

September 2015 Newsletter  
**Goju-Ryu Karate-Do Kyokai**

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### **New GKK Dojo**

We are pleased to announce our newest GKK School, the Bushin Kan Dojo, led by Mr. Roger Lewis in Elizabethville, PA. The dojo is hosted by the Northern Dauphin County YMCA and there is consideration of a second school in nearby Millersburg, PA.

Mr. Lewis has practiced and taught martial arts for many years. Now retired from the Armed Forces, his former students include members of the service as well as the general public. In addition to Goju-Ryu he has experience in a broad range of martial arts with emphasis on practical application.

The dojo will also be part of the Y's outreach program for at-risk children. Mr. Lewis has experience working with kids from impoverished neighborhoods and is quite accomplished at that type of mentoring.

Our congratulations to Mr. Lewis on this welcome addition to the GKK and for his willingness to share his expertise with others.

### **Seminar – Ju Aspect of Goju-Ryu**

By Rich Stamper

A seminar to introduce the Ju (soft, gentle) aspect of Goju-Ryu will be presented by Rich Stamper on Saturday September 26, 2015 at the Black Swamp Dojo in Whitehouse, OH (Toledo area). Attendance will be for dan rank practitioners only and limited to twenty participants.

The seminar will be in two sessions, each approximately three hours in duration. The fundamental concepts of the Ju aspect for both controlling and attacking will be the basis of this introductory seminar. A light lunch will be provided.

The seminar is not about mawashi-uke or kaki-uke. It is not block and counter training. It is about the energy available through the use of the Ju aspect and its effectiveness. It is about concepts not usually taught. An open, receptive, beginner's mind is required to grasp and utilize this often neglected and seldom demonstrated fundamental aspect of Goju-Ryu.

The first session will be held from 10:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. The second session will be held from 2:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M. Both sessions are to be attended as different fundamental concepts will be taught at each. The fee of \$40 is to be submitted along with the application and waiver.

For more information, application and waiver, contact [gkkhq@goju.com](mailto:gkkhq@goju.com). Indicate: Ju Seminar.

### **So What Do You Say?**

By Rich Stamper

At testing time, even for our higher dan rank members, I typically request performance of our 'simplest' basics. This usually entails standing in Sanchin stance and doing seiken zuki, age uke, mae geri, and so on. I also typically request simple moving basics. The early stuff, what we first learned.

It is not about the techniques themselves, it is about the concepts behind the 'simple' basics that I am interested in and looking for. The sequence of events, the flow, demonstration of understanding and utilization of the body to accomplish the goal, are the factors I consider for promotion.

I believe a black belt can learn more from a beginner class than a beginner can learn from a black belt class. So, what do you say?

The Japan trip was wonderful and very successful. We accomplished what we were scheduled for. Most of the days were hot and humid, but we saw sunshine all the time. Only blemish we had was typhoon 11 and 12 which came in during the Gion festival and rained three days.

We visited the Seigokan Karate tournament and were welcomed by all Seigokan dignitaries. We were invited to the head table during the tournament, and also invited to the head table during the reception party. We were welcomed by my college Karate club members and graduates. It was a very nice atmosphere with Sebastian, Roger and karate senseis, as well as our graduate karate members. This was a successful "Good Will" visit. As for sightseeing, Roger and I visited the Kashima Shrine (Budo God), watched Sumo wrestling, soaked ourselves in the hot springs resort and watched fireworks at the Tenjin river.....Motoo Yamakura

## Japan Trip

By Roger Bartnick

This article will include an introduction of the trip, interesting observations, itinerary and pictures. This trip was a great addition to my involvement with GoJu Ryu for the past 30 years in Toledo, Ohio. I presently reside in Florida.

Travelling two weeks in Japan with Shihan Yamakura was a true adventure and a great learning experience. His planning and organization of the trip was more than I expected. It was not just going to a destination but how to get there via the JR (Japanese Railway Bullet Train, subway, trolley, bus, an occasional taxi and lots of walking). Since all signs were predominately in Japanese it was crucial not to lose sight of Yamakura-Sensei. Getting lost was not an option.

Protocol was very important. I was Roger or Bartnick-San, Shihan was Yamakura-Sensei. His friends were Hotta-San, and Tanaka-San. We had numerous day excursions with them which included visiting downtown Kyoto with the giant Ferris wheel, festivals, fireworks, shopping, and staying at a spa resort in the mountains. It was an adjustment sitting in the back seat and seeing them drive on the left side of the road with the steering wheel on the right side. They were so cordial that I felt an immediate friendship with them.

The Japanese Yen currency was a relatively easy adjustment. The coins were 1,5, 10, 50, 100 and 500 yen. The paper was 1,000, 5,000, 10,000 yen and higher. Before long I had a full pocket of change cashing just paper yen.

### Interesting Observations

The towns, public transportation, highways, hotels, restaurants, etc. were all immaculate. If there were smokers they stayed invisible. There was NO use of cell phones on public transportation. It was the courtesy of the travelers. There were no signs whatsoever that cell phones were not allowed. So taking the Bullet Train was quiet and peaceful. There were hundreds of bicycles and scooters used for transportation. Very few had locks.

Meals always consisted of a bowl of rice and usually some type of noodles. Dinner meals often had an assortment of 10 – 15 various appetizers as the main entree. Hot tea, cold green tea, coffee, Asahi beer, and sake seemed to be the beverages of choice. Chop sticks were always used.

The ladies and gentlemen were conservatively dressed. The men typically in dark slacks and long sleeved white dress shirts and polo type shirt after work. The ladies wore dresses.



### Itinerary

The trip was from July 13 to July 26, 2016. There is a thirteen hour time difference.

**Day 1:** Hotel Saibo, Tokyo. Room key controlled the lights and A/C. When leaving the room, removing the key card from the designated card slot would shut off all power. Walked the lighted streets of Tokyo.

**Day 2:** Hotel New Commander, Neyagawa. Visited the hometown of Yamakura-Sensei. A small community that according to Yamakura-Sensei hasn't changed much over the years. Welcomed by his sister.



**Day 3:** Kyoto, Gion Festival. Floats, parade, vendors, open market, and other various activities.

Myomanji Temple. Very serene and beautiful

**Day 4:** A surprise banquet at the New Commander Hotel. Many of Yamakura-Sensei's friends having a great get together

Didn't know how to speak Japanese but didn't seem to be an issue having fun.



**Day 5:** A day with Sebastian Pirrone, GKK Canada, walking the town of Neyagawa. Had a great day but got lost and took the taxi back to the hotel

**Day 6:** Himeji Nikko Hotel, Himeji. Attended the 70th anniversary of the All Japan Karate Championship tournament. Six rings all going at one time.



Attended the tournament banquet that evening with all the high ranking officials. Once again, the courtesies extended were great.



**Day 7:** Attended the final day of the tournament. Interesting to watch the difference in sparring techniques among the black belts,

Visited the Himeji Castle, a fortress of many battles of years past.



**Day 8:** Fushimi Inari Shrine. A spectacular shrine maintained perfectly. The history and architecture is unbelievable.

**Day 9:** Hotel Wing. Visited the Kashima Shrine. Another shrine but each shrine is unique to its own. The landscape, the architecture is all different.



**Day 10:** Sumo Match. These 375 to 450 lb. sumos are limber, strong, quick and use a lot of finesse and strategy when fighting. They try to psych out their opponent in this 15 foot diameter ring. Some battles are quick and others can last much longer.

**Day 11:** Kobe. Arima View Hotel.

This is a hot springs resort hotel in the mountains. The springs, saunas, spas, and view are a complete relaxation resort in true tradition.

Yamakura-Sensei, Hotta-San, Tanaka-San and I shared a large room and slept on the floor with comfortable mats. Walked the streets at night wearing our Japanese robes.



**Day 12:** Rode the Giant Ferris Wheel in Kobe, a cable car ride into the mountain, saw the Herb Garden in the mountains, and the Rokkosan Pasture in Kobe.

**Day 13:** Tenjin Matsuri Fireworks Festival. Tradition of festivals date back hundreds of years. They continue to grow and get more fantastic each time.

I may have missed a day of travel but shared most experiences.

Fly back to Florida at 582 mph, 36, 000 feet, 15 hours, for the 6,423 mile flight.

Thank you once again to Yamakura-Sensei, Hotta-San, Tanaka-San and their many friends and associates for the courtesy and hospitality.

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