



Buddhist Thoughts

Salt Lake Buddhist Temple: 211 West 100 South
Salt Lake City, Utah 84101, volume 18 issue 11
web site: slbuddhist.org

December, 2011
Rev. Hirano's contact numbers: Office: 363-4742,
home: 299-8727, emergency 819-2648



Christmas Time is Here

J.K Hirano

Christmas time is here,
happiness and cheer,
fun for all that children
call their favorite time of year.

Snowflakes in the air,
carols everywhere,
olden times and ancient rhymes
and love and dreams to share.

Sleigh bells in the air;
beauty every where;
yuletide by the fireside
and joyful memories there.

Christmas time is here;
we'll be drawing near;
oh that we could always see
such spirit through the year,

Over the past 24 years as a minister within the Buddhist Churches of America, I have tried to explain Buddhism in a simple and direct way. Buddhism is absolutely useless if you do not see it and understand it within the context of your everyday life. There are books, documentaries, and movies about Buddhism. However, if you do not see Buddhism all around you, you have not begun to understand Buddhism.

The title of this article is "Christmas Time is Here". It is also the name of the song that I have written the lyrics at the beginning of this article. This song is sung in the cartoon "Charlie Brown's Christmas." The premise of this cartoon is Charlie Brown is depressed about the commercialization of Christmas. He searches among his world for the true meaning of Christmas. I wonder what he would think if he saw our current Christmas celebrations. This cartoon was created in 1965, almost 50 years ago. In 1965, I was about 8 years old. This may have been the Christmas when I received one of my favorite toys of all time, "King Zor". In 1962, when King Zor was first created, it sold for \$11.99. I looked for King Zor on Ebay and found a complete King Zor in working condition being offered for a little over \$1500.00. Times have changed; however, do you know the meaning of Christmas?

As Charlie Brown lamented so many years ago, there is a lot of commercialization to Christmas. Many people look to the material items they will get or give at Christmas. In Charlie Brown's world he learns about the meaning of Christmas from his friend Linus;

"And there were in the same country shepherds, abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them! And they were so afraid ... And the angel said unto them, "Fear not! For, behold, I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all my people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ, the Lord.

And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." And suddenly, there was with the angel a multitude of the Heavenly Host praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the Highest, and on Earth peace, and good will toward men.

That's what Christmas is all about, Charlie Brown." - Linus Van Pelt

Linus's quote is from the Gospel according to Luke. St. Paul calls Luke beloved

physician. Buddha was also called a spiritual physician. This particular section of the Bible focuses on the life of Jesus. We know that much of Jesus's life in the bible is allegory. What I hear in Linus's explanation of the meaning of Christmas or Jesus's birth, is a teaching which expresses gratitude for all the causes and conditions in my life, both the good and bad and to realize that life is good. Whatever my situation may be at the present moment, don't give up. All things are impermanent and therefore there is always hope for things to get better. This message is all around us, especially when Christmas time is here and I am a part of the answer.

If you have any questions about the meaning of Christmas for Buddhists, you probably won't find it in a book, documentary or movie. All you have to do is listen to the teachings that are all around you. Watch as someone you can tell isn't materially wealthy, reach into his or her pocket and give to a Salvation Army bell ringer. Be one of the individuals or part of a group, creating Sub for Santa gifts or Angel Trees wishes. Look into the eyes of a child and observe the light that shines especially bright at this time of year and help make their dreams come true. If you can answer these calls, this is where you will find the meaning of Christmas. This is where you can become a part of the Christmas spirit; this is the meaning of Namu Amida Butsu.

On behalf of Carmela, Kacie, Taylor and myself I would like to express my deep appreciation for all the support we have received over this past year. This year taught my family a lot of lessons about impermanence and change, the death of my Father, the girls losing both grandfathers. Throughout these difficult times the Sangha has been of great comfort and support. Thank you all so very much. We hope that all of you have a very Merry Christmas and enjoy and appreciate the New Year, Namu Amida Butsu.

President's Message

Dot Richeda

As another year comes to a close, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Sangha for all your support during the year. Without you, the Temple will not grow and be so successful. My thank you also goes out to the Temple Board members. These members are volunteers guiding and managing the business affairs of the Temple. My job is made easier by all the willingness and support of all the volunteers of the Temple. Sensei and Carmela, thank you for your support.

This year we started a Taiko group. Stan Hirai and Betty Yamashita from the Ogden Taiko Group have volunteered to help us and we have not disappointed them with around 30 members attending practice every Sunday. Look for our performance in about two years. Next Temple Board Meeting: December 8, 2011 at 6:00 PM.
In Gassho,

BWA NEWS

Brenda Koga

The year flew by quickly, and here we are in the last month of 2011. Although the year is winding down, the Buddhist Women's Association continues

to stay active with the various activities for not only the organization, but mainly related to the temple.

In November the BWA ballots were prepared to elect the new board of directors and from this board the members will elect their new officers on December 4. Thank you to those who volunteered to serve on the nominating committee: **Maya Chow, Christy Fong and Reiko Matsuura**. Also assisting with the process was **Reiko Watanabe** who printed the mailing labels.

If you are a BWA member, please make sure to attend the December 4 meeting at 9:00 a.m and vote. The organization is guided by its leaders, but it is membership that makes the important decisions.

In conjunction with the Holiday Boutique in November, appreciation is extended to a group of women who volunteered to make ohagi to sell. Funds collected from the sales were donated to this worthy fund raising project. Those who assisted with this project were **Takeko Doi, Terry Fujinami, Reiko Matsuura, Reiko Watanabe, Kathy Terashima, Setsuko Nagata and Kazuko Yakumo**.

On December 4 following the service, the BWA will reorganize the kitchen. With the flurry of events, utensils and cooking implements tend to be misplaced. Thus, the ladies take the time to reorganize the items. Thanks to all who will assist with that task.

Upcoming on December 11, the temple will commemorate Bodhi Day with a special service followed by a luncheon. This year the Dharma School will prepare the main dish and BWA members will be asked to provide salads and desserts. If you would like to contribute something, please contact Brenda Koga.

As was mentioned earlier in this article, the **BWA's next meeting** will be on **December 4 at 9:00 a.m.** in the classrooms.

DHARMA SCHOOL HAPPENINGS

Brenda Koga

The Dharma School continues to register any students who participate in our temple program and activities. Thank you to those parents who have completed the form and submitted their \$10 dues for their students.

If you have been to our services, you will have noticed The Golden Chain and The Promise being led by the different classes **First Grade through Sixth Grade**. Thank you to the students and teachers of these classes for assisting in assuring that happens.

Our appreciation is extended to **Maya Chow** for not only arranging the pianists for the services, but also for working on the development of a new **service**

book. During this interim period prior to a new book being published, Maya has arranged to have some different gathas printed in a supplementary booklet.

On December 11, 2011 we will be celebrating **Bodhi Day** with a special service and luncheon. **LaVerne Kyed** has volunteered to chair that luncheon for the Dharma School. Each family is being requested to bring a casserole dish to complement our luncheon. If you have any questions, please contact LaVerne.

On January 15, 2012 the temple will celebrate HoOnko. In conjunction with this event, the Dharma School will be collecting items for the **Goodie Bags** to be distributed to our senior members. **Judy Watanabe, Holly Black and Gail Minaga** are chairing that task and are asking those interested in contributing to bring 3 dozen items for the bags. If you have questions, please contact Gail, Judy or Holly.

Students will decorate the Goodie Bags during classes on **December 18** under the supervision of the YBA. During this time **Dharma School teachers and board meeting** will have their next meeting at **11:00**.

Halloween Party

3rd and 4th grade class

The Dharma School held their annual Halloween party on October 30th. The 3rd and 4th grade students shared their favorite parts of the event.

Alex Tokita said his favorite part was that he won in his round of musical chairs and also all of the candy. **Josh Watanabe** liked playing musical chairs and also liked dressing up as a Power Ranger. **Justin Roberson** said his favorite part was hitting the piñata. **Anna Fukushima** liked all the games and the piñata but was especially happy that her brother, Noa won at musical chairs. (With her help!) **Maya Ikegami** loved hitting the piñata and liked the group of teenagers who dressed up as Jabbowockees. **Max Watanabe** couldn't think of his favorite part but liked the whole thing. Our teachers, **Gail Minaga, Faye Mitsunaga** and **Christy Fong** agreed with Max. We enjoyed the whole thing!!!

All the students enjoyed participating in the parade and eating the great lunch with family and friends. Thanks to all the Dharma School teachers and parents who helped with this event.

In Deepest Condolence

Our Temple offers our deepest sympathies to the family and friends of

Ritsuko Hayashi

Noriko Kobayashi

We hope that through the nembutsu teachings and the strength of your family and community, you will find comfort in this difficult time. Namo Amida Butsu

Shotsuki Hoyo

December 11, 10:00 am

Deceased	Date of death	Next of kin
Aramaki Yasu	12/8/86	Hiroshi Aramaki
Hideshima Hideji	12/28/90	Tad Hideshima
Hirano Kiyoshi	12/18/73	Jerry Hirano
Ikari Hideyoshi	12/31	Sachiko Tohinaka
Ikegami Akitaro	12/2/60	
Iwasaki Bunjiro	12/11/65	Fujio Iwasaki
Katsuki Yoshio	12/9/87	
Kawaguchi Sato	12/1/83	Bill Kawaguchi
Kida Kiyoji	12/9/65	Jeff Kida
Komatsu Fumie	12/30/88	Judy Komatsu
Matsuno Albert	12/21/93	Yuriko Matsuno
Mitsunaga Kiyoshi	12/16/94	Helen Mitsunaga
Mori Michiko	12/3/87	Tami Mori
Nodzu Kentaro	12/22/70	Ken Nodzu
Okubo Riyo	12/24/83	Harry Okubo
Omura Roy	12/22/87	Terry Omura
Osako Sadao	12/16/88	Yaeko Osako
Sasaki Omatsu	12/15/92	Shigeru Sasaki
Shimamura Michiko	12/14/94	Geraldine Chappell
Suyehiro Fusa	12/6/46	Greg Matsuura
Sueoka Joanne	12/1/83	Dru Sueoka
Sueoka Lillian	12/17/88	Dru Sueoka
Usui Yoshio	12/1/83	Beth Usui
Yakumo Chijun	12/13/91	Kazuko Yakumo
Yakumo Aya	12/1/82	Kazuko Yakumo
Frank Nishimura	12/31/2000	Chiyoko Nishimura
Hamamoto Kiyoko	12/20/01	Aiko Okada
Shigemi Mori	12/5/08	Asako Mori
Kenny Mitsunaga	12/17/08	Tomio Mitsunaga
Henry Kawa	12/23/08	Glen Kawa
Mary Nakai	12/31/09	Marianne Nakai
Akiko Takenaka	12/31/09	Gary Takenaka

2011 Special Award Winners

January	Misao Doi
February	Brent Koga
March	Frank Ujifusa
April	Julie Matsuura

May	Linda Davis
June	Chris Okamoto
July	Mary Aramaki
August	Kai Uno
September	Ritsu Hayashi
October	Walt Sato
November	Samantha Sueoka

Tentative 2012 Schedule

January	15	Hoonko, Shotsuki Hoyo, New Year's Party
	29	General Meeting
February	19	Nehan E, Shotsuki Hoyo
March	18	Ohigan
April	8	Salt Lake Hanamatsuri
	10	Ogden Hanamatsuri
May	6	Gotan E
June	3	Lagoon Day
	10	Graduation
July	14	Obon Dance
	15	Obon/Hatsubon
	21	Honeyville Obon/Hatsubon, Ogden Dance
	22	Ogden Obon/Hatsubon
Aug	6-9	BCA Minister's Fuken
September	9	First Day Dharma School
	15	100 Year Buddhism in Utah Celebration
	16	Ohigan/Shotsuki Hoyo
October	28	Halloween Party
November	17-18	Holiday Boutique
	18	Eitaikyo
December	2	Bodhi Day
	31	Joya E