



The Official Publication of the Asahi Schools of Aikido

*"A pebble cast into a pond creates ripples. Aikido is the pebble. We are the ripples."*

**Asahikan Dojo welcomes Ula Pasternak and Scott Manning.**

**Testing will be held:**

**Adults -**

**Wednesday, May 27, 2009 7pm and**

**Saturday, May 30, 2009 11am**

**Retesting: Saturday, May 9, 2009**

**2009 Visiting Instructor Schedule**

**June 13<sup>th</sup> Saturday**

**Rob McKweon Sensei 11am \$20.00**

**September 12<sup>th</sup> Saturday**

**Chuck Mann Sensei 11am \$20.00**

**November 7<sup>th</sup> Saturday**

**Ben Cliver Sensei 11am \$20.00**

**Aloia Sensei** will be teaching at the **Doshinkan Dojo** on **Friday, September 11<sup>th</sup>** at 6:30pm.

#### **Kenshu Training**

Our next **monthly intensive training** class will be held at the Dojo on **Friday, May 29, 2009** at 7pm. Mat fee is \$20.00. Please inform the **Dojo Uneisha** by **May 27<sup>th</sup>** of your planned attendance.

#### **Ukemi Clinic with Sensei**

Sensei will be conducting an **Ukemi Clinic** on **Sunday, May 17, 2009** from 10:30am until 12 noon. Mat fee is \$20.00. Pre-registration is required for the event.

#### **Now Available!**

**Aikido – an art in motion - Control**  
**Featuring Mike & Pam Aloia Sensei**  
**on DVD and available worldwide!**

#### **Instructors Class**

The next **Instructors Class** will be held on **Sunday, June** at 12:30pm.

**Available May 11, 2009: The Perfect Storm – Women in Aikido DVD with Pamela Aloia Sensei**

#### **Administration Corner**

If anyone has questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at [admin@asashidojo.com](mailto:admin@asashidojo.com). Thank you to everyone who has donated to the cleaning supply/ water fund! With your donations we were able to purchase special mat cleaner that should help prolong the life of our mats.

Thank you to all students and parents who came out and helped with the Dojo cleaning on 17 April.

Special Thanks to all the students from the Kids Class who also stayed to help! You guys are the best dusters!!

The dojo looked great when we were finished.

#### **Dues:**

Please respect the payment deadlines set forth by Sensei regarding the submission of dues. Your monthly training fees are what keep the dojo going—we must pay for things like rent and utilities from your fees. We are fortunate to have a place to train, please be mindful of the 10th of the month deadline. A \$10 late fee will be imposed if you pay after the 10th of the month. If you are unable to make it to the dojo, you may either mail your check using the P.O. Box listed on the website or pay online via paypal.

#### **Testing Applications and Fees:**

All Kyu forms and fees are due ONE WEEK PRIOR TO THE TEST DATE. This is important so that the dojo has confirmation of the fact that the individual is indeed testing. I would also suggest marking the forms link as one of your "favorites" as this is not a public link. I do add it the communication I send regarding testing, but it would be helpful to keep it handy in case you need to access it at other times. Please take the time to fill out the forms completely and add a recent photo.



Asahi Schools of Aikido/Aikido Now 50 West 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave Collegeville, PA 19426

610-489-6281 [www.asahidojo.com](http://www.asahidojo.com)

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### **Future Seminar and Clinics:**

All future seminars and clinics must be paid in advance. Paying the day of the event will result in an additional \$5 fee. Please sign up and pay prior to the event. This will allow the dojo to plan ahead and have any needed supplies etc. on hand.

Please let me know if you have any further questions or concerns.

**Cheri Poole**  
*Asahikan Dojo Administrator*

**Advertising Space** available in the newsletter and Dojo website. If interested please contact Sensei.

### **Tribute Poem to Morihei Ueshiba**

Look down toward Earth and see what you have done to the world.  
You have founded the art of peace and harmony. If you have not founded this art, the world would be corrupt and without peace.  
You have brought Aikido from the underground societies to the mainstream and it is known throughout the world.  
Your spirit is the beacon to your students  
Your life has been a model of dedication and aspiration,  
O-Sensei, has influenced me to become a better marital artist and not to use the art to start violence or for evil.  
So, O-Sensei, keep smiling from heaven for you have influenced another person to do better in all things.

*Domo arigato gozaimashita, O-Sensei!*

*- Submitted by Antonio Aloia*

### **A FEW THOUGHTS ON TESTING....**

Why take it seriously? Does it really matter? Aikido is not like going to class and taking a Math test-generally 60% or better and you pass-not with flying colors, but you pass. Strange thing this so-called education system of ours is, but that is for another article. To really learn and be able to apply the knowledge you learn on or off the mat, one must study, practice, and make every effort to absorb the information that is being taught.

Not being prepared for Testing is disrespectful. Sensei would not have recommended you to test, if he did not think you up to the challenge. Being asked to test is an honor and something to be taken very seriously.

Simply reviewing the material the week before, showing up and taking the test, just isn't enough in Aikido. Aikido is life long journey. It begins with the basics- understanding what is meant by commitment, focus, using your center and finding your opponent's off balance point. Always we are working and developing our ukemi- our way of protecting ourselves. Next comes, learning the techniques-the movements to create your opponent's off balance. From here, you will gradually make your way through various levels of understanding-this is the part that never ends... Making the most of your time on the mat is necessary EVERY time you are in class. Sensei has established the various Kyu levels to help you work your way up the ladder a little at a time. Each time you test, you should find that you have challenged yourself to learn a little more and at each level you will discover new things within yourself and within "your" Aikido. Each step builds on the next. And yes, somewhere in there, you will need to learn the Japanese terminology!

Who suffers if you chose to take the easy road, show up to a few classes, watch a little "You Tube Aikido", read only the part of the Handbook that pertains to your test and perform your techniques in a rather milquetoast fashion? Who loses?? Obviously, you do!!!! But not only do you lose, the dojo loses. The dojo exists as training ground, a place for all students to learn and grow together. When one of our own fails to uphold the ideals and training standards of the group, it is a direct reflection on the whole and that disappointment permeates through the entire dojo, all the way from the students up to Sensei.

Aikido cannot be done alone- that in and of itself is a gift not available in many educational endeavors. If you are struggling, do not understand a specific technique or just need someone to watch in an effort to improve via emulation-there are many senior students who would love to help you, but you have to want it. You have to ask, you have to show interest and commitment in class.

I challenge each of you who recently tested and those about to begin the next round of testing - Step it Up! Make the commitment every day, every time you are on the mat, every chance you get. Make it Real and I hope that each of you will be able to find your own Aikido Path.

*- Cheri Poole Ikkyu*

*Check out our full line of Asahi Apparel items at Café Press!*



If anyone would like to contribute some writings to **ASA Asahikan Dojo's Aikido Now**, please send them to Sensei at [newsletter@asahidojo.com](mailto:newsletter@asahidojo.com). We look forward to hearing from you.

**Message Board** If you have not already signed up for the **ASA Message Board** we urge you to do so. It is fast, easy and free. Show your support. Get involved!

Visit our **web site** for our *monthly message, current/back issues of Aikido Now, supplies and DVDs, the message board and a current listing of events and schedules.*

### **It's You, Not Me.**

Throughout our training we will be challenged to do many things. These challenges will come from your instructors, your dojo, your sempai, your peers and yourself. Some will seem easy while others tax your very being. Some challenges will be physical while others will be of the mind and spirit. These challenges, of course, are designed and put forth to enhance our training experience and promote and develop continuous growth.

As a practitioner we will always have some sort of challenge to face. And as we face and meet each one, we will discover new things about ourselves - which will bring on new challenges. Training keeps us on the constant cusp of discovery.

Challenge and discovery go hand in hand. To discover something we must face the challenge to find it, to face it. Again, many challenges will be laid out before us and with them many discoveries await, but unless we as the individual take the step to meet the challenge, to embrace what it is designed to do, we may never make new discoveries or uncover old ones.

The true responsibility of training lies with the individual. How you make it and what you make of it will determine what you get out of it. The challenges will be there for anyone who dares to step out of the circle. Others will share in the experience. At times we may face the same set of challenges. But in the end, the one who makes the difference is you, not me.

Osu!

*-Michael Aloia Dojo Cho ASA*

### **Dojo Etiquette** **Rei**

We have two basic forms of rei at the Dojo.

**Ritsurei**, the standing rei, is used before, during and after technique with a partner or instructor. It is a sign of mutual respect and acknowledgement. It signifies the intent to learn and assist in learning. The standing rei is used when enter and leaving the dojo, when stepping on and off the mat, while greeting another or instructor on and off the mat. Arms should be straight along side the body, feet together and bending at the waist. Your head should follow the path of your upper torso.

Kohai are to bow slightly lower than sempai and sempai slightly lower than instructors and so on.

**Zarei**, kneeling rei, is used primarily at the beginning and end of each class, at the end of formal instruction or demonstration, during suwari waza or hanmi handachi practice or when training has been halted and practitioners sit in seiza until training resumes. Since this form of rei is used at the beginning and end of each class, proper rei is required by everyone.

A proper kneeling is done by lowering the left knee first, toes up, followed by the right knee, toes up. Toes are then dropped. Knees should be two fists apart, back straight, hands palm down at the hips.

As the rei commences, the left hand should be placed first, sliding from the hip, followed by the right creating a triangle in front of the knees. As our upper body is lowered, our bottoms must not rise up, it is not a counter balance to our heads dropping. Our forehead should almost touch the triangle made with our hands as our elbows bend outwards.

As we rei we say "oneigaeshimasu" or "domo arigato gazaimashita". We follow by straightening up at the waist, right hand comes back first followed by the left. We make our toes live, then raise the right knee and stand.

The kneeling rei also signifies respect, acknowledgement, the intent to learn and assist in learning.

