

Feb 2018 Newsletter  
Goju-Ryu Karate-Do Kyokai

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**Hello GKK members, Dojo Leaders and National Directors**

By Ed Myers

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.”

**SAVE THE DATE:** Please make plans to join us for our Spring Seminar and annual business meeting the weekend after Mother's Day - May 18th and 19th - in Toledo, Ohio. More details to come.

Dojo Leaders, we are asking that you do your best to have at least one representative from your dojo, as well as yourself, attend this year. We look forward to seeing you the weekend of May 18th and 19th in Toledo.....Dwight Scales

**Lights Out**

By Rich Stamper

“Mastery does not come from memorization and repetition. Real mastery comes from understanding the principles and learning how they hold up when put to the test.”

My Golden Gloves coach said there are two rules. 1. Hit the other guy. 2. Don't get hit. Oh, if it were really that simple. However, those two rules do define and exemplify the principle, the idea behind the practice. I may not have understood that concept at the time but I do now.

Boxing is about competition and it is not theoretical – the winner and loser are clearly determined in a real, full contact match. Judo is the same in that regard. One's ability is identified for all to see in full contact matches and, at least back in the day when I was active, promotions were a function of tournament wins. Yep, same thing with wrestling in high school. Participants are put to the test in a full contact match.

I have seen lots of people who could talk a good fight. I have heard all kinds of theories and the “if they do this, you do that” sorts of things. Doesn't matter until put to the test in a real, full contact situation with an opponent who's trying to incapacitate - you. It's about how well the theories and principles hold up. If one understands them that is. Understands and can use.

Recently, I read about a physics professor (unnamed) who told his class: “Don't trust me. If you don't question everything I say here in class, if you don't go home and check it yourself because you're skeptical and refuse to take my word for it, then you don't belong here, and you're going to have a hard time making it in physics.” I wonder how many instructors in any discipline say such a thing, yet the logic is obvious. It is the standard testing of a hypothesis described by the scientific method. Does it hold up when put to the test – a real test.

Understanding the underlying principles is the part that is often bypassed or overlooked by rote memorization and repetition. One can perform certain actions with no understanding of the principles behind them and can learn them one at a time. However, if the fundamental principles are understood then that understanding will manifest in many ways including ones never before encountered or practiced. See rules number one and two above.

I discovered there is a big difference between how hard a twelve year old boy can punch and how hard a seventeen year old boy can punch. In my early years boxing as a young kid we pretty much went by points because no one could knock the other person out or down. Well, that all changed when I resumed at age seventeen. First time back in the ring I must have forgot rule number two. Lights out. Let me tell you friends, it's the one you don't see that gets ya. I put in the time and thought I was up to speed, but when put to the test, well, reality won out. Over the course of a year I got it back together, but there is just too much chaos and uncertainty in a real match - where someone is doing their darndest to knock you out - to rely on skill and repetition on the bag. I learned the principles. When forced to. And it worked.

I suppose in most any discipline there are those who are posers and those who understand. Real mastery comes from understanding the principles and learning how they hold up when put to the test.

## Sad News – The Passing of Leo Lipinski Shihan

Hachidan Seiwa Kai; Hachi Dan JKF Goju Kai;  
President JKF Goju Kai Europe; Vice President Seiwa Kai International

By Mark Cramer



Well-known and highly respected across the globe, Leo Lipinski Shihan was a great karateka and a superb teacher. He inspired many, and will be missed by all whose lives he touched.

As a young man just beginning his karate training, he would go down to the docks in Durban, South Africa and ask Japanese merchantmen if they knew karate. If they did, he would ask them for lessons. This request for lessons was also a form of a challenge. During these encounters, he kept what was good, discarded what wasn't, and focused on what worked. This made him a very tough individual.

South Africa was at the height of its apartheid regime, during his early years of teaching Goju Ryu Karatedo. However, Leo Shihan opened his dojo to all races despite harassment from the police and threats of retribution from the government. This defiance of what he knew was morally wrong took tremendous courage, but Leo Shihan looked at a person's character before he looked at anything else. He knew what was right, and he followed his convictions.

In his quest for mastery of Goju Ryu Karatedo, Leo Shihan met Shuji Tasaki Shihan and joined the Seiwa Kai organization. Immediately, he knew that he had found the right man to follow. Through Tasaki Shihan he met Seiichi Fujiwara Shihan and together they made Seiwa Kai the first-rate international karate organization that it has become today.

As the Chief Instructor of Seiwa Kai Europe, Leo Shihan was single-minded about finding the best Goju-Ryu practitioners for the Seiwa Kai. As was the case in South Africa, he was unconcerned about borders or political regimes.

Leo Shihan was the founder of the first International Seiwa Kai Seminar in Omagari, Japan and helped to pave the way for future generations of karateka to study and learn Goju Ryu Karatedo in Japan. It is a tribute to both the Seiwa Kai and to Leo Shihan that Seiwa Kai members from across the globe train annually in Japan as a band of brothers and sisters of Goju Ryu Karatedo. There is scant mention of nationalities, politics, or regimes.

As President and Chief Instructor of JKF Goju Kai Europe, he was able to bring together sixteen different and diverse national organizations and transform these groups into single smooth-running organization. Once again, nationality and politics played no part in Leo Lipinski Shihan's style of leadership. His focus was always on developing a person's character and perfecting their Karatedo skills. This is one of the many the reasons that he became the only non-Japanese to achieve a JKF Goju Kai Hachidan.

He leaves a legacy of strong leadership and the ability to teach all people equally regardless of color, nationality, or politics. He will be greatly missed in the world of traditional Karatedo.



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