



Mana

The newsletter of **Hawai'i Ki Federation**

Fall 2015

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Chief Instructor's Message: The HKF/Western Europe Training Camp

by Christopher Curtis - Chief Instructor HKF

This year, for the first time, Japan Ki Society Headquarters asked that each Ki Federation or Ki Society organize their own training camp, instead of holding the usual "World Camp," which had participants coming from all over the world. The new format called for a minimum of 20 and a maximum of 50 participants. Because due to the individual costs and time involved many of the smaller groups would not be able to put together enough participants to make the minimum number required, joining together with other groups solved that difficulty.

For many years I have been dreaming of an opportunity for the students in Western Europe to be able to come together with the students in Hawaii. When, at World Camp 2014 the Headquarters staff announced this new idea, I realized that this dream could actually come to be. Of course, what really made it work well was that so many of those students from the Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Belgium, Slovenia, and Hawaii signed on to participate!

Of course, the camaraderie that this get together produced and embraced was fantastic, but the big point of it all was for all of these devoted folks to be able to experience training with each other under the expert guidance of Shinichi Tohei Sensei, as well as great teachers like Kataoka Sensei, and Kubori Sensei.

My deepest gratitude goes out to all who took part and particularly to Nadia Kubori and the Headquarters staff members who worked so hard, and so graciously, to make this experience as wonderful as it was for all of us.

Next fall we repeat the same experience on the same dates (August 31 – September 3) with all the same countries participating, and with the added attraction that David Shaner Sensei and many of his Eastern Ki Federation students will be joining us!

We look forward to seeing you all! ∞



Members of Hawaii Ki Federation who attended the training camp, L-R: Rene Relacion, Jeff Baldwin, Lynn Curtis, Christopher Curtis Sensei, Tracy Reasoner, Joni Jackson, Ilima Loomis, Crayton Nakamoto and Roy Uyehara.

Japan camp memories

Mana: We asked participants in the September 2015 HQ training in Japan for what stands out as a special memory to share with our readers. Here are the responses received.

Jeff Baldwin, Maui Ki-Aikido

In the years I've been going to World Camp, the highlights have been, in addition to the teaching, the experience of being around all the different teachers, students who have become long-time friends. Being with these friends has been good fun along with the good training. When this new format for camp was proposed, I knew I'd miss some of my friends who came to the former World Camp. The connection with everyone that I had enjoyed for years had changed. It had always been great, and I really liked the interaction with different member dojos from all over the world.

This Seminar was going to be a little different. Shinichi Tohei Sensei said he wanted smaller groups so that he could spend more time one-on-one with us. It was a new direction, and I questioned what it would be like. But being able to train one-on-one with Tohei Sensei was helpful for everyone. Connection has been a recurring theme now for a while, and this was no different. As expected, the teaching was great, and everyone had fun when we were on the mat.

This was an HKF camp, the first one using this new format. Curtis Sensei worked very hard to pull it together for everyone. He facilitated organizing members from different parts of the globe and Hawaii. But without some of the other Ki Federations, it seemed like it would be somehow reduced. Then I started to see the list of people develop, first Hawaii members, then parts of Europe, more Hawaii, more from Europe, California, Washington - it was once again showing the international profile of a world camp. To my delight we also saw a good number of Japanese attend, which is always important, and I was grateful they were there. Of course not to forget the staff from headquarters who worked hard to produce this event.

What I had not expected, or anticipated was the off-mat time. In past world camps people would draw naturally into their circle of friends, hang out with their teachers, and speak common languages in comfortable settings. It's human nature, I guess. It occasionally made it hard to connect with people socially. What struck me this time is that none of that happened. During the off mat times, people would get up and move from table to table, meet new

friends, and squarely engage each other every day. I saw different groups each day training, walking, talking, and spreading their circle of friendship. It seems that all the training in connecting had given a little push to the idea of being together with everyone. Being open and willing to train with more than our own circle of friends. Therefore, training on the mat was completely fluid.

So I was completely wrong about expecting the missed interaction. It happened, and possibly even better than before. Others commented on it, too, so it wasn't just me. Sure, I still missed some long-time friends, but I think I'll see them again. I know that next year we're going to do basically the same format, and I want to encourage people who did not go to double or triple their efforts to attend,



Enjoying fellowship in the social hall of Ki Society Headquarters, Curtis Sensei with HKF and European members.

and for the people who did go, to come back. I think the new World Camp format is great and I hope everyone will experience it.

Japan camp memories . . . continued from page 2

Ilima Loomis, Maui Ki-Aikido

The highlight for me was just to experience Shinichi Sensei's teaching, as well as working with the other teachers at headquarters. Just to see them move and hear the way they could explain and communicate Ki-Aikido techniques and principles in very simple and accessible terms was very inspiring for me. It was also a great experience to train with so many other wonderful students from all over the world. While I enjoyed getting to know everyone off the mat, sometimes having a language barrier also reminded me what it's like to connect with a partner without talking, and just train. I made some wonderful new friends, and also was able to get to know some longtime friends on a new level. It was a great experience, and I can't wait to go back.

Crayton Nakamoto, Maui Ki-Aikido

We arrived in the evening greeted by the ever-helpful Nadia. Early the next morning, led by Curtis Sensei, we visited Tohei Sensei's shrine, a nice privilege.

Then we strolled to the renowned 7-11 where you press a button for the size of coffee you want, and the machine grinds the fresh beans and makes the coffee. We headed back to the dojo for breakfast.

However, I must have been anxious, because I changed early and headed to the dojo proper. I had my first good look at the beautiful dojo with its vaulted ceilings and its field of mats; if my math is correct, there were 520 mats.

The rest of the week was great. It included a brisk walk to the Bamboo Forest with rice fields along the way. The meals were great. Drinks were good. The gi was soaked. Laughter abounded. Discussions deep.



Ancient tree on the Ki Society grounds near Tohei Sensei's ancestral home.

Rene Relacion, Kapa'a Aikido, Kaua'i

We started by shaking hands, one of the most familiar ways to connect with a partner. By keeping one point and becoming one with the universe, we were reminded, we naturally become one with our partners. This was the opening lesson of the HKF/Western Europe Camp in Japan.

When you see something demonstrated in a clear, seemingly simple way, you're led to believe that you too can do it. You become instilled with a profound feeling of confidence. This was pervasive throughout the week.

My experience in Japan was all that I had ever heard about training at Headquarters. And more. The gracious attention of the staff, the warm camaraderie of my fellow aikidoka, the patience, skill, and clarity of the instructors, and the humbleness of Shinichi Tohei Sensei all were indelibly felt.

I am grateful for having been granted such a wonderful opportunity. The experience elevated my personal practice and deepened my appreciation for the immensity of our art. With a different perspective, even the everyday, commonplace acts seem to have a depth to them. Like a handshake. ☺



Hawai'i Ki Federation news from dojos around the Islands

HKF Winter Omiki Seminar held in October

Curtis Sensei led the Winter HKF Omiki Seminar at Lokahi Dojo in Honolulu in October, during which he brought to the group many of the teachings of Shinichi Tohei Sensei from the Japan training camp held in September. In his Ki class he shared that Tohei Sensei teaches, "If you use mind correctly, Ki can flow freely." It's incorrect to be watching oneself, trying to do it oneself instead of letting go. Oneness Rhythm Taiso is perfectly designed to allow us to do this.

And doing Oneness Rhythm Taiso, he reminded us all that the exercise was made for the purpose of helping people get over the "martial tendency" of being hard, tense. Evolved from Aiki Taiso and then the "3-min. exercise," the focus is "relax and don't watch yourself." Also let go of thinking. Don't focus ever on the result, but rather on the process. Impossibility exists when *result* is the focus.



Alaria Franconi, Honoka'a Ki-Aikido, takes Jokyū Ki test from Curtis Sensei)



Brianna Leval, Maui, practices with Robert Oda Mililani Dojo



Alaria Franconi gets help with ken from Dean Mayer Sensei, Hanapepe Head Instructor



Jimmy Fujita, Kapa'a Dojo, Kaua'i, receives Jokyū Ki test from Curtis Sensei

HKF 2016 upcoming March seminar

For our calendars - Christopher Curtis Sensei will teach the annual HKF Shugyo Tassei Kigan Shiki Seminar in March, 2016. It will be held March 4 through 6 at the Lokahi Ki Aikido Dojo in Honolulu. See Curtis Sensei's Schedule 2016 at mauiaikido.com for the full calendar of the year's events.



Rene Relacion of Kapa'a Dojo, Kaua'i, tests stability of Fiona McGrath, Maui



Kaua'i, Maui and Hawaii Island young ladies Kendra Ishida, Brianna Leval, Fiona McGrath and Alaria Franconi

Mililani Ki-Aikido news

by Eric Nonaka Sensei, Head Instructor

Aloha from Mililani Ki-Aikido! As some may know we are planning a trip to Japan to visit our headquarters dojo in Tochigi next year. A few years ago one of our parents suggested a trip for our children's class (a HUGE undertaking but something they want to do). Tentatively we are planning on leaving on May 31, returning to Hawaii June 13. Training at Ki No Sato will be for two days (June 2 and 3). We will then return to Tokyo to do tourist things (touring and shopping I've been told). In addition, we are looking into watching a professional baseball game, which is very different from watching baseball in the States.

Right now we have a core group of students that have committed to this trip, and we would like to invite anyone from the other dojos to join us. This is a once in a lifetime trip for our young students, one that they will remember for many years to come. Please make plans to come and join us next year! I can be contacted by email at: nonakae003@hawaii.rr.com or eric@lappertshawaii.com. Hope to hear from you soon! ☺

Maui Ki-Aikido Teens received Youth Award

Two Maui Ki-Aikido youth members were chosen as the 2015 recipients of the Suzuki Sensei Ki-Aikido Youth Award. Brianna Leval and Fiona McGrath, both 2A Kyu received tuition and expenses to attend two Hawaii Ki Federation seminars, on Maui in June and in Honolulu in October this year, along with dues and fees benefits.

The youth award is given annually, based on several criteria which include a strong level of interest and effort in training, a commitment to dojo service, and a respectful and supportive attitude toward their dojo, their teachers and their fellow students...

The annual award was created in 2003 to honor the Shinichi Suzuki Sensei, our beloved founding teacher of the Shunshinkan Dojo, for his dedication and outstanding leadership in the development of Aikido in Hawaii, as well as in honor of his then 50th year of teaching at the Maui dojo. ☺



Youth Award winners Brianna Leval (L) and Fiona McGrath with Curtis Sensei



Curtis Sensei welcomed Christophe Quetel, head of Ki-Aikido in the Antwerp area of Belgium, who visited and trained in all the classes at Maui Ki-Aikido in November.



Hanapepe and Kapa'a members pose for a group photo after a joint practice, Saturday, October 17, 2015 at Kapa'a dojo. Pictured, front row, left to right: Dean Mayer Sensei (Hanapepe Head Instructor), Lloyd Miyashiro Sensei (Kapa'a Head Instructor), Rene Relacion, Kyson Gusukuma. Middle row: Nancie Bean, Jimmy Fujita, Jessie Hill. Back row: Jan Hashizumi, Cherish Kuloloia, Kendra Ishida, Gene Hashimura, and James Takaki



Dean Mayer Sensei and Christopher Curtis Sensei with students who were promoted at the Omiki Seminar: Kendra Ishida, Shodan, and Jimmy Fujita and Alaria Franconi, Jokyu Ki.



Shodan test Oct. 25, 2015, of Kendra Ishida of Hanapepe Dojo, Kaua'i, with uke Kyson Gusukuma of Kapa'a Dojo.

New sign for Shunshinkan Dojo



Maui Ki-Aikido has placed a new sign on the Shunshinkan Dojo which recalls the message of welcome to the public which was on the old original dojo.



Adult kyu tests were held Nov. 20 at the Shunshinkan Dojo, Maui. George Carlson and Crayton Nakamoto testing for 2nd kyu.



Cilandria Arnett, nage, and Michiko Powers, uke, perform 5th kyu arts.



Darius Listewnik and uke Guilherme Sampaio test for 4th kyu.



Curtis Sensei gives Hitori Waza tests to (L-R) Darius Listewnik, Bill Zastrow, Guilherme Sampaio and Tsuey Bond.



Maui Ki-Aikido's kids receive stability tests from Curtis Sensei and Joni Jackson Sensei at their Nov. 22 promotions

Kiatsu shared at workshop on Maui



Joni Jackson, a Maui Ki-Aikido instructor who trained in Kiatsu with Tohei Sensei in Japan, gave a hands-on workshop in Kiatsu which was open to the community as well as to dojo members.



Joni Jackson Sensei demonstrates pressing with Ki on Kelly Cole Ah Kee's neck.



Members of Maui Ki-Aikido who tabled at the Maui Matsuri Festival at UH Maui College in the summer: Shaun Lonzaga, Ilima Loomis, Mele Stokesberry and Fincher Sterling.



Guilherme Sampaio works on Tsuey Bond's shoulders.

Order Form: Please write in the number of items you are ordering after each price.

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Purchase and download *Letting Go*, and *Ki-Aikido on Maui* for \$9.99 each in the following formats: Kindle (Amazon); Lulu (Viewable on any device from Lulu); iBook (iTunes Store); and Nook (Barnes & Noble).

Letting Go: Talks on Aikido is a collection of insightful, concise essays adapted from talks given by Christopher Curtis, 8th Dan, the Chief Instructor of the Hawaii Ki Federation and Head Instructor of Maui Ki-Aikido in Wailuku, Maui. A wide range of topics is covered, from the basic principles and techniques of Ki-Aikido to the practical ways that Ki-Aikido can be applied to living a more centered, productive, and mindful life.

The *Letting Go* book is a useful companion to related Letting Go lectures, podcasts and discussions available on Curtis Sensei's blog, found at curtissensei.com.

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All the participants at the HKF Omiki Seminar held Oct. 23-25, 2015, at Lokahi Ki Aikido, Honolulu, and taught by Christopher Curtis Sensei, Chief Instructor of HKF. Front row HKF instructors Rene Relacion representing Kapa'a, Linda Sasaki of Central YMCA, Dean Mayer of Hanapepe, Eric Nonaka of Mililani, Curtis Sensei, HKF Senior Advisor Clayton Naluai Sensei, Leilani Pakele of Hilo, Charles Boyer of Lokahi and Lillian Paiva of Honoka'a.