

**SGI-USA FAMILY YOUTH FESTIVALS
IDAHO MEMBERS JOIN WITH THE COMMUNITY
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The SGI-USA youth in Idaho set sail on a historic journey with Idaho's first SGI-USA youth festival, July 28. Fremont Park in Idaho Falls came alive with exhibits, dialogue and music as the Family Youth Festival celebration exploded onto the scene. With such high spirits, even the blustery conditions—wind gusts reached 40 mph—did not disrupt the youthful determination.

Preparations for the event began several months ago, including a poster contest with the theme "Peace Begins with Me," held in several junior high and high schools. The winning posters were on display at the festival. Idaho members were very excited to also share with the community the Gandhi, King, Ikeda and Victory Over Violence exhibits. Guests viewed the displays with extreme interest, asking many questions about the SGI movement.

An enthusiastic announcer, Boise District Young Women's Leader Amelia Unione, went over the agenda for the day, which included musical entertainment and a youth forum and discussion centering on Victory Over Violence. To kick off the festivities and introduce the SGI-USA and the purpose behind the Victory Over Violence campaign, Idaho Chapter Young Men's Leader Craig Green took center stage.

Audience participation was a key factor during the forum, including a short true/false quiz concerning violence. Many questions were asked and the time allotted for the discussion quickly dissolved.

The musical segment of the festival began by responding to SGI President Ikeda's desire that each festival "celebrate their shared humanity" through Beethoven's "Ode to Joy," which resounded with a universal message of equality. SGI-USA member Ty Putnam began the festivities by playing the song on the flute. The strains of the melody floated throughout the park, heralding a new and youthful era for Idaho.

Craig Green and Nelson Soucek, local musicians and SGI-USA members who have performed throughout the country, also took to the stage with their own musical creations. Later joined by drummers Mike Hyatt and Voytek Zajeczkowski, the band cast a spell over the audience.

SGI-USA members circulated, greeting guests, answering questions and handing out literature. The festival was well received as verified by the nearly 50 signatures on the VOV pledges. KIDK-TV, a local CBS affiliate, dropped by to see what the excitement was all about. Craig Green gave an interview, answering questions about the festival and the SGI-USA.

The momentum generated by this ground-breaking festival will flow onward like the waters of the nearby Snake River, with an ever-seeking spirit, paving the way for a hope-filled 21st century throughout Idaho.