



AIKIDO CENTER OF LOS ANGELES

NEWSLETTER

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Los Angeles, California
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August 1, 1989
Volume IV. Number 7.

SUMMERTIME AT THE DOJO

Message from Sensei:

Summertime is always a time for vacations, trips and breaks from school. Usually, the membership dwindles a little and we don't see many students until the fall. It is a time when we see many students come and go. Ken Watanabe left for Japan in July for a three months stay at his family home in Wakayama. Eriko Shoji just returned from Japan along with newlyweds, Ron and Junko Hill. We expect the return of Morgan Weisser this month after a one month vacation in Japan and Stephen Stephanides should also be returning about this time after a ten months stay. We have many students taking small vacations here and there.

In Europe, most dojos close for the summer. Around June, all the instructors have a big seminar trying to create enough income to last themselves three months until fall. Most students leave the dojo on vacation so practice generally ceases.

Generally, we think of the summer time as a lazy time until our students return in the fall. Quite contrary to this, our dojo becomes so busy and is, indeed, July proves to be one of the busiest times of the year. This year has been especially busy for us. In July, we submitted an application for a cultural grant from the state. I met with Sugano Sensei of the New York Aikikai at the airport on a stop-over on his way to Australia, for a very nice talk. On the 13th of July, we were interviewed by Channel 18, for a special Nisei Week program which will air on August 13th. On July 15th and 16th, the dojo demonstrated Aikido at the Zenshuji O-Bon Festival on Saturday and at the Lotus Festival in Echo Park on Sunday. During the same weekend, I presented an exhibition of Japanese swords at the Zenshuji. On the 19th, I was very fortunate to meet Master Anshin Uchida, a teacher of the Noh Theater, who has been designated at an "Important Intangible Cultural Asset" (Juyo Mukei Bunkazai) which is one step below a "Living National Treasure." On the following day, I participated in the PANA Convention here at the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center which is a convention celebrating cultural relations between North and South America. I met many interesting teachers and individuals from Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, etc. About one thousand people attended. As of this writing, I still must meet Tozen Akiyama Sensei, the head of the Milwaukee Zen Center who is visiting Los

Angeles on the 22nd and 23rd. On the 23rd, I must observe the 1st anniversary of the passing of my mother. On the 24th, I have a television interview for Channel 56. There is a Carnival Appreciation Party by Zenshuji on the 30th.

The month of August proves to be equally busy. On the 12th and 13th, we will present our Annual Nisei Week Aikido and Swordsmanship Demonstration at the Yaohan Plaza. This is our most important demonstration of the year. I have appointed to the Nisei Week committee this year, so I will be assisting with many other events.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to everyone who has been helping inside and outside of the dojo. I do believe that we are doing important work inside the dojo by providing excellent training for our students and, at the same time, I believe that we are making a significant contribution to the cultural community of the West Coast through our participation and our many contributions. Little by little, we are building a dojo that everyone can be proud of. As I attend these functions, I am able to meet many people and learn from their experiences and insights through their conservation. At the same time, many people now immediately recognize the Aikido Center of Los Angeles.

Summertime is never a lazy time for our dojo.

I hope everyone continues to train hard and support the work of the dojo.

Thank you.

Daniel Furuya,
Chief Instructor



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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

July 29th - August 5th. New England Summer Camp at the Roger and Williams College in Rhode Island.

July 30th. Dojo Picnic. Griffith Park.

July 30th. Martial Arts Training Magazine on the stands. Sensei's article: "Learning Is Only the Second Step."

August 5th - 6th. Nisei Week Hozonkai Japanese Sword Exhibit at the JACCC.

August 12th - 13th. Annual Nisei Week Aikido and Swordsmanship Demonstration at the Yaohan Plaza at 3rd and Alameda Sts. on the 2nd floor from 1:00pm to 2:00pm.

August 13th. The dojo featured on Channel 18 at 7:30pm.

Spetember 1st. Publication of the USAF Eastern Region Newsletter.

September 10th - 14th. Banff Aikido Summer Camp in Alberta, Canada, with Waka-Sensei, Yamada Sensei and Kanai Sensei.

DOJO TRAINING SCHEDULE

Beginning Classes

Monday through Friday 6:15pm-7:15pm

Monday-Wednesday-Friday 7:30pm-8:30pm

Saturday & Sunday 10:15am-11:30am

Advanced Classes

Tuesday 7:30pm-8:30pm

Saturday 11:30am-12:30pm

Weapons Class

Thursday 7:30pm-8:30pm

Children's Class

Sunday Noon-1:00pm

Iaido-Muso Shinden Ryu

Wednesday 8:45pm-9:45pm

Saturday & Sunday 9:00am-10:00am

**ANNUAL NISEI AIKIDO
AND
SWORDSMANSHIP DEMONSTRATION**

**August 12th and 13th
1:00pm to 2:00pm**

Yaohan Plaza, 2nd Floor

DOJO PICNIC

**July 30, 1989
2:00pm to 5:00pm after practice**

Griffith Park

DOJO POSTERS

This year, we have beautiful posters for our Annual Nisei Week Aikido and Iaido Demonstration. They were designed by the Little Tokyo Workshop at the JACCC by Mr. Miles Hamada.

We will be circulating these posters throughout the city before our Nisei Week demonstration. After the demonstration, we have ordered an extra 100 posters which we be on sale for \$10.00 each. This money will be used towards repairing the mats and carpet. Please reserve your poster now. It is a "limited" edition.

TOZEN AKIYAMA SENSEI PRESENTS LECTURE ON ZEN

Tozen Akiyama Sensei, resident priest of the Milwaukee Zen Center, conducted a short service and presented a lecture on Zen in the dojo on July 25, 1989. Akiyama Sensei was formerly an Aikido and yoga instructor in Japan who became a Zen priest at the age of forty. He worked at Zenshuji a number of years before moving to Milwaukee, at their invitation, to head the Milwaukee Zen Center.

ANSHIN UCHIDA SENSEI VISITS DOJO

The dojo was honored on July 19, 1989, with a very special guest, Anshin Uchida Sensei, a master of the Noh theater, from Japan, who has been designated as *Juyo Mukei Bunkazai* or "Important Intangible Cultural Asset." (This is one step below the rank of "Living National Treasure.") Uchida Sensei said, "I never saw such a beautiful dojo and I hope that some day I will be able to teach or perform here when I visit America again. Uchida Sensei will be presenting an outdoor performance of Noh at the JACCC in September. This is the

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UCHIDA SENSEI continued.

first performance of *takigi noh* (outdoor noh) in America. Twenty-two other artists will accompany him. He will be performing "Kokaji," the story of a sword-maker who becomes possessed by the spirit of a fox while forging a sword.

OUR THANKS TO ZENSHUJI

The Zenshuji Temple presented a generous donation to the dojo for our Aikido demonstration at their O-Bon Festival and carnival on July 15, 1989. Our sincere thanks for their kind and generous token of appreciation.

SENSEI JOINS 5th PANA CONVENTION IN LOS ANGELES

Sensei participated in the 5th PANA Convention held at the JACCC in Los Angeles in July. PANA is a national organization of Japanese artists and teacher promoting closer cultural ties with countries in South America. A few countries represented were Mexico, Brazil, Argentina and Guatemala among others.

MADAME SOSEI MATSUMOTO OF THE TEA CEREMONY VISITS DOJO

Madame Sosei Matsumoto, a master of the Urasenke tea ceremony here in Los Angeles visited our dojo for the first time this month to inspect the construction of our new *mizuya* or preparation room for the tea ceremony by our member, Pat Monahan. This year, Matsumoto Sensei received the Pioneer's Award from the JACCC and the title of Meiyō Shihan (Honorary Master) for the Grandmaster of the Urasenke School, Konnichian Sensei, in Japan. Mr. Douglas Firestone and Mr. Yasushi Matsuki and Sensei study the tea ceremony under Matsumoto Sensei. Matsumoto Sensei taught Sensei's grandmother the art of tea over forty years ago.

SENSEI SUBMITS REBUTTAL TO MICHIGAN ANTHROPOLOGIST ABOUT SAMURAI

In the New York Times, the Los Angeles Times and the Rafu Shimpo newspapers, an article was printed regarding the origins of the samurai in Japan and the native Ainu race. Sensei refuted the article with his own Letter to the Editor disagreeing with the theories of this anthropologists. Copies of the original article and the rebuttal are available in the dojo.

MEDIA COVERAGE

If one watches his TV closely, our dojo appears in the current advertisement for the Nisei Week Festival. It shows part of the demonstration given at the opening ceremonies for the Nisei Week Coronation Ball last year. If any student has a VHS recorder, please try to catch it on tape.

THANKS FOR YOUR HELP

Thanks goes to the following students for their help at the Zenshuji O-Bon Festival demonstration:

Douglas Firestone
Kaz Nishida
Victor Rodriguez
Eriko Birnbaum
Mitsuko Yoshimoto,
Tom McIntyre
Yasushi Matsuki
Ron Hill
Koichi Matsumoto

Helpers:

Charles Armijo
Anthony Andred
Art Martinez
Oscar Martinez

Thanks goes to the following students for their help at the Lotus Festival in Echo Park:

Douglas Firestone
Kaz Nishida
Victor Rodriguez
Eriko Birnbaum
Mitsuko Yoshimoto
Tom McIntyre
Yasushi Matsuki
Koichi Matsumoto
Mark Francis

Helpers:

Charles Armijo
Anthony Andred
Oscar Martinez
Kenny Osaki
David McIntyre

MASTER HSU CHI

Master Hsu Chi (Adam Hsu) visited the dojo this month from his home in the suburbs of San Francisco. He is a master of Chen Style Tai-chi, Ba-chi and Pi-Qua among many other important styles of kung-fu. He recently returned from a trip to mainland China visiting many birthplaces of ancient kung-fu. Sensei met him over ten years ago when both were demonstrating at the International Martial Arts Exposition in Oakland.

We have invited him to conduct a seminar on the history and development of kung-fu and his experiences in China at the dojo sometime towards the end of the year. He is also interested in teaching the *miao-dao* or Chinese willowleaf sword to us. He is a master-teacher and I hope my students will welcome and benefit from his great skill and experience.

PROMOTIONS AS OF AUGUST 1, 1989**6th Kyu**

Jeff Baerenwald
Kevin Chiu
Steve Tarrango
James Sims
Rick Newsome
Art Martinez
Oscar Martinez
Eric Rodriguez
Jon White
Miguel Alcocer
Norm Lew

5th Kyu

Mike Takehara
Charles Armijo
Pat Monahan
Lorraine Rowan
Albert Quervalu
Daryl Akamichi
Diana Andrews
Ray Kuwahara

4th Kyu

Tom Wyngarden
Lennie Senibaldi
John Easton
Mark Francis

3rd Kyu

Curtis Westfall
Dr. Hieu T. Nguyen
Anthony Andred

2nd Kyu

David Nava
Ismael Araujo
Ken Watanabe

1st Kyu

William Gillespie

Congratulations! Please keep up the good work.

TEISHO BY BISHOP KENKO YAMASHITA

From Rohatsu Sesshin on December 3, 1988.

Reprinted from the Zazenkaï News, Volume II, No. 10.

Joshu Jushin was a famous Zen Master in 9th century China. One day a young monk addressed him thus: "I am a newcomer to this monastery. Please tell me the secret of how I should train myself."

Joshu asked: "Have you finished breakfast?" The new priest responded: "I have." Joshu said: "Wash your bowl."

Joshu Zenji trained under Nansen Fugan Zenji from the age of 20 until he was 57; after that he became a wandering monk. At the age of 80, he became the Abbot of Kannon Temple, dying at the age of 120.

While Joshu was training he asked of Master Nansen: "What is the Way?" This word, "Way," means to live one's faith; it is concrete practice; it is to meet enlightenment, to realize it and to maintain it. Delusion, impurities, and ill desires are all things that come up as we live; therefore, the true meaning of enlightenment is to go back to the state before one became infected with them.

Nansen's answer to Joshu was: "*Heijo shin* is the Way." Meaning that the way is our "daily mind:" regaining calmness and serenity is the way.

Joshu asked again: "Is it good to make such a 'daily mind' a purpose?" Nansen responded: "If you make calmness and serenity your purpose, they will go on confronting with their opposites in you forever. This contradiction will disturb you and you will neither be calm or serene."

Joshu continued querying: "If you don't have any purpose, yours cannot be called a practice to bring about enlightenment; is this not so?"

Nansen responded: "Don't be possessed of the idea that non-ego, no-mind, is in the realm of the unknown. It is true that you cannot grasp the reality of mind, not yet soiled; as long as you are trying to grasp it with an already deluded mind or deluded intentions, you will fail. The reality of mind can be realized in your continuous practice, regardless of whether you are aware of it or not. First you learn the form and then you become accustomed to the principle; there is a way of eating, there is a culturally determined way of greeting, learn them earnestly and practice until you become one with them. This is the training. When you are used to them you will feel less pain; you will become more and more confident."

At this time I want to emphasize the emptiness and non-ego that you have learned with such great pain. It

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BISHOP KENKO YAMASHITA continued.

is important to continue practice until you even forget this confidence which sometimes turns into arrogance, and just settle yourself down in non-egoistic, no-mind practice.

Joshu's "wash your bowl" after eating is to see where you are standing. Don't look only upward or far-away, look downward right here and do what you have to do at the present moment and then leave things as they are. There is nowhere to settle down except in the practice. This is the meaning of *Hei-jo-shin* ("daily mind").

Training is zazen, learning the Sutras, and working. It is also fundamentally required that we practice together in a group. Throw yourself away into the group; leave yourself in the group's hands. In so doing, your individual character, which can so often be a thorn, will disappear. While eating and walking in a certain way, while greeting in a certain way, you will be refined.

Scraping away your selfish deeds, your style and your many self-vindications thoroughly, you can complete your self-refinement. Zen has built the way of self-realization in this manner.

COMMENTARY:

Bishop Kenko Yamashita is the head of the Zenshuji Temple on Hewitt St. and all of the Buddhist churches in North America. This lecture was presented to the members of the Zazenkai in December of last year during a special training period of intense zazen meditation.

Training, whether it is Zen or Aikido or any other fine art, takes great courage, discipline and patience. It is difficult for most people to continue for any length of time until they begin to see the value of their training. Many often become distracted with other activities, move away or become too busy at work. It is discouraging for many people to continue their training because their progress cannot be measured so easily as collecting trading stamps, swimming laps in a pool or jogging around the block.

One of the important secrets of training is to see training as part of our lives, not something separate from ourselves or outside of our daily activities. In one sense, this is the meaning of *hei-jo-shin* or "everyday mind." Aikido training is not more important than "washing your bowl" or washing the dishes after eating. It is no more important than washing your face when you wake up in the morning. These small activities, which we don't think much about, make up your life and are important. Taking care of yourself everyday, both mentally and physi-

cally, is the most important duty of your life. We often neglect this. We have many challenges in our lives, some are good and some cause great suffering. We can avoid them or make ourselves distracted by them but it is still important to brush your teeth and wash your face. This means that it is important to come to practice on time, keep your uniform clean and develop yourself, little by little, everyday. As our training becomes part of the normal, daily activity of our lives, we can begin to see the secret benefits of our training.

Towards the end of Yamashita Sensei's sermon, he mentions about "giving up one's self to the group." I think this may be a difficult concept for everyone to understand. He does not mean to lose your own identity or individuality. He does mean, I believe, that our daily activities and our training must always be in the context of the people around us, our environment, our society and nature itself. We cannot do it alone or we eventually develop a distorted of the world. One cannot come to the dojo and just practice by himself just as one cannot go to work and work by himself or live in this society by himself.

I hope that everyone will continue to train hard and some day begin to see themselves and their lives more clearly.

TOZEN AKIYAMA SENSEI

Akiyama Sensei conducts a Memorial Service for O-Sensei on July 24, 1989.

Tozen Akiyama Sensei, resident priest of the Milwaukee Zen Center, was in Los Angeles during the O-Bon Festival and visited our dojo to conduct a memorial service for O-Sensei and give a sermon to the membership on Tuesday, July 24, 1989. There were about thirty students in attendance. Akiyama Sensei was assisted by Hakujuin Kuroyanagi Sensei of the Zenshuji Temple.

UC IRVINE AIKIDO CLUB

The University of Irvine Aikido Club has invited Sensei to conduct a special class on August 7, 1989 from 7:00pm to 9:15pm. If there are students who wish to join this class, please make arrangements for carpooling. The one hour class will be followed by a one hour question and answer period about Aikido.

USAF NEWSLETTER

Our dojo publishes the Newsletter of the United States Aikido Federation Eastern Region. The next issue will be out on September 1, 1989. The July issue is still available. The Newsletter is published bi-monthly.

MORGAN WEISSER BACK FROM JAPAN

Morgan Weisser returned from his trip to Japan back to the dojo on July 24, 1989. We will be anxiously awaiting his article on all of his experiences. He kindly presented Sensei with a bokken. He will be attending USC in the fall. Welcome Back!

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A PLACE THAT IS NEITHER HOT NOR COLD

From "Two Moons" by Shunmyo Sato

About the ninth century there was in Tang China a Zen master called Tozan Ryokai who was eleven generations distant from Bodhidharma. Because of his great virtue he was awarded the title of Gohon Daishi, and the "To" of Soto School came from the first character of his name. Consequently, we should pronounce it "Soto" and not "Sodo" as many Japanese do. Once a monk in training asked Tozan Daishi, "When heat and cold come, how can I avoid them?"

It was probably a scorching hot summer afternoon or a bitterly cold winter morning, and this heat (or cold) was so extreme the monk could not bear it.

Now you may think that the monk's question has no relevance today when we can avoid heat and cold as we wish with air conditioning and central heat. But even though we have indoor cooling and heating, if we take one step outdoors, we will find that a way to avoid the violence of nature has not yet been developed.



"Go where it's neither hot or cold."

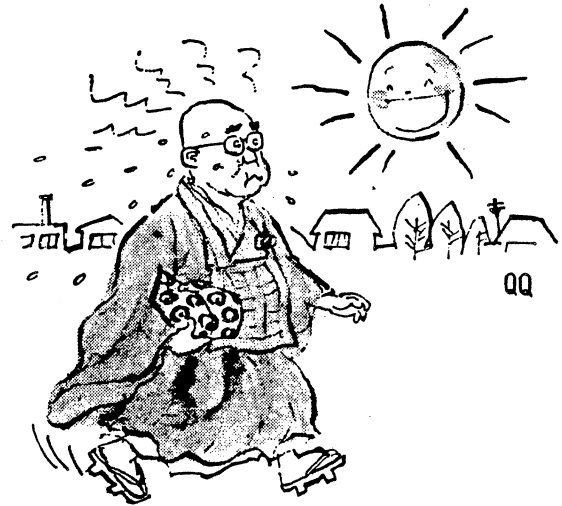
Tozan said, "Why don't you go where it's neither hot nor cold?"

"What is this place of no heat and cold?" The training monk seems to have thought that in some distant land there was such a place, and to counter this Tozan replied, "When it's hot, become one with the heat; when it's cold, become one with the cold. That is the place of no heat and cold."

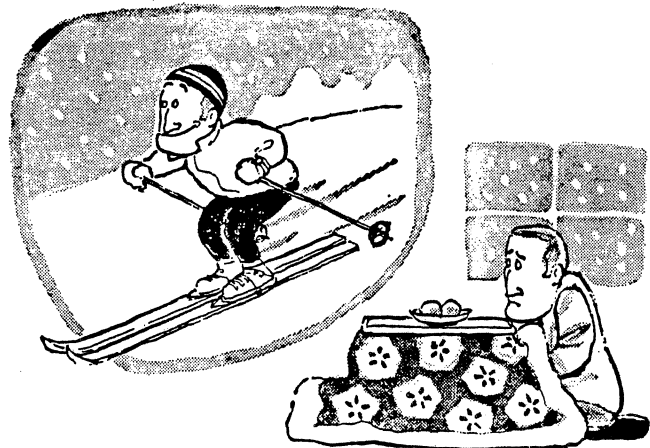
As long as we are living in natural surroundings, we cannot avoid heat and cold, but we can get rid of the mind which is fearful of, uncomfortable with or uneasy around heat and cold.

I become depressed around the time of the Festival for the Dead (O-Bon). Thinking about having to go

around house to house for memorial services in the hottest part of summer makes me want to go to a country which has no heat. However, once I start making the rounds and get drenched with sweat, the heat no



longer bothers me. In the same way, while I am shivering with hunched shoulders at the "kotatsu" stove at home, I just cannot seem to get into the mood to face a snowstorm; but once I get myself ready and leave to go skiing, even a snowstorm can be fun. So, heat and cold themselves are not troublesome or anything else; it is the anxiety and discomfort twined about them which makes us suffer.



An old poem says: "The ladle, coming and going in the hell of heat and cold, has no mind and suffers not." As it says in the poem, the ladle enters the boiling kettle and enters the cold water pitcher but feels no pain, because it has no mind.

Once when Ryokan fell victim to an earthquake he said to a visitor paying a condolence call:

"When you're sick, it's all right to be sick; and when you die, it's all right to die."

It is not only a matter of heat and cold. Birth, death,

HEAT AND COLD continued.

sickness and old age also are like this. Casting away delusive imaginings and thoughts is the only Way to transcend birth and death and avoid the heat and cold.



When it's time to die, dying is all right.

(In the sixteenth century) Kaisen Osho converted Shingen Takeda and was subsequently invited to live at Erinji in Koshu (Yamanashi Prefecture). When Shingen's son Katsuyori was later attacked and defeated by Nobunaga Oda, most of the Takeda forces fled to Erinji. Hearing that Kaisen Osho had sheltered these people, Nobunaga became violently angry, drove all the monks up into the tower of the temple gate and set fire to the tower. At that time, Kaisen turned to the other monks and calmly said, "Well, this is finally the end. Of course, we are discharging our debt to the Takeda Family, but in any case, we could not have simply handed over to the enemy people who had sought refuge in the sleeve of the robe of Dharma. We will die bravely and loyally with the others." Having said this, he had each monk in turn recite a death verse, and finally he intoned the following:

"Calm meditation requires no peaceful surroundings, If the mind is clear, fire itself is cool."

These words appear in the *Hekiganroku* in the chapter "Tozan's Neither Hot Nor Cold."

