

February 2016 Newsletter

Goju-Ryu Karate-Do Kyokai

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GKK Annual Dues

By Ed Myers

Hello GKK members, Dojo Leaders and National Directors. It is once again time to collect the annual dues and update the active member list. Dan ranks are \$25 and Kyu ranks are \$15. Dojo Leaders are to send this to your National Director. For example, Frank Matt (Dojo Leader) of the Corinth Goju Dojo in New York will send their dues and active member list to the USA Director, Dwight Scales. The National Directors are to send the active member list (in Excel or word) and dues to Ed Myers (CEO). This is all due by April 1st.”

The Calculus of Karate

By Rich Stamper

Experienced practitioners continue to develop through a special kind of evolution. At some point each considers paths for future growth and makes a decision about which method to continue. Usually that involves making a choice between continuing along the well known training regimen path or venturing onto a path that is interesting from the point of understanding the nature of karate in the global sense.

There is strong motivation to continue on the well known (and popular) path of incremental improvement and refining fine detail. There is momentum there, it is familiar territory, and besides, everyone does it. It is sort of natural and intuitive to just do more of the same but do it a little better, a little stronger, a little faster, a little smoother, a little more like some arbitrary standard of performance, and so on.

Another common path is to study a different style of karate or to investigate an alternate martial art such as jujitsu, judo, kendo, Tai Chi Chuan, or similar that is deemed to supplement or enhance our primary practice. It is typical for experienced practitioners to have dan rank in other arts, and that study will also follow the well known and well worn path of each particular discipline.

So at some point (or points) paths are considered. Stay on the current path, take an alternate but complementary path, or, very rarely, venture out beyond the typical.

As we all know, there was a selection of paths made in the early nineteenth centuries that affected martial arts as we practice them today. Martial methods were pretty much secret and only known by a select few at that time and that is still the case today. When it was in vogue to present arts to the general public for various reasons a different path was presented and was immensely popular. Jujitsu became judo, te became karate, sword became kendo, and so on. That path is well traveled and followed today by almost all – it is known as Martial Arts.

So at that time of selection did the original paths of martial methods just disappear? No, they did not, and they remain just as secret and selective as they were originally. There are two primary paths for what we generally describe as karate: the original exclusive Method and the now extensively well known Art. One path is seldom traveled and hard to find, the other broad and deep and very well known.

In the late nineteenth century every fourth grade student knew how many pecks were in a bushel (four) and how many quarts in a peck (eight) and used that information in school and at home. Now we don't teach or use it as much if at all, but that path of education still exists. It is the same with karate, the old path still exists - it's just hard to find and rarely taught.

Science advances based upon what is currently known. It is subject to rigor and that drives efforts in a specific direction. Yet, it is the path that isn't obvious and of natural progression, or has been overlooked, that often yields breakthroughs. Just something to think about.

“Every man prefers belief to the exercise of judgment”. Seneca

Did You Know

By Rich Stamper

Did you know that all dan rank members are to submit at least one article to our Newsletter each year? Yep, Yamakura Shihan said so. You have heard this before, probably once a year. We have too much knowledge not to share, so share.

Great Lakes Seiwa Kai Friendship Tournament

By Mark Cramer

Saturday, February 6, 2016 - Douglas Road School Gymnasium, 6875 Douglas Road, Lambertville, MI 48144

9:00 TO 10:00 Late Registration, 10:00 Competition Begins

For more information contact Mark Cramer at: Colette.cramer@att.net

The Point © By Bill Handren

Big Red, Part II

"It is the teacher's responsibility to teach. It is the student's responsibility to learn" Motoo Yamakura

I laughed. Ringside boxing equipment was offering a water filled heavy bag with a three year warranty. They called it the Powair. My Everlast canvas bags never made it past a year. The Nevatears held up around fifteen months. By then the bags had so much duct tape wrapped around the owies they looked like a hillbilly's La-Z-Boy. I ordered the bag figuring Ringside would rue the day they sent the thing to me.



I built a beefed up bag hanger, hung my red haired stepchild in my basement gym, filled it with 130 pounds of water and pounded away. I loved it. It felt "right." It required true "hydrostatic shock" to make the bag dance. Momentum. You know it when you feel it. Human like.

Since it is water filled it doesn't bottom pack like the other bags. Stuffed bags become rock hard at the bottom after awhile and spongy in the middle. The "dead" weight of the Powair is unlike a makiwara which pushes back against the puncher.

I would later learn George Foreman loved the bag. Iron Mike Tyson can be seen here using one;

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hBQg_f5q4Kk

My daughter's boyfriend was an amateur boxer and he wanted to show off a bit. He pounded on it for several minutes. My wife later told me she knew I wasn't hitting it; "The furniture upstairs wasn't bouncing." I nicknamed the bag "Big Red". My Big Red teacher was constantly dropping hints. It refined striking, punching and kicking better than any tool I have tried.

Time passed. The bag workouts escalated into grudge matches. I was determined to make good on the warranty, but the bag defied me. Despite beatings that would make a North Korean prison guard applaud, it showed no signs of wear.

I found the warranty the other day, tucked away in a file cabinet. Big Red is over thirty years old and still hangs defiantly in my gym. It is now as old as I was when I first started this affair. We have trained and aged together. A love / hate relationship. It may have lost a pound or two through evaporation. I've gained several

In the end, I believe it will be declared the victor.

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