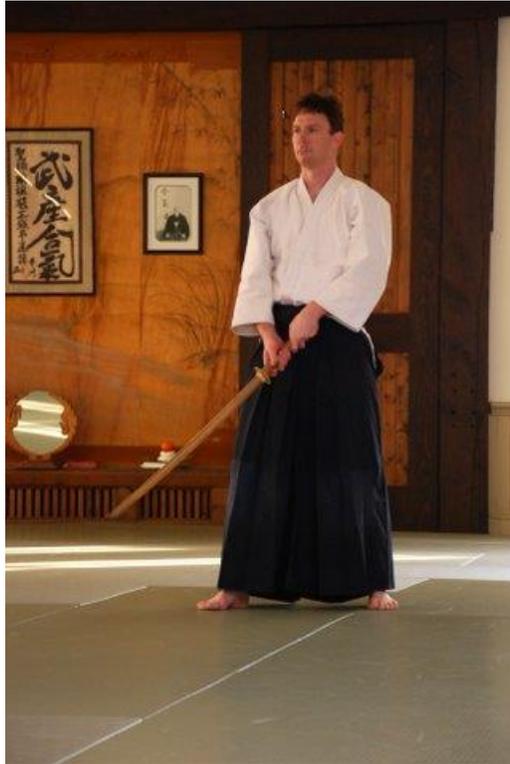


## Featured Senior Instructor, March 2010



**David Pitard**

Aikido West, Redwood City, California  
Division 2

How did I come to Aikido? It was sometime in the late 80's, which makes me a relative new-comer. I was practicing karate at the time in Richmond, Virginia, and I saw a tape of an Aikido demo. It was, believe it or not, with Bruce Klickstein and Pat Hedricks. They did a demo of a series of techniques done at varying speeds. I thought it was fantastic. Soon after, it so happened that an Aikido dojo opened near where I was living and I went to check it out. I took its first class and spent the summer training. When I returned to karate training, it somehow didn't hold my interest as it had before and I decided to concentrate on Aikido. That was in 1989, and I was pretty hooked.

Apparently, I was really hooked. A few years later in an extended bout of youthful insanity, I picked up, moved to Tokyo, and began to study at Hombu Dojo. I trained there seven years and was very fortunate to have contact with some incredible teachers, and to get to know many of the wonderful visitors that come there every year. One visitor, in particular, was Phil Cruise, who is a student of Doran-sensei. Phil told me about his dojo in California, and was later kind enough to introduce me to Doran-sensei. When I moved to the Bay Area a few years later, it was Aikido West I made my home. I was very fortunate

to be with a group that could gracefully handle my re-entry trauma, and I owe a lot to Cyndy, Paul, Jane and the many other members there for their kindness and support. I left the Bay Area in 2003, and am now living in Baltimore, Maryland. I miss my friends in California, and visit there whenever I can.

***My most Memorable Aikido Experience***

This is a tough one. Many, many, memories; it is hard to pick one and say it is most memorable. If I tried I would probably chose wrong, and would also have a good chance of getting myself in trouble. In general, what I try to remember most is the throws, the ones I receive. I try to remember the magic ones, and hope to give that feeling someday to someone else.