

The Aikido Center of Los Angeles, 940 2nd St. #7, Los Angeles, CA 90012. Tel: (213) 687-3673. Website: www.aikidocenterla.com.



The Aikido Center of Los Angeles LLC 道の為、世の為、人の為 合気道 The Aiki Dojo

Direct Affiliation: The Aikido World Headquarters, 17-18 Wakamatsu-cho, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, Japan
International Aikido Kodokai, Rev. Kensho Furuya Foundation
Los Angeles Sword & Swordsmanship Society Kenshinkai
Nanka Yamanashi Kenjin Kai Southern California Yamanashi Prefectural Association
Los Angeles Police Department Martial Artist Advisory Panel

\$5.25
Donation

January 1, 2007

Volume XXVI. Number 1.

Happy New Year!



Happy New Year Congratulations and many Best Wishes to Doshu, his family & all members of Aikikai Hombu Dojo.



New Year's Greetings:
Hideo Yonemochi
Shihan, 8th Dan,
Executive Director
Aikikai Foundation

Happy New Year! I hope that everyone is having a wonderful New Year. Because of everyone's support and cooperation, we see Aikido in the world growing steadily every



year. This is because everyone has come to widely grasp O'Sensei's technique and principles.

Through the correct instruction and fine personal character of Furuya Sensei, I am very pleased that so many people with the Aikido Center of Los Angeles can enjoy Aikido practice everyday.

I have many beautiful memories of practicing with everyone in Los Angeles last July and I am looking forward to practicing with you again next year. Together, we shall pour out our sweat on the mats in training.

To learn Aikido, the most important point is to practice the same fundamental techniques over and over again. I believe this is the true way to progress in Aikido.

To Furuya Sensei and to all my friends and students, I give my heartfelt greetings for a healthy and prosperous New Year.

*Hideo Yonemochi
Saidan Hojin Aikikai,
Aikido World Foundation
Executive Director of the Board,
Chief Director, International Dept. Aikikai*



New Year's Greetings: Hiroshi Isoyama Shihan, 8th Dan, Ibaraki Shibu Dojo-Cho Daiko, Senior Counselor Of The International Aikido Federation

I would like to wish all the members of the Aikido Center of Los Angeles, a very Happy New Year.

I am sending my New Year's Greetings from the far away land of Japan. I hope that all of you will have a bright New Year under the direction of such a wonderful teacher as Furuya Sensei.

As for us Japanese, we always try to make each year better and pour out our Ki energy from the very first day of January.

I am very thankful that your dojo sent so many people to participate in my Seminar in Santa Clarita this last November. This was the first time the sponsoring dojo tried to do this kind of seminar so I realize that there were many shortcomings committed. I ask your forgiveness for these oversights.

I had the opportunity to meet Furuya Sensei in October of 2004. My very first impression when I visited Furuya Sensei's dojo, was something about how clean and pure the dojo was and I felt this dojo was quite wonderful. Because the dojo is a place to train both mind and body, it must be immaculately clean as this, I believe. Although I never met his students, my impression was that they must all be quite superb.

The Founder of Aikido, Morihei Ueshiba O'Sensei always spoke of the power of our spiritual energy, in relation to spiritual discipline. He spoke of creating World Peace by becoming One with the Universe. He strictly discouraged power derived from simple physical strength. In respect to O'Sensei's will, we are always mindful to not alter his teachings.

In addition, we protect the only Aiki Jinja unique in this world. Because it is a singularly exceptional dojo seeped in O'Sensei's sweat, I urge you to come to visit us.

Finally, I would like to express my New



Beautiful Mt Fuji at sunrise on New Year's Day.



With 3rd Doshu, Ueshiba Moriteru Sensei at recent seminar, Isoyama Shihan and 100 black belts in front of the Aiki Jinja.



Year's prayers for the greater success for Furuya Sensei and for the Aikido Center of Los Angeles.

*Hiroshi Isoyama, 8th Dan Shihan
Acting Chief Instructor of the Saidan Hojin
Aikikai Ibaraki Branch Dojo, Chairman of
the All Japan Aikido Federation, Senior
Counselor of the International Aikido
Federation*



Hideo Yonemochi Shihan with Ikeda Teru Sensei of the International Dept. at Aikikai Hombu Dojo. Ikeda Sensei is 92 years old and still works full-time at Aikikai. Both Yonemochi Sensei and Ikeda Sensei are Furuya Sensei's dearest friends and mentors for almost 40 years.

Hiroshi Isoyama Shihan LA Seminar Con't. From December

However, the body is not strengthened by physical practice alone. Through a strong spirit, you will develop a strong body and through a strong body you will develop a strong spirit.

Isoyama Sensei discussed "Japanese custom," noting that for those who are very serious about Aikido and wish to practice Aikido for a long time, should also try to absorb the Japanese customs which also embody Aikido. Seiza or formal sitting is a Japanese custom, rather unique to Japanese culture. Bowing to each other, saying "Onegai shimasu" ("please") and "Arigatou gozaimashita" ("Thank you") are all a part of traditional Japanese custom.

Many of these customs are also a part of Aikido and therefore should be incorporated into your Aikido practice as well.

At the beginning of class, Isoyama Sensei conduct "mokuso" or quiet meditation, then two bows to O'Sensei, two claps and a final bow. This is a particular custom from Shinto, the indigenous religion of Japan and is performed to sacred objects of reverence and this includes Shinto gods and deities. This is performed before O'Sensei who was deified as "sacred presence" by prominent religious leaders in Japan and demonstrates the exalted reverence paid to O'Sensei as a great teacher and martial artist.

November 11. Day #2

Isoyama Sensei started off today by asking everyone, "What do you think is better? To learn many, many varied techniques or to focus one technique and master all of its nuances?"

He mentioned that during his many years of study with O'Sensei, he learned several basic techniques in all of their infinitely numerous forms and expressions.

Again, Isoyama started off today with Tai no Henko or Tenkan. He instructed that it is not just to turn but to bring your opponent's center and power into your own. Both centers, yourself and your opponent must merge into one. In other words, make my center one with his center.

From Tenkan, he approached Irimi from Katatetori. In Irimi Kokyu-ho, he emphasized that the movement must be directly forward but this can only be accomplished by a circular, spiralling movement of the hand. This "spiralling" movement of the hand was greatly emphasized by O'Sensei.

Next, Shomenuchi Irimi-nage

Shomenuchi Ikkyo. Emphasizing that Ikkyo must be done as if the opponent is holding a knife in his hand. The movement must be big so that one "does not get cut" whether there is a knife in the hand or not.

Shomenuchi Nikyo. Nikyo is not to injure or give pain to the other person. Nikyo is to gently guide the person downwards. One must emphasize correct technique and correct mental attitude to produce correct Aikido. If one thinks to injure or hurt the other person, and one's Aikido emerges from this mind-set, one cannot possibly create proper Aikido.

Shomenuchi Kotegaeshi. One must pull the outside leg back in Kotegaeshi in order to avoid getting kicked when the opponent is down. Usually many students are vulnerable just after throwing with Kotegaeshi.

Shomenuchi Sankyo

Shomenuchi Yonkyo. One must grip Yonkyo properly like holding a sword. If the Yonkyo grip is properly executed, he cannot counter attack against you. As you apply Yonkyo, create a large movement towards the opponent's ear before bringing him down.

Many variations of Sankyo and Yonkyo and moving from Sankyo first and then into Yonkyo.

In all Aikido techniques, one must lead the opponent in the proper way. (O'Sensei)

Bokken Training: One must treat the bokken like a real sword - it is not just a wooden stick. There must be the proper way to handle the sword and pay respect to it. There is also an etiquette in how to handle the sword. Without this, one cannot train in Aiki sword.

Suburi and variations.

November 12. Day #3

Tai no Henko (Tenkan)
Suwari-waza Ikkyo.

Memorial Service 2nd Doshu Kisshomaru Ueshiba Sensei January 7, 2007, 11:00am



Ryote-dori - Exercise of rotating both hands outwards and cutting downwards with the hand blade continually. Then rotating both hands from out to in, cutting down with attention to the thumbs. The both hands moving out to in in the same direction. Then combing all exercises in sequence.

Ryote-dori Nikyo. The object is not to injure the person but to lead him downwards.

Ryote-dori Kotegaeshi. From jodan and chudan. In Kotegaeshi, it is important to slip the outside foot back in order to protect one's self from the opponent's kick.

Ryote-dori Shihonage Irimi. Always from gyaku-hammi, moving the lead foot forward first of all. Lock the wrist to bring his center of balance upwards before executing Shihonage. Without this, it is difficult to move under the opponent's arm to execute this technique.

Ryote-dori Shiho-nage Tenkan. Tenkan just as the hands are.

Ryote-dori Tenchi-nage. Draw the person into yourself. In the early days, the upper hand used to strike the opponent's face. today, we just use the upper hand to throw.

It is important to see the upper hand as "heaven" and the lower hand as "earth" as the name implies. In this technique, one brings both heaven and earth together into one in the throw.

Ryote-dori Iriminage

Ryote-dori Koshinage Keep the upper hand straight, do not bend it at the elbow. If you bend the arm, you will not be able to bring the opponent over yourself to throw him effectively.

Ushiro-waza.

Jo Basics.



Concepts discussed During the Seminar:

Kiai: Kiai is to express one's inner spirit freely. This is why we make a loud kiai from the pit of our stomach. When you answer another person, you must answer with a strong kiai, not with a weak voice. How you answer the other person is a part of your spirit and personality. Jokingly, he commented that some people answer with a voice like they are passing gas.

Namae: Your name should be on your arm of your uniform so that you are easily identified. This is important so that people will know who you are.

Seminar Impressions:

It was so nice to see Isoyama Shihan again after several years and it was an excellent seminar. I really appreciate the time and effort Isoyama Shihan took from his busy teaching schedule in Japan to visit LA.

He spent a great deal of time explaining many important concepts and principles of Aikido with great emphasis on etiquette and manners. I think this was very important because this is often neglected or ignored.

Just to be in the presence of such a great teacher is a pleasure and honor and I hope that all of my students absorbed as much as possible from him. From what I learned from Isoyama Shihan this time, I see that we need a lot of work and practice to materialize all of his instruction.

Many thanks to Isoyama Shihan and his hosts, the Isoyama American Aikido Academy.



Isoyama Sensei with one participant from Mexico and Furuya Sensei.



Happy New Year Kei Izawa 5th Dan, C. I. Tanshinjuku Boulder, CO.

Happy New Year to all! Sometimes we feel that there are too many problems with no viable solutions. I am not talking only about the big global affairs but we also tend to worry about many personal issues surrounding us. The modern society has created expectations of immediate gratitude and because of that we have become very short sighted as well.

It is amazing when you look back at many great leaders in history who without the help of modern communication tools managed to come up with very wise and long term solutions. Knowledge is important but many times we have lost the wisdom to set a framework to look farther into the future. The ancient people had a saying, "Enryo nakereba, Kinyuu ari". which basically means that "If you are looking at short term issues and details only and you don't have a long term perspective, naturally you will encounter some major concerns"

When we practice Aikido, I believe most of us practice it without expecting to see immediate results. Aikido's width and depth allow us to become humble and at the same time it forces us to take a long term view. After many years of practice, we realize how far we have come when you look at a beginner, but at the same time realize how much more we have ahead of us. This patience and perseverance is important to keep the world sane. Let's promote a sound Aikido, humble practice and enjoy the future years to come.

I would like to thank Rev. Furuya Sensei for his friendship and nice exchange of positive energy to look way into the future.



Kanai Sensei & Our New Year's Yasumasa Itoh, 6th Dan, Tekko Juku Boston, MA

Happy New Year! I would like to chat about the year of 1979, when I celebrated my first New Year's with Kanai Sensei

I remember very well Kanai Sensei's joyful expression when we decided to have our first New year's practice and afterwards enjoy freshly pounded mochi for everyone. And then, he was so depressed when we told him that without a mortar and pounder and even a steamer for the sweet rice, it would be impossible. Deciding that we had to do this no matter what for Kanai Sensei, and discussing this with a carpenter who was student at the time, we found the wood we needed about four days before our celebration. When we told Kanai Sensei that we would try to get it done but no guarantees, he was half elated and half in doubt. Hurrying to make the mortar and pounder in time, Kanai Sensei was greatly pleased. I think that, at this time, no one in the dojo had ever seen such a mortar and pounder for making mochi.

Kanai Sensei loved mochi and seeing him wrap the mochi in nori (seaweed) and eating it - I can remember this as if it was yesterday. Seeing Kanai eating mochi like that, I recall that all of the others had strange expressions trying this mysterious mochi for the first time. One student noticed that there were some tiny pieces of wood mixed in with the mochi and taking a good look, sure enough, it was small pieces of wood. One of the students struck the mortar too hard with the pounder causing the wood to shatter. When we told Kanai Sensei, he replied, "I thought it was nori so I already ate so much. Don't worry, you will not die eating a little wood." Anyways, because the mochi is good luck for our New Year's celebration, we ate it all up, wood and all. I must apologize to all of those who ate "wooden mochi" that year! We still continue our New Year's celebration even to this day. Happy New Year and many best wishes,
Yasumasa Itoh, 6th Dan, Tekkojuku Dojo.
Boston, Massachusetts

From Kodokai, Salamanca, Spain: Special Practice With Aikikai Instructors From Hombu Dojo For Japan Week November 23. Part I.



Special Guest Instructors From Aikikai Hombu Dojo: Shigeru Sugawara: 6th Dan Hiroyuki Sakurai: 5th Dan Makoto Ito: 4th Dan Yuji Oyama: 3rd Dan Tadao Machida: 3rd Dan Noboru Takahashi 3rd Dan

This last week, we celebrated "Japan Week" in Salamanca. This event is conducted annually in one city and its objective is a cultural exchange between Japan and other cities of the world. This year the country was Spain and the host city, Salamanca.

The activities that were scheduled during this week were courses and demonstrations of different martial arts sponsored by the Nippon Budokan in Tokyo.

Aikido was also included with six instructors from Hombu Dojo. To publicize this important event, our dojo communicated with many institutions and organizations of our city to somehow help develop this Japan Week and welcome our special guests from Hombu Dojo.

We contacted the hosting organization of this event which facilitated the names of the instructors who would come to Salamanca and their Schedule during those days.

Once we knew the names of the instructors, I wrote to Furuya Sensei to know if we could help them in their stay in my city somehow. Ito Makoto Sensei wrote a letter to Furuya Sensei being thankful to him for the interest, but that its schedule was a little tight and that it would be difficult to see us outside the seminar anticipated for Saturday 25.

A few days before, Mr. Makoto wrote an email to me to communicate to me that if there would be the possibility of making a small practice between the guests of Hombu and the students of our school on the 23rd of November.

I responded that it would be a pleasure and an honor to have them in my Dojo and to share a class with them. Confirming the course, the Dojo started preparations for our guests with cleaning, flowers, and taking care of the Dojo, invitations to other centers of Aikido near our Dojo generally, the purchase of gifts... etc.. In principle, I confirm just on making a one day seminary and to return them to the hotel supposing that they would be tired from the long trip from Japan to Spain. We also entertained the idea of taking them to dinner, if they are not so tired. I asked my students to be ready if we have to look for a site where to take them.

The course would begin to 19:00. We would meet them at 18:15 at the hotel. Although it is only 10 minutes to the Dojo from the Hotel, the weather was quite rainy which might cause delay. I preferred to arrive with

with about 15 minutes free time to relax before beginning the class.

At 18:10, Gabriel (student) and I were waiting at the entrance from the hotel for our guests of Japan. When the teachers appeared, they remained surprised of the formality and the punctuality, since they were delayed about 10 minutes coming down from the room and they even requested excuses to us and they ask us if their attire was suitable for the occasion.

During the way, we talked about the trip and their plans for those days, knowing this I proposed to him that if they wished, we would like to invite to them to have dinner after the course. They answered that they would be enchanted. I asked Ito Makoto Sensei for the preferences for Sugawara Sensei and he replied to me that anything would be good but that something light was preferred. Since the morning, they had eaten much and they had been a little full all the day with too much meat. I suggested several options to them and in the end they showed preference for Italian cuisine.

The traffic allowed us to arrive at 18:35. We left from the same door so that they entered the Dojo directly and they changed without hurry. Already our students reserved sites to just leave the car in front the door of the Dojo.



The participants were about 40 people waiting for the teachers in seiza, to bow to them at the entrance to the Dojo.

In the dressing room, we had prepared a small table with drinks and something to eat, some fruit and snacks for the end class.

At the same time, already I informed to my students that we have to make a reservation in a restaurant for 16 people, quite complicated thing for that time at night. But we found a very nice place.

At 18:55, they changed and they prepared to

begin. The teacher began with a warm up very similar to ours and next began with techniques of Kokyu-ho, Shomen-uchi Ikkyo, Nikyo, Sankyo, Kote-gaeshi, Irimi-nage, Tenchi-nage, and Shiho-nage, and finishing with Kokyu Dosa.



In the end, the course gave words of gratefulness to the Dojo and to the assistance. Nothing but to do the photo of family, and we give them some gifts. To each one, a bottle of wine and oil from my city, box with typical food from Salamanca and a nice T-shirt from the Dojo of Furuya Sensei that he had sent me days before, along with some financial support and help to buy the gifts and dinner. They gave us an Aikido book and beautiful tenugui to us. When they went away to change, Gabriel and I changed quickly to be prepared to gather to them to go have dinner.

We did not want that it became very late since I suppose that they would be tired. We parked not very far from restaurant, but the streets to the restaurant follow the nicest street with beautiful buildings that at this time of night look so beautiful that they took advantage of to take some photos.

By the way, we changed impressions on the way and schedules of Japan and Spain. In the restaurant, we spoke of the different groups from Aikido. When finalizing the dinner, we found the cars to take them to the hotel. I think in my personal opinion I believe that they enjoyed their stay in our Dojo. My best always, Santiago

PS: And many, many thanks to Furuya Sensei for helping me and my Dojo to conduct in this seminar.

Santiago Garcia Almaraz, Chief Instructor



New Year, New Spirit

Kensho Furuya
Chief Instructor
Aikido Center of
Los Angeles

First of all, I would like to express my very sincere Happy New Year's Greetings to Doshu and many good friends at Aikikai Hombu Dojo for their continued loyal guidance and support. I do not know what I could do without their friendship and instruction. I would also like to give my Best Wishes to all of my students who have stood by my side through thick and thin. We shared many hard times together and I often think this is more enduring and meaningful than the easy good times we also have enjoyed throughout the year.

I have thought long and hard about what to say to you to open the New Year of 2007 but it has been very hard for me to decide so I thought I will just do my usual ramblings and say what comes to mind at the moment without trying to make much sense or give you a clear thought.

Please support Doshu and Aikikai. Without this spirit and commitment, it cannot be True Aikido which you practice.

In whatever you do and think, you "yourself" will always come first. This is only human nature and the most natural thing to do. However, in Aikido practice, put the other person first. "To put others before yourself" I have found to be one of the fundamental principles of Aikido.

And finally, I would like to say to you to be humble and modest in everything you do. Not everyone will recognize and appreciate you, but always the right people will know what you are doing.

On Aikido Practice:

*In learning, one must lose the self.
In training, one must purify the soul,
Great learning like the mountain be,
An endless Path, we're never free,
Struggling, struggling to find the light,
So deep the darkness, no end in sight,
The floating clouds through skies so blue,
The gentle breeze through ancient trees,
Without my knowing, my mind's at ease.*

Kensho Furuya, 2006

We live in a world of diversity. We are economic animals with a money religion of "more is better." I see this in almost every aspect of our lives. I think you know what I mean. It is quite evident in Aikido too. But I think that we misunderstand the meaning of diversity. For most, it means to take whatever we like, throw away whatever we do not like. This is not exactly diversity, this is more like self-indulgence. As a saying goes - "no one can stand in two boats at once" yet we try to stand in two, three and even four boats at once!

Before 2nd Doshu passed away, he wrote a few words on a Japanese folding fan for me. His last teaching to me was, "The Single Path of Aikido." Everyday, I think about these words and ponder their meaning. Of course, their superficial meaning is obvious, yet I feel there is something deeper here and this is what I am searching for. . . . In this day and age, to pursue the "single path" is truly noble and beautiful in my mind. I think 2nd Doshu lived his whole life like this, practicing the Single Path of Aikido.

Once, someone said, "become like an ocean and accept all waters from every stream and river." This is a good idea, much different from the philosophy of the single path and I think many people like this idea. . . . Yet, I think I would like to change the meaning of these words, "although the ocean accepts all waters from every river and stream, it never changes it's own nature."

Water fits into any vessel and constantly changes its form. It can become hard like ice or disappear like steam. Yet, water is always water. The Single Path may be to find the True Self in this myriad world. In 2007, foster New Spirit for the New Year.
Rev. Kensho Furuya, Ban setsu-An

Haiku: "O'Sensei's Photo"

*Gentle eyes,
Looking down as I bow my head low,
The Aiki Path becomes so clear!*
Kensho Furuya, 2006





From Taipei Taiwan: Wishing You A

Bountiful New 2007

Sifu Adam Hsu, Director Traditional Wushu Assc.

First of all, let me wish all of you a merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Last November, much to my surprise, I received an award from the Taipei City Cultural Bureau. Each year they select four individuals for this honor—educators, artists, musicians, etc—citizens who they feel deserve recognition for their dedication and contributions to Chinese art and culture. 2006 marked the tenth anniversary of the Culture Awards.

I never expected to be picked for something like that. So when I stepped on stage during the ceremony, one of the first things I told the audience was that I felt like the triple-crowned king of kings among those honored that night.

First of all, the other recipients are young. One is a successful scriptwriter, director, and producer of plays. The second, a professionally trained Chinese opera performer, merges Shakespeare with Beijing Opera. Both of these men have been working at their crafts for the last twenty years and are very famous in Taiwan. The third honoree is a young lady who has molded a "Chinese-flavored" tea ceremony and developed this into a performing art. Me, with my white hair, I was the oldest.

I really feel that this award should recognize the hard work and talent of younger artists. I'm sixty-five this year, legally old, a senior citizen. To award a senior is quite different: It's to recognize his achievements. This was the first of my three crowns.

Though I've worked intensively in traditional wushu all my life, I don't feel as if I've achieved anything. I still consider myself to be a humble student of martial arts. What's there to recognize or celebrate? Thus, the idea of receiving the Culture Award was somehow embarrassing to me.

Nonetheless, when I got up in the morning to wash my face and brush my teeth, I looked in the mirror and saw a happy face. How strange! So I couldn't lie to myself. I was happy. But why?

After some soul-searching, I finally understood: At last, wushu was getting official honor and recognition as a cultural art. Let me explain. In Taiwan, if we want to produce an exhibition or tournament, we might need some government assistance such as funding or perhaps a space in which to hold the event. When we go to the government's Culture Department, they tell us "Oh no, you're a sport." The Sports Bureau tells us "We can't help you, you're a recreation." At the Recreation Department, they say, "No, this is a performing art." Wushu always gets kicked around. We're orphans without parents or foster homes. What's going on?

I have always believed deeply from the bottom of my heart that traditional wushu is a major cultural art. It stands up next to the finest and most profound of Chinese arts. I greatly appreciate and respect the Cultural Bureau for having the guts to step off the safe and narrow pathway and place traditional wushu within this circle. This is something truly to celebrate.

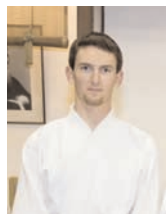
At the ceremony, my feelings were reflected in the overwhelming amount of flowers that had arrived for me. While other recipients were given, at most, three baskets, students and friends from Taiwan, Canada and the U.S. sent more than twelve! I fully understood that this wonderful outpouring of feeling was not because of me, myself, but because finally traditional wushu was getting the respect it deserves.

That night I was the last person to receive the award. I pointed out to the audience that stage plays, Chinese opera and even tea, as a refined ceremony, are well respected and

Continued:

Washington, DC: Happy New Year!

Eric Russell, 2nd Dan



Over the past 10 years I have practiced at seven dojo's, yet I always look forward to coming back to Aikido Center of LA the most. Thanks to much hard work from Furuya Sensei and many

students and friends of the dojo, ACLA is and always has been a beautiful and well maintained dojo with great energy and practice on the mat. While the quality of instruction and traditional environment at ACLA is exceptional, it certainly has made it difficult to search for comparable dojos through all of my moves.

My latest relocation is in Alexandria, Virginia and therefore yet another new dojo. While I was able to eliminate the dojo's that advertised weight loss and quality of life improvement, I am thankful for Furuya Sensei's guidance for my final decision. If any ACLA students visit the Washington DC area please touch base with me if you have time to get in some Aikido. I thank you all for the warm welcome and great practice on the mat. I wish you all the best over the Holiday Season and into the New Year. Eric Russell

From Sweden: Seasons' Best

Peter Nyberg, 4th Dan

Some short greetings from Sweden. My name is Peter and I have been training Aikido since 1991 Now and then I look at your Sense's Site and his Daily message and sometime I would e-mail him about current topics that occur.

In our country we have three big Aikido styles ki, Aikikai and Iwama-ryu inspired Aikido. I can be wrong it could be more styles....

In Sweden I do think, mainstream Aikido community was very glad when Iwama-ryu Aikido became one with Aikikai, but still doing their style within Aikikai family. Those who are weak in bukiwaza became stronger in taijutsu and I'll hope the same is the other way around.

Since the 60's many big and strong aikido clubs have been invited many high ranking Sensei's from Japan, Europe and France.

Our club is a free club who train under no particular style, but we are a bit inspired by the Aikido of Takeji Tomita. From whom I took my aikido kyu degrees. He separated from Saito Sensei in 1998 and his style is called Takemusu Aiki, Tomita Academy.

Continued:

Mark Ty In Japan Part 3.



Himeji Castle is designated as a National Treasure.

Friday, September 22 (Himeji-jo)

We left Kyoto and moved to Osaka. After checking into the hotel, we left for Himeji Castle and arrived there around lunch time. Himeji-jo is even more beautiful and impressive than it appears in pictures.

The castle incorporated quite a few interesting features. The outer walls had tiny holes for defense. Arrows could be shot or rocks dropped out of these holes in order to strike the attackers below. Also, the route to the castle entrance itself was not very linear. In fact, blindly following any single path would probably get you lost since each path twisted around in circles. You have to know the exact route to the castle entrance in order to find it. Once inside, the steps were purposely made to be very steep in order to make the castle more defensible.

We left Himeji-jo late in the afternoon. By the time we got back to Osaka, it was almost evening. For dinner, I wanted to try some Kobe beef. After some work, I was able to find a place that was relatively affordable. Kobe beef was as good as I had heard, but it was expensive. As much as I enjoyed it, I don't think I'll be making a habit of eating it.

Saturday, September 23 (Tokyo)

We took an early train back to Tokyo. We arrived and checked back into the SunLite Hotel in the afternoon. By the time we had lunch, it was already late afternoon. Cromwell, my brother, wanted to get some souvenirs for himself, so we went back to Asakusa. This also gave us a chance to see Senso-ji Temple. Although it was closed by the time we got there, we at least got to see the outside of it. I also managed to find an obi for Iaido at the Nakamise-dori.



Nakamise-dori shopping center.

Aside from going to Asakusa, we did not do too much today as we have to get ready for our flight tomorrow. I have to make sure my luggage is already packed tonight because I won't have much time tomorrow.



With Takeshi Kanazawa Sensei, 6th Dan

I'm going to Kanazawa Sensei's and Doshu's classes in the morning. That won't leave me much time to shower and eat lunch before leaving for the airport.



2007: This Old Hakama

Tom Williams
4th Dan, Hacienda
La Puente Aikikai

My trusty old blue hakama will turn 15 this year. That's, like, 60 in human time. It has held up very well, all things considered.

Old blue has seen its share of dojos. Why, it remembers practicing at Hombu Dojo in Japan. It saw a variety of mats across Europe. It particularly enjoyed its time in Latin America, from Puerto Rico, down through Mexico and ultimately to South America. It has traveled across North America from Toronto to Vancouver, San Diego to New Orleans, up both the east and

west coast and many points in between.

It spent a couple of years on loan to two other students during a time when I needed to wear black and they needed blue. Those were the dark times of separation. I was happy to get together again when we came to ACLA.

Not everything has been rosy, though. I remember the first time it blew out both knees. It was touch and go there for a while until the patches were received and sewn into place. Then the hem started to get pretty ratty and frayed, so we had to do a little nip, tuck and lift to help it out. Took a good 5 years off its age and started feeling better about itself right away.

The second set of knee replacements was tougher. The material had gotten really thin and there wasn't a whole lot for the new patches to hold onto. It looked bad, like we might have to pull the plug. But my wife came up with an ingenious solution for an inner liner to sew into and we breathed new life into the garment again. I was warned that this would probably be the last time for major repairs. But, so far so good.

I know eventually, I will have to put it up and give it the retirement it has earned. And while that will be a sad day, we will be able to look back on all the good times we have had together on the mat. But while it's a step slower these days, it's still pretty spry for such an old timer. I hope you can join with me and my old blue hakama to enjoy all the special moments in Aikido training during this New Year 2007.

Best wishes for a happy and prosperous New Year to all.

Tom Williams, 4th Dan
Aikido Center of Los Angeles &
Hacienda La Puente Aikikai

Sweden Greetings Con't:

Once I asked myself what can I do for others so myself and another Aikidoka started up a small group of people . . . They still keep on coming to train. I have more to learn from them and I'm happy that they still want my company. . . .

This is a saying I founded some years back: Life is the road we are walking on to try to understand what it's all about, but the only thing we can be sure of is continuous changes. Peter Nyberg, Sweden



Belgium: New Year's Greetings

**Sven De Schryver
4th Dan**

There once was a little boy who had a bad temper. His father gave him a bag of nails and told him that every time he lost his temper, he must hammer a nail into the back of the fence.

The first day the boy had driven 37 nails into the fence. Over the next few weeks, as he learned to control his anger, the number of nails hammered daily gradually dwindled down. He discovered it was easier to hold his temper than to drive those nails into the fence.

Finally the day came when the boy didn't lose his temper at all. He told his father about it and the father suggested that the boy now pull out one nail for each day that he was able to hold his temper. The days passed and the young boy was finally able to tell his father that all the nails were gone.

The father took his son by the hand and led him to the fence. He said, "You have done well, my son, but look at the holes in the fence. The fence will never be the same. When you say things in anger, they leave a scar just like this one. You can put a knife in a man and draw it out. It won't matter how many times you say I'm sorry, the wound is still there."

The little boy then understood how powerful his words were. He looked up at his father and said "I hope you can forgive me father for the holes I put in you."

"Of course I can," said the father.

As a Christmas-message this can count I would think !

This story is similar to the alteration of Minamoto Musashi's attitude from "I do not regret any of my actions" to "I won't do anything which a later might regret".

If we really want to make progress in Aikido, this should be a major "technique".

Let us all focus on our self-education and

self-control, me for myself I believe I still have much to learn in this !! Much to learn in this new year, much to learn !!

And to end with it anyway: "Merry Christmas and a Happy New year" and let us all become an example of budo no arikata (ideal purpose of budo). Respectfully and sincerely yours, Happy New Year!
AIKIDO-DOJO AIKIKAI AALTER

Sven De Schryver
Bergstraat 65
B-9880 Aalter, Belgium



Germany: World Peace

**Echardt Hemkmeier
4th Dan
Hamburg, Germany**

Monthly, I get the Newsletter of the Aikido Center of LA and I see December coming. It is time for a Christmas greeting to publish in the Newsletter. We also have a newsletter now, we call it Seishinkan Shinbun, but it is very small. Maybe you like to write also a greeting. Normally such letter start with happy chi...and a happy new y.... I think, this is not enough sometimes.

In a year, where international violence is so obvious, we must ask ourselves, "What we are doing?" On the mat sometimes, I get the same impression. Some people can not avoid competitive thinking. The "technique" must work. I must put the person down. Can I resist his technique? Can we not even on the tatami leave this thinking?

After 20 years of Aikido, I changed my point of view very much. Now I know it is possible to change, to make myself better. Before, I was often near to give up, but now, teaching all over Europe, I enjoy more teaching the children classes.

I like to see their shiny eyes, when they feel, that adults take them serious, practice with them, and help them in a friendly way.

Adults are so tiring some times. They like to see themselves always in a mirror, they know a little bit and start to teach some others, even a blackbelt who is so kind and do not comment on this.

I see that my effort are still not strong

enough and this is my shame, but now I know I have a really strong heart and will not give up.

Kodo, your book, is always a big help to stand up again for the morning keiko, going to keiko after all work, and teach how to clean a Dojo, clean the technique, clean the mind.

Here I like to ask you, all Aikidoka in the world, "let's go ahead with Shoshin (beginner's mind), lets change."

I wish you and all your friends and families, a Happy New Year. Yours, Eckhardt Hemkemeier from Hamburg, Germany



Mexico: Greetings

**Dr. Roberto
Magallanes
1st Dan
Vera Cruz Aikikai
Mexico**

It is amazing how time goes by so fast, since it has been almost five years that has been the honor, joy and, let's say luck, to meet you at your beautiful and ancient style Dojo.

During this time, I have been invited to visit you on three occasions with some of my students and every time, we have been welcome and honored with your teachings, as well as with your guests and students, showing harmony, respect and protocol, so important in daily life.

During your seminars, we have made friends like Tom Williams, David Ito, James Doi, Mark Ty, etc. etc and have practiced true Aikido with them making us feel at home and now part of all your students and friends.

Your book, Kodo, Ancient Ways, has been a model for us in daily life.

Thank God for putting you people in our Path. Thank you and your students and we hope for a peaceful and joyful Happy New Year!

We will see you all in April, 2007 for Yonemochi Sensei's Seminar.

Dr. Roberto Magallanes, Vera Cruz Aikikai

From Hilo, Hawaii: My 1st Visit To The Furuya Dojo:

**Heraldo Farrington, 1st Dan
Aikido of Hilo, Hawaii**

I recently had the opportunity to make a trip to California from my home in Hawaii, and I was able to spend a few days in the Los Angeles area. I had sent a short note to Furuya Sensei, letting him know of my upcoming trip, and that I would very much like to visit the dojo and practice. I have been communicating with Sensei for at least four of the six years that I have been training in Aikido, and I have learned much through his on-line efforts – but we had never had the opportunity to meet in person. Sensei wrote back, encouraging me to visit for as long as I could, and then he even announced a special bokken class because I had expressed interest in the fundamentals of suburi as he taught them. Imagine my surprise – I was already being extended such hospitality, and I had not yet arrived!

I made my reservations at a hotel in Chinatown, about a five-minute drive from the dojo, which is in Little Tokyo, and made the drive from Santa Barbara. Once I got off the freeways and onto the surface streets, directions made sense – but I must admit that with all of the on-going construction, getting off the freeways was a bit confusing! I had just finished a three-day scuba charter to the Channel Islands, and I was quite tired from all the diving, and then the driving, but I had managed to get some solid sleep the night before, so I checked into my room, grabbed a quick shower, and then changed into my gi and hakama. One last check on directions, and I was off to the 5:15 class.

I found the dojo easily enough, and met a senior student at the entrance, washing down the stone walkway prior to class. He actually seemed to be expecting me, and welcomed me inside. It was quite a transition, coming in from the city-feel of the alley-way of downtown Los Angeles, into the shady bamboo grove and the cool, clean gravel walkway, and then into the dojo proper. The green tatami mats, the prominent kamiza, the white walls contrasting with the dark wood, all provided a very solid sense of a working dojo, and at the same time, made for a beautiful space. And the high ceiling above the practice mats also added an open, airy feel, so much so that it was easy to for-



Note: For the sake of continuity, this article, continuing from last month, is reprinted here in its entirety.

airy feel, so much so that it was easy to forget that I was inside a converted warehouse.

I was led upstairs, and into Sensei's busy office space, where he was, quite predictably, in the midst of one of his many writing projects. After introductions, he engaged me in some easy conversation about my recent travels and plans, and then graciously accepted the o-miyage that I had brought from Hawaii. Then he sent me back downstairs where practice had already started.

After a quick stretch, I joined the other students for the rest of the class, and thoroughly enjoyed practice. I was impressed with the beginning students' intensity, pace, and vigor, and it was truly a joy to join them on the mat. All too soon, the class was over, and as we waited for the next class to start, more students arrived, including some iaido students. Everyone made a point to welcome me, and when Sensei came down from his office, the bokken class started.

It seemed as if each aspect of my suburi -- stance, grip, blade angle, strike, finish – all merited careful, patient correction from Sensei. It was a great practice of Beginner's Mind for me, and I only hope that I am able to return sometime in the future for further instruction!

After class, Sensei formally introduced me to the other students, and then he carefully placed the o-miyage I had brought him upon the kamiza "for O'Sensei first." This practice, which is followed still in traditional Japanese homes, reminded me again of Sensei's deep dedication to "Kodo" – ancient ways– and also of his undying loyalty to Hombu Dojo and to our Founder. And it also reminded me of how the best teachers seem to teach us through nearly everything they do not only through what they might say.

Then Sensei invited me to dinner. Because I enjoy Mexican food, he took me to Elf Tepeyac, a landmark restaurant in East Los Angeles, named for the hill in Mexico upon which the Virgin Mother first appeared to a peasant named Juan Diego in the mid-1500's. This apparition culminated in what came to be known as the Miracle of the Roses, and is the reason that the local Mexican-American community has planted so many rose bushes throughout East LA. My own mother is from Mexico, and I remember her telling me the tale of Juan Diego and Our Lady of Guadalupe when I was just a small boy – in fact, I was actually born in Los Angeles, although my family moved away soon afterwards. So this was quite a homecoming, of sorts, and the food that night was absolutely delicious. Sensei has enjoyed this particular restaurant ever since he was a student at USC, and I am glad that I was able to join him for a late night burrito and wonderful conversation at one of his favorite places!

After dinner, we drove to a nearby café back in Little Tokyo for some coffee and more conversation, and as I listened to Sensei speak to the waitress in Japanese, I remember feeling as if I was suddenly back in Tokyo, Japan. A wonderful first day in cosmopolitan Los Angeles!

The next morning, I awoke with a serious cough, so I wasn't able to join Sensei for breakfast. In fact, I slept all that day and missed practice that evening – I guess I was just too exhausted from my previous travels. But by the following evening, I was able to cough my way through two more great classes of aikido, after which Sensei and a group of his students took me out to dinner at an amazing Korean restaurant called Chosun Calbi. According to Sensei, the entire interior was recently refurbished at a cost of over one million dollars – and it certainly looked brand-new and very high-tech. We cooked our food on a small grill in the middle of the table, and the venting system, for instance, was so effective that I never noticed any smoke at all. The food and service were outstanding, as was the company, and after dinner, we all went for coffee at Koffee, a trendy Korean cafe. I stuck with the cheesecake, but their famous shaved ice dessert was amazing, and contained a little bit of everything you might desire.

The next morning, I was up early, and after some hotel coffee, I drove to the dojo to watch an Iaido class, which Sensei was kind

enough to allow. Many dojo don't allow visiting spectators during Iaido practice, mainly due to insurance issues, so this was definitely a treat for me. I wish I was able to practice Iaido myself, but we don't have any instructors here on the Big Island of Hawaii. It does not exactly look easy, but it definitely seems to be a part of Budo training that would sharpen my awareness, and after watching a class, I truly envy the students here in Los Angeles, who have such a wonderful opportunity to train under Furuya Sensei.

Then it was time for two more Aikido classes, after which I was definitely hungry again! And a good thing too, since Sensei had scheduled an Aloha Party for my farewell – this time at a landmark Chinese restaurant called Paul's Kitchen, a favorite hang-out for many of LA's police and city government officials, not to mention Tommy Lasorda. It was wonderful to be a part of Sensei's group – at each restaurant we visited, it was obvious that he was a long-time customer and friend, and we were all treated as honored guests. The food here was delicious, and there was plenty of it, too. I definitely enjoyed an excellent 'finishing party' and was honored to share it with so many new friends!

Then, all too quickly, it was time to return Sensei to his home, and say our final farewells. Such a short trip, yet it was filled with such comradery and good cheer, all based on reigi and Aiki – truly an enlightening, and completely enjoyable, experience!

I would like to thank all of the students and instructors for their warm welcome, their hard and honest training, and their careful instruction. I hope to come visit and train with you again, and I encourage each of you to look me up if you are planning a trip to Hawaii. Even if you are visiting one of the other islands, I would be glad to fly over and show you around. Please ask Sensei for my contact information if you need to write or call me.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Furuya Sensei for a wonderful visit and a great first meeting. Our relationship started on-line, and seemed to culminate in my brief, intense visit to your dojo and home . . . and yet, here I am, on-line with you again, as well as the larger readership, completing the circle and looking forward to my next visit. I should also thank you, Sensei,

for inviting me to write this article for the newsletter. Such writing does not come easy to me, but I find it very rewarding, as I seem to relive the experiences yet again . . . and I am grateful for the opportunity to let others know how well they can expect to be received, providing they take the time to make the trip, and follow protocol as best as they can, and keep "Beginner's Mind," just like any voyage or journey requires!

Finally, thank you for the signed copy of Kodo, the wonderful T-shirt, and the coffee mug! They each remind me of my new friends in Los Angeles, and they also remind me to strive to be the perfect host, and the perfect guest, at all times, as each situation requires. Mahalo Nui Loa!



New Year's Greetings

Brett Rushworth
3rd Kyu

I would like to send a message of gratitude to the Furuya Dojo and to our friends around the world, and to Furuya Sensei for giving this opportunity to connect through Aikido.

May the love we share for Aikido and the martial arts continue to flourish. Through practice and hard work may we generate a feeling of peace and harmony to be felt over the world. Now is the time to embrace all that is around us, to "see" and "feel" connected to others and the world we share and to "breathe". My wish would be for us all to breathe more peace and more healing energy into the world and into the hearts of those fighting and suffering, for we are all in the same boat.

The words of Rumi say it best...
The morning wind spreads its fresh smell.
We must get up and take that in,
that wind that lets us live.
Breathe before it's gone.

Dance, when your broken open.
Dance, if you've torn the bandage off.
Dance in the middle of fighting.
Dance in your blood.
Dance, when your perfectly free.

Thank you to everybody and have a wonderful New Year! Brett Rushworth



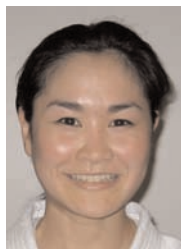
New Year Greetings

Leonard Manoukian
2nd Kyu

January 2007 will mark the second year of Armand's and my membership at the dojo. In that time two things have become clear to me. First, one must be consistent in one's Aikido training. Second, one must continually reflect on that training. What better time than now to consider this year's work?

As for Armand, life is grand. He feels comfortable with his peers and has made his share of friends. As for Aikido, the children's keiko seems like playtime in a gi, but I've noticed that the instruction has left a real mark on Armand. The manner in which Aikido is transmitted at this age has taught Armand something of fundamental importance: how to take instruction regarding physical movement. That is not easy to learn. Sport coaches try it all the time. The great disadvantage that they have, however, is that they must do it in a pressure filled environment. Even if adults want to pretend that there are no winners or losers in children's athletics, children themselves know who won and who lost. None of that is present in Aikido. Children learn how to learn, not by being graded or by winning or losing, but by the pure fun of motion. Also, they retain more than we think. During this AYSO season, Armand took ukemi during a game to avoid a fall that would have been harder otherwise. So, Armand had a good year; here's to many more.

As for me, this was a "complete" year. When I joined I didn't expect to be any good at Aikido anytime soon, and I'm not. The year started well enough. There was real progress, I felt. But as a friend reminded me, with his very scientific vernacular, "learning is not linear". Sure enough, the year has had it highs and lows. In mid-year I felt that my cup was full entirely too often and nothing was getting in. Luckily, I realized that when learning is at an ebb, the best thing to do is to concentrate on the enjoyment derived from the practice, for its own sake. That has not proven difficult. Our dojo, the people and the place, make practice worthwhile in and of itself. And that has made for a good year; here's to many more. Happy New Year!!! Best regards, Leonard



12 Years: Returning To Japan

**Maria Murakawa
3rd Dan**

I arrived in Osaka, Japan on Friday, October 18. My family and I were lucky enough to be able to take our vacations all at the same, as the purpose of the trip was for my grandmother's hoji, or first anniversary ceremony of her passing one year ago in November. As it was difficult getting all the parties together, namely my father, mother, brother, and I, the ceremony had been moved up for the month of October. The last memory I have of my grandmother was twelve years ago. She was standing outside of the house my mother grew up in to see my brother and I off as we were driving away to the airport to catch a plane back to L.A. Somehow the image of her waving and smiling made me so sad to leave her, I cried on the plane ride home. That was the last time I ever saw her.

So twelve years later, I'm back at that same old house, and was flooded with memories of the summers our family used to spend there almost every year. There were relatives, aunts and uncles I hadn't seen in over twelve years. When the monk arrived the ceremony began and we all sat in seiza the whole time as he read the okyo (chanted). The ceremony was much like the ones we do in the dojo for O-sensei and Doshu, where everyone gives an incense offering while the monk is chanting. Then there is a discussion afterwards. This particular one was about how Japan has reached a turning point in how they honor the dead. Traditionally there were altars (butsudans) in each home to honor their ancestors. Since there are less children being born in Japan to every family there is less of a likelihood of the altars being passed down from one generation to the next. He believes there will be changes in the form of how Japanese remember the deceased, and even less people to remember them. I just thought it was great that we could all get together the traditional way, in front of the butsudans with the picture of my grandmother, and all of us coming together to remember her spirit.

I stayed in Japan for seven days, leaving on the eighth day. During this time we also paid our respects to my father's deceased

parents in a cemetery in Nishinomiya, a city near Osaka. A relaxing highlight of the trip was when we took the train to Wakura Onsen, a city near the Japan Sea. We stayed at a ryokan (Japanese style hotel with hot springs) overlooking the calm waters of



At the Wakura Onsen, Ryokan Notoraku during our family reunion dinner.

the bay where we took mineral baths and had kaiseki-ryori (Japanese full course meal) for dinner. We also visited Kenrokuen Garden in nearby Kanazawa, one of the most spacious and beautiful gardens I've seen in Japan. Our travels also included daytrips to Tokyo by bullet train and to Kyoto, where we went to Kiyomizu Temple.

One thing which I notice about Japan is their attention to detail and awareness



At the Kenrokuen in Kanazawa

which is so prevalent everywhere. From how food is prepared and served (I had the best food in Japan), how clean public places were, and how courteous people were in general. I just remembered how people bowed there - so clean and elegant, it inspired me to be more aware of this etiquette within the dojo, in practice and to keep this spirit in everyday life as well.

I guess this has been one of the best trips I had taken, since we were all able to go together as a family, back to our roots in Japan. That's all about my trip! A very Happy New Year and Best Wishes always, Thank you, Maria Murakawa, 3rd Dan

Vera Cruz, Mexico: Dr. Alvaro H. Meza, 1st Dan

Dear Sensei: Many thanks for your teachings all this year and since joining your organization. It is an honor to have a teacher who is along the path of Aikido and Life. Thanks for the friendship & attention received by you and your students, our friends forever. I wish all the best for this New Year 2007. Sincerely yours, Dr. Alvaro Meza, Vera Cruz, Mexico

New Beginnings:

James Takata, 2nd Dan

This past year has been full of new beginnings for me, the biggest of which was my engagement and wedding to my wife Jen on July 1, 2006.

For me, every new beginning generates energy and excitement. Free from the inevitable wrinkles of experience, beginnings are all hope and potential. Of course, New Year's is a popular time for a fresh start. People here in the United States often create New Year's resolutions, and although many won't be fulfilled, the idea of a clean slate is powerful and appealing. With these wishes, great or small, we express hope and desire to improve our lives and become better human beings.

It was New Year's Day seven years ago when that same desire led me to Aikido and the ACLA. With no idea of what was in store, wearing sweat pants and a t-shirt, I stepped onto the mat for the first time. Sensei often speaks of the importance of having a beginner's mind. As I recall, my mind was mostly overwhelmed. There were so many new faces, movements, rules, names, and sensations. But there was also that great energy and excitement as this art began to reveal itself.

There is a wonderful simplicity to practice in the beginning. Progress is easy to measure: uniforms get broken in, names and terms become familiar, and movements go from awkward to natural (or at least less awkward). As a new student you have few responsibilities beyond being on time. Reflecting on that first year, I wonder how much of a beginner's mind I have retained. Am I as humble? Back then, I knew that every person in the dojo, even if he had started just one day before me, had something to teach me. It's obvious, but more difficult to understand, Continued:



Memorable, Wonderful Seminar!

Maria Ferrari
2nd Dan

Happy New Year Greetings to Sensei and everyone in the dojo!

This has been a great year, with an obvious highlight being the seminar with Yonemochi Sensei. I have a hard time expressing how honored I felt to practice with such an excellent teacher, who is so accomplished in Aikido and came from so far away to teach us. I have also had a very hard time articulating my experience of his seminar or the impact it had on me.

We are lucky to study Aikido at this particular dojo because time and again it brings us into contact with greatness, and in the presence of greatness we are humbled. This year I have been humbled continuously, not only by Yonemochi Sensei and our guests Izawa Sensei and Itoh Sensei, but also by the instructors and students in our own dojo... those with many years more experience and understanding, and also those who have been practicing for fewer years than I have but with a persistence and dedication that I can really feel as their techniques become cleaner, simpler, and more assured, better with each passing week. I know the exposure to so many talented and hardworking students of Aikido can only be good for my own Aikido... but sometimes exposure to someone like Yonemochi Sensei is daunting. It makes me aware of how much more refined and specific even a familiar technique can be, and how much better I would have to be at every single part of Aikido before I could really begin to understand its power.

Luckily for me, the one thing Aikido teaches me over and over and over is that no matter how amazing the teachers and students around you are, or how much you respect them or are impressed by what they can do you cannot just freeze up and be paralyzed and awe-struck by all the greatness because if you don't relax you'll mess up your break-fall and end up being angry all class that you fell on your head. At least, that's what happens to me when I start thinking too much and doing too little. In Aikido, as in life, we have to be practical.

So I try to remember another thing Yonemochi Sensei taught us, which was to choose one technique that we love and consider it our own. It's a lot easier to focus on one technique than trying to master the whole of Aikido at one time. And I think part of what Yonemochi Sensei was telling us when he said to focus on one technique we know we are good at was something that has been really hard for me to learn... to just calm down and pay attention to the task at hand. I expect that, as long as I am a student of this Dojo, I will have many chances to come into contact with greatness once again, and I hope I can rise to meet them in a practical way without forgetting how special and rare they truly are.

I hope everyone has a safe and happy holiday! Maria Ferrari, 2nd Dan

Happiness

Jeffrey Wheeler, Iaido 3rd Dan

Greetings of the holiday season to all who read this. My name is Jeff Wheeler and I have been fortunate to be an Iaido student of Sensei's for over six years now.

Sensei often points out in his writing that as individuals we are absolutely responsible and in control of whether or not we experience happiness at any given moment of our lives. For me, it is an easy truth to accept (intellectually). It isn't hard recognize that I am truly the only one in control of how I accept, respond and react to the circumstance in life moment by moment. I get stuck in traffic and I know I am the one who interprets the situation emotionally. I am the one who seems to need to label the circumstance as good or bad. The traffic isn't affected by the attitude I respond with and doesn't care about my experience of life. It is only a circumstance. My emotional response is truly in my hands only.

I find no experience of happiness however, in my ability to recognize that circumstance usually appears without malice or intention. My rational understanding may deflect a potential judgement of a situation, but I see that it doesn't ever encourage any feeling or actual experience of happiness. When it comes to the things I consider most important in life? Family, relationships, health and the like, my rationalizations seem even less effective in staving off the labels of good and bad I seem so eager to automatically apply.

Continued:



Happy Year Of The Boar

Gary Myers
Iaido 5th Dan

Happy New Year to Sensei, Mark, and the Kenshinkai and Aikido sections of ACLA. I want to thank Sensei for his instruction, and patience over the past year. Each year it becomes more difficult to write a greeting that doesn't sound like the last which is why I have great admiration for Sensei and his daily writings on both the Yahoo group and the ACLA sites.

Year 2007 is the Year of the Boar which is the last year in the twelve year zodiac cycle. If you believe in zodiac characteristics, people born in the Year of the Boar are affectionate, strong, determined, chivalrous, intelligent, They are also honest and sincere and expect the same from others and they are very naive. These are all pretty positive traits. I think anyone would be happy to be described in those terms, even the naive part, since it signifies someone who believes in the best from other people.

I'm looking forward to another New Year at the dojo. Have a happy & healthy 2007.

J. Takata - New Beginnings Continued:

that today every person in the dojo still has something to teach me, even if she started yesterday. Do I watch as closely? Each time I saw a technique it took all of my attention just to catch the general direction of the movement. I'm ashamed to admit that sometimes I only see the indication of Ikkyo, for example, instead of giving all my attention to uncover the minute details and deeper meaning I know to exist.

Evidently, I have much to learn by studying and applying the beginner's mind to my own life and practice. In fact, my New Year's resolution for 2007 is to strive for that state of mind.

I would like to wish a Happy New Year to everyone. Many thanks to Sensei for his teaching, not only in word, but also in action. Thanks also to my fellow students at the ACLA for their continued help and patience. James Takata, 2nd Dan.

New Year's Season Greetings

Yo Pratioto

Thank you Sensei. I just like to say that since I join the dojo in Sep 2006 I do learn a lot from Furuya Sensei. Everybody in the dojo were very helpful by correcting my movement and posture especially Sensei who's never tired of giving so much to his student, Thank You Sensei. I believe I might not be able to understand right away for everything that you taught me but I will try my best and my goal after I join the dojo is no other than to keep practicing the basics so I can get a good solid foundation of the basics of Aikido.

I start to understand little by little about how to execute a proper technique and not only to execute the technique but also always be aware of your posture such as not leave yourself open to your partner so he could counter attack and of course always be aware of your surrounding too. And also as an uke we were taught to blend in with nage and at the same time we also have to be able to protect ourselves and later finished with the proper ukemi. This is a very simple common sense when your are in a real martial situation. But since we were practicing with our partner in dojo sometimes we just forgot about how important to be aware of your posture, spacing and timing.

I also learn a lot more about etiquette and a proper manner in the dojo and its really gave me a better understanding of learning Aikido is not just learning the technique but also learn how to be a better self. In other words, Aikido do have a great deal of positive influence in every aspect of your life.

I really would like thank O' Sensei for created such a beautiful Art. Aikido is True and Beautiful. And I also feel blessed to have Furuya Sensei as my teacher. Once again Thank You Sensei for your endless effort in the Art even though sometimes it is not quiet appreciated by others. You have taught me a lot for I have a better understanding for the Art.

I also like to thank my seniors David Ito, Mark Ty and Bill Allen for tirelessly guiding me in my practice and everyone else whose already been very helpful to me. And finally I wish everybody a Happy New Year 2007.

Respectfully, Yo Pratioto

April 14-15, 2007
Our Annual O'Sensei
Memorial Seminar
Once Again Welcomes

Hideo Yonemochi
Shihan, 8th Dan
Executive Director of the
Aikido World Foundation

Happy New Year

Kay Sera, 1st Dan

Happy Holidays to all Aikido lovers!

It has been and is a whirlwind year but as it is drawing to a close and the holidays are fast approaching, it is a time for reflection, gratitude and appreciation. For me, our dojo is a tremendous gift. An oasis of practice. There is a sense of constancy that I know I should not take for granted. As I walk up the little steps through the beautiful lush garden that always feels so fresh as it has just been watered, I feel a sense of joy to be able to bow, enter the dojo, remove my shoes, and bow before I enter the dressing room. Where else is my every action focused and deliberate? Where else do I bow? I feel very self conscious but this is good because at least to some extent I am a little more conscious, a little more aware. And this is before class has started! For the opportunity of this training and practice I am very grateful.

Despite my extreme busy-ness, and lack of attendance currently at the dojo, I realize I have learned so much and long to enter that oasis and place of practice, focus, movement, calm and attention. I appreciate what I have learned over these years and the opportunity for consistent, persistent training.

May the spirit of the season uplift us in gratitude for all the wonderful gifts we have been given, especially our Aikido practice and the opportunity given by Sensei who has given so generously of his love, energy and spirit.

Happy New Year to All! Thank you very much!

Kaye Sera, 1st Dan



Israel: New Year Greetings

Ze'ev Erlich
Aikikan Dojo
4th Dan

Dear Rev. Kensho Furuya Sensei and members of Aikido Center of Los Angeles. A New Year... At last... Good things happened this year but not only.

Our way, this path of Aiki which we devote ourselves to. It has to help bringing peace. We must practice hard and not expect peace to "show up" by itself like sunrise in the east. We - the people, must practice not only for our joy and self but also with the mission of peace in mind.

Fujita Masatake Sensei who learned directly from O'Sensei for 13 years always says that we have to teach Aikido to children. That the next leaders of this world will grow-up at our dojo.

Shall 2007 will be a year of peace, a year of more care about the environment. A year of humanity.

We, members of Aikikan Dojo in Israel are full of appreciation to Furuya Sensei who showed a tremendous worry and care to our situation during the war here in July. Thank !you. Happy New Year 2007

Israeli Aikido Association (Aikikai)
Aikikan Dojo, Chief Instructor,
Ze'ev Erlich,
Rehovot, Israel

Happy Holidays

Dennis Long
laido, 2nd Dan

I would like to wish everyone reading this to have a Happy New Year

and a Happy Hanukkah, and may everyone have a happy and wonderful New Year filled with focused training. And, may we all find, and explore new levels within the techniques and within ourselves. Be well all! And may Peace overtake the entire planet.



Annual Dojo Christmas Party December 3. At The Smoke House.



One of our best Christmas parties with about 43 guests in attendance. Many thanks to Carol Tanita and David Ito for all of their help in coordinating this great event!



Our special guest was Sifu Harry Wong, a very old and dear friend of Sensei's, who brought both of his wonderful kids this year.



With Sensei, Sifu Harry Wong, his kids, Mark Ty & Jim MacDonald. We missed Al Leong who was planning to attend but could not make it at the last minute.



Jacob Stevens & his wife, Jindrek Novick, Brett Rushworth, Shawn Menasche, Jacob Sisk, and Bill Allen at this table..



We filled the entire big banquet room of the Smoke House, a landmark institution of Burbank, which serves great food. Guests had their choice of freshly roast turkey with all of the trimmings or fresh salmon.



There were tons of Christmas presents and no one went home empty-handed. Many thanks for everyone's contributions. Sensei received a magnificent gift from all of the students.



Jake played a few blues songs for everyone's entertainment. Great music!

O'Sensei Memorial Service & Seminar April, 13-15, 2007

Tentative Schedule of Instructors:

1. Hideo Yonemochi Shihan, 8th Dan, Executive Director of the Aikido World Headquarters, Head Director of the International Dept. Aikikai, Tokyo
2. Yasumasa Itoh, 6th Dan, Tekko Juku Dojo. Boston, MA.
3. Kensho Furuya, 6th Dan, Aikido Center of Los Angeles.
4. James Nakayama, 6th Dan, Chushinkan Dojo, Buena Park, CA.
5. Kei Izawa, 5th Dan, Tanshinjuku Dojo. Boulder, CO.
6. Lisa Tomoleoni, 5th Dan, Aikido Shimboku Dojo. Chicago, Illinois
7. James Doi, 5th Dan, Aikido Center of Los Angeles
8. Ze'ev Erlich, 4th Dan, Israeli Aikido Association-Aikikan. Rehovot, Israel
9. Tom Williams, 4th Dan, Aikido Center of Los Angeles, Hacienda La Puente Aikikai. La Puente, CA.
10. David Ito, 4th Dan, Aikido Center of Los Angeles.
11. Mark Ty, 3rd Dan, Aikido Center of Los Angeles
12. Santiago Garcia Almaraz, 3rd Dan, Salamanca Kodokai. Salamanca, Spain.
13. Steven Shaw, 2nd Dan, Littleton Aikikai. Littleton, Colorado.
14. Gary Myers, Iaido 5th Dan, Aikido Center of Los Angeles

Affiliated Branch Dojos

Aikido Kodokai
Salamanca, Spain
Santiago Garcia Almaraz

Hacienda La Puente Aikikai
La Puente, California
Tom Williams

Wyoming Aikikai
Sheridan, Wyoming
Tom McIntrye

Bahamas Aikikai
Grand Freeport, Bahamas
Seymour Clay

Jalisco Aikikai
Jalisco, Mexico
Eric Jaracho

Aikido of Guadalajara
Guadalajara, Mexico
Raul Blackaller

Aikido of Puerto Vallarta
Puerto Vallarta, Mexico
Eric Jaracho, Raffi Badalian

Association D'Aikido Pour Demain
Paris, France
Cyril Danan

Israeli Aikido Association-Aikikan
Rehovot, Israel
Ze'ev Erlich

Valladolid Aikido Dojo
Valladolid, Spain
Felix Ares

Veracruz Aikido Dojo
Vera Cruz, Mexico
Dr. Roberto Magallanes
Dr. Alvaro R. Hernández Meza

Marco Giuseppe Marangoni
Monza, Italy

Four Seasons Dojo
Granbury, Texas
Mike Schmidt

Littleton Aikikai
Littleton, Colorado
Steven Shaw

Brugos Kodokai
Brugos, Spain
Under Santiago Almaraz

Aikido Tanguma
Joaquin Tanguma
2nd Dan Aikido
Monterey N.L. Mexico

Our Good Friends In Aikido:

Tanshinjuku Dojo
Boulder, Colorado
Kei Izawa

Chushinkan Dojo
Buena Park, CA.
J. Nakayama

Aikido Ai
Whittier, CA.
F.McGouirk

Tekko Juku Dojo
New England
Yasumasa Itoh

Aikido-Dojo
Aikikai Aalter
Sven De Schryver
Bergstraat 65
B-9880 Aalter, Belgium

Aiki Dojo Newsletter

Editor: Rev. Kensho Furuya
Photo: Larry Armstrong
Printing: Michael Vance, Bill Allen

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Sifu Adam Hsu Continued:

appreciated performance art forms. Next to these, wushu is the art least recognized and patronized by the public. Within this category generally known as "wushu," the real, traditional wushu is not a performance art. So to be honored that evening was the third crown.

I then said, "I know what you're thinking. You're expecting to see a grand performance, with people flying through the air, twisting, punching, kicking, flashing weapons all around the stage." I told them "I don't do that." Then, "Or maybe you have something else in mind—a huge boulder smashed on someone's stomach; or someone who swallows a sword and exhales a cloud of golden needles to penetrate the clouds. I don't do that." Then I spent some time to explain what I meant.

Wushu in performance, including elements like punching, kicking and Chinese weapons, does contain a certain percentage of traditional wushu mixed with Chinese folk dance. This is why we have forms and this is traditional.

But the communist government in Mainland China has mixed Beijing opera, Western gymnastics and ballet with our eastern martial art. They've been very successful in developing and marketing their program internationally. Presently, more than eighty countries have "modern wushu" organizations. They even qualified to nominate modern wushu for consideration as a new Olympics event, though ultimately the Olympics committee denied their petition.

I've been a critic of modern wushu for many years. All the government officials in Beijing's Wushu Bureau are very familiar with me and with my message. But they always miss the point. I'm not against the modernization of traditional wushu. I am against Westernization.

Every single day, I work intensively on modernizing wushu. It's my dream to legitimately connect this art, which is so completely rooted in the wisdom and practices of ancient China, to the peoples and lifestyle of the 21st century. While I admire the communist government's decision to promote their brand of wushu, I can't at all agree on the content. As the years go by, the percentage of wushu in their performances gets smaller and smaller, while the amount of gymnastics, ballet, and Beijing opera grows.

The other type of performance I mentioned earlier also contains a certain percentage of wushu. However, it is heavily oriented towards acrobatics and the paranormal. Often a direct association is made with supernatural or religious forces. The most successful group representing this type of

of performance is the Shaolin Temple.

Wushu needs to be promoted and in this world, promotion takes money. I don't have much ability in promotion and therefore I need to rely on others to carry this on. I'm not at all against creating shows that are pleasing to audiences and sell many tickets. But for the sake of wushu, I ask only that these groups keep the wushu in what they do. Right now, I see the same problematic trend in Shaolin performances: the percentage of wushu contained in their shows is shrinking very very quickly, and the amount of acrobatics, magic tricks and Western gymnastics is growing.

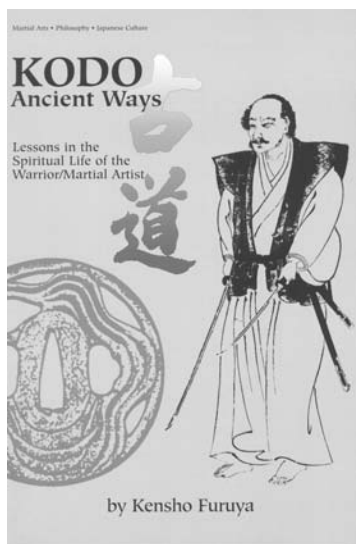
The Mainland Chinese government, creator of modern wushu, is also a major force behind the successful promotion of the Shaolin Temple. There's nothing wrong with entertaining people, inspiring audiences with artistic presentation and athletic skills.

Aikido Center of Los Angeles:

We are not-for-profit, traditional Aikido dojo dedicated to preserve the honored values and traditions of the art. We are continually focused on maintaining the highest standards of the art in a Dojo which, itself is considered a work of art. With your continued understanding and support, we hope that you will dedicate yourself to your training, enjoying all the benefits Aikido can offer.

We do accept all Branch Dojo affiliations with any dojo who practices and wishes to follow the Aiki Kai Hombu Dojo training, rules and standards. This also includes commitment to 3rd Doshu and the Ueshiba Family as the Founding Family and Originator of our art. You are welcome to make inquiries by email or letter. Our purpose is to help others in the correct practice of Aikido and to spread the correct transmission and understanding of O'Sensei's teachings.

Publications By Kensho Furuya:



Kodo: Ancient Ways: Lessons In The Spiritual Life Of the Warrior

By Kensho Furuya
\$16.95 plus tax.

Highly recommended
for all students of the
Dojo. Please request for
your autographed copy

But calling it "wushu" and associating it in compelling ways with the true art has led everyone—contemporary kung fu practitioners and teachers as well as aficionados—to mistakenly believe this is the right way to do Chinese martial arts. I believe people have the right to reach for and then enjoy their success but they do not have the right to cause such a great deal of damage to traditional wushu.

At this point, the audience was very quiet, surprised at what I had to say. Then, with the help of some of my coaches and assistant coaches, we started our own "performance." I told them that we humans are born with instincts and ability to fight. So first, we showed natural ways that little kids, students in school, guys on the street, even mommies fight: natural punches, kicks, palm strikes. Then we demonstrated the traditional Chinese martial arts way to fight. We wanted people to understand that our purpose is to train ourselves so that the body and mind can work in the most sophisticated, disciplined, efficient manner to deliver an effective blow with great power.

One of the ways power is generated in natural fighting is to use distance—for instance, pulling your fist way back or delivering the punch in a curved, "roundhouse" manner—to generate more force and power, much the same principle a baseball pitcher employs as he winds up to throw his ball. With traditional wushu, as your level of skill grows, you need less and less visible space to gain power. At the highest levels, the body and mind are trained so well that power can be issued from almost no distance. At this point external movement and energy is so skillfully internalized that a power-punch can be delivered with just a sudden twist of the body.

At this level of ability, techniques don't have to base their effectiveness on external factors such as strong muscles, natural ability to move quickly or distance to build up momentum and speed. This level is not gained by practicing many different wushu styles and forms, learning twenty more techniques, imitating the donkey and the snake. This is not the real direction of our training.

Wushu is not a popular art and general audiences have much more misinformation in their minds than real understanding. Educating people and promoting traditional wushu in an honest way remains a big challenge. I will try harder.

In 2008, Beijing will host the next summer Olympics. After 2008, they will have to make some changes. They are organizing a big wushu event in Beijing for that very summer. They will try to gather practitioners from all over the world for "unofficial" performances, competitions and maybe a conference to rethink the future of wushu.

I don't think this will be enough to turn the tide. I'd like to see a new, major conference held sometime after the dizzy summer of the Beijing Olympics—not a celebratory, congratulatory type of meeting but serious and sincere. With the Chinese government's dream of elevating their modern wushu to an Olympics event now broken, hopefully they will be willing to seek a new path away from the showy, entertainment business orientation of their current program. Perhaps at that time, they can regain some balance and self-respect, open their hearts and start to listen. Hopefully, they will plant their feet on the earth and adopt an attitude of openness, humanity, cultural depth and well-being that will welcome an international viewpoint and initiate a new and healthy direction.

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Published by Rev. Kensho Furuya, The Aikido Center of Los Angeles, 940 E. 2nd Street #7, Los Angeles, CA 90012
Tel: (213) 687-3673. Email: aclafuruya@earthlink.net

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Once again, I wish a Bountiful 2007 to every one of you, my dear friends.

Adam Hsu, Traditional Wushu Association

Eric Russell Visits Dojo. November 12



An old student of the Dojo, Eric Russell was in Los Angeles the other day. Eric studied under Sensei after returning from Japan where he studied at Hombu Dojo while going to school. He later moved to the Oakland area for his work with Cliff Health

Bars. After his marriage in December of last year, he recently moved to Washington DC for his wife's new job. Hopefully, and Sensei is counting on it, he will move back to Los Angeles after his wife's three-year contract ends in Washington.

It was nice to see him again. Eric is planning to attend Yonemochi Sensei's Seminar in April, 2007.

Jeffrey Wheeler-Happiness Continued:

So, the question for me seems to be how do I actually encourage and foster the experience happiness in my life? Very recently I've been exposed to a principle and practice so blindingly simple and effective that it stunned me. I want to share it with you now.

What I have found is gratitude. Gratitude and the recognition that whatever situation I encounter, I still absolutely have much to be grateful for. When I take a quiet few minutes, stop what I am doing and give thought to the things in life I have to be thankful for and really let it sink in, I note that what I feel what I experience, is happiness. In the most difficult situation, in my most depressing state of mind there is still much to be grateful for and it seems when I quietly acknowledge those areas of life, happiness begins to well up and emerge.

Too simple, right? Try it for yourself, perhaps twice a day for 5 minutes and see if it doesn't work for you as well. I have really been amazed recently at the way it seems to be working in me.

In closing, I'm grateful to be able to be a student of Sensei's and to train at our dojo with each of you. I wish you all happiness and a Very Happy New Year!

Jeffrey Wheeler, Iaido Kenshinkai

Relax!



Congratulations! Mark Passes His Bar Exam

Mark received news on November 12 that he passed his Bar Exams. On December 4, he attends a special swearing in ceremony at his Alma Mater, USC. Many Best wishes!

Our Dojo:

Michael Merhle, 5th Kyu

I just returned from a business trip to Silicon Valley last night. A few years ago I actually used to live up there and since I hadn't been back since I took this opportunity to sort of 'take a trip down memory lane'. After one of my meetings I drove back to my old neighborhood in Cupertino, took a look at the old house I used to live in, and then went to my favorite Sushi place. Afterwards I strolled down to my favorite coffee house to get a good cup of Java before heading back to my hotel.

While waiting in line at the coffee place I noticed three fellows sitting at a table and leaning on the wall was what looked suspiciously similar to a katana bag. I was really surprised because I didn't expect to encounter Aikido paraphernalia in my old coffee hangout. After my coffee was served I approached the small group and asked if one of them happened to study Iaido. They all seemed very surprised about this strange guy wearing a suit inquiring about such things. One of them however replied that all three were studying Aikido and that the bag actually contained a bokken. He wanted to know if I studied as well and I replied that I had the honor of practicing under Furuya Sensei in Los Angeles. All their faces lit up and they immediately knew who I was talking about. "He's the Sensei who's got that beautiful dojo crafted like a Samurai Mansion, right?" one of them asked. "Yes exactly" I said and smiled from one ear to the other.

At that moment I couldn't help but feel tremendously gleeful to be able to study under a Sensei who is so widely appreciated and in such a traditional setting which who seems to be the envy of so many Aikidoka. I had lived in Cupertino for several years (it's the boonies, quite frankly) and knowing the area I am sure that the place those three were studying in was probably a remodeled gym in some Silicon Valley strip mall. Not that there's anything wrong with that of course - as long as the instructor is a good teacher and the training is true to the art. However, as I was driving back I kept thinking about how many people out there might be interested in Aikido, but somehow based on their location wind up with a bad instructor or have to make due with circumstances which are less than ideal. I remember reading about Anatoli in one of our old news letters and how he explained that he had to make due with practicing ukemi on a wooden floor back in Russia. How many more people out there are unable to study because there's no dojo close-by or maybe their health prevents them from doing so?

I personally realized fairly early that I am not very talented in the art - quite to my surprise I must say. Having studied Tae-Kwon-Do and Kenpo when I was a bit younger it all seemed to come very easy to me. When I started Aikido over two years ago I expected to catch on quickly and to be pretty advanced after a few years, which in many ways turned out to keep holding me back. Aikido has been one of the hardest things I've ever done and sometimes I wonder if I'll ever catch on. I see people who joined a few months ago having an easier time and often I'm ready to give up - it's so easy to just walk away and scratch it off as an 'experience'. For some strange reason I am however unable to let it go - the one reason being that beyond the occasional injuries and my ability to frustrate even the most patient instructor, I really do love Aikido. And realizing how lucky I am that I am able to study at all under such renowned guidance in such a beautiful dojo almost makes it an obligation.

In conclusion: meeting those three up in Silicon Valley was sort of an epiphany for me, which is very strange because it was only such a brief encounter. But I'm sure I won't ever forget it and it has strengthened my determination to continue my training in Aikido.

Michael Merhle, 4th Kyu

Welcome To The Aikido Center of Los Angeles



Aikido Center of Los Angeles

Visiting Our Dojo:

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. Interested students and visiting Aikidoists are always welcome to join our practice. We are directly affiliated with Aikikai Hombu, Tokyo, Japan. Please make inquiries by email: aclafuruya@earthlink.net.

Please Visit Our Website:
www.aikidocenterla.com
Aikido-laido-KODO@yahoo



Rev. Kensho Furuya, 6th Dan

The Kensho Furuya Foundation:

Mr. Ken Watanabe - President
Mr. Gary Myers - Secretary
Mr. Mark Ty - Treasurer
Dr. Cheryl Lew - Senior Counsel
Mr. Jonathan Altman - Legal

The Furuya Foundation is dedicated to preserving the Dojo and its continued operation maintaining the highest standards of practice and the work of Furuya Sensei in research and education in Aikido, the traditional Japanese sword & related arts and their history, culture and traditions. Your donations & contributions are welcome.

Japanese Swords: Appraisal & Restoration

Expert appraisal on Japanese swords. Complete services for restoration of Japanese art swords and custom-ordered Iaito training sword. Services include polish, handle wrapping, scabbard lacquer work, special orders. By appointment only.



Japanese Swordsmanship:

Traditional Muso Shinden Ryu Iaido

We offer instruction in the traditional art of Iaido, the art of the Sword. Serious students are always welcome. Iaido demands a strong commitment of time, honor, perseverance and integrity. It is a spiritual art with a history and tradition of over fine hundred years. It is an art which is rapidly disappearing in our modern world today. We welcome all interested students to join our training. You will learn the proper etiquette and handling of the Samurai sword and its usage as a real weapon. This is not sword play, movie stunt action or performance-competition. This is a real, traditional martial art discipline.

