

EDITORIAL: Thanks for Years of Dedication

An era is over. For more than 32 years, volunteers in the districts, chapters, headquarters, territories and joint territories personally collected money for subscriptions to this newspaper. Beginning in February, though, people everywhere can subscribe directly through the mail.

No more late nights, computer printouts spread out on dining room tables or living room floors, searching for the missing name that will balance the turn-in sheet. No more “ADD,” “CHANGE,” or “DELETE” forms. No more data inputting. No more late night deposits.

The effort that went into ensuring that people could read Nichiren Daishonin’s writings, members’ experiences and SGI President Ikeda’s guidance in our publications was enormous. The thanks we all owe these folks — mostly women, but joined here and there by men — cannot be expressed adequately here. Suffice it to say that without these people’s dedication, few of us would have gotten the words of encouragement that have kept many of us going over the years.

While people in the districts will no longer collect money, people will, of course, still need to spread the messages contained in these pages. Promoting our publications — and urging people to read them — is still an important part of our movement.

The written word is a powerful tool in spreading the SGI’s message of peace and personal happiness. Many great movements of the past and present use newspapers to forward their aims. President Ikeda spoke on Gandhi’s use of the newspaper when he was in Los Angeles last year:

What was one of Gandhi’s great weapons in his struggle to communicate his ideas to the people? It was publishing his own newspaper. He believed that a newspaper’s sole purpose is to serve the people. Through his newspaper, he called for non-violent resistance and rallied the people to this cause. The autobiography he began to write in prison was also serialized in the paper and tens of millions of Indians across the land waited eagerly to read each installment. In the meantime, it was ordinary, nameless youth who spread Gandhi’s message — conveyed to them via the pages of his newspaper — widely among the populace. (*SGI President Daisaku Ikeda’s Addresses in the United States, June/July 1996*, p. 11)

This direct mail system will make the task of spreading and receiving our message much easier. The reader’s convenience is enhanced not only because the form is simple and the envelope postage-paid but also because credit cards can now be used for payment.

Thus the publications turn-ins have been relegated to the realm of golden memories. Those who did what had to be done deserve our enduring thanks.

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