

Aikido of Phoenix

Satori Dojo Newsletter

WWW.AikidoOfPhoenix.Com

March, 2004



SENSEI'S CORNER

Konichiwa Deshi,

I recently got a call from a Sensei in Idaho. He is sending his 19 year old son to the Valley for school and has some concerns about his welfare. They are unfamiliar with the Valley and as any good father would do, he started trying to learn more about the area. What is unique in this situation however is that he phoned me personally and asked if I would mentor his son and in essence, try to steer him in good directions while he is here. Why did he call me you ask? Well, simply because I am an Aikidoka. This gentleman understands that regardless of what Aikido flag you may walk under,

in the end we are all Aikidoka and that makes us unique. It is a big big world out there and when you have a chance to surround yourselves



with people of like mind and clean healthy beliefs, you should stay there. That is not to say you should never leave the dojo. What I am trying to say though is that if you ever leave, that the Aikido family is really that. The people in our dojo are your immediate family, but a dojo, say in Idaho may be "cousins". I encourage you to enjoy and be thankful for the fantastic dojo family that we have. Have a great day!

In Oneness

Sensei

THE CHANDLER KIDS' CORNER

What another great month of training! During the younger class we reviewed some basics to help students prepare for testing and we also talked about the meaning of "Aikido" and "ki". I shared the literal definition of Aikido as "the way to blend with energy". We discussed what that means and then shared different ideas of what Aikido means to us. All ideas are correct and it was nice to hear what the students are thinking. Everyone gets something a little different out of their

training and everyone trains for different reasons. I think it's important to verbalize our thoughts once in awhile to get the brain thinking about what you are really doing and why.

During the older class we also had some discussions about Aikido and ki but we also added a couple other principles – masakatsu agatsu (true victory is victory over yourself), shodo-o-seisu (controlling the first move) and dochu no sei (calmness in action). It was enlightening to share information with the students and to hear their thoughts and ideas. We will be discussing these principles again and again so if you didn't quite understand something you'll have more opportunities in the future to give it further thought. And as usual if you ever have a question about a principle (or anything for that matter) please don't hesitate to ask. Besides having dialogue about Aikido principles we also practiced several aiki taiso (exercises you do alone) and then did techniques that directly (or indirectly) used the aiki taiso.

February 18 marked the last class James Nydegger would be my assistant instructor. He has enlisted in the US Army and left Arizona to spend some time with his family in Kansas before heading out to Ft. Benning, GA for basic training. We wish him all the best and his presence on the mat will be greatly missed.

I would like to formally welcome and introduce Robert Vaughn as my new assistant instructor. Robert is a shodan (1st degree black belt) and has been with Aikido of Phoenix since 1995. He is a dedicated individual and his calm, patient and humorous demeanor makes him a natural for helping with the kids' classes. I thank him in advance for all his hard work and effort.

I look forward to our time on the mat and hope it's one of hard work, good times and great rewards. See you on the mat!

Teresa Mastison Sensei

GLENDALE GAZETTE

Greetings from Glendale. If you live in the valley, and it's February, and you study a Japanese martial art, it can only mean one thing: it's Matsuri time! Several of the Glendale students were at the Matsuri festival Sunday, February 29th. We got a chance to visit outside of the dojo and see each other in a different setting. Personally, I always have a great time at this Japanese festival and seeing some of my students there

is an added pleasure. If you have an interest in Japanese culture or martial arts, mark your calendar for the last Saturday and Sunday in February and come on down for an enjoyable outing. This year marked the 20th anniversary of the Matsuri and it appears to be a permanent part of Phoenix culture.

A number of kids tested in Glendale in February and some more will be testing in March. I watched the February test candidates come in early and practice and they also got some time on the mats to get ready for their tests. I am very impressed with the dedication those students gave to preparing for their tests and it showed in their achievements. All of the candidates did an outstanding job on their tests and some showed me a great deal of improvement in just those four weeks before testing. They are good models for all of the students and I expect to see as much effort from the March candidates. It is through this kind of effort that a person improves in whatever they're doing. Keep up the great work everybody!

There will be open workouts on Sundays: March 7th, 14th, and 21st from 1 PM until 4 PM. I'm pleased with the turnout so far and hope that more students will take advantage of this extra time to practice. This is also a good time for test preparation. As with all Aikido of Phoenix activities, this time is for all adult students regardless of which dojo they're training in.

That's the news from the Westside.
Until next time...Sayonara!
Russ Fleagle Sensei

SEMPAI'S CORNER

Konichiwa,

Last month I recently had the opportunity to attend a class taught by Sensei at the Glendale dojo. He really hit upon a most striking and prolific philosophical teaching point during class. Sensei was giving a lecture about the philosophy of "Bushin" (Martial Spirit) and how we are really training to defend against an opponent mentally or emotionally, not physically! (I personally lost a few brain cells during this class trying to absorb this information) He kept hammering this point to the Deshi that this is truly what Budo is all about. Defending one's self against an attack with love, care, and concern, not anger. Taking care not to harm the attacker, just because you can. Showing restraint by displaying a high moral concern for your opponent is a true sign of Budo. Causing them to think how their attack is failing, not succeeding. Why they are out of position and not in the position of power they first perceived when they started the attack. Not by the momentary pain that is caused by the technique being applied, but by trying to figure out why they are falling.

Learning how to lead an opponent's center and mind during an attack is what we are learning to master on the mat; also we are learning to train with a very intent focus. It does not have to be fast, just true and honest in nature every time you attack. Fifty percent of an Aikidoka's career is spent being the Uke.

Now the next step in the process is to learn how to utilize this philosophical point more effectively off the mat in our daily lives. How to extend our "Ki" subconsciously, not having to stop and physically think about extending each time we are confronted with a dilemma be it physically or mentally because we are always extending our "Ki" all of the time, always moving from our center. The only way we can master this is to first and foremost master ourselves both mentally and physically on the mat in a safe, positive environment allowing for mistakes to happen.

Lastly I would like to congratulate all who have been invited to test this month. From the preparations I have observed recently these test will be outstanding. All of the ukes are outstanding Aikidoka and mentors in their own right.

In Oneness
Gene Potocki, Sempai

LOCATION CHANGE FOR CHANDLER CLASSES

On Tuesday, March 9 the Community Center will not have any rooms available for us to hold classes so instead of canceling classes we will hold them outside in the grassy area in front of the Community Center and Library. Classes will be held and conducted as usual although you may escape the tumbling that night☺ .

PROMOTIONS AND TEST CANDIDATES

Promoted:

Hachikyu – Steven Abdi-Moradi, Ryan Wiskow, Troy Francis, Yelena Shepard

Shichikyu – RJ Ayala, Natalie Barkley, Adam Stringham

1st Stepping Stone – Holly Swenson

2nd Stepping Stone – Sho Shapiro, Grant Swenson, Aryel Nigrovic

3rd Stepping Stone – Joshua Cakebread

4th Stepping Stone – Shantanu Bala, Kyle Radosevich

Rokkyu – Laura Carpenter, Kelly Adams, Conner Nigrovic

Invited to test:

Hachikyu – Austin Wiskow, Cargen Shepard, Alexander Le, Thomas Cazares, Cody Geno, Raquel Dumas, Jessica Cryderman, Ian Williams, Alec Hood, Mika Carpenter, Joshua Smith

Shichikyu – Zach Sampo, Jordan Savoca, Clayton Carpenter

3rd Stepping Stone – John Barkley, Ethan Berkson, Dominic Lopez

4th Stepping Stone – Tessa Abrams

Rokkyu – Cater Abrams, Amy Doppler, Niko Huffman

Gokyu – Emilee Sparks, Kaitlyn Radosevich, Jade Mirasol, Ross Gubrud

Yonkyu – Wayne Johnson, Bill Barnes, Cory Hare

Sankyu – Karen Fabiano

CHANDLER DOJO TO HOST SPECIAL KIDS SAFETY CLASS

On Wed., April 7th Teresa Mastison Sensei will present a **FREE** special self-defense class for both Chandler children's classes instead of regular class. This will be open to all students of Aikido of Phoenix, their siblings, friends, neighbors, relatives and anyone else you can think of.

This special class will cover some basic self-defense information and give the kids some concrete things to do to help them escape should they ever be attacked. There are some basic fundamental principles to self-defense that need to be taught, then practiced and reinforced. **PARENTS ARE HIGHLY ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND!** Please stay for the class so that you will know what your child is learning and be able to talk about it frequently and practice the techniques.

Sometimes I think, "surely kids know ...surely parents are telling their kids..." but after the latest surge of abductions I realize that not everyone has the important information that could save a child's life. Talk to your children often about what you want them to do in certain situations. Practice techniques or things they can do to increase their chances of being noticed and escaping. It's one thing to talk about a technique but quite another to actually do it. Let your kids practice on you – someone safe. It may not be the "real thing" but just going through the motions will hopefully create a trigger for their memory and help them remember what to do in a real life situation.

Class times will be the same as usual: 5:15 – 5:45 for 5 – 8 year olds and 6:00 – 7:00 for 9 year olds and older. You do not have to wear your gi but may if you want to. Especially for the younger class, we will be crunched for time but we will be sure to cover what I consider to be the most important and I will provide a handout outlining what was covered in class plus much more. It is meant to be a guide and reference for parents to help them teach their children important safety skills. This will also be available for anyone who won't be able to attend but wishes to have the information.

I have no idea what kind of a turn out we will have – hopefully a large one – so I will thank you in advance for being patient and understanding during this one-time event. I will strive to make it as meaningful as possible.

Teresa Mastison Sensei

EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN FOR COMMUNITY CENTER

The Chandler Community Center has created an Emergency Action Plan to evacuate the building in case of an emergency. I would like to pass on this information so parents especially will know where we go in the event the building needs to be evacuated during class time.

The plan calls for people from the Community Center to exit quickly and calmly through the nearest available exit and then meet at the flagpole in front of the Library. If that area is unsafe then the parking lot East of the Senior Center will be the meeting place. Once there instructors are to take roll to see that everyone from their class is accounted for. The best I will be able to do is to take the sign in book with me and check to see that everyone who signed in is at the meeting place. Please be sure to sign in every time you come to class. This will make it much easier for me to know who is in class that evening if we ever have to put this action plan to the test.

I just wanted everyone to know this information, especially parents who do not stay for class, should we ever have to evacuate the building.

AIKIDO OF PHOENIX HAS NEW PHONE NUMBER

Aikido of Phoenix has a new phone number. As of the printing of this newsletter, it will be in effect. The new number is 480-699-2334. Thank you!

PHOTOS AND HOME MOVIES TO DVD

Do you have some great family movies on VHS or photos that you would like converted onto a DVD? Budoworks Multimedia Services is a full media transfer service. If you want to preserve you memories, the best way to do it is to capture them into DVD. We can create fantastic photo montages and exciting and fun slide shows set to music. Great for gifts. Contact Sensei or Dojo Cho for more information!

AIKIDO VIDEOTAPES AVAILABLE

Mastison Sensei has completed several videos and they are now available in VHS or CD (for

computer). We also have DVD format – please add \$5.00 for DVD. Following is a short description of each tape and it's cost. If you are interested in obtaining any of these please see Teresa.

Officer Survival-Patrol to SWAT - \$20.00

This tape covers open hand defenses, weapon retention, knife defenses and much more. This was designed to supplement direct instruction for today's law enforcement professionals.

Go Kihon Aikido Waza - \$30.00

This tape was made with the goal of exposing students to five kihon (basic) techniques and their application to all the basic attacks.

Student Guide to the Fundamentals of Aikido-\$20.00

This tape was developed in an attempt to help you understand the basics of Aikido and dojo life. It covers ukemi (tumbling), etiquette, undos (hand exercises), aiki taiso (exercises you do alone), weapons, and history.

Kobudo - \$20.00

This tape touches on the fundamental of the weapons of Budo. We look at two common weapons as well as two that are rarely seen in most dojos. The weapons that are covered are the bokken (wooden sword), the jo (wooden staff), obi waza (belt) and the kuboton (small, key chain style stick).

