

Homeless Meal Service Fundraising Seminar

June 17-18 2006

Written by AHAN President Emily Busch



Stephanie Yap Sensei serving dinner at the mission.

Nippon Kan's Homeless Meal Service Project has been ongoing at the Denver Rescue Mission for the past sixteen years. This seminar was organized to raise funds to provide local meal service to homeless Denver residents for the coming year. IISA Instructor Stephanie Yap Sensei, Founder and Chief Instructor of Aikido of South Florida www.aikidosouthflorida.com was invited this year to be our special guest instructor. About eighty Nippon Kan students were in attendance for this special seminar and over \$3000.00 was raised to support this ongoing project.

Stephanie Yap Sensei's dynamic teaching style, infectious positive attitude and powerful technique were a hit with Nippon Kan students, making her the number one favorite guest instructor Nippon Kan has hosted in many years! Yap Sensei delighted in helping with this project and showed great insight and understanding for the purpose and scope of the event. Stephanie Yap Sensei has been involved in other Nippon Kan AHAN projects in Mexico and Brazil in the past few years.



Stephanie Yap Sensei teaching at Nippon Kan dojo.



Stephanie Sensei made a lot of new fans at Nippon Kan!



A very powerful bokken practice.



Hard practice in the hot, hot sun.

The seminar schedule included an actual meal service at the Denver Rescue Mission. On Sunday after completing a two hour morning weapons class outside, Nippon Kan students, Stephanie Yap Sensei and her assistant Jose Figueroa traded in their bokkens for peelers and cooking knives to prepare the vegetables and meats in the Nippon Kan gardens to be used for the evening's homeless dinner. Later that evening at the Denver Rescue Mission, Yap Sensei, assistant Jose Figueroa, Homma Kancho and our Nippon Kan volunteer staff served the evening meal to 300 homeless guests in great Nippon Kan style!

Nippon Kan's Homeless Meal Service has been held almost every third Sunday of the month for the past sixteen years. After morning practice on each designated Sunday, students gather to prepare the foods for the evening meal. About 80% of the meal takes about three and a half hours to prepare at Nippon Kan. The meal is then transported to the mission where the final touches are added before the evening meal service.

Over the years we have "fine tuned" the menu for this meal, taking into consideration special requirements for our special guests. First, we have learned that the foods served need to be soft or easily eaten (soft enough to chew with bad or missing teeth and to be eaten quickly as most guests want to leave as soon as they have finished). Second, we have learned that the meal needs to be flavorful and spicy! (Drug and alcohol abuse in many cases has dulled the

taste buds of some of our guests). All ingredients need to be economical, available year-round and of course FILLING!

After years of trying different menu ideas we have come up with the following menu that seems to be a big hit with our rescue mission guests!

Chicken curry with rice

Meatballs

Fried chicken dumplings

Bacon and cabbage sauté

Desert and bread



Students help prepare vegetables between classes dressed in their keiko gi.



Stephanie Yap Sensei chopping onions so fast even "onion tears" couldn't catch up!

Many sincere thanks to Stephanie Yap Sensei and all attending students for making this Homeless Fundraising Seminar a wonderful success!



Yap Sensei and Nippon Kan volunteers at Denver Rescue Mission.



Inside the kitchen; the true power of Nippon Kan!