

**Celebrate! Celebrate!**  
**San Francisco members reach out to their community**

**By PENNY WILLIAMS & RON BAIRD**  
**Correspondents**  
**San Francisco, Oct. 4-5**

Potrero, one of San Francisco's seven hills, was bathed in sunlight this weekend when members hosted "Celebrate Community" an open house and culture festival for the SGI-USA and local neighbors. The newly opened Ikeda Auditorium was the impetus for the event. The auditorium is one of several new structures on Potrero between 16th and 17th streets brightening a part of the city once lined only with warehouses and car-repair shops.

The culture center parking lot became a festive bazaar for the event, with a bower of fresh flowers over the entrance, tables and chairs, and a stage for musicians, singers and dancers to perform, along with booths for hamburgers and hot dogs. Inside the culture center, other things were happening, such as samba and circus workshops.

Photographs, paintings and sculpture were exhibited in the auditorium while soft piano music accompanied strolling viewers. Lectures and panel discussions also took place in this area.

City Councilman Leland Yee attended and shared his appreciation during a panel discussion. Mr. Yee explained the dilemma faced by legislators, saying: "We have somehow marginalized and fractionalized different elements in our society. When individuals say that we must pick one side or the other on various issues, I know we don't have the answers in city hall. I would encourage SGI to spread your word and your work not only among yourselves, but throughout the city. Answers to our problems will not come from one individual, but from all of us together working in a cooperative way."

Linda Serizawa also helped with the planning and feels that the open house was a grass roots event. "The members really wanted to contribute and share our organization with the community," said Linda.

Today's event commemorated SGI President Ikeda's first steps abroad in October 1960 to help fulfill Nichiren Daishonin's quest for world peace.

**WT**