



Gentry Martial Arts May PART II

Break-a-thon results

Thanks to all who participated in the break-a-thon and picnic. We broke 310 boards during the hours, doing our part in the new world record of 70,000 boards broken across the country. Altogether we raised over 1,200 dollars for Project Action. Special thanks to our sponsors who donated the boards, allowing us to keep the costs minimal: Bender Lumber and Black Lumber in Greencastle.

Demo Team

Demo team has two important shows coming up in June. The first is June 6th at Relay for Life, 6:00 pm. The second is at Summerfest on the square at 2:00 pm Sat. June 21st. Both shows will be expanded to include more hapkido, so it is important that everyone is at the final two practices to make sure we have it down. Practice Friday March 30th will be expanded. It will from 6:30-8:00. No hapkido that evening. **A mandatory practice for anyone doing the show on June 6th will be held Wed. June 4th at 7:30.** We realize it is a little late for the younger ones, so hopefully we can finish at a decent hour.

Class Adjustments

Please make note of the following cancellations or schedule adjustments on account of the upcoming demo team practices.

Hapkido class cancellations: Friday March 30th. Intermediate and Advanced class on Wed. June 4th. Those students can come to the beginning class earlier that evening for a combined class. Also see testing info.

TKD: Friday June 6th class will be moved to 7:00 pm to accommodate the demo.

TTCA Summer camp

Don't forget that TTCA summer camp applications are due by June 1st. Make checks to TTCA. Please specify if you will be camping or staying in the barracks. Testing will be Sat. June 14th at the summer camp.

Hapkido Testing

A hapkido test has been scheduled for Wed, June 11th at 7:30 pm in Martinsville. Intermediate and advanced students who are not testing may come to the beginning class time for a joint class.

Congratulations to our Seniors

GMA would like to congratulate and thank our seniors from DePauw for all their hard work, and wish them all the best. From TKD- Miss. Katie Roe and Miss Kathy Husmann. From Hapkido- Mr. Matt Gaunt and Liz Porter.

Lil Dragon News

Testings:

Martinsville will have a lil dragons makeup exam on Fri, March 30th. You might consider scheduling a private review session if your dragon has missed a lot of class lately.

GMA-Spencer will have a lil dragons test on Sat, June 21st at 10:00 am.

Lock in/Sleepover

All dragons from both schools are invited to a dragons only lock-in at the Martinsville school, tentatively set for June 21st. We realize this is the first time many of our dragons will have been to such an event, so parents are also welcome. Dragons do not have to stay the night but can still come for the festivities. Dragons can also bring a friend. We will play games and watch a movie. The only cost is \$5.00 for pizza and breakfast. We will confirm the date and time with you later.



Black belt club Bonsai Outing

Details: Those people leaving from Martinsville will meet at 6:45 am at the school. Those coming from Ellettsville/Spencer will rendezvous with the other caravan at the Bloomington Walmart parking lot at 7:15 am. Hapkido people not taking the TKD class need to leave the school by 9:30 in order to make the 11:30 bonsai workshop. Do not be late, especially if you are looking for a ride. Remember, this was a special order and you will be responsible for the fee whether you sleep in or not. Your packing should include a dobok (if taking TKD class,) a pair of trimming shears, a pair of wire cutters, a plastic bag or other barrier to get the tree home without making a mess, and money for food, the \$40.00 registration, and additional bonsai items.

Driving directions are available from an instructor.

Life is like a bonsai tree:

In high school (back when we wore stone belts) I had an assignment in English class to pick an object and explain how it was a metaphor for life. I chose my bonsai tree. That metaphor has always stuck with me and as our black belt club goes to learn a little something about bonsai, I thought I would share it. Bonsai, just like people, come in all shapes, sizes and temperaments. You can make them look well beyond their actual years, such as giving them the appearance of being struck by lightning, and others you'd never expect to be as old as they are. But the metaphor extends far beyond just physical appearances. Each tree has its own personality. As species of trees, some are rather fragile and some are a lot more hardy. The hardy ones can take a lot of abuse in the course of molding it, yet it still grows into a masterpiece. I think of people like Bernard Kerik, Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, and other hardship cases, who despite the harsh "molding", have grown into pinnacles of their profession and society.

Additionally, there are main archetypes or styles of bonsai, such as windswept or a cascading look, that each raw tree will inherently possess. It is up to the expert to correctly identify the personality of the raw tree and shape it according to the tree's pre-existing uniqueness. In order for the tree to be a masterpiece, those inherently qualities must be recognized and fostered; forcing the tree to take another style that it is not predisposed to be rarely works out. But that doesn't mean that the artist has no say over the direction of the tree. The artists will prune and clip to accentuate the tree. Perhaps most important, however, is the training stage, where the trees learn how to grow into shape by wires. Eventually the wires will be removed, but the tree still keeps its shape. I liken this to the impact of our parents, teachers, and mentors, who first show us, and sometimes even dictate to us, which direction we should go. Eventually, the restrictions are lifted, but if done properly, we will still choose to go in the direction we were initially pointed.

Of course the biggest restriction to the bonsai tree is the very thing that keeps it a bonsai...the limited size of the pot. By minimizing the container, the tree is limited in its growth. I believe the same can be said of us—the more confined our life, the more limited our growth. It is important that we continue to broaden our horizons.

On one of my martial arts field trips to Boston, I visited an arboretum bonsai that were over 200 years old. The bonsai in my care do not tend to live that long. But regardless of life's condition, their purpose was still the same—to beautify the world while they were there. We can learn a lot from those little trees. --BLS