

Hawaii Buddhist Women's News

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

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Message from the President: Linda Nagai "Nurturing Nembutsu: Cultivating Awareness"



The Steering Sub-Committees have been working diligently to prepare for the upcoming 18th World Buddhist Women's Convention. This exciting and Dharma-connected event will be held in Honolulu at the Hawaii Convention Center on Saturday and Sunday, September 11 and 12, 2027. Prior to the convention, this August, we are preparing to welcome 12 representatives from Japan, BCA, Canada, and South America for a pre-convention site visit and the BWA World Representatives' meeting. Plans for this visit are currently being finalized. We will introduce our convention theme, "Live Peace, Live Aloha, Live as One in the Nembutsu," by engaging our visitors in activities designed to embrace and embody this meaningful theme.

After a long hiatus due to COVID, we are thrilled to once again send two outstanding young adults to Japan: Chad Tsuyoshi Okawa from Aiea Hongwanji and Lauren Kana Suzuki from Pearl City Hongwanji. They will spend approximately ten days in Japan this summer as participants in the BWA Student Exchange Program.

As BWA members, we endeavor to follow in the footsteps of Lady Eshinni

and Lady Kakushinni by embodying their devotion, compassion, and forward-thinking leadership despite life's challenges. Inspired by their example, BWA members today engage in social service, advocate for marginalized groups, and promote harmony and understanding through acts of kindness within their communities.

This year, BWA members across the state are continuing their efforts to embrace the Honpa Hongwanji's theme and slogan, "Nurturing Nembutsu: Cultivating Awareness." Through various programs, activities, and values, they foster spiritual growth through Nembutsu practice while encouraging mindful living and compassionate action.

The Maui BWA encourages intergenerational sharing of reflections on how the Nembutsu sustains faith during life's joys and challenges. For example, Kahului Hongwanji BWA hosts a Tuesday coffee hour and has initiated a Thursday sewing session open to anyone interested. Participants include a 100-year-old member and a woman in her 90s who relocated due to the Lahaina fires. These sessions, led by Charlotte Wilkinson, foster a welcoming and compassionate

environment that encourages members to grow spiritually and cultivate a sense of belonging.

The BWA chapters from Hawaii, Maui, Kauai, Honolulu, and Oahu will be awarding scholarships to high school students and providing grants to support non-profits that assist those in need. They will also be visiting care homes, distributing blankets and other essential items, and sharing joy with seniors.

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you for continuing to follow in the footsteps of Eshinni and Kakushinni. You are remarkable individuals who exemplify deep compassion and dedication to the well-being of others. Eshinni's letters reveal her profound care for her family and community. In today's world, where balancing family, work, and spiritual life can be challenging, you provide mentorship and resources that nurture mindfulness and compassion within families, the Sangha, and the wider community. Your efforts continue to honor their legacy and contribute meaningfully to our shared spiritual path.



MAUI UNITED BWA

Diane Lee



The MUBWA members joined with the community of Maui by participating in two events. The Alzheimer's Memory Walk was held at the Queen Ka'ahumanu Center in Kahului on November 16, 2024. An annual event held throughout the country, funds from donations are used for "Alzheimer's care, support, and research."

Secondly, members played ukulele and sang for shoppers at Safeway Maui Lani while collecting donations for the Salvation Army Red Kettle Drive.

Bimonthly, members prepare peanut butter jelly sandwiches for A Cup of Cold Water, a community Care-Van outreach program; an all-volunteer Ministry of the Episcopal Church of Maui and Friends. Sandwiches and hygiene supplies are distributed to anyone in need at different sites on

Maui. During July 1 to July 31, 2024; 1,194 people were served.

The MUBWA 69 th Annual Fall General Assembly was held on November 23, 2024 at Makawao HongwanjiBuddhist Temple. A heartfelt memorial service was officiated by Rev. Kerry Kiyohara.

The 2025 MUBWAOfficers were installed for the new year. Sharon Nohara will preside as the MUBWA President. Followingthe business meeting and lunch, Cheryl Hamilton of

"Create with Cheryl" taught a workshop on greeting card making. Ms. Hamilton, who also teaches on-line, shared where components could be purchased or recycled from scraps, ribbons, stickers, even used greeting cards, and ideas and techniques to assemble unique greeting cards to send to family and friends. She was assisted by helpers who guided participants to create impressive pieces of art. This activity was funded by the HI Federation Membership and Education Grants.



The Dana Committee chose the Maui Humane Society as the recipient of the Dana Award. Kathleen Hogarty, Director of Development, and Sarah McCandliss were presented the award by Carolyn Kaya, chair of the Dana Committee. The MHS offers a multitude of programs and services to help our animals and animal lovers. As stated in the "Golden Chain of Love" " I will try to be kind and gentle to every living thing and protect all who are weaker than myself."

As the New Year moves into Spring, we send Happy New Year Wishes from Maui!



HAWAII ISLAND UNITED BWA

On October 26, 2024, Hilo's damp, rainy morning was warmed by the friendly, smiling faces of our many members from Hilo, Honokaa, Kona, Naalehu and Puna. Thirty-nine attendees, including Reverends Kazunori Takahashi and Blayne Nakasone-Sakata, shared many Nembutsu moments at this Membership meeting. Dana abounded as the day progressed at Hilo Betsuin's YBA Hall, with host Hilo BWA providing delicious refreshments for all.

Rimban Takahashi officiated the short service before our meeting and gave a meaningful Dharma message explaining, "Kando" (feel/move). By listening earnestly to the Dharma teachings passed down to us by Shinran Shonin, we are able to experience deep compassion and understanding for others. We can then convey these feelings through kind, sincere actions towards each other. When times get stressful, simply reciting the nembutsu with gratitude can bring peace and harmony to our troubled souls.

Election of 2025-2026 Officers took place without a glitch because of the dedication and unselfishness of the following members: President-Jane Iida (Hilo), Vice President-Karen Maedo (Hilo), Recording Secretary-Sandra Tomiyama (Hilo), General Fund Treasurer-Carole Tsutsumi (Hilo), Scholarship Treasurer-Susan Nishioka (Hilo), and Auditors: Eileen Usagawa (Puna), June Fujikawa (Kona), Joni Onishi (Hilo).

This year, one centenarian, Sally Entilla of Hilo BWA was honored, and the following 11 new members were recognized with gifts: HILO-Pam Oki, Myra Hironaga, Victoria Mendez, Aiko Mitchell; HONOKAA-Katherine Brooks, Margaret Shiba; KONA-Darcie Asakura, Hedi Casquilho-Gray, Jack Nunberg, Lilly Ushiroda; and PUNA-Sarah Kay.

We approved Dana chair Lynn Higashi's suggestion that the "American Foundation for Suicide Prevention—Hawaii Chapter" be the recipient of our 2024 Dana funds. This organization addresses the increasing number of suicides in the State of Hawaii and Hawaii County. We also approved a \$10,000 donation, in memory of all deceased HIUHBWA members, for the 2027 WBWC. Okagesamade, we are here today.

After a delicious bento lunch, Puna BWA presented the Education Seminar with special guest speaker, K. T. Cannon-

E. Okano

Eger, Master Gardener, whose topic was, "Caring for a Community Treasure:

Lili'uokalani Gardens, Hilo". Her power point presentation of the garden's history dating back to the 1800s to today, instilled us with greater appreciation for this beautiful place that was once a place to keep fish in Waihonu pond for Hawaiian royalty. She mentioned how the gardens here and across the nation provide a place of beautiful serenity for contemplation and self-reflection to soothe one's soul.

K. T., President of Friends of Lili'uokalani Gardens and other non-profit groups, help maintain its beauty with financial support and much grunt work. Donations and manpower are welcome. Please visit their website at www.us-japanesegardens.com for more historic details and their many works in progress.



Guest speaker and member of Puna Hongwanji BWA, K.T. Cannon-Eger, spoke on the history and upkeep of Liliuokalani Gardens in Hilo and how the history of Queen Liliuokalani intertwines with Hongwanji.



KAUAI UNITED BWA

Karen Nishimoto

West Kauai Hongwanji hosted the KUHWA Fall Conference on October 27, 2024. A thoughtful message was delivered by guest speaker Rev. Barbara Brennan, followed by the installation of officers. Next on the agenda was a delicious lunch prepared by West Kauai members. Refreshed with food and fellowship, attendees were ready to listen and learn. Each participant was given a lei kit and directions to make a ribbon lei. This hands-on activity was in preparation for the 2027 World BWA Convention.

On November 10, 2024, KUHWA members, relatives and friends gathered at the Kauai Veterans Cemetery for the annual Lonesome Grave Project. A short service was held before the decorating of gravesites began. Greenery and flowers were generously donated to ensure there were no lonesome graves. This project is a yearly commitment to serve the community and honor veterans. Another annual commitment is the Homebound Project which recognizes those members of Lihue Hongwanji Mission who are 90 years of age and

homebound. This year, LHWA members met on December 7, 2024 to make paper kadomatsu. These decorative pieces were delivered along with barazushi bento boxes to LHM homebound members. Recipients expressed their appreciation for the bento boxes and thanked everyone for working for the temple.

A tour of the new gym at Kauai High School was held on December 23, 2024 for LHWA members. It was of special interest to those members who are alumni or who once taught at the school. The brand new building with all the latest technology was impressive. An enjoyable luncheon was held after the tour at The Plantation House by Gaylord's on the grounds of the Kilohana Plantation.

On January 19, 2024, LHWA members and newly elected officers for 2025 met for lunch after Sunday service. Tasty dishes and pleasant conversations were enjoyed by all at Puakea Grill in Lihue.



OAHU UNITED BWA

Susan Morishige



Oahu's Annual Conference was held on 10/26/24 at Mililani Hongwanji. The theme was "Building Healthy Sanghas: Sharing Nembutsu Moments." Registration at 8am was followed by fellowship and morning refreshments donated by Oahu unit members.

- The memorial service recognized six BWA members who died between 8/1/23 and 7/31/24:
Aiea: Marcia Shimabukuro and Stella Nishikawa **Mililani:** Ethel Kawahara and Itsue Tamamoto
Pearl City: Myra Matsumoto **Waipahu:** Nancy Miyashita
- The keynote Dharma Speaker was Rev. Joshin Kamuro, resident minister of Mililani Hongwanji.
- Officers for 2025 were elected at the Annual Membership Meeting:
 President June Asato (Mililani) Vice President Susan Morishige (Aiea)
 Recording Secretary Diane Yoza (Mililani) Corresponding Secretary Joan Masaki (Pearl City)
 Treasurer Joyce Ogawa (Mililani) Assistant Treasurer Twila Castellucci (Mililani)
 Auditors Kumika Soga and Janet Kaya (Waipahu)
- The Immediate Past President is Susan Morishige (not an elected office)
- There were six new members in 2024.
- The workshop by Scott Spallina on Elder Abuse was entitled "From Winning the Lottery to Butchering Pigs." It covered the evolution of scams and looked at the current financial scams targeting seniors. The second workshop was by Annette Kam. Her book, "Wait, Don't Die Yet, was a complete guide to assist people before, during, and after a loved one's passing.
- The conference ended with Lucky Number drawings.

The 2026 State BWA Conference will be hosted by Oahu District. A "Save the Date" flyer was distributed to get a tentative count of members and hotel rooms by 1/31/25, to help with planning. In March 2025, a flyer will go out about workshops and speakers. A third flyer will have the schedule and hotel information. At Oahu's 4th quarter Board meeting, Carolyn Uchiyama was reelected Oahu's Federation Director. The next Board meeting is scheduled for 2/16/25 at 1:00pm at Waipahu Hongwanji.

UNIT REPORTS

Aiea BWA participated in a craft fair at Pearl City High School on 11/22/24, and invited the Hoshu men to their Year-End luncheon on 12/22/24.

Mililani BWA observed C.A.R.E. day in October with Mililani Adult Day Care attendees, and went to the Mililani Golf Course Restaurant for lunch afterwards. They held their biannual Ehime Maru cleanup in November, and their annual December dinner meeting on 12/6/24.

Waipahu BWA held their BWA Hoonko service on 12/15/24. Guest speaker Ms. Irene Nakamoto gave a meaningful message on how to live

as good Buddhist women.

BWA members visited their honorable members on 1/7/25. The conversation with each honorary member was enjoyable, and the BWA members

were glad to learn that all were in good health. On 1/25/25, Waipahu BWA members held a general membership meeting, followed by fun and meaningful games and delicious lunch.



HONOLULU UNITED BWA

The Honolulu United BWA did not have any activities since the last Federation newsletter. Therefore, I will share what each of our units have done.

MOILILI HONGWANJI BWA



In January, the members prepared a light meal for several elderly, homebound and/or frail temple members. Each year, this otoki project is done at Hoonko in conjunction with its BWA's C.A.R.E. Day ("Compassion and Respect for Elders"). The meal

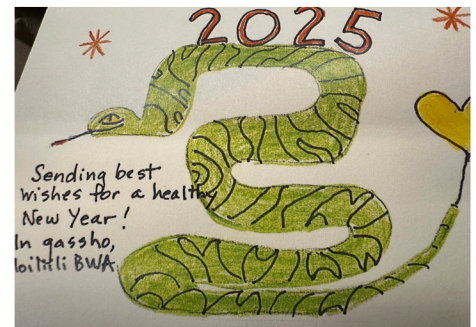
consisted of barazushi, simmered root vegetables, kuromame, matcha kanten, and a tangerine. Included with the food was a greeting card, wishing



Dianne Ida



all a healthy, happy new year of the snake. The various dishes symbolized good fortune: red and white veggies symbolizing "kohaku," auspicious colors; kuromame welcoming good health; and matcha symbolizing "hatsugama" or first tea of the year. The petite tangerine represented the "daidai" citrus, counting generations, topped off our special offering to our elders.



JIKOEN HONGWANJI BWA

The members participated in a temple clean up on Dec. 29, 2024. They attended a New Year's Eve service to express gratitude for 2024, and they prepared andagi and soba for everyone. On Jan. 12, 2025, The

BWA helped with a bodhi leaf printing activity. Participants creatively used bodhi and other leaves to print onto t-shirts, cloth bags, and aprons. Next, the BWA was in charge of Jikoen's New Year's luncheon, which included entertainment, bento lunches, desserts, and prizes. At the event, donations were collected for the California

Wildfire victims.

Finally, on Feb. 15th, Jikoen had a BBQ Chicken Fundraiser, and the BWA helped with numerous tasks, as well as preparing a thank you lunch for all of the volunteers.



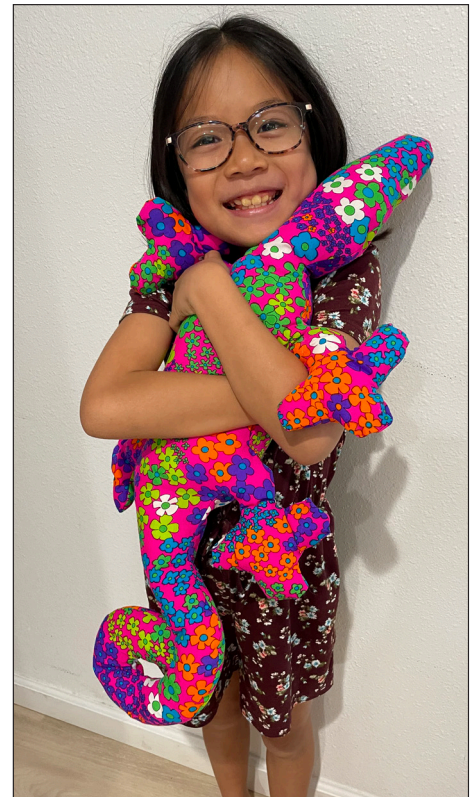
HAWAII BETSUIN BWA

On Jan. 12, 2025, the Betsuin BWA had its General Membership Meeting, followed by an installation of its officers and a group picture taking. The Betsuin SOS (Sisters of Sorting) continue to sort and organize donations coming in for Spring Bazaar and BWA Rummage Sale scheduled for Mar. 30th. The SOS,

Denise Suneyoshi, Shirly Kang, and Sara Lee have been processing the donations for the past eight months. Rummage sale coordinator, Liane Wong, said that the SOS has cut the set up time for the rummage sale in half by organizing the donations. The BWA has a big job of collecting donations, and

Dianne Ida

setting up and running the rummage sale. During the month of February, Jo desMarets held a craft class making stuffed geckos. Several members participated making geckos for their moopuna. Craft classes will continue in March making dream catchers.



Liane Wong's granddaughter, Ava, hugs her gecko that Liane made.



From Left to Right: Directors: Sara Lee, Sandi Sakata, Sharon Sanae Nakai, Tami Sakata, Charlyne Tom; Auditors: Claire Groom and Lillian Ishii; Recording Secretary Diane Marshall, Corresponding Secretary Arlene Matsubara, 2nd VP Liane Wong, Immediate Past President Jo desMarets, Treasurer Dianne Ida, President Gayle Hirohata-Goto; Director Carol Ogino; Officiant Rev. Charlene Kihara



Sara Lee puts the final stitches in her gecko after stuffing it!

