

Food drive this week, drop-offs around city

What does a martial art that includes throws and break falls have to do with hunger and helping families in need? Normally, absolutely nothing, but this week Woburn Aikikai is conducting a food drive as part of its upcoming Aikido seminar on Aug. 25 to benefit the Council of Social Concern Food Pantry in Woburn.

The food drive, which began on Saturday, will run through Sunday, Aug. 26. The drive offers 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?

Translated from Japanese, aikido means "the way of harmonizing energy." It was developed in Japan in the 1920s by Morihei Ueshiba, known by those who practice as O-Sensei, or "great teacher." After becoming disenchanted with

the competitive format of other arts, he set out to create a more practical discipline focused on reconciling differences. Aikido 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.

Where to donate

Community members are encouraged to drop off non-perishable food items/canned goods at the following locations this week:

Woburn City Hall Lobby during normal hours from Aug. 20-24.

Whole Foods, 400 Cambridge Road in Woburn during normal store hours (8 a.m.-10 p.m.) Aug. 18-26.

St. Barbara's Catholic Church, 138 Cambridge Road in Woburn during normal Mass schedule (Monday - Friday 9 a.m., Saturday 9 a.m. and p.m.,

and Sunday 7:30 a.m., 9 a.m. and 11 a.m.) Aug. 20-26.

Woburn Aikikai, 6 Cedar St. in Woburn during normal class hours, Monday-Friday 5:30-7:30 p.m. and on Saturday the 25th 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

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 Web site at www.woburnaikikai.org.

WEISS FARM
Established 1910

BARK MULCH

Playground	\$41 yd.
Hemlock Red	\$41 yd.
Enhanced Red	\$41 yd.
Brown	\$35 yd.
Black	\$39 yd.

RICH LOAM

Screened	\$30 yd.
Unscreened	\$22 yd.
50/50 Special Mix	\$33 yd.
Organic Compost	\$30 yd.

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