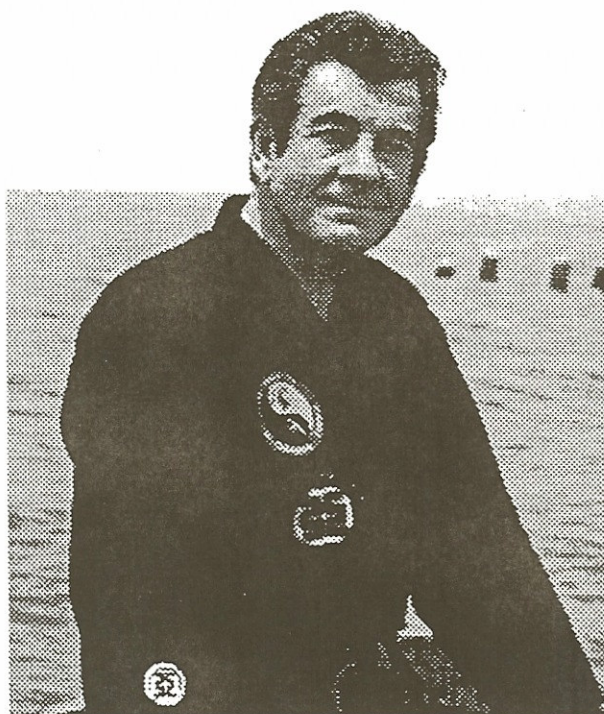




# Newsletter

June 1993

*Dedicated to our karate sister Jane Asher.  
May you have been granted peace.*



## A Word From Shihan

We are asking every candidate for Shodan to write an article for our Newsletter and send it to our editor Al Gomez. Write something that will help and inspire those who travel the same way we do.

### Three Stances

We all think in symbols. The fighting stances we use take affect on our minds and spirits. A scripture says – "as a man thinkith in his heart so is he"

1. The first is the formal stance used in sport kumite. It is usually like the temple guards, of old. The warrior stands firm (in one of our stances) his master hand is as if he held a sword, the weaker hand holds a phantom dagger. The master hand is usually high while the weaker hand is low.

2. The second is the prayer stance with the hands held palm together in front. In the orient, this is used as a friendly gesture of respect. It is also a great ready position for combat.

3. The third stance is the grizzly bear stance. The grizzly (when he means business) tries to seem unaware, of what he deems, as a threat. He may look relaxed, you may see him looking at you out of the corner of his eye. When he explodes (in total fury) he has the element of surprise on his side.

The warrior stands as a guardian angel. He defends his temple, his "loved ones" and his country. The Christian warrior (of Chivalry) defends the weak and the helpless. A Christian warrior, of the first Century, writes "and having done all to stand; stand therefore ..."

I wish I could adequately tell all my beloved students how much I appreciated your love and loyalty. I'll be trying, the rest of my life.

Shihan Foster



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C.H. Asher

On December 21, 1992, karate lost one of its distinguished members. You probably never heard of her, since she never attained high rank, perfected Kata, led a Dojo or competed in tournaments. However, she will be missed because she was one of the foot soldiers, one of the Karateka that makes the art. What is a Sensei without a student.

As names are passed down in our Karate history, her link is just as important to both the future and past of the art. In her darkest days, knowing her death was eminent, she remained true to the art and the teachings of Zen. When she no longer could perform the rigors of Karate, she turned to Tai Chi. When she no longer could physically practice Tai Chi, she performed her Kata mentally through the art of visualization.

Being in her center, she was able to control her physical and mental pain. As a true Zen master, she lived in and for the moment, no past or future only the present. She was always in her center, and her center was love. I will never have a better teacher or role model. I only wish I was half the Karateka.

My Sensei taught me how to endure my pain, but never her pain.

Our Dojo misses you Shodan Jane Asher.

*The Karateka raised her weapon  
to engage in mortal combat  
Outnumbered she knew her fate,  
and accepted death as a warrior.*





## Karate as Preventive Medicine

Mark Algiers

I'm writing here today to give some thoughts on preventing wear and tear on your body from working out. After you have been injured, it is hard to come back to full strength. Depending on the injury, you may never be 100% again. So you may ask yourself, how can I come back from injury? How do I cope with the pain to pace myself properly?

My very first suggestion is to let pain be your guide. If what you're doing causes too much pain, either stop or slow down, don't make your injury any worse than it is. Try an alternative exercise to achieve the same goal. For instance, if you are hurting from too much hard karate, definitely replace with more soft karate. Always keep in mind the Yin and Yang: the soft and hard work in harmony with each other.

I also stress more mind intent with a workout. For example, kata; you visualize each movement while you are physically performing the kata. At the end when you are done, come back to a relaxed high kebadachi with your hands comfortably at your side, breathe, find your center\*. Visualize the kata in your mind, see it, feel it, think it through precisely. Then do the kata physically keeping that same feeling of center throughout the form. This is one way of accomplishing the feeling of Zanshin.

Tai Chi is an excellent alternative to hard karate. I personally practice Shihan Fosters Yin Yang Waza, but I also learned a 44 move Yang style as transformed by Cheng Man Chi'ng. To really explain the benefits from Tai Chi you would probably have to write a book. So let me say that Tai Chi translated means, "The Supreme Ultimate".

So in closing, I would like to say if you are hurting from what you are doing physically, slow yourself down, start using your mind more to think your way through the movements. Remember, karate is moving Zen. Therefore, it is very important to achieve the Zen frame of mind over your physical accomplishments in a workout. If you pace your workouts using the Yin and Yang philosophy along with a Zen frame of mind you will have felt Zanshin. The spirit of Chi will stay with you always.

\*Center in the martial arts can mean many things. In this case it is a physical balance of the whole body with the mind. Technique is in unison with the breath. You have to be centered in order for Chi to flow.



## The First Book Review

Al Reingold

From early on, I have had an interest in reading about the martial arts, Taoism, zen, and related literature. I have been asked on several occasions to recommend books to others, and I have always been on the lookout for superior books and articles. This has entailed much sifting through the inferior books and literature (and, of course, those judgments of quality are all relative and entirely subjective). With this in mind, and Al's permission and support, I would like to start a "Book Review" section in the Newsletter of those books that are found to be good resources and background. This way, hopefully, if anyone comes across a work they feel would be worthwhile to share, this might become the forum for doing so.

### The Art Of War

— Sun Tzu —

Seeing as this is the first review, we might as well start with the first known book. Written about 500 B.C., The Art Of War (also called The Thirteen Chapters) comprises a Chinese general's proven views of strategy and warfare. True to our own beliefs, Master Sun teaches, "Supreme excellence consists in breaking the enemy's resistance without fighting." The rather short manual covers everything from a leader's relationship with the soldiers, to discipline, to fighting on high ground versus low ground, to the five distinct types of spies and how to employ them effectively. Few, if any, of the concepts depicted are dated, much less obsolete. On the contrary, the book provides a concise and effective methodology of a very real martial art, and provides the backbone of much of the literature that has followed to the present day. Eiji Yoshikawa's Musashi relates that the renowned seventeenth century Kensei, or "sword saint," Miyamoto Musashi himself possessed and studied a copy of Sun Tzu. The work has become more popular over the last five years or so, with several different editions available. I think I have amassed all of them, and would recommend for first-time readers the Delacorte Press edition, edited by James Clavell. He gives a straight text translation, while the others intersperse commentary of various kinds. While fascinating in itself, the commentary tends to detract from the pure text. In his "Forward," Clavell recommends that every politician, soldier and student be required to read and study this book. This approach is, without a doubt, well warranted.





## On Taking Action

Al Reingold

As I have grown with the art, one aspect has recently become an imperative in my life: taking action. Too often in the past (and still an issue I am struggling with at present) I have perhaps seen the necessary road to follow, but have hesitated in actualizing the next step of taking this action. I think that, due to fear of change and/or the unknown, I have become at times mired in the comfortable past, neglecting to embrace the dynamics of life. Ironically, I have noticed that the more I initiate action, the happier and more balanced I have become, yet this is still a difficult pattern to follow. Relationships that have become stagnant and in need of change, long distance friends drifting, breaking out of a stale workout routine, playing music, even music I *enjoy*, articles I have not written, etc. are all too easy to deal with -- once (or if) the obstacle of **deciding** to take action has been overcome and the action initiated.

I have learned the dubious skill of rationalizing anything, of putting my world into an intellectual box. See, for example, the "Book Review" in this issue. While this box is a fine and appropriate place for academics and other like pursuits, it really represents only a very small portion of the whole, of life. The rational process is at least one step removed from REALITY -- merely a poor representation. Life is to be experienced, not studied objectively, a research project for the mind alone. If the mind and body are to be truly intertwined, there must exist a balance between what is KNOWN and what IS, what we think and what we do. While training my body to learn "no mind," I have also seen that I must begin to train my mind to learn "no thought." In slowly realizing this, several directives that many of us have heard -- and passed along -- throughout the years began to seep through the mush that will hopefully, someday, evolve into mushin: "Do *something*, even if it's wrong;" "Do what you do;" "Get out of the head;" and so on. This fear of relinquishing the mental capacity, the judging component, the rationality that I had been [initially] brought to believe was intrinsically and definitively human -- and therefore positive -- ran deep. Still, it is difficult to find a place for Descartes' "I think, therefore I am" in a Dojo (for example in kumite, "I think, therefore I am getting hit" will do nothing to rectify the situation; thought has little place in kumite, and much of our Dojo Etiquette, as well as the art, trains the practitioner to relinquish the thought process). One of my favorite quotes, from Dan Millman's Sacred Journey of the Peaceful Warrior, in which he quotes Charles Dubois, recites: "The important thing is this: To be ready at any moment to sacrifice what we are for what we could become." We learn by allowing a vulnerability, an acceptance of that which we do not know. We grow by taking risks that may bruise the body and the ego, but will strengthen the *person*. We gain insight through leaps of faith, through trust of our Shihan, our Senseis, and our art, and live, actively, by doing.



## One Of Life's Challenges

Jack Delinsky

Due to your comfort level, you do not often realize how good your life has been. Take a moment to remember the last time you were sick or injured. During that time, you probably pondered how good it feels to be well and healthy. When you feel good, you rarely if ever think about how bad it feels to be sick. The reason for this is that you become comfortable with being well and have little reason to consider how good a healthy life is.

Have you ever thought how great it is to be around your Martial Arts family? It is a treasure to hold in high regard. As you achieve higher and higher ranks, do not underestimate the wealth of knowledge and experience you are gaining. Upon receiving a Shodan ranking, your challenge is to teach others bringing them into the fold. This is one of the greatest gifts you can give your Karate family.

Over time, some of you will move to another city or state away from your Karate family. This will truly challenge the skills you have developed. In fact, you may never really know how much you have learned until you leave. If you have studied hard and grasped the principles, you will accept the challenge of a move. I speak from experience since I have the only Shorei Kempo school in Minnesota. It is very rewarding and challenging experience. However, I would start a new school again without question. The growth of new students as well as my own cannot be measured.

This brings me back to the issue of comfort level. Without a doubt, moving is not a comfortable endeavor. The most important advice I can share regarding a move from your Karate family is to start a new school (share your knowledge) and absolutely make the effort to stay in touch with those you love.

All and all, take every opportunity at hand to learn from your Sensei and Karate family. No one knows what the future holds. It is knowledge that can never be replaced and will remain with you the rest of your life.



## Editors Note:

Al Gomez

I would like to thank everyone who has submitted articles and look forward future submissions from the membership.

The winter newsletter will be out during the month of December, 1993. Please have your articles to me by November 26. Any questions, comment, suggestions, etc. please direct to - Al Gomez,

Thank You!





## Spiritual Confidence

J. Alan Klees

You may have heard O Sensei Foster say that karate will give a student confidence in themselves. This is a good thing to have and most notable when we are in a state of uncertainty in our own minds. For instance, when learning a new kata or reviewing one out of practice. Our ability and confidence grows with experience; however, it seems from O Sensei's venerable example and teaching that there is more to consider. To those who have met him, Reverend Foster's belief in the spiritual nature of the individual is explicitly known. Not only do we become proficient in karate, but it seems we would also develop in a spiritual sense. This I feel is worth some time in extracurricular study and have set out here to understand some of it.

To know about spiritual confidence that the karate student feels, we have to look at what the spiritual thing is. First of all, I think most of us are objective or open to it. Its possible that the spiritual dimension is something we haul around with us and take for granted. We could think our spirit was something that takes care of itself, in the same way for example, our autonomous nervous system takes care of our breathing function. Until we lack confidence or have doubt or some other spiritual illness wracking us, we become aware that our spirit needs attention. Up until these difficult times it can be said we have full confidence and spiritual health.

It would seem there is no point in asking what we can do about spiritual problems and the impact they have on our spiritual well-being. Not when its apparent they are something we must endure. There's no consolation in

wishing for something that neither here nor there. Until the time we regain our confidence these spiritual spasms take their course. Now we might ask what the deal is? Are we getting worse to get better? We do after all recover from these episodes, but what's the use of it? And can we make any sense of it whatsoever? These are difficult and complex questions.

A possible way to resolve this uncertainty about our uncertainty, and there are ideas that seem to refute this, is by a scientific viewpoint. According to the Darwinist theory of evolution, living human organisms develop according to laws of nature or by what is called natural selection. Applied in a spiritual context, it could be said spirit develops in the same way. What makes this supposition most interesting is that we then have to consider a continuum of evolving spiritual forms. This knowledge, if true and applicable, allows us some perspective to our spirituality, and may satisfactorily explain the content of our lives, or in the fact that we struggle - the operative word is "struggle" with spiritual matters.

What comes to mind, then, is the mind. If the pursuit of spiritual knowledge qualifies as an effective and necessary reaction to the motive force of spiritual conflict, then we have a perfect reason to study and know spiritual matters. It is then in our own hands to develop spiritually. Our role in the question would be, like other worldly matters, to do hard work and make a conscious effort in developing. We could suppose that we become stronger because of the experience. And our distant relatives in the cosmic future may thank us for it.



## 100 Percent

Bob Nelson

The practice of Karate-do is not restricted to the hours spent in the dojo. With the correct understanding, all of one's life becomes Karate-do. My Sensei, Chuck St. Pierre always told us, "It doesn't matter what you do in life, just be the best at it." I believe he meant that everyone should engage in an activity and strive to be the best that he or she can become. It means to perform each and every action with one's full and undivided attention, completely committed to the experience of the moment. When every action is performed with full concentration and 100% of one's attention, every action becomes the practice of Karate-do. Karate-do is not just kicking and punching, nor is it limited to the performance of kata in the dojo. Instead, the mental discipline of Karate-do training applied to everyday life transforms all activities into Karate-do.



## From the President

Richard K. Bruno

As many of you know we are celebrating our 25th year as a karate association. We started out as one school at the K.Y.F. in Kenosha in October of 1968. We now have over 20 schools across the U.S.A. We have much to be proud of in these last 25 years. This may not seem like a great number, however, we stress quality and not quantity. Our average Shodan trains for 6-7 years in our association.

I also have to mention that we will be celebrating Shihan's 80th birthday this July 10th, 1993. We will be at the Danish Brotherhood again in Kenosha, WI. (Please see page 4 on the party and the map for directions.) We hope everyone can take time out from their busy schedules to join us at this joyous social event. We plan to have some different and interesting events in our program this time.

