

GMA News April 2019

Good luck to our Black belt candidates at black belt testing:

TKD: Jack Higgins, Holly Brown, Ethan Dickerson, Hunter Szekely, Kaiden Cedeno, Son Tran (DPU), Yuan Zhaing (DPU), Mr. Luke Wilson (3rd), Miss Megan Gens (3rd)

HKD: Mallory Howard, Andrew Bobker (DPU)

Upcoming events:

April 6	Fast Mini Extrav 10:00-4:00 (ish)
April 10/11 th	Siblings join us for class
April 12 th	Parents Committee Meeting 5:30
April 13 th	Bedford TKD tournament
April 14 th	USHF Seminar, here at GMA 12:00-5:00
April 26 th	TKD testing 5:30
April 27 th	TKD black belt testing 10:00-12:30
April 27 th	HKD black belt testing 1:30-?
April 28 th	Home Invasion Defense Course 12:00-5:00
May 4 th	Annual Break-a-thon and school picnic, Pritchard Park
May 11 th	Stop Bullies FAST, Kids FAST class 9:30-12:00
May 11 th	Lil Dragon testing 1:00-2:30/ 2:30-4:00
June 1 st	Hoosier Open BJJ tournament

SIBLING DAY—April 10th (and 11th for us)

Just like we have done for mothers and fathers, in honor of National Sibling Day, we will be letting any brothers/sisters work together in a special class on April 10 and 11th. We won't let the fighting on the mats get as heated as it might at home, although we would expect the dodgepad to be hotly contested.

Summer day camp dates are set

Some people have been asking about this year's dates of our popular day-camps. More details will follow, but we wanted to announce the dates so people can start planning for our intensive training camps.* There is a small chance one or two of the dates may have to change; we should know in the next couple of weeks. But we wanted to give people the most heads we can. Pre-registration discounts apply. Here is what we have:

BJJ camp June 4-5.

Lil dragon camp July 17-19.

TKD day-camp(s): June 24-28; July 22-26.

Specialty camps still being ironed out

Break-a-thon and annual school picnic May 4th

It is time for our annual school picnic and break-a-thon to benefit our scholarship program—which provides scholarships for students to become or stay involved in martial arts. Some of our own students benefit from this fund, so we need your continued support. Plus it is a great chance for our students to get in a lot of breaking practice! The break-a-thon will begin at 11:00 (arrive at 10:30) with a cookout and fun and games to follow. This is one of our most fun outings and outside of the breaking, it is for the whole family! This year we will be having it back at Pritchard Park. Parents committee would welcome help with logistics.

Home Invasion Course

We are excited to be hosting a seminar on how to protect your family during Home Invasion Scenarios with a guest instructor. Details will be on facebook, but it will deal with Detering, Detecting and Defending against threats, concepts for safe rooms, clearing your house, and how to get the family on the same page. Discounts make it affordable for the whole family to take this this course.

GMA Wishes a Happy Birthday to:

Mr. Noah Wilson	4-1	Danny Key	4-1
Samantha Cushing	4-4	Colin Barbour	4-9
Corey Collins	4-9	William Stierwalt	4-10
Todd Phelps	4-13	Cheyenne Ennis	4-17
Eli Thompson	4-20	Doug Burchett	4-22
Haley Sieg	4-23	Megan Gens	4-23
Jordan Mascoe	4-26	Cathy Petraits	4-27
Alesha Fouts	4-28	Wyatt Wright	4-29
Jack Higgins	4-30		

Training Anniversaries

Finnegan Vandewalle (TKD 11 yrs)	Cathy Petraits (TKD 7 yrs)	Wesley Yoshida (TKD 7 yrs)
Katheryn Clephane (TKD 6 yrs)	Todd Phelps (HKD 4 yrs)	Evelyn Kaufman (LD/TKD 3 yrs)
Jenna Berry (TKD 2 yrs)	Eli Estep (LD 1yr)	

Quotes of the Week

With tournament coming up, this month we will be discussing sportsmanship and continue w quotes from GM

This Month in Martial Arts History (selected from “Dates with Destiny” in *Martial Arts Success* by John Corcoran.

April 7 1954. Jackie Chan’s Birthday

April 15 1922 (-Oct 20 1982). Donn F Draeger (martial arts historian) birthday

April 26, 1963 Jet Li Birthday

April 1922 Gichin Funakoshi demonstrates karate in Japan—setting the course for Karate and TKD worldwide

April 11, 1955 the name Tae Kwon Do is approved by President Syngman Rhee to describe Korean martial arts

April 21 1993 Walker Texas Ranger starring Chuck Norris debuts

Notes for upcoming tournament on the 13th. We will be discussing more in class.

- Remember to wear your Team Gentry/ Hero in Training and GMA Parent t-shirts to show your support.
- Make sure all gear is clean and white. A reminder: you will need full sparring gear, including hogus, mouthpiece, groin protection.
- GMA group photo will be taken at 9:00 at venue of the tournament. This is the photo to be used for the local paper, website, etc. There will likely be a line into the event at that point, so don’t be stuck in line while we are doing the photo. Please be in full uniform at that time.
- Registrations are available at the front desk, saving you some time in line, and we can help w questions

Performances in the Martial Arts

We hope many of our students and friends are following the Kukkiwon Demo Team as they march through the “Worlds Best” TV show. (as I wrote this, they were in the semifinals). I am very glad to see this amazing and storied team start to get some mainstream acknowledgement for both their athleticism and their artistry. As one judge put it, “Bruce Lee meets Fred Astaire.” As someone who has followed them for a while, their initial performance was rather tame compared to my favorite—hard to beat sitting at the Kukkiwon and watching them rehearse and perform a private show for the Prince of Jordan. But the latest performance was so new both in theater and technique that I was just as enthralled as the laymen.

The Kukkiwon demo team (KDT) has brought to the forefront the performance side of the martial arts. Despite it being in the name, most people don’t actually consider the martial arts actually an art form. All the ways that martial arts fit the criteria for art is another huge conversation, but we will focus on the performance angle here. For now I will at least point out I have always scratched my head that college dance classes are listed as *performance* art, and martial arts (which in many cultures is linked to or predates their dance and has function as well as beauty of movement) is merely PE credit. While maybe not quite up to KDT standards, I am proud of our demo team for trying to go beyond the mere machinations of movement and add in entertainment and expression: musicality, storytelling and comedy as well as physical skill expression. It is an underappreciated aspect of the ART.

But as in most cases of art, beauty is in the eye of beholder when it comes to martial arts performance. There are several other teams who are amazing martial athletes, but I am not as much of a fan of their shows. I am especially not a fan of the K-Pop dance / TKD fusion trend. It just isn't my cup of tea—martial arts can influence dance, not the other way around. And the trick kicking and acrobatics are cool, but sometimes they take over a little too much—the KDT can do a lot but I like when they have more of a balance between their precision forms and breaking. Again, to each their own I suppose. Personally, I like my art grounded in reality a little more. My favorite artist is Tabora, NOT Picasso.

While these performances on stage can be inspiring, in normal class they are quite the opposite. To be clear, martial arts practice should not be theatrical performance. Tai chi performers (not practioners) may be the epitome. The movements are supposed to be subtle and reserved, but yet, some people have to give it some flair. Everyone's form is going to be idiosyncratic, but I am talking about people who are less interested in doing the form than having other people watch them do the form. I had one theater/dance major at college who explained how he couldn't help himself in "projecting" into the form. I am sure muscle memory was a big part of it, but if he was so skilled in the mimicry of movement you would have thought he could have toned it down if he wanted to.

In TKD, GM Choi always mentioned "il sa da sang." One death, many lives—or more loosely, death to the self so that the group can live. Obviously it can have larger, more altruistic connotations, but in class it means not blazing ahead and "standing out" when everyone else is moving in cadence. While you are putting on a show for everyone to look at you, you are making the group look worse. Personally, I have always preferred the Japanese proverb that is essentially the other side of the coin: the nail that stands out gets pounded down. Or a related saying—you are not on me time you are on team time.

Admittedly, there are occasions in the martial arts, such as testings and tournaments, where you are asked to "perform" in a more attention grabbing scenario. But let's also not mistake "performing" in martial arts and performing with your martial arts. I am talking about using or executing your skills for their original purpose when called upon. Performance skill and fighting skill are not the same thing. As we discuss in the FAST classes, it doesn't have to be pretty, but it does have to be effective. But as martial arts have been further removed from their original purpose, sometimes we can get too caught up in aesthetics. In the absence of the reality of combat, the emphasis can become to outperform our opponent as opposed to winning. The most cringe worthy example of this is the so called "self defense" competitions at some tournaments, which are nothing more than well-choreographed demo routines with stunt work. Pretty sure that the simplest, most efficient and effective self-defense to most of those scenarios would not score very well because it wasn't exciting, wasn't overcomplicated, and didn't require a high level of fitness and athleticism to do. And the even scarier thing is most of the spectators would scoff at the lack of skill for "self-defense"

I sincerely hope that the Kukkiwon Demo Team wins. Our martial athletes and performers deserve more recognition for their artistry and their craft. But it also needs to be kept in perspective and not creep into other aspects of the wonderfully profound world of martial arts.