



**EXPERIENCE:**

Kristi Bennett overcomes the suicide of a friend.

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Photo by MIKE MULLEN



## Northern California Youth Hold Anti-Violence Summit

(see back page)

**S**GI-USA members of San Francisco hosted an all-day event on Aug. 29 in Oakland to reverse the alarming trend of the rising number of crimes and destruction being committed by juveniles and teens. The summit also included participation by several other community organizations, including the Oakland Youth Advisory Commission and the West Oakland Violence Prevention Program.



Photo by JONATHAN WILSON



**SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S POEM**

# Become Strong!

**S**GI President Ikeda dedicated this new poem to all SGI members on Sept. 4. He presented the poem at the Tokyo Makiguchi Memorial Hall in Hachioji, during his acceptance speech on receiving an honorary doctorate from the National University of Central Peru.

*Become strong!  
Become strong!  
Become strong without fail!  
We need strength to be happy,  
To be victorious.  
The strong can help others  
Transform their lives  
Into lives of value,  
Dedicated to truth,  
Leading to happiness and peace.*

*Weakness is a source of misery—  
Weakness  
Is to live in fear;  
Weakness incurs people's scorn  
And abuse;  
It has no power to fight back.*

*Weakness is a source of  
unhappiness—*

*It will make you a loser  
And a coward.  
The weak are bereft of good  
fortune;  
The prayers of cowards are not  
answered.*

*What transforms such weakness  
Into strength  
Is faith,  
Buddhist practice,  
And struggle.*

*Cowards  
Burn with jealousy,  
Often resenting others'  
happiness,  
Maligning and attacking  
excellence.  
They are losers in life,  
Pathetic and base,  
Possessing neither faith nor  
character.*

*Courageous people of justice and  
truth  
Look down upon  
The likes of such treacherous  
cowards;*

*They pay them no heed,  
Advancing serenely  
Toward the future,  
As lions.*

*The brave-hearted  
Rejoice in struggles,  
Welcoming them with pleasure  
and joy.  
The cowardly  
Lose in every battle;  
They are gloomy, cheerless  
And pathetic.*

*Fear is hell;  
Courage is joy.*

*Never forget  
That devotion to faith,  
Without begrudging our lives,  
Forges, in the depths of our  
beings,  
The heart of an indomitable hero,  
The supreme state of life.*

*With an intrepid spirit  
We solemnly adorn this existence  
With justice, courage and  
triumph!*



# Forty Years of Creating Trust

## EDITORIAL

By **JEFF FARR**  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

**A**chieving American kosen-rufu is as simple as creating trust. We're in the process of establishing trust for the SGI movement throughout American society, doing this one person at a time — convincing one friend after another that our organization has something irreplaceable to contribute to this country.

Oct. 2, World Peace Day, is a reminder every year for us to keep creating trust, to never slacken in doing so. Next year, Oct. 2 will mark the 40th anniversary of President Ikeda's 1960 arrival in Hawaii, the first stop on his first trip for world peace.

From the beginning, what he did, too, was create trust. At the first discussion meeting held in America, which was during the Hawaii visit, President Ikeda told the pioneer members that "as children of the Buddha, you each have a mission of boundless proportions. With that mission and pride in your hearts, please become excellent citizens who are trusted by all. To win the love and respect of others leads to the propagation of Buddhism;

kosen-rufu exists in developing such trust" (*The New Human Revolution*, vol. 1, p. 55).

How exactly do we develop this trust? There's no set way — there can be as many ways as we can imagine. We can set an example, we can engage people in meaningful conversation, we can show proof in our lives, etc.

From the get-go, though, we have to trust the people whose trust we want to win. Our trust in them is the cause for earning their trust in us.

When President Ikeda decided to form a district in Hawaii, the first outside Japan, everyone was surprised — especially those who became the district leaders. President Ikeda was placing the responsibility for American kosen-rufu in the hands of members he had just met!

Placing this kind of trust in people rarely happens in our society. This kind of trust, though, is desperately needed — everywhere, as soon as possible. E. M. Forster in "What I Believe" puts it this way: "One must be fond of people and trust them if one is not to make a mess of life." We have made a mess of our world precisely because we haven't trusted one another. Kosen-rufu offers a solution to this, a way to change the direction of our history until now.

To create this solution, we also have to be honest with people; we have to honestly share with them what we feel about this Buddhism. Even if people don't want to join our organization or aren't attracted to our ideas, they will take notice of our honesty and respect it.



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In 1960 in Hawaii, President Ikeda answered the members' questions one after another, urging them to change their karma

through Buddhist practice. He didn't shirk from telling them what he knew they needed to do — the steps he felt they had to take to become happy. His honesty, more than anything else, convinced and inspired them.

In "The Daimoku of the Lotus Sutra," the Daishonin says that "the basic character of a Buddha is honesty and straightforwardness" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 3, p. 21). Oct. 2, World Peace Day, is a reminder that it's qualities like these we should always strive for in our efforts for American kosen-rufu.

The lesson of Oct. 2 is that without such sincerity — without always going back to sincerity as our starting point — we'll never get far; we won't create trust, we won't accomplish our mission.

With sincerity, we are guaranteed to win.

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EXPERIENCE—KRISTI BENNETT, LOUISVILLE, COLO.

# Not Just a Personal Tragedy

I would like to share an experience that concerns the suicide of a very dear friend of mine one year ago. What I have learned from this event is that with our practice of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism, we can always create something positive out of a negative situation. I feel that I have created a stronger identity for myself and gained value by challenging my pain with my Buddhist practice. Because all our lives are connected on many levels, the value I can create from my friend's death can influence his "life entity" as well. I felt reluctant to share what I have considered a private tragedy, but I feel now even more strongly that the process of dealing with difficulties — and winning over them in our own way — is valuable for all of us to hear and experience.

Fourteen years ago, my friend and I were co-workers who shared adjoining office spaces. Dan and I enjoyed each other's company. He was a very funny man, and quite conversational; if we weren't laughing, we were talking. I have to admit that a year later, when he moved to a different job, I found it much easier to get my work done.

I felt a connection with Dan from the first moment we met. Together we could look at each other and know what the other was going to say before either of us said it. He was well-liked and respected by all with whom he came in contact, and he showed interest in people because of who they were, not because of what they could do for him. His interest in my life made me feel like accomplishing all of my dreams. Largely because of his interest, I went back to school and majored in economics, traveled, remodeled my house, made new friendships. I took up bike riding and running. Dan was there whenever a problem arose and was helpful just by being there for me. I've never known anyone else like him in my life, before or since.

We could talk about anything, and of course he knew I was a Buddhist and chanted Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. He had said it himself. He often remarked admiringly about how cheerful and peaceful I was, or how well

I coped with life. He somehow never believed that those possibilities could exist for him.

The last time we had lunch I was struggling through a difficult time in my life. It felt so great to talk with him again; he felt the same. Underneath the surface, though, I sensed in him an underlying heaviness, a sort of resignation. But life as an adult has its ups and downs, so I thought nothing of it. I just felt so happy to see him again.

During the first week of June, I felt unexplainably depressed. I had no specific reason for it, just a nagging overall feeling of hopelessness. My dear friend shot himself on the first of June. I didn't hear about it until a week later. Although his wife reported him missing after his failure to return home that Monday, and the police found his car soon after, the snow accumulation hampered

tragedy. It makes me think about the isolation many men must live in.

For me, during the months after his death I fulfilled my responsibilities, but I was numb to them. If I talked about what happened, I found myself sobbing. I repeated the whole sequence of events like I was a war victim. My suffering over the loss could not be turned off like a television show. It went with me everywhere, all the time, and while other people empathized, when they went home or hung up the phone, the loss was turned off for them because, of course, it wasn't their life. It pained me how difficult it was to explain why this loss so impacted me, because our friendship didn't have a label that other people could understand. He wasn't my husband or a family member, but he wasn't just a co-worker either.

*'Because all our lives are connected on many levels, the value I can create from my friend's death can influence his "life entity" as well.'*

their mountain search and his body was not located until the following Sunday.

I've shared many of my memories of Dan and our friendship and what it meant to me, because when we hear *suicide*, we think "how horrible," "how could anyone do that," "how selfish," — basically we're appalled and angry. But it's also true that inside the ugly statistic lies a human being, in this case someone who made other people laugh, and someone who in many ways tried their best to do the "right thing, all the time."

In my own thoughts about why my friend committed suicide, I wonder if he hadn't found himself in a box — a box of expectations about life that didn't turn out the way he thought they should. I read a lot. I ran across a statistic about men and suicide. Did you know that men commit suicide four times more frequently than women do? This makes me realize that this suicide was not just my personal

I chanted many hours because that was my only solace. I read SGI President Ikeda's lectures; they were a lifeline to hope. I was stumped about what to chant for as a goal, because, no matter how much I chanted, my friend was not going to reappear. I realized this was an example of the impermanence of life, but that left me feeling, "Why bother?" — and somehow I knew there had to be a reason to bother. That was when I began to have a feeling of appreciation for having a sense of purpose in life, an appreciation at how eternal this purpose is and how untouched it is by all of life's impermanence.

A fellow SGI member, a person who continually exerts herself in this practice for self and others, really encouraged me by pointing out how fortunate I was to have been able to talk with Dan that last time, to end our friendship on a positive note. I began to see a little glimmer of the positive, and that helped lift me out of the well of



Kristi with her cat, Abbie.

suffering. President Ikeda also replied to a letter I wrote him about my friend's suicide and my great appreciation for my practice at such a time.

Finally, after many hours of chanting, I was able to make a determination: to somehow continue creating value with my life, using this experience as a springboard. After a year, one day I said to myself, "I am not going to suffer anymore about any of this." The time had come when I knew the remaining suffering was within my own life, not the fault of my external circumstances.

This was a turning point. I am discovering an unending sense of my own Buddhahood — a benefit I never expected. I feel a strong loyalty to myself for the abilities I have, and a challenging spirit for my weaknesses. It's almost as if I have become the source of encouragement that Dan provided for me.

My suffering is at rest, although I still miss him. I feel more deeply the passages from "Happiness in this World": "Suffer what there is to suffer and enjoy what there is to enjoy," and "Never let life's hardships disturb you. After all, no one can avoid problems, not even saints or sages" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 161). I am comforted to realize that sometimes, no matter what precautions or preparations we make, life is difficult, we just have to face it. Since we are human, we

have the capacity to suffer. I also note here that the Daishonin doesn't say we need to make careers out of suffering by being victims. To me, being a victim occurs when I stop taking action and responsibility for my life.

I recently reread an article about benefit from the February 1992 issue of the *Seikyo Times*. A passage from that really struck me: "[C]hanging poison into medicine (*hendoku iyaku*) [means] transforming obstacles or threats into something positive. This begins at first with our attitude...how to face problems with a spirit of hope-filled challenge rather than with resigned defeat" (p. 40).

I have finally regained my hope. Hope that I can be happy. Hope that I can contribute value to people I know. Hope that I can resolve whatever problems I encounter. I feel I have won a hard-fought battle against the hopelessness resulting from both the violence and tragedy of my friend's death.

On the winter solstice this last December, I woke up with a poem in my mind. I would like to end with that poem, which is called "Solstice": in the chocolate velvet darkness / of solstice I slumber / true self warmed / with the nectar of timeless power / — source lost in rapture / found in sorrow — / my winter of pain / recedes / I waken / fragrant blossoms / strong in their fragility / greet me. ☸

## SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S AUG. 24 SPEECH

# At the Threshold of the 21st Century

*SGI President Ikeda declares, 'Standing at the threshold of the 21st century, I declare that I—and all of us—have resolutely triumphed over the three obstacles and four devils, and the three powerful enemies!'*

During this meeting, President Ikeda was inaugurated as an honorary professor of Kyrgyzstan's Institute of Oriental Languages and Cultures. To commemorate his inauguration, Rector Avazbek Atahanov of the Institute of Oriental Languages and Cultures, which is affiliated with the Kyrgyz State Pedagogical University, presented the SGI leader with one of the country's famed thoroughbred horses. Rector Atahanov personally selected the horse, which he will raise and care for in Kyrgyzstan on President Ikeda's behalf.

**T**hank you for the fine Kyrgyz steed! A woman named Kurmanzhan Datka is today known as the mother of Kyrgyzstan. Her husband was a leader in the country's Alay region and after his death, she inherited his mantle. With her consummate skill in diplomacy, she parried Russian pressure on Kyrgyzstan, defending her people.

But one day her son, who had been fighting against the Russians, was captured and sentenced to death. Unbelievably, the Russian authorities forced her to attend her son's execution. They no doubt expected this proud woman to break down and beg tearfully for her son's life. As the time for the execution drew near, these cruel individuals watched her intently with sadistic pleasure.

But this mother declared resolutely: "My son! You know the cause for which you give your life. Be proud! Fear nothing and go bravely to your death!" All those present were amazed by her courage. Many wept with great emotion.

I see in this mother the essence of the Soka Gakkai spirit.

Kurmanzhan Datka did not spill the blood of her people, the people of Kyrgyzstan, but she urged her own son to walk the road of martyrdom nobly. Kurmanzhan Datka is still held in high regard in her homeland, and her face is depicted on Kyrgyzstan's 50-som note. [The som is the basic monetary unit of Kyrgyzstan.]



Pittsburg members celebrate the opening of their community center, Aug. 8.

## The struggle to develop ourselves and better the world makes our lives immortal.

Today is Aug. 24 [the 52nd anniversary of President Ikeda joining the Soka Gakkai]. Standing at the threshold of the 21st century, I declare that I—and all of us—have resolutely triumphed over the three obstacles and four devils, and the three powerful enemies!

Every possible intrigue, scheme and falsehood has been employed to attack and destroy the Soka Gakkai, which alone is carrying out the Buddha's will and decree. Let me say here and now that the evil doings of these conspirators will be recorded forever in history.

Today, our 12 million members throughout Japan and the world are shouting "Hurrah!"

You have all worked so hard. Thank you! Thank you from the bottom of my heart!

Our members everywhere around the globe are in high spirits.

The great Russian writer Leo Tolstoy asserts: "An immortal soul requires a task as immortal as itself. And just such a task is assigned to it: endless striving after perfection of self and of the world." How true this is! The struggle to develop our-

selves and make the world a better place is what makes our lives immortal.

Napoléon Bonaparte, meanwhile, declares: "There is only the difference of one step between triumph and downfall. I have seen that in the most crucial of circumstances, the smallest things decide the greatest events." Napoléon knew that only one step separates victory and defeat. The distance between pride and a fall is just one tiny step.

Napoléon also declared that he needed no Arch of Triumph or victory celebration, for he knew no triumph greater than the people's satisfaction. A victory is genuine only when the people are happy and satisfied.

## The Lotus Sutra had to pass through perilous places on a long road fraught with danger and hardship to get to us.

I thank all of you for traveling from afar, in such hot weather, to attend today's meeting.

I feel as if I were galloping across the vast plains of Kyrgyzstan, the cool winds blowing on my face, on the magnificent steed that has been presented to me today by our honored Kyrgyz guests. The sparkling snow-capped peaks of the imperish-

able Tien Shan mountain range tower majestically on the horizon like a procession of kings. The highest peak in the range, called Victory Peak (Pik Pobedy), is 24,406 feet, soaring far above Japan's Mount Fuji [at 12,388 feet].

The mountain snows of Tien Shan melt into pure, rushing streams that nourish the plains below and gather in Kyrgyzstan's Lake Issyk-Kul, which is nine times the size of Lake Biwa [Japan's largest freshwater lake]. This resplendent lake is known as the beauty of Kyrgyzstan and the pearl of Tien Shan. How many travelers it must have captivated with its scenic beauty as they traversed the Silk Road, east to west and west to east! Many Buddhist relics and sites have been discovered near the lake.

Today, Aug. 24, leaders from China, Russia and the three Central Asian republics of Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan are meeting in Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan, for a five-nation summit. China's President Jiang Zemin will be there and so will Russia's President Boris Yeltsin. The world will be watching this summit with great interest.

Kyrgyzstan, or the Kyrgyz Republic as it is formally

known, was born in 1991 after the end of the Cold War, appearing on the world stage as a republic of hope, like the new day's dawning sun. Kyrgyzstan is composed of a harmonious blending of more than 80 diverse ethnic groups. Bringing its rich cultural heritage to shine, Kyrgyzstan is beginning to emerge as a new leader for peace in the 21st century.

Honored by the presence of two great Kyrgyz leaders in the field of humanistic education, today's meeting represents a historic people's assembly.

Honorable President Amangeldy Bekberaev of Kyrgyz State Pedagogical University; Honorable Rector Avazbek Atahanov of the Institute of Oriental Languages and Cultures; fellow SGI members who have traveled to Japan from 20 countries; and my precious members across Japan who continue to strive tirelessly despite the fierce summer heat: I have just received the unparalleled honor of being conferred the title of honorary professor from a great palace of wisdom and hope for the new century. I offer my deepest thanks and gratitude.

One of the major Silk Road routes, the so-called Northern Tien Shan route, passes through Kyrgyzstan. Mahayana Buddhism, which originated in India, traveled to China and East Asia along this route.

Nichiren Daishonin writes of this, paying tribute to the efforts of those who carried Buddhism along this path. He comments that, in its transmission, the Lotus Sutra had to pass through such perilous places as the deserts of Central Asia and the Pamir highlands, and that the road was long—58,000 *ri* or even 100,000 *ri*—and fraught with danger and hardship (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 145). [One *ri* is about four kilometers.]

Fifty-two years ago today, on Aug. 24, 1947, I took my first step together with my mentor, Josei Toda, on a new spiritual Silk Road of peace, culture and education, based on the teachings of Buddhism. I humbly accept this great honor from Kyrgyzstan—a country which has such a wondrous connection with the transmission of Buddhism to Japan—together with

Photo by JONATHAN WILSON

my fellow members in 128 countries and territories, who have shared my sufferings and joys and worked so hard to open a great path of heart-to-heart exchange and communication around the globe.

**'Do not be afraid! Do not retreat!' — this is the essence of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism.**

The West has the heroic epics the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* from Ancient Greece. We in the East have a great heroic epic, too, more than 40,000 lines in length—the towering masterpiece of oral literature, the Kyrgyz epic *Manas*. This remarkable cultural legacy has been passed down for a thousand years.

Four years ago, Kyrgyzstan held a national celebration to commemorate the millennium of the epic's creation. I received a kind invitation to attend this event from the Kyrgyz minister of culture. When the members of Kyrgyzstan's Kambarkan Folk Ensemble performed in Japan last year at the invitation of the Min-On Concert Association, they gave a fine choral rendition of parts of the epic.

The *Manas* tells the story of how the Kyrgyz people, who are being harassed and divided by foreign invaders, rise up and unite, centering around the young hero, *Manas*. The people fight courageously against oppression and insult, and over three generations they firmly establish and defend their homeland.

British historian Arnold Toynbee also made reference to the *Manas* in his studies of the region's history. As you know, Dr. Toynbee viewed history as a process of challenge and response. He believed that the secret to the development and growth of a culture was how it responded to challenges. This ability to respond to challenges determined the success or failure of a civilization, concluded Dr. Toynbee.

The great epic poem of Kyrgyzstan tells the story of a courageous response to a cruel challenge.

In the epic, the hero *Manas* calls on his compatriots to rouse themselves to action:

*There is life and there is death  
There is good and there is evil  
There are times when we  
are fated to be tested by trials*

*Why was I born of my father?  
As long as my soul abides,  
My only course is to  
advance along the path  
to glory!*

*I am not fool enough to  
relinquish to the enemy  
This land that I inherited  
from my father!*

*Why was I born of my mother?  
To walk the path of  
heroes.*

**SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S SEPT. 8 ENCOURAGEMENT**

# An Unsurpassed Achievement

**A**t an executive conference with representative SGI leaders on Sept. 8, SGI President Ikeda said: "Who has actualized the Daishonin's prophecy of world kosen-rufu? You have. It is an unsurpassed achievement in human history.

"You are more praiseworthy than any hero or eminent figure. You are noble emissaries of the Buddha, just as described in the Goshō and the Lotus Sutra—and I sincerely welcome each and every one of you, praying for your longevity and happiness, and for the prosperity and development of your respective countries."

The SGI leader further stressed that Buddhism is win or lose and that battles in the realm of Buddhism must not be fought halfheartedly. In any country where, as in Japan, priests of the Nikken sect are attempting to undermine and obstruct the kosen-rufu movement, he said, it is vital that the SGI members give them no quarter, recognizing them clearly as the enemies of the Buddha that they are.

President Ikeda also presented the members of SGI-Macau with a long poem he composed in their honor, titled "Shine, Eternal Citadel of Human Harmony!" [Later this year Macau, long a Portuguese territory, will be returned to China.]

Unless one has a burning determination to vanquish evil, one cannot protect the people. One cannot ensure that justice will prevail.

The Daishonin writes, "Those with the heart of a lion will surely attain Buddhahood" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 35). You cannot become a Buddha unless you strive with the heart of a lion.

Cowards cannot attain Buddhahood. Self-serving individuals who, when faced with an enemy of the Buddha, simply stand by in silence or flee—those who only fight halfheartedly or leave the battle to others—will never attain enlightenment.

I want all of you, the youth division members, to be people of courage, to be lions, just as the Daishonin urges. He says, "Each of you should summon up the courage of a lion and never succumb to threats from anyone" (MW-1, 241).

"Do not be afraid! Do not retreat!"—this message is the essence of the Daishonin's Buddhism. No matter how high your position in the organization, you disqualify yourself as a leader the moment you lose your determination to go on fighting for kosen-rufu.

The Daishonin was a lion king. We must follow directly in his footsteps and in those of Mr. Toda. We must wholeheartedly pursue the path of mentor and disciple that is the SGI.

For the past half century, I have defended this people's organization, the Soka Gakkai—which my mentor declared more precious to him than his own life—and developed it into a global organization. I have fought.

The Lotus Sutra says that people will "curse and speak ill [of us]" (*The Lotus Sutra*, p. 193). I have personally endured that and countless other persecutions, just as the sutra says. Throughout it all, I have followed the path of mentor and disciple that transcends life and death, spreading the alliance of global citizenship that was my mentor's cherished dream.

I am proud of my accomplishments and my life. In every struggle or endeavor, and in the presence of any and all, I believe that I have always acquitted myself ably and honorably.

I am happy to announce that today in Brazil, on the other side of the globe, my great mentor will be awarded a posthumous honorary citizenship from the city of São João do Meriti in the state of Rio de Janeiro. A special conferment ceremony will be held in the

City Council chambers.

I have made the accomplishments of Mr. Makiguchi and Mr. Toda known to the world. This is the task of the true disciple; this is the path of mentor and disciple.

**Education provides the wings that allow us to attain glory.**

In Kyrgyzstan, they say that a horse is a person's wings. When our distinguished guests presented me with this magnificent steed, they asked me to name it. I want, with their permission, to name it *Glory*, taking inspiration from the message of the *Manas*, their great national epic, which urges: "Advance resolutely along the path to glory!"

Education provides the wings that allow us to attain glory as human beings—in a way that is truly human and dignified. President Bekberaev and Rector Atahanov are two individuals who have devoted themselves tirelessly and passionately to the cause of education.

President Bekberaev is a renowned scholar of German language and literature. Aug. 28 will mark the 250th anniversary of the birth of the German literary giant Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, who says, "One must be young to do great things."

Youth is strength, youth is hope.

What constitutes youth? It is not simply a matter of age. Youth is determined by whether one possesses a lively intellectual curiosity, whether one takes courageous action for what is right.

Both President Bekberaev and Rector Atahanov are standing at the head of the youth and taking the lead in building their

**FROM SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA**

# Poems for the Publications Correspondents

As a correspondent,  
You are opening  
The great path of kosen-rufu.  
Take pride in leading kosen-rufu.

Write down  
Words of infinite might  
With your pen  
As a victor  
Of present and future.

As an uncrowned king,  
Write ceaselessly  
And determinedly  
Articles that will remain in history  
For 10,000 years.

*Praising all the efforts of the correspondents for kosen-rufu,  
August 24, 1999*

FROM THRESHOLD, 5

respective schools with a young, dynamic spirit. Rector Atahanov, at 37, arrives at the Institute of Oriental Languages and Cultures each morning before anyone else and stands outside the building to greet the instructors and students as they arrive. He sets a superb example for us all. I hope that our Soka Gakkai leaders will show this kind of concern toward their fellow members.

What is crucial is the vibrant energy and momentum of the central figure.

Mr. Toda often used to say that if the leaders at the top are truly serious in their commitment, any vital areas for reform would naturally become apparent to them.

**Leaders need to have a sound philosophy of life and death, or their leadership will have no foundation.**

Young, energetic people, whose average age is below 30, staff the Institute of Oriental Languages and Cultures. This was true of the Soka Gakkai in the old days, too. I became president at 32. I hope all the youth division members will quickly develop into fine leaders.

Assistant to the Rector Hironori Ito, who is a trusted institute member, is a Soka University alumnus from the 15th graduating class. In commemoration of this day, I present him

with a poem:

*I dedicate this to you  
Noble friend  
Soka University alumnus  
May you always advance  
with the pride  
Of being a pioneer in  
Kyrgyzstan*

Today, Soka University graduates are active in 52 nations around the world. Of those teaching Japanese in Kyrgyzstan, five are Soka University alumni—two men and three women—and four are employed at the Institute of Oriental Languages and Cultures. I humbly ask you, President Bekberaev and Rector Atahanov, to take care of my Soka University graduates, who are as dear to me as my own sons and daughters.

Ballsagun, the great 11th-century Kyrgyz poet and scholar, writes in his mature years: "Live, ever thinking of death which is inevitable. That is the way to avoid suffering after you enter the grave."

The Daishonin also says, "First study death, then study other matters" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 1404).

What is the purpose of life? What is the meaning of death? Such fundamental philosophical contemplation is of utmost importance to human beings.

People in positions of leadership, especially, need to have a sound philosophy of life and death—or their leadership will be without firm foundation. They will not lead people to happiness.

**TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION MEETINGS**

## A Sound Philosophy of Life and Death

**FROM THIS SPEECH:**

Nichiren Daishonin says, "First study death, then study other matters" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 1404). What is the purpose of life? What is the meaning of death? Such fundamental philosophical contemplation is of utmost importance to human beings. People in positions of leadership, especially, need to have a sound philosophy of life and death—or their leadership will be without firm foundation. They will not lead people to happiness.

1. Why does the Daishonin say to "first study death, then study other matters"?
2. How does thinking about death help us live better lives?
3. How would you describe what a "sound philosophy of life and death" is?
4. Why do leaders who don't have such a sound philosophy lead people to unhappiness?
5. Why do many leaders today not have such a sound philosophy?
6. Does the Daishonin's Buddhism have a positive view of death?

**SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S SEPT. 6 ENCOURAGEMENT**

## Living Each Moment in Earnest

The evening of Sept. 6, SGI President Ikeda attended a representative leaders conference in Shinanomachi, Tokyo, emphasizing the importance of the present moment. He began by quoting a passage from the Shinjikan Sutra "If you want to understand the causes that existed in the past, look at the results as they are manifested in the present. And if you want to understand what results will be manifested in the future, look at the causes that exist in the present" (*The Major Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 2 [2nd ed.], p. 172). Given this truth, he

observed, the causes and effects of the three existences of life—past, present and future—are always condensed in the present moment.

Therefore, the essence of the Buddhist way of life is living each moment in earnest and accumulating eternal benefit, he said.

President Ikeda asked the leaders to be confident that the good fortune and benefit they are accumulating through propagating Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism around the globe will definitely be manifested as brilliant results in the future. He also voiced his wish

to establish, in a suitably significant location, a bronze memorial plaque that will pay lasting tribute to the dedicated individuals who have made outstanding contributions to worldwide kosen-rufu.

Living as we do in the evil age of the Latter Day of the Law, President Ikeda stressed, it is vital that we always advance with strength, fortitude and great courage. When we do, he continued, beautiful "flowers of the Law," fragrant with happiness, bloom luxuriantly in our lives. ☸

There are those who have no solid philosophy to guide them in life, and they have no interest in seeking one. Yet they are cocky and arrogant. Aren't such people complete failures as human beings? Whatever power or authority they may have, it is as evanescent as a dream.

But the lives of you who live in accord with and dedicated to the Mystic Law, the eternal and imperishable Law of the universe, are eternal and imperishable in return. By comparison, social status and material wealth are insignificant. I want you to be confident that you are leading the greatest of all lives.

Ballsagun also entreats: "A person who does not work for others is as if in the grave. Don't be a dead person! As long as you have strength, work for others!"

Today is Men's Division Day. The men's division is the golden pillar of kosen-rufu. I hope all of our men's division members will lead positive, youthful lives, always taking the initiative in working for others' welfare.

**The new century will be the century of women and the century of youth.**

The well-known Kyrgyz writer Chingiz Aitmatov is a dear friend of mine. Last autumn we met again in Kyoto and spoke intimately about many issues, including reviving the culture of the written word.

Mr. Aitmatov holds the highest hopes for the Soka Gakkai's daily, the *Seikyo Shimbun*, a truly humanistic organ. He remarks: "In an age filled with all sorts of vulgar writing, the *Seikyo Shimbun* does not print gossip or fabrications. It publishes on a very high cultural level and is read by millions."

Next year will mark the 70th anniversary of the Soka

Gakkai's founding. With that in mind, let us all work together to increase the readership of the *Seikyo Shimbun*, source of inspiration and hope to leading thinkers around the world. One of Mr. Toda's fondest wishes was that everyone in Japan would read the *Seikyo Shimbun*.

The 21st century will be the century of women. More and more women are moving into leadership roles. As they do, the times will change dramatically.

The new century will also be the century of youth. It is the stage on which the youth division members will carry out their activities.

The Aug. 12 *Seikyo Shimbun* ran an article that Mr. Aitmatov wrote especially for the newspaper. In it, he introduced an ancient Kyrgyz song that praises "seed sowers":

*Give the seeds you have  
sowed sufficient water,  
Build wide irrigation  
ditches,  
Don't let weeds grow in  
your field,  
Don't let tricksters steal  
your crop,  
Personally stand guard  
against thieves.  
Seeds, produce a rich  
crop, multiply!  
One seed producing a  
thousand fruit!*

Youth are the seeds. We must nurture each of these seeds so that each may bear a thousand fruit. We must cultivate and foster each youth, so that each develops into a person of great ability and strength.

We must not allow our precious organization dedicated to propagating the Daishonin's Buddhism to become the victim of tricksters or thieves.

**The people must become stronger.**

The important thing is for the people to become strong—for the organization of the people, the Soka Gakkai, to become strong. It is essential that we do not let anyone get away with treating the people with ridicule and contempt.

We must rise up and courageously speak out for truth and justice. Silence equals defeat. There will be no justice unless we demand it.

I stood up firmly, all by myself, to defend Mr. Toda and fight our opponents. I fought, and I won. I knew that Mr. Toda was indispensable for kosen-rufu. By protecting him, I was protecting kosen-rufu.

I am determined to work together with our honorable friends from Kyrgyzstan to sow and nurture even more hope-filled seeds of peace, culture and education, and to dedicate the rest of my life to creating a monumental epic poem to the victory and glory of the people—an epic poem that will be sung down through the generations across the new millennium.

In closing, on behalf of all present, I offer my sincerest prayers for the eternal, unimpeded growth and development of the Institute of Oriental Languages and Cultures, a fine institution dedicated to producing the rich fruit of humane education.

*Chon Rakhmat!* ("Thank you very much" in Kyrgyz.)

*SGI President Ikeda's speech at the 36th Soka Gakkai Headquarters Leaders Meeting, held at the Tokyo Makiguchi Memorial Hall in Hachioji, Aug. 24.*

VICTORY OVER VIOLENCE — SEABECK, WASH.

# Youth Sponsor VOV Picnic

Photo by MICHAEL M. HENNESSY

Early this past August, my oldest daughter, Kelli, asked me to attend a youth planning meeting with her in Seabeck, Wash. We were introduced to the SGI-USA Victory Over Violence youth campaign to end violence here in the United States. We watched a short video, which explained that to end physical violence we must put an end to passive violence. The discussion centered on what kinds of things might be done in own area to bring our message to local street kids. Kelli suggested a picnic at a park where a lot of kids hang out who deal with both physical and passive violence almost daily. There was a lot of discussion on the difficulty of putting on such a program on such short notice. I pretty much thought that was the end of her suggestion.

At our monthly World Peace Prayer meeting, Kelli caught me completely by surprise when she stood up and announced that her goal for this campaign was a picnic for local kids to get them to pledge to support nonviolence. The hope was to bring kids together and explain to them the incredible number of violent acts committed today by kids against other kids.

With the video as a centerpiece, the picnic was a success. So many totally unexpected benefits happened that it is hard to list them all. Members from different parts of the Northwest Peninsula Area participated



Kelli Hennessey (right) and her sister, Chelsi.

with an enthusiasm that was nothing short of amazing. It showed what we could accomplish as a group through chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo and taking action. A local band with the very appropriate name — Born Victims — was invited to play. The band's drummer stated that this was the first time his parents, who are divorced, had

come together to hear him play. We were able to get over 100 people to sign pledges and it was cool seeing all those kids wearing the buttons.

Several days after the picnic, I picked up Kelli from a friend's house. As we were driving home, she told me that the greatest feeling in the world was to see an idea become a re-

ality. There were some difficulties and last-minute problems. We learned a lot from the experience, and with our little picnic as a first small step and a lot of prayer, we feel that we are that much closer to a real victory over violence.

— KELLI HENNESSY  
and MICHAEL M. HENNESSY

## SGI Youth Training Course Begins

More than 400 youth division representatives from 55 countries and territories gathered at the Soka International Friendship Hall in Tokyo for the opening session of SGI Youth Training Course on Sept. 8. SGI President Ikeda sent a message, addressing the participants as "outstanding young leaders of the widespread propagation of the Mystic Law."

Here are some of his main points:

- Thank you very much for

coming all this way. I extend my warmest, heartiest welcome to each of you.

You have gathered together in high spirits for this important training course being held on the threshold of the 21st century. What an immense and wondrous mission you possess!

All the Buddhas and heavenly deities throughout time and space are most assuredly praising you, saying: "Excellent! Excellent!" You are definitely being protected by them and enveloped in their warm embrace.

I have also been eagerly awaiting your arrival: I bow to

you in profound respect, my palms pressed together in reverence. The Lotus Sutra states, "If you see a person who accepts and upholds this sutra, you should rise and greet him from afar, showing him the same respect you would a Buddha" (*The Lotus Sutra*, p. 324).

- I am sure that, leading up to this training course, many of you encountered various obstacles in your daily lives. Yet you succeeded in valiantly overcoming and winning over them. Now, you have taken your place joyfully in this gathering

for worldwide kosen-rufu, an eternal gathering transcending time. There is absolutely no doubt that you will accumulate boundless fortune and benefit, and shine with indestructible glory into the infinite future.

- I am praying earnestly, sending you daimoku, with the sincere wish that you will have a most enjoyable, bright, meaningful and memorable training course. Please use it as an opportunity to strengthen your life, enhance your mental and physical health and elevate your life-condition.

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# Anti-Violence Youth Summit Convenes in Oakland

Photos by MIKE MULLEN



Summit participants split into small groups for roundtable dialogues on violence.



Oakland Mayor Jerry Brown tells the youth, 'The power is inside each of you to help bring about the changes you want.'

*Solutions. Hope. Working together for a nonviolent society.*

While very much aware of the human toll and suffering caused by violence in America and throughout the world—especially the rising number of crimes and destruction being committed by juveniles and teens—nearly 700 teen-agers and young adults from throughout Northern California met Aug. 29. Their Anti-Violence Youth Summit was an effort to reverse this alarming trend.

The all-day event was held just across the Bay Bridge from San Francisco, in the hillside city of Oakland, at the Henry J. Kaiser Auditorium, located alongside Oakland's scenic Lake Merritt, in the heart of the city.

Sponsored by the SGI-USA members of San Francisco, the summit also included several other community organizations such as the Oakland Youth Advisory Commission and the West Oakland Violence Prevention Program.

The heart of the summit came when the participants broke up into small groups of about 10 for roundtable dialogues on violence. One group of

mostly junior high school students talked about the fears they face each day at school of being harassed by bullies. At another table sat a mother and her teenage son, with the son speaking about his concerns over violence to the group and his mother listening so attentively, as if hearing her child speak for the first time.

And so it went, table after table—discussion, tears, hugs, raw emotion evoked by an issue that affects everyone.

About halfway through the dialogue session, to the delight of those gathered, Oakland Mayor and former California Governor Jerry Brown appeared.

Mayor Brown urged the teens and young adults to take responsibility for helping stop the violence in their schools and communities. Said the mayor: "You have the power to shape your life, the world in which you live. You have even more power when you work together with your parents, your friends and your teachers to come up with solutions to problems. . . . The power is inside each of you to help bring about the changes you want. It's really up to each of you."

—TOBIE MARSH



**Kawika Melendey**, Sacramento, Calif., 13 years old (SGI-USA member): "What I learned from this meeting is that if I have a friend who is having trouble in school, I can help. We can talk about the problem. This meeting taught me what passive violence is—that we shouldn't call each other names or tease people."



**Ninfa Robles**, Vacaville, Calif., 18 years old (guest of an SGI-USA member): "I am happy to see people talking about what we can do to stop violence. Having dialogue is important, because when people start talking with each other, they get to know each other better, and as a result they don't want to do things to hurt each other. It's great seeing so many different people here today getting to know one another."



**Joel Trammel**, Fremont, Calif., 17 years old (guest of an SGI-USA member): "I think of myself as a peacekeeper. When my friend told me about this meeting, I immediately wanted to come. It's been a very meaningful experience for me, because the meeting looked at solutions to the problem of violence. That's the key. It's great seeing all these people here today coming together to help solve the problem. That's the answer: everybody working together."



**Alice Watson**, San Jose, Calif., 30 years old (SGI-USA member): "I wanted to be here to make a cause, since I believe so strongly in the concept of cause and effect. If you want to see change, you have to make the causes to make those changes happen."

"Being here, learning more about what I can do as an individual to help stop violence, is an important cause that I wanted to make. It is wonderful and really encouraging seeing other groups joining with the SGI in this effort. This is my first experience as an SGI member working with other groups. When you talk with people from other organizations, you realize we all are seeking basically the same things: a peaceful life, where people can get along. I really hope we have more opportunities to work with other groups toward a common goal."



**Katherine Tsang**, San Jose, Calif., (SGI-USA member and summit facilitator): "It has been a remarkable experience, seeing these young people open up and share their feelings about violence. There is a real fear of being a victim of violence. Listening to their concerns made me realize how much they need support—from their parents, teachers and religious leaders. Hopefully from today, they will continue the dialogue about how to prevent violent behavior. Many said that because of the summit, they now feel more confident about being able to positively resolve conflicts in their lives. They all expressed a desire that there be more meetings like this."

WTI

# 제3회 FNCC 한국어 연수회

지난 8월 12일부터 15일까지 제 3회 한국어 연수회가, 시원하게 펼쳐진 플로리다의 녹색 대치위에 위치한 평화의 성 [플로리다 자연문화회관] (이하 FNCC)에서 열렸습니다.

멀리 한국에서 이번 연수회를 위해 참석해주신 서상용 부이사장, 정정숙 부인부지도장을 포함, 미 전역에서 182명의 구원의 동지가 부푼 가슴을 안고 이 곳으로 모였습니다.

빛은 멀리 알래스카, 하와이로부터 뉴욕, 메릴랜드 그리고 플로리다에 이르기까지 가깝고도 먼 길을 광포를 위한 마음 하나로 찾았습니다.

얼굴만 보아도 가슴이 벅찬 그들, 그들의 환한 미소속에 우리들은 이미 한 마음이 되었습니다.

“지금 SGI-USA는 큰 점보 제트기처럼 대공을 나르기 위하여 질주하고 있습니다. 그 점보기가 떨 수 있게 여러분께서 한껏 밀어주시기 바랍니다.” 라고 자이츠 이사장께서 격려사를 통해 말씀하신 것처럼 미 전역에서 신심하고 계시는 한국인의 역할과 기대는 어느 때보다 크다고 하였습니다.

이케다 회장 선생님께서 한국의 벗에게 드린 장편의 시 “사계의 선율 민중의 개가” 에서 [지금 한국 SGI가 전 세계의 모범이 되어 불법르네상스의 육일은 지구 사회를 찬란하게 비추어간다] 는 지도말씀은 국제무대인 이곳 미국에서 신심에 면려하고 있는 우리들에게도 적용 되리라 봅니다.

이번 연수회를 통해 돈보이는 부분은 [청년부들의 눈부신 성장] 과 연수회에 참가하신 [회원 개개인의 인간적인 성숙함] 이라고 평가하고 싶습니다.

한겨울의 추위와 같은 언어

의 장벽을 인내과 지혜로서 극복해오신 한국인의 투혼이 대망의 21세기를 앞둔 이 시점에서 지용의 보살로서 그 참모습을 서서히 드러내 보이고 있습니다.

자랑스러운 일입니다.

연수회 기간동안 15명이 월드 트리뷴을 새로이 구독신청 하였고, (참가자 대부분은 이미 구독하고 있었음) 65명이 한국난(코리아 페이지)을 신청하였습니다.

FNCC 연수회가 끝나고 각 지역으로 돌아가신 회원님들은 구독신청 홍보에 진력하고 계십니다.

특히 라스베가스 지역에서는 일시에 8명이 구독신청을 해왔습니다.

월드 트리뷴의 내용을 한국난에 실어 SGI-USA의 활동 방향과 흐름을 우리 회원들에게 전달하는것이 저희들의 사명입니다.

보다 신속하고 향상된 한국판 월드 트리뷴을 제작하기 위해서는 각 지역에 흩어져 있는 능력 있는 분들의 협조가 필요합니다.

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되는 영어판 신문에 한국난이 삽입되고 있습니다만, 인제가 될지 모르지만 한글로 월드 트리뷴 전면(前面)을 장식한 신문은 여러분들께서는 받아보시게 될 날이 올 것입니다.

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감사합니다. 다음은 연수회 내용을 간추려 보았습니다.

### 8월 12일, 목요일

각 주에서 도착한 회원들은 스텝진의 안내로 버스를 타고 FNCC에 도착, 각자의 짐을 푼 후, 저녁식사를 마치고 연수회 개최식에 참석하였습니다.

이 자리에서 SGI-USA 웬디 클락 부인부장은 이케다 회장선생님의 스피치를 인용, 70세의 나이가 청춘이라면 50대, 60대는 어린이와 같으니 이번 연수회를 계기로 새롭게 결의, 전진하자고 제안하셨고, 멀리 한국으로부터 이번 연수회를 위해 방문해주신 정정숙 부인부지도장과 서상용 부 이사장

께서는 [출가한 딸이 시집에서 잘살아야 친정부모의 마음이 편하듯 미국의 한국인 회원에 대한 한국불교회의 마음도 이와 같다.] 고 인사하신 후 준비해온 선물(한국 전통 도자기)을 FNCC 스텝에게 증정했습니다.

### 8월 13일, 금요일 제1회 연수회

SGI-USA 자이츠 이사장께서는 한국인 회원의 구도심과 노고에 깊은 감사의 마음을 전한 후 [진지하게 신심을 수행하는 사람, 구도심이 강한 사람에게 대복운과 공덕이 쌓임에는 의심의 여지가 없다.] 라고 격려하신 후, 한국인 회원 모두가 미국광포를 위해 SGI-USA에서 훌륭한 모범이 되어달라고 당부(자이츠 이사장의 격려사 별도참조) 그 뒤를 이어 서상용 부이사장의 생명에 와 닿는 [개목초 강의]를 통해 대난속에서 빛나는 말법의 본분, 니치렌 대성인의 혼을 배웠습니다.

### 제 2회 연수회

[대아의 생명으로 스승과 함께 21세기를 향하여] 라는 주제로 청년부들의 발표와 체험담이 소개되었습니다.

이들의 순수한 일념과 패기에 밝은 미래를 확인한 부인부들은 환희의 눈물을 흘리기도 했습니다. 또한 이번 연수회의 하이라이트인 [그룹토의]를 통해 월드 트리뷴 홍보와 한국난에 실을 기사내용에 관해 진지한 논의가 있었고, 참가자 전원이 주제자가 되어 스스로 월드 트리뷴 홍보확대에 최선을 다할 것을 결의했습니다.

### 제 3회 연수회

영원한 학회가 [오늘도 힘차게]로 연수회 분위기를 상상에 달하고, 세계평화를 위해 헌신해오신 선생님의 인생드라마, 다큐멘터리 [인간 다이사쿠 이케다]의 비디오를 보면서 모두가 또 한번의 감동의 눈물을 흘렸습니다.

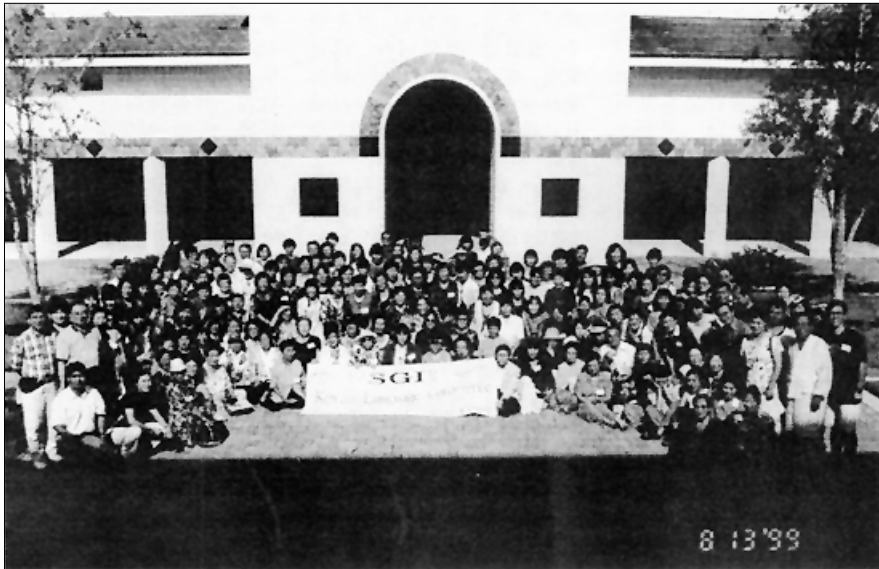
비디오 상영이 끝난 후, 늦은 시각임에도 불구하고 참가자 전원이 선생님께 감사와 결의의 편지를 쓰는 시간을 가졌습니다.

청년부들과 몇몇 장년부들은 밤늦게까지 모아진 편지들을 다시 영문으로 번역하는 수고를 아끼지 않았습니다.

### 8월 14일, 토요일

아침 근행 후 시카고에서 열리는 문화제에 참석하시기 위하여 떠나시는 클락 부인부장과 자이츠 이사장의 아쉬움이 남는 격려사가 있었습니다.

클락 부인부장은 [모든 사람이 제각기 다른 개성을 가지고 있으므로 다른 사람이 자신과 같을 것이라는 기대를 버리고 각자의 차이를 인정하며 광포를 위해



8 13 '99

# SGI-USA 자이츠 이사장의 격려사

한국인 연수회의 개최를 진심으로 축하드립니다. 여러분의 굉장한 노고와 일년에 감사드립니다. 또한 연수회를 위해 한국에서 오신 두분의 간부님들께도 감사드립니다. 미국에서 한국회원의 신심의 활약은 실로 빛나고 있습니다. 실질적으로 한국인 회원수도 증가하고 있습니다. 여러분의 구도심이 야말로 넘버원이라 할 수 있겠습니다. [구도심이 강한 사람] [진지하게 신심을 수행하는 사람]에게 대복수와 공덕이 쌓임에는 의심할 여지가 없습니다. 이케다 회장선생님의 제주도방문을 비디오를 통해 보았는데 매우 감동적이었습니다. 선생님께서는 기념촬영후 [여성은 행복에 대해 진지하게 생각하고 진실로 행복한 여성이 되어주세요. 남성은 사회의 승리자가 되어주세요] 라고 지도말씀을 주셨습니다.

저는 오늘 어느 한 여성에 관해 얘기하고자합니다. 지난 6월27일 TV를 통해 방영된 다큐멘터리 [인간 다이사쿠 이케다]의 연출자인 케이코 키무라씨입니다. 그 분 말씀이 이 프로그램이 방송된 후 많은 시청자로부터 감사와 격려의 인사를 받았다고 합니다. [참가 학회와 이케다 선생을 싫어했는데 이 프로그램을 통해 생각이 바뀌었다] [이케다씨가 그렇게 굉장한 사람인데 몰랐다] 라는 내용도 있었다고 합니다. 케이코 키무라씨는 학회원도 아니고 신심을 하는 분도 아닌데 3년 전 선생님의 에세이 [세계의 지도자와의 대화]를 읽고 감동한 나머지 이것이야말로 '인류의 보물'이라는 확신으로 라디오 프로그램을 통해 소개해나갔다고 합니다. 라디오 방송이 나가자 화가 난 남자 한 명으로부터 전화가 걸려와 당장 방송을 중단하라고 하더군요. 그런데 매주 방송이 나갈때마다 똑같은 사람이 같은 내용의 전화를 계속 걸어오는 것이었습니다. 그렇다면 이 사람도 방송을 계속 정취하고 있었다는 애

기겠지요. 그러나 6개월 후 이 사람은 다시 전화를 걸어 이렇게 말했다고 합니다. [감사합니다. 이 프로그램을 계속 방송해주세요.] 라고 한 사람의 마음의 변화에 키무라씨는 더욱 감동하여 이케다 선생님에 관해 보다 많은 것을 배우고 싶다는 마음으로 선생님의 저서를 계속 읽어왔다고 합니다. 아마 보통 학회원보다 더 많이 선생님의 책을 읽었을 겁니다. 그리고는 TV 프로그램제작을 결의하고, 지난 봄 선생님과 사모님께 인터뷰신청을 했다고 합니다. 1시간 30분 동안 진행된 인터뷰는 '마음과 마음의 대화' 였다고 합니다. 선생님께서는 언제나 진심의 사람에게는 진심으로 응하십니다. 인터뷰가 끝난 후 선생님은 스텝 한사람 한사람에게 감사의 마음을 전하고 악수를 청했다고 합니다. 선생님의 진심의 마음과 태도에 스텝들 모두가 놀랐다고 합니다. 지금 일본에서는 7개의 방송사가 미국에서는 6개의 방송사가 회장선생님에 관한 내용의 방송을 준비한다고 합니다. 이분은 회원이 아니지만 광선유포에 굉장한 공헌을 하고 언론을 통해 절복을 해나가고 있으니 '지용의 보살'이라 할 수 있겠지요. 제 자신도 이 이야기를 통해 너무나 많이 배웠습니다. 사제불이의 정신은 선생님을 직접 만나지 않아도, 함께 있지 않아도 항상 선생님의 마음과 직결해 있는 것입니다. 선생님으로부터 무언가를 바라기만 하는 그런 태도는 제자의 자세가 아닙니다. 우리 모두 선생님이 계시기에 신심을 만났고 또한 올바른 신심을 수행할 수 있는 것입니다. 이에 대한 '감사의 마음'을 가지는 것이 중요합니다. 광선유포를 위해 일하려고 결의하고 행동하는 것이야말로 선생님께 보답하는 길이고, 벗에게 선생님의 마음을 전하려고 하는 마음과 태도야말로 진정한 제자의 정신입니다. 이를 위해 각자가 사제불이의 원점을 가져야합니다. 개인적으로 제

자신의 원점을 이야기한다고 하면 저는 1963년 대학교 2학년때 권투연습중 허리부상을 당해 척추디스크로 입신을 하게되었습니다. 6개월만에 완전 회복된후 환회에 찬 저는 열심히 활동해 학생부 반장, 지부장 그리고 총학생부장에 임명되었습니다. 그런데 이 역직을 가지기 위해 제목을 무척 망이 했습니다. 제 인생에서 역직을 위해 기원한 건 처음이자 마지막이었지요. 왜 그렇게 제목을 했는가 하면 총학생부장이 되면 선생님의 어의구전 강의에 참석할 수 있었기 때문이지요. 원래 어의구전은 굉장히 어려우나 선생님의 강의는 이해하기 쉽고 명확했습니다. 그 강의가 바로 제 신심의 보물이지요. 그리고 3월 선생님께서는 30명의 대학 졸업생을 초대, 참가 학회빌딩에서 저녁식사를 가졌습니다. 저녁식사 후 선생님께서는 한사람 한사람과 악수를 하며 격려하셨습니다. 선생님께서 제게 악수를 청하며 이름을 묻고는 [자네를 잊지 않겠네] 라고 말씀하셨습니다. 그때 저는 초라하고 가난한 한 학생이었을 뿐인데 선생님께서는 저를 굉장히 중요한 사람처럼 대해주셨지요. 그때 저는 [선생님과 함께 나의 인생을 광포를 위해 바치겠다] 라고 결의했습니다. 이러한 원점이 있었기에 저는 37년 동안 신심을 지속할 수 있었던 것입니다. 대학 졸업 후 학회직원이 되어 홍보국에서 일하며 아시아 외교관 유학생들과 많은 우정을 맺어 참가학회를 이해할 수 있는 다리가 되도록 노력했습니다. 그때가 1960년대이니가 한국 광포가 막 시작되려고 할 때지요. 제가 알고 지내던 많은 제일 한국인 회원이 한국광포를 위해 한국을 오가며 활동했었지요. 그분들이 돈이 많아서 그렇게 했던 것이 아닙니다. 오로지 조국의 동포를 행복하게 해주고 싶다는 마음 하나로 그렇게 하셨던 것입니다. 지금도 그분들과는 좋은 연대를 맺고 있는데 한국사람은 한

번 친구가 되면 절대 배신하지 않습니다. 이후 성교신문 특파원으로 로스앤젤레스, 시애틀 등으로 광포를 위해서라면 어느 곳이라도 가고 무엇이든 하겠다는 마음으로 활동했습니다. 1993년 1월 이사장으로선생님을 환영할 수 있었는데 그때 선생님께서는 다음과 같은 말씀을 하셨습니다. [스승은 제자의 성장을 진심으로 강하게 원한다. 그러나 많은 사람들은 그것을 이해하지 못한다.] 그 말씀을 듣고 저는 선생님의 마음을 이해하려고 끝없이 노력하겠다고 결의했습니다. 제자의 끊임없는 성장과 행복을 기원하는 선생님의 마음을 이해할 때 진정한 제자라고 이름 붙일 수 있는 것입니다. 제자신도 끝없이 선생님의 마음을 이해하려고 도전하고 있습니다. 1996년 1월 선생님께 개인적으로 질문을 할 수 있는 기회가 있었습니다. [어떻게 하면 미국의 광포를 전진시키고 조직을 발전시킬 수 있을까요?] 라고 질문하자 선생님께서는 [회원의 행복을 위해 기원해라. 나는 회원의 행복, 건강, 무사고, 경제적 번영을 위해 40년 동안 기원해왔다. 이것이 지금 학회의 기반이다. 따라서 자네도 그런 마음으로 먼저 기원해라] 라고 지도하셨습니다. 신심에서 가장 중요한 점은 타인의 행복을 위해 기원하는 것입니다. 우리 모두가 벗의 행복을 위해 기원한다면, 모두가 함께 하고 싶어하는, 보다 따뜻한 조직이 될 것입니다. 반대로 서로가 미워하고 싸우기만 한다면 모두가 도망가려고 할 것입니다. 이 원칙은 각자의 반, 지구, 직장 또는 가정등 모든 곳에 적용됩니다. 타인의 행복을 기원하는 마음이 바로 대복운을 가져오는 것입니다. 벗을 위해 기원하고 또한 싫어하는 사람을 위해서도 기원합니다. 중문의 회원을 위해서도 기원하고 대화해갑시다!

또 다른 중요한 점은 선생님과 사모님의 건강과 장수를 기원하는 것입니다. 이렇게 해나갈 때 선생님의 마음에 직결해나가는 것입니다. 얼마 전 선생님께서는 희망에 대해 스피치 하셨습니다. [희망이야말로 최고의 보물입니다. 대 희망을 가지고 살아갈 때 무한하게 성장할 수 있습니다. [희망은 생(生)] [절망은 사(死)] [희망은 승리] [포기는 패배] 다] 라고 하셨습니다. 또한 희망과 큰 목표를 가지고 도전하면 스트레스를 없앨 수 있고 콜레스테롤도 저하된다고 합니다. 건강 장수하기 위해서는 희망을 잃지 마십시오. 실제 암 환자 연구에서도 살고자 하는 마음, 즉 일념이 강하 사람에게서 카라셀이라고 하는 암세포를 파괴하는 세포가 자신을 포기하고 있는 사람보다 더 많다는 것을 발견했다고 합니다. 학회원이 암을 극복하는 것도 모두 희망과 일념이 강하기 때문입니다. 어서에도 [나이는 더욱 젊어지고 복운은 더 쌓인다.] 라고 있듯이 광선유포를 위해 살 때 젊음, 미, 건강 그리고 행복, 이 모두를 이룰 수가 있는 것입니다. 여러분 모두 실증을 내면서 생활해주시시오. 현재 SGI-USA 에서는 3P(propagation 절복, publication 불교회 출판물구독, participation 좌담회참석) 운동을 전개하고 있습니다. 절복에 관해서는 한 지구당 2명의 신회원을 증가시키는 것이 현재 목표인데 한국인 회원은 한 사람당 한 명씩 절복하는게 어렵까요? (참석회원 대학수로 만장일치) 또한 윌드 트리분도 영어를 못하기 때문에 라고 기피하기보다는 신문을 통해 미국 사람에게도 불법을 알려나가도록 노력하고, 각자의 지역 회원 모두가 좌담회에 참석할 수 있도록 격려합니다. 한국인 회원 모두가 SGI-USA 광포의 도상에서 훌륭한 모범을 보여주는 예가 되어주시시오. 감사합니다!!! (Aura Lee, 뉴욕)

# \* 시 (詩) \*

## 평화의 동산 FNCC!!!

버려진 들판에 홀로 피어나 나그네의 발걸음을 멈추게 하노라.  
 모진 비바람도 살을 에이는 추위에도 눈물을 삼키며 잘도 견디어,  
 승리의 오늘을 맞이한 구원의 동지여! 장하고도 장하도다.  
 처음 보는 얼굴이건만 부모형제를 만난 듯 반가움이 솟아오른다.

전국 방방곡곡에서 달려와 행복의 동산에 모두 모였노라.  
 삼대 회장선생님의 혼이 맥동치는 이곳 FNCC,  
 희망의 동산에 둘러앉아 눈물겨운 지난날을 이야기하며,  
 서로를 격려하고 새로운 천년을 향한 미래의 꿈을 결의하였노라.

마끼구찌 선생님의 분수가 창공을 가르며 거침없이 솟아올랐다, 하이얀  
 물안개 되어 쏟아져 내리는 그 아래, 도다 선생님의 미소 같은 잔잔한 연못,  
 그 옆에 자리잡은 자애에 넘치는 이케다 선생님의 무대에서 우리모두 다짐하였노라.  
 이체동심의 마음으로, 남묘호렌계교, 남묘호렌계교, 나묘호렌계교...

다채로운 우리들의 과거를 말해주듯이 평화의 동산에 떠오른 일곱색깔 무지개,  
 낮설고 물 서른 이국 땅에서 연약한 뿌리를 내리느라 귀머거리 되어 눈물을 흘리고  
 병어리 되어 가슴을 치면서도, 선생님께 계시기에 꿈을 잃지 않고 가슴속에 희망을  
 불태우며 싸워왔기에 지나온 세월이 영롱한 이슬 되어 내 인생을 빛내노라.

길가에 버려진 쓸모 없는 작은 돌일지라도 나만이 할 수 있는 사명이 있노라고,  
 앵매도리의 원리를 가르쳐 주시고, 세세생생 이기주의에 물들은 어두운 생명을  
 “남을 위해 등불을 밝히면 내 앞이 먼저 밝아진다는“ 행복의 진리를 깨우쳐주신 선생님,  
 본존님을 만난 대 복운에 감사하며 마음속깊이 사제의 길을 맹세하였노라.

작은 내 생명을 불태워 불행에 허덕이는 내 이웃에 주고 또 주며 함께 손잡고 가리라...  
 저 21 세기를 향하여...  
 평화의 동산을 향하여...  
 전 인류의 행복을 위하여...

내일 작별에 시간 온다해도  
 내 생명은 죽음마저도 후회 없는 기쁨으로 맞이할 것이다.  
 아...나는 행복했노라고!!

FNCC 를 다녀와서, Aug 20, 1999  
 (여운해, 뉴욕)

이체동심으로 강한 확신을 갖고 전진합시다.] 라고 격려해주셨고, 자이츠 이사장은 이번 한국어 연수회의 환회와 열기에 자신의 감동을 표현하신 후, [지금 SGI-USA는 푸른 창공을 향해 이륙하려는 점보 제트기와 같습니다.

이 제트기가 날기 위해서는 이를 밀어주는 굉장한 힘이 필요하니 한국인 회원이 바로 그 힘이 되어달라] 고 당부하시면서, 연수회의 하이라이트인 [우정의 밤] 축제를 못보고 떠나는 것이 아쉽다고 하시면서 '돌아와요 부산항에'를 맛배기만 선사하셨습니다.

### 제 4회 연수회

조용완(미국 한국인 회원 담당 간부) 부인부장으로 부터 지역활동 상황보고가 있었고, 이어서 서상용 부이사장의 명쾌하고 박력 넘치는 유계치문 강의에 모두가 넋넉박멸을 결의하고, 정정숙 부인부 지도장의 중문문제 및 일반적인 신심수행에 관한 질의문답 시간을 가졌습니다. 5개의 질문이 들어왔고, 모두가 수준이 높은 좋은 내용들이었습니다.

오후에는 관광, 그룹지도로 이어졌고 저녁 식사 후 드디어 모두가 기다려왔던 연수회의 꽃 [우정의 밤 축제] 가 열렸습니다. 삼바, 각설이, 아프리카 춤 그리고 스모등 세계 각구의 패션 쇼를 준비해오신 LA팀의 재치에 모두가 웃음을 감추지 못하고, 하와이의 훌라춤, 라스베가스의 어우동 그리고 수 차례에 걸친 합창이 진행되는 동안 축제 분위기는 점점 무르익어 가면서 개인의 노래숨씨를 선보이는 가라오케로 이어져 갔습니다.

[우정의 밤 축제] 무대였던 선사인 식당의 조명도 하나씩 줄어들면서, 노래를 부르는 사람을 둘러 사는

수많은 사람들의 춤의 행렬은 환희! 그렇습니다. 환희! 바로 그것 이었습니다. SGI-USA 부이사장이신 사사키씨는 [우리 모두 황금의 추억을 만들 수 있었던 것에 대해 진심으로 축하해 드리고 싶습니다. 때로는 의롭고 쓸쓸할 때도 있겠지만 여러분은 절대로 혼자가 아니라 SGI 가족입니다. 미국광포를 위해 함께 전진해 가지지 않으시렵니까?]

### 8월 15일, 일요일

### 제 5회 연수회

제3회 FNCC 한국어 연수회의 성공을 축하하듯 신비스럽게도 연수회장 주의를 일곱 색깔 무지개가 감쌌습니다. 비가 내린 후도 아닌데, 아침근행 후 선생님의 제주도 방문 비디오상영 및 연수회 참가 수료증 증정이 있었습니다.

격려사를 통해 사사키 부이사장은 [여러분 모두가 경제적으로나 가족, 직장등 여러 어려운 상황속에서 연수회에 참석하셨습니다. 연수회에 참석한 그자체가 여러분들 각자가 승리자임을 증명하는 것입니다. 우리는 모두 SGI 가족이니 어려울 땐 함께 울고, 기쁠 때는 함께 웃으며 기쁨을 나눕시다. 연수회가 성공적으로 이루어질 수 있었던 것도 이케다 선생님의 기원이 있었기 때문입니다. 선생님과 함께 오로지 광포를 위해 각자의 지역에서 절복홍교와 기관지확대운동에 최선을 다해 주십시오. 감사합니다.]

뒤이어, 참가자들의 결의와 소감 발표가 줄을 이어 면서 제 3회 FNCC 한국어 연수회는 희망과 용기를 간직한 2000년을 기약하면서 막을 내렸습니다.

(편집인 일동)

# 나의 신심, 나의 체험

## \*대아의 생명으로 선생님과 함께 21세기를 향하여\*

저는 Orange County 지역에서 여자부 활동을 하고 있는 김영옥입니다. 선생님의 마음이 그대로 전해지는 FNCC에 갈 수 있는 복운과 이케다 회장선생님과 스승과 제자의 원점이 될 수 있는 계기가 이루어질 수 있도록, 1999년 원단 근해때 10시간 동안 제목을 올리면서 제 나름대로 투쟁해 왔습니다.

그러나 바쁜 학교생활과 직장생활은 FNCC로 향한 저의 마음을 무척 힘들게 했습니다. 올해 5월, 대학졸업과 동시에 대학원 진학을 생각했지만 모두 뒤로 미루고, 우선 FNCC에 가는 목표와 청년부가 주관하는 Culture Festival(문화제)에 참가하는 계획을 세웠습니다.

저는 대학을 다니면서 생활비를 마련하기 위하여 Hilton Hotel에서 일을 하고 있었는데, Hotel은 저의 전공에 아무런 도움을 주지 못하는 분야이고, 또 새벽 근무와 주말에도 일을 해야 했기 때문에 저의 학회활동에도 지장을 주었고, 육체적으로도 힘이 겨워 매일 피곤함과 싸워야 했습니다. 그래서 저는 제 전공도 살리고, 월요일부터 금요일까지 근무할 수 있는 직장을

기원하기 시작했습니다. 이번 제 3회 FNCC 한국어 연수회를 성공시키기 위하여 로스앤젤레스 지역의 청년부들과 2개월에 걸쳐 다양한 프로그램과 장기자랑을 준비했습니다. 우리들 청년부들은 매주 토요일마다 만났습니다. 토요일 새벽 6시부터 오후 3시까지 근무를 끝내고 집에 돌아와 편히 쉬고 싶다는 유혹도 많았지만, [마에 질 수 없다]며 그 유혹을 뿌리치곤 했습니다. 우리들이 준비하고 있는 이 장기자랑이 180명의 한국인 회원을 즐겁게 해줄 수 있다는 일념으로 매주 토요일 연습에 임했습니다. FNCC로 출발하기 일주일 전부터 저는 비행기표가 걱정이 되었습니다. 왜냐하면 그 비행기표는 저의 친구로부터 선물 받은 것으로 빈 자석이 남아야 탈 수 있기 때문입니다. 하루 전날까지도 빈 자석이 없어 밤을 새워 제목을 올렸습니다. 저는 이번 연수회의 안내요원으로 발탁되어 하루 먼저 FNCC에 도착해야 되는데도 불구하고 비행기 자석을 구하지 못해 안달을 부렸습니다. FNCC에서 저를 기다리고

있을 청년부들을 생각하니 잠이 오지 않았습니다. 다음날 8월 11일, 새벽 6시에 로스앤젤레스 공항에 도착하여 7시 30분 비행기를 타려고 했지만, 이 비행기도 좌석이 없었습니다. 그 다음 비행기도 좌석이 나지 않았습니다. 목이 바짝 바짝 타 말라왔습니다. 저를 기다릴 청년부들의 얼굴 하나 하나를 떠올리면서 진지하게 송이 제목을 올렸습니다. 그리고 나서야 9시 30분에 겨우 비행기를 탈 수 있었습니다. 사실은 저는 그 전날 어느 회사에 취직하기 위하여 면접을 봤었는데 제가 소속돼 있는 여자부장이 하신 [우리 회원은 남묘호렌계로처럼 생각하고, 말하고, 행동해야 한다]는 격려의 말씀을 거들 떠올리면서 최선을 다해 남묘호렌계로처럼 생각하고, 말하고, 행동했습니다. 그 다음날 저는 회원들을 마중하기 위하여 공항에 나왔습니다. 제가 든 SGI 깃발을 보면서 제게 다가오시는 회원들을 맞이하면서 저는 무엇이라고 표현할 수 없는 행복감을 느꼈습니다. 하지만 한편으로는 무엇인

가가 계속 저를 괴롭혀오던 것이 있었습니다. 그것은 오랫동안 신심을 해오면서 입으로만 이케다 선생님이라고 외쳤지, 마음 오저 깊은 곳에서 진정한 사제불이의 정신이 없음을 깨달았기 때문입니다. 마키구치 호수와 그 중앙에서 물줄기를 뿜어 올리는 도다 분수를 바라보면서 저는 이케다 선생님의 마음을 저의 마음속에 담고 싶었지만 그러면 그럴수록 저는 더 괴롭기만 했습니다. 연수회 마지막 날밤, 저는 안타까운 저의 심정을 어느 간부님께 지도를 받았습다. 그 간부님은 이 모든 것이 사종교 독에 의해서 비롯된 것이라 지도하시면서 지금부터라도 진심으로 이케다 선생님의 구상을 실현할 수 있는 제자가 되라고 격려해 주셨습니다. 저는 그 자리에서 꼭 그렇게 하겠다고 맹세했습니다. 제방으로 돌아올 때 시간은 이미 새벽 3시를 지나고 있었습니다. 저는 그때 미국의 대부분의 도시가 밤 9시가 넘으면 무서워서 밖에 나갈 생각조차 할 수 없는데 마키구치 호수와 도다 분수가 있는 이곳 FNCC는 새벽 3시도 전혀 무섭지가 않았습니다. 이곳은 정말 평화롭고 아름다운 곳입니다. [선생님께서는 이렇게 평화로운 낙원을 건설하기 위하여 밤낮으로 전 세계에 걸쳐 투쟁하고 계신다.]

여기까지 생각이 미치자 제 눈에는 눈물이 팽 돌아옵니다. [선생님 죄송합니다. 입신 11년만에 비로소 선생님의 마음을 느꼈습니다. 선생님! 이제부터는 불제자로서 부끄럽지 않는 김영옥이 되겠습니다.]

저에게는 그 날밤이 바로 선생님과 저 사이에 [사제불이의 원점]을 만든 감격적인 순간들이었습니다. 그런 일이 있은 후, 플로리다 FNCC 연수 센터에서 로스앤젤레스로 돌아오는 귀로에 저는 그렇게도 벗고 싶었던 커다란 업 하나를 벗어버린 기쁨을 감출 수 없

었습니다. 오늘의 하늘은 어제의 하늘이 아니었고, 제 어깨를 스쳐 가는 사람들도 예사롭게 보이지 않았습니다. 모든 자연이 다 자연 그대로 아름답게 보였고, 제가 살아 있다는 그 자체만으로 저는 행복했습니다. 집으로 돌아온 다음날 저는 떠나기 전, 면접을 봤던 직장으로부터 합격되었다는 전화를 받았습니다. 묘하게도 플로리다로 출발하기 전에 면접을 보았고, 돌아와서는 합격되었다는 기쁨에 새삼 신심의 고마움을 느끼고 있습니다. 저에게는 플로리다에 있는 FNCC 연수회관을 선생님의 마음을 그대로 느낄 수 있는 지상의 천국이고, 모든 속업을 전환시킬 수 있는 묘법의 땅이었습니다. 본존님께서 주신 직장이라서 모든 것이 기원한 그대로 되었습니다. 월요일부터 금요일까지 근무하고 일도 전공분야와 직접 관련된 직장입니다. 또 이번 9월에 있을 예정인 청년부 문화제에서 History Group에서 공연을 준비하고 있습니다. 저는 새로운 천년을 맞이하는 너무나 뜻깊은 이해에 또 한번 이케다 선생님과 삼세 영원한 [사제의 원점]을 새길 수 있도록 강성하게 제목을 올리고 있습니다. 이케다 회장선생님께서 FNCC 연수회에 오신 한국인 회원들에게 주신 메시지 [월월 일일 강성해지시라. 조금이라도 해이한 마음이 있으며 마가 틈탈 것이니라.]란 어서 구절이 있습니다. 인내 강하게 희망에 가득찬 자신의 사명에 살아가는 궁지와 즐거움으로 혈액순승의 의식인 근행과 끊임없는 제목도전으로 최후의 승리가 되겠습니다. 맨 처음 미국에 왔을 때 갓갓된 광선요를 향한 그 열정만은 생애 변하지 않고, 본존님께 칭찬 받을 수 있는, 선생님께 안심을 드릴 수 있는 한국의 김영옥이 되겠습니다. 감사합니다. (로스앤젤레스, 김영옥)

한국어 페이지를 위한

# 안 내 말 씀

지금까지 월드 트리뷴에서는 스페니쉬어, 중국어 그리고 한국어 페이지를 매일 발간하였습니다. 금년 6월부터 월드트리뷴에서는 구독자 중에서 원하시는 분야 한하여 외국어 페이지를 우송해드립니다. 만약 월드트리뷴을 구독하시면서 외국어 난을 받아 보시기를 원하신다면 아래의 신청서를

가입하신 후 다음의 주소로 보내 주십시오.

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\* 각 지역의 리더되시는 분들에게는 월드 트리뷴을 구독하시는 회원들 중 한분도 빼짐없이 한국어 페이지를 받아 보실 수 있도록 확인해 주셨으면 감사하겠습니다. \*\*

\* 영어로 쓰세요  
Last Name (성) \_\_\_\_\_  
First Name (이름) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address (주소) \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Area code & phone number (전화번호: 지역번호 포함) \_\_\_\_\_

월드 트리뷴 구독(ID) 번호: \_\_\_\_\_

\* 이 번호는 월드트리뷴 첫 페이지에서 본인의 성명 바로 위에 적혀 있으며 9자리 숫자로 되어 있습니다.

아래 것 중 하나를 선택하십시오

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