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PureLand Path

The Oregon Buddhist Temple Monthly Newsletter

December 2008



Awakening to our true selves

Reverend Jundo Gregory Gibbs

Most major religious traditions have special holidays this month. For Buddhists, it is Bodhi Day, the commemoration of Sakyamuni's Awakening to Buddhahood. When he realized enlightenment Sakyamuni Buddha became his most true and real self. Can we awaken to our true selves?

Our founder, Shinran Shonin, studied with Honen Shonin in order to awaken to the truth of the Nembutsu. On the Nembutsu path Shinran awoke to the presence of the fulfillment of Amida Buddha's Vow of Universal Liberation. Still, Shinran did not become a Buddha because of that awakening. He was a man of great insight and deep conviction but still ensnared in blinding passions. Honen used to say that the nembutsu leads us to awaken to our foolish selves. Instead of becoming Buddhas we become (fully, without denial) our foolish selves. This means we become more authentic but still remain far short of being perfect.

On December 7th, at 10 a.m., we will have our Bodhi Day service to commemorate Sakyamuni's Awakening to his True Self. The night before, December 6th, from 8:15 pm. we will have a night-long session of saying the nembutsu aloud together. Some of us will say "Namo Amida Butsu" ("I rely on the Buddha of infinite light and life."/"I rely upon the Awoken Source of limitless wisdom light and endless life"). Some of us will say "Namu Amida Butsu", or "Namada" which has the same literal meaning but may be easier to pronounce for some. A few of us will say "Kimyo Jin Jippo Mu Ge Ko Nyo Rai" ("I respect and rely upon the one who emerges from Reality such as it truly is whose wisdom light extends in every direction without obstruction"). All these various forms of nembutsu/Buddha recollection are ways in which we are accepted and reintegrated into reality such as it truly is. Yet, as Honen remarked, we become our foolish selves all the more

authentically. The answer to the question of who we truly are is elusive.

On the one hand, I am an Irish-American guy from Fresno. On the other hand, I am the universe coming to know itself as a Fresnan of Celtic ethnicity. Most of you are the universe knowing itself as folks raised in Oregon. At this very real level where we are the universe coming to know itself as individual biological persons our true self is Awakening, is a Buddha or is Buddhahood. At the level Honen spoke of, however, reverent saying of the Buddha's Name makes us all the more aware that we are foolish, self-centered people. In comparison to the loving kindness we feel we are encountering in the nembutsu, our own worth seems slight at best.

The process of awakening to the nembutsu has these two opposite effects: 1. We really see how foolish and selfish we are 2. We recognize our truest urges in the vows of the Buddha and our True Self as a Buddha-to-be. It would be silly for a caterpillar to mistake itself for a butterfly. But if the caterpillar thought it would never be a beautiful flying creature that would be another mistake in its self understanding. I don't expect anyone to awaken thoroughly to Buddhahood at our night-long nembutsu chant this month. Even so, we will one day. We all will, I believe, one day awaken to Buddhahood. To mistake ourselves for the foolish and sometimes lost persons we may find ourselves to be now without understanding the other side, the real and almost inevitable destiny of Buddhahood would be truly foolish.

Please consider joining us for this extended session of vocal nembutsu on Saturday December 6th running through about 7:45 a.m. on Sunday 12-7. You don't have to come for the whole eleven hours. Just drop in for half an hour or even just for ten minutes to join your friends in saying the nembutsu. If you can't make it to the all night nembutsu session I hope we may see you on Sunday the seventh for the Bodhi Day service..

Gassho, Reverend Gibbs

"The purpose of the Oregon Buddhist Temple is to insure that the Jodo Shinshu Sangha have the facilities, resident minister and other resources they need to share the BuddhaDharma in their daily lives and during their major life events."

Oregon Buddhist Temple 3720 SE 34th Avenue Portland, OR 97202-3037 503-234-9456
503-231-1551 (fax) e-mail: oregonbuddhisttemple@yahoo.com website: <http://www.oregonbuddhisttemple.com>
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December Highlights

Dec 6	All Night Nembutsu	8:15 pm – 7:45 am
Dec 7	Bodhi Day Service, Jodo-E	10 am
	Followed by potluck lunch	
Dec 12	OBT Board Meeting	7 pm
Dec 14	Mochitsuki-Mochi Sale	All Day
Dec 20	OBWA Meeting	9:30 am
Dec 21	Convention Planning Meeting	12:30 pm
	Annual General Meeting	
Dec 31	Year-End Service, Joya-E	6 pm
Jan 1	New Year Service, Shusho-E	10 am

- *Mochitsuki – Mochi Sale is Sunday, Dec 14. Work schedule and order form are attached. Please return orders by Thursday, Dec. 11.*
- *OBT 2009 Membership registration form is attached.*



Summary notes of November 14 OBT board meeting

Judy Hittle, OBT Secretary

- Recent major repairs were made to the Temple vehicle.
- Two Minister's Assistants and two honorary minister's assistants will be installed at the Northwest District Convention on February 15, 2009. The Minister's Assistants are Cynthia Wong and Tammy Herold. Two lay leaders will be recognized as honorary minister's assistants.
- Joe Wahl will be attending the National Board Meeting on December 5th. One of the major agenda issues will be the funding of the Jodo Shinshu Center and the upcoming balloon payment.
- Dharma School had a successful annual visitation on the 26th of October. Preparations are now being made for Bodhi Day and for the Northwest Convention.
- OBWA evaluated the Sukiyaki Bazaar and are making plans to improve the communication between the ticket sellers and the workers in the kitchen to prevent the problem of unsold food from recurring.
- At the recent Federation of Buddhist Women's Association meeting, a three-year plan for financially supporting the Jodo Shinshu Center was passed. There was also a discussion about the shortage of ministers in the BCA and the need for each temple to develop programs designed to appeal to and retain younger members of the temple.
- The installation of the new lighting was completed on September 24th. The net cost will be about \$1,710, including rebates from the Energy Trust of Oregon, Inc. and a Business Energy Tax Credit.
- Mochitsuki will be held on December 14th. Mark Achterman and Scott Winner are coordinating this

event. It is anticipated that 600 pounds of rice will be used. Two new machines have been added which should help the production run smoother.

- The annual general meeting is scheduled for December 21st following the Convention planning meeting.

Next OBT board meeting: December 12, 2008, at 7:00 p.m. The board meets every second Friday of the month. OBT members are welcome to attend. Minutes of the meetings and reports are available in the temple office in the annex, or contact the OBT Secretary.



Northwest Buddhist Conventions

February 13th – 15th, 2009

Carol Saiget, Convention co-chair

Thanks to the help of many members, plans are well underway for the NW District Convention that OBT will be hosting. Members of the Buddhist Education Committee have been working with Rev. Gibbs to plan three Saturday workshop sessions. Each delegate will have three choices to pick from during each session. Keynote speaker Taitetsu Unno and our NW ministers will address the themes: *Interdependence in a Jodo Shinshu World* and the commemoration of *Shinran Shonin's 750th Memorial*. In addition, we will offer both a children's' and youth program so everyone in the family can participate.

Knowing that all of us have been affected by the economy, we are making every effort to be purposeful and reasonable when it comes to expenses. Adult registration is \$90, which is \$10 less than last year's registration in Seattle. We are also trying to make decisions that are environmentally friendly, so we are keeping our consumables (like paper and plastic) to a minimum. For fun, it sounds like we'll be offering some swing dance lessons so we're ready to take the dance floor when the Minidoka Swing Band plays after the Saturday night banquet. **The deadline for registration is Dec.31st. Contact Tammy Herold (503 720-0353) for details and/or check the OBT website.**

We expect over 350 delegates. This means we will all have to pitch in and do our share. If you haven't volunteered for a job that fits your talents or time, let us know and we'll put you to work. **If you haven't signed up to be a sponsor or can solicit an advertiser for the booklet, the form is included in this newsletter.** Working together we are sure to make this 62nd NW Buddhist Convention a memorable event for everyone.



OBWA news

Alice Ando, OBWA President

The Oregon Buddhist Women's Assn., along with 44 Buddhist Women's Assn., in the United States has received a thank

you from the BCA Jodo Shinshu Center for our donation of \$144,645 as of October 2, 2008. It is a privilege for OBWA to be a part of this project.

The OBWA acknowledges with deep appreciation the following donations: Anonymous; Lennie Tanaka – Special; Susan Endecott – Special; Kida/Tomita Families - In memory of mother, Fumiko Kida and grandmother, Tsuru Nakamura

October Meeting and Cleanup - Oct 18: Tsuyako Monas, Kimiko Mishima, Kazuko Sunamoto, Mary Nakashimada, and Julie Kagawa. November Clean-up - and setup for Eitaikyo: Michael & Janice Ishii, Bob Tsutsumi, Duane Watari, Lily Meiners, Teresa Soto de Ramon, Lily Kajiwara, Sachi Hasuike, Ernie Takeda, Jean Matsumoto, Kathie Sato and Anna Tanaka.



Important: we need help! *Elaine Yuzuriha*

Please, please help us locate 2009 graduating high school seniors either affiliated with OBT or of Japanese ancestry. Each year we get complaints that certain graduates were overlooked. It is up to each of us to contact the committee with information about each graduate. Even if you think the committee already has the name, please don't assume anything! We need everyone's help on this. Contact either Kim Kono (503) 236-6811, kim_kono@yahoo.com, or Elaine Yuzuriha (360) 253-9532, e.yuzuriha@comcast.net. We need the graduate's name, parents' names, school, student's address, phone number, and if possible, email address.



Dharma School students and parents visited Mrs. Sakae Ando (sitting). From left: Elaine Yuzuriha, Kirt Achterman, Alice Ando, Alyssa Ono, Joy Yuzuriha, Sho Gibbs, Michi Stoeller (in front), Cathy Shikatani (in back)



Lotus circle – November/December Jean Matsumoto

Altar flowers are being provided by:

- November 30 - Cynthia Wong in memory of (imo) father Walter Pietrak Sr.
- December 7 - Etsu Osaki imo father and mother, Tatsuya and Yasashi Ichikawa
- December 14 - Alfred Ono imo mother Masaye
- December 21 - Ernie Takeda imo mother Satoko
- December 28 - Susan Endecott imo husband Ron

Thank you to all who joined the Lotus Circle and provided the flowers for our onajin (altar) and around the temple during the past year. Almost every Sunday was covered and many Sundays by several people. This program has turned out to be very successful and we now look forward to next year. Thank you to the members of the flower arranging toban: Etsu Osaki, Judy Yamauchi, Tomoko Ono, Janice Okamoto, Susan Endecott, Kyoko Gibbs, Yasuko Fields, June Shiigi, Misa Kodama, Miho Weinstein, Jayne Ichikawa. They have done such a terrific job, and the arrangements are always a little different and beautiful.

Don't forget to check the Lotus Circle page on the OBT website and contact Ken Garner webmaster@oregonbuddhisttemple.com if you would like to submit brief memorials, pictures, etc. For further information regarding the Lotus Circle, or if you would like to join in the year 2009, please contact Jean Matsumoto, 503-280-2463, or e-mail jamatsumoto@gmail.com.

December Toban

Ando, Alice	Annand, Edna
Annand, John	Demise, Darlene
Gorawsky, Christo	Higashi, Gary
Ikata, Rose	Lawson, Brian
Matheson, Ken	Matheson, Nobuko
Muramatsu, Hank	Nakamura, Colin
McCormack, Tom	Okita, Mary
Reneau, Charles	Seibel, Penny
Shiigi, June	Shiigi, Stan
Sugitani, Hiroko	Sumoge, Jerry
Sumoge, JoAnn	Takashima, Jean
Takeuchi, Mel	Takeuchi, Tom
Takeuchi, Tomiko	Tano, Alice
Ward, John	

Toban not only means "my turn" but "my chance" to show my appreciation to all the men and women whose monetary donations and hard work resulted in this beautiful place, our Temple, to hear the Dharma.

Words of Jean Matsumoto – 1995

2008 Memorial Chart

Year Of Passing	Memorial	Year Of Passing	Memorial
2007	1 year	1986	23 year
2006	3 year	1982	27 year
2002	7 year	1976	33 year
1996	13 year	1972	37 year
1992	17 year	1959	50 year

If you would like to have a memorial service performed for loved ones or ancestors, please make arrangements with Rev. Gibbs as early as possible.



Greetings from New Mexico Ally Sinclair

As many of you know, our family moved from Oregon last June. After 8 years as members at OBT, we were sad to say good-bye to the Temple and all of you. Our journey was a fun adventure. Picture this: a five day road trip with 2 cars, 3 people, 2 cats & a bunny rabbit. We discovered many things, including the perhaps little-known facts that cats do not like cows, and bunnies do not like hotels.

We passed through 6 states in all, saw parts of Oregon we'd never imagined, then crossed into potato territory and saw the Ore-Ida factory. More poignantly, we went to Minidoka; Miss Jean's stories of her personal experiences as a girl came to life for us there. We appreciated that Buddhism endured and even thrived, to come back to OBT for us to discover there years later. On a lighter note, we visited the state capitol in Utah and learned this intriguing tidbit: Mormons in America eat the most Jello! Who knew?! For Alyssa, known to many of you as "Hana-chan", the highlight was going to the Four Corners and putting hands and feet in all four states (Utah, Colorado, Arizona and New Mexico) before eating yummy "fry bread".

The weather here is an amazing 4 seasons with clear dry air, warm sun & blue skies daily. The wind conditions are perfect for hot air ballooning, and every morning we see colorful balloons in the sky. One even landed in our street! When the balloons fly low over your house, the sound they make filling up is like Darth Vader breathing down on you!

From our back yard, we have a view of the Sandia Mountains as well. Our new home here is in Rio Rancho, a suburb of New Mexico. We are lucky to have landed in a street with extremely outgoing & friendly neighbors and great schools. We've even got a principal from Portland; what more could we ask for?

There are 12 kinds of Buddhist temples or groups here in Albuquerque and we are launching an "O-tera Sagashi" (a.k.a. Buddhist Church Search!) to choose one. We'll write again in the New Year to let you know how it goes. Meanwhile, best to all at OBT. Gassho.

In Celebration of Shinran Shonin's 750th memorial
Oregon Buddhist Temple invites you to join us for

An All-Night Vocal Nembutsu

Saturday to Sunday, December 6th & 7th

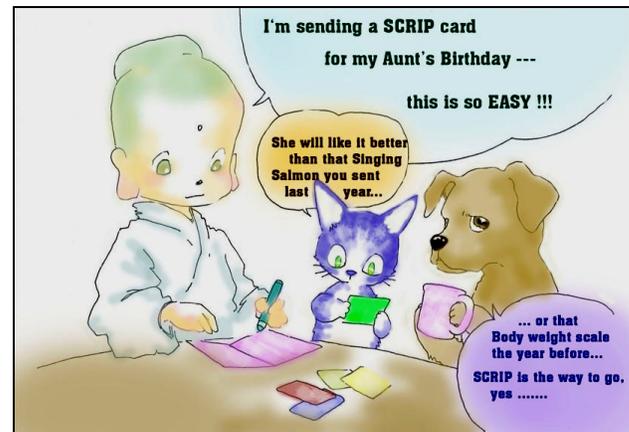
Oregon Buddhist Temple
3720 SE 34th Ave
503-234-9456

Beginning at 8:15 pm with a talk on the Nembutsu.

Na Ma Mi Ho Bu

9 pm - Nembutsu recitation begins
8 am - Breakfast
10 am - Bodhi Day service

International caffeine service available all night long featuring tea and coffee from around the world!



Remember this holiday season and all year round that scrip gift cards make great gifts. The proceeds support our temple at no additional cost to you. Order your scrip today -- see the attached order form. If you have any questions about the scrip program, contact Ken Garner, Cynthia Wong, or Gordon Wong at the temple or via email at scrip@oregonbuddhisttemple.com