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TAIHEIJI BULLETIN



JULY & AUGUST 2026

Attend the Taiheiji Bon Dance!

Friday, August 7
Saturday, August 8

The Soto Mission of Aiea (Taiheiji) is pleased to announce the return of its annual Bon Dance festival on Friday, August 7, and Saturday, August 8, 2026.

The Bon Dance is one of Taiheiji's most cherished traditions, bringing together temple members, families, friends, and the wider community for two evenings of remembrance, fellowship, and celebration. The festival serves as an opportunity to honor our ancestors while expressing gratitude for the many people whose lives have helped shape our own.

The schedule for both evenings will remain unchanged:

6:00 p.m. Taiko Performances by Somei Taiko
6:30 p.m. Bon Dance Begins
8:00 p.m. Okinawan Bon Dance

Guests can enjoy traditional Bon dancing around the yagura, spirited taiko performances, delicious food, and the warm sense of community that has made Taiheiji's Bon Dance a favorite summer tradition for generations.

Whether you are an experienced dancer or attending for the first time, everyone is welcome to join us as we celebrate Bon together.

Bon Dance Plant and Flower Sale

The annual Plant and Flower Sale will once again be held during both evenings of the Taiheiji Bon Dance on Friday, August 7, and Saturday, August 8.

The sale has become a popular attraction for plant lovers, home gardeners, and visitors looking for something unique to take home. A wide variety of healthy and beautiful plants will be available, including flowering plants, ornamentals, succulents, and other garden favorites.

Taiheiji is kindly seeking donations of plants and flowers from temple members and friends. Potted plants, rooted cuttings, flower arrangements, and garden-ready greenery are all welcome. Every donation helps make the sale a success while supporting the temple's ongoing activities.

All proceeds from the sale will benefit the Soto Mission of Aiea and its programs. For more information or to arrange a donation, please contact Corinne Gytoku at 808-223-5735.

Bon Dance Practice at Taiheiji

As Bon Dance weekend approaches, Taiheiji will host a community-wide Bon Dance practice on Tuesday, August 4, at 6:00 p.m. in the temple social hall.

The practice is an excellent opportunity for newcomers to learn the dances and for returning dancers to refresh their memories before the festival. Experienced instructors will guide participants through each dance in a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere.

No special attire is required. Simply wear comfortable clothing and footwear suitable for dancing.

Everyone is encouraged to attend as we prepare together for another wonderful Bon Dance season.

Help Need for Bon Dance Preparations

The success of Taiheiji's Bon Dance depends upon the many volunteers who generously donate their time and effort. We invite members, family, and friends to assist with the following preparation activities:

Sunday, August 2 – 8:00 a.m.
Yagura Set-Up Day

Volunteers will help erect the yagura and chochin framework, clean the temple grounds, social hall, and restrooms, and prepare the property for Bon Dance weekend.

Thursday, August 6 – 5:00 p.m.
Bon Dance Preparation Evening

This evening's primary task will be hanging the chochin lanterns, one of the most time-consuming but visually rewarding parts of Bon Dance preparation. Volunteers will also help set up tables and chairs in the social hall and complete other final preparations.

Friday, August 7 and Saturday, August 8
8:00 a.m. (Tentative)

Food preparation and day-of-event preparations will take place throughout both mornings. Please call the temple office at 808-488-6794 to confirm start times.

Sunday, August 9 – 8:00 a.m.
Bon Dance Clean-Up

Volunteers are needed to dismantle the yagura, remove decorations, and return equipment and supplies to storage.

Your kokua is deeply appreciated and helps ensure the continued success of this beloved community tradition.

Memorial Chochin Dedication Program

This year, Taiheiji is pleased to introduce a new annual Memorial Chochin Dedication Program.

For a donation of \$10 per dedication, members and friends may dedicate a chochin lantern in memory of a departed loved one. During Bon Dance weekend, the name of the individual being remembered will be displayed on a dedication card attached to a lantern hanging on the temple grounds.

As hundreds of lanterns illuminate the Bon Dance grounds, each dedication will serve as a visible reminder of the people who continue to live on in our hearts and memories.

Each dedication is made for the current year's Bon season and will be renewed annually. Families are warmly invited to participate each year as part of this continuing tradition of remembrance.

Dedication request forms will be mailed during the month of July. We hope this new tradition will provide a meaningful way to honor loved ones during the Bon season for years to come.

2026 Bon Otoba Services at Taiheiji

The 2026 Bon Otoba Services were held on June 18, 20, and 21, bringing together temple members and families in remembrance of departed loved ones.

We were grateful for the assistance of Rev. Ryokei Ishii of Waipahu Soto Zen Temple Taiyoji, Rev. Hirosato Yoshida of Soto Mission of Hawaii, Rev. Masataka Hoshino of Soto Mission of Hawaii, Rev. Cameron Williams of Kauai Soto Zen Temple Zenshuji, and Minister Assistant Tesshu Ishii of Waipahu Soto Zen Temple Taiyoji.

Following the Thursday service, fresh sekihan prepared by Taiheiji members and Fujinkai members was distributed to attendees. Hawaii Candy senbei were distributed following the Saturday and Sunday services.

Bon Services provide an opportunity not only to remember those who have passed away, but also to express gratitude for the lives, sacrifices, and teachings they have shared with us. We extend our sincere appreciation to all who participated and helped make this year's services meaningful and successful.

What is Bon?

The memorial services held during Obon have two meanings. One is to honor the Buddha and show reverence for one's ancestors and others who have died. The other is to express gratitude to all people to whom we are indebted, including parents, relatives, friends, and others who have supported our lives.

The full expression for Obon is Urabon-e, derived from the ancient Indian word Ullabana. According to the Bussetsu Urabon Sutra, the tradition originates from a ceremony performed by Shakyamuni Buddha for the deceased mother of Maudgalyayana, one of his immediate disciples. Through this act of compassion, suffering was relieved and gratitude expressed.

Today, Obon remains a time to honor the spirits of our ancestors, express appreciation for those who support us, and reflect upon the interconnected nature of our lives.

Bishop Shuji's Bon Message

Bon is often described as a time to look back. It is a season when we pause from our busy lives to remember parents, grandparents, relatives, and friends who have passed away. We reflect on the sacrifices they made, the guidance they offered, and the countless ways they helped shape the lives we live today.

As I have grown older, however, I have come to see that Bon is not only about remembering the past. It is also about considering how we carry our loved ones forward into the future. The deepest way we honor someone is not simply by preserving photographs, visiting cemeteries, or speaking their names, important as those practices are. We honor them by living the values they taught us. Their kindness, perseverance, generosity, humility, and compassion continue to influence the world whenever we embody those same qualities ourselves.

In Buddhism, we understand that our lives are interconnected with those who came before us and those who will come after us. Bon reminds us that we inherit a legacy from our ancestors. At the same time, we are creating a legacy for future generations. May we honor those who came before us not only through our prayers and offerings, but also through the way we live our lives each day.

Dollar a Day Donation Drive

The continued support of Taiheiji's Dollar a Day Donation Drive helps ensure the temple's ability to share the Buddha-Dharma for future generations.

A contribution of just one dollar a day (\$30 per month) provides meaningful support for temple operations, programs, services, and maintenance. Participating in the Dollar a Day Donation Drive is a simple yet powerful expression of dana, selfless giving.

Please visit the temple website or contact Bishop Shuji Komagata at 808-488-6794 for more information.

Now Accepting Items for the Upcoming Online Auction

Taiheiji will soon be accepting donations for its annual Online Auction Fundraiser, which will be held later this year.

Now entering its fifth year, the online auction has become an important and successful fundraiser for the temple, helping to support a variety of temple projects and programs.

We welcome donations of new items, collectibles, antiques, artwork, services, hotel stays, event tickets, gift certificates, and other unique items that may appeal to bidders.

If you have an item you would like to donate, please contact Corinne Gytoku at 808-223-5735 to arrange a drop off date and time. Your generosity helps support the continued growth and success of our temple community.

Opportunities to Support Taiheiji

Cemetery Plots Available for Purchase

Taiheiji continues to offer cemetery plots at Hawaiian Memorial Park Mortuary and Valley of the Temples Memorial Park for members and supporters seeking to make future arrangements for themselves or loved ones.

We are currently in the process of expanding our available inventory of cemetery plots. Families who may have inquired previously are encouraged to contact the temple again, as newly available options may better suit their needs and preferences. For more information, please contact Bishop Shuji Komagata at 808-488-6794.

Daihannya Tendoku Sponsorship Program

Taiheiji will once again offer opportunities later this year to sponsor the Daihannya Tendoku Service that will be performed during our New Year's observances.

The Daihannya Tendoku ceremony invokes blessings for health, protection, prosperity, and well-being for individuals, families, businesses, and organizations. Sponsorship forms will be distributed after the Bon season so that interested members may participate. Please watch future temple mailings for additional information.

Legacy Wall Dedication Project

Taiheiji is currently developing an exciting new Legacy Wall Dedication Project for the Soto Mission of Aiea Activity Center. The planned mural-sized installation will cover an entire wall within the Activity Center and provide a lasting opportunity for individuals, families, and organizations to leave a permanent legacy supporting the future of the temple.

While details regarding dedication options and display methods are still being finalized, we wanted to share this exciting project with our members and supporters. Additional information will be announced later this year. We hope the Legacy Wall will become a meaningful way to honor loved ones, celebrate family histories, and support the temple for generations to come.

2026 HSMA Fall Conference on Kauai

The Hawaii Soto Mission Association invites members and friends to attend the 2026 HSMA Fall Conference hosted by Kauai Soto Zen Temple Zenshuji on November 7 and 8, 2026. This year's conference marks the first HSMA conference on Kauai in more than thirty years and offers a unique opportunity to experience the island's Soto Zen heritage, warm hospitality, and strong sense of community.

Highlights include a rare visit to the original plantation camp site where Kauai Soto Zen Temple first served Japanese sugarcane plantation workers, a traditional Hossenshiki Dharma combat ceremony featuring Cameron Shinzen Williams, Dharma sessions led by Brian Butsudo Turner Sensei, temple tours, tea ceremony, fellowship activities, and the completion of training ceremonies for Cameron Williams, Kim Shokan Loh, and Todd Donin Cowdrey. Whether you are a longtime temple member or new to Buddhism, the conference promises a memorable weekend of Dharma, friendship, learning, and aloha.

For more information, please contact Bishop Shuji Komagata at 808-488-6794 or bishop@sotomission.org.

Acknowledgement of Generous Donations Received

Aiko Karaoke School	Donation to Temple
Bruce Behnke & Steven Leong	Legacy Wall Sponsorship Program
Fukiya	Donation to Temple
Fumiko Kosuge	49th Day Memorial Service for the late Glenn Kosuge
Joyce Ruiz	Inurnment Service for the late Daren Higa
Jean Takata	27th Memorial Service for the late Edward Takata
Sandra Tanaka	3rd Memorial Service for the late Elaine Tanaka
Charlene Yamaguchi	Contribution to the Legacy Endowment Bond
Marilyn Au Hoy	Donation to Temple
Sandra Tanaka	Donation to Temple
Corinne Gytoku	Donation to New Building Sponsorship Program
Jerrilyn Segawa	13th Memorial Service for the late Beatrice Okuda

UHSSWA to Host Free Medicare Informational Seminar

The UHSSWA (the statewide umbrella organization that supports and coordinates the auxiliary organizations called the Fujinkai at Hawaii's Soto Zen temples) invites the public to attend a free Medicare informational seminar on Saturday, August 23, at 10:30 a.m. at the Soto Mission of Hawaii, located at 1708 Nuuanu Avenue in Honolulu.

The presentation will be led by Mark Faildo, a licensed Medicare advisor with extensive experience helping individuals understand Medicare enrollment, coverage options, supplemental plans, and prescription drug coverage. Through educational seminars and personal consultations, he has assisted many Hawaii residents in navigating the Medicare system and making informed healthcare decisions.

This seminar is intended for individuals approaching Medicare eligibility, those who qualify through disability, spouses and family members assisting loved ones with healthcare planning, caregivers, and anyone interested in learning more about Medicare and the benefits available through the program. Whether you are preparing to enroll soon or simply want to better understand your future options, this seminar will provide valuable information in a welcoming and educational setting.

There is no admission fee, and all interested members of the public are welcome to attend. For more information and to RSVP, please contact the UHSSWA Advisor, Jaymie Komagata at 808-537-9409, extension 2, or by email at jaymie@sotomission.org.

Schedule of Events

July

7	Tue	7:00 p.m.	Bon Dance Practice at Wahiawa Ryusenji
9	Thu	7:00 p.m.	Bon Dance Practice at Wahiawa Ryusenji
13	Mon	7:00 p.m.	Bon Dance Practice at Wahiawa Ryusenji
14	Tue	6:00 a.m.	Zazen
15	Wed	7:00 p.m.	Bon Dance Practice at Wahiawa Ryusenji
17	Fri	7:00 p.m.	Wahiawa Ryusenji Bon Dance
18	Sat	7:00 p.m.	Wahiawa Ryusenji Bon Dance
21	Tue	6:00 a.m.	Zazen
27	Mon	7:00 p.m.	Bon Dance Practice at Waipahu Taiyoji
28	Tue	6:00 a.m.	Zazen
28	Tue	7:00 p.m.	Bon Dance Practice at Waipahu Taiyoji
29	Wed	7:00 p.m.	Bon Dance Practice at Waipahu Taiyoji
31	Fri	6:00 p.m.	Waipahu Taiyoji Bon Dance

August

1	Sat	6:00 p.m.	Waipahu Taiyoji Bon Dance
2	Sun	8:00 a.m.	Yagura Set up (tentative date)
4	Tue	6:00 a.m.	Zazen
4	Tue	6:00 p.m.	Bon Dance Practice at Taiheiji
7	Fri	6:00 p.m.	Taiko Performance by Somei Taiko at Aiea Taiheiji Bon Dance
7	Fri	6:30 p.m.	Aiea Taiheiji Bon Dance
8	Sat	6:00 p.m.	Taiko Performance by Somei Taiko at Aiea Taiheiji Bon Dance
8	Sat	6:30 p.m.	Aiea Taiheiji Bon Dance
9	Sun	8:00 a.m.	Yagura Breakdown
11	Tue	7:00 p.m.	Bon Dance Practice at Soto Mission of Hawaii
14	Fri	7:00 p.m.	Soto Mission of Hawaii Bon Dance
15	Sat	7:00 p.m.	Soto Mission of Hawaii Bon Dance
18	Tue	6:00 a.m.	Zazen
23	Sun	10:30 a.m.	Free Medicare Informational Seminar
25	Tue	6:00 a.m.	Zazen

Soto Mission of Aiea
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