



Aikido of Phoenix



Satori Dojo Newsletter

WWW.AikidoOfPhoenix.Com

October, 2002

SENSEI'S CORNER

Deshi,

As an instructor, I have always encouraged people to take part in Aikido seminars both here in Arizona as well as at any other location they can get to. Seminars can be a great place to learn about Aikido. My views about seminar participation are not common in the Aikido world or in the Budo world for that matter. Most dojos do not encourage students to attend seminars because, in my opinion, they feel threatened by what they will learn. In fact, many schools discourage you from going anywhere outside the dojo.

However, in light of reports that I have received over the past few months about the way our students have been treated I am rethinking my views on seminars. While it would be enormously unfair to lump all non-Aikido of Phoenix Aikidoka into one ball, I am at this point fed up with the attitude that seems to thrive in the Aikido community.

I am not writing this just to complain about the state of the art. I am writing this out of sincere concern and frustration. We are representatives of the art and must take this duty seriously. When I see and hear of others being rude or condescending, especially yudansha, it makes me angry. I believe that no one art is better than any other. This relationship applies to Aikido schools and organizations as well. We are an independent school and will always be that way. I feel that the current attitude in Aikido organizations is that of elitism and arrogance. Too many Aikidoka are tied up in what patch they wear or who the head of their system is as opposed to being the best individual Aikidoka they can be. This, unfortunately has become even more prevalent over the last year. What is just sad is that I will generally be treated better at a Karate seminar than I am at an Aikido seminar.

After months of thought on this subject I am now announcing a new general policy within Aikido of Phoenix. I will no longer make official announcements regarding any scheduled Aikido seminars. Now understand this. I am not discouraging you from attending seminars. I still think that there is a great deal to be learned at seminars. I feel compelled to tell you though, that you will be attending at your own risk. The risk is in being treated poorly by people that have no right to do so. There are certain instructors that I will still announce, but they will be limited. I am still a big

fan of people like Mike and Cathy Anderson Senseis and most of the people they bring in.

It may seem odd to make such an announcement in my column but I feel strongly enough about it that it needs to be done. We are a professional dojo. I have always been proud of the way our students have acted at seminars. I expect no more than what we give. If you would like to speak to me in more detail regarding this, please feel free to contact me.

-In Oneness,
Sensei

THE CHANDLER KIDS' CORNER

Welcome to the newer students who have joined us. I hope you gain something from your time with us. Please don't hesitate to ask if you have questions about anything at all.

Recently we started examining the mental side of Aikido by exploring the concepts on which Aikido was founded. Last month we discussed the ideas of shodo-o-seisu and dochu no sei.

Shodo-o-seisu means control the first move, which in essence means be ready. You are not going to throw the first punch or attack, but you will be ready to react with whatever happens to you and around you. By being aware and paying attention to the ki (energy) that is around you, you have a better chance to deal with the circumstances more effectively or avoid the conflict altogether. The advantage here is that by practicing shodo-o-seisu you give yourself a choice.

Dochu no sei is calmness in action. This concept is a bit easier to understand, although it is hard to put into practice. Staying calm, cool and collected during a stressful time is indeed a hard thing to do, but to try is a must. When times are tough and things are crazy that is the most important time to practice the philosophies of Aikido. Extending positive ki, controlling your own breathing, being a good person and blending with whatever comes your way are the things your Aikido training help you develop. Everyone has their own reasons for training, but I would hope that at least one of your reasons is to better yourself in some way. I can think of no better way than to be a nice person who will do the right thing when it counts.

On the technical side we worked some good techniques and practiced hard. During the younger class

we focused on the hantai grab (cross body grab) and worked several techniques to escape this kind of attack.

During the older class we were introduced to a new way of doing an aiki taiso, tenkan. I was impressed with the speed at which the students adapted to this change. Good job everyone! We practiced shomenuchi ikkyo, ryotetori tenchinage, katatetori hantai zenponage and katatetori hantai ikkyo and nikyo. We looked closely at the ikkyo pin and worked out some kinks that had started developing.

What a great month of training! I love seeing everyone giving it their best. Keep up the good work.

Teresa Mastison Sensei

GLENDALE GAZETTE

Greetings from Glendale. As we move closer toward the end of the year, our annual Christmas party is coming more into focus. The Glendale dojo is holding a yard sale to help defray the cost of this formal affair. The sale will be held on Saturday, November 2nd. If you would like to contribute any items to be sold, or would like to help with the sale, contact JoAnn Alston at 623-825-6574, or tjtdreams@msn.com. You can also contact Jurek Rakoczynski at 623-934-7465 or jrakoczynski@qwest.net. All items are welcome and appreciated. If any of the Chandler students wish to contribute, we can make arrangements to pick up your items.

Several of the youth students tested in September. I want to commend each of them on an outstanding job on their tests. It was obvious that they prepared well and they were some of the best tests that I have seen in the kids' classes for some time. Congratulations to each on a job well done. Testing at Aikido of Phoenix is by invitation and we don't invite students to test until they are ready but it still takes a lot of effort to prepare and do a good job. These students were a model for the rest of the youth students at Glendale.

Occasionally, students won't be able to attend class for a month and don't register. If this happens and you are able to attend a class or two that month, by all means feel free to attend. I don't want any of my students to feel that money is the main requirement for attending class. The dojo is always open to the students, regardless of their registration status. I also want to thank everybody for their timely registrations. I appreciate your attending to this matter every month. If it's more convenient, you can register for as many months as are on the registration flyer. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me.

That's the news from the Westside.

Until next time...Sayonara!

Russ Fleegle Sensei

"IT'S THE BEGINNING OF THE MONTH ALREADY?"

The Chandler dojo will begin mailing out friendly reminders to students who have not taken care of their registration responsibilities by the middle of the month. If there is ever a problem and you won't be able to register by mid-month please let Teresa know. Also, please let Teresa know if you register through the community center office. Unless you communicate otherwise we can only assume if registration hasn't occurred by mid-month that there's been an oversight and a friendly reminder will be sent.

It is the student's responsibility to register for class in a timely manner. This means students should fill out the registration form and pay by the 10th of each month. If you know you won't be able to train for the entire month then registration is not required. But if you train – however sporadically it may be – then you are expected to register.

As always, if there are financial difficulties please talk to Teresa. Scholarships are available.

PROMOTIONS AND TEST CANDIDATES

Invited to test:

Hachikyu – Brittney Barnes, Julian Preciado

1st Stepping Stone – Alexander Dorr

2nd Stepping Stone – Timmy Fleegle

Nidan (2nd degree black belt) – Russ Fleegle (Nov.)

Sandan (3rd degree black belt) – Teresa Mastison (Dec.)

Promoted:

Hachikyu – Sho Shapiro, Patrick Stenquist

2nd Stepping Stone – David Garner

3rd Stepping Stone – Kelly Daley, Conner Nigrovic

Rokkyu – Stanley Oehrlein

MAKOTO COMPLETION

In August we held our bi-annual Makoto – Advanced Student Achievement Test. As with all Makoto sessions, this one proved to be grueling and a true test of an Aikidoka. When all was said and done, there was one student left standing. Fred Wahlstrom of the Chandler dojo has now been added to the Makoto Budoka list. He did a great job and we are pleased to see his name added to this elite list of students. Congratulations.

2ND ANNUAL FALL CAMP

On Saturday and Sunday, October 12th and 13th, we will be holding the second annual fall Aikido camp in Williams, Arizona. Jim Clark of the Chandler dojo has been kind enough to offer the use of his property and

cabin for the event. Cost is \$10.00 per person. The only exception is children still in diapers. We will be arriving at the property on Friday night and classes will be held as follows:

Saturday: 10:00 am to 12:00 noon
2:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Sunday: 10:00 am to 12:00 noon

We ask that if you bring children, that you also bring an adult to watch them. No unaccompanied children will be permitted at the camp because of safety issues. Jim's cabin is approximately 12 miles north of Williams and is on a large, very wild property. Indoor space is on a first come first serve basis. If you like to camp out then there is no shortage of room to do so. If you are interested in attending, please see Sensei or contact Jim Clark for details.

CHRISTMAS PARTY

On Saturday December 14th, we will be holding the annual Aikido of Phoenix Christmas Party and Student Awards banquet. It will be held in Tempe off of Warner and McClintock. Times will be from 6:00 pm to midnight. Cost has yet to be determined because we still have a fundraiser in the works to offset the cost. Make plans to be there now. There will be a catered meal and dancing. Don't miss out!

CLASS FEES TO INCREASE IN NOVEMBER

Class fees for both the Chandler and Glendale dojos will be increased by \$10 a month starting next month. Because the community centers are on different session schedules we will be starting the increase beginning in November for the Chandler dojo and beginning in January for the Glendale dojo. The new fees are as follows:

Chandler – Aikido for Younger kids \$35
Aikido for youth/adults \$40
Family rate \$60
Glendale – Aikido for youth/adults \$40

As always if there is a problem with paying the new fees PLEASE talk to Sensei Mastison, Sensei Fleegle or Teresa. Scholarships are available.

PROFESSIONAL LISTINGS

Personal Training: Fred Mastison is a certified personal trainer and is able to help you meet ALL of your fitness goals. He offers complete training as well as single session consultations to design a diet and workouts. A complete list of services and rates is available by visiting our web site: <http://www.AikidoOfPhoenix.Com> and click on Personal Training or you may call 480-963-8014.

For Sale: Yamaha Studio Piano. 45" Height. Sounds and looks great \$2650.00. Matt Gallaher 480-227-3230

Gunsmithing: Mike Meacham is a licensed gunsmith and photographer with a shop in west Phoenix. He works on all types of weapons, but specializes in shotguns. He is equipped to do precision TIG welding on gun parts, knives, swords and other items as needed. He does photography of fine guns, swords, artwork, and portraiture. By appointment only. Call 623-849-6022

Web Page Designer: For help with any and all of your web page needs, please contact Pam Armstrong. She provides a vast knowledge and skill in the web page realm. 480-821-5097

On-Site Computer Technician: Jim Fleegle is an A+ certified computer technician with over 8 years of experience. He provides in-home computer service to diagnose and repair hardware and software problems, upgrade components, build computer systems, and design and install small networks. You can reach him at his home number (602) 253-8689 or his cell phone after 5:00 p.m. (602) 738-1047.