

# Hawaii Buddhist Women's News

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

Honorary President: Yoshiko Umitani President: Linda Nagai Minister Advisor: Rev. Blayne Higa  
1727 Pali Highway Honolulu, HI 96813 USA Contact us at (808) 522-9200 or [www.hawaiibwa.org](http://www.hawaiibwa.org)

## Message from the President: Linda Nagai

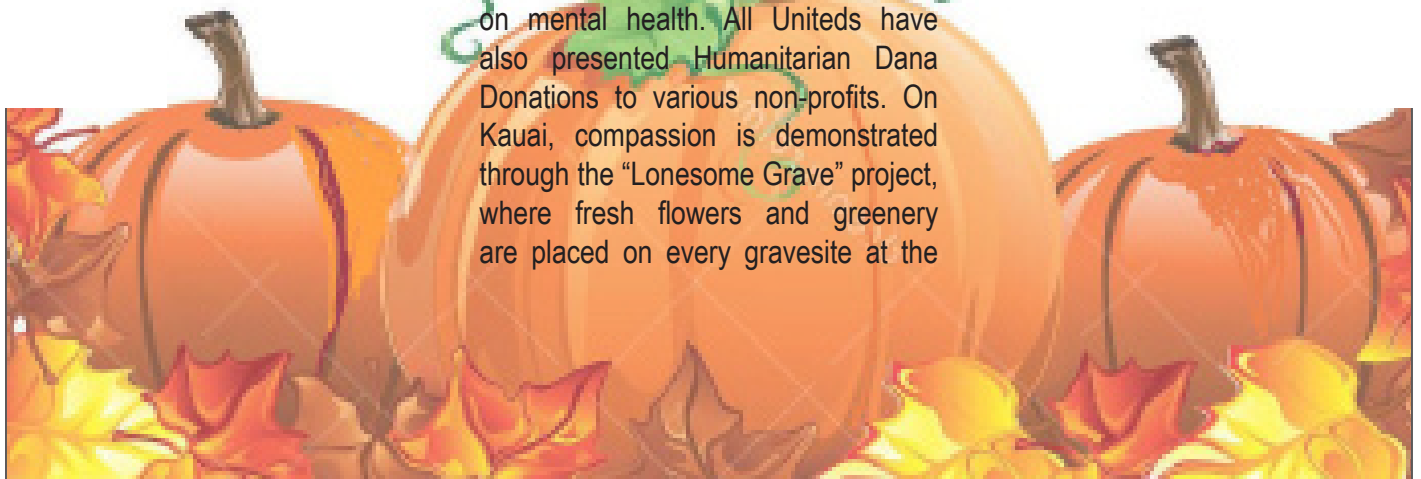
“Live Peace, Live Aloha, Live as One in the Nembutsu.”

Our committees are working diligently to bring the 18th World Buddhist Women's Convention to Hawaii, which will be held in September 2027. As you can see, we have chosen a theme that embraces Amida's compassion. This is a significant undertaking—just imagine coordinating over 2,000 people in and around the Hawaii Convention Center. For this reason, the Steering Committee for the 18th World Buddhist Women's Convention is reaching out to all BWA members, Hawaii Kyodan members, friends of the BWA, Jr. YBA, PBA, and other affiliates of the Hongwanji to volunteer and help with this enormous endeavor. We will need all hands on deck in 2027 as we share the Aloha Spirit with the world.

As we move forward with preparations for the World Convention, our BWA members from various districts continue their active involvement with their temples and communities. Building a healthy Sangha requires everyone's participation to ensure our success. Special thanks go to the members of various districts, such as the Hawaii Island United, who have packed hygiene items and healthy snacks for women and children in homeless shelters, and organized garage and bake sales to support the Maui wildfire relief efforts and the Seattle Betsuin Arson Restoration Fund. In Kona, the Holualoa Hongwanji, a former satellite temple, has reopened its doors to the Hondo after about 40 years, once again offering the Sangha and community members a place to listen to the Dharma. Honolulu United held an educational workshop focused on mental health. All Uniteds have also presented Humanitarian Dana Donations to various non-profits. On Kauai, compassion is demonstrated through the “Lonesome Grave” project, where fresh flowers and greenery are placed on every gravesite at the

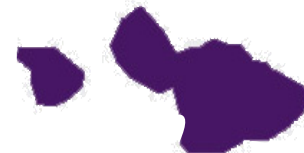
Kauai Veterans Cemetery. Maui United's ti leaf leis, placed on graves at the Makawao Veterans Cemetery on Memorial Day, honor and remember our veterans for their dedication and service to our country.

Despite our declining membership, I want to thank each and every one of you for continuing to follow in the footsteps of Eshinni and Kakushinni, supporting our temples in transmitting the Dharma through various activities. Just as Eshinni and Kakushinni represented confident women of the Kamakura era, today's BWA represents a new era, continuing to support our temples so that Shinran Shonin's teachings may be shared for generations to come.



# MAUI UNITED BWA

Marilyn Morikawa



## Compassionate Connections With Maui Ohana

Maui United BWA members are connected to each other and to our Maui Ohana. Compassionate connections were made with Spring and Hanamatsuri Visitations to nursing homes Hale Makua Kahului and Wailuku, Kula Hospital, and Roselani Place Senior Living. Spring General Assembly was held at Makawao Hongwanji on March 16. Guest speaker Aileen Oda Koja spoke on "Discovering One's Roots through Ancestry."

Throughout the month of May, nimble fingered ladies and men met at weekly Kahului and Wailuku meet-greet-make gatherings to prepare ti-leaves and weave lei for Memorial Day. Five hundred seventy lei were made and donated to Makawao Veteran's Cemetery. Then, May 18 was making origami for Maui Matsuri Children's Festival at Kaahumanu Shopping Center.

BWA members shared compassionate connections at their temple Obon, helping to prepare and sell the products the community looks forward



to. Nowhere was the spirit of Obon more evident than at the Lahaina Obon, originally envisioned by Lahaina Hongwanji and jointly with Lahaina Shingon Mission, and Lahaina Jodo Mission with support from the County of Maui. Though the buildings are impermanent, the connections are Lahaina Strong.

Connections were also made with Maui Humane Society, Kahului Hongwanji Preschool, and Cup of Cold Water. Then, Maui temples sent food goodies and crafts to be sold at the Lanai 100th Anniversary Obon Celebration on August 31.

President Diane Nako thanks all members for their hard work and efforts. She says, "After a year of rebuilding since the Maui wildfires, the Maui BWA has been an integral part of supporting our communities through volunteering at various local events and making connections that benefited many across the state."

With compassionate connections, Maui United BWA continues to serve our Maui Ohana as we share "nembutsu moments" together.



# Maui Strong!

*We Stand With Lahaina!*

Honpa Hongwanji Mission Of Hawaii  
Federation of Buddhist Women's Associations

## HAWAII ISLAND UNITED BWA

Congratulations and best wishes to this year's \$1,000 scholarship recipient, Justin Imamura of Hilo Betsuin. He is a hard-working young man who, for nine years, has participated in numerous school and temple activities, including emceeing and kansho ringing for Sunday services. As a seven-year participant in the scouting program, he attained his Eagle Scout rank upon completion of his project. Justin is currently attending Oregon State University in Corvallis, Oregon, which is the 3rd ranked school in the nation to study natural resources and conservation. He is majoring in Fish and Wildlife Management and will also pursue internships offered at OSU.

**HILO:** On April 28 at their Eshinni/Kakushini Day service, guest speaker Linda Nagai gave an inspirational message titled, "Walking the Path: A Woman's Journey in Shin Buddhism". It was about her arduous journey to attain Tokudo ordination, her "35-year-old dream". On the path were many pitfalls that she overcame with perseverance, patience and deep gratitude for the support and encouragement received from others. In August, their Kyodan/BWA Super Garage Sale co-chaired by Karen Maedo and Jane Iida was a huge success with proceeds given to the Kyodan to help maintain their temple and support others in need.

## E. Okano & Jo Kim

### HONOKAA:

Their BWA/Kyodan Garage Sale, Bake Sale and Silent Auction in June are some of the fundraisers held to support their temple and greater community. Numerous donations were made to Maui Food Bank, Maui Humane Society, Maui Strong, PBA and seven other charitable organizations. They continue to assist the Peace Committee with their Friday meal and grocery bag distribution.



**KONA:** Besides assisting their temple with fundraisers, they held their 65th Annual General Membership Meeting and Memorial Service in February.

In March, the Rev. Barbara Brennan was their guest speaker at the annual Eshinni/Kakushinni Day service. In 2025, they will be celebrating their 125th Anniversary!

**PUNA:** A recent fresh pumpkin pie sale raised \$500 for Lahaina BWA. Dana Service was held in February with Claudia Uyeda, Project Dana Coordinator, as their guest speaker; and calabash donations were given to the Seattle Betsuin Arson Restoration Fund. In April, Cyndi Osajima, spoke at their Eshinni/Kakushinni Day service.

On October 26, we will be holding our General Membership meeting hosted by Hilo BWA, in conjunction with the Buddhist Education Seminar, hosted by Puna BWA.

Photo on top left: Justin Imamura and his family receiving our scholarship award. Photo on the bottom left: Linda Nagai (middle right) with then Hilo BWA President Deborah Fried (middle left), Rev. Joshin Kamuro (left) and Rev. Kazunori Takahashi (right) when she spoke at Hilo BWA's Eshinni/Kakushinni Day Service.  
(Photos by Sandra Tomiyama)





# KAUAI UNITED BWA

Lynette Mizuo



## Eshinni -Kakushinni Day Service



The annual Eshinni-Kakushinni Service, sponsored by the Kauai United Hongwanji Buddhist Women's Association, was held at Lihue Hongwanji Mission in April. We were honored to have Edythe Vassall as our guest speaker via video message. In addition, we were delighted to have the PBA Buddhist Club students and teachers join us for the service and fellowship after.

## Aloha Kapaa BWA

The Kapaa Hongwanji Women's Association would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Kauai United Hongwanji BWA for the many years of friendship, fellowship and working

## Roberta Yanagawa

together joyfully for various events to support the BWA and its mission. Regretfully, the time has come to close our unit with a fond aloha and mahalo to all. Our membership has declined tremendously due to the aging and

passing of our dedicated members. We have not been successful in recruiting younger members. We look forward to becoming an active unit in the future. All the best to our BWA sisters and the Federation.



# OAHU UNITED BWA

Susan Morishige



June Asato chaired a successful sale of food and snacks at the BSC Spring Festival on 6/6. All fundraiser profit went towards preliminary expenses for the planning of the 2026 State BWA Conference, which will be hosted by Oahu District. Conference co-chairs Carolyn Uchiyama and Claire Tamamoto reported that the conference will be held on 3/28-29/2026 at Ala Moana Hotel (already reserved). The theme is "Nurturing Nembutsu: Sharing Gratitude." The committee is currently seeking a keynote speaker, and created a budget for 5 workshops, panel presentation, entertainment, and Pop up store. It hopes to gather BWA members throughout the State of Hawaii to renew friendships; share the Dharma Teachings and grow membership by inviting guests. No zoom or hybrid attendance is planned.

OUHHBWA owns a scroll which we have been calling the Amida Scroll. It was usually displayed at annual conferences and seminars when a service was held in a hotel or social hall rather than a temple. In 2018, it was used as a backdrop for installation of 2018 OUHHBWA officers.



This year, Headquarters borrowed it for the Triple Celebration, and it looked beautiful on the stage.

Oahu's Annual Conference will be held on 10/26 at Mililani. With a theme of "Building Healthy Sanghas: Sharing Nembutsu Moments," the conference starts at 8am (Registration and Fellowship), then Memorial Service with keynote Dharma Speaker Rev. Joshin Kamuro, Annual Membership Meeting (including election), Installation, Workshop (Evolution of Elder Abuse by Scott Spallina), lunch, and Workshop (Wait - Don't Die Yet with author Annette Kam).

## Unit reports:

**Aiea** BWA collates the monthly Aiea JIKO newsletter, produced craft items for its 3/22-23 Craft Fair and 8/26 Bon Dance, and provided refreshments for the 8/14 Oahu District Education Seminar with Rev. Kenji Akahoshi. Lois Toyama was the guest speaker at Eshinni/Kakushinni Day service.

**Mililani** BWA held its Rummage/Country Store on 3/23. Its Annual Spring Membership Meeting was held on 4/14 at Gyotaku Restaurant with guest speaker Jessica Lani Rich, President/CEO of the Visitor Aloha Society of Hawaii (VASH) and host of KITV program Inspire You and Me. Eshinni/Kakushinni Day was celebrated on 4/21 with Emi Hashi, Youth Specialist for Hawaii Kyodan who spoke of the contributions of women in early Hawaii who formed the structure of the Fujinkai as we know it today. The Eshinni/Kakushinni service offertory

was donated to the Jr YBA and Ohana Arts. The BWA's annual \$1500 Scholarship was awarded to Dymon Kakazu, granddaughter of Betty and Aki Kakazu. Six BWA members cleaned the Ehime Maru Memorial at Kakaako Waterfront Park on 4/27, followed by fellowship at Panya Bistro. This year marks 23 years since the tragic collision of the Ehime Maru and USS Greeneville submarine. Onenju making/repair was held on 6/23 and 6/30 with instructors Keiji Kukino and Tamayo Matsumoto. At Mililani's bondance, the BWA was responsible for the Country Store and choba table/towel distribution.

**Pearl City** BWA observed Eshinni/Kakushinni Day on 4/28. Guest speaker Mrs. Kumika Soga of Waipahu delivered a heartfelt and humorous Dharma talk, which gave listeners new insights on the legacy of the two women, wife and daughter of Shinran, who lived long ago and made such a meaningful impact on the lives of Buddhist women all over the world.

**Waipahu** BWA made mustard cabbage pickles for the 6/6 Buddhist Study Center event, held its Eshinni/Kakushinni Day service on 5/19 with guest speaker Jaryd Oshiro (Jikoen Hongwanji member and lay assistant), visited 8 honorary members and family (5/2 and 5/4, held a mini bazaar during obon, and is planning a larger bazaar on 10/19. Thank you to Aiea Hongwanji Dana group who shared five decorated covers for square kleenex boxes that were donated to Waipahu BWA to use for dana purposes; Waipahu gave them to some of the Honorary members they visited.



## HONOLULU UNITED BWA

The Jikoen, Moiliili, and Hawaii Betsuin BWA units have lots of activities all year. We come together joyfully once a year at either a joint education/membership conference or as we did this year, a membership conference.

On Saturday, August 17th, the Honolulu United BWA had a membership conference at Hawaii Betsuin. There were 43 members and 15 guests and friends present. The theme was "Sharing Nembutsu Moments Together." The day started off with a service, emceed by Lynn Nakata (Moiliili president), which included a remembrance for the members whom we lost this year. From Hawaii Betsuin, we said sayonara to Mary Fujitani, Nancy Toyama, Fusae Kiyokawa, Mabel Mirikitani, Mildred Sakumoto, and Betty Morimoto. From Jikoen, we

missed Yoshiko Nakasone and Annie Shimabukuro, and from Moiliili, we bid aloha to Satsuye Tanaka and Hideko Kumagai. Namu Amida Butsu.

Rev. David Fujimoto, the HUBWA minister advisor and Moiliili's resident minister, gave the Dharma message. He shared stories about how the BWA was part of his life from when he was attending Hongwanji Mission School, specifically that he looked forward to getting candy from the BWA ladies after certain services and was so disappointed when the ladies were not there. The service continued with the singing of the "Buddhist Women's Pledge" and "Ondokusan II." We ended the service with a collection for the Ministerial Training Fund; a generous \$2,690 was donated.

The group moved to the social hall where they found snack bags, other treats, and coffee and tea. That got everyone energized for the annual General Membership Meeting led by President Lois Ohta.

After the meeting, we were given an origami tsuru and beads. We painstakingly strung the small beads to hang the

Dianne Ida

tsuru. Next on the program was an Eshinni multiple choice game. We learned about Eshinni while we had laughs as we read some of the wrong choices like Shohei Ohtani and Ruth Tabrah. There were prizes for just about everyone.

After a delicious bento from Nijiya, the Dana Awards were presented to the representatives from various non-profits.. Project Dana is our perpetual recipient; Mernie Miyasato-Crawford received the check. This year is We Are Oceania's third and last year; Leah Milne received the check. Receiving an award for the second year was the Honolulu Police Community Foundation; Paul Putzulu received the check. No one from Project Hawaii was able to attend. This was their second year receiving the award.

The new recipient was Mediation Center of the Pacific; Tracey Wiltgen and Bruce McEwan received the check.

We had a unique closing activity. Some of the Jikoen members taught us the Kachashi Dance, which is an Okinawan folk dance. Everyone, even the Dana Awardees got up to dance or sat and moved their arms rhythmically to the music. Everyone was smiling or laughing as they tried out the new moves.

Thank you to the Membership Committee for the planning: Sharyn Sekine (chair), Dorene Toma, Lynn Nakata. The Education Committee helped them: Judy Muramoto (chair), Wendie Yumori, Cindy Alm, Lois Toyama, Dorothy Colby.



CONTINUED ON PAGE 7



**2024 HUBWA DANA AWARD PRESENTATIONS**  
**Honolulu United Buddhist Women’s Association Membership Conference**  
**August 17, 2024**



**Perpetual Dana Award – Project Dana**  
Mernie Miyasato-Crawford accepts award from Cindy Alm of HUBWA



**3<sup>rd</sup> Year Dana Award – We Are Oceania**  
Leah Milne accepts award from  
Judy Muramoto of HUBWA



**2<sup>nd</sup> Year Dana Award – Honolulu Police  
Community Foundation** Paul Putzulu  
accepts award from Cindy Alm of HUBWA



**1st Year Dana Award – Mediation Center of the Pacific**  
Tracey Wiltgen and Bruce McEwan accept award from Cindy Alm of HUBWA

**2<sup>nd</sup> Year Dana Award recipient -- Hawaii Project, Inc., was unable to attend this presentation.**