



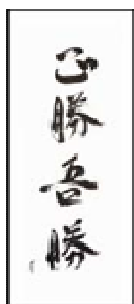
ABUNDANT PEACE AIKIDO & T'AI CHI

Connections

Editorial

April 2011

Great news! It is finally light early enough for our morning keiko to resume for the season. We will begin on Thursday 7th April 2011 from 6:00 to 7:30 AM. The mat fee is only \$10.00; please join us if you can manage it!!



I cannot speak for anyone else, but from my perspective it seems as though winter has become our only season! I was relieved today that the temperature climbed into the double digits, above zero; at last, there is some hope that the snow will actually melt, that the world will turn green again, and that I might yet get another chance to ride my motorcycles!

March was a brief interlude of relative calm in our always active training schedule, and still there was no shortage of activity. Our beginner T'ai Chi class reached that first milestone, the end of the mini-set or the first "cross hands" of the set. As well, Sifu Brad held a very successful meditation retreat, with more than a dozen students in attendance; something for all of us to consider attending, the next time it is offered. Finally, we continue to see a steady stream of new students into the Beginner Aikido program, eager to test the waters of the aiki path.

On an entirely unrelated note, we are going to have a Federal Election on the 2nd of May; pointless to some, yet essential to others. Most of us probably have an opinion, one way or another; those that do not, should use the time between now and then to educate themselves, formulate an opinion, then make the time to cast their vote. "Democracy, said Sir Winston, is the worst form of government, except for all the others"; but, it requires that every Citizen do the work, and I hope that each of you will do just that. Remember, if you don't cast your vote, you surrender the right to complain!

I will close with a message for our Senior Students; we seem to be struggling a bit in our efforts to cover the Beginner Skills Program. I remind everyone that we all thought it was a good idea, and we must now give the support this program needs in order to be successful.

Stuart

Corporal Francisco Gomez Memorial Library

February marked the first anniversary of our Library; that is a significant milestone, one



we should all be proud of. That said, this benchmark is also an opportunity to take stock of what we have built, and to resolve going forward that we will not allow the

momentum to recede, that together we will take this to the next level. In recognition of this Anniversary I challenged each member of our community to do two things sometime in the next six months; first, borrow something from our Library and read it, and second, make a donation of a book or other media. I include this challenge again, to ensure it does not get forgotten or overlooked.



Promotions

We congratulate those of us who were promoted in March of 2011:

Kids

- Brynn G. Jr 14th Kyu
- Ethan G. Jr. 14th Kyu
- Parker B. Jr. 14th Kyu
- Lacey S. Jr. 13th Kyu
- Rachel T. Jr. 13th Kyu
- Michael B. Jr. 13th Kyu
- Peter C. Jr. 13th Kyu
- Ryan T. Jr. 13th Kyu

Adults

- Scott R. 6th Kyu
- Terry M. 6th Kyu

Congratulations!

Spring Course Calendar

Emergency and Preventive Self Defense.

Discover simple yet very effective ways of emergency and preventive self-defense in this one day program. You will learn basic skills that you will be able to immediately use to make yourself safer, and more capable of handling any situation. This program offers a no-nonsense and practical approach teaching effective techniques that do not require size, strength or special skill. Self defense is a life skill; become safer in your home, on public transit, on the street, in your vehicle, or at any time you may find yourself in a dangerous situation.

Sunday, 15 May 11, 2:00 to 5:00 PM, \$75

Ikeda Sensei Seminar



A group of keen aikido students will once again make the long journey to Aikido of Missoula to attend a Seminar with Hiroshi Ikeda Shihan, on the weekend of 15 to 17 April 2011. Hotel rooms have been pre-booked; please inform

Stuart of your needs to have a room set aside in your name. Additionally, those planning to attend need to sort out their transportation plans. Finally, Senior Students remaining behind, please discuss with Stuart your availability to cover classes during the weekend of 15th through 19th April, as Sensei Brad is planning to attend the Seminar. Thank you in advance for your help in keeping things rolling at the Dojo!



Announcements



Aikido of Missoula will host Hiroshi Ikeda Shihan on the weekend of 15th

through 17th April 2011. A number of us are planning to attend, and we have pre-booked hotel rooms at the Days Inn, across the street from the Dojo. This is the next exciting

seminar opportunity; Ikeda Shihan is a highly skilled and exceptionally powerful practitioner and teacher; make the journey if you can. When we travel to Missoula as a group, a fabulous time is always had by all! Ask anyone who has made the trip before, or check for seminar details at www.aikidomissoula.com

Friday, 15th April 2011

6:00 to 6:45 PM: Registration
7:00 to 8:30 PM: Keiko

Saturday, 16th April 2011

10:00 AM to Noon: Keiko
2:30 to 4:30 PM: Keiko
7:30 PM to ???: Potluck

Sunday, 17th April 2011

10:00 AM to Noon: Keiko
2:30 to 4:30 PM: Keiko

David Goldberg Sensei will host a four day Bridge Seminar from May 12th to 15th, at the River of Life Centre in Fort Washington Pennsylvania. Some of us are making this trip; speak to Stuart, Shawn, or Marcel if you want to know more!

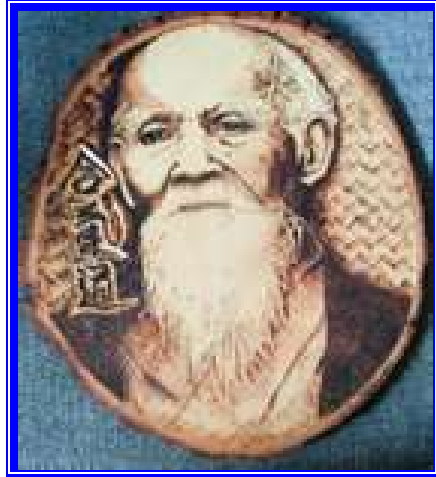
Dojo Care will be done on Saturday, April 9th from 1:30 to 2:00 PM.

The first "Noodle Night" for the Spring 2011 T'ai Chi course took place on the evening of Saturday, March 26th, and was both well attended and thoroughly enjoyed. Please join me in congratulating this focused and enthusiastic group for their excellent progress.

Special Training

Aikido students of all ranks are invited and encouraged to attend our Special Training session, which is scheduled for Friday, 8th April 2011 from 6:30 to 9:30 PM. The theme this month is "Kokyu Nage". We will explore kokyu nage as the art of combining the forces of our mind, breath and body for unified movement both within ourselves and in connection with another. Blending, balance taking, and leading our training partners are all important skills we develop through the practice of kokyu nage.

O Sensei's Wisdom



"The totally awakened warrior can freely utilize all elements contained in heaven and earth. The true warrior learns how to correctly perceive the activity of the universe and how to transform martial techniques into vehicles of purity, goodness, and beauty. A warrior's mind and body must be permeated with enlightened wisdom and deep calm."

-Ueshiba Morihei, O Sensei-



Sword Training

Many of our students had the opportunity to examine the outstanding iaito, batto, and heirloom quality tachi that are offered through Gold Mountain Forge, Sensei David Goldberg's other passion.

There is great value in training with first an iaito, and then a live blade; there is also great joy in the ownership of something so beautiful. Goldberg Sensei has graciously permitted me to act on his behalf in regard to sword sales; please feel free to see me if you have questions or would like to make an acquisition.

-Stuart-

For New Students

Once again we have seen an enormous influx of new students, eager to explore the Aiki path. We welcome each of you to our very special community, and hope that your life will be enriched by your experiences here.



The level of martial training experience each of you has will vary; for some, your time at our Dojo may feel almost like coming home, while for others many of our customs and traditions may seem odd or unusual. Please remember that all of us have stood in your shoes; do not be afraid to ask questions of any of our Senior Students, who will be only too happy to give you an answer, or to direct you to an appropriate source of further enlightenment.

Bowing. This is a simple tradition of both Japanese Culture and Martial training that we honor as a symbol of respect. We bow before we step onto or off of the mats to show humility and respect to our training place. We bow to the Shomen Wall and the photo of O Sensei as a gesture of respect and gratitude for the opportunity to train. We bow to our Teachers, or Sensei, to express our thanks for their wisdom and guidance. Finally, we bow to each other, and say "oneigashimasu" before we practice together, again as a gesture of respect and because none of us can learn Aikido without our training partners.

Sweeping. You have no doubt noticed that someone sweeps the mats before, and after our classes. This is done for the practical purpose of cleaning dust from the mats; but, more than that it is done as a symbolic purification of the training space. To sweep must never be seen as menial or demeaning; rather, view it as a privilege, and as an opportunity to focus your mind and body and prepare not only the dojo, but also yourself, for the challenges to come.

Common Sense. Read the ASU training manual that was provided to you; it will help you understand our world a little better. Also, remember that Aikido training involves significant physical contact; it is therefore a simple courtesy to ensure your clothing and bodies are clean. All jewelry must be removed prior to training, to prevent injury to yourselves or your partners. Finally, if you are fighting off a cold, you may choose to stay away until you are well, or to watch the class rather than participating.

Abundant Peace Aikido takes pride in offering training that is both very martial, yet executed with safety in mind. Some of the rules we follow are to honor the traditional ways, while others are to ensure training safety. All are designed to enhance the Aiki experience, and to help every one of our students, new and old, to train with joy!