

Aikido Center of Los Angeles, LLC, 1211 N. Main Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012, Tel: (323) 225-1424 www.aikidocenterla.com



The Aikido Center of Los Angeles

道の為、世の為、人の為 合気道

The Aiki Dojo

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

February 2009

Volume XXVII Number 2

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General Meeting

Saturday
February 7, 2009
9:30 AM

Meditation Class

Saturdays: 12:00-1:30 PM

(This class is open to the public and is free of charge).

O'Sensei Memorial Seminar



April 24-26, 2009

Guest Instructors:
Kei Izawa
Yasumasa Itoh

Everyone is invited!

Setsubun by Gary Myers Iaido Chief Instructor

On the 3rd or 4th of February, Setsubun is celebrated in Japan. It is the traditional ceremony for the casting out of demons from dwellings by throwing beans. Setsubun is classified as a *mayoke*, a magical rite created to ward away evil spirits. The term setsubun is derived from the term *setsu* that refers to a specified time interval of the solar year. On that date, it is traditional to scatter soybeans inside and out while chanting an incantation to drive out the *oni*, demons, and bring in good luck for the year. It is also customary for family members to eat the same number of beans as their age. Often the children of the family will assume the roles of the bean casters and the demons. It must have created a sense of well being to know that the demons were no longer present and good luck would be coming to the family. Of course, in Western cultures, we have our own sets of rituals meant to do the much the same thing as Setsubun.

Continued on page 3...

In the Dojo by David Ito Aikido Chief Instructor

Gung Hei Fat Choi:
Congratulations and be prosperous!

In 1873, the Japanese adopted the Gregorian calendar and celebrated the New Year on the first of January. Previously, they followed the Chinese lunar calendar, which celebrated the beginning of spring. January 26, is Chinese New Year and this year is the Year of the Ox. The year of the ox is a harvest sign of Spring and inspires prosperity through hard work. The ox is a conservative sign and values tradition and a back to basics approach to life. The slow, steady, modest gait of the ox is a metaphor for the year to move slowly and for us work hard to accomplish our goals.

There are two legends with many variations about how the animals came to symbolize the Chinese lunar calendar.

Continued on page 2...



JAPANESE LESSON

日本語

Itadakimasu: I gratefully receive

Pronounced: Ee-tah-dah-key-mah-sue

いただきます。



In Japan, meals usually begin with the statement itadakimasu, which is intended to mean, "I gratefully receive." This expression actually has no clear English equivalent. This pre-meal ritual expression is similar saying to bon appetite or to saying grace. Before eating, put your hands together and say itadakimasu with a slight bow towards the food. The statement itadakimasu literally means, "I receive." It comes from the word itadaku or "to receive" and the humble honorific masu is added for politeness.

This expression has its roots in Shintoism in which you honor the efforts of the person who created the meal and the sacrifice of meal contents too. The Shinto religion uses this phrase to honor every life and the efforts that are sacrificed on our behalf.

A more formal expression, usually heard during tea ceremony is, Osaki ni itadakimasu. Osaki ni means "to go ahead" and combined with itadakimasu you are apologizing for going ahead of others even though they insisted.

When you finish the meal you say Gochisosama deshita, to show gratitude for their efforts.

Other expressions heard at a meal:

Oishii (oi-she): Delicious

Irrashimase (ee-rah-shy-mah-se): Welcome!

Omatase itashimasu (oh-mah-tah-say-ee-tah-she-mah-sue): I am sorry for making you wait



In The Dojo continued from page 1...



The first legend is that during the 6th century, the Buddha or Jade emperor invited all of the animals to a New Year's party. However, only twelve animals came and the Buddha decided to name a year after each one. The second legend is that the gods determined which animal would be designated as one of the twelve signs for each year

based on the order in which the animals arrived. The cat and the rat were good friends, but in the rat's haste in the morning, he forgot to wake up the sleeping cat. On the way to the meet the gods, the rat met the ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, sheep, monkey, rooster, dog, and pig. He feared because he was the smallest that he would be the last and talked the ox into letting him ride on his back in exchange for signing for him. The pair arrived together and the ox was excited thinking he would be the first, but just then the rat jumped off and became the lucky first animal of the zodiac. The cat never made it and never forgave the rat and that is why the cat hates rats to this day.



As we were going to print, I heard the news that Helio Gracie passed away at age 95. Whether you approve of Gracie Jiu-jitsu or not, we should acknowledge the enormous impact Helio Gracie and his fighting system has had on martial arts today.

I have never met Helio Gracie, but my impression changed of him after reading and watching his bout with Masahiko Kimura. In 1996, Helio's admission that he had been briefly choked unconscious during a bout, he eventually lost due to a broken arm, with Masahiko Kimura. I was very impressed by his acknowledgment because it showed great character and he could have easily taken it to his grave. Also, if he truly was unconscious, then his spirit continued to fight on after he was unconscious. If you watch the video, you can see him fighting while he is unconscious and in the end he refused to tap even when his arm was broken. Sensei many times talked about warrior spirit and this ability to fight on even when you are unconscious or dead. He said that, "If your head is cut off, you should be able to draw and cut at least one time before you die." In the future, as we look over the landscape of history, there are few that stand out and change the way we think about martial arts. Helio Gracie was a modern day legend and good, bad, right, wrong, agree or disagree, his impact on the world of martial arts lives on.



Product Review

My Japanese Coach for Nintendo DS
by UBISOFT, \$29.99



I don't usually play a lot of Nintendo DS games. My wife and son usually take the honor of playing these games. However, recently I bought the DS game "My Japanese Coach" for my son to get him more exposure to languages. After putting in the game and getting him setup as a user he was given a basic test to rate if and how much Japanese he knew.

Since my wife speaks some Japanese at home, and I speak some also he actually got a lot of the basic questions, which was a nice surprise to me. At this point the game basically is broken into "lessons" and the first section is lessons 1-29. My son moved to lesson 5. For the next hour or so my son was consumed by the games and lessons and moved ahead 3 or so lessons. He retained a lot of the new words (maybe 30 or so) and was speaking and could understand them.

He took off to bed in the normal routine and after charging the DS a bit I took my turn. I have been speaking and studying Japanese off and on for about 16 years or so after I took it in college. I think of myself as mid-intermediate. I set up my account and took the test. I jumped to a lesson and took off.

My initial thought (before I even opened up the game) was that this was pretty easy stuff and more for kids to use to start to learn

a language. Wow was I wrong, and for the better. I was sucked into fun games, lessons, and training and really started to get into it. At the higher level it goes into verbs, adjectives, and the different writing styles (katakana, hiragana, and some Kanji).

This progression along with the game able to recognize Japanese writing was a really nice challenge. The writing system goes slow where you trace the characters with the stylus and after you trace it a few times it fades away and you have to write it without help. Even though I know all of the basic characters it really was nice to be able to practice my writing in a controlled manner. Then there are games to backup your writing with recognition games and speed.

I was only playing the game for few hours and it looks like I am only 10% in! The difficulty slowly increases, but it is a fun and an interactive way to memorize and retain the language. If you have kids or want to study a language yourself this is a great way to start the adventure.

Otode ne (see you later)...

Reviewed by:
Andrew Blevins
Chief Instructor, Kiryu Aikido in Colorado

This is review originally appeared in Blevins Sensei's web blog called the Bamboo Grove: <http://aikiblog.kappazone.com>

Editor's note: Blevins Sensei review inspired me to give My Japanese Coach a try. I have found that this is indeed a wonderful program and I really think it is definitely helpful for anyone studying Japanese.

Branch Dojos

Hacienda La Puente Aikikai

Hacienda Heights, California
Chief Instructor: Tom Williams

Aikido Kodokai

Salamanca, Spain
Chief Instructor: Santiago Garcia Almaraz
www.kodokai.com

Veracruz Aikikai

Veracruz, Mexico
Chief Instructors:
Dr. Jose Roberto Magallanes Molina
Dr. Alvaro Rodolfo Hernandez Meza
www.veracruz-aikikai.com

Aikido Renbukai of Arizona

Surprise, Arizona
Chief Instructor: Michael Van Ruth
www.aikidorenbukai.com

Setsubun continued from page 1...



While there are few who now believe that beans will dispel their troubles, the ceremony remains. Why it does has more to do with the participation of the family wanting the best for itself than the physical act of throwing beans.

It would certainly be nice if we could throw some beans and see the troubles of the current financial crisis be scattered like those demons. But unfortunately it is not going to be that easy or that quick. Everyone is affected by it either directly or indirectly. No one really knows how long it will last or how bad it will get. It is during these difficult times when we have to band and work together as an organization. We have to help each other if someone is adversely affected. Just as the family wishes the best for itself and its members during the Setsubun, so must ACLA help its members in whatever way it can during these times of crisis.

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Published by Aikido Center of Los Angeles
1211 N. Main Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012 Tel: (323) 225-1424.

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Kisshomaru Ueshiba Nenki Hoyo Memorial Mervice

Photos by Bill Allen



**Osoji
Year-end cleanup**

Photos by Larry Armstrong



**Christmas
Party**

Photos by Larry Armstrong



Evolution of Muso Shinden Ryu Part III

by Gary Myers

Iaido Chief Instructor



Last issue we covered the development of the Muso Shinden line of iaido through Hasegawa Eishin. One of his students was Hayashi Rokudai Morimasa. He lived from 1661-1732 and was a minor retainer under the daimyo Yamanouchi

Toyomasa who was the lord of Tosa in Shikoku. Hayashi was encouraged to study and develop his sword skills and studied various schools, including Shinkage Itto Ryu and Hasagawa Eishin Ryu. He also studied Omori Ryu under Omori Masamitsu and Arai Kiyonobu. Hayashi studied these techniques while serving his master in residence in Edo, and is credited with furthering seiza techniques of the Omori Ryu and also including other movements such as chiburi, hakama control and tsuki, or thrusting techniques.

When Hayashi returned to Tosa he brought these techniques combining them into what he called Muso Jikiden Eishin Ryu and which was an amalgamation of Shinmei Muso, Muso Hasegawa Eishin and Omori Ryu. This combination became established in Tosa and was also called Tosa Iai. Hayashi might have been but another swordsman of the tradition had he not documented these techniques and their origins in a book called *Hiden Sho*. Although he did not consider himself a *soke*, he is named the 9th *soke* of the Muso-Eishin lineage due to his contribution. His style passed through several descendants of Hayashi in Tosa. Hayashi's adopted son Yasudaiyu Masataka (d. 1776) inherited his estate and also taught a number of students, including his son-in-law Okura Kiyokatsu.

Okura had two excellent students: Matsukichi Sadsuke Hisanari and Hayashi Masunojo Masanari. After Okura's death in 1770, a division in the line formed. Matsukichi basically taught Muso Jikiden Eishin Ryu, but that name got transformed into Muso Shinden Battojutsu. The word *shinden* is a reference to the Hayashizaki Shrine. This branch later became what is called the Shimomura branch (Ha). Hayashi Masanari was the great grandson of Hayashi Rokudai and became the 12th *soke* in the line in 1779. He held to the Jikiden traditions of the forms. This eventually became known as the Tanimura branch after a later *soke*. There is still disagreement to this day as to which branch, the Shimomura Ha or the Tanimura Ha is the true line of the Muso-Eishin line of iaido. Both sides had excellent swordsmen and there was certainly much cross teaching and interaction between the branches. It is at this point that succession line and who taught who gets confusing; I will briefly list the prominent *soke* of each line.

Tanimura Ha

Hayashi Masunojo Masanari (d. 1815) - became the headmaster in 1779 nine years after Okura died.

Oda Manzo Takakatsu (d. 1809) - little known but was said to

have taught Yamakawa Kyuzo of the Shimomura Ha

Hayashi Yadaiyu Masakata (d. 1823) - may have been a student of Yamakawa Kyuzo Yukio of the Shimomura Ha

Tanimura Kamenjo Yorio (Yorikatsu) (d. 1862) - The branch of jikiden was named after Tanimura. He was a low ranking samurai but had exceptional skills in many martial arts. He was certainly influenced by Hayashi Yadaiyu, his teacher, and his own teaching followed the Muso Jikiden Eishin Ryu.

Goto Mogobei Masasuke (d. 1898) - Masasuke began modifications to the art that were carried further by his successor, Oe Masamichi Shikei.

Oei Masamichi Shikei (1852-1927) - His primary teacher was Goto Mogobei, but he was also taught by Shimomura teachers Ichisada and Shimamura Ummannojo Yoshinori. Oei was reluctant to teach outsiders and was said to have refused Nakayama Hakudo when first asked to teach him. He later relented. He reorganized the school and established three levels, including the Omori Ryu seiza waza and established the name formally as Muso Jikiden Eishin Ryu. He lived during turbulent political times, with the abolishment of the shogunate, sword wearing, and the samurai class. Later he became more outgoing with his teaching. Shikei never named a successor prior to his death; after he died, there were three splits in the Tanimura branch. Masamichi's wife passed the *soke* to Hokiyama Namio, who passed it to his student Fukui Harumasa (1884-1971). Many felt that the school should have been passed to Yamamoto Harusuke, an outstanding swordsman who passed away in 1979. The third branch continued from its headmaster Yamanouchi Toyotaka.

Kono Minoru Hyakuren (1899-1974) - took Muso Jikiden Eishin Ryu out of Tosa and introduced it to other parts of Japan, mainly in the southern and western regions. He taught in Osaka up to the 1970s and named his school Yamahura Ha. In 1948 he formed the Zen Nippon Iaido Renmei.

Fukui Torao Seisan (1916-2001) - 21st generation, succeeded as the head of the Zen Nippon Iaido Renmei.

Ikeda Takashi Seiko (b. 1932) - 22nd generation recognized as the current *soke*.





QUESTIONS & Answers

Question:

What are the hand towels used for? S.M.

Answer:

The hand towel that is used in Japan is called a *tenugui* or *hachimaki* and can trace its origin back to 250-530 AD. It is a rectangular thin multi-purpose piece of cloth about one foot by three feet and is usually printed with a some type of pattern. The word *tenugui* translates to "hand wipe" and *hachimaki* means "headband wrap." Today many people use the names interchangeably because hand towels can be used as an all purpose scarf, handkerchief, headband, napkin or wash cloth.



In Aikido we refer to them as a *tenugui* and use them to wipe our faces or hands when they become sweaty. It is considered impolite to wipe your face on your uniform where someone else's face or hand might touch.

In the old days, samurai referred to them as *hachimaki* and they served as the headbands that helped to keep their helmets snug during battle. Kendo practitioners call them *tenugui* and wear them under their *men* or helmet.

The towel used as a headband is a symbol for working hard in Japan, which is similar to the gesture of rolling up your sleeves in the West. When people get serious about what they are doing it is not uncommon for them to wear a headband adorned with the symbol or slogan of their campaign.

It is not uncommon to give someone a hand towel as a personal gift. The hand towel today can be imprinted with popular *ki-mono* patterns, names of schools, events or businesses, words of encouragement, Buddhist sutras, slogans or advertisements.

Muso Shinden Ryu Part III continued from page 5...

Shimomura Ha

Matsukichi Sadasuke Hisanari (d. 1808) - As stated before, he was a student of Okura Kiyokatsu and he also taught Hayashi Masanari. Matsukichi is noted as the first *soke* of the Shimomura Ha. He renamed his style Muso Shinden Battojutsu.

Yamakawa Kyuzo Yukikatsu (Yukio) (d. 1848) - Yamakawa taught in Kochi Tosa and was both a student of Matsukichi and also of Oda Takakatsu of the Tanimura Ha. Obviously, even though there was a division, there was still quite a bit of cross-teaching between the two branches.

Shimomura Moichi Ichisada (d. 1877) - He was an upper-ranking samurai who served the Yamanouchi (Tosa Daimyo). He was the sword instructor to the daimyo and he also had his own school of

iaijutsu. He is also thought to have taught Oei Masamichi. The Shimomura Ha was named after him by his students.

Hosokawa Gisho Yoshimasa - He was the son of Shimomura Yoshinori and a student of Ichisada. He, too, was a samurai of high rank at a time of upheaval for that class. He was teaching at the same time as Oei Masamichi. He was highly skilled with the sword and is said to have demonstrated cutting rice grains in half without cutting the tatami they were on. He demonstrated *iai* for the emperor and served as the main teacher of Nakayama Hakudo for the Shimomura Ha when Nakayama Hakudo came to Tosa to learn these *iai* styles.

The next article will be about Nakayama Hakudo.

New T-shirts and Hand Towels On Sale Now!



Upcoming Events

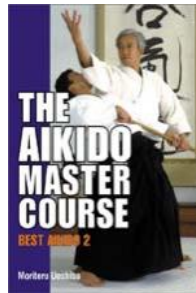
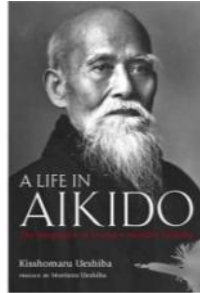
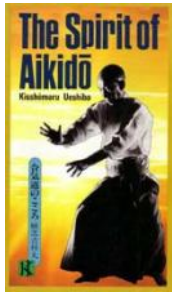
- February 7: General meeting 9:30 AM
- February 28: Intensive seminar
- March 5: Kensho Furuya Memorial Service at dojo
- March 7: Kensho Furuya grave site visit
- March 15: Iaido demonstration
- March 28: Intensive seminar
- April 12: Easter-dojos closed
- April 24-26: O'Sensei memorial seminar
- April 26: O'Sensei memorial service
- May 27-31: Moriyama Sensei visit



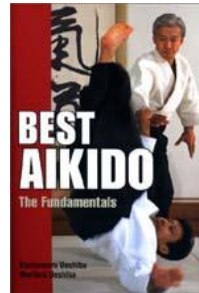
Recommended Readings:



by Ueshiba Kisshomaru



by Ueshiba Morihiro



Aikido Center of Los Angeles:

We are a not-for-profit, traditional Aikido Dojo dedicated to preserving the honored values and traditions of the arts of Aikido and Iaido. With your continued understanding and support, we hope that you also will dedicate yourself to your training and to enjoying all the benefits that Aikido and Iaido can offer.

The Aiki Dojo Newsletter

Publisher: David Ito
Editor-in-Chief: Mark Ehrlich
Photographer: Larry Armstrong

O'Sensei Memorial Seminar



April 24-26, 2009

Guest Instructors:

**Kei Izawa, Aikikai Tanshinjuku
Yasumasa Itoh, Aikido Tekkojuku Boston**

Schedule to be determined

Everyone is invited!

Moriyama Sensei Visit

May 27-31, 2009

Moriyama Sensei, 7th Dan is the Chief Instructor of Pearl City Aikido Dojo located on the island of Oahu. He has been studying Aikido since the early 1950s.

Everyone is invited!



Aikido
Hawaii

Congratulations Jonah Espino!



Jonah Espino won the worldwide Lion Peace Poster contest for students ages 11, 12 and 13. The theme this year was "Peace Begins With Me" and Jonah's poster was the first place winner out of 350,000 students. Posters are judged on originality, artist merit, and contest theme. Jonah received his award at the annual Lions Club Christmas luncheon. In receiving his award, Jonah said, "Peace would help us solve most of the problems of the world."



Tod Fujioka visits from Hawaii Betsuin Aikido Club



Aikido TRAINING SCHEDULE

Sundays

9:00-10:00 AM Children's Class
10:15-11:15 AM Open

Mondays

5:15-6:15 PM Fundamentals
6:30-7:30 PM Open

Tuesdays

6:30-7:30 PM Open
7:45-8:45 PM Fundamentals

Wednesdays

5:15-6:15 PM Fundamentals
6:30-7:30 PM Open
7:45-8:45 PM Weapons

Thursdays

6:30-7:30 PM Bokken

Fridays

5:15-6:15 PM Fundamentals
6:30-7:30 PM Open

Saturdays

9:30-10:30 AM Open
10:40-11:40 AM Open

6:30 AM Instructor's Intensive: last Saturday of the month.*

* These classes are not open for visitors to watch.

Iaido TRAINING SCHEDULE

TRADITIONAL JAPANESE IAIDO SWORDSMANSHIP

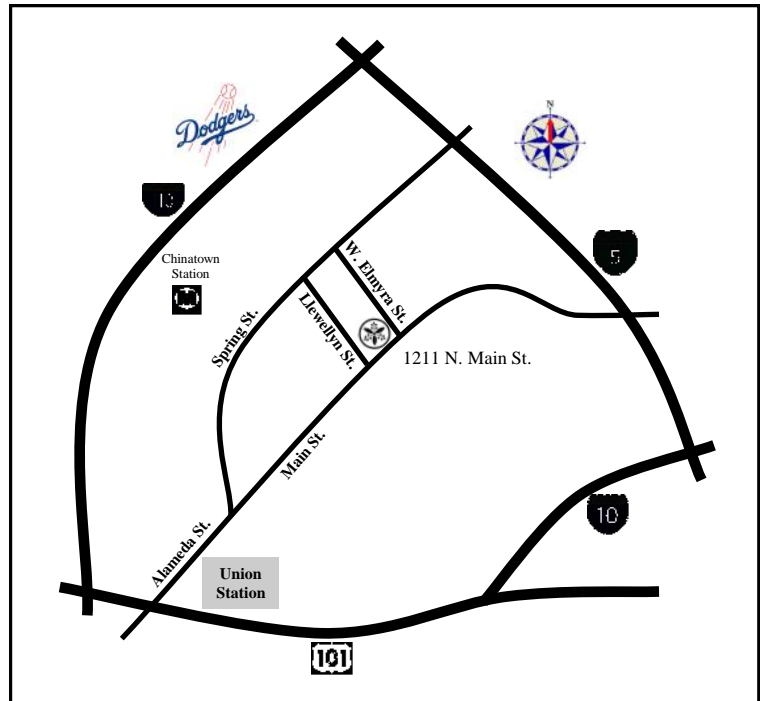
Saturdays:

7:15-8:15 AM Beginning
8:15-9:15am Intermediate-Advanced

Sundays: 7:45-8:45 AM

Thursdays: 6:30-7:30 PM (Bokken Practice)
7:30-8:30 PM

No classes on the last weekend of the month.



Meditation Class

Saturdays: 12:00-1:30 PM

(This class is open to the public and is free of charge.)

We are directly affiliated with:

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 Doshu Moriteru Ueshiba.

The Furuya Foundation and the Aikido Center of Los Angeles admit students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. The Furuya Foundation and the ACLA do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, and national or ethnic origin in administration of their educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.



Finding Our Dojo



We are located at
1211 N. Main Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Tel: (323) 225-1424

E-mail: info@Aikidocenterla.com

We are across the street and one block northwest from the Chinatown Metro Station.

The entrance is on Elmyra Street.

No Appointment Necessary to Watch Classes or Join:
You are welcome to visit us anytime during any of our Open or Fundamental classes. Please come early.