

MADISON HOSTS DISTRICT LEADERS TRAINING MEETING

“It was the best meeting I ever attended,” said Mike Voves as he exited Monona Terrace’s Hall of Fame. Mike’s sentiments were echoed by many attendees of the Madison, Wis., district leaders training meeting.

On the morning of March 21, some had come prepared to endure the Buddhist austerity of reviewing the *SGI-USA Leadership Manual* paragraph by paragraph. That would have been really dry, according to Lillian Wilner, Madison Chapter women’s division leader and central coordinator for the meeting. “We strove to come up with a relevant agenda based on what the district leaders wanted,” she explained. “Then we chanted for the meeting to be fun and accessible.”

And was it ever! After gongyo, there was a personality test in which people expressed an affinity for certain shapes. The choices were circle, square, triangle, rectangle and squiggle. Each shape meant a different type of personality, and it was instantly gratifying that everyone was *not* the same shape.

“I’m a recovering triangle,” quipped one district leader. “I think I’m two shapes,” commented Jean Kovac, Wisconsin Area leader. Irene Mackie, game facilitator and vice women’s division area leader, was quick to point out that “all different kinds of people are needed to effectively take care of the members and advance world peace.”

After lunch, Tim Burnham, River West District leader, facilitated a session on improving communication. One of the most important points made is that communication is like an iceberg: If people don’t strive to communicate on an intimate, meaningful level (the unseen part of the iceberg), then routine administrative communication (the visible part of the iceberg) does not occur or is ineffective.

— ELIZABETH THOMPSON