

World Tribune

No. 3121

THE YEAR OF ADVANCEMENT TOWARD THE NEW CENTURY

JANUARY 10, 1997

INSIDE THIS WEEK

2 EDITORIAL

Living true to yourself takes courage.

3 PERSPECTIVE

Having the heart for guidance.

5 EXPERIENCE

Actor resolves to participate in life and not just observe it.

6 STUDY

SGI Day, Jan. 26, a day of hope.

7 SPEECH

SGI President Ikeda talks on the life of Sun Yat-sen, the father of modern China.

10 SPANISH PAGES

Theme for 1997, the Year of Advancement.

12 WORLDVIEW

Carl Sagan awakened millions to the cosmos.

'FRIENDS FOR PEACE' PULLOUT INSIDE THIS ISSUE

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New SGI-USA Youth Division Leaders Named



James Herrmann
SGI-USA Vice Young Men's Division Chief



Archibald Asawa
SGI-USA Vice Student Division Chief



Ed Feasel
SGI-USA Youth Div. Chief



Hiroki Sakai
Student Division Secretariat Chief



Ian McIlraith
SGI-USA Youth Division Advisor



Melanie Merians
SGI-USA Youth Division Advisor



Yoshiyuki Nagaoka
SGI-USA Youth Division Advisor

More leadership appointments, p. 4

SGI President Discusses Life of Sun Yat-sen

SUMMARY

COURTESY OF SGI NEWSLETTER

The following is a summary of a speech by SGI President Ikeda at a monthly All-Japan Prefecture Chiefs Conference on Dec. 5, 1996.

Heartfelt encouragement pervades Nichiren Daishonin's writings, SGI President Ikeda said to begin his speech. In a letter written to Nichigen-nyo, the wife of Shijo Kingo, the Daishonin in essence wrote: Although you may be slandered by others, in the long run you have nothing to fear or complain of, because an infinite number of Buddhas and Buddhist deities throughout the universe cherish and praise you.

With words like these, the Daishonin inspired his followers to develop a lofty state of mind and to ceaselessly advance filled with hope, Mr. Ikeda said.

He then quoted Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925), widely recognized as the father of modern China, who observed that an in-

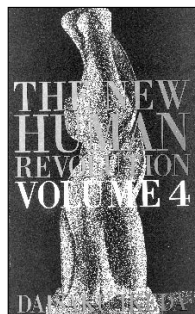
PLEASE SEE SUMMARY, 4

'New Human Revolution,' Vol. 4, Published

The New Human Revolution, SGI President Ikeda's novelized history of the movement for kosen-rufu throughout the world, continues with vol. 4, just published in English by the SGI-USA.

Vol. 4 comprises five chapters: "Spring Storm," "Triumph," "Fresh Leaves," "Rissho Ankoku" and "Great Light," which have been serialized in an ongoing *World Tribune* feature. Vol. 4 recounts the continuing efforts of newly inaugurated third president of the Soka Gakkai, Shin'ichi Yamamoto (the name of Mr. Ikeda's character), to solidify the structure of the organization for kosen-rufu throughout various parts of Japan.

Among the many valuable insights the reader can find in Shin'ichi's guidance to leaders is



this passage from the "Rissho Ankoku" chapter:

As far as dedicating one's life to Buddhism is concerned...in the present circumstances it means to make kosen-rufu our fundamental purpose in life and to live a long

and useful existence in pursuit of this goal. This is what it means to offer your life for Buddhism. Once you resolve, as a Soka Gakkai member, to make kosen-rufu your life's foundation, it is essential that you become an outstanding person at your place of work. If you do poorly at work, you cannot demonstrate to others how wonderful Buddhism is, and no one will want to take faith. For the same reason, you should strive to create a happy and harmonious family life and take good care of your health. To live a life devoted to kosen-rufu means to be a success in society and to attain personal happiness. Dedication to Buddhism does not mean living a tragic life.

Near the conclusion of his introduction to this proposed 30-volume work, Mr. Ikeda shares the following thoughts:

"I have taken writing *The New Human Revolution* as my life's work. In it, I am determined to continue to record, to the limits of my ability, the diamondlike, genuine path of mentor and disciple, and depict the grand portrait of glory created by the precious children of the Buddha as they have advanced with the dream of worldwide kosen-rufu, just as Nichiren Daishonin taught."

The New Human Revolution, vol. 4, will soon be available at all SGI-USA bookstores, and can be mail-ordered (M.O. #0604) Price: \$10.00. **WU**

VOICES

How can we as SGI-USA members take action to help people in other countries suffering from war, poverty, starvation, disease, human rights abuses, etc.?

Members from L.A. #4 Joint Territory respond:



I think the easy answer for this is to chant daimoku for them, whoever and wherever they are. Although it seems simple to chant, it really isn't because I don't think I can imagine what people from these countries are going through. Maybe we could start some kind of pen pal campaign so we can know who we are chanting for. After all, if

we can write to someone and show them love, compassion and encouragement through our words, isn't that kosen-rufu?

— DIANE NOLAN, Costa Mesa, Calif.



I subscribe to *Life* magazine, and the idea occurred to me to cut out pictures of people in impoverished areas throughout the world. I put these pictures in a folder, and I chant for these people. I also cry for them. My boyfriend is from Guadalajara originally, and he was going there to visit his family. I asked my neighbors and friends for any clothing they could donate to people there. I asked him to pass these on to anyone he met who was in need.

— BRENDA DUCHEMIN, Irvine, Calif.



I would like to see an SGI missionary program for people who want to spend some time in dedicated service to kosen-rufu. These missionary workers could go to other countries, or anywhere in our own country to help members and nonmembers. I would also like to start an organized effort by all divisions in my area to visit the elderly, the

sick and those who are struggling. I think that many more people would be encouraged to do home visits.

— KATE LLEWELLYN, Newport Beach, Calif.



Nobody knows where they will be next month, or next year, so I really think it's important that on a daily basis you do what you need to do to develop as a human being so that no matter where you go, you can make the most effective contribution as a human being in your interactions with people. I honestly think that Nichiren Dai-

shonin's Buddhism teaches you to develop as a true human being. Somehow we have to relate that to the people we come in contact with, whether its in the United States or in another country.

— ED KING, Edwards Air Force Base, Calif.



It's sometimes hard to chant a long time, but my mother tells me to chant five minutes for myself, 10 minutes for my members and try to chant 10 minutes for kosen-rufu. With all the problems around the world, I feel this is what we need to do as members.

— VICTOR JACKOWICH, Victorville, Calif.

Each week (except when we run our "Question of the Month"), members of one joint territory will respond to a question on life, Buddhism or the organization.

'Live Your Own Life'

EDITORIAL

Why do you do what you do? To live up to your beliefs or the expectations of others? To strive for your ideals or to seek society's approval?

These are important questions. The danger of living to please society becomes apparent when that society itself goes mad. Without our own foundational beliefs, our own sense of right and wrong, we won't be able to stand alone for justice.

SGI President Ikeda reiterated this point of being true to yourself in his new year's poem:

*My mentor, Josei Toda, left his words,
"Live your own life."
Shakyamuni Buddha also told us to live after
his death
true to ourselves and the Law he taught us.
"Rather one lion than a thousand sheep,"
said Makiguchi.
Like a lone rock, unyielding, jutting out from
the sea,
meet the turbulent vortices of the world
and pierce them through, living as you believe,
polishing that which is most truly you.*

We all may want to live this way, but day to day it's not so easy. It takes enormous courage. Think of Martin Luther King Jr., Cesar Chavez, Nelson Mandela, Rigoberta Menchu and others who've stood up for human rights and been persecuted.

Or George L. "Lee" Butler, the retired air force general who once was commander of the U.S. nuclear forces. Recently, he stirred a growing debate when he came out strongly against nuclear weapons, asserting that the nation would be more secure without its nuclear arsenal than with it.

Or Craig Keilburger, the 13-year-old Canadian activist for children. His adamant and emotional appeals against child labor are striking a chord with labor unions and forcing the Canadian government to deal with the issue. Kielburger's inspiration in part was Iqbal Masih, the boy in Pakistan who spoke out against bonded child labor in

the rug trade and was assassinated for his stand. The SGI-USA Youth Peace Conference's "Children's Rights" exhibit, which begins a two-year tour of the country this year, is unofficially dedicated to him.

Being true to yourself means not simply doing your own thing but cherishing an ideal and having the character to live up to it, to speak out at any cost in any situation — whether it be on the world stage like those above or when a friend utters a racial or sexual slur.

Day to day, it also means to trust yourself, your intuitions, your choices. Peace of mind can never be found if you let others make your decisions for you. Many of us worry about our daily decisions. What should my major be? Which job should I take? Where should I live? Should I get married? Should I have children?

The important thing is to follow your heart. With faith in the Gohonzon, ultimately no decision is wrong. We should be convinced that every decision is the right one if it is our own decision. For even if it turns out not to be the right decision at first, it can be an opportunity to change poison into medicine through the power of faith in the Mystic Law.

On the deepest level, to be true to yourself you must, naturally, find out who your true self is, your greater self, your self that "discovers one's happiness in the happiness of others," as Mr. Ikeda writes. As practitioners of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism, we are all Bodhisattvas of the Earth. We are here to prove the power of this practice by solving problems, problems we have chosen to take on. Just to recognize this can give us a profoundly positive change of attitude.

When we base ourselves on this true identity, we can find strength and courage. "Rely on a solid 'self' as unmovable as an island," Mr. Ikeda writes in *The New Human Revolution*. "This is the very heart of Shakyamuni's lifelong teachings."

With such a solid self, we can find all the courage we need to live our own lives. ❖

QUESTION OF THE MONTH: 'What does it mean to you to live as a Buddhist?'

Please be specific and limit your responses to 50 words or less. All responses are subject to editing. Please send your responses and a face photo of yourself to: "Question of the Month," World Tribune, 525 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, Calif., 90401, or e-mail us at: SokaNews@aol.com.

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**WORLD TRIBUNE
MAILBOX**

Eliminating Nuclear Weapons

Thank you for printing Ann Porowski's illuminating "How and Why To Eliminate Nuclear Weapons" (Dec. 13, 1996, "Perspective"), with its focus on the recent Report of the Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons (address for a copy: Administration Bldg., Parkes Place, Canberra ACT 2600, Australia).

One small clarification: President Clinton in September 1996 signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, not a "Nuclear Disarmament Treaty." Although the CTBT almost certainly will prevent future nuclear weapons testing among its signatories (including the five declared nuclear weapons states), the treaty, ironically, probably will never officially enter into force. The reason is that India and Pakistan must sign, along with the 42 other countries possessing nuclear facilities, before official entry into force. But those two states are on record that they will not sign the CTBT — nor the current, inadequate Non-Proliferation Treaty — until the United States and the other nuclear weapons states agree to eliminate their nuclear weapons.

The abolition of nuclear weapons under worldwide mandatory inspection is definitely achievable, but it will require a nuclear weapons ban treaty which does not go into force until all states have signed and ratified it (otherwise, the United States and the other nuclear powers will not sign and will retain their nuclear weapons). Such a unanimously signed treaty banning nuclear weapons would enhance the security of the current nuclear weapons states, because so-called rogue states would be cut off from nuclear weapons development (because they signed the treaty and because of the geopolitical force of its unanimity). Security of the nonnuclear weapon states (the great majority of states) would also be increased, because they would no longer live under the threat of the current arsenals of nuclear weapons on Earth.

FRED MATTIS, Annapolis, Md.

Orientation, Not 'Preference'

As a new member I find the *World Tribune* to be an excellent tool for educating new members about the organization and as a forum for sharing information. I was particularly pleased to read about the formation of the Diversity Committee (Nov. 29, 1996, *World Tribune*).

However, in educating others there has to be clear communication and/or dialogue. I have always found (as a member of the gay and lesbian community) that I am quite offended by the phrase "sexual preference."

I prefer tea over coffee, jelly over jam, but my sexual orientation is not a "preference." I hope that this will indeed raise the awareness of other members so that everyone does indeed participate in an organization where we all feel comfortable.

MICKY PIZARRO, New York

Letters printed here do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the SGI-USA or the World Tribune.

In the "Mailbox," we will publish members' comments, suggestions and questions as they pertain to the World Tribune. Because of volume, not all letters can be printed, but they are all read. All letters are subject to condensation.

Please include signature, mailing address and telephone number. Pseudonyms and initials will not be used. Send letters to "Mailbox," World Tribune, 525 Wilshire Boulevard, Santa Monica, CA 90401; or via America Online (SokaNews).

Getting to the Heart of Guidance

PERSPECTIVE

By JARED R. GOLDMAN
SCOTTSDALE, ARIZ.

One of the key points SGI-USA Vice General Director Masao Yokota emphasized in a recent lecture here was the importance of forging a strong personality. He noted that there are two essential factors in the development of one's personality.

The first is self-discipline, clearly represented in our movement by the daily practice of gongyo. Discipline is not usually something people like to hear about, Mr. Yokota mentioned lightheartedly. The second essential component is caring for others. This vital behavior, Mr. Yokota pointed out, is a two-way interaction.

We can see throughout the history of Buddhism the reciprocal caring demonstrated between mentor and disciple. Two of the most well-known examples come from episodes separated by 700 years. First is the bond between Nichiren Daishonin and his faithful samurai follower, Shijo Kingo. As described by the Daishonin in the Goshō, Kingo held the reins of the Daishonin's horse, accompanying his mentor to his scheduled execution site at Tatsunokuchi. Each cared for the other more than for life itself, revealing the beauty of

shared destiny created as a free choice from the hearts of individuals awakened to their eternal mission.

In the 1940s, an unforgettable scene at Toyotama Prison (described in SGI President Ikeda's novel *The Human Revolution*) depicts the life-to-life bond between mentor and disciple: Josei Toda recognizes his teacher, Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, being marched in the opposite direction from himself, wearing a basket over his head like all the other prisoners. Toda cries out: "Sensei! Take good care of yourself!"

Later, Toda would comment that his mentor cared for him so much that he allowed him even to go to prison with him. That's not an easy sentiment to grasp with the mind. But to the heart it makes deep sense and resonates with the texture of profound truth.

I recently attended a seminar and learned about the research and activities of the Institute of HeartMath® — a non-profit think tank specializing in innovative approaches to the problems of human stress, quality, creativity and effectiveness. In his book *Freeze Frame*, president, CEO and founder of the institute, Doc Lew Childre, describes a simple process that can be used to access more fully the natural healing frequencies of our hearts. Beyond a metaphor for our spirituality, research demonstrates that, as a physical

organ, the heart emits a powerful electrical field of energy that permeates every cell of the body. The heart's frequencies, through an interactive "dialogue" with the brain's cortex via the hypothalamus, have a dramatic effect on our hormonal system, leading to tremendous reduction in stress and increased immune function levels.

Based on my experience of the power of these heart frequencies, I can see that my heart is the channel for feelings of care and appreciation. Guiding my every action, based on faith, my heart can connect with the heart of another and words come to my mind and flow out with a genuine, gentle quality. In the "Expedient Means" chapter of the Lotus Sutra, referring to the Buddha, it states, "His words are soft and gentle and can delight the hearts of the assembly."

So it would seem that words that can truly be called guidance are words spoken from the heart. By this it is meant that those giving guidance have first accessed the higher dimensions of the mind by going into their hearts — hearts filled with appreciation and caring. As the SGI president says in his lecture on the "Expedient Means" chapter, "Words uttered with ardent prayer for someone's happiness, even if they are strong, are 'soft and gentle.'"

So it might be said that getting to the heart of guidance, in truth, may be the journey of getting to the guidance of the heart. ☐

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Photo by KAREN ZELLER

'Poohbah Lounge': A Place To Mix

By KIM KASSIRA
CORRESPONDENT
New York City

Since its inception, the New York branch of the SGI-USA's Youth Peace Conference has strived to approach the concept of peace propagation through creative and innovative avenues. Hence, "The Poohbah Lounge." It was born in 1995 as a unique way to bring together SGI members and their guests in a unified ideal — celebrating global citizenship through poetry, music, dance, art and stories.

Recently, youth division member Andrew Gebert graciously surrendered his East Village loft to the renovating skills of his counterparts, who transformed it into a performance and buffet space. By 8:00 p.m., the performance portion of the evening was introduced by newly appointed YPC Chief Denise Royal.

Sharing the theme for the evening, "Building Bridges, Transcending Boundaries," she asked: "What are the boundaries we create?" Sex, race, music and money were among the answers.

Referring to the cultural mix in the city as well as in the room, Ms. Royal continued: "New York City is an amazing place for having to learn to deal with people. Housing conflicts, language differences, economics — what a place to experience human revolution.

"If there is something you would like to share tonight, please stand up and perform something for us or stay afterward and share with us your feelings about the evening."

Poetry from Maya Angelou and Persian poet Sohrab Sepheri, among others, a story by Rainer Maria Rilke and an cappella rendition of a song by Desiree followed.

Several members also performed original pieces, which were moving, humorous, thought-provoking and sometimes personal. One person even shared thoughts from her daily journal.

The evening's success was marked not only by the smiles but by the new friends made and the new ideas learned. W



Children pet an American alligator at the Florida Nature and Culture Center. The presentation was held in concert with the ecology exhibition.

Animal Show Delights Kids

By SHIRLEY WHITE
CORRESPONDENT
Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.

Do you know why a bat hangs upside down? Ask one of the children who attended a wildlife presentation at the Florida Nature and Culture Center. They'll never forget because they met two African bats face to face.

Tom Batchelor, owner of Pangaea Productions, Inc., gave a presentation as part of the "Ecology and Human Life" exhibition held here recently. His presentation stressed the importance of saving the animals' natural habitat to ensure their survival.

All the participants were allowed to touch most of the animals, from the American alligator to the Burmese python.

The children's favorite seemed to be the Florida panther. The panther has drastically dwindled in numbers and is on an endangered species list, along with many other Florida Everglades inhabitants. Due to the encroachment of humankind, in just 50 years the panther has gone from 1,600 to 40 in the wild.

The most important aspect of the animal exhibit was the lasting impact it had on the children. We asked them what they could do to save the animals, and here are some their answers: Stephanie Sawyer, 8, said, "I like all of the animals, and we should stop spraying pesticide on the mosquitoes because the bats eat the mosquitoes and die."

Bianca Golden, 9, learned how important it is to leave the animals alone in their natural habitats. She would like to become a famous performer, and after her performances talk to the audience about taking better care of the wild animals' homes.

Samuel Bernal, 10, believes we can save them by not destroying their homes.

Whether the children remember that bats hang upside down because their feet are too small to stand on, they did get the message: It is up to each of us to take the action necessary to save our wild animals. Hopefully, our children's children will see these animals in their natural habitat and not just in a zoo. W

New Leaders Appointments



Edward Clark
SGI-USA Vice Men's
Division Secretariat Chief

L.A. #1 Joint Territory

Shinji Ishibashi
Joint Territory Chief

Cory Taylor
YMD Chief

L.A. #2 Joint Territory

Richard Sonoda
Guidance Staff

Greg Martin
Senior Advisor

L.A. #3 Joint Territory

Ian McIlraith
Joint Territory Chief

Edward Clark
Senior Advisor

L.A. #4 Joint Territory

David Aoyama
Joint Territory Chief

Momoyo Martin
Women's Division Chief

L.A. #5 Joint Territory

Frank Williamson
Joint Territory Chief

Theresa Hauber
Women's Division Chief

Michiko Wilson
Senior Advisor

San Diego Jt. Territory

Joe Firoved
Senior Advisor

SUMMARY, FROM PAGE 1

COURTESY OF SGI NEWSLETTER

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a letter written to Nichigen-nyo, the wife of Shijo Kingo, the Daishonin in essence wrote: Although you may be slandered by others, in the long run you have nothing to fear or complain of, because an infinite number of Buddhas and Buddhist deities throughout the universe cherish and praise you.

With words like these, the Daishonin inspired his followers to develop a lofty state of mind and to ceaselessly advance filled

with hope, Mr. Ikeda said.

He then quoted Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925), widely recognized as the father of modern China, who observed that an intrinsic side of every failure is the opportunity to advance. With this in mind, the Chinese leader endlessly encouraged his fellow citizens to never succumb to failure. After all, Mr. Ikeda affirmed, one can only become stronger through experiencing hardship and difficulty.

Furthermore, Sun Yat-sen had the foresight to never act impetuously. He clearly understood the fleeting prosperity short-sighted individuals enjoy, the SGI leader explained, as opposed to the enduring legacy those who embody the resolve and will to persevere can pass along.

Stressing that we are still in the very earliest stages of the kosen-rufu movement — the eternal struggle for human rev-

RON GLASS, LOS ANGELES

No Porches

Actor Ron Glass is resolved to participate in life fully in his 40s, 50s and 60s and not just sit back and watch.

I began practicing Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism in 1984 after being rescued by a compassionate practitioner of this Buddhism who found me drunk on my butt at a Hollywood party.

After some resistance, I agreed to try chanting. I was

I was considered a promising, already accomplished actor with every apparent reason to be happy as well as successful.

What nobody knew was my family pattern — karma, if you will.

In my immediate family, we were five: A social darling of a

our glorious destinies.

All charged up with this incomplete formula for success, we broke into life. The inevitable failures, disappointments and obstacles in life would invariably take their toll. Somewhere around age 40, the members of this extraordinary stock — without a pot to pee in or a window to throw it out of — would retire to their proverbial porches. There they would soothe their dashed aspirations by poking fun at the foibles and pipe dreams of themselves and others.

Somewhere between ages 40 and 45, while in self-imposed retirement, I found myself mired in this family pattern.

Without a strong consistent practice of this Buddhism, I would most likely never have been able to recognize this family legacy. From the beginning, I was active in organizational activities and always consistent in both my daily practice and in my concern for the members I was responsible for, both as a group chief and as a district chief.

I had excellent mentors, models, leaders and, also, really excellent critics. To all of them, I am forever indebted.

So, to get back to my story, around 40 to 45, I found myself either practicing really hard or partying even harder but never feeling completely satisfied — not ever. I sought and received guidance. The senior member with whom I spoke was strict. He said my life was shallow. BOOM! He said I should challenge myself to uncover depth, meaning, significance and purpose.

Around this same time, SGI President Ikeda challenged SGI members to become successful in society and respected in their communities.

With several halting starts, finally I committed to making a change. I continued to get guidance and encouragement as I redoubled my efforts in my district.

After several determined chanting sessions, I reversed some challenging relationships

within the district so that many members could blossom, make breakthroughs and truly enjoy activities and their daily lives. Also, a quote from SGI President Ikeda in the *Daily Guidance* began to stand out for me:

I sincerely hope that not only in your 20s, 30s or 40s, but also in your 50s, 60s and throughout your life you will live with a lively spirit and a faith filled with a strong seeking mind, fully enjoying the benefits of Myoho and the protection of the Buddhist gods.

I began to see I was using getting older to excuse my retreating attitude. As I continued to make sincere effort in practice and activities, I began to consistently experience renewed vitality, great energy of purpose and a strong determination to reply to President Ikeda's guidance. Being in one's 40s, 50s, 60s, etc., is no excuse to just observe life. We must participate.

So, with considerable insecurity, I got a personal manager, new agents and got back into the mix. Chanting assiduously, I auditioned often and became a regular on a short-lived series call *Rhythm and Blues*. When it was canceled, I was wrecked. I was doing my part, so why wasn't the series successful?

The tug of my family karma returned. Perhaps the failure of this series was a sign. Perhaps I should retire to some porch and give in to the family tendency to give up in the face of struggle and disappointment.

Instead, I performed Lou in the stage production of *The Speed of Darkness*, probably the most difficult characterization I have ever taken on.

Shortly before opening, I was hit by deep feelings of inadequacy and incompetence. I wanted desperately to give up, back out — quit. But due to the support of a senior member, much daimoku and the echo of President Ikeda's challenge, I

continued. I got great reviews and won the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Award for best performance by an actor.

This victory was followed by a wonderful TV pilot — that never even aired. Again, that spot on the porch was looking very attractive. In fact, I hung out on that porch for a minute. Within a short time, however, I rolled up my sleeves, again changed my representation and took on a stage play at the Old Globe.

Although the play was successful, I was not critically embraced as favorably as I had expected. But the confidence I was building through consistent daimoku sustained me.

In addition to my work, I became very active as a board member and celebrity spokesperson for the Al Wooten Jr. Heritage Center in South Central Los Angeles — a haven for children in a community threatened by drugs, gangs and hopelessness.

I realized that in my effort to respond to President Ikeda's challenge about being productive in society at whatever age, I was now experiencing appreciation, meaning and purpose in my life.

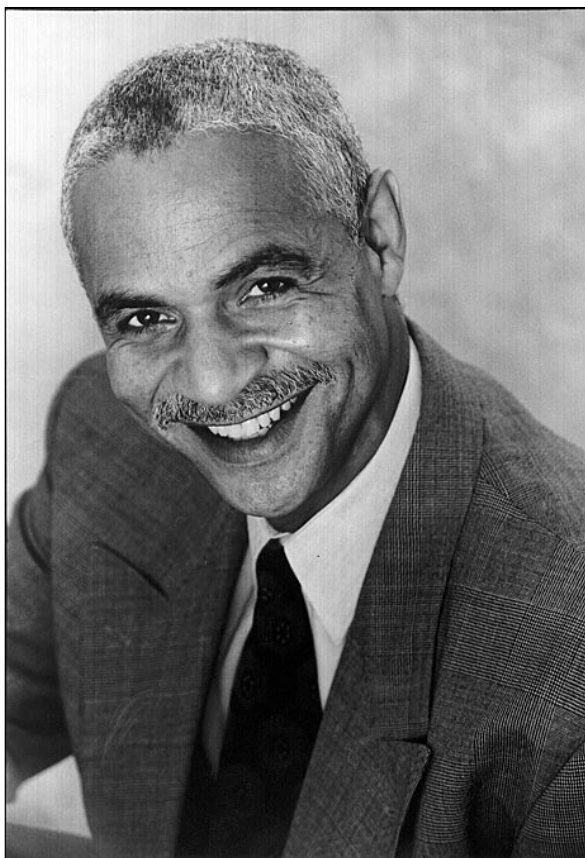
Most recently, I revamped my representation team yet again and determined to use my practice as the heart of all my activities.

The result is that I'm playing a wonderful role, Ronald Felcher, on the NBC sitcom *Mr. Rhodes*. This job affords me the opportunity to challenge myself to take the Buddha to work five days a week. And when doing interviews, I have acknowledged my Buddhist practice and its effect on my life to a national audience. This is the victory I determined to accomplish in 1996.

I really hope *Mr. Rhodes* continues beyond this season, because I love the character I'm playing. Weekly exposure on national television affords me a unique opportunity to challenge myself, use my practice and show actual proof.

However, whether *Mr. Rhodes* continues or not, I will continue. I am determined to respond to President Ikeda's guidance regarding a youthful spirit and a youthful practice that are characterized by vitality, renewal and energy — refreshed, whether in my 40s, 50s, 60s and throughout my life. There may be snow on the rooftop, but there's still fire in the furnace.

I guess there's no porch for me. ❏



Ron Glass

38 years old when I received the Gohonzon. I had lived in Los Angeles for more than 10 years. I had spent eight successful seasons on a hit TV series called *Barney Miller* and one season on *The New Odd Couple*. I had guested on scores of episodic shows, done "Movies of the Week," stage plays, and on and on.

sister; an all-star athlete; a handsome Casanova; a near intellectual prodigy and then, well..., there was me.

A tradition of outstanding potential was apparent in my family for several generations. In fact, we were taught that this combination of outstanding potential and the mystique of just being a Glass guaranteed

SIGN POSTS APPLYING NICHIREN DAISHONIN'S WRITINGS TO DAILY LIFE

Winning Over Our Lack of Self-Confidence

By MALINA MOORE

SGI-USA YOUTH DIVISION STUDY COMMITTEE

If you wish to free yourself from the sufferings of birth and death you have endured through eternity and attain supreme enlightenment in this lifetime, you must awaken to the mystic truth which has always been within your life. This truth is Myoho-enge-kyo (The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin, vol. 1, p. 3).

When I first read this passage, I loved it like I love how-to manuals! I thought, "Finally, we're getting down to the nitty-gritty — how I can reach enlightenment today!"

As I practiced more, I often referred back to this passage for encouragement when I hit an obstacle. It has become a personal point of reference, a tool with which I put my problems into perspective.

For me, the "sufferings of birth and death" represent my battle with a lack of self-confidence, to know my self-worth.

In speaking with others — particularly other young women — I have found this is a common struggle. Too often we gauge our worth and the value of our accomplishments against external criteria.

And I find that because of this we suffer and experience a deep sense of powerlessness.

However, when I read "you must awaken to the mystic truth which has always been within your life," I am reminded that I possess the Buddha nature, that I have the power to change any situation and that the responsibility for my happiness is solely my own.

I realize then that I am perfect in the deepest sense. I am no longer lacking. I am neither "not quite..." nor "too..." I just *am* — nothing more, nothing less.

And that is OK. Although the process of knowing this with my life is an ongoing, often difficult process, I feel tremendous joy in going through it. ❏



Will peace last in Guatemala? Thousands who celebrate the new peace accord in Guatemala City on Dec. 29, 1996, hope so.

SGI DAY — JANUARY 26

The SGI Offers Hope to the World

By JEFF FARR
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

SGI Day is a day of hope. Every year on Jan. 26, to commemorate the SGI's establishment in 1975, SGI President Ikeda presents a detailed proposal to the United Nations outlining his perspective on the world's problems.

In these peace proposals Mr. Ikeda always takes a positive approach toward the world's problems. While he never glosses over the seriousness of these problems — nor the United Nations' internal problems — his emphasis is on what we can do now to make things better in the future.

In this sense, his peace proposals offer a uniquely Buddhist perspective — one based on hope. In his 1996 proposal, he quoted the late Norman Cousins, who said that "the main characteristic of pessimism, like cynicism, is that it sets the stage for its own omens. It shuns hope for the future..."

But it's not easy to be optimistic about the world when we see what's going on in the news. In 1996, in fact, often what we thought was on the mend seemed to break again.

Tragedies like Rwanda seemed to be repeating themselves. Many felt that when Benjamin Netanyahu was elected prime minister of Israel, his position on Palestinian statehood set the Middle East peace process back at least a couple of years.

In recent weeks we have seen the peace in Bosnia prove itself to be more and more tenuous. In Russia, a new brand of nationalism has been born as the country faces what Dr. Yuri A. Petrosyan recently told President Ikeda is the most challenging time in its history.

In short, the world does not seem to be taking the direct course toward peace, but

the long, winding, bumpy road there. It's like we are lurching toward peace. It's no surprise that the recent news of the Guatemalan peace treaty being signed — which ended a 36-year civil war — was met with cautious joy even in Guatemala.

But President Ikeda always backs up his peace proposals with historical examples of the common people rising to the challenge and successfully changing their world. In his 1996 proposal he turned to the current example of the new South Africa: There the people are moving steadily forward — now with a new constitution — in creating a nation where people of different ethnic backgrounds and cultures form what Mr. Ikeda described as "a multi-hued, harmonious whole while giving free rein to the distinctive characteristics of each component group."

At the same time that President Ikeda keeps looking to the positive, he admits that solutions may naturally be a long time coming. "It will take many years and much effort to resolve the global problems we now face," he said in his 1996 proposal.

Last year at a meeting with Spring Training Course participants in Tokyo, the SGI president expressed this long-term perspective when he shared details of a report from an SGI delegation to Mongolia. He explained how he saw the SGI's newly established relationship with Mongolia as a result of Nichiren Daishonin's work more than 700 years earlier.

"Nichiren Daishonin established a profound Buddhist connection with Mongolia," he said. "When the Mongol emissaries sent to Japan were beheaded by the Kamakura government, the Daishonin lamented their fate.... He again offered prayers at the time of the Mongol inva-

sions. I sense that the seeds planted with his prayers at that time are now putting forth shoots."

Last September another seed put forth a shoot: The World Boys and Girls Art Exhibition, jointly organized by a few Mongolian organizations, the SGI and UNESCO, was held at the Mongolian Children's Palace in Ulan Bator, Mongolia.

The SGI has been planting seeds throughout the world for 22 years now. Formed in Guam, with representatives of 51 countries in attendance, the SGI began with the SGI president's encouragement that its members devote themselves to planting these seeds of peace.

Now there are SGI organizations in 128 countries, many of which started with just one or two members but which are now steadily growing. When President Ikeda talked about Mongolia, he mentioned how happy he was that there are two SGI members living there, who he said "have won great trust and confidence among the people of that country."

The SGI has achieved many things in its 22 years, but the greatest hope our organization offers the world is not in these achievements alone but also in our membership, the people who make up the SGI. Only human beings can nurture hope; Nichiren Daishonin clarified that the ultimate origin of hope is the human heart. The spirit behind SGI Day is related to this important teaching of the Daishonin. The Middle East, Bosnia, Rwanda — where are the answers? Inside the human heart, the Daishonin says — the heart that hangs on to hope, even when it faces a troubled world. Such hearts can be found in plentitude in the SGI. ❏

Be True to the People's Trust

SGI President Ikeda gave the following speech at the 5th Headquarters Leaders Meeting held at the Soka University Auditorium in Hachioji, Tokyo, on Nov. 17, 1996, to commemorate Soka Gakkai's Founding Day, Nov. 18.

Today we celebrate the magnificent 66th anniversary of the Soka Gakkai's founding. Heaven and earth are bright and clear, as are the hearts of 10 million fellow members. Your jubilant, confident cheers of victory reverberate in my heart. Thank you!

Everything we have achieved is the result of your efforts and faith. Allow me to express my most profound gratitude and congratulations to each of you, who I hold in the highest esteem.

What profound joy it gives me to report on this glorious celebration to Nichiren Daishonin, first President Tsunesaburo Makiguchi and second President Josei Toda! As their proud disciples dedicated to realizing kosen-rufu, we have soundly defeated the three powerful enemies,¹ fought fearlessly against the tyranny of oppressive authority and finally opened a brilliant path that will continue on eternally throughout the 10,000 years and more of the Latter Day of the Law.

Let me take this opportunity to once again offer my most heartfelt appreciation to each of you. You have my deepest respect.

An Honor from Zhongshan (Sun Yat-sen) University

I have just received the title of honorary professor from Zhongshan (Sun Yat-sen) University, one of China's most pre-eminent and cutting-edge institutions of higher learning. I thank the university deeply for this honor.

This year marks the 130th anniversary of the birth of the university's founder, Sun Yat-sen (also known as Sun Zhongshan; 1866-1925), who is revered by the Chinese as the "father of modern China." On Nov. 12, which is not only Sun Yat-sen's birthday but the anniversary of the founding of Zhongshan University, celebrations to commemorate these events were held all over China.

Sun Yat-sen firmly believed that the people are the emperor

and sovereign. With that unshakable conviction, he embraced the lofty vision to awaken humanity to the goal of world peace.

In one of his lectures, Sun Yat-sen declared: "During the imperial period, a single individual was the emperor, but now that we have democracy, every one of our 400 million people is the emperor. This is what is meant by 'the people are sovereign.' This is the true exercise of the people's rights."²

As a tribute to that conviction, I share the honor I have received from Zhongshan University today with all of you here and with all the SGI members in 128 nations around the globe.

Faith Means Maintaining Trust

Nichiren Daishonin, whose Buddhism we embrace, clearly and irrevocably declared that Japan is the disciple of China and Korea (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 1272). Japan inherited not only Buddhism but an enormous amount of its culture from China and the kingdoms of the Korean peninsula. We must never forget the tremendous debt of gratitude we owe the Chinese and Koreans. That is the path of true humanity and the way of life of a genuine Buddhist.

In the past, however, Japan forgot this debt of gratitude and treated the Chinese and Koreans with arrogance and contempt, ultimately launching itself down a path of self-destruction.

Faith means maintaining trust and goodwill in the strongest, deepest way possible. Based on such humanism, the Soka Gakkai has formed friendships with people throughout Asia and the entire world. The fact that China trusts us so deeply is proof that the Soka Gakkai is unerringly following the path set by Nichiren Daishonin.

It thus gives me unsurpassed pleasure to welcome distinguished guests from Zhongshan University here today as we commemorate the anniversary of both the Soka Gakkai's founding and the day on which President Makiguchi died in prison a martyr to his beliefs.

In 1905, while living in Tokyo as a political exile, Sun Yat-sen went about his activities quietly and unflaggingly



Sun Yat-sen (also known as Sun Zhongshan; 1866-1925), who is revered by the Chinese as the 'father of modern China.'

'During the imperial period, a single individual was the emperor, but now that we have democracy, every one of our 400 million people is the emperor. This is what is meant by "the people are sovereign." This is the true exercise of the people's rights.' — Sun Yat-sen

TRUST, FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

like the flow of a mighty river, gathering around him many able young people dedicated to the liberation of China. He eventually formed the Alliance Society, a revolutionary coalition. Tokyo was thus one of the starting points of his revolution.

At the time, more than 10,000 Chinese students lived in Japan, and most of them were affiliated with revolutionary groups that sought to overthrow the corrupt Qing dynasty. When Sun Yat-sen founded the Alliance Society, the efforts of these various groups were consolidated into a unified force.

Around this same time, the young Makiguchi was teaching at Kobun Gakuin, a school for Chinese foreign students among whom were active members of Sun Yat-sen's Alliance Society. Mr. Makiguchi was then 34, five years younger than Sun Yat-sen. One of his Chinese students, who was impressed with his classes, later translated Mr. Makiguchi's lectures in *The Geography of Human Life* [his pioneering work on the indivisible relationship between people and their environment] into Chinese and published them in China.

The Soka Gakkai's ties with China are truly mystic. Soka University was the first Japanese institution of higher learning to invite foreign exchange students from China, following the restoration of diplomatic relations between China and Japan in 1972.

Passionate Lectures

One of Sun Yat-sen's nicknames was "the Cannon." He was given the name because he was a bold, decisive leader, as unreserved and dynamic as a cannon blast. I fondly recall a journalist, who knew Mr. Toda well, once saying that the latter had resembled Sun Yat-sen in many ways.

I am very happy that members of the Makiguchi and Toda families could join us today. I am confident that our two great mentors are smiling as they watch over us celebrating on this occasion.

As is exemplified by Zhongshan University, any university that remains faithful to the spirit of its founder can continue to grow and develop forever. An organization or body in which the founding spirit remains vital and alive can advance limitlessly.

Zhongshan University was founded in 1924 — originally under the name, Guangdong (Canton) University — just one year before Sun Yat-sen's death. Despite suffering from poor health, Sun Yat-sen went to the new university almost weekly. He delivered 16 lectures to the students whom he would entrust to carry on his work to reform Chinese society.

Each lecture was two hours long and devoted to an in-depth discussion on the subject of "The Three Principles of the People" (nationalism, democracy and the people's livelihood), which formed the core of Sun Yat-sen's political doctrines.

Sun Yat-sen passionately declared to his students that those who oppressed the people were acting against Heaven and that resisting such oppressors constituted acting in accord with Heaven. In other words, not to fight against despotic authority runs counter to the morally correct path of human conscience. Sun Yat-sen also emphasized that the world's people must unite to stand firm against those who would rule by force.

This is in complete agreement with Mr. Makiguchi's and Mr. Toda's sentiments. Mr. Makiguchi refused to compromise with Japan's unscrupulous militarist authorities. Even in his prison cell, he continued to insist with dauntless courage that Japan's invasion of China and the rest of Asia was based on a fundamental perversion of Japanese thought. And he died a martyr's death in prison for his convictions.

His disciple, Mr. Toda, who shared an indivisible bond with him, also believed that no people of any country should ever have to suffer at the expense of another country. All the world's people, he cried, must find happiness and prosperity together. He was an advocate of the ideal of a global human family.

Upholding the People's Trust

The words of Sun Yat-sen's wife, Song Qingling, who knew the heart of the great Chinese statesman and his devotion to the people better than anyone, come to mind: "We must never betray the people.... We must be eternally faithful to their trust."³ This spirit — "Never betray the people! Be ever true to the people's trust!" — is also the fundamental spirit of the Soka Gakkai, one that we must never forget.



'One of Sun Yat-sen's nicknames was "the Cannon." This was because he was a bold, decisive leader, as unreserved and dynamic as a cannon blast.'

As is always the case with great, visionary leaders, Sun Yat-sen's life was a series of persecutions. After all, persecutions are the proof of greatness. A slanderous pamphlet of fabricated accusations, titled "The Crimes of Sun Yat-sen," even circulated in and outside of China. At one time, a price was set on his head. Yet he fought on with the spirit to meet every setback with ever-stronger resolve, every obstacle with ever-greater determination.

This is the mark of a true revolutionary, the mark of true greatness. It is the most lofty, noble way a human being can live; it is also the Soka Gakkai way of life.

Recently, a Japanese newspaper reported that research has shown Sun Yat-sen to be a 70th-generation descendant of Sun Tzu, the great Chinese military strategist who lived during the 4th-century B.C.E. Certainly, Sun Yat-sen mastered one of the great tactical lessons of battle — "Let loose with your war cries first and rob the enemy of his strength."

Our voice costs nothing and is our strongest weapon. Nichiren Daishonin wrote, "Do not spare your voice" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 726). And there are different voices needed for different situations: the clear, resounding voice that declares truth and justice; the strong voice that refutes evil; the bright, confident voice that tells others about the greatness of this Buddhism; the warm voice that gives encouragement; the sincere, friendly voice that offers praise and words of appreciation to others.

The important thing is that we meet and speak with people

widely inside and outside the organization. Especially through actively engaging non-members in dialogue, we can spread a correct understanding of our organization and activities. Acting loudly and bravely in the presence of fellow members but hardly saying a peep to people outside is cowardly and contradictory.

Our voice is an expression of our life force. That is why our voice is so important. It is vital, therefore, that we speak out with confidence, dignity and the courage of lions, and we fearlessly refute — with razor-sharp reasoning — the slanderous accusations leveled against us. This is the path that leads to kosen-rufu's progress.

Youth Defended Their Mentor

Great men and women are always subject to betrayal. In his later years, Sun Yat-sen's very life was imperiled by the treacherous intrigues of rebels. Students and other young people, however, rose up powerfully to protect Sun Yat-sen, successfully expelling the traitors who had caused him so much suffering. Secure knowing his cause was in good hands, Sun Yat-sen died, drawing to a close a tumultuous life.

The Chinese leader had endured enormous struggles for many years. He had taken upon himself the full brunt of all attacks, striving desperately to buy time for the cause of liberation. The emergence of a group of brave, determined young successors was his final triumph. The curtain had risen on the great revolution of Chinese society that was to come.

I feel I know all too well what Sun Yat-sen must have been thinking, as I, too, have been trying to buy time, enduring the unendurable, waiting for youth to rise and shoulder the future. In every age, in every struggle, it is those youth who have inherited the spirit of great leaders or teachers who determine victory.

It is wonderful to be young. Nothing holds a candle to youth — not titles, not wealth. Mr. Toda also always valued young people. Today, there are far too many leaders in society who look down on the youth and seek only to exploit them. One of the reasons that the late Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai was interested in the Soka Gakkai was because I was young. When I first met him in December 1974, I was only 46. And in fact, for some time before that, the premier had been paying attention to the Soka Gakkai.

President Wang Xunzhang of Zhongshan University, a renowned scholar in his field, is also young at 45. He is in fact the youngest head of any major Chinese university.

Illumination Will Come

The great Chinese writer Lu Xun (1881–1936) taught at Zhongshan University. In a newspaper column, he wrote: "There are still many monsters who prefer the darkness, and they may yet produce their dim miasma, but illumination will come in the end, without fail, just as the dawn cannot be held back."⁴ We are advancing toward the glorious dawn of the century of life that all humanity has been waiting for. Let us all vow to propel the Soka Gakkai and the SGI toward that dawn together — bravely, with pride and dignity, our gaze fixed firmly on eternity.

Thank you! ☸

1. Three powerful enemies: three groups of people who persecute the votaries of the Lotus Sutra in the evil age after Shakyamuni's passing: 1) lay people ignorant of Buddhism; 2) arrogant and cunning priests; and 3) false saints in league with corrupt secular authorities.
2. Translated from Japanese: *Son Bun to Mo Takuto* (Selected Writings of Sun Yat-sen and Mao Zedong), ed. Hidemi Onogawa (Tokyo: Chuo Koronsha, 1980), p. 246.
3. Translated from Japanese: Yutaka Nozawa, *Son Bun* (Sun Yat-sen) (Tokyo: Seibundo, 1962), p. 238.
4. Translated from Japanese: *Lu Xun, Rojin Zenshu* (Collected Writings of Lu Xun) (Tokyo: Gakushu Kenkyusha, 1986), vol. 10, p. 139.

A Playground for Denver

Gaylord District Members Help Win a Community Playground

By LEIGH KENNICOTT
BOULDER, COLO., CORRESPONDENT

On a recent wintry morning, members of Denver's venerable Gaylord District gathered to admire the completed playground in their neighborhood that was built as a result of the concerted efforts of Ayo Joyner, Gaylord District group leader and president of the North Denver City Park Civic Association. Other people may just see a basketball/tennis/volleyball court, but Ayo calls it "a great exercise in faith."

It all began because Gaylord District leader Huelette Robinson wanted to put into action SGI President Ikeda's suggestion to sink roots into the community. Huelette's involvement in the North Denver City Park Civic Association soon interested Ayo. "I've always been community-minded," Ayo says. After she joined the group, she "turned on full force, and ended up being president."

When several neighborhood groups learned of a \$30,000 grant offered by an asphalt, concrete and aggregate company, they entered into an alliance to try to win the grant. The local Fire Station No. 10 donated the space for the project. Simple cooperation would gain the cash award for them. But, as everyone knows, cooperation is not easy. Ayo had to resolve several conflicts with members from the other groups first.

"Daimoku was the only thing that kept me going," Ayo recalls. "Getting that grant meant practicing in faith. If I had not been practicing hard, I would have gotten easily discouraged."

In fact, it was a discouraging process. One group dropped out of the competition; other groups had different ideas about the function of the park. Ayo had to hold everyone together in a forward-looking manner. The personality clashes she experienced



(L - r) Linda Pyles, Ayo Joyner, Huelette Robinson.

'Daimoku was the only thing that kept me going. Getting that grant meant practicing in faith. If I had not been practicing hard, I would have gotten easily discouraged.' — Ayo Joyner

brought her back to her practice. "I chanted to overcome my anger," she said. "Then I started chanting for one person's happiness, and at the next meeting, she did a total about-face."

Through that experience, Ayo realized how important it was to open her heart to the circumstances of others. With new-found consensus, and battling the deadline, Ayo put together her proposal at the last moment. She chanted sincerely to benefit the community with her ideas, and at last the association won the grant.

But Ayo's struggles weren't over. She clashed with another woman, and so angered her that she wouldn't return Ayo's phone calls.

"I chanted to learn what I had done to turn her off, and then I realized that I was so caught up with getting this project done, I hadn't been listening," Ayo said. "She was my wake-up call, saying, 'Don't forget the kids.'"

"I knew Ayo was capable, because that's what SGI's about — raising capable leaders," Huelette says. "And we don't just focus on the Buddhism part but bring it out into the community."

Gaylord District's newest member, Linda Pyles, adds: "You have to get out into society. Otherwise, how can you show what your practice can do?"

Ayo nods. "Through this project, I utilized the Gohonzon and I truly believe that I gained more than I gave," she says.

The members of Gaylord District now look to the future of the park, knowing that kosen-rufu is an ongoing process.

"We're only as good as our most recent achievement," Ayo observes. "It's no good if we pat ourselves on the back for building a playground and the park just sits there." She is now looking forward to organizing the neighborhood youngsters to compete in citywide tennis, volleyball and basketball leagues. WII

LORENZA CORREA, MIAMI

La Determinación, la Oración y la Acción la Llevan al Triunfo

Tengo practicando Budismo dos años y hace aproximadamente un año comencé a invocar daimoku para obtener un ascenso en la compañía para la cual estaba empleada por 10 años.

Me desempeñaba como Gerente de Eventos Especiales para una compañía multinacional y deseaba convertirme en Directora de Mercadeo y aumentar mi salario por un 50%.

Un mes después de mi fuerte determinación, la compañía cambió de Gerencia y contrató a veinte ejecutivos para trabajar en el mismo departamento, duplicando posiciones.

El trabajo de todas las personas de la Gerencia anterior estaba en peligro y las condiciones de trabajo se ponían cada vez peor; aunque me parecía imposible cumplir mi meta, no me di por vencida y continué invocando daimoku con mucha fe.

Al ver que la situación no mejoraba, mis colegas y yo comenzamos a contar los últimos días que nos quedaban en la compañía.

Un día antes de la visita del Presidente Ikeda a la Florida el pasado mes de junio, diecisiete empleados, incluyéndome a mí, fuimos despedidos.

Ese mismo día me comuniqué con un dirigente de la organización y le comenté que ahora

tenía todo el tiempo disponible para participar en el movimiento.

Apesar de mi situación estaba feliz y dispuesta a participar en las actividades de cualquier forma aun sea limpiando el piso.

Deseaba estar con el Presidente Ikeda y con todos los miembros de los otros países en el Centro de la Naturaleza y Cultura de la Florida.

El dirigente me contestó que tenía la oportunidad de poder participar en la oficina de administración lo cual me dió la oportunidad de conocer y ver varias veces al Presidente Ikeda. ¡Fue un gran beneficio!

Cuando el movimiento terminó, continué trabajando con otros grupos que visitaban el Centro, y al mismo tiempo, continué invocando daimoku para obtener una posición de Directora de Mercadeo.

En varias actividades que se llevaron a cabo en el Centro de la Naturaleza y Cultura de la Florida, participé en la cafetería lavando platos, ¡Nunca había visto ni lavado tantos platos en mi vida como los que lavé en esos días!

En septiembre me fue encomendada la responsabilidad de apoyar a los miembros como dirigente de grupo para Miami Lakes y me compré un gran bud-sudan.

Tres meses después, recibí

una llamada de una compañía que se especializa en contratar personas para otras compañías, informándome que me habían recomendado para una posición de Directora de Mercadeo para una compañía internacional en Sur America, ofreciendo un salario de 25% más de lo que ganaba anteriormente.

Rechacé la posición pero después recibí una llamada del departamento de recursos humanos de la compañía y del Vice Presidente, insistiendo en que tomara la posición.

Una vez más rechacé. Las llamadas continuaron y me ofrecieron visitar la propiedad en Sur America. Nuevamente la rechacé.

Al no estar satisfecho el Vice Presidente tomó un vuelo de diez horas hasta Miami para conocerme. Estuve de acuerdo en reunirme con él.

Durante nuestra entrevista, le hice saber que no estaba interesada en el salario que me ofrecían. Me preguntó cuál era la cantidad que deseaba ganar y le contesté que era 50% más de mi salario anterior.

Me respondió que su compañía no tenía el presupuesto para pagarme esa cantidad.

Sin embargo, sorpresivamente accedió a la cantidad. Aún sin dar la respuesta, viaje a Sur America.



Lorenza Correa

Después de una conversación con el Gerente General, me di cuenta de que no solamente me estaban ofreciendo el 50% más por el cual había estado invocando daimoku sino que me ofrecían \$5,000 dólares para la mudanza, pasajes para toda mi familia para trasladarnos a Sur America, cuatro semanas de vacaciones al año incluyendo los pasajes de toda mi familia a Miami y una 25% de bonificación anual sobre mi salario.

En esos días me enteré por un colega que mi oferta fue la mejor hecha a cualquier director por la compañía.

Pensé inmediatamente, "La diferencia yace en el poder ab-

soluta del Gohonzon."

Me gustaría compartir con ustedes una orientación del Presidente Ikeda:

"No importa en que estancamiento nos podamos encontrar, siempre que nos basemos en Daimoku, vamos a definitivamente superar cualquier penuria en la vida. Daimoku es la clave para constantemente inspirar, rejuvenecer y revitalizar nuestras vidas.

Recuerden que, nuestros sufrimientos actuales son la fuente de nuestro crecimiento y desarrollo" (*Daily Guidance* [Orientaciones Diarias], 19 de noviembre). ❧

Infundamos Aliento y Fortaleza, Brindándonos Mutuo Apoyo

A continuación se transcribe un resumen del discurso pronunciado por el presidente de la SGI Ikeda durante la reunión mensual de responsables de prefectura de todo Japón, el 5 de diciembre de 1996.

El presidente de la SGI Ikeda inició su discurso refiriéndose al profundo y cálido aliento que desbordaban los escritos de Nichiren Daishonin. En particular, citó el fragmento de una carta dirigida a Nichigen-nyo, la esposa de Shijo Kingo, a quien el Daishonin le enseñó

que, aunque sea calumniada por los demás, en el largo camino de la vida, ella no debe lamentarse ni albergar ningún temor, porque innumerables budas y dioses budistas de todo el universo la protegerán y alabarán. con palabras como éstas, el Daishonin motivó a sus discípulos a desarrollar un estado de vida elevado y a avanzar incansablemente llenos de esperanza.

Luego, el señor Ikeda se refirió a Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925), conocido como el padre de la China moderna, quien señaló que todo fracaso lleva intrínsecamente una oportunidad para avanzar. Dijo que con esto

en mente, el líder chino había alentado incansablemente a sus seguidores a no sucumbir jamás ante una derrota.

El señor Ikeda afirmó que uno puede fortalecerse solo a través de las duras experiencias y dificultades de la vida.

Explicó además que, Sun Yat-sen jamás se dejaba llevar por lo inmediato y era consciente de que aquellos a quienes la sociedad llama "hombres de éxito" no eran más que dueños de una prosperidad efímera; y que, por el contrario, aquellas personas de voluntad y convicción inquebrantables eran quienes podían acumular una

fortuna eterna.

El Presidente de la SGI subrayó que la organización apenas se encuentra en sus primeras etapas del movimiento por el kosen-rufu, la eterna contienda hacia la revolución humana y citó un poema del segundo presidente de la Soka Gakkai, Josei Toda, en el cual éste insta a que continuemos infundiendo aliento y fortaleza a la gente en la larga travesía del kosen-rufu. El señor Ikeda manifestó su deseo de que todos los miembros de la SGI renovasen su partida hacia el 2000, año en que se conmemorará el 70º aniversario de la fundación de la Soka Gakkai, brindándose mutuo

apoyo.

Al finalizar su discurso, el Líder de la SGI se refirió a un verso del poeta chino, Bai Letian (772-846), que describe la lucha entre dos tribus, tan trivial como la sostenida entre los dos minúsculos tentáculos de un caracol. En este poema, Bai Letian señala que, ricos o pobres, uno debe disfrutar plenamente de la vida, tener la sabiduría de evitar lo trivial y desarrollar una gran profundidad de espíritu. Por último, exhortó a todos los presentes a avanzar con firmeza hacia el futuro, mientras trabajan incansablemente por la felicidad de toda la humanidad. ❧

LEMA DE LA SGI

1997 — 'Año del Avance Hacia el Nuevo Siglo'

Durante el próximo año, manteniendo el espíritu enunciado en la Carta de la SGI y en base al reconocimiento de que el avance de cada persona es el avance de Kosen-rufu bajo este lema, promovamos las actividades de la organización siguiendo los siguientes lineamientos:

- 1) El estudio del Budismo para el fortalecimiento de la fe.
- 2) Establecer lazos de amistad a través del diálogo.
- 3) Atesorar y alentar a cada persona

Primero, "El estudio del Budismo para el fortalecimiento de la fe", significa estudiar seriamente el Goshu, las orientaciones del Presidente Ikeda y demás materiales, como medio para impulsar nuestro desarrollo en el plano de la fe e interiorizar el espíritu de la SGI de pararnos solos por Kosen-rufu. El segundo presidente de la Soka Gakkai, Josei Toda, nos dejó el legado de su eterna guía "Uno debe de vivir su propia vida" Lo que quería decir era que en vez de compararnos con los demás, deberíamos ver cómo somos hoy respecto a lo que éramos ayer. Podemos decir que nuestra vida se encamina hacia un auténtico avance cuando mantenemos constante la postura de reflexión introspectiva y la preocupación permanente por nuestro propio crecimiento. Desarrollemos como individuos mediante el esfuerzo cotidiano centrado en el estudio del Budismo.

El segundo punto. "Establecer lazos de amistad a través del diálogo." Se refiere a desarrollar lazos firmes de amistad y confianza a través del diálogo. Cada individuo tiene alrededor de sí un valioso círculo de irremplazables amigos, tanto fuera de la organización como dentro de ella. Proponemos la meta de entablar diálogos abiertos, de corazón a corazón con cada uno de ellos, para compartir la filosofía budista y ampliar el círculo de amistad y confianza, como pasos esenciales para el cumplimiento de la misión que compartimos.

El tercer punto. "Atesorar y alentar a cada persona" se refiere al espíritu esencial de la SGI. Nuestra organización es un ámbito donde las personas comparten sus alegrías y se brindan aliento mutuo a través de una fructífera relación de intercambio humano. En última instancia, sólo la sinceridad y el espíritu de atesorar y alentar a cada persona pueden llegar a conmover realmente el corazón de la gente y expandir, como consecuencia, la ola de la felicidad. Por ello, como integrantes de la gran familia Soka, proponemos la práctica de este tercer punto, en el sentido más auténtico.

En base a los puntos anunciados, quisiéramos hacer del "Año del avance hacia el nuevo siglo" un año de esperanza y valor, en el que, junto al presidente Ikeda, todos podamos dar un gran paso de avance hacia el siglo venidero, que queremos sea una centuria rebosante de vida y paz, una era floreciente de humanismo y armonía.

PUNTO FOCAL DE LA SGI-USA PARA 1997

Basados en una oración potente, nos desarrollaremos y compartiremos la filosofía budista a través de un diálogo compasivo, expandiendo la ola de la felicidad en la sociedad.

POEMA DE AÑO NUEVO DEL PRESIDENTE IKEDA

La Luz del Alba: Rumbo a la Era del Renacimiento Budista

*¡Una nueva mañana, la primera...!
El Año Nuevo se celebra
en todos los idiomas del mundo.
¿Oyes los deseos venturosos
que, desde ciento veintiocho naciones,
nos hacen llegar nuestros amigos?*

*Radiante, brilla en el horizonte del siglo
el Sol.
El Renacimiento Budista proclama la
alborada,
así como el otro Renacimiento abrió la
explanada
de un mundo nuevo y creó un inédito reino
espiritual.*

*¿De este nuevo mundo, cuál es el tema
central?
El ser humano y la verdadera identidad del
hombre.*

*En el pensamiento y en el nombre
del fundador de la Soka Gakkai
hallo el impecable ideal para que renazcan
los creadores de valores.*

*En la persona de Tsunesaburo Makiguchi
encuentro al más grandioso maestro del
humanismo;
en él, brilla la luz de lo humano que
llevamos en el alma;
en él, espelnde el brillo de la identidad
genuinamente humana.*

*Postuló una educación
contraria a la guerra,
afín al individuo y a la paz;
su pensamiento fue luminosamente original;
alumbró sus ideas el brillo incandescente de
su fe.*

*Fue el único en no retroceder;
fue el único en no dar un paso atrás.
Se mantuvo firme, en pie ante los totalitarios
—esos muchos dispuestos a sacrificar a
uno—;
vio multiplicarse los ejércitos,
pero creyó,
creyó en el advenimiento
de una época humana.*

*Consciente de los derechos humanos,
esclarecido sobre la libertad,
sin doblegarse ante los interminables usos
del poder perverso,
hay un nuevo movimiento popular
que adquiere inusitada fuerza,
que preconiza la era del pueblo en el papel
estelar;
es la esperanza que irrumpe y avanza,
en la marcha del nuevo renacimiento.*

*Mi maestro, Josei Toda, me legó un
pronunciamento:
"Vive tu propia vida".*

*El buda Shakyamuni nos enseñó a ser fieles
a nosotros mismos y a la Ley,
cuando llegase la época en que él ya no
estuviera.*

*"Más que mil carneros vale un león"
fue lo que Makiguchi nos dejó como
advertencia.*

*Cual roca solitaria, impertérrita,
que asoma y emerge del mar,
resistan el embiste turbulento del mundo
y atraviesen las olas a pura convicción
viviendo como creen correcto,
perfeccionando el aspecto más auténtico que
haya en ustedes.*

*El renacimiento es una victoria espiritual
sobre la barbarie.*

¿Cuál es su verdadero sentido?

*Que uno mismo haga su revolución humana
para abrir y revelar el inmenso poder latente
capaz de desplomar los muros de la opresión
que desde el exterior nos es impuesta.*

*Estos hombres y mujeres sólidos como la
roca
contra la barbarie, son un bastión;
son un puente entre el Budismo y los asuntos
mundanales.*

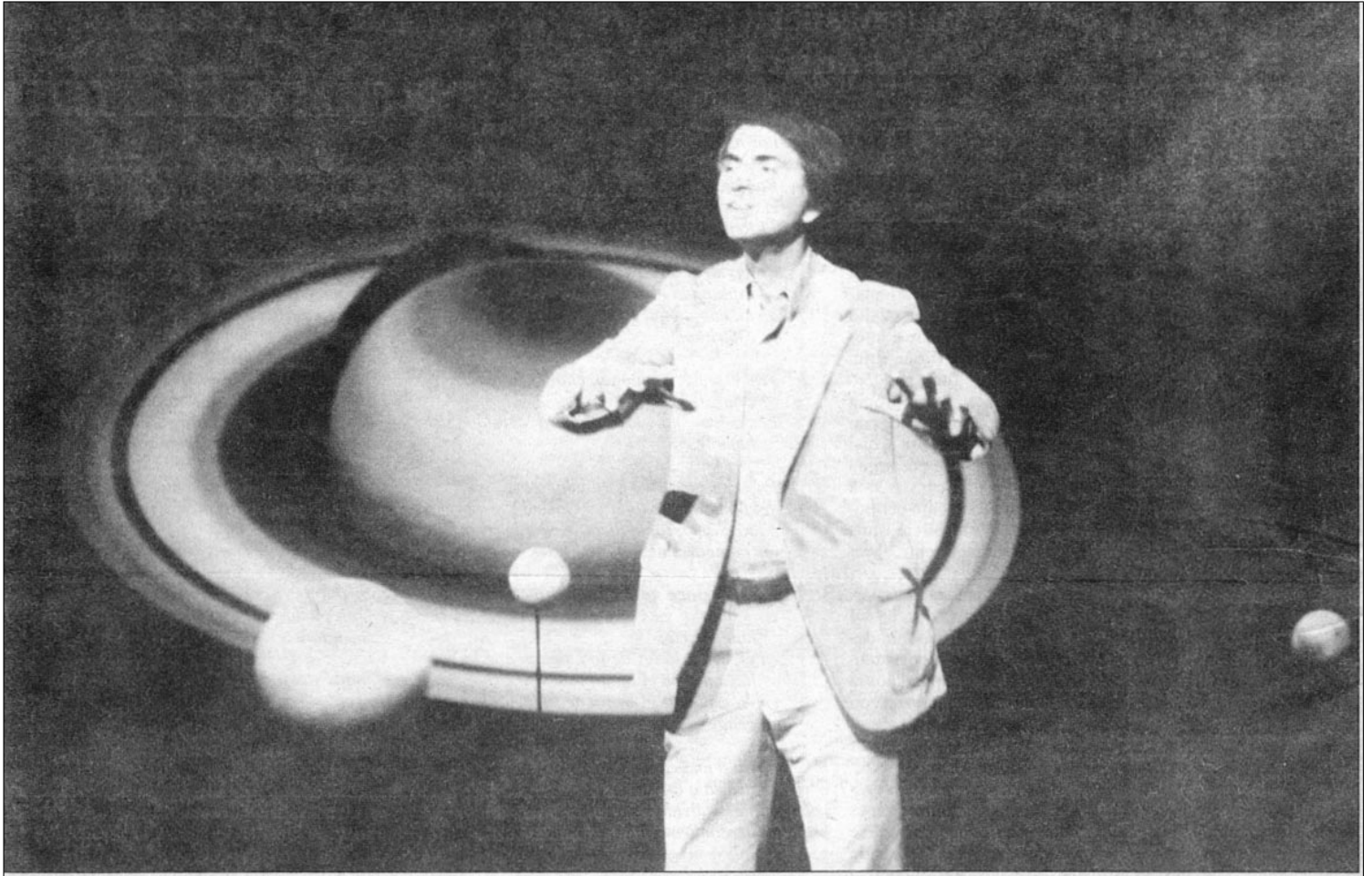
*Hondas son las sombras
proyectadas por el caos
cuando el mal se viste de justicia.
Pero, como Emerson bien dejó sentado,
tampoco son algo que nos deba intimidar:
"No lo entendieron a Pitágoras, a Sócrates,
a Jesús.*

*No lo entendieron a Lutero, a Galileo, a
Copérnico...
Todos los grandes son objeto de la misma
incomprensión".*

*Hagamos brillar nuestro ser auténtico
y encontremos, para eso, la propia dicha
en la felicidad de los demás...
¡Demos a conocer la alegría suprema de los
bodhisattvas,
sumemos nuestras fuerzas y respaldemos
el avance unos pasos más,
los pasos que restan hacia el nuevo siglo!*

*Yo también continuaré, en todo el mundo,
con mi labor:
tender puentes entre las ideas,
sublimar las diferencias
entre pueblos, lugares y creencias
hasta convertirlas en amor fraternal,
para que esta tierra y aquel lugar
de par en par se abran y florezcan.
Yo también continuaré esta tarea
y, entonces,
el siglo del renacimiento se desplegará,
arrobador en su brillo deslumbrante.*

Awakened to the Cosmos



AP PHOTO/FILES

Astronomer Carl Sagan, a gifted storyteller who extolled and explored the grandeur and mystery of the universe in lectures, books and an acclaimed TV series, died Dec. 20, 1996, at age 62 after a two-year battle with bone marrow disease. Dr. Sagan believed that 'science is never finished' — the work he started will certainly continue.

By ERNIE LAUSTEN
PHOENIX CORRESPONDENT

We are made of star stuff," astronomer Carl Sagan said. "We are, each of us, a multitude. Within us is a little universe."

Dr. Sagan, who died Dec. 20, 1996, was perhaps the best, most humanistic science teacher in the world. His books, lectures, documentaries and TV appearances inspired millions to the wonder and importance of science — to that realization that "we are, each of us, a multitude."

He was most famous for his PBS series *Cosmos*, which described our fundamental connection to the planets in the solar system, the birth and death of stars, the origin and evolution of life on Earth, life's molecular building blocks and the expansion of the universe. *Cosmos* introduced the scientists who first discovered

'If we can't think for ourselves, if we're unwilling to question authority, then we're just putty in the hands of those in power.' — Carl Sagan

what we know, and quite often, their struggles with authority. It has been seen by more than 500 million people.

Dr. Sagan's last book, *The Demon-Haunted World*, was released last summer. In it, he passionately argues for the necessity of education. Now that we are so dependent on science and technology, he calls the public's ignorance "a prescription for disaster," giving many examples of how easily people are consumed by superstition and mysticism when they are uneducated.

"If we can't think for ourselves, if we're unwilling to question authority, then we're just putty in the hands of those in power," he warns.

Carl Sagan will be remembered for the twin philosophies by which he lived and taught: That "we make our world significant by the courage of our questions and the depth of our answers" and that "science is never finished." W



NEWS FLASH!

Thank you for all your support of our "Friends for Peace" newsletter!

Beginning with this issue, "Friends for Peace" will be printed every month at about the same time each month.

This is your newsletter — please send us your experiences, poems, art work, pictures, stories, etc. We need lots and lots of information. Remember — this is the newsletter where all the Boys and Girls Group members share with each other.

Send your information to:

"Friends for Peace"
c/o Lisa Kirk
SGI-USA
525 Wilshire Blvd.
Santa Monica, CA 90401

New Year's Greetings From Around the Nation



Maui Boys and Girls Group members say, 'Hauoli Makahiki Hou' (Happy New Year) to their fellow 'friends for peace.'

Boys and Girls Group Study Program Approved

In our last issue of "Friends for Peace" (see the Dec. 6, 1996, *World Tribune*), we announced our Boys and Girls Group study program, pending approval from the SGI-USA's Central Executive Committee (CEC). The CEC approved our study topics at its December 1996 meeting.

Here are the topics once again:

- JanuaryDiversity (appreciate each other)
- FebruarySense of Responsibility
- MarchCause and Effect
- AprilThe SGI
- MayCourage
- JuneMentor and Disciple
- JulySeeking Spirit
- AugustFriends, Respect
- SeptemberThree Basic Practices of
Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism
- OctoberAppreciation
- NovemberHistory and Important People
- DecemberConviction and Determination

We need your HELP! Please send us any study material you want to suggest for the above topics — for example, a story or poem you may have written or used somewhere else, a game (like a wordsearch) or an experience you may have relating to one of the topics. Send them to:

Palma Odano
10942 Barman Avenue
Culver City, CA 90230
(or call her at 310-202-7964)

Thanks a bunch!



The New York #2 Joint Territory Boys and Girls Group in New Jersey send greetings from their 2nd annual Halloween celebration.



Nashville Boys and Girls Group members, at a July 1996 swim party, send 'warm' greetings to all their friends.

We need YOU to make "Friends for Peace" a success. Tell us your stories, send us your art. Make this YOUR newsletter!

After the death of Ricky's parents, nightmares haunted him. During the flashbacks of his parents' car crash, he could picture his parents going right



through the windshield. "Why?" he said out loud. "Why did it have to happen to my parents?"

He'd already wasted two weeks of summer crying about his parents. To-

day, his Aunt Susan and Uncle Bob were watching television in the front room.

Ricky sat on his bed. "They don't really care about me." He burst into tears.

The next day, he stayed in bed thinking about his parents. He went outside and closed the sliding glass door behind him. He walked down the steps of his balcony. He looked at all the evergreen trees around the perimeter of his rectangular back yard. He lay down on the hammock and noticed he couldn't hear anything but the birds in the distance and every once in a while a car. Nothing was moving. He started to doze but was immediately awakened by some strange noise. It wasn't the birds or cars. He slowly walked toward the noise. It sounded like a big laser, yet very soft. He looked around the tree where the noise was coming from. Nothing was there. He went back to the hammock, lay down and went to sleep.

When he awoke, he thought he was still in his dream. He looked to his left and to his right. He jumped at what he saw!

An old man with odd green eyes was looking at him. "Ah, you're awake," said the man.

Ricky was about to scream, but he couldn't. Something stopped him. He stood up to the man as if he were no stranger. "What's your name?" Ricky asked.

"My name is Zoris," the man said with a bow. "I've come to save you."

"From what?"

"From the Mirror of Sadness. I've been watching you."

Ricky stepped back. "You were the one who made that noise, weren't you?"

"Yes," he said. "I'll get right to the point. You've been sad because your parents died. The Mirror almost got you. Now I've come to save you. Don't look into the Mirror of Sadness. It will suck you in; you can't escape. I'm going to prevent that by telling you what you must do. Number one: Face your worst nightmare. Number two: Never give up. Number three: Remember that you're never alone."

Ricky thought this old man was strange, but he seemed to be telling the truth. "What does that mean?" he asked.

Zoris laughed. "You'll find out."

The Mirror of Sadness

ART AND STORY BY DANIEL C. COLMAN, 10

Los Angeles

Don't look into the mirror of misfortune. The sadness will grab you as if an octopus was grabbing you. It sucks you right in and there is no chance of getting out. The sadness will overpower you until you are actually a part of its evil power. It is easy to be sad, so it is easy to be sucked in. Don't look into the mirror of misfortune. You'll regret it. Men and women are fighting an everlasting battle against its sadness. Those who give up will be sucked in. You must fight back. Resist its power. Never say it's too strong, because it's not how you look on the outside, it's how you look on the inside. It's not your physical strength, it's your heart. Don't let it get you down. You have to face your fears. It will get you down at your weakest spot. That's why you have to resist.



The next night, Ricky had a dream. In his dream he was still in his bed and awake. He got up to get a glass of water, but he stopped; something caught his eye outside. The object shined and glistened like the rays of the sun. It seemed to disappear. Then it reappeared in his room in front of his own eyes. He saw it clearly; it was a mirror. It had a gold frame with gargoyles imprinted on it. The mirror was so clear and clean that anyone could see themselves perfectly from far away.

An evil-looking face with two horns on the sides of his head and two black bug eyes

appeared in the mirror. The demon looked directly into Ricky's eyes. "You will soon be a part of the sadness. Just sit back. The adventure has just begun."

Ricky remembered what Zoris said about the Mirror of Sadness. He was facing his worst nightmare. The evil face disappeared and was replaced by his parents. He gasped at what he saw. His parents were driving in their car talking to each other. The mirror now showed him the car crash. He saw his parents flying through the windshield. Then Ricky closed his eyes, trying to forget the horrible accident. But then he remembered Zoris' words, "Never give up hope."

Ricky opened his eyes. "That was in the past. The nightmare will not haunt me anymore."

The evil face replaced his parents in the mirror. "You will always feel sadness, because you are the only one out there with no parents."

Ricky shouted: "I'm not alone! There are other kids who lost their parents. They overcame the sadness. And I have, too!"

The demon screamed and exploded into thousands of pieces. The Mirror of Sadness was shattered.

The next morning Aunt Susan shook Ricky to wake him. He slowly opened his eyes, surprised to see his aunt's face. Ricky felt strange because she usually never cared enough to wake him up.

She whispered: "We're going for a walk on the beach. Want to come?"

"Sure," he said smiling.

Aunt Susan, Uncle Bob and Ricky walked on the beach and talked like they were good friends. After a long walk down by the water's edge, Aunt Susan asked, "Ricky, would you like to go home for lunch now?"

Ricky looked around. "Yes, but first I want to say hi to a good friend."

Aunt Susan and Uncle Bob watched Ricky walk towards an old man.

Ricky shook hands with Zoris. "I thought you were from another planet."

"Yes, actually I am. I'm just staying here taking care of more kids like you."

"Thank you so much. I did what you said and now I am not afraid to face my parents' death." Ricky hugged the old man.

After a good lunch of chicken soup and Caesar salad, Ricky took out the picture of his parents that he had locked up in his safe. He looked

at them and smiled.



THE
END



Ashley Dawley (front) and friends.

Running for Class Secretary

ASHLEY DAWLEY, 12
Philadelphia

Hello. I am 12 years old and in the 7th grade. I live in Philadelphia and I have the good fortune to go to a really good school. When I was in the 6th grade, I wanted to run for a class officer, but since I was new to the school, I didn't think I would win so I didn't run. When I got to the 7th grade, I thought I was popular enough to make class secretary, so I ran. For the election, I asked my mom to help me write a speech that rhymed. That night, and the next night before the election, I chanted and did gongyo with my mom.

I also go to meetings and I am active in the Youth Orchestra. Recently, I participated in an original play that we performed at the Cultural Extravaganza for the Boys and Girls Group. It was a really fun

meeting, where the kids did everything, sharing their talents with the rest of the joint territory.

When the day came to vote, it was very intense. There was another girl running against me, and she really wanted to win. She tried to convince me not to say the speech I had prepared, because when she went up before the class, she didn't have a campaign speech. When I got up there, my speech was the bomb!

My friend Nancy and I were so excited. My teacher read off the votes. We were tied, with one more vote to read. He said my name, and I was so happy. I was class secretary for the first time in my life, and I won by one point! I came home and told my mom. She was so proud and so were my father and my two older brothers. Next year I will run for president. **FP**

Chanting for the Happiness of a Good Friend

DREW PROSSER, 3

Overland Park, Kans.

I just turned 3 on Oct. 2. When my friend Zachary was at my house to play, he started crying while we were fighting over a toy. He cried so much that his father had to come pick him up, and he didn't want to come back to play with me.

I chanted with my mother for Zachary to be happy and for

him to want to come back to my house. And guess what? It worked! Zachary came back last week and this time he didn't cry! I told Zachary that I chanted for him. **FP**



Drew Prosser

Trying One More Time

MOLLY DAISY SCARPINE, 8

Long Beach, Calif.

I am 8 years old. I have been learning Irish dancing for four years. We have a lot of competitions all over the state every year. At first, I would win, but then for a long time I couldn't ever win. My teacher didn't teach me anything new and my friends were all getting ahead of me. I felt really bad, like I didn't want to go to dancing any more.

My mom asked me to try one more time. I decided to chant every day of the week before the next competition.

My mom told me it would make me confident and bright. It was great! I won four medals. So now I chant before every competition.

In six months, I caught up with and passed my friends. At the last competition, out of nine dances, I won seven first places



Molly Daisy Scarpine

and two thirds. Chanting always works. Chanting rules! **FP**

'Chant to the Gohonzon First'

JENNIFER KUEHU, 8

Waianae, Hawaii

Aloha. I am 8 years old. I would like to share my benefits with you. This fall I started to play soccer. We practice twice a week, and we play games on Saturdays.

At the beginning, I was not so good. I would get scared to kick the ball in the goal. My grades

were also not so great. My mom and dad said that if I don't do my 100 percent and bring my grades up, then they will take me out from soccer.

My mom said that if I want to see results, then I should try chanting to the Gohonzon.

I started a daimoku chart and chanted five minutes every day. My determination was to score goals in soccer, to have good grades and

to be a good daughter.

After two weeks, I saw results. I scored my first goal, for which I got a pin. My first quarter grades were great and my mom and dad were very happy.

My mom says that I am a good daughter and to always be a responsible person.

Now I know that if I need help, I should chant to the Gohonzon first. **FP**

