



# Maui Ki-Aikido



Christopher Curtis Sensei, Hawaii Ki Federation Chief Instructor, and David Shaner Sensei, Eastern Ki Federation Chief Instructor and Ki no Kenyukai Advisor to Western Russia, during the Spring 2006 HKF Seminar.



Master Koichi Tohei presents the 50 year award to Hilo's Takashi Nonaka Sensei in Japan at World Camp 2005, while Shinichi Tohei Sensei looks on. See story on page 3.

Curtis Sensei's archived articles and transcripts, as well as archived issues of this newsletter, are available on:

[www.hawaiiiaikido.org](http://www.hawaiiiaikido.org)

## David Shaner Sensei leads Spring HKF Seminar

by Jeff Baldwin

After having a great seminar with David Shaner Sensei, I was asked to provide a little glimpse of it for our newsletter readers. As many of you know, last year for our spring seminar we were quite lucky to have Koichi Kashiwaya Sensei come and teach, and this spring we've been honored to host David Shaner Sensei, Chief Instructor of the Eastern Ki Federation and Ki no Kenyukai Advisor to Western Russia. It is a delight to have such a great teachers come to visit and teach.

Shaner Sensei opened up the Seminar by first recognizing the most senior teachers present. In attendance were our very own Hawaii senior Aikido instructors Takashi Nonaka Sensei, Clayton Naluai Sensei, and Maui's Shinichi Suzuki Sensei. He thanked our Chief Instructor, Curtis Sensei for inviting him there. It was a very special moment for all, and I think Shaner Sensei was having quite a good time with it. He thanked each one individually and gave us all some insight into his personal relationship with each of these wonderful

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## Hilo to host third annual Hawaii state Taigi Competition

The Hawaii Ki Federation will hold its third Taigi Competition July 7 through 9 on the Big Island at the Hilo Ki Aikido Dojo. Participants in both the Adult and Junior categories from dojos on all islands will perform Taigi arts series, including the basic Kitei Taigi and the Sentaku Taigi for 2006.

To prepare the judges, instructors and students for this challenge, Christopher Curtis Sensei, Chief Instructor of the Hawaii Ki Federation, will hold a special Taigi training weekend as one of the 2006 Senior Instructor Intensive workshops, to be held in Hilo Saturday and Sunday, June 10 and 11.

Curtis Sensei stated, "I'm again hoping to see a group taigi from each island."

The Sentaku Taigi, or arts series chosen for this year's competition, are: Taigis 1, 2, 6, 9 and 13. The weapons sentaku are the same every year: 22 through 28.

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*Shaner Sensei . . . continued from page 1*

teachers and the sacrifices they had made, as well as the help they had each given. It's through the dedication of teachers like this that Aikido flourishes in Hawaii. Of course if you ask them they will all point to Master Tohei, "our teacher."

With that he started the seminar by asking a question: "Would you like to be more confident in your Aikido?"



*Shaner Sensei demonstrates a technique.*

Well, of course the answer was easily predictable, and everyone answered, "Yes." Then He asked, "What do you need to be more confident?" After some discussion, the idea of clarity was brought in. How might one become clear? After more discussion, it was suggested that by *understanding* we could become clear. From this Shaner Sensei told us that the theme would be "confidence," and from there he built the rest of the seminar.

Then he departed from this (or so it seemed) and started to teach us how Tohei Sensei came up with his method of ranking in the Kyu and Dan system. Fifth kyu is to see where the nage's mind is. This is also done

Kaisho style, or at the slowest speed. Fourth kyu is where Master Tohei wants to see rhythm and Gyosho, the second speed of performing. At third kyu it is time for the nage to demonstrate self-control. Also at this level, the space between the arts becomes more important. Second kyu is when we see the basics all coming together, demonstrating fluidity and more rhythm, and first kyu is the beginning of a demonstration of "breath power" or kokyu. It's the precursor to the Shodan test but without the pressure.

However, we didn't stop there. Shaner Sensei then rolled into the Dan ranking System. He said that Shodan was almost a play on words for us. It means that the Shodan level practitioner must be able to "show" another person of lower rank how to do the art. You are at the beginning level of becoming a teacher. A person at the Nidan level must now be able to teach up to the level of Shodan. At Sandan you are now expected to have taught students up to the level of Nidan, and you must have increased your own levels or fluidity and power. For Yondan, there is no test. You are far from done, though. This is the first level or rank given for serving the teaching. You are now the teacher of teachers. Godan, Sensei said could be yet another play on English. Godan was to "go down" or start over. You must know what it is to have a beginner's mind and demonstrate this. He stopped there. Beyond this there are more levels. Our teachers know this, and if you ask people from the rank of Rokudan and up, they will often tell you that rank is not important.

But how does this pertain to the theme of the seminar? Of course it's obvious; confidence comes from clarity, and clarity comes from understanding. By understanding the levels of the Kyu system, we can perform confidently because we know the level which we are expected to achieve.

No Maui seminar is complete without the Hawaiian experience, and Shaner Sensei was not only our teacher during the seminar but a guest of our dojo. We all enjoyed one of our legendary Maui parties with him, with the honored presence of our senior HKF teachers mentioned above. We eagerly look forward to Shaner Sensei's return to teach us again someday, and for more seminar fun in the planning, rumor has it that Clarence Chin Sensei will be paying us a visit next year.



*Taigi . . . continued from page 1*

The tradition of Taigi Competition in Hawaii began in 2004 on Maui when thirteen teams competed for honors that included Best Nage (yudansha), Best Nage (mudansha), Most Inspirational and the Overall Gold Medal Team. Last year's overall Senior winners were Charles Boyer of Lokahi Dojo paired with Tracy Reasoner of Maui. The Junior overall winners were Dylne Gonzalez and Lindy Franco, both of Maui. The winners every fourth year go to the International Taigi Competition at Ki no Kenkyukai Headquarters in Japan.

With this summer, plus two more years of Hawaii competition to sharpen their skills, HKF students should be ready to shine in Japan in 2008.

## Master Tohei's 50-year award to Takashi Nonaka Sensei

On Oct. 19, 2005, at this past year's World Camp in Japan, Takashi Nonaka Sensei, Hawaii Ki Federation Senior Advisor and now-retired Head Instructor of Hilo Aikido Club, received the award for 50 years of study of Ki-Aikido. The unique, hand-made ceramic plate with its message that Ki must flow like a stream and never stop or get stuck, was personally presented to Nonaka Sensei by Master Tohei.

Nonaka Sensei said that he didn't quite feel up to making the long trip to Japan until he heard that the plaque would be presented by Tohei Sensei in person. Then, he said, he knew he had to go and also take his wife, Toyomi, who had so enjoyed hosting Tohei Sensei in Hilo many years ago. The Nonakas were accompanied by their daughter Anne Gordon and son Eric Nonaka, Head Instructor of the Mililani Dojo of HKF.



## Hilo's Takashi Nonaka Sensei Retires, Leilani Pakele Steps Up

Takashi Nonaka Sensei officially retired as Head Instructor of Hilo Ki-Aikido on December 31, 2005. Nonaka Sensei was with the Hilo club since 1955 and has served as its inspiration and Head Instructor for over 50 years. He will continue to serve as a Senior Advisor to the Hawaii Ki Federation.

After seeking and receiving the input of the HKF Chief Instructor, Christopher Curtis Sensei, as well as the Hilo Dojo's senior instructors, Nonaka Sensei has turned the reins of leadership of Hilo Ki-Aikido over to Leilani Pakele Sensei, a well known and long-time student of Nonaka Sensei. However, Nonaka Sensei says "I'm still coaching, watching, still involved."



*Takashi Nonaka Sensei, new Hilo Head Instructor Leilani Pakele, and Hilo Assistant Head Instructor, Mitsuo "Mits" Murashige.*

He also continues to teach his long-standing Sunday morning advanced Ki-Aikido and weapons class.

In a recent interview on Maui, Nonaka Sensei stated that he is very interested in developing leaders for Hilo and for Hawaii Ki Federation. He wants to work for the smooth transition of leadership in the future. With regard to the challenge this poses, he said, "You may have your eye on 10 possible future instructor/leaders, but over 10 to 15 years, for a variety of reasons, that's down to 3 or 4."

Nonaka Sensei's philosophy of leadership is based on his successful experience of supervising a laboratory at C. Brewer and Co. for 32 years, applying the universal principles taught him by Tohei Sensei to his work. He believes that to be a good head instructor, it's more important to be a good leader than to know a lot of waza. Comparing dojo leadership to a business, he asserts that while in a worker knowledge is 75% of what is important, the rest being the ability to work with people, for a foreman, that ratio changes to 50-50%, and for the top management, only 25% is about factual knowledge. The remaining 75% is the ability to understand people's needs and to encourage and guide them.

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## Meet Jeff Baldwin

In this issue we are profiling our new Maui Ki-Aikido president, Jeff Baldwin, yondan.

Jeff started training at our dojo in 1990. He has a good story about how he became intrigued by Aikido.

Growing up here on Maui (he's a 6<sup>th</sup> generation islander), Jeff was always attracted to martial arts and started training in karate at the age of 8. He practiced it off and on into his 20's.

In one karate class a student asked the instructor, "What's the best martial art?" Of course the answer was "Karate," but the student went on to ask, "What about Aikido?"

"You don't have to worry about those guys because they're nice and they'll never fight you. Just don't grab one of them. If you touch them, it's only because they let you," the instructor answered.

A couple of years later in a Kaji Kempo class, Jeff heard the same question asked of the instructor, who said, "This is the best martial art." This time it was Jeff who asked, "What about Aikido?" The answer was, "You don't have to worry about the Aikido guys 'cause they'll never fight you, but watch out, because they have some power I don't understand."

While he liked training in the



various arts he tried, he didn't like hurting people. "Every art I had ever learned before involved hurting people quite badly in order to 'win'. Aikido hinted of something different."

Finally, Jeff was ready to find out for himself, and when a friend said, "Gotta go to my Aikido class," Jeff responded, "I'm going with you."

Jeff states that although he has benefited from training with several other instructors of different martial arts, Aikido is unmatched. No where else has he experienced the depth and breadth of the training that Aikido offers.

His friend is long gone from the dojo, but Jeff has stayed to become one of our very valued

senior students, one of the teachers of our adult beginner class on Thursday nights at the Shunshinkan Dojo, a member of the board of directors since 1993, vice-president twice, long-time Maui Ki-Aikido fund-raising chairman, and now board president. He can also be found assisting in the youth Aikido classes where his daughter Julia, 12, is now a 5<sup>th</sup> kyu student. Jeff's list of contributions to the dojo also include serving on the committee for our growing Endowment Fund, and, this year, taking on the big responsibility of being fund-raising chairman for all of Hawaii Ki-Federation where he also serves as the representative from Maui Ki-Aikido. On top of all that, he donated his welding skills recently to make our beautiful ornamental window guards for the dojo.

Jeff lives in Kula, Maui, with his wife Janet and daughters Julia and Michelle. He is the hard-working owner of 4 businesses, Haleakala ATV Tours, Haleakala Excavation, a business consulting service, and a welding and repair shop.

When asked about plans for his tenure as our new president, he stated his confidence in the dedication and ability of the MKA board of directors and said, "I plan to serve the board, stay out of the way, and let them do their job."

*Hilo . . . continued from page 3*

Leilani Pakele Sensei has been studying Aikido and teaching at Nonaka Sensei's side for over 30 years. For the past year, as Assistant Head Instructor, she has been learning and taking over the duties of Head Instructor. She said, "It's a big challenge to try to fill the shoes of Nonaka Sensei, but he says not to worry, that he'll be right there beside me." She expressed appreciation for the great

support given by the Hilo Club with its many helpers.

Pakele Sensei also stated that she feels strongly the responsibility to teach what she has learned in Japan of Master Tohei teachings, as well as what she is learning within Hawaii Ki Federation and in Hilo. Her new duties also include representing Hilo Ki-Aikido in the Hawaii Ki Federation where she is already the board's treasurer.

Of the three Hawaii Ki Federation dojos with women head instructors, Pakele Sensei is leading the largest of those three, with 75 to 80 youth and adults. The other women head instructors in HKF are Linda Sasaki of Central YMCA on Oahu and Lillian Paiva of Honoka'a Dojo on the Big Island.

## MKA student trains with the cops

by Ilima Loomis

Auditing the Maui Ki-Aikido police class was a great way to see another side of our Aikido training, and watch our dojo instructors in action. The mat was crowded with a room-full of police recruits in blue T-shirts and black sweatpants perspiring in the mid-afternoon heat. The recruits came in all shapes and sizes, from heavysset, thick-necked bouncer types to meek-looking future pencil pushers. The group's single wahine held her own among the boys.

While the recruits may not have delved very deeply into the Ki training that enriches our regular classes, they sure had a lot of fun with the locks, holds and other defensive techniques. After sitting in silent attention as the instructors explained and demonstrated an art, they enthusiastically jumped up to try it out. While most of us try to avoid being a "bugger" in regular



class, the police recruits embraced that role. The dojo rang with their laughter and good-natured kidding as they tried to apply the locks and pins on their squirming, struggling partners.

With so many big guys in the class, it was tempting for many of the recruits to rely on strength when taking down their partners.

Walking around the dojo, we observed several whose solution to a difficult lock was to simply grab their partner by the hand and wrestle them to the floor. They got a lesson in Ki when our very own Olive Silva Sensei, 83 years young, toddled over in her child-sized hakama and asked to demonstrate. A strapping young recruit presented his wrist indulgently, only to find himself flat on his back before he knew what was happening to him. Olive Sensei happily continued her demonstration down the line, chuckling all the while, until the recruits assured her they'd learned the proper technique.

As a kyu-level student, the police class was a wonderful opportunity to gain more confidence in my techniques by putting them to the test against "buggers," and to enjoy the lighter side of Aikido with some fun-loving recruits. It was a particular honor to receive the instruction of Suzuki Sensei, who kept a watchful eye on the class and provided valuable correction and insight to me and the other kyu-level students. Finally, it was an opportunity to be handcuffed for the first and hopefully last time in my life by fellow student Rhyn Davies, who was remarkably effective with the restraints. A good time was had by all.

## "Paul just wants to be the good Otomo."

by Paul Tootalian (Curtis Sensei's otomo in AZ)

The words rolled past me at first. They seemed no more significant than if he'd spoken about the weather in Phoenix or asked if I was married or liked dogs or had kids. It wasn't as if Curtis Sensei adopted a serious tone when he uttered them that late night at the intimate, post-seminar circle of Arizona Aikido Ki Society members. His gaze didn't tell me, 'Paul, here is some advice, wisdom that can help you grow, change and relax.'

I greeted his remark with a smile and nod, my standard response during the three days prior, as I played the part of 'The Good Otomo.'

But what indeed is a good Otomo? I wondered this now at the close of our three-day Spring seminar. Sensei's refreshing arrival coincided with a deluge of rain and even snow, marking the end of a four-month regional drought. I speculated on his chosen Shokushu reading and one's ability 'to command the wind, rain and thunder', while being enlightened to 'just cutting' and techniques like Katate-dori-ryote-mochi-kokyunage en-undo. But what stuck in my mind's eye was when he informed us we were all descendants of Narcissius, self-absorbed bunglers with little hope except in being our true selves.

This rang a (Misogi) bell for me. My preoccupation had me fixated on my role as the perfect Otomo, the-better-than-anyone-had-ever-been Otomo, possibly the history of Aikido's greatest Otomo. I pictured myself patiently standing outside the dojo door

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Otomo . . . continued from page 5

properly Hakama'd with an enormous multi-colored golf umbrella lifted skyward, calmly awaiting Sensei's arrival under the patter of rare Arizona rain. But in reality, I was still in the changing room fumbling with my Hakama when I heard the creak of the dojo front door accompanied by a muffled chorus of "Good Morning Sensei!"

'Paul just wants to be the good Otomo.' But I hadn't. In my secret heart I wanted to be the well-thought of and admired Otomo, the top Otomo, a kick-ass mofO Otomo. Was there the chance, however remote, that this attitude showed up in my training?

Otomo duties actually had a way of jarring me out of my penchant for perfection. Clumsily juggling the wet gi, the pants, the shirt, the pants, the jacket, the watch, the ring (was it left or right pocket?)... unknitting the Hakama and beating Sensei in the sandaled foot race to the changing room door... noticing the TsingTao seconds after some other cad had already judged it refillable... all this and more gave a wannabe Otomo a brief glimpse into the true spirit of humble attendance.

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Why was I falling all over myself? Sensei himself noted, 'Otomo is very easy. There is no

mystery; only one thing to remember.' Putting Sensei in the high position and myself in his shadow didn't entail harshly dismissing myself or my shortcomings, nor assuming some posture of excellence. 'Paul just wants to be the good Otomo' now sounds to me like an observation of someone guarded and restrained. But aren't these hard-won insights why we study, why we seek out good teachers? Don't ask for whom the Misogi bell tolls, it tolls for thee.



## We Need Your Help

Please donate your HI-5 recyclable beverage containers to Maui Ki-Aikido for our children's programs. Take them to:

Aloha Recycling  
75 Amala Place  
Kahului (across VIP Foods)  
8-4:30 M - F  
8 - Noon - Sat

Ask them to hold the proceeds for the "Maui Ki-Aikido account." They will also pay a penny a pound for non-HI-5 glass containers.

Thank you very much for keeping Maui Ki-Aikido in mind when you recycle!

## USA National Ki Conference for 2006

This year's annual USA National Ki Conference is scheduled for June 22 through 25 and will again be taught by Shinichi Tohei Sensei, Deputy President of Ki no Kenkyukai. The four-day 2006 conference will be held in Portland, Oregon, at the Takushinkan Dojo (Frontier Dojo), Regional Headquarters for the Oregon Ki Society of the Northwest Ki Federation, headed by Chief Instructor Calvin Tabata Sensei.

The Oregon Ki Society announces the basic training schedule as follows:

- Thurs 6/22 - Instructor and brown belt workshop
- Fri 6/23 - Ki and Ki-Aikido for all participants
- Sat 6/24 - Ki Testing, Ki and Ki-Aikido classes, and Lecture with Q&A for all participants
- Sun 6/25 - Kiatsuho & Ki Breathing for all participants.

Shinichi Tohei Sensei, son of International Ki Society Founder, Master Koichi Tohei, has assumed leadership of the Ki Society, but continues to learn from his father as he illuminates Master Tohei's principles for us, his students, world-wide. Shinichi Tohei Sensei, who has led National Ki Conferences for several years and has also taught us in special seminars in Hawaii and World Camp in Japan, is a dynamic teacher who makes his classes and seminars fun as well as very inspiring and memorable.

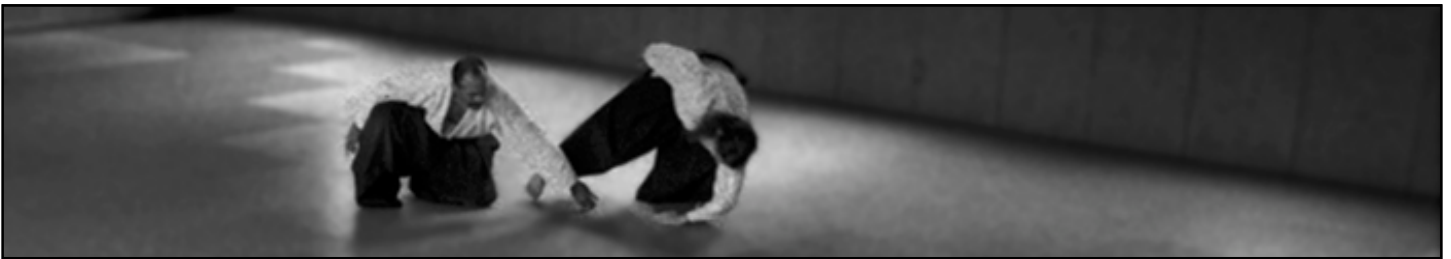
His wife, Sachiko Tohei, will also attend.

Online registration is available at the Oregon Ki Society website, as well as details about accommodations and attractions in the city of Portland.



At the 2005 HKF Seminar on Kauai in December, kyu and dan promotion students L-R: Mary Frances Graham (uke) Petr "Klika" Zamykal (uke), Rene Relacion (Nidan), Christopher Curtis Sensei, Fincher Sterling (Nidan) and Mike Malkovich (uke). Also testing at the seminar (not pictured) were Craig Ponting for Chukyu Ki and Kyson Gusukuma for Jokyu Ki.

Socializing at the 2006 HKF Spring Seminar party were seminar instructor David Shaner Sensei, Shinichi Suzuki Sensei, Clayton Naluai Sensei, Takashi Nonaka Sensei and Christopher Curtis Sensei.



Steve Self, a student of Imaizumi Sensei at the Shin-Budo Kai Dojo in Durango, Colorado, has contributed a fascinating article titled "Integral Aikido," introducing Aikido concepts into the Integral Life Practice. Self was inspired to write the article while training with Curtis Sensei recently in Arizona. You can read Steve's interesting article at [www.hawaiiikiaikido.org](http://www.hawaiiikiaikido.org)

### Three dojo programs seek donations

Several of Maui Ki-Aikido's valuable programs rely on the generous help of our Aikido family and friends of the dojo. Maui Ki-Aikido offers donors three worthwhile and important choices of areas to help: our general children's programs, our Endowment Fund, which safeguards the future of the Shunshinkan Dojo, and the Shinichi Suzuki Ki-Aikido Youth Award, which brings one or two teens with us to World Camp at Ki no Kenkyukai headquarters in Japan each year.

Thank you very much for your support of the programs that make spreading the teachings of Tohei Sensei and Shin Shin Toitsu Aikido possible.

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I would like to designate my donation for the following fund(s): I would like to designate my donation for the following fund(s):

- Shinichi Suzuki Ki-Aikido Youth Award
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Please make checks payable to Maui Ki-Aikido.

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**Order Form:**

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

**Ki-Aikido on Maui**, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, by Christopher Curtis Sensei..... (non-member) \$20\_\_\_\_\_  
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**50 Years of Aikido in Hawaii, A Book of Days**..... (non-member) \$20\_\_\_\_\_  
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