

OZENESS



Quarterly Newsletter of BRIGHT DAWN: Institute for American Buddhism

Vol. 15 No. 2 Summer 2011

LAY MINISTER INDUCTION 2011

By Rev. Koyo Kubose



The LM4 (Lay Minister Group 4) Induction weekend began on Saturday, May 21 with an all-day training session on conducting religious services. The session ended with the inductees directly experiencing a TiSarana Buddhist Confirmation Ceremony by having the ceremony actually done for each of them. Rev. Koyo gave the following Dharma names: *GoYo*

(Strong Sun) to Andy Bondy (Cherry Hill, NJ); *SoYo* (Creative Sun) to Shirleen Kajiwarra (Chicago, IL); *JoYo* (Enthusiastic Sun) to David Merrick (Madison, WI); *KaYo* (Home Sun) to Patricia Milligan (Camarillo, CA); *ChiYo* (Earth Sun) to Marilyn Robinson (Grand Junction, CO); and *KuYo* (Sky Sun) to Douglas Slaten (Camarillo, CA).

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DID HE PLAY SPORTS?

by Dharma Dan



As you can see from the picture of my perch in the rafters of the SPOT (Special Place of Tranquility), I have a good vantage point from which to view the goings-on inside the SPOT. During this past Induction weekend, I had a nice memory of an incident that happened a few years ago during the 2009 Induction. The excitement of the day was over, most of the guests had departed; only family remained—adults cleaning up, children playing and running around.

Rev. Koyo brought his six-year old grandnephew, Trevor Gyomay Kubose, into the SPOT. They sat on the floor in the middle of the 10' X 12' room. Surrounding them was a Buddha statue on one wall, a batik Buddha fabric hung on another wall, plus three shelves overflowing with religious objects collected or given to Revs. Gyomay and Koyo Kubose over the years, not to mention myself and other Dharma puppets sitting in the rafters.

Rev. Koyo explained to Trevor why he brought him into the SPOT and how he wanted to impress upon Trevor the significance of his middle name, Gyomay. With wide attentive eyes, Trevor nodded as Rev. Koyo said, “You know that your great grandfather was a famous man.” Then, Trevor, with a child’s honest innocence, blurted out excitedly, “Did he play sports?” Rev. Koyo smiled broadly as he realized he was being reminded of how Gautama Buddha was famous for communicating to his listeners in the most effective way—tailoring his message to their particular psychological make up.

Rev. Koyo recalled how his father, like most males in their youth, played sports like baseball and football. More impressive were the times when Rev. Gyomay Kubose joined in physical activities during family vacations—at an age when most seniors would seek out the lounge chair. You couldn’t keep him from participating in a playground family basketball game—playing in his dress shoes at the age of 80! During a 1992 family vacation, when he was 87 years old, he went horseback riding. Later, at a motel, he drove in and swam the length of the swimming pool. Most impressive of all was that whatever he did, he did with gusto!

As Rev. Koyo told Trevor that indeed, Rev. Gyomay Kubose did play sports—for some reason I thought of the Baltimore Sun newspaper famous headline, “Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus.” Even though the connection is not exactly right, I felt like saying, “Yes, Trev-Dog (his nick name), your namesake, your great grandfather, he did play sports!”



The next morning, the six inductees gathered again at BDI (Bright Dawn Institute) in Coarsegold, California for their Lay Minister Induction Ceremony. A seventh member of this LM4 group, SeiYo Thomas DeMann (Las Vegas), was present via live streaming video. He was unable to attend for health reasons. By coincidence, Rev. Koyo was scheduled to speak to a Las Vegas Sangha group two weeks prior to the Induction. So, while there, Rev. Koyo conducted a private Induction Ceremony for SeiYo Thomas.

The Induction ceremony at BDI began with the tolling of a *kansho* calling bell. The six inductees lined up at the head of a processional, which proceeded past an honorary street sign *Rev. Gyomay and Minnie Kubose Way* and two Buddhist flags, that marked the path towards Altar Rock, site of the Induction Ceremony. At the clearing in front of the Altar Rock, guests seated themselves under a white canopy while a newly composed Bright Dawn theme song was played. This beautiful composition was completed only a few days earlier by Stacy Niko Byoyo Burkhardt, a lay minister from last year's LM3 group. The ending portion of this new Bright Dawn theme song can be heard at the beginning of every Live Dharma Sunday broadcast (8:00 AM Pacific Time; 347-945-7953).

As part of the Induction Ceremony, each inductee did an incense and water offering using the late Rev. Gyomay Kubose's favorite *ojuzu* beads and while wearing an *okesa* (neck stole) formerly belonging to Rev. Gyomay Kubose's teacher, Rev. Haya Akegarasu, who gave the *okesa* to Rev. Kubose saying, "This *okesa* has my sweat on it." The *okesa* has gone on to be used in special ceremonies and now has the sweat of Rev. Gyomay and son Koyo Kubose and of all past Bright Dawn lay ministers. The Induction ended with each inductee receiving a lay minister certificate and *okesa*, the latter being custom-made in Japan with a Dharma

Wheel design. For the Induction Luncheon, BDI board members and friends contributed their favorite food dishes; such pot-luck meals are the best! Thank you, thank you.

Later that afternoon, an *Iaido* sword drawing demonstration was given by Michele Benzamin-Miki Sensei. The demonstration was done in the BDI backyard which is a small lawn area surrounded by large boulders. This intimate setting heightened the impact of the demonstration because the wind and sound of the sword slashing through the air could be felt and heard. Benzamin-Miki Sensei creatively showed how the dynamic nature of sword movements could be used to deepen spirituality. During various sword *kata's* (forms), she wove in guided imagery exercises whereby a person could experience the "cutting through" of mental obstacles to love and forgiveness. The demonstration was a unique and powerful event.

Special thanks to DJ Morris and Lay Minister Sayo Sugranes who came from Orlando, Florida. Sayo Sensei was a big help during the entire Induction weekend. DJ did videotaping and provided his expertise in the live streaming of the training session and Induction Ceremony. While here, they both helped Adrienne Kubose, BDI Administrative Director, with software aspects of the BDI website and with computerizing Dial-the-Dharma (one-minute taped talks available 24/7; 847-386-8836).



The secret of health for both mind and body is not to mourn for the past, worry about the future, or anticipate troubles, but to live in the present moment wisely and earnestly. Hope is important because it can make the present moment less difficult to bear. If we believe that tomorrow will be better, we can bear a hardship today. The point of power is always in the present moment.

—Buddha

Oneness Newsletter Summer 2011

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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.

Reader Replies

Dear Sensei,

I have a question about humility. Can a person be taught to be humble? Perhaps you could address this in your newsletter? Thank you. TN (Hawaii)

Dear TN,

That's a good question. Humility is certainly a desirable virtue. However, I don't think someone could successfully strive to become a humble person. If humility was set up as an end goal, what would happen if the person felt he achieved his goal? Would he brag, "I made it; I became a humble person!" LOL Genuine humility cannot be forced into existence. Moreover, a person could fake humility to fool or manipulate others. Sometimes this happens without the person himself knowing he's faking the humility. He is genuinely proud of being humble! This is when someone should shout, "Baka!" which is a Japanese word meaning "fool."

When genuine humility occurs, it is a by-product of certain experiences; the kind of experiences that result from self introspection into the twin teachings of Impermanence and Interdependency. These are the two "eyes" that Buddhists use to view themselves and the world. If we continue to look deeper and deeper, then we see clearer and clearer into the nature of (1) Impermanence: reality is constantly changing—so good and bad—there's nothing to cling to; and (2) Interdependency: we undeservedly have received so much and given back so little.

When the twin teachings of Impermanence and Interdependency are taken to heart, we cannot help but let go of arrogance and self conceit. This is the way to open up a life of humility and gratitude. This kind of spiritual life is constantly "opening up" and is never arrived at as some final destination or achievement. It is the same with so-called enlightenment. One never achieves enlightenment; he only is constantly opening up to enlightened living. Forget the nouns; live the verbs.

Dear Sensei,

Although my father died many years ago, he contributed to the dysfunctional family I grew up in. This influence was passed on to me in my relationship with my adult children. Thus, Father's Day is always a difficult time for me. Any advice? Thanks, SK (CA)

Dear SK,

Whenever rocky personal stuff arises, concentrate on the Dharma; keep the Dharma at the center of ones life. Of course this is easier said than done. It is sound advice but not necessarily helpful in any specific way. Yet, in the midst of dealing with rough personal stuff, if we constantly remind ourselves of the phrase, "Keep the Dharma at the center of my life," this keeps us oriented in such a way that the "right" way to handle things will take place.

Other quotes or metaphors come to mind; I don't know if they will strike a chord with you but here they are:

1. "Let go and grow."
2. One's life keeps moving forward; it's like we are driving a car, which you cannot do by looking primarily in the rearview mirror. The main thing is the road ahead. One can play around with this metaphor in many ways but in the end, just don't hit anything; don't crash!
3. "Change your past." Sometimes we feel we are the victim of a past and that we are stuck, in the sense that the past is a reality that cannot be changed. Yet in another sense, the past can be changed. The past gets changed by re-interpreting it in the present; that is, putting the past into another context or by framing it in a different way than before. To change the past, means changing how it affects oneself.



NEW ADDITION To the Bright Dawn Family

A baby boy was born at 7:32 AM on May 6, 2011 in Fowler, California. He measured in at 9 pounds, 2 ounces and 22 inches. His name is Remy Riché Fleuridor; second son of Richardson and Shauna (Kubose) Fleuridor; seventh grandchild of Don and Joyce Kubose; and seventh great grandchild of the late Rev. Gyomay and Minnie Kubose.

Welcome to the world, Remy! Congratulations to your parents and we know you will be a Bodhisavatta to them, teaching patience and perseverance... especially at 3:00 o'clock in the morning!

WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME?

By Dave Teiyo Pangburn

I awoke yesterday morning with the news that Osama Bin Laden had been killed in a raid upon the compound he was found to be living at in Pakistan. When I heard this news I was a bit surprised that after so long a period of time the man considered to be an evil terrorist, responsible for the death of many over the years had finally met his demise. As my day progressed, I began to see and hear television, Internet, and radio reports of the raid in Pakistan, and the reactions filtering in from all over the world.

While so many expressed joy at this occasion, and Americans everywhere called it a "Day of Victory", I found myself numb. It was like a sense of sadness descended on me. That was when I asked myself "What's wrong with me?". The man responsible for 3,000 deaths in New York, hundreds in Africa, and more in other places has been stopped! Would he have changed his ways if he had become awake to the message of Oneness? Maybe not. It is a simple fact that some folks will leave this world without ever waking up to the path of compassion and service. I am not a violent oriented person, however in my lifetime I have come to the conclusion that violence is acceptable at times to protect the life of others. I cannot foretell what may have happened in the future had Osama Bin Laden lived, however at the present time I understand why his assassination took place.

What disturbs me about this situation is the reaction of my Countrymen. Perhaps a "duty" had been done, but I find no joy at someones death, even if they were the personification of evil in their unenlightened state. I feel sadness, and even more when I observe people rejoicing at the death of an enemy. Whats wrong with me? Why am I not glad that someone who harms others can no longer do such a thing? I am glad the harm he did cannot be repeated by him, but there will be others. Do we kill them all too? It could be me or you.... the possibility for us to do such dastardly deeds does exist. Do we deserve death for the harms we have done to others? (Surely Not! We only did "little" harm...nothing as grand as what Bin Laden did!)

Many questions are raised by this public act.... and we consider all the implications because the media will

CITY HAIKU

By Sallea

*Up through cracked cement
In unrelenting summer
Thrusts a bold green shoot*

*Pollution alley
Slovenly rat survivor
Rummages for food*

*Abandoned building
Graffiti for company
Distant traffic whoosh*

*You were someone's pride
Now among the castoff junk
Left to rust, old car*

*Wrapped in old blanket
Grizzled bum sleeps in doorway
Fading wisps of breath*

*Streetlight exposé
Lipstick too red, heels too high
Shattered heart concealed*

not let us lose focus on what has happened. Yet, everyday there is suffering, tragedy, and pain, often at the hands of others. Why be disturbed by this particular event? I think because it opens our eyes to all of those who fail to feel sadness when someone dies due to their ignorance. It should encourage us all the more to share what we have found. What's wrong with me? I will tell you....I AM AWAKE! That's what's wrong with me, and it changes how I walk through this world. Years past I would have rejoiced too. Now I cannot because what has woke up within has changed me. World events such as these will make you recognize how far along you have walked. Gassho my family!



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When submitting donations, please list your name exactly as you wish it to appear in the Oneness newsletter. Acknowledgments are current as of **June 12, 2011**. 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. Describes the author's daily morning ritual and how ordinary things and activities can deepen one's spirituality. 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." Collection of 58 essays of down-to-earth teachings for a richer, more meaningful life. 134 pages.

THE CENTER WITHIN audio cassette; 3 hours.

AMERICAN BUDDHISM. Covers a brief history of Buddhism in America, 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. 99 pages.

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

ENGAGED PURE LAND BUDDHISM: Essays in Honor of Professor Alfred Bloom. Challenges Facing Jodo Shinshu in the Contemporary World. Edited by Kenneth K. Tanaka and Eisho Nasu. 360 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 help Jodo-Shinshu Buddhists understand their own religious tradition and also help in communicating it to others. 270 pages.

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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.



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Change Service Requested



YES YES Your Everyday Spirituality YES YES

JUN	<p>Theme: Self change/growth Purpose: Cutting through mental obstacles Method: "Wisdom-Sword Gassho:" From a one-hand Gassho position, make a quick, slashing arm movement from one shoulder to the opposite hip. Smile as you know self change is a life-long process and not a one-time deal.</p>
JUL	<p>Theme: Gentleness Purpose: Handling conflict with right understanding Method: "Soft Gassho:" Prepare to deal wisely with any negative situation by bringing hands together very softly in Gassho, as a reminder to be gentle, calm, and understanding.</p>
AUG	<p>Theme: Life changes Purpose: To foster a wide perspective Method: "Keep-Going Gassho:" With arms spread wide shoulder high to each side, slowly inhale, bringing hands together in Gassho, with the thought of bringing in all past learning influences. Then, slowly exhale and spread arms out again, with the thought of extending out to the world all one's learning benefits. Repeat three times; end with a Gassho bow.</p>

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 email us at brightdawn@kubose.com or indicate below and send to: Bright Dawn Institute, 28372 Margaret Road, Coarsegold, CA 93614.

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