

## WOBURN AIKIKAI NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### LOCAL AIKIDO DOJO TO CONDUCT FOOD DRIVE AS PART OF SEMINAR

**Woburn, MA** (August 15, 2007) - Woburn Aikikai will conduct a week-long food drive as part of its upcoming Aikido seminar on August 25<sup>th</sup> to benefit the Council of Social Concern Food Pantry in Woburn, MA.

The food drive will run from Saturday, August 18<sup>th</sup> through Sunday August 26<sup>th</sup>. The drive will offer several locations in Woburn where canned goods and other non-perishable food items can be donated. In addition to asking community members to donate canned goods, all seminar participants will be asked to donate food as part of the seminar.

According to Michael Baron, Chief Instructor at Woburn Aikikai, the idea for the food drive came up at a meeting about the seminar, as a way to reach out to the community, raise awareness about Aikido, and also do something positive in the Woburn community that the dojo calls home. Anyone who donates food as part of the drive will receive a coupon for a free week of classes at the dojo.

"We view this as a win-win situation," said Baron. "We are able to do something good in the community by helping the Council of Social Concern meet the needs of families in Woburn and Winchester who need food and we get the word out about Aikido and what we are doing at our dojo."

**Hunger doesn't go on vacation.** According to the Council of Social Concern Food Pantry, the summer months are particularly difficult for families, with children home for three meals a day. According to the Greater Boston Food Bank, over 320,000 people seek food assistance in Eastern Massachusetts per year. These are people we know – family members, friends, colleagues and neighbors – and they are often the most vulnerable among us - such as children and the elderly. These are poor people, and also working and middle-class folks.

**What is Aikido?** Aikido is a traditional Japanese martial art that redirects and neutralizes an attack by throwing or pinning an attacker. Its techniques use natural body motion, without relying on physical strength. Through disciplined and rigorous training, students develop an understanding of martial principle, physiology, and body mechanics. Aikido is non-competitive. Students of all levels train cooperatively, learning how to throw, fall, and roll safely. It is appropriate for men, women, and children of all ages.

Community members are encouraged to drop off non-perishable food items/canned goods at the following locations during the week of August 19-25<sup>th</sup>:

- Woburn City Hall Lobby during normal business hours from August 20-24<sup>th</sup>
- Whole Foods, 400 Cambridge Road in Woburn during normal store hours (8am-10am) from August 18-26<sup>th</sup>
- Woburn Aikikai, 6 Cedar Street in Woburn during normal class hours, Monday-Friday 5:30pm-7:30pm and on Saturday the 25<sup>th</sup> from 10am-5pm.

**The food pantry wish list includes: canned fruit, canned lunch (Spaghettios, etc.), cereal, coffee and tea, condiments, instant potatoes, powdered milk, jelly, juice, and rice mixes.**

Anyone who is interested in attending the seminar or donating food can contact Woburn Aikikai by visiting their website at [www.woburnaikikai.org](http://www.woburnaikikai.org). Woburn businesses who wish to serve as a drop-off site are also encouraged to contact the dojo for more information.