

## 'Way of Youth' Inspires New York Celebration

By SEAN AND YUKO K. GROVER  
NEW YORK CORRESPONDENTS

Blossoming, youthful smiles filled the SGI-USA's New York Culture Center on April 29, as 400 New York junior high and high school division members and their guests attended The Way of Youth Celebration: A Celebration of Creativity and Friendship. The youth, with extensive four-divisional support, planned the event. It was an opportunity for young members to invite their friends, family and neighborhood youth organizations to the Culture Center to learn about Nichiren Dai-shonin's Buddhism.

Passing through a balloon-decorated facade, participants entered an atmosphere charged with music, art and laughter. They immediately heard: "Hello! Is this your first time here?," as youthful tour guides greeted guests and proudly took them on an orientation tour.

New tour groups left from the lobby every five minutes to accommodate the hundreds of teenagers who poured into the event. Each room of the center was arranged to create a wel-

coming feeling. The walls of the center cheered guests with displays of paintings and Chinese calligraphy created by teenage members.

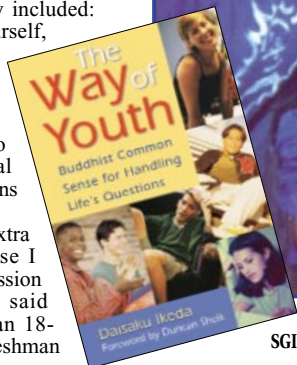
Guests could choose to participate in numerous discussion groups and creative workshops. Junior high, high school and student division members led the small discussion groups. Topics were taken directly from SGI President Ikeda's book *The Way of Youth*. They included: staying true to yourself, friendship, confidence, dreams and goals, and the bigger picture. Participants were invited to share their personal experiences, concerns and dreams.

"I had to have extra confidence because I was leading a discussion on confidence," said Melody Crowell, an 18-year old college freshman and student division member. "I have never done this before. This was a great training. I was very happy to see so many people enjoy expressing themselves."

After the discussion sessions, the teen guests partici-



Photo by SEAN GROVER



Inspired by SGI President Ikeda's book 'The Way of Youth,' New York youth gather at the SGI-USA's New York Culture Center for The Way of Youth Celebration, April 29.

pated in "creativity workshops." These workshops originated in 1996 under the vision and direction of dancers Bill Thompson and Michon Peacock. They started out as a small dance class with less than

a dozen teenage participants. Currently, the workshops attract hundreds of teenagers each month to the Culture Center and have grown to include performance groups in Hip-Hop dance, break dance, mod-

ern dance, acting, voice, art, orchestra/jazz band, percussion and video production.

Bill and Michon saw the workshops as a way to develop

PLEASE SEE WAY OF YOUTH, 11

Photo by ROB HENDRY



Arts Division Conference participants enjoy the beauty of the Florida Nature and Culture Center by Toda Lake.

### FNCC ARTS DIVISION CONFERENCE

## Art Is a Flower of Life

By ROB HENDRY, GARY KENT  
AND ROBIN MEADER  
CORRESPONDENTS

Despite differences among the various arts represented at second SGI-USA Arts Division Conference, held May 17-20 at the Florida Nature and Culture Center, participants were inspired to learn that the core of every art form is faith.

Conference-goers' hearts

opened immediately in response to the lush, tropical landscape, fragrant with blooming plumeria and gardenia, alive with birds and quick brown lizards with red throats. The FNCC campus presented a gorgeous celebration in the sunlight that rhythmically blended at evening into a spirited symphony of nature's nightlife. Time, too, seemed to expand into relaxed, full moments, each complete and heartfelt.

The centerpiece of the weekend was Friday's meeting, "Never Give Up on Your Dreams," put together by renowned jazz pianist and SGI Vice Culture Department Leader Herbie Hancock as a combination lecture, experience and performance.

The evening opened and closed with performances by a

PLEASE SEE ARTS DIVISION, 11

### New SGI Chapter Created in Slovenia

A new SGI chapter was recently established in Slovenia, of the former Yugoslavia, with Jasmina Una Tumpej appointed as the new chapter leader. On April 28, the newly-formed chapter held a kick-off in Ljubljana, capital of Slovenia.

Ms. Tumpej, a psychiatrist in a university hospital, became an SGI member 20 years ago in London. After emigrating to Slovenia, she and her mother started to introduce others to Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism. Together with the other members in Slovenia, every autumn she organizes the Alpe-Adria Meeting at which members from the neighboring countries of Yugoslavia, Croatia, Hungary, Austria and Italy are invited to join discussions on Buddhism.

The chapter in Slovenia is the second to be formed in the Balkan Peninsula, following one in Yugoslavia earlier this year.

### SGI-Paraguay Holds Culture Show

On May 20, SGI-Paraguay commemorated its 40th anniversary by hosting a music extravaganza titled, "Victory of Youth Resounds into the New Century," at the Guarani Culture Center in Asuncion, Paraguay. Around 1,200 guests and local residents attended the event, including Education and Event Vice Minister



Blanca Rosa Ovelar de Duarte and renowned Paraguayan poet Enciso Yegros. In a message, SGI President Ikeda congratulated the joyful gathering of youthful successors. SGI-Paraguay General Director Kaoru Kurita introduced the SGI's guiding principles and history, and called on the SGI-Paraguay members to contribute to Paraguayan society and work for people's happiness as upstanding citizens. The youth presented traditional songs, music and dances of Paraguay, and some visiting SGI-Brazil members performed an energetic Brazilian dance.

### Zeist, Netherlands, Hosts SGI's Human Rights Exhibition

On May 25, the SGI's "Toward a Century of Humanity — An Overview of Human Rights in Today's World" exhibition opened at the Zeist Castle, Zeist, Netherlands. Netherlands UNESCO Center Director Mathilde C. Guurink hosted the opening. U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees Ruud Lubbers sent a taped message

expressing his support for the SGI's exhibition, which he says carries a message for peace. SGI President Ikeda also sent a message that introduced the Buddhist concept of "simultaneous reverence for oneself and others," the practice of which allows people to shake free the bonds of egoism and develop respect and compassion for others.

Through the support of Zeist Mayor Bookhoven, Zeist became the 39th host city of the SGI's human rights exhibition, joining 38 others in eight countries that have shown the exhibition to date.

### SGI-France Hosts Lecture on Culture and Humanity

On May 18, SGI-France sponsored a lecture on "Rediscovering Solidarity" by Professor Marc Lebaillly, anthropologist and former professor of the University of Paris, at the SGI-France Paris Culture Center. In his talks, Professor Lebaillly voiced concern about the dangers of a society that is dictated by the pursuit of profit

and the glorification of violence. The anthropologist pointed to today's human society that is united on various levels by sentimentalism, codified rules of behavior, and economic motives, and held that there is an urgent need to redefine human solidarity as based and founded upon cultural exchange. He strongly advocated that humanity work to build a truly cultural society.

### Singapore Soka Youth Center Holds Open House

The Singapore Soka Association held an open house on May 12 and 13 at the newly-built Soka Youth Center. Around 3,000 local residents and friends visited the center, a hub for activities for the youth division. Visitors viewed an exhibit on the SSA youth's peace activities and enjoyed song and dance performances by cultural groups. In addition, a forum titled "Dreams and Challenges of Youth" was held in conjunction with the open house. Participants from many sectors of society, including artists, teachers, doctors and entrepreneurs, took part in the forum. Their discussions centered on realizing one's dreams and goals and leading a fulfilled existence.

Courtesy of SOKANET  
(www.sokagakkai.or.jp)

# DOUBT VS. FAITH

Back to the Basics

By RIKA HASHIMOTO  
LOS ANGELES



Master your faith, and pray to this Gohonzon," Nichiren Daishonin writes. "Then what is there that cannot be achieved? There can be no doubt about the sutra passages that say, 'This sutra can fulfill their desires, as a clear cool pond can satisfy all those who are thirsty,' and 'They will enjoy peace and security in their present existence and good circumstances in future existences'" (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 412).

The phrases "peace and security" and "good circumstances" tend to make us think that if we reach a certain point in faith, we will live a life of ease and comfort. Everything will get easier and more comfy.

But is this the real meaning of the Daishonin's statement?

Actually, he explains elsewhere that "one should regard meeting obstacles as true peace and comfort" (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 750). Enjoying "peace and security" and "good circumstances" means enjoying obstacles.

The fact is that we are always going to be faced with difficulties. Even those of us who have sincerely practiced Buddhism for many years will continue to encounter obstacles. We may even face bigger obstacles as we progress in faith.

It all comes down to how we perceive our obstacles — and deal with our doubts. It can be

easy when facing hardship and difficulty for doubt to creep into our hearts. However, the Daishonin says, "If you do not question and resolve your doubts, you cannot dispel the dark clouds of illusion, any more than you could travel a thousand miles without legs" (WND, 1031).

When we try to resolve our doubts by seeking a deeper understanding of our circumstances, seeing everything in our lives from the perspective of faith, we are able to expand our lives in manifold ways. We are able to overcome our obstacles.

It is when we apply Buddhism in our lives from moment to moment — to every kind of obstacle that can come up — that we see growth and advancement, that we are able to build conviction in faith. Without these efforts on a continual basis, our foundation in faith remains weak and unstable.

This is why SGI President Ikeda emphasizes the importance of viewing things from the perspective of faith, especially at crucial moments in our lives. It is often at crucial moments — when we suffer a setback we were not expecting, for instance — that we give in to

doubt. President Ikeda explains, "What we do, how we act, at the crucial moment is what determines ultimate victory or defeat" (May 18 *World Tribune*, p. 11).

Difficult times are our crucial opportunities to grow. These are the times we can learn through our experiences and deepen our understanding of ourselves, Buddhist philosophy and the mentor-disciple relationship.

Through the examples of the Daishonin and the first three Soka Gakkai presidents, we can see that those living with unshakable conviction in faith can accomplish even the impossible. This means us, too.

The Daishonin encourages one of his leading disciples that diligence in faith is the path of a victorious life: "Carry through with your faith in the Lotus Sutra. You cannot strike fire from flint if you stop halfway. Bring forth the great power of faith, and be spoken of by all the people of Kamakura, both high and low, or by all the people of Japan, as 'Shijo Kingo, Shijo Kingo of the Lotus school!'" (WND, 319).

Real happiness in life lies in establishing this true inner strength to continue — the life-

force we develop through unremitting efforts to develop our lives for kosen-rufu. **WT**

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**World TRIBUNE** The SGI-USA's Weekly Newspaper

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

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HONORING OUR PIONEERS — KAZUE ELLIOT, LOS ANGELES

# Achieving Happiness With a Lifelong Challenging Spirit

**Kazue Elliot shares some of her experiences after 45 years of practice: her family's introduction to the Soka Gakkai, meetings with second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda and learning the importance of reaching out to the community.**

*This experience originally appeared in the Feb. 2 Japanese edition of the World Tribune.*

I joined the Soka Gakkai in August 1954. I was visiting a friend when a Soka Gakkai member, Mr. Ishizuka, came to talk to my friend about Buddhism. I said to him, "If it's such a great religion, why don't you ask my mother to practice?" And that was the beginning.

At that time, my mother had a very serious paralysis due to a brain hemorrhage. I was a nurse at the time and I knew her case was hopeless. I had become a nurse to help support my financially struggling family.

When I got home that evening, I was surprised that Mr. Ishizuka was there talking to my mother. He was a person of pure heart who simply wanted to tell others about Buddhism, unconcerned with any self-interest.

That same night, after talking to Mr. Ishizuka, my mother managed to get into a taxicab and go to a discussion meeting. She took a bus on her way home, without any help from others. When she returned home, to my surprise, she was walking around in front of me. Shortly after this, we received the Gohonzon. Soon my mother's condition improved even more and my sister who was disabled was able to enjoy a normal life as well. My family's actual proof deepened my faith in the practice, and I did a



lot of *shakubuku* — introducing others to Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism.

I found out later that Mr. Ishizuka, to whom we owe so much, could not read or write. He learned how to do gongyo through listening to others do it. Mr. Ishizuka was nicknamed a *mannen hancho*, or permanent group leader, as he remained forever in the same position in the organization. He was a true treasure of our organization.

My mother, my sister and I were surrounded by members who were warm and sincere like Mr. Ishizuka. They taught us

first of all to practice with a pure heart, the most important thing in faith.

On hot summer days, my mother used to send me out to get ice cubes so that we could offer cold ice water to the Gohonzon. On cold winter days, she placed a portable briquette brazier in front of the altar and said, "Gohonzon, please keep yourself warm."

One day, I was diagnosed with tuberculosis. Having seen me so downhearted when I got home from the hospital, my mother simply said, "Chant daimoku." Her faith in the Gohonzon gave me a bright ray of hope and I was eventually able to overcome the illness.

Before coming to the United States, I was able to attend some of the famous Q-and-A meetings with second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda. While attending one of the meetings, my group leader pushed me into raising my hand to ask a question. To my surprise, the moderator called on me. Timidly, I said: "I've just gotten married and I am going to America soon. What should I do to introduce Americans to Buddhism?"

The guidance I received from President Toda at that time has remained a treasure throughout my life. "Instead of saying something difficult," he said, "make sure to teach the greatness of chanting Nam-myohorenge-kyo."

President Toda's guidance never failed to convey his earnest determination to use Buddhism to save others. I feel the same determination from SGI President Ikeda whenever I see him. They are indeed inseparable; a great example of the oneness of mentor and disciple.

I believe that this sincere, warm and caring heart to save people is the SGI's eternal core, something we must never lose.

We are now embarking on the Century of Hope, the Century of Women and the Century of America. I want to express my appreciation for President Ikeda's deep consideration for us at this special time. For my part, I'm determined to reach further out into the community.

The Golden Stage Group — SGI-USA members who are 60 and older — is proud of its "lifelong challenging" spirit. It

took me eight years to graduate from high school in the United States, and by then I was 47 years old. It took me 10 years to be accredited as a flower arrangement instructor and 15 years to be accredited as a tea ceremony instructor. I am presently in charge of a monthly tea ceremony class at the SGI-USA's Los Angeles Friendship Center. I began these activities not merely as hobbies, but as cultural activities for the kosen-rufu movement. Through these activities I have made many friends and done my best to expand the general public's understanding of the SGI.

The Golden Stage Group is one of the treasures of the SGI-USA. Every time I meet pioneer members across the country, I cannot help but be deeply moved because I know the personal history of each one's struggle. I believe that every one of them has paved a path for kosen-rufu, overcoming obstacle after obstacle.

I believe leaders must not regress, full of complaints and jealousy. Haughty and arrogant leaders who cannot support the growth of others are problems for the SGI organization. We must become people full of appreciation and courage so that we are able to support every single member.

At the beginning of every year, President Ikeda says he is going to fight 10 times harder than before, 100 times harder than before. This has always been such an inspiration to me. President Ikeda is 73 years old, the same age as first Soka Gakkai president Tsunesaburo Makiguchi was when he passed away. And yet, President Ikeda is still vigorously leading our movement with the force of a lion. He is indeed our eternal model for practicing the Daishonin's Buddhism, showing us how to live with a lifelong challenging spirit. **WT**



Kazue Elliot performs a traditional Japanese tea ceremony in Little Tokyo, Los Angeles.

## SGI-USA On The Web!

For information about SGI-USA, please visit our official Web site at [www.sgi-usa.org](http://www.sgi-usa.org). The site includes information on the organization's activities, history and publications, as well as an introduction to Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism.

SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S APRIL 26 MESSAGE — PART 1

# Exerting Ourselves To Change the World

**‘Exerting oneself means wholeheartedly, single-mindedly advancing forward, ever forward, without pause or vacillation,’ SGI President Ikeda writes. ‘This is the essence of Nichiren Daishonin’s Buddhism.’**

*Part 1 of SGI President Ikeda’s message to a nationwide conference for prefecture leaders in Japan, held at the Soka Culture Center in Shinanomachi, Tokyo, April 26.*

Thank you all for your efforts to attend this conference. Kosen-rufu is an unceasing spiritual struggle. Each of these conferences is an important gathering that sets the rhythm for victory in our movement. To commemorate this occasion, I present you with this message.

With the arrival of May 3, 2001, we have at long last scaled the mountain of kosen-rufu in the 21st century. My sincere gratitude and praise to the leaders of all regions, prefectures and wards who have joined me in victoriously ascending many steep slopes.

In the “Record of the Orally Transmitted Teachings,” which I studied intensively

during my youth, Nichiren Daishonin says: “Nam-myoho-enge-kyo is the practice of exerting oneself” (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 790). Here, *exert* has two meanings: pure, in the sense of unsullied; and incessant, in the sense of continuous activity.

Exerting oneself means wholeheartedly, single-mindedly advancing forward, ever forward, without pause or vacillation. This is the essence of the Daishonin’s Buddhism.

Leaders should exert themselves bravely and vigorously, waging an earnest all-out struggle. Victory lies in such tenacious efforts. Trying to evade or run away from difficult challenges leads to decadence and destruction.

**To raise young people is to raise the future.**

At the 5th Headquarters Leaders Meeting, we made a vigorous departure toward 2030, the 100th anniversary of the Soka Gakkai’s founding (see the May 25 and June 1 issues of the *World Tribune*). This also marked the start of a new cycle of Seven Bells. Let us advance, making each of the coming 7- and 10-year intervals a milestone of victory and hope.

May 3, 2008, will signal the end of the 1st bell. The year 2010 will mark the Soka Gakkai’s 80th anniversary. May 3, 2015, will complete the 2nd bell. The year 2020 will mark the Soka Gakkai’s 90th anniversary.

Let us set our sights on crowning 2030, the 100th anniversary, with brilliant victory. During that time, we will also mark the 3rd bell (2015–22) and the 4th bell (2022–29).

The year 2050 will mark the Soka Gakkai’s 120th anniversary and the completion of the second cycle of Seven Bells. By that time, the members of the 1st class of Soka University of America and the present mem-



SGI President and Mrs. Ikeda celebrate the start of the second Seven Bells. ‘Advancing in the exemplary unity of many in body, one in mind, let us from May 3 make a new departure, loudly sounding a new cycle of Seven Bells in the new century,’ writes President Ikeda.

bers of the student and future divisions will have reached the same stage in life as I have now.

To raise young people is to raise the future. I am wholeheartedly looking forward to the day when today’s youth are active in all sectors of society.

In “Repaying Debts of Gratitude,” the Daishonin says, “If Nichiren’s compassion is truly great and encompassing, Nam-myoho-enge-kyo will spread for ten thousand years and more, for all eternity” (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 736). Each of you has the lofty, proud mission to become a wellspring nourishing the flow of kosen-rufu over the next 10,000 years.

**We have to burn with the spirit of propagation.**

The great minister and strategist Chuko Kung-ming, whose saga was made famous by the Chinese classic *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, says, “If the commanding general lacks courage, it is the same as having no general at all.” For a leader of kosen-rufu, courage means having the spirit of propagation. Someone who loses

this spirit cannot be called a true leader of kosen-rufu.

Kung-ming also says, “The secret to certain victory lies in the capacity to respond to change.” In a struggle, we have to adroitly respond to changing circumstances.

The important question is whether we can create a situation in which victory is certain. And this depends entirely on our ability to fully avail ourselves of the opportunities that arise.

We have to open a way forward, burning with the spirit of propagation. We have to use every condition to our advantage, without letting any opportunity slip by.

In a letter to the Ikegami brothers and their wives, the Daishonin writes: “Nichiren’s teaching was especially difficult to believe at first, but now that my prophecies have been fulfilled, those who slandered without reason have come to repent. Even if in the future other men and women become my believers, they will not replace you in my heart. Among those who believed at first, many later discarded their

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faith, fearing that society would reject them. Among these are some who oppose me more furiously than those who slandered from the beginning.

"In Shakyamuni Buddha's lifetime, the monk Sunakshatra believed the Buddha at first, then later not only backslid, but also slandered so viciously that even the Buddha could not save him from falling into the hell of incessant suffering" (WND, 502).

There are those who have turned against the benevolent world of Soka, who out of selfishness, greed and ugly jealousy have returned their debt with spite, betrayed their comrades and left the organization. What envy and chagrin they must now be feeling as they watch us celebrate this glorious May 3! What loneliness and regret they must feel in the depths of their hearts!

Josei Toda, the second Soka Gakkai president, used to say, "When those who have vilified the Soka Gakkai mournfully say to themselves, 'Oh no, what have I done!' — *that* will be the time of kosen-rufu."

I was really delighted by the presence of members of the Makiguchi and Toda families, who are in excellent health, at the 5th Headquarters Leaders Meeting. This year marks the 130th anniversary of first Soka Gakkai president Tsunesaburo Makiguchi's birth and the 50th anniversary of Mr. Toda's inauguration.

**Buddhism can only be protected by waging a sublime struggle.**

Looking at the long sweep of history, we find that the Daishonin appeared 700 years after Buddhism was first transmitted to Japan from Korea. And that was 700 years from the time of the Great Teacher T'ien-t'ai of China.

The Daishonin says: "Now, more than 700 years after Buddhism was introduced to Japan...the great Law never heard of in previous ages is spreading throughout Japan. How reassuring it is to know that not only the people here, but those of India, China, and the entire land of Jambudvīpa will be able to attain Buddhahood!" (WND, 482).

The SGI, which is actualizing the Buddha's prophecy for the propagation of the Law throughout the entire world, was founded 700 years after the Daishonin waged his struggles for the Law. Were it not for the SGI, the Lotus Sutra and the Daishonin's writings would be nothing but collections of empty words.

The completion of each of these 700-year intervals has been occasioned by landmark struggles to protect the lifeblood of the Law. Buddhism can only be protected by waging a sublime, magnificent struggle of faith. A passage in the Nirvana Sutra that the Daishonin cites explains that 700 years after the Buddha's death a villain appearing in the form of a sage or Buddha will seek to destroy the Law (see *Gosho Zenshu*, p. 651).

The Soka Gakkai has resolutely fought and defeated a conspiracy of corrupt priests seeking to destroy the Law that arose, just as this passage predicts, 700 years after the Daishonin's passing. Advancing in the exemplary unity of many in body, one in mind, let us from May 3 make a new departure, loudly sounding a new cycle of Seven Bells in the new century.

**The bell of peace resounds when each of us powerfully awakens to our mission.**

The number seven has a mystic rhythm that is extremely profound. We find it in the seven characters of Nam-myoho-enge-kyo, which is the fundamental rhythm of the universe itself. The great violinist Sir Yehudi Menuhin, with whom I had an unforgettable exchange, said that he found the sound of Nam-myoho-enge-kyo easy to hum and to have a very pleasant rhythm.

As the Daishonin says, "It is the power of the Buddhist Law that enables the deities of the sun and moon to make their rounds of the four continents" (WND, 685). The heavenly bodies all comport themselves in synch with the rhythm of the Mystic Law.

Advancing together with the Soka Gakkai, a body dedicated to accomplishing the Buddha's will and decree, let us sound the victory bell of progress, fulfillment and expansion based on the rhythm of the Mystic Law that pervades the universe and all life. This is the path to accomplishing kosen-rufu and realizing growth in our lives. In such advance, there is positively no idleness, stagnation or deadlock.

It occurs to me that seven years was an important interval in the Daishonin's struggles, too. Seven years after declaring the establishment of his teaching, on April 28, 1253, he admonished the ruler of the time with his submission of the landmark treatise "On Establishing the Correct Teaching for the Peace of the Land," in 1260.

Just over seven years after



Sir Yehudi Menuhin expressed to SGI President Ikeda that he found the sound of Nam-myoho-enge-kyo to have a very pleasant rhythm.

that, in early 1268, Japan received an official demand that the country acknowledge fealty to the Mongol Empire. The first Mongol invasion of Japan, which the Daishonin had predicted in "On Establishing the Correct Teaching," took place in 1274. And the second Mongol invasion followed again by seven years, in 1281.

Every seven years, society was thrown into great turmoil, and the clarion bell of "On Establishing the Correct Teaching

for the Peace of the Land" resounded throughout the country with increasing clarity.

The SGI has carried out extensive exchange with the Republic of Mongolia, the erstwhile seat of the Mongol Empire. [President N. Bagabandi was impressed on visiting the Soka University campus in Japan in May 1998. He has urged President Ikeda to visit Mongolia, saying that his country desperately needs the SGI leader's philosophy.]

#### SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA'S JUNE 7 ENCOURAGEMENT

## The Fundamental Power To Transform Our Lives

**'The power of the Mystic Law is the only means by which we can transform the three poisons of greed, anger and foolishness that are inherent in human life,' says SGI President Ikeda.**

The evening of June 7, SGI President Ikeda attended a conference with Soka Gakkai regional leaders and divisional representatives at the Shinano Culture Center in Shinanomachi, Tokyo. Representatives from the Boston Research Center for the 21st Century were also present.

"We live in a society of interminable conflict and strife," President Ikeda said. "Education is the way to liberate humanity from this tragic cycle. On a more fundamental level, the power of the Mystic Law is the only means by which we can transform the three poisons of greed, anger and foolishness that are inherent in human life."

He also expressed his expectations for top leaders: "It is the mission and responsibility of the top leaders of our organization to work selflessly and wholeheartedly for the sake of their fellow members and the Law.

"Especially hope the men's division leaders will make up for what they may lack in physical stamina with brain power and decisive leadership that will pave the way to vic-

The Soka Gakkai proudly rang in the first cycle of Seven Bells from its founding in 1930. And last year, 2000, marked the Soka Gakkai's 70th anniversary. It could be said that this struggle compressed 700 years of history into a period of 70 years.

The daimoku chanted by our fellow members, the branching out of connections to Buddhism and the vast good fortune accumulated by members during the past 70 years are of an astronomical scale. This is indisputable. The SGI today shines with countless capable people and abounds with infinite energy.

We now begin a new cycle of Seven Bells, setting our sights on the year 2050. This will be a time for the SGI to further expand the solidarity of world citizens and construct an unshakable foundation of peace in Asia and the world.

The bell of peace resounds when each person powerfully awakens to his or her sense of mission. When we wholeheartedly persevere in waging an earnest spiritual struggle, the victory bell of justice rings.

*To be continued in an upcoming issue.*

tory. I ask that they give constant thought to what they can do to make it easier for everyone to carry out their activities, what they can do to inspire everyone with enthusiasm and joy. And that they also take concrete measures toward that end.

"As for our youth division leaders, it is vital that they are firmly committed to taking full responsibility for kosen-rufu. They are young and therefore should not be content with merely sitting back and enjoying the fruits of an established organization that was built through others' labors. It is important that the youth go out and take initiative themselves, courageously speaking out for the cause of truth and justice. Now is the time to create an eternal fortress of capable people." **W**

# Introducing SUA's Humanities Faculty

By PAUL R. CARBAJAL  
SOKA UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

Students taking courses in the Humanities concentration this fall at Soka University of America, Aliso Viejo will be expected to be active learners both in and outside of the classroom. The Humanities concentration will challenge students to understand and explore the difficulties and problems of achieving diversity within the world community.

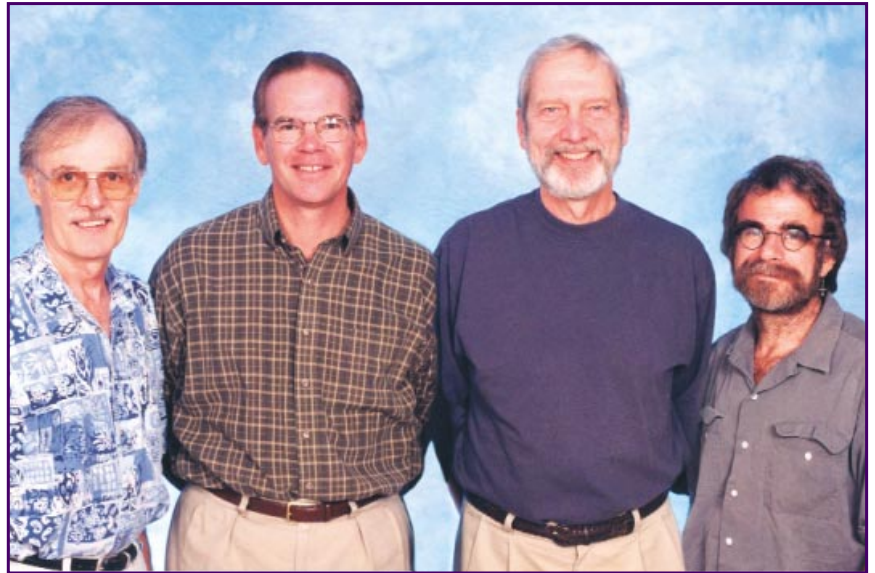
In addition, the students will examine how and why different perspectives about the world have arisen in different cultures and historical periods. Students in the Humanities will also be required to take at least two courses in the other concentrations, Social and Behavioral Sciences and International Studies.

"The Humanities will have a crucial role to play at SUA for at least two reasons," mentions Jay Heffron, Professor of History. "As the name suggests, the central object of study in the Humanities is the human being and in particular the role of human agency in the world. While the social sciences tend

to focus on large, overarching structures, systems and institutions, the Humanities are more interested in understanding how human beings experience those structures. How do they think about and reflect about their lives? What have they done and said—in art, literature, philosophy and religion—that places them within but also outside of and beyond their changing circumstances? The Humanities seeks to understand the so-called eternal verities while rooting them in particular times and places."

Students will be able to choose to work alone or in groups. Through a number of disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches, students will synthesize, interpret and communicate knowledge and information through a variety of resources throughout the concentration.

"Just as science seeks universal principles in the midst of endless physical variety, so the humanities seek common themes in the diversity of cultures, ethnic groups and human individuality," says David Chappell, Professor of Comparative Religion. "This search to cherish variety while trying to build commonality applies



(L-r) David W. Chappell, Ph.D. (Comparative Religions), Jay M. Heffron, Ph.D. (History), Michael Hays, Ph.D. (Humanities and Comparative Literature), and Glen Mazis, Ph.D. (Philosophy and Humanities).

equally to teaching and to how the Soka community conducts its own human relationships internally and with the wider communities."

The faculty has put together a curriculum that allows the student to explore the various ways in which the traditional disciplines of art history, history, literary studies, philosophy, religious studies and the creative arts address common topics and

concerns through a number of disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches.

"I think what we want in the Humanities is essentially to throw humanity into the balance, exposing our students to the dizzying heights but also the depressing lows of human achievement," says Heffron. "We hope to do this by exposing them to a variety of materials from history, lit-

erature, philosophy and the arts—primarily to raise their self-knowledge."

Within the Humanities, the concentration will be divided into two categories: 1) Time and Places; and 2) Human Condition. The division is designed to assist the student in selecting courses that are of interest as well as completing core and general education requirements. **WT**

## Linus Pauling Exhibit a Success

By PAUL R. CARBAJAL  
SOKA UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

The "Linus Pauling and the Twentieth Century" exhibition concluded its five-week stay on June 10, 2001, on the campus of Soka University of America, Aliso Viejo at the Founders Hall Art Gallery.

The 2,556-square-foot traveling exhibit, which traces more than seven decades of Linus Pauling's life and work through photographs, diaries and historic artifacts, attracted more than 5,000 people, including 3rd-, 5th- and 6th-grade students from Bergeson Elementary School in Laguna Niguel.

Students also came from Dana Hills High School in Dana Point, Coastline Community College in Fountain Valley and from Mission Viejo and Capistrano Valley high schools, both in Mission Viejo.

Leading Pauling biographer Tom Hagar from the University of Oregon closed the exhibit with a special evening lecture on June 7, celebrating the legacy of Pauling and his wife, Ava Helen. This was the second event in the 2001 Soka University Speakers Series.

The next stop for the Pauling Exhibit is the Boston Science Museum in Massachusetts, for a one-year stay. **WT**

## SUA Family Tour Day, Aug. 4

If you have been looking for a chance to see the new SUA, Aliso Viejo campus, Aug. 4 is your chance. SUA's staff and faculty will be on hand to answer questions and assist with self-guided walking tours that will give parents, students, interested friends and neighbors a chance to go inside key buildings.

### Here is the schedule:

**9:00 a.m.—Noon**

Self-guided Walking Tours  
(SUA provides the map!)

**10:00 and 11:00 a.m.**

Student and Parent Q-and-A session

### SUA Family Tour Day Reservation Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Number of other people attending with you? \_\_\_\_\_

How many prospective students will be in your group? \_\_\_\_\_

Will anyone in your group need special assistance for the tour? \_\_\_\_\_

If so, please let us know how we can assist you: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Please return to:

Family Tour Day Reservations  
Soka University, Aliso Viejo  
1 University Drive  
Aliso Viejo, CA 92656

A M E R I C A , A L I S O V I E J O



Photo by GERRY HALL

- Faculty and staff are set to move into Founders Hall, Pauling Hall and Gandhi Hall in mid-July.
- Furniture is being moved into the residence halls.
- Grading on the front campus parking lot is complete.
- Installation of diving boards is complete at the Olympic-size swimming pool.

Faculty and staff will soon be moving into Founders Hall.

# Interested in SUA, AV for 2002? Plan Ahead!

**By PAUL CARBAJAL**  
SOKA UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

Plan Ahead” are key words for students interested in applying for Soka University of America’s 2nd class, entering in fall 2002. Admission requirements and application completion deadlines are listed for your convenience in the application—so please take the time to read the entire application before filling it out. (You can get an application by using the contact information below.)

SUA will continue to review every aspect of each student’s application before selecting 100 students into its class of entering freshman students for 2002. This includes review of your high school academic record, the rigor of your academic program, extracurricular activities or special talents, demonstrated leadership, a written personal statement, recommendations—and SAT I (or ACT), which is required of all applicants. The SAT II examinations are also recommended in two subject areas, but are not required. The Test of English Language (TOEFL) is required of all international students whose native language is not English.

If you are interested in coming to SUA in 2002, here are some

important dates to remember:

- SAT I and II tests must be taken by Sept. 1, 2001, to be considered for Early Admission and by Dec. 15, 2001, to be con-

sidered for Regular Admission. SUA’s SAT code is 4066 and the ACT code is O467. You can find out more about SAT test locations and fees by visiting [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).

- The TOEFL test must also be taken by Oct. 13, 2001, to be considered for Early Admission and by Dec. 15, 2001, to be considered for Regular Admission. SUA’s TOEFL code is 4066. For more information on the TOEFL test locations and fees, visit [www.toefl.org](http://www.toefl.org).

If you have any questions about the admission process, please contact an SUA counselor at [admission@soka.edu](mailto:admission@soka.edu)—or call (888) 600-SOKA. **WT**

To subscribe to the *World Tribune* or *Living Buddhism* via the Web, visit [www.sgisubs.com](http://www.sgisubs.com)

S U A A T A G L A N C E		
	Calabasas Campus	Aliso Viejo Campus
Academic Program	Graduate School	Liberal Arts College
Dedication date	Feb. 3, 1987	May 3, 2001
Degree offered	Master of Arts (MA)	Bachelor of Arts (BA)
Major	Second and Foreign Language Education	Liberal Arts
Concentration(s)	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)	Humanities; International Studies; Social and Behavioral Sciences
Program duration	1 1/2 years	4 years
Fall 2002 admissions deadlines	April 2002	Oct. 1, 2001 (Early) Jan. 15, 2002 (Regular)
Admissions e-mail	<a href="mailto:grad_admissions@soka.edu">grad_admissions@soka.edu</a>	<a href="mailto:admission@soka.edu">admission@soka.edu</a>
Admissions telephone	818-878-3717	888-600-SOKA (toll free), 949-480-4130
Fax number	818-880-9326	949-480-4151
Web page	<a href="http://www.soka.edu/calabasas">www.soka.edu/calabasas</a>	<a href="http://www.soka.edu/homeav.html">www.soka.edu/homeav.html</a>
Address	26800 West Mulholland Hwy., Calabasas, CA 91302	1 University Drive, Aliso Viejo, CA 92656

# Education Should Be About Creating Happiness and Peace

## Dialogues on Education

**‘The heart of education is imparting the skills or know-how for creating a happy and peaceful society. That is why it is imperative that educators possess compassion and wisdom.’**

Carlos Albizu University in San Juan, the capital of Puerto Rico, recently awarded SGI President Ikeda an honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters in Behavioral Sciences, recognizing his contributions to peace and human happiness. CAU Board of Trustees President Antonio Vázquez-Febres, CAU President Salvador Santiago-Negrón and his wife, Dr. Carmen Albizu-García, and CUA Vice President Teresa Albizu-García traveled to Japan for the presentation, which was held on May 8 at the Soka University Central Tower in Hachioji, Tokyo.

Carlos Albizu University, San Juan (formerly known as the Puerto Rico Institute of Psychology) is dedicated to training professionals in psychology and related fields. The school carries on the ideals of the eminent psychologist Dr. Carlos Albizu-Miranda, its founder and first president. Dr. Albizu-Miranda, who earned his degree in clinical psychology in the United States, founded the school in San Juan in 1966 out of a desire to train experts in psychology who possessed a thorough understanding of the country's ethnic and cultural background.

The school has awarded doctorates in clinical psychology since 1972. In 1980, it also established an affiliated institute of psychology in Miami. And on Jan. 1, 2000, the two schools became a single university named after the founder.

President Santiago-Negrón, who follows in Dr. Albizu-Mi-



Carlos Albizu University Board of Trustees President Antonio Vázquez-Febres presents an honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters in Behavioral Sciences to SGI President Ikeda, May 8.

randa's footsteps as an "activist scholar," has instituted a community hot-line program and family counseling centers to address the needs of citizens. Through these and other initiatives, he has greatly expanded the availability of mental health care in the community.

At the conferment ceremony, Mr. Vázquez-Febres read the honorary degree citation, which pays tribute to the SGI leader's "outstanding commitment and selfless dedication to the welfare and advancement of humanity, and...noble contributions to world peace, universal understanding and the promotion of tolerance for diversity and pluralism in the achievement of global harmony."

Introducing the SGI leader's achievements, Dr. Carmen Albizu-García remarked that President Ikeda's educational philosophy closely accords with that of Dr. Albizu-Miranda and with the ideals of the university he founded. She added that she is confident President Ikeda's work will continue to

attract growing interest and attention around the world.

In conferring the honorary degree, President Santiago-Negrón said: "In a world in which violence is prevalent in most societal relations, the clear and enlightened thinking of Dr. Daisaku Ikeda serves as an inspiration to those who subscribe to the valued principles of equality and justice."

In his acceptance speech, President Ikeda cited CAU founder Dr. Albizu-Miranda to the effect: "Education that is bereft of love is fruitless. Learning that focuses exclusively on logic and reason robs people of their humanity and will not serve the interests of human beings. Education that is guided by love emphasizes social good not competition between individuals; it is cooperative learning not competitive learning."

The SGI leader said that he found in these words an extremely profound and lofty philosophy. "The true purpose of learning is human happiness and world peace," he said. "The

heart of education is imparting the skills or know-how for creating a happy and peaceful society. That is why it is imperative that educators possess compassion and wisdom."

To celebrate the occasion, the noted Puerto Rico-born jazz flutist and SGI-USA member Nestor Torres performed "Morigasaki Beach" and "Miami Beach Rumba."

Prior to the presentation of the honorary doctorate, President Ikeda met with the party of educators from CAU at Soka University. On May 3, the group attended the dedication of Soka University of America, Aliso Viejo, Calif. After their arrival in Tokyo, they visited the Soka International Women's Center, the offices of the *Seikyo Shimbun*, the Soka Gakkai's daily newspaper and the Min-On Culture Center, which are all located in Shinanomachi.

In a June 2000 interview with the *Seikyo Shimbun*, CUA President Santiago-Negrón, who is a renowned psycholo-

gist, discussed the need of restoring human compassion to modern society. He explained that the job of a psychologist demands continual learning. To help those who are suffering, it is not enough to simply acquire a mastery of techniques or new technology, he said.

The key, he emphasized, is to keep striving for one's continuing personal growth and development. He stated that people who can truly bring comfort to others are those who can communicate with and connect with the harmony and peace that exist within the depths of the other person's life.

He explained that he frequently tells his students that developing their own inner balance and cultivating a rich spiritual connection with patients will ultimately be more important for their success as psychologists than the mere mastery of techniques. One cannot truly free the human heart through education alone, he said, stressing that education must be grounded in a love for humanity.

President Ikeda commented that these insights resonate with the principles of Soka education. "It is crucial that we pursue the path of compassionate education for the happiness and welfare of humanity in the 21st century," he said.

Noting that Dr. Santiago-Negrón teaches classes at the undergraduate and graduate levels on such topics as drug addiction, abnormal psychology and learning disabilities, President Ikeda mentioned that "the essence of Buddhism is also psychology. Buddhism is the highest 'psychology of life.'" Touching on the upsurge in violent crime in Japan in recent years, the SGI leader predicted that psychology would become an increasingly important area of study in the future in Japan and around the world.

He also applauded the efforts of CAU to promote research and understanding of human behavior from an integrated perspective in an effort to raise specialists who are sensitive to cultural diversity. Noting that the university this year celebrates its 35th anniversary, he said: "Young universities have an important role to play. While universities with long histories and traditions have many strengths, they can also often have a tendency to become set in their ways. In a time of such enormous flux as today, it is important to have young universities that can rapidly respond to change." **WT**

# the new HUMAN REVOLUTION

SGI President Ikeda's novelized history of the Soka Gakkai

## 'JEWELLED SWORD'

VOLUME 8, CHAPTER 2, PARTS 15-16

*'When we look at the government today, we find that our leaders are all incredibly egocentric and selfish,' says Shin'ichi Yamamoto. 'They do not listen to the ideas of youth. If we are to build a new Japan and a new peaceful world, youth must rise to action.'*

The proposal of Goro Watari, the head of the student division, for the formation of student division groups at each university was met with a vigorous round of applause at the 6th student division general meeting. Prior to this meeting, Watari had sought guidance from Shin'ichi Yamamoto regarding the direction of student division activities. Shin'ichi was determined to do all he could to support anything the student division felt necessary for the advancement of kosen-rufu. He wanted to respect the group's autonomy and independence.

Following speeches from some vice general directors and the general director, President

Yamamoto took the podium. Offering his warm congratulations on the occasion of the 6th Student Division General Meeting, he said: "A vast sky of boundless hope awaits you. I sincerely pray that you will all live meaningful lives free of regret, and shine with integrity and vibrant life force, always basing yourselves on faith.

"For the past year, I have been lecturing to representative members of the student division on the 'Record of the Orally Transmitted Teachings.' And recently I began studying Nichiren Daishonin's treatise 'The Object of Devotion for Observing the Mind' with members of the Tokyo University Lotus Sutra Study Group.

Also, a group centering around members at Kyoto University in Kansai will be studying Buddhism's great life philosophy through the Daishonin's work 'One Hundred and Six Comparisons.'"

Shin'ichi regarded these series of lectures with Tokyo and Kyoto University students as a sort of model for forming the university organizations that Watari had spoken of, and a way in which he could support them. He envisioned that one day the student division groups on each campus would study the Daishonin's writings.

"I am absolutely determined," he said, "that from among the members with whom I am working so closely I will find and raise successors who will be responsible for the Soka Gakkai in the future and become leaders of Japan and the world. I hope you will all strive diligently toward that goal and work hard to forge and develop yourselves!"

Hearing President Yamamoto's high expectations of them moved the members deeply. Shin'ichi staked the Soka Gakkai's future entirely upon the growth of the student and youth divisions. There is an old saying: "When a tiger dies, it leaves its hide

behind; when a man dies, he leaves his reputation." Shin'ichi, however, was not concerned in the least with leaving a legacy of personal fame or honor; his only wish was to leave behind talented successors.

Shin'ichi continued: "Japanese intellectuals today tend to believe that religion is not compatible with science, or that it is altogether unnecessary. But this is a mistake. The great scientist Albert Einstein himself emphasized the necessity of religion, and Russian writer Leo Tolstoy wrote: 'One of the worst prejudices known is held by a majority of the so-called scholars of our time, who claim that a person can live without faith.' And the 19th century American writer William Adams called faith the extension of reason.

"When we take a calm and objective look at life and social phenomena, seriously pondering how to alleviate human suffering, what life is, and the primal force of the universe, we naturally arrive at religion. If thinkers and scientists who seek such answers knew of the supreme life philosophy that is the Daishonin's Buddhism, I believe they would be deeply impressed, bow their heads in respect, and shed tears of gratitude.

"Let us, who uphold this great religion, strive to create tremendous change in every area of human life, including culture, society, government and business, through our activities to realize religious and human revolution. I would like us to continue advancing with our sights set 20 years hence."

Shin'ichi shared his feelings openly: "But whatever I propose, if it stops with me, nothing will be accomplished. If all of you become outstanding leaders in both name and reality, taking a stand as pioneers of the age and as true practitioners of the Daishonin's Buddhism, I can die happily at any moment.

"When we look at the government today, we find that our leaders are all incredibly egocentric and selfish. They are arrogant and fixed in their ways. They do not listen to the ideas of youth. If we are to build a

new Japan and a new peaceful world, youth must rise to action. I declare that it is you students, the leaders of youth, who must make your stand.

"That is my prayer and my hope. I am blazing the trail with all my strength and being in the belief that you are my true successors. Can I count on you?"

Without a moment's pause, every member shouted, "Yes!" Shin'ichi looked out at the room, at the face of each participant. Gazing back at him, their eyes gleamed with a burning vow.

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

### 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.**

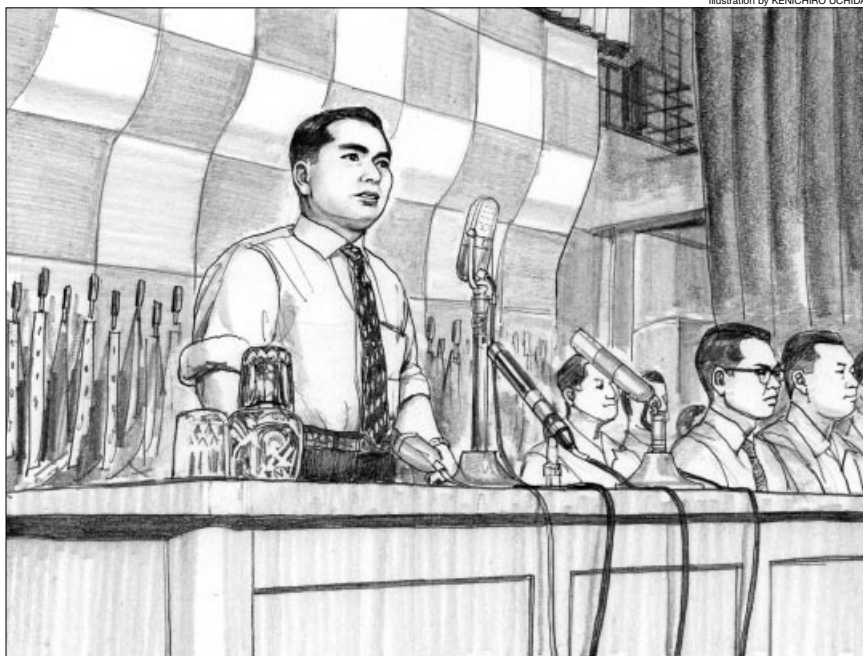
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Illustration by KENICHIRO UCHIDA



# Middleway: Getting the Word Out

*A Message*  
FROM MATILDA

By **MATILDA BUCK**  
SGI-USA WOMEN'S LEADER

Did you ever wish you had a book that gave a clear, concise, easy-to-read explanation of this practice, something that you could recommend to anyone? Well, it is here.

Did you ever wish you could just walk into a bookstore and pull it off a shelf? Well, you can.

As an example, here is a delicious quote from Middleway Press's *The Buddha in Your Mirror*: "Buddhism, like physics, teaches that everything is in constant flux. But...rather than actively striving to clarify the nature of the physical world... Buddhism seeks to illuminate the human condition. To Nichiren, freedom meant not an escape from the realm of changing phenomena but the discovery of an absolute point of reliance within ourselves. This liberates us from the bonds of karma as a result of manifesting Buddha wisdom to perceive the true nature of all phenomena, including our relationship with them" (p. 77).

The name *Middleway* is worth a closer look. The Buddhist concept of the Middle Way is not to be confused with middle of the road or a little of this, a little of that. The quote above refers to the "discovery of an absolute point of reliance within ourselves," which wonderfully describes the Middle Way—the direct path that transcends extremes and that veers neither left nor right from the ultimate goal. It's like the balance you need to ride a bike. The faster you pedal, the more you must adjust to the increasing pull from side to side as you strive for balance. As the Daishonin writes in "On Attaining Buddhahood in This Lifetime": "[Life] is neither existence nor non-existence, yet exhibits the qualities of both. It is the mystic entity of the Middle Way that is the ultimate reality" (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 4).

Middleway Press is pedal-



ing with great energy toward its goal to make the Daishonin's Buddhism accessible to a larger audience. It's been barely a year since its first release—SGI President Ikeda's *The Way of Youth*. Since then, two more books have come out: *For the Sake of Peace*, also by President Ikeda; and *The Buddha in Your Mirror*, by Woody Hochswender, Greg Martin and Ted Morino. A fourth release—*Soka Education* by President Ikeda—is on its way.

And one of the best parts is that they are all available at your local bookstore. Even if they're not on the shelf, your bookseller will be delighted to take an order. If they get enough orders, the bookstore is likely to keep it in stock.

Middleway Press has an innovative vision for future publications. As Dave McNeill, managing director, recently said: "The names Ikeda, Nichiren and SGI are virtually unheard of in the U.S. book trade and book-buying public. Middleway Press is out to change all that."

It is a whole new take on propagation. I thought, at first, why not sell Middleway books in our community center bookstores? One answer is that the purpose of the Middleway books is to deliver the Daishonin's Buddhism to the widest possible circle of people. It will take our extra effort to ensure that these books find a place in mainstream bookstores. Every time we walk into a bookstore (or go on-line) and ask for a Middleway book, it's a chance to introduce these books and their message to another person. If these books only stayed in our own bookstores, their audience would be far too limited.

The point is: Get President Ikeda's message out where people can find it. We have all seen books by the Dalai Lama and other religious leaders at eye-level on bookstore shelves. Middleway Press books should be right up there. It's up to us to prime the pump, to create the momentum that will get our books into many hands. This isn't just a matter of selling books—it is sharing the richness and effectiveness of the Daishonin's Buddhism. I am

looking forward to the day when books by Daisaku Ikeda will be on the list of best sellers.

Because of Middleway Press, anyone can have access to the wisdom of Buddhism anytime, anywhere, including on the Web (check out [www.middlewaypress.com](http://www.middlewaypress.com)). I am struck by what a great propagation tool it can be!



Maybe you will be on the phone with your cousin several states away. "Gee, my teenager is asking so many questions these days," she says. "I could really use some help." So you tell her to check out this wonderful book, *The Way of Youth*. Reviewers, you tell your cousin, have said that readers will "find Ikeda's caring commitment both inspiring and attractive." The book is also a finalist for an industry Book of the Year award. And here is the easy part: Your cousin can go down to the local bookstore that same day and ask for the book.

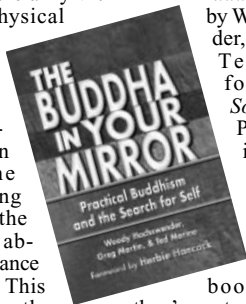
Here is another scenario: Someone you have never met is browsing the bookstore for some practical insight to world peace, and he happens upon *For the Sake of Peace*. The book, subtitled *Seven Paths to Global Harmony*, reiterates the author's conviction that peace starts with the individual. "If all practiced the principles of empathy, di-

alogue and awareness that Ikeda outlines," one reviewer wrote, "the world would experience true peace." Now there is a thought.

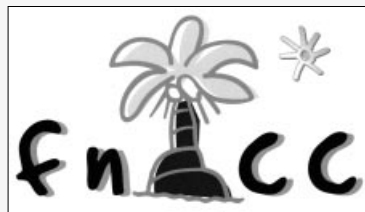
Talking with people about Middleway Press books is one important way to get the message out. Here is another idea: Talk with your fellow chapter members or your area leaders and approach a bookstore near your community center or other meeting place. Tell them you are promoting these books to X-number of members every month, and that you will direct them to that store if they will carry those books on the shelves. Everyone will benefit that way, including those non-members who just happen to find one of the books! You can do this even in individual districts, especially if the district is far from its home chapter.

Did you know that many of the large bookstore chains are willing to come to, say, a summer SGI-USA festival and set up a booth to sell Middleway Press titles? If your festival organizers are interested, contact the Middleway Press staff (310-260-8934) for help in making arrangements.

One final point: When you walk up to the order desk at your local bookstore, don't take "not available" for an answer. As I write this, *The Buddha in Your Mirror* is in its second printing, but some booksellers may not be aware of it. If they tell you a book is not available, let them know it is, and ask them to place the order anyway. This extra effort will have a significant impact, as it raises awareness in the bookstore of the interest in and popularity of Middleway books. **WT**



## COMING TO THE



**Raising Our Children Conference**  
Aug. 16-19

**Conference highlights include:**

- Lecture on Nichiren Daishonin's writings for parents
- Experiences of parents raising children in the SGI-USA

- Parenting teens
- Raising Buddhist children in a Judeo/Christian society
- Becoming your child's emotional coach
- SGI President Ikeda's guidance on children
- Connecting with our children through positive communication
- Alternative parenting (co-parenting, blended families, single parenting, same-gender parents, etc.)

Sign up for this important conference now with your SGI-USA region or zone office.

If you have questions, please contact:  
Palma Odano  
SGI/USA  
P.O. Box 1427  
Santa Monica, Ca. 90406-9907  
(310) 260-8900 x8365  
POdano@aol.com

**Upcoming conferences at the FNCC:**

- Young Women's Conference  
**July 12-15**
- Youth Performing Groups  
**July 19-22**
- Student Division Conference  
**Aug. 2-5**
- Junior High and High School Conference  
**Aug. 9-12**
- Men's Conference  
**Aug. 23-26**

**For more information:**

Please contact your region leader or your SGI-USA zone office for information on how to sign up for a conference. You may also visit the SGI-USA Web site at [www.sgi-usa.org](http://www.sgi-usa.org) and click the FNCC icon.

FROM WAY OF YOUTH, I

and nurture the creative spirit of young members and by emphasizing Buddhism and art, raise the next generation of youth leaders. The success of the Way of Youth Celebration was a clear manifestation of their years of dedication to developing the New York junior high and high school division.

After the workshops, everyone gathered in the main room for performances. As each youth group took the stage, cheers and applause were ceaseless. All guests were then invited to participate in the upcoming Northeastern Zone family youth festival to be held in New York City this summer.

Shan Sarafin, SGI-USA high school division leader, gave final encouragement. He stressed the importance of hard work, never giving up and always seeking one's mission. "Today, I want you to think about your mission on the way home," he said. "There is something that only you can do in your life. It is very, very difficult to find it, but never forget your immeasurable potential." "I was very moved by the welcoming atmosphere," commented 19-year-old Anthony Scipio, a guest. "Everyone was



(Above) A young member enjoys a creativity workshop during The Way of Youth Celebration at SGI-USA's New York Culture Center, April 29. (Right) A steel drum band performs for the crowd of more than 400 SGI-USA members and guests attending the event.



encouraging each other. I have never experienced this kind of thing before."

Erica Ramos, also a teenage guest, expressed surprise at her encounter with the SGI, noting: "I have never been with this many happy people. This was

so much fun!"

For Sansho Scott, a high school division member, the event even inspired him to make a determination for the upcoming festival: "By July, I am determined to increase my grades at school. And of

course, I want to invite as many of my friends as possible to the festival."

The Way of Youth is available at your favorite neighborhood bookstore or online at [www.middlewaypress.com](http://www.middlewaypress.com).

FROM ARTS DIVISION, I

local six-man taiko drum group, Fushu Daiko Inc., playing on drums handmade from Kentucky whiskey barrels. The temperature inside the air-conditioned auditorium rose 10 degrees from all the excitement.

The emphasis of the evening was on faith. Herbie Hancock urged the artists to use the power of daimoku to overcome negativity and fulfill their dreams. Mr. Hancock reminded the participants to "use your art to encourage others. To have dreams, you have to have hope, you have to create hope in your own life. Whatever piece you think is missing from your life, it's there — you have to bring it out."

Further, noting rhetorically that people tend to define themselves by the work they do, and then define their success by their popularity, Mr. Hancock objected: "When I'm eating dinner, I'm not a musician. The only thing I am all of the time is a human being. Chant to see the true entity of your life. Don't look at your art form — develop your life."

Earlier on Friday, SGI-USA General Director Danny Nagashima opened the conference



Photo by JONATHAN WILSON

Conference leaders Pascual Olivera (right) and Linda Johnson embrace members at the closing session of the Arts Division Conference.

by speaking on the mission of people in the arts. He pointed out that American artists have a mission to go back out to the world to enact kosen-rufu because their ancestors mostly came from other places.

Pascual Olivera, SGI-USA Arts Division leader, urged the participants to chant until their problems disappear. "If it's still not enough," he said, "chant one more day to 'see the moon rise over the capital.' You must resolve to become happy first."

The unbridled energy of the conference pervaded the Saturday night celebrations, one an impromptu jam session with conga drums on the lip of the lake, the other with electric music in the dining hall. As parties drifted back to their rooms at the end of the night, a third party took shape in the swimming pool with singing and dancing in the water.

In his message to the conference, SGI President Ikeda wrote: "Art — it is a flower of

life, an eternal healing power. Nichiren Daishonin expresses the quintessence of the Lotus Sutra as follows: 'Even if you are not the Venerable Mahakashyapa, you should all perform a dance. Even if you are not Shariputra, you should leap up and dance. When Bodhisattva Superior Practices emerged from the earth, did he not emerge dancing?' (*The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin*, p. 1119). We are the Buddhas of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, and so are all equal without discrimination. We awaken to this great truth once we return to the origin of eternal life. Then we realize the vow of the Bodhisattvas of the Earth — to lead all people to happiness through the Mystic Law — as our own. Out of our awakening wells forth the greatest of all joys, and such a joyful state of life will, in turn, become the supreme inspiration for artistic creation."

Everyone who attended the conference was now ready to embark on their challenging, new mission as "Bodhisattvas of the Arts," determined to hang on to their dreams to connect to their audiences — not through technique, but from the heart of faith. **WT**



The SGI-USA's Weekly Newspaper

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THIS BEAUTIFUL EARTH: PHOTO ESSAY BY SGI PRESIDENT IKEDA

# 'City on the Water'

It was the season of white night in Stockholm, sunlight bathing the city nearly 20 hours each day. The bright sky was often deceiving. Before we were aware of it, it was already 9:00 or 10:00 at night. The daylight of the northern sky—with its pristine clarity—enveloped the city and the people.

In the park, sunbathers cherished every minute of the short passing summer, and a father strolled with a toddler. In a narrow alley of the Old Town, some elderly people sat around a table, talking and laughing. Everyone in this city seemed to enjoy living at his or her own pace.

In June 1989, I flew from England to Sweden. The capital, Stockholm, is often called the "Venice of the North." Also known as the "City That Floats on the Water," it is built upon 14 islands that are linked by bridges. Canals run throughout the city, and one can see marinas and locks even downtown. The water is so clean that you can swim and fish in the middle of the city. Forests and lakes surround it, and the air is fragrant with the scent of pine trees.

During my stay in Stockholm, I made a courtesy call on Their Majesties King Carl XVI Gustav and Queen Silvia at the Royal Palace. They are a friendly, charming couple. The king is actively involved in environmental protection, and the queen works hard for the sake of the disabled. Queen Silvia served as a chief hostess on the Organizing Committee for the Munich Olympics in 1972, during which she met her husband, who was then crown prince. When their engagement was announced, they became internationally known as the "Olympic couple."

During our conversation, the queen shared her first impressions of Sweden. When she arrived there, she wondered why there seemed to be so many disabled people in the city. She later realized it was not that there were more disabled people living in Sweden, but rather many more were integrated into society, enjoying an active public life made possible through specially designed facilities that provide access to public places such as movie theaters, restrooms and so on.

Often referred to as normalization, such efforts were rooted in the idea that everyone—regardless of personal challenges—has a right to live a normal life with others. Based on this philosophy, Sweden has been striving to help the elderly and the physically and mentally challenged to live well, and

in harmony with others.

All people have difficulties of one kind or another. No disability should be looked upon as that person's fault or something to be ashamed of. Sweden directs her gentle gaze at humanity, always aiming to further improve society while questioning how to do so. The fearless Vikings used to set sail into uncharted seas. It is fitting that their descendants, the Swedes, have

about the sealskin he had hidden. "I don't know what you mean," said the bride. Pretending she had forgotten all about the stolen sealskin, she continued, "You must have had a strange dream last night."

Eager to prove his story, the fisherman stepped ashore and brought the sealskin out from under the rock where he had hidden it. The instant the bride set eyes on the sealskin, she grasped it and drew it over her head. She then flung herself into the sea and swam quickly away. The fisherman plunged into the water after her, but could not catch her.

When he saw he could not stop her, in his grief and frustration he seized his spear and hurled it. His aim was better than he had intended, however, for the poor mermaid gave a piercing shriek and disappeared into the depths.

The fisherman stood on the strand waiting for her to appear again. He saw the water around him, now stained with the mermaid's blood, begin to take on a soft sheen. As the crimson-hued water lapped the shores, flowers began to blossom

and waft their fragrance. Since then, anyone seeing these shores has been drawn to this place, which eventually became the city of Stockholm.

Selma Lagerlöf recounts this legend in her book *The Wonderful Adventures of Nils*. Though an illness had rendered her partially lame, Lagerlöf soared high on her literary wings. She once wrote: "Merely to wish to see pretty things was not the true longing for spring. One ought to take up and kiss the first sod whose grass appeared above the snow. One should pick the first nettle-leaf merely to burn one's skin because it was now spring."

The winter of Northern Europe is long and harsh. Through it, however, the people nurtured an indomitable will to await springtime and fully embrace it. They know that they can accomplish anything as long as they try, that they have the strength to change their lives as well as society. They shun expressions that ascribe things to fate or suggest that nothing can be done.

Stockholm in June was in full bloom with lilac. Countless clusters of purple flowers stood out gently under the turquoise sky, and innumerable heart-shaped lilac leaves seemed to embrace this northern capital with their warmth and vitality.



Stockholm, Sweden, is called the 'Venice of the North' and the 'City That Floats on the Water.'

been leading a voyage of human progress by not waging war for nearly two centuries.

A well-known Japanese legend tells of a celestial maiden who, while bathing in the sea, has her feathered robe stolen. Though she is forced to marry the man who stole it, she eventually reclaims her robe and returns to her heavenly abode. There is a similar story about the origin of Stockholm:

One day a fisherman happened upon the area and had such good luck with his catch that he forgot to start for home. As a splendid moon shone in the night sky, he noticed a multitude of black spots moving in the tide. They were a school of seals. Moments later, the seals came ashore and transformed into indescribably beautiful young maidens—the legendary sea-nymphs.

While the mermaids were dancing joyfully, the fisherman hid a sealskin lying nearby. When it was time to return to the water, one of the mermaids could not find her sealskin and started to weep and wail. The fisherman took her to his cottage and he and his mother treated her very kindly. She seemed to be happy with them and eventually agreed to marry the fisherman.

On their way to the wedding, the fisherman's boat came near the islet where he had won his bride. The fisherman could not stop smiling and told the bride