

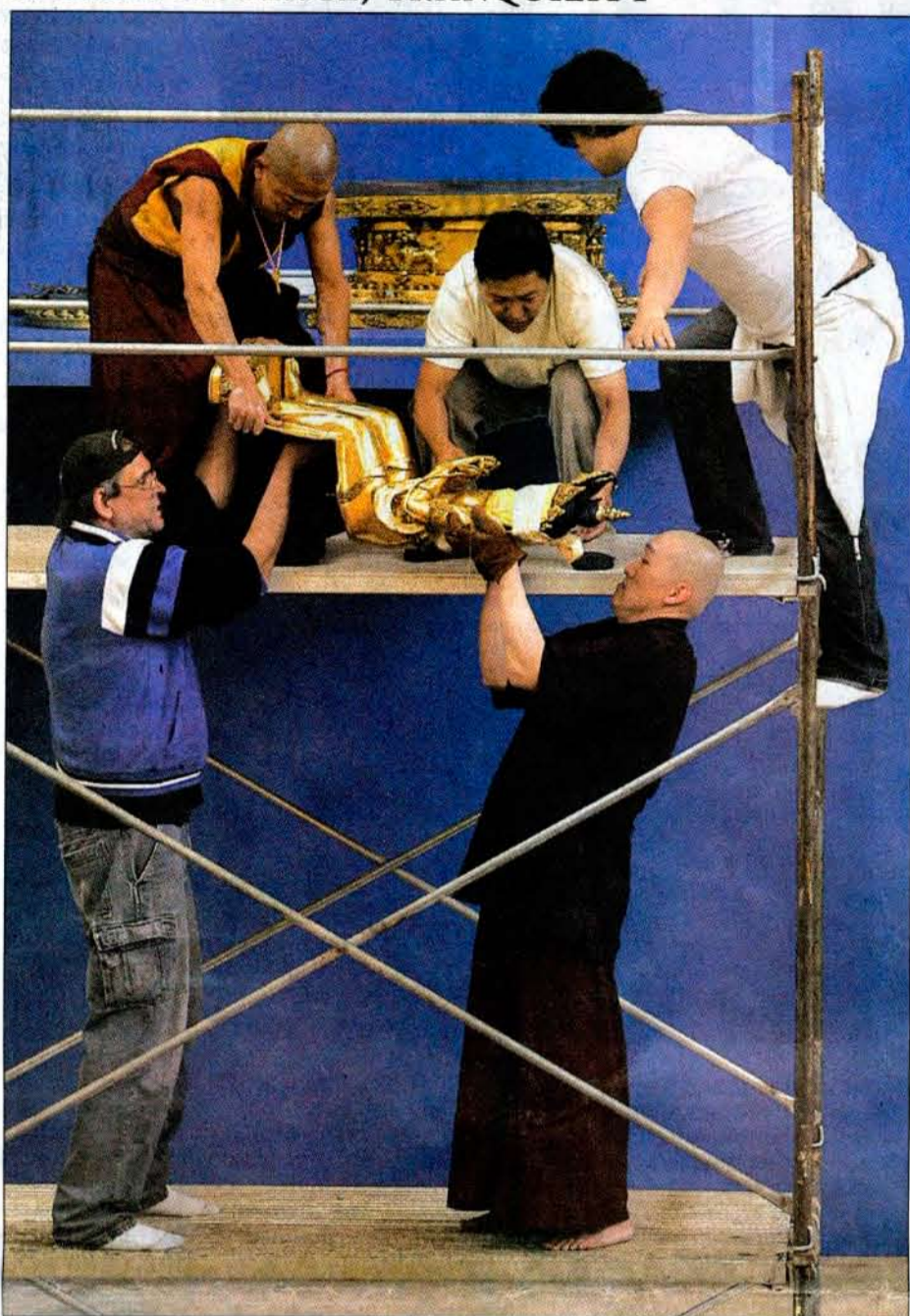
# METRO

**Information technology:** Committee pushes for more oversight of state p

**Animal remains:** 50 dead goats discovered in Washington County over 2

**Obituary:** Jeffrey Olson was costume manager at the Skylight. 5

## A SITE FOR PEACE, TRANQUILITY



JOE KOSHOLLEK / JKOSHOLLEK@JOURNALSSENTINEL.COM

The Deer Park Buddhist Center monks and volunteers lift the statue of Maitreya the Future Buddha into place in the new \$6.1 million temple. The Dalai Lama, Tibet's exiled spiritual leader, arrived Wednesday to bless the new temple.

## Building a home for spirituality

### Dalai Lama on hand to bless new temple

By TOM HEINEN  
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**Town of Dunn** — Power tools whined as work continued on a new \$6.1 million Tibetan temple amid preparations for Wednesday's arrival of the Dalai Lama at Deer Park Buddhist Center and Monastery near Madison.

Inside the residence of the founding abbot and director, tranquility prevailed.

Geshe Lhundub Sopa, 84, breathed gently into his upturned hands.

It was a simple response to a deeply nuanced question.

What does the Buddhist monk think as he looks at his life's journey? Exiled since the Chinese invaded Tibet in 1959, he taught at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, trained many professors who now teach Buddhism elsewhere and saw Deer Park's growth parallel a rising in-

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## TEMPLE

# Buddhist center thrives

Interest in various Buddhist traditions in the United States and abroad.

Sopa used his breath and hands to simulate mist on the surface of a mirror. It spreads quickly but soon fades.

That, he said, will not happen at Deer Park, a repository for sacred Tibetan texts, a center for preserving Tibetan culture, a seat of learning whose teachers draw people from the U.S. and abroad.

"I am very, very happy here," Sopa said. "It benefited so many people. Buddhism teaches something special — love, compassion, sincerity. Although we have many centers, sometimes the centers may disappear. People here are not like that."

Originating in India 2,500 years ago, Buddhism has spread with cultural variations as a religion and a philosophy. Milwaukee has sev-

eral centers and meditation groups with Asian immigrants and Western converts.

There are at least 1.5 million Buddhists in the U.S., making it the country's fourth-largest religion, according to *www.adherents.com* and the American Religious Identification Survey by the Graduate Center of the City University of New York.

Only 28% of adults who identified themselves as Buddhist reported being affiliated with a temple. Then there are the people who meditate without embracing Buddhism's moral teachings and non-theistic spiritual awakening as a faith.

"The groups that I know of are expanding," said Janet Gyatso, Hershey professor of Buddhist studies at Harvard Divinity School, co-chairwoman of the American Academy of Religion's Buddhism section and past president of the International Association of Tibetan Studies. "There's a younger generation. For a while, we thought it was just the baby boomers, sort of the hippie generation, and when they grew old, the next generation wouldn't follow them. But I don't think that's true now."

What is the appeal?  
"I think it's a certain idea about simplicity, directness, the attraction of devout med-



Tara statues wait to be placed in the new Deer Park Buddhist Center, near Madison.

### IF YOU GO

The **Dalai Lama**, who is making his sixth visit to the University of Wisconsin-Madison, will give a sold-out talk at the Kohl Center on Friday. Walk-up tickets are available for his Buddhist teachings at the Veterans Memorial Coliseum at 9:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. today and 9:30 a.m. Friday. Tickets are \$44 and \$32 per session, with discounts for children, students and senior citizens.

itative practices that lots of people want to try to integrate into their lives as a way of fighting off the stress of modern life," Gyatso said, adding that public association of Buddhism with peace adds to its intellectual appeal.

### Finding inner peace

Ani Jampa, 36, a Buddhist nun and Sopa's administrative assistant, grew up in

*"Although we have many centers, sometimes the centers may disappear. People here are not like that."*

Geshe Lhundub Sopa,  
Deer Park Buddhist Center

Milwaukee's North Shore suburbs as Alicia Vogel. She got interested in Buddhism while living with Tibetan refugees in India and studying Tibetan painting for an art history degree from Colorado College. She came to UW-Madison to study under Sopa for a master's in South Asian studies.

"Since my initial exposure to Buddhist ideas, I felt the sense of wanting to develop the qualities that I was learning about to bring about greater peace and happiness in myself and other beings around me," said Jampa, a

novice nun with a shaved head. "I felt a very strong personal commitment to the spiritual path."

The Dalai Lama, Tibet's exiled spiritual and political leader, stays at Deer Park during visits. He sent Sopa to the U.S. from India in 1962 to introduce Tibetan culture, religion and philosophy.

Seen as one of the Tibetan Buddhist tradition's great living spiritual masters, Sopa taught at UW-Madison for 30 years.

Deer Park has blossomed since Sopa founded it on a 13-acre site near Oregon in the 1970s.

There are five Tibetan monks, with three more coming. Three American women have become Buddhist nuns.

Capacity crowds of 70 are at Sopa's 10 a.m. Sunday teachings in the enclosed pavilion that serves as a temple. His first teaching in the new temple will be Sunday.

The new, nearly 20,000-square-foot temple — which was designed by Jampa's brother, Eric Vogel of Milwaukee — is expected to expand participation. Intended to look like a centuries-old Tibetan temple using modern construction techniques, it reflects the center's goal of preserving Tibetan culture, which is threatened by Chinese occupation, Vogel said.