



Announcements (January 2005)

Our heartfelt condolences to the families of

Roy Soejima

1922 – November 1, 2004

Jim Tamura

1922 – November 16, 2004

Skyler Cullitan

1998 – December 10, 2004

January Sangha Services - Our Sangha Services (Sangha is the Sanscrit word for Buddhist community) is a traditional Jodo Shinshu service with chanting led by a Doshi, (a minister assistant or a lay member from the Sangha). Following Sunday services when there is not a minister, we have a Buddhism 101 book study and discussion. We will be reading from the Jodo Shinshu Guide (the new purple book from BCA).

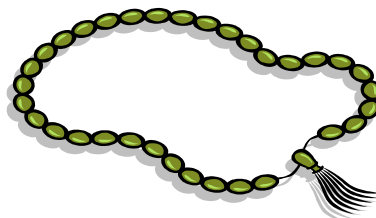
Ko Service - Starting in January, the Wednesday evening Ko meetings will take on a different focus. The main activity will be chanting. We will be learning how to chant the Shoshinge (Song of True Faith) found on page 33 of the Service Book. This is Shinran's poem from his Kyogyoshinsho. This is chanted every morning at the Nishi Hongwanji in Kyoto. The Shoshinge outlines the

principal tenants of Shin Buddhism. We'll study proper pronunciation, musical notation and melody. We'll also discuss the meaning of the text. But the emphasis will be on the chanting. The goal is for people to experience the meditative peace, inner calm and the spiritual contentment that comes with group chanting. It will be on Wednesday evenings 6:30 to 7:30. We'll try it for 8 weeks and then evaluate whether to continue. Paul Vielle will lead this class.

Conference 2006 Work Party - Join us at the temple on Saturday January 8th at 10:30 am to help put together the gift items that will be handed out at the Northwest Buddhist Conference in Tacoma in February. For more information contact Leslie Green at 458-6183.

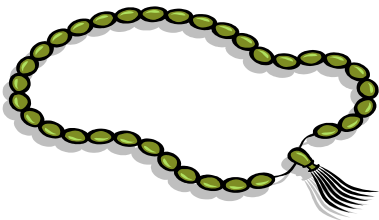
Annual Meeting - The general meeting will follow the Sangha service on Sunday January 9th. Stay after service to hear temple president, Christine Marr, present a state of the temple message and to hear our plans for 2005.

Socho Koshin Ogui Visit - We have a very special event beginning on Saturday, January 22nd at 7:00 pm. There will be a gathering to meet our new Socho, who comes to us from BCA in San Francisco. We will have an informal question and answer period....he would like to hear our comments and questions on the vision of the BCA and our temple. There will be refreshments downstairs following the talk.

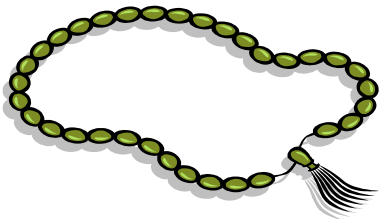


Sarana Affirmation Service - Beginning at 10:30 am, Sunday, January 23rd Ogui Socho and Rev.

Castro will lead a special service for those members who have applied for Buddhist names. Also during this service Ogui Socho will install Paul Vielle as our very first minister's assistant. We will top off the day by taking Rev. Castro and Ogui Socho to a late lunch which is still being arranged and will be announced as soon as possible. If you plan to attend the lunch, please let Christine or Leslie know before the service begins so that proper arrangements can be made.



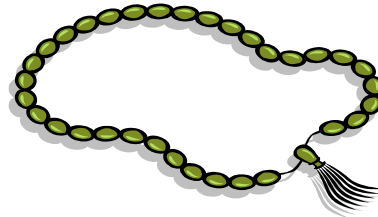
Looking Ahead - The 2005 Northwest Buddhist Conference will be held on the weekend of February 18th - 20th, in Tacoma. We have sent our headcount to Tacoma, so for those who have signed up to attend be sure and mark your calendar, and be sure to contact Fumi or Liat for hotel information. Tacoma will hold a certain amount of rooms so make your reservations soon.



We would like to extend a warm welcome to our newest members who joined this year:

Jim & Shirley Bennett
Andrea Gonzales and family
Jenifer Johnston and family

Kosuke Imamura and family
Tom Lande
Kenna Latwesen and family
Martena Peterson and family
Rachel Scudder
Anne Trevethan and family



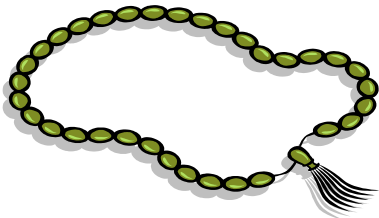
Temple News

This month brings the end to 2004. I can't believe how fast the year has gone by. We have lost some long time members, bringing much sorrow to us all. It also keeps us closer as our church/temple was the thread that brought us together in this life. The commitment to grow our sangha becomes stronger in me, as a legacy to all the hard work everyone has given over the years.

An important piece we are just beginning that should help our growth is the **Minister's Assistant Program**. Our first candidate, Paul Vielle will be installed by Socho Koshin Ogui on January 23, 2005. He has been officially recommended by Rinban Fujii and Rev. Castro of the Seattle Betsuin. He will assist Seattle by helping with many duties in Spokane. Some of those duties will be: assisting all visiting Reverends, preparing the Altar for special services and serving on the funeral committee. His list is much longer, this only names a few. We appreciate Paul's commitment to the Spokane Sangha! Socho Ogui

will also give Buddhist names to 16 members and install our 2005 Board.

We are also looking forward to a **gathering with the Socho January 22, Saturday evening, in the Hondo at 7 PM.** This is "meet our Socho" prior to the formal service on Sunday. He is looking forward to meeting our members and speaking about the vision of the BCA. He welcomes an informal question and answer format following his comments. Everyone is invited to attend, we want a large turnout to welcome a special guest! Refreshments to follow downstairs.



The General Meeting of the Members will be held following our 10:30 Service on January 9, 2005. This will bring members up to date on our yearly budget and goals for the year. One goal includes more visiting Reverend Services this year. We are planning for approximately **two Reverend Services a month**, (we have 19 Reverend services budgeted for 2005). If you are not able to attend the Seattle Reverend Services on the 4th Sunday each month, there will be another service you can attend. This will also bring more opportunities for families to plan Memorial Services.

Are there any other services members are hoping for? Be sure to attend if you have questions or suggestions about the Temple

A group of Spokane delegates are planning to attend the **Buddhist convention in Tacoma.** We will present Spokane as the host of the 2006 Convention. Plans and coming along, much work ahead! If you are interested in being a part of our conventions, don't be shy! Lots of jobs available to fit your talents, big jobs and little jobs, something just right for you.

With Gassho, Christine Marr
SBT President



Changes to the Newsletter, By Ed Parker, Editor

The newsletter has been changing content and growing over the past year or so since I have been editor. I have tried to include articles and poetry concerning Jodo Shinshu by people of different perspectives. I want to continue doing this. For this approach to continue and be successful I need two things: your support for this sort of thing and your comments, articles and poetry for the newsletter. I hope you will contribute

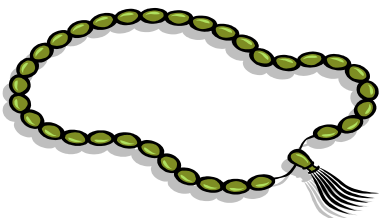
your thoughts, or questions, on the Pure Land.

Currently the newsletter goes out to over five hundred people. Now, no one wants those trees to have died in vain, so I need your feedback. If you are a member of the Sangha, a portion of your dues goes to support the newsletter. If you read the newsletter, but haven't decided to join our Sangha, a contribution to the newsletter would be appreciated. The newsletter is on our website:

(spokanebuddhisttemple.org) At the website you can read over the past issues and Dharma Talks at your leisure. If it is something you would like to support, send in a poem, haiku, or an article to be included in the next issue.

The bottom line is that the newsletter is an expense that must be justified. If you are receiving the newsletter and want to continue receiving it, let me know. If you would like to only receive special event announcements, let me know. If you don't want to receive the newsletter, let me know. I will have you taken off the list. Eventually, no later than May, those who have **Not** indicated an interest in continuing to receive the newsletter will be dropped from our mailing list. I can be reached at parkere99@msn.com or mail your comments to:

Ed Parker, Editor
927 S. Perry
Spokane, WA 99202



Waiting to disappear, Ed Parker

Mine is a very personal religion, so what I have to say means no more than leaves tossing in the wind, less perhaps. I have no answers. I say the Nembutsu from gratitude and humility, gratitude from of being shown that there is more than this face of existence, humility from having glimpsed the infinite. Having experienced the limitless, I can accept my limitations, grateful that I am not a bigger fool than I am. This I, this delusion of I, created from my ignorance, is a creature from a dream, a dream from which I cannot awake. What am I? What am I doing? Why? There are no answers, none that I can grasp; none that I can hold on to. I surround myself with all I know. All I know tells me who I am, what I am, it gives me answers. Sadly, I find my answers, simply don't answer, falling short of meaning, falling short of truth. I fashion my questions from ignorance and throw them at this

wall surrounding all I know, this wall that limits my reality. Answers fall at my feet, hollow and broken. I lean against my Bodhi tree, looking for the Morning Star. There is no where to go, nothing to do. Watching the sun rise, the sun rises. The moon begins to fade, the stars pale into the softening blue. Still, I dream, foolishly wishing it was all, more, or perhaps, less. How strange this dream existence, living in a world of this and that, only knowing separation.

We live in a sea of Amida's light, Amida's light shines through us, casting our delusions' shadows on the wall, to ape and mime all that is denied. How painful to see what is revealed? Earnestly seeking a spiritual mirror, we dare not see our face. We speak of the Three Poisons: greed, anger, and delusion, but I see only delusion. Delusions blind the eye, dull the mind: delusions are dust on the mirror. Delusions form what are considered our good intentions along with everything else. Who intends evil for evil's sake? There is always a good reason, a well intended reason for the harm we do. Those who can not see through their delusions can not know what they intend. They wait as a spectator would, curious, and surprised by what they do. They live a life of explanation, exaltation, and regret.

I say the Nembutsu and try to open my eyes. I feel the light, hear the calling voice, and yet it slips away. Though my actions form my mirror, though my questions form my mirror, all I see there is this poor fool, this me, waiting to disappear.

In the Buddha, I seek refuge.
In the Dharma, I seek refuge
In the Sangha, I seek refuge

What am I?
No answer.
Just delusion
and me
waiting to disappear

Just
this, and that,
thought, and desire
waiting,
to disappear

In the Buddha, I find refuge.
In the Dharma, I find refuge
In the Sangha, I find refuge

And so, I only aspire to the Pure Land, for truly the Pure Land is a state of mind, one free of delusion. The Pure Land exists as that potential which draws me on like a magnetic force attracting its opposite. The voice of Amida is this attraction calling out to me to question what I am. Finding no distinction between Amida Buddha and the Pure Land, I seek refuge in the question there, abhorring the studied answer. The vow reassures me, comforts me, standing against all answers, it answers all, giving refuge to those like me, who seek to cast off their delusions until at last they simply disappear.

Truly, what I say means no more than leaves tossing in the wind, less perhaps. I have no answers, nothing to convince anyone of, no point to make. I say the Nembutsu from gratitude and humility and let the answer people, answer for Jodo Shinshu.

DONATIONS

The Spokane Buddhist Temple gratefully acknowledges the following dues and donations received from November 20 through December 6, 2004. Please notify Fumi Uyeji or Liat Parker of any omissions or corrections.

Dues listed are those received during this period, often times dues are paid for a few months or a year at a time and are acknowledged once when received

Dues

Kengo Yorioka
 Chris/Christine Marr
 Tom Lande
 Satoshi/Mary Terao
 Etsuko Yamada
 Jennifer Johnston
 K. Imamura Family
 Ann Heineman
 Kengo Kato
 Jeffrey Workman

Dana

Chris/Christine Marr
 Ann Heineman
 Kenna Latwesen

In memory

Janet Tamura 200
In memory of Jim Tamura

Lorie Taylor 10
In memory of Roy Soejima

