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
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FEBRUARY 5, 1999



Photo by GREGORY NAKASUJI

1999 Peace Proposal Calls for an End to War

SGI President Ikeda calls for a transition from a culture of war to a culture of peace in his latest peace proposal, which was released Jan. 26, SGI Day. Describing the culture of war as "a chain reaction of revenge," the greatest victims of which are children, he urges the swift adoption and ratification of an international treaty banning the use of children soldiers and proposes a three-point plan to curtail the thriving arms trade. However, to truly delegitimize war, President Ikeda asserts, the key is creating bonds of mutual trust and collaboration through the promotion of dialogue — not only among governments but among ordinary citizens. We have already seen, he adds, the move away from a world dominated by military power to one dictated by economics. But he contends that the law of the jungle still rules, and that a more humanistic capitalism must be created for the next century. The full text of the 1999 peace proposal will appear in an upcoming *Living Buddhism*. 

SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S ESSAY

'My Thanks for Offering Your Homes As Meeting Places'

President Ikeda offers his deepest appreciation to all SGI members who hold SGI activities in their homes. 'The homes and venues our fellow members make available for Gakkai activities are precious places of Buddhist practice and centers for nurturing human potential,' he writes. 'They are beacons for the widespread propagation of the Daishonin's teachings in our communities and majestic citadels of the people's victory.'

By **DAISAKU IKEDA**
SGI PRESIDENT

1998 was another remarkable year of triumphs for the Soka Gakkai — a year in which we again worked hard to revitalize society by spreading the ideals of a new humanism.

The wellspring of all these efforts is the discussion meeting, an oasis where people

can refresh and revitalize their lives.

I express my deepest appreciation to all those who have offered the use of their precious homes for meetings.

It is impossible to fully describe the trouble that these sincere members go to in making their homes available for this purpose. It is no easy

thing to arrange parking space for automobiles or bicycles. Or to ensure that the sound of gongyo and Gakkai songs does not disturb the neighbors. They also need the full understanding and cooperation of their whole family.

All Buddhas and Buddhist gods — the protective functions of the universe — are

surely praising these generous individuals who welcome members and guests to their home with warm smiles, sparing no effort to make sure all feel comfortable.

In the "Acceleration" chapter of *The New Human Revolution*, volume 6, I wrote about the moving story of revitalization that happened in a shanty-

town known as Dokan in Fukuoka, Kyushu, the southernmost of Japan's four main islands. The area was filled with an unsightly array of tightly packed, dilapidated lean-tos, but lively discussion meetings were conducted there, just as in
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STUDY

Lisa Jones discusses the oneness of body and mind.

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President Ikeda's three new mottoes for Soka University of America.

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PERSPECTIVE

What Sean P. Grover did when chanting became a chore.

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More Obstacles

By PATRICIA FORD

SGI-USA YOUTH DIVISION STUDY COMMITTEE

No one born human, whether high or low, is free from sorrow and distress. Yet, troubles vary according to the time and differ according to the person. In this respect, sorrow is like illness: No matter what malady one may suffer from, as it worsens, he will think that no illness could be more dreadful than his. ("Letter to Konichi-bo," *The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 4, p. 162)

This letter was written to the woman Konichi-bo, a widow who had just lost her son Yashiro. While exiled on Sado Island, she sent



In My Life

NICHIREN DAISHONIN'S WRITINGS IN ACTION

Nichiren Daishonin gifts as offerings to him. He encouraged her to keep faith despite her son's death, sympathizing with her sorrow but at the same time saying that what mattered was how she faced it. He told her that her

son would be saved from evil in his next life by her strong faith.

When I read this quote from the Daishonin to one of his followers, it made me reflect upon my life. I thought to myself, how can I really do human revolution and change myself?

This past year and a half has been the most trying test of my faith ever. A long relationship ended with someone I really cared about, and I have had problems with my friends continuously.

I became really angry and thought to myself, I must have really made some bad causes in the past!

I am also moving to the town where I go to school, so I won't have to commute anymore; I have had some anxieties about this. Will I make new friends, do well in school, and be able to handle living totally on my own financially?

I know, reading this quote, that whatever happens, I will always have obstacles, sorrows and distresses. I also know that I can always chant about them and overcome them just like Konichi-bo did after receiving this encouragement from Nichiren Daishonin. **W**

ONENESS OF BODY AND MIND ("SHIKISHIN FUNI")

No Degree of Separation

WHAT A Concept

ON THE BASIC IDEAS
OF NICHIREN DAISHONIN'S BUDDHISM

By LISA JONES

CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Buddhist texts and teachers talk about Buddhahood as being unfathomably joyful and beyond our ability to imagine. It's difficult, though, to teach others about something that defies standard methods of conceptualization. So in a way, Buddhist concepts are like a bridge; they represent a struggle to explain and describe the life-condition of Buddhahood in terms that we can grasp.

Oneness of body and mind (Jpn *shikishin funi*, literally body, mind: two, not two) explains that our lives are both intangible (spiritual) and tangible (material). This isn't news, of course: The mind-body connection as it relates to healing and illness is widely accepted, and most of us have experienced that a sullen or a happy mood can affect our physical well-being. Buddhist practice enables us to create harmony between our physical and spiritual aspects, to recover from illness and maintain our health.

On another level, Buddhist practice enables us to attain an awareness that there is

NO separation between physical and spiritual; both are expressed simultaneously in all phenomena of our lives throughout past, present and future. Nichiren Daishonin states that "the oneness of the physical and spiritual aspects is the ultimate reality" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 708).

At its root, oneness of body and mind means that we are one with the single great living entity that is the entire universe.

SGI President Ikeda writes: "Everything in the universe is 'alive.' Everything is an entity of life and death, an entity of the Mystic Law. Even if we look at the material aspect, matter that is scattered throughout the universe as a result of the death of a star will be used in the birth of new stars and in the bodies of biological organisms. It may be that the atoms making up our bodies, too, were once shining as part of a star somewhere. Human beings are children of the stars, of the universe.... The benefit of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo is literally the benefit of the entire universe. It is inexhaustible. Limitless."

Our lives are without beginning or end. This eternity is expressed even in the ever-changing — and seemingly perishable — material aspect of our exist-

ence. To understand this is to accrue great benefit.

The Daishonin writes: "When we revere Myoho-renge-kyo inherent in our own life as the object of worship, the Buddha nature within us is summoned forth and manifested by our chanting of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo; this is what is meant by 'Buddha.' To illustrate, when a caged bird sings, birds who are flying in the sky are thereby summoned and gather around, and when the birds flying in the sky gather

around, the bird in the cage strives to get out. When with our mouths we chant the Mystic Law, our Buddha nature, being summoned, will invariably emerge" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 6, pp. 207-08).

The concept of the oneness of body and mind illustrates, in part, that through the physical action of using our mouths to faithfully chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, our Buddha nature emerges. When we chant, our mind

and body become the Buddha's mind (wisdom) and body (compassionate action).

At its root, oneness of body and mind means we are one with the single great living entity that is the entire universe.

Twenty-two in a series

WHAT ABOUT...?

What Are the Reformist Priests Doing?

By TED MORINO

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

How are the reformist priests now engaged in the kosen-rufu movement with the SGI? The 40-some priests who indignantly left Nichiren Shoshu after Nikken excommunicated the Soka Gakkai in 1991 have been engaged in various activities pointing out the destructive function of the current Nichiren Shoshu priesthood.

For instance, the Association for the Reformation of Nichiren Shoshu, headed up by Gen'ei Kudo — the former chief priest of Myoho-ji, the Los Angeles-area temple — has been putting out a publication called *Reform News (Kaikaku Jiho)*. The newsletter is published on an "as-needed" basis to chronicle the continuing activities of the current Nichiren Shoshu priests, as they deviate from and run counter to the spirit and teachings of Nichiren Daishonin.

This association also publishes a small pamphlet series, *The Pure Stream of the Fuji School (Fuji no seiryu)*, which is geared toward awakening temple mem-

bers to a correct understanding of the Daishonin's Buddhism and the corruption of the Nikken sect. Since these reformist priests operate out of their own temples, they also conduct various ceremonies, including memorial services and funeral services, upon SGI members' requests.

Also, an amalgam of young priests who left Nichiren Shoshu are active with the SGI as the Association of the Youthful Priests for the Reformation of Nichiren Shoshu. They have also taken it as their mission to enlighten temple members to the dangers of their misunderstandings of the Daishonin's Buddhism and to share their own experiences of living within the priesthood.

These two associations work together closely with the SGI organization to protect the kosen-rufu movement. Still fresh in my memory are the efforts of some reformist priests to bring some temple members back to the SGI-USA in recent years.

In the meantime, a so-called temple with a sanctuary was officially opened in Singapore and Ghana, where young

priests were dispatched to handle local religious ceremonial needs and educate people about the temple issue. Two such facilities have also been opened in Japan, one in Kansai and the other in the Chubu region.

One other group, the Association of Nichiren Shoshu Priests Concerned About the Protection of the Law, is headed by Hosho Shiina, a former chief priest of Myosetsu-ji, the New York-area temple. This group, while having some personal ties with priests still within Nichiren Shoshu, is supportive of the SGI and devoted to revealing the evil functions of the Nikken sect.

Reformist priests are often invited to the Soka Gakkai Headquarters Leaders Meetings to keep pace with the Gakkai's rhythm of advancement for kosen-rufu. Says Reverend Kudo: "We will continue to strive to unveil the ills of the Nikken sect and thereby awaken people to the point where they can correctly answer the question 'Who and which organization in the world today has actually promoted kosen-rufu on a global scale?'" **W**

Entrance-Level Exam To Be Held In April

By EUGENE HIRAHARA

SGI-USA STUDY DEPARTMENT LEADER

This April 25 we will be holding the SGI-USA Study Department Entrance-level Examination. I know there are many people who don't even like to hear the word *examination*.

Past experiences with tests — of being judged by their scores and of facing negative consequences for failing — have made it an experience they wish not to repeat. Although examinations are often tools for evaluating a person's knowledge and ability in a particular field or skill, the SGI study examination is intended as a means to encourage us to study Nichiren Daishonin's teachings and deepen our faith and practice. Far more important than the score we receive is the studying itself and what we capture of Nichiren Daishonin's spirit and wisdom in the process. SGI members who have challenged themselves to study in the midst of hectic daily schedules and advanced in their practice even a little as a result are all winners, regardless of the test score.

Study programs and examinations are an important tradition in the history of our organization. In a few recent installments of "The New Human Revolution" that appeared in the *World Tribune*, SGI President Ikeda writes about attending study department exams in Los Angeles in the early 1960s. His character in the novel, Shin'ichi Yamamoto, tells the participants: "Some of you must be wondering why we have to study such difficult Buddhist theory, when surely it's simply enough to chant and receive benefit. Please bear in mind, however, that while correct faith does bring tremendous benefit, it is also fraught with obstacles and difficulties. Unless you have a solid grounding in study, you'll start to have doubts when problems arise" (Jan. 15 *World Tribune*, p. 5).

Of course the spirit and tradition of the SGI's study program originated with Nichiren Daishonin. In his writing "The True Entity of Life," he states: "Exert yourself in the two ways of practice and study. Without practice and study, there can be no Buddhism" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 95). And the Daishonin's immediate successor, Nikko Shonin, also emphasized the importance of study in his writings. In his "Twenty-six Admonitions of Nikko," article 11 states, "Followers of this school should en-

grave the teachings of the Goshō in their lives and thereby inherit the ultimate principles expounded by the master."

Throughout his life, Nichiren Daishonin wrote a multitude of letters addressing a wide variety of issues and principles to people of very diverse circumstances. Some of these are essential doctrinal writings that explain his profound philosophy, and others are compassionate letters of encouragement to disciples facing life-and-death situations. Many contain very clear and concrete instructions and guidance that practitioners can readily apply to their daily lives. All represent his active efforts to lead people — ultimately all of humankind — from misery. The Daishonin's writings are great works of living philosophy and humanity and constitute a clear textbook for living a valuable and courageous life. Nikko Shonin, the Daishonin's successor, carried on his spirit and protected his writings, making clear that they contained the Daishonin's eternal teachings.

Nevertheless, as time passed, the priesthood repeatedly strayed from the founder's spirit and the laity were no longer encouraged to study Buddhism. Naturally, without study there was little or no way for the laity to tell whether the priests were on the right

course or to put the teachings into practice. This is one of the things that the Daishonin was admonishing against in the passage, "Without practice and study, there can be no Buddhism" (MW-1, 95).

It was only with the emergence of the Soka Gakkai and the efforts of its presidents that the spirit of the two ways of practice and study was reborn. As a result, Nichiren Daishonin's teachings have spread throughout the world, as he wrote that they would.

During World War II, the laity was severely persecuted by the military authorities, and the majority of the membership abandoned their faith. President Toda later declared, "Without study, the members didn't really understand faith. They became frightened and were defeated by persecution. It was very unfortunate. I'm determined that mistake will not be repeated."

With this in mind, Mr. Toda published *The Complete Works of Nichiren Daishonin* (Jpn *Goshō Zenshu*), containing over 400 writings. It marked the first time in the 700 years since the Daishonin that such a work was available.

The tradition of the Soka Gakkai's study program evolved through study meetings and examinations. This unique program by which ordinary people master the deep philosophy of Bud-

dism has now expanded to include millions all over the world.

In his current essay series, SGI President Ikeda clarified why the study of the Daishonin's teachings is so important with three points: "First, Buddhist study deepens faith...." he said, and "second, study gives impetus to the advancement of kosen-rufu...." "Third," he concluded, "study is the key to establishing a new humanistic philosophy" (Sept. 25, 1998, *World Tribune*, p.4).

I ask that every responsible leader actively visit each district and group and give their full support and assistance to those taking the exam. Often a "study-buddy" system works well with each person paired with another examinee or small group to study together.

Sample questions, from which the actual exam will be made, have been published in the Jan. 29 *World Tribune*. Reading the exam material, and then going through the sample questions a few at a time until you are familiar with all of them, may be helpful in preparing for the exam. Let's encourage everyone eligible to take the upcoming Entrance-level exam, so that they can deepen their understanding of Buddhism, strengthen their faith and practice for kosen-rufu, and create a firm basis for their personal growth and happiness. ☐



Study Material for April 25 Entrance-Level Exam

Source: SGI-USA Study Program Entrance-Level Textbook

1. "On Attaining Buddhahood" (pp. 6-12; 20-29)
2. "The Real Aspect of the Gohonzon" (pp. 32-43; 47-52)

Source: Learning From the Goshō: The Eternal Teachings of Nichiren Daishonin

3. "Happiness in This World" (pp. 223-46; these pages were reprinted in the December 1997 issue of *Living Buddhism*.)

Source: The Life of Nichiren Daishonin

4. Nichiren's Daishonin's life (pp. 11-18; 56-78; 83-115; these pages were reprinted in the December 1997 issue of *Living Buddhism*.)

Source: Questions and Answers on the Temple Issue (pamphlet)

5. Introduction; Question No. 2; Question No. 4 (pp. 4-6; 9-10; 13-16; these pages were reprinted in the December 1997 issue of *Living Buddhism*.)

New Evidence Presented in Seattle Incident Trial

Scientific tests on Nikken's diary, which was submitted as evidence by his lawyers in the Seattle Incident trial, suggest that Nikken did not tell the truth about his diary during his previous testimony. The test results indicate that a crucial part of the diary entry Nikken testified that he made on March 20, 1963, was actually added at a later date.

Two U.S. forensic experts, David S. Moore and Erich J. Speckin, examined Nikken's diary for the defense and made the finding; the defense team has since submitted their results to the Tokyo District Court (in Nichiren Shoshu's libel suit against the Soka Gakkai over its press coverage of the so-called Seattle Incident).

Under direct examination on Dec. 22, 1997, Nikken claimed that he was in bed by 1:00 a.m. on March 20, 1963, about an hour before the incident — his dispute with prostitutes and subsequent run-in with police — occurred. His cited proof was his diary entry, which ended "Now I am going to sleep. It's 1:00 p.m. now."

(Nikken explained that he sometimes confuses p.m. and a.m.).

The test results indicate that "It's 1:00 p.m. now" was added some time after the next day's entry was recorded. Mr. Speckin, a forensic document analyst and ink-dating specialist, used a high-powered microscope to show that impressions made by the next day's entry, which appears on the reverse side of the page, affected the ink flow in "It's 1:00 p.m. now." This would not have been possible if Nikken had written it when he said that he did.

Another test, conducted by Mr. Moore, a forensic document examiner, employed specially filtered light shone on the page to reveal that the ink used for "It's 1:00 p.m. now" is most likely different from the ink used in the following paragraph, which Nikken testified he wrote at the same time with the same fountain pen.

— JEFF FARR

By DAISAKU IKEDA
SGI PRESIDENT

SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S ESSAY



A REVOLUTION DAWNS

The SGI president remembers 1990, the year that the priesthood tried to take control of the Soka Gakkai and started to negate Nichiren Daishonin's humanistic teachings. 'For the sake of kosen-rufu, we of the Soka Gakkai simply could not allow the Daishonin's teachings to be trampled in this manner,' President Ikeda writes. 'The Daishonin's Buddhism exists for all the world's people. We rallied to defend the Daishonin's spirit, and we rose as one. It marked the dawn of a new religious revolution.'

Beethoven's Ninth Symphony is the roar of the spirit of that great musical genius, who proclaimed, "At the end of suffering, there is joy!" It is a sublime, eternal hymn that links all humanity as brothers and sisters, a rousing paean of the people.

On Dec. 12, 1998, I was fortunate to enjoy once again the Soka University students' performance of the Ninth Symphony, which has now become an annual tradition. It was this same symphony that was performed on Oct. 3, 1990, as a song of victory celebrating Germany's reunification, which was finally attained after such a long, hard struggle.

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It was a few months later, in mid-December 1990, that a document from the Nichiren Shoshu Administrative Office titled "Questions Regarding the Speech of Honorary President Ikeda at the 35th Headquarters Leaders Meeting" was delivered to the Soka Gakkai Headquarters. Among other things, the document claimed that singing "Ode to Joy," the Ninth Symphony's choral section, was slander of the Law; it was tantamount to praising non-Buddhist teachings, to venerating Christianity. The priesthood took exception to the fact that I had suggested at the meeting in question that we put on a large-scale choral performance of "Ode to Joy" in the future.

The Nichiren Shoshu document criticized me for saying things I never said and was an attempt to brand me with the labels of slanderer of the Law and slanderer of the high priest. We sought to discuss these claims with the priesthood, but the cowardly priests hid and refused to come forth to talk.

Then, at the end of 1990, under the pretext of revising Nichiren Shoshu's regulations, they eliminated the position of head of all Nichiren Shoshu lay organizations, the post I held, and effectively dismissed me.

Their aim was clear. They wanted to get me out of the way, to destroy the Soka Gakkai, and, under the cloak of priestly authority, to control all the Gakkai members as if they were their personal slaves.

•••••

The Nikken sect began propounding heretical doctrines

found nowhere in the Nichiren Daishonin's teachings. They declared, for instance, that the high priest and the Dai-Gohonzon are "two indivisible entities of the object of fundamental respect." Their plan was to create a hierarchy of power and control, with the high priest at the apex, followed by the rest of the priesthood, who stood above the lay believers and dominated them.

This was in complete violation of the Daishonin's teachings, which uphold the principles of the dignity and equality of all human beings and state that we are all treasure towers, we are all children of the Buddha.

Further, discriminating in this irrational way against the art and culture that is an expression of our shared humanity is no different from the Nazis' actions in Germany. It signifies a terrible kind of witch-hunt that totally rejects humanity.

If we had allowed the priesthood to do this, the Daishonin's Buddhism would have become a false religion that served only as an instrument of oppression and harm.

It also soon became clear that the Nikken sect was guilty of an astonishing number of violations of the Daishonin's teachings — for example, Nikken, high priest of Nichiren Shoshu, had erected a new ancestral tombstone in a Zen-temple cemetery. Stories of the greed of the clergy in selling their services at funerals and in memorial tablets for the deceased, along with an astonishing number of incidents of corruption and degeneracy — including profligate spending and licentious behavior — surfaced one after another.

PLEASE SEE REVOLUTION, 7



A chorus in the Olympic Stadium, Nagano, Japan, sings 'Ode to Joy' for the opening ceremonies of the 1998 Winter Olympics, Feb. 7, 1998. The chorus was joined via satellite by choruses in New York, Berlin, Sydney, Beijing and Cape Town.

World
TRIBUNE

The
SGI-USA's
Weekly
Newspaper

The *World Tribune* (692-720) is published weekly by the SGI-USA, 606 Wilshire Blvd., PO Box 1427 Santa Monica, CA 90406-1427; (310) 260-8900; FAX (310) 260-8910; E-mail: wt@sgi-usa.org Subscriptions Office: (800) 835-4558; FAX (310) 260-8970; E-mail: SGIUSUBS@aol.com

Periodical Postage Paid at Santa Monica, CA, and at additional mailing offices. Return To: SGI-USA Subscriptions, 606 Wilshire Blvd., PO Box 1427 Santa Monica, CA 90406-1427

Subscription Rates (subject to state taxes) \$15 for Three Months; \$28 for Six Months; \$50 for One Year; \$85 for Two Years; \$110 for Three Years.

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the new HUMAN REVOLUTION

a novelized history of the soka gakkai

'FRESH GROWTH'

VOLUME 7, CHAPTER 2, PARTS 25-26

'I don't think that the old me would have been able to handle losing the husband I loved and having to fend for myself in America with two small children,' Masako Clarke says, concluding her experience at the America West General Meeting. President Ikeda explains: 'A golden glow emanates from those whose hearts are ablaze with a powerful sense of mission. It serves as a beacon of courage and hope, capable of transforming even the most painful, sorrowful darkness into a realm of brilliant light.'

By DAISAKU IKEDA
SGI PRESIDENT

Masako Clarke wiped away her tears and tried to continue, but her voice choked up once more. "I'm sorry," she said to the audience and turned her gaze to a seat in the front row of the hall's ground level. On it was placed a large framed picture of her husband.

She had so wished for the two of them to attend this America West General Meeting with President Shin'ichi Yamamoto together. But now that her husband was gone,

she had decided to bring along his picture, so that he would be there symbolically. Seeing her husband's face, she lifted her head and began speaking again with renewed composure.

"I don't think that the old me would have been able to handle losing the husband I loved and having to fend for myself in America with two small children," she said. "But I have the Gohonzon and the support of many wonderful members.

My moping about would only grieve my husband on Eagle Peak. Instead, I know that my striving with pas-

sionate commitment to spread Nichiren Daishonin's teachings will draw his cheers of support and approval.

"My husband gave me two beautiful children," she concluded. "It is my responsibility as a mother to raise them to be fine young people who can contribute to kosen-rufu. Above all, I also have a mission to realize the widespread propagation of the Daishonin's Buddhism in Seattle and throughout America. So that I may fulfill that precious mission, I am determined to live with courage and strength, and to become a model of unsurpassed happiness for all to behold. Thank you."

Her words were met with loud, sustained applause.

A golden glow emanates from those whose hearts are ablaze with a powerful sense of mission. It serves as a beacon of courage and hope, capable of transforming even the most painful, sorrowful darkness into a realm of brilliant light.

Masako Clarke's experience and her brave resolve had deeply moved the audience.

Speeches by the leaders accompanying Shin'ichi were next on the agenda, after which new leadership appointments and additions to the U.S. organizational structure were announced. Introduced first were Nagayasu Masaki and Emiko Haruyama, who were appointed America General Chapter leader and women's division leader, respectively. Next, the appointments for several newly created positions were announced: Akio Ishibashi was named general chapter vice leader, a position to be held in addition to his responsibility as Los Angeles Chapter leader, while Yukiko Gilmore was made general chapter women's division vice leader concurrently with her position as San Francisco Chapter leader.

In the youth division, meanwhile, Yuji Nakahara was appointed vice leader of the young men's division North America General Corps, and Chikako Hayashida was named the young women's division leader for Los Angeles Chapter.

The establishment of several new districts for Los Angeles Chapter was also announced along with the appointment of several men's division members as their respective district leaders, a new development that particularly drew Shin'ichi's attention.

After the newly appointed leaders rose in turn to powerfully voice their resolve to work for kosen-rufu, Kiyoshi Jujo took the podium to announce the plans to open a Soka Gakkai community center in Los Angeles. He explained that the new center would also house the offices of the America General Chapter and the Los Angeles Bureau of the *Seikyo Shimbun*, the Soka Gakkai newspaper in Japan. He heartily congratulated the members on this development, which signified that the movement to spread the Daishonin's Buddhism was progressing steadily in the United States.

When it came time for Shin'ichi to speak, he greeted the audience with a warm smile and said in English, "Good evening!"

Reverting to Japanese, he continued: "It's good to see you again. Many thanks to those of you who have traveled from as far away as Seattle and San Francisco especially for today's meeting. Seeing all of you here, your lives filled with benefit and joy, makes me deeply feel that spring has at last come to Los Angeles.

"Only after surviving the harsh trial of winter can seeds burst into fresh growth in the springtime," he said. "Similarly, only by surmounting hardships can we be victorious in life and savor real, lasting joy. On the other hand, if we shun difficulties and lose our challenging spirit, then all we'll be left with in the end is failure and regret. Therefore, I propose that we blaze a trail through the forest of difficulty we find ourselves in, and that tomorrow we work again energetically for kosen-rufu!

"My colleagues from Japan have already stressed the most important points," he said, "so I now want to open

up the floor to any questions you may have. If there's anything at all you want to ask, please don't hesitate."

Several hands shot up. The questions were diverse, ranging from points of study, such as a clarification of the concept of the realm of the five components [form, perception, conception, volition and consciousness], to more general inquiries about how to approach Christian customs and traditions in the United States. One person wanted to know why a number of old Japanese military songs were included in the repertoire of Gakkai songs and regularly sung by the members.

In the early days of the organization, there being none among the membership who were songwriters or composers, the Soka Gakkai members often took well-known songs — some of them old military tunes — adapted the lyrics somewhat, and sang them as Gakkai songs.

Shin'ichi replied: "Even if the tune is the same, the lyrics can make a world of difference to a song's spirit. Similarly, even if the lyrics are the same, the spirit with which they're taken can make a profound difference to the song's meaning. In the early days of our organization we may have sung old military songs, but we sang them to express our commitment to kosen-rufu, to the realization of world peace and the happiness of humanity. It is because the members could in fact appreciate the spirit in which these songs were sung that they have struck such a strong chord in their hearts and become an enduring tradition of the Soka Gakkai."

To be continued

Daisaku Ikeda appears in the novel as Shin'ichi Yamamoto. The events take place in 1963. Illustration by Ken'ichiro Uchida.

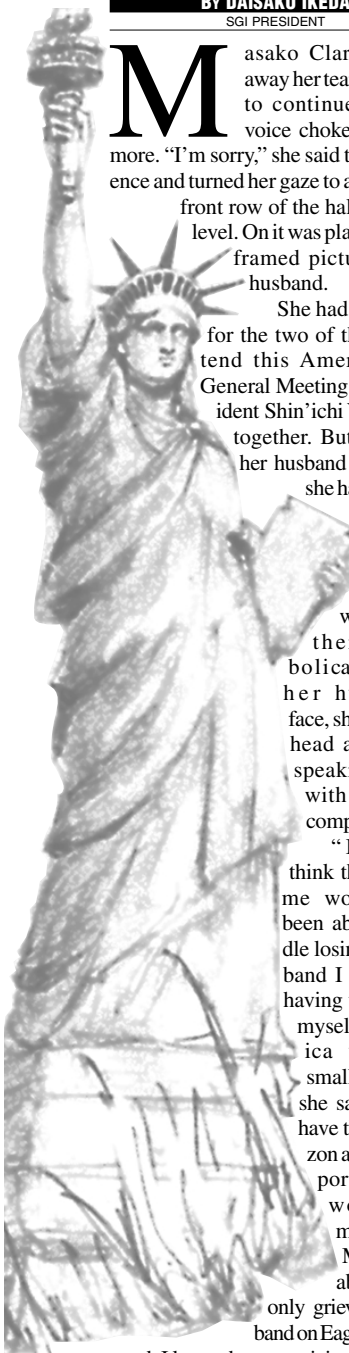
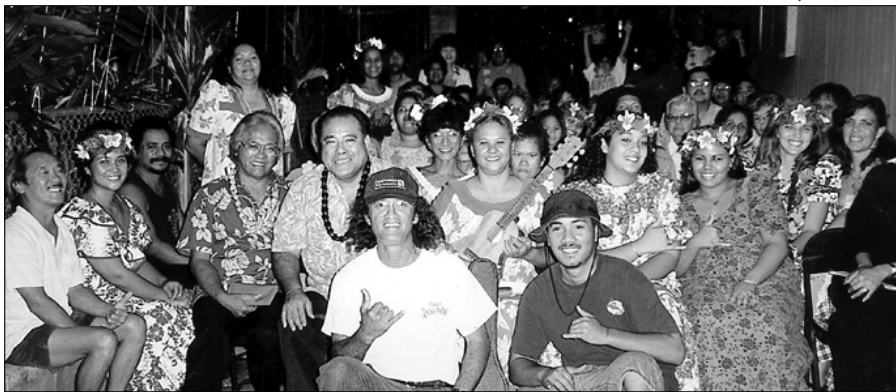


Photo by GAYLE SYVERSON



Haleiwa District members gather at the home of Louise and Eddie Auwae on the island of Oahu, Hawaii.

ESSAY, FROM PAGE 1

other parts of Japan.

A Soka Gakkai group leader and his wife, who made their living by running a fresh fish shop, offered their home — a small, refurbished warehouse — for meetings. Because most of the participants came barefoot, being too poor to own shoes, the tatami-mat flooring of their home soon became soiled with mud and grime and had to be replaced several times a year.

But the group leader and his wife never uttered a single complaint. They were solely concerned with serving their fellow members.

Many of the members were also too poor to have three square meals a day, so the group leader and his wife would make a simple stew of leftover fish and serve it to them. They even invited members to use their bath.

They were the first residents of Dokan to have a real home. Everyone was happy for them and used to say, "You've got yourself a palace," as proud of it as if it were their own. The group leader and his wife said they would never forget members telling them later, with deep appreciation, that attending meetings at their home had inspired them to strive in faith and see the hard times through.

.....

The "Benefits of Responding with Joy" chapter of the Lotus Sutra teaches that those who, during a discussion of Buddhism, make room for others to sit will acquire immense benefits. How much greater, then, are the benefits of those who actually provide meeting places for such a discussion! They will surely be infinite, immeasurable.

Mrs. Chieko Nakagawa, a women's division member who has made available for Gakkai meetings a private community

center located on the banks of Fuefuki River in the town of Isawacho, Yamanashi Prefecture, in central Japan, has experienced such benefits. Mrs. Nakagawa's late husband, Kiminosuke, started out after the war as an itinerant clothing salesman, eventually establishing his own clothing shop. All went well until he was struck down by illness, and their life became very hard.

In 1961, the Nakagawas joined the Soka Gakkai. From that point, they opened their home for discussion meetings and succeeded each month in introducing new people to faith in Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism. Mr. Nakagawa regained his health, and his business came back on track.

I visited the Nakagawa home in 1967. "I want you to become as happy as can be," I said. Tears came to the couple's eyes, and they voiced their strong resolve to spread the Daishonin's teachings in their community. It was at that time, I have heard, that Mr. and Mrs. Nakagawa decided to build a private meeting hall that members could use freely, without constraint, in the cause of furthering the flow of kosen-rufu in their area.

.....

Their determination, their creed, was not "What can the Gakkai do for us?" but "What can we do for the Gakkai?" They worked and prayed with all their might to realize their dream, and in 1982, 15 years after my visit, that dream at last became a reality. They built a magnificent private community center, large enough to seat 350 people.

Mr. Nakagawa continued to win over his illness and demonstrate the power of faith. He finally passed away eight years ago, at the age of 81.

Mrs. Nakagawa is 84, and she

continues to energetically look after the community center. She enjoys a happy, fulfilled existence and still encourages and supports her juniors in faith.

Last October, I sent her a poem as an expression of my thanks for her long years of devoted service:

*May the fragrance of
happiness
Pervade Nakagawa Castle
On the Fuefuki River*

.....

Mr. Makiguchi also opened his home as a base for Gakkai activities, making available for that purpose two small, adjoining ground-floor rooms. Mr. Toda, too, even after resigning from the directorship of the Soka Gakkai, when his business fell into dire financial hardship, continued to hold discussion meetings at his home. The talks he gave during those times about the theory of life remain engraved in my memory with great clarity.

When I was still single and living in a one-room apartment, I held discussion meetings in my tiny home as well. Four or five people completely filled the space. I couldn't help but feel sorry for those who attended in such cramped conditions, but the meetings were energetic and enthusiastic.

I spoke about the teachings of Buddhism with all my heart, striving earnestly to bring others to embrace faith in the Gohonzon. I firmly believed that, no matter how small and shabby my room might have been, the gatherings I held there were a modern assembly of the Lotus Sutra.

After getting married and soon thereafter moving to a small house in Kobayashi-cho in Tokyo's Ota Ward, my wife and I continued to open our home for discussion meetings. When our children came along, it offered

Poems to Behind-the-Scenes Groups

SGI President Ikeda wrote the following poems for the Soka Group and Gajokai on Jan. 10.

To the Soka Group

*Resolutely holding high
The treasure-sword of Soka,
Young heroes,
Take the lead!*

...

*Able friends of propagation,
Precious young people of ability,
I boldly entrust to you
Kosen-rufu.*

...

*Heroes of Soka,
Possessing a great, lofty mission,
May the Buddhist gods protect you!*

To the Gajokai

*For fulfilling your great mission
As Gajokai of the Headquarters,
All Buddhas and Buddhist gods
Will praise you.*

...

*My precious friends,
Are you not kings?
You who have nobly devoted
The time of your youth
To the Mystic Law.*

...

*Now stand up
With courage and justice,
Gajokai,
Adorning your youthful years
As the world's finest.*

The Soka Group and Gajokai are behind-the-scenes groups within the young men's division. The Soka Group support members at activities by handling parking and traffic control as well as public safety outside the centers; in doing so they act as a liaison between the community and the SGI. The Gajokai provide support inside SGI activity centers. They help create an enjoyable and safe environment through maintaining room setup, including seating and sound systems, the centers' alarm and fire security systems and general upkeep.

them an excellent way to experience the wonderful world of the Soka Gakkai firsthand.

.....

The homes and venues our fellow members make available for Gakkai activities are precious places of Buddhist practice and centers for nurturing human potential. They are beacons for the widespread propagation of the Daishonin's teachings in our communities and majestic citadels of the people's victory.

I chant every day, with a feel-

ing of the deepest gratitude, for all who offer their homes or other facilities for this purpose. I pray: "May the places you provide in service of kosen-rufu endure eternally as great palaces of benefit and good fortune. May your families prosper. Thank you, thank you so much!"

This series is published as "Thoughts on The New Human Revolution" in the Seikyo Shimbun.

REVOLUTION, FROM PAGE 4

For the sake of kosen-rufu, we of the Soka Gakkai simply could not allow the Daishonin's teachings to be trampled in this manner. The Daishonin's Buddhism exists for all the world's people. We rallied to defend the Daishonin's spirit, and we rose as one. It marked the dawn of a new religious revolution.

•••••

On Nov. 28 the following year, 1991, the Nikken sect excommunicated the Soka Gakkai. What madness!

It was the Soka Gakkai that had always upheld the Daishonin's teachings to the letter. The mask of the priests was ripped away by this action, and their true nature as the minions of hell was revealed.

But the Soka Gakkai members did not quail. We knew, from our reading of the Daishonin's writings, that this madness of Nikken was an example of the Devil of the Sixth Heaven

having entered the body of a high-ranking priest in an effort to destroy Buddhism.

The Soka Gakkai is an organization of people completely dedicated to advancing the widespread propagation of the Mystic Law, thereby carrying out the Buddha's will and decree. The Nikken sect, on the other hand, in excommunicating the Soka Gakkai with its own hand cut off the true lineage of faith and returned to the vile behavior it had exhibited during World War II, when it denigrated the Daishonin's spirit and utterly betrayed his teachings.

For the Gakkai, the excommunication released us from the chains by which the envious, scheming Nikken sect had sought to control the Daishonin's followers and allowed us to claim our true spiritual independence.

•••••

Seven years have passed since then. The outcome of the

struggle of good and evil and the workings of the law of cause and effect have been strict and uncompromising. The decline of the crazed, destructive Nikken sect is clear.

The victims, unfortunately, are the lay believers who practice with the temple, who are not aware of the evil heresy of the Nikken sect and have been deceived by the priests.

We declare confidently to all: Look at the exciting, joyful activities of our comrades spreading the Daishonin's teachings throughout the world! Listen to their bright song of hope and life, filled to overflowing with benefit!

The new humanism of the Soka Gakkai, derived from the Daishonin's Buddhism, is linking people around the globe, transcending national and ethnic boundaries, and earning praise from all as the light of hope for the new century.

Leaders of diverse fields who seek a philosophy of humanism and peace come to the Gakkai in a constant stream from all over the world. Isn't this brilliant proof of our truth and rightness?

•••

Most despicable of all are those former Soka Gakkai members who have betrayed their comrades in the organization and the Gakkai itself, although they owe us so much, in order to curry favor with the priests. Simón Bolívar, the great liberator of Latin America, once said, "Forgetting one's debt is the greatest crime a person can commit." First Soka Gakkai President Tsunesaburo Makiguchi used to say, "The final fate of all traitors is a degrading story of suffering and ignominy."

Second President Josei Toda also took a harsh view of ingratitude and treachery. Though in one respect he seemed easygoing and an accepting man, he was very strict about the conduct and behavior of youth. He believed that the time



President Benjamin William Mkapa of the United Republic of Tanzania and SGI President Ikeda discuss the Century of Africa, Dec. 14, 1998.

SGI President Meets With Tanzanian Head of State

SGI President Ikeda met with President Benjamin William Mkapa of the United Republic of Tanzania on Dec. 14, 1998, at the Seikyo Shimbun Building in Tokyo. Citing President Ikeda's prediction that the 21st century will be the Century of Africa, the Tanzanian leader affirmed that a new day is indeed beginning to dawn for the continent. He pledged to devote himself to transforming fear into confidence, destruction into creation and hatred into compassion. President Ikeda said that President Mkapa has earned great repute for ridding his government of corruption and reforming the civil service system, as well as transitioning his country to a market economy and slashing inflation. He further mentioned Tanzania's instrumental role in advancing regional peace and stability by its acceptance of more refugees than any other country in Africa. Mr. Ikeda praised President Mkapa for urging people to call him their comrade, his stressing that everyone — president and citizen alike — is equal.

of one's youth is vital in building the foundation for the rest of one's life. When it came to the essentials, he could be quite ferocious.

Once, one of his disciples told a lie. When Mr. Toda learned of this, he took the youth to task, thundering: "Are lying and deceit any way for a young person to behave?! Have you become a fox?" He was the epitome of paternal strictness.

He once told a young man who was always maneuvering and striving to look good in the organization without making any effort: "If you keep this up, you're going to come to a pitiful end in life. I can discern no desire on your part to live with decency and honor. You are deceitful, and in the end, you're the one who will suffer for it." He said this out of great compassion, out of a deep wish to prevent the young man from going farther astray and losing his faith.

How wonderful it is, in every age, for a person to have a true

teacher!

Mr. Toda often used to say about traitors: "Leave those lowly losers be. Betraying the Gakkai is betraying the Daishonin. In the end, they'll receive the punishment of the Buddha [negative retribution in accord with the strict workings of the law of cause and effect], you'll see."

•••••

Right human conduct means fighting against evil and cutting it off at its root. The tricolor Soka Gakkai banner of victory waves in the skies of the new century, and a song of joy resounds throughout the heavens.

The grand march of a new year, of a new century of Soka, has begun.

This series is published as "Thoughts on The New Human Revolution" in the *Seikyo Shimbun*.

New SUA Mottoes Announced

SGI President Ikeda, the founder of Soka University of America, recently gave three new mottoes to the university:

- Be a philosopher living a new renaissance of life.*
- Be a world citizen creating the solidarity of peace.*
- Be a pioneer forging a global civilization.*

These mottoes are in addition to the three founding principles that Mr. Ikeda gave the university in February 1987:

- Be the treasure house of capable people who will shoulder the establishment of world peace.*
- Be the dynamic force in developing a Pan-Pacific culture.*
- Be the center of intellect linking East and West.*

SUA's Calabasas, Calif., campus currently offers a master's degree program in second and foreign language education. SUA's Aliso Viejo, Calif., campus, scheduled to open in 2001, will offer an undergraduate program.



What To Do When Chanting Becomes a Chore?

PERSPECTIVE

BY SEAN P. GROVER
NEW YORK

You may think you offered gifts to the Treasure Tower of Taho Buddha, but that is not so. You offered them to yourself. You, yourself, are a



true Buddha... You should chant Nam-myoho-enge-kyo with this conviction.

(The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin, vol. 1, p. 30)

It just happened again. I sat down to chant, ready to challenge myself and expand my life, and minutes later I was watching the clock. Why does this happen? Often I begin really focused, and later discover myself studying

the incense burning, rearranging my altar or contemplating take-out dinner menus.

Ahhhh! What happened to changing my life?

Earlier in my practice, I recall telling my leaders with great excitement, "I chanted an hour today!" I would neglect to tell them that during that time I also vacuumed, did a load of laundry and read the TV guide — all while chanting. Why is it still sometimes so difficult to chant? What is this resistance that wells up from my life?

In "On the Treasure Tower," Nichiren Daishonin explains to Abutsu-bo the proper attitude to have while chanting. He tells him to chant with the conviction that he himself is a Buddha, and that the Treasure Tower (the Gohonzon) is, in essence, his own life. Therefore, I may think I am avoiding chanting to the Gohonzon, but

Having problems focusing on the Gohonzon while chanting? Do you 'clockwatch' your daimoku? Sean Grover shares his experience of challenging his 'fundamental resistance to chanting'

I am really avoiding myself.

Wanting to challenge this tendency, I did an experiment. I agreed to lead a chanting session at the New York Culture Center twice a month. Can you really chant like it's the last moment of your life? Is that really possible? I was determined to find out.

I sat forward in my seat, took a deep breath and let it rip.

Every time a resistance rose out of my life — the critical voices that seek to create doubt, the impulse to watch the clock, the self-conscious feeling of leading the chanting — I locked my gaze on the Gohonzon and chanted with increased energy.

The first thing I noticed was sweat. Lots of it. Then, after about half an hour, a sense of empowerment. Then a sense of freedom. My pressing problems seemed less troubling. My life-condition was clearly raised.

By challenging my fundamental resistance to chanting and staying focused, I discovered a clearer sense of intent and purpose in chanting.

Like the children in the "Life Span" chapter of the Lotus Sutra, sometimes I refuse this "highly effective medicine" of Nam-myoho-enge-kyo, even though I know from experience that when

you take it "you will quickly be relieved of your sufferings..." (The Lotus Sutra, p. 228). The choice is clearly my own.

Will I be a victim of my environment, rejecting the medicine and prolonging my own suffering, or will I accept it, take responsibility and set my life in the direction I want it to go?

So for all you folks out there resisting focusing on the Gohonzon, watching the incense burn or contemplating take-out dinner menus while chanting (and you know who you are), I leave you with two definitions from the American Heritage College Dictionary: *resistance*, "a force tending to oppose or retard motion"; *breakthrough*, "an act of overcoming; a major achievement or success that permits further progress."

Contact Sean Grover at SEANYUKO10@aol.com

Remembering the Reason Why

PERSPECTIVE

By LIZ CARTER
CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

I was deeply moved by SGI President Ikeda's recollection of Rabbi Marvin Hier (Aug. 21, 1998, *World Tribune*) and his message there: to never forget the victims who cry out to be remembered.

The year before I began practicing Buddhism, I was hitchhiking around Europe (the college student thing to do in those days) and made my way to Germany. One of my goals was to visit a concentration camp. When I was 10, my mother had taken me to see Anne Frank's house in Holland, and I had read her journal/autobiography. I wanted to see for myself the kind of place where she had ended her precious, young life.

My traveling companion at the time was a young man from

Australia. Mick and I reached Dachau on a gloomy, drizzly day near the end of our time together. We were becoming tired of each other's company, and altogether it promised to be a gloomy experience. Not speaking, we toured the facility. In one structure, we saw the wooden bunks — shelves, really — where families would live together. Maybe 4 feet wide, 6 to 8 feet long, three levels about 3 to 4 feet apart, a whole family would huddle in this space at night, or all day when there was no place else they were ordered to be.

The camp had been surrounded by high fencing strewn with razor wire. Displays of photos showed a dead man of indeterminable age, skin barely stretched over his bones, thin, black-and-white striped clothing hanging off his limbs like a shroud, caught in the rolls of this barbed fence, in the snow, one of who knows how many failed escapes. All the faces

Liz Carter recounts her visit to the German concentration camp Dachau. This was one of the experiences that led her to start practicing Buddhism.

of inmates who had been alive for the camera were gaunt skulls — pitiful children, ageless adults with thin hair or shaved heads and missing teeth. There were photos of pits where dozens of stick-like bodies lay discarded atop countless more before the grave was bulldozed closed. Image after shocking image displayed to remind tourists of Germany's humiliating and shameful past. Depressing, surreal.

Finally we reached the "showers," a small, out-of-the-way building, where innocents were herded ostensibly to be

washed, but in truth, to be killed. The mass gas chamber.

Until then, I had toured the buildings numb and dreary. Entering this building, however, I had a different experience. Mick heard them, too: a hundred, a thousand voices screaming out of the past. Barely audible, sounding inside my head, the haunting of the sacrificed, the murdered. I trembled.

Somewhere it was posted — I forget where, it was 16 years ago — that the whole camp had actually been razed; a few structures had later been rebuilt in replica as an eternal monument to ensure no one would forget the horrible atrocities committed there. The whole camp — except for the gas chamber. That alone was original. The one place where Mick and I had both experienced an apparent auditory hallucination of the echoes of slaughtered prisoners. We saw this announcement after our tour.

The following summer my sponsor, Dalila, a young woman from Algeria, took me to an SGI exhibit at the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, where a traveling exhibit displayed the results of an A-bomb dropped on Hiroshima. Melted spectacles and bottles, photos of the horror. As a result, I began my Buddhist practice, chanting for world peace.

Dalila disappeared a few years later. I tried to find her on my visit to France in 1994; they said they think she went back to Algeria, a land marred by its own hellish war in recent years. I'm grateful to her for having escaped long enough to awaken me to this practice. And I thank the *World Tribune* for publishing President Ikeda's essay and helping me remember why I joined the SGI.

Contact Liz Carter at antiboo@cybercom.net

Share Your Experience With the 'World Tribune'

Experiences in faith are among the most popular articles in the *World Tribune*. Whether told in the first or third person or in dialogue format, the story of how you became a better person through practicing Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism can deeply influence the lives of others. If you'd like your experience to be considered for publication in the *World Tribune*,

please send it to: *World Tribune*, Attn: Experiences Editor, 606 Wilshire Blvd., P.O. Box 1427, Santa Monica, CA 90406-1427; or e-mail wt@sgi-usa.org. Please include your name, address and telephone number! Your story should be no longer than five typed pages, double-spaced (approximately 1200 words).

The FINE Print



fineprint@sgi-usa.org

Greetings

I'm writing to send appreciation and gratitude to Margie Polito, who lives somewhere in Arizona now. She faithfully came down to my house in Crescent City to chant with me every week, which I really looked forward to, as it is a remote area, with only one other member. I moved to Oregon and would really appreciate hearing from her (and any other). My address now, Margie, is: Judy Eaton 33499 Row River Rd. Cottage Grove, Ore. 97424

Do you know of or are a college student in the Orange County area? If so, we have great news for you! There is an SGI Club at the University of California, Irvine, with members that are dedicated to strengthening friendships and promoting peace in the UCI community. We have weekly meetings on campus where we do gongyo, read study material, and share our experiences. Come join us and have some fun during your college experience! If you are interested or for more info, please contact Lisa Sasaki at (949) 737-1047 or e-mail, lsasaki@uci.edu Hope to see ya! — Lisa Sasaki, Irvine, Calif.

Congratulations

WELCOME TO THE WORLD! Jacob Geone Grimmage, born Dec. 22, 1998, at 12:00 noon. His happy parents are Roger and Tammie Grimmage (maiden name Kichefski). The family still lives in Jacksonville, N.C.

Kudos to Chuck Evans (Rocky Mountain Area) who just celebrated 30 years of practice! Way to go! Here's to 30 more! — Liz Carter in Cambridge (antiboo@cybercom.net)

Congratulations! In recognition for her work contributions, Terrell Frew (Baltimore, Md.) was recently presented with a "Visionary Award." Her employer created this award especially for her and the plaque states that it was presented with appreciation for her vision and creative leadership.

Thomasa Louise Williams, the crew from San Diego Imperial District wishes you a very Happy Birthday and wants to acknowledge that you're a poet, you know it, and you're really showing it. — JL Henriques, San Diego

Milestones

On Nov. 21, 1998, my mother, Kazue Van Pelt, passed away. My desire is to print a quick "Thank you" to the many SGI members who attended Mom's magnificent funeral. My intentions are twofold actually. My mother has traveled extensively, and has touched many people. I would like to inform as many members as possible of her passing. She was a longtime member of SGI (since October 1959). My mother was one of the original women's division pioneers from the

New York/New Jersey/Pennsylvania area. I flew home to be with my mother shortly before she passed. Her funeral turned into quite an elaborate affair. Attending were the usual friends and family, and several hundred SGI members. I was overwhelmed by the number of SGI members who attended, many who traveled a long distance to pay their last respects to my mother. They conducted a beautiful ceremony—I will never forget that splendid tribute to Mom, and many of the attendees provided verbal testimonials to the many personal and professional contributions my mother made to SGI and the members—her friends.

I am not a member of SGI, although I am a believer. My mother has, through the years, convinced me that believing in the Gohonzon and listening to the guidance of your President Ikeda and others is the spiritual avenue to travel. My present life path, like that of far too many other people, does not allow me the time to even ponder the spiritual aspects of our existence. However, the passing of my mother has caused me to slow down and redirect my energies. Thanks to the assistance of a gal named Reiko, I changed Mom's subscription to the *World Tribune* to my home address. — Richard J. Van Pelt, Spokane Wash.

Monty Ricard, an SGI member, gave a precious gift to us all in the Stamford/Greenwich, Conn., area. On Jan. 21, 1999, a memorial service was held to honor and celebrate his life at the Nathaniel Witherell Nursing Home chapel. Monty had been working as a custodian at the Home for the last 30 years and had touched many lives and hearts over this long stretch of time. He passed away in December 1998 and even though his family does not practice this Buddhism, they honored Monty's faith by having his Buddhist fellow members hold a funeral service for him.

It is customary to hold a memorial service for the residents and staff members who have passed on at the nursing home chapel run by the Rev. Wentroble, a Presbyterian minister, who was aware that Monty was a Buddhist. The Rev. Wentroble had also earlier on in the year joined our Buddhist group for an interfaith dialogue on life and death. This was part of our Common Ground series of lectures to initiate a dialogue with representatives of local churches and synagogues to create a circle of faith and friendship in our area. The Reverend felt it only appropriate to have Monty's Buddhist family hold the service for him. This is the first time that a Buddhist service was held at the chapel.

The chapel started filling up at 1:45 for the 2.00 p.m. service, with family, friends, fellow workers, staff members, nurses and administrators, residents in walkers and wheelchairs until there was standing room only and people spilled over into the corridor and beyond. The Rev. Wentroble graciously handed over his church to our chapter chief, Fred Tunick, who shared with those present

Monty's faith and practice of this Buddhism. He quoted passages from Nichiren Daishonin's writings and Daisaku Ikeda's works about the eternity of life, the Buddhist concept of life and death and the meaning and significance of Nam-myoho-enge-kyo. The chanting of Nam-myoho-enge-kyo resonated while everyone patiently lined up to offer incense to Monty's memory. Everyone and everything there seemed to reflect the gentleness of Monty's life, the vastness of an expanded human heart, the enormous generosity of the human spirit. Everything was just so right. This is how we are meant to live, each one of us recognizing the humanity in one another, celebrating one another's beliefs and traditions, honoring our lives and elevating our experience as a human family on this planet earth we call home. All we truly need is kindness toward one another, love of our family and friends, celebrating our joys together, grieving for one another's losses and basically sharing our common humanity.

It has taken me a week to absorb the enormity of this experience and maybe it will take me weeks or months to grasp the value of this gift of Monty's, but it seems like we just experienced our first victory in the community for the next century. — Shashi Khorana 52, Riverside Ave. Riverside, CT 06878 Ph. (203) 698-2813; Fax (203) 637-4143; skhorana@aol.com

Lost and Found

I am looking for Diana Shinn. As you know, I practiced with my mother, but you were the one who gave me my first prayer book and prayer beads in 1982. It's been a long time, and I will be receiving the Gohonzon in April of this year! Please contact me at: 226 3rd St. #30 Marysville, CA 95901. Anxiously chanting! — William Buster, Marysville, Calif.

Trying to locate a long lost friend from the Washington, D.C., area. Denise Blakely, aka "Nicee Fufu." She attended Howard University in the late '70s. Drama was her thing. Camille Mitchell and Reuben Banks aka Chepito "Cheko" Matsumoto, are looking for you. Rumor has it you are practicing in the San Diego area with your daughter Fumiko Palmi. Please e-mail me at rbanks3162@aol.com or call Camille at (301) 738-1186.

To Theresa Straley: Thirteen years ago you were able to shakubuku me when you read of my son's extensive medical record and summoned me to your office. Although I resented the fact that I had to drive 20 miles just to sign a medical form and hear of your "stupid" Buddhism, you did in the 10 minutes we were together plant the seed (of Buddhism) in me. Happy to say the seed has sprouted and my son and I are now enjoying the fruits of your effort. Please call me at 808-456-1683. — Edwin A. Ikeda, Pearl City, Hawaii

SUA Announcement

Now in its fifth year, Soka University of America's graduate school is accepting applications for its master's degree program in second and foreign language education.

Individuals seeking admission to the M.A. program must hold a baccalaureate or bachelor's degree with a minimum grade-point average of 2.7 or B- on a four-point scale. Applicants whose native language is not English are required to submit a Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) with a minimum score of 600. Applications for the 1999-2000 academic year are due by March 31. For more information, contact the Graduate Admissions Office at 26800 West Mulholland Hwy., Calabasas, CA 91302. Telephone (818) 878-3717, e-mail: grad_admissions@soka.edu.

Correction:

Last week in our "Sample Questions for the Entrance-level Exam" (pp. 3-4), we cited page numbers for the answers in *Living Buddhism* — but neglected to include which issue of *Living Buddhism*. It's the December 1997 issue, and we apologize for any confusion we created. See page 3 in this issue for a complete list of the study materials for the April 25 Entrance Exam. Good luck with your studies!



SGI President Ikeda and Director Eusebio Leal Spengler of the Museum of Havana discuss José Martí, Cuban author and hero of independence, Dec. 11, 1998, at the Tokyo Makiguchi Memorial Hall.

Cuban Officials Meet With President Ikeda

Director Eusebio Leal Spengler of the Museum of Havana and other Cuban officials met with SGI President Ikeda on Dec. 11, 1998, at the Tokyo Makiguchi Memorial Hall in Hachioji. The SGI leader and Mr. Leal, a noted historian and archaeologist, first met during President Ikeda's first visit to the Caribbean nation in June 1996. President Ikeda cited José Martí, the renowned Cuban author and hero of independence, as saying that nothing will happen if we sit

around and wait — we have to go out in the world and take action. This spirit, the SGI leader stated, is what led him to visit Cuba two years ago. He voiced his deep gratitude for the warm welcome extended to him then by President Fidel Castro. President Ikeda went on to cite Martí, who evidences Cuba's poetic spirit, as saying: "All that is not compatible with the sanctity of human life is destined to perish. No one can rob people of the wings of poetry that is the cry of the soul." ❧

The Most Compassionate Action

EDITORIAL

By ED FEASEL

SGI-USA YOUTH DIVISION LEADER

Until the end of February, SGI-USA will be focusing its efforts on propagation. The youth will fully support the organizational direction by helping to create joyful monthly discussion meetings and by holding youth-sponsored introductory meetings during the month of March, when we traditionally celebrate March 16, Kosen-rufu Day.



The outstanding characteristic of the Buddha is often defined as compassion. This compassion has two aspects: to remove another's suffering and to give that person happiness. Sharing Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism is certainly a great act of compassion; it's our effort to give another person happiness.

Recently, a renowned scholar, who is not a member, told me: "While America is doing great economically, we have become a nation impoverished when it comes to the spirit or heart. It is precisely at such a time that the Daishonin's Buddhism can help people overcome their spiritual poverty." From these words, I could really feel that people in society are seeking a new life philosophy, one that they can be-

lieve in and that can really lead them to true happiness.

Youth Division Leader Ed Feasel shares his thoughts on the importance of sharing Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism with our friends.

Propagation is the most important action for us but also the most difficult. It must begin with the spirit to help save suffering people, and it must begin with prayer.

Just talking about how great the SGI is or how great Bud-


dhis is won't cause people to begin practicing. The important thing is to grasp what people's problems are and to give them hope and confidence that they can overcome these problems through their practice of the Daishonin's Buddhism. Crucial to this is sharing our personal experiences in faith — it's not just talking about theory.

Propagation is also not the effort of a perfect person trying to help someone who is imperfect. It's about people who are equals striving to overcome their problems together.

It's when we pray with this spirit to help people who are suffering that they will appear in our environment. At first, they may not share with us the struggles that they are going through. At this point, we can

go back and chant for them. Then, we can meet with them again, go back and chant again and meet them again. Through this repetitive process, we can finally open our heart as to how to encourage others.

In the end, propagation is a compassionate act to help our friends and family members who are suffering. It is also the means to change our own life and the condition of society.

SGI President Ikeda has lived with this spirit of propagation burning in his heart, and he has realized the unprecedented spread of the Daishonin's Buddhism throughout the world. Let's have this same heart and spirit, and let's carry on this most compassionate action of propagation again this year. 

FEB. 16: THE BIRTH OF NICHIREN DAISHONIN

Honoring an Ordinary Person's Extraordinary Wisdom

SIGNIFICANT DATES

ON MILESTONES IN THE HISTORY OF THE DAISHONIN'S BUDDHISM AND THE SGI

By STEPHANIE CELANO

STAFF WRITER

The efforts of great people must never go unnoticed — be they great rulers, thinkers, artists or peacemakers. History testifies to this fact, as we have lauded



the achievements of individuals like Winston Churchill, Gandhi, Marie Curie, Josephine Baker, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Mozart. In memory of these human icons, we feel compelled to erect statues and busts of them, adorn our currency with their faces, honor our streets and buildings with their names,

make national holidays of their birthdays — we even name our children after them.

Those with keen insight recognize the accomplishments of these legends and see to it that they are remembered. We immortalize their greatness so that future generations will remember them too as heroes, never forgetting how they've changed our lives for the better. This is how we've grown accustomed to showing our appreciation for their accomplishments.

As Feb. 16 comes around, we who have learned of the greatness of Nichiren Daishonin will have reason to celebrate. It's a day we can honor him — on his date of birth — as the great proclaimer of the Mystic Law of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. We honor him because he was an ordinary person; however, his wisdom and compassion for humanity were extraordinary. This is what inspires us.

Zennichi-marō (Splendid Sun) was born in the village of Kominato on Feb.

16, 1222, the son of a poor fisherman. At the age of 12, he began studying at the local Buddhist temple where he prayed to become the wisest man in Japan. He later became a priest, and began his quest for the truth of Buddhism, of life itself.


After years of tenacious study of the body of Buddhist teachings, he was convinced that the Lotus Sutra was superior to all. At age 32, on April 28, 1253, from a hilltop overlooking the Pacific, he first chanted Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, revealing the correct path to happiness.

Having changed his name to Nichiren (Sun Lotus), he courageously challenged the onslaught of persecutions brought about through upholding his belief. He endured exile, escaped death and was exposed to public ridicule: "Because I have expounded this teaching, I have been exiled and almost killed. As the saying goes: 'Good advice is harsh to the ear.' But still I am not discouraged" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 166).

In spite of the persecutions, in all his

wisdom he understood his mission clearly and paved the way for the future, enabling us to practice the Mystic Law.

In the letter "Persecutions by Sword and Staff," the Daishonin states: "Bodhisattva Jogyo and his followers will appear in the Latter Day of the Law to propagate the five characters of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. I, Nichiren, have appeared earlier than anyone else. How reassuring to think that I will surely be praised by bodhisattvas equal in number to the sands of sixty thousand Ganges Rivers!" (MW-2 [2nd ed.], 256-57).

As ordinary people — the Daishonin's disciples — it is only natural that we would reflect on how our lives have changed through faith in Buddhism; how we have benefited from the Daishonin's efforts. We are "the bodhisattvas equal in number to the sands of sixty thousand Ganges Rivers," and Feb. 16 signifies not only his birthday, but our opportunity to praise him in our prayers and renew his spirit in our hearts. 

Mailbox

Please keep sending us your letters about the *World Tribune*. Our new address is 606 Wilshire Blvd. P.O. Box 1427 Santa Monica, CA 90406-1427; or e-mail wt@sgi-usa.org

NOV. 18 MEETING REPORTS:

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!

Thanks to everyone who sent us photos and reports of your Nov. 18 commemorative discussion meetings. We weren't able to print them all, due to space limitations, but they were all great! We deeply appreciate all your efforts to contribute to the *World Tribune*, despite your busy schedules. Any time that you want to report on what your district is doing, please send us photos (preferably in color) and a short report (about 200 words), and we'll do our best to include them in the *World Tribune*.

WORLD TRIBUNE MAILBOX

Thanks, Mr. Davis

I want to thank Mr. Davis (Jan. 1, 1999, issue) for his district's experience. I dug out the Oct. 24, 1997, *World Tribune* he spoke of and reread SGI President Ikeda's guidance. Everyone should read this guidance. In this guidance he states, "If we just surround ourselves with flatterers ... great leaders keep at their side people who are strong, talented and able to constructively voice contrary opinions..."

The above portion of President Ikeda's guidance, I believe, creates an atmosphere of dialogue and then growth. Thanks again, Mr. Davis.

— BERNIE SPIEGEL,
Watertown, Mass.

P.S. President Ikeda also paraphrases Mr. Aylwin (Nov. 20, 1998, issue, p. 6) regarding those

who surround people in power. In addition, he paraphrases Madame Deng (Nov. 20, 1998, issue, p. 6).

Appreciation for Pascual

My sincere appreciation to Mr. Pascual Olivera for sharing his experience with all of us (Jan. 8, 1999, issue). His wholehearted sincerity touched my life very deeply. Like him before, and based on President Ikeda's guidance, I am now looking inside myself for that "one basic fault" that stands in the way of my personal growth.

This search has made my determinations more realistic, and it is fueling my faith in order to keep practicing con-

sistently and on a daily basis (for quite some time now, I have not been consistent).

I also extend my thank you to the *World Tribune* team for the wonderful work they perform on a weekly basis.

— LIRELLA JAEN-SANDOVAL,
Chicago

Moved by 'Friends for Peace'

As an 11-year member who has appreciated and savored the *World Tribune* at every stage of its continuing evolution, I am so very moved by the "Friends for Peace" monthly pullout section. The superlative examples set by all those who contribute in any way, and

especially the budding young writers and what they have to say, offer me such tremendous hope for the future.

Of special note is Kelly Lin's "My Thoughts on Buddhism" (Dec. 4, 1998, issue). What I learned from her finely crafted article is that one can never outgrow the need to continuously approach the practice of OUR Buddhism with fresh clarity, determination and enthusiasm. Thank you, Kelly! Thank you, *World Tribune* staff and contributors! Thank you, dear President Ikeda, for having laid such a solid foundation for a new humanism!

All of the above help to make me proud and happy to be over 50 and actively participating and practicing as a member of the SGI-USA!

— VERONICA REDD
/akaVRedd Forrest,
Los Angeles

bodhisattva: A compassionate human being who is dedicated to helping others and who aspires to attain Buddhahood, characterized by boundless wisdom and infinite compassion. People who chant and propagate Nam-myoho-renge-kyo are known as Bodhisattvas of the Earth.

Buddha: In Sanskrit, means awakened one. An enlightened person; one who perceives the true, eternal nature of all life and leads others to attain the same enlightenment. The Buddha nature exists in all beings and is characterized by the qualities of wisdom, courage, compassion, freedom, joy, perseverance and life force. Nichiren Daishonin teaches that by embracing the Gohonzon anyone can attain enlightenment in his or her present form in this lifetime.

daimoku: Literally, title of a sutra, it refers to the invocation or chanting of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, the title (and essence) of the Lotus Sutra.

Gohonzon: Object of devotion; a mandala that expresses the essence of the Lotus Sutra. The Gohonzon is the embodiment of the Law of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo and the life of Nichiren Daishonin in the form of a scroll, which SGI members enshrine in their homes. *Go* means worthy of honor and *honzon* means object of fundamental respect.

gongyo: Literally, it means assiduous practice. In Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism, gongyo consists of reciting excerpts from

A GLOSSARY of BUDDHIST TERMS

the second and sixteenth chapters of the Lotus Sutra, chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo and offering silent prayers.

karma: Sanskrit word meaning action. The life tendency or destiny each individual creates through thoughts, words and deeds that exert an often unseen influence over one's future. According to this concept, one's actions in the past have shaped one's reality at present, and actions in the present in turn determine one's future. Buddhism teaches that cause and effect exist simultaneously in a single life-moment. By strengthening our innate Buddha nature through Buddhist practice we can break the chains of karmic causality, lessening retribution for negative causes made in the past, and making new causes that will move our lives in the direction of our greatest happiness.

kosen-rufu: Literally, it means to widely declare and spread (Buddhism); to secure lasting peace and happiness for all humankind through the propagation of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism.

Lotus Sutra: The highest teaching of Shakyamuni Buddha, it reveals that all people are innately capable of attaining enlightenment. Reciting excerpts from the Lotus Sutra is part of SGI members' daily Buddhist practice.

Nam-myoho-renge-kyo: The fundamental component of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism, it is the law of life. It is also the law of the universe. It expresses the true entity of life that allows people to directly tap their enlightened nature. Although the deepest meaning of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo is revealed only through its practice, the literal meaning is: *Nam* (devotion), the action of practicing Buddhism; *myoho* (Mystic Law), the entity of the universe and its phenomenal manifestations; *renge* (lotus), the simultaneity of cause and effect; *kyo* (Buddha's teaching), all phenomena.

Nichiren Daishonin (1222–82): A 13th-century Japanese reformer upon whose Buddhist teachings the SGI bases its activities. He inscribed the true object of devotion, the Gohonzon and established the invocation of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo as the universal practice to attain enlightenment. Daishonin is an honorific title that means great sage.

Shakyamuni: Also known as Siddhartha Gautama. Born in India (present-day southern Nepal) about 3,000 years ago, he is the first recorded Buddha and founder of Buddhism. For 50 years, he expounded various sutras (teachings) culminating in the Lotus Sutra, which he declared his ultimate teaching.

Soka Gakkai International (SGI): The Soka Gakkai International (SGI) is a worldwide association of people who practice the Buddhism of Nichiren Daishonin, with members in 128 countries and territories. Soka Gakkai means value-creation society.



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The *World Tribune* welcomes reader submissions. If you are interested in contributing an article or photograph, please contact us for guidelines. Together we can make a great newspaper.

Martin Luther King Day Celebrated

Photo by CRISPIN SUSAN REEDY



RL Thorton High School cheerleaders perform at a YOUTH 2 YOUTH rally held in Dallas. SGI-USA members were invited to speak at the rally following a parade in which more than 150 SGI-USA members took part.

Dallas

More than 150 SGI-USA members from Dallas and Killeen, Texas, celebrated Dr. King's birthday for the third year by walking three miles in the annual parade sponsored by the city of Dallas. This year was special because a local community development organization, YOUTH 2 YOUTH, which sponsors activities for teens, invited SGI members to speak at their post-parade Save Our Youth Peace-out Rally. Texas Region Young Women's Division Leader Mimi Kubiak related her experience of a recent trip to the Martin Luther King Jr. museum in Atlanta.

After the rally, SGI member Barbara Felsen commented: "One of the things that I like about living in Dallas is the diversity, and I want to support that. Dr. King was a fighter for peace, and we're fighters for peace, too — it's our mission."

— CRISPIN SUSAN REEDY

Los Angeles

The Martin Luther King Jr. Westside Coalition sponsored festivities in honor of Dr. King as a program of "commitment, renewal, interfaith exchange and community recognition" this past Jan 18. SGI-USA youth performed at the 14th annual King Day celebration held at Santa Monica College. A volunteer from the community noted that the turnout for the event was remarkable and reflected a diversity of residents.

Among the several "Community Champions" who were recognized this year were two SGI-USA members, Bonnie Boswell and Denise Harris. The keynote speaker, Angela E. Oh, an advisory board member on the President's Initiative on Race and a commissioner on the Los Angeles Human Relations Commission, was also honored.

— STEPHANIE CELANO

Photo by NEHASI LEE



Denise Harris, at left, and Bonnie Boswell, far right, are honored as 'Community Champions' in Los Angeles.

Photo by BRANT MILLER



Thirty-one SGI-USA members from San Antonio take part in the Martin Luther King Day parade for the first time.

San Antonio

On Jan. 18, in the spirit of equality for which Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. gave his life, 31 SGI-USA members and friends in San Antonio marched three miles with 35,000 other participants in one of the nation's largest MLK marches.

The day before, an interfaith service was held at the Second Baptist Church. SGI-USA member Cheryl Emerson greeted a diverse congregation on behalf of the city, as did Councilman Mario Salas, who represents District 2, where the activities took place. An administrator for Mr. Salas, Mrs. Emerson also served as the publicity chair for the San Antonio MLK Commission. San Antonio Men's Division leader Roy Duggan also spoke, expressing appreciation for Dr. King.

This was the first time San Antonio members participated in the community's MLK Day activities. They deepened their resolve to have even greater participation next year and to discover new ways to support the San Antonio community.

— BRANT MILLER

SPECIAL PULLOUT SECTION

FRIENDS for Peace

FEB. 5, 1999

DIVERSITY

From The New Human Revolution, vol. 1 ("Golden Autumn" chapter)



Shin'ichi Yamamoto said: "Buddhism teaches that no human being can exist in a state of total isolation; instead we congregate and live by supporting and helping one another. This philosophy opposes the idea of rejecting or shutting out certain persons or groups of people. If anything, the principle of dependent origination leads us to give the utmost consideration of how to enable others to reveal their potential, how to establish better human relations and how to create the greatest possible value.

"In short," Shin'ichi continued, "We — indeed, all people — are brothers and sisters from the infinite past who share a mission to bring peace and happiness to the world we live in. What we decide to base ourselves on has a drastic influence on the meaning of our individual lives. For instance, a large tree with leafy, green branches will not grow in the

desert or on top of solid rock; it will only thrive in rich, fertile soil.

"Similarly, if we are to become great human beings capable of realizing a rich blossoming of humanity and a fruition of glory in our lives, then it is vital that we stand firm and prosper in whatever soil we may find ourselves. Establishing this kind of solid basis is to have an awareness of our mission as Bodhisattvas of the Earth.

"The earth belongs equally to everyone. It revitalizes all human beings, transcending racial, ethnic and national distinctions, and supports the flourishing of culture. A vibrant wellspring of pure altruism, of compassion, surges forth from its soil. If everyone were to awaken to their missions as Bodhisattvas of the Earth and take action based on it, there would not be the slightest doubt that we could build true world peace and human harmony."



In Oakland: (left to right, starting in back) Antonio Williams, Alivia Owens, Rebecca Rogers, Sierra Eisen, David Rogers, Ibn Cannon, Dario Cannon, Angelo Williams, Miellette McFarlane, Ricky McFarlane and Agyei Wallace (Mom Melissa Eisen and Grandmother Faith Davis in back right).

Holiday Cheer in Oakland

By JOSIE RAGAS McFARLANE
Oakland, Calif.

Skating Event.
1998 was a fabulous year of growth for the boys and girls in the East Bay area: Oakland, Richmond, Vallejo and Alameda. From monthly summer beach parties and barbecues, trips to the zoo and a gathering of friends, each child experienced many victories in their lives and a deeper understanding of what it is to be an SGI member and to feel deeper appreciation for the Gohonzon.

On the afternoon of Dec. 13, 1998, 11 happy junior bodhisattvas met for gongyo, a discussion about a young Buddhist's concept of Christmas, treats and traditional American holiday songs as they prepared to leave for an afternoon at the Oakland Ice Skating Rink. This was the second annual End of the Year Boys and Girls Group Ice

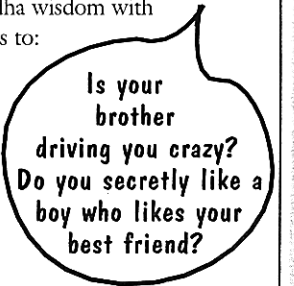
ASK AMANDA



"Friends For Peace" has its own advice column, "Ask Amanda." Amanda will share a little Buddha wisdom with you to put in your backpack. Send letters to:

"Ask Amanda" c/o "Friends for Peace"
SGI-USA
P.O. Box 1427
606 Wilshire Blvd.
Santa Monica, Calif. 90406-1427

Don't forget to include your age, your phone number and your address.



Is your brother driving you crazy? Do you secretly like a boy who likes your best friend?

EXPERIENCES

JAKE ZIELINSKI, 12

Audubon, N.J.



Hello! I am a seventh grader at Audubon Junior High in New Jersey. I have been doing gongyo and chanting daimoku since I was about 3 years old.

It was about one to two months into school, and I was doing very poorly in math. I had gotten two F's and one D. My parents were constantly on me. This was good for me, though. They were always telling me to chant. But I kept blowing it off.

It got to the point where I was lying about homework and getting punished to the point where I couldn't attend football or hockey. I wasn't allowed to go out at all. I realized that I had to do something. So I chanted four or five times about improving my grades. Although I didn't do gongyo consistently, I believe that it helped me a whole lot. If I didn't chant those few times, I never would have taken any action whatsoever.

I went into class many times to get help from my teacher. I did many extra math problems to prepare for my upcoming tests. I studied about half an hour every night. The night before the test I studied for almost two-and-a-half hours. I never would have done this without chanting.

Friday came the big day. I had four tests that day. When math class came, I breezed through in less than 20 minutes. My previous math tests I didn't even finish. I asked my math teacher my grade at lunch. He extended his hand and said, "Good job, Jake, you got 101."

Wow!

I couldn't believe what I had just heard. When I received the test back, I actually had 104: a 98 and six points extra credit. My other three tests that day I also received A's. As a result of that test I am going to make a strong determination to do some kind of gongyo or daimoku in the morning and night. I am trying out for the junior high basketball team and the All State Band. These are two major things I can chant about.

Post Script: Since I gave this experience at our November discussion meeting, I have received four A's on my math tests. I am doing very well in all of my other subjects. I have also made the junior high basketball team.

ANDY ODANO, 10

Culver City, Calif.



Hi. I am in the fifth grade. I'd like to share with you an experience I had recently. I earned some money and also received some money as gifts. My cousin gave me a Blockbuster card as a gift. I put everything in my new wallet. But somehow I lost the wallet. My mom was very upset with me for taking my wallet out with me with so much money in it. She asked me to try to remember where I had been and retrace my steps to find my wallet. I couldn't remember.

My mom said if I chanted I could remember the last place I had my wallet. So I sat down in front of the Gohonzon and chanted Nam-myoho-rence-kyo for over one hour. I then remembered that I definitely brought my wallet in the house and put it on the ledge in the front hallway. I told my mom, and she said that my wallet must be in the house somewhere. We searched everywhere for it but couldn't find it.

I remember that President Ikeda says that you should never give up. So I chanted more and, believe it or not, a couple of hours later I found my wallet. I opened my bedroom closet door, and my wallet fell down in front of me. Chanting really works! I was so happy to find my wallet.

I learned from this that I need to be more responsible with my things. I am determined to continue doing gongyo and chanting daimoku every day, study hard at school and never give up on anything!

POETRY

SUDDENLY YOU TURN AROUND AND...

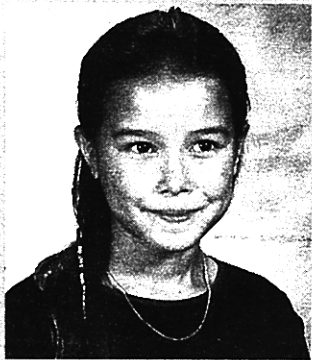
By JENNIFER NUMAGAMI, 12, Correspondent, Pottstown, Pa.

The human race has no face
We've caused a scar
Nuclear bombs have bombed our land
Demolished our precious Earth
Where's the peace?
Friendship and trust
Between all beings
Bounding together
Those from across the seas
North and South poles
Aeons apart
Peace is what we need
Where's that helping hand?
Can we get along?
Cooperate...
Hand in hand
Into the future
For if we try
Continuously
We will succeed as
Friends for peace.



JULIE TAEKO GRAMLICH, 9

San Francisco



I started chanting when I was 5-and-a-half years old. When I was 8, I was going to audition for the San Francisco Ballet's performance of "The Nutcracker." I chanted to be a Mother Ginger's child, and I got in! I was very happy to perform at the Opera House 16 times. This year I was an angel! It was very fun! I enjoyed performing. I am doing gongyo twice a day. Thank you, SGI!

WORD SEARCH

Welcome to the new year! Some things to associate with the new year can be found in this word search. The words are listed below. Now try to find them!

- | | | |
|---------------|----------------|----------|
| Determination | Marching | Resolute |
| Forward | Happy New Year | Victory |
| Twenty | Aspirations | First |
| Goal | Century | Start |
| Hope | Win | |

S E I O A J E H C P V C Q T A
 N M F I R S T F O R W A R D T
 O T R A T S U H B A M V U M G
 I V O N W B L T P E P O H C E
 T A Y N P G O A L Y B S E I S
 A K F T A Y S G O W E T M R W
 R W Y A N C E C D E D S V F I
 I Y D E T E R M I N A T I O N
 P Z S J Q N W R P Y K Z C M L
 S W L N O T Y T Z P A W T Y I
 A E K W X U E L K P L H O O C
 G N I H C R A M R A D E R S B
 A R T Z H Y O P S H L A Y T H

(Jennifer Numagami, 12, of Pottstown, Pa., contributed this game.)

EXPLORING DIVERSITY & SIMILARITY



OBJECTIVE: To get to know one another by exploring differences and similarities in our family backgrounds and cultures.

MATERIALS: Various colored stick pins, yarn, map of the world (drawn on a board or store-bought), small stickers (each with one child's name on it), butcher paper.

PREPARATION: At the Boys and Girls Group meeting the previous month, ask children to find out where their parents and grandparents came from.

ACTIVITY: Bring out a large sheet of butcher paper. Write each child's name and where their parents and grandparents are from. Take out the map of the world. This is the fun part: Everyone can help locate the places on the map that are listed on the

butcher paper. One at a time, each child chooses two colored pins, his or her name sticker and a length of yarn. One pin will mark the city where the meeting is, and the second pin (along with the name sticker) will mark the place where their parents or grandparents are from. Attach the yarn from one pin to the other. When everyone is done, you will have a beautiful, crisscrossed design unique to your area. Talk about differences and similarities. You may decide to display your map at your community center for all the members to see.

YOU CAN ALSO: Invite parents to send pictures (postcards or cut from magazines or other sources) of their family's place of origin that the children can use to make pictures or collages.

This idea was contributed by the New York Boys and Girls Group coordinators.

Everyone Is UNIQUE!

Here's a game you can play at your next Boys and Girls Group meeting:

Everyone sit in chairs or on the floor. Choose one person to be the "caller." The caller will call out one description (for example: everyone with a red shirt) and if that description fits you, stand up as fast as you can. Other descriptions might include:

Everyone with glasses; everyone with parents from Costa Rica; everyone who likes spaghetti. See how many descriptions you can come up with. The last description the caller yells out might be: Everyone who chants Nam-myoho-enge-kyo!



Jesse Owens

Jesse Owens was a great man. In 1936, he won four gold medals at the Olympics in Berlin, Germany. One reason this was special was because Adolf Hitler, who was the leader of Germany (this was just before World War II), wanted to use the Olympics to prove that one race was better than all the others. There was another special story about that Olympics, and this is the way Jesse Owens told it:

I held the world record in the broad jump. Yet I was one jump from not even making the Olympic finals. I had fouled on my first try and, playing it safe the second time, had not gone far enough. Everything depended on this third jump. Fear swept over me, and then panic. I dropped to one knee and prayed.

Then I felt a hand on my shoulder. I opened my eyes, and there stood my "archenemy," Lutz Long, the prize athlete Hitler had kept under wraps for years while he trained for one purpose only: to beat me. Long had broken the Olympic mark in his very first try in the preliminaries.



Jesse Owens takes a leap of faith — in himself — at the 1936 Olympics.

"I know about you," he said. "You are like me. You must do it all the way, or you cannot do it. The same thing that happened to you today happened to me last year in Cologne. I will tell you what I did then."

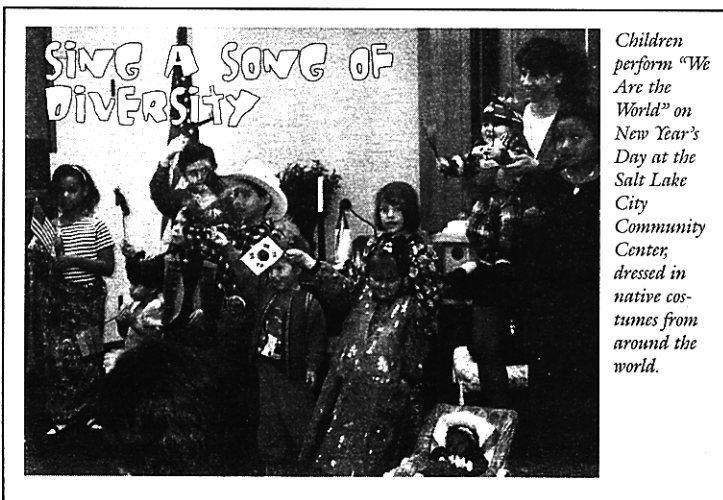
Lutz told me to remeasure my steps, place my towel six inches in back of the takeoff board and jump from there. That way, I could give it all I had but be certain not to foul.

As soon as I qualified, Lutz, smiling broadly, came to me and said, "Now we can make each other do our best in the finals."

We did, too. In the finals, Lutz would jump and set another Olympic record, then I would jump just a bit farther and break Lutz's new record. The instant

my record-breaking was announced, Lutz was there, throwing his arms around me and then raising one of my arms to the sky. "Jazze Owenz!" he yelled as loud as he could. "Jazze Owenz!"

I won that day, but even before I made that last jump, I knew I had won a victory of a far greater kind — over something inside myself, thanks to Lutz. ☘



Children perform "We Are the World" on New Year's Day at the Salt Lake City Community Center, dressed in native costumes from around the world.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What are your questions about Buddhism?
What do your friends ask you about chanting?
Send us your questions! We wanna know what you wanna know. We want to make study topics more interesting and useful for you, so we need to hear from you — yes, YOU!

Send your questions to: "Friends for Peace"

P.O. Box 1427

606 Wilshire Blvd.

Santa Monica, CA 90406-1427

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