

## OKAZU

This edition of OKAZU is dedicated to the members who are connected to Placer Buddhist Church through attendance at memorial services, church activities, Dharma School or special services. It is because of your participation that PBC is experiencing a resurgence of growth and vitality. Read on to hear about some of the past events and also future events.

### PBC Annual New Year's Party

This year's party was another lively and fun-filled event with ono (delicious) food, sing-along and even an authentic hula performance. Our volunteers prepared 300 box lunches but many of you took yours home because of the other pupus (heavy appetizers) already on the tables. Thanks to Fred Kochi and his friends from San Francisco, everyone seemed to have had a good time – eating, socializing, singing and of course drinking. From my vantage point behind the bar which was set up in our new building addition, people were truly enjoying themselves. I wish to see more non-familiar faces in the crowd next year.

### The Cost of a Square Foot

Speaking of building addition, by the time you receive this Bulletin, our new storage and restroom addition will have been completed. At a cost of about \$230,000 and size of 865 square feet, this new addition equates to \$266 per square foot. Those who remember the first temple which was built in Penryn (up the hill) in 1919, the cost was \$6,000 with its one-third acre parcel of land priced at \$2,000. Then in 1961, the church's present location was chosen (Donahue property) among two other properties for \$27,850 and construction of the church completed in July 1965 at a cost of \$117,600. Based on its size this equates to \$18 per square foot. By the way, before construction was even started \$119,800 in pledges were made by the Sangha for this undertaking. In September 1966 the classrooms were constructed at a cost of \$11 per square foot. Isn't it amazing that even taking into account the effects of inflation and changes in building codes, that construction costs can increase so much with time?

### Your PBC Dues

You may have noticed that your 2012 dues have increase to \$100 per person, an increase of \$10 over last year. However, despite Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) having assessed each temple \$94 per member last year, your Board of Directors voted not to increase the dues in step. This year BCA is assessing \$99.38 per member which in turn resulted in us increasing your dues to \$100 each. Many of you have already submitted your payment – mahalo nui, or thank you very much. For the remaining members, please do so.

### Identification Check

There is no age requirement to participate in our senior activities. At age 55 I don't feel like a senior but the activities are open to me. Bingo, casino diversions, excursions, casino stops, karaoke and sing-along – these are but a few of the activities that you can partake in. March's activity will be touring the facilities of the Farmers' Rice Cooperative in West Sacramento where you can view the different types of rice being processed –white, brown, quick-cooking brown, sake, etc. Follow that with a diversion to Cache Creek casino for lunch.

### For Whom the Bell Tolls

In celebration of the New Year, the bell at our temple's entrance was rung 108 times on the eve of this year. This bell, donated by Jim Nitta in 1965 in memory of his father and son has been rung many times at funerals, memorial services, special services, Dharma School services and New Year's Eve services. A second larger bell, sitting on a rocking pedestal next to the bamboo plantings by the temple entrance, was donated by Shichitaro Omoto in 1920. A third bell hangs near the rear entrance of Reverend Aoyama's office. The bells donated by Mr. Nitta and Mr. Omoto were stolen in January 1995 but found later that May. Mr. Nitta's bell was immediately put back into use but Mr. Omoto's bell was finally put back to its original location in 2010 after major refurbishment. Although this bell is never used, it is impressive due to its size, weight and black color. Within the base of the bell is a time capsule that was implanted when our church was moved to its present location in 1965. So next time you hear the calling of the bells by sensei, think of Mr. Omoto and Mr. Nitta and their contributions to the church.

### This Land is Your Land

Your Board is exploring the possibility of leasing back the vacant parcel in front of the church. Let us know if you have any recommendation for its use that can benefit the Sangha.