



The Buddhist Temple of Chicago BULLETIN



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Resident Minister

Rev. Patti Nakai

President

Ann Yi

BTC 75th Anniversary Reflections

The Ninja Upkeepers

One common story about our founding minister, Rev. Gyomay Kubose, is that he was always seen picking up the trash on the temple grounds or busy inside the building, straightening things up. And he always wore a cheerful expression while doing this clean up work. I wonder if it was a Tom Sawyer ploy – “Hey everybody, this is so much fun! You should try it!”

Rev. Kubose like many in leadership positions felt it was important to set an example for others to follow – that to encourage people to do maintenance work at the temple, he should be seen doing the labor necessary to keep the temple neat and functioning. But in Buddhism there is the concept of “secret good,” that good works should be done without anyone knowing about it. In the seventy-five years of our temple’s history, there have been dozens of people, including our recently retired minister Rev. Yukei Ashikaga, who did their work in secrecy, behind-the-scenes. I’d like to call them the “ninja upkeepers.”

I’ve visited many temples, including the nearby Midwest Buddhist Temple, that have paid janitorial services, so it is unusual that our temple has gotten by relying on volunteers to regularly keep things clean. One amazing ninja was Mrs. Haruko “Harky” Tadamoto who came in every week and cleaned the temple from top to bottom before you can finish chanting “Hannya Shingyo.” I marveled at how fast and efficient she was and she never missed a spot anywhere.

Focus of Attention

Had I remembered that the minister and president headshots are in the Bulletin, I would have either not run for president or gotten into a time machine and gone back to the period when I was the editor to stop myself from putting the headshots in to begin with. At the time, Rev. Patti resisted using her picture, but understanding her public role, she eventually provided nice photos that she has updated over the years to reflect her current look, whether it was her headscarf during her cancer treatments, or her current pixie. Glenn was the first president whose headshot appeared on the current design. He initially sent a shirtless picture of Bruce Lee but eventually he came around. When Bill took the reins again, he didn’t have a picture, so we set up a quick photo session of him in him in the place we know him best—behind the book counter. With all that history, I risked hypocrisy by objecting when [bulletin editor] Nancey reminded me that I had to provide a headshot. She rejected my offer to provide a cat photo instead.



Rev. Patti Nakai
Resident Minister

This article
continues
on page 4
column 2.



Ann Yi
BTC President

Contact Ann at
[annyiBTC@
gmail.com](mailto:annyiBTC@gmail.com)

This article
continues
on page 6
column 1.

MARCH 2019 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 24—**Spring Ohigan**
- March 31—**Founder's Day**

Regular Temple Services

- **Religious Service** (in English)—Sundays, 11 am.

Temple Meetings & Community Service

- **Bulletin mailing**—2nd to last Friday every month, 10 am; volunteers welcome. This month: March 22.
- **Bulletin submissions**—Deadline for notices and articles: every month, 6 pm, the Thursday 15 days prior to mailing. This month: March 7.
- **Temple Board Meeting**—Once a month, Sunday, 12:30 pm. This month: March 31.
- **Upaya Helpers** (refreshment service, community outreach, ping pong, etc.) Email Lynnell S. Long: lynnellstephani@gmail.com or Albert Gonzalez: albiglz@yahoo.com
- **Cook It Forward** (feeding unhoused persons)—<https://www.facebook.com/groups/CookItForward/>

Meditation & Buddhist Education

- **Buddhism Study Class**—Wednesday afternoons, 1:30 – 3:00 pm. Currently the class is reading “River of Fire, River of Water” by Taitetsu Unno. No previous Buddhism study required.

- **Dharma School (for school-age children)**—Sundays, 11 am. This month: March 10, March 24.
- **Introduction to Buddhism**—offered periodically throughout the year. Next session starts in May 2019. E-mail Nancey Epperson at naepperson14@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

- **Aikido** (“cooperation, not competition”)—Sundays, 5-7 pm. Email DJ Lortie djaikibudo@gmail.com.
- **Asoka Society** (refreshment service, social club, outings, etc.)—3rd Saturday every month, 1 pm. This month: March 16.
- **Iaido** (Japanese Swordsmanship)—Mondays, 7-9 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. **Children**, 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sundays at 11. Email kokyotaiko@buddhisttemplechicago.org to confirm.
- **Ukulele Group**—Tuesdays, 1 pm. Email Ruth Abbanti: fabbanti@sbcglobal.net.

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, Nancey Epperson, Ann Yi

Feedback & Submissions Questions, comments, corrections & suggestions are welcome. Submissions are encouraged—articles, essays, book reviews, photos, poetry, news items, announcements, drawings, etc. Submissions will be reviewed for suitability and space availability. Anonymous submissions will not be published, but author's names 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 and potluck
- 1/06 Monthly memorial service. *** Sutra study class met.
- 1/12 BTC Kokyo Taiko performed and many temple members helped with mochi-tsuki and attended Kagami-biraki (new year's celebration) at the Japanese American Service Committee.
- 1/13 Lynnell Long was the lay speaker at service. Dharma School on field trip. *** Rev. Nakai was guest speaker at the Midwest Buddhist Temple.
- 1/15 Rev. Nakai attended meeting of the Chicago Japanese American Council at Northbrook Public Library.
- 1/20 Regular service. *** Board of directors met.
- 1/26 Rev. Nakai conducted memorial service for Roy Goro Akune at BTC. Mr. Akune is survived by daughter Shuko.
- 1/27 Eitaikyo and Dharma School service. *** General membership meeting.
- 1/28 February bulletin prepared for mailing.

Our deepest sympathy to
the family and friends of:
Roy Goro Akune

THANK YOU!

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

Service & Hospitality

- **Sunday Service Participants:** Ruth Abbinanti, Sue Balsam, Bill Bohlman, Wendy Fawcett, Albert Gonzalez, Glenn Fujiura, Rider Ganschow, Ed Horiuchi, Karen Kanemoto, Neil Kanemoto, John Kelly, Noreen Enkoji, Lynnell Long, George Mizuki, Peter Mizuki, Stan Oda, Stephen Rodgers, Liam, Jun, Yulian, Beatrice,
- **Lay Leaders:** Bill Bohlman, Nancey Epperson, Wendy Fawcett, Lynnell Long, Miriam Solon
- **Musicians:** Drea Gallaga, Ann Yi
- **Sunday Service Refreshments:** Asoka Society, Noreen Enkoji, Bill Gallaga, Haru Ito, Izui Family, Kanemoto Family, Peter Mizuki, Candy Minx, Alice Murata, Laura Muraoka, Jan Saiki, Linda Tademoto, Ruby Tsuji, Joyce Yamamoto

THANK YOU!

- **Audio Controls:** Wendy and Jacob Fawcett, Gary T. Nakai
- **Bulletin Mailing:** Dennis Chan, Noreen Enkoji, Ed Horiuchi, Haru Ito, Masa Nakata, Antoinette d'Vencets, Sadae Kasamoto, April Kellman, Candy Minx, Alice Murata

Temple Keepers

- **Maintaining Temple inside and out:** Tomio Tademoto
- **Cleaning Hondo & Nokotsudo:** Michael Yasukawa
- **Extensive landscape maintenance:** Tomio Tademoto
- **Cleaning washrooms:** DJ and family
- **Emptying trash, putting it out for disposal:** Sue Balsam, Karen Baier, April Kellman, Adam Kellman
- **Sweeping and mopping:** Gary Nakai, Candy Minx, Michael Yasukawa
- **Cleaning kitchen:** Wendy Fawcett & Family
- **Restocking paper towels and toilet paper:** Karen Baier, Candy Minx, Miriam Solon
- **Watering plants, laundering kitchen towels and aprons:** Alice Murata, Candy Minx
- **Clearing trash from temple exterior spaces:** Wendy & Jacob Fawcett
- **Cleaning minister's residence:** Dharma School
- **Administrative Office Volunteers:** Ruth Abbinanti, Karen Baier, Nancey Epperson, April Kellman, Candy Minx, Helene Rom
- **Maintaining and updating Temple website:** Ann Yi
- **Maintaining and updating Temple computer:** John Kelly, Gary T. Nakai
- **Setting up and taking down chairs & tables:** Too many to thank—thanks to all!

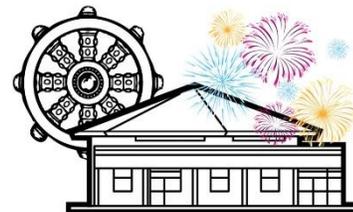
BTC 75th Anniversary Planning

By Glenn Fujiura

A single celebratory banquet would not do justice for our long and rich history, so we are planning to integrate 75th anniversary themes into activities throughout the year like community outreach and fund-raising.

We'd love some volunteers. If you are willing to roll up your sleeves to help (and maybe have some great anniversary ideas), contact me at btctreas@gmail.com

Let's celebrate!



The Buddhist Temple of Chicago
75th Anniversary • 1944-2019

Rev. Saito: Becoming “I as I”

By Roger Adams

Rev. Gyoko Saito told me that just after he entered this country in 1956, he had a dream in which his teacher, Haya Akegarasu (1877-1954), tells him that promoting Buddhism in America isn't much. It is only when he, Saito, becomes truly himself, I as I, that the true teaching will take place. Indeed, it is true that Rev. Saito became “I as I” after listening to his teacher in the dream.

I started out at the temple attending Rev. Gyomay Kubose's study group. In those days Zen Buddhism was very popular and Rev. Kubose tapped into this popularity. As we read Shunryu Suzuki's book, *Zen Flesh, Zen Bones* the discussion group grew to over fifty members.

In 1963 when Rev. Kubose left for Japan for graduate studies, Rev. Saito headed the class. He quickly got finished with Suzuki's book and started the project of translating his teacher Rev. Akegarasu's writings. Now we were learning the teachings of Shinran Shonin and his followers all the way up to my teacher himself. Rev. Saito was a lion and I needed a strong teacher such as him with a no-nonsense approach. With his power of “I as I” as well as his character and sincerity, I became a true follower of the Buddha. In other words, it was as I met Rev. Saito that I became a Buddhist.

Ever since then, which includes his passing in 2001, I have taken up what he has told me in the fifty-some years since I first met him. I want to be at one with him and all the efforts he put into the temple – it was amazing, his life here in Chicago. To be fully one with him I have to introspect on who I am and what I am. In this regard I have to check and transcend the all-important “I” as well as the three poisons—greed,

anger and stupidity – as the main core teachings of Shin Buddhism towards self-realization.



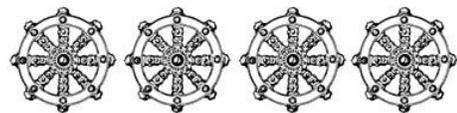
The Ninja Upkeepers

(continued from page 1)

Besides her cleaning work, Harky helped greatly with the interior construction work of our 2006 building along with Mrs. Jennie “Jane” Watanabe and others who despite their advanced age, worked as a skilled, conscientious crew with my husband Gary.

When Harky felt it was time to retire from the cleaning work, we had a series of young, strong men take over her duties, such as Justin (who moved to Oregon) and Jun (who moved to Hawaii). They wondered how Harky could cover so much ground in a minimum of time when it took them hours just to tackle one area of the temple.

I am grateful that currently there are a number of people taking care of much of the cleaning, maintenance and repair work at the temple as volunteers. But if you ever thought of becoming a ninja, there's lots to do requiring much more effort and dexterity than battling swordsmen on rooftops. To do “secret good” is to practice the Buddhist virtue of *dana*, giving without expectation of reward. It is also an opportunity for meditation on the interdependence of our lives. Without those who push the brooms, wipe the counters, collect the trash, weed the landscaping etc., our Dharma-learning center could not exist. I bow in gratefulness (Namu) to the many beings (Amida) that make our shared awakening (Butsu) possible.



The photo below is from the Temple's 30th anniversary booklet. Rev. Saito is 3rd from left, Roger Adams (in the white shirt) is on the right.

General Membership Meeting 2019

By Bill Bohlman

On Sunday, January 27, approximately 50 people attended the general membership meeting. Officers and various temple groups reported on their activities during 2018 and their plans for 2019. In addition, the biennial election of officers took place.

Although the financial position of the temple remains strong, we are running annual operating deficits. The 2018 deficit was smaller than 2017, however it was still significant. The 2019 budget reflects this new reality and once again projects a deficit. It is hoped that with 2019 being the 75th anniversary of the founding of BTC donations in honor of this milestone will offset the projected deficit. With regard to the anniversary, we discussed various ways to commemorate this event. A committee working on this is open to all who wish to participate.

The lay leader program remained involved in helping with Sunday services. The group has begun training under Rev. Patti to be able to assist with memorial services in the event Rev. Patti is unavailable. BTC remains one of the “go to” places for students doing research. Our prison book outreach is made possible thru the generous donation of books by temple members.

Membership has seen a gradual decline. To try to offset this, a new online membership form has been designed and will be operational in 2019. This works in conjunction with our website and Facebook page. The hope is that by making it easier, more will be encouraged to continue their membership support.

Dharma School continues to thrive with new families joining. Currently there are three age groups, each learning the Dharma at a level that is meaningful and enjoyable. The group took various field trips to enhance their understanding of everyday dharma. The children acted as service chair and conducted parts of the service a few times in 2018. On Dharma School Sundays one of the children reads the Dhammapada.

The taiko group performed at various events. Iaido continued strong, the new aikido group continues to meet and, as always, Asoka remains the backbone of the temple. Meditation continues to thrive with sessions on Sunday morning and Thursday evening.

Elections for officer only had one contested race. Ann Yi and Candy Minx were nominated for president and each gave a five-minute presentation about their qualifications and vision for the temple. A ballot vote by all members present resulted in Ann Yi elected temple president. The other races only had one candidate each. The newly elected officers who will serve for a two-year term expiring in January 2021 are:

President - Ann Yi
Treasurer – Glenn Fujiura
Auditor – Stan Oda
VP Religious Affairs – Bill Bohlman
VP Temple Relations – Albert Gonzalez
VP Membership – Kiyoko Omachi

In addition to the elected officers, the board has two appointed officers, representatives from the temple groups and nine at-large members who serve a rolling 3-year term. The minister also serves on the board. Current board members are:

Appointed officers: Secretary, Diana Schoendorff;
Buildings & Grounds, Tomio Tadamoto.

Temple group representatives:

Asoka, Haru Ito; Kokyo Taiko, Miriam Solon; Iaido, Jerry Morishige; Upaya, Lynn Long; Dharma School, Diana Schoendorff.

At-large members with term expiring January 2020:

Lynn Maruyama, Adam Kellman, Nancey Epperson.

At-large members with term expiring January 2021:

Lynn Long, Ed Horiuchi.

At-large members with term expiring January 2022:

Wendy Fawcett, Sue Balsam, Ken Addison.

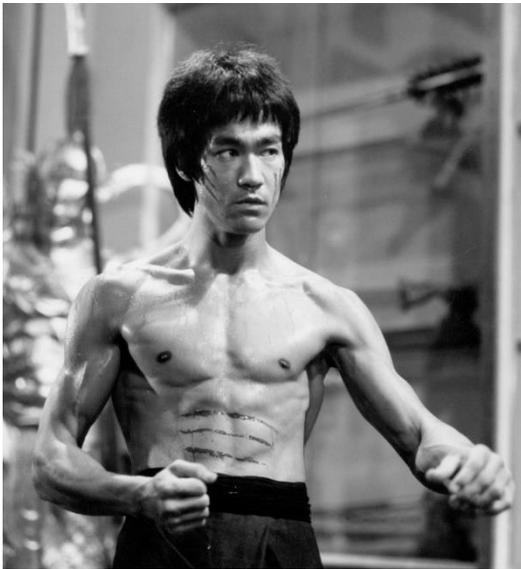
Rev. Patti thanked temple members for their support. In 2019 she would like to turn over some of the day to day temple duties to a part-time office assistant. This will free her up to do more ministerial visits and other ministerial activities. In appreciation of her service and dedication to the dharma, we gratefully presented her with an orei.

As we celebrate our 75th anniversary [see ***BTC 75th Anniversary Planning*** on page 3], we find ourselves facing new challenges. It is the responsibility of all of us to honor the legacy of those who started this temple; those who worked thru the years to make BTC a place for all to hear the dharma. Together we can make BTC's future as meaningful as our past. Namu Amida Butsu.

Focus of Attention

(continued from page 1)

This is a long way of saying that I never planned to run for office. The only reason I eventually joined the board is because I overheard Lynnell asking Bill about it. In a moment of questionable judgment, I wandered over and said I was curious as well. Bill, no dummy, moved fast, and next thing you know we were sheepishly sitting at the table as board members at large while the veteran board members looked us over with a starved eager gaze that I now recognize. *New blood! Fresh voices!* Glenn raised his hand and nominated me as president and everybody had a good laugh because, of course, that was ridiculous.



Glenn T.
Fujiura
BTC President
2013-2014

I had intended to serve only a year or two to get pet projects through, namely dragging BTC into the 21st century screaming and kicking and biting. Some of it is done—[PayPal](#) donations are up (donate now!), the [online membership form](#) is live (renew your membership now!), and [Amazon Smile](#) is working (shop now!). The truth is that I am most comfortable when I can focus intensely on one or two projects at a time. In contrast, the president role is diverse and scattered among many projects. Plus, it's uncomfortable being looked at. When planning my wedding, Rev. Patti happened to mention that she was going to wear a plain black robe to officiate because she had been told that brides don't like attention diverted from them. "Wear the fanciest robe you have!" I declared. "The fancier the better! If you have one that lights up, wear that!"

Focus of Attention

(continued from previous column)

Apart from writing articles, what does the president even do?

In the past year, I had the chance to see stage performances of both *Hamilton* and *1776*, two famous musicals about the founding of the United States. What they taught me is that there is no difference in governing then and governing today. You still have many opposing forces, and there is always extensive compromise that comes from sometimes heated and even nasty debate. While these arguments aren't as entertaining in real life as the spectacularly hilarious rap-off between Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson (from *Hamilton*), they are much the same.

I was especially touched by John Hancock's quiet role in *1776* (played by a woman in the production I saw). Hancock is famous for his huge signature on the Declaration of Independence. What's less known is that he served an important role as the patient chair of the Second Continental Congress. His importance was not because he was one of the movers and shakers; on the contrary, the bulk of the fame fell to the Thomas Jeffersons and Ben Franklins. His importance was that he was the nearly invisible guider, rule follower, and occasional slap downer. He kept things from going off the rails. One important tie Hancock broke was to require that the vote for independence from England be unanimous. To vote otherwise would have meant that the remaining English colonies would have had to fight the new United States in a civil war, of sorts. Those demanding independence saw the wisdom in his reasoning despite their outraged disappointment. He kept the greater good of all the colonies in mind. (Of course, this is a musical, so the actual history, like sausage-making, is messier.)

The BTC president has a similar role. The movers and shakers are the minister (or ministers, when we're lucky enough to have more than one) and the various temple groups. For a position that requires a public non-cat photo in the Bulletin, the president is remarkably passive. He or she almost never makes motions and generally votes only to break ties. At the General Meeting, I made a comment about cracking the whip more and I later worried out loud to my husband that this came off as arrogant.

Focus of Attention

(continued from page 6)

“No,” he said, “they all know that they can silently ignore you.” We then shared a hearty laugh at my expense.

How does a president avoid being ignored? How does a president bring unity to disagreeing individuals and groups? How does the president make sure that the temple acts for the greater good? The answer is by focusing on an agenda that everybody supports. This is that agenda.

- 1) Our Mission Statement (see page 2)
- 2) Rev. Patti’s need for administrative and ministerial help
- 3) Our 75th anniversary
- 4) Our budget deficit

All my articles for the next two years will touch upon this agenda in one way or another. The first one is closest to my heart, not because the other three are unimportant, but because they all flow from the Mission Statement. It’s why we exist, why when I first came, I stayed, and what I think will keep the temple alive in the future. In particular, I believe in the teaching lineage of “the historical Buddha, Gautama Shakyamuni, and the teachers who have followed—Shinran Shonin, Manshi Kiyozawa, and Haya Akegarasu.”

Rev. Patti introduced me and my long-time Wednesday classmates (some of us go back almost 10 years) to these teachers in detail. For her dedication to spreading the Dharma within our temple, to the community, and around the world, we are incredibly lucky. I have the privilege of calling Rev. Patti my personal teacher and learning from her and from the many guests she has invited to speak here over the years, including Dr. Nobuo Haneda (Rev. Patti’s personal teacher) and Dr. Michael Conway. Of the deceased teachers we’ve read, Akegarasu is my favorite. I carry a copy of his poem, [“Who Am I?”](#) in my Sunday packet next to my o-juzu and kesa.

Anyone who wants to know what drives me at BTC need understand only this—I am not merely a Buddhist, I am a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist. It is the foundation of everything I do at the temple and the fuel for the energy required not just to serve as president, but to pitch in with all the other various

Focus of Attention

(continued from previous column)

volunteer jobs, whether on teams or by myself. I don’t know why thousands of people don’t knock down our doors trying to learn about this Buddhism that Rev. Patti has described as almost “radical.” Let’s see what we can do to get those thousands through our door, or at least one more, one at a time. Let Kiyo call their names and let us welcome them into our unique spiritual home.



Rev. Patti officiating at the author’s wedding, in a fancy robe at the author’s request, 2015.

Photo by Sam Lee.



The Buddhist Temple of Chicago

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MARCH 2019 CALENDAR

See page 2 for details on specific events. Events may be canceled or moved.
 Check www.facebook.com/budtempchi for the most up-to-date changes.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 7 pm Taiko	2
3 9 am Meditation 11 am Monthly Memorial 5 pm Aikido	4 7 pm Iaido	5 11 am Qi Gong 1 pm Ukulele	6 1:30pm Study Class	7 Bulletin submission deadline 7:30pm Meditation	8 7 pm Taiko	9
10 9 am Meditation 11 am Regular Service / Dharma School 5 pm Aikido	11 7 pm Iaido	12 11 am Qi Gong 1 pm Ukulele	13 1:30pm Study Class	14 7:30 pm Meditation	15 7 pm Taiko	16 1:00 pm Asoka Society
17 9 am Meditation 11 am Regular service 5 pm Aikido	18 7 pm Iaido	19 11 am Qi Gong 1 pm Ukulele	20 1:30pm Study Class	21 7:30 pm Meditation	22 10 am Bulletin Mailing 7 pm Taiko	23
24 SPRING OHIGAN 9 am Meditation 11 am Regular Service / Dharma School 5 pm Aikido	25 7 pm Iaido	26 11 am Qi Gong 1 pm Ukulele	27 1:30pm Study Class	28 7:30 pm Meditation	29 7 pm Taiko	30
31 FOUNDER'S DAY 9 am Meditation 11 am Regular Service Board Meeting 5 pm Aikido						