

# *AiShinKai* Just for Fun

November 27, 2010 (actually 11/30; *ma* is a little off this week)

## Zen Pizza

There is a well-known pizzeria in New York that is managed by a local Zen monk. As the story goes, one afternoon this fellow walked in and said, "Make me one with everything." The monk made no reply to the old, old joke, simply saying that the order would be \$15.00. The man handed the monk a twenty dollar bill, and sat down to wait. After a few minutes, he stirred to ask about his change, to which the monk responded "Change must come from within!"

## Open Season

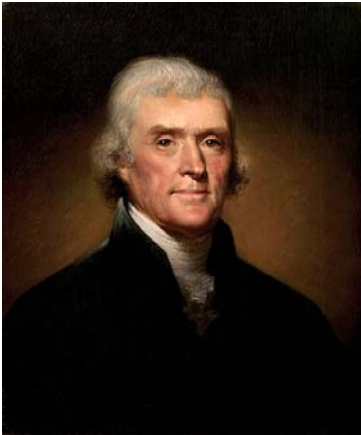




Hanson



HONEY... HAVE YOU SEEN  
MY SWORDS?!?



## Hero of the Week

### **Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826)**

Third President of the United States (1801–1809) and the principal author of the Declaration of Independence (1776). Jefferson was one of the most influential Founding Fathers, known for his promotion of the ideals of republicanism in the United States. Jefferson envisioned America as the force behind a great "Empire of Liberty"[3] that would promote republicanism and counter the imperialism of the British Empire. Major events during his presidency included the Louisiana Purchase (1803) and the Lewis and Clark Expedition (1804–1806).

As a political philosopher, Jefferson was a man of the Enlightenment and knew many intellectual leaders in Britain and France. He idealized the independent yeoman farmer as exemplar of republican virtues, distrusted cities and financiers, and favored states' rights and a strictly limited federal government. Jefferson supported the separation of church and state and was the author of

the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom (1779, 1786). He was the eponym of Jeffersonian democracy and the cofounder and leader of the Democratic-Republican Party, which dominated American politics for 25 years. Jefferson served as the wartime Governor of Virginia (1779–1781), first United States Secretary of State (1789–1793), and second Vice President of the United States (1797–1801).

Jefferson achieved distinction as, among other things, a horticulturist, political leader, architect, archaeologist, paleontologist, musician, inventor, and founder of the University of Virginia. When President John F. Kennedy welcomed 49 Nobel Prize winners to the White House in 1962 he said, "I think this is the most extraordinary collection of talent and of human knowledge that has ever been gathered together at the White House – with the possible exception of when Thomas Jefferson dined alone." To date, Jefferson is the only president to serve two full terms in office without vetoing a single bill of Congress. Jefferson has been consistently ranked by scholars as one of the greatest of U.S. presidents.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas\\_Jefferson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Jefferson)

## A Sensei Story - Dr. Bannister Meets His Iaido Teacher, Again

In March 2001, I traveled to Japan with a small group of American Iaidoka who wished to train in greater depth and clarity through the guidance of the All Japan Kendo Federation (Zen Nihon Kendo Renmei). There I met the man who would become my Iaido teacher: Eura Kazunori Sensei (Iaido 8<sup>th</sup> dan hanshi) was the head instructor of *Tsubomi Seishin Kan Iaido Kai* in Tokyo, where Don Yoshimoto Trent was kaicho. When we contacted the Kendo Renmei about training in Japan, there was considerable ambivalence among the teachers. They did not understand why we wanted to submit ourselves to the difficulties of training and grading in Japan. But Eura Sensei expressed a willingness to at least see what we were about. He came to watch our training the first day, sitting in the back with a very grave expression. At the evening's welcoming party, I made sure to sit beside him and pour his beverages in Japanese style. He was surprised by my sincerity and manners. We got pretty soused together, and sang a few karaoke songs. The next day he dressed and came on the floor, remarking that he had such a great time the night before that he had decided to teach us. For the first time, I saw the kind of Iaido I wanted to study. Eura Sensei is a small man, but moves with great confidence, smoothness, and power. He also exhibits two qualities that I have always valued in my practice: quietude and elegance. His Iai was extraordinarily beautiful and strong. I trained hard and long in anticipation of going to my first Japanese grading exam in the morning.

After testing, the dojo membership convened at a beautiful restaurant for a celebratory party. Forty or so senior members, in suits and ties and beautiful gowns, sat on tatami together to share a fine meal. I remember looking around at their strong faces and presence, and thinking that the samurai culture of old Japan was alive and well. Eura Sensei rose to make a speech. Through an interpreter, he explained why he was interested in helping Americans. His story was heartfelt and deeply moving. He explained that the real purpose of Budo training was not just to study technique to make ourselves strong. As a Budo, arts like Iaido, Kendo and Aikido were designed to create better citizens, to improve the whole person and to thereby help the condition of the human family. He said that the most important thing in Iaido is to "show your heart." To illustrate what he meant, he wanted to tell us a little about himself.

As a young child, Eura was in Nagasaki when the U.S. Air Force dropped the atomic bomb. His family was killed, and he joined 100 other children walking north through the ruins towards safety. They walked for three days. They begged the only adult they saw for help, and were told that they must eat the dust, for there was no food. They finally found shelter at a Zen monastery in the mountains outside the city. He stayed there for ten years. At first he was sad, then angry, and finally found peace. The monks taught him that the real enemy was not the Americans, but war itself. He began studying the martial arts of Kendo and Iaido, eventually rising to the level of a senior teacher. He dedicated himself to building bridges of friendship among all the people that he meets through martial arts training. He has taught all over Japan, and even traveled to France to share training. When the call went out for instructors who wanted to help a small group of sincere Americans, Eura raised his hand to say that he would take a look. Many other instructors didn't want to help, instinctively distrusting foreigners and Americans. But Eura Sensei thought there would be no better way to forge lasting friendships between Americans and the Japanese than by sharing the common language of Budo. With this speech, Eura Sensei welcomed us to his dojo, and encouraged us to try hard.

There was a long silence following this speech. I looked at the faces of the teachers and senior students around us, and saw not a dry eye in the room. Some were sad, others determined, and I suddenly perceived that they were offering what they believed was their greatest gift – their practice – in hopes that it would lead to a better future not only for us, but for each nation and our world. I was deeply moved, and had to excuse myself to go outside for a moment. Fresh air helped me to regain some composure. I knew then that I had finally found my teacher. His story of tragedy turned to hope and purpose resonated deeply with a romantic streak in my own personality, and with my own aspirations in Budo practice. I knew that he could help me to realize my ambitions. It took a couple of years of outright begging, but Eura eventually accepted me as his student, and invested heavily in my career by teaching me anything and everything I desired. We enjoyed several wonderful years together, but then an internal power struggle split the dojo, and we could do nothing to stop it. We kept in touch regularly, but we were separated for six long years, unable to train together.

I finally saw Eura Sensei again in September 2010. Our reunion was cause for great joy on both sides. I am the last man standing of the original group of Americans who made the trip to Japan in 2001. It was quite obvious to all that I still practice Eura-style Iai with great joy and enthusiasm. Years before - after finally agreeing to teach me his *koryu*, or old style Iai - Eura told me that with all the demands made of him, he had time for only one real student in his life, and he had decided that I was the one. His faith has been matched by my sincerity: our mutual love and respect has endured the hardship of long separation. Both Eura Sensei and the other teachers in the dojo were astonished and delighted to discover that I still move just like him, and that I remember all the lessons of years past. They are glad to have me back, and observed that the depth of my loyalty to Eura Sensei was obvious and highly unusual: despite years away, I had honored the original bond of understanding and friendship forged so many years before. They were extremely gratified to learn that the gamble made on that fateful night in 2001 had born fruit. Now that we have recommitted ourselves to the mission, we can look forward to sharing Iaido practice together for many years to come.

## Upcoming Events

Annual Food Bank Drive – November 20-December 16

Bring cans and non-perishables to each class and lesson to support our neighbors in need. Let's surpass last year's total of 215 pounds collected.

Shodo Brush Calligraphy Mini-seminar – December 4, 4-6:00pm

A unique opportunity for adults and children to learn about the Way of the Brush.

*AiShinKai* Edmonds Bannister Dojo. Contact Dr. Bannister: [sensei@aishinkai.com](mailto:sensei@aishinkai.com)

Rank Promotion Exams – Thursday, December 16, 5-9:00pm

Youth Aikido – 5-5:40

Adult Aikido – 5:40-6:00pm

Aiki-ken/Aiki-Jo – 7:30-8:15pm

Iaido – 8:30-8:45pm

*Please come watch, cheer, and support your fellow members*

## Just For Fun 11/20 Answers

AiShinRyu Aikido *Word Search 11-20-2010*

## Solution

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I + N E T B + A + I I I + H I
+ H G I O E B + A + H R + A G
K A S O H I N K + I C O + K O
N O K E H S N K M B U D O A S
Z E K S A I N I A A N N + M I
N O E Y H G R A I N E A M A M
+ U R S U I E K Z O M R U + T
+ + I I + N I T + Y O I N + S
T A N T O D A + O K H A E + U
S H I H O N A G E K S A T T K
+ A I K I D O + E I + M S O I
A T A K O R I H S U + + U R +
+ I H C U N E M O K O Y K I +
+ + I G O K I E K + A Z I E S
+ + + + U + + + + + + + + +
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(Over,Down,Direction)

AIKIDO(2,11,E)

AIKIDOKA(10,5,SW)

AISHINKAI(2,9,NE)

BOOKEN(6,1,SW)

BUDO(10,4,E)

HAKAMA(14,1,S)  
IKKYO(10,11,N)  
IRIMI(6,7,NE)  
KATA(4,12,W)  
KEIKOGI(9,14,W)  
KOKYUNAGE(1,3,SE)  
KOTEGAESHI(10,10,NW)  
MAAI(12,11,N)  
MISOGI(15,6,N)  
MUNETSUKI(13,6,S)  
NAGE(1,4,NE)  
RANDORI(12,7,N)  
SEIZA(15,14,W)  
SHIHONAGE(1,10,E)  
SHOMENUCHI(11,10,N)  
TANTO(1,9,E)  
TENKAN(5,1,SE)  
TORI(14,10,S)  
TSUKI(15,7,S)  
UESHIBA(2,7,NE)  
UKE(5,15,NE)  
USHIRO(10,12,W)  
YOKOMENUCHI(12,13,W)  
ZANSHIN(9,7,NW)  
ZORI(1,5,SE)