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For Immediate Release

Hawaii's Byodo-In Temple Celebrates 50th Anniversary with Free Anniversary Edition Obon Festival, August 4th

Visitors invited to afternoon celebration in Kaneohe packed with food, entertainment, giveaways, a time capsule presentation and floating lantern ceremony, and more

KANEOHE, HAWAII (July 10, 2018) – [Byodo-In Temple](#), inside [Valley of the Temples Memorial Park](#), celebrates its 50th anniversary with an impressive anniversary edition of Obon on Saturday, Aug. 4, 2018, from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. The day's free activities will include food booths featuring bento and andagi (Japanese doughnuts), Taiko drum and Bon Dance performances, as well as the presentation of a time capsule set to be opened on Byodo-In's 75th anniversary in 2043. The evening will conclude with a visually spectacular floating lantern ceremony. All are invited to attend the family-friendly celebration, with the first 50 people receiving a free lantern, gift bag and VIP Byodo-In Temple access for the lantern-floating ceremony.

"This incredible temple references a seminal part of U.S., Japanese-American and Hawaiian history," said Dennis Boser Jr., regional manager of Valley of the Temples Memorial Park. "We invite the community to celebrate this momentous 50th anniversary with us and to discover the beauty, tranquility and cultural significance of the Byodo-In. We think they'll find the temple and its grounds as remarkable and peaceful now as it was in 1968."



Byodo-In Temple, inside Valley of the Temples Memorial Park in Kaneohe, invites the public to its 50th anniversary celebration on August 4th from 4-9 p.m.

Obon Significance

Similar to America's Thanksgiving, Obon marks a time when Japanese families reunite to celebrate their heritage with loved ones and ancestors who've passed away. Valley of the Temples' Obon Festival is traditionally one of the biggest on Oahu, where hundreds of people gather to take part in this yearly Japanese ritual.

Byodo-In History

In 1968, Valley of the Temples constructed a half-sized replica of the 11th-century Phoenix Hall of the Byodo-In Buddhist temple complex in Uji, Japan. Nestled at the foot of the Ko'Olau Mountains, the Temple was built to commemorate the centennial of the first Japanese immigrants to Hawaii. Construction took nearly three years and cost \$2.6 million. The Temple was dedicated on June 7, 1968 with a traditional Buddhist ceremony.

Governor John A. Burns, a favorite of the Japanese community because of his support for Japanese rights during the state's territorial years, presided over the dedication.

Byodo-In Today

Hawaii's Byodo-In is one of the most picturesque places on Oahu. It is among the top 10 visitor attractions on the island and the #1 attraction in Kaneohe, with more than 300,000 visitors annually.

For more information about Byodo-In's celebratory 50th anniversary edition Obon event, please visit www.valley-of-the-temples.com or call (808) 725-2798.

CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

WHAT: The Byodo-In Temple, located inside Valley of the Temples Memorial Park, celebrates its 50th anniversary with a historic anniversary edition of Obon, one of the largest such festivals held on Oahu each year. The day will include a range of free activities for the public, including Japanese dancers and drummers, food booths, a floating lantern ceremony and time capsule presentation, commemorative giveaways and more. *The first 50 attendees will receive a free lantern, gift bag and VIP Byodo-In Temple access for the lantern-floating ceremony.

WHERE: Byodo-In Temple at Valley of the Temples Memorial Park
47-200 Kahekili Highway
Kaneohe, HI 96744
(808) 725-2798

WHEN: Saturday, August 4th from 4-9 p.m.

Schedule of events:

- **4 p.m.** – Food booths featuring Bento and Andagi
- **5 p.m.** – Taiko drumming and entertainment
- **6-8 p.m.** –Traditional Bon Dance
- **8-9 p.m.** – Floating lantern ceremony
- *Historic photo exhibit throughout

ADMISSION: Free

MORE INFO: Please visit www.valley-of-the-temples.com or call (808) 725-2798.

ABOUT VALLEY OF THE TEMPLES MEMORIAL PARK

As the premier cemetery on Oahu, Valley of the Temples Memorial Park provides end-of-life services to families from diverse religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Established in 1963, Valley of the Temples Memorial Park is located on the Windward side of Oahu and is surrounded by mountains and lush, rolling green hills which overlook the Pacific Ocean. Valley of the Temples features the Hawaii Byodo-In Temple, the famous 1968 replica of the 11th century Phoenix Hall of the Byodo-In Buddhist temple complex in Uji, Japan. The Hawaii temple has appeared in numerous popular television shows including *Lost* and *Hawaii Five-O*. Valley of the Temples Memorial Park is part of a family of cemeteries, funeral homes and crematories with locations throughout the U.S. For more information, visit www.valley-of-the-temples.com or call (808) 239-8811.

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