

Aikido Connection Monthly

Volume 2, Issue 1

March 2004

UPCOMING EVENTS

The dojo will be closed:
April 22nd through April
24th for an Instructor
Seminar

We are looking
for some kind person or
group of people to help
organize the summer picnic

2004 Event Schedule

... is posted in the dojo—
make your plans now!

Ikebana (Japanese Flower Arranging)

Two-hour workshop/demo
on Saturday, May 8; \$30
fee includes materials

Four-week intro course
meets Saturday afternoons
in June; \$95 fee includes
materials

Please check the flyers in
the dojo for registration
deadlines

NEWSLETTER

PUBLISHED BY

**AIKIDO OF NORTHERN
INDIANA**

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Zen of Northern Indiana

by Eric McGregor

While Aikido aids in strengthening and maintaining the body, zen helps strengthen and focus the mind. In fact, I believe that trying to achieve a quiet mind is more difficult than performing aikido techniques. Clearing your mind from outside distractions and focusing on a goal or task is an important skill.

You hear about Attention Deficit Disorder in the news. It is simply an inability for a child or an adult to focus. Should we just take the latest pill available to solve this disorder? I don't know. Taking anti-depressants seems like a drastic alternative to me. Before taking drugs, I would try some techniques that have been focusing minds for centuries.



"Zen" - calligraphy by
Fumio Toyoda Shihan

Kangeiko Seminar at Ryoshinkan Dojo

By Eric McGregor

Kangeiko at Ryoshinkan Dojo in February was an enjoyable seminar. There was good attendance at the seminar. Participants at the event came primarily from the Chicago area, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, and West Virginia. This was my first time at Ryoshinkan Dojo, and it is an impressive facility, a building constructed specifically for Aikido instruction.

The highlight of the seminar was the guest instruction of Hatayama Sensei from Japan. He is a very positive and humble person and a truly outstanding martial artist. In his instruction, he used only yudansha and high-level kyu-ranks as ukes and it was evident that his skill far surpassed anyone that he worked with. His movements were never awkward and his body position and techniques were always perfect and tailored to the size and shape of each individual uke. All his movements and techniques were natural, balanced, and efficient.

Under his instruction, we practiced many of the same techniques that we do in our classes, but with a slightly different emphasis. One of the aspects that he

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At the zen meditation classes at the dojo, we perform several different types of zen. One form is the traditional sit, that almost everyone is familiar with. The techniques used during the sit can be applied anywhere. I sometimes go for walks and practice zen techniques. It works well.

Another form of zen practiced is okyo, which is zen chanting. Through this technique, a small group of people can achieve a strong, underlying musical tone that is very soothing.

The final form practiced is calligraphy, which is my personal favorite. Calligraphy can provide a creative and artistic outlet.

One of the reasons I started taking aikido was to deal with stress better. Aikido has definitely helped, but I believe that zen classes have also been rewarding. As we improve the physical aspects of our Aikido techniques, we will need to work on the more subtle aspects of the art for further development. Zen meditation is a big part of it.

Kangeiko

(continued)

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stressed was that movements in Aikido should follow the forms of spirals and not circles. This is an aspect that I had not yet grasped. In addition, some of the techniques we performed were mainly to strengthen the condition of uke. For instance, nikyo would be slowly applied to uke until he was flat on his back. This was done to strengthen his wrists.

Another thing that struck me was the way that Hatayama Sensei moved backwards in shikko. From seiza, he would extend a leg straight behind him and pull himself backwards with his back leg. This enabled him to move as quickly backwards as he did forward.

Even stretching took on a new look. While we were in seiza, we would gently strike different parts of our body (including our heads) with our fists. It was strange at first, but afterwards I felt strong and prepared.

In closing, I had a great time at Kangeiko. I enjoyed meeting and training with other Aikido practitioners, and learned some subtle aspects of Aikido which will further aid my development in the art. I highly recommend that anyone who can attend the next seminar.

Calling All Youth!

www.aikidoconnection.com/indiana/youth

An Aikido web site for youth, about youth, and by the youth. Here is your chance to have your say and put it out there on the world wide web for all to enjoy. Aikido of Northern Indiana (that's us) wants our kids and youth to have a web site. But it's not yours if us adults do it so we need you kids to build it.

Don't know how? No problemo. You did not know how to do Aikido before you came here and now look at you. Two of our parents have given their time and talents to create a great tool for teaching the how to's, the in's and out's, the secrets of, the real dirt, the greatest moments, the top ten tricks, everything you ever wanted to know about making your own web site. Tom Owen (Chris's Dad) and Camille Sobun (Andy's Mom) have made it soooo easy even I could learn how to do this stuff.

Just think! Your stuff, pictures of you flying through the air, pictures of someone else flying through the air because you threw them, your drawings, your writings, your ki out there on the internet for all to oooo and ahhh over. Oooo, Ahhh. Sign up to learn more! There will also be a questionnaire for you to fill out (parents can help) so we know what we are starting with.

**The how is not important,
Your enthusiasm is all you need!!**

Promotion List

Youth Promotions

| | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------|---------|
| Nic Honeycutt | 10th kyu . . | Jan. 30 |
| Amber Schiessle | 10th kyu . . | Jan. 31 |
| Collin Schiessle | 10th kyu . . | Jan. 31 |
| Sean Kelly | 10th kyu . . | Jan. 31 |
| Kaisa Crawford-Taylor | 9th kyu . . | Jan. 27 |
| Derek Williams | 8th kyu . . | Jan. 31 |
| T.J. Williams | 8th kyu . . | Jan. 31 |
| Chris Owen | 7.5 kyu . . | Jan. 30 |
| Andy Sobun | 7.5 kyu . . | Jan. 30 |
| Hirut Crawford-Taylor | 5.5 kyu . . | Feb. 3 |
| Matthew Johnson | 5.5 kyu . . | Feb. 3 |

Adult Promotions

| | | |
|----------------------------|-------------|---------|
| Thomas Pampalone | 7th kyu . . | Feb. 16 |
| Eric McGregor | 6th kyu . . | Feb. 11 |
| Tim Kosch | 6th kyu . . | Feb. 11 |
| Karl Nelson | 4th kyu . . | Mar. 17 |
| Shannon Crawford-Taylor . | 3rd kyu . . | Mar. 5 |

Congratulations !!

Happy Dojo Birthdays to

| <i>January</i> | <i>February</i> | <i>March</i> |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| <i>Leroy Johnson</i> | <i>Kevin Strickland</i> | <i>Kyu Kim</i> |
| <i>Hirut Crawford-Taylor</i> | <i>Andrea Amico</i> | <i>Amber Schiessle</i> |
| | <i>Don Honeycutt</i> | <i>John Light Jr.</i> |
| | | <i>Phil Smutko</i> |

NEW!! Onshinkan Dojo Sweatshirts

Early in April, we will be ordering sweatshirts for the dojo. We won't have many in stock, so get your order and payment in now! They will be dark green sweatshirts with the orange leaf logo and "Aikido of Northern Indiana—Onshinkan Dojo" over the left chest area. Pre-order cost is an incredible \$25 each! Sweatshirts purchased after the order is placed will be \$35 each. Let us know how many you'd like and what size.

If *your heart is large enough to envelop your adversaries, you can see right through their petty mindedness and avoid their attacks. And once you envelop them, you will be able to guide them along a path indicated to you by heaven and earth.*

The Art of Peace - Morihei Ueshiba

Contributions of Aikido-related writings and artwork for these newsletters is appreciated !!!! This is your newsletter- please help make it useful and interesting!