

# GMA News April 2026

*Good luck to our black belt candidates in TKD*

## Upcoming events:

- April 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> National sibling day (April 10<sup>th</sup>)—siblings can join us for classes Wed the 8th and Thurs 9<sup>th</sup>.
- April 18<sup>th</sup> USHF seminar, here at GMA 9:00-5:00
- April 24<sup>th</sup> TKD testing—no class
- April 25<sup>h</sup> World Tai Chi day celebration 10:00-11:00 at Jimmy Nash Park.
- April 25<sup>th</sup> TKD black belt testing 12:00-2:00
- April 25<sup>th</sup> TKD bb stripe testing 2:00-3:30
- April 25<sup>th</sup> Fuji BJJ tournament
- April 27<sup>th</sup> Lil Dragons Testing—no dragons classes
- May 2-3 GMA hosts Dr. Yang seminar
- May 9<sup>th</sup> Break a thon and school picnic 11:00-3:00ish?

## **BJJ CLASS PLAN STARTING IN MAY!**

Starting next month, we will be adjusting how we do our BJJ class schedule. Instead of remembering which nights are gi/no-gi during the week, we will run an extended time doing each. All classes from the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month to the 15<sup>th</sup> will be gi. All classes from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the end of the month will be no-gi. Still the same number of classes of each during the month, but we hope this will allow our classes to have more continuity from night to night.

## **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. Pre-registration discounts apply. Here is what we have:

**Dragons camp July 7-9 TKD camps June 8-12 and July 27-31. BJJ camp June 18-19. HKD June 22-23**

## ***Break-a-thon and annual school picnic May 9th***

This is one of our highlight events of the year, rain, or shine, at Jimmy Nash park Shelter 5. We will arrive at 11:00 and set up for the picnic. Breaking practice will start after people eat and then we will finish with some games and fun like throwing pies in the face of the instructors. The break a thon benefits our scholarship program!

## **GMA Wishes a Happy Birthday to:**

Moriah Gluff 4/02	Nolan Tupper 4/12	Nyah Hooten 4/15	Sadie Burgess 4/23
Erica Jones 4/24	Charis Hoffman 4/25	Sara Blair 4/26	Xavier Shelton 4/28
	Alex Jones 4/28	Hadley Reel 4/29	

## **Training Anniversaries**

Cathy Petraits- 14 yrs (Tai chi)	Wesley Yoshida- 14 yrs (TKD)	Evelyn Kaufman- 10 yrs (TKD)
Jenna Berry- 9 yrs (TKD, HKD)	Colt Goforth- 5 yrs (KBJJ)	Jake Staker- 5 yrs (BJJ)
Luke Voorhees- 5 yrs (TKD)	Noel Voorhees- 5 yrs (TKD)	Darrien Troxell- 3 yrs (HKD)
Edit Vagedes- 3 yrs (HKD)	Greydon Parker- 3 yrs (TKD)	Lynne Stewart- 3 yrs (TKD)
Leia House- 3 yrs (TKD)	Jean Todd- 1 yr (HKD)	Asher Laminger- 1 yr (LD)
Elliot Hogan- 1 yr (LD)	Ivy Cunningham- 1 yr (HKD)	

## **Don't forget GMA website, Facebook, Instagram,**

Follow us on Instagram @Gentry\_MA for lighter notes. And you can also subscribe to our YouTube Channel

**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.

## The Image of Invincibility in Martial Arts? Part 1

Many people might be attracted to the martial arts by some mythological allure of being nearly invincible. While this ambition may apply to some naïve concept about controlling violence, it may also include—coupled with images of the long, flowing white beards of esoteric masters—hopes of becoming immune the effects of mortality in general. I will attest that the overwhelming number of examples of age defying feats, both related to personal protection but also fitness/functional ability at a significantly old age, was by martial arts masters\*—not limited to but especially including tai chi masters.\*\* Moreover, these feats are more impressive in that, while these masters certainly took care of themselves, they didn't spend millions on extreme diets prepared by personal chefs, cryotherapy chambers and the like that modern professional athletes use to extend the longevity of their careers. But the recent loss of martial arts icon Chuck Norris just days after he was recorded sparring on his 86<sup>th</sup> birthday, is a reminder that Father Time is undefeated.

I can recall a long time ago in a different rant, bemoaning the fact we were losing a generation of martial arts pioneers. We are now losing the next generation—the direct students of that generation, including many of my teachers who are now in their 70's, 80's, and 90's and are now retiring from teaching. I will admit that when I was younger, they seemed to have an aura of invincibility around them, and I regret taking their presence for granted, as if they would always be around, and lost chances to learn as much as I could because I thought I had forever to do so.

The mystique of their superhuman qualities was admittedly augmented by me putting them on a pedestal, but it cannot be entirely attributed to that. They were sought out for their mastery and skill and were appreciated for such. While most never openly claimed to be invincible, they were also confident in their abilities, and even when not in their prime, they had to continually demonstrate enough skill to convince skeptics in the room they knew what they were talking about. Given that, allowing such an aura of near invincibility to be proscribed to them didn't hurt their teaching careers.

Culture (both Asian and martial arts culture) also encourages such a mystique to be maintained. Images of Mister Miyagi knowing mysterious ancient healing secrets fuel stereotypes that seemed to be confirmed in front of our eyes by expert and vibrant masters, and this is further bolstered by the cultural expectation of deference and respect for elders. The hierarchal culture of martial arts also reinforces respect for seniors, as well as the more unique mindset of never disclosing a vulnerability. My primary master instructor, GM Choi, upon disclosing I wasn't feeling well, admonished me to never let my students perceive me to be in a weakened state. He didn't really elaborate, and while some of this goes to the mindset of never giving an adversary information to be used against you, I suspect this also spoke to his expectation and obligation to uphold the image of invincible master.

Many would say such an image is counterproductive, and I will discuss such an argument in part II of this rant. But one can make the case that it simply doesn't pay to show weakness or age. Just as only the most dedicated fan, driven mostly out of nostalgia or novelty, would pay to hear a singer perform once their voice is gone and they can no longer hold a note, only the most loyal and appreciative student or fan would pay to train with a sickly, old has been. While it is a simple fact of life, it is still depressing to see our heroes succumb to ravages the of time, even if it is much delayed and a less steep of a decline than for most other people. I am grateful that many of my instructors, despite their age, are still at a level of mastery that inspires—both in terms of ability and also longevity. \*\*\* But as the demise of Chuck Norris reminds us (jokes aside), the image of invincibility is illusionary.

\*from the likes of both GM William CC Chen or Lee Morrison still having some of the fastest hands I have seen as senior citizens, to Gracies controlling people half their age on the ground, to HKD masters like GM Kim Nam Jae throwing people with ease, to GM Son supposedly running in Central Park at dangerous hours, almost hoping someone would try to mug him...there are many more I could list.

\*\*This is why I took up tai chi early, so as Cheng Mang Ching said, by the time you figure out what life is about, you still have the health to enjoy it.

\*\*\* In another timely coincidence, we are honored to host Dr. Yang for one of his last seminars, who will be retiring from seminars at the age of 80.