



# 明澄庵会

## MYO CHO AN KAI NEWSLETTER

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### MYO CHO AN KAI HONORED WITH VISIT BY FUSHIDA SOKEI GYOTEI



Sensei Ward and the students of Myo Cho An Kai were deeply honored when Daisosho Hounsai and Oiemoto Zabolai agreed to send Fushida Sokei Gyotei, to give an intensive special seminar at Myochoan on May 14 and 15, 2008.

To become a Urasenke Gyotei teacher, a candidate must have several years of study or have graduated from the Urasenke Professional School. He must then be selected and accepted by the Grand Master, and becomes a "Mizuya member" of Urasenke. Then, he must take additional training for at least 10 years. Finally, the candidate receives his "Chamei" and becomes Gyotei. To study with a Gyotei teacher outside of Japan is a great privilege.

Over 25 years ago, Urasenke sent a Gyotei teacher to each group in the United States, but in the past 10 years, only one teacher has come to Los Angeles, New York, and San Francisco. Never before has Urasenke sent a Gyotei teacher to conduct a seminar for just one group, so Myo Cho An Kai was most grateful for this special honor. During the seminar, several students had the opportunity to take individual lessons on specific tea procedures as well as on being a guest in the 8-tatami room, the 4 ½ Daime room, and the Ryurei room.

Since each Grand Master has his unique way of handling things, a Gyotei teacher can illuminate those subtle differences and help teachers ensure that they are up to date with the current practices.

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*Pictures: Top: Fushida Sensei instructs Shoko Takagoshi at the seminar. Bottom left: Students listen intently to Fushida Sensei's lecture. Bottom right: Soshin (Katie) Nitta and Mrs. Matsui take a lesson from Fushida Sensei.*

**MYO CHO AN KAI HONORED WITH VISIT BY FUSHIDA SOKEI GYOTEI (continued)**

*Fushida Sensei with students and guests. (Since this picture was taken at the very end of the second day, some participants were not present for the photo.)*

Fushida Gyotei's visit to Myochoan created a great deal of enthusiasm on the part of our students, who had a wonderful learning experience. One outstanding highlight of the class was observing Fushida Sensei make tea.

Sensei Ward was delighted to host her four tea friends from the Monterey group for this special occasion, and everyone enjoyed the great benefits of the Gyotei's visit.

At the conclusion of the two-day seminar, the Myochoan group hosted a dinner in honor of Fushida Sensei at Piatti in Roseville. In light of the success of this seminar, Sensei Ward has requested Urasenke to consider sending a Gyotei teacher here in each season. ■

**NOTED AUTHOR SPEAKS TO WAKI AND MYOCHOAN GROUPS**

Reverend Nobuaki Hanaoka, the author of *On the Back of a Buffalo*, was the featured speaker at the Summer Tea Gathering and Pot Luck Dinner for the members of the California Wa Ki Association and Myochoan Kai on September 20, 2008. Reverend Hanaoka, who is an ordained United Methodist minister, served the Church as a pastor for 35 years, mostly in Northern California. He was raised as a Christian by a Buddhist father in the late days of World War II, and this unique situation blessed him with the beautiful and harmonious outlook that is evident in his new book.

During his talk, Reverend Hanaoka spoke movingly about his belief that the East and the West have a great deal to learn from one another, and that to take advantage of this opportunity, we must adopt the attitude of respect that is embodied in the word "Namaste," which means "I recognize the Divine in you." He noted that it is difficult to fight after acknowledging the Divine in each other!

Citing several of the Eastern stories from his book, Reverend Hanaoka talked about what the story might mean to the contemporary Westerner. Appropriate to the setting in the Myochoan tea house, one of the stories he used was that of Rikyu, Hideyoshi, and the morning glories, in which Rikyu was teaching that true value is not in how much you have, but how much you can appreciate what you have.

Following Reverend Hanaoka's talk, Soshin (Katie) Nitta hosted Koicha in Honseki, with the assistance of Shoko Takegoshi as hanto. The first guest was Sori (Noriko) Nagato, and Reverend Hanaoka was second guest. Sori (Noriko) Nagato then hosted tea in Ryurei, where Sensei Ward was the first guest.

Guests returned to Honseki, where Sensei Ward presented certificates from Urasenke to several  
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*Pictures: Top right: Reverend Hanaoka delights guests with stories from his new book. Lower left: Patricia Payne receives Urasenke certificate from Sensei Ward.*

**NOTED AUTHOR SPEAKS TO WAKI AND MYOCHOAN GROUPS (continued)**

students. Sori (Noriko) Nagato received a certificate with permission to take the next level of study after receiving a tea name. Patricia Payne was given a certificate that permits her to study tea on the intermediate level. Asuka Suzuki, Marcia Zaklan-Ferris, and Michiko Nakata were accepted as official members of Urasenke, and received certificates permitting them to study at the beginner's level. Following the ceremony, members and their families enjoyed time together at a wonderful pot luck supper at Sensei Ward's home. ■

**SJN / SUMIRE KAI OF SACRAMENTO VISITS MYOCHOAN**

On April 19, 2008, Sensei Ward and her students hosted the SJN / Sumire Kai of Sacramento, a group of Sacramento residents originally from Japan. This was the group's second visit to Myochoan.

Guests enjoyed a guided tour of the Mychoan gardens and the tea house, during which Sensei Ward talked about the philosophy and history of tea, and the building of the Myochoan tea house. Following the tour, Soshin (Katie) Nitta and Shoko Takegoshi hosted a tea demonstration for the group, with Soshin as Teishu and Shoko as guest. ■

**MYOCHOAN HOSTS BELLA VISTA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**

Twenty members of the Japanese Club from the Bella Vista High School in Fair Oaks, California visited Myochoan on November 8, 2008. Under the direction of Mrs. Kaneko, the group studies Japanese language and culture. Sensei Ward took the group on a tour of the tea house gardens and rooms, and explained the history and philosophy of Chanoyu. The students then observed the tea ceremony, hosted by Soshin (Katie) Nitta, assisted by Patricia Payne as hanto and enjoyed a cup of tea.

After their visit, the students sent notes of gratitude to Sensei Ward. Here are a few excerpts from their letters:



*"Thank you so much, Sensei! I learned a lot about the tea ceremony and how every small movement is important..." "The tea garden was very beautiful, and the tea house was very pleasant to be in. It had a very calm, tranquil energy..." "I enjoyed learning and I felt very honored to be a part of it. It was a very rewarding experience and it makes me interested in taking part in the teaching of tea ceremony manners and procedures." ■*

*"Rikyu's tea ceremony is an art of finding richness in poverty, fullness in aloneness, and perfection in imperfection. His teacups are not perfectly shaped, but those who drink from them experience a perfect harmony with nature. His tea houses are simple, but they are sanctuaries in which one can find the dignity of every person who enters." --Nobuaki Hanaoka, in his book On the Back of a Buffalo.*

**2008 SOTANKI AT MYOCHOAN**

Sotanki Chakai was held at Myochoan on November 16, 2008. This Chakai honors Rikyu's grandson, who advanced the Wabi style of tea. Sensei Ward was delighted to welcome back from Spain her longtime associate and special guest Roger Rapp for this gathering. Patricia Payne hosted tea in Honseki, assisted by Yoshiko Kamiya as hanto. Roger Rapp was the first guest. Patrick Couch also hosted tea in Ryurei for the occasion. Later, Sumie Ward hosted students and guests for a beautifully prepared seasonal meal at her home.



*Above: Patrick Couch hosts tea in Ryurei for Sotanki. At left: Sensei Ward and Guests at Sotanki.*



**MYOCHOAN KAI CELEBRATES JOYAGAMA**

Joyagama, the final tea gathering of the year, is a time to share tea with friends and enjoy memories of the past year. It is a time to welcome the New Year as we bid farewell to the old. Sensei Ward hosted Joyagama on December 30, 2008 for the members of Myochoan Kai and their families. Sensei Ward was pleased to welcome special guests Roger Rapp from Spain and Steve Vilter from Alaska.



This Chakai was unique in that Sensei Ward had allowed each of her students to choose the room in which they would host tea and the procedure they would use, as well as they order in which they would go. Patrick Couch first hosted tea in Ryurei, where Steve Vilter was honored as the first guest. In Honseki, Patricia Payne hosted tea, with Roger Rapp as first guest. Next, Soshin (Katie) Nitta hosted in Daime, and Elizabeth Parker was first (continued on next page)



*Above left: Patricia Payne hosts tea for first guest Roger Rapp. Above right: Sensei Ward, students and guests at Joyagama.*

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**MYOCHOAN KAI CELEBRATES JOYAGAMA *(continued)***

guest. Back in Ryurei, David Deppner hosted tea using Chotenban procedure. Maxine Babel was the first guest. Guests returned to Honseki, where Nobuko Clark was teishu with Soshin (Katie) Nitta as first guest, followed by Sori (Noriko) Nagato as teishu and Sensei Ward as first guest.

Following tea, everyone enjoyed the traditional Joyagama meal prepared by Sensei Ward featuring Toshi Koshi Soba, the long, thin buckwheat noodles. Symbolically, the very long noodle connects the person eating it from the end of the old year to the beginning of the New Year. The evening was a beautiful celebration of the year past and the year to come. ■

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**UPCOMING EVENTS**

*Introductory Series for the Japanese Way of Tea*

Myochoan is offering an Introduction to the Way of Tea for anyone interested in learning Chanoyu, the art of the Japanese Tea Ceremony. The course will include brief lectures on the tea garden, tea room architecture and tea history as well as instruction on being a guest at a tea gathering. If you are interested in attending any of the 5 or 6 tea gatherings held at Myochoan during the year, it is most helpful to know how to be a guest. The first introductory course will be taught by Soshin (Katie) Nitta, and will be held on four consecutive Saturdays. The fee is \$100. Prior experience is not required, and classes will be limited to 5 or 6 participants to allow for individualized attention. Specific dates will be announced soon. For more information, call Sensei Ward at 916-663-3436 or Katie Nitta at 916-316-3159.

*Being a Guest at Chakai*

Sometime before Rikyu-ki, Sensei Ward will teach a class on how to be a first guest at Chakai. The specific date will be announced soon. For more information, contact Sensei Ward.

*Rikyu-ki*

Rikyu-ki, the chakai that honors Sen no Rikyu, the first Grand Master of the Urasenke, on the anniversary of his death will be held on March 28, 2008. ■

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**BECOME A MEMBER OF MYO CHO AN KAI**

Myo Cho An Kai is Sensei Ward's organization, dedicated to practicing and promoting awareness of Urasenke Chado. Members have the opportunity to take lessons in Chado from Sensei Ward and to participate in tea gatherings and other activities throughout the year. Members also receive the Myo Cho An Kai newsletter. To become a member, please contact Sensei Ward (916-663-3436). ■

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**CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEWSLETTER**

We welcome your contributions to the Myo Cho An Kai newsletter. Beginning with the next issue, the newsletter will be edited by Chuck Jamison. Please contact Sensei Ward if you would like to write an article for the newsletter or have other items of interest to our readers.■

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