

DECEMBER 15 GMA NEWSLETTER

Upcoming events:

- Dec 4th TTCA testing 5:30 (no regular TKD class)
- Dec 5th Lil Dragon testing. 9:00 and 10:30
- Dec 11th Winkle seminar- b-ton 6:00-8:00
- Dec 12th FAST Stress Shooting 9:00-1:00
- Dec 12th Leadership Team outing 1:30
- Dec 13th Deadline to be confident about receiving Xmas orders in time.
- Dec 15th GMA Xmas Party, Awards Banquet, and Dance: 5:30-9:00. Morgan Co Fairgrounds. No class
- Dec 19th BB stripe testing 9:00-10:30
- Dec 19th Demo Team 10:30-12:00
- Dec 19th Black belt prep testing 1:00-3:00
- Dec 22rd Winter Weapons Camp—silat knife and scarf 9:00-3:00
- Dec 23rd Winter Special Daycamp—Jun Fan/Jeet Kune Do camp 9:00-3:00
- Dec 24th -25th NO CLASS—Merry Christmas! (see below)
- Dec 27th Tim Sledd BJJ seminar-IBJJ
- Dec 28-29th Winter Daycamp: Martial Arts for Movies/Stage 9:00-3:00
- Dec 31st-Jan 1st NO CLASS—Happy New Year

Xmas Party, Dance and Awards Banquet

This years Christmas party/awards banquet and dance has been scheduled for Dec 15th at the Morgan County Fairgrounds. Arrival and set up will be from 5:30-6:00. The dinner and awards banquet will begin at 6:00. Music will be provided by Mallets and Skins. Following the awards, Santa will make an appearance and there will be a dance that will continue till 8:30 or 9:00 pm. This is a chance to join in some fellowship, recognize some key students and parents, and give Santa any last minute list revisions. Sign ups for the pitch in dinner will be posted soon. We also need a very close idea of people attending for seating arrangements. No classes will meet that Tues. We hope everyone will be able to share in our annual event. Parents committee would welcome help with set up at 10:00 at the fairground.

Winter Camps Coming Up Fast

Rather than having the kids sitting around stuffing themselves with candy, we take the vacation time to offer something special. Don't forget you can also make it a X-mas present. Camp price includes lunch and some of the weapons or gear needed for the seminar and you can put the gear under the tree!

Winter Weapons Camp 22nd This year we will be having guest instructors to help showcase the art of Silat—a fascinating style with emphasis on knife and cloth weapons like the scarf (or sarong). A cool martial art for everybody, but HKD and Kali students will get special benefit. You can see the world through martial arts, and this is a chance to get your passport stamped in Indonesia.

Winter Special daycamp, Dec 23rd. We will also have a special camp on Bruce Lee's art of Jun Fan/Jeet Kune Do. The emphasis will be on trapping and focus mitt work. Benefits of this camp include more hand coordination and sensitivity, better overall striking, and better skills with the mitts for better training.

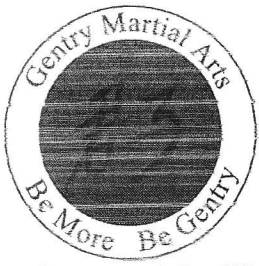
Movie/Stage combat camp Dec 28- 29th. Things that look good on the big screen aren't always what they appear. Come see how they do the stunts without getting the stars hurt. Mr. Yoshida, who has worked on martial arts films and done fight choreography, will show some secrets. Participants will make their own movie fight scene, and we will unveil our action stars at a red carpet event. The release date of this debut has not been set. Great for anybody in demo or anyone with interest in movies/theater, etc. Both the camp and red carpet event were a huge success last year. However, as before, spaces are limited. Only a few can become action stars on the latest Yoshitech production!

Training Anniversaries

Collyn Dodge (BJJ 7 yrs)
Elija Roberson (HKD 1 yr)

Minda Ruba (TKD 2 yrs)
Dominic Tejera (BJJ)

Elizabeth Dodds (TCC 1 yr)
Caleb Bourland (TKD, BJJ yr)



Quotes of the Week: This month, with goal setting around the corner in Jan, we will be talking about the differences between the habits and behaviors of successful people and unsuccessful people.

And the NOMINEES are:

This year we are announcing those students who are nominated for our yearly awards:

Student of the year: *Jackson Gadbery, Katie Pickering, Nathan Hall, Debbie Rahman, Clay Thacker,*

Black Belt of the year: *Cathy Petraits, Lise Roberson, Christian Marion, Megan Gens, Karissa Cozzee*

Most Improved Student: *Kenyan Tackett, Caleb Waltz, Aiden Dodds, Soliel Patterson, Andy Farmer*

Competitor of the year (TKD): *Kathryn Clephane, Morgan Williams, Donovan Sieg, Nate Wilson, Kyler Chylaszek*

Honorable mention—comp of year—Ryan Spires

GMA Wishes a Happy Birthday to:

Piper Phelps 12-1

Joshua Roberson 12/8

Kye Pearson 12/13

Nathan Hall 12/23

Elijah Roberson 12-2

Collyn Dodge 12/12

Christian Marion 12/18

Mrs. Yoshida 12/26

Richie Long 12/07

Kyler Chylaszek 12/12

Hunter Szekely 12/20

Please Plan ahead for Xmas Items

If you have any last minute Christmas shopping to do (don't we all) or need that stocking stuffer or whatever, just a reminder to please plan ahead. Many of our suppliers go out of stock of seasonal items and we want to make sure we minimize the delays in getting any special orders to you! *The last day to order Xmas items to ensure shipping (assuming availability) is Dec. 13th. Keep in mind, some things are already backed ordered past the holidays.*

Give another person the chance to "be more" this Christmas

Don't forget that you can get a gift certificate for a uniform and month of classes—100.00 value, for only a 25.00 cost to you (BJJ uniforms more). If you know anyone who has ever "thought about" doing martial arts, or if there is someone you know who "this would be good for", this is your chance to get them off the fence and really reaping the benefits of training.

Class Cancellations for Holidays, class adjustments, and general policies

- No class on Tues Dec 15th on account of the Christmas party...see you there.
- Holiday class cancellations: No class on Dec 24th through Dec 25th on account of Christmas. Classes will resume Mon Dec 28th (evening classes). Additionally, we will be closed Dec 31st and Jan 1st. Classes will resume with evening classes on Jan 4nd.
- Also a reminder of our general policy regarding bad weather. We *try* to follow the lead of local schools—if they cancel school that day, cancel evening events or let out early, so do we. If on morning delay, we will meet as normal (tai chi in the morning will follow the 2 hr delay). This applies to universal problems such as snow and ice, not things like flooding or other issues that may be more regionalized. The only exception to this may occur when the school cancels in advance of a huge storm and the forecast is *clearly* incorrect, or when crews have all day to work on the roads. When in doubt, simply call, check the website and facebook/twitter, check your email for announcements, listen to WCBK, etc.

Martial Artists Shouldn't Be Very Tolerant People

What is tolerated becomes the new standard

I used that quote from a book written by one of my teachers as the school's quote of the week recently, and while I am not sure how much it resonated with the kids, it certainly resonated with me again as to why we do things the way we do them. I hope you can better appreciate it as well.



It seems like every generation laments that the ones that come after as softer than the ones before, and martial arts black belts are no exception. Upon further reflection, they are probably the worst. I have heard the concerns about the quality of black belt and standards in schools slowly eroding for decades now. And I am not immune to that sentiment from time to time. There are lots of reasons to explain this downward trend—from industry specific concerns about over-commercialization of the martial arts to societal issues such as a more sedentary children and a philosophical shift regarding children, failure, and their self esteem. I have an opinion on those things that some would say makes me, well, not very tolerant. But that isn't exactly what I meant by the title.

But one major factor is not as easily defined or pointed to. It occurs subtly and fitfully, but it takes us down the slippery slope of eroding standards nonetheless. And that is tolerance for things that aren't quite up to snuff. Of course it applies when a person who is testing doesn't have quite the power or stances that others before have had, but he doesn't stink. It is probably good enough, and we can rationalize why he isn't as good—he is younger, smaller, slower (and we will blame genetics instead of fitness). But we must be careful or this type of thinking permeates EVERYTHING. And often it is innocent enough. A kid having to roll up his sleeves because he is dobok is a little long is one thing, but now some do it for fashion and soon we have people with the sleeves up to their knees as if the school floods regularly. (Just recently happened in one of my college classes-- I simply asked them who assumed that was ok-- cause I know I didn't tell them it was.)

We COULD let kids get away with moving a little bit in joon bi or attention (they are kids after all). But if that is tolerated as the new standing still, then how much moving is too much? I thought they were here to learn focus—so how can we let them fidget and do what they want? As much as they do in school, where it is a problem?

Kihaps aren't loud enough? Well, they are a shy person, give them a break. But wait a minute—are they not here to gain confidence and come out of their shell?

Don't answer yes sir all the time? No problem. They usually do. Until they usually don't or hardly ever. And then we wonder where the respect in the school went.

You see how this works. And it certainly isn't limited to just martial arts on the floor but all parts of our organization. The floor isn't too dirty today. We can let it go one more day. Soon the school is only cleaned every other day. (Don't worry- as far as I know this is a hypothetical). We pride ourselves on customer service, but things are really busy right now. Well, our policy is not to gossip, but I gotta tell you this one story...

And we see it in activities and society in general as well. How did we get to this much trash talking and poor sportsmanship in youth sports? At what age is that dance move too risqué for those girls? Media pushes the boundaries of vulgarity on primetime television. If they get away with it (or just get enough PR from it), then someone else has to push the envelope further. People dress more and more provocatively, because someone else was allowed out of the house in something that shouldn't have been tolerated. Rudeness is more and more tolerated.

I don't know about you, but it doesn't take watching the news very long to be alarmed at what is being tolerated as acceptable behavior in many events these days. And it also didn't take long for that to become the new standard of behavior either. I have been in organizations that eroded quickly becomes things were tolerated. And I am going to do my utmost to keep GMA from becoming one of them. Not just for the sake of our school but for the sake of our students as well. Because we can BE BETTER. A regimented, disciplined group like martial artists should be the line in the sand. Rather than seeing how many corners we can cut, we need to take pride in doing things the way they should be done. We take pride in finding a way to succeed rather than making excuses as to why we can't.

There are many other phrases to describe this problem—the slippery slope, a frog getting boiled in the pot, giving an inch, etc. But a military phrase that has stuck with me might offer the solution. “Shined shoes saves lives.” Obviously not literally. But the discipline and attention to detail when it comes to meeting standards may keep us from lowering the standards in crucial areas as well. We obviously don't have shoes in class to shine, but a uniform or belt tied wrong is pretty close to muddy shoes or a bed you can't bounce a quarter off of.

Contrary to what you might think—I often don't like getting on the children for every little infraction. But being tolerant isn't being nice....it is denying our students the opportunity to BE MORE. And for GMA, BEING MORE is sometimes about BEING LESS tolerant. ---BLS