

NEWSBRIEFS

CALIFORNIA

Men's Health Is Topic of Seminar

Preluding National Men's Health Month in June, men's division members in La Puente and East Los Angeles chapters invited doctors to hold an open forum and Q-and-A session on May 18. The purpose of the seminar, as well as Men's Health Month, is to raise awareness among men of the importance of preventative health behavior in the early detection and treatment of health problems. One telling statistic noted at the seminar explained that the rate of male mortality could be significantly reduced if men would drop their "macho" attitude and seek treatment before symptoms have reached a critical stage. A similar seminar is scheduled in October as part of these chapters' ongoing Men in Buddhism campaign. There are also talks of planning a family health seminar.

— *RUBEN TREVISIO, East Los Angeles*

CALIFORNIA

SGI-USA Joins Interfaith Dialogue at UCLA

The Center for the Study of Religion at UCLA hosted a two-day conference, May 7–8, to discuss the multifaceted dynamic of religion in Los Angeles. Topics included "The Challenge to Religion of the Multicultural City" and "L.A.: Nurturer of the New, Challenger to Tradition." Some two dozen academics as well as religious leaders and religion reporters presented papers and responded.

Los Angeles #2 Region Leader Dave Martinez was invited to respond during the session "Asian Religion in L.A.: Diaspora or 'At Home'?" Mr. Martinez described the evolution of the SGI-USA. "Because of the compassionate sincerity and steady efforts of our pioneers, we have developed into a tremendously diversified membership — all ages, races, cultures, sexual orientations — all walks of life," he said.

Another presenter, Havantola Ratansara, president of the Buddhist Sangha Council of Southern California and the American Buddhist Congress, said that SGI-USA's interfaith and inter-Buddhist dialogue is "a good sign and encouragement for the progress of Buddhism in America."

— *NANCY SIMMS, Los Angeles*

ZAMBIA

Zambian Ministry of Home Affairs Commends SGI

The SGI of Zambia has received a letter of commendation from the Ministry of Home Affairs of the Republic of Zambia. It is the first SGI organization in Africa to be so honored. The letter, signed by Registrar of Societies M. K. Nyendwa, pays tribute to SGI-Zambia's activities to promote culture, education and human development. Since its formal registration in 1987, Mr. Nyendwa states, the SGI-Zambia has served as a model for nongovernmental organizations. SGI-Zambia, which established its first chapter in 1984, today comprises a headquarters and three chapters. SGI-Zambia members come from all walks of life and are conducting activities based on Buddhism with a firm commitment to contribute positively to their communities. Their efforts have been hailed in many areas of Zambian society.

— *Courtesy of SGI NEWSLETTER*

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