



August Announcements:

Obon/Hatsu-Bon Service

Sunday, August 22 at 10:30 am, we welcome Rinban Fuji for this special service. Everyone is welcome to attend. All other services in **August will be Sangha Services**. Sangha (a Sanscrit word for Buddhist community) will be held August 1, 8, 15 and 29 at 10:30 am. The Sangha service is a traditional Jodo Shinshu service with chanting led by a Doshi, a lay member from the Sangha. Following the Sangha Service we have snacks and a Dharma class for adults downstairs.

WHY JODO SHINSHU? Saturday August 21 at 7 pm

Rinban Fujii will give a talk for temple members and the general public. If you have wondered what our temple is about, and more to the point what Jodo Shinshu is about, this is the talk

for you. All are invited, \$5 donation at the door.

Dharma Class Video for Summer

The book we have been studying: *Buddhism, Plain and Simple* will be on hold for a few weeks so that we can watch a video, **Great World Religions: Buddhism by Professor Eckel**. Jim and Shirley Bennett are lending this DVD to our temple and it makes sense to enjoy it with them before they head south soon for the winter. So join us and pass the popcorn. We finish around noon.

Ko Service, Wednesday nights at 6:30 pm. The Ko is an informal Sangha service and Dharma discussion group. The service is lead by a Doshi. The discussion group is facilitated by the Doshi (the Doshi is not a teacher) or anyone who wants to read and study a Zen or Jodo Shinshu a topic.

Temple News

Looking back on July, oh what a busy month. We participated in the Perry Street Faire. This brought many people together to make the senbei, preparing the chicken yakitori skewers and chopping vegetables. This fundraiser provided much needed money for our temple and in addition, provided an opportunity to work side by side and get to know one another. We visited, laughed and worked hard binging in about \$800.

The companionship was so enjoyable, we are thinking about holding a craft evening to continue our friendships and make items to sell at our fundraisers. Some ideas are: making origami magnets and some Buddhist

checkbook covers (will that remind us to not be attached to money?) See next month's newsletter for dates and time.

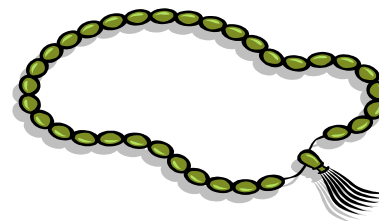
A big thanks to Jefferson Workmen for heading up the Perry Street Faire project. He took on a lot of responsibility and it is very much appreciated. Look to another page for a list of many other helpers.

Also this month we enjoyed our retreat with Kenji Akahoshi, "The Practice of No Practice." We are so fortunate to have him visit and we learn so much from his retreats. It felt so good to pull away from everyday life and focus 2 days on what it means to say the Nembutsu. In addition, we get to know like minded people and discuss Buddhism in depth. This is pretty impossible in our normal routines with all the distractions, tasks and interruptions. We do pay our way to retreats, but really, they are priceless. Much thanks to Liat Parker for being the "behind the scenes person" who kept the weekend running smoothly.

We are experimenting with some extra Reverend Services in the coming months. Currently we have a formal, "Rev. Service" once a month with a Seattle minister. We will be inviting guest ministers more often to give us every other week services, (check the calendar as this is not possible every month.) George Kawahara has generously agreed to provide Reverend Hospitality to these Spokane visitors. It is hoped that we can expand our membership with added services. This will start in the fall.

Last but not least, I hope many will attend our planning session for the Feb. 2006 Northwest Buddhist Convention on August 8th at noon in the temple basement. This meeting will start the committee structure and planning so that we will be well on our way by Convention in time in Tacoma Feb. 2005 (coming right up!). **If you are interested in being a part of Convention 2006, please attend! We need your input.**

With Gassho,
Christine Marr SBT President



Speaking of the upcoming Convention in 2006: After 17 years, Spokane Buddhist Temple will once again play host to the annual Northwest Buddhist Conference in 2006. We will be hosting it at the historical Davenport Hotel and anyone who is involved in the planning will have the opportunity to share in making this a wonderful event. Join in on the fun Sunday, August 8th following the 10:30 am service to find out which committee is just screaming for your expertise. I know that we have many talented members out there who are just waiting for the chance to be a part of this experience. I will have a list of committees along with detailed job descriptions. We will also be looking for creative ideas for a theme, and topics for breakout sessions. See you all there! --Leslie

A word from Jefferson Workman about the Perry Street Faire: I

would just like to thank everyone who donated their time and effort in helping the Temple prepare for the Perry Street Faire. It was wonderful seeing our Sangha work together. Working together, sharing the burden, the wisdom and compassion of Amida shines brightly through our Sangha. Gassho, Jefferson Workman



For their selfless efforts, The Spokane Buddhist Temple would like to thank:

Barbara & Justin Braden
 Jim & Shirley Bennett
 Hyacinth Dezenobia
 Andrea Gonzales
 Karen & Sam Gordon
 Leslie Green
 Phyllis Hathaway
 Ann Heineman
 Jennifer & Jordyn Johnston
 Rachel Jordan
 Kathy Landry
 Martyna Lowenhoff
 Christine Marr
 Bonell McLeish
 George Nelson & Spokane Aikido
 Pat Omine
 Ed & Liat Parker
 Konrad Patterson
 Alex, Martena, & Nate Peterson
 Russ Posten
 Dave Powell
 Spokane Produce
 Herman & Phyllis Sugimura
 Janet, Jim, & Rod Tamura
 Elizabeth Watts

**Paul, Karen & the Hongwanji
 A Letter from Mary in Japan
 Friday, 16 July 2004**

Paul and Karen Vielle, friends from the Spokane Buddhist Temple, flew into Tokyo and then took the shinkansen to Kyoto. They will be here for just a few short days and then off to Beijing and India. I met them at their hotel in Kyoto Wednesday evening and spent the night with them. We attended morning services at the the Hongwanji. The [Nishi Hongwanji](#) is a World Heritage Site. It was a pleasure accompanying Karen and Paul on a great English guided tour of this compound. Tabitha, who works at the Hongwanji and is a college student here in Kyoto, gave us the tour. She used to live in WA and her Dad was the Buddhist minister in White River sometime ago. Now he is a minister in Hawaii. The site includes many museum quality buildings housing ancient wall and ceiling paintings, a traditional Japanese dry landscaped garden, a floating pavilion, and 2 outdoor Noh stages, not to mention the place of worship - the Amida Buddha Hall. The big Founder's Hall is under construction and won't be completed until 2008.

After the tour, with Tabitha's help, we went shopping for some [ojuzu](#) and a [kesa](#) for Paul. The shop, next to the Hongwanji's International Center, served us tea and cookies after Paul had finished shopping. While his purchases were being wrapped we were invited to go upstairs and visit the costume museum. This museum included a series of miniature scenes from the [Tale of Genji](#), a very famous traditional Japanese saga. There were meticulously dressed dolls in dioramas of specific scenes from this drama. Wow, gorgeous.

After shopping and a really nice vegetarian lunch at the train station, we decided to hop on the subway and experience part of yoiyoiyama (the eve of the eve of [Gion Matsuri](#)). This is one of the 3 biggest Festivals in all of Japan and one of the longest in duration. It runs for practically the whole month of July. It was probably 90 degrees and a bit humid. The floats are scattered in the streets for blocks and blocks. There are 32 floats all together and they are ancient. Connecting the floats are uncountable street vendors selling all sorts of taste sensations from takoyaki (octopus balls) and okonomiyaki (cabbage and egg omelet with ????) to ichigo and ringo ame (strawberry and apples on a stick dipped in syrup that dries hard like our candy apples). Fans and parasols are everywhere to fight off the heat and glare of the sun. It's almost too bright to take good photos during the heat of the day but the crowds are small. Gion Matsuri actually started under very oppressive circumstances in 869 when a plague raged through Kyoto. A priest of the Yasaka (or Gion) shrine led a

procession of people through Kyoto in an attempt to appease the Shinto gods. The plague soon ended but this event became a popular festival with large floats (Hoko & Yama - rolled and carried) now being paraded through Kyoto. The floats, some of which weigh over 10 tons, are very elaborate and many are decorated with Dutch and Turkish tapestries from the 15th century.

Each of the large Hoko floats carries musicians and truly looks a couple of centuries out of place as it is pulled through the streets. The Hoko floats are so big that they must be pulled by a large team of attendants.

I may try to attend next year on the day of the parade but after experiencing the crowds two days before this event, I can see why there are many warnings to stay away. It is so hot and with over 200,000 attending it could be miserable!

Paul and Karen were drooping. They had done a tour in Tokyo and on Wednesday had done a tour of Kyoto in the morning and then taken a 1.5 hour bus ride one-way to Nara and toured there in the afternoon. Good grief. So I put them on the subway, back to their hotel for a much needed nap. I stayed for an extra hour or so and took some more pictures and pigged out on fresh iced pineapple on a stick. Barbequed chicken on a stick and bought some French fried sweet potatoes for Paul and Karen. I discovered some homes open to the public, their treasures displayed for everyone to see. I saw centuries-old painted folding screens, tapestries and hand woven silk fabrics, and got a glimpse into the insides of a traditional old-style Japanese home with its enclosed gardens.

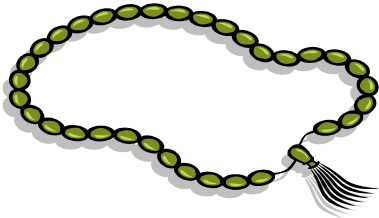
I was able to contact Connie and David headed to Kyoto from Osaka. I met them in the train station and headed over to pick up my overnight bag and introduce them to Paul and Karen. Since Paul and Karen were leaving for Beijing early the next morning, they declined our invitation to visit the Matsuri that evening. David, Connie and I stashed our non-essentials in a locker at the train station and caught a subway for the festivities again. We arrived on the streets of Shijodori (5th Street) around 5:30pm, even then crowds were spilling into the streets. By 6pm, the streets were roped off and filled with people in summer yukata and the intensity of the mood heightened. Hawkers selling chimaki (bamboo wrapped shrine amulets) got to me, I have one hanging over my door which will keep me healthy till next Matsuri. The sounds of the repetitious matsuri music (percussion and high-pitched flutes and/or whistles) was everywhere - in the stores, malls and stations. To tell you the truth it can really grate on your nerves, but here in the crowd with all the colors and excitement, it fills the air with festive energy. The crowd carried us through the streets, snacking and drinking as much water as possible to stay hydrated. As we were leaving I sampled a heavenly amber ale made by a local brewery. It seems so strange to be standing on the street at 8pm with a beer in my hand asking a policeman for directions to the subway! hah. So we headed home - foot sore and tired, but with a buzz of happiness at having been able to experience such an evening.

That half I never knew, by Ed Parker

The other day someone asked me, if I thought the glass was half empty or half full. She had no particular glass in mind; none was in sight, so I assumed the question was hypothetical. In general, the assumption is that a response of half full indicates an optimistic turn of mind and half empty, pessimism. The assumption is an ego based one, one that indicates ownership in the contents of the glass. Unless I intend to drink it, what do I care? What if I wasn't thirsty? What if the glass was filled with something I didn't want or need? What if we looked at the contents from the perspective of the glass?

The merit of a container is greatest when it is empty. When it is empty, it can be filled with any number of things, the contents mixed, blended, altered in any number of ways. An empty container has many options. Those options decrease as soon as something is put inside it. When the glass is full, nothing more can be added until something is taken away. From the container's point of view, being half empty would be considered optimistic; half full, pessimistic. Think about it. Truthfully, she asked me, and being a woman with little interest in idle speculation, she had a purpose. How do I see Life? What is my outlook? I told her I was a Buddhist, which I fear only confused her. Still, there was no glass and I don't recall being thirsty. Had I been, as I did later, I may have thought back on a tall frosted glass, one shy a long thirsty pull and wonder as I did so many years ago, whose thirst had been so cunningly assuaged

by that departed half. And perhaps thought it, indeed, the best and freshest half that disappeared on my way between bar and table. Half full or not, pessimist or not, I could only remember that curious feeling of awe and resentment toward the one who so deftly drank my beer without my knowledge. Life is all about mysteries: questions to be questioned, when you are not too full of answers to hear them.



DONATIONS

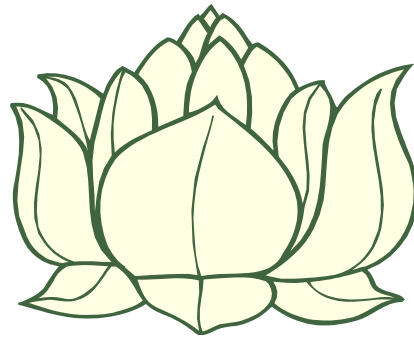
The Spokane Buddhist Temple gratefully acknowledges the following dues and donations received from June 25 through July 21, 2004. Please notify Fumi Uyeji or Liat Parker of any omissions or corrections.

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

Jim & Shirley Bennett
 Anonymous
 Paul/Karen Vielle
 Chris/Christine Marr
 Leo/Yuri Kiyohiro
 Marceline Burdett
 Ann Heinemann
 Leslie Green
 Kengo Yorioka
 Tosh/Amy Kirihara
 Fumiko Heyamoto
 George/Toshie kawakawa



Dana

Jim/Shirley Bennett	25
Rachel Jordon	20
Russ Postern	15
M/M Vielle	30
A. Heinemann	20

In memory of Shozo Higashi – 300
 Mary Higashi

In memory of Tak Horiuchi – 20
 Jim & Janet Tamura

