



**AIKIDO OF PHOENIX**

[www.AikidoOfPhoenix.com](http://www.AikidoOfPhoenix.com)

## ***Aikido of Phoenix Newsletter*** ***March 2010***

### ***FROM TERESA MASTISON SENSEI***

It takes a lot to make a dojo the warm and inviting kind of place that draws people in. Here at Aikido of Phoenix we are extremely blessed to have all of you as students. Every student contributes to the energy of the dojo just by being there, but when students practice hard and with a glad heart it heightens the energy of the dojo even more. Thanks for making our dojos welcoming and friendly places to train.

Besides enjoying the company of the people who participate in class coming to the dojo for practice serves many purposes. You get some exercise, you socialize with others, you learn and practice techniques, you learn about and discuss philosophies; but what I find most rewarding as well as helpful in my daily life is my improved state of mind when I leave the dojo. You enter the dojo at the end of your day sometimes burdened with the day's events or worries that are on your mind. You decide to come anyway. You go through the motions of stretching, ukemi and begin the task of focusing on what Sensei is teaching and doing your best to replicate what was demonstrated. Before you know it, class is over and you feel so much better. You had to push everything else to the back burner in order to focus on your training and by doing so you helped change your state of mind. This, more times than not, is exactly what I needed to improve my day but wasn't aware that I needed it. Persistent training, especially when you don't feel like it or have had a bad day, pays off.

I hope you have had similar experiences. I think it's one of the best benefits to your Aikido training. Positive energy that you share with others in class can do wonders on your attitude and change your day as well as outlook on things.

We have hard working students in all our dojos and I want to thank you for your presence and diligent training because it is your efforts and energy that help us all, even if you're not aware of it.

### ***FROM JOHN SCANLIN SENSEI***

"There are no contests in the Art of Peace. A true warrior is invincible because he or she contests with nothing. Defeat means to defeat the mind of contention that we harbor within." -O'Sensei

"One must first learn to control oneself before attempting to harmonize and control others. Without a good balance and control of oneself, one can neither avoid an attack nor apply an effective technique on others. It is through self-control that one can learn to enjoy a harmonious way of life." -Rod Kobayashi, founder of Seidokan Aikido (our style).

Masagatsu Agatsu - "True victory is victory over oneself." - an Aikido philosophy that stresses that we must eliminate all the negative aspects of our character (fighting spirit, ego, pride, jealousy, etc) before we grow as a person and an aikidoka. If I could pick one word to describe Aikido, it would be "control". We control an attack with our techniques, control our bodies with our ukemi, control our emotions with ki breathing and dochu-no-sei (calmness in action), and control our negative thinking by applying the principle of Mastagatsu Agatsu. Stay in control!

Congratulations to Snedigar students Asher, Samantha, Rusty, and Logan for doing such a great job on your tests. I enjoyed working with each of you.

Keep the spirit strong!

### ***FROM LUCY MAILLOUX SENSEI***

We have had a lot of action at the dojo. Last month the class pulled out their jos and this month we have moved on to bokkens. Perfect timing since the weather is starting to get nice which allows us the opportunity to do our weapons work outside. A change of training venues is always good; it adds to our training experience and takes us out of our comfort zones. The dojo held its first Self Defense Class which went well and provided a very different look at our training. As students we become accustomed to practicing in our gis, but training in our regular clothes has a different feel to it. In addition, we have welcomed three new students to the dojo. As new students I encourage you to ask questions, be patient, allow yourself to make mistakes, train sincerely and in time you will see great progress.

The class and I had a great time at the Matsuri festival and thanks to all who started the day at our home for breakfast. While I was watching the demonstrations at the festival, it reminded me that training in Aikido is a privilege and one that should be respected. We train Aikido as a complete budo and although there are softer versions of Aikido, we focus on both the physical and philosophical side of the art. It is imperative that when we train, we do so in an ethical manner. If we have disarmed an attacker and safely resolved the conflict, is it necessary to then take our blade and harm the attacker? In my readings, I found that O'Sensei taught that there are four levels of ethics:

1. You attack and kill an unsuspecting victim which is a display of unethical behavior and one that lacks honor.
2. You provoke an attack and injure the person when they attack. This demonstrates ego which shows bad judgment.
3. You are attacked and unnecessarily injure the attacker during your defense. This demonstrates a lack of control and adherence to the true ethics of Aikido.

- You are attacked and defend yourself without causing serious harm to the attacker. This is the highest level of ethical conduct.

As evident by the teaching of O'Sensei, the knowledge that we have as Aikidoka holds us to a higher ethical standard. So to answer my own previous question, defend yourself but do so with honor and understand that it is not necessary to harm an attacker once the conflict has been resolved.

*"Those who are skilled in combat do not become angered, those who are skilled at winning do not become afraid. Thus the wise win before the fight, while the ignorant fight to win."*

Morihei Ueshiba, O Sensei

As always, remember to train for success, learn to anticipate and overcome obstacles, and failure comes when you do not sincerely dedicate yourself to your commitments and accept that you will not succeed.

Congratulations to Amanda Redington who has been invited to test for the rank of Sankyū.

March 26-28 is WorldFEST 2010 in downtown Phoenix. Snedigar students, if you are interested, meet at Sensei's home at 3:00pm so that we can take the light rail in to the Festival. More details about the festival can be found later in this newsletter.

### **KIDS' CORNER**

*(Cue "Mission Impossible" them music)*

Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to practice using your peripheral vision, act on any information you gather from your eyes, ears, nose or sense of ki, and to be persistent in discovering the source.

So, what does this mean? It means as you go about your daily business pay attention to what you see, hear, smell and sense. If you see something move out of the corner of your eye (peripheral vision) turn to see what it is. If you hear something, find the source of what is making the noise. If you smell something that you don't recognize search for what is creating it. If you sense something out of the ordinary don't dismiss it, find out what is causing it and don't stop until you discover what it is. If you can't determine the source just by looking, tell an adult and let them help you. By paying attention and locating the sources of what you see, hear, smell or sense it gives you the advantage of extra time. For example, you're walking down your neighborhood street when you hear a dog barking wildly. You turn to see where the dog is and notice that he is behind a fence, but jumping up and down aggressively and getting close to jumping over the fence. Because you noticed this you increase your speed in order to get home before the dog gets over the fence. Had you not noticed the dog's aggressive behavior and how close he was to jumping the

fence, you may not have walked any faster. This could have been quite a surprise if the dog got over the fence and came after you. This is just a made up example, but I hope you can see the usefulness of paying attention. What kind of examples can you come up with, real or made up, where paying attention to your surroundings would give you extra time to react and/or avoid a dangerous situation?

Now, here's an important point for all kids concerning finding the source of what you see, hear, smell or sense. **DO NOT GO LOOKING FOR THE SOURCE BY YOURSELF!** If you notice something out of the ordinary you might be able to just turn your head and see what it is, but if you can't identify it immediately tell an adult and let them locate the source. This is especially true if the noise, smell or whatever is outside or in another part of the house. You can be an invaluable help in alerting your parents when you notice something that is not normal. Don't dismiss those "weird" feelings. Be persistent (don't give up) in identifying the source or having someone else find the source. Even if it turns out to be nothing, you have to practice paying attention to your senses and it is ALWAYS better to be safe rather than sorry.

Now, go about your business and pay attention!

### **FAMILY RATE CHANGE COMING SOON**

Beginning June 2010 for the Chandler and South Chandler dojos, each person who registers for Aikido will pay an individual city fee instead of a single fee for a family. By making this change the city will align all their classes to reflect the same policy across the board. We are the only class that offers a family rate, which has caused some frustration and confusion. Currently, you can view the Chandler and South Chandler Aikido class information online, but you can't actually register because their system is not set up to handle the family rate. In addition, the fees currently listed online are incorrect because the system is unable to distinguish between family and individual rates so charges both. This is very misleading especially for potential students. In June, when this change happens, it will then be possible to register for Aikido classes online and the information posted will be correct.

However, this change will increase the amount families pay the city, but the instructor fees will remain the same. Currently, the family city fee is \$11 or \$17 depending on which dojo/class you attend. When this change goes into effect, each participant registered for class will pay the city fee for an individual - \$8, \$11, or \$13 per person depending on which dojo and class is attended.

As always, we want to make Aikido available to anyone who truly wants to train. If this change creates a problem we ask that you talk to us and we will figure something out. The City of Chandler also has scholarships available.

## ***WHAT'S A SEMPAI AND WHO'S WHO IN AIKIDO OF PHOENIX?***

A Sempai is a student who acts as a liaison between the Sensei and the students. It is a student who understands the functions and protocols of the dojo and helps the Sensei teach others how things work in the dojo. We are not Japanese, but we strive to run our dojos in a traditional manner. This means our dojos are not democracies. There is a strict hierarchy to the structure of a dojo. The Kancho is the founder and head of a school. The Chief Instructor is in charge of the school's instructors as well as running the school. The Sensei at each dojo is in charge of that particular dojo and the Sempai assists the Sensei.

A Sempai is a leader in the dojo because they have demonstrated leadership skills and have enough experience to know what is expected of students. Their main job is to help students learn dojo etiquette and to follow proper protocol of the dojo. They also occasionally hold meetings to review and/or explain things that need to be addressed. The Senseis that teach for Aikido of Phoenix are friendly, open and approachable people, but if there is ever a time when they are not available or if you are unsure if it's appropriate to ask the Sensei, the Sempai is the person to ask. Lucy, John and myself encourage students to ask questions and we love to discuss Aikido with anyone willing to listen, but generally, if it's related to the function or business of the dojo the Sempai is the person to go to. A dojo may have a Dojo Cho as well, who is the business manager. The Dojo Cho handles things like registration issues, orders and anything else related to the business of the dojo. If there is no Dojo Cho the Sempai will often take on those responsibilities as well, although it is not expected. The Sensei is always available to help the dojo run smoothly and to answer any questions. But, in the traditional dojo the roles of Sempai and Dojo Cho were created to help run the dojo which allowed the Sensei to solely focus on teaching.

I would like to take this opportunity to formally announce that Jim Magda has been selected to be the Sempai for the Mesa dojo. Jim has been training with Aikido of Phoenix for almost a year and was just recently promoted to the rank of Gokyu (blue belt).

For your information, following is the hierarchy of Aikido of Phoenix:

- Kancho - Fred Mastison Sensei (retired 9-09)
- Chief Instructor; Children's Instructor - Teresa Mastison Sensei
- Instructor for Chandler - John Scanlin Sensei
- Instructor for S. Chandler - Lucy Mailloux Sensei
- Instructor for Mesa - Teresa Mastison Sensei
- Sempai for Chandler - Daniel Horn
- Sempai for S. Chandler - Thor Mailloux
- Sempai for Mesa - Jim Magda
- Dojo Cho for Chandler and Mesa - Teresa Mastison Sensei
- Dojo Cho for S. Chandler - Amanda Redington

I hope this helps you understand to some degree how our dojo is structured. I know it always helps me to have background information and that was my intent with this article. If you have any questions feel free to ask me. - Teresa Mastison Sensei

## ***RANK PROMOTIONS***

*Hachikyu* (green belt) - Grady Edwards, Samantha Dip  
*Shichikyu* (orange belt) - Claren Ryan, Rusty Wilkins  
*1st Stepping Stone* - Kiana Sampredo, Aidan Jaimes, Logan Knapik  
*2nd Stepping Stone* - Aislyn Ryan  
*3rd Stepping Stone* - Daniel Sampredo, Nicholas Wright  
*4th Stepping Stone* - Thomas Skalsky, Michael Skalsky  
*Gokyu* (blue belt) - Brandon Magda, Jim Magda  
*Yonkyu* (purple belt) - Mike Meyer

## ***AIKIDO DEMONSTRATIONS DURING OPEN HOUSE AT SNEDIGAR RECREATION CENTER***

On Saturday, March 20 Snedigar Recreation Center (location of South Chandler dojo) will be hosting an Open House that will highlight classes taught there. Both the kids and adult classes will be having demonstrations so that the community can learn more about what is offered at the center.

The Open House begins at 10:00 am and will end at 12:00 pm. The Aikido demonstration will be from 10:00-10:30 with the adult class continuing with regular class until 11:30, which will act as another demonstration in and of itself. We will have students demonstrating a wide range of techniques to help showcase what Aikido is about and hopefully encourage people to come to a class and give it a try.

Snedigar students who are participating, please come dressed in your gi and ready to go by 9:55 am. This will be a great way to get in some extra practice. Once our demonstration is over and while you are there, check out the other classes that will be participating as well. There will be informational flyers, make-and-take activities and drawings for free stuff.

Thank you in advance for everyone who will be participating. It is very much appreciated. Let's show everyone what a great art Aikido is!

## ***AIKIDO OF PHOENIX T-SHIRTS COMING SOON!***

We will soon be taking orders for our new Aikido of Phoenix t-shirts. The shirts will be steel blue in color with the Aikido Of Phoenix logo on the front and a dynamic Aikido image on the back. They will be made out of a 50/50 cotton/poly blend material and cost will be around \$15-20. We will have kids and adult sizes.



Phoenix Sister Cities WorldFEST  
March 26-28, 2010  
**FREE Admission**

Celebrate the world we live in at the 5th annual Phoenix Sister Cities WorldFEST, held in collaboration with Alliance Beverage Distributing Company. WorldFEST is a celebration of diversity featuring the cultures, arts and food of Phoenix's sister cities and much more. Visitors can see, hear, smell, taste, touch and actively participate in this hands-on, multicultural festival with FREE ADMISSION.

**LOCATION:**

Heritage & Science Park  
115 North 6th Street  
Phoenix, Arizona 85004

**FRIDAY, MARCH 26th :**

11:00am-1:30pm: **WorldLUNCH and Live Entertainment**  
4:00pm-10:00pm: **World of Beers, Food and Live Entertainment**  
4:00pm-10:00pm: **SRP WorldSTAGE Live Entertainment**

**SATURDAY, MARCH 27th : Noon - 11pm**

**KidsWORLD and Sister Cities Village**  
Noon-5:00pm: **Friendship Stage International Performances**  
Noon-5:00pm: **KidsWORLD & Sister Cities Village**  
Noon-10:00pm: **WorldSTAGE Live Entertainment**  
Noon-11:00pm: **World of Beers**  
1:00pm: **Sister Cities Parade**

**SUNDAY, MARCH 28th: Noon - 5pm**

**Asia-Pacific Day**  
Noon-5:00pm: **KidsWORLD & Sister Cities Village**  
Noon-5:00pm: **Hospitality Industry Sunday**

**For More Information visit [www.phoenixsistercities.org](http://www.phoenixsistercities.org)**



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