



HAWAII CELEBRATES

A 40-year journey
for world peace in
the Pacific

pages 4-7

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SGI PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE FOR THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

SGI-USA Has Developed Because of You

Photos by GREGORY NAKASUJI

My sincerest congratulations on the holding of your spirited and dynamic activity, aimed at the creation of a new era. I have heard that today you are commemorating the 40th anniversary of global kosen-rufu.

SGI-USA has developed because of your tenacious and dedicated struggles, day and night. For this, I thank you.

In particular, I want to express my deepest respect to those of you who pioneered our movement in America. Thank you for all of your hard work over the years.

Forty years have passed since my first visit to the United States, and today my beloved friends of SGI-USA are working together toward a new era of humanity. You have been making wonderful progress based on beautiful human harmony, centering on your general director, Danny Nagashima, and your women's leader, Matilda Buck, both of whom I trust so dearly.

What makes me the happiest is to witness the excellent growth and development of the youth who shoulder the responsibility for the

new era. A new era requires a new door, a new means of entry. It is always the passion of youth that opens that door—the actions of youth who uphold a just philosophy and live without compromise for a high ideal.

I therefore ask that you, the young successors to kosen-rufu, please carry on with the same faith and fighting spirit as the pioneers of SGI-USA, firmly receiving the baton in the race into the 21st century, while advancing with dignity and the heart of a lion king.

The vigor of youth lies in continuing to grow while maintaining a fresh determination and brimming with a seeking spirit. Real satisfaction in life lies in maintaining the flame of youthful passion and hope in your heart, no matter how old you are. Hope is born of the courage and enthusiasm that does not shrink from real effort and hard work.

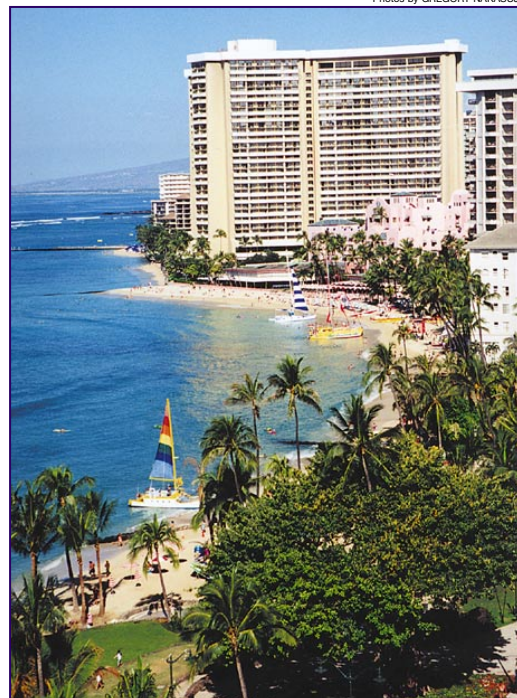
No matter how painful or difficult your situation, you need never put yourself down. You need not dwell on how you were in the past. Nichiren Daishonin says, "No

matter what may happen, never slacken in the least" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 1090). This means to live right now with all of your strength and energy. Please be confident that our way of life lies in looking toward tomorrow, embracing boundless hope within, and advancing ever forward.

Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism teaches, "'Joy' refers to the wisdom and compassion shared among self and others" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 761). True happiness and joy exist when each person's life shines with wisdom, when he or she lives a life of fulfillment, possessing love and compassion for others while contributing positively to society. Please work together in friendship and high spirits to show proof of this principle.

I am praying from the depths of my heart that your gathering today will be most enjoyable, lively and significant. Please relay my best wishes and regards to all those who could not attend today.

October 2000
Daisaku Ikeda



It All Started Here— Hawaii!

The SGI's worldwide kosen-rufu movement began 40 years ago with SGI President Ikeda's 1960 arrival at his first overseas destination—Hawaii. See pages 4-7 for our special coverage of Hawaii's 40th anniversary celebration, which was held Oct. 1 at the Hawaii Convention Center in Honolulu. (Right) Women of all ages perform a hula dance that shows the Hawaiian members' deep respect for traditional Hawaiian culture.



GOOD FRIENDS, BAD FRIENDS

Back to the Basics

By JEFF FARR
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism teaches the importance of knowing good friends from bad ones. Good friends help us to practice Buddhism with greater strength, to become happier. They do not have to be nice to us all the time or even be close to us; sometimes people who point out our weaknesses or with whom we have a hard time can help us greatly in our practice. Anyone who influences us to chant to the Gohonzon can be called a good friend.

Bad friends are those who in some way discourage us from practicing strongly. This does not just mean that they say or do things that make us depressed. We may encounter people who seem to be very nice to us but do not have our best interests at heart, whose function is to lead us away from our enlightenment.

The Daishonin thus says in "Three Tripitaka Masters Pray for Rain" that "the best way to attain Buddhahood is to encounter a good friend. How far can our wisdom take us? If we have even enough wisdom to distinguish hot from cold, we should seek out a good friend" (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 598).

He also clarifies exactly

how bad friends can affect us: "Bad friends use honeyed words to deceive and flatter. They are so skilled in the use of words as to know instinctively how to pander to the ignorance in people's hearts and destroy their goodness and integrity" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 7).

The Nichiren Shoshu priests have in recent years been the ultimate example of bad friends. Their intention has been to snuff out our conviction that the source of benefit is our own faith. Benefit is found only through their intervention, according to them.

Yet, with complete awareness of what these priests are up to, we have turned them into good friends, in a sense. For instance, because they have been trying to confuse us, we have been inspired to study the basics of the Daishonin's Buddhism more closely. Thus, we have strengthened our practice and opened the way to greater benefit.

Because the priesthood has been trying to confuse our friends, we have had the chance to reach out to many people and share our conviction in this philosophy. We have prayed for our friends who have been swayed, in the process of discovering new stores of compassion in our hearts.

In short, thanks to this situation, we have taken our practice to a new level. It is from this view that the Daishonin in "The Actions of the Votary of the Lotus Sutra" says, "It is not one's allies but one's powerful enemies who assist one's progress" (WND, 770). **WT**

Wisconsin Conference Big Hit With Members

By MIKE BENNETT

LAVALLE, WISC., CORRESPONDENT

The result of Wisconsin's first area-wide conference, held Sept. 23-24, can be summed up in one phrase: "Mission accomplished!"

Barbara Garrison, from Milwaukee, one of the chief organizers of the event said: "I really enjoyed it! I think everyone did. We wanted to create an activity that would help promote unity, and where everyone could just be happy together. We also wanted to have meaningful presentations, so that people could take something home with them. There were a lot of obstacles to overcome to make it all happen, but we did it!"

Irene Mackie, of Madison, echoed those sentiments: "It's been a great weekend. And it was really enjoyable just to practice here in such a beautiful environment."

The environment she referred to is the Green Lake Conference Center, where the conference was held. Located on one of the few spring-fed (and thus crystal-clear) lakes in the state, the grounds are truly beautiful. It was a fitting site to host such a wonderful gathering.

More than 60 members from all over Wisconsin and Michigan's Upper Peninsula, as well as several leaders from the



Photo by MICHIO HOLIDAY

The first Wisconsin Area Conference was held at the beautiful Green Lake Conference Center, Sept. 23-24.

Chicago area, attended the weekend event, many meeting for the first time. A member from the Upper Peninsula, who received the Gohonzon at the conference, said: "We're sort of isolated where we are. It was really fun to meet all these people. I had no idea! And there was so much information. It was really impressive and educational. I learned so much."

Saturday's sessions included a panel discussion on "Breakthrough Prayer," a lecture on the writings of Nichiren Daishonin and a session on applying Buddhist principles to health issues. That night there was a bonfire, with performances by the youth and a marshmallow roast (the first for many of the non-native

Wisconsinites.) On Sunday morning, everyone gathered for morning gongyo, more youth performances, and many were able to stay for the midday teleconference of the Central Executive Conference from Los Angeles.

Many members cited the highly interactive, entertaining and informative lecture by Eric Carlson as the highlight of the conference. However, Melanie Bennett may have summed up many of the participants' final analysis when she said: "It was all great, but some of the best, most meaningful conversations happened during meals in the cafeteria. It was just like being at the Florida Nature and Culture Center!" **WT**

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EXPERIENCE — VANESSA PRESTON, OVERLAND PARK, KAN.

Helping Others Is True Friendship

Vanessa Preston, 14, helps her friends through difficult times with her Buddhist practice.

Do you know what it's like to be alone? Do you know what it's like to have a split personality where one holds a knife to your wrist and the other pushes it away? This was a question I was asked by a friend who desperately sought my help. It's scary, isn't it?

I'll never know what drove Nancy, Sue and a total of eight of my good friends to hurt themselves as their only way out of their struggles. I looked at their lives, searching for what would make them so desperate to take such drastic actions. I didn't realize that when you are on the outside looking into another person's life, things that seem minor to you could be traumatic to them.

I didn't want them to know that I knew the cuts on their wrists were self-inflicted. I was sure that it would make them feel embarrassed around me, or they might think that I would think differently of them. This perception was about me and not about helping them.

Chanting Nam-myohorenge-kyo has always worked for me. I was born into a family that practices Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism, and based on the past six years of personal experience with chanting, I knew that anytime I needed help I could turn to the Gohonzon.

I didn't always have this confidence in my Buddhist practice. But through my efforts to overcome struggles with school, friends and at home, I have learned that all my prayers are answered in a way that is best for the situation. I may not realize it at the time, but looking back I know that I have been fortunate that the answers to my prayers always turned out for the best.

What I hadn't learned was that I also have the power to help my friends through my Buddhist practice. This past semester in high school, I had the opportunity to use my practice in a way I never had before. Within a week's time, I found out that at least eight of my

friends were so desperate in their suffering that they were physically inflicting pain on themselves. Then on Friday of that same week, my friend Max told me that my best friend Nancy had slit her wrists the night before. Fortunately, she survived but still needed mental and emotional help.

I didn't know what to do. I felt discouraged and ultimately scared out of my mind to know that the lives of my friends were in danger, and that they were looking to me for help. What if I tried to help them, but they got angry with me? What if I did the wrong thing? Then I remembered a quote from second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda that my mother often uses to encourage me. He says, roughly, that if you put a pot of rice on to cook and chant for it to boil, it will never boil until you turn on the flame. In other words, you can't just chant for something to happen. You must also take action.

I decided that I should definitely talk to Nancy. I found her in the lunchroom and asked her if she was doing okay. She said, "Yeah," and I said, "No, I mean are you really okay?" She finally said that she really wasn't okay and began to cry. I gave her a huge hug and told her that it was going to be all right. She then showed me her bandaged wrists. I will always remember how I started to cry when I saw them. She told me how glad she was that someone had finally noticed. I felt terrible. How could I have been so selfish to worry about how this situation would affect my relationship with my friends rather than taking quick action to help them?

Nancy and I spoke for some time and I finally convinced her to see our teacher. Later that same day, my other friend Sue approached me and wanted to



go with us to see the teacher. I had no idea that Sue was also hurting herself. The three of us went to Mr. Smitters, whom we knew had helped other kids with the same problem. There was another teacher

who was not supposed to be there. She overheard our conversation with Mr. Smitters and took it upon herself to tell the school principal and the counselor about Sue and Nancy. The principal called them to the office and made them both call their parents. When I found out about this, I became mad and upset; I knew that neither of them was ready to talk to their parents.

When I got home, I desperately needed to chant. I was now even more confused. I had chanted all week as my friends approached me, and now that I finally had the courage to take action, I wasn't sure that I had taken the right action. It seemed like everything had gone wrong. I chanted desperately for them to be okay and for their parents to understand.

However, late that night I got a phone call from Sue. She was calling from a phone booth. Sue's parents thought that she was a failure and a disgrace to their family. Her mother kicked her out of the house, and Sue had to call her grandmother to come and pick her up. I still hadn't heard from Nancy and didn't know how she was.

Now, I was even more discouraged, but my mother kept encouraging me. We spent most of the weekend chanting for Nancy and Sue. I chanted to understand why this had all happened. I thought I had it all figured out: I would help my friends and everything would turn out fine. But it didn't. Nothing seemed to come out the way I had planned.

By Sunday, I realized

through all my chanting that Sue's grandmother was providing her the loving home that she needed. In less than a week, her mother called her begging her to come home. They now go for counseling, and Sue's doing fine.

Nancy called me that Sunday evening and told me how she spent the entire weekend having quality time with her mom. Nancy and her mother now have a better relationship, and she can tell her mom things that she never could before. After the whole ordeal, I asked Nancy if I had helped her, and if I had done the right thing. She said, "Yes, I'm not alone anymore."

Through this experience, I learned two things. I knew that even though things don't always turn out how I plan them, my prayers are always answered. But this time it was more difficult to hold on to my faith. I learned that especially when I'm confused and things don't seem right, I have to chant even harder to not give up.

The second thing I learned was the importance of not only practicing for myself but also for others. With my practice of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism, I know I helped my friends overcome their sufferings. But without chanting, I would not have looked beyond my selfish perspective of the situation and sincerely reached out to my friends.

I am currently studying SGI President Ikeda's poem "Soar Into the Vast Skies of Freedom! Into the New Century!" and I feel there is a connection here for me:

*From the perspective of faith,
for people who live with lofty and utter conviction,
to be swayed by appearances is foolishness and error.
"I do not choose or discriminate among them whoever they may be—
this wise and clever friend;
this person wracked by poverty's pain;
the person plagued by the deepest sleeplessness;
this person isolated in the remote regions of being different...
I share life with them all,
live in profound meaning,
live as a good friend to each."*

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HAWAII'S 40 YEARS — A JOURNEY FOR WORLD PEACE

We Did It!

Photos by GREGORY NAKASUJI

The pioneers of Hawaii share how they built the organization's foundation with their mentor, SGI President Ikeda.



Tom Hara: I went to meet President Ikeda at the Honolulu Airport the evening of Oct. 1, 1960,

because my leaders in Japan had written encouraging me to do so. [Mr. Hara was the only member to meet President Ikeda's party at the airport. The other members, whom Mr. Hara had not met yet, did not show up because they had received some misinformation about the flight's arrival time.]

When I saw President Ikeda, I said, "I am youth division member Tom Hara." He said, "I know you!" We had met two years before that in Japan.

The *Seikyo Shimbun* that my sponsor had sent me about President Ikeda's visit said that four people were coming, so I had prepared four leis. But there were six people!

The *Hawaii Times* came in to take a picture of them to announce that Soka Gakkai leaders were visiting. I remember that President Ikeda and his party was wearing overcoats. In Japan in October, it is kind of cold. And I do not think that they had the correct weather information — Hawaii is always warm, but they had heard that Hawaii would be like New York in November!

I had given them the leis, so I was about to leave. Then a voice said, "Wait..." I turned around, and it was President Ikeda. He said that I could stay at the Kaimana Hotel with them. But I was supposed to stay at a relative's house close to the airport. I started to leave, and then President Ikeda said, "Let's meet at the Kaimana Hotel tomorrow." Then I had to go. That is how I welcomed President Ikeda.

The next day, Oct. 2, everyone met President Ikeda at the hotel, and the first discussion meeting was held that night.



Mitsue Rife: The first time I met President Ikeda on Oct. 2, 1960, at the Kaimana Hotel, I really knew nothing about

him. I had no preconceptions.

But I was so impressed by his character. Every time I met him from then on, I was more and more impressed. In those days, he was so young, but he had such capacity. In the bottom of my heart, I was determined that I wanted to learn from him throughout eternity.



Nobuko Ishiro: After the first discussion meeting, President Ikeda said, "If anyone has any more questions,

please feel free to meet with me at the hotel later." Harry Hiram, the first district leader, and I went.

There were not so many restaurants open that late. I thought that Ms. Kashiwabara, who was accompanying President Ikeda, might be hungry. So I made rice balls at home and then went. President Ikeda was hungry, too, because he had not had time to eat.

My question to him was about funerals. There was no temple, there were no priests. Until that time, I had not met any members in Hawaii. I had joined in Japan and had been practicing by myself in Hawaii. Now that I knew there were other members, I was wondering what to do about funerals — after all, everyone dies. President Ikeda told me: "Don't worry! There will be a temple here in the future." Mr. Hiram asked how we could receive the Gohonzon from Japan for the members. Soon, the Soka Gakkai started sending us the Gohonzon when we sent in the applications.



Sheila Mier: Back in 1962, my mom was searching for a solid religious practice or faith. She was struggling with bad health. Mr. and Mrs. Kawamoto



Born in Hawaii, Harry Hiram was the first district leader in America. He was appointed Hawaii District leader on Oct. 2, 1960, by SGI President Ikeda. Over the course of 22 years, he developed the Hawaii organization from one district into a region that stretched from Guam and Saipan to the Hawaiian Islands. When he died, on Oct. 29, 1982, President Ikeda wrote him this poem: 'Surrounded by / The sea and the sky / Of emerald blue, / Let's send off our General of Hawaii / With our deepest prayers.'

invited us to a Buddhist meeting. We were farmers and lived close to the Kawamotos.

I drove my mother to the meeting because of her poor health. Mr. Kawamoto spoke to my mother about her health. My grandmother gave my mother her blessing to practice Buddhism — this is rare in Hawaiian culture.

That is how my mother joined. I was 14 years old, and I became curious because they talked about happiness and fortune — things I never heard a religion emphasize.

It was good to see my mother stick with it over the past 38 years. She has overcome two major bouts with cancer. She is now 86 and has lived through so much.

We now have four generations in our family who practice. My mom had many people oppose her in her family, but one by one they came to understand. My mother was able to share Buddhism with many Hawaiians in the community.



Mariko Ueno: I met President Ikeda in January 1963, when he came to Hawaii for the second time. I did not know who he was. I did not even really know what the Soka Gakkai was, because I joined on Dec. 26, 1962.

Somebody encouraged me to go to Kaewai Elementary School for a meeting. I sat in the

back in the cafeteria. I remember when President Ikeda came to the stage, he did not want to talk to us from above, so he came down to talk with us. I thought, "This man is different than other leaders." I got a warm feeling from this man.

After the meeting, he came to meet us outside. He passed by me, and our eyes met. Once again, I felt such a warm feeling from his life. I became interested in practicing Buddhism from that time, and I started to go to district meetings. Slowly, I got involved. I am glad I did!



Roy Oda: I joined in June 1963. The reason I decided to was that, although it was a Buddhist religion, at my first ac-

tivity I saw so many Caucasians, like T.J. Rife or John Kindt, talking about Buddhism. I had expected that mostly it would be older Asian people explaining Buddhism, but they were young Caucasians. They knew so much about Buddhism. Mr. Hiram was there, but he did not say too much — he did not have to, because all these people like Mr. Rife were doing a great job.

I grew up in another Buddhist sect, but they never actually taught us about Buddhism, about the philosophy. That is why I became curious and decided to give the Soka Gakkai a try. I was the

26th young men's division member to join in Hawaii.

What kept me going was that I kept meeting different people and hearing their different experiences. Those were great to hear. The more I attended the meetings, the more I thought: "Well, I have listened to so many good experiences that the members have. What about me?" I decided to really learn gongyo and start chanting on my own. I started going to Mr. Hiram's house to learn gongyo with him.



T.J. Rife: One of my greatest memories is when President Ikeda attended the opening of the first community center in Hawaii in August 1965. The YMD members were feeling kind of bad, because we did not have any time with him. Then he looked outside and saw all of us on the lawn. And he came out to see us.

We were all trying to sit Japanese-style, but he said: "Relax! You don't have to sit that way!" He talked to us and answered our questions. We were in shock — that was a great moment. I really wanted the YMD members to have that chance to meet with President Ikeda.

The Hawaii YMD came to be known as the Pineapple Corps. We all wore white shirts and black ties then. And the ties had pineapple-shaped tie tacks.

HAWAII'S 40 YEARS — A JOURNEY FOR WORLD PEACE



Melvin Padayhag: What impressed me at my first meeting in 1963 was an explanation of the three proofs

in Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism: literal, documentary and actual. And I learned that actual proof was the most important — that got me interested.

So I attended my second meeting two weeks later, which was a young men's meeting, where I first chanted Nam-myoho-enge-kyo. Hawaii was only a chapter at the time.

From the 1960s until now, we have shared this Buddhism with a lot of people. And we have always emphasized actual proof.



John Kindt: As far as I am concerned, if it were not for Mr. Hiram, I would not be an SGI-USA member today. He was

the type of person I could talk to anytime.

Mr. Hiram is the person who kept me and a lot of the members going who could not speak Japanese. Most of these members were in the military. He was able to explain Buddhism to us. He could explain what the Soka Gakkai was. People complained all the time, and he listened to their complaints. And he would give them satisfying answers. That is why they kept developing.

President Ikeda placed a lot of responsibility on Mr. Hiram. No one had the affect on the members that he had. We could relate to him. He really listened to President Ikeda's guidance, and he passed that guidance on to us. That was very important to us.



Ryuko Hirama: In 1974, right before the San Diego convention, Mr. Hiram collapsed. He was unable to meet President Ikeda at the convention.

We did not think that President Ikeda was going to visit Hawaii, but hearing about my husband's condition, he stopped by on his way back to Japan. When he saw Mr. Hiram, President Ikeda acted just

like my husband was his own son. He really prayed to the Gohonzon for my husband's recovery, and my husband lived several more years.

I felt that President Ikeda's concern for my husband — and for all the Hawaii members — was more than our own parents'. Whenever my husband and I had a crisis, President Ikeda warmly encouraged us. Mr. Hiram and I gained the confidence that no matter what happened, we would never be swayed.



Albert Mier: In 1975, we had a pre-bicentennial convention in Hawaii. I was in charge of the warehouse. I was halfway between YMD and men's division. Many disasters happened along the way, but I took full responsibility for it all. I chanted so much.

One time, we received a message at the warehouse from President Ikeda. I will never forget what he said: "To all of you working behind the scenes in this convention, I know what you are going through. I can feel what you feel. Even though I am wearing a suit, and I am going to meet the governor of Hawaii, underneath this suit I feel like I am wearing my work clothes."

At that moment, I refreshed my determination. We moved together and created a successful convention. President Ikeda is a great leader who, no matter how far away we are or what we are doing, knows what we are going through. There is no other organization in existence today where a member can feel such a connection to the central figure or mentor.



Aileen Oda: One thing I have learned as a pioneer of Hawaii — that I really want to share with the youth — is that, no matter what, you should never leave the family of the SGI. People in Hawaii are very open. That is why people here were able to create a great family atmosphere in the organization. That is the Aloha spirit that makes the SGI-USA in Hawaii great. No one should ever leave this wonderful family!



Kimiko Kindt: I am doing activities with Mrs. Hiram now, because she cannot drive. I make appointments

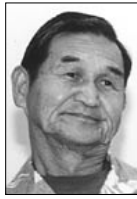
for her to do home visits all over, and I take her. I help at the culture center front desk and the bookstore, too. I would like to do even more activities, but my problem is there are too many things that I like to do!

When I joined, I wanted to have children, but I lost three times. However, now I can see that I have the greatest family. All the Hawaii members that I have had the fortune to take care of are my family. I do not like it when people try to take care of me — I like to take care of other people. That is why I am still healthy today, and I am getting younger!

Of course, the pioneer times and today are a lot different, but I can never forget what I learned as a pioneer — to have faith in the Gohonzon and to put President Ikeda's guidance into action.



Susan and Minoru Nishida: What we learned as pioneers of Hawaii is that when you have problems, don't give up, no matter what. Stick with the Gohonzon and the SGI. All your prayers will be answered.



Nora Padayhag: Our family has had a lot of actual proof over the years from this practice. In 1965, I attended my first SGI meeting while I was visiting my sister, who was a member in Los Angeles, although she couldn't attend. I'll never forget the great experiences I heard at that meeting, especially that of a new member who overcame paralysis of half of her body. In December of that year, I started practicing. I used to think that life was so boring, a routine of work and partying on the weekends. But joining the SGI changed my life for the better! **W**



Congratulations on 40 Years of Contributing to the American Experience!

By DAVID CHAPPELL
SOKA UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

Congratulations on the 40th anniversary of SGI's international movement! This Oct. 2 is very significant in marking 40 years of SGI history since SGI President Ikeda made his first step toward the world.

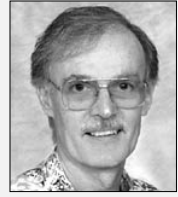
I believe that the SGI is pioneering across the globe in finding new ways to infuse the Buddhist values of compassion, wisdom, fairness and justice within our human societies, cultures, families and in individuals' hearts. I really praise President Ikeda's outstanding dedication and leadership in this endeavor.

The SGI was dramatically different from other Buddhist organizations in the way it established itself in America, in how it valued the American experience. President Ikeda on his first trip to America told the Japanese pioneers, "Learn English, get a driver's license, and become an American citizen...." This was really a remarkable message, saying that you should take responsibility where you are to build your life and flourish there.

That is a distinctive message of not just looking to the past but of making a creative contribution in the present and the future, and the SGI has done that. No other group coming from Asia has been as successful as the SGI in spreading its roots in the new cultures it enters.

Shakyamuni criticized the caste system. And in turn the SGI has criticized those structures that value one human being more than others. These can be institutional structures like the priesthood vs. the laity, or they can be racist structures. I think that the SGI is more vocal in challenging the distinctions of race than any other Buddhist group.

Having the eye to see that spreading Buddhism does not mean making everybody fit into a Japanese or Asian Buddhist package, having the eye to see the flower of compassion and wisdom in people of other races, other times, other cultures — that takes an unusual eye. President Ikeda always has had that. Separation from the priesthood was a necessary process for cre-



ating new value, and it has become a wonderful gift for sensitizing SGI

members to issues of structural injustice and institutional inequality.

I want to emphasize four reasons why I think the SGI has been so successful in America and the world:

1) The SGI welcomes people with constant caring that gives support like a new family. You have done this better than any other Buddhist group.

2) The SGI has captured idealism. You have presented a vision of a better world, where everybody is included. That vision has attracted young people who are idealistic, who care, who want to make a difference.

3) The SGI has valued every human being, especially those who have suffered and struggled, honoring and valuing them just as they are without judging them.

4) The SGI has introduced a simple, practical way of practice for people to use in their struggles, namely, chanting and the Gohonzon. Individual members can use these to get empowered and resolve their problems.

President Ikeda has chosen education, culture and dialogue to bring about peace. These cannot be imposed from the top down. It is only by empowering everybody that we can really build a lasting peace.

Only by empowering people through education and literacy, by overcoming the digital divide and getting everyone included can you have real peace. That means the development of an inclusive culture. Hopefully it is this challenge that SGI will give to the leaders of our global economy.

Dr. Chappell left the University of Hawaii at Manoa this summer to become a professor of comparative religion at Soka University of America, Aliso Viejo. He is a scholar of Asian Buddhism who recently began to study the SGI movement.

Hawaii's 40 Years: A Jo

By JOANNE TACHIBANA
HAWAII BUREAU CHIEF

The governor of Hawaii, Benjamin J. Cayetano, declared Oct. 1 Soka Gakkai International-USA Day. Anne Kobayashi, his executive assistant, presented the proclamation at SGI-USA Hawaii's 40th Anniversary General Meeting, in commemoration of the 40th anniversary of the SGI peace movement that began on Oahu on Oct. 2, 1960, when SGI President Ikeda arrived on his first journey outside Japan.

At that time, Hawaii District was created, the first one outside Japan, and Harry Hiram, a local resident, was appointed its first leader. In Hawaii, families of many ethnic backgrounds — Hawaiians, Filipinos, Chinese, Samoans, African Americans, Portuguese, local Japanese and more — were soon to join and start creating the foundation for Hawaii's organization.

For many months leading up to the 40th Anniversary General Meeting, the youth brainstormed and discussed how best to celebrate this very special milestone in the annals of the Hawaii peace movement. The Hawaii Convention Center provided the largest venue to accommodate the statewide membership who would participate — 3,500 members and guests were expected (SGI-USA General Director Danny Nagashima welcomed the 4,000 who attended, including 200 from the neighboring islands of Hawaii, Maui and Kauai).

With support from the men and women and the Boys and Girls Group, the youth-sponsored event unfolded.

The selected theme, "Honoring Our Past... Creating Our Future..." was illustrated through story, song and dance. Hawaii's SGI story unfolded in the tradition of oral history, with a grandma sharing with her grandson, who was experiencing conflict with his friends and within himself, how our peace movement came to Hawaii's shores. All was illustrated through vignettes taken from the "Sunrise" chapter of *The New Human Revolution*, volume 1. The talented, multi-ethnic members of the SGI, young and old, added to the story with songs and dances. A special highlight was guest artist Danny Couch, internationally acclaimed entertainer, performing his signature song, "These Islands," which made its debut at the 1998 Miss Universe Contest in Hawaii and recently was adopted as Hawaii's state song. To this melody was added the graceful motions of hula dancers.

The history of the SGI on Hawaii was also capsulated in a video — beginning with the 1960s and flowing through the decades — that featured photos and mini-interviews with pioneers and today's youth. There were smiles and tears as many members recalled their personal paths, their struggles and triumphs, through the many years of their SGI activities. The Aloha spirit, shared heart to heart, permeated throughout the center as old friends reunited and new friends were embraced.

WT



Popular singer Danny Couch performs his song 'These Islands.'



(Below) Youth create a local Victory Over Violence display depicting the social challenges Hawaii is now facing.



SGI-USA General Director Danny Nagashima with members at the Maui Community Center on Hilo, Sept. 27, and Kauai.

(Above) The Boys and Girls Group's dragon dance began the day's cultural performances. (Below) The Hawaii Culture Center is the result of the members' efforts since 1960 to develop the kosen-rufu movement in Hawaii.



Photos by GREGORY NAKASUJI,
GEORGE FUJIOKA and
GEORGE YOSHIOKA

Journey for World Peace



(Above) Anne Kobayashi (center) presents a proclamation to SGI-USA Hawaii leaders. (Below) A children's art exhibit in the Convention Center foyer.



Cathy Kishi, Pacific Zone Youth Leader:

Taka Ishii, Pacific Zone Youth Leader:

Through the preparations for this 40th Anniversary General Meeting, we could understand further the significance of SGI President Ikeda coming to Hawaii 40 years ago. There was a skit in our meeting based on the "Sunrise" chapter of *The New Human Revolution*, volume 1, which is all about President Ikeda's 1960 visit. Many of the youth who performed are high school and college students. Together, we studied the "Sunrise" chapter and learned what it was like in those early days. The grandmother of one of the young women in the skit was one of the pioneers who was there in 1960. This young woman was really excited to be an actor in this skit.

The youth understood more the mission they have to be practicing in Hawaii, at this time in history, from preparing for this 40th Anniversary General Meeting. They realized that these people in *The New Human Revolution* are the same people they always see at the Culture Center—this gave them a deeper sense of pride. A number of youth who were not involved in activities at all before this event got really involved. They started to come to activities enthusiastically and started to do gongyo and chant a lot. From now on, we want to involve them in smaller group activities, where we will continue to study Buddhism with them more.

We learned how to work with the men's and women's divisions, too, through this event. A lot of times, we had clashes of ideas. We as youth have a lot of creativity, but we sometimes do not think of the details. We learned so much from our seniors, and we want to show our respect for them by continuing to grow. I feel like everyone, including President Ikeda, is waiting to see our progress. **WT**

Things are a lot different now than they were 40 years ago, and the youth today do not face the same challenges that the pioneers did. But this does not mean that the youth are not suffering. They are facing violence, drugs, peer pressure and school and family problems. Hawaii also has serious economic problems. It is because of these problems that we can really prove the power of Buddhism. As long as we can capture the same spirit that the pioneers learned from President Ikeda—to face all their problems fearlessly—then I think Hawaii will continue to advance. **WT**



Director Danny Nagashima encourages members at the Convention Center, Sept. 28. He also visited the Convention Center on Oahu, Sept. 27, and Kauai, Sept. 29.



Perseverance and Cooperation

A Record of My Life by Daisaku Ikeda

‘The people of Okinawa knew that with perseverance and cooperation, in time they could surmount any obstacle,’ SGI President Ikeda writes. ‘And that without such optimism, tomorrow would never come. They possessed the strength to never abandon hope.’

Emigrants from Okinawa have made remarkable contributions throughout the world, particularly in South America. Within the SGI, as well, the efforts of members from Okinawa shine brilliantly. To name but a few, these members include General Director Yoshimasa Chinen of Chile, General Director Takeshi Kamiya of Bolivia and Women’s Leader Marina Kiyoko Nakajima of Brazil.

An event to commemorate the centennial of Japanese immigration to Peru was held in May last year, with Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori, a second-generation immigrant himself, attending. At the request of the organizing committee, the event opened with performances by 800 SGI of Peru members.

The first of these was a group of young women performing an Okinawan harvest dance called the *Mamidoma*. Both natives and nonnatives to Okinawa danced. This is evidence of the important roles that Okinawans are playing in Peruvian society.

Next, a harvest dance from the Andes was performed. The stadium erupted with thunderous applause as the dancers illustrated the exquisite fusion of the people and the land.

In June 1998, a celebration of 90 years of Japanese immigration to Brazil was held in the South American country with the attendance of Brazilian President Fernando Henrique Cardoso. The organizing committee had invited me

to attend, but I was unable to; my eldest son, Hiromasa, went in my place.

As in Peru, the youth of Brazil put on an electrifying performance. And in June last year, President Hugo Banzer of Bolivia attended an event in which the SGI of Bolivia brass band and fife-and-drum corps performed.

Throughout South America, the *Uchinanchu* [what the Okinawans call themselves] are making significant contributions to their respective societies as upstanding citizens. Their efforts, which reach beyond the local Japanese community, far surpass any narrow-minded nationalism or ethnocentrism.

The Okinawans’ spirit to help others is not mere formality.

Why have the people of Okinawa been so well received throughout the world? According to Kunihiro Mitsumori, the central figure in the Soka Gakkai organization in Okinawa, it is because they are culturally international by nature.

Many generations ago, Okinawans boldly set out on the open sea in small vessels called *sabani*. Carried by the current, they got as far as Java and Sumatra, and succeeded early on in creating a trade zone. This period of extensive trade came to a halt for Okinawa when Portugal and Spain embarked on the Age of Great Voyages at the end of the 15th century.

Nevertheless, the Okinawan people have continued to view the sea not as a barrier holding them back but as a pathway to an unknown world. The Okinawan concept of *nirai kanai*—that happiness comes from beyond the sea—has also most likely contributed to the Okinawan people’s fearlessness regarding the unknown.

The migration of Okinawans to other parts of the world dates back to Kyuzo Toyama, who is regarded as the father of Okinawan immigration. Even with the installation in the 19th century of the Meiji government [which abolished feudalism and began Japan on a rapid course toward becoming a unified modern state], the old customs of the previous Edo Period were preserved in Okinawa.

While in form the system of government had changed, the



The Asian Peace Culture Festival held in Okinawa celebrates the open highways of the sea, March 1996.

Okinawan people continued to suffer. The poll tax, an atrocious law without parallel in the world, continued to be in force. And the land tax system was not revised until 36 years after similar revisions had been made elsewhere in Japan.

Furthermore, it was a long time before the first national legislative assembly elections were held on the islands. The citizens of Okinawa continued to be robbed of even the opportunity to express their opinions.

Poor economic conditions persisted. Not only was there no rice, but there was even a shortage of potatoes. The Okinawans staved off their hunger by eating cycads [Japanese sago palms], which can be lethal if not prepared carefully. People talked about living in a “cycad hell.”

Having grown frustrated with the lack of efficacy of the Freedom and People’s Rights Movement [an early Meiji Period effort to reform the government along the lines of Western democracies], Kyuzo Toyama threw himself passionately into promoting emigration. He saw emigration as a realistic means of saving people from the dire circumstances that gripped Okinawa.

A hundred years ago, in 1899, he organized the first group of immigrants to Hawaii. It was a party of 26 people primarily from his native village, Kin. Four years later, he led a second group there.

Witnessing the spirit of the Okinawan immigrants with his own eyes, Toyama composed the following poem:

*Let us go!
The five continents
are our home.
Sincerity is all we have.
The stones of Kin adorn the
entire world.*

How lofty! Planting roots around the world—with sincerity as their only possession—Okinawan immigrants have worked and toiled in earnest. The foundation for their current global activities was laid a century ago.

A member in Okinawa related to me how his grandfather had been part of the second migration from Kin village to Hawaii. The arduous labor involved in harvesting the sugar cane and carrying it on his shoulders caused the top of his grandfather’s right ear to fold downward permanently. That is how hard they worked.

In Okinawa, there was a practice since ancient times called *yui maru*, which describes the way people helped one another. *Yui* means to bring together, and *maru* means to make rounds. When the season came to harvest sugar cane or plant rice, the locals would form groups by area or by kinship and would move from one farm to the next sharing the work.

This tradition of mutual help was carried on by Okinawan associations set up in the various parts of the world to which Okinawans emigrated. While tilling the land of their new homes under the scorching sun, they supported one another and overcame all their struggles.

The spirit of the people of Okinawa to help their fellows is

not mere formality. They have learned with their very lives the importance of aiding others.

Typhoons strike. Fields are laid to waste before the wrath of Nature. But when the storms have cleared and the snarling waves subsided, a serene, bountiful sea stretches out far and wide, bringing a cornucopia of treasure.

The people of Okinawa knew that with perseverance and cooperation, in time they could surmount any obstacle. And that without such optimism, tomorrow would never come. They possessed the strength to never abandon hope.

It is now a hundred years since the first group of Okinawan immigrants left the shores of their homeland. The *Uchinanchu* of Brazil number 80,000, accounting for approximately 10 percent of the country’s citizens of Japanese descent. There are 45,000 living in Peru, making up more than half of the ethnic Japanese community in that country. In Argentina, where the number of people of Japanese descent comes to approximately 30,000, those who trace their origins to Okinawa make up 70 percent.

The destiny of a land is changed by its people.

The strength of the Okinawan people to stand alone and rise above severe hardship enabled them to overcome what must have looked like hopeless situations and to show actual proof of their victory through hard work and effort. They show the

PLEASE SEE PERSEVERANCE, 11

the new HUMAN REVOLUTION

SGI President Ikeda's novelized history of the Soka Gakkai

'SECURING THE FOUNDATION'

VOLUME 8, CHAPTER 1, PART 1-2

As Volume 8 begins, the third anniversary of his presidency is approaching and Shin'ichi Yamamoto considers what his next move for kosen-rufu will be.

Every river has a source. Nichiren Daishonin writes, "The farther the source, the longer the stream" (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 940). The Soka Gakkai, too, has a brilliant spiritual source. It is the eternal way of the oneness of mentor and disciple, set forth by the Soka Gakkai's first and second presidents, Tsunesaburo Makiguchi and Josei Toda. As long as this spirit remains alive, the stream of kosen-rufu will continue to nourish the world.

Makiguchi was arrested by the oppressive militarist government in Japan and died in prison during the cold of late autumn, on Nov. 18, 1944. He was 73. He gave his life in the struggle to achieve peace and happiness for all humankind, upholding the great philosophy of Buddhism as he fought against authoritarianism to the very end. His was a noble death.

Toda was arrested along with Makiguchi, and in his prison cell he steadfastly prayed for his elderly mentor: "Please allow me to take all the blame for both of us, and let Mr.

Makiguchi go home as soon as possible." But his beloved mentor was not to leave prison alive.

When Toda learned of Makiguchi's death, he shook with rage. And when he was finally released from prison, this indomitable champion of the Mystic Law swore "revenge" against unjust authority.

This revenge was to prove the validity of his mentor's cause; to inherit Makiguchi's will and create a flow of kosen-rufu as broad and powerful as a great river. It was to eradicate misery from the world and usher in an age in which power would be restored to the people and the strength of the human spirit would triumph over authority, military might and violence, thereby establishing lasting global peace.

Embracing his mentor's heart, Toda determined that he, too, would devote himself to spreading the Daishonin's teachings. Both the mentor who died in prison and the disciple who emerged from prison alive were lions prepared to stake everything for the spread of the Mystic Law.

The way of the lion is the way

of mentor and disciple — of dedicating one's life to truth and justice. It is the way of the courageous, who stand alone, afraid of nothing. It is the path of victory, in which all evil and injustice are defeated. And it is the way of compassion, in which one gives oneself completely to championing the cause of the people.

The Soka Gakkai is a gathering of lions, an alliance of people who share Josei Toda's spirit and have taken on the task of creating indestructible happiness and peace.

Many who joined the organization in the beginning were struggling with problems like illness, poverty and family discord. By challenging their karma, they awakened to their mission as Bodhisattvas of the Earth — their true mission as human beings — and began working actively to improve society. Herein lies the greatness of the Soka Gakkai's kosen-rufu movement, as well as the essence of Mahayana Buddhism.

May 3, the day of the 25th Headquarters General Meeting, would mark the third anniversary of Shin'ichi Yamamoto's presidency. With the occasion approaching, Shin'ichi had been giving much thought to what his next move should be. This May 3 would mark the final lead up to the first milestone he had set — the seventh memorial (sixth anniversary) of Josei Toda's death, on April 2, the following year.

Each goal he had made upon becoming president to achieve by that time was being realized. The membership goal of 3 million households had already been reached five months earlier, with the membership now standing at more than 3.3 mil-



Illustrations by KENICHIRO UCHIDA

lion households.

Work on the Grand Reception Hall at the head temple, which the Soka Gakkai was building and donating to the priesthood, was moving smoothly toward its scheduled completion the following spring. In addition, the new Soka Gakkai Headquarters would be finished in August, and a ceremony to celebrate its completion was slated for early September.

The Komei Political Federation, with the Soka Gakkai as its main supporting body, was also making great progress. Its representation in local government assemblies now surpassed 1,000 officials. It was steadily developing into a substantial force for restoring government to the people and creating a society in which the people would play a leading role.

Since Shin'ichi's inauguration, the Soka Gakkai had clearly been growing and advancing by leaps and bounds. This made him all the more aware that to take the next big step forward, it would be necessary to reorganize and secure the foundations of the headquarters and general chapters in each area.

But Shin'ichi also keenly perceived an even more important task — to preserve for all eternity the spirit of his predecessors, Makiguchi and Toda, who, unafraid of even death, dedicated their lives to achieving peace and happiness

for all humankind. Shin'ichi was concerned that this spirit was gradually weakening among the Soka Gakkai leadership as the organization continued to develop.

For example, he was beginning to notice leaders who were taking advantage of the Soka Gakkai now that it had become well established. Rather than considering what they could do for kosen-rufu and the Soka Gakkai, they were expecting the Soka Gakkai to do something for them.

Some leaders were also of the mistaken view that attaining a high position in the organization was a sign of success. Preoccupied with becoming "important," they would be elated when appointed to a higher position and disheartened if they were not.

If people obsessed with fame and personal profit — people who seek only to exploit the Soka Gakkai for their own benefit — become leaders, the members will suffer. This will inevitably lead to the decay of the entire organization and its collapse from within.

For the future growth and advancement of the Soka Gakkai, Shin'ichi silently pledged to cut these tendencies off at the root. He would begin by causing the Soka Gakkai spirit to brim within each leader's heart.

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



A Tribute to My Nemesis

PERSPECTIVE

by LEE K. WOLFSON
PITTSBURGH

Lee Wolfson discovers that, perhaps more so than our friends, it is our enemies that shape our lives.

I arrived home from work one night to find a large envelope in the mail. Upon opening it, I found the program from my 30th high school reunion. While I never attend these events for reasons that will become apparent, I was curious about the fate of some of my classmates. In the back of the program was a list of all 126 graduates. Those who responded or were locatable provided some basic demographic information. I must say there were a lot of names I no longer recognized.

Before I put the booklet down, I went to the front pages that contained the program, menu, etc. On the next page was a memo-



Photo by MARK MILLER

riam. Four of my classmates had died since we graduated. One of them had died shortly after graduation. Two of them I recognized but hardly knew. The last one, Art D., I knew very well.

Art had tormented me through most of my school life. His favorite name for me was Jewboy or Kike. In my younger years, he delighted in this kind of name-calling until I would be driven to tears or fighting, or both. He often would goad other boys into similar name-calling. Most of them were larger than me. I was usually on the losing end of these "encounters."

My parents tried to protect and comfort me, and would often complain to the school administration, but there was rarely any kind of meaningful intervention from the school or the other parents. As a young

boy, I had a difficult time grasping this as bigotry. I just thought everyone hated me.

In high school, it wasn't much different, although by then I was able to grasp the concept of prejudice. It became quite obvious to me, as the only Jew in my school (in a small western Pennsylvania town, population 10,000) that I was never going to be accepted socially, by either gender. I withdrew from any meaningful associations. In my senior year, Art's badgering only got worse.

One day in particular, he was gleefully whispering "Jewboy, Jewboy, Jewboy" in history class. I ignored him. Then we were on our way to band practice in another building. On the street, he kept up his harangue but was no longer whispering. His buddies were laughing and joining in. Finally, I turned to him and told him to "back off."

By now a crowd had gathered. I could see he was seething. In my first moment of what I thought was psychological insight, I came up with a plan. In an effort to diffuse the situation and embarrass him, I

turned to him, looked him in the eye, and said: "Okay, Art. Why don't you prove to all your friends what a real man you are and punch me?"

The crowd fell silent. I stared at him defiantly. Then he did the one thing I never thought he would do. He punched me. Right in the mouth. I thought: "Hey! He wasn't supposed to do that." However, the crowd grew almost silent. The hate and negativity diffused, and we continued on down the street. He never harassed me again.

Sitting on my patio that night, under the moonlit sky, a chorus of cicadas serenading me, I smoked a really fine cigar (Astral Bellicosa), the curling smoke a reminder of the transience of all phenomena. I sat with my feelings. I pondered: Art D. is dead. My great nemesis is dead.

I feel no joy, no sense of triumph, that I outlived him, or that somehow he got his just reward. I don't even know how he died. But I did realize this: So much of who I was, and who I would become, was defined in many ways by Art, my enemy

and tormentor. Perhaps, it's our enemies — as much or perhaps even more so than our friends — who truly shape who we are, and what we might become. Could it be that through these painful life experiences a seed was planted that eventually led to my becoming a psychologist and a Buddhist?

Embracing Buddhism for the past 28 years has taught me that if I would practice Buddhism, then I must put into action the path of lovingkindness and compassion.

In my silent determinations, following my recitation of the Lotus Sutra, instead of offering prayers for the deceased, I make a promise: to hold in my heart the loving memory of all those individuals who touched my life in some way. Then I pledge that my actions this day will pay tribute to their loving memories. This morning, I held Art in my heart with lovingkindness and made this same pledge.

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

Children's Rights Exhibition Celebrates Fourth Year

By MALINA MOORE
SGI-USA EXHIBITION COORDINATOR

Since its first showing in 1996, "Treasuring the Future: Children's Rights and Realities" has appeared in 19 cities across the United States. It has received mayoral proclamations, state resolutions and congressional letters of recognition. To date, more than 45,000 people — both big and small — have seen this exhibition in museums, libraries, shopping malls and university campuses. Thanks to the hard work and dedicated efforts of SGI-USA members, child advocacy organizations and local community supporters, the exhibition has been accessible and convenient for people from all walks of life to see.

Working for the happiness of others and upholding human rights has been the proud legacy of the SGI, and this naturally extends to the rights of children. As we know and rec-



Photo by GARY MURIE

Malina Moore, exhibition coordinator.

ognize — especially through the efforts of the Boys and Girls Groups across the country — children are our future, therefore it is imperative to nurture and invest in their positive growth and development.

I feel that exhibition committees across the United States, by reaching out to community organizations and organizing educational activities around the topic of children's rights, have done just that. They have used the exhibition as one more opportunity to

contribute to our children's positive growth and development. In addition, I believe they have laid the foundation for what hopefully will be a long-lasting cooperation between our local organizations and our communities.

And I believe the positive impact doesn't end there. Most locations had never before hosted an SGI-USA exhibition and were somewhat overwhelmed by the often daunting tasks at hand. No matter how much the tension may have risen or what obstacles may have come up, in each location, the committee members rose to the occasion and created meaningful events for the community and family and friends to attend. Some even expressed their surprise (and delight!) at their own potential and capabilities.

I feel so fortunate to be involved in this project, and it has been my privilege and honor to meet so many fantastic people around the country.




Photo by GREGORY NAKASUJI

A mother and her daughter enjoy the exhibition in New Orleans.

I can't express enough my appreciation to everyone who has supported this exhibition. Thank you very much!

So what's next? Well, "Treasuring the Future: Children's Rights and Realities" will end the year 2000 with

two more showings at the Avenues Mall in Jacksonville, Fla. (Oct. 16-29) and at California State University, Channel Islands (Nov. 10-19). For more detailed information, please check out our Web site at www.kidsrights.org. 

FROM PERSEVERANCE, 8

true mettle of human beings.

They continue, without any support or status, to uncompromisingly proclaim the nobility of peace based on their firsthand experiences. Prior to World War II, the use of the Okinawan dialect was prohibited in elementary schools, and those caught using it were forced to wear a "Dialect Disgrace Tag" around their necks. It was a shameful past, in which they were made to detest themselves and their culture.

But through this experience, the people of Okinawa have stood up determined to risk their very lives to protect human rights. They rely on no one. And they have an instinctual intolerance for discrimination.

Buddhism has steadily spread throughout Okinawa because its philosophy, which strengthens people's foundation of self-reliance and independence, resonates with the strong indigenous spirit of *Uchina* [another name for Okinawa]. This surely stems from the Okinawan abhorrence of temporary fads and the intervention of power and authority.

Okinawan people keenly view things without judgment—they look at grass-roots movements with a discerning eye and recognize good for what it is. Of course, it goes without saying that the noble contributions of Soka Gakkai members in Okinawa have also played a significant role in solidifying this traditional spirit.

When I visited Okinawa in 1988, I spoke extensively about the principle in the Lotus Sutra of the three transformations of the land [referring to the scene in the "Treasure Tower" chapter where Shakyamuni transforms the land three times, thereby pu-

rifying it]. The destiny of a land is changed by its people.

This is just as Nichiren Daishonin indicates in his treatise "On Establishing the Correct Teaching for the Peace of the Land." He says, "The nation achieves prosperity through the Buddhist Law, and the Law is proven worthy of reverence by the people who embrace it" (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 18). He also says: "All things depend on the country and the time. In practicing Buddhism, one should take this principle into consideration" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 1579).

Stressing this idea that the prosperity of a land depends on the activities and development of the individuals who live there, I encouraged the members in Okinawa to polish themselves through faith in the Mystic Law. This, I said, is the fundamental way leading to the revitalization of society and to making Okinawa a model for Japan and the world.

There is a large bell that adorned the main building of Shuri Castle during Okinawa's Great Trading Age. The inscription on it reads, "As a bridge linking all nations, we have brought forth ever-abundant treasures." It is within this spirit of the Okinawan people to live as global citizens, appreciating cultural differences and finding beauty in diversity, that the greatest reward of international exchange is found.

Okinawa is truly a bridge linking all lands. It possesses the unsurpassed mission of conveying to the world the tremendous importance of culture and peace. The 21st century will without a doubt be the time when the genuine ability of the *Uchinanchu* shines forth.

The 2000 G-8 Summit of industrialized nations is being



A L I S O V I E J O C A M P U S

Send in your own questions, and we'll share the answers!

Question:

What questions will SUA ask during the telephone interview? Can you fax me the questions in advance so that I can prepare?

Answer:

The telephone interview is our opportunity to get to know you a little better. It is a dialogue where you will be asked some questions—and you will have the opportunity to

ask some questions of your own. We do not give out the questions beforehand because we do not want prospective students to feel that they have to rehearse or prepare and memorize specific answers. The most important thing to remember is just be yourself. This interview will be a conversation, and we will do our best to make it an interesting, enjoyable chance to talk about what is important to you.

Question:

I heard from a friend that SUA's purpose is to send

missionaries around the world. Is that true?

Answer:

No, it is not true. SUA welcomes students of all religions and nationalities and offers a non-sectarian liberal arts curriculum. Everyone participates in an academic internship/study abroad in their junior year in which they go to another country to study the language and experience the people and their culture. This is part of their curriculum for which they earn academic credit. We do expect that when our students graduate they will have developed the character, wisdom and leadership skills necessary to make positive contributions in their communities and their countries.

If you have questions of any kind about SUA, please send them to SUA at either admission@soka.edu or info@soka.edu. We will use this World Tribune column to share our answer with others who might have the same questions.

held in Okinawa. Most suitably, the Bridge to All Nations Pavilion will serve as the main venue of the event.

Eleven in a series

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

Correction: The title and the first sentence of the "Buddhist Applications to Psychotherapy" article in the Sept. 29 World Tribune, pp. 1 and 10, misrepresent the actual focus of the two symposia held at this year's American Psychological Association's 108th annual conference. There was equal emphasis on the application of Buddhism to psychotherapy and to the solution of social problems of ethno-political conflict, war and genocide, poverty, environmental degradation, nuclear warfare and biological weapons.

The following paragraph was omitted toward the end of the article on p. 10: Kathleen Dockett, Ed.D., psychology professor at the University of the District of Columbia, spoke on how Buddhist psychology can help prevent ethnopolitical conflict, genocide, and war. At the core of ethnic conflict lies a crisis of identity. From the

Buddhist perspective, when people fail to understand their true identity, and the spiritual equality and mutual interdependence of all life, they tend to form deep attachments to transient national and cultural identities as though they were permanent. Buddhism holds the more flexible view that individual and group identities are relative, contingent, and evolving. The key to resolving conflict among ethnic groups lies in discovering and revealing a universal humanity that transcends difference. Solutions call for broad concepts: of self-identity as one with the universe, of social identity as mutually interdependent, and of universal identity as global citizenship. Combined with genuine dialogue, cross-cultural interaction, mutual responsibility, and global awareness, these provide the ingredients for a harmonious coexistence in our global human society.

Calendars for 2001!

The Century of Life 2001

The Century of Life datebook is back with a new edition for 2001. This gorgeous week by week calendar features stunning photography by SGI-USA members together with inspirational quotes from SGI President Ikeda. This year we've added a place for phone numbers and addresses, too.

6" x 9" \$12.95 M/O # 4112

Florida Nature and Culture Center 2001

A wall calendar featuring the unique beauty of the Florida Nature and Culture Center in photographs by Jonathan Wilson.

12" x 12" \$9.95 M/O # 4108

Available at all SGI-USA bookstores.
Or purchase your copy via mail order:
1-800-626-1313 or sgiusamoc@aol.com.



World Tribune
Press

'United for Peace' in Dallas

By TROY MURRAIN
DALLAS BUREAU CHIEF

On Oct. 1, the members of Texas/Oklahoma Region celebrated the 40th anniversary of SGI President Ikeda's first trip for worldwide kosen-rufu, holding their first culture festival at the beautiful Southfork Ranch in Plano, Texas.

The theme, "United for Peace," was clearly displayed on the smiling faces of the more than 2,000 people in attendance, gathered here to watch the performances of members from Oklahoma City, Houston, Corpus Christi, San Antonio, Killeen, Fort Worth, Austin, Tulsa and Dallas.

Upon their arrival at the auditorium, guests were welcomed by the sweet sounds of the Dallas Jazz Band and viewed an exhibition detailing the SGI's movement for peace, culture and education, as well as the new campus of Soka University of America in Aliso Viejo, Calif.

The two-hour event featured magnificent performances such as the Fort Worth young women performing a hip-hop dance as the

"Hip-Hop Power Puff Girls," and a traditional Indian and Japanese dance from the Dallas young women. The San Antonio members offered a traditional African song and dance called "Aki Wo Wo," and from Corpus Christi, aspiring rapper Steve Orgas had the crowd moving with his song "The Truth Is Supreme."

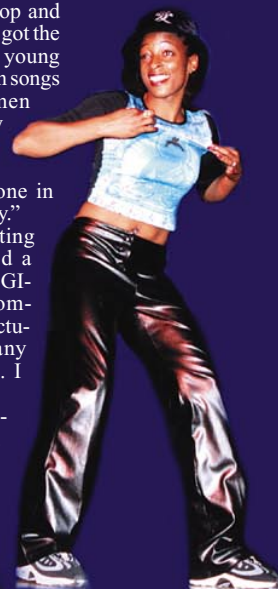
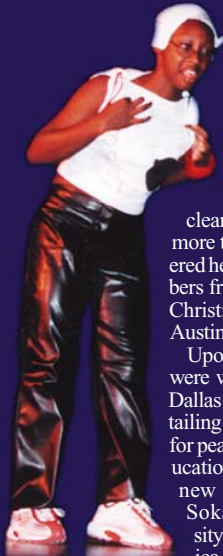
Members from all over the region contributed to swing dance performances, drum routines and wonderful choral performances, such as "Be True to Your School" by the Houston Boys and Girls Group, "Love Is the Seventh Wave" by the Oklahoma City Chorus and "The Tater Song" by the Austin members.

The highlight of the fes-

tival was the youth. The young men performed several energetic hip-hop and Stomp-style dance routines that got the crowd out of their seats. The young women excited the audience with songs and dances profiling "Women Through the Decades," a history of women in the 20th century. The festival concluded with the Sunset Chorus leading everyone in singing Beethoven's "Ode to Joy."

Soroya Anderson, representing the mayor's office, presented a proclamation naming Oct. 1 "SGI-USA Day" in Dallas. She commented that the "SGI-USA is actually accomplishing what many organizations are trying to do. I truly enjoyed this event."

Mimi Kubiak, young women's region leader, said: "Our goal of all the members uniting together has been accomplished. I feel like I'm walking on air!" WT



Texas/Oklahoma Region
Culture Festival
October 1, 2000 - Dallas, Texas



Photos by LISA GERLICH