

Matsuo Machida's 'Walk for peace' travels through Washington Court House, OH

Martin Graham
September 7, 2015
Record Herald



Matsuo Machida (at center in light blue) has been walking since June 25 from San Francisco, Calif., to meet a self-determined deadline of Sept. 18 and arrive at the Washington Monument in Washington, D.C. He is pictured here at The Willow in Washington [Court House] with local supporters and nationwide followers as they welcome him to Ohio. Photo courtesy of the Record Herald

A man walking from San Francisco, Calif., to the Washington Monument in Washington, D.C., passed through Washington [Court House] Sunday and met with local supporters and nationwide followers.



Matsuo Machida, a 65-year-old taxi driver from Nagano, Japan, never made it further in his education

than the ninth grade in Japan, according to a press release. He found his calling at 20 years old as a missionary in the Unification Church founded by Reverend Sun Myung Moon. Machida has a wife and two sons living in Japan.

Reverend Moon, using “The Divine Principle or Exposition of the Divine Principle,” a book he co-authored, helped to spread the core of Unification theology. Following the format of systematic theology, it includes several main points. The first is God’s purpose in creating human beings, second, it details the fall of man, and third, explains the restoration, “a process by which God is working to remove the ill effects of the fall as well as restore humanity back to the relationship that God originally intended.”

Machida has been walking between 37 and 40 miles a day since June 25 in an effort to raise awareness for world peace and redemption. This is not the first march he has accomplished. In 2004, he said he received a calling from heaven to walk from San Francisco to Washington, D.C., to protest Rev. Moon’s imprisonment in Danbury, Conn., from 1984 to 1985 for alleged tax evasion. Friends and fellow church members in Japan gave donations to support his march.

This time around, Machida has given himself a deadline: he must reach the Washington Monument by Sept. 18, a day that his religious community considers a significant day in its history. The marathon trek includes marching seven days a week for 86 days, and spans a distance of more than 2,900 miles. To be able to reach his destination within his own deadline, Machida must march for more than 14 hours a day. He rises from his sleeping bag at about 3:30 a.m., departs about 4 a.m. and does not stop until about 9 p.m. each evening.

“I always sing when I march, since there is not much else to do,” Machida said during an interview Sunday at The Willow restaurant in Washington [Court House], where he met local supporters. “Every day I always start with specific songs and one I love and sing every day is ‘The Star-Spangled Banner.’”



Machida has been walking through small towns most of the way; however, an ABC affiliate in Indianapolis, Ind., met him at the state capital on Sept. 1. Local citizens took him to lunch and helped stock his escort vehicle with nutritious Japanese provisions. He also was covered by ABC and FOX affiliates in St. Joseph, Mo., in August, where he met Mayor Bill Falkner at a Gothic Tea House. He also met with Deputy Mayor Pat Jones, who welcomed him to City Hall and gave him the coin of the city.

“Loneliness is very hard,” Machida said. “I just want people to know of Reverend Moon and his campaigns to revive faith and to help spread peace and bring along togetherness in this nation. The support is amazing, and I am so thankful for all of the help in making it to the monument. I still have a long way to go, but I am looking forward to it.”

Once he left, Machida will be heading towards West Virginia, Virginia and then finally will reach Washington, D.C., after nearly four months of walking.