REPORT: August Yamakura Shihan Gasshuku

During the weekend of August 24th, the Springfield Goju Ryu, Springfield, Illinois, hosted a gasshuku by Motoo Yamakura Shihan. Twenty five GKK members attended the two days of training.

Friday evening was a brown and black belt only class. Yamakura Shihan reviewed each person's kata and made corrections where necessary. Sanchin was emphasized.

Saturday's session was open to all students. Training began with a review of the GKK Kihon. Details on the proper execution of each technique were covered. Yamakura Shihan placed particular emphasis on turning the body into certain techniques, such as shuto uchi, to produce maximum power. Kihon Ido followed. New, more complex stepping patterns were introduced to teach the students the importance of varying one's practice.
Shihan Yamakura explained the Japanese philosophy of teacher and student. While the teacher may teach, he is not responsible for the student's learning, or his / her being prepared for grading. That responsibility is the students'.

A grading examination was held for the lower ranks, followed by lunch.

After lunch, a class was held with the emphasis on more combination stepping patterns with kicks and punches. This was followed with a grading exam for advanced students.

The results of the day's two gradings are;

Gary Mazzotti - Go Dan, Bill Handren – San Dan, Sheila Leggett – 2nd kyu, Trish Barrington – 2nd kyu, Xavier Camp – 6th kyu ho, Deb Crawford – 6th kyu, Bonnie Patterson – 6th kyu, Amanda Phillips – 6th kyu, James Williams – 6th kyu, Marci Stevenson – 7th kyu, Shawn Crawford – 7th kyu, Patric Crawford – 7th kyu, Kayla Sharp – 7th kyu, Edwin Boyd – 7th kyu, Cooper Peterson – 7th kyu, Elise Dracos – 7th kyu, Aidan Peterson – 8th kyu, JT Peterson – 8th kyu, Robert Webb – 9th kyu

The day's last class was devoted to drills on Yamakura Shihan's series of Yakusoku kumite. After a short recess, a dinner was held at the First Church of the Nazarene, where our two days of training were held.

We thank Yamakura Shihan for spending time with us, and look forward to his returning.