

Nichiren Shu News

Published by the Head Office of Nichiren Shu Buddhism & NOPPA

No. 211

December 1, 2015

1

San Jose Myokakuji Betsuin Celebrates 35th Anniversary

Text and Photographs by Jan Deputy-Louy

On October 23-24, 2015, the San Jose Myokakuji Betsuin celebrated its 35th anniversary in conjunction with the unveiling of the results of the completed restoration process on their statues of Nichiren Shonin and Itto Ryoson: One stupa and two world-honored ones. The event began with a banquet dinner at the Dynasty Restaurant in Cupertino,



California. The highlight of the evening was the guest speaker Dr. Naomi Sasaoka, a representative of the conservators at Rishso

University. Dr. Sasaoka made a presentation entitled "Sculpture Conservation." She outlined the complicated process of artifact and sculpture restoration.

The anniversary ceremony began the following morning and was officiated by Bishop Nisshu Oikawa, from Honzan Myokakuji in Kyoto. He was assisted by Rev. Ryusho Matsuda, Rev. Kanshun Tanigawa, Rev. Ryuken Akahoshi, Rev. Shinko Matsuda, and other priests who have been devoted to the statues of this temple over the last 35 years. About 50 young children presented offerings of candles, flowers and singing.

Highlights of the ceremony included the opening message delivered by emcee Noriko Rose, the presentation and



Dr. Naomi Sasaoka (pictured left) of the Rishso University Restoration Team spoke about the process of restoring the 400-year-old statue of Nichiren Shonin for the altar of the San Jose Temple (pictured above).

dedication of his new book by Rev. Ryuei McCormick, the eye opening prayer of a new gohonzon donated by Bishop Nisshu Oikawa, chanting of Chapter 16 of the Lotus Sutra, and a message by Rev. Ryuken Akahoshi. Rev. Shinko Matsuda presented Dr. Naomi Sasaoka



with a plaque honoring the Buddhist sculpture conservators of Rishso University. The team was comprised of Professor Takahiro Akita along with his staff

of Tomoyo Nosaka and Dr. Sasaoka. The plaque expresses appreciation for the preservation and restoration of the Gohonzon and Nichiren Shonin statue.

In the closing address, Bishop Nisshu Oikawa spoke of the wonderful restoration work of the Nichiren Shonin statue and also the stupa, Itto Ryoson. The statue is actually a copy of the original that resides in the head temple, Honzan Myokakuji in Kyoto. The team from Rishso University were surprised when they learned that the Itto Ryoson statues were made in the 15th century during the Edo period, or about the time



Rev. Ryusho Matsuda planting a new cherry tree.

the Mayflower came to America. The statues were brought to San Jose by Bishop Nisshu Oikawa's father, Bishop Shingaku Oikawa, when he founded and dedicated the temple 35 years ago.

At that first dedication, Bishop Shingaku Oikawa planted a cherry tree in front of the temple. Since that time, Bishop Nisshu Oikawa has steadily returned to this temple every five years. He was disappointed to learn that the tree had recently succumbed to the abnormal California drought. A new cherry tree was presented and planted at the ceremony.

The day's events were well attended by many people from Japan, all over North America, and Hawaii. It concluded with a group photo and luncheon provided by the temple.



Bishop Nisshu Oikawa addresses the gathering.



Rev. Ryuei McCormick offers copies of his book.



Celebration attendees gather for a group picture.

JODO-E (BODHI DAY)

The historical Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama, is said in some stories to have attained Enlightenment under the Bodhi tree on the eighth day of the twelfth lunar month in 596 B.C. The word Bodhi in Sanskrit means "enlightenment."

Siddhartha was the first born son of King Suddhodana of Kapilavastu in northern India, present-day Nepal. He had been brought up inside the palace and kept away from any suffering, such as sickness, old age and death. Some stories say that, at the age of 29, the Prince left his wife, his infant son, and the rest of his family to search for the true meaning of life.

Outside the palace, he saw so much suffering and sadness among the common people.

After six years of living as an ascetic under different teachers, he still could not find answers to the questions he had about life. Although he fasted and went through severe practices, he was still lost. He went into a forest in Bodhi Gaya, northeastern India and sat under a Bodhi tree, also called a peepal tree, which is a special type of Banyan fig.

He fasted and meditated for 49 days. During this



time, he was confronted by Mara, the God of Desire, and many other demons. But he did not give in. One morning, he came to several realizations. These were the basis of the Noble Eightfold Path and Four Noble Truths, the principles from which Buddhism was born. From this day on, he was referred to as the Buddha: the Enlightened One.

For Buddhists all over the world, Bodhi Day is a day of remembrance and meditation. Some temples decorate their altars with

many candles or lights to symbolize the many pathways to Enlightenment. Some decorate a ficus tree with multi-colored lights strung with beads to symbolize how all things are united. They also hang three ornaments to represent the Three Jewels: the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha.

In Nichiren Shu, Jodo-e is not as widely celebrated. However, since it is one of the important events in Buddha's life, some temples carry out a special candlelight ceremony to celebrate and commemorate the Buddha's Enlightenment.

—Compiled by Sandra Seki

FOOTPRINTS OF NICHIREN SHONIN (2)

From the Nichiren Shu Shimbun Translated and Compiled by Rev. Sensho Komukai

We continue our virtual pilgrimage of the 57 Honzan, or Main Temples, of Nichiren Shu. By visiting these Honzan, you can better understand the lives and hardships faced by Nichiren Shonin and his disciples. In this second installment, we visit the temples most directly connected with his birth and early life: Tanjoji, Seichoji and Kyoninji.

TANJOJI TEMPLE: Five minutes by bus from JR Awa-Kamogawa Station

Nichiren Shonin was born on February 16, 1222 at the village of Kominato in the Province of Awa, present-day Chiba Prefecture. It is said that at the moment of his birth, lotus flowers blossomed, schools of porgy fish splashed on the surface of the sea, and spring water gushed out of the ground in the garden of his parents' house. He lived in Kominato until he was 11 years old, when he entered Seichoji Temple to begin his formal education.

Tanjoji Temple was originally built at the site of his parents' house. It was moved to its current location after two great earthquakes and tsunamis in 1498 and 1703.

A grand celebration and ceremony at Tanjoji is planned for 2021 to commemorate Nichiren Shonin's 800th birthday.



Tanjoji Shoshi-do (Founder's Hall) where Nichiren Shonin's 800th birthday ceremony will be celebrated in 2021.

SEICHOJI TEMPLE: 20 minutes by taxi from JR Awa-Kamogawa Station

Seichoji Temple was founded in 771, when a monk carved and enshrined a wooden statue of Kokuzo, or Boundless Wisdom Bodhisattva. In 1237, Nichiren Shonin was ordained here at age 15. His master, Dozen-bo, gave him the name 'Rencho,' meaning Eternal Lotus. Determined to learn why social conditions in Japan were so chaotic, Nichiren Shonin prayed to Kokuzo Bodhisattva to become the wisest man in Japan.



Seichoji Dai-do (Main Hall) where the statue of Kokuzo Bodhisattva is enshrined.

After studying in Kamakura, Kyoto, and Nara for about 15 years, he concluded that the Lotus Sutra was the true intent of Shakyamuni Buddha. In 1253, he returned to Seichoji. On the morning of April 28, standing atop a steep hill called Asahigamori, he chanted Namu Myoho Renge Kyo toward the rising sun for the first time. He changed his name to Nichiren, or Sun-Lotus, since the Lotus Sutra says, "the light of the sun

eliminates all darkness and the lotus flower is not defiled by muddy water."

His master, Dozen-bo, passed away in 1276. When Nichiren Shonin heard of his master's death, he wrote an essay called "Hoon-jo" or "Essay on Gratitude" and sent one of his disciples, Niko, to read the essay in front of Dozen-bo's grave: "Flowers will return to their roots. The true taste of fruits remains in the earth. To my late Master Dozen, I have now dedicated all the merits I have accumulated in spreading the True Dharma." The tomb of Dozen-bo is on the way to Asahigamori.

KYONINJI TEMPLE: Six minutes by bus from JR Awa-Kamogawa Station

In 1264, Nichiren Shonin left Kamakura and returned to his home town of Kominato. On November 11, he was walking towards the home of one of his followers, Kudo Yoshitaka, Lord of Amatsu. As he and some of his disciples, including Kyonin-bo, were passing through Komatsubara Grove in the evening, they found armed men waiting in ambush. Nichiren Shonin wrote, "Arrows shot by nembutsu followers were

falling like rain, and their swords were attacking us like lightning." The army was commanded by Tojo Kagenobu, governor of the area. Tojo was a believer in Amida and angry with Nichiren Shonin for rejecting the nembutsu practice. Tojo struck Nichiren Shonin's forehead with a sword, causing him to bleed heavily. As Tojo tried to strike again, he saw Hariti, also called Kishimojin, appear on a yew plum pine. This frightened Tojo so much he fell off his horse and was mortally injured.

Kudo Yoshitaka and Kyonin-bo were killed in the ambush. In 1281, Yoshitaka's son established the Kyoninji Temple to pray for the souls of Yoshitaka and Kyonin-bo.

On the night of the attack, Nichiren Shonin hid himself in a cave. The following morning, an old woman found him. She gave him her cotton hood to stop the bleeding wound on his forehead. For the rest of his life, Nichiren Shonin put a cotton hood on his head during winter to reduce the pain on his forehead. Still today, every Nichiren Shu temple places a cotton hood on the head of Nichiren Shonin's statue from late autumn through the following spring.



Kyoninji Temple was founded by the son of Kudo Yoshitaka, one of the people who was killed in the Komatsubara Persecution.



Sodoji Temple Rededicated in China

From the Nichiren Shu Shimbun

On September 10, as construction was being completed, a rededication ceremony was held at Sodoji Temple in Xian, China. It took about ten years to build a repository hall to store Buddhist scriptures. Sodoji is known as the holy place where Kumarajiva translated the Lotus Sutra from Sanskrit into classical Chinese. Around 1,000 people, with 88 people coming from Japan, participated in the ceremony to honor Kumarajiva for his great achievement and to promote friendly relations between Japan and China.

When a Nichiren Shu tourist group visited Sodoji for the first time in 1980, they found the temple ruined and devastated by China's Great Cultural Revolution. They established the Xian Buddhist Association in Japan to help reconstruct the temple. Part of the project included a life-sized statue of Kumarajiva and a Kumarajiva Memorial Hall. Rev. Di Xing, chief priest of Sodoji, often visited the Head Office of Nichiren Shu during the project to meet with Association members and deepen the friendship they were forming with each other.

The repository hall consists of five stories with a frontage of 54 meters, a depth of 30 meters, and a height of 23 meters. It will be used to archive sutras collected from all over the world and as a lecture hall. Enshrined in the hall are



the statues of 'Isson-Yonshi,' the Buddha accompanied by four bodhisattvas.

The ceremony began by setting off about 50,000 firecrackers. The service was then started by Chinese priests. Nichiren Shu ministers then conducted the eye-opening ceremony for the 'Isson-Yonshi' statues. The chanting voices of Jigage, the verse section of chapter 16 of the Lotus Sutra, and Odaimoku, combined with a powerful kito blessing echoed throughout the brand-new hall.

Rev. Di Xing and the president of Xian Buddhist Association expressed their gratitude for all the contributions. Rev. Nichiyu Mochida, chief priest of Sogenji Temple in Chiba Prefecture in Japan stated, "I truly wish that we can collect all the scriptures translated by Kumarajiva and store them here in this repository hall. I also hope that younger generations of Nichiren Shu will strengthen more ties with Sodoji in the future."

—Translated by Rev. Sensho Komukai



REVEREND KANNO PREACHES (39)

"They are not defiled by worldliness Just as the lotus-flower Is not defiled by water."

—Lotus Sutra, Chapter XV, The Appearance of Bodhisattvas from Underground



"Lotus-Flower"

Many readers of the Nichiren Shu News may know this popular phrase from the "Bodhisattvas from Underground Chapter."

This is my understanding of this phrase of the Lotus Sutra: "The lotus-flower grows in muddy water. However, the mud does not stain the plant. It blooms with clean and beautiful petals. We live in a world that can be compared to the muddy water of the lotus pond. We should not be stained by worldly evils. Don't succumb to them! Try to live beautifully and strongly like the lotus-flower. We should know this."

I will show you another significant lesson this phrase gives us: "The lotus-flower bears seeds at the same time as it blooms. In this phrase, the Buddha tells us we should realize that the lotus-flower is a tangible example that we are born naturally possessing Buddha-nature, the seed to become a Buddha, so that we attain complete peace of mind."

This "seed" to become a Buddha, which you have from birth, you should keep it from being stained by the mud of this world and let it grow into a beautiful lotus-flower. So the Buddha addresses us.

Rev. Nisso Kanno, Bishop of Ikegami Honmonji Temple, Tokyo

Temples Affiliated with Nichiren Shonin in the Izu Peninsula

Oiwaya Soshido (Renkeiji Temple)

By Rev. Kanshu Naito

In July of the first year of Bun'ō, 1260 CE, Nichiren Shonin wrote the Risshō Ankoku-ron. He presented it to the ex-regent and supreme authority, Hojo Tokiyori. In it, he stated that Tokiyori should bring about peace in the nation by supporting the Lotus Sutra, as the true Buddhist teaching. On the other hand, major temples in Kamakura, thinking that their teachings were being denied, bore more and more hatred towards Nichiren Shonin and began to slander, libel and take hostile actions against him. Based on this defamation, on May 5 of the first year of Kocho, 1261 CE, he was exiled to Ito on the Izu Peninsula by the High Court with no discussion or defense of Nichiren Shonin's actions. This exile was deemed necessary because it was a capital crime to slander the shogunate government and disturb the social peace. Traditionally Buddhist priests were not executed. So Nichiren Shonin was exiled instead. However, this exile was almost the same as a death sentence.

He was taken from Yuigahama, Kamakura by sea, arriving at the shore of Ito

just before dusk, but the men escorting him did not leave Nichiren Shonin on the shore. Instead they placed him on a rock, later named the chopping board rock, which barely broke the surface of the water and was quite a distance from the shore. Then they turned back for Kamakura, perhaps thinking that

Nichiren Shonin would drown before reaching shore.

Yasaburo was then a fisherman living in Kawana in Ito. He passed by on a small boat near the rock and heard Nichiren Shonin chanting the Lotus Sutra ardently. The tide was getting higher, and the waves seemed to engulf

Nichiren Shonin, threatening to swallow him into the Pacific Ocean. Yasaburo was wondering why his fishing was not successful that day. He thought maybe it was Buddha's intention not to let him catch any fish since it was the eve of the thirteenth anniversary of his mother's death.

Yasaburo faintly heard Nichiren Shonin's sutra-chanting and followed the sound to find a priest in danger of drowning. Even though he wondered why this priest was standing alone in the sea, he was impressed by the energetic chanting despite the risk to his life. So Yasaburo drew nearer and brought Nichiren Shonin into his boat, thus saving Nichiren Shonin's life.

Yasaburo invited Nichiren Shonin to his home. He and his wife cared fondly for Nichiren Shonin. However, their neighbors were alarmed by their providing refuge for Nichiren Shonin, who had been exiled for committing a serious crime. Yasaburo decided to take Nichiren Shonin to a small cave near their home so that he would be out of the public eye. This cave is now called "Oiwaya Soshido." It enshrines a statue of Nichiren Shonin and is maintained by Renkeiji Temple.



Offerings at the altar in the cave of Oiwaya Soshido, adjacent to Renkeiji Temple.

PARLIAMENT OF WORLD RELIGIONS

By Rev. Ryuoh Faulconer

The first Parliament of World Religions was organized in 1893 as part of the Chicago Columbian Exposition. This was one of the first introductions of Buddhism to the west from Japan. Of the four Japanese ministers present at the event, one was Zitsuzen Ashitsu, a Hokke school minister.

The Parliament has been held six times since its centennial in 1993. The most recent was this year, October 15-19 in Salt Lake City, Utah. NONA Bishop Myokei Caine-Barrett, Rev. Kanjin Cederman, Rev. Shoda Kanai, Rev. Eisei Ikenaga, the manager of the NBIC, and I attended. A few lay members from North American temples also participated. Ministers dressed in our traditional robes, which set us apart from the crowd. Many people approached us, asked questions, and we made several new friends. Our goal was to learn more about other faith traditions, what is being done on social issues by faith communities and to introduce Nichiren Shu Buddhism to other participants. Everyone there was happy to talk and learn about each other.



Smiles, putting the palms together in gassho, and warm greetings abided.

There were over 9,500 participants from all over the world representing many faith traditions. Over 600 formal talks and demonstrations took place, with many more discussions on important topics such as faith, injustice, war, hatred, inequality, peace, and compassion. As you walked the halls, sounds of chanting, singing, and different groups discussing their faith bombarded your senses. On the last day, the Nichiren Shu delegation demonstrated Shodaigyo meditation and held a question and answer session, both of which were well attended.

The Sikh community offered Langar to all participants each day for lunch. The word Langar actually means "open kitchen." This was a free offering. In

the Sikh community, this is a form of giving to all. The food was delicious and vegetarian.

There were many booths on culture and religious traditions, including a museum display on Mahatma Gandhi and his legacy. A market area offered religious items, books, and information on different faith groups. Displays in the halls included a Jain temple and a Tibetan Sand Mandala. Churches and temples of the Salt Lake area created sacred spaces within the convention center for different faith traditions to practice reflection and prayer. The Jodo Shinshu's temple in Salt Lake City, located next to the convention center, opened its doors for talks and demonstrations in the Jodo tradition. Other churches and temples near the convention center did the same. By the

end, all of us were exhausted from so much interaction and discussion, but we were still very happy that we had come. I particularly enjoyed the building of a Tibetan Sand Mandala to Kanzeon as a prayer for peace, meeting other Buddhists from many traditions, and a discussion on evangelical Christianity and the LGBTQ community. Rev. Ikenaga participated in a lively discussion on ISIS, and NONA Bishop Caine-Barrett participated in a dialogue of feminine spirituality.

America is a diverse society with many different religions. Understanding these religions lets us help those who come to us with questions about our religion and a desire to follow the Buddhist path. At the next Parliament of World Religions, we would like to have a booth ourselves and participate in more events. Maybe we could have a parade of *mando*, flower lanterns, through the halls or just march with *uchiwa-daiko*, hand drums. This would attract attention from other participants and give us a chance to introduce the Wonderful Dharma to them. The world needs Odaimoku, the Wonderful Dharma of the Lotus Sutra and the teachings of Nichiren Shonin.





**Nichiren Buddhist
International Center**
Rev. Eisei Ikenaga

2015 Shami Seminar

This year's NBIC Shami Seminar was held from August 26-30. The seminar is patterned after the Sodo-rin, a five-day practice for prospective Nichiren Shu priests. The Sodo-rin is a required prerequisite to the Shingyo Dojo, the final step in the Nichiren Shu ordination process.

The daily schedule of the seminar was rigorous. Everyone woke up at 5:00 in the morning to begin the day with *suigyo*, a practice of purification that involves chanting and splashing oneself with cold water. *Suigyo* was immediately followed by a solemn morning prayer led by the instructors. As soon as morning prayers were done, everyone pitched in to clean up. Breakfast was at 7:40. Meals were also a formal practice. They began with chanting grace, and there was no conversation while eating. The prospective shami were responsible for washing the dishes and cleaning up as quickly and efficiently as possible, as the day's first lecture began at 8:30. Lectures and other

activities consumed the entire day, leaving the participants little time for themselves until after 9:00 in the evening.

Various lectures were offered throughout the day by the instructors who are noted experts in their fields. This year, Rev. Shokai Kanai of Nevada Kannon Temple gave extensive lectures on the Lotus Sutra. Two accomplished Shomyo-shi masters from Japan, Rev. Tsumyo Murakami of Kujoji Temple of Minami Alps, and Rev. Kosho Ohara of Koyoji Temple of Nagoya, explained many of the finer points of Nichiren Shu ceremonies to participants. Rev. Hosho Sugawara of Hilo Nichiren Mission provided instruction in chanting the sutra and *shodaigyo*. Rev. Kyokei Ono from Tokyo provided expert translation for the entire seminar. Rev. Eisei Ikenaga was responsible for lectures on the life and teachings of Nichiren Shonin, as well as instruction in *shakyo*, or sutra copying. Ms. Asayo Kawasaki, a nutritionist certified by Athlete Food Meister, exquisitely prepared authentic Japanese dishes for each meal during the busy five-day seminar.

Four novices attended the seminar. Elizabeth Christina Drewello and Charles Joseph Griggs are disciples of Rev. Ryuoh Faulconer of the Greater New England Sangha. Chad Grohman and James Cody Kroll are disciples of Rev. Kanjin Cederman of Enkyoji Temple in Seattle.



Nichiren Mission of Hawaii
Rev. Chishin Hirai

Ema Design

We have started the annual design contest for Ema, or votive picture plaques. Ideas from members, relatives, friends and supporters of all the Hawaii Nichiren Missions are welcome. Next year, 2016, is the Year of the Monkey.

Special prizes will be awarded to the best designs and displayed on the 2016 Ema. So please send in your artistic talent!

Honolulu Myohoji
Rev. Takamasa Yamamura

Spirit of the Tree

In Hawaii, there is a tendency to cut down trees without much thought.

In Japan, unless there is a considerable problem, trees are not cut down. This is because trees are alive just like us. Don't we feel sad when someone kills a dog or a cat? Why do we not feel the same way when someone cuts down a tree? Is this because it is silent?

In Japan, we do not cut down trees around the home or temple premises at random because the head of the household or related persons may meet misfortune, illness or even death by doing so. We prefer to prune the trees rather than cutting them down. When there is a tree that has to be cut down, the area surrounding it is purified. After transferring the spirit of the tree to a new seedling, and giving

thorough apologies, we respectfully cut down the tree. Since the trees have been around longer than we have, we must never destroy them and nature through our selfish decisions.

Tampa Bay, Florida
Rev. Shinkyō Warner

Interfaith Week

As part of the second annual "Interfaith Week" celebration in St. Petersburg, Florida, Rev. Shinkyō Warner conducted a session entitled "Meditation, Tea and Dharma" at a restaurant owned by a member of the Tampa Bay Sangha.



Nearly 40 people showed up to practice Shodaigyo led by Rev. Warner, receive an offering of tea from the restaurant, and participate in a discussion of Buddhism and the Lotus Sutra. Participants offered thoughtful questions on Buddha Nature, what it means to be a Bodhisattva, and how the Buddha intends for us to conduct our lives in this world of suffering and conflict. Rev. Warner received several invitations to speak at other churches and temples in the Tampa Bay area and many expressions of gratitude for his sharing the Wonderful Dharma with them. Everyone left happy in what they had learned and with a new assurance of their Buddha Nature and their capacity to reach enlightenment.

VOLUNTEERS' EXPERIENCE IN HAWAII



I am studying English Literature and Buddhism at Rissho University. From August 19 to September 9, I stayed at the Nichiren Mission of Hawaii as part of the university volunteer program.

Each day at the Mission starts with a *hoyo*, or prayer service. Then we had breakfast and chores. My first weekend was preparing for the Bon Dance Festival. I learned that decisions for temple activities were by mutual consent from both Rev. Hirai, Bishop of Hawaii, and the members. I would like to see events like the Bon Festival at my temple in Japan. The next week, I attended an English language school.

The last week, I visited a hospice, a mortuary, and a nursing home. At the hospice, I learned how to care for people at the end of their lives and to grieve for my own loved ones when they pass away.

At the mortuary, I learned that each religion conducts funeral services differently. I asked myself, "What is religion? What is faith? What is god?" Now I want to study more about religion.

In the nursing home, one patient said, "You are so much fun to talk with." This made my visit very rewarding.

I thank Hirai-sensei, his wife, and the members of the Nichiren Mission of Hawaii for this wonderful opportunity. I missed my family and friends, but now I miss the people I met in Hawaii. One day, I want to return to Hawaii. —*Mizuki Yoshimura*



I am a sophomore at Rissho University, majoring in philosophy and religion. Coming to Hawaii was a valuable experience.

At the Nichiren Mission Temple, my days started at 5:30 in the morning and ended at 11:00 at night. First, I chanted the sutras for about an hour, then I helped with breakfast. Work started at 9:00 and ended at 5:00. Afterwards, I helped with dinner, took a bath, did the laundry and went to bed.

When I arrived on August 19, I helped with preparations for the Bon Dance. From the 24-28, I attended an English language school. I then visited nursing homes

and two mortuaries from August 31 to September 3.

At the Hosoi Mortuary, I met Ai Saito, a mortuary staff member. She is a Japanese woman who grew up in Hawaii, 27 years old and a Buddhist. I asked her, "Are you scared of death?" She said "I'm not scared of death, rather I accept that I will one day die, so I appreciate living every day. When I die, I die. When I'm alive, I will enjoy." But she said ghosts are scary. I think it's brilliant to think this way. It's been a good lesson for me. I was able to see the difference between the Japanese and Hawaiian points of view about life and death.

I will try to come back to Hawaii in three years. I hope to see you all again soon.

—*Riho Komaki*

Calendar for December 2015–January 2016

- DEC 8** Jodo-e (Enlightenment Day) commemorating the day when the Buddha attained Enlightenment.
- DEC 8** Hilo Nichiren Mission 50th Anniversary Ceremony
- DEC 31** Joya-no-Kane: Bell ringing ceremony to wish for good fortune in the New Year

- JAN 1** Memorial for Nichiji Shonin
- JAN 13** Minobusan Opening Ceremony for the New Year, Kuonji Temple
- JAN 23** Memorial for Nichiro Shonin

Nichiren Shu News c/o The Head Office of Nichiren Shu, 1-32-15 Ikegami, Ota-ku, Tokyo 146-8544, Japan; Tel. +81-3-3751-7181, E-mail: kokusai@nichiren.or.jp
Board of Trustees Junko Kobayashi, *Chief Administrator, The Head Office of Nichiren Shu*; Bungyo Yoshida, *President, NOPPA*; Kenitsu Saito, *Executive Director, Missionary Department*; Momi Shiozaki, *Executive Director, General Affairs Department*; Kenyu Yoshida, *Director, Missionary Department*
Editorial Board Sandra Seki, *Editor*; Shinkyō Warner, *Assistant Editor*; Alan Rowe, *Art Director*; Keiryū Shima, *Chief Advisor*
Staff Kanshu Naito, Gyokai Sekido **Advisor** Hoyu Maruyama