



OBT established 1903

PureLand Path

The Oregon Buddhist Temple Monthly Newsletter

April 2008



The birth of the Buddha and the flourishing of our Temple

Reverend Jundo Gregory Gibbs

By the time you read this springtime should be in full swing. I hope that it is a beautiful day as you read this newsletter. Perhaps you are looking out your window from time to time to as you read this, appreciating the flourishing of nature. I hope that some of you have noticed that our temple has been flourishing these past seven or eight years.

Sometimes we have such high expectations that we can't look at what is happening and say, "This is good. We're on the right track here." On May 11th we will celebrate Shinran's birthday and combine this with OBT's commemoration of the 750th Memorial for Shinran Shonin, our denominational founder. That day will also be Mothers Day and our Hatsumairi (Infant Presentation) and New Members Recognition. We will on 5/11/08 acknowledge the 100th new member to join this temple in the last seven years.

For this count I only take into consideration people who pay their membership donation. As I often tell you I don't want people having hard times financially to send in the donation envelope in this newsletter or even to pay the membership donation. All are welcome at our services and study classes with no charge and no mandatory donation. For counting growth in temple membership nonetheless, I only count those who have paid the membership donation.

We have brought in a remarkable number of new members for a temple our size. Shakyamuni Buddha would be pleased. We have done the Buddha proud (to use a colloquialism). When it is so clear to the other 49 BCA temples, why is it not obvious to everyone at OBT that our temple is flourishing? There are several reasons and at this time I will just mention that there are losses by death (8 10 members per year) and there is an attrition rate of new

members of about 40% over four years. A few of those new members leave because they were looking for something a bit different than Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. We got them on the path of the Dharma and if they end up at a Tibetan temple or a vipassana meditation group good for them. We have done the Buddha proud.

The vast majority of the 35 - 40 people who came to visit, came to pay membership dues, joined tobans and are now elsewhere left for educational or employment opportunities out of state. With the work we have been doing together to make this temple grow, if Portland's economy were as brisk as the economy in Orange County is, if the job market were as good as it is in Sacramento, we would be talking about how to build a bigger temple to accommodate everyone. That is a good problem to have, as problems go, but we aren't there yet by any means.

We have honored the Buddha by making it clear that this temple is a spiritual resource for anyone who can appreciate it. We now have members of a wide variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds and from a number of different religious upbringings. They come here for Buddhism and stay for Jodo Shinshu. I don't coddle newcomers with generic sermons about ecology and oneness without touching on the specifics of the Nembutsu path. This means that when I retire or die on the job one day in the future the new members will stay. They have become friends of all of yours after all. They have become adherents of the Nembutsu teaching. They have come to be nurtured by the saying of Amida Buddha's Name and by your friendship. They have become friends of the Buddha. We have done the Buddha proud.

The historical, founding Buddha, Shakyamuni's birthday will be celebrated April 6. I will give a brief Japanese language talk at a short 9:30 am Service that day. At 10 am our main service will begin. Our program will include performances by our Dharma school children. Their skits are always charming and sometimes you can understand what they say. Please come out for our Buddha's birthday service on the sixth of April. Even if you can't

"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>

This monthly newsletter is published by the Oregon Buddhist Temple, a Buddhist Churches of America temple affiliated with Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-Ha. Please contact the temple with any comments, questions or concerns, or if you wish to report a change of address. Send news items to the editors: Shinya Ichikawa and Jayne Ichikawa, sjichi@verizon.net

make it that day, try to take to heart the renewal this temple is going through. We are flourishing. We are doing the Buddha proud.

Warm Regards, Greg Gibbs

April Highlights

Apr 6	Hanamatsuri Service Followed by entertainment and refreshments	9:30 am
Apr 11	OBT Board Meeting	7:00 pm
Apr 19	OBWA Meeting	9:30 am



BCA National Council Meeting

Alfred Ono, Event Chairperson

Oregon Buddhist Temple does it again. As a Temple, we are known for hard work and an outstanding presentation. The BCA National Council meeting again demonstrated the effort of the membership to make a great event. The BCA National Council meeting and BCA minister session was a great success. Many compliments have been received from both ministers and delegates.

The feeling of a calm, friendly, confident atmosphere that many felt contributed to a productive and not contentious meeting. BCA felt that the goals of the meeting were fulfilled in a spirit of cooperation. Hopefully the BCA can now move forward to accomplish its mission and goals, especially the collection for the Campaign to collect funds to pay off the debt for the Jodo Shinshu Center in Berkeley.

We also demonstrated an environmentally aware and friendly atmosphere by not giving out trinkets or using excessive plastic. People seem to enjoy the spirit of mass transportation and moved well traveling both to the airport and to other Portland areas.

Many also expressed their positive feelings about Portland- for some their first visit here. They enjoyed the clean street, the great shopping, especially Powell's Books, and the beautiful weather. Some even commented positively about the number of hard working "hakujin" working as temple members. Even though there were some last minute changes and an occasional oops, the general feeling was that of satisfaction. The worse complaint was the cracked bathroom tile, not enough soap in the room and the unpredictable podium microphone.

Thank you all for your help and cooperation. Here at OBT we hosted a very hospitable gathering with a smiling "What can we do for you" attitude and positive feeling, along with the few days of blue sky.

A special thank you to the section chairpersons:

- Tammy Herold - registration
- Amy Peterson - transportation

- Herb Osaki - hospitality
- Cathy Yarne and Carol Saiget - food and banquet
- Susan Endecott - program
- Tom McCormack and Jayne Ichikawa - tours
- Michael Ishii - golf

Thank you especially to Rev. Gibbs as the minister liaison and general runner.

Now I can just go back to washing dishes at the bazaar.

In Gassho



More on BCA National Council Meeting

Tammy Herold

What a wonderful experience it was to be part of the organizing team preparing to host the National Council Meeting. Many a time I thought "how are we going to pull this one off?" (It would have been fun to keep track of how many "I don't know's" and "What do you think's" were uttered during the planning process and even during the event!) It truly was an example of Other Power as I saw so many people pitch in, offer wonderful ideas and step up at the last minute to help out. The feedback we are receiving is very positive. One person said it was the best National Council Meeting he had ever attended.

A big personal thank you from me to the Sangha members who helped out at the registration desk. I could handle tasks away from the desk and knew it was in very good hands. We had such a good time volunteers stayed and hung out even though their shift was over. Rev. Gibbs and Dr. Ono were an invaluable source of advice and I really appreciate their cool heads. Thank you, thank you, thank you to everyone who helped from the beginning of the planning process to getting that last person to the airport. Our Temple gets to host this again in another 36 years so "save the date!"



BCA National Council OBT Golf tournament

Michael Ishii, Tournament Chairman

Thank you to those who attended the Oregon Buddhist Temple Golf Tournament on Tuesday 2-26-2008. The tournament could not have been possible without the financial support of the following people and organizations.

Hole Sponsors

- Total Plumbing- Bruce Iwata
- Hiroshi Yamauchi
- Carolyn Saiget
- Rose City Cemetery and Funeral Home- Jon Oilerenshaw

- Boise Cascade- Tim Sawabe
- Brian Annand
- Rick Okamura
- Dr. Alfred Ono
- Bateman Carroll Funeral Chapel- Ms Merlene Drapela
- Bishop Socho Ogui
- Golf balls from Bateman Carroll Funeral Chapel
- Riverview Abbey
- Thomson DBM- Joe Wahl
- Mt Hood Chemical
- Downtown Auto - John Nozaki

Thank you golfers for attending and having a wonderful day of golfing.



Spring bazaar wrap-up *Susan Leedham, co-chair*

We had a very successful Spring Bazaar this year. We made money to keep our temple running, and we received a lot of compliments on the great tasting food, so

kudos to all of our talented cooks!

Kim Kono and I would like to thank all of you who were able to come out and help, even if it was only for a couple of hours. All help was greatly appreciated. And a special thank you to those that felt like they were living in the temple kitchen for three days!

We also had lovely ikebana and bonsai displays, and a successful omiyagi shop and omanju sales, and, of course, a raffle, which all helped create a festive atmosphere.

Our bazaars are really a community effort, and they require a lot of team work, but we also had fun working alongside one another and sharing stories and learning new skills.

Thank you!
In gassho

Spring bazaar omiyage booth *Tammy Herold, Linda Tanaka*

The Spring Bazaar Omiyage booth was quite successful this event. The hand made items were very popular and several donated food items were sold even before the booth opened! There were several recent donations of wonderful items and OBWA would like to thank Yasuko Fields, Jean Takashima, Sahomi Tachibana and Nobuko Matheson and any others who may have donated. The manju made by members sold out in about two hours. Thank you to all who participated in the manju making process. And, of course, thank you to the people who helped set up, sell and break down the booth.



OBWA news *Misa Kodama*

OBWA wishes to thank the following people who supplied refreshments on March 7 for the spring bazaar preparations: Jerry Sumoge, Hannah Honma, Ernie Takeda, Kyoto Gibbs, Thomas Hokama, Frieda Fujikawa, Shizuko Ouchida, Teruko Nishikawa, Fumi Okubo, Sumi Ishida, Sets Ueno.

We also wish to thank the following members of the March toban who supplied refreshments for the March 15 OBWA meeting: Kuniko Mishima, Brenda and Jerry Fugate, Edna Annand, Mary Nakashimada, Shizuko Ouchida, Alice Sumida, Sets Ueno and Kazuko Sunamoto.

Edna Annand organized a craft workshop to make items to sell at our spring bazaar. The first session was held after the OBWA meeting on February 23. Ladies made craft items using dry flowers and paper, and crocheted baggage tags, pot holders, etc. Omiyage shop at the Bazaar sold these items as well as the manju the ladies made. OBWA will continue to make craft items in order to sell them at the omiyage shop at our Obonfest.

We wish to acknowledge donations received from Etsu Osaki, Sumi Ishida and Alice Tano,

Next OBWA meeting will be on April 19, at 9:30 a.m. Next month reporter is Etsu Osaki.

April Toban

Amasuga, Kats	Amasuga, Lauren
Cave, Marian Nagaki	Cohen, Cindy
Fukunaga, Lori	Fukunaga, Ray
Hasuike, Sachi	Hondo, Craig
Ishii, Janice	Ishii, Michael
Kajiwara, George	Kajiwara, Lily
Koyama, Edna	Koyama, Richard
Matsumoto, Jean	Meiners, Lily
Ouchida, Rose	Roman, Jose Manuel
Sato, Kathie	Scapple, Karen
Soto de Roman, Teresa	Takeda, Ernest
Tanada, Anna	Tsutsumi, Gail
Tsutsumi, Robert	VinHasa, Sharon
Watari, Duane	

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



Lotus Circle - April
Jean Matsumoto

Altar flowers for the month of April will be provided by:

- April 6 - Gordon Wong in memory of father, Tung Sang Wong.
- April 13 - Anonymous; Ben Ishida in memory of father, Suetaro Ishida
- April 20 - Kazuko Sunamoto in memory of husband, Kats, and father-in-law Yozo Sunamoto.
- April 27 - Open

If you would like to join the Lotus Circle or would like more information about it, please call Jean Matsumoto (503-280-2463); e-mail: jamatsumoto@gmail.com. Thank you.



Greetings from Taipei, Taiwan

Charlene Roberts, OBT member teaches English in Taipei

During the Winter Break I went to Phnom Penh and Siem Reap, Cambodia. I was really impressed with the optimism and hope the Cambodians have for the future. They have been through genocide, wars, diseases, poverty, child trafficking and limited life spans, and they have lost a whole generation of families. But all the people I talked to were looking to the future for a better life. The poverty and the lack of daily necessities was staggering. Medical care was an unattainable luxury. In Siem Reap, I went to a cello concert given by a Swiss doctor to raise money for his hospital (Kantha Botha Hospital) that provided free care for Cambodian children. He has developed breakthrough treatment for TB, dengue fever and AIDS (He pioneered a technique that stops the transfer of the HIV virus from the mother to the child) and even provides transportation and free medication to the children.

I visited a school for poor village children (ages 6-16) where they can learn English at no cost to them. The kids only go to public school for half a day and then they come to this school for the other half. The director, my tour guide, took me there and I had an opportunity to teach a lesson to a class of 50 kids. They were so eager to learn and did quite well with no books, and only a white board and plywood benches to sit on. The school was financed by a British woman who raised the money to buy the land, build the two-room school, restrooms and dig a well. Unfortunately, the pump handle had been stolen and they didn't have water to drink. Vey, my guide, felt that by learning English, the kids had a future and could pull themselves out of poverty. His dream is to have them stand on his shoulders and reach for their future.

Taipei American School library is cleaning its shelves of outdated, but still good, books, and I am sending them to this school. One of our teachers is taking a box of books

when she goes there during our spring break. This school is called the ELMA Foundation and it has set up bank accounts where we can donate money. I will see if my students also want to send some books, money and supplies to these 200 students.

When I returned to Taipei, I received a note from Vey that one of the 14-year-old boys had died of meningitis. He had been sick for only a weekend and his family didn't have money or transportation to get him to a hospital. In this Buddhist country, impermanence is a constant.

I have one last trip before I come "home" this summer. I am going to Malaysia for a regional teachers' conference in Kuala Lumpur. This summer I will teach three weeks in Tokyo, spend a week in Hawaii, a week on the East coast, a week in Portland (July 20-27), and then a week in San Francisco before I head back on August 4 for another year in Taiwan.

I want to spend at least two Sundays in Portland so I can go to Temple. I hope everyone won't be on vacation.

2008 Memorial Chart

Year	Memorial	Year	Memorial
<u>Of Passing</u>		<u>Of Passing</u>	
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.



Queen Maya dreamt of a white elephant and the baby Buddha was born under a midst of sweet rain.