulations were also presented to six centenarians: Misako Hatami, Fujie Chikuami, Yoshiko Morinaga, and Shizuyo Uwono (Hilo); Clara Tokunaga (Kona); and Haruko Hayashi (Papaikou). Those who were unable to attend were represented by family members, and others were presented with their certificates and special leis at their care facilities. Some of the residents at the care facilities were emotionally grateful for this special recognition.

Rimban Jeffrey Soga officiated the installation of the following 2017-2018 officers that was held immediately following the General Assembly meeting: President—Ellen Okano (Hilo); 1st Vice President—Lynn Higashi (Honokaa); 2nd Vice President—Linda Nagai (Kona); Recording Secretary—Carole Tsutsumi (Hilo); General Fund Treasurer—Eileen Usagawa (Puna); Assistant Treasurer—Susan Takiue (Kona); Auditors—Helen Shiota-Benevides (Papaikou), Sally Murakami (Kona); Federation Directors—Lynn Higashi (Honokaa) and Carol Tsunazumi (Puna).

BJ Soriano, Hilo Choir Director, and Karen Maedo emceed the after lunch program that included the singing of our Buddhist Women's Pledge, and lively medleys of Hawaiian and popular songs.

OAHU UNITED BWA

President, June Asato



Oahu United has not been very active since hosting the Federation Meeting in October 2016. We held our last united meeting for 2016 in November, and our first quarterly meeting for 2017 in February. For 2017 we will be working with the Oahu Lay Association to host the 2017 State Lay Association Convention on September 8-10 at Aiea Hongwanji. This will be the same weekend as the PBA dedication and the Hawaii Kyodan Board of Directors' meeting. We are planning to host optional activities and hope to include a "coffee hour" for BWA members who attend.

Most units held successful fall or winter bazaars and craft fairs as well as tsukemono and other sales.

Mililani BWA hosted a well-attended Vegan Experience program in December. Former BWA exchange student and member of Mililani BWA Susan Asato and assistant Ryan Takakawa presented a program on plant based



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OAHU UNITED continued



diets and relation to Buddhism. The program included displays, tastings of various "milks" and "cheeses" as well as demonstrations on baking and cooking techniques and substitutions. The evening was capped off with a full vegan dinner and a film presentation. Susan and Ryan continue to promote plant based diets and compassion for all life. This was the third Vegan Experience program that they have offered for the Mililani BWA. You can meet Susan and Ryan at their website and blog, <http://www.bigtentvegan.com/>. They are very active in VegFest in southern California and visit Hawaii several times a year.

MAUI UNITED BWA

Earlyn Ginoza



Maui United Buddhist Women's Association (MUBWA) started 2017 with participation in the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day event at his Stone of Hope monument in front of the Maui County building. The event focused on Dr. King's principles supporting peace, cooperation and equality, values which are precious to everyone. MUBWA was honored to be the lead group in the walk around the block as part of the morning's program. Peace origami cranes were shared with participants. MUBWA also had a table where anyone was welcome to stop by and learn to make these origami peace symbols. MUBWA's Sharon Nohara made the special ti leaf lei adorning the Stone of Hope.

Then on January 21, 2017 MUBWA joined the Kahului version of the Women's March on Washington. MUBWA focused on promoting peace and compassion while supporting equality for all. It was especially touching that at precisely 8 a.m. Hawaii time and whatever time this matched around the world there was a minute of silence that made us all feel together as one. The march in Kahului was truly Hawaiian style with lots of aloha



to share and participation estimated at 5,000 plus! The melting pot of people as well as the weather conditions made for a wondrous time full of delightful elements. May we share peace, compassion and gratitude forever.

HONOLULU UNITED BWA

Merle Tashiro & Donna Higashi



Two Honolulu Units Celebrate

In 2016, Jikoen and Kailua Hongwanji BWAs celebrated its 75th and 50th Anniversary celebrations respectively. Records indicate that Jikoen was the first one on Oahu to remain open during WWII, while the women's group was founded in 1941. Kailua Fujinkai was established in 1966 under Rev. Jukaku Shirasu with Mrs. Shirasu serving as the group's first president.

In the early years, two secretaries recorded minutes in beautiful handwritten penmanship in Japanese and in English. Even the treasurer's records were recorded on accounting sheets since computers were non-existent. Representing Kailua on the Honolulu United and Hawaii Federation levels were two well-known members – the late Esther Fujiioka and the late Dorothy Ono. In fact Dorothy Ono and husband Tadaso bequeathed a large portion of their assets for building their new temple facilities in 2013-14. Today KHBWA is fortunate to still have five of its original members: Elaine Fukada, Marjorie Ikeda, Janet Kukino, Miyuki Masuda and Patsy Michihara. Mahalo ladies! Janet and Patsy are shown here with Kailua Hongwanji's resident minister, Rev. David Nakamoto.

Several resident ministers were at Jikoen throughout the years and notably it was during Rev. Chikai and Mrs. Chihoko Yosemite's tenure that they undertook their biggest fundraiser venture of their existence – the purchase of their present temple's property from Bishop Estate, from lease to fee. Within three years, with the help of countless number of individuals and groups, including the JHBWA, the project was successful. Today much of their Kyodan BOD leadership is led by active BWA members. Mrs. Chihoko Yosemite was honored at its 75th Anniversary. She is shown above with First VP of Hawaii Federation BWA's, Lois Toyama, also a member of Jikoen Hongwanji.



KAUAI UNITED BWA

Lynette Miyamoto

On October 30, 2016, Kauai United Hongwanji BWA held its Annual Autumn Conference with Lihue Hongwanji as host. We started with a Memorial Service, remembering members who have passed away within the year since our last Conference. Kauai lost ten members last year. We also recognize our Dharma School Teachers with a certificate and gift. We did sing the Buddhist Women's Pledge gatha during the Service. Our keynote speaker, Stephanie Fernandes, Director of the Mana'olana Emergency Homeless Shelter and Transitional Housing Program (under Kauai Economic Opportunity), shared with us an overview of homelessness on Kauai and programs that are available to assist them. They do a lot of good work for the homeless and really try to help them get back on their feet again.

Lunch and our annual general membership meeting followed the program. We learned to recycle Spam cans and made them into pretty holders for pencils and a note pad, perfect by the phone to jot down information. Everyone made one to take home. Attendance was 30 members and 3 ministers.

On November 10, 2016, Thursday, we did our annual Lonesome Grave Project. We gather as many flowers as we can and decorate the graves at the Kauai Veteran's Cemetery in Hanapepe so on November 11th at the eleventh hour when they hold Services, the graves are nice, especially the older graves that do not have anyone to put flowers for them. It has gotten to be a wonderful site to see so many members come out to do a service for our Veteran's.