

## January 2011 Newsletter

# Goju-Ryu Karate-Do Kyokai



## Annual California Gasshuku & Black-Belt Promotions

by Dan Taylor

On December 17, 18, & 19, the GKK dojos of Visalia and Bakersfield, California, held their annual Gasshuku with Yamakura Hanshi. It was a time of new and

renewed learning for all. Hanshi taught all aspects of training in kihon, kata, bunkai, and kumite. Additionally, he gave in-depth instruction on the nature and development of ki.

This year's event was hosted by the Bakersfield Dojo, which did an outstanding job in the organization of this great time that was enjoyed by all who attended.

On Saturday evening, a banquet was held with Yamakura Hanshi making black-belt promotions as follows:

Robert DaLessio - Godan, Matthew Prillwitz - Nidan, Saul Velazquez - Shodan



## Visalia Karate-Do Christmas Demonstration and Awards

by Dan Taylor



On December 16, 2010, Visalia Karate-Do held its Christmas Demonstration and Awards. Fifty students participated in demonstrations which included kata, bunkai, kumite and bo-Jutsu. Special awards for outstanding student were awarded to Jeremy Burke, Sirely Lopez, Gabriella Rodriguez, and Clarissa Ramirez. Thirty-eight students were promoted in rank.

The following students participated in the event:

Bradley Abrams, Adriana Aguayo, Ronnie Ayala, L Jay Ayson, Jasmine Burke, Jeremy Burke, Jorge Campos, Cameron Darr, Sergio Diaz, James Duffin, Nathan Escobar, Anthony Guerrero, Bryan Herrera, Brandon Irving, Allison Lopez, Sirely Lopez, Andru McWilliams, Dorien Medina, Daniel Melchor, Jeffrey Murphy, Mitchell Nuckols, David Olinger, Hector Rangel, Gabriella Rodriguez, Jorge Rodriguez, Steven Santana, Gracie Schrader, Tiffany Steele, Amanda Wilds, Cameron Wiseman, Aaron Yang, Clarissa Ramirez, Leslie Zuniga, Angel Rodriguez, Daniel Ramirez Jr, Daniel Ramirez Sr, Saul Velazquez, Margaret Montalvo, Maria Montalvo, Jexuan Moreno, Diego Soto, Isaac Soto, Mary Reitz, Rachel Reitz, Mike Reitz, Lorena Beltran, Mathew Prillwitz, Rudy Vargas, Steven Clark.

## Did You Know?

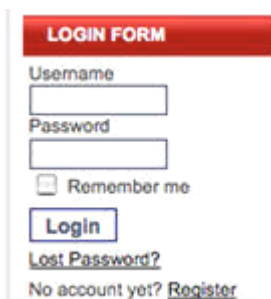
by Rich Stamper

Did you know that GKK Annual Renewal Fees remain the same this year as for the past twenty plus years? They do. We balance fees against what's needed to operate the organization and we're getting by with what we have largely because of all the volunteer effort that goes into administration. What a great group of people we have.

## About Goju.com, Official Website of the GKK

by Greg Dodge, GKK Marketing Director

I would like to invite all of our GKK members (black belt and kyu ranks) to visit and participate in our organization's official Website at <http://goju.com> . . . The site contains monthly articles from our GKK newsletters, direct article submissions by members, martial arts news, informational Website links, event announcements (tournaments, seminars, promotions, promotional results, GKK documents, GKK training aids, our GKK forums, and more.



We would also like to invite all of our members to register in our Members Only area so that they can download GKK documents, GKK training aids, and participate by posting on our GKK forums, or by submitting articles.

To register go to the homepage and on the left-hand side of the page you will find the "Log-In". At the bottom of the Log-in section you can register by clicking on the link that reads "No Account Yet? Register", or if you already have a password and user name just log-in. Once you log-in as a Registered Member a new navigation menu will open and you can access the content of the Members Only area.

We are also looking for some members who would be interested in acting as "Monitors" on our forums, or in starting their own forum on the site (i.e., Start and Market A GKK School, Question of the Day, Kids Corner, etc.). If you have suggestions, or an interest in participating yourself, please contact me at [gdodge@yahoo.com](mailto:gdodge@yahoo.com) and I will help get you started!

Your participation in and promotion of the Website to others helps GKK members from all over the world "stay-in-touch", and assists the Goju-Ryu Karate-Do Kyokai to continue in its goal of "teaching and promoting traditional karate-do".

Thank you for your kind assistance.

Greg Dodge, GKK Marketing Director, 2430 Georgetown Ave. Toledo, OH 43613, 419-392-0268, [gdodge300@yahoo.com](mailto:gdodge300@yahoo.com)

### Character Of Goju-Ryu

The Character of Goju-Ryu, a book subtitled Kata Implications for Experienced Practitioners, is available for shipment.

The theme of the book revolves around how to understand what Goju-Ryu kata have to teach, and to provide a methodology intended to help us learn how to learn from the kata – not just learn the kata.

As the title indicates, the book is intended for experienced practitioners (ni-dan and above) and assumes competence in kata performance exists. It is not a book about learning the kata or how to perform them – we already have excellent examples for that.

For those who seek an understanding of the lessons of kata the book should be a valuable resource. Because of the limited audience, only a minimum quantity will be printed

Written by Rich Stamper over the course of many years and containing 392 pages, the book can be obtained from HQ for \$24.95 (GKK members) with free shipping in the USA. Price for non-members is \$34.95 plus shipping.

Send orders to: GKK Publications, P.O. Box 8402, Toledo, OH 43623.

### [www.patriotfightgear.com](http://www.patriotfightgear.com)

by Jeffrey Sullens

New site guys, a few new brands. Your help spreading the word is greatly appreciated. We now have Fuji, Isami, kikskin, Tatami Fight Wear, Toraki, Mizuno, Ground Control, Vulkan and Tokon karate gi. I also have blank no logo Lucky style gi and blank no logo single weave gi. We have a lot up on the site already and should be finished by this weekend. Check out the site and if it is not up yet please just email @ [www.patriotfightgear.com](http://www.patriotfightgear.com) and I can help you out. Have a great Holiday everyone!

## And a Good Time Was Had by All

by Bill Handren

*"I want to thank all of the black belts who traveled to Springfield, Illinois to make our workout a great success and the GKK for their wonderful support. If it weren't for the GKK, our workout would not have been possible. The GKK is there if you just reach out and show you truly want to be part of the organization. We are truly a family. So, if you're thinking of joining the GKK, I hope you read this and understand they will be there to help you any way they can." - Kim Barrington, Springfield Goju-Ryu*

On December 10th and 11th, the Springfield Goju-Ryu held its first GKK Workout. There was over 300 years of combined experience by the dan grades who attended, and each contributed to this workout. Senseis Ken Maunz, Diane and Jim Jackson, Angie Monday, Dwight Scales, and Ed Myers traveled over six hours to attend the workout. Sensei Ray Walter drove up from the St. Louis area. Senseis Dave Shaneman, Ed Boyd, Gary Mazzotti, Kim Barrington and Deb Crawford of the Springfield Goju-Ryu hosted the event.

Friday evening was a black belt session. Each member demonstrated kata and the other members critiqued. Bunkai were also covered.

Saturday began with a children's class taught by senseis Maunz and Monday. After watching how much fun the children had, I'm pretty sure they will choose karate over Chuck-E-Cheese if given a choice. It takes a special skill to keep the little ones interested and enthused. Most impressive. While the children's class was being taught, the other black belts gathered in the racquetball court to work on kata and exchange evaluations and tips.

After the children were dismissed, everyone moved into the basketball court and broke into groups. Some teachers worked with the green belts, some with the brown belts and some worked on group kata. No one was really in charge. Each took a turn leading and offering his or her observations. This is what made the workout so enjoyable. There was so much going on at the same time, it was almost too much to take in.

During the group kata, two members would do a kata at the same time so everyone could see the differences in performance. This brought to light how each performer adds his or her emphasis on where speed and power are applied.



After lunch, the rest of the workout was conducted in the Training Room. Nearly four hours of demonstration, critique and insights. Each member took a turn demonstrating a bunkai which was then practiced by the group. Since takedown mats were set up, a good amount of time was spent on ground techniques. An interesting exercise was slow sparring

which allowed the members to use techniques which are normally not practiced in kumite because of the risk of injury. Around five PM, the workout ended, group photos were taken and all went out for dinner at Kiku Sushi and Steakhouse.



## A Couple of Old Guys Beat the Young Guys

by Mark Cramer

On November 21, three members of the GKK competition team traveled to the Greater Cleveland area to compete in the USA Karate Federation Championships. The results are as follows:

Arpan Patel (8 year old male novice) Kata -- Silver, Kumite -- Bronze

Yatri Patel (14 year old female beginner)Kata -- Gold, Kumite -- Gold

Mark Cramer (18 to 34 male advanced mandatory kata) Mandatory Kata -- Silver

John Barnes (a former GKK member) and I competed in the 18 to 34 year old division and beat all of the young guys to meet in the finals. John is in his 50s and I just turned 60. We both did Suparinpai, and John won on a close 3 to 2 split decision.

## Standing Basics

*"Most athletes succeed in spite of their training, rather than because of it."*

Several years ago, the mongoose was imported to the United States. The goal was to control the rattlesnake population in the Southwest. Problem was, the rattlesnake is faster than the cobra which the mongoose will kill. The rattlesnake has one move; it curls up and when you enter its striking range, it bites. The rattlesnake found the mongoose quite tasty.

Taking a handful of movements and drilling them to perfection makes sense. An opponent gets into striking range and you hit him before he can react. It is also a dirt simple tactic and the simpler the tactics, the greater the likelihood of being successful.

The GKK's Standing Basics is well balanced with ukes, strikes and kicks. The kicking portion of the Standing Basics addresses one of the weak points of kata. Kicking skill requires more effort to develop than striking skill and cannot be adequately developed through kata practice alone. One can argue that Goju is not a kicking style, but I would have to ask why then do karate? Low kicks are very effective for self defense and there is no excuse for not putting in the effort.

The Standing Basics allow a lot of techniques to be thrown in a minimum of time since no stepping is involved. A rate of one technique per second is a fairly easy pace for most. Doing fifty repetitions, with a ten second pause to close and open the next movement means you can do the four basic ukes and seven basic strikes in eleven minutes. Kicks run longer and are more exhausting, but a few hundred kicks can be done in ten minutes or so without sacrificing technique.

There is an optimal number of repetitions in all training. We reach a certain point in skill training where additional repetitions are disastrous to skill development. Technical skill is best developed when the opposing muscles are slightly fatigued to allow their relaxation, yet the active muscles are fresh enough to perform the skill properly. Going past a certain threshold will teach the active muscles a second, sloppy performance skill which will blend with the first. We actually undo some of the good and replace it with bad technique. The Standing Basics are arranged pretty well to minimize this. When certain sets of muscle fibers become fatigued, we have moved on to fresh sets without having to rest. This makes for a very time efficient program which allows a high level of skill training in under thirty minutes. If you choose less than fifty repetitions each, the time is naturally reduced. I've used fifty each for decades because I figure that's good enough without spending my life in the dojo.

Standing Basics also satisfy the aerobic component we need for good health. By the time ukes are done, my pulse has started to elevate and by the time kicks are done I'm searching for defibrillator paddles. Again, good enough. Doing aerobics for the sake of your circulatory system, is like putting a car in neutral and flooring the gas pedal to clean the fuel lines. Just as gas lines exist solely to feed an engine, the circulatory system is a support, not primary system. There has been a shift in aerobic thinking to the use of shorter, more intense activity in place of long, slow aerobic training. Intensity rather than duration. We kill two birds with one stone in the Standing Basics; martial skill is developed and our circulatory system gets a good workout as a by-product. The repetitive stress injuries from aerobics are avoided. No, this won't prepare you for a marathon; exercise is highly specific. Running will not improve your karate and karate won't improve your running. If you want a higher level of fitness, spend less time talking in the dojo and more time training.

In medicine, there is the concept of maximum therapeutic dosage. One Tylenol won't stop your headache, ten Tylenol will kill your liver. Dosages must be exact to get the desired results. Not too little, not too much. The same for exercise; training must challenge, neither coast nor cripple.

Arguably, the single greatest gift the Japanese gave to karate is organization. Training should be logical and methodical. The standing basics are a superb example of this organizational skill. In addition to the GKK, other karate groups such as the Goju Kai, Seigokan, Kyokushinkai and others also use this program. It develops skill in multiple planes of movement.

There are basically five directions in which you can hit an opponent: left, right, over, under and through. The Standing Basics build skill in all five directions. If we leave kata completely out of the picture, the practice of standing basics will develop a reasonable amount of martial skill. Add a target for as many of the movements as possible, and you will also correct one of the flaws of simply tossing techniques into thin air. For maximum training efficiency, using targets will provide the necessary feedback during the standing basics. Of course, this is difficult to do in class, but I assume the bulk of one's training is done alone. Class is for instruction, your own time is for training. Visit a boxing gym sometime and watch how they train. You won't see a coach guiding his students through a session. He corrects, you go off to a corner and practice.

The Standing Basics are neglected by many. There seems to be a train of thinking that the more I learn, the better skilled I will become. But, that is backwards. We end up as walking encyclopedias of things we can't make work reflexively. It is perfection of the few not the familiarity of the many that counts.

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