



The Buddhist Temple of Chicago BULLETIN



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Resident Minister

Rev. Patti Nakai

President

Ann Yi

BTC 75th Anniversary Reflections

Koso-ki: Remembering the Teacher

One of the important and unique events on our temple calendar is the annual observance in August of Koso-ki, the memorial for Haya Akegarasu who was the direct teacher of Rev. Gyomay Kubose and Rev. Gyoko Saito. The name “Koso-ki” means “fragrant grass memorial” because Akegarasu loved the orchids called “fragrant grass.”

I don’t know when BTC started observing Koso-ki but I would like to think it started when Rev. Saito joined our temple two years after Akegarasu’s passing in 1954. It might possibly have started in 1977 when BTC celebrated Akegarasu’s 100th birthday with the publication of two translations, *The Fundamental Spirit of Buddhism* (translated by Rev. Kubose with help from Nancy DeRoin) and *Shout of Buddha* (translated by Rev. Saito and Joan Sweany). When I joined the temple in the late 1970s, I remember Koso-ki was the one Sunday when Miyoko Nozawa appeared on the altar platform wearing her minister robes (and also, she made fantastic manju, bean-cakes, as an offering to share with everyone). Mrs. Nozawa had the initial ordination, tokudo, in Japan and considered Akegarasu her teacher although she had not studied directly under him as our two ministers did.

Beneath the Waves

If you have ever worked in the temple kitchen, you know that mysterious underground forces whisk away dirty towels and dishcloths and produce them a week later, clean and folded. These forces are the Laundry Elves. They are so secret that even though I am occasionally one of them and could ID a few other fellow Elves in a police lineup, I couldn’t ID the entire underground Laundry Elf Army. I suspect there has been an unbroken line of Laundry Elves going back decades, all mostly un-thanked, unless they are caught darting into the kitchen and furtively stuffing the clean towels back into the towel bin. Also strange is that the number of towels at the temple seems to have *increased* over the years despite all this illicit back and forth. How does that happen?

The Thank You section of the Bulletin includes a plea for people to send in recognitions. From 2011 to 2016, the years I served as Bulletin editor, I think maybe only one person ever sent me something. Sometimes I had to track people down when something special happened in order to figure out whom to thank.



Rev. Patti Nakai
Resident Minister

This article continues on page 7 column 1.



Ann Yi
BTC President

This article continues on page 6 column 1.

AUGUST 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 <<<

- August 17—**Bon Odori dance – 7:30 pm**
- August 18—**Obon Service**
- August 25—**Koso-ki (Akegarasu memorial)**

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: August 23.
- **Bulletin submissions**—Deadline for notices and articles: every month, 6 pm, the Thursday 15 days prior to mailing. This month: August 8.
- **Temple Board Meeting**—Once a month, Sunday, 12:30 pm. This month: August 25.
- **Upaya Helpers** (refreshment service, community outreach, ping pong, etc.) Albert Gonzalez: albertgbc@gmail.com
- **Cook It Forward** (feeding unhoused persons)—<https://www.facebook.com/groups/CookItForward/>

Meditation & Buddhist Education

- **Buddhism Study Class**—On break for the summer. Resumes in the fall. No previous Buddhism study required.
- **Dharma School (for school-age children)**— On break for the summer. Resumes September 8.

- **Introduction to Buddhism**—offered periodically throughout the year. Next session starts August 7, 2019. E-mail Nancey Epperson: naepperson14@gmail.com.

- **Meditation**— On break for the summer. Resumes in September.

- **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. E-mail DJ Lortie: djaikibudo@gmail.com.

- **Asoka Society** (refreshment service, social club, outings, etc.)—3rd Saturday every month, 1 pm. ~~This month: August 10 (moved to accommodate Bon Odori preparations).~~ **August meeting cancelled**

- **Iaido** (Japanese Swordsmanship)—Mondays, 7-9 pm.

- **Qigong** (Chinese Movement)—Tuesdays, 11-12:30 pm. 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. E-mail kokyotaiko@buddhisttemplechicago.org to confirm.

- **Ukulele Group**—On hiatus in August. E-mail Ruth Abbinanti: fabbianti@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, April Kellman

Feedback & Submissions Questions, comments, corrections and 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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- ✿ 6/02 Monthly memorial service. *** Chanting class met.
- ✿ 6/03 Rev. Nakai attended Chicago Japanese American Council meeting at Skokie Public Library.
- ✿ 6/06 Rev. Nakai conducted private memorial service for Margaret “Peggy” Waters at family’s home. Ms. Waters is survived by daughters Susan Stonequist and Cynthia Ozimek.
- ✿ 06/06-10 Special 4-day Iaido seminar at BTC.
- ✿ 06/09 Dharma School Sunday chaired by Dharma School students. *** Sutra study class met.
- ✿ 06/13 Quang Minh Temple monks visited BTC on their annual Uptown pilgrimage.
- ✿ 06/15 Gelatin art class met. *** Asoka Society did annual pre-festival cleaning of kitchen.
- ✿ 06/16 Father’s Day service.
- ✿ 06/18 Rev. Nakai conducted cremation service for Barbara Shimashita at Lakeview Funeral Home. Mrs. Shimashita is survived by son John. *** Bon Odori teachers met to practice the 2019 program
- ✿ 06/21 July bulletin mailed. *** Rev. Nakai conducted funeral service for Yukiko Yanagidate at Lakeview Funeral Home. Mrs. Yanagidate is survived by sons Alan and Glenn.
- ✿ 06/23 Natsu Matsuri
- ✿ 06/25 Temple clean up
- ✿ 06/29 Rev. Nakai conducted 49th day service for Tak Tomiyama at BTC.
- ✿ 06/30 Pride Sunday service with guest speaker J.J. Ueunten. *** Board of directors met.

Our deepest sympathy to
the family and friends of:
Barbara Shimashita
Peggy Waters
Yukiko Yanagidate

THANK YOU!

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

Service & Hospitality

- **Sunday Service Participants:** Sue Balsam, Bill Bohlman, Glenn Fujiura, Dharma School Students, Drea Gallaga, Candy Minx, Peter Mizuki, Otto Patzwaldt, Roxanne Shimizu, Diana Schoendorff
- **Lay Leaders:** Bill Bohlman, Sue Balsam, Nancey Epperson, Wendy Fawcett, Lynnell Long, Carlos Meza, Gary T. Nakai, Miriam Solon
- **Musicians:** Drea Gallaga
- **Audio Controls:** Wendy and Jacob Fawcett, Gary T. Nakai
- **Bulletin Mailing:** Dennis Chan, Noreen Enkoji, Ed Horiuchi, Haru Ito, April Kellman, Masa Nakata, Mary Ozaki
- **Sunday Service Refreshments:** Noreen Enkoji, Anna Idol, Haru Ito, Peter Mizuki, Kiyo Omachi

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:** Adam Kellman, Candy Minx
- **Sweeping, mopping, vacuuming:** Mary Harvey, Michael Yasukawa
- **Restocking paper towels and toilet paper:** Miriam Solon
- **Watering plants, laundering kitchen towels and aprons:** Alice Murata
- **Clearing trash from Temple exterior:** Mary Harvey
- **Cleaning minister’s residence:** Dharma School
- **Maintaining and updating Temple website:** Wendy Fawcett, Glenn Fujiura
- **Maintaining and updating Temple computer:** John Kelly, Gary T. Nakai
- **Setting up and taking down chairs & tables:** Too many to thank—thanks to all!

Natsu Matsuri 2019

By Bill Bohlman

The key to a successful Natsu Matsuri festival is dedicated volunteers. This year, once again, a Sangha working as one made Natsu Matsuri a resounding success. Every aspect of the festival depends on volunteers.

The main attraction of the festival has always been the food. To festival attendees it may look simple as food is ready when they want it. However, behind the scenes a lot has taken place. This year we sold more than 700 teriyaki chicken dinners. Starting with the Saturday preparation of the chickens in the BTC secret sauce, through the construction of the barbecue pit, to the 5 am arrival of Team Teriyaki to begin to cook the chickens (1), everything proceeded seamlessly. Even the predicted storms stayed away until after the festival.

In the kitchen, a similarly dedicated crew spent Saturday prepping ingredients. On Sunday dozens arrived early to prepare the chirashi and inari. Throughout the day on Sunday they worked serving (2) a steady stream of customers. At the end of the day every bit of food had been sold.

On the stage, performances included Taiko (3), Iaido (4), Aikido (5), Kyudo (6) and an O Bon Odori preview. This year's cultural exhibit focused on samurai. Traditional samurai armor and various weapons allowed visitors to see these items up close. In the hondo a Dharmathon of short presentations about Buddhism by our lay leaders provided a chance for quiet reflection. Limited space allowed for only a few vendors and crafts including jewelry, artworks, Native American items and a kumihimo "make & take".

For many years, the same people have been in charge of the same responsibilities. This year began the handing off of some of these jobs to a younger group of individuals. Of course, at BTC younger is a relative term. Many others helped with the raffle, food ticket sales (7), arranging for parking, food service, set up and clean up; I hesitate to thank individuals by name since I will surely miss someone. Suffice to say that Natsu Matsuri is a true group effort; every person is important to its success. As chairman for more than twenty years, each year my job gets easier due to our amazing Sangha. Thank you for all you do.



Old Dog, New Trick

By Chuck Izui

Every year, near the end of Natsu Matsuri, a promotion is done where it's announced that all are welcome to participate in the upcoming August Bon Odori. Japanese folk music is played and a handful of excellent dancers show us all some of the traditional dance moves that will happen on the night of Bon Odori. I believe that Rev. Patti mentioned to me that the dancing at Bon Odori is done to imitate the actual motions that our ancestors did generations ago – coal mining, fishing, harvesting, etc. By doing these dances we don't merely mimic our ancestors, but we honor and welcome them back into our consciousness during Bon Odori and Obon. I may be wrong about this recollection since I'm a poor listener and even poorer Buddhist, but this story works for me, so I'm sticking by it. I like Bon Odori, so I often attend. I rarely go to Obon service and typically attend, if possible, only one [Sunday] service per year.

I do, however, make it a point to help out at Natsu Matsuri every year. I think that I've helped at the summer festival, in some manner, for most of the past 40 years. Before that, like most sansei who attended the festival as kids, I played games, sold raffle tickets, helped in booths, maybe sold some hot dogs or tacos and generally ran around with friends. Sadly, every year there are fewer nisei due to death or incapacity. There might be fewer sansei for the same reasons, but possibly it's simply due to lack of interest.

With no research or facts to back me up, I privately complain that the financial benefit of Natsu Matsuri must be dwindling and has less monetary benefit to the temple. After festival my back hurts, my arms hurt, I'm dehydrated, and I get tired of kitchen bosses yelling at me. Is it really worth the effort? Many of those helping could simply write checks and the dollars generated may come surprisingly close to the Natsu Matsuri revenue.

But this year, after a long shift in the kitchen, the Bon Odori promo came to life, and it finally struck me that Natsu Matsuri is my Obon and Bon Odori. I help at the festival by doing things that my father and mother did years ago. By cooking rice or



Chuck Izui preparing rice for chirashi and inari as part of the Natsu Matsuri kitchen crew.

Photo: Rev. Patti Nakai

grilling chicken or running the cultural exhibit or making chirashi or cleaning tables or cooking udon or building a stage, we honor our parents and grandparents and aunts and uncles and friends when we do the same things that they did a generation ago. Many nisei did these same things because that's what their parents did before them. For those temple members who didn't have parents doing these things, I salute you for working hard during Natsu Matsuri and creating your own traditions whether you know it or not. Some of you bring your children to help at the festival, and maybe it's something they'll remember well into adulthood. One never knows when a memory is being created. I often thought Natsu Matsuri continues because of a few crazy people who just didn't know when to quit. Now I'm thinking those few crazy people already knew what I just discovered.

Life is change, so I'm not sure what this all means or whether this summer festival will continue. All I know is that next June I have one job lined up, and I'll think about my mom and dad and a host of other people when I do it.

Beneath the Waves

(continued from page 1)

Initially, I thought that this shortage of feedback was due to indifference from our readers. But as I got to know the temple better, I began to realize that, to the contrary, our readers were many kinds of elves doing so much for the temple in tiny ways that sending every single act would eventually make the Thank You section eight pages in 3-point font. If you are someone who does ten things for the temple when you are there, maybe it seems too daunting a task to send the editor lists of ten things you saw each of ten other people do, especially when sometimes you are all doing them together.

In addition to the laundry, here is a woefully incomplete list of things I happen to know have been given to the temple, sometimes regularly:

- Trivets, mugs, dishes, bowls, platters
- Computer monitor, printer, electric stapler, binders
- Envelopes used to send out the Natsu Matsuri raffle (including the return envelope)
- Hundreds of dollars' worth of stamps
- Brand new cash box with separate slots for bills
- Pens, notepads, lotions, towels, dishcloths, toiletries

In addition, people often refuse reimbursement (e.g. the cost of emergency ice for the Spaghetti Dinner; taxicab fare while running a temple errand; emergency printer paper, etc.).

That's just a very short list of some *stuff* we get free but don't include on our Thank You or Acknowledgements lists. What is the cost of the labor and time people put in? Only 10% of an iceberg is above water, with the rest submerged and unseen. Is 90% of the work at the temple hidden and unknown? It's impossible to say because it's invisible. But in my gut, the math sounds about right. So, let me take the opportunity now to thank the 90%.

To the elves and the saints, to the bodhisattvas and the buddhas, to the worker bees and the gift givers – you know who you are – thank you, thank you, thank you. The sum of these invisible acts of kindness makes up the invisible but much-felt foundation that is our sangha.

Beneath the Waves

(continued from previous column)

The visible gifts are incredibly important too. If you don't already, pour over the Thank You section once in a while and read through the Acknowledgements (which are two months behind due to the lag that printing and production cause). And please, if you get a moment, send us those additional Thank Yous that the Bulletin team might have missed.

This month, Bill Bohlman, our Natsu Matsuri chair, has written up the thank yous for our biggest visible event of the year. In the decade plus that he has handled this event, he has always taken time to thank the people who helped. I would also like to thank everybody who helped and also thank him for his long-time service in a difficult and, yes, I'll say it – thankless job.

Thank you.



Members of the Natsu Matsuri kitchen crew

Photo by George Nagata

Presidential Vacancy

Due to personal reasons, Ann Yi has resigned her position as board president and from the board of directors. We want to thank Ann for all she has done for the temple.

As per the temple bylaws, a person will be selected by the board of directors at the August 25, 2019 board meeting to fill the balance of the current presidential term. As per the bylaws, any member of more than one year in good standing may submit their name for consideration.

Koso-ki: Remembering the Teacher

(continued from page 1)

After Mrs. Nozawa's health declined and she passed away in 1994, BTC stopped observing Koso-ki. For Rev. Gyomay Kubose, it was impossible to forget his teacher, but with advanced age he had difficulty keeping dates straight, so it was a shame that others didn't feel Koso-ki was as important as Mrs. Nozawa did. When I returned to BTC in 1995 as a volunteer minister, I had Koso-ki Sunday put back on the temple calendar. For a few years the Koso-ki service included Rev. Kubose tearfully pouring out his gratitude to his teacher. But in the last couple years of his life he was unable to attend this important occasion for expressing his thankfulness.

Koso-ki along with the occasions of Rosen-ki (memorial for Manshi Kiyozawa) and Ho-on-ko (Shinran's memorial) remind us that our temple didn't just "pop up" out of some mastermind's solitary vision, but our temple's birth was possible due to the centuries of transmission of the Buddha's teachings through the devoted students and followers in Asia. Our temple's mission statement (seen in every bulletin issue) clarifies what was misleading in the old "founding principle" that used to be printed in our directory. Buddhism recognizes all things are changing, including how the teachings are presented in different eras, locations and cultures, so there really isn't a completely "new" direction. Rev. Kubose and Rev. Saito continued in the direction of their teacher, Akegarasu, of his teacher Kiyozawa and of Shinran and the teachers before him. It is the direction of bringing the teachings of freedom and equality to people in expressions, verbal and non-verbal, that can touch them.

Nikkei Night: Talkin' bout our Generation

Dance featuring the Knu (er) Basics playing songs from the 60's & 70's. They used to play at Viking Hall back in the day.

Date: Saturday, September 21, 2019

Place: Midwest Buddhist Temple

Time: 7:30-11:00 pm

Fundraiser with proceeds going to JAFL Youth programs and MBT.

For information and tickets, please contact Lynn Maruyama: lmaruyama114@gmail.com

Koso-ki: Remembering the Teacher

(continued from previous column)



Statue of Haya Akegarasu in his hometown of Hakusan City, Japan

It may seem a paradox but only by following a teacher, by carefully studying the teachings, by interacting with fellow seekers – only with those three treasures of Buddha, Dharma and Sangha do we discover the treasure of our own unique life. How fortunate we are at BTC to hear the clear voice of Akegarasu:

Note well the free shout of the independent person, his lonely mind, his feelings of longing, his figure which is most strong and most weak. Taste the new world of life you will find here, a world created, after deep introspection, by the total annihilation of self. There is no room for seeing evil or for prayers to gods; there is no so-called morality and no so-called religion. There is only living, enjoying, struggling – as a person, as what I am ... I adore that Gautama Buddha who shouted, "Under the heavens and on all the earth, alone, I am noble!"

[from "Declaration of the Independent Man" in *Shout of Buddha*]



The Buddhist Temple of Chicago

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AUGUST 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	2 7 pm Taiko	3
4 11 am Monthly Memorial 5 pm Aikido	5 7 pm laido	6 11 am Qi Gong 7:30 pm Bon Odori practice	7 6:30 pm Introduction to Buddhism	8 6 pm Bulletin Submissions Deadline 7:30pm Bon Odori practice	9 7 pm Taiko	10 4:00 pm Aseka Society CANCELLED
11 11 am Regular Service 5 pm Aikido	12 7 pm laido	13 11 am Qi Gong 7:30 pm Bon Odori practice	14 6:30 pm Introduction to Buddhism	16 7:30 pm Bon Odori practice	19 7 pm Taiko	17 7:30 pm Bon Odori dance
18 OBON / HATSUBON 11 am Obon Service 5 pm Aikido	19 7 pm laido	20 11 am Qi Gong	21 6:30 pm Introduction to Buddhism	22	23 10 am Bulletin Mailing 7 pm Taiko	24
25 KOSO-KI (Akegarasu Memorial) 11 am Regular Service 12:30 pm Board Meeting 5 pm Aikido	26 7 pm laido	27 11 am Qi Gong	28 6:30 pm Introduction to Buddhism	29	30 7 pm Taiko	31