



ABUNDANT PEACE AIKIDO & T'AI CHI

Connections

Editorial



My schedule remains overwhelmingly busy, and with the end of that situation only very distantly in sight, if at all. The primary up side during this time has been that I have been able to do much of my traveling on the back of my Harley...motorcycling is another of my passions, and I am grateful for the chance to take some brief respite

from the grind of work on the road. That said, I miss my time on the mats and am hopeful that I will be able to get back to the mats very soon, even if only for two or three times a week.

I have had to work a bit, to make that happen; what about you? For me, it has meant a continual review and reminder of the many "what's in it for me" benefits that I derive from training. If any of you find yourself in a similar situation, perhaps you need to reconsider your connections?

-Stuart-



July 2011

Corporal Francisco Gomez
Memorial Library

One news item that many may have missed is the announcement that for the Canadian



Forces the War in Afghanistan is over, at least in terms of their direct combat mission. Of course, our soldiers will remain in that theatre, but will be in training and

support roles. We must remember the sacrifices that have been made; as a dojo community, our Library is an act of remembrance. We must honor that by keeping our Library healthy, which means we must grow it, nurture it, and use it.



Promotions

We congratulate those of us who were promoted in June:

Kids

- Alex M. Jr. 14th Kyu
- Rachel T. Jr. 12th Kyu
- Lacey S. Jr. 12th Kyu
- Ryan T. Jr. 12th Kyu
- Kristiana S. 12th Kyu
- Emily S. 12th Kyu
- Andrew S. 12th Kyu
- Cassidy D. 11th Kyu
- Airk M. 11th Kyu
- Oleg S. 11th Kyu
- Nikola K. 11th Kyu
- Julia S. Jr. 8th Kyu
- Stephanie T. Jr. 8th Kyu
- Tamara K. Jr. 6th Kyu

Adults

- Rob H. 9th Kyu
- Don F. 8th Kyu
- Andrij N. 8th Kyu

Special Training

Aikido students of all ranks are invited and encouraged to attend our Special Training session, which is scheduled for Friday, 15th July 2011 from 6:30 to 9:30 PM. The focus this month is strikes within aikido techniques. Atemi are inherent in every aikido technique, simply part of the natural potential of Connection and Irimi. This special training will focus on interesting and fun ways of exploring and implementing vital strikes in our training. Students of all ranks are encouraged to attend!



Announcements

Dojo Care will be done on Saturday, July 23rd from 1:30 to 2:00 PM. Classes will be held at their usual time. Please make time to help care for our wonderful training place!

The Spring 2011 T'ai Chi Beginner Class has now completed their introductory program, and have celebrated that achievement by going out for their final "Noodle Night" as beginner students. We congratulate our grads for their patience, determination and commitment to their health and wellness. Completing this four month program is no small feat and marks your entrance into a journey on the path of an incredible art and health system.

Welcome to our community!

Saotome Sensei has announced the dates of his next Seminar at Aikido of Missoula; it is scheduled for the weekend of 23 to 25 September 2011. Many of us have made this trip before, and I have no doubt we will once again have a large contingent. Make plans to travel with us and experience the amazing talent of our Most Senior Shihan!

Morning keiko has been sporadic, and depends upon who is available. If you are interested, speak with Stuart!

Seminar Musings

After a relatively relaxing trip (aside from a briefly harrowing moment when we realized we needed to find our baggage and go through Customs etc. in Toronto) from Edmonton we arrived in Philadelphia, found the train, and headed out toward our destination. Fortunately a friendly fellow rider knew where we were going and helped us negotiate Philadelphia's labyrinthine light rail system. When we were on the platform switching trains, we discovered our guide not only knew exactly where we were going but had also practiced Aikido many years earlier.

Once we arrived at our stop; we were picked up by Jet, the dojo manager who helped us get settled in to our new digs, took us to nearby Ambler and joined us for an awesome Philly Steak sandwich, a couple of pints and some good laughs. A little while later she dropped us off to go fetch another guest (her boyfriend Don from Florida as it turns out).

After that it was just one great adventure after another. The first day we went into Ambler to do some shopping and later hooked up with David Goldberg Sensei, Kaya Sensei visiting from Turkey (along with other members of the Turkish delegation) for a bite and a pint. We also met our new roommate, Tesfaye Tekelu (aka Tes) who lives in New York now but started Aikido in Ethiopia and studied under Richard Strozzi-Heckler. There was a funny moment when Jet was approaching with Tes, where she said "wait until you meet the Canadians, they're a riot!" not knowing I was around the corner.

From there we went to Flourtown to get out breakfast supply and (some would say, more importantly) beer. The breakfast supplies were not spectacular (tofu, berries, soy-milk), but the beer was (Founders Brewery, Double IPA – Yum!). This served us well as it was (or became) popular among many of the folks we got to be friends with (including a couple of Senseis who shall remain nameless). It also helped us quickly identify who our "real beer" counterparts were in Philadelphia.

The seminar started Thursday Evening with Ikeda Sensei teaching the first Keiko, Gleason Sensei teaching the second. Stickle's Sensei was supposed to teach a third session but was unable to. The content of both keiko was similar to what Brad Sensei has been teaching since his trip to Missoula this spring. This was a real advantage because it was like we got chance to practice ahead of time. Gleason spoke of the asagoa or 'flower' shape one can make with one's hand so as to project ki out of the palm. Throughout the weekend he was demonstrating application of this as well as moving the hara.

Once we were done for the first evening a number of us (Goldberg, Ikeda, Gleason, Kaya, and Robinson Senseis, the Turkish delegation, Jet and Don and Tes) went to an awesome Italian restaurant that was

once a tiny train-station. It was a memorable dinner and many laughs were enjoyed.

Friday and Saturday was broken up into 3 pairs of 1 hour sessions held in two rooms. This format provided two training options for all but a few of the keiko. Traditional etiquette was waived and we were encouraged to explore what was going on either training room at any point at any point in the seminar.

We had the opportunity to take in some terrific Aikido. Aside from the classed taught by Ikeda and Gleason Senseis. Goldberg Sensei taught a Bokken class as well as a Tanto vs. Tanto class. Robinson Sensei (Goldberg Sensei's Partner who teaches Jujitsu and Kenjitsu) taught a session on choke holds. Kaya Sensei from Turkey taught some open hand vs. tanto classes, Rick Stickle's Sensei along with Keller and Zimmerman Senseis taught some additional open hand classes.

One of the River of Life Dojo students and chef, Allan, made us all some wonderful lunches on each the two days of full classes. On Friday we had BBQ Tuna and Swordfish Po-boy sandwiches, and on Saturday we had trout (all of which Allan had caught himself). After practice on both evenings, we went out for dinner. Friday was Mexican and Saturday was all you can eat sushi! Again, a good time was had by all!

As for the Aikido, it was tops. Our training ended on Sunday after three classes taught by Gleason, Stickle's and Ikeda Sensei respectively. I think it's safe to say we'd do this again. David Goldberg Sensei was a consummate host and provided an awesome seminar experience from a number of standpoints. The purpose of bridge training is to meet and practice with other Aikidoka who have different perspectives and approaches to the art. I think I speak for both of us in that we feel privileged to have been able to participate.

-Marcel L.-

O Sensei's Wisdom



"There are times when you may be overwhelmed by the teachings of the Way. At such moments, it

is important to continue with the original spirit of a beginner."

Motivation...

The following is an excerpt from a document that all students of Aikido Eastside, the school of which George Ledyard Sensei is both Dojo Cho and Chief Instructor, must read and sign.

"The Dojo is at the center of the practice of Aikido. It is the place where one comes to train. It is also the center of a social nexus of individuals who have also made the same kind of commitment to follow the path of Aikido. The members of a school constitute an extended family of sorts who count on each other's support in their training and in the events of their lives outside the dojo.

Establishing this kind of connection with the members of the school is an important element in one's training and is crucial to the health of the school. It is largely the membership which takes responsibility for the care of the facility and the creation of the kind of physical environment in which they wish to train.

In return for the commitment to the art and to the dojo community the Chief Instructor offers the opportunity to become truly excellent in this art. He commits to the students of the school that he will take his own training to the highest level he can attain and that he will offer that experience to those at the school who make the commitment to train hard enough to be able to benefit from this experience.

It is important to understand that one does not entitle one to instruction. The membership fees simply give one the opportunity to train in a wonderful dojo with an instructor who for thirty years has trained with many of the finest instructors of Aikido and other martial arts in the world.

This training continues still and the student at Aikido Eastside will receive some of the finest training available in Aikido. But the instruction is earned by one's efforts not by merely paying the membership fee. It is not the job of the Teacher to motivate your practice, you must do that yourself. If you do make the effort the instructors of Aikido Eastside will bend over backwards to share their experience with you."

