

World TRIBUNE

IN THIS ISSUE



SPECIAL FEATURE

**'Beginning the Journey of Faith':
A dialogue among
new practitioners
in the SGI-USA**

pages 4-7

Periodical Postage Paid at Santa Monica, CA 90401 and at additional mailing offices
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: SGI-USA Subscribers, 606 Wilshire Blvd., PO Box 1427 Santa Monica, CA 90406-9907

No. 3320

\$2.00

NOVEMBER 17, 2000

Courtesy of SEIKYO PRESS

SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S OCT. 5 SPEECH—PART 2

JOY IS FOUND IN THE STRUGGLE

'Victory and hard work go hand in hand,' SGI President Ikeda says. 'If you exert yourself 100 percent, victory will come to you quite naturally. I hope you will recognize that joy is found not so much in victory itself but in the struggle, effort and challenge to achieve victory.'

The conclusion of SGI President Ikeda's speech at the 50th Soka Gakkai Headquarters Leaders Meeting, held in commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the Soka Gakkai's founding, at the Tokyo Makiguchi Memorial Hall in Hachioji, Oct. 5.

The dialogue that I conducted with Dr. Austregésilo de Athayde, late president of the internationally acclaimed Brazilian Academy of Letters, was published in Portuguese in May of this year. Dr. Athayde

was imprisoned many times and forced to live in exile abroad. Refusing to be cowed, however, he fought head-on against the military dictatorship that ruled his homeland.

When I flew to Rio de Janeiro in February 1993, after a visit to Colombia, Dr. Athayde kindly came to the airport to see me, arriving some two hours before my plane was scheduled to land. [On that occasion, the 94-year-old Dr. Athayde told SGI President Ikeda: "You are a symbol of world peace. Let's work together to change history!"]



SGI member and Italian soccer superstar Roberto Baggio makes a guest appearance at the JOMO Cup exhibition soccer match at Tokyo's National Stadium, Oct. 4.

Dr. Athayde writes [in a newspaper article from Oct. 30, 1945]: "During 15 years spreading democracy, in exile and in prison, I sought for all ways available to me, through the written word and through the press, to infuse the soul of the people with the lost spirit of human dignity." The same spirit exists in the Soka Gakkai. Three generations of presidents were imprisoned, but none of

them bowed to the pressure of authoritarian state power.

Dr. Athayde continues: "What began with a fistful of indomitable determination grew and spread until it became the overwhelming majority of the nation. Finally, a small current gained the proportions of an irresistible torrent, a breeze became a tornado."

The members of SGI-Brazil have fought and won, following

this exact same pattern.

Dr. Athayde rejoiced at our dialogue. It turned out to be the last dialogue for publication that he conducted. After his death, I had the opportunity to meet with his son and daughter, Roberto Athayde and Laura Sandroni, when they visited Japan. I fondly remember that meeting.

PLEASE SEE SPEECH, 2

New Look for SGI-USA Web Site

The completely redesigned official sgi-usa.org Web site will be up and running on Nov. 18. In addition to a fresh, new look, the site, originally launched in 1995, takes advantage of the latest Internet technologies.

Currently, more than 16,000 people visit the site each month, making it a tremendous vehicle for communication among our membership as well as a natural promotional tool for the SGI-USA.

With this in mind, the SGI-USA's Information Systems department undertook a complete redesign. "Our purpose in hosting this site is to help make the

SGI-USA's message and SGI President Ikeda's spirit available to both members and new audiences in a convenient way," says Gerry Hall, director of the department. "Many people, in their search for answers to any question, look to the Internet first. When they encounter our site, we want to make sure they not only understand the information, but also the spirit of our organization."

The new site is fully searchable and divided into three areas: the SGI-USA organization, an introduction to Buddhism, and our Publications. Some new features include a searchable reference library, video and audio

clips, flash animation, a virtual tour of the Florida Nature and Culture Center, a children's section and an interactive map section that will direct visitors to their closest SGI-USA community center.

One of the most exciting elements is a new members section, which will feature articles on the basics of Buddhist practice, an interactive guide to the altar and even an audio file for practicing gongyo!

In the near future, the Information Systems department hopes to add more information and multimedia content, as well as on-line ordering for the *World Tribune* and *Living Buddhism*. **WT**



The home page of sgi-usa.org, the official Web site of SGI-USA. The completely redesigned site will debut on Nov. 18.

FROM SPEECH, 1

When people get along well, benefit is forthcoming.

Above all, the members of SGI-Brazil get along well together. They are a splendid example of unity, of oneness of mind and purpose. It is always a delight to meet them.

In Brazil, one finds art, poetry, people, warm hearts and fragrant flowers. With their bubbling enthusiasm and energy, our members in Brazil are expanding their beautiful realm of friendship.

By contrast, in organizations where people do not get along, hearts become closed and narrow, and jealousy and selfishness reign—ultimately, nobody works together for the same purpose. When people get along well, benefit is forthcoming. When they do not, there is no benefit. This is what Buddhism teaches.

All over Brazil this month, general meetings—to be attended by 100,000 people—will be held to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the kosen-rufu movement in that country. How wonderful is Brazil's passion and enthusiasm!

Let all of us here in Japan, as well, create a magnificent new milestone in the kosen-rufu movement, with the top leaders setting the example by going all-out with their daimoku—chanting and chanting, then chanting some more—and working energetically on the

front lines of the organization.

Forty years ago this month, on Oct. 19, 1960, I headed for South America as part of my first trip abroad for peace. I was not in good health. The exhausting schedule had begun to take its toll, and I had a fever of close to 104 degrees.

The leaders traveling with me were against my making the long trip to Brazil from the United States. But I thought, "If I don't go now, I may never have another chance." I was determined to go at all costs. Nothing could stop me. If I was going to collapse, then so be it. That was my feeling.

Thus, while fighting against illness, I took the first step for kosen-rufu in Brazil. I threw myself into a busy round of activities with the pioneering members and planted the seeds for kosen-rufu there.

I am overjoyed to see the magnificent development that my beloved Brazilian members have achieved. I salute them. Praise to Brazil! Praise to its tradition of continuous victory—of total triumph!

Viva Brazil! Pique! Pique! Brazil!

The priesthood reacted negatively to the SGI's development.

Today, we have with us Dr. Richard Seager, a noted American scholar of religious studies [and the author of *Buddhism in America*]. Dr. Seager's field of specialty is religious history

and comparative religion. He has for many years researched modern Western religions and cultural traditions, as well as encounters between the religions of East and West.

He made the following observation about the essence of the split between the Soka Gakkai and the Nichiren Shoshu priesthood: "The rupture occurred because the dynamic growth of Soka Gakkai simply began to outrun the authority, power and imagination of the Nichiren Shoshu priesthood, particularly once Soka Gakkai began to flourish as an international movement" (*Buddhism in America*, p. 77). This is a keen insight.

Dr. Seager also notes that the Soka Gakkai has established new institutions in America that are devoted to "progressive and humanistic value creation" (p. 86), citing as examples Soka University of America and the Boston Research Center for the 21st Century. He has voiced high hopes for the future activities of these institutions. I am firmly determined to respond to Dr. Seager's expectations.

Victory hinges on how serious we can be.

Yesterday, Oct. 4, soccer fans all over Japan were captivated by the artistry that Italian soccer player Roberto Baggio displayed on the field during the JOMO Cup exhibition soccer match that was held in Tokyo. Mr. Baggio received the Fighting Spirit

Award for his wonderful performance. My wife and I watched the game on television.

Mr. Baggio is very kind-hearted. Once again, as he has done on previous occasions when he has played in Japan, he invited a group of students from Tokyo Soka Elementary School to attend the game. He made sure that it was a memorable day for them, even going out of his way to join them in a commemorative photo on the soccer field. As the school's founder, I wish to take this opportunity to convey my deepest appreciation to Mr. Baggio for his kindness. *Grazie!*

It has been a year since I last saw Mr. Baggio and his wife, Andreina, and I am delighted to meet them again today. You both look wonderful.

I want to share with our youth some of this great soccer hero's philosophy on winning [from an interview with Mr. Baggio in the December 1999 issue of the Soka Gakkai-affiliated monthly magazine *Ushio*].

In response to the question "What is crucial for victory?" Mr. Baggio says, "First, I think soccer is above all a very passionate sport.... Without a strong, strong desire to win, it is like the engine is turned off. Without that strong urge, you cannot win."

When you resolve that "I am going to win! I am going to win without fail!" the engine of your entire being starts to move into gear. In any battle, the vic-

tors are those who discard all pretensions and airs, and fight to the end, never letting go of their tenacious drive and determination to win. Victory hinges on our seriousness.

Those who can unite are truly wise.

Mr. Baggio also says: "You cannot win without arduous effort. Training is crucial above all. You have to train and practice till it hurts. Victory is only won through agonizing effort—without agonizing effort there can be no victory." It is the same in Buddhist practice.

Mr. Baggio continues, "Only when you work really hard to win can you savor a deep sense of satisfaction in winning." Victory and hard work go hand in hand. If you exert yourself 100 percent, victory will come to you quite naturally. I hope you will recognize that joy is found not so much in victory itself but in the struggle, effort and challenge to achieve victory.

Responding to a question on how he deals with pressure, Mr. Baggio says, "What I do is tell myself: 'Endure! Endure! Endure!'" People with perseverance will always be happy in the end. Let us advance with this unflagging spirit! No matter what happens!

Mr. Baggio also states his belief that in any job the key to success is solid teamwork. The tremendous success of the Soka Gakkai, too, has been won

PLEASE SEE SPEECH, 3

The 'Saha' World



By GEOFF ROHDE

SACRAMENTO REGION LEADER

Saha means suffering, sorrow and all that we do not like about the grim realities of everyday life. Nichiren Daishonin writes that "the saha world is the world of withstanding pain and suffering" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 771).

But according to this Buddhism, this saha world in which we find ourselves—sufferings and all—is also the Buddha's land, a realm of Eternally Tranquil Light. As hard as it might be to accept, the Buddha's land is right

here, right now. And nowhere else! "There are not two lands, pure or impure in themselves," the Daishonin writes. "The difference lies solely in the good or evil of our minds" (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 4).

The challenge of our Buddhist practice is to see, hear and experience all that life dishes out as radiant manifestations of the Mystic Law. In truth, everything is exactly that. Therefore, when our vision is transformed (or enlightened), we see and experience any situation as happening in the Land of Eternally Tranquil Light.

But how do we make this psychological, perceptual, spiritual shift happen? It takes more than just positive thinking—it takes strong Buddhist practice based on the Daishonin's teachings. The Daishonin formulated the practice of

chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo and inscribed the Gohonzon precisely for this purpose. Nikko Shonin—and many others after him—devoted years of their lives to collect, protect and share the Daishonin's letters with posterity. Thus today, we can also study the Daishonin's writings and imbue our lives with his courage, compassion and spiritual insight.

The Daishonin encourages us to take full responsibility for improving our lives—with the understanding that no meaningful change can ever happen outside our lives until and unless meaningful change happens inside us first.

Bolstered by these and other attributes, we can find joy, peace and security amidst the saha world. For those so empowered, the saha world is the Buddha's land. **WT**

Corrections

• The article titled "Redwood Coast Members Spread Friendship" on page 3 of our Nov. 10 issue was written by Luis Meyreles of Santa Rosa, Calif.

• In the Nov. 3 "Seize the Day," page A, the last line in the second column should read: "Seize: Thank you all for your comments." On page B, at the end of the third column, three lines are missing; they are shown here in *italics*: I felt that it was judgmental to *denounce those who chose to go with the priest—after all, we were all chanting, and wasn't that the most important thing?* On page C, three words are missing at the end of the third column; they are: *mentor in faith*. We apologize for any misunderstanding this caused our readers.



The *World Tribune* (692-720) is published weekly by the SGI-USA, 606 Wilshire Blvd., PO Box 1427 Santa Monica, CA 90406-9907; (310) 260-8900; FAX (310) 260-8910; E-mail: wt@sgi-usa.org SGIUSBS@aol.com

Periodical Postage Paid at Santa Monica, CA, and at additional mailing offices. Return To: SGI-USA Subscriptions, 606 Wilshire Blvd., PO Box 1427 Santa Monica, CA 90406-9907

Subscription Rates (subject to state taxes) \$15 for Three Months; \$28 for Six Months; \$50 for One Year; \$85 for Two Years; \$125 for Three Years

Printed on 100% recycled paper
Copyright © 2000 by SGI-USA.
All rights reserved.
Printed in the USA.

Courtesy of SEIKYO PRESS

FROM SPEECH, 2

through our solidarity. Being able to unite is wisdom in the truest sense. The wise savor glory, while the foolish taste defeat.

Mr. Baggio further says: "The only way for me to fight against the callous criticism and abuse I received was to play really well — and not just simply play a good game but to win. By winning, the criticism and abuse disappeared." Victory — let us advance with this as our goal! Our fellow SGI members, Mr. and Mrs. Baggio, have triumphed splendidly. Look at their magnificent victory! One who is good and right must not be defeated. The kind of justice that can be defeated is not true justice. Our faith is committed to justice and truth. Buddhism is win or lose. We achieve

kosen-rufu by winning.

The youth will shoulder our movement in the 21st century. I have no one else to count on but you — you are my only hope.

My young friends, may you follow Mr. Baggio's example and lead a youth of great meaning, a youth of challenge, a youth free of regrets, a youth of absolute victory. Armed with that strength, may you score many winning goals for the ultimate victory of the people.

In closing, I want to share with you the words of some philosophers. First, Romain Rolland declares, "Losers have no history." And Pascal says, "Man without faith can know neither true good nor justice."

I am praying that you will enjoy ever-greater good health and happiness. Thank you for your long attention today. **WT**



SGI President Ikeda meets with Dr. Richard H. Seager, associate professor of religious studies at Hamilton College, Clinton, N.Y., at the Tokyo Makiguchi Memorial Hall in Hachioji, Oct. 5.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION MEETINGS

Win or Lose

From This Speech:

Italian soccer player Roberto Baggio says: "The only way for me to fight against the callous criticism and abuse I received was to play really well — and not just simply play a good game but to win. By winning, the criticism and abuse disappeared." Victory — let us advance with this as our goal! ... One who is good and right must not be defeated. The kind of justice that can be defeated is not true justice. Our faith is committed to justice and truth. Buddhism is win or lose. We achieve kosen-rufu by winning.

- 1) Roberto Baggio suggests that we can show actual proof by winning in a struggle. In what areas of your life are you striving to show actual proof? How do you hope this will make others think of your Buddhist practice?
- 2) Why do you think that SGI President Ikeda is concerned that "one who is good and right must not be defeated"? How do you know if you are "good and right"? And how do you make sure that you are not defeated by anything?
- 3) Do you think of achieving victory in your own life as a form of justice? How do your own victories contribute to creating a just society?
- 4) "Buddhism is win or lose," President Ikeda often says. What does this mean to you? What is your greatest experience of winning?

Read the WT E-mail Express

It's the Quickest Way To Get SGI President Ikeda's Guidance

The WT E-mail Express is a free, weekly e-mailer for World Tribune subscribers. It features excerpts from President Ikeda's new speeches, essays and dialogues, as well as previews of other upcoming World Tribune articles.

To subscribe to the WT E-mail Express, just follow these three easy steps:

- 1) Open a new e-mail message
- 2) Enter to (first line): **ListManager@sgi-usa.org**
- 3) Enter message text (first line): **SUBSCRIBE wtexpress**

You'll receive a confirmation message and then a new issue every week!



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:

Who should I contact at SUA, Aliso Viejo to check on the status of my application?

Answer:

Please contact Susan Smith, SUA's new Manager of Admission, at (949) 580-1877. Susan's e-mail is ssmith@soka.edu. She will be happy to answer your questions. Please do not call her asking about the admission decision on your application. These will be announced only by mail.

Question:

How will the Early Admission decisions be announced? Will I get an e-mail? A letter?

Will announcement dates be different for international students?

Answer:

Letters that will be mailed on Dec. 15 will announce all early admission decisions. Both national and international student letters will be mailed on the same date. Please do not call to ask about the decision on your application, because this information will only be sent by mail to protect the confidentiality of our applicants.

Question:

Why are there different addresses on SUA brochures and publications and in the World Tribune? Which one should I use? If I sent materials to an

old address, will I be penalized if it doesn't get here?

Answer:

SUA is growing and has had to change its temporary office address. Mail sent to the old address at 85 Argent, Suite 200, Aliso Viejo, CA 92656 is being forwarded to us at our new temporary address of 26137 La Paz, Mission Viejo, CA 92691. Mail sent to our new permanent campus address of 1 University Drive, Aliso Viejo, CA 92656 is also being forwarded to us. No matter which address you use, we will get the mail. If your application material is post-marked on or before a specific deadline, it will be accepted as meeting that deadline. We are encouraging everyone to begin using the new 1 University Drive address, because that is our permanent address and the only one we will be using effective January 2001.

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.

Subscribe to the Justice Chronicle

The Justice Chronicle is a free, weekly e-mailer for World Tribune subscribers about the Soka Spirit movement. Its purpose is to support SGI-USA's ongoing education campaign about this subject in the timeliest fashion possible.

The Justice Chronicle will feature the latest Soka Spirit movement news, SGI President Ikeda's recent guidance about it and study articles explaining the difference between Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism and what the temple is teaching.

To subscribe to the Justice Chronicle, just follow these three easy steps:

- 1) Open a new e-mail message
- 2) Enter to: **ListManager@sgi-usa.org**
- 3) Enter message text (first line): **SUBSCRIBE chronicle**

You'll receive a confirmation message and then a new issue every week!

BEGINNING THE JOURNEY OF FAITH

Discovering the Joy of Faith and Practice

By KATHLEEN SLATTERY
LOS ANGELES BUREAU CHIEF

The following discussion took place among seven new SGI-USA members from the Culver-Palms Area, Los Angeles, Calif. They talk about the joy of faith and how it has affected their lives.

World Tribune: What motivated you to start practicing Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism?

Jack Brophy: What started me practicing was that there was something so universal in the SGI-USA members that I met at the activities. I felt their warmth. I saw their joy and felt their compassion. In making eye contact with different people and conversing before and after the activities, I knew right then that these people have something. I was anxious to learn more right away.

Susana Sandoval: That's the best tool for kosen-rufu.

Jack: Yeah.

Susana: That warmth and compassion. We are all dedicated to world peace. One of the major things that we can do is to show compassion and to be loving and supportive of everybody. We can do this together—so it's not just one individual. We are all together doing this.

Loretta So: The members—you feel their energy here—you feel the warmth.

Tomohiro Hashimoto: My girlfriend Risa, who lives in Japan, encouraged me to start chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo when I was suffering. She sent me SGI President Ikeda's guidance from the *Seikyo Shimbum* [the Soka Gakkai's daily newspaper].

I have always been dedicated to baseball. When I was 19, I was fortunate to play for the Oakland Athletics club in the minor leagues. Then I had a problem with my shoulder and I was clashing with my teammates because of my personality. When I was visiting Japan, Risa took me to a meeting where President Ikeda talked about Orlando Cepeda. I've always respected Orlando a lot and was surprised to learn that he is an SGI member. That day I decided to join the SGI and received the Gohonzon on May 9, 1999.

Joan Levine

'Some-where deep inside me I realized, oh boy, ... even your suffering is fabulous—everything is fabulous.'



Joan Levine: My real estate agent introduced me to the practice. I was 48 and buying my first house and doing it all on my own with no second income. Whenever we were waiting for someone to show up like the escrow agent, my real estate agent would say, "Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, Nam-myoho-renge-kyo." We went into the house that ended up being the condo that I bought. "Whoever lives here has a Gohonzon in their bedroom," she said. So I said, "What's a Gohonzon?" "The Gohonzon is the mandala that we chant to," she said. "That we do gongyo to." And I'm going, "Gongyo? Gohonzon?" I felt chanting was a very good thing because you use your voice and you have a room full of people using their voice and creating this harmony. I missed that because I used to sit around and sing with my friends sometimes until 4:00 in the morning. So, every time I had an opportunity to go chant, I just did it. The more I did, the more I wanted to do it.

Loretta: I always felt, even as a little girl, I was searching for something, but didn't know what. I was like a lost child. I didn't fit in. In 1990, I moved to the United States from Hong Kong and met a very good friend who had been chanting for 18 years. The first time I sat down and chanted with her in front of the Gohonzon, tears filled my eyes. I thought, "Maybe this is the missing piece?" I love to chant. I received the Gohonzon this past May, and finally feel like I found the missing piece.

Susana: I can totally relate, Loretta. I had already changed my life a lot by the time my boss' wife introduced me to the practice. I was a gang member,

using drugs, ditching school, and was often picked up by the police. My friend who worked at the police department once asked me with such concern when I got caught ditching school, why I was doing it, what I needed, and asked me what I was missing?

I really cleaned up my act. I went back to school and graduated with my class. I did community service and went to rehab. My mom forgave me, but I still felt like there was something missing, too.

Then my sister invited me to come and live with her in Los Angeles so I could go to college. I loved learning. She gave me 30 days to find a job. It was a week before the 30 days was up when they began experiencing problems with the phone system at her job. They needed someone right away, so she recommended me to her bosses. They ended up hiring me full time.

It turns out that in my office more than half of the people are SGI-USA members, so being introduced to this practice was kind of inevitable. I received the Gohonzon in December 1999, and it was like my cup was filled, I found what I was missing. Just being able to chant every time you have a problem...there's this comfort, like when your mom hugs you. You just feel safe. I think that's what I needed—that security, that feeling of love that I get from practicing this Buddhism.

Milton Malone: This practice makes me feel good, too. I was just drowning in negativity. I received the Gohonzon in October 1999.

Janice Davison: For most of my life I lived in the South in New Orleans or Alabama. I was a mother and thought that made me complete. But then I moved to Los Angeles and things here were tough. Also, my daughter and I had always been so close, but now she had moved to Atlanta. I could sense her unhappiness about being there and feeling alone in her efforts to get a job. By chanting for her, we connected in a way that allowed me to encourage her. I decided to receive the Gohonzon in July 1999 after chanting for five months because I could see the positive effect chanting had on my feelings and my thoughts.

WT: How has your life changed since you began practicing?

Milton: When you're as angry as I was, you seem to attack everything. Inside I had this rage against everything. I used to attack anything and anybody. I used to look at people's faults and say, "Ok, you're wrong and I'm right." What I noticed is I don't do that anymore or don't let it overwhelm me anymore. I get along with my mother better and my brother and sister. I've talked to my mother more in the last two months than ever in my life. I'm busier—working more. I like being busy. I have a lot of energy. When I sit around I get negative. But when I'm out working and moving around using up all my energy, I kind of enjoy it. I used to think it was a sell-out going to work. You're working for the "man."

That's what's changing—no more overwhelming anger. It was holding me back for so long. It's easy to get angry. It's easy to lock yourself in that security blanket. Instead of working through it you just get angry, pissed off and storm and break something. That's too easy. It's harder and a little more painful to look inside yourself and realize why you're so angry, and say, "Okay, now I have to change it."

I've been discovering capabilities in myself I never knew were there by participating in Soka Group the past six months; like how I'm able to take charge in a crisis and think on my feet without direction from anyone.

Tomohiro Hashimoto

'I keep President Ikeda's guidance in my mind and heart: "If you lose today, then win tomorrow." "If there's no hope, then you yourself create hope."'



Tomohiro: I was so impatient and stubborn. I couldn't get along with people because my life was so closed. Since I started doing gongyo and chanting, I'm able to control my

Janice Davison

'When you change, your environment will also. It is about staying focused on the self...'



anger and take even seemingly negative situations more positively. I also started opening up to others. Now I'm surrounded by many good friends. I keep President Ikeda's guidance in my mind and heart: "If you lose today, then win tomorrow." "If there's no hope, then you yourself create hope." My biggest benefit was that I was meeting Orlando Cepeda in July. After hearing Orlando's experience of practice and encouragement from President Ikeda, I determined to pursue my goal of becoming a major league baseball player, no matter what.

Janice: I chanted about my sensitive nature and to overcome my negativity. Things seemed to get worse and I was miserable, but as I continued to chant, without knowing it, I was getting stronger inside.

In January I was supposed to go in for an operation but it was rescheduled for March. I was suffering so much, and began chanting two to three hours a day. The week of the operation, I increased my chanting to five to six hours a day. Then my sister and my niece were chanting with me on the phone, sometimes for more than 30 minutes. Everyone was getting benefits. I was so nervous. Then on the day of the surgery, I really felt the universe supporting me. Everyone was so attentive and I was taken into surgery. Five hours later, I was back in my room with everyone telling me how great I did. My health is great now.

Jack: To me, the most important, most basic and greatest change in me is I finally have a purpose in life since I started chanting. I now know what I want to do in life. I used to always think, "Why was I born, what am I supposed to do, what's my purpose?"

All the other changes surround that; changes in my personality, my depth of feeling,

BEGINNING THE JOURNEY OF FAITH

my ego, patience, greed, anger, my ability to develop virtues that I used to think were just sissy things for women. Being a nice guy? Not me, I didn't need any of that.

Having a purpose—that's the greatest change, the biggest benefit.

Joan: I've always had really severe depressions, where I have been completely non-functional for years at a time. My mother was the same way. I remember, after I first received the Gohonzon in February of this year and was chanting everyday, I felt this overwhelming feeling of relief that life was truly joyous. Somewhere deep inside me I realized, oh boy, you are so wrong, even your suffering is fabulous—everything is fabulous.

I had some stock that went way up and I got this house—these things started happening immediately. But what I was really looking for was to let go of the resentment and open up and lead a more joyous life. For years, I would work all week and sleep all day Saturday. When I first started chanting, I'd go to the Saturday chanting session. I would leave wide-awake with tons of energy and the world was in color. It's just been wonderful. I don't feel like sleeping all day.

Susana: I've learned how to really value my friends, my family, my mother. I was terrible to my mom. We really started talking again, and now we are just the closest in the world. Now I take the love I have from my family and friends all together and I hold them with both hands and I keep them really close to my heart. I chant for them and I think that is one of the biggest benefits I've ever had, just actually realizing that this is what you have been given—from all that darkness, you come to value your family and your friends. Only with this Buddhism could I realize that everything I'd gone through was all for a purpose. I now appreciate what I went through.

Milton: Now when I look in the mirror I can say, I am a good, decent person. So what if I get angry, everyone else has that kind of negativity, you're not the only one. I used to be very shy. I would never raise my voice. Now I actually look at people when I'm talking to them. I want to make friends again. I

want to talk to more members.

Jack: I want to talk to you. You seem like the kind of guy I'd like to talk to.

Milton: Thank you.

Loretta: Congratulations. I can feel what you talked about, Milton—about feeling angry. There was an article in the *World Tribune* a while ago about how some people get mad and get even. I've stopped getting even and it really takes a lot to make me mad, now. I truly believe my Buddhist practice will help me to become a better person day by day. I'm a nurse. One day I was with a patient in the procedure area while we were waiting for the doctor. Then all of a sudden, the patient asked me, "Are you an SGI member?" I was shocked. "How do you know?" I asked, and she said, "I can feel your energy." She told me she had been practicing for 20 years, and she said: "Of all the people I met here today, you are the happiest one. I can see a glow on your face that the other people don't have, in the way that you talk to me, the way you let me know what was going to happen to give me the comfort, I knew that you were an SGI member."

Loretta So

'The first time I chanted with her in front of the Gohonzon, tears filled my eyes, thinking, "Maybe this is the missing piece?"'



Jack: I was badly injured, lived alone in a big house and could hardly walk or talk. I couldn't even crawl to the kitchen to eat. That's how sick I was. Nancy called and came over with enough food for a week. I was told that I was going to have to have surgery because my nerves in my neck were being crushed. Normally it doesn't heal by itself, but Nancy kept coming over and assisting me in my pain. With Nancy rubbing my neck every night, a little medicine and chanting, even after a big relapse, eventually I didn't need the surgery. The orthopedic surgeons were amazed.

Jack Brophy

'The most basic and greatest change in me is I finally have a purpose in life since I started chanting.'



I saw Nancy's goodness was so deep, I just fell in love with her. I asked her to marry me, and she said: "Oh, get out of here. No way, you're so crazy! We're so different. You've got to be kidding me! You're a big, tall white guy and I'm a little Chinese lady. You're highly educated, I have no education." She could hardly speak English. I said: "I don't care about all these differences. You have that heart, you have that spirit."

I received my SGI-USA membership certificate May 3, 1999, and a few months later we got married. Nancy and I do gongyo every morning and night and read President Ikeda's daily guidance. Nancy's been practicing for 18 years so she really helps me develop myself.

Tomohiro: My mother was so impressed by the changes in me, she began practicing and received the Gohonzon on Sept. 3. She tells me that she's happy and chanting about two hours a day. My grandmother, too. She had negative feelings about the SGI, but in one year, because of the changes she sees in me and how happy my mother is, she wants to attend activities. I'm so excited to see so many changes happening in my family.

Janice: One evening, my daughter called me in such low spirits. No one seemed to be responding to her resume. I told her she must say Nam-myohorenge-kyo and we chanted on the phone together for 15 to 20 minutes. The next day she got a job. I talk with her every day and read her the daily guidance from President Ikeda. She said it encouraged her so I sent her a copy. I make sure to talk with everyone I meet about how great chanting Nam-myohorenge-kyo is and how the SGI can help someone learn more about our Buddhist practice.

Joan: For more than 40 years, my emotions and my actions were dominated by my

fear of dying. Now, for the first time that I can remember, I'm not afraid of death.

WT: What are your dreams for the future?

Tomohiro: I'm 22 years old now. I will continue to pursue my dream of becoming a Major League baseball player, which I have cherished for a long time. In order to realize my dream, I will never spare my effort and keep chanting.

Janice: My health now is great, and I feel I can accomplish all my dreams. I am learning to love myself, and will continue working for kosen-rufu so that everyone can have a chance to become happy.

Milton: I've wanted to become a writer since I was 12. Writing everything—poems, scripts, novels. I also want to be a musician, a martial artist and possibly become a leader in the practice in some way. It's only been one year but I know I'm going to be here for the long run and a lot of great things are going to happen. I'm here until kosen-rufu and beyond.

Susana: I want to be in a position to touch other people's lives—to help a lot of people like other people have helped me. My Aunt Cilla was my role model, with her kindness and warmth. I want to be someone else's model. I want to be the kind of boss my bosses are. I want to be that kind of loving and compassionate person.

Susana Sandoval

'Just being able to chant every time you have a problem... there's this comfort, like when your mom hugs you. You just feel safe.'



Joan: My original dream was to be happy in my own skin, and to use the gifts I have to actually benefit people. I want to do the work I was put here to do. I continue to struggle with duality in my life. I want to paint for a living. I actually sold one of my paintings after I began chanting. I also want to get busy in the research of aging and it's

Milton Malone

'I've been discovering capabilities in myself I never knew were there...; like how I'm able to take charge in a crisis...'



relationship to cancer. I work in the department of preventive medicine at the University of Southern California. I have known for a long time that I have a lot of gifts, and it's taken a lot to even get that out.

WT: What do you think would be beneficial for other new members or people just starting to practice to know?

Susana: I would say that if you tell your friend the problem, it's a complaint. But if you take it to the Gohonzon, it's a prayer. If you have any small problems, any big problems, anything—go straight to the Gohonzon first and just chant about it. You'll see it get better.

Jack: It's important to remember to never look outside of yourself for the answer because you are already born with the goodness and the wisdom and all the truth you need. Get connected to your Buddhahood.

Milton: Gongyo first, and find out what's holding you back. Then do what you're afraid to do because that may be the one thing that will set you on the right path.

Janice: Recently in the *World Tribune*, there was an article on the power of chanting Nam-myohorenge-kyo with a strong and high life-condition. It explained how when we are chanting and things are not changing, it is because we are looking to change the environment or someone else instead of ourselves. Another article by SGI-USA Women's Leader Matilda Buck explained how each day we have the chance to change our situation, and that for her, chanting was like using a lantern in the dark. When you change, your environment will also. It is about staying focused on the self to fight the evil and bring out the good. **WT**

Photos by Sachiko Nobukuni

Improving Gongyo: A Moderate Approach

By **BOB TALIAFERRO**
NEW YORK BUREAU CHIEF

Gongyo means assiduous practice, which I have always assumed meant regular or continuous. Looking it up, I found that it does mean diligent and persevering. It can also mean attentive, hard-working or painstaking.

It is by taking all of these meanings to heart that Cyndy Carallo of Bayridge District in Brooklyn South Area has been conducting monthly gongyo workshops for the past several years. She believes people suffer when they struggle with gongyo. She would rather people enjoy their practice by being able to do a good gongyo. This is what motivated her to start the workshops.

Designed for anyone who wants to improve his or her gongyo, the workshop is intended for participants who are doing gongyo on a regular basis.

By supporting members to pay close attention to the details of pronunciation and rhythm, they improve their gongyo. Cyndy has a great deal of respect for any SGI member who has the courage to say: "For years I've been faking it. Now I want to learn gongyo correctly." For people who have real difficulty, Cyndy will always make time for extra sessions.

The workshop differs from "slow gongyo," which is appropriate for beginners. At the workshop, gongyo is done at a moderate pace to keep up the rhythm and interest. This moderate pace allows Cyndy to hear places where participants need help. When gongyo is over, participants are usually ready to discuss their weaknesses. For some, it's only one line, while others may constantly be mispronouncing the same word or vowel. Some people only need help with timing. The participants all listen to one another's

areas of difficulty and then work on helping each other with the correct pronunciation until it sounds perfect.

Cyndy will often suggest what someone may work on at home until the following month's meeting. She says: "When members return to the next session there is always progress. The smiles on their faces when they have succeeded at improving are priceless."

Cyndy takes the workshop seriously because it works. People who voluntarily participate want to hear constructive criticism. They want to improve. Also, the workshops are a "safe" place. No one ever laughs at another person and no question is considered stupid. "We laugh a lot, but with each other," Cyndy says.

Following are some additional suggestions Cyndy has offered her fellow members based on her experience with the gongyo workshop. **W**



Photo by LISA HOLLIS

In the course of our lives as common mortals, gongyo, along with daimoku, represents a most solemn encounter with the original Buddha. It is a ceremony that brings forth our state of Buddhahood and allows us to reveal the Gohonzon in the depths of our lives. For this reason, our practice should be invigorating and filled with joy. Gongyo should leave us feeling refreshed and revitalized.

— Daisaku Ikeda, "Selected Speeches," p. 38

Helpful Tips

By **CYNDY CARALLO**
BAYRIDGE, BROOKLYN

Help each other improve.

In the "The True Aspect of All Phenomena," Nichiren Daishonin writes, "Teach others to the best of your ability, even if it is only a single sentence or phrase" (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 386). At the workshop, we all help each other improve our gongyo and our joy of practicing.

Use the pronunciation guide.

At the front of the gongyo book, *The Liturgy of the Buddhism of Nichiren Daishonin*, there is a guide to pronunciation. It also explains the rhythm of gongyo by showing how Chinese characters in the sutra book relate to beats while reciting gongyo. The beauty of gongyo is that no matter what your language, we all sound the

same when we recite it together.

Be determined and have a seeking spirit.

Everyone, including SGI President Ikeda, had to learn gongyo just as you are doing so now. Mistakes and slips are OK. The main thing is having the attitude to improve and to enjoy.

Enjoy gongyo.

Emphasize enjoying gongyo because it is such a great cause for our happiness. In a Q and A session on gongyo, President Ikeda explains: "The Gohonzon is called the mirror of your life. In the Goshu, Nichiren Daishonin states, 'When you bow to a mirror, the image in the mirror bows to you.' So by carrying out a strong and vibrant gongyo, you are showing yourself and those around you ultimate respect" (Sept. 26, 1994 *World Tribune*, p. 6).

Set aside time.

When you first begin to practice gongyo, it is natural to want to do a full gongyo (five prayers in the morning and three in the evening) right away, but this may prove to be too

time-consuming and difficult if you have a busy schedule. It will take time to learn. New members may want to give themselves a certain amount of total time for gongyo (20 or 30 minutes, for example), and then divide that time between reciting the sutra and chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. As you improve, you will be able to recite more and more of the sutra during your gongyo. The main thing is trying to be consistent on a daily basis.

Perfect one page at a time.

Most people learn parts A and C first and then work on part B later. (A includes pages 1 to 5; B is from page 6 to 27 (to "ge gon"); and C is from "Ji ga" on page 27 to 38.) Trying to perfect the whole book each time you recite gongyo can be a little overwhelming. If you are a beginner, perfect one page at a time, performing your recitation at a slow and steady pace.

Practice on your own.

It's important to find time to practice in addition to the

monthly discussion meetings and the gongyo you do every day. At these practice sessions, you can find a quiet place and go over those words you struggle with the most. If you can't figure it out, make a note so you can ask someone later.

Listen to others when doing gongyo.

By listening to the central figure, we can all do gongyo together. There is no need to chant loudly. Chanting softly will enable you to hear others doing gongyo. When you get to a part you are having trouble with, it is OK to be silent and listen so you can learn the correct pronunciation. Then you can rejoin the group as soon as you are comfortable. I believe this can prevent bad habits from forming.

Note problem spots.

I found it useful to earmark the corner of the page (either the top or the bottom of the page depending on where I had difficulty) where I stumbled, while I was doing gongyo. This way I could keep up my rhythm and not have to stop. After gongyo, I'd go back over these passages several times until I felt comfortable.

Use the sutra book.

Doing gongyo correctly does not mean you have to memorize it. By using the sutra book at least once during each gongyo, you will refresh your awareness of correct pronunciation. If you stop using it, you may eventually start making errors.

Keep a steady pace.

Eventually you will want to do gongyo at the same pace as other members. While learning, however, it is important to do it at a steady pace that is comfortable for you so that you can pronounce the words correctly. By clearly pronouncing the words correctly and accentuating your timing at a moderate speed, you will still be sharp and clear as you pick up speed.

Ask for help.

Many people still get stuck in one or two spots. Or they may have learned to say a word incorrectly, even though that was how they were taught. There is no shame in asking someone to clear it up for you.

Have a good gongyo!

BEGINNING THE JOURNEY OF FAITH

Photo by GREGORY NAKASUJI



Though no chapter of the Lotus Sutra is negligible, among the entire twenty-eight chapters, the "Expedient Means" chapter and the "Life Span" chapter are particularly outstanding. The remaining chapters are all in a sense the branches and leaves of these two chapters. Therefore, for your regular recitation, I recommend that you practice reading the prose sections of the "Expedient Means" and "Life Span" chapters.

—The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin, p. 71

Basic Buddhist Terms To Remember

BODHISATTVAS OF THE EARTH

Those who chant and propagate Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. Emerging from the earth means to shatter one's shallowness and reveal one's true identity, and bodhisattva is one who dedicates his or her life to helping others.

BUDDHA

"Enlightened One." One who perceives the true nature of all life and leads others to attain the same enlightenment. The Buddha nature exists in all beings and is characterized by the qualities of wisdom, courage, compassion and life force.

DAIMOKU

Literally, *title*, it refers to the invocation or chanting of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, the title of the Lotus Sutra.

GOHONZON

The fundamental object of devotion in Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism. It is the embodiment of the Law of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, expressing in graphic form the life-state of Buddhahood, which all people inherently possess. *Go* means worthy of honor and *honzon* means object

of fundamental respect.

GONGYO

Literally, it means assiduous practice. In Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism, gongyo consists of reciting excerpts from the second and sixteenth chapters of the Lotus Sutra, chanting Nam-myoho-renge-kyo and offering prayers.

KARMA

Sanskrit word meaning action. The life tendency or destiny each individual creates through thoughts, words and deeds that exert an often unseen influence over one's future.

KOSEN-RUFU

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

LOTUS SUTRA

The highest teaching of Shakyamuni Buddha, it reveals that all people can attain enlightenment and declares that his former teachings should be regarded as preparatory. Recit-

Taking the First Step

The following message was excerpted from the September 1984 issue of the Seikyo Times magazine.

From the bottom of my heart, I would like to express my sincerest congratulations to you new believers who have just taken the first step in faith. I am convinced the day will soon come when you will quietly recollect that this was the beginning of a new life.

In any endeavor, the first step is of prime importance. An old saying goes: "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." Needless to say, it takes much more determination and preparation to set out on a journey of a thousand miles than it does on a journey of one mile, and the journey of faith you are beginning is far more arduous than either of those. Remember, the ultimate goal of our faith in Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism is to realize an ideal world where we can fully enjoy and share eternal, absolute, indestructible and unshakable happiness with each other.

Because it is a long journey to which we have devoted ourselves, the first step is of very great importance. I hope you, as a new member, grasp the true value of faith in the Gohonzon as early as possible in your practice.

Of course, in these early days of your faith, you may be wavering between doubt and belief. The Great Teacher Miao-lo of China said, "Even one whose motive of conversion is not pure will obtain many benefits if he exposes himself to the true object."

In other words, no matter what motivates people to begin practicing this religion, they can obtain many benefits from their practice as long they take the first step with the resolution befitting such a long journey. From that humble beginning, their faith will deepen, and they will find the power of the Gohonzon to be truly great, all-encompassing and profound.

I hope in these early days of your practice you throw aside your preconceptions and examine Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism with an open mind to see its true value. Follow the guidance given you step by step, and you will never fail to find actual proof in your daily life. Through your own experience and those of your seniors, you will marvel at how noble and beautiful it is to practice this Buddhism.

—SGI President Daisaku Ikeda

ing excerpts from the Lotus Sutra is part of SGI members' daily Buddhist practice.

NAM-MYOHO-RENGE-KYO

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

NICHIREN DAISHONIN (1222–82)

The founder of the Buddhism

upon which the SGI bases its activities. He inscribed the true object of devotion, the Gohonzon, for the observation of one's mind and established the invocation of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo as the universal practice for attaining enlightenment. Daishonin is an honorific title that means great sage.

SHAKYAMUNI

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

SOKA GAKKAI INTERNATIONAL (SGI)

The Soka Gakkai Inter-

national (SGI) is a worldwide association with membership in 163 countries and territories. In the service of its members and of society at large, SGI centers its activities on human potentialities for individual happiness and for global peace and prosperity. The breadth and focus of its mission derive from the philosophy and practice of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism. *Soka Gakkai* means value-creation society. The SGI-USA is a member-organization of the SGI.

TEN WORLDS

Hell, Hunger, Animality, Anger, Humanity, Heaven (or Rapture), Learning, Realization, Bodhisattva and Buddhahood. The Ten Worlds are also interpreted as states of life.

'Way of Youth' Garnering Praise Nationwide

Print, radio and on-line reviews help spread book's message. Web site launched.

By **DAVE McNEILL**
SANTA MONICA, CALIF.

"Daisaku Ikeda adeptly connects the timeless wisdom of Buddhist teachings with the concerns of modern youth in this competent self-help book aimed at the teen set."

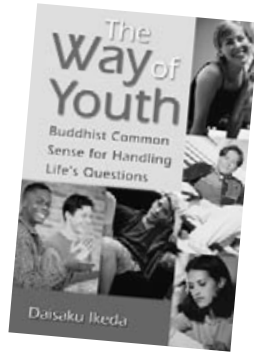
"Ikeda hits the hard topics head on, a bold approach that his target audience will no doubt appreciate."

"...A wonderfully accessible approach..."

"...a superb contribution to Buddhist 'life style' literature..."

"...answers will prove surprisingly beneficial even to adult parents, teachers and counselors."

This is just some of the praise that SGI President Ikeda's newest book, *The Way of Youth*, has received in the first few months since its publication. Several magazines and Web sites have already printed reviews and stories about the book, and one radio station in Washington, D.C., discussed the book for an hour during one of its talk shows.



The host of the show, Cheryl Costa, read from the book and strongly recommended it to the listeners, saying the advice wasn't just for teens but also for adults who are struggling themselves or who are raising teenagers of their own. "As a parent of a 24-year-old daughter, I wish I had had a book like this during those difficult days [when she was a teen]," she said. "This book could have helped in having a dialogue with a teenager. Both parents and children could read the book and discuss it."



New SGI Conference Center Purchased

An SGI Conference Center has recently been purchased in Orange County, Calif. The conference center is currently undergoing renovation, and is scheduled to be completed in the summer of 2001. The center will be used for various international and leadership conferences, such as the Central Executive Conference currently held each quarter.

Promotion efforts continue, with more print and radio coverage planned in the coming months. Middleway Press is also beginning to promote its upcoming titles. They'll staff a booth at the annual convention of the American Academy of Religion in Nashville later this month, talking to many of the thousand of religious scholars attending. And their Web site, www.middlewaypress.org, has just been launched with information on books, Nichiren

Buddhism and the SGI-USA.

Members, especially teenagers, interested in supporting the promotion of *The Way of Youth* are encouraged to visit their favorite teen Web sites or chat rooms and talk about the book or post reviews where you can. Such grass-roots efforts are

key in helping to spread the book's empowering, hope-filled and relevant message. **WT**

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

Subscribe yourself or share it with a friend.

To subscribe, send in the order form below with your payment enclosed. No cash, please. Call 1-800-835-4558 if you have questions. Please check the appropriate boxes.

WORLD TRIBUNE		LIVING BUDDHISM		If you wish, please select one free optional language supplement of the World Tribune. <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish <input type="checkbox"/> Korean <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese
<input type="checkbox"/>	3 months \$15 (13 issues) Save \$11	<input type="checkbox"/>	3 months \$15 (3 issues) Save \$3	
<input type="checkbox"/>	6 months \$28 (26 issues) Save \$24	<input type="checkbox"/>	6 months \$28 (6 issues) Save \$8	
<input type="checkbox"/>	1 year \$50 (52 issues) Save \$54	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 year \$50 (12 issues) Save \$22	
<input type="checkbox"/>	2 years \$85 (104 issues) Save \$123	<input type="checkbox"/>	2 years \$90 (24 issues) Save \$54	
<input type="checkbox"/>	3 years \$110 (156 issues) Save \$202	<input type="checkbox"/>	3 years \$125 (36 issues) Save \$91	

Are you a new subscriber? Yes No U.S. rates only. International rates vary.

Charge my VISA or Master Card

Card # _____

Expiration date _____

Signature _____ All credit card orders are subject to bank approval

Name _____

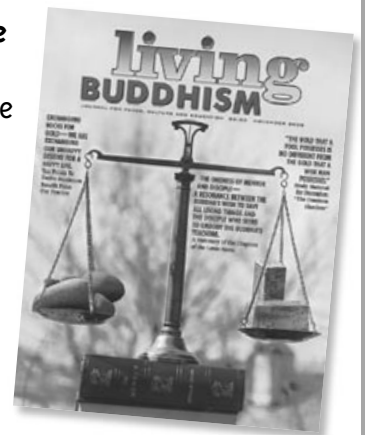
Address _____ Apt. # _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

(For gift subscription, please indicate gift giver) District Source Code (if known)
SEND TO: SGI-USA Subscriptions, PO Box 1427, Santa Monica, CA 90406-9907

"Ten Points to Derive Maximum Benefit From Our Practice"

and "The Fourteen Slanders" are part of this month's exploration of Buddhist practice in *Living Buddhism* magazine.



To subscribe, please see the form on this page or pick up a copy at your local SGI-USA community center bookstore.

Let Us All Live Like Kings

PERSPECTIVE

By JAMIE LIPTAN
SANTA MONICA, CALIF.

On Oct. 28, at approximately 1:00 a.m., a great Bodhisattva of the Earth was ushered into his next existence. Anthony Dwain Lee, 39, was a strong SGI-USA member and leader, and my friend.

He was attending a Halloween party in an exclusive area of Los Angeles, when a police officer, mistaking the gun accompanying his costume as real, shot and killed him. The officer believed Anthony was pointing the weapon at him and responded as he had been trained.

Anthony died in yet another tragic case of gun violence, and this may be all the general public remembers of him. But I believe his legacy is much greater.

I remember a man who, through his Buddhist practice and pursuit of his dream of an acting career, rose from a life of gang violence to become one of SGI-USA's courageous heroes of peace. He transformed himself into someone deter-

mined to change humanity through his own sweat, through engaging one person at a time.

Upon meeting Anthony, you could not help but be drawn in by his intensity, the way he packed so much life into every moment. I remember playing basketball with him earlier this year, and, despite my advantage of being some 12 years younger, he made me work harder than I ever thought I could. And afterward, as was customary with him, we shared the biggest laugh you could imagine.

His passing has hit me hard. For the first time, the reality of our challenge in the Victory Over Violence campaign has reached the deepest place in my life. VOV is not just a lapel pin and a great sounding pledge. It is life or death. It touches the people we love, the men we call brother.

If we cannot use the opportunity of VOV to teach people in this society about the Buddhist values of nonviolence and the sanctity of life, people will continue to die needless deaths. This was Anthony's way. He was not afraid to tell somebody the path they were on was destructive—

to display true compassion.

The power of our organization lies in the bonds among its members. Anthony and I, two men from completely different backgrounds who would not likely come together under any other circumstances, both lived for the dream of kosen-rufu. His appreciation toward SGI President Ikeda for creating such an organization, where anyone can contribute to humanity, was unmatched.

In his death, as he did in his life, he has shown me the great path of living as a Bodhisattva of the Earth and a disciple of the mentor we shared, President Ikeda. Through his great sacrifice, I believe the youth of SGI-USA can once again stand up and reach out to our friends and elders alike, saying: "There is a better way. We must achieve victory over violence!"

On Nov. 1, more than 650 people gathered at the SGI-USA Los Angeles Friendship Center to celebrate Anthony's life. There were songs, cheering, a few tears and firm determinations. In the faces of those present, I could see Anthony's desire for them to revolutionize their lives as he had



Anthony Lee (center) celebrates a successful SGI-USA event with fellow members at the North Hollywood Community Center.

his own, telling them, "You've got no choice but to win!"

At Anthony's memorial, Mike West, a young man whom Anthony had personally raised in the SGI-USA and imbued with his own sense of passion for kosen-rufu, shared that Anthony would always greet him by say-

ing, "What's happening, King?"

"I never understood what he meant until now," Mike said. "Anthony lived like a king and he wanted me to as well. For Anthony, I will live my life like a king."

May we all create such a legacy. **WT**

A MAN NAMED JUSTICE

PERSPECTIVE

By MITCH HALE
LOS ANGELES

I decided to say no to an interview with 20/20. And *DateLine* and *Extra*. After a while, all further media coverage became exploitive for me because I found that I couldn't speak of my friend Anthony without speaking of a passion we shared, which was the telling of a particular story called *The Buffalo Man*.

Media coverage had been very enticing these last few days because a big part of me wanted to scream out to the world that Anthony must be recognized. After attending his memorial at the SGI-USA Los Angeles Friendship Center Nov. 1 with hundreds of other people and dozens of media outlets, I realized he had taken care of any recognition problem he may have had. He touched the lives of so many people it's hard to imagine. He put that huge energy of his into raising capable young men in the pursuit for world peace.

In a sense, his death couldn't have been more perfect. I see clearly that if anybody had the capacity to change the world it was he, and if anybody could affect positive change against violence by the police it would be Anthony. Early in his youth, he embarked on a path that would have led him to incarceration or death, by a police officer or another black man. He died at the hands of a man who was both, and at a time when the world is ready to stand up and say, "No more!"

For many years, Anthony and I worked together on a story in which he would star and I would direct. It's an historical tale of the early days of this country, just after the end of the Civil War. Anthony was portraying an ex-slave who had become a scout for the 10th cavalry in the genocide of Native Americans. At the climax of the story, the situation explodes when one of the black soldiers shoots and kills another and Anthony's character, the Buffalo Man, then intercedes and puts a stop to the escalating violence. It breaks my heart that Anthony

died in the hands of a black man in uniform in a violent and fearful society, but it is somehow perfect again—almost as if he had planned it that way.

Part of me wanted to get on national television and say all this and hopefully someone would then come out of the woodwork and fund our project, so that I could honor this great warrior named Anthony Lee. And then another part felt that an action like that would not be dignified enough for this tale and for his legacy. That part won out. So, I'm telling you, my fellow members in the SGI movement: I will make this film, and I will dedicate it to his life. Anthony is saying to me even now, "We will not be defeated!"

He was truly a great man and will be missed sorely. Now we must get on with the business of creating a truly peaceful world, one person at a time.

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



Anthony Lee and Mitch Hale at the Beverly Hills/Hollywood NAACP Theatre Awards in 1995.

AN ESSAY BY SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA

We Each Have the Greatest Treasure

Praising SGI-Australia, SGI President Ikeda says: 'We all have an important mission. We all possess the most precious treasure that is life itself.'

The last Olympics of the 20th century, the 2000 Sydney Olympics, is avidly awaited by people the world over. For the first time since the Melbourne Olympics 44 years ago, the Olympics are being held in the southern hemisphere.

May the curtain of the new century rise from Australia, land of tolerance and multiculturalism! I pray with all my heart for the success of this wonderful festival of peace.

In February last year, the shining new SGI Australia Culture Centre opened in the area that has been designated Olympic Park, home to the main stadium of the Sydney Olympics.

When I visited Australia in 1964, the Soka Gakkai membership there was very small, with less than 10 members under the leadership of Tsutomu Teitei. Nevertheless, praying for the peace and prosperity of this land and the happiness of her citizens, I established the first chapter, Melbourne Chapter, on this continent of hope.

Today, 36 years later, SGI-Australia has made brilliant progress, now boasting five headquarters and 18 chapters. My heart is filled with gratitude for the pioneering efforts and struggles, the arduous challenges of construction, of our noble members there.

Today, SGI community centers proudly stand in Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane. I set foot in each of these cities on my first visit to Australia, and I am deeply moved to think that many members are now gathering at SGI centers there.

◆◆◆◆

The first SGI center in Australia was the Sydney Community Centre, which opened in 1977. The late Matsuyo Hanson, Australia's first women's leader, served as the center's caretaker. She was a treasure. In her 10 years of service in that capacity, until she died at the age of 63, Matsuyo wonderfully protected that center, which nurtured and produced so many capable, talented people.

Matsuyo was born in Shimane Prefecture, Japan. She met her husband, a member of the Australian armed forces, in Hiroshima after World War II. They returned to his homeland, Australia, after marrying. Matsuyo joined the Soka Gakkai shortly after my visit, and from that moment on she devoted herself to Soka Gakkai activities while struggling with her illness-ridden karma.

When women came to see Matsuyo for guidance, they always encountered the same scene: her back, as she faced the Gohonzon in earnest prayer. "Always daimoku!" was her credo.

When she had finished chanting, she would turn to her visitor with a warm smile and ask, "Now, what is on your mind today?" She sat and listened patiently to her visitor's problems. Members were always put at ease by her sincere manner, and they trusted her deeply.

Leaders must listen earnestly to the voices of the people.

In the Lotus Sutra, there is a bodhisattva called Perceiver of the World's Sounds, who, out of profound compassion, listens for and responds to people's cries for help or salvation. We must listen patiently and closely to what our friends and fellow members have to say. We must never forget that listening to people's hearts is an important part of our bodhisattva practice.

Matsuyo was not a talkative person. She was quite reticent, whether she was speaking English or her native tongue, Japanese. Yet her each and every word was golden, shining with her powerful conviction in faith, through which she had time and again conquered the demon of illness.

"Daimoku! If you chant daimoku, everything will be fine!" "Be cheerful! Just move forward cheerfully!" These were her bywords, and they never failed to rouse courage in the hearts of the suffering members who visited her and to send them out of the center with their heads held high.

◆◆◆◆

Needless to say, she was not the sort of person satisfied with just sitting and waiting for people to come to her. She was a hardworking, extremely active women's leader. Once, while she was still Sydney Chapter women's leader, she learned there was a woman practicing in a town 120 miles away. From that

day on, for more than 10 years, she drove that long distance — and driving was not one of her strong points — to visit that lone member once a month.

Many people told Matsuyo that she was wasting her time and energy, saying that no matter how many years she drove all that way, that particular member would never really become active. But Matsuyo knew that giving one's all — even for just one member — was the Soka Gakkai spirit. She refused to stop her efforts.

Eventually, the member in that distant town stood up in faith and introduced others in her area to Buddhism, creating a new circle of members dedicated to the Mystic Law.

In "The True Aspect of All Phenomena," Nichiren Daishonin writes: "The sutra states: 'If one [of these good men or good women in the time after I have passed into extinction] is able to secretly expound the Lotus Sutra to one person, even one phrase of it, then you should know that he or she is the envoy of the Thus Come One. He has been dispatched by the Thus Come One and carries out the Thus Come One's work.' Who else but us can this possibly refer to?" (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 385).

Australia's second women's leader, Sumi Mack, was introduced to the Daishonin's Buddhism by Matsuyo and embarked on the road to happiness. And the present women's leader, Fumie Hiramatsu, too, says she is deeply indebted to Matsuyo for her unstinting help and support.

There are members all over Australia who proudly declare that they are who they are today because of Matsuyo, and that their families owe her an immense debt. Here we see the beautiful ties of the eternal Soka family.

We all have an important mission. We all possess the most precious treasure that is life itself. The true humanistic spirit of Buddhism lies in our efforts to touch and inspire the hearts and minds of others through valuing each person with the recognition that our lives are equal.

The brilliant light of free-



Australia's Cathy Freeman holds the torch before lighting up the Olympic Flame at the Olympic Stadium during the Opening Ceremony of the 2000 Olympics in Sydney, Sept. 15.

dom, tolerance, and happiness profoundly suits the beautiful land of Australia.

◆◆◆◆

In his famous work *The Geography of Human Life*, first Soka Gakkai president Tsunesaburo Makiguchi shows how intimately a person's daily life is linked to the wider world. For example, he points out that the wool in the clothes he wore was produced in Australia. He was always teaching us to understand ourselves as part of the larger world around us.

Our Soka School System is based on Mr. Makiguchi's theories of value-creating education, and recently Soka Kansai Senior High School and Ashcroft High School, located in the city of Liverpool, Australia, on the outskirts of Sydney, have become sister schools and set up a student-exchange program. Students of both schools can engage in short-term special studies in language and culture at their sister school. Ashcroft High School has also awarded me the title of honorary principal and my wife, honorary deputy principal.

I have received honors from a number of Australian cities and local councils. These include honorary citizenship from Auburn, the home of our SGI Australia Culture Centre, and Darwin, along with citations of recognition from the Gold Coast — which I also visited on my trip to Australia 36 years ago — Glen Eira and Hornsby.

◆◆◆◆

"You will be tortured probably in many horrible and primitive ways, but you will realise that genius of which you sometimes suspect you are possessed." This is a passage from the novel *Voss*, written by the great Australian writer and Nobel laureate Patrick White. The novel's hero, an explorer, is urging a young man to join him on his expedition into uncharted territory and share a life of challenge.

Only when we dare to scale the towering mountain range looming before us do we discover our true selves! There is a royal road that leads to eternal happiness! Kosen-rufu is a momentous, pioneering effort to create a future of hope for all humanity.

My dear friends of SGI-Australia, who in 2001 will celebrate the centennial of your nation's federation: Fully supporting General Director Hans Van Der Bent, please build a magnificent castle of kosen-rufu unrivaled for the harmonious, friendly relations of its members and the strength of its unity anywhere in the world. Lead the way boldly into the next millennium! The dawning sun of humanism is rising brilliantly in the skies of Australia, Continent of the Future!

This essay was published in the "Thoughts on *The New Human Revolution*" series in the Oct. 17 *Seikyo Shimbun*, the Soka Gakkai's daily newspaper.

the new HUMAN REVOLUTION

SGI President Ikeda's novelized history of the Soka Gakkai

'SECURING THE FOUNDATION'

VOLUME 8, CHAPTER 1, PART 7-8

On May 3, looking back over his first three years as president, Shin'ichi Yamamoto says, 'I have striven in accord with the Daishonin's teaching "Life is limited; we must not begrudge it. What we should ultimately aspire to is the Buddha land."'

After the announcement of new leadership appointments at the May 3 Headquarters General Meeting, the former Hong Kong Chapter leader, Ikuyo Oka, returned the chapter flag to President Shin'ichi Yamamoto, who then presented it to the new chapter leader. Flags were also presented to the Hawaii and Seattle chapters, both of which had been established in January.

Next, Vice General Director Eisuke Akizuki announced the organization's activities and goals toward the seventh memorial (sixth anniversary) of second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda's death. This was followed by determinations from representatives of each division.

First, Student Division Leader Goro Watari pledged to increase the division's membership to 20,000 and to bring them together under its crimson and navy flag.

Newly appointed Young Women's Leader Michiyo Watari took the podium next and began speaking energetically of her hopes and goals: "I have been entrusted with the great responsibility of leading the young women on this auspicious occasion commemorating the third anniversary of President Yamamoto's inauguration. This is a time for fresh advancement. I am determined to muster all my strength and devote myself entirely to kosen-rufu!"

She next introduced the first of two new mottoes for the young women: "Establish unshakable faith."

A life without roots is like a floating weed being tossed about on the waves; it is easily swayed by the trends of the times and by personal weakness. A person who lives this way will be set back when faced with harsh trials. Faith, Michiyo stressed, is the very root that grounds us. And it begins and ends with chanting daimoku.

She then introduced the sec-

ond motto: "Lifelong learning."

There is no growth or progress for those who do not strive to cultivate their minds. A saying goes, "A life without learning is base." In particular, for those who aim to become leaders of the next generation, study is not only the greatest right but also a duty.

Michiyo further expressed her hope that the young women would especially pour their energies into studying the teachings of Nichiren Daishonin—the basic foundation for life—and make the Buddhist philosophy of life their personal philosophy.

Next to speak was Kenshiro Ishikawa, the young men's leader. He reported on the first European young men's general meeting, held in Paris in April. He also spoke of a new surge in the spread of the Daishonin's Buddhism around the world that was being powered by youth. Emphasizing the need for many more capable young people to bolster this great progress, he voiced his hope that the young men would do their best to raise such youth in many fields of endeavor.

In closing, Ishikawa said: "The Soka Gakkai is the body from which capable individuals are fostered. It is a vast ocean of people, and only by diving in and getting actively involved can we develop ourselves into individuals as strong as gallant orca whales."

"We, the young men, will build a solid organization. We will stand at the front lines of our activities for kosen-rufu and become pillars of support to all the members while waging a great struggle to rebuild society."

Following the resolutions by youth representatives, Katsu Kiyohara addressed the gathering on behalf of the women.

She began speaking proudly of their energetic efforts: "I wish to affirm that the women are the motivating power and driving



Illustration by KENICHIRO UCHIDA

force of the Soka Gakkai's activities to build a peaceful society. Has it not been the women who have introduced the Daishonin's Buddhism to those suffering from illness who have been abandoned even by their doctors? Have they not gone time and time again to visit families suffering in poverty to teach them Buddhism?

"In their own families, they give courage to their husbands who are worn out from working to put food on the table. And they are the ones raising their children to be capable individuals who will shoulder the Soka Gakkai's movement in the future."

"Mr. Toda used to say that kosen-rufu would be accomplished by the efforts of women. The fact that more than half of the entire Soka Gakkai membership is women is clear proof of his conviction."

"That is why, I believe, President Yamamoto treasures the women's division, and why he wrote the editorial 'To the Women's Division' for the March issue of the *Daibyakurengue*."

Touching on Shin'ichi's message, Kiyohara called on the women to forge open a road leading to the revitalization of society. As pioneers of true women's liberation, she declared her hope that they would excel in their chosen fields—be it in the media, arts, education or any other area of endeavor.

Shin'ichi was pleased and reassured to see each division pledging its commitment to fresh progress while utilizing its unique capabilities, each burning with strong determination for the realization of kosen-rufu.

Next came greetings from a vice general director and other leaders, followed by President

Yamamoto's speech.

The members applauded thunderously in anticipation of Shin'ichi's impassioned words marking a fresh start on this significant third anniversary of his taking the helm of the Soka Gakkai.

Shin'ichi's voice resonated clearly throughout the auditorium: "It has been through the kind help and support of the board of directors, the other leaders and the members that, despite my inexperience, I have been able to bring our movement to where it is today. I have striven in accord with the Daishonin's teaching 'Life is limited; we must not begrudge it. What we should ultimately aspire to is the Buddha land' (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 214). I thank you from the bottom of my heart."

Joyful applause filled the hall.

Shin'ichi continued: "Now I engrave in my heart once again the following words of the Daishonin: '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' (WND, 280)."

"With your cooperation, I am determined to continue to take the lead in the next step of our efforts for kosen-rufu, aiming toward April 2 next year—the seventh memorial of Mr. Toda's death—as well as next May 3."

Shin'ichi's call for further advancement was a lion's roar. Once again, the Nihon University Auditorium erupted in applause, and it did not subside for some time.

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

The World TRIBUNE SGI-USA's Weekly Newspaper

General Director
Daniel Nagashima

Publisher
Fred M. Zaitus
Assistant Publisher
Greg Martin
Editor in Chief
Ted Morino

Managing Editor
Marge Hall
mhall@sgi-usa.org

Associate Editor
Jeff Farr
jfarr@sgi-usa.org

Staff Writers
Stephanie Celano
sccelano@sgi-usa.org
Jamie Liptan
jliptan@sgi-usa.org

Staff Photographer
Gregory Nakasuji

Contributing Artists
Stephanie Sydney
ssydney@sgi-usa.org
Linda Eberle

Staff Translators
Jeff Kriger
Shin Yatomi

Contributing Photographers
Sean Grover
Sachiko Nobukuni

Photo Editor
Lisa Hollis
marvillsa@cs.com

Bureau Chiefs
Phil Simpson, Atlanta
Fletcher Dalton, Boston
Veronica Evans, Chicago
Jim Dreisbach, Florida
Joanne Tachibana, Hawaii
Kathleen Slattery, Los Angeles
Cheryl Utley, Midwest
Robert Taliaferro, New York
Dave Shadovitz, Philadelphia
Irene Owada, Rocky Mountain
Liz Anderson, San Diego
Ron Baird, San Francisco
Bill Lawrence, Seattle
Troy Murrain, Texas
Robin Meader, Washington, D.C.

Foreign Language Pages
Chinese: Ingrid Yeh
Korean: Charles Lee
Spanish: Greg Martin

READERS COMMENTS

Send to:
Mailbox
606 Wilshire Blvd. PO Box 1427
Santa Monica, CA 90406-9907
or e-mail: wt@sgi-usa.org

SUBSCRIPTIONS
1-800-835-4558
or e-mail: SGIsubs@aol.com

FRIENDS FOR PEACE
ffp@sgi-usa.org

SEIZE THE DAY
seize@sgi-usa.org

FINE PRINT
fineprint@sgi-usa.org

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.

GANG SYMPOSIUM HELD AT NEW YORK CULTURE CENTER

'Don't Give Up on Us'



By YUKO K. GROVER
NEW YORK CORRESPONDENT

"What can we do for our children?" must have been the question many participants had on their minds during the annual Gang Symposium "Red, White, and Blue...Colors of Inner-City America," held for the first time at the SGI-USA New York Culture Center on Oct. 18. This annual event was sponsored by the Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies. More than 200 people attended, most of them case workers and social workers representing more than 50 social youth agencies in New York City.

The symposium opened with the SGI-USA Youth Peace Conference's nonviolence promotion video *Quest for Peace*. Afterward, Paula Miksic, on behalf of the SGI-USA, welcomed all the participants, most of whom were not acquainted with the SGI. "It is my sincere wish that today's dialogue will create the solidarity and the will to take action that will manifest the roots of our common humanity," she said, "for the sake of one young person and for the sake of peace."

Leroy Jordan Jr. delivered a powerful lecture on the history and background of gangs in the United States. Mr. Jordan, a certified gang specialist, violence prevention educator and substance abuse professional, opened his speech by telling the audience: "Why I am here this morning is because I have four children. And I stand for children, every day of my life." He continued: "I also stand before you as the father of a recently murdered son. So this work is personal."

Cathy Sally, assistant principal at Erasmus Hall High School of Humanities and the Performing Arts in Brooklyn, was one of

the many who were inspired by Mr. Jordan's lecture. "I have been to workshops on this subject that nearly put me to sleep," she said. "But today I was completely captivated."

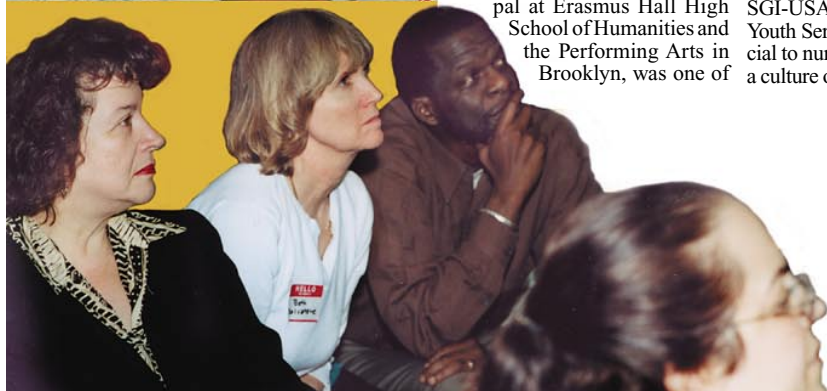
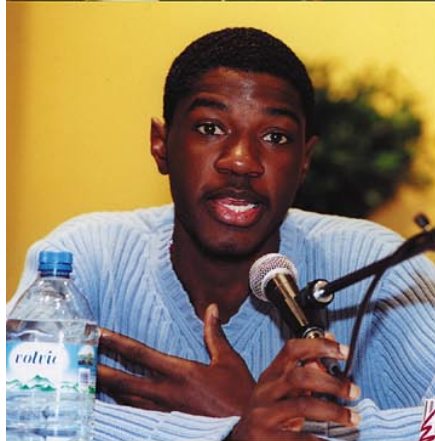
Five teenagers who had gang-related experiences gave a panel presentation. The teens presented experiences and answered questions from the audience. The quick and eloquent answers by the teenagers often impressed the adult audience and made them eager to ask more. The dialogue between them ranged from asking practical advice such as "How can I prevent my daughter from joining a gang?" to just simply "What can adults do for their children?"

Often the answers were very simple and direct. "Don't give up on us," said Daniel Styvacent, "and just love us."

Atiba Joseph, a teenage representative from the SGI-USA, stressed the important role of parents. "My mother was always encouraging me," he said. "We need someone always telling us we can be somebody."

Brian Moriarty, coordinator of the symposium and the Federation's Youth Services Network, gave a great deal of credit to the SGI-USA for the success of the event. Referring to the SGI-USA members, Mr. Moriarty stated: "They are the nicest people I have met in my life. They are energetic, very involved and committed."

Sean Grover, a program administrator with Brooklyn Psychiatric Centers and SGI-USA member who helped facilitate the symposium, commented: "We all felt refreshed by today's dialogue. The kind of collaboration that took place here, between the SGI-USA and the Federation's Youth Services Network, is crucial to nurturing and developing a culture of peace." **WT**



Photos by Sean Grover