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# O N E S S S



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Quarterly Newsletter of BRIGHT DAWN: Institute for American Buddhism

Vol. 13 No. 2 Summer 2009



**2009 Lay Minister Induction**

Dave Nichiyo Abatangelo, Wendy Shinyo Haylett, Cheryl Jiyo Kornegay, Paul Toyo Mack, Paul David Teiyo Pangborn, Jr. , and Ken Muyo Swanson completed the two year Lay Minister Program and were Inducted as Bright Dawn Institute for American Buddhism Lay Ministers on May 23, 2009 held outdoors at the Altar Rock in Coarsegold, CA. Board Members, family members and friends attended.

The Induction marks the culmination of reading, writing and discussing Buddhism. In addition to studying Rev. Gyomay M. Kubose's writings and approach, the Lay Ministers studied the life of Buddha, an overview of different Buddhist sects in the United States, Naikan, a few sutras, and topics such as Buddhism and Christianity, integral spirituality, and "green" Buddhism.

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Although Wendy Shinyo Haylett and Cheryl Jiyo Kornegay were unable to come to Bright Dawn Institute in Coarsegold, CA., they were able to participate via a computer webcam hookup and also group teleconferences..

At the tolling of a calling bell (kansho), everyone gathered outside. Then, led by a Buddhist flag at the front, there was a procession up to the Altar Rock.

As shown in a recent Oneness issue, there is an honorary street sign “Rev. Gyomay and Minnie Kubose Way” on the path up to the Altar Rock. As each of us passed this street sign, we bowed our heads.

During the Lay Minister Induction, each Inductee was introduced and given an okesa (neck stole) and certificate that signified their completion of the Bright Dawn Institute Lay Minister Program.

The Inductees were asked to share how they came to Buddhism, their current career, and some personal information which follows.

### **Dave Nichiyo Abatangelo**

I like to think that two of the best things in my life came to me on the same day. When I married my wife Joan, we asked then Rev. Sunnan Kubose to marry us at the Buddhist Temple of Chicago. I knew what a prize I had in Joan but I didn't know that the door would be opened to something that would become equally important in my life. Rev. Sunnan gave me a copy of the “Center Within” and that began a slow and steady journey deeper into the practice of Buddhism.

I currently am in technical sales at Oracle—a large, software company. I enjoy the work but am quietly planning my next career—buying and running a small family retreat center / Bed and Breakfast replete with llamas, honey bees, fruit orchards and wildflowers.

I get significantly more pleasure from playing the piano than my wife and kids do from hearing me play. I love to play with my boys and am currently learning some new magic tricks with Conal and helping Casimir prepare for the World Pokemon Championships (although they have a lo-o-o-o-ong way to go.) I hope Casimir and Conal will speak as fondly of me as the Kubose children do of Gyomay Kubose Sensei.

### **Shinyo Wendy Haylett**

I have been a spiritual seeker for most of my life. As a young child I reported nighttime “visits” from a “wizard” bringing me a bookshelf full of books and teaching me “wisdom.” As a child, I was troubled by death (my grandfather died on my 7th birthday) and was captivated by the ability of my mind to watch my own thoughts. I think that initiated me on my spiritual journey.

In my teen years, I pursued baptism in a community Protestant church and loved to visit the churches of my friends. During my 20's and 30's, I continually sought a spirituality that would soothe the angst of some unidentifiable separation from something—I didn't know what. My only reading since that time has been spirituality, religion, and philosophy. I studied Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, Gurdjieff, Ouspensky, Transcendentalism. I read Watts, Suzuki, Dogen, Gary Snyder, Chogyam Trungpa; studied Emerson; and found solace in The Upanishads, The Bhagavad-Gita, Paramahansa Yogananda, The New Testament, Thomas Merton, and Meister Eckhart.

Yet, I was more of a student than a practitioner, until the Kalachakra World Peace tour visited Rochester, New York and the Memorial Art Gallery in the 1990's. Watching Ven. Tenzin Yignyen and the monks from Namgyal Monastery in Ithaca, N.Y. create the sand mandala, and listening to them chant, was the hook that enticed me to be more than a student and I found a Tibetan Buddhist sangha.

I took refuge in 2001 and continued as a serious practitioner and student, receiving many teachings primarily in the Gelugpa and Kagyu lineages of Tibetan Buddhism, and meditation and mindfulness trainings in the style of Insight Meditation and Zen. I began teaching an introductory course in Buddhism with the local Tibetan Sangha in early 2007.

I lost my way with Tibetan Buddhism, but not Buddhism... Bringing me to Bright Dawn. I was drawn to this program because of its inclusiveness and its focus on providing tools to lay practitioners. I believe that the Dharma will continue to flourish in America only if lay practitioners take an active role. America does not value a monastic system, so another method must be used, and I believe that method is dedicated, proactive lay involvement. I share completely Kubose Gyomay Sensei's and Kubose Koyo Sensei's vision of an American Buddhism.

I found my Buddhist home here with Bright Dawn and knew it early in my first year of the program. I am truly one in the Oneness of Bright Dawn and know that the ending of this leg of the journey today is truly a new dawn – a Bright Dawn.

Since 1989 until now, I make my living as a freelance writer and resume consultant. Prior to that, from 1972 to 1989, I worked as a television broadcast engineer.

My interests outside of Buddhism, my partner, and my dogs are nature, poetry / haiku, technology, and music. What you might not know about me is that I play six musical instruments (but none of them very well): keyboard/piano/organ, accordion, French horn, trumpet/cornet, mandolin, and guitar.

please go to **Inductees** on page 4

# LUCY

by Ken Muyo Swanson

Lucy (our dog) died. On Thursday, it was pretty clear she was fading. It's been 8 weeks since she stopped eating, and about a week since she refused water. I washed her face, cleaned her eyes, sat and talked with her—telling her that it was ok for her to leave, and that she could come back and raise another family like ours. I read to her about Jizos. She had a clean bed and blanket, she was comfortable. I went to work. Jennifer comes home about an hour later—she called me a few hours later—about 6:30 pm, Lucy stiffened out her legs and sighed. She passed comfortably. Jennifer washed her, got a clean sheet and put her in her bed in a cool place by the door. When I came home from work at 1 am, we took her to the Animal Emergency Center. Lucy could still teach vet nurses and technicians there, so we thought that was good. Then she would be cremated. We went home pretty exhausted, but felt that Lucy was in good, caring hands.

I had gotten a little flack during the past few weeks about “Isn't it inhumane to not put down your dog—isn't she suffering?—she's going on 17 years old, she's just a dog,” etc. No, she was not suffering. No, she was not “just a dog.” She was family—she was there when Johanna came home from school, she was there when anyone was sick, she protected us, she was our alarm clock in the morning. She never woke up grouchy, and she never went to bed mad. Animals are pretty incredible. Lucy knew that this was an impermanent world, and that every flavor, every smell, was shared—it was a communal experience. She seem to know what “oneness” is—she really did have Buddha-nature. We learned a lot from her. Two weeks ago, she slid down off the couch to the floor, where she poured over the latest Oneness from Bright Dawn (I assure you this was NOT staged!).

It was a good lesson for us in how things happen in their own time. I think back to how my baby sister, born with a heart defect and sent home from the hospital to die, was kept in the bedroom—it was months before she passed. I don't remember anything about it now. It was good to have Lucy at home during her final months, comfortable, cared



for. It was stressful, sad, sometimes messy, sometimes funny, but that is all part of the cycle of living and dying.

I found a Gatha for a Memorial Gathering that seemed right:

We do not die—we cannot die;  
We only change our state in life  
When these earth temples fall and lie  
Unmoving 'mid the world's wide strife.

There is no death in this wide world;  
But one eternal scene of change;  
The flag of life is never furled,  
It only taketh wider range.

By ourselves is evil done,  
By ourselves we pain endure,  
By ourselves we cease from wrong,  
By ourselves become we pure.

No one saves us but ourselves,  
No one can, and no one may;  
We ourselves must walk the path,  
Buddhas merely teach the way.

Who so is compassionate is everywhere beloved; by the kind and good Lucy was prized as a friend, and at death her heart is full of peace.

May It Be So.

## *Oneness Newsletter Summer 2009*

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The purpose of the Bright Dawn Institute is to offer a non-sectarian, non-dualistic approach, the Way of Oneness, to deepen individual spirituality in everyday life for people of all backgrounds.

### Cheryl Jiyo Kornegay

I have always been spiritually curious and was allowed a fair amount of freedom to explore different religions as a child and teenager (under the assumption, of course, that this exploration would reinforce and lead to a commitment to my family's Christianity - especially Catholicism). As a result, I've been interested, or dabbled at some point, in quite a range of religions: several brands of Christianity, Judaism, a few styles of paganism... I never had much contact with Buddhism, though, until I worked with Alitha Palich, a woman who was my mentor and boss in my first two years of non-profit work. She was an inspiration on *many* levels and happened to be a Buddhist.

As I recall, I questioned her now and again about Buddhism, but she was never quick to talk about it or bring it up. She did, however, often carry books - particularly collections of Buddhist stories. Sometimes when she'd go out of the office and leave her book behind, I would pick it up and read from it. I was interested in what she said and what I read in her books and my research, but sometimes the things that I'd read would raise more questions than answers - and often certain stories or explanations seemed depressing ways to think about life. I began to learn slowly, integrating some things into my rather eclectic personal path, but Buddhism itself did not resonate particularly strongly with me for quite some time.

When my husband Cutler went through his initial diagnosis and first brain surgery, it was a difficult time. I remember that as the first time that the Four Noble Truths truly struck home in an epiphanal way. It was when I was in the surgical waiting room and it was easy to feel like a lone island in the middle of a turbulent river, even surrounded by friends and family, but I saw another woman there who put things into perspective for me. She was paged to the front desk and was very concerned that something had already gone wrong in her husband's surgery. When the receptionist told her that she only had a phone call, she began to cry. I understood how she felt and I wanted to reach out to her. It was a cathartic moment and a very strong catalyst on my path. Later, on the way to visit Cutler in the ICU, I passed a trio of women who were crying outside in the hall. One spoke into her cell phone saying "hello\_\_\_\_, we lost him." I was deeply struck by their suffering and wanted to do something, but didn't feel it was my place to intrude. I was suddenly profoundly struck by the suffering all around me: I was in a hospital outside an ICU ward and there were pa-

tients and families suffering. Above my head, below my feet, on every floor all around me people were dying, being born, in pain, being brought back from the brink of death, fearful, hopeful, falling in love with someone (their new children) - the whole drama of human life was all around and not just in the hospital, but all over the world! No islands in a stream, just the stream! From that point on, I was committed to the path of Buddhism. I went home and printed up a bunch of cards that read "You Are Beautiful, You Are Loved, You are Never Alone" and began to slip them to people that I thought might could use hearing those words. Or I'd leave them places where they could be found: bank teller tubes, countertops, a public bathroom sink... It felt like a non-intrusive way to offer compassion.

For several years, I worked in non-profits doing grant writing, program development, and volunteer management. After a while, I became disenchanted with non-profits (there was never another Alitha Palich to share an office with and learn from) and annoyed by the bureaucracy involved. I decided to move back to North Carolina from Wyoming, go back to school, and dedicate more time to dance. By then I had been dancing for about two years and had recently begun to teach beginners classes at the local YMCA and Boys and Girls Clubs. I found that it was an excellent way to help women and young girls (especially) with their self esteem and body image, making a more direct impact than I seemed to be making from behind my office desk.

When I went back to school, it was harder than I thought to choose a major (I have pretty varied interests and a non-conformist streak) and then when Cutler began to need treatment it became difficult to juggle school and I had to drop classes several times.

Today I'm STILL in school, but- thankfully- I enjoy it very much and am doing well. A few years ago, I was spotted performing by a professional Middle Eastern "Belly" Dance troupe and was invited to join. I danced with them for several years and decided to become a soloist again so that I could advance further in my preferred style (yes, there are multiple styles of "Belly" dance. The style that I prefer to perform is called Tribal Fusion and is very athletic and allows for a good deal of creativity. It's like the Modern Dance of Middle Eastern Dance.)

I currently teach dance classes at Wake Forest Yoga and find dance to be my moving meditation. It's very difficult to distract yourself with your mind's monkey chatter when you're dancing! Properly called "Middle Eastern Dance" or "Raqs Sharki," belly dance is a cultural dance that is tradi-

tionally learned and performed by both genders. It is a joy to share with others and I love to watch my students, male and female, blossom as they learn to embrace their bodies, whatever their age, size, or ability, forget about their internal dialogue, and interpret the music through their movement. Dance has been a powerful friend in my life. I perform solo for festivals and events and aspire to take part in professional competitions – but, alas, those are few and far between on the East Coast.

Besides dance, I am an avid reader – a trait that I share with my husband and children. Our living room has three book shelves and these are not enough to house all of our books. I very much enjoy hiking, camping and learning – especially life sciences and anthropology, but I’m like an intellectual raccoon and often distracted by some shiny new subject that grabs my interest.

I am very grateful to be a part of Bright Dawn. It has been a privilege to learn from such wonderful teachers and to have such a beautiful Dharma family. Thank you.

### **Paul Toyo Mack**

All my life I’ve asked “Why.” As an unstoppable problem solver, I have also asked “Why not.” As a disaffected Christian, I nevertheless am a very spiritual person, a seeker dissatisfied with pat answers and assuredness and oddly comfortable with ambiguity and doubt.

In 1993 a friend of my wife’s invited me to attend a 5 day silent retreat conducted by two nuns from Thich Nhat Hanh’s Order of Interbeing. I found myself so taken with the palpable centeredness and overall calm of the entire retreat. I took vows of the Three Refuges and Five Precepts. While not always faithful to the vows or the precepts, they still provided me with guiding principles for my life as I continued on my spiritual path.

For a long time I have differentiated between my job and my work, though lately I have come to appreciate that my work informs how I perform my job. As a teacher-educator I try to honor my students’ and colleagues’ life paths and also to believe they are making their best effort and to raise our discourse to higher levels of acceptance and non-judgement.

My interests cover a broad range including both mental and physical efforts. I now direct my energy toward focusing my attention on fewer activities and more on people, especially family. I love the outdoors, especially taking solitary walks in forested areas.

I am honored to have come to know each person on this part of my path toward understanding.

### **Paul David Teiyo Pangburn, Jr.**

My path to Buddhism was not a search for enlightenment. After a series of events that left me unhappy, I began looking for a more meaningful life. My first exposure to Buddhism came through reading books. I read many books over a 10 year period that shaped my path. Eventually I understood that it was the Dharma that provided the spiritual peace I was seeking. My desire to find a community of like travelers led me to Bright Dawn and my commitment has solidified since hearing these teachings.

Part of my life goal has been to leave this world better than when I came into it. What I mean, I would like to help others. As I have aged, I have come to realize that we all need each other. The compassion for others that has welled up within me is a gift of the Buddha. I presently work in the social services field where I have ample opportunity to exhibit Buddha Nature and teach the Dharma simply by being myself. Social Services is a wonderful job for a Buddhist! People who need help are looking for the same freedom that I once sought and like my sensei, I can show them the path by how I live.

I am married to my wonderful wife Jane (11 years on June 20<sup>th</sup>!). She is here today to support me. We love to travel. I collect music of all types and old movies. I am a voracious reader of books. I fancy myself as a pretty good amateur chef. Jane and I love to entertain friends.

### **Ken Muyo Swanson**

“I am Muyo. We know this is “NO SUN”—not just “NO” but the ABSOLUTE, TOTAL NEGATION of the Sun—NOTHING! But as my daughter Johanna offered: “Nothing, but at the same time, everything, I we are all part of everything else.”

When I was stationed in Japan in the late 1980’s, I made a pilgrimage to Mt. Fuji and visited many temples. I found the inner peace that meditation brings, and have studied and read and sat ever since.

My careers have always been some permutation of law enforcement: transit system supervisor, community service officer, military police, infantry, and security. I have retired three times now. I haven’t figured out what I want to be when I get big.

My hobbies include tending to our 200+ different hostas and our many animal friends who visit us for food, water and shelter. We have ducks, raccoons, fox, coyotes, and occasional deer and many birds and other small critters.”

## *American Buddhist Services*

**Heartland Sangha** holds 11 A.M. Sangha is to be commended for their Saturday services on the first and “cutting edge” efforts in creating these third Saturdays of every month at progressive American Buddhist services.

Lake Street Church, 607 Lake Street, Evanston, Illinois (use courtyard entrance on Chicago Avenue). For more information, go to [www.heartlandsangha.org](http://www.heartlandsangha.org) or call Asayo Horibe, Heartland Sangha President, at (847) 869-5806.

Each service is uniquely planned by a chairperson volunteer from the local Sangha. Music and readings from a variety of sources are used. Gratitude offerings of rice, flowers, or other innovative offerings often replace traditional incense burning and sutra chanting. The Heartland

**New Dawn Sangha** meets the second Tuesday of every month at 7:00pm here in Decatur, IL. If anyone wants more information or directions, they can contact Sensei John Miyo Wylder at 217-429-1883 or [bassho@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bassho@sbcglobal.net).

## **SIGN UP FOR LAY MINISTER PROGRAM**

Space is limited but still available for our non-residential Lay Minister Program which starts in September. Join others on a Buddhist path who are attracted to Kubose Gyomay Sensei's non-sectarian Oneness approach. No tuition fee. Sweat equity involves reading assignments, writing reports and Sunday evening teleconference discussions over a two-year period. For more information go to [www.brightdawn.org](http://www.brightdawn.org) or email Adrienne at [brightdawn@kubose.com](mailto:brightdawn@kubose.com)

## *Acknowledgements with Gratitude*

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#### **In Memory of**

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*Yujimi Sakazaki*  
*Margaret Fujimoto*  
*Yozzo George Kurokawa*

(When submitting donations, please list your name exactly as you wish it to appear in the Oneness newsletter. Acknowledgments are current as of **June 1, 2009**. Donations received after this date will be listed in the next issue. If we have missed an acknowledgment, please let us know.)

## Book List

### **Book by Rev. Koyo Kubose**

**BRIGHT DAWN: Discovering Your Everyday Spirituality.** The author's early morning run and sunrise viewing over Lake Michigan are related to simple teachings like "wide view" and "keep going" which deepen one's daily spirituality no matter where one lives. Includes map of actual lakeshore path and over a dozen photographs. 152 pages.

### **Books by Rev. Gyomay Kubose**

**EVERYDAY SUCHNESS.** A classic collection of short articles first published in 1967, hailed as one of the most significant books in Buddhism because of its simple explanations and reference to everyday life. 142 pages.

**THE CENTER WITHIN.** Continues the approach of "Everyday Suchness" and speaks directly to the ordinary layperson. Collection of 58 essays reflects Rev. Kubose's down-to-earth presentation of the Dharma teachings which offers to all people a richer, more meaningful life. 134 pages.

**THE CENTER WITHIN audio cassette;** 3 hours.

**AMERICAN BUDDHISM.** Covers a brief history of Buddhism in America, Four Noble Truths, Eightfold Path, problems in terminology and misunderstandings common to Westerners. 29 pages.

**ZEN KOANS.** Commentary on over 200 classical and modern koans. Insights and life teachings applicable to all Buddhists. 274 pages.

### **Translations by Rev. Gyomay Kubose**

**THE FUNDAMENTAL SPIRIT OF BUDDHISM** by Haya Akegarasu (Rev. Gyomay Kubose's teacher). Translated by Rev. Kubose, this book gives an idea of Rev. Akegarasu's life (1877-1954) and teachings. 99 pages.

**TAN BUTSU GE.** (Translation and commentary). This sutra tells the story of Dharmakara who became Amitabha, the Buddha of Infinite Light. 56 pages.

**HEART OF THE GREAT WISDOM SUTRA.** (Translation and commentary). This sutra deals with the teachings of non-self and nothingness. 35 pages.

### **Other Recommended Books**

**BUDDHIST SYMBOLS.** Handy brochure explaining common Buddhist symbols. quad-fold.

**BUDDHISM: Path of Enlightenment.** Simple, concise introduction to basic Buddhism. Teachings are superimposed on beautiful full-color photographs of nature scenes such as water ponds, rock gardens, bamboo grove, etc. 20 pages.

**COFFINMAN** by Shinmon Aoki. This diary of a mortician invites the reader into the fascinating world of Buddhist Spirituality which sees the extraordinary in things ordinary, mundane, and even repugnant. 142 pages.

**OCEAN: AN INTRODUCTION TO JODO-SHINSHU BUDDHISM IN AMERICA** by Ken Tanaka. Uses a question and answer format to present Jodo-Shinshu Buddhism and to answer questions frequently asked by non-Buddhists. The book can

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Heart of the Great Wisdom Sutra .....	\$6.00		
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River of Fire, River of Water .....	\$19.00		
The Feelling Buddha .....	\$15.95		

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help Jodo-Shinshu Buddhists understand their own religious tradition and also help in communicating it to others. 270 pages.

**RIVER OF FIRE, RIVER OF WATER** by Taitetsu Unno. Introduces the Pure Land tradition of Shin Buddhism using personal anecdotes, stories, and poetry. With spiritual insight and unparalleled scholarship, this book is an important step forward for Buddhism in America. 244 pages.

**THE FEELING BUDDHA.** by David Brazier. A lucid account of how the Buddha's path of wisdom and loving kindness grew out of the challenges he encountered in life. 207 pages.



**BRIGHT DAWN**  
**Institute for American Buddhism**  
 28372 Margaret Road  
 Coarsegold, CA 93614



Change Service Requested

<b>YES YES    Your Everyday Spirituality    YES YES</b>	
<b>JUN</b>	<b>Theme:</b> Tree Gassho <b>Purpose:</b> Trees are so plentiful we tend to take them for granted. Every now and then, be mindfully grateful for nature's gifts. <b>Method:</b> Walk up to, look carefully at, and touch a tree; then do Gassho.
<b>JUL</b>	<b>Theme:</b> Rain Gassho <b>Purpose:</b> Be thankful for nature's rain which is essential for life. <b>Method:</b> When it's raining, don't just run to your house or car. Sometimes put your face to the sky, spread your arms out, smile, then do Gassho.
<b>AUG</b>	<b>Theme:</b> Air Conditioner Gassho <b>Purpose:</b> Although we do appreciate air conditioning in the summer, we can deepen the gratitude <b>Method:</b> Do Gassho when you first feel the nice cool air from the air conditioner.

**Mailing List Update**

If you are already on our mailing list and wish to remain on the list, no action is necessary. We are happy to continue sending our newsletter to all interested persons. If you know someone who would like to be added or removed from our mailing list, please indicate below and send to: Bright Dawn Institute, 28372 Margaret Road, Coarsegold, CA 93614.

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

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