Midwest Buddhist Temple

Bulletin

The monthly newsletter of the Midwest Buddhist Temple

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435 W. Menomonee St., Chicago, IL 60614 • 312.943.7801 • mbtchicago.org • Resident minister: Rev. Todd Tsuchiya • Retired minister: Rev. Ron Miyamura

Goodbye 2024, hello 2025—Year of the Snake

Photo by Joy Zavala

Many gathred in the MBT hondo at the Joya-E (New Year's Eve) service to see 2024 out.

Sangha gathers at MBT for New Year's Eve and New Year's Day services

By Elaine Miyamura and Joy Zavala

It was out with the old and in with the new at MBT as the Sangha gathered for services on both New Year's Eve and New Year's Day.

Fifty-plus people came for the 7:30 pm Joya-E (New Year's Eve) service on Dec. 31. Rev. Ron led the chanting and then gave a Dharma Message. He spoke of the tradition of this service and his experiences growing up in California and when he was a student in Japan.

Everyone got a chance to ring the kansho bell at least one time, after being reminded that we should first think of something we want to get rid of before striking the bell. Many of us laughed as we thought of many, many things we would like to get rid of in the new year.

We rang the bell a total of 108 times to symbolize the 108 limitations to enlightenment. After the 108 strikes, everyone was invited to enjoy a bowl of toshi koshi soba expertly prepared by Dean Katahira, Greg and Nancy Rivera, Melissa Maslanka, Marcus Moore and Elaine Miyamura.

*see **new year's**, page 3*

Cold December morning, hot rice for mochi-making

By Elaine Miyamura

On a chilly and gloomy December morning, we gathered at the temple for our annual Mochitsuki Festival.

Hot, steaming rice came out of the kitchen and was quickly put into the mochi machines. After a short time, the mochi was transferred to the two mochi cutting machines. Crank, crank, crank and soon

*see **mochitsuki**, page 10*

inside

Happy New Year's!

Check out the many holiday greetings from MBT friends near and far. *Pages 4–7.*

Mini mochi makers

Dharma School children of all sizes gathered in the Social Hall on Dec. 15 to try their hands at mochi making. *Page 11.*

happenings

By Elaine Matsushita

The Japanese American Citizens League is now accepting applications for its **2025 JACL Chicago Scholarship Program**. Scholarships range from $2,000 to $5,000+ and are open to undergraduate and graduate students who have demonstrated a commitment to JACL's mission.

Scholarships will be awarded at the JACL Chicago Scholarship Luncheon on May 18, 2024. Applications must be submitted by March 1, 2025. For more information, visit this link or contact **Christine Munteanu**, JACL Chicago Scholarship Committee chair, at scholarships@jaclchicago.org.

Card contest deadline nears
Tap your creative juices and enter the Japanese American Service Committee's 5th Annual **New Year Card Contest**. The deadline is 5 pm Monday, Jan. 6. There are three divisions to enter: kids under 12, teens (13–19) and adults; top three winners in each category win prizes. Entries can be submitted electronically or in person at the JASC office. Click here for more information.

Ripples of the past
JACL Chicago is hosting **Intergenerational Conversations: Ripples of the Pas**t on Saturday, March 1. This program brings Chicago-area Nikkei (people of Japanese ancestry) together to connect and process the trauma of World War II-forced displacement and incarceration through personal story sharing. It was created to bridge the gap in programming for the community's need for containers to reflect on and heal from the generational impact of incarceration. Ripples will be held from 2:30 to 4:30 pm; the location is to be determined. To register or for more information, visit this link.

Job opening
JACL Chicago is seeking a dynamic part-time staff person to support the work of the chapter. In addition to supporting communications and administrative work for the organization, this position will have the opportunity to lead the Our Story Educational Program to promote the education of Japanese American incarceration in schools.

To apply, email a cover letter and resume to Program Director, Rebecca Ozaki, rebecca@jaclchicago.org with "JACL Chicago Program Coordinator" in the subject line. Application is rolling until the position is filled.

Consul General visit
Tatsu Aoki's AIRMW team, representing **Tsukasa Taiko, Shubukai** and **Toyoaki Shamise**n, joined Japan Consul General Yanagi and his wife at their residence in Evanston for a wonderful Japanese dinner and conversation. Our own **Kiku Taura** and **Kay Kawaguchi** were among the honored guests.

Kiku and **Tsukasa Taiko** were also featured on Channel 9's "Around Town" with Anna Beleval in early December. Bravo, Kiku!

California, here we come
The Hutts (Grady, Taryn and Marigold)

*see **happenings**, page 7*

Photo from Taryn Hutt

Grady, Taryn, and Marigold Hutt, with Taryn's parents, Toni and Phil, at Disneyland.

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Please send articles and photographs to: **Midwest Buddhist Temple, 435 W. Menomonee St., Chicago, IL 60614 or bulletin@mbtchicago.org**

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Don't forget to visit our website, ***mbtchicago.org***, for more information about Shin Buddhism and the Midwest Buddhist Temple.

General meeting, Shinnen Enkai set for Jan. 26

Please join us on Sunday, Jan. 26 for our Annual Membership Meeting immediately after service. You will hear from our Board of Trustees President Jason Matsumoto and others on the temple's 2024 accomplishments and plans for 2025. Voting members will be asked to ratify the 2025 Operating Budget.

Following the meeting will be our Shinnen Enkai, or New Year Party, where lunch will be served along with entertainment. Tickets are $10 for adults and $5 for children 10 and younger.

You can purchase tickets at the temple or contact the office, 312.943.7801.

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new year's

Continued from page 1

It was a great way to end 2024.

And then the next morning, the hondo was again filled at 10:30 am with those who came for the service to welcome in the new year. As it was the night before, the service was led by Rev. Ron.

Toshi koshi soba

He mentioned in his Dharma talk that 2025 is the Year of the Snake (a symbol of success and perseverance).

After service, we served our traditional ozoni soup, which included mochi made at our Mochitsuki Festival earlier in December (*see story on page 1*). Spinach, shiitake mushrooms and kamaboko were added to the mochi in the ozoni soup.

Ozoni soup is said to bring good fortune and good health in the coming year. In many homes, it is the first meal eaten on New Year's Day. Sharing ozoni soup with our MBT Sangha family and friends is a heartwarming and delicious way to start the year.

There were around 55 people who attended the New Year's Day service. Thanks to Terry Cichocki, Yumi Masuoka and Marcus Moore for their help making and serving the soup.

We hope 2025 will bring good fortune and good health to everyone.

Photos by Elaine Miyamura and Joy Zavala

Above: Rev. Ron strikes the kansho, one of 108 rings on New Year's Eve.

Below: The Sangha enjoys ozoni soup on New Year's Day.

Happy 2025

Rev. Ron & Elaine Miyamura
Chicago

merry merry

and try to keep it all the year!
Taryn, Grady & Marigold Hutt / Chicago

Chicago

Wishing all a wonderful new year!

Josh Fidler & Andrea Shlimon & Ryla

***

Wishing everyone the best for the new year!

Fumiko Matsushita

***

Happy New Year!

Roxane Tono & Lexi

Happy 2025

Jesse & Joy Zavala
Chicago

Happy 2025

Wishing all a happy and peaceful 2025!
Kiku Taura & Takamasa Onose
Chicago

Happy 2025

Glynn, Carol, Mitch & Craig Isoda
Chicago

merry merry

Rev. Todd & Connie Tsuchiya / Chicago

Suburbs

Happy New Year!

Carl & Harumi Ichikawa / Palatine

***

Happy 2025!

Susie & Ron Kono / Darien

***

Akemashite omedetou! Happy New Year!!

Kevan, Megumi & Aino Kosobayashi / Naperville

***

Happy New Year!

Victor & Sandy Miyata / Des Plaines

***

Happy, healthy 2025!

Joyce & Rick Morimoto / Evanston

***

Best wishes for the new year!

Gary & Rev. Patti Nakai / Skokie

Out of State

Wishing you a happy and healthy new year!
Sam Fidler & Callye Foster & Mac / Missoula, MT

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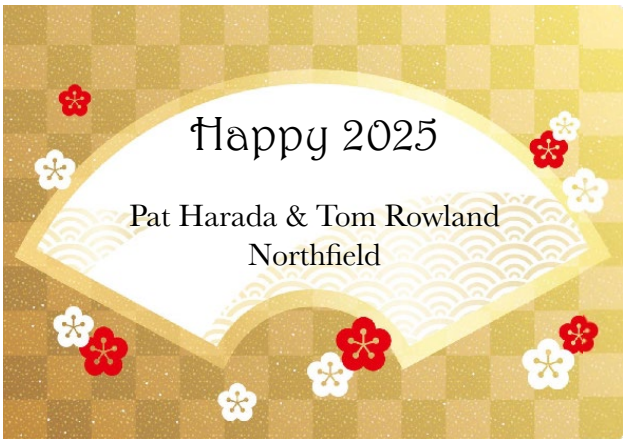
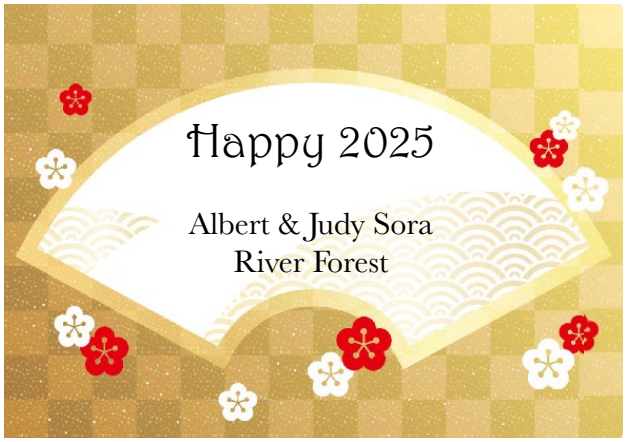
Happy holidays!
Emiko Morimoto & David Yarmolinsky
Kohei & Naoki

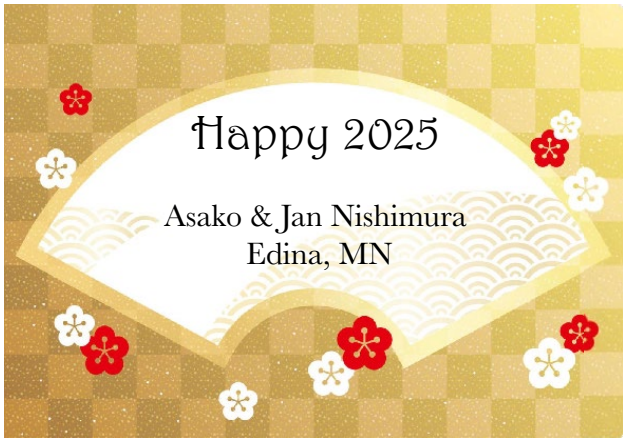




Abroad

Happy holidays!

Kenji Morimoto & Will Lawrenson / London



2025

happenings

Continued from page 2

went to SoCal to visit family and enjoyed a busy, cheerful, fun-filled week, complete with Marigold's first airplane ride and visits to the Disney Studios and Disneyland. "This was especially meaningful," says Taryn, "as Taryn and Grady met while working at Disney, Taryn's father **Phil** worked at Disneyland for 35 years, and Marigold's very first ride was one that Taryn worked on at Imagineering. Can't escape The Mouse in our house!"

Music at MBT
Cynthia Mee is a member of the BCA Music Committee and the BCA Archives Committee and has an article in the BCA Music Committee's December 2024 newsletter about the history of taiko at MBT and the different ways MBT is embracing music today**.** Please take a look. There's a lot to learn from Cynthia's extensive research—as well as what's going on musically throughout the BCA.

Home for the holidays
Emily Harada is home for the holidays from Minnesota, and will be here with her folks, **Michael** and **Yvonne Harada**, for New Year's Day. Sadly, come Jan. 2, she'll be returning to Minnesota.

Holidays in Massachusetts
Rick and **Joyce Morimoto**, along with **John Adachi**, celebrated the winter holidays with **Emiko**, **David**, and grandsons **Kohei** and **Naoki** in Cambridge, Mass. "We continued our family's oshogatsu tradition and made a mini-sampling of great Japanese food," says Joyce. At the same time, in London, **Kenji Morimoto** and **Will Lawrenson** had a wonderful holiday. "Kenji started his new series on mochi to welcome the new year. Check out @ kenjcooks on Instagram."

Not a dull moment
Carl and **Harumi Ichikawa** had a busy December with Carl's surprise health issue (all good now), retirement, and daughters **Erin** and **Gia** visiting from Los Angeles for the holidays

Photo from Joyce Morimoto

Rick and Joyce Morimoto join daughter Emiko and David Yarmolinsky and grandsons Naoki and Kohei for the holidays in Massachusetts.

Happy birthday to...
We would like to send happy birthday wishes to other friends born in the month of January:
Jerry Matsumoto, Jan. 16
Takamasa Onose, Jan. 28

Working with your nature, not against it

The following is from a Dharma message that was shared on Dec. 22.

By Taryn Hutt

Good morning. Please join me in gassho as I read the words of Sakyamuni Buddha from the sutra translated as, "Setting the Wheel of Dharma in Motion":

The noble truth of suffering (dukkha) is this: birth is suffering; aging is suffering; sickness is suffering; death is suffering; sorrow and lamentation, pain, grief, and despair are suffering; association with the unpleasant is suffering; disassociation from the pleasant is suffering; not to get what one wants is suffering. In brief, the five aggregates of attachment are suffering.

Namo Amida Butsu

This is not my favorite part of Buddhism. I am not a fan of suffering. I love to avoid unpleasant things, and I never want to discuss sickness and death. I love my attachments!

But as I round the corner into a new phase of life, I have realized that much of my suffering, I bring on myself—but not in a way that I'd previously assumed. I don't suffer because I'm not good enough. I suffer because I believe there is such a thing as "good enough."

Now, I am a procrastinator. I've known about this Dharma talk date for months, and I didn't write a word until last Monday.

Many possible topics have been simmering. I asked myself many questions. Should I make it more personal or general? Focused or wide? Should I talk about Niji Dharma, my work in the office, or my home? Should I go big and ponder the meaning of life? Or should I talk about one specific passage? All of these questions provided ample opportunity to not *write* my talk. To continue procrastinating.

I won't get into the roots of my procrastination problem—that would take us all the way back to elementary school. But I can tell you that it's been top of mind this year in particular.

I turned 41 in June, and I was diagnosed with ADHD in September. That's a big learning curve after 40 years of wondering what was wrong with me. But this diagnosis doesn't have to be a bad thing; it's just new information.

And there are many wonderful parts of my life. I have an adorable toddler. I am happily married, and I have good friends.

My house is nice, we eat well, we take neighborhood walks, I make art. Not bad things.

And yet, I always feel like I'm searching for something. I am always looking forward, wondering what might be around the corner or, more honestly, I'm wondering how I can build a corner to my liking, organize my way toward it with a detailed map, and turn said corner with as much preparation as possible, with full visibility of what will sit before me—no surprises.

This, my friends, is what's called a Control Freak.

Control freaks are my people. Type-A personalities. Go-Getters. Spreadsheet nerds. Planners, trackers, workaholics. These are not people who slowly meander toward a corner, smell some roses, take in the present moment, and enjoy surprises.

No, we are not those people.

Throughout my life, people have said things to me like, "Relax!" "Take it easy!"

They've encouraged me to enjoy now, to stop obsessing over the future, as though a countdown clock is constantly ticking in my mind (and yes, that is what's happening up there). Even here at MBT, I've been encouraged to "Don't worry, be happy," which is much easier said (or kazoo-ed) than done. (Fun fact: Every time we sing that, I lean over and whisper to Grady, "This is an affront to anxious people!")

I am a procrastinator, and I've always felt terrible about it. I've felt guilt about things I didn't do as well as I could have. I've felt grief over opportunities lost. Even as a kid, I was a little ball of anxiety about this.

As I wrote this talk, I imagined myself sitting on the naijin—just like this—with shoulders tightening into knots. I can get nervous about being nervous—that's the professional level of anxiety at which I operate.

Add in the ADHD, and you've got a recipe for a highly creative, hamster-wheel brain that never stops turning in search of a better, smarter, more together version of itself.

So, why am I telling you this and what on earth does it have to do with the Dharma?

Many books, teachings, talks about Buddhism revolve around living in the present. Neither the past or future actually exist. We only have moments, fleeting and intangible. There is constant change, constant movement.

In high school, I read something that first sparked my interest in Buddhism. I've been unable to locate the source, though I repeat it to myself all the time, for decades: "The root of all suffering is the illusion of control."

The root of all suffering is the illusion of control.

Of course, the Four Noble Truths tell us that we will suffer. It is inevitable.

To repeat: The noble truth of suffering (dukkha) is this: birth, aging, sickness, death, sorrow and lamentation, pain, grief, and despair are suffering; association with the unpleasant—*or* things I cannot control—is suffering; disassociation from the pleasant—*or* happy surprises I can't or won't see—is suffering; not to get what one wants is suffering.

Setting aside the more obvious forms of suffering—sickness, pain, death—let's look at that last phrase. "Not to get what one wants is suffering."

In my case, I hold two opposing ideas in my mind, opposing parts of myself.

One: I want concrete answers. I want to create a plan and know it will move forward as I want it to. I want definition and assurance.

Two: This is impossible. This illusion of control is, in fact, the root of my suffering.

Tough spot to be in.

We often know what our problem is, the want versus need that drives our suffering. In the wise words of Mick and Keith: You can't always get what you want, but if you try sometimes, you just might find, you get what you need.

We often have what we need right in front of our faces and, yet, we won't accept it. Maybe we can't. Maybe we don't have the tools. I know that I'm going to be riddled with anxiety if I wait until the last minute to do something, if I procrastinate.

*see **nature**, page 9*

nature

Continued from page 8

And yet…that's the nature of my brain. A brain that often feels like an adversary, but a brain that I need to look at as my partner.

The big questions on which I tirelessly ruminate are: Why? And How?

But those questions are too big—and better saved for my therapist—and they usually waste precious time. The time I keep complaining I don't have enough of, the time I'm always fighting for.

This is perfectly shown in the parable of the poisoned arrow…

It's just as if a man were wounded with an arrow thickly smeared with poison. His friends and companions, kinsmen and relatives would provide him with a surgeon. And the man would say, "I won't have this arrow removed until I know whether the man who wounded me was a noble warrior, a priest, a merchant, or a worker."

He would say, "I won't have this arrow removed until I know the given name and clan name of the man who wounded me, until I know whether he was tall, medium or short, until I know whether he was dark, ruddy-brown or golden-colored, until I know his home village, town or city, until I know whether the bow with which I was wounded was a long bow or a crossbow, until I know whether the bowstring with which I was wounded was fiber, bamboo threads, sinew, hemp or bark, until I know whether the shaft with which I was wounded was wild or cultivated, until I know whether the feathers of the shaft with which I was wounded were those of a vulture, a stork, a hawk, a peacock or another bird, until I know whether the shaft with which I was wounded was bound with the sinew of an ox, a water buffalo, a langur or a monkey."

He would say, "I won't have this arrow removed until I know whether the shaft with which I was wounded was that of a common arrow, a curved arrow, a barbed, a calf-toothed or an oleander arrow."

The man would die, and those things would still remain unknown to him.

So, let's avoid why or how and just think about what. Let's look at what is happening to us, what has happened before, and what will probably happen again.

But let's try to do it without judgment. Without the guilt and grief, without the negative baggage of anxiety. Let's just look at what it is.

If I look at what I find most fulfilling in my life, aside from husband and baby, and of course being the office manager here—it's my many (many) creative projects. Paintings, movies, novels. I keep myself busy.

I want plenty of time for all of these pursuits. That is what is happening now.

But I will end up grabbing 10 or 15 minutes in the morning, maybe an hour during a baby nap on Fridays. I know this, because it is what has happened before.

I will buy a new 2025 planner, write in my self-imposed deadlines and lofty goals, and then find I don't meet them. That is what will probably happen again.

If I refuse to tread down the slippery slope of why and how, and if I refuse to attach bad or good to this cycle, it's much easier to accept that I cannot control it. My mission is to weather it all without such harsh judgment and accept the what—as is.

And yet, I know that I'll keep tightly clinging to the hope that I can change *all* of this. It's one of those tricky attachments.

As one of my favorite Tweets reads, "All of my plans for the future involve me waking up tomorrow with a sudden sense of discipline and adherence to routine that I have never displayed even once in my life."

That's some suffering, right there.

What I have found most comforting in my time here at MBT, with all of you, is the message that I don't have to feel bad about not being that version of myself. About not being the disciplined version that never races toward deadlines and drinks enough water and does yoga every morning before the baby wakes up.

The real version, the one that actually exists in this present moment, the one that gets the newsletter out—mostly on time, the one that answers emails and helps out at events, the one that is very tired and likely dehydrated, that one is enough.

So, I'm challenging myself to work with my nature, not against it. Not to assume it's wrong. I'm asking myself for some grace. For permission to be a procrastinator. To be a little ball of anxiety. And to suffer all the while.

Because if suffering is inevitable anyway, I might as well buy the new planner and write my fantasy deadlines and dream my big dreams, tell myself I'll do yoga tomorrow, put the final touches on my Dharma talk on Saturday night, and stop punishing myself for it. It is what it is.

If I'm a Type A, To Do List-loving control freak, so be it. That's the kind of bombu I am right now.

And perhaps by accepting this, by releasing the grip on my attachments—not only to the aspirational version of myself but also to the voice in my head that is such a tough critic—that might ease the suffering. It won't go away, but it could be softer, quieter.

And maybe one day, I'll be able to sing "Don't Worry, Be Happy" and mean it.

Please join me in gassho for a final thought, from—as I call it—the orange book, "The Teachings of the Buddha," which, for me, acknowledges that our brains, even with their unwieldy human thoughts, are partners in our Buddha Nature:

This whole world of delusion is nothing but a shadow caused by the mind.

And yet, it is also from this same mind that the world of Enlightenment appears.

Namo Amida Butsu

The light of compassion that grasps us illumines and protects us always;

The darkness of our ignorance is already broken through;

Still the clouds and mists of greed and desire, anger and hatred,

Cover as always the sky of true and real shinjin.

—From Shoshin Nembutsu Ge

mochitsuki

Continued from page 1

little white, sticky mounds of mochi were strewn on the "mochi-making" tables.

Seasoned mochi-makers and newbies gently shaped the mochi into uniform, white pillows. Swish—the mochi were quickly sent to the "cooling" tables where they were gently released from the trays and set to rest and cool.

It is amazing to see all of these white pillows of delicious mochi lined up so expertly and resting for a cooling nap.

Wake up! Time to get plated and packed! The little pillows of mochi are placed on individual plates and packaged for people to buy.

The process from start to finish is pretty amazing and requires "all hands on deck!" It is through the idea of interdependence that our Mochitsuki Festival can happen. From the early-risers who come to temple to steam the rice, to the mochi-makers, coolers and packaging folks, to the cleanup crew—we make it happen every year.

If you were unable to join us, rest assured we have plenty of this delicious mochi available for sale at the temple.

Have a very Happy New Year everyone!

The process from start to finish is pretty amazing and requires "all hands on deck"—from the early-risers who come to temple to steam the rice, to the mochi-makers, coolers and packaging folks, to the cleanup crew!

Photos by Joy Zavala

A busy December for Dharma School

By Jennifer Toguri

Dharma School ended 2024 with dana (giving) activities to support donations to Bernie's Book Bank and Send a Smile Today.

Thank you to Heather Nobuhata, Tracie Padal and Lisa Macri for supporting these ideas. We encourage everyone to visit these organizations' websites to learn more and contribute throughout the year.

We also held our Dharma School mochitsuki event on Dec. 15. Many thanks to Erin Chikaraishi and Kirsten Ishida Ha for coordinating the event, along with all the families helping.

We plan to resume classes in mid-January. Our theme is dhyana (meditation), which will be a nice reflective practice to begin the new year.

Please look out for updates via our Dharma School emails, and let us or the office know if you'd like to be added to our email list.

We have exciting plans for this year, including Hanamatsuri, a Sangha appreciation brunch, and a garden project.

We would appreciate help from the Sangha to assist with classes and events. Please reach out and stay tuned! Happy 2025!

Dharma School students were busy in December, working on projects to support Send a Smile Today and Bernie's Book Bank—and making their very own mochi!

Photos from Jennifer Toguri

Still time to join MBT Women's Association

By Jeanne Toguri

The MBT Women's Association would like to wish everyone a Very Happy New Year, 2025—year of the snake. The snake symbolizes mystery, wisdom and intelligence.

Membership Drive: Membership dues are collected throughout the month of January. Please consider joining our group. Dues are still $10, with a portion going to the Federation of Buddhist Women's Association and the Eastern District Buddhist Women's Association dues.

New Life for Old Bags: We will start resuming our New Life for Old Bags sessions for 2025 on Jan. 12 at 12:30 pm in the Social Hall.

NLOB sessions are scheduled for the second Sunday of each month from 12:30–2:30 pm, except in April, July, August and December, when there will be no sessions.

Come join us to convert plastic bags into sleeping mats for the unhoused. Meet new friends and enjoy the camaraderie.

At the present time we are not accepting any plastic bags.

"Oishii Cookery": The MBT Women's Association cookbook is still available at $15 if purchased at the temple and for $20 if you would like it to mailed. The 100-page cookbook, which includes the recipe for MBT's famous chicken teriyaki, makes a great holiday gift.

Copies can be purchased by checks made out to MBTWA by or cash. Contact the temple office at 312.943.7801.

Acknowledgements of donations to MBT WA: Connie Tsuchiya

Would you like to join a toban at MBT?

By Allison Hagio

A toban at MBT is a group of volunteers, organized by the MBT Women's Association, that operates for two months, helping with the preparation and cooking of Japanese dishes for events. Volunteers also assist during Soji or memorial services during that two-month period.

Participating is a wonderful way to contribute and connect with other MBT Sangha members. You don't need to be a member of the Women's Association to volunteer—everyone is welcome.

Each toban has a point person who is responsible for scheduling volunteers for events. For the January–February toban, I am the point person. If you're interested in volunteering over the next couple of months, you can usually find me at the temple after Sunday services. Feel free to ask for me, and I can add you to the contact list.

If another two-month period works better for you, no problem. You can also inquire at the info desk in the Social Hall about signing up for any of the six toban groups—March–April, May–June, etc.

Remembering to say 'thank you'

The following is from a Dharma message that was shared on Dec. 1.

By Rev. Ron Miyamura

This is the regular Monthly Memorial Service and the Sunday Morning Family Service here at the Midwest Buddhist Temple.

The Monthly Memorial Service is a service that allows us to collectively observe a Memorial Service for our loved ones who have passed away before us.

Click this link to hear the Dharma message shared by David Martin on Dec. 8, 2024.

The way to think about this is to remember that we are building on the shoulders of those who have come before us. We benefit from all the contributions of our ancestors.

And while we are remembering our ancestors, this service also gives us the opportunity to offer incense, to chant the sutras and, most of all, to give a spiritual offering in memory of our loved ones.

Good morning …

Rev. Todd is taking a medical leave so he can heal and recover from the pain issues that he is experiencing. For the immediate future, I will be taking over the ministerial duties for the temple. Please allow Rev. Todd to unplug and so he can concentrate on his recovery.

Even though it is now December, it is the end of the Thanksgiving weekend, and we are reminded of giving thanks for all that we have—and we should not be thinking about what we might not have.

Thanksgiving is the most Buddhist of the American holidays. Especially for Shin Buddhists, we should remember to say thank you.

We want to find a way to express our gratitude. We want to say thank you to our parents, to our entire family, to our relatives, to our friends, to our community, to the Sangha.

We say thank you because we have received something from everyone and everything around us.

Of course, we know what we receive from our family and friends. But we often don't realize how much we receive from people we don't see and maybe don't even know.

We are reminded of why we say *itadaki-masu* before we eat—when we sit down and put our palms together. I wish we had an English word for this. But for now we can use the Japanese term.

Itadaki-masu means "I humbly receive." We are saying "Thank you for this food that I am about to receive." We are saying "Thank you to the cook who prepared this food," and also to all the causes and conditions that brought this food to be in front of me.

It is thanking the farmer, the sun, the soil, the rain, the truck driver, the truck, the fuel for the truck, the grocery store and on and on. There are so many people, causes and conditions and so many things that had to happen together to bring this food to me, and now I am allowed to receive.

Somehow, we know we should thank each and every person and each and every cause and condition that allowed this food to be in front of me. But we also know that it is really impossible to know all the causes and conditions. We are simply humbled, and we can only say *itadaki-masu* with a deep sense of gratitude. We say thank you.

And as Shin Buddhists, we are reminded that Shin Buddhism is a religion of "thank you." Most other schools of Buddhism and most other religions are religions of "please"—meaning, the reason for those religions is that one is asking for something or praying for something.

Shin Buddhists can accept life as it comes to us, and we receive the benefits of those around us, and we are humbled and awed into simply expressing gratitude. And we say Namu Amida Butsu.

We are a religion of thank you.

As Shin Buddhists, we receive the gift of Amida Buddha's Name. And our rebirth in the Pure Land is assured, and we are assured of becoming a Buddha.

The infinite Wisdom and Compassion of Amida Buddha is beyond our abilities to understand. And in comparison, our feeble human efforts will never be enough to attain Enlightenment on our own.

Perhaps, we can know that when we realize our own limitations, we can begin to understand and appreciate the depth and scope of infinite Wisdom and Compassion.

But in the meantime, we can just try to live our lives to the best of our abilities and let Amida handle the infinite stuff.

And as we get further into December, we acknowledge the many people who are less fortunate that we are. I hope we all can find some small way to share what we have.

Of course, we have the Homeless Sandwich-Making Project, and there are soup kitchens where we can volunteer. There are countless ways to help the less fortunate.

And we also need to remember and acknowledge things like today, Dec. 1, as World AIDS Day. And we remember our Sangha members who have passed away with the HIV virus.

December is also a time for the many religious holidays coming up. For Buddhists, next week is Bodhi Day—and there are other religious holidays like Christmas, Hanukkah and Kwanzaa and they are all holidays of gratitude.

So it is now the season of gratitude and I hope we can all celebrate with a feeling of thanks and gratitude.

Namu Amida Butsu …. With gratitude and kindness beyond words.

Reminder of interdependence, interconnectedness

The following is from a Dharma message that was shared on Dec. 15.

By Rev. Ron Miyamura

This morning is the Regular Sunday Morning Family Service, and we are observing the memorial service for the late Rev. Gyodo Kono, the minister who founded the Midwest Buddhist Temple.

Remembering Rev. Kono reminds me of the Japanese Buddhist phrase *in-nen,* which roughly translates as "causes and conditions." It is a reminder of interdependence and inter-connectedness of everything around us.

We are dependent on the causes and conditions around us. We affect things around us and things around us affect us. No one is an island.

Today, we can perhaps appreciate all the efforts of people like Rev. Kono that allows us to be here today.

I know there are many people who have never met Rev. Kono and, sometimes, I am asked about him. I was fortunate to work with Rev. Kono as his associate minister here at the Midwest Buddhist Temple from August 1973 until his sudden passing in December 1975.

Of course, my relationship with him was very important to me because I was a rookie minister who really did not know what it took to be a minister. Rev. Kono taught me a great deal.

I was such a rookie, and I do not come from a ministerial family, so everything was new. I had some book learning, and I had finished my master's degree in Shin Buddhism. But book learning has very little to do with being a minister.

Fortunately, Rev. Kono was a very patient man.

About the background of Rev. Kono. He arrived, freshly graduated from Ryukoku University with a bachelor's degree in Shin Buddhism. In 1937. He was assigned to the

Hanford Buddhist Church in the Central Valley of California near Fresno.

With the advent of the Second World War, he ended up in the Rohwer, Ark., concentration camp. Rohwer was one of the smaller camps and was among the first to close. As the Rohwer Camp was closing, Rev. Kono got permission to go to Chicago and try to start a temple here.

The first service he held in Chicago was on July 10, 1944 at the South Parkway Community Center. Then the temple office moved to the Near North Side at Division and Clark Streets.

The temple was able to rent the Uptown Players Theater until it burned to the ground just the day before the Hanamatsuri Service in 1946. The temple then used the Olivet Community Center and, in 1950, moved to the 1757 N. North Park building.

In 1971, Rev. Kono's lifelong dream of a new temple building came true when the Sangha moved into this building here on Menomonee Street.

One of the great mysteries continues to be: Why did Rev. Kono decide to stay in Chicago? In the late 1940s, Rev. Kono's father passed away, and he was invited to take over the family temple in Hiroshima. The family temple, called Sairin-ji, was a large and prosperous temple.

Rev. Kono could have returned to Japan and taken over the temple. And he could have had a comfortable life.

It was very nice to meet Rev. Kono's nephew. While he gave us some insight into Rev. Kono, the mystery of why he decided not to take over his family temple in Hiroshima remains.

He chose to stay in Chicago and decided to not be the

*see **kono**, page 15*

Rev. Kono and the causes and conditions that brought me to our temple

By Allison Hagio

Recently, I was sitting in the hondo listening to Rev. Ron's dharma talk about Rev. Gyodo Kono and the Japanese saying "*in-nen*," which means cause and condition, or destiny.

Rev. Kono's journey and the choices he made are why I'm here today at MBT.

Rev. Kono came to America before World War II and, unfortunately, was interned at the Rohwer concentration camp in Arkansas during the war. My ears perked up when I heard this because that's where my Grandpa and many of the Hagio relatives were interned.

As I continued to listen, I learned about Rev. Kono's charismatic personality; he could truly hold an audience's attention. I imagined my Grandpa and others at Rohwer becoming intrigued fans of Rev. Kono's work.

I wish I could remember any stories my Grandpa shared with me, but sadly I don't. I know that, after Executive Order 9066 was issued, the U.S. government began planning for the removal of Japanese Americans. I heard that if you wanted to return to your original home—in my Grandpa's case, near Stockton, Calif.—you would have to wait longer to leave the camps.

They were encouraging people to relocate to cities like Chicago and New York.

I can envision my Grandpa talking with his eight siblings and their mother about Rev. Kono moving to Chicago to start a new life. I imagine that at Rohwer, Rev. Kono attracted a large congregation, and that many people decided to follow him to Chicago.

They initially settled on the South Side—I remember my grandpa mentioning that—before they moved to the North Side, just as Rev. Kono did. My Grandpa was a part of MBT from the beginning, though I'm not sure of his exact role.

He was also starting his own printing company at that time, trying to establish a life amid the challenges of discrimination after the war. I do recall some stories about those struggles.

Fast forward to today, I grew up at MBT, attending Sunday School. And after a long break, I have returned. I want to thank Rev. Kono for staying in America instead of returning to Japan, where he had a good life set up.

He instead brought many Japanese Americans to Chicago and started MBT.

I also want to express my gratitude to my Grandpa for having the faith in Rev. Kono and taking the chance to follow him. I am here today because of those choices, and I am so grateful for the Sangha, Dharma, and Buddha.

kono

Continued from page 14

18th-generation minister of Sairin-ji. Instead, he took the challenge of building a new temple and he dedicated his life to building the Midwest Buddhist Temple.

For this, we are grateful.

What kind of man was Rev. Kono? Well, I am no expert, but I know he was a vigorous man who loved life. He was pretty athletic. He played tennis and was a very good bowler.

Side story—and my favorite story about the early days of Rev. Kono: When he was first assigned to the Hanford Buddhist Church, he wanted to go to the local junior college to learn English. But the Board of Trustees at the time said, no. They said, "We are all going to make our millions and return to Japan, so we don't have to bother to learn English very much."

Disappointed, Rev. Kono sort of bent the rules, and he signed up for a tennis class to get some exercise—and more importantly, to learn English.

For trying to learn English, he was ahead of his time.

He was a common man who liked to meet all kinds of people. It has been said that he loved to roam Rush Street looking for converts. Yes, he liked to have a drink or two.

Rev. Kono was a sharp dresser. He saved his money to buy Hickey Freeman suits that he had tailored because he was a short man. He always claimed that he was 5 foot 2 inches—but I don't know.

And it was appropriate that he was at the old downtown Marshall Field's Store for Men, looking for a new necktie for New Year's, when he had his heart attack and passed away at the age of 64.

He was also known to help new ministers from Japan. He would borrow money from some of his friends so that he had enough money to take the new ministers out for drinks after the meetings in California.

Back then, most of the meetings were in San Francisco, and he was familiar with the local places to make the new ministers from Japan feel more at home. This was part of the nurturing way of Rev. Kono.

Rev. Kono was best known as a dynamic speaker in Japanese.

There were few ministers who could match his skill in delivering a sermon in which he would have his audience, as they say, "eating out of the palm of his hand."

He was such a good speaker, who used his voice and his body to whisper softly or shout loudly. His ability to convey emotion was well-known, and he was in demand to speak at temples all over the West Coast.

Rev. Kono has left his imprint on the Midwest Buddhist Temple, and many of the things we have today and do today are directly from the legacy of Rev. Kono.

In particular, I can still remember the strongest impression I had when I assisted at the first service was that there were a good number of people at the Regular Adult English Service and that everyone chanted the Sutra. Back in those days, there was a Dharma School Service, an English Adult Service and a Japanese Language Service.

Rev. Kono somehow encouraged the adult membership to attend Sunday services, and this was not common on the West Coast. I can remember that when I was growing up there was the regular Sunday morning services only for Dharma School, and there was an afternoon Japanese Language Service—but no Adult English service.

Maybe, there were Adult English Services only for the holidays. But here at MBT, from the very beginning, Rev. Kono could persuade members to come to Sunday Service.

My favorite story about the early days of Rev. Kono: When he was first assigned to the Hanford Buddhist Church, he wanted to go to the local junior college to learn English. But the Board of Trustees at the time said, no. They said, "We are all going to make our millions and return to Japan, so we don't have to bother to learn English very much." Disappointed, Rev. Kono sort of bent the rules, and he signed up for a tennis class to get some exercise—and more importantly, to learn English.

But what was even more impressive to me was that everyone participated in the chanting. Again, growing up, only the minister chanted the sutra. And in Dharma School Service, this was just boring.

In more recent years, more of the West Coast temples have re-introduced chanting as something for everyone.

But here at MBT, from the very beginning, Rev. Kono could persuade members to participate in the chanting.

Again, Rev. Kono was ahead of his time.

But the biggest legacy that Rev. Kono left us is this naijin—the inner-sanctuary or the altar. Rev. Kono personally selected this butsudan. He had a vision of what he wanted—and it was non-traditional.

In the traditional Jodo Shinshu temple, the butsudan or Buddha-house, might be this size, but the statue would be about 18 inches high and surrounded by all kinds of ornaments. The statue is supposed to be obscured and not easily seen. The ornaments were supposed to be an artistic interpretation of the Pure Land.

And in the Mahayana and Sanskrit tradition, the flowery details were meant to describe the lavish and ornate ornaments surrounding the Buddha.

Instead, Rev. Kono wanted a simple statue. In fact, the maker of this butsudan and statue is from a shop that normally caters to Shingon temples. All the shops that catered to Jodo Shinshu temples only could envision the traditional ways.

But the shop Rev. Kono found was able to find a shop to make the butsudan the way he envisioned.

We take for granted the beautiful simplicity of this naijin, but it was not an accident. We can thank Rev. Kono and the vision he had.

In America, the ornate decorations seemed out of place and kind of gaudy. For this, we can thank Rev. Kono.

Our Kono Fund is part of the legacy of Rev. Kono. After his sudden passing, some of the members, led by the late Noby Yamakoshi, started a scholarship fund in memory of Rev. Kono.

Originally the Kono Fund was for ministerial education, but it has expanded to Minister's Assistants training, general Buddhist Education and Special Projects.

And this fund continues today.

Today, we acknowledge the *in-nen*, the cause and conditions from the past that bring us here today. And we are part of the causes and conditions that will affect the future. And for this we are grateful.

Namu Amida Butsu – with gratitude and kindness beyond words.

Outreach project delivers 590 sandwiches

By Joy Zavala

On Saturday, Dec. 28, the MBT Sandwiches for the Homeless Project delivered 285 sandwiches to Sarah's Circle, Cornerstone Community Outreach, Ewing Annex Men's Hotel and a tent city near Kinzie and Des Plaines.

And on Nov. 30, 305 sandwiches were delivered Our at-home sandwich-makers delivered 170 sandwiches, and 135 were made at MBT.

We also gave away donated cold weather accessories (hats, scarves, socks, gaiters, gloves, blankets, jackets) and almost everything was taken. Some people did not even have gloves, and the temperature was in the 20s.

We will distribute more warm clothing and accessories in January.

We appreciate everyone who helped make and pack sandwiches, delivered sandwich bags, and distributed clothing and accessories. We also thank everyone who donated the much-needed items to help people living outside in the harsh Chicago weather stay a little warmer.

Photos by Joy Zavala

The sandwich crew on Dec. 28. Volunteers made 285 sandwiches in December and 305 on Nov. 30 to deliver to Sarah's Circle, Cornerstone Community Outreach, Ewing Annex Men's Hotel and a tent city near Kinzie and Des Plaines.

When a woman living on the street was disappointed to have missed out on the coats being given out, Susan Gilkey (left) gave her her own, saying she could buy another coat. Giving the coat off her back without hesitation is an example of true Dana.

Collecting winter wear for those in need

Since Chicago's weather has started to change with typical cooler fall temperatures, we will start collecting items for people staying at a tent city near Kinzie and Des Plaines in Chicago.

We can use new blankets, and new and gently used adult and children's coats, scarves, gloves, hats and sweatpants. Also, new warm socks are appreciated.

If we have any items left over, we will donate them to Church of the Ascension's St. Chrys's Closet, where migrants can "shop" for free on Wednesdays.

Collection bins are set up in the Social Hall, and we will drop items off with our sandwiches on the last Saturday of the month through December.

Email scam warning for Sangha

We have all seen many warnings about email or internet scams, and unfortunately we've now seen some scam emails pretending to be sent from BCA temples or ministers.

If you receive a questionable solicitation email from a BCA minister or temple (especially from a "keemail" domain) disregard the message as spam.

When MBT asks for donations, it follows the guidelines on our MBT Donation page. MBT will never request donors to buy gift cards, cryptocurrency, or set up wire transfers.

If you ever have a question about one of our donation campaigns, please feel free to contact us at office@mbtchicago.org or 312.943.7801.

SCAM EMAIL EXAMPLE:

Are you able to help? I would appreciate a swift email correspondence since I need your help discreetly. This needs to be handled by email.

In Gassho,
Minister Todd Tsuchiya

Check out Dharma talks on MBT YouTube channel

Did you know that MBT has a YouTube channel? We do! You can view over 150 of our videos at: youtube.com/@mbtchicago435 (also find links on our home page and our Online Dharma Talks page at our website.)

On our channel, you'll find Dharma Talks, special music videos and some great videos of Ginza Holiday Memories.

If you have an idea for video content you'd like to see on our channel, just drop us a line at mbt.webadmin@mbtchicago.org.

So check out our channel and become a subscriber by clicking the "Subscribe" button. If you hit the bell icon, you will be notified when we post new content.

YouTube

oishii / recipes from mbt friends

Ginger Beef

Ingredients

1½ lb.	flank steak
¼ cup	soy sauce
3 Tbsp.	sugar
1 tsp.	fresh ginger, grated
1 clove	garlic, minced
½ cup	flour
½ cup	vegetable

Directions

1. Cut flank steak in half lengthwise, then slice each half diagonally very thin.

2. For marinade, combine soy sauce, sugar, ginger and garlic. Marinate steak for 30–60 mins.

3. Flour each piece of steak and quick fry in oil.

To order a copy of "Oishii Cookery," send a check ($15, if picked up at the temple; $20, if mailed—made out to MBT Women's Association) to MBT, 435 W. Menomonee St., Chicago, IL 60614.

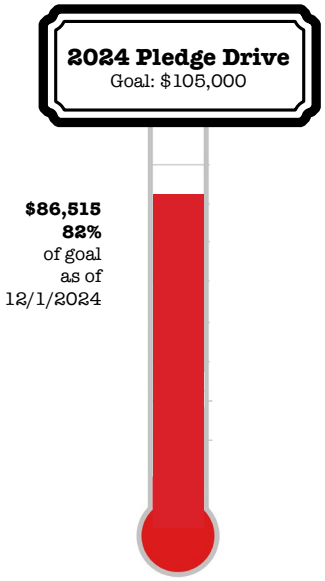
MIDWEST BUDDHIST TEMPLE
2024 PLEDGE DRIVE

MBT welcomes everyone to become temple members, with no minimum pledge requirement. All MBT supporters are asked to give what they can financially, as well as their much appreciated time and effort. Donations can be made online at *mbtchicago.org/join-support/donate-now/*; look for the purple "Donate Now."

DONATE NOW

What are the benefits of making a pledge?

- Maintains the daily cost of operating the temple (salaries, utilities, maintenance, supplies)
- Supports our religious, social and community programs
- At the $300 minimum, allows voting on key temple issues
- Receive our monthly Bulletin newsletter
- Provides membership in the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA), including Wheel of Dharma newsletter
- Ensures the continued growth of the temple



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The Midwest Buddhist Temple gratefully acknowledges the following donations received between **Nov. 14 and Dec. 13.**

Please notify the Bulletin or the MBT Office of any omissions or corrections.

Bodhi Day
John Bikulcs
Mark and Susan Brown
Theresa Cichocki
Mickey and Jean Hamano
Dr. Michael and Yvonne Harada
Helen and Kaz Ideno
Gale Kono
Rev. Ron and Elaine Miyamura
Roger and Arlene Suekama
Esther Takeshita c/o Jim Kono
Jeanne and David Toguri
Roxane Tono
Joy and Jesse Zavala

November Memorial
Dr. Greg And Cissy Itahara
Mari and Jeff Johansen

December Memorial
Kathy Aragaki-Van Horn
Sharon Inokuchi
Karen Kikukawa
Michael Nishi and Angela Konishi
Jim Kono
Ron Kono
Rev. Ron and Elaine Miyamura
Sharon Miyata-Sipich
Joy Okayama
Kachiko and Koji Okubo
Joyce Saiki
Esther Takeshita
Dennis and Pam Teshima
Nadine Tono
Gary Tsuchiyama
Dorothy Yahiro
Tommy Yamashita
Joy and Jesse Zavala

January Memorial
Mary Isoye

Dharma School
Jennifer Toguri

Rev. Kono Fund
Twin Cities Buddhist Association
Steve Arima and Elaine Ogawa

Legacy Garden
Heidi Lynn Farrand

Nokotsudo
Kathy Isoda
Dr. Greg And Cissy Itahara
Diane Kayano-Hata

Outreach / Homeless Project
Esther and Howard Chin and Sherry and Eugene Tademaru (in memory of Michael Imanaka, Judy Imanaka, Mineso Imanaka, James Imanaka, and Yoshito Hashimoto)

80th Anniversary
Yoko Nakagawa

Pledge / Membership
John Adachi
Stacy Arima Castillo
John Bikulcs
Mark and Susan Brown
James and Amy Chikaraishi
Theresa Cichocki
Heather Craig-Somerlot
Dr. Greg And Cissy Itahara
Kathy and Steve Harada
Brian Key
Marshall Kubota
Elaine Matsushita and Bob Sutter
Sharon Miyata-Sipich
Lynn Palmgren
Susan and Robert Rakstang
Roger and Arlene Suekama
Rich Taura
Jennifer Toguri
Joanne Tohei
Tim West
Ken Yamamoto
Aeko Yoshikawa
Joy and Jesse Zavala

Special Donations
Twin Cities Buddhist Association
Jiuqing Cheng
Dermot Edgecombe
Dr. Greg And Cissy Itahara
Dean Katahira
Rev. Ron and Elaine Miyamura
Michael Nishi and Angela Konishi
Ken and Janice Rivera
Chika Sekiguchi
Kiku Taura and Takamasa Onose
Robin Wylie

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January memorials

On the first Sunday of each month, the Midwest Buddhist Temple holds a collective Monthly Memorial Service during the regular Sunday Family Service, when loved ones can be remembered and honored.

Although memorial services are held in memory of a loved one who has passed away, the purpose of the memorial service is for us, the living, the ones who remain behind. The memorial service provides an opportunity to express appreciation and gratitude for the many benefits we have received from the person who passed away. These are the names of temple friends who have passed away in December, and who we will remember during the MBT service on Jan. 5.

January

1928 Tetsuo Takaki
1936 Suye Nakamoto
1937 Torakichi Shoji
Inosuke Yasukawa
1942 Mas Robert Hayashi
1944 Yasutaro Nishikawa
1945 Yasuko Umeki
1946 Tadao Miyata
1950 Frank Kinoshita
1952 Fusae Taguchi
1954 Yoshio Terao
1959 Chonosuke Hayashi
1960 Fred Toguri
1961 Hisao Nishimura
1964 Kumataro Migaki
1966 Yukino Horita
Tomo Yasukawa
1968 Yoshio Takaki
1971 Kaneyo Kawamoto
1972 Edward Schroeter
1973 Hana Sugiyama
H. Hong Chen
1974 Eiju Tokunaga
1976 Genji Yagi
1977 Suyeno Yoshimura
1980 Clarence S. Nakamura
1982 Matsu Okumura
Yutaka Yasutake
1983 Naka Hagio
1984 Sumio Nishi
1985 Motoji Wakasa
Miye Maekawa
Joseph M. Voos
1987 Hideko Okazaki
1988 Kiyoko Nakamura
1989 Gary Hagio
Kotora Teshima
George Sugano
1990 Misao Hosaka
Kisa Wakabayashi
1991 Yoshio Tanabe
1992 Joe Minoru Migaki
1993 Akiko Ichikawa
John Dunleavy
1994 Mas Uyeda
Jane Shizue Fujimoto
1996 Sachiko Yasunaga
Fujiye Naito
1997 Miyako Matsuki
1999 Dawn Carroll
Masahiko Fujisawa
George Watanuki
2000 George Asakura
John Isoda
William Katahira
Masanobu Kobata
2001 Toyoho Furuta
Dr. Masaro Harada
George Tanaka
2002 David Yoshimura
Fumiye Iwana
2003 Dane Asakura
2004 James "Jimbo" Hamano
Kazuyoshi Hino
2005 Bill Adachi
Kiyoko Sonoda
Steven Yamashita
2006 Charles Shishida
2007 Hiromi Kamihana
2008 Thomas Honda Sr.
2009 Carl H. Muraoka
2010 Aki Nishimura
Judy Yoshia Imanaka
2011 Osamu Ueda
2012 Yoshiko Toyama
2014 Harumi Sakoda
2015 Mitsuo Fujishima
2016 Susan Steel Ishida
Tsuneo Moriki
Masato Ozaki
Alice Yamamoto
2017 Edith Morimoto
2018 Misu Miyata
2019 Akiye Nakayama
Mitsuo Ono
Jiro Sakamoto
Brian Taketa
Stuart G. Terusaki
2020 Mary Fujii
2021 Yukio Isoye
Harry Yoshihara
2022 Mae Imaoka
Ronald Frederickson
2023 Alan Omori
Michael Imanaka
2024 Shigeo Ito

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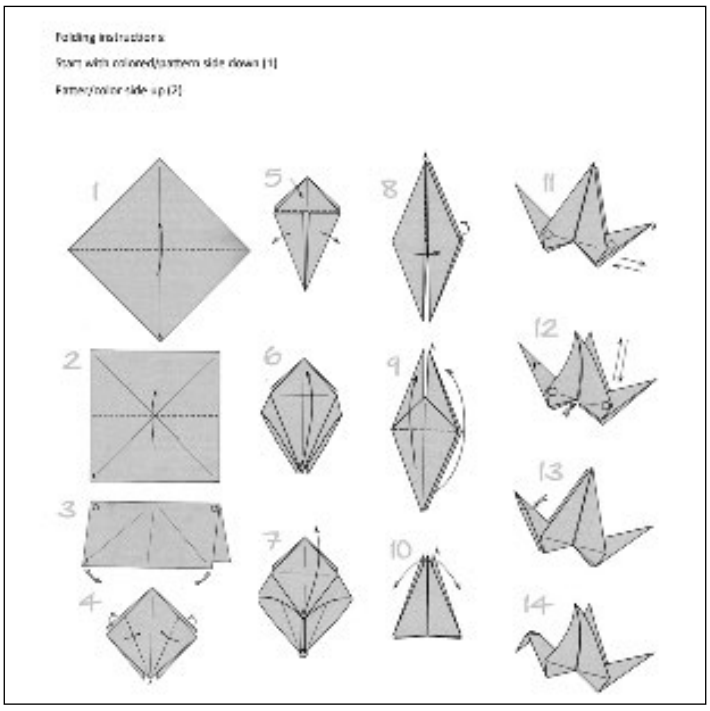

Help to commemorate EO 9066 incarceration

By Connie Tsuchiya

The Bainbridge Japanese American Committee of Seattle is holding an event to commemorate the day in 1942 that the Bainbridge Japanese American community was forced, under President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066, to leave their homes to go to the concentration camps in Manzanar and then to Minidoka. They were the first impacted by the executive order that was issued in reaction to the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor.

Need more help learning to fold origami tsuru? Check out this YouTube video.

The ceremony will be held at the Exclusion Memorial on Bainbridge Island on March 30, 2025, during which a keynote speaker will read the names of those incarcerated and strings of *tsuru*, origami paper cranes, are placed around the memorial site.

The folded cranes are being donated from all over and the Bainbridge community is asking for our help.

You can fold cranes of any size or color—and either string them or bring them loose to the Midwest Buddhist Temple where volunteers will string them.

If you are able to string your tsuru at home, the loop at the top must be at least 2 inches in diameter to fit over permanent wall hooks. Please add a tag that identifies you and Midwest Buddhist Temple so that visitors will be able to know where they came from.

If you would like to contribute cranes, please bring them to the Midwest Buddhist Temple by March 1. The MBT Events Committee may also organize in-person tsuru-making sessions this winter. Stay tuned!

And if you would like to help string tsuru, please contact Connie Tsuchiya at ctsuchiya@comcast.net.
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save the dates

JAN. 4, 11, 18, 25 Eva Yam will be leading the Old Town Triangle Association's Saturday yoga classes at MBT, while the OTTA undergoes renovations. Yam's all-ages classes have a methodical focus on balance, stability and mobility. They are grounded in yoga therapy based on the needs of each participant.

Time: 9 to 10:15 am. **Location:** MBT Social Hall. **Cost:** $15/class with the purchase of a series determined by the teacher, or $18/class, payable to the teacher. **To register:** Click here. **More information:** Email ey_spud@yahoo.com.

JAN. 8, 15, 22, 29 Emily Chou will be leading the Old Town Triangle Association's Wednesday yoga classes at MBT, while the OTTA undergoes renovations. Her Happy Yoga Vinyasa Flow class (all levels) will begin the dialogue with your own body and mind. Drop-in students are welcome; please bring yoga mat and any props (blankets/blocks/straps, etc.), which might aid in sitting/balancing comfortably.

Time: 7 to 9:30 pm. **Location:** MBT Social Hall. **Cost:** $15/class with the purchase of a series determined by the teacher, or $18/class, payable to the teacher. **To register:** Click here. **More information:** Email yourbestpartner99@hotmail.com.

JAN. 12 Come to our monthly New Life for Old Bags mat-making session. Currently, we have plenty of plastic bags so you don't have to bring any. You can bring a Jumbo Size Q crochet hook, if you want to crochet a mat.

Time: Noon to 2 pm. **Location:** MBT Social Hall. **More information:** Please contact the MBT Office, 312.943.7801.

JAN. 16, 23, 30, Feb. 6 Ho Etsu Taiko is holding a four-session Taiko 101 workshop. If you are interested in playing taiko, you can join in for one session or all four. All are welcome, no experience required. (Note: Ho Etsu Taiko is actively seeking new performing members in 2025.)

Time: 7 to 9:30 pm. **Location:** MBT Social Hall. **Cost:** $35 for each individual session or $120 for all four (this bundle price is available until Jan. 16). **To register:** Click here.

JAN. 25 Join us for our Homeless Project sandwich-making day. We will make sandwiches at the temple and will also accept sandwiches made at home and dropped off at the temple.

Time: Sandwich-making at noon; dropoffs of sandwiches made at home at 1 pm. **Location:** MBT. **More information:** Please contact the MBT Office, 312.943.7801, if you would like to participate.

FEB 2 Get to know members of the MBT Board of Trustees and warm up with a hot bowl of soup at our Sangha Appreciation Soup Bar. All ingredients will be provided by our board members.

Time: 11:30 am. **Location:** MBT Social Hall. **More information:** Please contact the MBT Office, 312.943.7801.

FEB 2 Along with our Sangha Appreciation Soup Bar, we will have a Bake Sale. Please consider donating baked goods and purchasing some to support our Outreach projects.

Time: 11:30 am. **Location:** MBT Social Hall. **More information:** Please contact the MBT Office, 312.943.7801.

JAN

at midwest buddhist temple

5 SUNDAY
10:30 am Monthly Memorial Service / Rev. Ron Miyamura

12 SUNDAY
10:30 am Family Service / Cynthia Mee

19 SUNDAY
10:30 am Ho-onko Service led by Dharma School / Rev. Henry Adams
11:30 am Ho-onko Otoki (luncheon)

25 SATURDAY
Noon/1 pm Sandwich-making/dropoff for Homeless Project

26 SUNDAY
10:30 am Family Service / Rev. Ron Miyamura
After service Annual General Meeting and Shinnen Enkai celebration

"If I were capable of realizing Buddhahood by other religious practices and yet fall into hell for saying the Nembutsu, I might have dire regrets for having been deceived. But since I am absolutely incapable of any religious practice, hell is my only home."

—Shinran Shonin