

June 2011 Newsletter
Goju-Ryu Karate-Do Kyokai



Bedford GKK Seminars

by Mark Cramer

On Saturday, May 14, the Bedford GKK hosted three seminars which were conducted by Mr. Motoo Yamakura, Hanshi. Forty-one students from a wide range of ages and experience levels attended the seminars. Some of those in attendance were as young as 7 years old and only 8th kyu beginners. Others were senior instructors in their 60s with 7th dan credentials.

Mr. Yamakura had something to offer all of those who came to workout and learn. Everyone left the sessions drenched with perspiration, and everyone left with something to contemplate regarding their training.

Annual Meeting 2011

by Rich Stamper

The GKK 2011 Annual Meeting was called to order at 6: 31 P.M. on Saturday, May 14, 2011. About thirty-five GKK members were in attendance.

Opening remarks recognized the contributions of Yamakura Shihan and particularly the seminar provided that day. Thanks also went to Mr. Mark Cramer for procuring the facility and to our contingent from Illinois for assistance with the promotion.

It was announced that programs have recently been established in Armenia and Germany. Our thanks go to our CEO Mr. Ed Myers for facilitating their membership and a welcome to our new members.

Highlights from the annual reports of several of our member countries were then presented.

Next was the Treasurer's Report. Our income and expenses remain about equal and reflect past years performance. Copies of the Treasurer's Report are available upon request.

The recipients of this year's prestigious Chairman's Award were announced and a brief summary of their contributions to the GKK stated. Awards were presented to Ms. Deb Crawford (USA) and Mr. Gustavo Munoz (Argentina).

Special recognition was given to Mr. Greg Dodge for his outstanding work on our website. There have been many updates and improvements incorporated recently and all members should check it out. An exclusive autobiography by Izumikawa Kanki Sensei procured by Mr. Jack Coleman also appears there.

New Business includes:

Mr. Mark Cramer requested consideration and clarification on our position for Junior Sho-dan awards. Mr. Cramer presented a clear and compelling presentation of the need for Sho-dan certification for some of those under the age of sixteen. There was general agreement. Our current position is that minimum age for full Sho-dan is sixteen years of age, and by extension, the minimum age for Ni-dan is eighteen. Our long standing practice is that Sho-dan may be awarded prior to age sixteen with the stipulation that confirmation testing is required at age sixteen. Resolved.

Mr. Dan Taylor supplied a very well written proposal for review and consideration of two potential organization enhancing suggestions. These are: (1) standardization of our kata practice to align with the JKF; and (2) obtaining GKK membership in an international organization such as FAJKO Goju-Kai or D.N.B.K. It is important to note that suggestions of ways to enhance our GKK are sought out and appreciated.

(1) After some discussion, it was reported that our initial agreement with Yamakura Shihan stipulates he is the GKK Technical Authority and exclusive source for our training including kata. We will abide by that agreement as a matter of honor as well as expressing our appreciation for what defines us as an organization. It was resolved that our members are allowed to learn and practice the JKF versions of the kata for use in various non-GKK events, but that competency in the training precisely as presented by Yamakura Shihan is required for promotion.

(2) After some discussion of international membership for the GKK, it was decided to send to committee for further investigation. The committee consists of Mr. Dan Taylor, Mr. Rich Stamper, Mr. Ken Maunz, Mr. Mark Cramer, Mr. Dave Shanemen, Mr. Dwight Scales, Mr. Ed Myers and Mr. Ed Boyd. The recommendation of the committee is to be submitted by 9-1-11.

After requesting additional new business (none) and making closing comments, it was motioned and seconded to adjourn at 7:14 P.M.

2011 Chairman Awards

Deb Crawford

Ms. Deb received the Chairman's Award for her contribution to the GKK as Business Manager, running the day-to day administrative operations. This often comprises trying to keep Mr. Ed Boyd out of trouble.

She creates membership cards and sends them and patches to all new members, and files and maintains the extensive records system.

She is a wife, a mother and dedicated karate student.

Ms. Deb has been practicing karate for several years and was promoted to Sho-dan in 2010. She is an assistant instructor teaching children's classes in the Springfield, IL dojo.

In addition she works full time for the great state of Illinois and has a pretty good reverse punch.....Ed Boyd

Gustavo Munoz

Gustavo started practicing karate at the age of twelve and in 1985 he started to train in Goju Ryu. In 2000 he started to teach.

He joined the GKK on November 9, 2009 and is the National Director for Argentina. As a new member of the GKK he needed to learn Kihon Kata, Uke No and Yaku Soku Kumite all from the DVDs. As the director he required his students to also learn these.

He started a course of self-defense for women. He instructed a lot of effective techniques with the object that the women can confront difficult situations. At the end of the course, he gave them didactic material and a cd with the training and self-defense given during the course.

Gustavo organized several Gasshukus for his students. Several of these were for GKK members only while others were multi-style events.

In 2010 Gustavo was promoted to San Dan. He now has fifteen members and two new Sho Dans. He has been a good addition to the GKK family and is representing us well.....Ed Myers

Book Review: by Steve Wilson

In "[The Character of Goju-Ryu, Kata Implications for Experienced Practitioners](#)", Mr. Stamper does an amazing job of discussing, analyzing, exploring, explaining, and evaluating the kata of Goju Ryu. The book perfectly recites so many thoughts, processes, questions, and journeys I myself have taken during the thirty-eight years I have studied Goju Ryu. Mr. Stamper explains each of those processes very clearly. He put into words many thoughts and experiences I personally have had but that I could never properly explain or convey to my peers or students in the manner that I was seeking to express myself.

He "very clearly" explains the difference between "Do" of modern day traditional karate intended for the general public and the "Te, Bujutsu, or Koryu (classical) kata practice before it was taught to the public. He not only explains the differences but explains why those differences exist, the reasons/purpose for both methods, and why both methods were/are necessary for those interested. Due to his wonderful work and ability to express his martial education and analysis so clearly, he will save me hours upon hours of explanation and discussion with my advanced students. Now I can say, "read this book" and then we can have a wonderful meaningful discussion!

I'm impressed and envious that Mr. Stamper was able to discern the complexity and meaning of the ancient Koryu kata of Bujutsu, that I could not. I remained confused for many years and unlike Mr. Stamper; who was able to analyze, break down, and "figure out" the real meanings and purposes on his own; I had to have it explained to me via a first generation 89 year old direct student of Miyagi Chojun Sensei. Much of what Mr. Stamper shares in his book is VERY similar indeed, to what that first generation student from 1930 shared with me. In short, Mr. Stamper's analysis is on the money... This precious resource made the lessons received from that first generation student even more clear and tied up some loose ends I still struggled with due that resource having passed away.

I am so grateful to Mr. Stamper for taking the time and energy to share his vast experience and understanding with the rest of us. There are many "master" who could learn a lot by reading this book! From my perspective this book is a must read by every serious practitioner of Karate-Do. It will be required reading for all of my Yudansha. Mr. Stamper, thank you so much!

"Man is the only varmint who sets his own trap, baits it, then steps on it".....John Steinbeck

Randall J. Strossen holds a PhD. in psychology from Stanford. He has authored several books, is the editor of "Milo" and the head of Ironmind Enterprises, a world renowned strength training equipment manufacturer. He was once asked what the secret was to getting big and strong. His answer: "don't hurt yourself." I found this to be such a profound statement, I made a sign which hangs in my gym with those three words. Maybe I should have put the sign in a more conspicuous place.....

I imagined my wife's words as I was headed face first towards the floor. As my dojo floor was rising up to smack me silly, I was pretty sure she would again say "I can't leave you alone for a minute" when she came home. I would be found hanging upside down, one ankle snared in my latest martial arts invention.

I am always looking for new pieces of training equipment. Something which will give me the "edge." My latest discovery was the boat cushion which I found at a thrift store for a dollar. It seemed like the perfect kicking target. Something that would offer feedback, have a fast return and if it didn't work out I would only be out a dollar. It even came with a hanging strap!

Well, actually two straps. I guess the person drowning is supposed to grab a strap in each hand and hang on as they float. "No need to cut the second strap", I thought. After all, a second strap would be a good backup when the first strap wears through.

So, I screwed a sturdy hook into a rafter, hung the pad on it and had an instant training partner.

The first roundhouse test kicks went well. I was pleased with myself. Some side kicks were in order. Somewhere around the third kick, I realized I should have secured the second strap. I managed to run my foot through the bottom strap and was snared like a giant turkey whose wishbone was about to be snapped. Then, I lost my balance. Another "this is gonna hurt" moment was about to happen as I headed down.

There must a martial arts guardian angel. Although I slammed my head and shoulders onto the floor, my snared foot slipped out. Any endeavor which doesn't break or tear some body part is successful I suppose. A smart man would learn to stop with the inventing, but I tend to see these things as challenges. Surely, I will do better with the next invention.

Uh, not exactly. "Bungee Man", was to be the crowning achievement of several decades of designing. The ultimate poor man's training partner. One who never tires or complains. Always ready for a workout regardless of the hour. He would be the ultimate tool - silent, so as not to wake the neighborhood - have a fast return yet, not wobble - and have that "just right" feel when struck.

I designed and re-designed like an eight year old engineer not quite yet aware of all that needs to be considered. It would be a masterpiece. I cut five strips of three-quarter inch thick plywood on my table saw. The basement smoke alarm went off a few times, but by now my wife had come to regard it as a warning I was using power tools. I really should sharpen the blade. The five plywood strips were about three feet long by six inches wide. I glued them together, one on top of the other and emerged from my smoky workshop with the perfect wooden dummy. I taped a piece of scrap carpet to the boards as a bit of padding. A heavy duty eye hook at each of the four outer corners and I was ready for the bungee cords.

I put two more eye hooks about six feet apart from each other into a rafter and directly below each I screwed an eye hook into the dojo floor. Bungee Man would be suspended from the rafter with two heavy duty bungee cords, and secured at the bottom with two more cords. It resembled a big "X" after I had it all assembled. I couldn't wait to test it.

I threw a light right punch into the center of the boards and to my disappointment, the thing oscillated horribly. I was crushed. Several hours of work down the drain and I was mad. I did what any mature craftsman would do with a not quite perfect project - I smoked a thunderous straight right into the center of Bungee Man.

My project sailed backwards a good four feet. I forgot that all this elastic energy would cause it to return just as hard as it went out. Karateka make the mistake of not pulling the fist back after a punch. My invention smashed my outstretched fist like a crazed Catholic nun and buckled my wrist. I was sort of lucky, it didn't break the wrist. I had sprained my wrist so many times on the heavy bag, I had become sort of an expert on wrist trauma. Despite some difficulty feeding myself for a few days, all was OK.

If you want to excel at a physical activity, nothing will impede progress more than an injury. And sometimes those injuries become permanent training partners. So, I've learned to be ever vigilant when it comes to training. Just because everyone else may be doing something doesn't mean I will. I will not train on a concrete floor. Mouth guard and eye protection are the rule. Staying hydrated is mandatory. Hurting gets old and it sometimes takes a lifetime to learn better.

In a fight, one must expect injuries. But in training, every cut, sprain, break, dislocation, tear and contusion takes you two steps backward for every step forward. There is a huge difference between training as hard as you can and knowing when to back off.

And, sometimes a little forethought is all that stands between you and serious injury.

Did You Know?

by Rich Stamper

Did you know that Mr. Greg Dodge has recently made extensive up-dates and improvements to our website? Mr. Greg was the designer of our website originally and he continues to invest a great deal of time and effort into maintaining and enhancing it. A wonderful contribution for us all. You owe it to yourself to check it out.

New Web Page

by Greg Dodge

Please check out our new GKK Publications Books & DVD's page at <http://www.goju.com/content/view/260/72/lang,en/> or just go to goju.com and click on the new ad banner, or click on GKK Publications in the menu.

Also, don't forget to catch-up on the latest articles and news that were just posted to the site!

Big Fat One-Eyed Crippled Black Belt Runs Off Intruders

by Kim Barrington

At 12:45 am Friday morning, two male intruders broke down the door to my home in Springfield, Illinois. Earlier, I had gone into the other bedroom to lay down and watch a dvd. Trish yelled from the other room that someone had pulled into the driveway and was coming to the door. Before I could make it to the door, Trish had already opened it. The person asked if a "John" lived here. Trish told him he had the wrong house, and closed the door. We thought this was suspicious.

The intruders thought Trish was home alone, because suddenly they kicked in the front door. I had returned to the other room by this time. The larger of the two was stunned when he realized I was home and did everything he could to get out of there. I was about to grab him and hit him with a right punch, when I tripped over a box at the end of the bed. They both shot out the door and were last seen running east as fast as they could.

*The happiest people don't necessarily have the best of everything;
they just make the best of everything they have.
'Life isn't about how to survive the storm,
but how to dance in the rain..'*

M. Yamakura	Chairman	3763 Old Creek Road, Troy, MI 48084	chairman@goju.com
Ed Myers	CEO	11568 Reed Road, Whitehouse, OH 43571	ceo@goju.com
Ed Boyd	USA Director	6 Skyview Drive, Springfield, IL 62707	director.us@goju.com
Deb Crawford	USA Business Manager	5705 Northlake Road, Springfield, IL 62711	sharpda71@msn.com
Bill Handren	Newsletter Editor	115 West North Street, Dwight, IL 60420	yokagawa2002@yahoo.com