

January 2008

Butsu Genji Buddha Eye Temple

Volume 8 Issue 1

Life Vows

Jun-e and Issei's Lay Ordination on January 13th

On the 13th of January, Carmelita Jun-e Thomson and Robin Issei Wiel will receive lay ordination and become my formal students. It has been one year since Yushin and Myobun's ordinations, and over the past year the significance of this Dharma Gate has become clearer to me. I guess it isn't really a surprise, but the way in which the mutual responsibility of student and teacher acts as such a strict instructor can be startling. Sometimes it is clear how to practice and study Buddha Dharma, but more often, when all the bargaining of a habituated life is drawn out by the uncompromising straightforwardness of this mutual vow, it seems like there is no way to make another step. It is in that place of impossibility that a student and teacher walk together.

A few years ago I was talking with my master about enhancing our altar here at the Eugene Zendo. I told him I was thinking about adding statues of Samantabhadra and Manjushri Bodhisattvas flanking Shakyamuni Buddha in the traditional formulation you see in temples all over Japan. He said, "No, that is the altar arrangement for a teaching school. A Zen temple should have Mahakashapa and Ananda (the first and second generation of disciples of Shakyamuni) flanking the Buddha." I knew that many Zen temples used this arrangement, and I knew that it was because we wanted to emphasize the importance of the teachings being handed down from teacher to student to the present day. But somehow I hadn't really considered the significance. When we make

offerings and prostrate to the Buddha, we are prostrating to his students down through the ages that continue practice to this day. The flesh and blood of the Buddha's life is the flesh and blood of our lives as we endeavor to clarify the way. This vow to awaken with all beings is always carried out with a teacher and a student.

It is with great respect that I enter into this vow with Jun-e and Issei. May our efforts see the blooming of hundreds of thousands of Dharma flowers.

-Ejo

Gensei enters the temple as a postulant

Also on January 13th, Ross Gensei Morris will formally enter the temple as a postulant. "Entering the Temple" means that Gensei will begin living at the Zendo and taking on the discipline of a monk. This is an opportunity for him to clarify his intentions of becoming a Buddhist Priest and try working directly with me as his teacher. The training of a priest includes a strict discipline of form and posture, both physical and mental. Gensei will try on this discipline so that he and I can decide how to make next steps. The postulancy will continue for an undefined period of time.

-Ejo

New Year Celebration

On Tuesday, January 1, 2008 we will have a New Year Ceremony and Celebration. The ceremony will start at 3 pm and will be followed by everyone enjoying traditional Japanese new year food and fellowship.

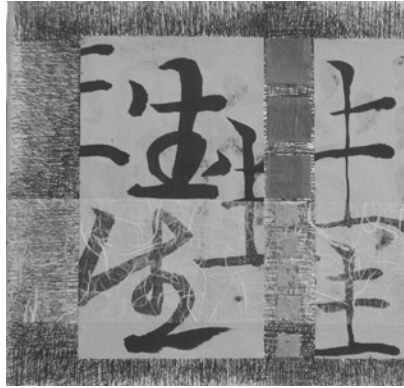
Dana, the first of the Buddhist Paramitas (perfections), is the voluntary giving of material, energy or wisdom to others. There are no dues or fees for attendance at the Eugene Zendo's scheduled training events. However, we do have expenses and rely on the support of visitors and Sangha members to help us transmit Dharma to all beings.

We appreciate your continued generosity.



9 Bows of Gratitude

- ◆ **Zak** for leading the December work party, and to **everyone who attended.**
- ◆ **Helen Strassel** for tulip bulbs.



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Announcements

- ◆ **The next work party is Sunday January 20 from 12-3** preceded by a light lunch.
- ◆ **Fusatsu** this month will be **Tuesday evening January 22** (see calendar).

Board notes

The board met briefly on December 11. The primary decision was to schedule the January meeting for Sunday January 6 from 12-2 at the Zendo, so as to have time for a thorough financial review.

Help support the people of Burma

The Foundation for the People of Burma seems to be a very solid organization. They provide humanitarian aid to Burmese people of all ethnic backgrounds and religious beliefs. A large portion of the population there does not get enough to eat and has no medical care. About half of all households have a person within dying of AIDS, and many children have lost their parents to the disease. Prices of basic necessities have skyrocketed as the government is corrupt and ignoring its citizens. When you donate to them and help support the Burmese people, you also receive their newsletter, Mingala Ba! Jack Kornfield is on their Board. It seems to be a worthy organization for which to practice dana, and a way to stay in touch with the larger world out there.

Gassho,
—*Seiku*

About the Eugene Zendo

The Eugene Zendo is a Soto Zen practice community open to everyone. The Buddhist teachings of compassion and wisdom are fostered amidst Sangha so that we can express these naturally in our daily life. The temple is entirely supported by donations. There is no fee for any event, although donations are gladly accepted. Activities center around zazen (silent meditation), which is the foundation of our practice. Gatherings may also include service, chanting, dharma talks, and study and discussion.

If you are new to Zen practice, an introductory class is offered at 8:00 a.m. on Sunday morning before our regular Sunday service. For more information, please contact our resident priest:

Ejo McMullen 541-302-4576 ejo@eugenezendo.org

You may also visit us on the Web at www.eugenezendo.org

The newsletter is mailed on the 20th of each month. Deadline for publication is the 15th of each month. Please submit newsletter items to Anyu at debraanyu@gmail.com

To receive this newsletter in the mail, please sign up at the Zendo, or send a note to Anyu at debraanyu@gmail.com

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