



Newsletter

December 1991

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A Word From Shehan

With any long range endeavor we must have purpose. The ultimate goal of the martial arts is health of body, mind and spirit and the more elusive and very important element of balance. We often summarize these as "Character".

All of our forms and movements point to defense of loved ones and self. Aggression is anathema to a true martial artist. Of course there is much pleasure and enjoyment in our practice. Some of us get more pain than enjoyment in competition. We hate to make another person feel defeated and we certainly hate to be defeated. We don't hurt or get hurt in a game of low stakes cards, but defeat in the things we love is paramount to death.

Some martial arts enables us to limit our resistance to gentle restraint as in Judo. This is the aim and purpose of the police officer. We teach this to selected people.

Ultimate Karate is violent. It is not fair play, it is all out no holds barred resistance against activity that must be stopped - Winning is the only aim. We aim to win or die.

My prayer is that none of us will ever have to fight. There may be no way out. When the whistle blows; we must go - not counting the cost. There is a commitment that every karateka must make.

May "The Eternal Spirit" grant us peace!

Independence Through Karate

Margaret Clark

My husband, Marc Travanti, and I own some property and a barn in the Catskill mountains in New York. The barn is old, we camp in it rather than live in it. The property is remote, our nearest neighbors are over a mile away. This summer I mentioned to a girlfriend that I was going to the barn for the weekend, alone. She was horrified, and replied, "You're going alone, without your husband, won't that be dangerous?" I asked if she thought it would be dangerous if Marc went alone. She replied, "Well no, but he's a man".

This story is an illustration of how fear keeps people, especially women, from independence. Independence is freedom. The fear I am speaking of here is the most basic of fears, fear of physical attack

to your person. For many women this fear will actually determine or limit what activities, what pursuits, what lifestyle they will choose for themselves. This is not freedom. For most women the probability of an actual attack on their person in their lifetime is small. In actuality it is the fear of this attack, rather than the attack itself, that is the problem. This fear not only keeps women from the freedom to enjoy activities alone, live alone, travel alone, adventure alone, these physical limitations erode self confidence and self reliance and create a pattern of limitations and lack of confidence in other areas of their lives.

Enter Karate. Karate is a powerful tool. A tool of freedom. Animals instinctually know how to use their

body as a weapon. Boys wrestle and fight and often gain a sense of their body as a weapon. But traditionally, women are not encouraged to develop a sense of their body as a weapon. Karate teaches women that their body is a weapon, that it is powerful and that they can rely on themselves. Most importantly Karate helps women to defeat the fear of the fear. That is freedom.

No one is impervious to attack, even the most trained karateka. Karate is not a guarantee. But Karate is a system that teaches self reliance, confidence, a joy in one's physical being, a respect for others, a freedom from fear and a freedom of choice. Karate is a gift for all of us.



Yin Yang Do on Prime Time Cable!

Al Ferguson

When I left Kenosha in 1980, cable TV wasn't in the dictionary let alone the phone directory. Now as I flip through the channels in 1991 I see a familiar scene. Wait a minute! I know those guys on TV, it's Dick Bruno and Al Gomez going through Yin Yang Do kata! Upon subsequent investigation I discover the inspiration behind the program.

Kandice Brill an announcer on WGTD - FM, who has been with us 1 year, came up with the idea for a show on local cable access channel 21. Sitting in her studio at WGTD - FM one evening she explained how she came to realize that there was no recorded documentation of our Association and style.

The purpose of "Karate" is to present an image of Karate as an art form and to preserve the work of Rev. William Foster and Phillip Koeppel. These two Masters of this art have for over 50 years (each)

worked to bring out the best in themselves and those around them"

With this thought in mind Kandice started out thinking of one show only. With the realization that we have 30+ Kata, the thought of 1 show blossomed into a series. Each show lasts 1/2 hour and runs 3 times a week for a month. Current days and times are Tuesdays 8:30 PM, Wednesdays - 9:30 PM and Saturdays - 9:00 PM.

With money from a grant and Joe Ferraro as technical advisor, the show was on. Joe appears at the beginning of each show doing a montage of Kata which was filmed at sunrise at the beach.

So far 7 shows have been presented with plans for many more.

Some highlights from the first 7 shows:-

Elio Covelli and Jim Frederick's 7 minutes of sparring which was better than most pay for view fights.

Dick Bruno's sword Kata. Al Gomez and Dick Bruno's Tai Chi - for the passiveness in all of us.

Joe Ferraro's fight scene by the Washington Park Bridge with help from "thug like attackers" Chris Harris, Matt Eddy, and Jim Frederick.

Elio Covelli's Kan Ku Sho (traditional version) Jim Frederick's Tensho.

Lynn Philyaw's own Willow Wasa.

And special recognition to Helmut Fallak who performed Omoto Ten with a slice of wood imbedded in his foot. Successful surgery was performed after the show.

This show isn't for Black Belts only. All ranks are welcomed to contribute their time, energy and creativity. We hope this show will also help keep all the dojos a little closer as tapes will be available in the near future for a nominal fee.



Thoughts and Greetings From a Wandering Soul

Al Ferguson

When we oreayed in on Tuesday October 22, 1991 at 5 PM in the small gym of the K.Y.F. it was our 23rd anniversary with Sensei Foster. Not only was it to the day but it was to the minute!

Some memories from Tuesday October 22, 1968. There are still 4 of us left at the KYF from that first class. (A fifth person, Ulf Muntzing, is now working out in Utah) Dick Bruno and I were still in college, Elio Covelli was complaining of advancing age at 25 and then there was that really old guy, Rudy Buttari, who looked like he really came there for a sauna and whirlpool but took a wrong turn somewhere. There is not enough room here to describe the aches and pains resulting from that first class but suffice it to say that Dr. Mario Garretto could write a dissertation on our collective condition. I was wearing a tee shirt and gym shorts - standard issue for beginning Karate students - trying to do 100 - 150 push-ups. "Why was a man of God putting us through this torture!" was one of the few coherent thoughts going through my head while trying to convince my legs that it was natural for them to sink into a low kiba dachi. Shaking legs like a leaf and I look at the old guy and he's still hanging in there. Well if he can do it so can a 19 year old like me.

And so Rudy became one of my first inspirations in Karate. A couple of others that I have seen or read about and admired: Jane Asher - a couple of years ago my hip arthritis was limiting me to front kicks and not much else. After going through the usual "why me" whining, I read about her triumphant battle over cancer and her subsequent return to class. Oh yeah, I had it so tough! And then there's Joe Cuccunato with arthritis and heart problems that would stop a Mack truck, he's still in class doing push-ups, Kata and sparring with the rest of us.

23 years later I, at 42, look over to Rudy and he doesn't look old to me anymore. Elio still complains about growing old, I'd believe him if he wasn't still in such great shape. And Dick Bruno and I should get with Al Gomez and head up to Madison, WI for one of our wild weekends but Helen and Matthew probably wouldn't let Dick go. Oh well some things do change. I can't go into detail about our Madison escapades because Al says this is still a family oriented newsletter. And me? I'm back from 11 years in California and one big reason is that I missed all of this so much.

Our 25th Anniversary will be Friday October 22, 1993. God willing, we will all still be here and I think we should plan one heck of a weekend reunion. See you at the Christmas party.



The Loss of a Student

Bob Nelson

People who have practiced the martial arts for any amount of time will agree that there is a high turnover in students. Just think for a minute of all the people you know who have started and then quit for one reason or another. Why is it that the same instruction and class structure will keep some students yet lose others? What are some of the reasons students leave? What can an instructor do to help keep students in class?

Over the years I have heard plenty of students reasons for dropping out of class. One of these reasons is that Karate is not what the person expected; It wasn't as glamorous or as exciting as the student expected. These beginning students get all pumped up watching Chuck Norris or Steven Segal and expect to be fighting within a couple of weeks. They are disappointed to discover that they must stand in the horse

stance throwing punches and kicks repeatedly. All I can say to these students is that you must learn to crawl before you can walk, and walk before you can run. Dedicated students will understand this and stick with it, while the others will get bored and quit.

Another reason I have heard for quitting is that the students has other interests such as baseball, basketball, soccer, etc.. It is great that students have interests other than Karate, but if they want to study Karate they should make an effort to be in class. These students must make a commitment and realize that Karate is not a sport. It is not something to "do" twice a week.

A third reason is that karate is causing problems with the students wife/husband or girlfriend/boyfriend. This is a personal conflict which can only be handled by the karate student. They should try to explain to

loved one that karate is not a "sport" but a lifestyle. The only other suggestion I can give to these students is to try and get the loved one involved in Karate, or get them to

read a book or two on the arts. (*Zen In The Martial Arts* by Hymms is a good primer.)

A fourth reason for quitting is that the student has just lost motivation. This can happen at any time and is usually brought on when a student reaches a plateau in the arts. The student feels that no matter how hard they try they cannot seem to make any progress. This student must look to the old saying "if you seek you won't find". My advice is to just keep on working out and stop worrying about progress. As long as the student keeps coming to class and is working out, progress will occur. It may not be evident to the student, but just by coming to class and working out the student shows progress. This progress may be more mental than physical, but it is progress!

Another reason for quitting is that the student has health problems which restricts him/her from doing certain techniques or exercises. The advice I give to the student is to know their limitations and work around them. Injuries are something we all deal with in Karate. It is knowing how to work around these health problems that will make the student stronger. I remember seeing a student with Cerebral Palsy do a kata with his crutches. This person had the true martial spirit and worked with his physical limitations instead of finding excuses.

These are just a few of the excuses I have heard as a sensei, and I'm sure as you read this you remembered some from your own experiences. My final word of advice would be to students who are thinking about quitting. Talk to your sensei and explain why you want to quit. Your sensei has invested time and effort into you, and you really owe him or her an explanation of why you want to quit. To just drop out without any explanation shows a lack of respect to your sensei and to your fellow students.

From the President

May everyone in our association have the most wonderful Christmas and healthy prosperous New Year.

Richard K. Bruno

Editors Note:

Season's greetings to everyone! With this edition of the Yin Yang Do Newsletter, we start our fifth year. It was in 1986 that I made the announcement to start publishing a newsletter at Shehan's Birthday party. (I believe it was his twenty ninth birthday.) Through the years I have had a tremendous amount of help from many people in the association. I thank you and look forward to more years of a cooperative effort in publishing the newsletter.

Any questions, comments, suggestions, etc please direct to - Al Gomez

Thank You!!
Al Gomez

Certificate & Patch Information

Lifetime membership - \$25

Patches - \$5

Kyu Certificates - \$5

Dan Certificates - \$10

All the monies collected go into the Yin Yang Do Karate Association account. The money is then used to produce/mail this newsletter, print certificates, buy patches, etc. Please help to support your Association!

Please send to: Al Gomez,