

The Buddhist Temple of Chicago

BULLETIN



Volume 67 Number 5 February 2011 (2555 B.E.)

Scheduled Events

(call 773-334-4661 or see www.budtempchi.org)

Dharma Sunday School - Sunday 11:AM - 12:00PM the 13th and 27th

Religious Services

Sunday at 11:00AM - 12:00PM in English, Sunday at 1:00PM - 2:00PM in Japanese (only on day of Monthly Memorial)

Monthly Memorial Service - Shotsuki Hoyo, 1st Sunday of each month, except where noted.

Buddhist Studies/Practices

Discussion Group - Open to All, Sangha Q & A, 2nd Sundays, 12:30PM - 2:00PM

Introduction to Buddhism - call temple to confirm dates and time

Meditation - Sundays 9:00AM - 10:15AM, Thursdays 7:30PM - 9:00PM - use parking lot entrance.

Sutra Study Class - 3rd Sundays, Open to All, 12:30PM - 2:00PM

Weekly Study Class - Wednesdays, 7:00PM - 8:30PM

Special Observances/Events

Nirvana Day, 13th Sunday, Memorial for historical Buddha.

Pet Memorial - 20th Sunday, to honor our pets who have passed away. Please bring a picture (photo or art work) of your loved one.

Brotherhood Sunday - 27th (see bulletin article within).

Activities

Asoka Society - 3rd Saturdays, 1:00PM

Calligraphy - Japanese brush writing class 2nd & 3rd Tuesdays 7:00PM

Crafts Class - 1st & 3rd Saturdays, 10:00AM - 12:00PM, Open to All (call temple for confirmation)

Fencing - Introduction to Kendo, Dojo sessions, Tuesdays, 8:00PM - 10:00PM at Bethany United Church (Bob Kumaki, 847-853-1187)

Japanese Language Instruction - Saturdays, 10:00AM - 12:00PM, children and adult classes, call 773-334-4661 to register.

Japanese Swordsmanship - Iaido, Mondays 7:00PM - 9:00PM

Taiko Drumming - BTC Kokyo Taiko Drum Troupe, Fridays, 7:00PM - 9:00PM

Taiko Drumming - Isshin Daiko Group, Saturdays 7:00PM - 9:00PM, call for appointment.

Self-Infatuation and Rabbit Droppings:

The 2010 Ho-on-ko Seminar

by Rev. Patti Nakai

"It was said that the monks who were attached to what Shakyamuni produced [his words and lifestyle] instead of looking at what produced Shakyamuni, were like people who cherished rabbit droppings as the rabbit," Dr. Nobuo Haneda noted during the all-day Ho-on-ko seminar at our temple on Saturday, November 20. The seminar titled "Shakyamuni and Shinran: Buddhism as a Teaching of Self-Examination" served to clarify what are essential Dharma teachings and what are just self-enhancing practices.

Dr. Haneda drew parallels between the lives of the historical Buddha, Shakyamuni, and Shinran (1173-1262) whose 750th memorial we are commemorating this year. In the morning session, Dr. Haneda spoke of Shakyamuni, how he left his family's palace at age 29 and spent six years engaged in ascetic practices under various teachers in India. It was only after he gave up on those practices, that he attained awakening. Dr. Haneda pointed out that it is a common misunderstanding to portray Shakyamuni's contemplation under the Bodhi tree as the deliberate practice of meditation. Instead he said Shakyamuni experienced being awakened by truth itself. It is not the self that examines itself, but the light of truth which makes us clearly see the self.

Shakyamuni wanted to believe he had a pure and permanent self (called "atman" in Sanskrit) but the truth of impermanence showed him there is no fixed physical or mental self. At the same time that Shakyamuni was disappointed that he had no fixed self to hold on to, he became aware of the dynamic flow of life where every moment is new and fresh. He was no longer clinging to the rabbit droppings of life as he did during his six years of ascetic practice, but was one in spirit with the lively rabbit, bounding forth into new experiences. For the rest of his life, from age 35 to his death at age 80, Shakyamuni was active as a continuous seeker, learning from his interactions with thousands of people.

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Our deepest sympathy to the family and friends
of:

Mr. Sachio Maeda

(Please see Temple News for details)

TEMPLE NEWS
December , 2010

12/03 Mrs. Taduko Maeda and Mr. & Mrs. Kunio Maeda visited Temple for making arrangement of funeral for Mr. Sachio Maeda who passed away on December 1, 2010.

12/05 The Cremation Service for the Late Sachio Maeda was conducted at Drake and Son Funeral Home.

10/09 Rev. and Mrs. Ashikaga attended the Birthday Celebration of the Emperor of Japan at the Olympia Centre of Consulate General of Japan.

12/11 The Funeral/Memorial Service for the Late Sachio Maeda was conducted at Drake and Son Funeral Home. The Late Mr. Maeda, 89, passed away on December 1, 2010. He is survived by wife Taduko Maeda, sons Kunio and Kenji Maeda. He is also survived by sister, Sumi Maeda in Japan.

12/12 Shotsuki Hoyo (Monthly Memorial Service) was observed. Rev. Patti Nakai spoke to Dharma School and Rev. Ashikaga gave Dharma talk to the general congregation. Rev. Ashikaga also delivered the message for the afternoon Japanese Service.

12/15 The Third Year Memorial Service of the Late Yoshiaki Akitomo was conducted at the Temple.

12/18 Asoka Society had their monthly meeting. Alice Murata was elected as the new president of the Society for 2011.

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THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU

Understanding the Nembutsu through recognizing the Paramitas in others – send in your recognitions!

Sunday Service Participants: Bill Bohlman, Dennis Chan, Rodel De Ocampo, Anna Idol, Annika Lemme, Kay Schroeter, Elaine Siegel, Justin Woodward and Mrs. Hisayo Ashikaga, our pianist.

Sunday Refreshments: Wonderful Bodhi Day lunch was served by the “Middle Way” group, Noreen Enkoji, Haru Ito, Harky Tademoto, Yone Tsurusaki.

For all the folks that helped to make 2010 Mochitsuki a successful event. Everyone enjoyed the free samples and took some home. And all the mochi sold out!

Temple Bulletin and Calendar Mailing: Rev. Ashikaga, Dennis Chan, Haru Ito, Amy and Morris Kawamoto, Gary and Rev. Patti Nakai, Kimie Suda, Mary Shimomura, Tommi and Tak Tomiyama.

Taking care of the Temple inside and out – Tomio Tademoto.

Cleaning the entire Temple every week – Harky Tademoto.

For manning the Temple office every Thursday – Tak Tomiyama.

For emptying the trash bins, filling them with new bags and putting them out for disposal – Adam Kellman, April Kellman, Shawn Lyte and Rev. Patti Nakai.

Replacement of all exit sign light bulbs: Jeffrey Sher

Shotsuki Hoyo
Monthly Memorial Observance

Once a month we set aside a Sunday service for a general memorial for loved ones who passed away during that particular month. This is a tradition that dates back to the beginnings of our temple and is a practice familiar to the Japanese ethnic community. Each deceased's name is displayed on the board situated at the front of the O-Naijin. Some of the displayed name cards are so dated that these persons are without surviving kin, yet they are honorably displayed for all time. As the month approaches, surviving members receive a reminder through the mail about the deceased so they can make plans to attend the memorial service. It is true that the number of departed members easily outnumber the existing members, so every monthly memorial service sees the highest attendance of the month. To have your loved one included in the monthly memorial service, please see our ministers.

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The Buddhist Temple of Chicago Bulletin

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Editor's Note: Comments, corrections, questions, suggestions are encouraged. Submitted material will be reviewed for suitability and availability of space. Anonymous submissions will not be published, but authors names may be withheld from publication upon request. Deadline: first Friday of the month. btculedtr@hotmail.com

- "Rabbit Droppings" from page 1 -

After Shakyamuni's passing, Buddhism went through many cycles of fossilization and renewal as it spread throughout Asia. Shinran represented the renewal of Buddhism in Japan as we could see in Dr. Haneda's discussion of his life and teachings in the afternoon session. For twenty years Shinran was a monk at the Tendai monastery on Mt. Hiei doing ascetic practices to cleanse the defilements from his mind. But Dr. Haneda called those practices "self-infatuation" because they are based on the idea there is a "so-called religious" self that can be purified. When Shinran gave up on monastic practices, he encountered Honen who said, "Just nembutsu," which Dr. Haneda interpreted as "Just appreciate the calling voice of truth. The truth of impermanence is calling to you saying, come as you really are." Like Shakyamuni, Shinran experienced the two-fold awakening: to the wrongness of clinging to self and to the awareness of being a part of the creative flow of reality.

Although on the surface Shinran's teachings of Jodo Shinshu ("Pure Land True Essence") seem different from Shakyamuni's, Dr. Haneda explained that Shinran is only using different terminology to convey the same principles. Dr. Haneda equated the term *shin* ("entrusting") with bodhi (awakening) because they both indicate spiritual transformation. "Birth in the pure land" is a symbolic description of being liberated from self-attachment and becoming aware of the larger flow of life, of running with the rabbits instead of fixating on their droppings. "Namu Amida Butsu" is the calling of the truth of impermanence saying, "Give up your imagined self and know that you are a part of this flow of reality."

Shinran in the same way as Shakyamuni became the perfect student, devoting the rest of his life to learning more about the nembutsu teachings and sharing the new insights from Buddhism through speaking and writing, reaching a wide audience of both educated and uneducated people. This example of Shinran shows us that there is no "practice" in Buddhism that you have to do. Dr. Haneda, like many ministers at Jodo Shinshu temples, feels it is all right to do practices like intense meditation in order to learn how useless those practices are in solving the basic problem of self-attachment (I am a prime example, having first come to BTC for the meditation group). What Shinran shows us is that there is the power beyond our self that fills us with such joy and gratitude that we cannot help but want to keep learning and listening to the Dharma.

For me personally, it was Dr. Haneda back in the early 1980s that set me straight about Buddhism being the path of self-examination. Each time I hear him, it serves as a reminder that both Shakyamuni and

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Special Events in February

By Rev. Patti Nakai

February 13, Sunday 2:00-4:00pm

Interfaith "Nirvana Day" Gathering

The event is sponsored by the Treasures of Uptown interfaith action coalition that I have been working with for the past two years. The main speaker is Rev. Taigen Dan Leighton of the Ancient Dragon Zen Gate center (Irving Park near Ravenswood). Taigen-sensei is the author and translator of several books and articles on Zen and is known nationally and internationally for his activism in social justice causes. After his talk, there will be representatives of other religions giving their perspectives, followed by small group discussions. If you would like to participate, please RSVP to Peoples Church 773-784-6633, e-mail: admin@peopleschurchchicago.org

February 27, Brotherhood Sunday

At our regular service at 11:00am we will be continuing our annual tradition of inviting speakers to share their experiences in fostering brotherhood among diverse groups. This year our speaker is Mr. Walter Reed, a volunteer from the Illinois Holocaust Museum. As a young German teenager, he was sent to camps in Belgium and France for Jewish refugee children, and in 1941, he was fortunate to escape to the U.S. and joined the American army in 1943. His experience of leaving home with only a few personal possessions and living in harsh makeshift quarters might remind our senior members of their own relocation experience, as well as Mr. Reed's military service of using his language ability to fight against his home country. We hope to learn more about the Museum and how its educational outreach is working to help the young and old overcome prejudice.

11th World Dobo Convention

Shinran Shonin 750th

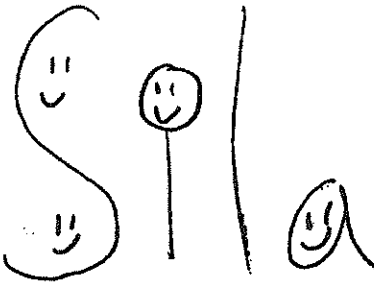
Memorial Service & Tour

Be sure to mark your calendars to attend the 11th World Dobo Convention & Shinran Shonin 750th Memorial Service and Memorial Tour in Japan from May 12th through May 23rd, 2011.

The Memorial Service for Shinran Shonin is an event held once every 50 years, and therefore, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Please contact the temple office for an application and more information on the convention and tour.

DHARMA SCHOOL ART

By Yuliana



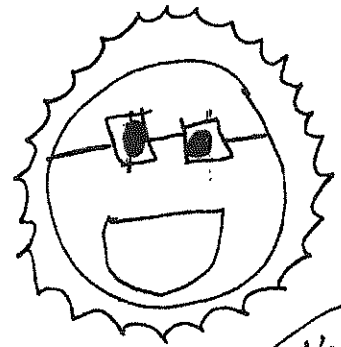
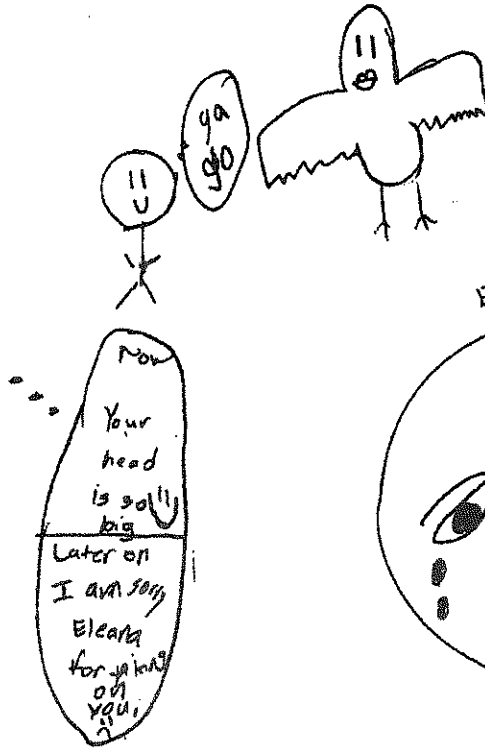
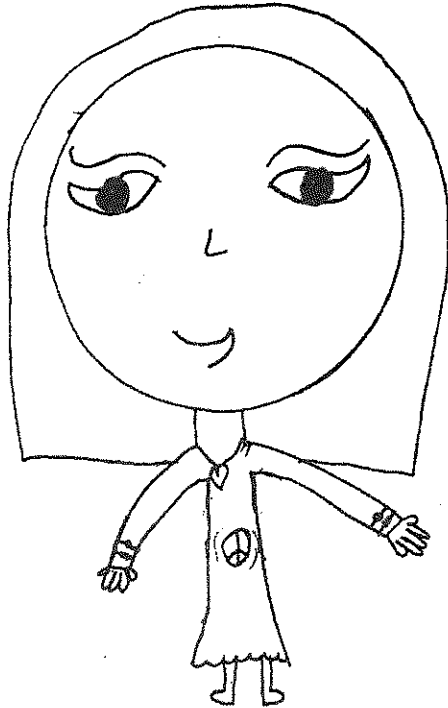
Sila is being kind to others
and not hurting their feelings.



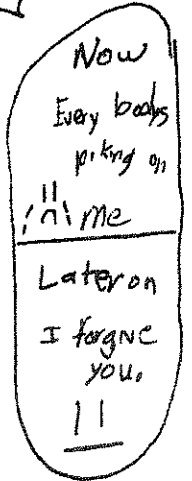
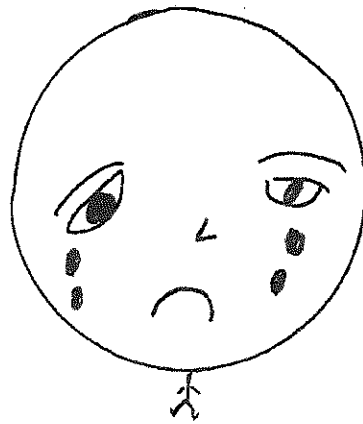
Kashon

By Wenqing

Hannah



Elana



Now
Your
head
is so
big
Later on
I am so
tired
for you
on
you

Now
Every body
piking on
me
Later on
I forgave
you
||

- "Rabbit Droppings" from page 3 -

Shinran taught us by their examples that the true Dharma is what challenges our self-attachment and opens us up to the forward movement of living in connection to all other lives. To treat Buddhism as just a set of practices for reforming the particular self is to be stuck on a trail of droppings instead of being on the open road of liberation.

- "Temple News" continued from page 2 -

12/19 Annual Mochi-tsuki was held. Everyone who attended the traditional event enjoyed participating and partaking of the O-Mochi as well. Regular Sunday Service was also observed in the Hondo. Rev. Ashikaga delivered the Dharma message.

12/26 The Year-end Service was observed. Rev. Ashikaga gave a talk to Dharma School and Rev. Patti Nakai delivered the message.

12/27 The January issue of BTC Bulletin and the 2011 Temple Calendar were mailed. * * * BTC Iaido Group had their Bonenkai Party.

The BTC Nokotsudo is fully operational. It is configured to accept varied sized urns in varied presentations, for storage periods to fit each family's need. The Nokotsudo will be open for regular inspection each Sunday immediately after service, and by appointment made with Rev. Ashikaga, Gary Nakai, or Kiyo Omachi.

To inter cremains in the Nokotsudo, fill out the application form attached to the Nokotsudo Policy. These documents are available from the temple office or they can be mailed to you by contacting the above.

Whether you have a definite length of time in mind for interment in the Nokotsudo, or whether that time is indeterminate while ultimate plans are being worked out, be rest assured that the beautiful design of the BTC Nokotsudo presents each applicant with a flexible, dignified storage accommodation. Furthermore, the BTC Nokotsudo policy permits the holding of burial certificates when accompanying the admitted cremains.

THE HAIKU CORNER

By Elaine Siegel

Reflections on Snow

Now then, let's go out
to enjoy the snow ... until
we slip and fall!

- Bashō, January 5, 1688 NOTE 1

Bashō wrote this festive haiku at a snow-viewing party in Nagoya, a prosperous castle town near the Pacific coast, stronghold of the Owari branch of the ruling Tokugawa family. On the road between Bashō's home in Edo (now Tokyo), and the ancient capital of Kyoto, Nagoya was a favorite stopover during Bashō's travels. A lively haikai scene flourished there, and Bashō was eagerly received by numerous patrons and students. A bookseller threw the snow-viewing party. NOTE 2 One can imagine the revelers, fortified, perhaps, by a draught of hot sake, plunging into the snowscape. They admire the snow, contemplate the snow, exult in the snow, until overcome by its beauty, its chill, or their own precarious balance amid the drifts.

The high spirits of Bashō's snow party haiku are foreshadowed in a haiku by his student, Tani Bokuin (1646-1725), written during their journey to the famed Atsuta Shrine, near Nagoya:

Two wanderers
gone mad with poetry
in the wintry gust
- Bokuin (1684) NOTE 3

In classical Japanese haiku, we find warm appreciation of snow, as a physical and tactile, no less than visual, experience. It is snowing! We fling open the shoji. The cold penetrates the room. We light the lamp, and go out into the storm, where we are enveloped in its intimacy and solitude.

In the lamplight,
Just a hint of wind –
This snowy night.
- Oshima Ryoōta (1718-87) NOTE 4

Ryoōta's haiku calls to mind the Japanese proverb, "Life is a lamp-flame before the wind" (Inochi wa fuuzen no tomoshibi). NOTE 5

Japanese painting and poetry often render the luminescence of snow in the pale light of a lamp, or of the moon. In the chiaroscuro of the snowfall, it is dark, it is light.

Snow on snow
This night in deep winter
A full moon
- Bashō (1684) NOTE 6

- continued on next column -

- continued from previous column -

Bashō's serene haiku arose from a haikai party at the Nagoya home of Bashō's close friend and patron, Tsuboi Tokoku (d. 1690), a rice merchant. Such parties were spirited affairs, flowing with wine and food, as six or more poets composed *renga*, a poetic form sequentially linking the verses of the participants. The events were competitive, with a master who judged the contributions and assigned points to the contestants. NOTE 7 On the occasion of Tokoku's party, two of the poets fell into a quarrel, which Bashō sought to mediate through this haiku. NOTE 8 Bashō's haiku was more than an attempt to quell the conflict through its aesthetic power -- though surely his haiku had a stunning impact on the gathering. It also served as an admonition to his students of the true purpose of haiku poetry. As Bashō wrote in a letter to the Samurai poet Suganuma Kyokusui (d. 1717):

When it comes to the way of poetry ... There are those who run around, trying day and night to make points, vying to win, with no attempt to see the Way. These may be called confused noisemakers in poetry....

Then there are fellows who work hard for the goal of true poetry and soothe their hearts by doing so. These do not easily take to criticizing others and, with the thought that poetry writing is another vehicle for entering the True Way, explore the spirit of [the great poets of] the remote past. NOTE 9

In 1688, Bashō spent months in Nagoya with his students, travelling widely with two of them, his beloved Tokoku and Ochi Etsujin. After viewing the famed harvest moon in the mountain village of Sarashina, Etsujin accompanied Bashō to his home in Edo. There were poetry parties on the topics of the moon and of late chrysanthemums. Etsujin lingered with him until the end of autumn, before returning to Nagoya. NOTE 10 Bashō wrote Etsujin a farewell haiku, drawing again on the imagery of snowfall, this time to express the beauty of shared moments, and the sorrow of parting.

Snow we two
Watched last year,
Is it falling again?
- Bashō (1688) NOTE 11

Sudden snowflurries? As Bashō bids his friend goodbye, snowflakes melt on his cheeks.

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- "Haiku Corner" continued from page 6 -

NOTES

1. Iza saraba / Yukimi ni korobu / Tokoro made Matsuo Bashō (1644-94), trans. Makoto Ueda, *Bashō and his Interpreters: Selected Hokku with Commentary* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, p. 177 (adapted).
2. *Id.*, p. 177.
3. Uta monogurui / futari kogarashi / sugata kana Trans. Ueda, *op. cit.*, pp. 95, 121.
4. Tomoshihi o / Mireba kaze ari / Yoru no yuki Adapted from Steven D. Carter, and see Gabi Greve, et al, Happy Haiku blog, Daruma Museum, Japan (from discussion on Simply Haiku Forum, April 2006).
5. Greve, *op. cit.*
6. Yuki to yuki / Koyoi shiwasu no / Meigetsu ka Trans. Jane Reichhold: *Bashō, The Complete Haiku* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 2008), p. 82 (adapted).
7. See Hiroaki Sato, *Bashō's Narrow Road: Spring & Autumn Passages* (Berkeley, Calif.: Stone Bridge Press, 1996), pp. 21-22, 24-29.
8. Reichhold, *loc. cit.* Bashō wrote he was "mediating the two unfriendly persons at Tokoku's place". *Id.*
9. Bashō, letter to Sugamuma Kyokusui, dated the eighteenth day of the second month, 1692. Trans. Sato, *op. cit.*, pp. 21-22.
10. Ueda, *op. cit.*, pp. 175-76.
11. Futari mishi / yuki wa kotoshi mo / furikeru ka Trans. Reichhold, *op. cit.*, p. 124 (adapted). Of Etsujin, Bashō wrote: "The man Jūzō of the Province of Owari is also known as Etsujin – the name of his hometown. Now he hides in the city, but only to supply himself with food and fuel. If he works for two days, he plays for two days. If he works three days, he plays three days. He loves his wine, and he sings from the *Tales of the Heike* when he is drunk. A true friend indeed." *Id.*



A Big Mochi

Yutaka Oshita gives a "Thumbs Up" response to the huge kagami mochi created by his granddaughters Raquelle and Riana.

Landing on "Start", 2011

Now that the new year's celebrations have come and gone (except for our lunar new year observing friends) we come down to earth and taste the reality of our resolutions and hopes of prosperity as we look forward at what's in store for each of us. It is no different with BTC too. So what's up the road for BTC?

From an active last year, first and foremost, BTC has resolved to search for its next resident minister. BTC has also welcomed the start up of two new social groups, one for age group 18 years through 40 (roughly, I'm told) years and "The Middle Way" for folks too young for the Asoka Society crowd. Dharma School has been bustling with activity all year long and shows every sign of reaching that critical mass size any week now where we'll have the desired problem of what to do with "all these kids." Our affiliated units continue to meet at the temple and to the astute observer Asoka Society, Crafts Group, Iaido (Japanese swordsmanship), Japanese Language School, drumming groups Kokyo Taiko and Isshin Daiko are all doing well. We wish them all continued prosperity!

It goes without saying that BTC needs to restructure itself in an administrative sense so our operations are more efficient and poised to take on the new clerical tasks necessary such as data base management and as an employer. In support of the foregoing, BTC has through its Board of Directors, resolved to insure that these activities and services are adequately funded, by increasing its annual operating budget.

All well meant fiscal planning is for naught if there are no individuals to step forward and shoulder the preparatory work. BTC is fortunate in having individuals committed to get the job done and willing to put the temple as a priority in their lives. Yet more is to be done and more initiatives are needed to research the issues as they pertain to BTC with the necessary commitment to getting the job done.

We can't do this vital work without you, our members and friends. In the course of this year, please speak out and get involved as a member of our dynamic sangha. Temple leaders deserve your support. And, if this fits your bill, in an everyday, every week, incremental sense, become a role model of giving back to The Buddhist Temple of Chicago in welcoming, helping, and mentoring future truth seekers in the Dharma.

Gassho,

Gary T. Nakai
President