



The Buddhist Temple of Chicago BULLETIN



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Rev. Patti Nakai

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On This Shore: Encountering the Dharma

This month, for the spring O-higan seminar (Saturday, March 11), the guest speaker is our “local boy done good,” Rev. Michael Conway, our BTC member who became a professor at Otani University. Back in December 2014, when I was included in the continuing education session for ministers at Higashi Honganji in Kyoto, Mike (I’m not used to calling him “Conway Sensei”) invited us all to the public lecture he would be giving at the Young Buddhists Hall. Rev. Ken Yamada of the Berkeley temple and I turned up for the event. The room was full, mostly of men of various ages.

In his preliminary remarks, Mike gave the audience his background – how he encountered Buddhism at BTC and went on to study in Japan. He pointed me out to the crowd as the minister he studied under, “when her hair was black and I still had lots of hair,” he said indicating his receding hairline.

After his talk, he took questions and one elderly man asked him in a very challenging tone, “When you came to Japan to study, which teacher was important in *really* teaching you Buddhism?” I thought Mike could’ve named any one of the outstanding Japanese teachers he learned from, but instead, I was moved very deeply



Rev. Patti Nakai
Resident Minister

For more writings
by Rev. Nakai,
visit her blog,
*Taste of Chicago
Buddhism*, at:
tinyurl.com/chibud

This article
continued
on page 6.

General Membership Meeting 2017

On Sunday, January 29, 2017, the annual general membership meeting occurred. Temple officers and various group representatives gave their reports. We enjoyed a delicious luncheon provided by Kokyo Taiko and the children’s Taikyo class parents.

I gave both the President and VP/Religious Affairs reports. The emphasis of my reports was on the changing nature of BTC. With the departure of Rev. Ashikaga, the lay leaders have taken a greater role in the services. The roles of Sunday chairperson, lay speaker and other functions were filled without hesitation by temple members. During 2016, members attended the World Dobo convention in Los Angeles and the EBL convention in New Jersey. Their registration fees, and some other costs, received funding from the Kubose Fund which was established for the purpose of Buddhist Education. Again in 2016, BTC was the “go to” place for students inquiring about Buddhism. A program of providing books to prisoners is in its early stages; a greater outreach is planned for 2017.

Natsu Matsuri 2016 once again showed the power of Sangha. Working together we were able to have a successful and fun festival while raising about \$11,000.



Bill Bohlman
BTC President

Contact Bill at
budtempchi@aol.com
or find him most
Sundays after
service at the
information desk
& bookstore.

This article
continued
on page 7.

MARCH 2017 Temple Events & Activities Guide

- See Calendar (page 8) for specific dates.
- Up-to-date details/last-minute changes are available on Facebook: www.facebook.com/budtempchi
- **ALL EVENTS ARE FREE, OPEN TO THE PUBLIC, and held at the Temple (unless otherwise noted).**

➤➤➤ *Special Temple Services and Events* ◀◀◀

- March 12—**Rev. Gyoko Saito Memorial.**
- March 19—**Spring O-Higan.**
- March 26—**Rev. Gyomay Kubose Memorial.**

Regular Temple Services

- **Religious Service** (in English)—Sundays, 11 am.
- **Lay Speaker Sunday**—Usually 3rd Sunday every month, 11 am.

Temple Meetings & Community Service

- **Bulletin mailing**—Usually, 2nd to last Friday every month, 10 am; volunteers welcome. This month: March 24.
- **Bulletin submissions**—Deadline for notices and articles: every month, 6 pm, the Thursday 15 days prior to mailing. This month: March 9.
- **Temple Board Meeting**—Once a month, Sunday, 12:30 pm. This month: Mar. 26.
- **Upaya Helpers** (refreshment service, community outreach, ping pong, etc.) Call Candy Minx for info: 312-618-0880.
- **Cook It Forward** (feeding the homeless)—Mary Harvey <https://www.facebook.com/groups/CookItForward/>

Meditation & Buddhist Education

- **Buddhism Study Class**—Wednesdays, 7 to 8:30 pm. No class March 8.
- **Dharma School** (children's Sunday school)—2nd and 4th

Sundays, 11 am. This month: Mar. 12 and Mar. 26.

- **Introduction to Buddhism**—offered periodically throughout the year. E-mail Rev. Nakai at rev.eshin.patti23@gmail.com.
- **Meditation**—Sundays, 9:00 am and Thursdays, 7:30 pm. First-timers: come 10 minutes early for instruction.
- **Sutra Study Class**—2nd or 3rd Sunday of the month, 12:30 to 2 pm. No previous Buddhism study required.

Social & Cultural Activities

- **Asoka Society** (refreshment service, social club, outings, etc.)—3rd Saturday every month, 1 pm. No meeting in February.
- **Book Club** – One night a month. This month: *When to Rob a Bank*, March 7, 6:30 pm.
- **Iaido** (Japanese Swordsmanship)—Mondays, 7-9 pm.
- **Kumihimo** (Japanese braiding). March 18. Email Nancey Epperson: naepperson14@gmail.com.
- **Movie Night**—One Tuesday night a month. This month: *The Razor's Edge*, March 21, 6:30 pm.
- **Qigong** (Chinese Movement)—Tuesdays, 11-12:30pm. Call Dennis Chan 312-771-6087 for info.
- **Taiko** (BTC Kokyo Taiko Drum Troupe)—**Adults**, Fridays, 7-9 pm. Email kokyotaiko@yahoo.com to confirm. **Children**, 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sundays at 11. Email sanghacomod@yahoo.com for appointments.
- **Ukulele Group**—Tuesdays, 1-3 pm.

MISSION STATEMENT

Founded in 1944 as an administratively independent temple, The Buddhist Temple of Chicago aspires to the following:

- To present and explore the Three Treasures of Buddhism – the Buddha (teacher), the Dharma (teachings), and the Sangha (community).
- To be guided and inspired by the historical Buddha, Gautama Shakyamuni, and the teachers who have followed – Shinran Shonin, Manshi Kiyozawa, and Haya Akegarasu.
- To present the Buddha-Dharma in a language and manner relevant and understandable in contemporary America.
- To welcome all who seek the Dharma without any exceptions.
- To be a positive presence in our local community working to enhance the vitality of our neighborhood.
- To honor and continue the traditions of our founding members.
- To always live the Nembutsu – Namu Amida Butsu.

BTC BULLETIN

Team Rev. Patti Nakai, Darryl Shishido (Editor), Nancey Epperson, Ann Yi

Feedback & Submissions Questions, comments, corrections and suggestions welcome. Submissions of announcements, news items, articles, essays, reviews, poems, photos, drawings, etc., are strongly encouraged. Submissions are reviewed for suitability and space availability. Anonymous submissions are not published, but author's name may be withheld from publication upon request.

Contact E-mail BTCbuledtr@hotmail.com or speak with anyone on the BTC Team

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- ❁ 1/01 New Year's Day service followed by multicultural potluck.
- ❁ 1/07 Gary and Rev. Nakai and several temple members attended Kagami Biraki, the new year's celebration hosted by Tohkon Judo Club at the Japanese American Service Committee. Kokyo Taiko and the children's taiko class performed.
- ❁ 1/08 January memorial and Dharma School service. *** Sutra study class met.
- ❁ 1/13 Lutheran Seminary class visited temple.
- ❁ 1/15 Lay Speaker service – Elaine Siegel was the speaker. *** Rev. Nakai was guest speaker for Ho-onko at the Midwest Buddhist Temple.
- ❁ 1/15-16 Nancey Epperson attended ONE-Northside's two-day planning retreat at Epworth United Methodist Church.
- ❁ 1/17 Rev. Nakai attended Chicago Japanese American Council meeting in Park Ridge.
- ❁ 1/22 Dharma School service. *** Board of Directors met.
- ❁ 1/23 BTC hosted meeting for the Green Affordable Housing Project, a proposed project to the Vatican by Buddhist-Catholic dialogue groups in four cities.
- ❁ 1/24 Movie Night.
- ❁ 1/25 Gary and Rev. Nakai attended birthday party for Ben Enta (101 years old) at Bethany Retirement Home.
- ❁ 1/26 Rev. Nakai attended the Buddhist-Catholic dialogue meeting at Our Lady of Pompeii.
- ❁ 1/27 February bulletin mailed.
- ❁ 1/28 Rev. Nakai conducted public memorial service for the late Mrs. Dennie Okuhara. She is survived by son Gary and daughter Lori Wing. Dennie, among her many volunteer roles at the temple, was the Bulletin editor for several years.
- 1/29 Eitaikyo service followed by the General Membership Meeting and luncheon.

Our deepest sympathy
to the family and friends of:
Dennie Hiden Okuhara

THANK YOU!

Understanding the Nembutsu through recognizing the Paramitas in others. Send in your recognitions!

- Sunday Service Participants: Bill Bohlman, Tom Corbett, Nancey Epperson, Glenn T. Fujiura, Robin Kanemoto, Sadie Kasamoto, John Kelly, Lynn Maruyama, Alice Murata, Michael Nudo, Elaine Siegel, Ann Yi
- Music/Accompanists: Drea Gallaga, Ann Yi
- Audio Controls: Wendy and Jacob Fawcett, Gary T. Nakai
- Sunday Service Refreshments: Noreen Enkoji, Haru Ito, Izui Family, Kanemoto Family, Wendy Lai, Tademoto Family, Ruby Tsuji, Taiko & friends, Upaya
- Bulletin Mailing: Dennis Chan, Antoinette d'Vencets, Noreen Enkoji, Nancey Epperson, Michael Gallaga, Haru Ito, Mike Kudo, Candy Minx, Alice Murata, Seichi & Cynthia Shiraiwa, Ruby Tsuji
- Cleaning Temple washrooms: Anonymous
- Taking care of the Temple inside and out: Tomio Tademoto
- Maintaining and updating the Temple computer: John Kelly, Gary T. Nakai
- Maintaining and updating the Temple website: Ann Yi, Wendy Fawcett
- Emptying the trash bins, filling them with new bags and putting them out for disposal: Sue Balsam, Adam Kellman, Candy Minx, Nancey Epperson, Ruby Tsuji
- Cleaning Hondo and Nokotsudo: Michael Yasukawa
- Administrative Office Volunteers: Ruth Abbinanti, Darryl Shishido, Nancey Epperson
- New Year's Day potluck: Bill Bohlman, Yoshiko Cohen, Jack & June Dairiki, Nancey Epperson, Mary Harvey, Anna Idol, John Kelly & Ann Yi, John Cashman & Maryann Merikoski, Miriam Solon, Ruby Tsuji

Our apologies to anyone we have failed to include.



To Live Is To Sleep and To Die Is To Awaken

by Candy Minx

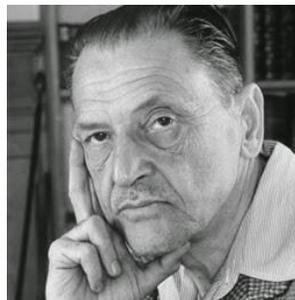
***The Razor's Edge* (1946), March 21, 6:30 pm**

The 1946 movie *The Razor's Edge* begins with an interesting premise: a voiceover tells us of a man he once met as the camera pans over an elegant party coming up on the speaker who turns out to be the writer Somerset Maugham. Maugham is the author of the original novel adapted for this film. The opening shots are quite dreamlike, lulling the audience into a strange sense of reality; the writer is telling a story including himself as the witness/narrator. This device seems to give the movie a sense of realism or authority.

The party of the opening scenes represents a globalized world of international travel, trade, society and exposure between cultures. Taking place right after the First World War till after the depression of the 1930's, we are introduced to high society, including industrialists, trust fund dandies, gold digging young women, veterans, artists and poets. The hero of the story is immediately at odds with everyone and provides the initial conflict in the story. His name is Larry Darrell (played by Tyrone Power) and he is a depressed soldier who craves peace and wants to understand the meaning of his own life, especially as he feels a responsibility by being spared with surviving the war. The other characters in the movie tease him, bully him or dismiss his worthiness because he wants to reject the norms of his culture and explore other ways of thinking.

While looking up some production notes on this movie, I read the Turner Classic Movie (TCM) web page. TCM's tagline for *The Razor's Edge* is "A young man's quest for spiritual peace threatens his position in society." Bingo! Here is an example of how spiritual quest was once considered in industrialized cultures. There was a time when some people had a stereotype about mindfulness or meditation culture; fear that an ascetic would be destitute, or eating strange diets, and not able to maintain a job. The film explores wandering, with an aloofness associated with meditation, or enlightenment, embodied by the hero as he separates himself both romantically and physically by traveling to the Himalayas. Later, he drifts in and out of the other characters' lives.

The decadent settings of European and American upper-income life are so well done in this film. Set designs and wardrobe create a sense of decadence and conspicuous consumption which remind me of the aesthetic disciplines called Vanitas, Memento Mori and Skull Art. Vanitas is Latin and means "emptiness". Vanitas are paintings from 17th Century Flemish and Dutch artists in the genre of Still Life which often contain musical instruments, flowers, human skulls and books. These items symbolized the activities of a human yet they do not prevent death: Vanitas reminded the viewer of the impermanence and transience of life. In classical times, Memento Mori contained funerary references and can be found in Plato and Seneca's idea that all philosophy is actually about death. Skull Art is most famously known through the artists Diego Rivera and Frieda Kahlo and through Día de Muertos, in which skeletons are decorated with the fashions of wealthy European culture. *The Razor's Edge* continually contrasts the lifestyle of the rich with suffering and loss as characters explore poor neighborhoods for parties, music and dance but always look to money and superficial desires for happiness. Suffering and grasping for money are recurring motifs along with repeated hypnotic scenes of nature. I was deeply moved by how well this movie describes a more traditional view of mindfulness that we seem to have lost. The hero actually transforms his state of mind as well as his lifestyle and measures his life by compassion, not by materialism. This seems to me to be a facet of contemporary mindfulness culture we sorely miss. This movie is a classic for a reason and it still holds up due to its compassionate portrayals of suffering, love, addiction, sexuality, loss, and post traumatic stress disorder.



Writer Somerset Maugham



Actor Tyrone Power



Buddhist Temple of Chicago / Board of Directors / 2017

Back (L. to R.): Diana Schoendorff, Bill Bohlman, Candy Minx, Darryl Shishido, Adam Kellman, Jerry Morishige

Front (L. to R.):

Haru Ito, Ann Yi, Lynn Maruyama, Debbie Miyashiro, Kiyoko Omachi, Elaine Siegel, Reverend Patti Nakai

Board members not pictured: Glenn Fujiura, Miriam Solon, Tomio Tademoto, Lynnell Long, Nancey Epperson

Kumihimo Returns—March 18!

by Nancey Epperson

Japanese braiding – also known as kumihimo — is an art form that is growing in popularity among crafters of all levels. At BTC last fall, the Kumihimo class had fun and made many attractive items.

This season, experienced braiders will start off by learning about counted bead patterns. We’ll explore how to read a pattern, as well as how to create our own patterns. We’ll work with bead shapes such as drop, leaf, lentil, magatama, and spear.

New braiders are welcome! We have easy projects for newcomers (or those who are still feeling new), and detailed instructions are provided. Our BTC group is a friendly one, and experienced braiders are generous with their help & support. The first project is a simple necklace braided with satin cord to which a pendant may be added.

Project kits are \$10 - \$15 and may be paid for at class time. Kumihimo toolkits (disk, bobbins, weight, glue) are \$12, and may be paid for at class time.

We try to meet on Saturday mornings from 9 am till noon. Come join us on March 18!

Let’s get our braid on! Contact Nancey Epperson (naepperson14@gmail.com) for more info or to sign up.



UPCOMING EVENTS

This month, we have three special events:

March 11 Saturday—Spring O-higan Seminar with Rev. Michael Conway (see enclosed insert and photo below). Rev. Conway will also be guest speaker at the March 12 Sunday service, the memorial for Rev. Gyoko Saito.

March 13 Monday—“Parenting as a Buddhist Practice” with guest facilitator Laurie Lawlor from the Lakeside Buddha Sangha in Evanston. (see enclosed insert for details)

March 19 Sunday—After the Spring O-higan service, the Upaya group is planning a very special luncheon to welcome the new season. You’ll miss out on the fun if you don’t come!

January 2016—Rev. Michael Conway, wife Kayoko, Rev. Patti Nakai



(photo courtesy of Rev. Nakai)

On this Shore (continued from page 1)

when he firmly responded to the man, “The most important time for me truly encountering the Teachings were my years at the Buddhist Temple of Chicago.”

The man and probably much of the audience was taken aback – how dare this foreigner insist that real Buddhism can be learned outside of Japan and from non-native Japanese people!

When I think about it, I would give a very similar response to that question. As much as I am grateful for the fantastic teachers I had in Japan, nothing they said would have made sense to me if I hadn’t first encountered the Dharma at BTC from Dr. Nobuo Haneda, the ministers and especially from the shining examples in the membership.

At O-higan time we talk about “going to the other shore,” but when it comes to listening to the Dharma, you don’t need to go further than 1151 West Leland. You don’t need to pack up and join a monastery in Asia. And you don’t need to wait for a charismatic guru to arrive from the Mysterious East. Though unglamorous, the true encounter with Buddhism comes by interacting with members (Sangha) and by hearing and discussing the teachings (Buddha-Dharma) at your local temple.

This month of March reminds me that we at BTC were so fortunate that “the Other Shore” came to our shore along Lake Michigan. At the end of the month we observe Rev. Gyomay Kubose’s memorial, Gyomei-ki, and on the second Sunday, we observe Koshu-ki, Rev. Gyoko Saito’s memorial. Rev. Kubose (1905 -2000) was born in the U.S. and he was a native speaker of English, though he was partly educated in Japan as a child. It was during his involvement with the Oakland Buddhist Church that he encountered the teachings of Haya Akegarasu and became inspired to delve more deeply into Buddhism. After completing his college education, Rev. Kubose went to Japan to study under Akegarasu and he returned to the States to share the teachings with people on the West Coast and later in the Heart Mountain wartime camp before settling in Chicago. In the case of Rev. Gyoko Saito (1927-2001), he brought the teachings directly from Japan to us here in Chicago. Rev. Saito became an American citizen as soon as he could in order to show he was dedicated to bringing Buddhism to the West rather than being a “missionary” on a temporary assignment. He felt it was important to get out trans-

lations of Haya Akegarasu, Shuichi Maida and other 20th century teachers. And in his own essays, he manifested Namu Amida Butsu by describing specific events where he was forced to sharply examine himself and awaken to the wisdom coming from others, including children and animals (and yes, even from one’s spouse).

Rev. Saito saw the need to have understandable translations of Shinran and the task was taken up by Dr. Haneda, who taught at BTC before, during and after his studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In his classes at BTC, and later as our guest speaker from Berkeley, he clarified Shinran’s teachings to us by giving us the meanings to words that somehow the existing English translations botched.

Due to the major problems in the English translations of Shinran and the Pure Land sutras, it is still necessary for us to have people come from that “other shore” of Japan, immersed in the language, history and culture of Jodo Shinshu. I am glad I had that opportunity to study in Japan and we should make use of guest speakers such as Michael Conway to continue to clarify what the Buddha and the great Pure Land teachers were really saying in Sanskrit, classical Chinese and medieval Japanese. And I hope people will continue to come forward with the time, willingness and ability to study in Japan and be a part of developing English translations that communicate directly to our seeking hearts instead of making us jump through fiery hoops of misleading interpretations.

With your support and participation, please continue to make “this shore” of BTC the place for present and future seekers to have a true encounter with the Buddha-Dharma and become a part of the Sangha.



(photo courtesy of Lynnell Long)

General Membership Meeting (continued from page 1)

Glenn T. Fujiura submitted the treasurer's report for 2016. As expected, we had a deficit of approximately \$8,000. Costs have continued to rise, but revenues have stayed flat.

Our auditor, Elaine Siegel, spoke once again about the Safe Sangha policy. This policy is designed to provide a means to deal with situations of unacceptable behavior. Elaine also presented the 2017 budget. As was the case in 2016, we again have a budget with a deficit. Although we have sufficient reserve funds at this time, it is imperative that we figure out how to raise more funds on an ongoing basis.

Kiyo Omachi, VP Membership, reported a decline in total members and a shortfall from our budgeted revenue. As our older members pass away, and their children do not continue with BTC, our new members are not enough to make up the difference.

Our Dharma School continues to grow; there are now three age group classes. Various outreach projects and activities help to show the Dharma in action.

The various temple groups reported. Kokyo Taiko announced a search for new members. Asoka continues to serve the temple while also enjoying group outings. The Upaya group provided refreshments for Sunday service on a monthly basis. They also were instrumental in our successful Spaghetti Dinner fundraiser, and the providing of food to the homeless living under Lake Shore Drive. Iaido (swordsmanship class) is thriving and will perform at this year's Natsu Matsuri.

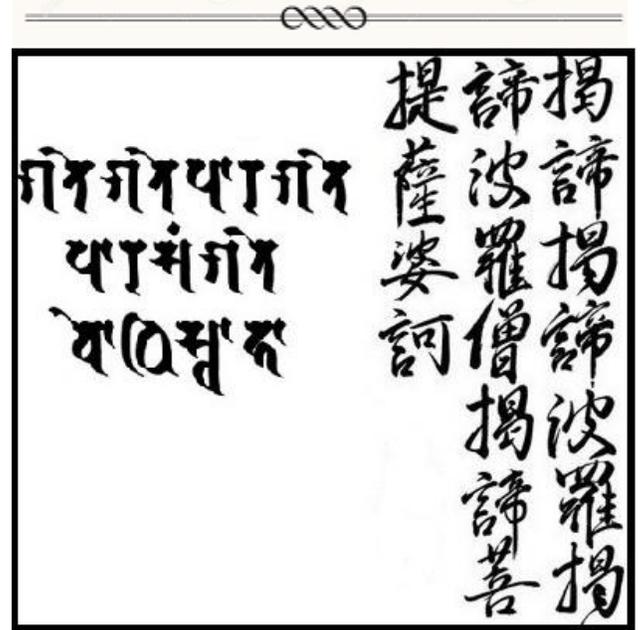
Rev. Patti expressed her thanks to the lay leaders and everyone who assisted her in 2016. The ongoing Introduction to Buddhism classes exposed many new people to Buddhism and BTC. The Education Center received a large donation in 2016 which will be used for guest speakers. Rev. Patti also spoke of the Eitaikyo Fund and how it is for the maintaining of the najin (altar) area and also for the training of future ministers and lay leaders. Rev. Patti mentioned that she would like to make more home visits; however, we do not have the volunteers available to cover the office while she would be away.

An orei (honorarium) in appreciation for her service to BTC was presented to Rev. Patti.

Overall, 2016 was a good year for BTC. We continue to thrive and remain a place to hear the Dharma. The only dark cloud is our ongoing deficit. The board of directors, and the fundraising committee, are searching for ways to increase our revenues. Our costs are mostly fixed and there is not much room to cut any further. The hard work and sacrifices of past members and friends have given us a cushion for now. If the temple holds a special meaning for you, we hope you will continue to support our mission of making the teachings available to all.

On behalf of the board of directors and Rev. Patti, I thank you for your past support and look to the future with excitement. Namu Amida Butsu.

[Editor's Note: For information on how you can help, see the flyer-insert, *Three Things You Can Do Now!*]



Left: Sanskrit language (Siddham script); Right: Japanese
Last line of the Heart Sutra, chanted monthly at BTC:
GYATE GYATE HARA GYATE
HARA SO GYATE BODHI SOWA KA
Going going going yonder
going yonder completed enlightenment perfect
“Man becomes one with the other shore, with the Buddha. But this is merely a surface interpretation . . . If you really understand this [Heart Sutra], then from there, GYATE GYATE to the other shore of enlightenment—complete and perfect, that is it . . . Enlightenment is not the end, it is the beginning—a great turn of life, which is [a] tremendous life.” (from *Maha Prajna Hridaya Sutra*, a commentary on the Heart Sutra, by Rev. Gyomay Kubose)



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BTC CALENDAR MARCH 2017

See Temple Events & Activities Guide on page 2 for details on events.
 Events may be canceled or moved after press time due to unforeseen circumstances.
 Check www.facebook.com/budtempchi for the most up-to-date changes.

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 7 pm Study Class	2 7:30 pm Meditation	3 7 pm Taiko	4
5 9 am Meditation 11 am Monthly Memorial	6 7 pm laido	7 11 am Qigong 6:30 pm Book Club	8 7 pm NO Study Class	9 6 pm Bulletin Submissions Deadline 7:30pm Meditation	10 7 pm Taiko	11 1:30 pm Spring O-higan Seminar
12 9 am Meditation 11 am Rev. Gyoko Saito Memorial/Dharma School 12:30 pm Sutra Study	13 7 pm laido	14 11 am Qigong	15 7 pm Study Class	16 7:30 pm Meditation	17 7 pm Taiko	18 9:00 am Kumihimo 1:00 pm Asoka Society
19 9 am Meditation 11 am O-Higan	20 7 pm laido	21 11 am Qigong 6:30 pm Movie Night	22 7 pm Study Class	23 7:30 pm Meditation	24 10 am Bulletin Mailing 7 pm Taiko	25
26 9 am Meditation 11 am Founder's Day/ Dharma School 12:30 pm Board Meeting	27 7 pm laido	28 11 am Qigong	29 7 pm Study Class	3M 7:30 Meditation	31 7 pm Taiko	