



Goju-Ryu Karate-Do

KyoKai

NEWSLETTER

November 2005

NEW DOJO OPENS IN CALIFORNIA

by Dan Taylor

A new dojo in California has joined the GKK.

Mr. Robert DaLessio, Sandan, directs the Bakersfield Fajukan. Mr. DaLessio has a strong background in Karate-do, Judo, Jujitsu, and Kobudo. Mr. John Shatto, Nidan and Mr. Brandon DaLessio, Shodan assist him.

Classes are held on Mondays and Thursdays in Bakersfield at Second Amendment Sports located at 2523 Mohawk St. Bakersfield, Ca.

NEW DOJO OPENS IN ILLINOIS

by Kim Barrington

Hello, my name is Kim Barrington. Starting October 11th, I will be opening a new karate club in the town of Riverton, Illinois. The school's address is 313 East Jefferson. The name of the school is the Riverton Goju-Ryu Karate-Do Kyokai. Classes will be held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. The first month's classes will be for children from 5:45PM to 6:45PM. Later I will start classes for adults

that will start at 7:00PM and run until 8:30PM. I also plan to start a self-defense class for women on Saturday's from 1:00PM until 2:00PM if there is an interest in the area.

TEACHING BY EXAMPLE

by Mark Cramer

"Lead them by political maneuvers restrain them with punishment; the people will become cunning and shameless. Lead them by virtue and restrain them with ritual; the people will develop a sense of shame and sense of participation." **Confucius**

One of the greatest teachers of all ages believed that people learn by the examples that are set by those in authority, and I agree. Within our dojos, we instructors are the authority and the role models for our students. Our students emulate us; they copy our finest habits as well as our worst. If we want our students to seek perfection of technique and push themselves to their physical limits, then we instructors must pursue the perfection of our technique and must push ourselves to the limits of our physical ability and endurance.

During jum-bi-un-do, if we instructors do not physically challenge ourselves, the students, will learn that they do not have to challenge themselves. If we instructors tell our students to engage in exercises and then we avoid stretching, pushups, and sit-ups, the students will be cunning enough to find ways of avoiding those same exercises.

During kihon, if we instructors do not challenge ourselves to perfect our stances, techniques, and movements the students will not pursue perfection in theirs. If we instructors lack enthusiasm for and concentration during kata, then our students will practice their katas infrequently and slovenly.

The same principal is applicable to our interactions with our students and other instructors. If we do not listen to what our students have to say, they will not listen to us. If we talk or are inattentive while another instructor is speaking, the students will be shameless enough to talk while we are speaking.

If we yell at our students for not working hard enough and punish them with degradation,

we will have little effect on their development in karate-do. However, if we instructors bow deeply to show respect when we enter and leave the dojo, if we work toward the perfection of our technique and our character, then our students will feel shameful if they do not do the same. We must teach by example.

YAMAKURA SHIHAN'S VISIT TO THE TOLEDO AREA

by Kevin Forsythe

Here is some of the detailed information on the upcoming events for Yamakura Shihan's visit to the Toledo area on **November 11 & 12.**

Friday night, Nov. 11th, from 7PM to 9PM there will be an area wide promotional. This is typically reserved for students promoting to brown belt and above, though all are welcome to attend. Please contact me in advance to let me know who will be testing and for what rank.

Saturday, Nov. 12th, Seminars:
1PM to 2:30PM All Belts \$10
2:30PM to 4PM Green & Up \$10
4PM to 5:30PM Brown & Up \$10
All three seminars: \$25.00

**Maximum cost for a family:
\$50.00**

7PM to ??? Dinner at
En Japanese Steak House

All events (except dinner) are located at the
Smith Rd. Elementary School
1135 Smith Road
Temperance, MI 48182

Instructors, please encourage your students to attend.

TO MY FELLOW WHITE-BELTS

by Allan Lebbin

Hello to everyone in Karate. How does one start a note to far-reaching and variously qualified individuals? From the beginning? In a past newsletter there was a mention of a 69-year-old male white-belt in one of the schools. That student is myself.

I would like to address this to all the white-belts.

Listen to your Sensei!
Understand what you are being told.
Apply this to circumstances as they arise in your life.

An example of a circumstance in my life: I live in a rural section of Kentucky in the U.S.A. Getting to where I actually live is difficult. There are hills, which prevent you from seeing oncoming road traffic. One day I was on this road returning home when I met a pickup truck coming at me. We were both sharing too much of the road. I went to my right; he went to his right and out into a cornfield.

I looked back and saw that he was shaken but all right. I pulled over to a clearing and stopped. He, this apparent Sumo wrestler, came after me. I guess he was of the 50-year-old age and was determined to make a point. He proceeded to

strongly advise me that I was wrong. I realized his rage was too great for a confrontation. So it came to me, "The purpose of Karate is self defense", and I started saying, "Yes sir, "YES SIR" which brought about a change in both of us. I guess we calmed down and he decided not to push the issue, although he was approximately three feet from my face at this time. This could have been a bad scene.

That was about three months ago and I stay on my side of the road and have not seen him since. If there is an interest in how other situations in my life were handled through the teachings of Karate please, write to the Editor of the Newsletter. Thank you for your attention. If you have any circumstances in which karate has been used, I would like to hear about it.

In respect; Thank you Sensei.
White-belt, Allan L.

OVERCOMING ADVERSITY

by Kim Barrington

Karate has had such an influence on my life so much that I am not sure even where to begin.

I was born in 1953 and as a result of an injury that I sustained at the hospital following my birth, I lost my sight in the right eye and at a very young age, I started having epileptic seizures that resulted in temporary loss of my sight in my left eye that

would last from a few minutes to a full day. The seizure subsided around my seventeenth birthday but I continued to be blind in my right eye along with a learning disability. I was a child with lots of problems. I did not like myself nor did I care for any one else. You could even say that I had a dislike for the human race. I was picked on in school almost every day. Kids would make fun of me because I was in special education classes. I would get into fights. I carried a huge chip not only on one shoulder but also on both shoulders.

I started my training in Goju-Ryu the summer of 1972 with my three younger brothers which all seemed normal. To make a long story short, I struggled a lot but I refused to quit! No matter what the Sensei at the time may have liked, I continued training. Even after my three brothers left the program to do other things, I stayed with my training. It was hard to watch all of the other students get promoted but that just made me more determined to show them that I could do this. Going to classes two nights a week just wasn't enough. So when my Sensei at the time opened another dojo, I started going to class five nights a week plus Saturdays. After I made Green belt, I would help teach at the YMCA on Tuesday and Thursday from six to seven pm and then I would go to the dojo from seven thirty to nine thirty or later the rest of the week to train. It took me three years

and four months before I would test for my first Black belt rank. It was at that time that I would be asked to come to Sensei's office. As well you can imagine I was a little nervous. When I got there he said it was time we had a talk and I thought ok what did I do now? He said "Kim before I tell you if you were promoted or not, I have something that I need to say and you should hear from me and not anyone else". He went on to tell me that I was probably the worst or at least the most challenging student he has ever taught. He went on to say, "Out of all of your brothers, you were the one I wanted to see drop out of the class. You were so uncoordinated that you couldn't walk down a flight of stairs and chew gum and open the door at the same time when I got to the bottom." After telling me this, he awarded me my rank of Sho dan and went on to say that if I could make it to black belt he believed that just about anyone could make it. Soon afterwards, my older sister, Caroline, came up to me and said, "Kim please make me a promise that you will never stop taking or stop teaching karate. It taught you how to become a better person."

I continued to teach and train until I moved from Springfield to California in 1983. I started working for Disneyland in 1984. I loved my job. I worked the 11 to 7 shift. Then it happened. I was going home from work. It was the morning of June 21st, 1989, my older brother's birthday. I was to take

my brother and his family to the Queen Mary in Long Beach but that wouldn't come to be. Before I got home, I would be involved in an accident that landed me in the hospital. I was riding my motor scooter when a truck pulled out in front of me and stopped too soon for me to avoid hitting it. My left knee had gotten caught between the bed and the bumper of the truck and it ripped my leg almost completely off. As soon as I landed, I tried to stand up but as I looked down, I could see that my left leg was just hanging on by mere threads. There was only four inches of skin and the main artery holding my left leg on. I was rushed to the hospital where the doctors reattached my leg. The doctors told me that I might not be able to use my leg again. I would spend the next 6 months in a hospital bed where I would receive home treatments. The doctors asked me if I participated in any sports? I said, "Yes, before I moved here, I taught karate but why do you ask?" He went on to tell me that most likely my involvement in karate probably saved me from losing my leg. All the strength that I had in my leg from my training had helped the nerves to regenerate and the muscles heal a lot faster but I would remain in a wheelchair probably the rest of my life.

I moved back home to Springfield and started my own form of therapy. It was about this time that a very special lady came into my life. As we got to know each other,

conversations would bring old memories to mind. Memories about years past when I first helped run the Y's Goju-Ryu Karate club along with David Shaneman Sensei. I also had my own classes in which I taught karate and self-defense to students with disabilities even students in wheelchairs. She helped me to realize that I not only could get back into karate but also should go back. So I started working harder to do more things out of the wheelchair. Finally the big day came. I went back to classes with my wheelchair. It was great to be back in karate again. But I made one huge mistake; I pushed myself too hard and tried to do too much out of the wheelchair. I was back in the chair full time. I thought to myself maybe there is a good reason that I was put in this wheelchair. Maybe God had a better plan for my life. A year later, I tried again but this time I would take it slower. Thanks to the other black belts at the YMCA and especially Eric and Kathy Johnson, I am no longer using my wheelchair.

Two years ago, I started teaching classes at the First Church of the Nazarene and with the guidance of Ed Boyd Sensei and Gary Mazzotti Sensei, we became part of the Springfield Goju club and I have recently started the Riverton Goju Club.

DID YOU KNOW?

by Rich Stamper

Did you know that GKK business cards are available for Dan Rank members? The

organization will supply the first fifty free of charge. Contact our USA Director, Mr. Kevin Forsythe for details.

SOME MORE STORIES ABOUT WHY SOME OF US STARTED TRAINING.

Zak Zakland Sensei's Story:

Twenty-odd years ago, I was a flabby, out-of-shape guy in my early 40's who was pretty disgusted with his physical condition. I had never been athlete, but I did lift weights and play racquetball from time to time. A good friend and co-worker was a brown belt at the local brand-new Goju-Ryu dojo and kept nagging me to try it. After a while, I just got tired of his incessant prodding and came with him one night. For some reason, they allowed me to spar the first night and I remember being kicked in the ribs a few times. I'm a person who has strong persevering qualities, so if I start something, I can usually plod away until I succeed (I got a PhD this way, more or less). So I continued to come to the dojo. I guess (like Mark) I was hooked.

The first few months saw me slowly improving my physical conditioning and enjoying the camaraderie; there were a few karateka who began around the same time and we became friends, partners in the journey. After perhaps 6 months, I began to see a whole new aspect to karate, the mental/spiritual side as well as the physical, and then I was really hooked.

For the first few years, as I rose up the ranks very slowly, my biggest challenge was my own feeling of inadequacy: "what am I doing here with all these athletes in there 20's and 30's". But, I persevered with the help of excellent teachers and fellow students, and finally reached Sho dan after a dozen years. Just before my Sho dan, we joined GKK; this was a big upward leap for me and for our dojo. During this time karate became a "do" for me.

Now I am more of a teacher than performer, but the "do" is just as intense and important to me. We have a great dojo, with good teachers and students (we're all teachers and we're all students). I feel very fortunate and honored to be where I am.

Ken Klafft's Story:

I seem to have this oddly perverse approach to teaching myself things: if I'm afraid of it, force myself to do it to overcome the fear. Cases in point:

Fear of high places ~ 3 years of working on a state paint crew that painted 2nd and 3rd story window frames for the college dorms. Yes, the outsides. After that experience I seriously looked at applying for a job painting the support columns for the Mackinac Bridge. Regretfully, the waiting lists for the jobs were too long. I did end up teaching repelling at the college though.

Fear of being under water ~ Advanced open water SCUBA

certification. Cave and wreck diving, the works.

Fear of confrontation ~ bouncer at several different nightclubs (bonus: the opportunity to see several relatively popular bands of the time ~ Joan Jett, Mitch Ryder, Molly Hatchet to name a few. Geez, did I ever slap a number on my age, huh?)

After moving around the country for a few years, my wife and I settled in Toledo, Ohio. I'd wanted to get some exercise and I knew I needed a commitment or I'd eventually lose interest. Lifting weights didn't jump out at me, aerobics wasn't my thing either, and running? Those who know me would lay bets on the odds I'd even "finish" a 300-yard dash. I shop in the "short fat guy" department if you know what I mean ...

My new job sent me to a class on using a particular IBM computer and the fellow teaching the class seemed to be an OK guy. During a break I'd been chatting about looking for some type of exercise to shed a few pounds and he suggested attending a karate class held at a local church. I'm still not exactly sure what drew me to the class: the fact that this guy was pretty sincere about it being a good class (and he was going to be there), or the idea of a karate class full of tough guys that would eat me alive driving my "scared of it? do it" urge. At any rate, I showed up at the church auditorium, introduced myself and started trying my

best not to embarrass the heck out of myself. I distinctly remember being in the back of the room with my sweats on and looking at all those blue, green, brown and black belts and thinking "man, I'll never be like those guys." With this guy's help and the help of the Stampers, I'd actually gotten the hang of things. Along the way I've met some of the most interesting people and most of them I'd consider friends.

The other few, I'd consider close friends. Every last one of them is a straight-up decent

person (even if I think they spar with me purely for the entertainment value).

Although I'm stuck with unavoidable commitments this summer and can't go to class regularly, there is absolutely no way I can stay away from the classes, the people and the philosophy. (Sorry guys, you're stuck with me ...)

P.S. Forsythe Sensei was the teacher in that computer class.

November 2005

<u>1</u> Nat'l Comp. Team	8PM	Smith Rd. Elem.Sch.	Temperance, MI
<u>8</u> Nat'l Comp. Team	8PM	Smith Rd. Elem.Sch.	Temperance, MI
<u>11-13</u> Yamakura Sensei Seminars@		Smith Rd. Elem Sch.	Temperance MI
<u>15</u> Nat'l Comp. Team	8PM	Smith Rd. Elem.Sch.	Temperance, MI
<u>22</u> Nat'l Comp. Team	8PM	Smith Rd. Elem.Sch.	Temperance, MI
<u>25&26</u> Stamper Sensei Seminars @		Springfield Goju-Ryu	Springfield, ILL
<u>29</u> Nat's Comp. Team	8PM	Smith Rd. Elem Sch	Temperance, MI

Please contact individual schools for class schedules.

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