

the Dharma

January 2021



San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin

640 North Fifth Street, San Jose, CA 95112

sjbc@sjbetsuin.org

Office: 408-293-9292 Fax: 408-293-0433

2021

BY G. SAKAMOTO

It's just four digits, two thousand twenty-one.

There will be 365 days in the year 2021 as there have been in any other year that those of us alive now have known.

But these same four digits hold so much hope and promise.

Our expectations for these next 365 days may exceed what we expected for the past four digits. Our understanding of any disappointment of those expectations may be greater than it was in the four digits previous to this.

2020, these very even, balanced looking four digits have meant imbalance, despair, horror, weirdness (orange skies), mask wearing, an appreciation for the use of good vocabulary, a scant tolerance of politics, realizations of the amount of work we must yet do as a society as well as the amount that has been done as well as the amount that has been forgotten.

We have sometimes found inner strength and sometimes found our limitations. We've hit walls and broken them down. We've smiled and not been seen, but learned to smile with our eyes and nod in agreement. We've been grateful for the digital world and at the same time, more grateful for the earth and its wonders.

In fighting this very small set of cells, having been identified as a pandemic, which have affected, at this writing, well over 72 million people in the world and been the identified cause of death of well over 1.6 million people on this earth, we have had to look at ourselves to see what we humans are, what we can contribute and whether we can expect anything more of ourselves.

And yet-

There have been new inhabitants of the earth that have been born. There have been giant advances in science very quickly. There have been voyages into the universe and into the depths of the earth's oceans. What we do also know from learning and living through this year that is coming to an end is that there is harmony in the world. That fewer cars on the road mean less greenhouse gas emissions which is better for the environment. We care more about the creatures and foliage in the great expanses of the world that have suffered through massive wildfires this year and in past years. We hug our pets and children more closely. We equally hug and miss our elders more than before. We think about people and those situations as a whole, more than we did the year before. The intensity of our lives has become more dense, sharper, deeper in color, harsher in aspect.

We have found harmony despite the crazy disparate, challenges, the irrationality & difficulty of life we've seen and experienced. But, this is something that we must know already. Life means there is suffering (first of the Four Noble Truths). It is more rare NOT to experience this, than TO experience this. And we can skip all the way through everything, being JodoShinshu Buddhists, and know that Amida guarantees birth into the Pure Land. Whether this is immediately after death, whether it is in life, or whether it is in various other

ways waiting, in the Pure Land, we have been assured by Amida's Vow, that this birth into the Pure Land is real.

We (Rinban and Kathy) once tried creating a picture book with original drawings of The Amida Kyo. It was lost, somewhere in the files, archives or recycling of the BCA.

But in trying to draw what we thought of to the words of the Amida Kyo, we found ourselves knowing that it was all an illusion. There was nothing to draw really, at the time. It was in our imaginations only, very literally, a visual translation of the words of the sutra. But what we saw when we looked up, into the world in which we lived, from the paper upon which we were trying to relate the sutra for the sake of introducing children, to the wondrous words, we found beauty, always, that we hadn't seen before. We are not enlightened, so why or how could we draw the Pure Land? By what audacity did we even begin this project?

We are older and maybe even a little bit wiser now. We LOVED SJObon@Home and all the ways the sangha worked together on all the events and efforts during this past year.

So, this is our message to you - it is of hope, gratitude and happiness. Be happy. Be safe. Be well. Our sincere wishes for a wonderful 2021 for all of us!

Namo Amida Butsu
Rinban, Kathy (and ALL the rest of the household!)

日日是好日 (NICH I NICH I KORE KOUJITSU, EVERY DAY IS A GOOD DAY.)

BY ETSUKO MIKAME

This is a story about Zen master, Unmon and his disciples. One day, Master Unmon asked his disciples ;“About the fifteen days before I do not ask you. Now that try to say something about after the fifteenth day.” Then, Nobody answered. Unmon himself answered for everyone,” 日日是好日 (Nichi nichi kore koujitsu) or “Every day is a good day.”

If you interpret this word as it is, it can be understood as the positive message like “let’s make our every day better, however he meant that “every day is a brand-new day and special.” So, I accepted this message from the true meaning of this word, “Just live your “today” and “now” which is given to you sincerely without any your judgments such as good or bad.”

This reminded me of the early days of Shinran Shonin. When Shinran Shonin was nine years old, he became a monk, he was sent to a temple due to his family situation. At the age of nine, Shinran Shonin accepted his family situation and decided to become a monk. In 1182, on a spring evening, his uncle took little Shinran Shonin to a temple called Shoren-in, Blue Lotus Temple, in Kyoto. At Shorenin Temple, Shinran Shonin was to become a monk in an ordination ceremony. Since it was already evening, the monk of the Shoren-in Temple told Shinran Shonin that, “Today, it is already dark, so let us hold the ceremony tomorrow morning.” But Shinran Shonin told the monk that he wanted to have the ceremony right now; otherwise, he may change his mind the next morning, and he may not want to become a monk. He then composed a poem and read:

"You assume that you can see the blooming cherry blossoms tomorrow, but they could scatter and fall over the night with a blast of storm."

The monk was struck by Shinran Shonin's determination, and he conducted the ceremony for Shinran Shonin that night, and Shinran Shonin became a monk.

We can never know what is going to happen tomorrow. We can guess, presume or plan what we are going to do tomorrow, but nothing is guaranteed. We may change our minds or the situation may change. Always keep in mind, "Today might be the last day of my life." This is not only from Steve Jobs. It is originally from Shinran Shonin.

Like little Shinran shonin taught us, Master Unmon pointed out that we shouldn't miss this moment and should cherish it because tomorrow is never guaranteed.

People hope to have a better day than yesterday and others. However, if we take it for granted that we live a peaceful and safe day, we might lose the heart of gratitude.

When we live our lives in this world, you might have many wonderful experiences, but on the other hands, you may find that various things happen every day that sometimes bother you, or that the storm blows and you get stuck in your life. But, even under the difficult time, every day is an irreplaceable day, and it is a time that never returns on the same day. What Master Unmon shows us through "日日是好日 - every day is a good day" will make us remind the importance of a refreshing perspective to find the beauty of each day, and to accept the moment as it is without our judgments.

So, let us start practicing "日日是好日 - every day is a good day" on our own pace from this moment, maybe it is a great chance for us to start it at the beginning of the year.

PRESIDENT MESSAGE

BY STEVE ONISHI

Happy (It's Not 2020 Anymore) New Year!

Wow! What an incredible year it has been. One that we will all remember for a long time...not unlike 1989 (Loma Prieta Earthquake) or 2001 (attacks on the World Trade Center). How can we forget the global pandemic, social injustice issues, climate change (wildfires, hurricanes, drought, etc.), extreme partisan politics...remember impeachment?

Well, the good news is that it is now 2021! Even in a year like 2020, though, I learned a lot about the character of the people of our Sangha. I learned that we do not complain about the current shelter in place situation...unlike others around the country that insist on meeting in large groups unmasked. I learned that we have many "frontline workers" that continue to put their own health at risk while helping the community at large. I learned that we have many creative members that continue to come up with new ideas on how we can provide service to our Sangha.

One of the downsides to the current situation, is that I do not get a chance to meet face to face with you, the members of the Sangha. I do know many of you as the Onishi family has been a part of this Sangha for generations. I remember my father (and recently learned my uncle) used to drive a church bus to pick up and drop off kids to Dharma school many years ago! Can you believe that?! We used to have a couple of church busses! For others, especially any newer members, I sincerely hope to meet you once we can again attend

church functions. I just ask that you not get upset with me if I forget your names! I have a terrible time remembering names. Just ask my wife....you know, what's her name!

My expectation is that we will continue to operate remotely for at least the first part of the year. So, if you have ideas on how we can best serve the Sangha or the rest of the community for that matter, please let me or any of the Board members know. We are anxious to hear your thoughts!

I also would like to thank Ed Nodohara for his leadership these past 2 years as temple President. It certainly has been a tumultuous time and he has successfully lead us through it. As we start the New Year, we will be making some minor structural changes to the Board of Directors. These changes are intended to make the Board more responsive to both the temple requirements and Sangha desires.

So, Happy New Year 2021 to everyone! I am excited about what the new year has to offer. So stay tuned! Don't forget to wear your mask to "protect all who are weaker than myself"!

EDITOR'S MESSAGE

HAPPY YEAR 2021!

Well, we made it to the end of this year in spite of the pandemic. But thousands did not. It is still a sad and scary time.

Sheltering at home, wearing a mask, social distancing are some of the ways to keep us safe, although there are still some people who do not feel the need to do any of this. I will never understand these illogical thinking and behavior.

Let us hope, in addition to all of this being over, that the new administration within our country will make the right decisions for the sake of the people.
the entire country and for the world.

We look forward to when we can go to the temple for services and events. It's good that some of the organizations are still doing things such as
the scouts with collecting bottles, plastics and cans. Other organizations are doing things still in spite of this difficult time.

So, as the old year ends and a new one begins, I wish you all good things in the coming year. Continue being safe.

In gassho,

Sally Idemoto

GENERATIONS



In conversation with **CHERYL & ADAM SWEENEY** interviewed by Sydnie Kohara

As we move forward into the next phase of our Generations Campaign, one SJBCB family is launching the development project with a significant gift to help kick things off. Cheryl and Adam Sweeney recently spoke with former Bay Area journalist Sydnie Kohara about the important role the church has played in their lives for the last 25 years. They share why they're so passionate about supporting a thriving Temple and Japantown community for their children, and generations to come. Here are excerpts from their conversation.

Tell us about your family's involvement with SJBCB.

Cheryl: My father and his family moved to the Bay Area from Santa Maria. He became involved with the Betsuin as a way to connect and meet other Japanese-Americans in the area. He made some lifelong friendships and then when he had his family, which was my mom, brother, and myself, they started me in Dharma School when I think I was five. My brother and I joined the Junior Choir early on, and that got our whole family involved in traveling and doing things together with the other families at the temple. As I got older, I got involved with the junior YBA and the high school Dharma School group.

During college, I attended Stanford, but I still kept a connection with the temple. When we started our own family, then of course we brought our kids in and became much more involved with the temple again. I think that Adam realized very soon, early on when we were dating, that family and the San Jose Japantown community are a huge part of my life. It's the connections to the people, friends, and families in our community. It's about coming together, volunteering together, and being there for each other.

Adam: I grew up in South Florida. There aren't a lot of Japanese people in South Florida. I think my first introduction to Japanese culture was being taken out to dinner by my uncle to a sushi restaurant in Palo Alto. And that was quite the eye-opening experience. It was wonderful, of course.

I met Cheryl because we lived in the same (Stanford) dorm together and Cheryl was the cute girl down the hall who had a computer. I was a computer science student in need of a computer. So somehow, I found myself using her computer and things kind of went from there. And meeting Cheryl's parents, I was basically willing to eat anything they put in front of me, and actually enjoy it. Showing up at New Year's and eating all the crazy stuff they put on my plate. Like, "Okay, this is going to keep your hair black." Which didn't work out at all. A lot of that kind of fun stuff, it was really how I got drawn in.



A Dharma School group pic of close friends with teacher and mentor, Dr. Kenji Akahoshi in 1988 (Cheryl, pictured third from right)

Like going to Obon every year, getting dragged out there to put on a Happi coat and try to dance. I am the world's worst dancer ever. And I think the thing that really struck me is that no one laughed me out of the place. People have always been very friendly, very welcoming, very open to having me there since the beginning. Which is just wonderful. And it's something that I've never really experienced in other places in my life. I never really had that before ending up with Cheryl in the Japanese-American community around here.

You told me the church and community have been a part of your lives every week for the last 15 years. What is it that has kept you both so connected?

Cheryl: Growing up in and around the Betsuin my whole life, it has laid a foundation for me personally. Not only with my faith, but just the fact that it's very accepting and very

straightforward and very open. There are no strict rules and things, it's more like providing guidance. And for me, that's really helped me to build myself spiritually and always having kind of a base to come back to.

Both of my parents are gone now, and being active at the Betsuin makes me feel close to them. They always stressed the importance of helping others and appreciating our culture. I'm inspired by the dedication of my parents' friends and other lifelong members who put so much into building what we have today, and I'm so grateful to still have them around. They connect me, and our children, to my parents, and they are examples of the kind of person that I hope to be.

Adam: I was never a very good Jewish boy, I have to say. I did spend some time as a young man going to the temple in our small town and did the bar mitzvah thing. But I kind of ended it there. But when I was more like college age, I really did start to appreciate that having a community of people who care about each other, who do things together, to look out for each other and make sure that everyone is okay together as a community is really something. It's very special and it's something to hang onto and to value.

Cheryl: I love our San Jose Obon. I feel like not only is it an opportunity for our community to celebrate and for everyone to come together, multiple generations of families and things, but I think the temple has also tried to make it very accessible to everyone. I have great memories of participating in the Obon odori with my Mom, cousins, and friends growing up, and I enjoy sharing that tradition with my daughter, Melody. Going to the practices, getting dressed up, and getting out there with so many people, from within and outside the Betsuin community, is something I cherish.

Obon is also a ton of work, but I have fond memories of being out there helping every year since I was little. As a leader with Jr. YBA and Scouts, I get to help organize kids doing the same things I did, and I hope that

the family tradition of volunteering at Obon that my friends and I grew up with continues as their family tradition, too.



Jr. YBA Big Trip to Disneyland
(Kimo, pictured back row, far right)
June 30, 2018

How have you engaged your children in temple activities? What impact has it had on them?

Cheryl: Our son, (Kimo, 17) joined Cub Scouts when he was five. His experience as a Scout, largely thanks to the dedication of the Scouting leaders, taught Kimo to make service to others, leadership, and compassion for the people around him an ingrained part of who he is. He joined Jr. YBA in 8th grade, where he's led activities for years. He likes helping to make YBA fun for his peers and bringing everyone together. He has friends from Scouts and YBA that he's known all his life. They're like a bunch of cousins in a big, extended family.



Kimo Sweeney receiving Metta award with parents Adam and Cheryl Sweeney on Boy Scout Sunday, February 10, 2013

Our daughter (Melody, 21) was very into doing things with the Betsuin. She went to Dharma School all the way through and ended up becoming a teacher's aide and helping in the classroom with the younger kids for her last few years. She was a Girl Scout all the way through high school, too. Melody really enjoyed working with the younger girls at the Betsuin All Girl Scouts events like Thinking Day, Valentines Day, and Bridging. And then she joined YBA in high school and became really involved with the leadership there. And she was very heavily involved with San Jose Taiko. Growing up in the Japantown community, it's just very deeply embedded in who she is, I think, as a person and her cultural identity. So I think that wherever she goes, she'll always have that part of it.



Melody Sweeney and Jessica Lum with Rinban Sakamoto accepting Senior Padma Award, Girl Scout Sunday, March 19, 2016

Your family has made a substantial contribution to Phase II of SJBCB's Generations Campaign. What inspired you to make this donation?

Adam: We have been talking about rebuilding the education building for many years. And that was one of the main things that got me to go and talk to Rinban Sakamoto. I wanted to say, "We're here, we're going to help you make this happen." We've all benefited from this community, from this church for a long time. We want it to be there for our kids. We want it to be there for our kids' kids. We're hoping to give a big enough gift that we really help to jumpstart this and make it happen.

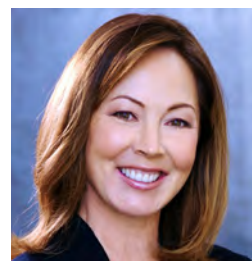
Cheryl: We can't take for granted that the Betsuin is always going to be there. We can't take for granted that this amazing Japantown in San Jose is going to be there if we don't do

our part to invest in it and be involved in it. We can't just expect it to be there if we don't do what we can to keep it going. We need to do things now to preserve it.

Your gift demonstrates giving at the highest level. What words of encouragement could you share to inspire others to donate?

Adam: I think back to who made this happen 80 years ago or whenever it was, when the church first started. How did they ever make this happen? We've lived off of everything that all those people before us put into the community. And it's our turn. It's our turn to help. And I hope that other people feel the same way. I hope that we can build something really special here, that people can enjoy and appreciate and make it a part of their lives for the next 50 years. It's time for that.

Cheryl: I've seen time and time again our community come together for a purpose. If someone is suffering or just needs a little assistance or is having trouble, there are always other people that come to their aid without even being asked. Everyone backs each other up. We're hoping that we can all come together and maybe inspire some others to think about contributing what they can as an investment for our future, for the future generations.



Sydnie Kohara is an Emmy award-winning international journalist who has covered business news around the world for CNBC. Her communications consulting practice includes strategic messaging and leadership positioning as well as building executive presence in the digital world. Sydnie is working with SJBCB with the Phase II campaign communications strategy and storytelling. Born and raised in Louisiana, Sydnie's family was recently profiled in a magazine story about the incarceration of Japanese Americans near her hometown during WWII. The authors are currently writing a book based on their research.

BETSUIN COVID-19 UPDATE

BY RANDY SUZUKI

With the continuing rise in COVID-19 cases in Santa Clara County the San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin is strictly following sheltering and operational guidelines set by the Santa Clara County Department of Health.

The Hondo and office will remain closed to the Sangha and public for your safety. Even though the Betsuin office is closed, staff is answering phones and replying to voicemail and email as quickly as possible. All Sunday services and special services will be virtual until it is safe to gather indoors; visit www.sjbetsuin.org or search for "SJ Betsuin Videos" on Youtube. Donations and pledges can be made via the website or dropped off in the office mail slot next to the front doors.

Rinban Sakamoto and Rev. Mikame are available for virtual services via Zoom as well as small **outdoor** inperson services held at funeral homes or cemeteries following social distancing, and mask requirements. We understand that virtual services can be a challenge for some but we ask that families refrain from gathering and participate only by households, or very small limited social bubbles.

The Nokotsudo is open by appointment only scheduled in advance so that distancing, and sanitizing can be managed between visitors. Visits are limited to 4 or less people at a time and masks are required. We ask that you refrain from using the incense burners for your safety.

Please call or email the Betsuin office to schedule services, Nokotsudo visits, or any other questions. We appreciate voicemail messages if we miss your call.

Phone: 1-408-293-9292

Email: sjbc@sjbetsuin.org

We wish you all a safe and warm holiday season.

SAN JOSE BUDDHIST CHURCH BETSUIN BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

[HTTPS://MEET.GOOGLE.COM/FIG-AYCC-TUD](https://meet.google.com/fig-aycc-tud)

DECEMBER 3, 2020, 7:00PM

A. MOTIONS:

1. Motion by Dennis Akizuki to adopt the minutes as amended, seconded by Gloria Yamauchi. Motion passed.
2. Angeles Investments, Paul Endo has contacted Hideaki Mizuno, director of BCA Funds. Mr. Mizuno said the temple already has an account for Angeles for \$15K+. The investment amount is just over one million. Since we are investing with BCA, our annual fee will be discounted. Account is liquid so withdrawing at any time is not a problem. Motion made by Mas Nishimura to place the entire investment into a growth fund. Seconded by Janice Doi. Motion passed with 2 abstentions: Paul Endo, Dennis Akizuki
3. Amy Lin-Furukawa motioned to nominate the following: Kevin Kitagawa, Paul Endo, Mas Nishimura, Larry Handa for Vice Presidents, seconded by Joyce Iwasaki, motion passed with 4 abstentions by Kevin Kitagawa, Paul Endo, Mas Nishimura and Larry Handa.
4. Mas Nishimura motioned Paul Endo as Treasurer, seconded by Kevin Kitagawa, motion also made by Janice Doi and seconded by Mas Nishimura to elect Ed Nodohara as Secretary, both motions were passed with abstention on the second motion by Ed Nodohara.

B. MEETING REPORTS:

1. Correspondence: Thank you note from Martha Onishi in appreciation for the Keiro Kai gifts.
2. Introduction of Dean Osaki: Dean has an extensive knowledge of non-profits. He is our Management Consultant for 6 months. Dean explained that this is a collaborative effort. It all starts with the Board so Board development (new board structure) is at the top of the list. Streamline the board meeting. Komon...staff assessment will all be reviewed. He will be attending the board meeting every month. The Yuki Foundation donated \$20,000 to help defray the cost of hiring Dean Osaki. As soon as they knew that Dean was in place and goals were set, the Foundation wrote a check.
3. New Board structure: Steve Onishi
 - i. There will 4 Vice Presidents: Kevin Kitagawa, Paul Endo, Mas Nishimura, Larry Handa
 - ii. Ministers and Komon and Past Presidents on Executive Committee.
 - iii. Executive committee, Vice Presidents, Advisors will all report to the President.
 - iv. Complete Board Members will not be meeting each month. Executive committee will meet as needed and presumably between whole board meetings.
 - v. Under each Vice President there will be 5 committees: Operations, Programs, Fundraising, Communication and Finance/HR.
 - vi. Goal is to start this restructured board in early 2021
4. Generations Pickers – Steve Onishi has had contact with Mike Mori. Got to get the word out about this donation program. It's free money.
5. Jim McClure reported that the City of San Jose Transportation Dept. has contacted the Betsuin regarding the 5th Street crosswalk safety. Because of the uncertainty of where we would like to place the crosswalk, the decision to install the changes need to be delayed. Mostly spoke about the Obon dance line and how it might have to expand to neighbor's to properties because of the number

- of dancers; getting rid of booths, etc. is not advisable. Jim says manpower is not a problem since much of the construction has been streamlined. To hire a company to furnish booths and set them up to our specs can be prohibitive. Jim's contact is selling his business so this may be a problem.
6. Status of Generation II: Dennis Akizuki said CAW is working on renderings of a two building (Lotus & classrooms and multipurpose building with multi-purpose room, kitchen, media center and conference room as oppose to the original 4 buildings concept for Phase II, Generation II. Construction cost may be about \$15M not included are environmental soil test and others. At the Annual Membership Meeting, December 13th, CAW will present the latest design concept.
 7. Update of ADVG to rewiring/cabling: Kevin Kitagawa. Kevin will meet with Matt Ogawa and Randy Suzuki to assess to run the cable. Target date: Kevin said he could plan for the work to be done by the end of the year. Ken Furukawa will be included in the project.
 8. Michael Jones pursuit of Tokudo, Ed Nodohara wrote to Bishop Harada that Michael Jones has the full support of the San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin Board in his pursuit of the Tokudo ordination.
 9. By-law update: Janice Doi has conferred with our attorney Gene Takagi regarding the changes to the By-laws. Two positions on the Board have not been filled for a long time. We need to elect a Treasurer and a Secretary as part of the cabinet today. Also, if we chose to change the quorum number in the by-laws, we could change the wording of the quorum to say "51% of the Board will constitute a quorum." Refresher session with Gene will be schedule for February 2021 Board meeting.
 10. Jodo Shinshu International Office: With the return of Hatanaka sensei to Japan, a new position opened at the JSIO. Letter from JSIO was received that requires translating English and Japanese documents, corresponding between Japan and JSIO. Rev. Kuwahara was the key person to first contact Mikame Sensei. Hongwanji has requested Reverend Mikame. Bishop Harada and Umezu Sensei requested Mikame Sensei to fill this position. After much negotiations between Rinban Sakamoto, Rev. Mikame and Bishop Harada the position is now an eight hour a week position. Mikame Sensei feels she can do the 8 hour a week job without disruption to the tasks at the Betsuin. Criteria for the position are: bilingual, drivable distance to JSIO and a kaikyoshi minister. This could be a great opportunity for Rev. Mikame. Amy Furukawa-Lin, lawyer and Board member, made very compelling suggestions (out clause & trial period) if Rev. Mikame chooses to take on this JSIO duties. Rinban Sakamoto, Rev. Mikame, Amy Furukawa-Lin, Steve Onishi, Dennis Akizuki and Ed Nodohara will meet to firm up this new position for Rev. Mikame then contact will be made to Kuwahara Sensei, Umezu Sensei and Bishop Harada.
 11. Annual General Meeting: Joyce Iwasaki developed the program for December 13, 2020. Rinban would like to know the order of the speakers. Flyer...Google Meet... Instructions for the Annual Membership Meeting will be on the website. No computer... one can phone in. Something new on the agenda - Incoming President will speak on the New Board Structure.
 12. Ministerial Report: Rinban Sakamoto announced that Rev. Mitchell will be guest speaker this weekend. Joya E New Year's Eve service will be different this year. The Hondo will be lit as in the past, but no guests...only Rinban Sakamoto and Rev. Mikame. The Shoshinge will be recited and the kansho will be rung. After the service, the Shusho will perform the installation of officers.
 13. Morgan Hill Howakai: Mas Nishimura has the website ready to go. It will be operational sometime this week.
 14. IT service -Kevin Kitagawa and Matt Ogawa have been able to reduce the monthly IT service cost. The savings will be well over a thousand dollars a month.
 15. Special Events: Joyce Iwasaki expressed so many positive elements to the special Keiro Kai event held on Nov. 21st. There are many to thank. Video of Keiro Kai is on the website. Larry Handa was instrumental in the logistic of delivering the packages to the waiting delighted recipients. Larry recommends in the future to deliver to shut-ins Keiro members if they are not able to attend the event at the Betsuin. Thank you to the Board members for being part of the celebration.

16. Jr. YBA and Scout reports: Larry Handa has written report. Cub Scouts are having recyclables this Saturday, Dec. 5th, proceeds to be given to Yu-Ai Kai. Rinban was the speaker at the Boy Scouts event...three of our Betsuin members were honored – David Tsukimura (new board member), Denise Kanazawa, John Ogawa.
17. Garden Committee: Dave Pascual reported there are many changes to the garden area in front of the Betsuin office. He would like to recognize those responsible for all the hard work to make the area special. Dave will put an article in the January 2021 Dharma Newsletter.
18. Volunteer Recognition: There are many who have helped at the Betsuin this year with the Shelter-in-Place events... There was mask making, Obon@Home, the garden and Keiro Kai just to name a few. Mas Nishimura will contact Terry Oshidari to offer his help doing virtual Volunteer Recognition.
19. Japanese Language School: Gloria Yamauchi is in the process of finding a new teacher and administrator. Please see written report.
20. Announcements: Janice Doi announced that everyone will be getting an invitation from Japantown Community Congress for a virtual Bonen Kai scheduled for December 29th from 6:30-7:30 pm. Also pick up a Toshi Koshi Soba kit to enjoy reining in the new year! Please purchase your soba kit by December 18th and please register!
21. San Jose Mosaic - Mas Nishimura reported Rinban Sakamoto was on a discussion regarding Obon and Dio De Las Muerta. Shirley Muramoto, a famed koto player played the koto and her son played an instrument. Both Shirley and her son danced in the Obon in the front yard. This is available on YouTube.

Upcoming Service:

New Year's Eve Service

Thursday, December 31st at 7:30pm via YouTube

New Year's Day Service/Installation of Officers

Friday, January 1, 2021 at 10:00am via YouTube

HoOnko Service

Guest Speaker: Former Bishop Rev. Kodo Umezu

Sunday, January 17, 2021 via YouTube

GARDEN LANDSCAPE PROJECT RECOGNITION /APPRECIATION

The Betsuin Board recognizes and appreciates the contributions by made participating organizations and individuals on the Hondo and office garden landscape project. Changes include: new gravel paths, paved areas, benches, reconfigured irrigation, and removal and replacement of plants. Contributions include aluminum cans /plastic bottles recycling to help fund the garden landscape project; in-kind donations; refreshments and snacks; the core group of volunteers augmented by the Saturday volunteers. Our thanks to the following folks:

Recyclables – Primary source for funding the project

Karen Akimoto
Dorothy Sato
Kiyoshi Shintani
Janice Doi
Ted Hashiguchi
Bob Terasaki
Dave Pascual
Alvin Hironaga
Stan Kawamata
Kaz Tamekuni
Emi Tsutsumi

In-kind donations

Ted Hashiguchi
Keith Kadokura

Supporters, snacks and beverages

Office Staff- Diane, Deborah and Randy
Linda /Steve Onishi
Emi Tsutsumi
Lynne Yamaichi
Santo Market – Leslie Kitazumi

Monday, Wednesday and sometimes Friday and Saturday Regular Workers

Ted Hashiguchi
Al Hironaga
Stan Kawamata
Dave Pascual
Bob Terasaki

Saturday Volunteers

Aiden Inoue *
Mitchell Beutler
Brandon Uenaka *
Miya Uenaka
Kailey Wong
Aiden Aniciete *
Glen Kurimoto
Colin Fujikawa *
Jory Fujikawa *
Neeko Hsu *
Deon Hsu *
Branden Hsu *
Derek Fujikawa *
Jun Furukawa *
Keith Kadokura *
Steve Onishi *
Linda Onishi
Mike Mori
Kevin Mori
Ryder Ando
Cole Takeda
Greg Aso
* Scouts/Leaders

GARDEN PROJECT PICTURES





KEIRO KAI

SUBMITTED BY JOYCE IWASAKI

The health and safety of our Betsuin activities during the Covid-19 pandemic directed the Keiro Kai Committee to do things differently while planning for this event. First and foremost, how do we stay connected and engaged with each other during this precautionary time? This year's challenge for the Keiro Kai Committee was to continue to show gratitude to our honorees but in a different and safe way.

The Betsuin Keiro Kai is one way we express our gratitude to the oldest generation in our Sangha. We recognize the contributions, wisdom and strength our honorees give to our Sangha. The Keiro Kai event celebrates their compassion and dedication that leads all of us to live fulfilling lives – a life of deep gratitude, reverence and humility. We honored 80 keiro who are 80 and older.

Since we've been sheltering in place, the Committee decided to give a peace lily houseplant and a box of cookies to each honorees that there will be better days ahead with the idea of good health and happiness are in our future. And hoped the cookies brought brightness to them today. For the two honorees living outside the area, scarves which were made by the Betsuin Sangha Crafters were mailed to them.

Committee Members:	Dennis Akizuki, Deborah Aso, Larry Handa, Al Hironaga, Joyce Iwasaki, Ed Nodohara, Janice Oda, Chris Sandoval, Emi Tsutsumi, Jacque Yamaguchi, Lynne Yamaichi, Rinban Sakamoto, Reverend Mikame
Office Staff:	Cindy Aragaki, Deborah Aso, Mitchell Beutler, Diane Fujioka, Randy Suzuki
Website Post:	Mitchell Beutler, Al Hironaga, Janice Oda
YouTube Host:	Matt Ogawa
YouTube Scriptwriter:	Dennis Akizuki
YouTube Videographer:	Al Hironaga
Delivery Teams:	Larry and Lynn Handa; Al and Karen Hironaga; Ed Nodohara; Gloria Yamauchi and Chris Nodohara; Sara Shoji; Amy Lin-Furukawa; Lynne Yamaichi, Trisha Yamaichi and Yody Chi; Cary Yamaichi and Grant Hill; Steve Oda and Everett Quan; Marissa Kitazumi and Mitchell Kitazumi; Janice Oda and Laura Oda; Joyce Iwasaki and Adele Iwasaki Yen; Emi Tsutsumi
Media:	Mitchell Beutler, Al Hironaga, Mas Nishimura, Janice Oda, Chris Sandoval
Graphic Artist/Print Materials:	Janice Oda
Gift Prep:	Joyce Iwasaki, Janice Oda, Emi Tsutsumi
Vendor Liaison:	Joyce Iwasaki
Gifts:	Peace Lily houseplant coordinated with Bob Uenaka of Cupertino Florist Guava Dreams cookies by Kelley's Kookies coordinated with Chayla Lyons Two honorees living outside of the area were mailed scarves made by the Betsuin Sangha Crafters. This effort was coordinated with Betty Kinoshita.
Video Presentation:	sjbetsuin.com/keiro-kai
Donations:	\$3645.80
Expenses:	\$2230.89

UNITE CASINO NIGHT TO BENEFIT GENERATIONS II, EDUCATION BUILDING

On March 13, 2020, our committee met in the gym for the final walk through for the event that was to occur in 7 days. We were thankful for the many Betsuin groups coming together for the common goal – to raise money for Generations II, Education Building! Dharma School, Jr. YBA, Jr. Choir, Japanese Language School, all Scouts, Lotus Families and Lotus Grandmas were preparing to bring light refreshments. EcoSangha

encouraged the event to Go Green with their generous donation. Over 100 participants were ready to have a great time playing casino games: poker, craps, roulette, and blackjack! The committee was very thankful to individuals, families, San Jose Japantown businesses and businesses around town and out-of-town who generously donated prizes for our lucky winners. Appreciated one's company who had made a generous donation based on Volunteer Hours she had given to Lotus. We were ready to have a grand time! That evening, we knew best that we needed to postpone. On March 17, the Shelter-In-Place Order was in effect.

Thought was to postpone the event to September. Mid-summer, we knew this was not possible with the rise in Covid-19 positive cases. Our committee decided to change it up to see if we could still make this into a fundraiser for the Education Building that we desperately need!

The committee decided to turn this into a raffle with all the prizes that we had received. Those who enthusiastically wanted to support and play the casino games, were asked if they would like their money returned or donated to Generations II. If they donated back, they were eligible to participate in a drawing with prizes that ranged from \$75-\$250! There were 35 lucky winners!!

Unite Casino Night committee is grateful to all who generously donated over \$21,000 to Generations II, Education Building!

In addition, Lotus Preschool Benefit/Unite Casino Night and San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin Staff are very grateful to have received two generous gifts from the Kogura Family:

The Toshiko Kogura Family - Toshiko, Carolyn, Richard & Cindy, Tracie & Lainey, Jimi and Julie: "In memory of Julie Murotsune and Patty Kogura, two lifelong friends, our family would like to donate \$10,000.00 to the San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin for the Generations II, Education Building/Unite Casino Night Fund. As Carolyn Kogura mentioned to Lynne Yamaichi, we felt both Julie's and Patty's fondness of Lotus Preschool and overall love of education would be well served by this gift."

The Kogura Family – Toshiko, Carolyn, Richard & Cindy, Tracie & Lainey, Jimi and Julie: "In memory of Patty Kogura, our family would like to donate \$10,000.00 to the San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin for the Generations II, Education Building/Unite Casino Night fund. Patty loved being included in the many Lotus Preschool activities through our children and grandchild. She always felt Lotus Preschool provided a sense of community and a nurturing and caring educational environment for all children. Since Patty served as an educator for over 30 years, we felt her wishes would be well served by this gift."

Forever grateful for the generosity of all! True acts of Dana!

With this unprecedented situation that our community, Country and World is now facing with Covid-19, it has affected all of us in some way or another. Disappointed that Unite Casino Night could not take place, we found the silver lining in this situation. We are elated to report on behalf of all our donors and supporters, Unite Casino Night has raised just over \$40,000 to the Generations II, Education Building.

Hope to have your support at our next Unite fundraiser!

With Gratitude and Gassho,

Mitchell Beutler, Leslie Kitazumi, Leslie Mune, Lindsay Mune, June Yasuhara and Lynne Yamaichi

ORGANIZATIONS

BUDDHIST WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION BY BARBARA SASAKI

By the time you read this, it will be January 2021 or close to it so Happy New Year! Hopefully 2021 will be a healthier year for everyone. Start the New Year right by wearing your mask, social distancing and staying safe.

BWA would like to thank everyone who supported our Lady Takeko Kujo Community Service Project which will benefit Silicon Valley Strong. Donations will be listed in a future Dharma issue.

Winter See's Candies Fundraiser: Joyce Iwasaki wanted to thank BWA members who participated in the See's Candies Contactless fundraiser! Thank you to everyone who purchased items as well! To ensure safety –See's Candies offered a completely online experience with deliveries routed directly to individual addresses. We are awaiting the final sales and profits from See's Candies. Profits go toward San Jose member's fees for the 2023 World Buddhist Women's Convention in Kyoto. Thanks, Joyce, for chairing this fundraiser.

BWA will have our Fuse-no-Hi (Dana Day)/Kisaragi-ki (Lady Takeko Kujo Memorial) service on Sunday, January 31 at 10:10 AM. Our own Sumi Tanabe, one of San Jose's minister's assistants, will be the speaker at this service. Everyone is invited to participate in this service dedicated to volunteers and our BWA founder Lady Kujo. Let us all try to attend and support Sumi!

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we unfortunately will not be holding our annual February Chirashisushi/Botamochi fundraiser. We thank you for supporting our previous fundraisers.

Thank you to members who have paid their \$15 2020 membership dues. 2021 membership will remain at \$15 and you can renew your membership by sending a check to the Betsuin at 640 N. 5th Street, San Jose, 95112. Make checks payable to "SJ BWA"

BWA would like to thank Karen Akimoto for her leadership as BWA's President. She has sent out encouraging words and kept us all informed of Betsuin events since the pandemic began. Thank you, Karen; look forward to your continued leadership in 2021.

BWA would like to acknowledge and give a special thank you to the following for their generous donations:

- Norris and Teri Hirota in memory of Satsuki Santo
- Agnes Sasaki in memory of Doris Kunimura
- Iyoko Katsuyoshi in memory of Setsuko Hane
- Irene Nakamitsu and Dale and Lynn Nakano for general donations

BOY SCOUT TROOP 611 BY AIDEN ANICIETE

The Boy Scouts participated in the Coyote Creek Cycling Classic (T611 led by Mr. Darrel Wong). Antelope Patrol placed 20th in council in Scout-O-Rama. Congratulations to Troop 611's ASM's Mr. David Tsukimura and Mr.

John Ogawa, they both earned the T611 Trailblazer Award. And finally the Boy Scouts reassigned their leadership roles:

New Troop Leaders

SPL: Connor Alicaya

ASPL: Luke Kaltsas

Quartermaster: Aaron Oshidari

Historian: Kevin Mori

Scribe: Aidan Ray Aniciete

Bugler: Connor Wong

Chaplain's Aide: Tyler Kao

New Patrol Leaders

Antelope PL: Colin Fujikawa

Buffalo PL: Ryder Ando

Fox PL: Michael Ho

Owl PL: Anthony Tsuji

CUB SCOUT PACK 611 BY DEN 1 LEADERS

Cub Scout Pack 611 - Den 1 Wolves

By Den 1 Leaders

The Wolf Scouts have had a busy beginning to the 2020-2021 scouting years. Although all our meetings have been held virtually, the boys have been working hard to complete their scouting adventures and look forward to advancing to Bear Scouts next year. Some highlights so far have been:

The lesson I liked the best was when the policeman talked to our pack. He discussed how he became a police officer. This was my favorite lesson because I learned about how he protects people and he told us about his different gadgets. -Jakob

I enjoyed the knots because I learned to do other knots. I enjoyed painting my plant pot because penguins can hunt. -Colin

I enjoyed watching the flower video. I learned that the garden is a very beautiful place. My favorite tree is all of them and the flowers are my most favorite. -Parker

I enjoyed learning how to tie knots because I can use it for mountain climbing and having fun. Now I can show it to my friends and family. -Kenzo

These are some things that I have enjoyed during Wolf scouting this year: I have enjoyed all the fun crafts and activities. Most of all, I liked creating the song for Scout-o-rama based on the Muppet theme song and singing it with my family. -Rowan

I liked the meeting with the police officer the best. It was fun learning about being an officer and asking him questions. It was also cool to see his uniform. -Liam

My name is Bryson Ide and my favorite scout activity was pumpkin decorating for our Halloween Pack Meeting. I painted my pumpkin yellow and decorated it with eyes, mouth, and eyebrows. My pumpkin's name was "Bob the Minion". - Bryson

My favorite cub scout lesson so far is the halloween pack meeting because I got to dress up as a boy scout. Another reason the halloween pack meeting was the best meeting was because we got to guess how many candy corn there were in the bucket. Lastly, the best meeting was the halloween meeting was the best because I got to see other people's costumes. In conclusion those are some reasons why the halloween meeting is the best meeting. -Eric

My favorite meeting was when Rinban Sakamoto gave us a tour of the temple because I got to share the experience with lots of friends. I also got to make a penguin pot for the rosemary plant I am growing from a seed. I am also keeping a journal of how my plant grows. -Clinton

SAN JOSE JR. YBA BY CASSIDY YONEDA

With the holiday season gearing up we have many fun events in store. Unfortunately, we were unable to hold the Bodhi Day Bake sale, but as an alternative, we sold succulents. Although these are difficult times we are still moving forward and coming up with alternative ideas that allow us to remain involved in the church community. Our holiday succulent fundraiser was a huge success, with all 132 of the plants selling out quickly. Hopefully next year we can open the fundraiser to all of the church members. On December 13th, we held our last cabinet and general meetings of the year. Behind the scenes, we have a committee hard at work planning our Coast District Conference which will be held virtually on March 20, 2021. The theme is "Toy Story: You've Got a Friend in Me." Hope to see you there! Wishing everyone a Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year!!



BETSUIN CHOIR BY PAUL ENDO

JOIN THE SAN JOSE BETSUIN CHOIR!

Akemashite Omedetou Gozaimasu! Last year was complicated. But we start the new year with signs of hope and clarity that as things return to normal so too shall we be able to gather and practice safely in song.

SJ Betsuin Choir members are amateur singers who have spread the Dharma through music for over 70 years. Anyone who loves to sing, has a sense of humor, likes to eat good food, and make lasting friendships is invited to join our choir family. Sopranos, altos, tenors, and basses are needed – no auditions!

Please join us when it is safe to do so and rehearsals resume. Our usual time is:

Days:	Tuesday evenings
Time:	7:00 to 8:00 pm
Place:	SJ Betsuin Hondo (640 N 5 th Street, San Jose)

We perform for the Hoonko, Hanamatsuri, and Obon services each year.

We are still unsure when our next performance will be as it depends on how quickly the state and nation get the Corona virus under control enough for us to start rehearsals again. So if you love music and would like to sing with us, contact Paul Endo at 415-730-3395 or Michael Yoshihara at 408-712-9259 or email either of us at sjbetsuinchoir@gmail.com and we will keep you informed as to when practices will resume.

SANGHA CRAFTERS BY BETTY KINOSHITA AND TOMI IMOKAWA

Ten months is along time to be under restrictions but most of us have made it this far. Hopefully, we are seeing the light at the end of the tunnel. The Crafters met in the parking lot in November and again in December. Masks and social distancing were observed. There was an exchange of completed projects and projects to be done. It was good to see everyone. There is a core group of 10 or so sangha crafters who have been continuing to knit, crochet and sew for the community projects. Thanks so much for their Dana. Fifty blankets were collected and labeled for Project Linus. Caps of all sizes and scarves were received to distribute to the Valley Medical Center, shelters and home less programs.

Plan to have our next parking lot gathering on January 8 at 11 AM to receive and distribute.

A ki ma shite ome deto go zaimasu, Happy New Years to all !!! Stay well all!!!

ECOTIP OF THE MONTH

Wasted food means wasted water, wasted energy and many Americans unnecessarily going hungry.

40% of U.S. food is wasted every year

1 in 6 Americans lack food security

Food eats up 10% of the U.S. energy budget

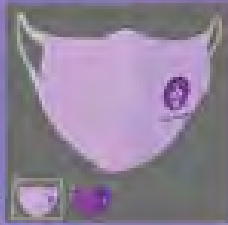
Food uses 80% of all fresh water consumed in the U.S.

California is the nation's top producer for many fruits, nuts, and vegetables. When you waste food, you waste California's limited water supply. **Let's do our best to reduce food waste & preserve our precious water.**

Customized Buddhist Face Mask



+
Your Temple
Name



Personalized Gift Idea

- BCA logo + customize lettering - "BCA" "OCBC" etc.
- 2 masks in 1 - 2 sided - Flip over pick 2 colors
- 4 colors - black, purple, gray, light purple
- 3 sizes - adult, youth, child
- Washable, multi-layered, antimicrobial coated fabric
- \$11 each + \$1.95 for shipping 1-5 masks

To order:

<https://www.flipmasks.com/collections/BuddhistTemple>

Questions: Naoko.Fujii@gmail.com or 650-485-1560

Thank you for your support

Palo Alto Buddhist Temple Dharma School Nishi Hongwanji Pilgrimage Fundraiser

GENERATION PICKERS



In-kind donations to benefit the San Jose Buddhist Church Generations Campaign

This is the Betsuin's version of the American Pickers show. We're looking for those lost treasures...things that you've kept for years that no one in the family really wants but are too good to toss, sell at garage sales or donate to the Goodwill. Donate these treasures to the Generation Pickers campaign and have our team of experts clean up, list, sell and ship your item on Ebay. All proceeds will help fund our Generations Education Building and Campus. This service is offered by a group of members to turn your forgotten treasures into cash donations to the Betsuin.

How it works:

1. Contact our Generation Pickers team and let us know what you have. We will give you an honest evaluation of what we think your item is worth. If we determine that it's something we can handle, you can drop off at the church office or we can pick up the item(s).
Note: determination is based on estimated value (\$100+) and ability to ship.
2. The team will list the item(s) on the online marketplace - primarily Ebay.
3. When sold, all proceeds go directly into a Generations Education Building and Campus account. Your donation letter will list the amount generated by the sale of your item and is acknowledged as a cash donation. If the item takes longer to sell, you may ask for an acknowledgement of your donation listing the actual item in the letter without a value.

What are good items to donate?

Newer Smartphones - for example, Apple Iphone 7s or later, Samsung Galaxy S8 or newer

Cameras and lenses - High-quality film and digital cameras like Nikon, Canon, Leica, Hasselblad, etc.

Audio/stereo equipment - Marantz, Phase Linear, MacIntosh, AR, SAE, Scott, B&O, tube equipment and more

Collectibles & Vintage items

Vintage Technology - Pre 1980 computers, 1st Generation Iphones, vintage video games, HP calculators, etc.

Sports Memorabilia - baseball/collector cards, autographed balls, autographed photos, etc.

Jewelry/Watches - High quality, collectable, vintage, gold and silver.

Fashion accessories - vintage or designer handbags, coats, wallets, etc.

Collectible shoes - Shoes in unused to excellent condition. Sneakerheads clean out your closets!

Professional Tools - Pro engineering, scientific, construction, technical, manufacturing, and more

Professional Audio Equipment - Microphones, rack equipment, quality musical instruments, etc

Questions?

Contact **Mike Mori** at (408) 316-4903 (call or text) or via email to gophervalley@gmail.com

Watch for Generation Pickers updates every month in The Dharma!

**Note: We cannot accept unscheduled drop-off of items.
Please contact our team via phone or email prior to donating.**



New Year L&L Hawaiian Barbecue Fundraiser

Supporting Yu-Ai Kai. Supporting our community.

January 26, 27 and 28, 2021

BBQ Chicken Plate (includes Steamed Rice and Macaroni Salad)

Pick-up Times (each day): **1:00, 1:30, 4:00 and 4:30pm**
(Pick-up only; 30-minute time slots)

Pick-up in front of Yu-Ai Kai building
NOTE THE **EARLIER DINNER PICK-UP TIMES!**

Order January 8 through 22

Online at: yuaikai-newyearbbq.eventbrite.com

By phone or mail: (408) 294-2505 or use form below
(**must be received at Yu-Ai Kai office by 1/22**)

Name: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

I would like to order _____ L&L BBQ Chicken Plates @ \$20 each for a total of \$ _____

Pick up **DATE** (check one): ☐ Tues, Jan. 26 ☐ Wed, Jan. 27 ☐ Thurs, Jan. 28

Pick up **TIME** (check one): ☐ 1:00pm ☐ 1:30pm ☐ 4:00pm ☐ 4:30pm

Mail/deliver this form with your check made payable to 'Yu-Ai Kai' no later than January 22, 2021 to:

Yu-Ai Kai
588 North 4th Street
San Jose, CA 95112

For more information and questions, please call Yu-Ai Kai at (408) 294-2505



Your generosity has enabled us to keep meeting the critical needs of the seniors in our community during the past year. We join those seniors in expressing our heartfelt gratitude "*Kansha*" to you as we celebrate 47 years of service and look forward to brighter days ahead in 2021!

SAVE THE DATES:

Feb. 23, 24 and 25 - Special Anniversary Bento from Kyoto Palace + R&J Toffees

Feb. 27 - Virtual Anniversary Event - Featuring Speakers, Videos, Opportunity Drawing & Online Golden Wish Fundraising Finale

Look for upcoming mailing, e-mail and Yu-Ai Kai website announcements for additional details!

For sponsorship opportunities or information, contact:

BoardPresident@yuaikai.org or call: (408) 294-2505

