

# World TRIBUNE

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Photos by HARRY SAKURAI

### FROM THE GENERAL DIRECTOR

## Activity Centers To Open Soon

Dearest Friends!

May 3 marks the 40th anniversary of SGI President Ikeda's inauguration as the third president of the Soka Gakkai. I am so happy to be extending greetings to all of you on this occasion! Because of the endless series of victories during these past 40 years, we now see an unprecedented and prosperous level of growth in the spread of Buddhism throughout the world. The widespread propagation of the Law is Nichiren Daishonin's will, and I can never fully express the appreciation and pride that I feel for having the opportunity to participate in this historic undertaking.

As I described in a letter sent to each of you this month, we will again hold our May Commemorative Contribution this year beginning April 28—the anniversary of the founding of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism—until June 4. I sincerely hope every member will be able to participate at this significant time.

In my travels throughout the country in the past months, I have met wonderful SGI-USA members who are truly taking the initiative to help the SGI-USA flourish in their community. I believe when individuals feel this kind of pride and responsibility, our future is assured. Our May Commemorative Contribution allows each member to take this kind of responsibility in a concrete way. Thank you in advance for your help in strengthening our foundation in America.

In line with this, I want to share some exciting news with you. Currently, we have 67 community centers and culture centers throughout the SGI-USA. This year we are scheduled to open three new community centers: one in Orlando, Fla., another in Southern Virginia, and the third on Long Island in New York. Congratulations! We intend to continue to increase the number of community centers in the United States in order to support our steady growth.

However, since there are many

locations with a significant concentration of SGI-USA members that are a long distance from the nearest community or culture center, the board of directors recently approved a plan to open smaller-scale activity centers. While the organizations in many areas are not yet large enough to support a full-scale community center, the members are still sincerely working to advance kosen-rufu, and often travel many hours to support their community centers. Therefore, these facilities will be suitable for gathering 60–70 people and allow many areas to conduct local activities with total freedom. How exciting! These activity centers will be a base for members to expand our propagation movement and publications promotion until a full-scale community center can be opened. With this vision in mind, I am pleased to announce that 15 such activity centers are planned to open throughout the United States as early as the end of 2000. The locations of these new centers will be announced soon.

Throughout America, we have a goal of two new members per district. Our growth as an organization isn't measured by how many buildings or facilities we have; rather, it is the happiness of individuals that demonstrates our growth. Therefore, while we are proud to announce our physical expansion, let's aim toward July 3 of this year, the halfway point of the year 2000, as a time for each of our districts to welcome one new member to our organization.

I earnestly applaud your efforts. Thank you again for your sincere support of the May Commemorative Contribution. Let's make this May 3 a fresh start with President Ikeda, and continue the challenge toward May 3 next year and the victorious opening of Soka University of America. Thank you very much!

Sincerely,  
Danny Nagashima,  
SGI-USA General Director



Participants of the first International Latin American Spanish-language Conference at the FNCC. Please see pages 6–7.

### SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S MESSAGE TO THE SPANISH-LANGUAGE CONFERENCE AT THE FNCC

## A Life of the Highest Value

**'I wish for all of you to please advance, having as your treasures of life the Gohonzon, the Goshō and true friendship,' SGI President Ikeda says.**

*The Spanish-language conference was held at the Florida Nature and Culture Center, April 6–9.*

Many congratulations on your first International Latin American Spanish-language Conference in the United States of America. I have been informed that today 12 Central and South American countries are gathered at the Florida Nature and Culture Center: Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela. I want

to express to all of you my great respect for the effort you have put forth.

You came from afar with a burning, seeking spirit; this fact is in itself victory. People with a seeking spirit are always jovial, cheerful and refreshing; they observe themselves with modesty and they forge themselves discretely. For this reason, they can develop themselves into great people. Why do you practice? Why do you deepen your understanding of Buddhism? Why do you need friendship and unity? You do it for the sake of the Mystic Law. You always ask yourselves about the purpose of life. You try to develop yourselves and you challenge yourselves daily for the good of people in society. You are truly sublime bodhisattvas and Buddhas. Please have full conviction that developing compassion, friendship and confidence—in the place where each one of you lives, and each one in his own way—is the actual proof of

world kosen-rufu.

I wish for all of you to please advance, having as your treasures of life the Gohonzon, the Goshō and true friendship.

Singing the song of victory together with your comrades, joyfully conduct a life of the highest value. This is the true objective of the SGI.

The Goshō says: "There is no true happiness for human beings other than chanting Nam-myōhō-renge-kyō" (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, "Happiness in This World," p. 681). I am praying day after day from the bottom of my heart for the health, safety, tranquility, victory and great development of all of you. Please send my greetings to the members of your respective countries, and to your families and friends.

*In the early morning hours of Friday, April 7, 2000  
Makiguchi Memorial Hall*

Daisaku Ikeda

# Unity Starts With Respect

## EDITORIAL

By JEFF FARR  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR



**How can we unite? ‘We can start with showing respect to everyone that we’re trying to unite with,’ Jeff Farr writes. ‘We can look for each person’s talent and praise the unique contribution that each person can make.’**

Why unite? Why is uniting as a group of Buddhists an important part of practicing Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism? The Daishonin says that “if the spirit of many in body but one in mind prevails among the people, they will achieve all their goals...” (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 618). He also says that “a hundred or even a thousand people can definitely attain their goal, if they are of one mind” (*ibid.*). We unite so that we can win in everything.

But how do we create this unity? How do we all get on the same page?

We can start with showing respect to everyone that we’re trying to unite with. We can look for each person’s talent and praise the unique contribution that each person can make. The Daishonin’s Buddhism teaches that each person definitely has something special—something irreplaceable—to offer the group, to offer humanity. We can find that special thing and give it support.

Wherever the organization is permeated with this kind of respect, it becomes something like a research laboratory for kosen-rufu. Although each person may be working on a different aspect of the project, everyone becomes deeply united toward the common cause. Each feels the overarching goal to be his or her own. Each sees the linkage between what he or she is in charge of and the bigger picture. This is why SGI President Ikeda asks SGI-USA members to “put your hearts and minds together with a sense of responsibility...”

(April 7 *World Tribune*, p. 1).

Part of this is also each of us respecting our own talent and sharing it in the

organization. This is what President Ikeda did as a young man, setting an example for us. When he once complained to second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda about the organization, President Toda asked him: “Why don’t you go ahead and make the Gakkai into the kind of organization you can really like? Build an ideal Gakkai through your hard work and earnest effort!” (*The New Human Revolution*, vol. 5, p. 199). This was the impetus for the young Ikeda to, in many ways, reinvent the Soka Gakkai: He dreamed up cultural activities for the organization, establishing the Brass Band in May 1954 and putting together the first Soka Gakkai sports meet that November. These paved the way for the Soka Gakkai culture festivals. Next year’s eight SGI-USA culture festivals sponsored by the youth division are one result of the vision President Ikeda had for our organization more than four decades ago.

The point is that President Ikeda didn’t back off from the Soka Gakkai or go start his own organization. He didn’t like

some of the activities, but he believed he had something distinct to contribute to them. He immersed himself in them, changing them. Eventually, millions of people understood what he was trying to do and joined in.

One reason that the SGI is great is because we have this strong tradition of embracing individuals’ initiative. From the Victory Over Violence project to the Soka Spirit movement, I constantly hear members’ new ideas being voiced and then see them being implemented. It’s as if the SGI is calling out to each of us: “Improve me! I know that you can make me better!”

At a recent youth-sponsored introductory meeting in Santa Barbara, Calif., I heard a presentation on Nam-myoho-renge-kyo that was better than any I had ever heard before. Students from the University of California, Santa Barbara, took turns explaining each of the terms in personal ways: through an experience, a song, a dance. It was much more moving—and convincing—than definitions I have been giving by rote for years at discussion meetings. It gave me confidence to see that our organization is being propelled by unconstrained creativity.

And it made me think that we each have the future of our organization in our hearts. All the great ideas that our organization needs must be somewhere in-

side us. After all, each of us is a microcosm of the universal macrocosm—our organization is like the coming together of many universes to make a new, larger, more wonderful universe than has ever been.

No wonder that “if the spirit of many in body but one in

mind prevails among the people, they will achieve all their goals...” No wonder that when we become a real team, based on respect for one another’s talent—and on remembering to make the most of our own talent—anything is achievable, anything at all. **wt**

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EXPERIENCE — FRANK CASTANHEIRA, SAN FRANCISCO

# Repaying My Debt of Gratitude

**Frank Castanheira introduces his parents and family to the practice in gratitude.**

Eighteen years ago I started practicing Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism not knowing what an incredible journey I was about to embark upon. Shortly after my Gohonzon was enshrined, I vividly remember chanting the night away when I began to cry without any end in sight. Strangely enough I was crying tears of both joy and sorrow. On the one hand, I knew at that moment that I had encountered a great philosophy that would carry me through life. I also cried tears of sadness because, for the first time in my life, I could clearly see how unhappy I really was. I was living in what Buddhism calls the worlds of Hell, Hunger and Animality.

Growing up my family was very close-knit, but I grew very distant and isolated due to my father's overwhelming disciplinary strictness, which cast a shadow of doubt and fear over my life from an early age. Having had such a bad relationship with my father for most of my life, I lacked confidence and became very rebellious.

In school I had difficulty concentrating and sitting still; I was constantly being reprimanded. Then at 14, I started experimenting with drugs. My relationship with my father worsened quickly. His way of dealing with me was by sending me away. During my high school years, I attended two military academies and two boarding schools. Each time my father shipped me somewhere, my self-esteem suffered and my tendency toward drugs increased.

Early on I realized that I needed to practice Buddhism so I could change my karma and become truly happy. Secondly, I felt a tremendous debt of gratitude toward my parents. I felt the greatest treasure I could give them was to introduce them to this practice. Since I was the rebellious child of the family, my mother was a staunch Catholic and my father a complete atheist, it seemed impossible. However, I made the determination in the depths of my life that I would share my Buddhist practice with my parents and sisters.

SGI President Ikeda's guidance of Feb. 22, 1990, states: "Buddhism elucidates three types of filial piety or natural obligations to parents. Giving one's parents ma-

terial goods such as clothing and food is the lowest type of filial piety. Respecting the desires of one's parents is the middle type and leading one's parents to Buddhahood with the Mystic Law is the highest type" (March 1990 *Seikyo Times*, p. 54).

I was born in Bogota, Colombia, raised in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and attended a Catholic school. Despite the deep Catholic influence in my life, I began my Buddhist practice full-steam ahead while living in San Francisco. I was able to create the wisdom and fortune of deciding to start with my little sister, Juana, who was coming to San Francisco to live with me.

I knew that if Juana could practice, we could join forces. In July 1982, Juana started to practice Buddhism. With unity, we began chanting for our family's happiness.

For two years, Juana and I encouraged my mother to start practicing. She was very adamant in stating that she was not interested. Despite that, she would still attend every activity within our district. Soon Mother developed friendships with the members in our district who embraced her and encouraged her. At that time, both Juana and I were very active in the organization. My mother's understanding of the kosen-rufu movement grew. As she watched us challenge ourselves through our Buddhist practice, she witnessed her children change from self-centered and spoiled to responsible, caring and active youth. During one of Mother's visits to San Francisco from Brazil, she decided to begin her practice and received the Gohonzon in 1984.

One year later, my mother was diagnosed with breast cancer. We were determined to beat it. I was with her during all her chemotherapy treatments and supported her practice. Today one of the greatest treasures in my heart is the memory of struggling and chanting for three months with my mother. She was able to overcome the cancer and return to Brazil.

In 1987, she had a relapse. This time the cancer returned with a vengeance; it spread to her lymph nodes and bones. She died on Oct. 11, 1987, after struggling with all her might. With Juana beside her, she died peacefully in her sleep with a radiant smile on her face. I had firm conviction that she had attained enlightenment.

With the passing of my mother, Juana and I started to focus our prayers for our father and older sister. Through many years of chanting, both our atheist father

and meditating sister started to see us differently. We always referred to positive changes in our lives as a benefit of this practice.

In 1997, my father came to visit us. Instead of staying for a week he decided to stay for three months. This visit was a turning point in my relationship with him. My father seemed to grasp something very deep in my life. Instead of criticizing me, he became my best ally. My father was convinced that my erratic behavior and drug abuse had a medical reason. Despite my apprehension, I agreed to see a medical doctor. It was then that I was diagnosed as a manic depressive and suffered from attention deficit disorder.

Through the changes he saw in my life — from overcoming my addictions to becoming a responsible adult — my father began to respect my Buddhist practice. Last year he started making offerings of fruit to the Gohonzon.

Unexpectedly in July 1999, my father was diagnosed with brain cancer — seven tumors to be exact. Given my father's age of 77, the doctors were not encouraging him to do any chemotherapy or radiation therapy. The doctors gave him three months to live. For the first two months of his last three months, we chanted with my father every day for approximately 30 minutes. My father truly enjoyed chanting.

My father never received the Gohonzon but at least he started to practice for himself and others, despite his limited understanding of Buddhism. On a couple of occasions while chanting, he told us to call Ana, our older sister, to come and chant with us. The four of us actually chanted together on various occasions. What a golden memory!

My father was never able to express his love for us in an emotional way. From the time we were toddlers, he had always been distant. Now, because of his illness, all his inhibitions had disappeared. For the first time he was open to receive our love and care. On the other hand, each one of us had finally come to understand that under the cold façade he had always put on, he indeed loved us. This was a tremendous benefit because it allowed us to connect with him through our hearts and bridge that gap that had always existed. With this new awareness, we were able to express our love and gratitude each day as we cared for him.

During my dad's last month, his brain was shutting down all his bodily functions. He became bedridden and could barely



Frank Castanheira with his two sisters, Ana Maria and Juana.

speaking. Juana and I began taking turns doing gongyo and chanting at his bedside while holding his hand. My father would squeeze our hands and nod approvingly. Dad passed away peacefully on Oct. 8, 1999, with a beautiful smile much like my mother's. The three of us were present when he took his last breath.

"Whether people to whom you explain Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism decide to take faith depends mainly upon their life tendency and their capacity to understand and believe in Buddhism. In any case, whether a person determines to take faith in Buddhism after listening to an explanation or listens to the teaching and does not decide to take faith in it, the benefit that the believer receives is the same," President Ikeda said (March 1990 *Seikyo Times*, p. 70).

Nichiren Daishonin's writing "The Four Debts of Gratitude" states: "One who studies the teachings of Buddhism must not fail to repay the four debts of gratitude.... The first of the four debts is that owed to all living beings.... The second of the four debts is that owed to one's father and mother.... The third is the debt owned to one's sovereign.... The fourth is the debt owed to the three treasures" (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, pp. 43–44).

By introducing my parents to Buddhism, they were able to face illness and death victoriously.

I have tremendous appreciation and joy in my heart for having been able to repay my debt of gratitude to my parents. To all the leaders and members who encouraged me along the way, thank you from the bottom of my heart. Now it is time to repay my grati-

tude to the Gohonzon, President Ikeda and the SGI.

In "Dialogue on the Lotus Sutra," President Ikeda states: "Those who spread the teaching 'will have repaid the debt of gratitude that [they] owe to the Buddhas' (*The Lotus Sutra*, p. 278). The sole prayer of the Buddha and the mentor is for kosen-rufu. That is why exerting oneself in spreading the teaching is what it means to truly repay one's debt of gratitude to one's mentor" (January *Living Buddhism*, p. 38). Because in the end, "faith is all that matters." **WT**

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MAY 3—SOKA GAKKAI DAY

# STANDING UP FOR ONE'S CONVICTIONS

## SIGNIFICANT DATES

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

By ROBIN MEADER

WASHINGTON, D.C. BUREAU CHIEF

**This I will state. Let the gods forsake me. Let all persecutions assail me. Still I will give my life for the sake of the Law.** (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, pp. 280–81)

It is uncomfortable to stand up in front of others and vow to accomplish something as huge as world peace; you might be regarded by others as arrogant, as foolish, as a dreamer. The Buddhist way is to have courage to make a vow in public before the actual goal has been accomplished.

In the above passage from “The Opening of the Eyes,” the Daishonin’s vow shows that he is standing, in 1272, age 50, at the beginning of a new phase in his life, having experienced a realization of his true identity as the Buddha of the Latter Day of the Law. From victory at the greatest battle of his life—by walking away intact from the attempted midnight beheading at Tatsunokuchi Beach in 1271—the Daishonin arrived at the strongest possible resolve for his activities in the future. The experience of excruciating personal hardship—exile—accompanied the Daishonin’s vow.

Similar hardships appeared in the lives of Soka Gakkai presidents Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, Josei Toda and Daisaku Ikeda. In 1943, Makiguchi uttered the words that would launch the Buddhist lay organization on the path of justice. When the chief administrator of the Nichiren Shoshu head temple advised Makiguchi as president of the lay organization to accept, even for a short time, the Shinto talisman being pressed on all religions in Japan by the militarist government, Makiguchi replied, “We cannot accept it.” Because Makiguchi clearly took a stand against government authoritarianism, the government trailed him, arrested him and imprisoned him later the same year. He died in prison in 1944.

Preceding Josei Toda’s inauguration as second president of the Soka Gakkai, on May 3, 1951, his business was failing

and creditors were hounding him, even as some in the lay organization questioned his leadership. Of this President Ikeda writes, “What Josei Toda experienced during these several months must have been similar to something like the Tatsunokuchi Persecution of Nichiren Daishonin” (*The Human Revolution*, vol. 4, p. 235). On Nov. 18, 1950, a few months before his inauguration as second president, Josei Toda said on the anniversary of Makiguchi’s death, “Embracing the Dai-Gohonzon, placing absolute belief in the founder, Nichiren Daishonin, and safeguarding the future of the Soka Gakkai to the last, I will determinedly devote my entire being to the Mystic Law and to the development of this organization, so long as my life shall last” (*The Human Revolution*, vol. 4, p. 226).

Daisaku Ikeda’s inauguration as president of the Soka Gakkai on May 3, 1960, came in the midst of the Soka Gakkai’s court battle against false charges of electioneering in the 1957 election campaign in Osaka. President Ikeda was called in for questioning on July 3, 1957, and the case would not be finally resolved and he cleared of charges until Jan. 25, 1962. President Ikeda writes about that May 3: “On assuming the presidency, Shin’ichi [the character in *The Human Revolution* who represents Daisaku Ikeda] had resolved firmly in his heart to dedicate his all to kosen-rufu with the spirit revealed in the Daishonin’s words, ‘This I will state. Let the gods forsake me. Let all persecutions assail me. Still I will give my life for the sake of the Law.’ Strangely enough, from that day on, all of his fears had disappeared” (February 1992 *Seikyo Times*, p. 35).

In 1962, after learning that the court had exonerated him of all wrongdoing, “Shin’ichi’s thoughts were on Josei Toda, to whom he silently said: ‘Sensei! Things turned out just as you predicted: I was acquitted. Thus your precious Soka Gakkai—which was your very life—was spared injury.’ He was keenly reminded again of his late mentor’s greatness.

“Shin’ichi also recalled how on a rainy evening in June 1957, just prior to his arrest, Toda had



Tsunesaburo Makiguchi



Josei Toda



Daisaku Ikeda

told him that the process of kosen-rufu would necessitate a fierce struggle against the devilish nature of authority.

“Tsunesaburo Makiguchi had died in prison, and Josei Toda had spent two years behind bars. Shin’ichi, too, had been imprisoned, albeit only for two weeks, and the ensuing trial had lasted four-and-a-half years. Thinking of these things, he was struck by a powerful realization of the Soka Gakkai’s inescapable destiny to battle against the devilish forces of authority... At this time, unknown to others, Shin’ichi Yamamoto’s imperishable, lifelong determination to struggle for human dignity and freedom began to take root in his heart and mind.

“Yes!” he thought. ‘I will do it! As a child of the Buddha, I will dedicate my life to the task of freeing people from the demonic shackles of authority and scoring a victory for the freedom and dignity of human beings!’” (May 1992 *Seikyo Times*, pp. 51–52).

In light of this history, the SGI honors the date May 3. Historically, on May 3, all SGI members reaffirm our vows as Buddhists in our own realms. May 3 marks the moment when ordinary lay people—and not schooled members of the clergy—take responsibility at the head of this great religious movement. We vow to take on any external attacks from ignorant forces in society, authoritarian leaders of the government and slanderous members of the clergy, as well as to vanquish all internal attacks from self-doubt. All in order to accomplish world peace.

The revolution of the Daishonin’s Buddhism can never

be led by a specialized band of people: It’s not the Daishonin’s Buddhism if it requires someone other than an ordinary person to lead it. The SGI is decentralized to empower each individual member through the neighborhood discussion meetings. The ordinary person in an ordinary life, not a specially trained person, is thus the center of the SGI.

On May 3, we can remind ourselves of several things. We can honor the lay leaders who shoulder the responsibility to propagate the Daishonin’s Buddhism and protect and teach every lay member. We can recall that this worldwide lay movement led by thousands of local neighborhood groups is vitally active for peace in every society on Earth; that Buddhism is meant to be this dispersible, and that SGI members throughout the world are making this theory into reality. We can reflect on the fact that, while lay people taking full re-

sponsibility to spread a religion is important, most significant is the successor’s vow to realize the mentor’s dream. We can remind ourselves that the realization of world peace will only come about as a result of person-to-person dialogue—in our SGI districts, our places of work and study, our homes.

Finally, we can see the vow of the ordinary person as extraordinary, because it is made by an ordinary person who lives up to the spirit of Buddhism. We might see ourselves as that ordinary person who decides in our own excruciatingly difficult moments to make the vow that defines our identities anew. We don’t have to wait until we’re respected to respect our own faith. We don’t have to wait to be called to stand up for world peace. May 3 is a day for standing up for our convictions as lay people, in the midst of our challenging, difficult lives, and for deciding to reveal our own true identities. **WT**

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# The Buddhist Emphasis on Dialogue

The following was excerpted from SGI President Ikeda's speech delivered at Harvard University, Cambridge, Sept. 24, 1993, titled "Mahayana Buddhism and Twenty-first-Century Civilization" (A New Humanism, pp. 154-57).

Since its inception, the philosophy of Buddhism has been associated with peace and pacifism. That emphasis derives principally from the consistent rejection of violence combined with stress on dialogue and discussion as the best means of resolving conflict. Descriptions of the life of Shakyamuni provide a good illustration. His life was completely untrammelled by dogma, and his interactions with his fellows stressed the importance of dialogue. The sutra recounting the travels that culminated his Buddhist practice begins with an episode in which the aged Shakyamuni uses the power of language to avert an invasion.

According to the sutra, Shakyamuni, then 80 years old, did not directly admonish the minister of Magadha, a large country bent on conquering the neighboring state of Vajji. Instead, he spoke persuasively about the principles by which nations prosper and decline. His discourse dissuaded the minister from implementing the planned attack. The final chapter of the same sutra concludes with a moving description of Shakyamuni on his deathbed. As he lay dying, he repeatedly urged his disciples to raise any uncertainties that they might have about the Buddhist Law (Dharma) or its practice, so that they would not find themselves regretting unasked questions after his passing. Up until his last moment, Shakyamuni actively sought out dialogue, and the drama of his final voyage from beginning to end is illuminated by the light of language, skillfully wielded by one who was truly a "master of words."

Why was Shakyamuni able to employ language with such freedom and to such effect? What made him such a peerless master of dialogue? I believe that his fluency was due to the expansiveness of his enlightened state, utterly free of all dogma, prejudice and attachment. The following quote is illustrative: "I perceived a single, invisible arrow piercing

the hearts of the people." The "arrow" symbolizes a prejudicial mindset, an unreasoning emphasis on individual differences. India at that time was going through transition and upheaval, and the horrors of conflict and war were an ever-present reality. To Shakyamuni's penetrating gaze, it was clear that the underlying cause of the conflict was attachment to distinctions, to ethnic, national and other differences.

In the early years of this century, Josiah Royce (one of many important philosophers Harvard University has given the world) declared that: "Reform, in such matters, must come, if at all, from within.... The public as a whole is whatever the processes that occur, for good or evil, in individual minds, may determine."

As Royce points out, the "invisible arrow" of evil is not to be found in the existence of races and classes external to ourselves, but is embedded in our own hearts. The conquest of our own prejudicial thinking, our own attachment to difference, is the necessary precondition for open dialogue. Such discussion, in turn, is essential for the establishment of peace and universal respect for human rights. It was his own complete absence of prejudice that enabled Shakyamuni to expound the Law with such freedom, adapting his style of teaching to the character and capacity of the person to whom he was speaking.

Whether he was mediating a communal dispute over water rights, converting a violent criminal or admonishing someone who objected to the practice of begging, Shakyamuni attempted first to make others aware of the "arrow" of their inner evil. The power of his extraordinary character brought these words to the lips of one contemporaneous sovereign: "Those whom we, with weapons, cannot force to surrender, you subdue unarmed."

Only by overcoming attachment to differences can a religion rise above an essentially tribal outlook to offer a global faith. Nichiren, for example, dismissed the shogunal authorities, who were persecuting him, as the "rulers of this little island country." His vision was broader, directed toward establishing a religious spirit that would embody universal values and transcend

## DEVELOPING A GLOBAL NETWORK OF SPIRITUAL SOLIDARITY

The following are excerpted from the book *A New Humanism, a collection of SGI President Ikeda's speeches and lectures given at universities, research institutes and academies around the world.*

The founder and first president of the Soka Gakkai, Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, battled Japanese militarism and died in prison at the age of 73. Beginning very early in this century, he insisted that the human race can no longer engage in military, political or economic competition, but instead must try to foster a climate in which societies compete on humanistic grounds. I hope that the students of Moscow State University will be front-runners in such a humanistic competition of the 21st century.

In this discussion, I have referred to Buddhist wisdom and the works of Tolstoy as I sketched the manner in which we can seek to achieve self-mastery. It is up to us to transform chaos into harmony in the coming century, and religion and philosophy, culture and government, all must concentrate on that attempt. I hope all people of similar convictions will join forces with me in our journey down this road to re-

the confines of a single state.

Dialogue is not limited to formal debate or placid exchange that wafts by like a spring breeze. There are times when, to break the grip of arrogance, speech must be like the breath of fire. Thus, although we typically associate Shakyamuni and Nagarjuna only with mildness, it was the occasional ferocity of their speech that earned them the sobriquet of "those who deny everything" in their respective eras.

Similarly, Nichiren, who demonstrated a familial affection and tender concern for the common people, was uncompromising in his confrontations with corrupt and degenerate authority. Always unarmed in the chronically violent Japan of his time, he relied exclusively and unflinchingly on the power of persuasion and nonviolence. He was tempted with the promise of absolute power if he renounced his faith, and threatened with the beheading of his parents if he adhered to his beliefs. Nevertheless, he maintained the courage of his convictions. The follow-

ing passage, written upon his exile to a distant island from which none was expected to return, typifies his lioness tone: "Whatever obstacles I might encounter, so long as men of wisdom do not prove my teachings to be false, I will never yield!"

♦ ♦ ♦

My personal mentor was Josei Toda, second president of the Soka Gakkai. Born in 1900, Toda was 30 years younger than Mahatma Gandhi. During the second world war, when Gandhi was engaged in his final struggles in prison, Toda was also imprisoned for his opposition to the Japanese military authorities. Like Gandhi, Toda was a pacifist of profound conviction. It was he who taught me the exalted way of peace when I was 19, just after the war. President Toda was also a leader of the people, inspired by a deep sense of compassion. Finally, like Gandhi, he was a creative social reformer. All of the Soka Gakkai International's activities for peace, culture and education stem from Toda's efforts and from the spirit he bequeathed us.

For 45 years, I have devoted myself to Toda's legacy. It is my desire and determination to continue to develop a global network of spiritual solidarity directed toward a world without war. In this endeavor, I trust that

I will have the company of my esteemed Indian friends. I know that, in these efforts, the image of Gandhi will always be in my heart. ("Gandhism and the Modern World," p. 138, speech given at the National Museum of India, New Delhi, Feb. 11, 1992)

♦ ♦ ♦

"Live true to your own life!" was the rallying cry of my mentor Josei Toda, the second president of the Soka Gakkai. He survived two years in prison during the second world war, and he emerged even more firmly undeterred from his dedication to peace. After Japan's defeat, the established values seemed to have been wiped out or turned upside down. In that time of spiritual desolation, Toda preached that the people must return to the very beginning and recreate their own inner human revolution. His teaching brought alive Shakyamuni's observation that we are our own masters, as no one else can ever be; if we discipline ourselves well, we will obtain a master like no other, which in our time can be called human revolution. ("The Magnificent Cosmos," p. 47, speech given at Moscow M.V. Lomonosov State University, May 17, 1994) **WT**

continued to explain to his guards and interrogators the principles of Buddhism. They were the very ideas which had made him a "thought criminal" in the first place. He died at the age of 73, still in confinement.

Josei Toda was heir to the spiritual legacy of Makiguchi, and he became the second president of the organization. He emerged from the ordeal of two years' imprisonment declaring his faith in the unity of the global human family. He then preached widely among the population, who were lost and suffering in the aftermath of the war. Toda also bequeathed to us, his youthful disciples, the mission of building a world free of nuclear weapons.

With this as our historical and philosophical basis, Soka Gakkai International remains committed to the role of dialogue in the advancement of peace, education and culture.... For my own part, I wish only to continue my efforts to speak with people all over the earth in order to contribute in some small way to the greater happiness of humankind. **WT**

# ¡Viva the Americas!

By DAWN YOUNG AND  
MARTHA MAUNY  
LOS ANGELES

With enthusiastic anticipation 53 members from Latin American countries, and 160 from across the United States and Puerto Rico, attended the First International Spanish Language Conference at the Florida Nature and Culture Center, April 6-9. This historic conference gathered members from Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela and the U.S. for the first time. Topics featured in the main sessions included unity and Soka Spirit.

During his opening remarks, SGI-USA Executive Advisor Fred Zaitzu stated, "This is a new era and a new departure for the kosen-rufu movement in America." He also mentioned that SGI President Ikeda is very happy about our having this wonderful conference uniting North, Central and South America, and asked that it be a joyful conference with no accidents.

President Ikeda sent a special message, which was read at the opening of the first session (please see page 1).

SGI-Argentina General Director Kazuo Oshida commented: "I have been practicing for 41 years and I am deeply in love with this practice. Do you know why? Because it talks about the heart and teaches us about life. President Ikeda said, 'He who quits never wins; a true winner never abandons his faith.' Kosen-rufu should be based on indestructible happiness and unity. *'Itai doshin'* and



Photo by FERNANDO MORAIS

Florida members in traditional costumes welcome conference participants to the FNCC during the opening ceremony, April 6.

'to stand up' are synonymous. *'Niji'* [as in *niji seson*], 'in this moment' or 'now' means the moment that one stands up to fulfill one's mission for kosen-rufu, and does so by one's own decision. It is not important how many years of practice we have. Rather, we should ask ourselves how much human revolution we have done." He also mentioned that *'itai doshin'* means 'to transcend any differences through dialogue.' If any one interrupts

this unity, he is destroying Nichiren Dai-shonin's teachings and preventing the advancement of the kosen-rufu movement. For instance, High Priest Nikken is creating disunity. Each one of us, as Nichiren Daishonin's disciples, should challenge ourselves and win in every area of our lives."

There were also open guidance sessions with Wendy Clark, SGI-USA women's division vice senior advisor, Sheilah Edwards, SGI-USA vice general director and vice senior women's advisor, Greg Martin, SGI-USA vice general director, Leiko Komatsu, SGI-USA Dominican Republic women's division leader, Kazuo Oshida, SGI-Argentina general director, Benshiro Ikeda, SGI-Argentina Study Department leader, and Gabriel Martinez Graces, SGI-Panama general director.

The passion and pride of the diverse participants was colorfully displayed at the Thursday night opening parade of national costumes presented by the Florida members. Several members even brought this warmth forth more vigorously

during the Saturday night friendship exchange.

The Sunday morning session included the exchange of moving experiences by several participants and a surprise performance by jazz flautist and SGI-USA

member Nestor Torres. Participants enthusiastically determined to continue attending training sessions at the FNCC and make it a focal point for fostering the advancement of kosen-rufu in the Western Hemisphere. **WT**



Photo by REBECA VILLA

Venezuelan members perform at the friendship exchange, April 8.



Photo by REBECA VILLA

Arrival at the Florida Nature and Culture Center, April 6.

# Unity Toward a New Era



Photo by HARRY SAKURAI

The first session is titled 'Many in Body, One in Mind,' April 7.

Photo by FERNANDO MORAIS



Photo by FERNANDO MORAIS



Percussionists at the opening ceremony, April 6.



Photo by FERNANDO MORAIS



Photo by HARRY SAKURAI

## Youth Summit Held

'Youth, my life's treasure, who will shoulder the full responsibility for the 21st century! Stand up with me! Even if it's just one of you, stand up and be a lion! Stand up resolutely where you are now, from this moment on! Steadily work to raise the flag of the people's victory here, there, and everywhere! The Eternal City of the SGI will rise from your fighting spirit' (Daisaku Ikeda, April 14 'World Tribune,' p. 8). Such was the spirit of the first international youth gathering of its kind, which took place during the recent Spanish Language Conference at the Florida Nature and Culture Center. Twenty-three youth representatives from 13 different countries in North, Central and South America gathered for a Youth Summit. Under the theme of "Creating The Eternal City of the SGI," the enthusiastic youth discussed Soka Spirit and the mentor-and-disciple relationship. At the conclusion of their two-hour dialogue, the youth committed to unite in standing up strongly against the injustice of Nichiren Shoshu and broadly establish the humanistic ideals of the SGI in their respective countries.

Photo by FERNANDO MORAIS



Photo by HARRY SAKURAI

Photo by FERNANDO MORAIS



## BUDDHISM IN DAILY LIFE

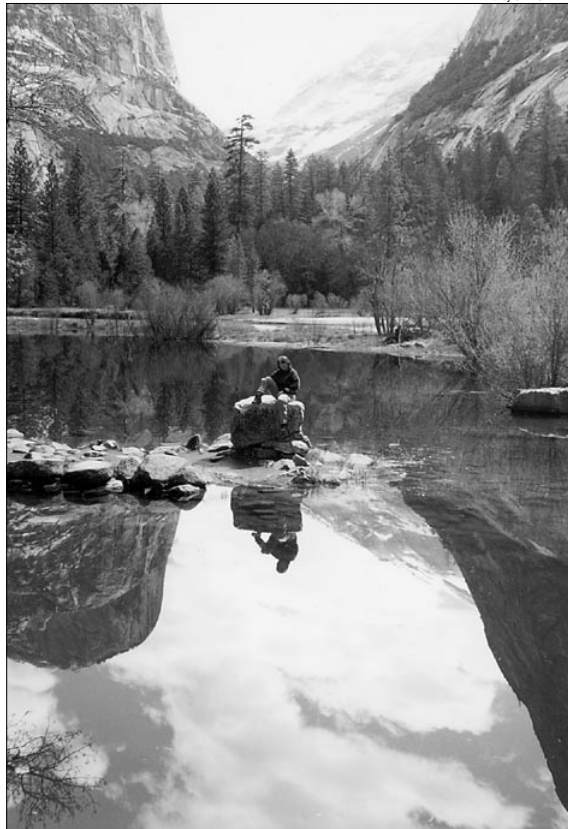
# The Concept of the Ten Worlds

The prime concern of Buddhism is our life-state, the joy or suffering we experience at each moment. This is always seen as an interaction between external conditions and inner tendencies; the same conditions (the same workplace, for example) that will be experienced by one person as unremitting misery may be a source of exhilarating challenge and satisfaction to another. Strengthening our inner state so that we are able to resist and even transform the most difficult and negative conditions is the purpose of Buddhist practice.

Based on his reading of the Lotus Sutra, the sixth-century Chinese Buddhist T'ien-t'ai developed a system that classifies human experience into ten states or "worlds." This Ten Worlds teaching was adopted and elaborated by Nichiren Daishonin, who stressed the inner, subjective nature of these worlds: "As to the question of where exactly hell and the Buddha exist, one sutra states that hell exists underground and another sutra says that the Buddha is in the west. Closer examination reveals that both exist in our five-foot body" (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 1137).

What are these ten worlds, then? Ordered from the least to the most desirable, they are Hell—a condition of despair in which one is completely overwhelmed by suffering; Hunger—a state dominated by deluded desire that can never be satisfied; Animality—an instinctual state of fearing the strong and bullying the weak; Anger—a state characterized by an unrestrained competitive urge to surpass and dominate others and often a pretense of being good and wise. These four states are referred to as the four evil paths because of the destructive negativity that marks them.

Continuing, Humanity is a tranquil state marked by the ability to reason and make calm judgments. While fundamental to our identity as humans, this state can also represent a fragile balance that yields to one of the lower states when confronted with negative conditions. Rapture is a state of joy typically experienced when desire is fulfilled or suffering escaped. The worlds thus far are sometimes grouped together as the six lower worlds. These are



Mirror Lake in Yosemite.

all basically reactions to changing external conditions in which we experience a lack of real freedom and autonomy.

What Buddhism refers to as the four noble states represent the effort to live with integrity, inner freedom and compassion. The world of Learning describes a condition of aspiration to enlightenment. Realization indicates the ability to perceive unaided the true nature of phenomena. Together, these are sometimes referred to as the two vehicles as people manifesting these states are partially enlightened and free from some deluded desires. But these worlds can be very self-absorbed, and in many Buddhist texts we find the Buddha admonishing the people of the two vehicles for their selfishness and complacency.

The world of Bodhisattva is a state of compassion in which we overcome the restraints of egotism and work tirelessly for the welfare of others. Mahayana Buddhism in particular emphasizes the Bodhisattva as an ideal of human behavior. Buddhism is a state of com-

pleteness and perfect freedom, in which one is able to savor a sense of unity with the fundamental life-force of the cosmos. For a person in the state of Buddhahood, everything—including the inevitable trials of illness, aging and death—can be experienced as an opportunity for joy and fulfillment. The inner life-state of Buddhahood makes itself visible through altruistic commitment and actions enacted in the world of Bodhisattva.

This brings us to a key aspect of the Daishonin's understanding of the Ten Worlds: Each world contains within it the other nine. As he expresses it: "Even a heartless villain loves his wife and children. He too has a portion of the Bodhisattva world within him" (WND, 358). Thus, the potential for enlightened wisdom and action represented by the world of Buddhahood continues to exist even within a person whose life is dominated by the lower life-states of Hell, Hunger or Animality.

The reverse is also true. The life-state of Buddhahood is not separate or discontinuous from

the other nine worlds. Rather, the wisdom, vitality and courage of Buddhahood can infuse and transform the manner in which a tendency toward, for example, Anger, functions in a person's life. When Anger is directed by the compassion of the worlds of Buddhahood and Bodhisattva, it can be a vital force in challenging injustice and transforming society.

The purpose of Buddhist practice—for us who practice the Daishonin's Buddhism, the chanting of Nam-myohorenge-kyo—is to bring forth the life-state of Buddhahood that can illuminate our lives and enable us to forge lasting value from our eternal journey through all the Ten Worlds.

Courtesy of SGI Quarterly

## Restoring Human Wholeness

The following is excerpted from a speech delivered by SGI President Ikeda at Claremont McKenna College, Claremont, Calif., Jan. 29, 1993. It can be found in the book *A New Humanism*, pp. 175–76.

One of the central teachings of Buddhist philosophy bears directly on the question of character formation. Buddhism classifies the states of life that constitute human experience into ten worlds or realms....

Within each of these ten states or worlds is likewise to be found the full spectrum of the ten worlds. In other words, the state of hell contains within it every state from hell to Buddhahood. In the Buddhist view, life is never static, but is in constant flux, effecting a dynamic, moment-by-moment transformation among the states. The most critical point, then, is which of these ten states, as they exist in the vibrant flow of life, forms the basis for our own lives? Buddhism offers a way of life centered on the highest states, those of Bodhisattva and Buddhahood, as an ideal of human existence. Emotions—joy and sorrow, pleasure and anger—are of course the threads from which life's fabric is woven, and we continue to experience the full span of the ten worlds. These experiences, however, can be shaped and directed by the pure and indestructible states of Bodhisattva and Buddhahood. Nichiren, whose Buddhist teaching is the base of our organization, did more than merely preach this doctrine; he

lived it, providing a remarkable model for the future. When, for example, he was about to be executed by the iniquitous authorities of the time, he reproached his lamenting disciples, saying, "What greater joy could there be?" After overcoming the greatest trial of his life, he even had saké brought for the soldiers who had been escorting him to his execution.

Because of these qualities, I am confident that Buddhism can deeply affect the formation of character, which is the key to the restoration of human wholeness. As a practitioner of Buddhism, it is my hope that together with our distinguished friends gathered here today, we will set off on a courageous journey in search of those new principles of integration that will determine the fate of humankind in the coming century. I would like to close by quoting a passage from a poem [*Leaves of Grass*] by Walt Whitman, whose poetry I have read and loved since my youth.

*I see male and female everywhere,  
I see the serene brotherhood of philosophers,  
I see the constructiveness of my race,  
I see the results of the perseverance and industry of my race,  
I see ranks, colors, barbarisms, civilizations, I go among them, I mix indiscriminately,  
And I salute all the inhabitants of the earth. [W]*

# the new HUMAN REVOLUTION

SGI President Ikeda's novelized history of the Soka Gakkai

Illustrations by KENICHIRO UCHIDA

## 'AT THE HELM'

VOLUME 7, CHAPTER 4, PARTS 9-10

*The Niigata and Uetsu members finally make it home. On his return to Japan, Shin'ichi Yamamoto learns of their ordeal and makes sure that all of them are OK.*

At their respective lodgings for the night, the Niigata and Uetsu members were served heartwarming meals by their hosts. Many of them were also able to take hot baths. It was their first opportunity to bathe in five or six days since leaving for the head temple the night of Jan. 21.

The housing arrangements had been made so quickly that in some cases there wasn't enough bedding to go around. So people had to sleep closely packed together with their feet tucked under the heated kotatsu table [a low table with a heat source underneath, usually covered with a quilt]. But they were simply grateful to sleep stretched out in a warm room.

Everyone felt deeply indebted to the Nagaoka members. Wanting to repay this kindness in some small way, some of the stranded members voluntarily shoveled snow from the roofs of their hosts' homes, while others helped out with the housework. This experience formed solid, enduring bonds of friendship among the members of Niigata, Uetsu and Na-

gaoka chapters — bonds that for some remain stronger than blood ties to this day.

Early the morning of Jan. 27, the Niigata and Uetsu members returned to the train. They had been told they would probably depart for Niigata at 9:00 a.m., but that time came and went. The train didn't budge. It turned out that just before their scheduled departure, a locomotive had derailed from one of the tracks at Nagaoka Station, holding them up again.

Around 4:00 p.m., two representatives of the Komei-kai parliamentary group of Upper House legislators hailing from the Soka Gakkai, Hiroshi Yamagiwa and Hiroshi Asada, flew to Nagaoka by helicopter to survey the storm damage in Niigata Prefecture and other parts of the Hokuriku region. They were the first members of parliament to rush to the scene of the natural disaster as soon as travel became possible. Cheers rose from the train when the stranded passengers caught sight of them. The members were overjoyed and reassured when they saw the Komei-kai representa-

tives' serious commitment to their jobs, losing no time to come to those areas that had been hardest hit by the blizzard.

There were other trains stuck at Nagaoka Station besides the chartered train carrying the Soka Gakkai members. Yamagiwa and Asada immediately set about gathering information from the passengers, station personnel and local residents. While assessing the situation, they also worked on coming up with a rescue and relief strategy.

What surprised the lawmakers most after their survey was the fact that there was no clearly established line of command for initiating and coordinating emergency relief activities, and that there was absolutely no cooperation among Japan National Railways, the Self Defense Forces and the local fire and rescue services. As a result, those bodies didn't even have the same information.

The evening of Jan. 27 came, and the train still showed no signs of moving. But the Niigata and Uetsu members were calm and in high spirits, having been rejuvenated by the relaxing time they had spent at the homes of their fellow members.

As dusk fell, angry shouts could be heard, and a pandemic broke out at the station. Frustrated and annoyed, passengers on the regular trains were demanding that the station personnel get the trains running again.

That same evening, just after 9:00, President Shin'ichi Yamamoto returned to Japan from his overseas trip. General Director Koichi Harayama and other leaders who had come to meet him told him about the



blizzard on his arrival at Tokyo International Airport in Haneda. Shin'ichi's face clouded when he heard that the chartered train carrying 900 Niigata and Uetsu members, on its way back from a visit to the head temple, was still stranded at Nagaoka Station.

"That's terrible," he said. "Has anyone fallen ill?"

"There were a few people with chronic health conditions," Harayama answered, "but I understand they've been taken to a local hospital as a precaution. Other than that, we've only had reports of several people coming down with slight colds."

"I see. Please make sure that everything possible is done to assist and support the stranded members."

When Shin'ichi arrived home after 11:00, he immediately sat down in front of the Gohonzon and did gongyo and chanted daimoku, praying earnestly for the members' health and safety.

Around the same time back at Nagaoka Station, the stationmaster informed Niigata Chapter Leader Kinji Eda and the other leaders that their train should be departing around midnight. In spite of the late hour, Nagaoka Chapter Leader Masashi Takekawa and several other local chapter leaders gathered at the station to see the Niigata and Uetsu members off.

At 12:08 a.m., Jan. 28, the station bell sounded announcing the departure of the Niigata-bound train. Some 93 hours had passed since the train first

stopped at Miyauchi Station. The passengers opened the train windows and called out thanks to the Nagaoka members.

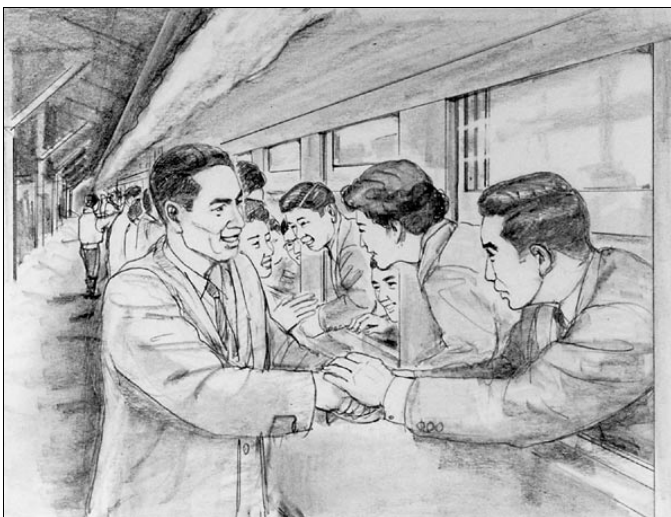
One member on board reached out to grasp Takekawa's hand and said: "Thank you for all you've done for us. I will never forget the kindness of the Nagaoka Chapter members as long as I live. I'm sure that every time I pass through Nagaoka, I will remember this experience. Thank you! Please thank everyone who has been so kind."

The train pulled away from the station and all the Nagaoka members waved goodbye. The passengers waved back, their outstretched arms visible until the train disappeared in the darkness.

As the train moved forward, the Niigata and Uetsu members breathed a sigh of relief, certain that they would reach their destination of Niigata Station at last. But the train traveled very slowly, stopping and starting several times along the way. Though the trip would normally have taken only two hours — even by a local train — it took twice that long before the chartered train arrived at Niigata Station shortly after 4:00 a.m., Jan. 28. Some 109 hours had passed since they had left the head temple around 3:00 p.m., Jan. 23.

It had been a long, long journey home. But a deeper commitment to faith now burned brightly in the members' hearts.

Daisaku Ikeda appears in the novel as Shin'ichi Yamamoto. The events take place in 1963.



# Making Buddhism Accessible to Everyone

## PERSPECTIVE

By ROSS DREIBLATT  
LOS ANGELES

I was so ferklept after reading Dave Baldschun's perspective (March 25 *World Tribune*) on the use of Japanese words, I thought, "Oy vey, he is really tampering with the verboten!" But then I thought a little while longer and it hit me! I thought to myself, "He's just trying to get you to think, right? To promote dialogue? What's so bad about making this an ALL AMERICAN BUDDHISM? Wouldn't it be a good idea to say adios to all those "Japanesisms" that don't belong in our culture anyways? He does have a point, n'est pas?"

Well, let me tell you, I'm just as progressive as the next guy. In fact wasn't I the first one to throw out all those NSA uniforms 10 years ago? And it's been years since I've been to a kosen-rufu gongyo—I go to world peace gongyos now! I didn't even bat an eyelash when men started doing bookstore toban...I...mean...er...bookstore attendant. Okay, well...maybe I batted one eyelash. Okay. So I did a little human revolution and I'm okay with it. But, I'm ready to jump on this next train, let me tell you. So the first thing I did was to do my morning assiduous practice and say over and over again the Sanskrit



words that translate to Devotion to the Mystic Law of Cause and Effect Through Sound or Teaching to my object of devotion. Maybe I need to convert some people to the one true law, or...hmmm. I realized this is a real dilemma.

Words push so many emotional buttons, because it is so hard to detach our experiences from words. For instance, for so many years every night I went to the kaikan to do activities. If I say kaikan to a new member in Los Angeles, they are gonna think we are going to a trendy new sushi restaurant. Now we go to the community center. Well, you can't get any more plain English than that. But for me, when I hear that word, I immediately think, oh that's where senior citizens play bridge or that's where poor people learn to swim.

The real dilemma is the one that has always confronted our country and one that President Ikeda has asked us to solve: how to be a successful melting pot. As a writer, I love language—I love the use of language to express myself and finding just the right words to do this successfully is a source of joy. The wonder of American language and vernacular is that just like most of the people in this country, very few of our words actually come from America. They were adopted by us. We take what is good and make it ours, including the language.

Like Dave, I strongly agree that we have to use our language very carefully in order to convey Buddhism in this country. I also strongly agree with Dave that we have to make this organization greater than any other existing

today. Why? Because we are a melting pot. And what we do here has ramifications for every country on Earth, so it is not enough to make Buddhism AMERICAN, we must make it universal and maybe that means taking words from other cultures and making them universal because, well, saying it in English just ain't the same, capiche?

I work for one of the biggest companies on the face of this Earth. So big that there are very few people in any part of the planet that are not affected by it. When the name of this company appears in any country, millions of people know exactly what to expect, have a common experience with this company. The picture of the mouse ears don't hurt either. What does this mean? This one American name has become universal. This name has become a universal language for many people who have warm memories from their experience with this name. In other words, there is no need to call Disney anything else because it has transcended language and become a universal symbol.

For many SGI members, the word *Sensei* goes immediately to their hearts. It is not the meaning of the word that we are arguing about, it is a title that we respectfully give someone. It is a title that President Ikeda is called by millions of people all over the world.

Like Dave, I shudder at the thought that at President Ikeda's

arrival every news organization on Earth will capture the image of hundreds of members yelling, "Sensei!" Perhaps I would rather see a bunch of Americans shouting, "Mentor!" Or maybe hundreds of Americans with tears in their eyes yelling, "Hey dude!" Hmmm. The truth is we don't want to see any of those pictures on the news at all. But what is more important is that Americans be able to express their love, their feeling for President Ikeda to their heart's content. Let's use common sense when making changes and not throw the baby out with the bathwater. If someone who is not familiar with the term looks at me funny, well, it's a chance for me to explain it.

Anyhow, let's make change when it makes people happier, and let's make Buddhism accessible to anyone and let's not say hasta la vista to traditions and other cultures simply because we can.

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

If you have any questions or problems with your subscription to the *World Tribune* or *Living Buddhism* magazine, please call  
**1-800-835-4558**

## Orange Chapter Honored by City of Garden Grove

By HARRIS KUTSUNAI  
SANTA ANA, CALIF.

In attendance with more than 350 volunteers, members of Orange Chapter were honored by the city of Garden Grove, Calif. on March 16 at the Citywide Volunteer Breakfast.

Mayor Bruce Broadwater thanked the volunteers who had contributed their time in assisting the city with community services including the Police, Fire and Public Works Departments.

Two years ago, the members of Orange Chapter had asked the city of Garden Grove for approval to clean one of the city's dirtiest parks. With the city's approval, SGI-USA members and friends went to Twin Lakes Park every month. In just a few months, Twin

Lakes Park was gleaming with a clean pond and spotless lawns. Once a month, volunteers gathered bags of trash in order to restore the park to its natural beauty.

"We've made so many friends in the community," said Nanami Moore, a member of Flower Park District. "Following the guidance of our mentor, Daisaku Ikeda, we supported last year's SGI theme of involvement in the community," added Douglas Neibauer, Flower Park District leader.

Willie "Cowboy" Kelly, a member of Golden Orange East District, commented that "this community activity has brought together the members. We are the only organized group that has adopted a park in Garden Grove. The members are really proud of their efforts."



Volunteers of Orange Chapter receive certificates of appreciation from the city of Garden Grove, Calif., to recognize their efforts in the community.

## Apology

We apologize for any misunderstanding or hurt feelings our printing of a letter under the heading "Authoritarian Leadership" in our March 31 issue might have caused. When we receive communication concerning a possible conflict or difference of opinion among individuals in our organization, it has been our policy not to publish it. Instead, we have tried to follow up through the SGI-USA organization to help responsible parties in that area to be aware of the problem and engage in dialogue to resolve it. This is because in any disagreement among individuals, each party has a different perspective — otherwise there would be no disagreement. By publishing the perspective of one party, and by printing the name and city of the person submitting the letter, we inadvertently may have done a disservice to those mentioned in the letter and may have contributed to, rather than resolved, any misunderstanding. This was an oversight, for which we wish to apologize both to all the parties identified in the letter and to the writer of the letter.

— WORLD TRIBUNE STAFF

## District's Growth

I received the WT E-Mail Express for March 31st yesterday. It is sooooo filled with goodies from President Ikeda and Mr. Wada! I was so excited by the contents that I forwarded it to all the leaders in my chapter:)

Tonight is our third monthly discussion meeting for the year. We have over the three months continued to use *The Human Revolution* and *The New Human Revolution* as our guide for developing our district. Because of our efforts I can say, without reservation, that our district is the happiest one not only in Amsterdam (I or II) but probably in the entire Netherlands:) We have gone from a district whose attendance ran around 30 percent to one whose attendance runs close to 70 percent. In addition, we had two people receive the Gohonzon early this month and have five more we are working with for May. One of those has been over to my house two mornings this week to work on her gongyo.

Having put the guidance from the March 31st WTExpress into effect several months ago, I feel so connected to the forward movement of kosen-rufu. I also have felt a fantastic renewal of determination for the happiness of our members and those in the SGI worldwide. In relation to the worldwide part, I have, using the Internet, found [an American friend in faith] and renewed that connection. He and I e-mail each

other every day. Our efforts here are actually encouraging him now in his efforts in his chapter in [the U.S.]. I am sooooo happy...understatement of the decade:)

— ELIZABETH CLARK,  
Amsterdam, The Netherlands  
femme@speed.a2000.nl

## Use of Language

Dave Baldschun has stirred up a hornet's nest with his recent article about Japanese terminology (March 17 *World Tribune*). SGI President Ikeda has given us frequent guidance about the importance of dialogue, including many details on how it should be conducted. Now that there is an emotional issue on the table, we will find out how many have been paying attention.

— BOB SIMMS,  
Tarzana, Calif.  
bobsimms@pacifinet.net

Though he is clearly well intended, I must strenuously object to Dave Baldschun's article "Advocating the Universality of Buddhism" (March 17 *World Tribune*). He has clearly been inspired by the words of President Ikeda, who he quotes at length, but his proposed application of this guidance would do more harm than good. We should not encourage Anglicization of Buddhist terminology and not abandon use of the Japanese word *Sensei*.

Around the world U.S. citizens are notorious for their deficiencies in foreign-language speaking, and in our multi-cultural society the excessive use of English has created painful tensions (both in society and within SGI)....

As a language teaching professional, I found myself admiring Sensei's guidance to Japanese members to learn English and adapt to U.S. society, but I've longed for him to give such strict guidance to U.S. members who lack basic foreign language skills and yet call themselves members of an international organization. To embrace at least one of the languages of our multi-linguistic membership is a true "language revolution." This is the reason I joined SGI in 1994 — because it was full of colors and languages that other Buddhist organizations I encountered were not. When he suggests that we make it so our organization is "perceived as [an] American organization" what exactly does he mean? For me and many other members it means a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual community.

When Mr. Baldschun calls for us to not "make it even more confusing" for new members by using so many "foreign words,"

he is asking us to dumb down a sacred text....When President Ikeda teaches us that we should not mimic Japanese society and culture, he is merely doing what any true teacher would, encouraging us to find our own voice. But the greater context of those comments is that they took place in the early '90s, when our organization was confronted with the effect of years of misapplication of his teachings and poor practice — effects we can still feel.

Mr. Baldschun states that he wants to respond to Sensei's guidance and "take action accordingly." As a Buddhist and a teaching professional, I encourage all long-time members to work patiently and consistently with new members so they can feel comfortable embracing the foundation of this practice through its language. Japanese members have been doing this with U.S. members for over 30 years, I think native English speakers can at least make a similar effort.

— EDITH SHILLUE,  
Boston  
eshillue@hotmail.com

I wish to commend the article published in the March 17 issue of the *World Tribune* written by Mr. Dave Baldschun, titled "Advocating the Universality of Buddhism."

It is my opinion that the time has arrived to review our behavior as followers of Nichiren Daishonin by changing the language we use to describe our practice and various aspects of our organization. This is America. As Mr. Baldschun points out, President Ikeda has constantly reminded us of the importance of expressing Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism in a way that is compatible with the customs and traditions of America. Let's take another step in our individual and collective human revolution by improving our communications to all human beings. I would be glad to be a part of any effort to find American English alternatives to the Japanese terms we currently use.

— ROD BURKE,  
Santa Monica, Calif.

## The Environment

In the interest of seeing the forest through the trees, please allow me to "log on" to the Hotchkiss affair, of which Dr. Tomo Kawaguchi seems desirous to position himself to deliver the last word through his assertion that global warming and population growth are "not topics of debate among *World Tribune* readers."

Mr. Hotchkiss' main point (Oct. 1, 1999, *World Tribune*), I

believe, was that environmental extremism poses a greater threat than environmental degradation. I tend not to agree with that premise. But I violently disagree with the idea that he shouldn't have the right to express his views in our newspaper as convincingly as he is able.

As SGI-USA members, we pride ourselves on our willingness to confront the array of problems now facing humanity. However, does this mean we need be of monolithic opinion on secular matters?

Dr. Kawaguchi should, I believe, refute Frank Hotchkiss' statements with facts of his own or expend the energy to write a similar article. The *World Tribune* should not be instructed on what is or is not a debatable issue.

As for the doctor's directive that "it's really up to us to think about what the SGI-USA can do about these issues, not discussing whether such problems exist or not," I suggest by holding imminent culture festivals in an environmentally responsible way with minimal use of spray paints and other toxins.

— MAURICE PATRICK MCCARTHY,  
Daly City, Calif.

*Letters printed here do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the SGI-USA or the World Tribune. Letters should be brief and are subject to condensation. Because of the volume of the mail received, unpublished letters cannot be acknowledged. Not all letters can be printed, but they are all read. By Mail: Mailbox, World Tribune, 606 Wilshire Blvd., P.O. 1427, Santa Monica, CA 90406-1427. By Fax: (310) 260-8910. On the Internet: wt@sgi-usa.org*

## Fine Print

To East Bay Capital Area Youth Division: The March 16th packet you put together was fantastic! Thank you so much. We learned so much and were so inspired by your efforts. With deepest admiration and respect from Washington Area Youth Division.

"Keeping a Promise": I never used to really stop and think about saying things like "I can or I will." They were just words. I never stopped and counted the times that I said these words to my wife. Not to mention how many times that I didn't follow through. Doris had made a promise a long time ago to a friend of ours who was also my women's division group chief. She promised that she would make sure that I continued my practice as long as she was alive. You see, Doris was the kick start to my engine, the boot on my butt. She is the reason that I am still practicing. For that reason alone I owe her more than I could ever repay. Just before Doris passed away in Feb. I made her a promise and this one I am going to keep NO MATTER WHAT! I made a determination by her bedside that I would never again waver in my practice and that I would stand tall and fight for kosen-rufu for both of us. — Bill Smiley, Winnemucca, Nev. (bbsmiley@the-onramp.net)



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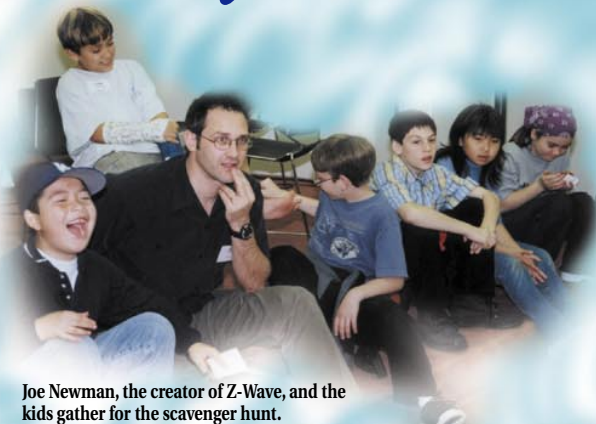
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The *World Tribune* welcomes reader submissions. If you are interested in contributing an article or photograph, please contact us for guidelines. Together we can make a great newspaper.

# 'Z-Wave' Living Museum Makes Big Splash at Santa Monica Community Center

The mural of the lotus pond created by the Art Part.



Joe Newman, the creator of Z-Wave, and the kids gather for the scavenger hunt.

**O**n Feb. 13 the first-ever Z-Wave Living Museum was held at the Santa Monica (Calif.) Community Center. Z-Wave, a mentoring program for children ages 7-12, was conceived by Joe Newman with the goal of "instilling in our children a sense that the Mystic Law is absolute."

Beginning in October 1999, every other Sunday Z-Wave's 15 mentors and 30 kids met for gongyo and chanting, followed by Buddhist discussion. The mentors, who are SGI-USA members and professionals in the areas of cooking, performing arts, documentary filmmaking, gardening and the visual arts, then worked with the children in small groups.

The Living Museum dis-

played examples of what each mentor group learned. The kids in the Z-chef section, headed up by Mentor Chef Phillip Yi, prepared avocado rolls and miso soup for guests as they watched the "ZWTV" kids perform a hilarious show using the Buddhist concepts they studied. Written and acted by the children themselves, it was videotaped by another group called "Reel Z," who learned how to make a documentary film and documented all the Z-Wave activities.

The community center was transformed that day by the "Wonder Garden" group, which worked steadily to beautify the new Z-Wave room and

the grounds at the SMCC. They studied the wonders of science and chemical reactions, and had fun with a huge "bubble machine." They also built a butterfly house, terrarium and coffee table.

One highlight of the afternoon was the unveiling of a huge mural designed and painted by the

children in the "Art Part" of Z-Wave. The mural depicts a lotus pond with a beautiful flowering lotus blooming in the center of a muddy swamp filled with creatures.

Jameise Rozner, 10, said: "Today is very fun. I got to see what everybody else is doing. The mural is pretty! I worked on the sky, the fish, the roots of the lotus flower... the teachers are very good!"

Joe Newman looks forward to future Z-Wave activities: "What I learned is that you need to find a lot of different people of vision and unite them... Z-Wave

unified a lot of 'rebels' who had their own vision." Many were already anticipating new Z-Wave adventures. Kyle Rachal commented: "My favorite part was the Clue Center... I'd like to do Z-Wave art next time."

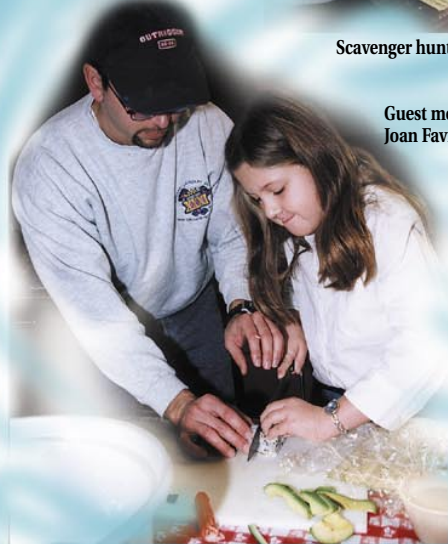
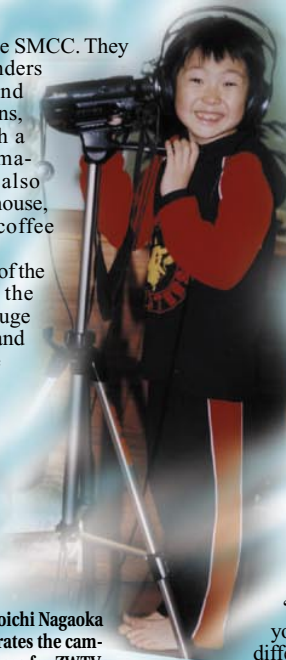
Z-Wave will resume at the Santa Monica Community Center on April 30 and continue every other Sunday through Aug. 6.

Anyone interested in getting involved can email [joe\\_newman@hotmail.com](mailto:joe_newman@hotmail.com)



Scavenger hunt participants turn in their clues.

Koichi Nagaoka operates the camera for ZWTV.



Guest mentor Ken Griffin and Joan Favretto prepare sushi.

Mentors Emily Kerns, Gerald James and Jonathan Ginsberg huddle up before show-time for ZWTV.

