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# O N E N E S S

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Quarterly Newsletter of the Rev. Gyomay M. Kubose Dharma Legacy

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## SOUNDLESS SOUND by Rev. Gyomay M. Kubose

The other day a group of young Christians along with their Sunday school teachers visited the temple. As usual, I explained Buddhism to them. Later they asked various questions. One of the questions was, "What is that brown bowl on the altar?" (They were referring to a large bronze bell.) "That is a bell," I replied. "What is it used for? What does it symbolize?" "Well, it doesn't exactly symbolize anything in particular. But if you wish to consider it as symbolic, then it symbolizes life. I'll let you hear the sound of the bell."

I struck the bell and everyone became *so quiet*. They listened until the very end of the sound. Then I remarked, "This is the way we begin our Buddhist services. Everyone listens to the sound of the bell, getting rid of extraneous thoughts and making their minds open and receptive. Most important, we are able to listen to the soundless sound."

One of the teachers was very taken by this idea of soundless sound. I could see it in her face. She was thinking about it and finally asked, "What is this soundless sound?" I replied, "The soundless sound is the sound you have to hear yourself. It cannot be explained." She said, "Is there such a thing as a *soundless* sound?" I answered, "To hear the soundless sound... that is the Buddhist teaching." She was thinking quite hard. "Are we able to hear it?" "Yes, that is Buddhism." She persisted, "But can't you explain it *somehow*?" She was so intensely interested in that one phrase: soundless sound. However, all I could say to her

was, "The soundless sound is one thing I cannot explain to you; yet you do have the ability to hear the soundless sound."

What is the soundless sound? The bell always sits silently on a cushion. Whenever anyone strikes the bell, it creates sound. Depending upon how it is hit, different sounds are produced: high, low, short, long. There are myriad tones contained in that bell. From the bell's point of view, it responds according to how it is struck.

There is one temple in Kyoto, Japan, which is famous for having a huge bell. On New Year's Eve it is a Japanese custom for each temple to strike its bell 108 times to send out the old year and welcome in the new year. The city of Kyoto has many Buddhist temples. Consequently, many different kinds of bells are heard on New Year's Eve. However, the bell at this one temple is so huge that if one person strikes it, hardly any sound is heard. The clapper is a huge log suspended by 16 ropes. It takes 16 priests, all swaying together, to draw back the ropes so that the log can strike the bell. This creates a most tremendous sound.

Every bell has the potential to produce hundreds of sounds and vibrations. This is also the way our life is. Each one of us is like a bell. We possess a capability of producing sounds, according to how things of the world strike against us. Some of us produce sharp tones; others produce flat tones. All these sounds and vibrations result from an interaction between ourselves and our environment.

All bells and all people have the potential to produce sounds. Each bell has unexpressed tones in it. Each one of us also possesses this unexpressed music. Each individual has the potential to create his own music. We are ever ready to produce sound. This is the soundless sound. Each bell, each individual has this soundless sound.

My teacher, Rev. Akegarasu, was very interested in bells. In his house he had a collection of bells from all over the world. There were bells of every size and shape and bells made of all kinds of material—copper, clay, silver, gold. Perhaps my teacher was interested in bells because of the soundless sound each has.

As for the soundless sound itself, as I told the Sunday school teacher, it is something to be experienced, not explained. Each person can hear the soundless sound. This is religion. It does not matter if the religion is named Christianity, Buddhism, Judaism, or Islam. Religion exists for anyone who is able to hear the profound sound, the soundless sound. The world of the soundless sound is such a beautiful, magnificent world. It is unique and yet universal. Find it. Listen to it. Live it.

(*The Center Within*, pgs. 71-73)

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# President's Message

by Rev. Koyos S. Kubose

This past autumn I gave a Dharma talk at the Bright Dawn Retreat Center in Plymouth, Wisconsin. I talked about my "one-thought method" of spiritual practice. This is where you come up with one word, phrase, or thought that summarizes a teaching for yourself. Then you can relate further experiences to that saying, thereby making the saying more and more significant and meaningful to you.

"Tears and Laughter" is the saying I've come up with regarding some recent experiences I've had this autumn. The older I get, the more I value tears and laughter. Although our mundane daily activities have their own value, I really treasure the deep sharing that takes place when we cry and laugh together. Pretension and artificiality are superficial compared to sincere tears and spontaneous laughter.

We should live like the autumn maple leaves falling to the ground, showing front, showing back. Through shyness, pride, being deceptive or manipulative, or for other reasons, we often hide our "back side" and only show our "front side." How wonderful to freely live with a naturalness that comes from being completely comfortable within one's own skin. Experience life fully. Live like a flower blooms, like a bird sings. Have genuine encounters with others, expressing oneself with one's total being.

This past October I went to California for my Uncle George's funeral. It was a sad occasion but the family shared a lot of laughter too. At the funeral we told humorous stories about Uncle George. Like the time a suitcase fell off the top of their car during a family vacation. Uncle George gathered up clothes that had spilled onto the highway median strip. He waved a bra over his head and playfully yelled to his wife, "Amy, is this yours?"

After the funeral service, we had lunch at a Chinese restaurant. George's son-in-law pulled me aside as we were getting ready to leave the restaurant. He asked whether one's good or bad actions had any effects upon oneself after dying. Did one have to be concerned? Did it matter? I wasn't sure how to reply and I did not have an articulate, pat answer. I said something like, it matters in a relative sense; there are karmic effects. However, in an absolute sense, it doesn't matter because there are no relative judgments of good or bad. For example, we consider death to be bad, something undesirable and to be avoided. As human beings we cannot help crying and being sad when losing a loved one. Yet, from the perspective of nature, death is a natural event. It is not good or bad, but simply is a reality of life. As human beings, none of us wants to die or to lose loved ones; staying alive matters. Yet, on another level, there is nothing to worry about; nature will take care of everything. So I concluded that there were different levels of truth. Then, to lighten the "heavy" topic, I laughingly said, "Man, that's some deep stuff." George's son-in-law immediately responded, "Yeah, that's some deep s - - t!" We walked out of the restaurant together, nodding and smiling, knowing that we had shared some deep s - - t. Right after that, we shared another great moment in the parking lot.

Earlier I had given a Dharma talk about the two basic realities of life: Impermanence and Interdependency. I called these the "Two I's." In the parking lot, George's son-in-law, who is in his 50's, whispered to me, "You know, earlier you talked about the two I's, but you forgot to mention the third I: Impotency!" I doubled over in laughter. These are genuine moments of sharing that I will never forget.

In November, I took a trip to Las Vegas to attend a "Chicago All Clubs Reunion." Many Japanese Americans living in Chicago were members of ethnic social and athletic clubs during the 1950's and 1960's when opportunities were limited after the Second World War.

Later, some people moved away from Chicago. So reunions were organized to take place in Las Vegas every few years.

For the first time, many in my former circle of high school friends attended this past reunion. Some old friends I hadn't seen in over 40 years! How we aged: hair lost and weight gained. We shared past memories and also remembered friends who died way too young. We laughed together and even had an old-fashion poker game; what a lot of fun it was.

The day after I returned home, I officiated a funeral of the mother of one of my childhood friends. He hadn't been able to attend the Las Vegas reunion because of his mother's death. As it turned out, the photograph of his mother that was used on the front of the funeral service program, was taken at her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration held this past summer in Las Vegas. So, as I talked to family members before the service, they said it was appropriate that I had just returned from Las Vegas. I gave my friend a photo of our group taken in Las Vegas. He showed this photo to other friends at the funeral. The photo was a great conversation piece that elicited a lot of old memories.

In my minister's message given during the funeral service I said, "I wasn't going to mention this, but I just came back from a trip to Las Vegas." I explained how the reunion was not just nostalgic but deepened awareness of generational differences and the thanks we owe others who struggled after WWII. The Issei and Nisei generations who relocated to Chicago after the camps were my generation's grandparents and parents. They put down roots in the Midwest to earn a living and raise families.

I related how, at the reunion, I could really see the effects of Impermanence and Interdependency, the two realities of life. That is, how impermanent youth and health are; and the importance of those we grew up with and shared formative life experiences. As I've mentioned before, Impermanence and Interdependency are the "Two I's" that I also call the "Two Eyes" with which Buddhists look at life. As I said this, I pointed my two index fingers forward from my eyes.

Then, I said that the Las Vegas trip was a spiritual retreat for me. Everybody at the funeral service laughed but the trip really did have spiritual significance for me. After the service, several people, with smiling eyes, asked me, "Did you win any money during your 'spiritual retreat'?" Another good friend, who is known for his uninhibited gregariousness, loudly directed a stream of comments toward me. He talked about how much my older group of friends had aged, about my gambling skills, etc, etc. He always teases others while bragging about himself in a joking way. Then he dramatically pointed his two index fingers forward from his eyes and said, "I also use my two eyes! Hey, Sensei, you thought I wasn't listening, huh? No, no, I remember about the two eyes!" Everyone around us laughed and we all shared a good moment together. Of course, his wife just rolled her eyes. Let me end this article by saying that tears and laughter are what life is all about.



## Oneness Newsletter Winter 2003

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The purpose of the Kubose Dharma Legacy is to offer a non-sectarian, non-dualistic approach, the Way of Oneness, to further individual spiritual growth in everyday life for people of all backgrounds.



## *Spiritual Surfing* by Rev. Koyo S. Kubose

It may seem strange that this Oneness winter issue includes articles about summer events in Hawaii, but this is the reality of our newsletter publication schedule. On the other hand, memories of Hawaii can keep us warm during our Midwest winter. Those of you readers who live in Hawaii, can just smile and enjoy this article, because I wrote it especially for you.

In the “Gathering 2003 Conference” article in this issue, I summarize my presentations. Yet, for me, whenever I go on any speaking trip, I always receive much more than whatever I am able to give. Many precious personal experiences occur. Most of them involve interactions with other people. For example, one elderly devout person at the Conference told me he calls himself a “retired” Buddhist. I thought this was an interesting idea with implications one could learn from.

This person and his wife were attendees when I was the guest speaker at their Buddhist Study Center’s Summer Session in 1999. At that time, one of the things I had attendees do, was put up post-it notes at home to remind them to put their hands together in Gassho, and remember to be thankful or mindful when engaged in various everyday activities. This couple put up a post-it note saying “Water Gassho” next to their kitchen faucet. This was to remind them not to take for granted whenever they took a drink or used fresh water. At this year’s conference, they told me that the original note was still there. This was surprising to me since that was over four years ago. I was inspired by their sincere application of this mindfulness practice in their daily life. In fact, because of my remarks at this year’s conference, they said they were going to put up another post-it with the words, “Keep Going.” This made me appreciate my expression of this teaching even more.

After the conference, family members and I went sightseeing on the islands. Many of these excursions were significant experiences for me. Nature is such a tremendous teacher. I also enjoyed the local food; this may seem ordinary and to be expected but I really enjoyed the food. I consider fully enjoying the great food a significant experience of spiritual gratitude. I want to briefly mention or just list some of the experiences I had on the different islands.

On OAHU, we climbed to the top of Diamond Head. Later we enjoyed the best cold saimin noodles we’ve ever tasted at a restaurant in Honolulu. I also spoke at the Wahiawa Hongwanji Mission, where I was stunned to hear myself be introduced by Rev. Kevin as “the foremost interpreter in America today of Shin Buddhism for everyday living.” After getting over my shock, I had no choice but to be spoiled by their Aloha hospitality. This included a rare treat of “*daishin*” which I learned are the tender side shoots of *yamaimo* (a special kind of Japanese potato). I never had this before and unless I am very lucky, probably will not have the opportunity to have it again. I also enjoyed a delicious butterfish dinner at a local restaurant, drinking Orain, an Okinawian beer. “Okole Maluna” (Hawaiian for cheers or bottom’s up).

On KAUAI, we went kayaking and then hiked to a waterfall and pool where ancient royalty used to enjoy bathing in the fresh water. Later we had the best hot saimin noodles ever at Hamura’s restaurant. We enjoyed sno-cones (with ice cream in the middle!) in the town of Hanalei (home of Puff the magic dragon). We took a sunset cruise to see the NaPali coast, where movies like Jurassic Park were filmed. For part of the cruise, I sunbathed in an isolated spot on the ship. I took off my shirt, put on lotion, closed my eyes, and staying relaxed but alert, communed with the vast ocean in a deep state of meditative *samadhi*. At home I have seen many sunrises over Lake Michigan. Now I was glad to have the chance to see a sunset over

the ocean. I saw the “green flash” at the instant that the sun went under the horizon. At the same time, dolphins and flying fish were jumping next to the ship.

On MAUI, seeing the sunrise over Haleakala Crater (House of the Sun) was special. I had never seen a sunrise before that was above the clouds. We were able to see rare blooming Silversword plants that grow only on the slopes of Haleakala. We also did the famous scenic drive of twisting curves all the way to the town of Hana. As we drove we listened to a CD that described the scenic sights near the different mile markers. We bought spam musubi at Hasagawa General Store and went on to visit the Seven Sacred Pools. During other times driving around we listened to a great music CD by Israel Kamakawiwo’ole. IZ is the man! One night I spoke at a youth retreat at the Lahaina Hongwanji Temple, where the parents served a pot-luck dinner of local dishes, including great desserts, like lilikoi (passion fruit) pie.

On the Big Island of HAWAII, we stayed one night at the Volcano House on the rim of the Kilauea Caldera. In the town of Volcano we enjoyed good Hawaiian breakfasts at the Lava Rock Café. We hiked across the Kilauea Iki Crater which was full of many steam vents. Within the Kilauea Caldera is Halema’uma’u Crater, home of Pele, the Hawaiian Goddess of Fire. At the overlook there, we saw rare Nene birds eating fruit offerings that were left at the site. We drove to the end of Chain of Craters Road and hiked to see lava flowing into the ocean. You could walk right up to the molten lava. As we hiked back to the car, night fell and we used flashlights to guide our way over the rocky lava surface. Looking back at the dark landscape, it was quite a sight to see the glowing lava flows, with the stars shining brightly in the black sky.

One day we attended a ceremony of the 87<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Founding of the National Park Service, which just happened to take place while we were at the Volcano National Park. Senator Daniel Inouye was flown in by helicopter. He was honored for his legislative work supporting the Park Service in Hawaii. We got to meet him afterwards and I mentioned to him that I went to college with Bob Matsui (Congressman from Sacramento). Senator Inouye immediately said, “So, you’re a Katonk!” We had a good laugh together. Katonk is slang for a mainland Japanese American.

In Hilo, we had saimin at Nori’s restaurant, and a great sashimi sushi dinner at Tsunami restaurant. I had an Aloha shirt custom made for me at a place called Dragon Mama’s. We toured a macadamian nut factory, and a local winery. I had good local Kona beer and Kona coffee. I liked the lychee fruit and even enjoyed the poi too. In Hilo, we bought obento lunch at Miyo’s and then drove to Parker Ranch to go horseback riding. We also went snorkeling at Warm Pools Beach and walked on Black Sand Beach. There were wild mongooses running around in the parking lots.

At the Hilo Hongwanji Betsuin, I gave a weekend seminar, including my Buddhist stand-up comedy routine. We had great Aloha hospitality wherever we were guests, including receiving many lei’s. We were able to get together with Chicago friends who retired back to Hawaii. We met new relatives for the first time. We went home with local chocolate candy, cookies, and jars of homemade jam, unique poha (gooseberry) jam, ginger jam, and wei-we jam. Some Hilo Betsuin members were also members of the local Urasenke Tea School. We ended our stay on the Big Island being served traditional Matcha green tea by ladies wearing beautiful kimono in a tea house located in a tranquil Hilo City Park.

We did so much that it’s still hard for me to get hold of the entire trip in my mind. Writing about the trip has helped make things real again. We received so much.

Mahalo, Mahalo, Mahalo.

# Gathering 2003 Conference

## by Rev. Koyo S. Kubose

*The following is a summary of my presentations at the Gathering 2003 Conference "Expressing Shin Buddhism in America" held August 15-17 in Honolulu, Hawaii. I was a member of a panel of five presenters (Alfred Bloom, Dennis Hirota, Kenneth Tanaka, and Taitetsu Unno). Each panelist gave about a ten-minute presentation at each of three General Sessions.*

### General Session 1: Basic Concepts of Buddhism and Shin Buddhism

Two basic Buddhist concepts are what I call the "Two I's": Impermanence (*anicca* in Pali, the ancient language of early Buddhism; *mujo* in Japanese Buddhism) and Interdependency (*pratitya-samutpada* in Pali; *engi* in Japanese).

Impermanence means that all things are in constant change, never remaining the same. This is a major aspect of the reality of life. It is not possible to stay youthful and healthy, or to live forever. Clinging to a desired permanence of things is the basis of human suffering.

Interdependency includes what is called the Doctrine of Dependent Origination: All things are caused. Things (phenomenal reality) are not isolated entities but affect each other. What we call an individual self is not a static noun but is a dynamic verb or process. Who I am, what sustains my life, is the entire universe.

In a play on words, I refer to the "Two I's" as the "two eyes." Impermanence and Interdependency are the two eyes that Buddhists use to look at life. In my presentation, I continued on to relate these two basic concepts of Impermanence and Interdependency to Shin Buddhism.

Amida Buddha is of major importance in Shin Buddhism. Amida Buddha represents the ideal spiritual qualities of wisdom and compassion. These two qualities of wisdom and compassion can be said to characterize historical Gautama Buddha's mind and heart. The Japanese word Amida combines the Sanskrit words *Amitabha* (Infinite Light) and *Amitayus* (Infinite Life). Light and life correspond to, or are related to, wisdom and compassion, respectively.

I consider Impermanence and Interdependency to be related to wisdom and compassion. Wisdom is the result of the right understanding of Impermanence. Compassion is the result of the right

understanding of Interdependency. This is how I concluded my remarks regarding basic concepts of Buddhism and Shin Buddhism.

### General Session 2: Expressing Shin Buddhism in America

I approached the topic of "Expressing Shin Buddhism" in the context of individual spiritual development, rather than from a broad social context. The process of expressing, or attempting to express one's understanding of the Buddhist teachings, is an important aspect in one's spiritual development.

The major teachings of past Masters were a result of a lifetime of struggling to express their personal understanding of the teachings. It is not enough to know and to express the teachings in a scholarly fashion. To apply the teachings to one's own actual life is what gives spiritual meaning and enables creative expression of the teachings. Past Masters often wrote a New Year's poem that was a current expression of their understanding of the Dharma teachings.

An important aspect of individual spiritual practice is to be constantly trying to express one's understanding of the teaching. Teachers often challenge their disciples by saying, "Show me your Buddhism!" Now-a-days, not many of us have a formal relationship with a spiritual teacher. Yet, we can still encourage the attitude of having an "inner teacher" who is constantly asking oneself to "Show me your Buddhism."

As a Shin Buddhist, you can challenge yourself to express the Nembutsu. If asked to do so right here, right now, what is your expression? To help make the expression your own deep expression that is really a part of you and not just something in your head, the challenge could be, "Say the Nembutsu without opening your mouth." What is important here is not whether one literally opens one's mouth or not. Nor is the point to silently do something else. The point is to find the "true and real" expression that is so full of sincere conviction as to be beyond judgment. It is simply life expressing itself.

This is a kind of applying a Zen koan procedure to the expression of the Nembutsu. When I was in Japan, my Zen teacher used the method I have described above. For over a year, I came before him in weekly private interviews and I expressed my "answer." The interviews were short and lasted only a few minutes. The two

## Gathering 2003 by Don Kubose

Early this year, my brother told me about a Buddhist conference he was invited to be a speaker at in Hawaii and suggested that Joyce and I also attend. The three-day conference was to be in Honolulu in mid-August. Never having been to Hawaii, we agreed to go. To make a long story short, we extended our stay to the end of August with Sunnan and Adrienne, Robert and Joyce (my sister) and my cousin Aimy and husband Bruce (our token haole!) all joining in. The eight of us visited Oahu, Kauai, Maui, and the Big Island. There was never a dull moment! Hiking, kayaking, mountain climbing, snorkeling, shopping, and eating, eating, eating! Sunnan gave several talks at various churches during the two weeks and we were invited to potluck lunches and dinners. Mmmm, delicious!

This was the first Buddhist conference I've attended. I have participated in many scientific conferences during my working years and found that this conference was organized quite similarly. The title of the conference was "Expressing Shin Buddhism in America - Gathering 2003". There was a panel of five

well-known "experts", all Reverends and all holding doctorates. There were four general sessions in which the panel gave their presentations. These were interspersed with several individual group sessions that involved everyone (we had all previously signed up for the sessions we wanted to participate in). The final general session served to summarize the discussions from each of the individual sessions.

The primary thrust of the conference was how best to express Shin Buddhism in America and what are the strategies to ensure the survival of existing temples. The two individual sessions I participated in, "Shin Buddhism and its Place in World Religions" and "Buddhism in America", emphasized the fact that Buddhism must indeed become American Buddhism and not remain the Buddhism that came over with the Issei in the early 1900's. There were many spirited discussions. It became very obvious to me, on a personal level, that this was and is the life purpose of Rev. Gyomay Kubose and the Kubose Dharma Legacy.



## American Buddhist Services

The Heartland Sangha holds 11 A.M. Saturday services at Lake Street Church, 607 Lake Street, Evanston (use courtyard entrance on Chicago Avenue). For more information, please call Heartland Sangha at 773-545-9972.

Upcoming Dharma Talks by Rev. Koyo Kubose are:

DEC	20	Road of the Tinkling Bell
JAN	3	Year of the Clever Monkey
JAN	17	Going Backwards
FEB	7	The Hidden Buddha
FEB	21	The Complaining Buddha
MAR	6	Post Modernism: Living in the Hyphen

unwritten rules for such interviews were: (1) no physical damage; and (2) when the teacher rang his little bell, the interview was over. Other than following these two rules, you could do anything and express yourself in any fashion.

The only reason to mention my personal experience is to give credence to my suggestion that you challenge yourself to “Express your Nembutsu!” or “Express your Buddhism!” It is important to emphasize that such expressions reflect a constant process, and that one never concludes or arrives at a final, correct answer.

### General Session 3: Shin Buddhism in Life Experiences

I would like to focus on one particular important life experience; namely, coping with the death of a loved one or a friend. Most of us have gone to many memorial services. In the Buddhist tradition, the purpose of memorial services is not to provide any benefit to the deceased, but the purpose is to provide the attendees an opportunity to listen to the teachings.

As a minister, I have tried to maximize the learning experiences of memorial service attendees by relating my Dharma talks to their personal lives. In recent years I have developed what might be called a “one-thought method.” I tell the attendees that during the sutra chanting, think about one shared experience or about something that you learned from being part of the deceased’s life. Try to distill or crystallize what you have received, into one word, one phrase, or one thought. Focusing on one word or phrase gives direction in shaping the mass of thoughts and feelings one experiences when remembering the deceased.

Then I tell the attendees to keep the one word or phrase in mind when they come up to offer incense during the chanting. I explain that to maximize the potential impact of the word or phrase, consider offering incense as a religious rite of consecration that makes the word or phrase sacred to oneself.

Actually, one doesn’t know whether one’s word or phrase will have any lasting power. Also, one shouldn’t feel that one’s word is the final word. It is simply the word that came to mind in a particular moment. On another occasion, another word may come to mind. In this continuing process, however, a particular word or phrase may “solidify” itself and come to have real spiritual significance. The

## Komical Karma



word may become what is called a “Turning Word” (*kuruma kotoba* in Japanese); that is, a word full of impact that turns one’s life around. This can be considered a great Dharma gift that one receives from the deceased.

### Closing Session: Panelists Reflections

For my closing reflection I would like to tell you about an experience I had while packing for my trip to Hawaii. On a shelf in my bedroom, I have many stuffed animals. I started with an animal hand puppet I named Dharma Dan that I sometimes used as a prop when giving Dharma talks. Over the years, I acquired or was given many other animal hand puppets.

Four years ago I was the guest lecturer for the Hongwanji Buddhist Study Center’s ten-day Summer Session in Honolulu. At the last session, one gift given to me was a turtle hand puppet. One of my “turning word” teachings I introduced was the phrase, “Keep Going.” I used the phrase often during the summer session, so the turtle was a nice symbol of “Keep Going.”

This teaching of “Keep Going” is more than just reassurance and encouragement. To me, the phrase has spiritual meaning similar to famous phrases such as “Beginner’s Mind” by Shunryu Suzuki Roshi or “Don’t Know Mind” by the Korean Zen master Seung Sahn. I also relate “Keep Going” to Shinran’s teaching of *Jinen Honi*, which means “naturalness” or “things as they are.” Nature just keeps going, without any self-conscious struggle to achieve or to get to some final destination. There is joy and meaning in each present moment. One “keeps going” in the Eternal Now.

So anyway, when I was in my bedroom packing my suitcase for this year’s conference, I heard a voice that said, “Take me.” I turned around and the turtle puppet was looking down at me from the shelf. I thought to myself, “Of course! The turtle was given to me in Hawaii. It’s a no brainer that he should accompany me back to Hawaii for a visit!”

As I told the conference attendees all this, I held up the turtle for everyone to see. They got a big kick out of this, and the turtle was so happy too. I asked for help in giving the turtle a name. Rev. Kuniyuki, the conference organizer, immediately replied “*Honu!*” which means turtle in Hawaiian. Then one of the panelists, Dr. Unno, quipped, “His full name is *Jinen Honu.*” \* \* \* \* \*



## 2004 YEAR of the MONKEY

There is a Japanese saying that even monkeys slip and fall from trees. The moral is that we should not become overconfident about our abilities. If we are egotistic about our talents, there is a tendency to become too full of oneself. It is the prideful "expert" that gets careless and hurts himself. On the other hand, when one is not sure of one's abilities, one is careful and diligent in one's efforts. Although there may be wide individual differences in ability, we can all strive fully to concentrate and give our all in whatever we do.

In 2004, Year of the Monkey, let us not act with a swagger and have a cocky attitude. Instead, let us strive to keep our "Beginner's Mind" and with sincere humility, always give one hundred percent effort in all our activities.

*Daylight Savings Time is over. Winter brings shorter days and longer nights. It is dark when we eat breakfast and dinner. Here are some seasonal haiku we've received:*

**Night is upon us  
Darkness devours the light  
The world is asleep**

*Jon Zick (13 years old), Mtn Home, Idaho*

**Sun is shining as  
Snow shower shimmers outside  
Surprise for my eyes**

*Nancy Schaffner, Chicago, Illinois*

**headless snowman ...  
the only snow left  
in the schoolyard**

*Randy Brooks, Decatur, Illinois*

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Tansy Yama-Guchi (PA)  
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Lloyd Yoshioka (CA)

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Edwin & Karolyn Fukuda  
Laura Fukuda  
Pat Fukuda  
Gail S. Shintaku

#### **In Memory of Pat Fujino Fukuda**

Bert & Glenna Fukuda  
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Maryann & Richard Brandon  
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Dana & Stacey Taniguchi  
Alice Tsuboi  
Bruce & Aimy Wilbur  
Anna Yamamoto  
Sally Yemoto  
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#### **In Memory of**

*Miyano Hashimoto*  
by Yoshi & Lee S. Tanaka

#### **In Memory of**

*Yuki Asai*  
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#### **In Memory of**

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by James McCaffrey



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<b>YES YES Your Everyday Spirituality YES YES</b>	
<b>DEC</b>	<p><b>Theme:</b> Gratitude/Awareness  <b>Purpose:</b> To not take for granted common things, like drinking water.  <b>Method:</b> "Water-Gassho:" Post a note next to your kitchen faucet reminding you to appreciate the water you drink. (Courtesy of Tando's; Honolulu)</p>
<b>JAN</b>	<p><b>Theme:</b> Discipline; Hard Work  <b>Purpose:</b> To motivate oneself for any task you find difficult to begin (e.g. studying, exercising, cleaning, etc.).  <b>Method:</b> "Wax-on, Wax-off Gassho:" With palms facing away from you, make a small circle in the air, first with one hand, then the other. Begin your task with a smile.</p>
<b>FEB</b>	<p><b>Theme:</b> Completion/Finishing  <b>Purpose:</b> To remind oneself to make a clean break from one task before going to the next.  <b>Method:</b> "All-Finished Gassho:" With one hand above the other in front of you, lightly clap; rotate hands and clap again; then face palms away from yourself (do quickly). These hand movements are what casino dealers do when leaving the blackjack or dice tables. (Hawaiians can also say, "All pau.")</p>

**Mailing List Update**

Our mailing list has welcomed new additions from many sources and referrals. We are happy to continue sending our newsletter to all interested persons. One reason for staying on the mailing list is to find out when new books come out. Also, you never know when you might want to order a book for a relative or friend in a future time of need. If you know someone who would like to be added or removed from our mailing list, please indicate below and send to: Oneness Newsletter, Kubose Dharma Legacy, 8334 Harding, Skokie, IL 60076.

Please add to your mailing list                      Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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