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# Aikido Center of Los Angeles

## The Aiki Dojo

Affiliation: The Aikido World Headquarters, 17-18 Wakamatsu-cho, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, Japan  
Los Angeles Sword & Swordsmanship Society Kenshinkai Headquarters

Office of the President: Nanka Yamanashi Kenjin Kai Southern California Yamanashi Prefectural Assoc.  
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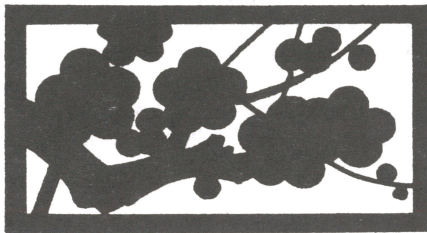
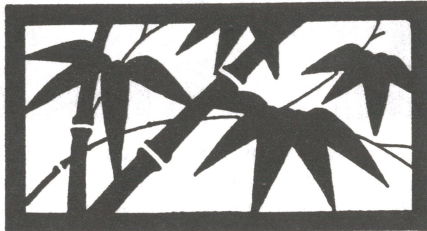
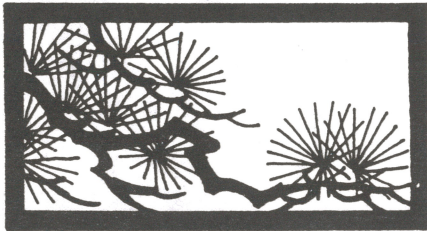
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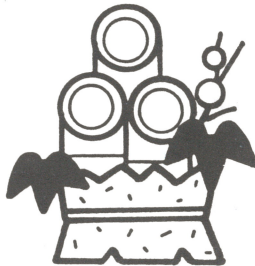
Our Dojo Newsletter's Special 20th Anniversary Issue

# Happy New Year!



あけましておめでとう  
あけましておめでとう  
あけましておめでとう

加賀正



*A Prayer for Peace in the World & Harmony Among All Aikidoists*

## Happy New Year's Greetings From Sensei:

*I would like express my sincere greetings for a wonderful New Year and I hope all my students and friends will enjoy good health, happiness and success in all of their undertakings. I hope that everyone will continue to train hard and support the Dojo so that we can continue to grow and serve the community. And as we grow, I hope we all learn the difficulties of working together in harmony and peace and begin to understand how important this is, not only in our own lives, but throughout the world.*

*We live in a world of great prosperity, science and technology, but we are still unfulfilled and there is still so much violence and unhappiness in the world. What is missing in our lives? Why can we not get along with each other? Why does one person's happiness mean the other person's defeat? I believe you can find these answers on the mat in the Dojo in your practice.*

*Our Dojo is growing and students are progressing well. This does not mean that we should become more aggressive and greedy but, quite the contrary, we must give to others and to the community. Many dojos are seeking us out for help and instruction. As we grow, so does our responsibility to be able to help them in the best way we can through our Aikido. What does this mean? More training, of course! "Allow others to grow as we grow, as we grow, nurture others." This has always been my mandate to teach.*

*We can never reach true happiness until everyone in the world is happy. Let's work together more in this New Year 2002, my best! Sensei*

### 2002 New Year's Schedule

**January 1st. New Year's Holiday**

**January 2nd. Practice begins.**

**January 5th. 2nd Doshu's Memorial Service.**

**January 20th. Kagami-Biraki.**

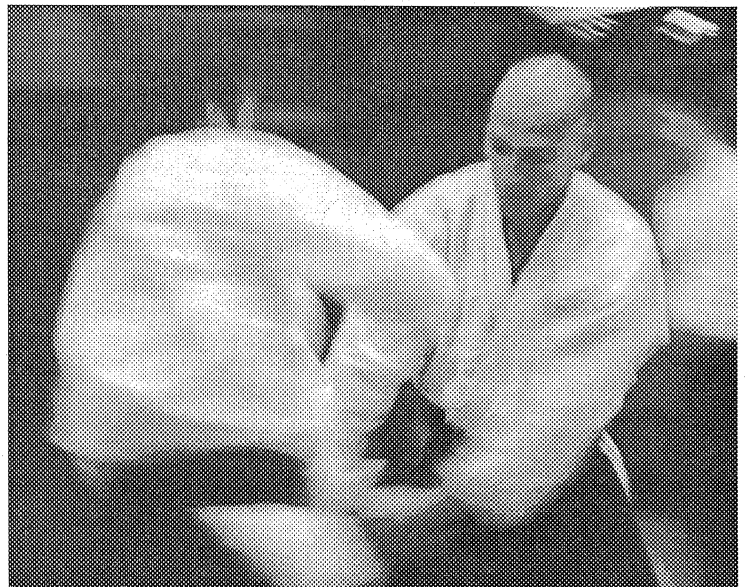
**February 20th. Late Bishop Kenko Yamashita's Memorial Service.**

**March ( ) Cherry Blossom Festival, Monterey Park.**

**March 9th. Annual Joint Practice. Aikido-Ai, Whittier.**

**March 16-17th. Seminar With Hiroshi Ikeda Sensei, Boulder Aiki-kai.**

## Welcoming Guadalajara, Jalisco and Puerta Vallarta New Affiliations



We were recently visited by Eric Sarracho who represents several dojos in the Guadalajara area and also one dojo in Puerta Vallarta, Mexico. Erik is also a good friend of Raffi Badalian, an old student of the Dojo. After training for several days, Erik made a formal request on behalf of his teacher to affiliated three of their dojos with our Aikido Center of Los Angeles. We welcome them and hope that we can all work together and grow in Aikido.

The three dojo are under the Jalisco Aikikai and consist of the Dojo Aikido de Guadalajara, Dojo Aikido Guadalajara Estadio and the Dojo Aikido de Puerta Vallarta.

Currently these dojos are under Dr. Rual Blackaller Sensei, 3rd Dan. Dr. Blackaller Sensei is tentatively scheduled to visit us in the early part of next year.

Erik Sarracho will be travelling in Asia for the next six months before returning to Mexico. Welcome!\*



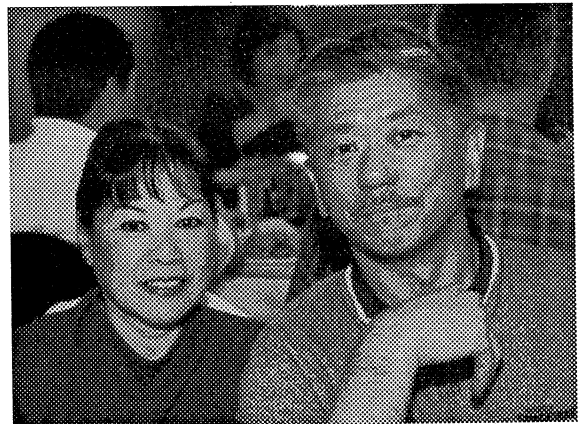
## Dojo Christmas Party Dec. 2.



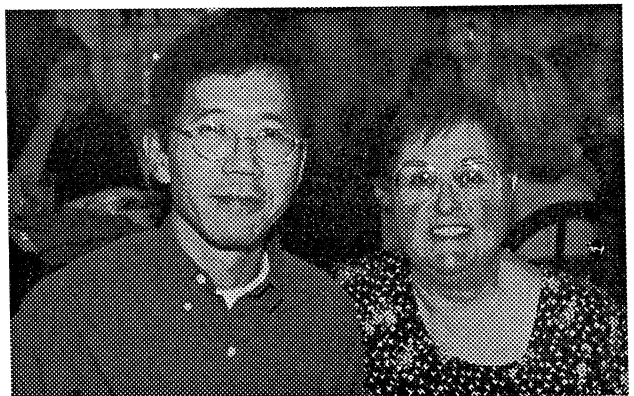
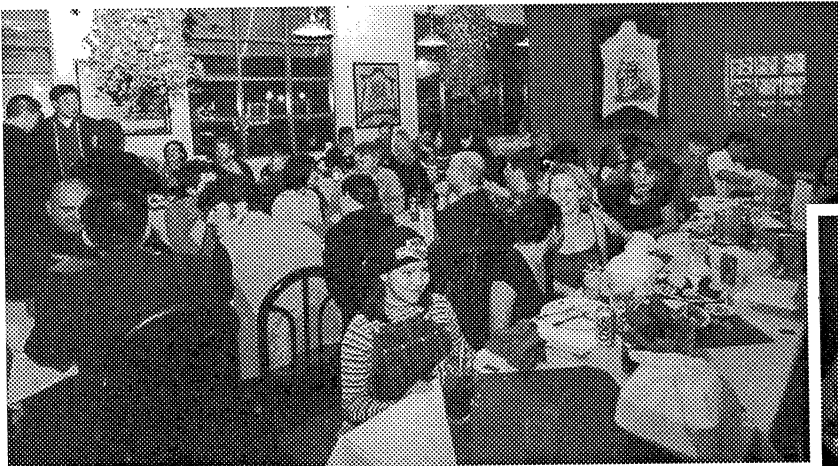
Sensei addressing students at Christmas Party.



Paulina, Lisa and Kay.



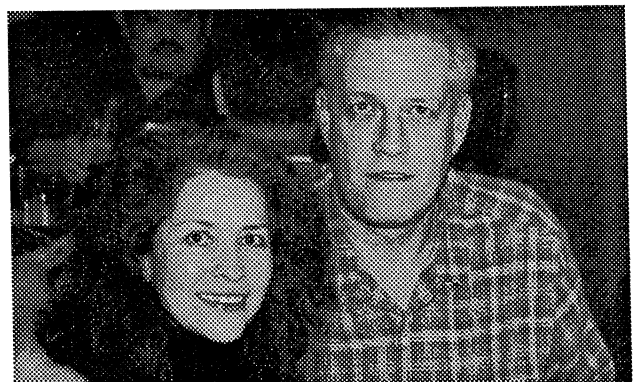
Special Guests: James Nakayama Sensei and the Mrs.



James Doi and the Mrs.

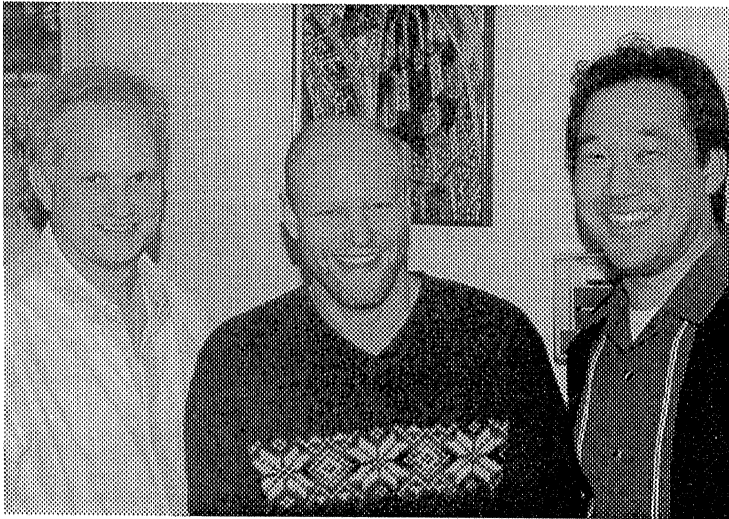


Cheryl & Mark. Everyone won in the Dojo Christmas raffle.



Tom Williams & the Mrs.

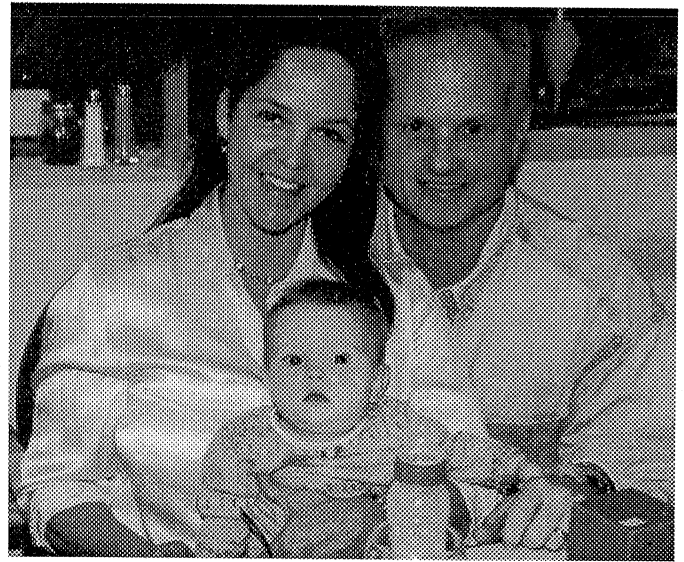
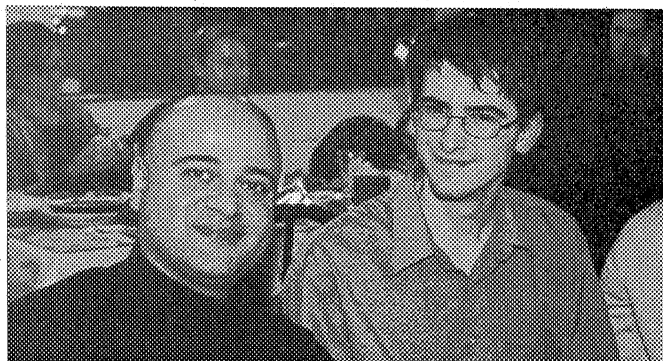
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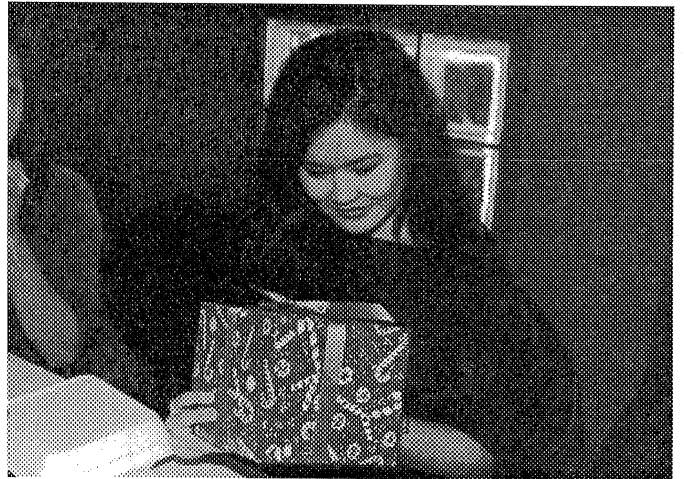
Jeff, Jim & Ken. Below: Jonathan.



Ken & Jonathan. Below: Dikran & Michael.



Happy Holidays from the Jeff Johnson Family.



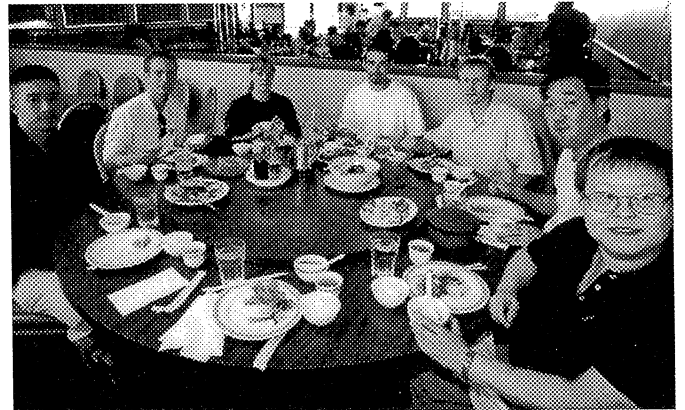
Maria Murakawa hits one of the jackpot prizes.



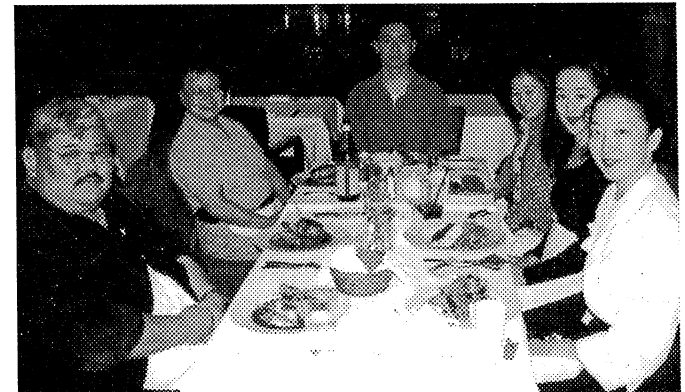
Everyone had a great time at this year's Christmas Party which was held at the Shamshiri Restaurant in Glendale where the food and service was excellent. This year, the Dojo held a raffle of Christmas presents and everyone went home with something. We thank Sensei for the gifts and Carol of Rafu Bussan in Little Tokyo for all of the beautiful gift wrapping (over 100 presents!). Many thanks!



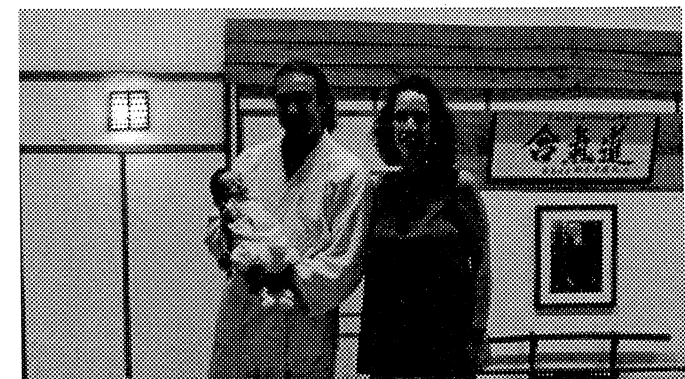
## Dojo Family Album:



With Patrick Cassidy Sensei and his students from Fresno.



With Kimiko Arai and her friends from Tokyo. She practices at Hombyu Dojo and is a student of Shigenobu Okumura Shihan.



Kodokai celebrates "new student" adopted from Mainland China.



Steve Shaw hits the jackpot at our Kenshinkai Christmas Party.

## 2001 In Review:

- Jan. 2nd. Training begins.
- Jan. 6th. 2nd Doshu's Memorial Service.
- Jan. 14th. James Takata Film Premiere In The Dojo.
- Jan. 27th. Joint Practice With James Nakayama Sensei, Chushinkan Dojo.
- Feb. 3rd. Frank Doran Sensei at Aikido-Ai, Whittier, Meeting.
- Feb. 18th. Master Adam Hsu Seminar.
- Feb. 20th. Late Bishop Kenko Yamashita's Memorial Service.
- March. 5th. Frontline News Interview With Sensei.
- March 21st. Demonstration at Pasadena City College, Pasadena.
- March 31st. Demonstration at Pico Aliso Impacto Project, East Los Angeles
- April 19th. Hiroshi Ikeda Sensei Meeting.
- April 20th. Triade Company Cable Interview.
- April 21. Annual Dojo Clean-up.
- April 22nd. Cherry Blossom Festival Demonstration, Monterey Park
- April 26th. Founder of Aikido, Morihei Ueshiba O'Sensei 33rd Memorial Service in the Dojo.
- April 28th. Evergreen Baptist Church Culture Day Demonstration.
- May 20-22nd. Naoji Karita Sensei Meeting.
- June 1st. Discovery Channel Taping for Cable TV.
- June 23rd. Iaido Video Taping.
- June 25th. KCET Life & Times Cable TV Interview Taping.
- June 28th. Children's Hospital Installation of the Buddha Ceremony.
- July 13th. Asahi Shimbun Newspaper Interview with James Takata by Eiki Yano.
- July 14th. Pasadena Buddhist Church Obon Aikido & Iaido Demonstration.
- July 15th. Lotus Festival Demonstration, Echo Park

# Welcome

## Three New Branches To Our Dojo Family:

### Jalisco Aikikai

### Aikido of Guadalajara

### Aikido of Puerto Vallarta

- July 30. Russell Wong Meeting.
- July 5th. Annual Nisei Week Aikido Demonstration.
- July 12th. Nisei Week Japanese Culture Lecture: Life and Art of Miyamoto Musashi.
- August 14-20th. Beth Mizuno from Washington, D. C.
- August 19-21st. Naoji Karita From Tokyo Meeting.
- August 30- Sept. 9th. Spain Seminar at the Kodokai, Salamanca, with Kenny Furuya and Mark Ty.
- Sept. 14th. Premiere of On The Inside: Martial Arts of Japan, Discovery Channel.
- Sept. 22nd. Operation Sparkle Clean-up Little Tokyo Project.
- Oct. 13th. Joint Aikido Practice with Aikido-Ai, Chushinkan Aikido and Orange County Aikikai.
- Oct. 14th. Nanka Yamanashi Kenjinkai Annual Memorial Service.
- Oct. 20th. Special Practice with Patrick Cassidy Sensei, Aikido of Fresno.
- Oct. 28th. Grand Opening of Tea Room at Gary Myer's (Kenshinkai) Yoshino Japanese Antiques.
- Dec. 2nd. Annual Christmas Party.
- Dec. 9th. Kenshinkai Iaido Annual Christmas Party.
- Dec. 31st. Year End Practice.



# Aikido Seminar

*Hiroshi Ikeda Sensei, 7th Dan,  
Boulder Aikikai*

## March 16, 17, 2002

### Seminar Schedule

(Schedule is subject to change.)

March 16, SATURDAY

10:30am-12:30pm

1:00-2:30pm Lunch Break

3:00pm-5:00pm

March 17, SUNDAY

9:30am-11:00am

11:00am-11:15am Short Break

11:15am-12:45pm

12:45-1:00pm Photo

*Everyone is welcome.*

*RSVP by March 1st.*

*To: [aclafuruya@earthlink.net](mailto:aclafuruya@earthlink.net)*

\$100.00/person both days.

\$65.00 one day.

Sorry but the Dojo has no seating space for observers.

All fees must be paid by March 1, 2001.

Seminar will be limited to 50 participants.

Please sign up early.

## Teacher & Student:

11-29-01

Sensei,

I am writing to you to ask your advice on a serious matter regarding my training. I know we have never met, but after reading "Kodo" and also your daily messages, I see you as being the teacher I can only aspire to be. I have a great deal of respect for the way you conduct your practice, and if you are kind enough to answer this letter I promise to carefully consider your advice. Here is my story:

A few months ago during an advanced class my instructor told us that we were too sheltered in the dojo. He said we needed to get out on the road and experience some of the things he had to deal with when he started. Since I always try to do as sensei asks, I immediately began looking for upcoming seminars in my area. About a week later I approached sensei for advice on which shihan I should make an effort to see. To my surprise I was immediately reprimanded and attacked in front of my fellow students. He exclaimed "what do you think your going to find out there!" He then began to belittle these particular shihan. Finally he told me that after 25 years running this dojo his new philosophy is "If you don't like it, get the hell out." At first I felt ashamed that I had done something to make sensei so angry. But by the time I got home my feelings had turned more to anger and betrayal. I had been loyal to my dojo for years, and was only doing what I felt my teacher was asking me to do. After this incident I began to become less tolerant of some things I had been ignoring for years. Sensei will often belittle the aikido shihan, speaking as though our dojo is the one true dojo in the world. He will often use the dojo as a forum to try to force his political views. I simply wish to learn aikido. And though I respect his technique immensely I'm not sure I respect him as a human being.

And so sensei, my question to you is simply this. Can I, a young inspired aikidoka, continue to train for the sake of good technique and simply ignore my own morality? Can I continue to learn a true budo from someone I no longer hold in high regard? Thank you for your time Sensei, I know your practice keeps you quite busy. I eagerly anticipate your response. Respectfully,  
Jason (Ni Kyu)

Editor's Note: Inquiry from another dojo.

12-07-01

Sensei, I am very honored that you made your response to my problem part of your daily message. I must admit I am still very uncertain of what will happen in my training, but your level-headedness on the matter has at least given me  
Continued



## Greetings From Salamanca: Proposition for 2002

By Santiago G. Almaraz  
Kodokai Dojo

Every New Year as with other years, we propose once again new goals. "I will train more, I'll more be constant with helping out, I'll participate more in dojo activities, I will, I will, I will! But, as in other years, these goals quickly disappear.

Unfortunately, we human beings, try to justify when we don't want to do the things or when we should and don't do it. Today, it was a hard day at work, I'm tired, I have headache, etc, etc. And when we glance at the calendar another year has suddenly gone, and we have committed the same mistake as the year before.

Especially, Advanced Students, (such a big name we give ourselves!), have some responsibilities to the Dojo, others students and sensei, but more specially with himself. They should know their responsibilities or learn them, The grade or Dan is not only to show off at seminars or sit down in the first line in class, or worst, to show off his abilities with the new students throwing them from one side to the other side of the mat.

Our Aikido should be practice. Every day as when we brush our teeth, we don't wash seven times in just one day, we must do it every day. We should do the same with our helping out and practice. Do it every day, even when we have practiced for many years.

Advanced students should be an example like a mirror for the new students. With etiquette, punctuality with the dues, and offering or helping with the dojo activities, with the practice assistance. Because very often this assistance comes with the expectation of getting something as in promotions, etc. It is only then we show how good we are. It is a little bit sad, is it not?

When we get to some level, we think that our assistance to the dojo is not important, because we pay our dues on time so this is good enough. We think that other advanced students come to the dojo, to help or teach so leave it to them. But this is a big mistake. Our Aikido is like a flower we have to water it every day. But worst it's when we forget the dojo after a month or more and we want everybody to be considerate as advanced students. This respect and admiration has to be won everyday. I think that this respect as Aikidoist, is not only for the technical part, it's for many other areas of the dojo and practice as well.

I know that many people can see in this article others not but not one's own self. I hope that the next year we don't repeat the same mistakes as the year before, and we don't simply look around for bad excuses for everything.

Santiago Garcia Almaraz  
Salamanca, Spain

## Friday Dojo Study Class:

Learn more the Aikido roots and traditions, martial arts and Japanese culture in our Dojo Study Class held throughout the year in the Dojo on every 1st and 3rd Friday from 6:30pm-8:00pm.

## Cheryl Lew: Emptiness

Recently I read a wonderful reminiscence entitled "The Piano Shop on the Left Bank" by Thad Carhart. Towards the end of the book was a description of a piano masterclass conducted by the late pianist Gyorgy Sebok. Maestro Sebok would frequently begin to play in exact unison with his students during repetitions of musical pieces under study. Students described the feeling of their teacher playing together with them as a special bond, a special transmission of energy and power from his hands to theirs.

Carhart's recounts: "The most difficult aspect of a master class, Sebok said, is trying to get the student to an emptiness, to a still point, where he can truly hear what he is doing. 'It's not an absence, it's an emptiness, and that is a sometimes subtle point to grasp for a young person.' For him, music had to flow out of the pianist, and in order for that to happen there had to be a quiet center.

"Technique, he felt, was vastly overrated as an isolated element. The best technique is one that doesn't exist, a kind of disappearing act, so the real focus needs to be on where the technique comes from: an inner calm, the emptiness he insisted on so that one could really listen. 'That's not the same as relaxation,' he cautioned."

Of course, master class students have already mastered the basics, and therefore are in a position to strive towards mastery of that emptiness.

When I read the above passage, I was immediately reminded of how our practice in Aikido and Iaido also involves mastering the basics and then moving towards a realization of an emptiness which is open, i.e. receptive, to everything. Certainly it makes sense that if one wants to be proficient in self defense, then one must achieve a state of emptiness in which one is completely receptive to all external phenomenon. Otherwise, there would be no possibility of defense from attack. If one is receptive to all possibility, then one can execute all possible responses.

The musical analogy to Aikido practice is playing chamber music, duets, trios, quartets—blending energies, timing, phrasing, pauses. It may seem odd to refer to silence, i.e. musical rests, as music. But really, silence in music is the same as emptiness in aikido, or the blackness in a painting: dense with content/energy and dense with possibility. The emptiness pulls one forward.

Practicing Iaido is rather more like playing Dowland lute fantasias, or Ricercars by Francesco da Milano. Francesco was reputed to transmit so much emotional content during the execution of a solo ricercar, lasting a couple of minutes at most, that many of his listeners "swooned." I don't suppose anyone would swoon in response to my Iaido—rather more likely that the instructors collapse from apoplexy. Nevertheless, during the execution of Shohat-to, there is a series of alternating expansions and contractions (Sensei's words) which are



## Aikido Center of Los Angeles NEWSLETTER

punctuated by pauses, or silences of varying weight, which propel the technique towards Zanshin where all the energy and power of the technique become centered just before the denouement.

It's becoming more apparent to me that the difficulties and errors involved in practice are not around particular movements or actions necessarily—but around omitting, cutting short, squeezing the pauses, the rests, the Zanshin. I'm beginning to see that the difference in execution of technique between a beginner and an advanced student isn't the duration of time to do the technique. The techniques last about the same number of seconds. Rather, the beginner always appears and feels weak, and rushed because there are no pauses, rests—no emptiness. For the advanced student, expansiveness of movement, precision in pauses, the final Zanshin, all allow accumulation of energy in that emptiness which manifests as power. Well, maybe if I can begin to see what this emptiness is about, I can actually begin to realize it in my practice. I hope so.

### Gary Myers, 5 Dan Iaido New Years Resolutions

It's hard to believe that another year has gone by so quickly. Last year was the Year of the Dragon in the Chinese zodiac and like the curved dragon's body the year was full of extremes both highs and lows. It started with the anticipation of a new millennium and ended with our country under attack and involved in a long and difficult war with terrorism. This coming year is the Year of the Snake; it, too, curves its body as it moves but the high and lows are less than that of the dragon. Let us hope that our future hills and valleys won't be as extreme and while things can never return to the way they were, we will learn, adapt, and persevere through the times ahead. I wish that Sensei and everyone else in the dojo has a happy, healthy and prosperous 2002.

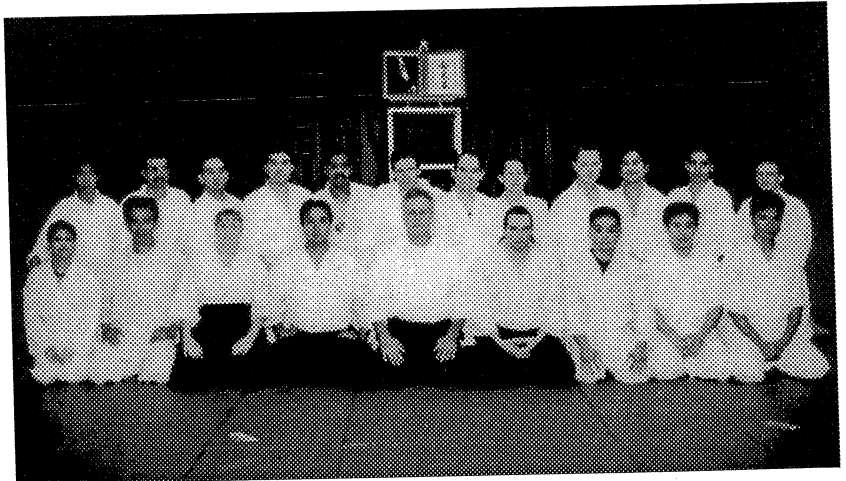
A new year always presents the opportunity for renewal or reawakening. That's why new year's resolutions are so popular. It's another chance to try to better ourselves, improve our condition by correcting those bad habits that we embrace for whatever reason. But unfortunately, most of us fall into our old habits and the resolutions are either quickly forgotten or we feel guilty about not living up to them. "They, those wise advisers we always refer to, say that the trick is to make our resolutions realistic, tangible and measurable. Just saying "I'm going to become a better person" is too vague and doomed to failure. Sometimes I think we approach Iaido in the same way we do new these movements have become ingrained through repetition then they are extremely difficult to correct, but not impossible.

Of course, the initial step in correcting a bad habit is to realize that we have one. That is the easy part, because Sensei will point out to you what you are doing wrong and instruct you to correct it. The hard part is for you to convince yourself that you are doing it wrong, and that is not so easy for some. How your mind receives correction and criticism is as important as how quickly you can physically correct a faulty movement. Habits, by definition, are behavioral patterns acquired either by frequent repetition or through an involuntary process. So if these movements have become ingrained through repetition then they are extremely difficult to correct, but not impossible.

If you feel you're being picked on, or that the correction doesn't pertain to you then you will continue to follow the same pattern and those bad movements will continue. Also if you feel that this is the best you're going to get and that nothing you do will change that, then that, too, is your fate. Once again our egos are at work interpreting and conforming the instruction so that it doesn't disturb the picture that we have of ourselves. The instruction is straight forward so you should just think how to do it correctly and follow the example of someone doing it correctly.

If we realize that bad habits hold us back from learning new things, now is the time to correct that bad habit that is hindering your progress. Pick that one bad habit that you are continually being corrected on and strive to eliminate from your movement in one month's time. Tell yourself that you never want to be corrected on that problem again. If you are successful, pick the next bad habit and work to eliminate that one. It's not going to be easy and it will take a lot of work to do enough correct movements to eliminate the bad habit, but it will be very satisfying to you when you do. So for 2002 let's resolve that we will eliminate those fundamental bad habits in our Iaido, there's not that many that it should take the whole year to correct.

### Tom Williams, New Year's Greetings



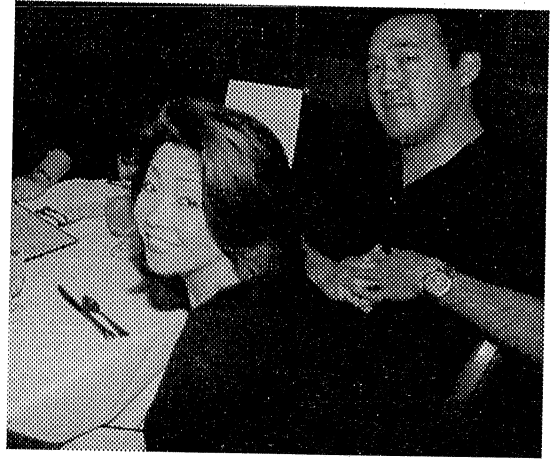
Hacienda La Puente Aikikai has completed another great year of Aikido training. We are now in our 7th year as a dojo. We are maintaining an enrollment of about 30 students. Many of the students, particularly those who have been training with us for a long time, are progressing quite well to higher levels.

This past year, we had two promotions of Gil Izaguirre to 2nd Dan and Rick Arrona to 1st Dan. A number of others are getting ready.

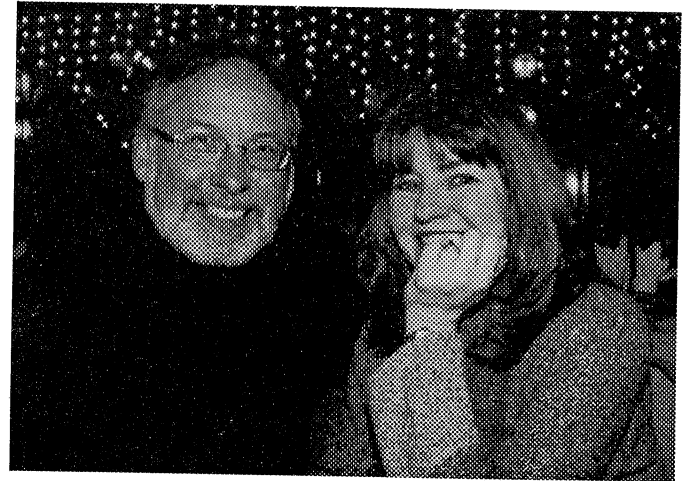
We look forward to the New Year with anticipation for continued growth and development. Recently, several new students have joined the dojo and have brought new enthusiasm to our class. We support all those who are sincere in the Aikido training and welcome everyone to come visit and share good, spirited practice with us.

Our Best Wishes go out to Hombu Dojo, the Aikido Center of Los Angeles, our branch dojos and the general Aikido community. Good luck for a prosperous New Year!

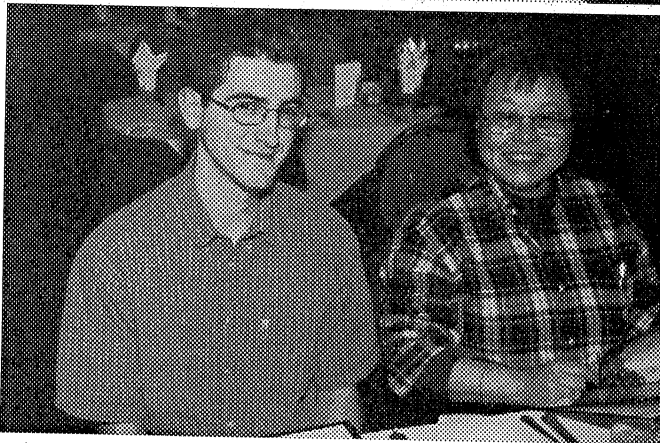
## Kenshinkai Iaido Christmas Party. Dec. 6.



Carol Tanita & Ken Watanabe. Left: Kenshinkai.



Larry & Beth Armstrong. Below: Jonathan, Steve & Mark.



Michael & Cheryl.



Carol, Andrei and James.

### Renewal Time!

#### Dojo Membership & Subscriptions

It is this time of year, all students need to renew their Annual Dojo Membership Fees. All of your dues and membership goes to supporting the Dojo and is always greatly appreciated.



## Looking Back

### Steven Shaw

When I first started training, my goal was not to get hurt. The more I trained, the more comfortable I became, but there was so much rigidity. It was difficult to take ukemi, and because of that I found myself focusing on the attacks. I would love looking for openings I could exploit, but that was so unfulfilling, as I didn't want to really hurt anyone. Through much prodding and pushing of, "Relax," "Too stiff," and direction of that nature, I began wanting to move as fluidly as possible. My flexibility had to improve as did my desire to relax. I was resisting too much. I still, at times, have difficulty relaxing, but I found that by trying to stay connected with my partners, feeling how they were moving and their energy, I no longer was thinking about relaxing. I just was relaxing.

The connection became the guiding force in my ukemi. It resonated through everything I did. In the classroom, I needed to be connected with my students, perhaps not physically, but definitely mentally. On stage, I needed to keep connected with my partners. Connections became apparent in every moment of my life. Less wear and tear on my brakes when I stayed connected with the flow of traffic, more learning from the world by remaining connected. It had always been there, it was just up to me to get with it.

Once connected, the playing with and exchange of energy, learning, life, and experience is possible. Every moment is filled with endless possibilities. This is where I am now. Trying to keep connected, which is a struggle in itself with all society's distractions, has become the task. That's the training. I train to keep connected. When connected, everything else comes naturally. Of course it helps to have great teachers to help guide the connection so I learn the right things. Training can be exciting and could lead to dangerous situations without the supervision of a teacher.

A few weeks ago Sensei wrote an analogy in his daily message comparing the dojo to a pool. If you haven't read it, I highly recommend it. He wrote how there's a shallow end for people who are learning to swim, and a deep end for those who are stronger swimmers with a gentle slope connecting the two. He also said the teacher is like a life-guard making sure everything is safe.

When I was a kid, I had learned to swim pretty well, but my stepsister had not. She still swam with floaties, but she wanted to go in the deep end of the pool. So, I put her on my shoulders in an effort to take her there. She was very calm at first but as I began to tire, we began to sink deeper. I was keeping both of our heads above the water, but she began to panic and pushed my head under the water. This escalated as I gasped for air in between her thrusts for survival. Eventually my Mom pulled her off of me and everything was fine. I learned that she had to be able to go into the deep end by herself. I could have swam with her, but she needed to do it herself in order for her to work it out.

This is the same in the dojo. Sometimes I get excited with the training and want to help my partner go to the deep end when I should just let them swim where they want. I know there have been people that have done that with me. They've let me lead the way in my own learning instead of trying to force it. I feel quite fortunate to have been the beneficiary of their patience. That's a hard thing to do, to be patient. I hope someday, when I'm a better learner, that I too can be

as patient while helping those around me the way others have helped me.

It can be overwhelming though. There is so much to learn; I'll probably never get it all. I have to feel good with what I do know, after all how can I be in harmony with the world if I'm in self-loathing? That's not very harmonious. Nor can I be in harmony if I idolize my teachers, even if they're great. They are learning while I'm learning.

One day after a long Native American Church ceremony, I was sitting next to the Fireman (he tended the fire for us) and I said, "Thank you for everything you've done for us." He said that I was welcome, and that I'd already told him. I said, "No, I really want to tell you how thankful I am." He said, "I know, but I may stop listening." I was stuck in the "Thank You" mode and it took that to get me back to the moment and learning. It's good to be thankful, but it, just like all of my intricacies, can be a distraction.

All these elements of existence can rob me from being connected in the moment harmoniously. I just have to let it all go and train. I'm working on finding the balance; all I have to do is keep connected.

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### Teacher & Student continued:

pause to think. Again, thank you kindly for taking time to respond. If you were 3,000 miles closer I would certainly seek permission to train with you. If I ever do find myself on the west coast, count on a visit!! Respectfully, Jason (Ni Kyu)

### From Sensei's Daily Message: December 1, 2001 Between Teacher and Student:

The other day, a student from another school wrote that he was very concerned that his sensei did not communicate well with the membership and they never knew what was going on in the dojo. For myself, I was a little amused at this. Not because the teacher there is so secretive but because I hold regular meetings in our own Dojo; a general meeting once a month, a intensive class once monthly with breakfast meeting following, and two discussion groups a month (four opportunities a month to communicate with each other), and we never have full attendance at any of the meetings. If a dojo has meetings to communicate with the membership, no one will hardly support them thinking that they are too much of a nuisance and waste of time. At the same time, if I didn't hold meetings, I am quite sure everyone would complain about "lack of communication." As they all say, "Go figure!"

Another student from another dojo expressed great disappointment recently with his teacher. His teacher advised him to expand his knowledge of Aikido and when he noted to his teacher that he was going to attend another seminar at another school, the teacher reprimanded him in front of all the other students. This student says he is confused and disappointed and is wondering what to do.

This is a difficult question. I posed this question to all of my black belts but hardly any one of them responded to me.

On one hand, if the teacher is inconsistent in his instruction, this is a cause for confusion and chaos. If the teacher loses the confidence and respect of the student, this is also an important concern as well.  
Continued:

## Annual Year End Garden Clean-up Party. Nov. 17.



Many thanks for all of our helpers for our Annual Dojo Garden Clean-up: Back row: Joe Healy, Andrei Maria, Ken Watanabe, Jonathan Altman, Jim Bassett, Michael Vance, Hanns Babich, Steve Andersen. Front: Bill Allen, James Doi, Mark Ty, Steve Shaw, Garty Myers, Cheryl Lew, Dikran Takvorian.

Bottom photo: The tedious and time consuming job of garden rock cleaning. Left to right: Joe Healy, Carol Tanita and Michael Vance washing the dirt and mud off the polished rocks for the garden.

### Teacher & Student continued:

On the other hand, I can also feel for the teacher. We all know how difficult the political climate of Aikido can be and can cause great frustration for teachers of many dojos. A student is, more of less, free of this and feels that he can go anywhere he pleases, "afterall, we are all Aikidoists, aren't we?" The student should have a little more understanding and discretion in this, I believe. At the same time, a teacher may be thinking to send a message to everyone at once in his reprimands and not even thinking that he is humiliating the student as an

individual. I wasn't there, how can I say?

In the current trend of dojos, a teacher does not play the role of teacher as he does, "friend." In an older sense, the teacher is a distant demi-god. This particular case is a very difficult question to answer and many times, it must be left to heart of the individual student, and teacher, to make the final decision.

In my own career, as most people, I have had my share of very bad teachers as well as good. A student must choose his teacher very carefully. As a teacher however, I often wonder why we, as teachers, do not enjoy the same privilege of choosing our students. As they all say, "Go figure!"

I am of the old school, it takes a lot before a decided to lose this teacher. From a samurai heritage, I prize loyalty above all else, yet this is difficult too. Many, many years ago, I shamefully confess, my teacher asked me to beat up another teacher in order to discredit him. Later, I found that he denied any knowledge of the incident because he wanted to discredit the teacher without taking any responsibility for it, fervently denying all involvement. I felt very betrayed by him, especially when everyone told me, "Why are you so stupid?"

Once my Zen teacher had a few guests and guests come several times a day, everyday, so I immediately began to prepare the tea as usual but there was no more Japanese confections to serve with the tea. I cut up some fresh fruit and served it with the tea.

As soon as I brought it out, my teacher said, "Take it back and peel this fruit!" So I obediently returned to the side kitchen and began to peel it. I could hear the complaints of my teacher's guests reprimanding him on being so cruel and harsh on me and wondering how I could be so "gentle" and quietly go back and peel the fruit without a complaint. When I heard this, I felt rather okay with myself showing these old ladies that my teacher had a "good student." I was also very proud that my teacher "trusted" me and felt close enough to me that he could yell at me! It is like a parent, I suppose, they will yell at their own kids but almost never at another's kids. Do you understand why?

Of course, I, too, was surprised at first by my teacher's curt orders to take the fruit back and peel it. While peeling the fruit, however, instead of being upset I began to think and with my "sleepy" head, I suddenly realized that my 90 year old teacher has weak teeth and he cannot eat the hard peel. I then realized that I was "wrong" for being so unthinking and inconsiderate of my teacher. Perhaps I fooled those old ladies but I didn't fool my teacher - or myself - that I was really a "good student" afterall. As they all say, "Go Figure!"

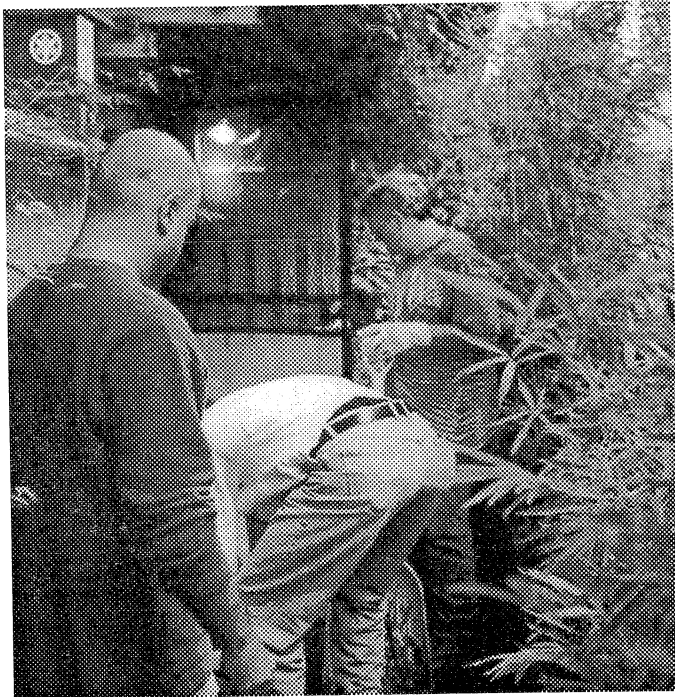
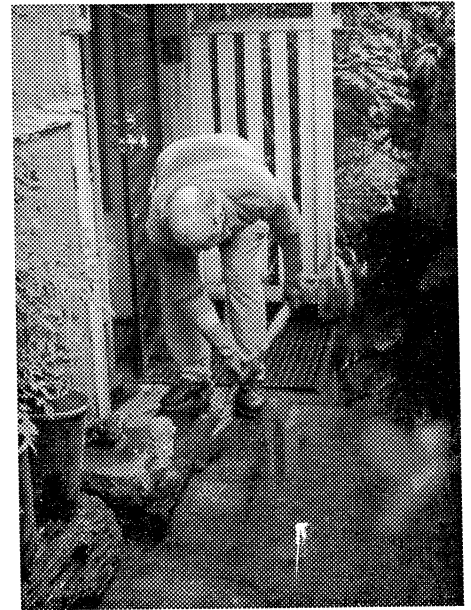
As a long time teacher myself, I can only say to you that the "closer" I feel to a student, the more I will yell at them. I don't want them to get away with anything and before I go to the great battlefield in the sky, I want them to be the best teachers possible. I want to teach them everything I can and I want them to be "perfect" in every way perhaps like an overzealous parent.

When I don't feel close to a student or feel that he doesn't trust me enough, I will try to treat him like the very best waiter in a four-star restaurant.

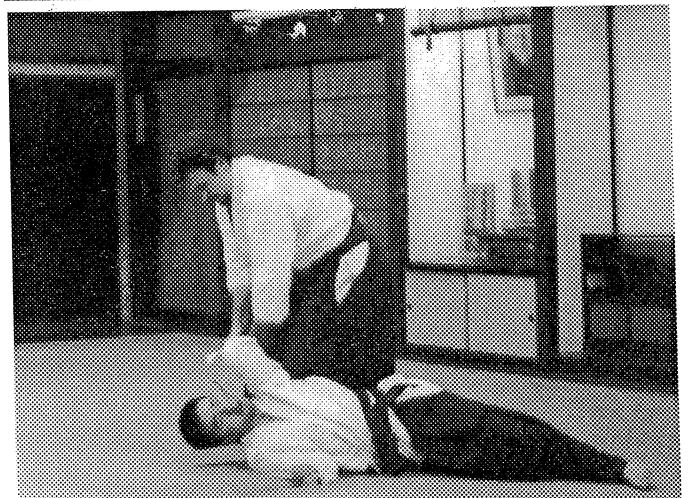
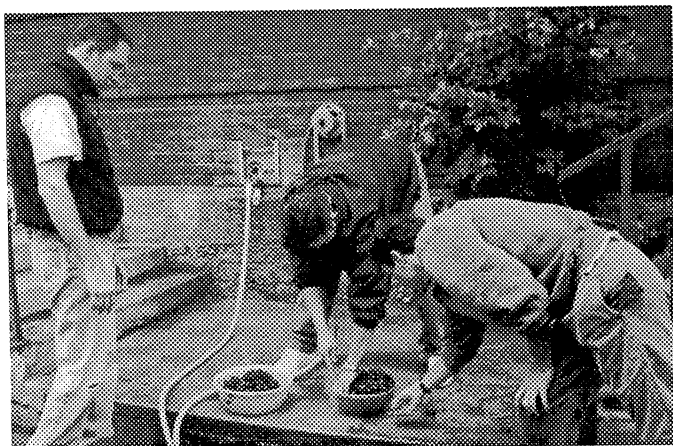
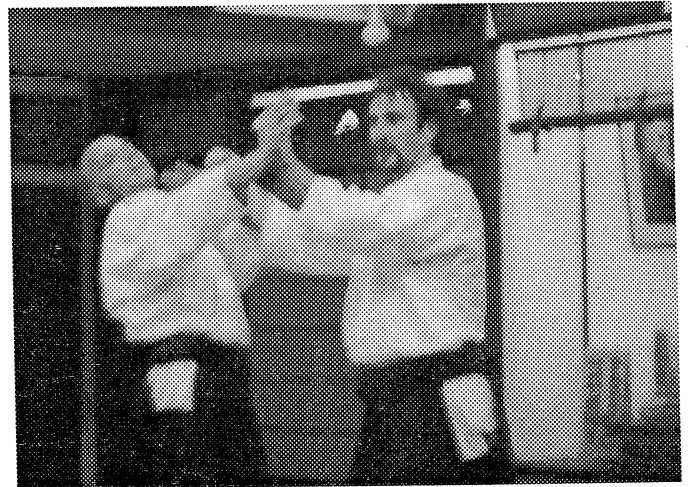
In your training, are you looking for a "good waiter" or a "good teacher?" Go figure!



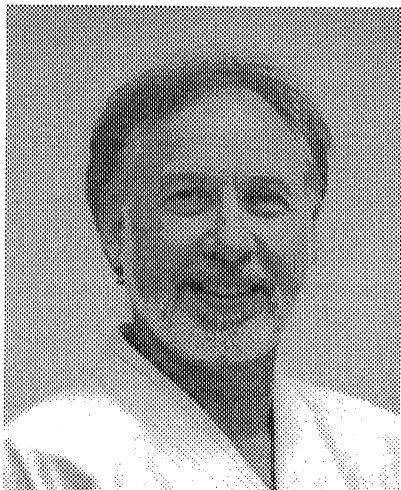
Aikido Center of Los Angeles  
NEWSLETTER



**Nick Kiritz, 3rd Dan, From  
Washington, D. C., In Nov.**



## Larry Armstrong



Larry Armstrong, one of our senior Black Belts, recently started anew career as a independent professional photographer. Much good luck in your new career!

Larry practices both Aikido and Iaido and lives in the West Hollywood area of Los Angeles.

## From Hamberg, Germany

12-12-01

Dear Sensei, Thank you for the December newsletter. The articles of you and Ken, and all the Others were very interesting. "Non-Sense" is very worth to think about. Here everything is going fine and again we are looking for another place for our Dojo, a little bigger than the old one, and with a apartment where I can live. All this car driving nearly every day to the job and then to the keiko is tiring and not necessary, i think. In the end of the year we will do a demonstration for a sayonara-event in a museum, where was a exhibiton about Japan in ancient times. Soon I will send a Videotape( sorry, only in VHS), which we made in spring with Shimizu Sensei in Hamburg. I takes 18 minutes with an interview, demonstration and practising in the one week seminar he hold in Hamburg. I hope you will like it. So I hope this letter will finds you well and Happy Christmas and a wonderfull new year. My plans for coming to America are difficult, because money is rare. But I will keep in touch.

Sincerely yours, Eckhardt Hemkemeier

## From Montreal, Canada

12-12-01

Dear Reverend Furiya, Just a short personal note to wish you a Merry Christmas and all the best in the New-Year. I really appreciate the time you have taken to write to me and give me support, even though we have not met in person. I hope 2002 is filled with continued success for you in all your endeavours.

You were right. All works out in the end. I've gone back to my roots in Karate, and am back training with my first real teacher, Mr. Tsutomu Watanabe, who teaches Japanese Shorin-Ryu. It's like going home. I walk in to the dojo and I am home. I train hard, with a smile, and with a realization that all the stress and mess I went through have nothing to do with the martial arts, that I had lost my focus and purpose, and that, at 50, my training is not for any personal ego or glory, but for my own inner betterment.

Please give my best regards to all your students and family, and enjoy the Holidays. Health and peace to you all. Ronald Auclair

## From New York, New York

12-12-01

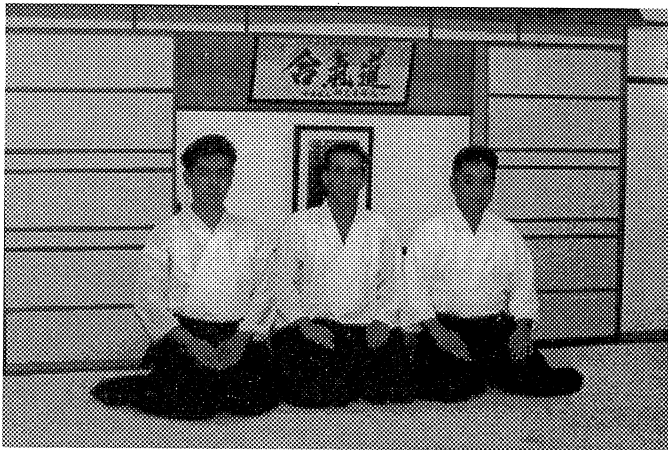
Dearest Sensei Ffuruya: i am 29 years old and live am born and raised in new york city. i come from a life of struggle to survive i want to tell you that your book kodo has encouraged me to pursue my lifes dream. growing up my family would make fun of me and my "kung fu shit" as my father would say after throwing away a new book i spent my allowance on. i was always being told that the martial arts would get me no where. my dad would preach about donald trump and ted turner and i would think about basho, takuan, musashi, o sensei., monks and sages have always been my idols. men complete in themselves without the comments of so called family. so its very nice to read kodo and see you carrying on the anciant ways. my favorite story is about o sensei and how he died after practice my prayer is that i die the same way. my intrest are aikido, kendo, aido, kyudo,zazen i am at ny aikiai and new york zen center, sensei would you teach me i will try hard to fill the barrell with the bottomless bucket, all my research i have not found sensei with same veiw. also im sorry to bother you with my measly request but to me my budo is life for without it i would just be another loser from the streets. if i was to come to la tosee you where would i sleep what would i eat i could work but where but to train with you i think would helpme on the path i am trying to walk taukuan style. sorry for my inexperienced writing agape love matthew.

## From Salamanca, Spain

11-30-01

The Aikido seminar with members of our founder school had been the most important event of the year for our Dojo, Kodokai. Several weeks before Mark & Kenny's arrival, we had been doing our best to improve our Aikido and give everything in the practice. We were very anxious to rise to the occasion, and not to dissapoint our new friends from L.A. When I first saw them was in action, during the seminar. Their style was not that different from ours, but the performance was simply outstanding; I could not get every detail because of my inexperience in Aikido, but one of the most visual things were their rolls across the tatami, in fact you saw them but you didn't hear them, as natural as everyone walks or breath. The technics were fluid and they never practiced too hard, fitting their strenght to the level of every student. And what could I said about their mastery in Iaido? The second day of the seminar they delighted us with an exhibition of some perfect cuts. With every draw of their sword they seemed to touch their head or hurt his hand...but never happened. There was a still silence of tension and admirance in the room during the performance, only interrupted when the rest of the public and participants sincerely applauded their art. In the practice with students the never lost their temper, teaching every detail of every technique, in a way that even other school's students had a great improvement with only a couple of days. This attitude in the Dojo was just a reflection of their personality outside the Dojo. They dealt with us just as equals, always polite and respectful, but they also showed us his sense of humor, vitality and the healthy interest for learning about our world as a child who opens his eyes. They asked for every custom, food, or folk of our city, and we were proud to give back a little of the knowledge they gave us. Their last day in Salamanca was very sad for all of us, and we wished we could have enjoyed their stay more time. I save with the words of Kenny duri ng our last launch; he said that our interest and efforts gave him a reason to keep on woking better and better, and that is exactly what we felt. Their dedication to Aikido made us work

**From Spain continued:**



Left to Right: Mark Ty, Santiago G. Almaraz and Fennly Furuya, at the Kodokai, Salamanca, Spain.

harder then and in now, and we will never forget neither their spirit in the Dojo nor their heart outside. In the name of Kodokai thanks for everything, and come back soon, we expect you as impatient as the first time.

12-11-01

Sensei, I write you this words to wish you a happy Christmas to you Dojo and students. Still I don't know anything about the Video from Cinturón Negro Magazine but when I had news I'll write you. This week the dojo have a special guess from Hawaii, Feliciano Kimo Ferreira Sifu, he is a one of the most important teaches of Kempo-Jutsu he spend a couple of days in Salamanca to visit the city and the Dojo too, and we talk about you and you Dojo, he travel around the world and visit Japan very often because his wife is from Japan, so they told me that the next time go to Los Angeles they would like go to visit you. I give to him a "Kodo" book from you, and I will send you a photos and an article of this. I don't know anything about Kenny Furuya, so I hope that he is fine, and I know that the sword arrived well ..at last. I give to Toño and Kike the information that Cherly send to me. Toño and his wife had been in China this November to adopt a Chinese child, I would like send you a picture.

This 15 of December had to go to Valencia.. again to another test and when I come back I had special winter practice at 6.00 in morning. Always, Santiago G. Almaraz

## Welcome To Our Dojo!

All new beginning students and practicing Aikidoists are welcome to join our training. Please inquire about our classes, study groups, monthly intensives, seminars, our monthly Dojo newsletter, Aikido training videos and books. Visit our web-site and check out Sensei's popular Daily Messages at [www.aikidocenterla.com](http://www.aikidocenterla.com) or email us at [aclafuruya@earthlink.net](mailto:aclafuruya@earthlink.net).

We are affiliated with Hombu Dojo Aikai Kai, Tokyo, Japan, and Rev. Kensho Furuya is our Resident Chief Instructor.

*Aikido Center of Los Angeles*

## Kenshinkai Iaido: Back To The Back

**To Gary Myers, Senior Instructor, Kenshinkai Iaido Department**

Gary: It was good to hear from you. I'm glad the Christmas party went well! I've really missed the dojo and iaido training.

It's been really tough healing properly because I have no sick leave at work and I've come to realize just how physical my job actually is. I've been training at home a little but have had to stop when my back pain kicks in.

Iaido is much more strenuous than I thought previously too. Swinging a sword is essentially throwing a huge lever with control...that control exerts tremendous force on the paraspinal musculature in order to stop...especially "on a dime." I've come to have an even higher level of respect for iaido from this injury.

Please send my warmest regards to Sensei and apologize to him for me...I've wanted to come by on Thursday nights just so I can work on him but at the end of my work days my back has been just thrashed. I'll hopefully be able to get back into the dojo this Thursday...I'll see how it goes with my morning practices. Please feel free to forward this message to Sensei as I don't have his email. I hope you're doing well Gary. Stay warm! Michael P.

### Sensei's Reply:

(Daily Message December 13, 2001)

**BACK TO BACK:** One of the greatest ailments suffered by most martial artists, including Aikidoists, and almost all athletes is back pain. Several years ago, I read a medical report indicating that about one-in-six of Americans today have some type of back pain or trouble. I am sure that those numbers have gotten worse, not better, since then. We have many reasons why we seem to have more back pain today than ever before. We attribute it to our modern, more sedentary, lifestyle, diet, lack of proper exercise, more stress and tension in our lives, and on and on, but no one has really come up with a solution. Perhaps, this is just of symptom of life today which we must endure - still it can be extremely debilitating at worse, and at the very least, a constant pain-in-the-but, if you pardon my pun.

The other day, a student wrote to me the following: "It's been really tough healing properly because I have no sick leave at work and I've come to realize just how physical my job actually is. I've been training at home a little but have had to stop when my back pain kicks in. (Note: Back injury occurred in another sport, not Iaido.)"

Iaido is much more strenuous than I thought previously too. Swinging a sword is essentially throwing a huge lever with control...that control exerts tremendous force on the paraspinal musculature in order to stop...especially "on a dime." I've come to have an even higher level of respect for iaido from this injury."

I am sure that this must all sound very familiar to everyone and every single one of you are probably sympathizing with this person in your hearts. This particular student is a young, active, all-around athlete and well-known chiropractor so his knowledge of such back ailments is much greater than most of us. I see so many careers in Aikido cut short because of back-pain.



## Aikido Center of Los Angeles NEWSLETTER



Ken Watanabe Plans Trip To Hombu, March, 2002.

### **BACK TO BACK continued:**

Of course, Aikidoists suffer from the same modern life-style ailments as anyone else. This is the first thing to understand. And, whatever I may say here, in regards to any and all ailments or pain or troubles, you must see your doctor and follow his orders. This is the second important point to understand.

Many people attribute back-pain in Aikido to ukemi practice, making the assumption that "rolling on one's back" must irritate it. As this one student assumes here, "swinging the sword" causes pain because he uses his back for power and stopping the blade in the cut.

So coming "back to back" or rather "back to the back," I come, once again, in defense of traditional training both for Aikido and Iaido. If anything, proper training should strengthen and enhance your performance and especially your back. Why? Because more than any other sport or physical activity, traditional Aikido and Iaido training emphasizes three essential points to a good, strong, healthy back. These three points are 1. Good posture. 2. Relaxing the shoulders and neck muscles. 3. Keeping your focus and strength at your center of gravity, not in your upper body.

Generally, we have a modern "sports" oriented perspective on all physical activities and as you know, as I have said many times in the past, sports and martial arts are two completely different animals. In executing Aikido and Iaido techniques, we are not using the primitive principle of a "level" and the focus of power is not in the back. Today, we like "abs" and "v" shaped bodies (me, too, although I am not blessed with them), and we like to carry our strength and power in our upper body in the shoulders and neck. This is also caused by concentrating our mental focus and processes "in our heads" and not "in our centers (tanden)" as prescribed in ancient training. Power should be focused in the legs and feet and at the center of gravity in the lower part of the abdomen (for which it is designed) allowing the upper body to remain relaxed and steady. With good posture, the upper body is allowed to relax, the internal organs stay in good natural, proper order, the neck muscles ease and the head shifts back into proper position and the thinking clears. Concentrating the power in the upper body and shoulders and neck, one cannot generate full power.

Most people, I see, with bad backs, usually are very weak in the legs and hips. Many people misunderstand training and stiffen the legs and hips and use the back to swing back and forth and/or generate power. This always causes problems. The back is a "support" system for the body, not a power structure. Quite on the contrary, one should use the legs and hips as much as possible and allow the back to remain relaxed with its only function to remain balanced, relaxed and properly straight.

In Aikido ukemi, the movement will only strengthen and enhance the performance of the back. Generally, we come into ukemi practice with old injuries, bad habits and an already stiff and aching back which is only aggravated by ukemi. Then ukemi takes the so-called, "bad rap."

In cutting with the sword, the power is in the tip of the blade or mono-uchi where the cutting process takes place. This can only be achieved if one keeps power in the legs and hips. Because this may be hard to conceptualize or materialize in our heads, it is best to simply follow the old maxim, of focusing on one's center. The sword stops "on the dime" naturally and an expression of "full power," one does not stiffen the back to force the stop. Of course, full power is never realized if one uses the back in cutting. The power, again, is always in the legs and hips. It is hard for us to understand these principles, I believe, this is why training takes so long and one must be patient and go slowly. Just because one can imitate the appearance of the technique or one can duplicate the movements, do not mean that one understands the art itself. This misunderstanding and superficial view of martial arts is at the heart of the problem here.

Follow your teacher's advice, go slowly, and really try to understand how to put your mental focus and power into your legs and hips and concentrate on your center of gravity. Don't tell me you think this is easy? Don't tell me you think you can do this after a couple of practice sessions? Don't tell me that you have mastered this every second of the day after only a few years of training?

This is the purpose of long arduous, devoted and conscientious training in traditional arts! Seeing the technique, and imitating it couple of times and saying to me, "Okay Sensei, what's next?" Oh my, you even have a longer way to go than I first imagined!

PS: I must again emphasize the point to consult your doctor in every and all cases regarding your health and to follow his instructions. In some cases, I understand it may be necessary to get several opinions from several specialists.

Secondly, developing the proper center and proper mental focus takes years of correct training under a qualified teacher. This is not something that you can develop overnight. Without a teacher who is not trained in this, you will be lost.

Thirdly, none of this can be understood from the standpoint of modern sports today. Traditional training is fast becoming a lost art and secret knowledge and most people I see do not know what it really means. Your training must always be properly focused, natural and always in the correct direction. One should follow their teacher as one would follow their doctor's advice.

Finally, treat all back injuries carefully. In some cases, back injury is not simply back injury but an indication of another internal problem.

## **Dojo Health: No Sweet News**

### **Diet Drink Anyone?**

**By Nancy Markle**

I have spent several days lecturing at the World Environment Conference on Aspartame marketed as NutraSweet, Equal and Spoonful. In the keynote address by the EPA, they announced that there was an epidemic of multiple sclerosis and systemic lupus, and they did not understand what toxin was causing this to be rampant across the United States. I explained that I was there to lecture on exactly that subject.

When the temperature of Aspartame exceeds 86 degrees F; the wood alcohol in Aspartame converts to formaldehyde and then to formic acid, which in turn causes metabolic acidosis. (Formic acid is the poison found in the sting of fire ants).

The methanol toxicity mimics multiple sclerosis thus peoples were being diagnosed with having multiple sclerosis in error. The multiple sclerosis is not a death sentence, where methanol toxicity is.

In the case of systemic lupus, we are finding it has become almost as rampant as multiple sclerosis, especially with Diet Coke and Diet Pepsi drinkers. Also, with methanol toxicity, the victims usually drink three to four 12 oz. cans of them per day, some even more. In the case of systemic lupus, which is triggered by Aspartame, the victim usually does not know that the Aspartame is the culprit. The victim continues its use aggravating the lupus to such a degree, that sometimes it becomes life threatening. When we get people off the Aspartame, those with systemic lupus usually become symptomatic. Unfortunately, we cannot reverse this disease.

On the other hand, in the case of those diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis, when in reality, the disease is methanol toxicity, most of the symptoms disappear. We have seen cases where their vision has returned and even their hearing has returned. This also applies to cases of tinnitus.

During a lecture, I said, "If you are using Aspartame (NutraSweet, Equal, Spoonful, etc.) and you suffer from Fibromyalgia symptoms; spasms, shooting pains, numbness in your legs, cramps, vertigo, dizziness, headaches, tinnitus, joint pain, depression, anxiety attacks, slurred speech, blurred vision or memory loss, you probably have Aspartame disease." People were jumping up during the lecture saying, "I've got this. Is it reversible?"

It is rampant. Some of the speakers at my lecture even were suffering from these symptoms. In one lecture attended by the Ambassador of Uganda, he told us that their sugar industry is adding Aspartame. He continued by saying that one of the industry leader's sons could no longer walk \* due in part byproduct usage. We have a very serious problem. Even a stranger came up to Dr. Espisto (one of my speakers) and myself and said, "could you tell me why so many people seem to be coming down with M.S.?" During a visit to a hospice, a nurse said that six of her friends who were heavy Diet Coke addicts, had all been diagnosed with M.S. This is beyond coincidence.

Here is the problem. There were Congressional Hearings when Aspartame was included in 100 different products. Since this initial hearing, there have been two subsequent hearings, but to no avail. Nothing has been done. The drug and chemical lobbies have very

deep pockets. Now there are over 5,000 products containing this chemical, and the PATENT HAS EXPIRED. At the time of this first hearing, people were going blind. The methanol in the Aspartame converts to formaldehyde in the retina of the eye. Formaldehyde is grouped in the same class of drugs as cyanide and arsenic DEADLY POISONS! Unfortunately, it just takes longer to quietly kill, but it is killing people and causing all kinds of neurological problems. Aspartame changes the brain's chemistry. It is the reason for severe seizures. This drug changes the dopamine level in the brain. Imagine what this drug does to patients suffering from Parkinson's Disease. This drug also causes Birth Defects. There is absolutely no reason to take this product. It is NOT A DIET PRODUCT. The Congressional record said, "It makes you crave carbohydrates and will make you FAT." Dr. Roberts stated that when he got patients off Aspartame, their average weight loss was 19 pounds per person. The formaldehyde stores in the fat cells, particularly in the hips and thighs.

Aspartame is especially deadly for diabetics. All physicians know what wood alcohol will do to a diabetic. We find that physicians believe that they have patients with retinopathy, when in fact, it is caused by the Aspartame. The Aspartame keeps the blood sugar level out of control, causing many patients to go into a coma. Unfortunately, many have died. People were telling us at the Conference of the American college of Physicians, that they had relatives that switched from saccharin to an Aspartame product and how that relative had eventually gone into a coma. Their physicians could not get the blood sugar levels under control. Thus, the patients suffered acute memory loss and eventually coma and death. Memory loss is due to the fact that aspartic acid and phenylalanine are neurotoxic without the other amino acids found in protein. Thus it goes past the brain barrier and deteriorates the neurons of the brain. Dr. Russell Blaylock, neurosurgeon, said, "The ingredients stimulate the neurons of the brain to death, causing brain damage of varying degrees." Dr. Blaylock has written a book entitled, "EXVIROTOXINS: The Taste That Kills" Health Press 800-643-2665). Dr. H.J. Roberts, diabetic specialist and world expert on Aspartame Poisoning has also written a book entitled, "Defense against Alzheimer's Disease" (800-814-9800). Dr. Roberts tells how Aspartame Poisoning is escalating Alzheimer's Disease and indeed it is. As the hospice nurse told Disease. Dr. Blaylock and Dr. Roberts will be writing a position paper with some case histories and will post it on the Internet. According to the Conference of the American College of Physicians, "We are talking about a plague of neurological diseases caused by this deadly poison." Dr. Roberts realized what was happening when Aspartame was first marketed. He said, "his diabetic patients presented memory loss, confusion, and severe vision loss."

At the Conference of American College of Physicians, doctors admitted that they did not know. They had wondered why seizures were rampant (the phenylalanine in Aspartame breaks down the seizures threshold and depletes serotonin, which causes manic depression, panic attacks, rage and violence). Just before the Conference, I received a fax from Norway, asking for a possible antidote for this poison because they are experiencing so many problems in their country. This "poison" is now available in 90 plus countries worldwide. Fortunately, we had speakers and ambassadors at the Conference from different nations who have pledged their help. We ask you to help too.

Print this article out and warn everyone you know. Take anything that contains Aspartame back to the store. The "No Aspartame Test" and

**Aikido Center of Los Angeles**  
**NEWSLETTER**

send us your case history. I assure you that Monsanto, the creator of Aspartame, knows how deadly it is. They fund the American Diabetes Association, American Dietetic Association, Congress and the Conference of the American College of Physicians. The New York Times, on November 15, 1996, ran an article on how the American Dietetic Association takes money from the food industry to endorse their products. Therefore, they cannot criticize any additives or tell about their link to Monsanto.

How bad is this? We told a mother who had a child on NutraSweet to get off the product. The child was having Grand Mal Seizures every day. The mother called her physician, who called the ADA, who told the doctor not to take the child off the NutraSweet. We are still trying to convince the mother that the Aspartame is causing the seizures. Every time we get someone off of Aspartame, the seizures stop. If the baby dies, you know whose fault it is and what we are up against. There are 92 documented symptoms of Aspartame from coma to death. The majority of them are neurological because the Aspartame destroys the nervous system. Aspartame Disease is partially the cause to what is behind some of the mystery of the Desert Storm health problems. The burning tongue and other problems discussed in over 60 cases can be directly related to the consumption of Aspartame product and several thousand pallets of diet drinks were shipped to the Desert Storm troops. Diet drinks sat in the 120 degree F Arabian sun for weeks at a time on pallets. The service men and women drank them all day long. All of their symptoms are identical to Aspartame Poisoning. Dr. Roberts says that consuming Aspartame at the time of conception can cause birth defects. The phenylalanine concentrates in the placenta, causing mental retardation, according to Dr. Louis Elsas, Pediatrician Professor genetics at Emory University in his testimony before Congress. In the original lab tests, animals developed brain tumors (phenylalanine breaks down into DXP, a brain tumor agent). When Dr. Espisto was lecturing on Aspartame, one physician in the audience, a neurosurgeon said, "when they remove brain tumors, they have found high levels of Aspartame in them". Stevia, a sweet food, NOT AN ADDITIVE, which helps in the metabolism of sugar, which would be ideal for diabetics, has now been approved as a dietary supplement by the FDA. For years, the FDA has outlawed this sweet food because of their loyalty to Monsanto.

If it says, SUGAR FREE on the label, DO NOT EVEN THINK ABOUT IT. Senator Howard Hetzenbaum wrote a bill that would have warned all infants, pregnant mothers and children of the dangers of Aspartame. The bill would have also instituted independent studies on the problems existing in the population (seizures, changes in brain chemistry, changes in neurological and behavioral symptoms). The bill was killed by the powerful drug and chemical lobbies, letting loose the hounds of disease and death on an unsuspecting public. Since the Conference of American College of Physicians, we hope to have the help of some world leaders. Again, please help us too. There are a lot of people out there who must be warned. Please let them know this information. You might want to print it out to hand out or fax it to people who are not online.

Submitted by Jim MacDonald, 2nd Dan.

**Visit Our Website Daily!**  
**[www.aikidocenterla.com](http://www.aikidocenterla.com)**

## Letters:

11-17-01

Reverend Furuya-I have been looking for a place to study martial arts, and looking at many different styles. During my searching, I came across your website, and I also saw your dojo on the Discovery Channel special. I am very interested in learning more about your school, and with your permission, I would like to watch (or participate, if possible) in a class. I have read several of the letters you have written, and I think I would be able to learn much more than martial arts from you. -Regards, Philip Moore

11-26-01

### Let's Be Thankful:

Sensei: I just got back from Thanksgiving at my Mother's and so should be back to practice Monday. It was a nice trip I haven't seen her in a while so it was good to go. Walking into the house and smelling the preparations for Thanksgiving dinner really made me feel like I was a kid at home again. I hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving. I think the Dojo has had a really good year in which we've accomplished many good things. We've re-established good contacts, developed a genuinely good group of people as students in Aikido as well as Iaido and the Dojo has never looked better. I think we have all these things we can be thankful for this year. See you Monday. Larry

11-27-01

--- Samuel Gracia

--- dayone11@earthlink.net

--- EarthLink: It's your Internet.

LOVE THIS WEB SITE!!!!!!

11-27-01

### A Friend From France:

Furuya Sensei: Not knowing that it was you that answered the mails, I didn't present to myself.

Outside of the fact that me desire to order the other volumes of your collection of video tapes, I allow myself to remind you that we were already a few years ago in contact with you.

Indeed, I have yourselves write in the month of June 1997 and you had the kindness to answer me June 26, 1997, your letter was accompanied by a present, your "Kodo" book autographed so gently.

Me you also had on the phone during the month of June 1997 in order to express you my recognition for your teaching that is had my unique sense: "step by step."

He/it dealt with me important to present me because since several years I am your teaching through your videos.

Me me call Cyril Danan and I are pupil of Mr. Gérard Blaize 7th Dan Aikikai of Tokyo, I practice the Aikido since more of 12 years.

In 1999 I have create with a friend of Aikido who is an American and that lives in Paris, an Association that himself call "Association Of Aikido For Tomorrow" and of which I am the President.

This Association to been created in the goal to organize a big practicum Of Aikido in Paris in France in the month of June 1999



## Aikido Center of Los Angeles NEWSLETTER

### France continued:

under the direction of Steven Seagal Sensei, my friend American to as friend of childhood one close to Seagal Sensei and it is grace has this contact that we could organize this big practicum of two days, there were more than 950 Aikidokas that came from all over the world, it was at Paris June 12 and 13, 1999.

In order to honor the presence of Seagal Sensei and Aikidokas that made the effort of the displacement, I have organize a demonstration of Japanese Traditonal Martial arts in the evening June 12, was present in demonstration: Mt. Gérard Blaize, Mt. Christian Tissier for the Aikido, Mt. Tomita for the iaïdo, Mt. J.Pierre disowns For the Batodo, The Katori Shinto Ryu as well as the Jodo was also present.

The profits of this event have been reverted to "the mistreated childhood and underprivileged", topic that especially results me from my heart.

While achieving this event I wished to prove that the Aikido is a big Family as wished it O.SENSEI.

And also to demonstrate that of the currents different of Aikido were able to that to find on a same "tatami."

These small years of practice my however to let a taste of bitterness when to the various present federation in France and to the political powers that reign within the family of the Aikido.

These why, I took the decision a few months ago to leave my usual "Dojo" and to open courses of Aikido.

Since the event of June 1999 I had been solicited very in order to dispense some courses but I didn't feel even ready.

What embarrassed me a lot at the court of his/her/its practice years

### No Ephedrine In The Dojo:

Recently there has been much publicity about the adverse effects and risks of the drug ephedrine (also called ephedra and ma huang) available over the counter in health food stores and in some over the counter "medications." People are often interested in using ephedrine for increasing apparent energy, weight loss and increased physical performance. There are no longer any legitimate medical uses for this drug and the potential side effects include sudden death, heart failure and stroke. Because ephedrine increases stress to heart muscle and may interfere with blood circulation to other important organs such as the brain, it should never be used in association with vigorous exercise. This drug may be "natural" but it is dangerous. Since the practice of aikido involves vigorous cardiovascular training, no student member of the Aikido Center of Los Angeles should be using this drug. Further, ephedrine interferes significantly with brain function and concentration. Therefore, any student practicing Iaido while under the influence of this drug represents a significant danger to himself and to the other students in the class. In general, because of the potential dangers to self and to others, no member of the Aikido Center of Los Angeles should be using ephedrine or any other so-called performance enhancing drugs. Use of such substances is completely counter to the spirit and the internal discipline intrinsic to the practice of the traditional martial arts.

these is all his/her/its professors who think to detain the truth concerning Aikido!!, in the beginning of my practice I thought that the Aikido could be a fully-fledged state, so a beginner could transmit his "state" has a more officer that he and the more officer could pull the profits of a teaching of it.

To the look of these few years of practice, I am in a position of conflict in relation to the powers that one some professors and practicing officers who take advantage of their "rank" to manipulate without reasons of the pupils who only ask has learn.

In any case, I follow since several years your teaching through your videos and it perfectly suits me because in relation with my own sensitivity.

I positioned myself therefore has the N°1 videos to start my courses and apparently our pupils are satisfied very and very happy, they even ask me to put other hourly gaps in place to have more hours of practice.

I want to thank you for everything that made you for the Aikido and more especially for me today through your teaching.

While hoping to read you very soon and while excusing me again of my mediocre English.

I pray you, Sensei, to accept my greetings the best,

Cyril Danan  
Association d'Aikido Pour Demain  
<http://www.aad.fr.st>

[cyrildan@wanadoo.fr](mailto:cyrildan@wanadoo.fr)

PS: i dont no if the "translate prg" do his best to translate the real and the "terms" of my letter, maybe the sens is wrong and i whould to excuse me for that ! i join you the text in french may be you have a better translation prg than me.

Maître,

Ne sachant pas que c'était vous qui répondiez aux mails, je ne me suis pas présenté.

En dehors du fait que je désir commander les autres volumes de votre collection de vidéo cassettes, je me permet de vous rappeler que nous étions déjà en contact il y a quelques années de cela.

En effet, je vous avez écrit au mois de juin 1997 et vous avez eu la gentillesse de me répondre le 26 juin 1997, votre lettre était accompagnée d'un présent, votre livre "Kodo" si gentiment dédicacé.

Je vous avez eu également au téléphone au cours du mois de Juin 1997 afin de vous exprimer ma reconnaissance pour votre enseignement qui est a mon sens "unique : "step by step".

Il me parait important de me présenter car depuis plusieurs années je suis votre enseignement à travers vos vidéos.

Je m'appel Cyril Danan et je suis élève de Maître Gérard Blaize 7e Dan Aikikai de Tokyo, je pratique l'Aikido depuis plus de 12 ans.

## Aikido Center of Los Angeles NEWSLETTER

### France continued:

En 1999 j'ai créé avec un ami d'Aïkido qui est Américain et qui vit à Paris, une Association qui s'appelle "Association D'Aïkido Pour Demain" et dont je suis le Président.

Cette Association a été créée dans le but d'organiser un grand stage D'Aïkido à Paris en France au mois de juin 1999 sous la direction de Steven Seagal Senseï, mon ami Américain à comme ami d'enfance un proche de Seagal Senseï et c'est grâce à ce contact que nous avons pu organiser ce grand stage de deux jours, il y avait plus de 950 pratiquants qui sont venus du monde entier, ce fut à Paris les 12 et 13 Juin 1999.

Afin d'honorer la présence de Seagal Senseï et des pratiquants qui ont fait l'effort du déplacement, j'ai organisé une démonstration d'Arts Martiaux traditionnels Japonais le 12 Juin au soir, était présent en démonstration : Maître Gérard Blaize, Maître Christian Tissier pour l'Aïkido, Maître Tomita pour le Jïdo, Maître J.Pierre reniez Pour le Batodo, Le Katori Shinto Ryu ainsi que le Jodo était également présent.

Les bénéfices de cet événement ont été reversés à "l'enfance maltraitée et défavorisée", sujet qui me tient particulièrement à cœur.

En réalisant cet événement je souhaitais prouver que l'Aïkido est une grande Famille tel que le souhaitait O.SENSEI.

Et également démontrer que des courants différents d'Aïkido pouvaient se trouver sur une même "tatami".

Ces petites années de pratique m'ont cependant laissé un goût d'amertume quand aux diverses fédérations présentes en France et aux pouvoirs politiques qui règnent au sein de la famille de l'Aïkido.

Ces pourquoi, j'ai pris la décision il y a quelques mois de quitter mon "Dojo" habituel et d'ouvrir des cours d'Aïkido.

Depuis l'événement de juin 1999 j'avais été très sollicité afin de dispenser des cours mais je ne me sentais pas encore prêt.

Ce qui m'a beaucoup gêné au cours de ses années de pratique ce sont tous ses professeurs qui pensent détenir la vérité en matière d'Aïkido !!, au début de ma pratique je pensais que l'Aïkido pouvait être un état à part entière, ainsi un débutant pouvait transmettre son "état" à un plus gradé que lui et le plus gradé pouvait en tirer les bénéfices d'un enseignement.

Au regard de ces quelques années de pratique, je me trouve dans une position de conflit par rapport aux pouvoirs qu'ont certains professeurs et pratiquants gradés qui profitent de leurs "rang" pour manipuler sans raisons des élèves qui ne demandent qu'à apprendre.

En tout état de cause, je suis depuis plusieurs années votre enseignement au travers de vos vidéos et cela me convient parfaitement car en rapport avec ma propre sensibilité.

Je me suis donc positionné à la vidéo N°1 pour démarrer mes cours et apparemment nos élèves sont très satisfaits et très heureux, ils me demandent même de mettre en place d'autres créneaux horaires pour avoir plus d'heures de pratique.

Je tiens à vous remercier pour tout ce que vous faites pour l'Aïkido et plus particulièrement pour moi aujourd'hui à travers votre enseignement.

En espérant vous lire très bientôt et en m'excusant encore de mon Anglais médiocre. Je vous prie, Maître, d'agréer mes salutations les meilleurs Cyril Danan

12-03-01

Sensei: Yes, everyone had a good time at the dinner at Shamshiri and most stayed around for a while after you had to take the Nakayama's back. People were particularly pleased to be able to order what they wanted rather than have a set menu. And there was no trouble collecting the money--in fact, most put in an extra dollar or two to help defray your expenses--so I will be returning some money to you. Several of your non-blackbelt senior students would not leave until they were personally assured that we had enough money to pay the bill and so they stayed and watched Mark and I count. This was the most painless arrangement of the money I've seen--maybe when people are free to order as much or as little as they want to eat, they feel more generous in putting up the funds?

I think the restaurant and Mr. Farhad did an outstanding job accommodating us--even immediately setting up a table for the latecomers. They only asked for 15% gratuity!!! We must continue to patronize that place. I was amazed at how rapid the service was, given the number of people.

Since the Iaido group is much smaller, we will also order off of the menu at the restaurant. And people can get whatever they want to drink directly from the bar. Last year, when we went to the Smoke House, although we tried to figure out ahead of time with a set menu, how much to charge people, we could not anticipate the extras that people wanted, and so there was a lot more trouble collecting funds beforehand and figuring out the difference afterwards. Cheryl

Sensei's reply: Many thanks for a great job. I think this was one of our best Christmas Parties ever! I hope we will be able to afford gifts for everyone next year as well. We should try to find a similar style restaurant for next year too. Many thanks to Carol Tanita for wrapping over 100 presents for the Dojo.

12-07-01

Dear Sir: I read about Aikido Center in Rafu Shippo, today. I want to know more about Aikido. I have no experience in and no prior knowledge of martial arts. I want to improve mentally, physically and spiritually. I am 36, married --Kanai wa Nihonjin desu-- with one 8 month old daughter. I am a resident of Manhattan Beach. Occupation: Attorney/Investment Manager. Please guide! ---A. K. Wahid

12-09-01

Hello Sensei, My name is Dwaylon Calhoun and for the past 10 years I have been searching for a martial art that would train my mind and body and I think that Aikido is the art that I have been looking for. I have heard many great things about your dojo and I would like to train with you. The problem that I think that I may have that I am too old to start the training. I would like your opinion if my thoughts are correct. My prior martial art experience included Krav Maga, Judo, and Gracie Jiu-Jitsu. I am a bit overweight (about 40 lbs) so I don't know how that will effect what one needs to do in Aikido. Please advise. Thank you in advance, Dwaylon Calhoun

Aikido Center of Los Angeles  
NEWSLETTER

## Welcome To The Aikido Center of Los Angeles



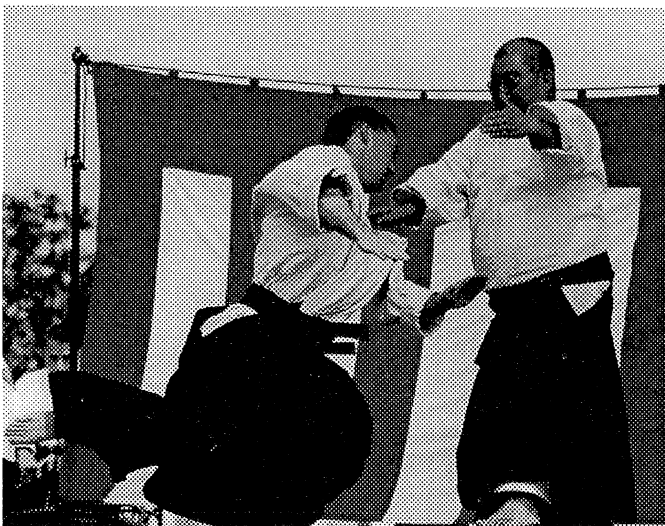
Aikido Center of Los Angeles

## Our Dojo's 28th Year, 1974-2002.

Our dojo is dedicated to the practice of traditional Aikido as taught by the Founder of Aikido, Morihei Ueshiba and his legitimate successors, the late 2nd Doshu Kisshomaru Ueshiba and the present 3rd Doshu Moriteru Ueshiba.

You are very welcome to visit our beautiful, hand-crafted, traditional Japanese Dojo during posted training hours. All practicing Aikidoists are welcome to train with us or observe our training.

**Please Visit Our Website:**  
[www.aikidocenterla.com](http://www.aikidocenterla.com).



Reverend Kensho Furuya, 6th Dan

### Dojo Supplies

#### Official Dojo Jackets

Now available on a custom order basis. Designed by Land's End, nylon in bright yellow with the embroidered Dojo logo. They are very comfortable and great to wear for demonstrations. \$55.00 each.

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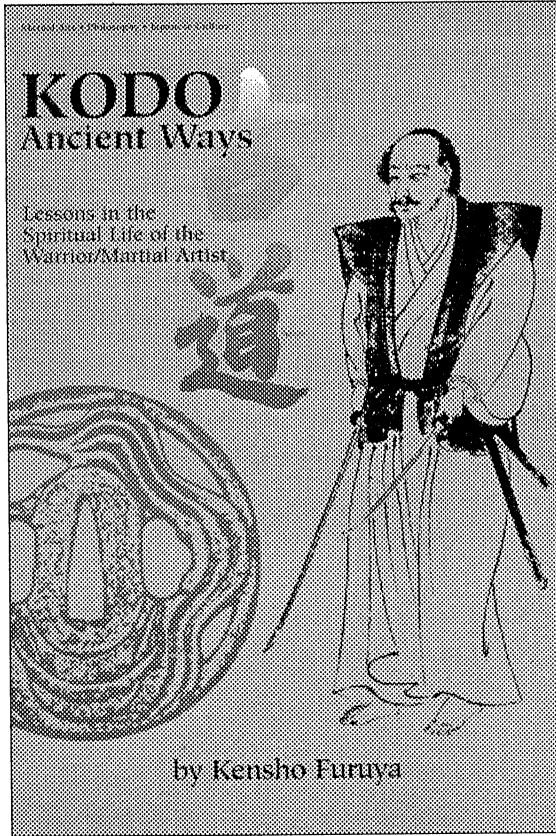


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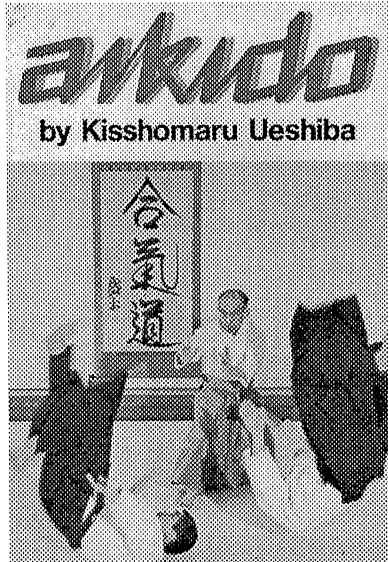
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## Recommended Studies:



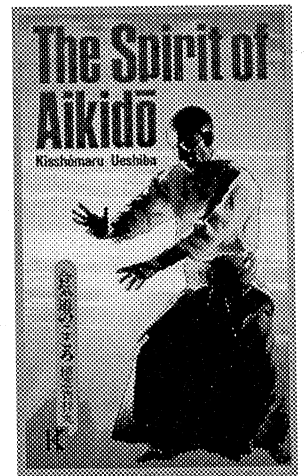
*Highly Recommended Reading:*  
**AIKIDO**  
By Doshu Kisshomaru Ueshiba  
Doshu's book is one of the best books available today on Aikido technique. Strongly recommended.



**KIHAN AIKIDO**  
Fundamental of Aikido  
By Doshu & Dojocho Moriteru Ueshiba  
The latest reference book on Hombu Aikido by 2nd & 3rd Doshu with excellent photos on all of the basic techniques. Referred to as the "Aikido Bible."



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**THE SPIRIT OF AIKIDO**  
By Doshu Kisshomaru Ueshiba  
An important book on the philosophy and historical background of Aikido's development. Translated from the Japanese - *Aikido no Kokoro*.

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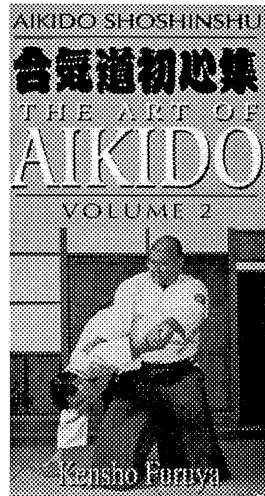
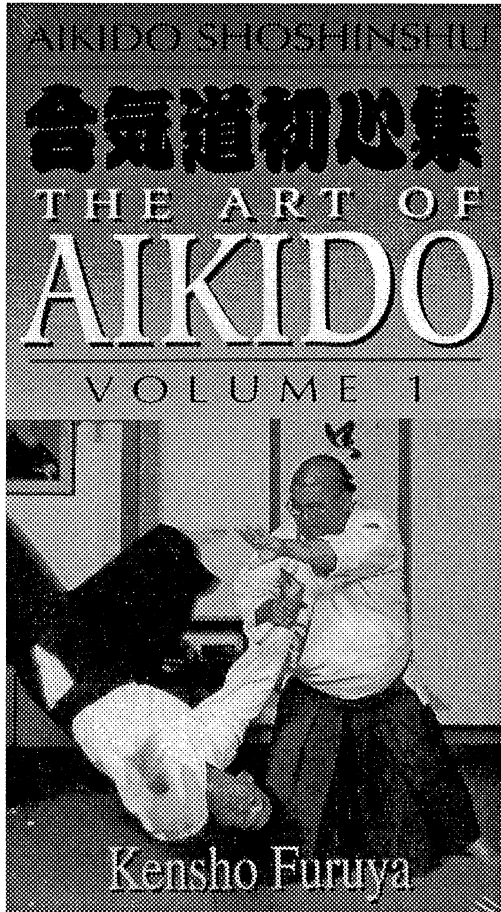
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# The Art of AIKIDO

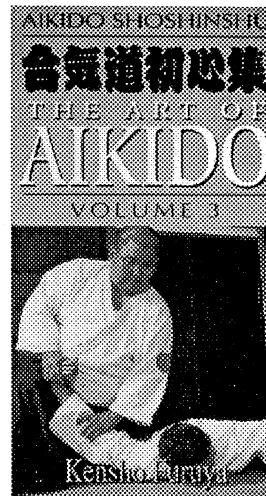
## Aikido Instructional Video Series in Nine Volumes

*"Top Rated"* - Karate Illustrated, *"Impressive Scope"* - Aikido Today, *"Exhaustive"* - Aikido Journal *"One of the Best"*

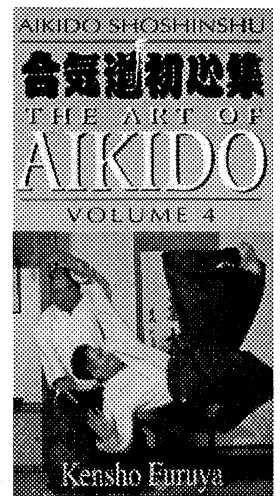
This video series is considered to be the most comprehensive and detailed instructional video on Aikido available today. Rev. Kensho Furuya, 6th Dan, Chief Instructor of the Aikido Center of Los Angeles, is a student of the late Kisshomaru Ueshiba Doshu of the Aikido World Headquarters. He began his training at the age of ten and celebrates over 40 years in Aikido. He studied in Japan in 1969 and the Aikido Center was established in 1974. Rev. Furuya is also an ordained Zen priest, a Brody Multi-Cultural Grant recipient, and was honored with a federal grant from the Carnegie Project of the National Defense Act to attend Harvard University in 1969. He is listed in the Who's Who and a board member of the LAPD Martial Artist Advisory Panel.



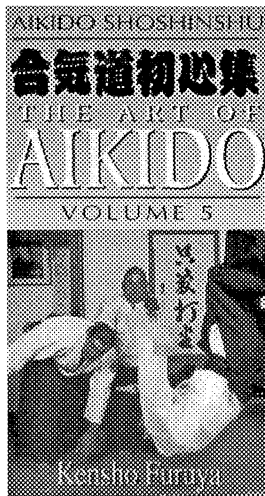
Basic Techniques  
Throwing & Joint Techniques  
Ikkyo, Nikyo, Sankyo, Yonkyo & Gokyo



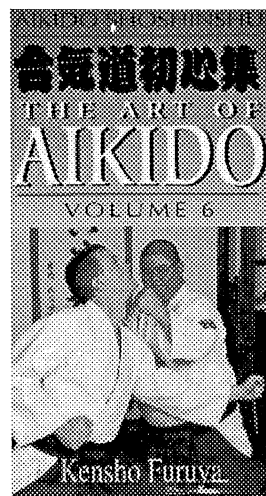
Ukemi-Breakfalling  
Basics Continued  
Free Style Techniques  
Tenshin. Ki. Breathing.



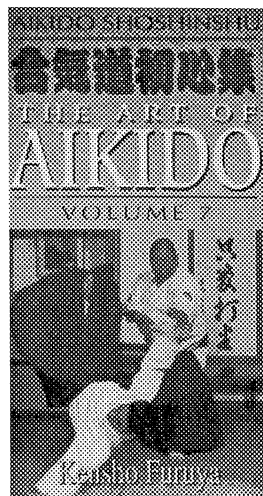
Katatetori Ryotemochi:  
Ryotetori: 2-hand.  
Reigi-saho: Etiquette.  
Koshinage-Hip throws.



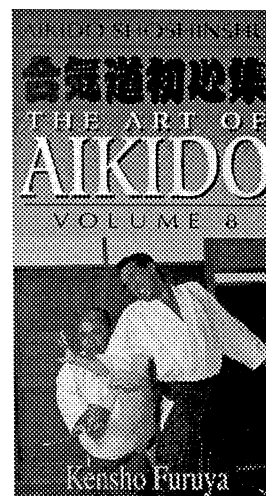
Suwari-waza. Gokyo.  
Hanmi-handachi. Kokyu-dosa.  
Katatori: Shoulder.  
Multiple attackers.  
Five-man Freestyle.



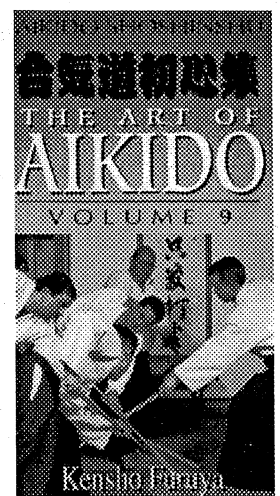
Tsuki: Strikes & Punches  
Yokomenuchi: Strikes to the side  
of the head & neck.



Shomenuchi: Direct strikes.  
Ushiro Katatetori Kubishime:  
Chokes from behind.  
Ushiro Ryotetori, Ryohijitori,  
Ryokatatori.



Atemi-waza: Striking  
Defense against kicks.  
Tanto-tori: Knife defense.  
Aiki-ken: Sword Training  
Fundamentals.



Jo: Basic long staff  
Fundamentals.  
Complete 1st Degree  
Black Belt Examination

# Aikido TRAINING SCHEDULE

## AIKIDO for ADULTS

**Sundays:** Children's Class: 9:00-10:00am.  
Open Beginning: 10:15-11:15am.

**Mondays:** Open Beginning: 6:30-7:30pm.

**Tuesdays:** Open Beginning: 5:15-6:15pm.  
Instructor's Advanced: 6:30-7:30pm

**Wednesdays:** Open Beginning: 5:15-6:15pm & 6:30-7:30pm. Intermediate-Advanced: 7:45-8:45pm.

**Thursdays:** Open Beginning: 12noon-1:00pm, 5:15-6:15pm & 6:30-7:30pm.

**Fridays:** Open Beginning: 5:15-6:15pm & 6:30-7:30pm.

**Saturdays:** Open Beginning: 9:30-10:30am. Beginning-Intermediate: 10:30-11:30pm. Every 4th Saturday: Open Intensive: 6:30-8:00am.

## CHILDREN'S CLASSES

7- 16 yrs old

**Sunday Mornings 9:00 -10:00am**

*Affiliation*

**AIKIDO WORLD HEADQUARTERS**

Aikido So-Hombu Dojo - Aikikai

17-18 Wakamatsu-cho, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, JAPAN

*We are committed to the study and practice of the teachings of the Founder of Aikido, Morihei Ueshiba and his legitimate successors, Kisshomaru Ueshiba and the present Moriteru Ueshiba Doshu.*

**Aikido Center of Los Angeles**

940 E. 2nd St. #7, Little Tokyo,

Los Angeles, CA 90012

Tel: (213) 687-3673

Email: [ac1afuruya@earthlink.net](mailto:ac1afuruya@earthlink.net)

**[www.aikidocenterla.com](http://www.aikidocenterla.com)**

# Iaido TRAINING SCHEDULE

## TRADITIONAL JAPANESE IAIDO SWORDSMANSHIP

**Sunday Mornings:** 7:45am-8:45am

**Thursdays:** 7:45-8:45pm

**Saturday Mornings:** 8:00am-9:00am

*No Classes on the last weekend of the month.*

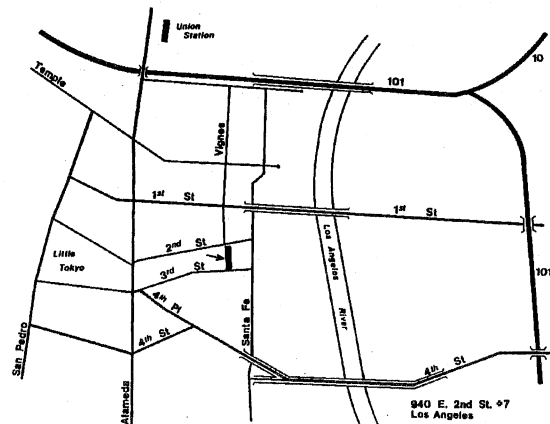
## Intensive Iaido

Every 2nd Saturday of the month.  
6:30am-8:00am

**Private Classes Available.**

## Finding Our Dojo:

*We are endeavoring to maintain the highest standards of training while preserving the True Spirit of Aikido. We hope you will appreciate our efforts and undertake your training with devoted and committed energy. Your efforts, we believe, will be greatly rewarded. We welcome you to an ancient and profound art. We welcome you to our Dojo. Everyone, beginners and active Aikido students alike, are cordially welcome to join our training. Thank you.*



We are convenient to most major freeways. Enter private lane at Vignes and 2nd Streets. We are one block west of Santa Fe Ave. and several blocks east of Alameda in Little Tokyo. The **Easiest Way:** From Alameda go east on 1st St and make right turn at Vignes. Do not turn on 2nd St. but go straight into the private lane. Look for the garden.