



# Mana

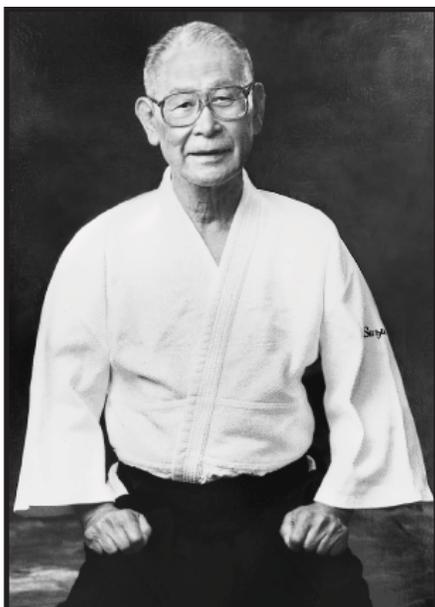
The newsletter of Hawai'i Ki Federation

Fall 2009

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Page 1



*Shinichi Suzuki Sensei*  
March 22, 1917 - May 22, 2009

## Remembering our teacher, Suzuki Sensei

*by Christopher Curtis, Chief Instructor, Hawai'i Ki Federation*

As the Aikido world knows, Shinichi Suzuki Sensei, our great teacher and beloved founder of Maui Ki-Aikido and the Shunshinkan Dojo, passed on May 22 of this year. All of the members of Maui Ki-Aikido as well as members throughout Hawai'i Ki Federation feel his presence in all we do and miss him very much.

When I spoke at his memorial service, I mentioned the many awards Suzuki Sensei received in his long lifetime. The Hawaii State House and Senate, the Maui County Council, and the various Japanese cultural societies have all showered Sensei with these tributes through the years. There are so many of them that they literally cover the walls in the dojo office. Of course, we are very proud of our teacher for being honored in this way, since it means that others saw what an impact he had on our community here. However, for himself, he never took this outpouring of support too seriously. What he truly wanted for all those who offered him their respect

was for them to follow him in their daily practice.

Suzuki Sensei was never a society enthusiast; he didn't join groups; he was never a community activist. His life was always completely devoted to his Aikido training, and sharing that training with those who gathered around him over the years. Sensei was not a flashy man. You would never hear him blowing his own horn. But this man quietly and humbly, through the years, continued to offer something way beyond any of those things, and that was his heart. And even though he possessed a wealth of unique knowledge in his particular field of expertise, those of us who knew and loved him closely, hung out with him more because of what came from his life force, than any bit of knowledge we might have gained.

Suzuki Sensei was always a dynamo of Ki. Aikido, as it was passed on to us by this teacher, was never just a martial arts practice, but an inspiration towards living daily life completely. Sensei believed in the principle of teaching to others only that which he had actually experienced himself, and as a result he never reached for wisdom beyond his own considerable resources. Even now, Shinichi Suzuki Sensei will continue to be the dynamic guiding light for Maui Ki-Aikido and for many other Aikido teachers and students throughout the world. We are very proud and grateful to have had such a dedicated and selfless human being as our teacher.

So if we are truly to honor this great man, let's do so in the way that we live our own lives, moment by moment, day by day, year by year. This he would be grateful for.

# Why YOU need to come next year to World Camp

Sixteen members of Hawai'i Ki Federation attended World Camp held October 20 through 25 at Ki No Sato Headquarters Dojo in Japan. In addition to the wonderful Ki and Aikido classes that are always offered, this year there were two new classes on the agenda: bamboo cutting and calligraphy. These offered additional ways to “first keep One Point,” Shinichi Tohei Sensei's theme for the seminar week.

In the bamboo-cutting class, every one of the around 70 participants had a turn and were able to cut the bamboo. As a preparation for that unique and unforgettable class, Otsuka Sensei read a poem by Dogen Zenji:

聞くままに、また心なき身にしあれば、己なり  
けり軒の玉水 (Kikumamani, mata kokoro naki minishiareba,  
onorenarikeri nokino tamamizu.)

The English translation given was, “While listening to the sound of the rainwater dripping off the eaves, forgetting myself, I became the raindrops.”

Curtis Sensei illuminated the connection of the poem to our experience that afternoon by saying that seeing and listening to something and forgetting ourselves, we become one with the object. This is experienced not in our mind/head, but felt by our whole body (the entrance into the state called “mu” or “ku-u”).

Keeping that in mind, consider the explanation of the poem given by Otsuka Sensei:

“There is a bamboo in front of me. I have a bokken in my hand.  
– Bamboo, bokken, and ‘I’ exist separately. But they are all the same in essence (‘Banbutsu Dokon’ – all things in creation came from the same source), ‘Ki Ken Icchi no Jibun’ (‘I’ in the state of ‘Ki-Sword Oneness’). Raindrops and the bamboo are the same thing – If the bamboo were a human, he/she wouldn't like it if we tried to cut it. Raindrops, the bamboo, the sword, and ‘I’ are all one and the same.”

To help us cut, Otsuka Sensei went on to give the following pointers: if you stare at the bamboo (separation of bamboo and “I”) you will *try* to cut

*continues on page 3*



Leilani Pakele Sensei, with her severed bamboo.



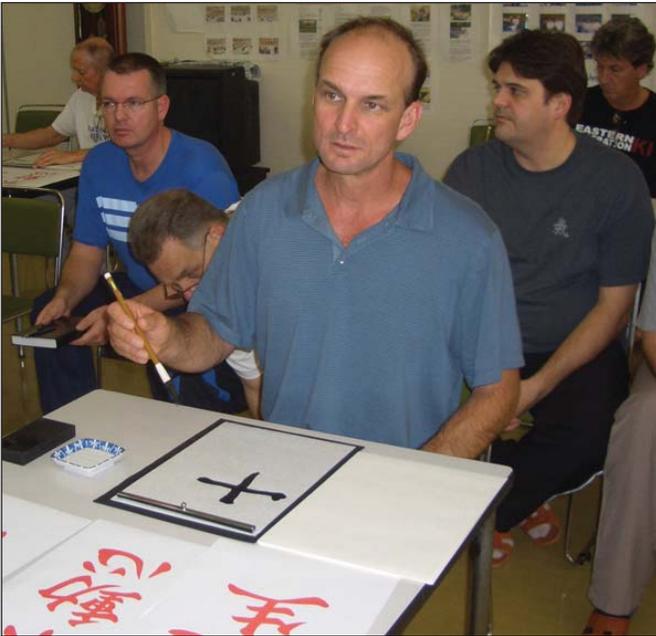
Bob Lightbourn of Maui enjoyed the bamboo cutting class.



Nederlands Ki-Aikido participants joined the Hawaii Ki Federation members in a photo with our World Camp teachers, Ishikawa Sensei, Kataoka Sensei, Shinichi Tohei Sensei, and Otsuka Sensei.



Curtis Sensei brushes “Fudoshin” while Robbie Kessler Sensei encourages.



Jeff Baldwin takes a turn with Ishikawa Sensei's orange example kanji in view.



Oliver Jackson paints "One Point."



*World Camp . . . continued from page 2*

the bamboo (separation of bamboo and "I", separation of the sword and "I"). Instead, feel and hold the thought of "Let's go down together." (The bamboo, the sword, and "I" become one – they are all part of the same universe.) Using the body, but forgetting your mind/heart (separation of mind and body), go all the way down with your mind/heart first. If you look at the bamboo, your ki stops at the bamboo. Look straight ahead and cut.

*An afternoon of calligraphy* was taught by Ishikawa Sensei, an 8th dan Ki-Aikido teacher and a 10th dan in the art of Shodo (calligraphy). Ishikawa Sensei created and hung up before us his bright orange example kanji of the words "Life," "One Point" and "Fudoshin" and showed the proper way to hold and use the brush. Then all the World Camp participants, sharing a large number of stations laid out with ink, brushes and lovely rice paper, got to have several goes at painting these kanji, with Ishikawa Sensei patiently coaching. After we had all practiced our brush strokes many times and saved our best results, Ishikawa Sensei did an expert demonstration of at least half a dozen large calligraphies.

*Among the other highlights of World Camp* were Senshin no Gyo, the early morning splashing of cold water on oneself at the spring, and Sokushin no Gyo in the Tenshinkan Dojo, Kiatsu in the Tenshingosho, or Meditation Hall, classes on the ken and jo, on Ki testing and Ki Breathing and of course, on Basic Principles. The week also included a tour of Master Tohei's traditional ancestral home and gardens on the Ki No Sato grounds. And no World Camp would be complete without morning trips to the Aoso Shrine with Curtis Sensei, international cameraderie after dinner in the social hall, and many good soaks in the dojo's capacious, hot men's and women's fudo.

But Curtis Sensei summed up the theme of the week's teachings as, "No matter whether you are cutting the bamboo, doing calligraphy, holding your partner's wrist or being held, giving or taking a Ki test, always *just keep One Point first!*"



Here, Ishikawa Sensei is creating a number of beautiful, large calligraphies in an impressive performance. Note the very large brush in the photo above.

## Mahalo

*Message from Eric Nonaka Sensei, Head Instructor, Mililani Ki-Aikido, Honolulu*

I would like to thank Chris Curtis Sensei and Hawai'i Ki Federation for my being one of those chosen this year to attend world camp. It is always a great experience to meet new students and instructors from other dojos as well as meeting up with old friends (and old friends are getting older!).

The teaching provided by Shinichi Tohei Sensei, Yutaka Otsuka Sensei as well as Kataoka Sensei was outstanding. The depth of their knowledge and their ability to pass this knowledge to us is just too good to be true. This year the addition of bamboo cutting (woo hoo!) and calligraphy made the experience just that much more special. Of course seeing Sachiko-san is always a joy, as well as seeing Iwade Sensei and Maki (Sato)-san with the new baby.

The bonus on top of everything was the free sake (Yay!) which WAS really delicious, and the time spent in fellowship was very precious.

Mahalo, mahalo, mahalo plenty, Eric Nonaka



## Teen award winners from Maui attend World Camp in Japan

Oliver Jackson, 17, and Tielr Ortogero, 16, are the recipients of Maui Ki-Aikido's fifth Shinichi Suzuki Ki-Aikido Youth Award, announced on June 17. They received an all-expense-paid trip to the Ki Society's world headquarters dojo in Japan for World Camp training October 21 through 25.

The Award was created in 2003 to honor the late Shinichi Suzuki Sensei, founder of Maui Ki-Aikido, for his dedication and outstanding leadership in the development of Aikido in Hawai'i as well as for his 50<sup>th</sup> year of teaching at the Maui dojo.

Tielr and Oliver bring the number of Maui teens to win the award to a total of nine. One or two youth are chosen annually, based on several criteria which include consistent effort in training, respectful and supportive attitude toward their dojo, their teachers and their fellow students, and their high level of preparation for, and performance at, the annual HKF Taigi Competition, held this year in Hanapepe, Kaua'i. At that competition, in the Junior Division, the pair won the Best Kitei Taigi. In addition, Oliver won the Best Youth Nage award, and Tielr, who had just a year ago moved up from 5th kyu, won the Most Inspirational award.

Both young men hold 1A kyu rank and both are in 11th grade. Tielr assists in youth classes at the Shunshinkan Dojo and Oliver helps the youth teacher in the Upcountry Dojo.

Why does Maui Ki-Aikido want to keep this award going? Suzuki Sensei felt it very important to teach Ki-Aikido to children and teens, and he wished to see young people continue with their training into adulthood. We see that when they come home from training with top sensei and other dedicated students from Japan and around the world, they are always deeply impressed by the experience and exponentially advanced in their training. They share what they have learned with the other youth students, serving as wonderful role models for all our Aikido kids, and we all benefit from the enthusiasm they bring back to the dojo and to their lives outside the dojo. Maui Ki-Aikido is now raising the funds annually to support this program and wishes very much to keep this award going.

We are actively seeking funding for next year via youth fund raisers, such as our car wash Feb. 20 and our Flatbread Company pizza night June 15, as well as donation appeals. It is hoped that through taking young Aikidoists to train at Tohei Sensei's World Camp, we will be helping to develop future Aikido leaders, wherever in the world they end up living and training.



*Tielr Ortogero and Oliver Jackson*

## Hawai'i Ki Federation News

### Two HKF Sensei receive 50-year award

This year marked the 50th anniversary of the beginning their Aikido training for Eric Nonaka Sensei, Mililani Head Instructor and outgoing HKF President, and Richard Kuboyama Sensei, HKF Senior Advisor from Kaua'i. At World Camp this year both received plates from Kaichou Shinichi Tohei. The plates say: "Ikite iru koto wa Ki wadasu koto dearu", meaning "To live is to extend Ki."

### HKF officers for 2010 through 2012:

- President-Charles Boyer
- Vice President-Leilani Pakele
- Treasurer-Tracy Reasoner
- Secretary-Lilian Paiva

### Ki and Dan ranks awarded in 2009:

#### Shodan:

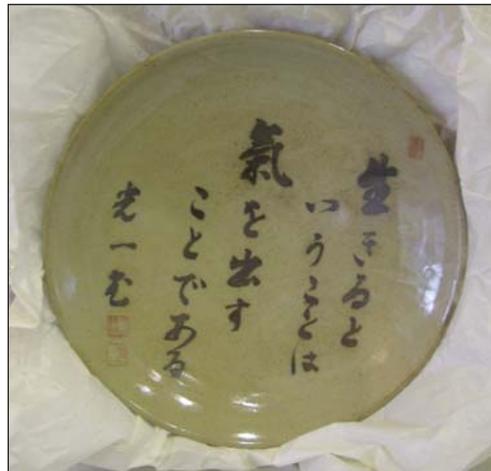
- Lokahi Dojo - Eric Saint Georges and Celine Boyer
- Central YMCA Dojo - Lukas Baroza and Stephanie Kuroda
- Maui Shunshinkan Dojo - David Borer

#### Sandan and Chuden:

- Maui Shunshinkan Dojo - Fincher Sterling



Eric Nonaka Sensei is congratulated by Curtis Sensei and Lynn Curtis on his 50th Aikido anniversary.



Ceramic plate given to Kuboyama Sensei and to Nonaka Sensei which says in English, "To live is to extend Ki."

## Year-end, New-Year traditions

The traditions practiced at our dojo by Suzuki Sensei for more than 50 years of Omiki wherein the sensei serves the students sake, and the performance of Ki Barai, the blessing of the dojo, done at both the last class of the old year and the first Ki class of the new year, are going strong.

Then at dawn every January 1, Curtis Sensei and many of the students faithfully continue Suzuki Sensei's tradition of coming to the dojo to again do a Ki Barai blessing, performed by Sensei, along with the sprinkling of sake and Hawaiian salt around the property and across every entrance. Mochi, pine and bamboo placed around the dojo enhance the feeling that this place is very blessed and very ready for another year of training.

Maui students also start off the New Year with Senshin no Gyo, or water misogi, on the first Sunday morning each January, letting out a big, group Kiai and leaping into the ocean before returning to the dojo for Sokushin no Gyo training.

And now in addition to these traditions on Maui, starting in 2009 Ki Barai and Omiki are also performed at the last and first Hawai'i Ki Federation seminars each year. The HKF Winter Seminar was just taught by Curtis Sensei in Hilo on the Big Island of Hawai'i, and the 2010 seminars will be initiated with the second annual Shugyo Tassei Kigan Shiki Seminar to be held at the Lokahi Ki Aikido Dojo in Honolulu Jan. 29 - 31.

### *Year-end, new-year event dates (at the Shunshinkan Dojo, unless indicated):*

Bonen Kai year-end party	Dec. 5 Saturday	6:00 PM
Last class, Misogi/Omiki	Dec. 16 Wednesday	7:00 PM
Dojo Blessing	Jan. 1 Friday	7:00 AM
Water Misogi, Ma'alaea Beach Park	Jan. 3 Sunday	6:15 AM
First class, Misogi/Omiki	Jan. 6 Wednesday	7:00 PM
Fund Raising Dinner, Baldwin residence	Jan. 16 Saturday	6:00 PM Kula
HKF Shugyo Tassei Kigan Shiki Seminar	Jan. 29-31	Lokahi Dojo, O'ahu
Shinenkai Party, Annual Mtg.	Jan. 23 Saturday	6:00 PM



## Meet Linda Sasaki Sensei

with MANA editor Mele Stokesberry

Sharing a dorm room at World Camp this fall with the pert, friendly and energetic Head Instructor of Honolulu's Central YMCA Ki-Aikido Dojo was a pleasure, and it made it easy to put the pressure on Linda Sasaki Sensei to let us interview her for this issue of MANA. Sasaki Sensei is now 6th dan and has served as Central Y's Head Instructor for many years.

MANA: Sasaki Sensei, tell us about how you got started in Aikido.

Linda Sasaki: A demonstration that Koichi Tohei Sensei gave in 1974 in Honolulu sparked my first interest in Aikido. My roommate at the UH dorms told me about this Aikido demonstration and class that was being given, so we went. Present were Tohei Sensei and several Hawai'i sensei: Suzuki, Nonaka, Kawawaki (Soupy) and Tabata. Their interaction was very warm and funny, but you could see that they were very dedicated to the Aikido training. I thought that this was great and continued to think about it until after graduating. It took me two years to finally find them again. By then the organization had changed and become Ki-Aikido.

I started training in 1976 and got my Shodan five years later. Funny, but I don't really remember when I got the other ranks.

MANA: Who were your teachers along the way, and in what dojos?

LS: I started at Central Y with the late, great Harry Eto Sensei and Stanley Yamanaka Sensei, and I'm still there. I have fond and fun memories of Eto Sensei slapping my hands (for being uncontrollably at the wrong place or being too tense), soundly bonking my head (by accident) with the bokken (for not extending and moving out of the way with Ki) and being thrown into the walls (time is not the only thing that flies when you're having fun).

Robert Nagata Sensei helped Eto Sensei out after Yamanaka Sensei passed away, and Nagata Sensei brought a wonderful new perspective in Aikido. It was unfortunate that he left due to job and family obligations. Then there were the other O'ahu instructors that I could "access"; Yamamoto Sensei was great! Also, being "picked on" by the late Suzuki Sensei and by Takashi Nonaka Sensei was an honor I can boast about. They, like Eto Sensei, were really patient with trying to get me to do Ki-Aikido to some reasonable degree.

MANA: What's it like to be the head instructor of the Central YMCA Dojo and how has it changed your life?

LS: At first, I didn't want the position - but Eto Sensei asked and appointed me. So I said "OK," thinking that it would be temporary.

It is a lot of responsibility, it takes up a lot of your time, your life essentially revolves around Aikido, BUT it is rewarding and fun. The pros outweigh the cons! And I have a GREAT Assistant Instructor in Roy Uyehara. Recently, Joy Ogawa (Hilo trained) has joined the ranks of Central Y's instructors and is also a great help. Thank God also for the young Yudanshas who fill in when the three of us are not able to be in class.

MANA: What classes do you teach?

LS: All the classes, if possible.

MANA: What concerns and hopes do you have for your dojo?

LS: That the Central Y Aikido Dojo will continue and prosper and be a positive influence in the lives of its students.

MANA: What do you do outside of the Aikido for work and enjoyment?

LS: I work for the Honolulu Board of Water Supply in the Land Division. As a hobby, I used to do Chinese



Linda Sasaki Sensei . . . continued from page 6

Brush Painting, but Ki-Aikido prevailed after I became Head Instructor. Maybe I'll try again. Other than that I like traveling, movies and theater (if I have the time), and eating!

MANA: You recently traveled in Japan along with attending World Camp. Do you have any recommendation for other Ki-Aikido students who read this, regarding going to Japan?

LS: You mean like...don't try to "keep up with the Jones'" when drinking with the Russians? (ha, ha..) But seriously, I do think that everyone should go at least once for the wonderful experience of the teachings, friendships, and culture. There is always something new to learn.

This past world camp had a wonderful class on calligraphy! We had horrible "penmanship," but it was a Japanese cultural experience and a practice of extending Ki through a calligraphy brush. If you held too hard and tense, your kanji character (that you thought couldn't get any uglier) really came out awful!

Then there was the bamboo cutting that also brought home the same teaching of extending ki and keeping one point.

If you have the opportunity, you should also travel in other parts of Japan. There are so many cultural things new and old in Japan. For example, we went to the Edo/Tokyo Museum to see the evolution of Tokyo City, the Japan Sword shop, some temples and a festival in Nikko, Ishimaru Denki and Laox (electronic stores) in Akihabara, the Anime/Manga stores and of course we ate! Too bad the exchange rate was not good but it did not stop us from spending for food!

MANA: What are your hopes or your vision for HKF?

LS: Having been through the ups and downs, fractionalization, etc. of Ki-Aikido, I hope that Hawai'i Ki Federation remains intact to prosper and enrich the lives of its members.

## HKF 2009 Taigi Competition on Kaua'i

Dean Mayer Sensei and Hanapepe Dojo hosted the 2009 HKF Taigi Competition at the Spring HKF Seminar May 29 to 31. Because of a low number of participants, everyone got to do "double and triple duty," getting lots of taigi experience, as Curtis Sensei rotated the partners and asked everyone to try every combination of nage and uke for Kitei and their sentaku taigi.

The Adult Division winners were:

Overall gold Medal Team Shunkunsho Award:

Celine Boyer and Eric Saint George.

Best Nage Fudoshin Award:

Celine Boyer.

In the Youth Division,

Best Kitei pair:

Oliver Jackson and Tielr Ortogero

Best nage:

Oliver Jackson

Best uke:

Lyman Franco

Most inspirational:

Tielr Ortogero

In 2010 the HKF Taigi Competition weekend will be May 28 to 30 at the Shunshinkan Dojo on Maui.



Curtis Sensei and the HKF members who participated in the 2009 HKF Taigi Competition, winners holding certificates.

## Maui's Alex Schaefer gives Aikido lesson to school children

Maui Ki-Aikido's assistant instructor Alex Schaefer wrote of his experience on November 10 of this year, "I had the delightful opportunity to share Aikido with the students of Roots North Shore Learning Center in Huelo earlier this month. Tucked into the jungle of Maui's north shore, it was a perfectly peaceful setting to teach children about the strength available to them through a calm mind. The students got to experience a variety of Ki tests, learn some history of Aikido's formation and expansion to the West, as well as what the kanji of Ai-Ki-Do means. It seemed the students had some training before because they were calm and attentive throughout the demonstration. It was a pleasant experience for me and I think the students and teachers learned something as well."

The following is a letter to Alex Schaefer from the Roots teacher and former Maui Ki-Aikido student, Akari Ueoka:

"I would like to convey my deep gratitude for you to come all the way to our school to share the beautiful principle of Aikido. It was a rich and informative demonstration you led today. I am sure that the children will remember the experiences you have given them today, and what I hope as a teacher is that they will utilize the knowledge about life energy in their lives to better themselves and others."



Alex Schaefer surrounded by the kids of the Roots North Shore Learning Center. Photos by Akari Ueoka.

### If you are reading this in black and white.....

How about getting it in full color on your computer screen? If you have internet access and are still getting this publication by postal mail hard copy, please help us save funds and help yourself to our full-color edition. Please send an email message request to [mauiki-aikido@earthlink.net](mailto:mauiki-aikido@earthlink.net) and we will send you a semi-annual email with a link to the newsletter. We respect your privacy and will never release your email to any other lists.

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

*Letting Go* by Christopher Curtis Sensei..... (non-member) \$25\_\_\_\_  
(HKF members) \$20\_\_\_\_  
(bulk rate to dojos, 5 or more) \$15\_\_\_\_

*Ki-Aikido on Maui*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, by Christopher Curtis Sensei (non-members) \$15\_\_\_\_  
Training manual used by all Hawai'i Ki Federation dojos. (HKF member) \$8\_\_\_\_

*50 Years of Aikido in Hawai'i, A Book of Days* ..... (non-member) \$20\_\_\_\_  
Perpetual keepsake calendar with historic photos that chronicle the birth, evolution and (HKF members) \$15\_\_\_\_  
development of Aikido, with rare photos of the founders.

*Bokken Suburi DVD - Training Aid* ..... (non-member) \$25\_\_\_\_  
Christopher Curtis Sensei performs the 8 Bokken Suburi, 10 repetitive bokken cutting (HKF members) \$20\_\_\_\_  
exercises, Kengi 1 and 2, and Jogi 1 and 2, developed by both Soshu Koichi Tohei and  
Shinichi Suzuki Sensei over the past 50 years.

*Meditation CD* with Christopher Curtis Sensei..... (non-member) \$15\_\_\_\_  
Breathe and meditate along with an actual Maui Friday night class, professionally recorded. (HKF members) \$10\_\_\_\_

*Norito CD*, as read by Christopher Curtis Sensei.....\$25\_\_\_\_

*Shokushu (Ki Sayings) CD*, as read by Clayton Naluai Sensei.....\$25\_\_\_\_

Subtotal of order \$\_\_\_\_\_

Shipping: USA & Territories Add \$5, Canada and Mexico Add \$11, all other countries Add \$13 for each  
1 or 2 books, or up to 4 DVDs or CDs.....\$\_\_\_\_\_

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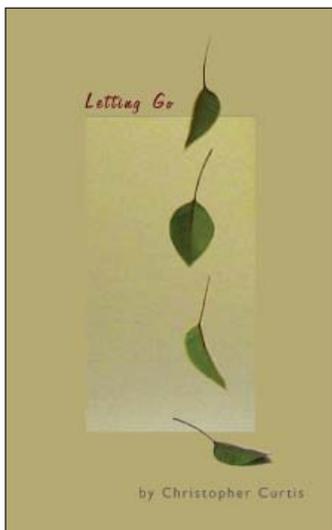
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P.O. Box 724  
Wailuku, HI 96793  
  
Fax: 808 244-5165  
Email: mauikiaikido@  
gmail.com



# ANYTIME

is a great time to give the gift of **Letting Go**

Here's your opportunity to purchase Curtis Sensei's book if you don't already have a copy. If you do, consider the value of sharing this teaching with your friends and loved ones. On the last Friday of every month, Curtis Sensei teaches a class on one chapter of the book. This give-and-take between Sensei and the students is recorded and posted on our blog at <http://curtissensei.com> where you can already download and listen to, or read, past sessions.

Hawai'i Ki Federation  
c/o Maui Ki-Aikido  
P.O. Box 724  
Wailuku, HI 96793

## **Hungry? Got a dirty car? Hey - that's great!**

Calling all Maui Ki-Aikido supporters -- Would you eat a pizza or some Zippy's chili for a good cause? How about getting your car sparkling clean to help the Suzuki Sensei Ki-Aikido Youth Award?

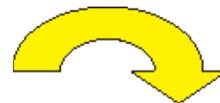
Maui Ki-Aikido is sponsoring several fund raisers over the next few months to help fund our endowment as well as the award that annually selects two outstanding, hard-training Maui Aikido teens to take for training at World Camp in Japan.

Zippy's chili and loaf cake tickets for \$7 are being sold now over the holidays. They make great gifts. See any youth or adult student, or call us at 244-5165.

Car wash, Saturday, February 20, at KMart in Kahului. Tickets available in January.

Flatbread Company Pizza Night, Paia, June 15. Please see the ad on this page.

MAHALO for supporting Maui Ki-Aikido.



**Mark Your Calendar  
Tell your friends!  
Bring a Guest!  
Plan a party!**

**Maui Ki-Aikido  
Benefit Night  
at  
Flatbread Company  
89 Hana Hwy, Paia  
Tues., June 15, 2010  
5:00 pm - 10:00 pm**

With each Pizza ordered by anyone all night, Flatbread Company donates \$1.00 to \$1.50 to Maui Ki-Aikido.

**Everyone likes Pizza!  
Please plan to join your senseis for dinner.  
Family seating (no reservations)**