

Sect mails taped message

By LESLEY COLLINS
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CLEARWATER — The "favorable" reaction from a Church of Scientology goodwill message via a cassette tape may spark additional tape mailings.

The Clearwater-based group mailed about 300 cassette tapes titled "Can We Ever Be Friends?" this week to local city officials, newspapers and randomly selected residents.

"We've gotten calls as to why people haven't received them," Scientology spokesman Ludwig Alpers said Tuesday.

Because of the positive response, "there might be more going out," he said.

A small group of Scientologists recently approached Alpers about donating money to provide the cassette tapes to community officials and residents.

"I think this will break the last bit of ice," he said, noting his belief that after 10 years of antagonism between the city and the Scientologists, both

Clearwater

sides appear to be heading in the same direction. "We want to create better relations, and this tape helps explain who and what are Scientologists."

The Scientology mailout includes the tape, a cover letter by Alpers and a postage-paid postcard enabling residents to get more information about Dianetics and Scientology.

The taped speaker, who identifies himself as a minister of the Church of Scientology, talks about the possibility of repairing the "torn heartstrings" of estranged family members and friends.

"It often appears that the things they have done were monstrous and cruel, and that they never can be forgiven," the tape continues. "But forgiveness is the very stuff of which harmony is made. Big people can forgive."

According to public relations

officials for Scientology, every difficult situation they ever were called to handle, whether with parents or the press, was caused by "some new or untrained Scientologist completely misinforming others as to what was Scientology data," the speaker says.

"Feeling challenged and invalidated, the relatively untrained Scientologist sometimes tries to make an impact on a non-Scientologist by telling him bizarre and sometimes incomplete or incorrect data on the subject instead of some useful material the other could use to better his life," he continues. "Uninformed persons experience a drop in reality and feel antagonistic when this occurs."

"... The materials of Scientology are not very mysterious and when viewed as a whole, not as fragments, are very sensible."

Rather, Scientologists believe in kindness, understanding and better human relations, the minister says.