



Gentry News Jan 2022

****2022—Year of the Tiger****

And the winners are.... congrats to our award recipients!

We want to thank once again everyone for a wonderful time at the annual Christmas party and awards banquet. This year we recognized the following students with our **annual awards**:

Most Improved Student—Liam Canada
Competitor of the Year (TKD)—Hope Bennett
Competitor of the Year (BJJ)—Brandon Cox
Black belt of the Year—Preston Santiago
Student of the Year—Maya Mras

Upcoming events:

Jan 8 th	Catch up camp 9:00-11:30
Jan 8 th	Lil Dragons testing 12:30-2:00
Jan 8 th	Spar Wars Kendo/Saber night 5:00-9:00 pm
Jan 15 th	FAST Defense Stress Shooting seminar 9:00-12:30
Jan 15 th	FAST Defense Adult Basics 1:00-4:30
Jan 15 th	Demo Team performance—Indian Creek High school halftime Meet here first (TBA)
Jan 20-21	Kristian Woodmansee returns for BJJ *** BBC and BJJ switch Tues/Thurs this week
Jan 28 th	TKD testing 5:30 No regular class
Jan 29 th	Stick fighting 9:00-11:30
Jan 29 th	Leadership Team 12:00-1:30
Jan 29 th	Black belt prep 1:30-3:00
Jan 29 th	Demo Team performance—Martinsville HS halftime Meet here first (TBA)

Schedule adjustment:

TKD yellow and green belt class continues to grow. Over the years, these things balance out, but to help make these students get more attention until they do, on TUESDAYS, we will be extending class for 15 minutes for yellow and green STRIPES to work on their extra material. Purple/Brown belt class will start in the other room as the normal time.

Catch up Camp

As always, we are offering people a chance to get back into the swing of things and catch up on missed classes from over the holidays in our TKD catch up camp. All rank material will be covered in this 2.5-hour intensive which also counts for three classes—we keep it very affordable to let everyone be able to catch up or simply get a jump start on training in the new year.

REVIEW and FOLLOW Campaign

We would appreciate it if our students/parents would leave more reviews on Facebook/google, etc. This is important to reassure other perspectives who are checking us out. Some of our reviews are dated and we would like more fresh ones, so we are going to have a contest to help encourage participation. We will be having a drawing for a 100.00 Amazon gift card. Every review on google or Facebook will get you five entries. Subscribing to our YouTube channel will get you two entries and liking the GMAM Facebook page or following us on Instagram (if you haven't already) will get you one additional entry. Drawing will be at the end of the month. Please note, we must be able to recognize who you are in reviews/subscriptions/follows to give you credit, so if it isn't clear, message us or comment to clarify.



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at Gentry_MA

GMA Wishes a Happy Birthday to:

Alysha Patel	1/1	Michael Fisher	1/1	Vanessa Moulton	1/1
Christian Hayden	1/3	Suzanne Gens	1/12	Molly Kirk	1/12
Isaac Edwards	1/13	Michael Metzger	1/15	John Hambrick	1/19
Elizabeth Gray	1/17	Bryson Presley	1/24	Dudley Bonte	1/25
Theo Higgins	1/27	Lane Sandler	1/30	Mikenna Kirk	1/31

Training Anniversaries

Ryan Spires (TKD 12 yrs.)	Rebecca Watkins (TKD 3 yrs.)	Maura Watkins (TKD 3 yrs.)
Brandon Cox (BJJ 2 yrs.)	Eric Hanscom (HKD 2 yrs.)	Isaiah Hanscom (LD/TKD 2 yrs.)
Caden Howe (LD/TKD 2 yrs.)	Max Bailey (BJJ 1 yr.)	Adrian Martin (TKD 1 yr.)
Roger Martin (HKD 1 yr.)	Eli Voorhees (TKD 1 yr.)	Sarah Voorhees (TKD 1 yr.)
Brianna Crowe (TKD 1 yr.)	Michelle Weaver (BJJ 1 yr.)	

Quotes of the Week

Since Jan is the time for New Year's resolutions, we take the chance to discuss goal setting. We will be getting everyone to share their goals through a homework assignment.

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

- Jan 7th, 1932-- Birthday for Jhoon Rhee—father of American TKD and Chung Do Kwan member
- Jan 17th, 1939—Birthday for Dr. He-Young Kimm—HKD master and Korean martial arts historian
- Jan 17th, 1970—Chuck Norris's last fight before retiring.

Musings on The Matrix, Meta, and Martial Arts

Over the holidays I was excited to watch the new installment of the Matrix franchise*. I can certainly remember how groundbreaking the first movies were, and I must admit that as an ardent student of the martial arts, being able to download fighting styles instantaneously seemed very appealing.

Coincidentally, the past few months have seen quite the increase in chatter about the meta verse, fueled by a push by some tech giants further into the field. It is like the matrix, but just voluntarily. And the at-the-moment-still-hypothetical question for both is "would people really choose or prefer a make-believe life to reality?" Just like the Matrix movie, the concept and discussion has bled over into the field of martial arts.

At the Kukkiwon master's course we recently attended, the discussion vacillated between how to reach the masses by becoming more digital and tech savvy, but then professing how martial arts should be part of the solution to kids being addicted to the screens—the screens we need to work harder to be on. Clearly, finding a balance between the two worlds is a point of debate.



Now certainly, technology can be used to improve performance in physical endeavors. Covid forced us all to embrace zoom and other methodologies to accomplish or at least supplement many training objectives. Online training modules have exploded. VR boxing and shooting games are said to be quite realistic and can have a training effect if you can avoid the nausea. But there is a difference between using technology to become proficient in VR skills that translate into real world skills and becoming proficient solely in VR skills. A boxing game might help with your reaction time, but things change when you feel the other guys' punches. At least in the Matrix, getting beaten to death in the fake world had real world implications.

I had a similar conversation a long time ago about the UFC games. I have never been a gamer, and quite frankly, I never saw the point of spending that much time learning all the button options to make a pretend character fight, when you could spend the same amount of time getting proficient at the real thing! But someone averse to actual physical exercise or getting hit themselves might see it differently. Perhaps the more understandable aspect is the vicarious persona aspect....in these sporting games you get to become your heroes, the players you idolize. You get to do their moves. In this regard, it is no different than kids acting out their favorite professional wrestler's signature moves on their parents' king size bed.

But in the meta-verse, it isn't mimicry of a person; the mimicry is reality itself. It is clear that you are not really the person in the video game. But will those lines become more blurred in the meta-verse? Will we get to the point where everyone believes or accepts the metaverse version? Could we get to the point where social pecking order is established by meeting after school in a VR parking lot? Where everyone races home to put on their headset to gather round and watch two people fight it out from their basements before their parents call them up for dinner? It seems ludicrous, but if everyone accepts this version as legitimate, does it become the new standard of status? How do the schools manage it with their zero tolerance policies? Was it really fighting?

I must admit I am not one to be the first to jump onto technology trends...I can remember being skeptical of email in college. I would like to think that people will reject what they know to be fake and an illusion and embrace what they know to be real, but when it comes to images of oneself, illusions can be quite powerful and addictive. There are plenty of martial arts who have built a bit of an illusionary persona in this world. You don't need a VR world to create your own mythos, and some people gravitate to the martial arts for just that reason, but that is another rant.

But overall, I would like to think that martial arts are part of the antidote. The martial arts offer you a chance to be honest about yourself through success and failure. When you spar or roll, your weaknesses and shortcomings are exposed. The board either breaks or your technique fails. There are no cheat codes. Some of the most real relationships I have had in my life have been formed on the mats. As always, I am biased, but the martial arts are the red pill that opens your eyes and gives you clarity about the world and what matters most in it. But if I were given the chance, I would still download white crane Kungfu, and rope dart 😊

*This isn't about a review, but I did think they did an excellent job with Matrix Resurrections.