



# DECEMBER 05 GMA NEWSLETTER

## Upcoming events:

Dec 2 <sup>nd</sup>	TTCA testing Dec 2nd
Dec 3 <sup>rd</sup>	TKD black belt/black belt prep class 9-11
Dec 4 <sup>th</sup>	Master Chen Tai Chi seminar in Indianapolis
Dec 10 <sup>th</sup>	Tai Chi seminar 9-12:00
Dec 15 <sup>th</sup>	GMAM Christmas Party—Morgan County Fairgrounds 4H building, starting at 6:00 pm. No class
Dec 16 <sup>th</sup>	USHF hapkido testing, 7:00 pm
Dec 17 <sup>th</sup>	Leadership Team 9:00-10:30,
Dec 17 <sup>th</sup>	Demo Team from 10:30-12:00
Dec 17 <sup>th</sup>	Hapkido black belt class 12:30-2:30
Dec 19 <sup>th</sup>	Seminar with Jason Winkle—IU from 4-8. To cover trapping and knife
Dec 20 <sup>th</sup>	Deadline to register for Winter Daycamps in order to ensure we have the gear
Dec 28 <sup>th</sup>	Winter Weapons daycamp 9:00-3:00
Dec 29 <sup>th</sup>	Ground and Pound daycamp 9:00-3:00

## Congrats to our latest black belt

Catie Willhardt finished her testing requirements and is our newest black belt!

## Xmas Party and Awards Banquet

This years Christmas party/awards banquet has been scheduled for Dec 15<sup>th</sup> at the Morgan County Fairgrounds from 6:00-8:30? This is a chance to join in some fellowship, recognize some key students and parents, and give Santa any last minute list revisions. Signs ups for the pitch in dinner will be posted soon. We will not have access to the kitchen at the facility, so please plan accordingly with your dish selection. We also need a very close idea of people attending for seating arrangements. No class on that Thurs. BBC will meet on Tues instead of Thurs of that week. We hope everyone will be able to share in our annual event.

## 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 all the weapons or gear needed for the seminar and you can put the gear under the tree!

**Winter Weapons camp, Dec 28<sup>th</sup>**. Learn a variety of weapons not normally taught in the classes—this year we will be covering “kumdo” sword techniques and kali stickfighting. Price includes the jukdo (bamboo sword), pair of rattan sticks, and carrying bag.

**Ground and Pound Camp with Mr. Sledd on Dec. 29<sup>th</sup>**. Obviously based on Brazilian jujitsu, but with a change in emphasis. Unique things covered include: closing the distance, takedowns, ground and pound strategies, and conditioning. After lunch, Mr. Sledd may also cover his yoga for grapplers program for flexibility. This is going to be a hard core camp with lots of new techniques and/or new spins on old ones. Price includes NHB gloves, which is normally almost as much as the price of the entire seminar

## Coats for Kids

As a holiday philanthropy, we are having a clothing drive for local charities to help take the sting out of winter. Any gently worn but outgrown coats, gloves, hats are appreciated contributions. They can be dropped off in the foyer of the school anytime between now and Xmas. Also, just a heads up, we started the campaign with all the coats that have been left at the school and been unclaimed for a month or more—this is your last chance to reclaim those.



## GMA Wishes a Happy Birthday to:

Clayton Smith 12/03  
Brenner Williams 12/09  
Collyn Dodge 12/12  
Isaac Bair 12/23  
Griffin Selch 12/30

Austin Brummett 12/03  
Richie Long 12/12  
Mark VanHuss 12/18  
Carl Underwood 12/26

Samuel Muncy 12/07  
Drew Wilson 12/12  
Kyle Wells 12/21  
Luke Monts 12/28

## Training Anniversaries

Catie Willhardt (TKD 5 yrs)  
Mariah Ellis (HKD, 3 yrs.)  
Branden Edwards (TKD, 1 yr)

Tylor Martins (TKD, 4yrs.)  
Alex Ellis (HKD, 3 yrs.)  
Evan Wilt (TKD, 1 yr)

Josh Stecher (HKD 4 yrs.)  
Jesse Stuard (TKD from LD, 2 yrs.)

## Quotes of the Week

This month we are going to be talking a lot about commitment, in relation to our “I’m in” campaign.

## 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!

## Class Cancellations for Holidays, class adjustments, and general policies

No class on Thurs Dec 15<sup>th</sup> on account of the Xmas party. TKD BBC will meet during the same time slot on TUES, the 13<sup>th</sup> for that week.

Holiday class cancellations: No class on Friday Dec 23<sup>rd</sup> or Monday Dec 26<sup>th</sup> on account of Xmas. Classes resume Tues, December 27 and run through that Friday Dec 30<sup>th</sup>. No class on Mon. Jan 2<sup>nd</sup>. Classes resume on Jan 3<sup>rd</sup>

Class schedule adjustments: Due to our growing green/purple belt class, starting on Dec 6<sup>th</sup> we will be moving purple belts to the advanced time slot from 6:45-7:45. Purple belt parents, please make note of the change.

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 or let our early, so do we. If on delay, we will meet as normal. 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* off. When in doubt, simply call, check the website, check your email for announcements, etc. We are also working on an automated calling system to help disseminate information.

## Are you in?—Gentry style.

No, this isn’t a reference to a calling plan with a company I like to affectionately refer to as Satan’s network (I recently got off their Lucifer plan). I borrowed this idea from a recent church service/membership drive. It was a basically the motto used to inspire people to recommitting or becoming active members. I immediately saw the parallels to what we do here at GMA and thought it would be good for our students (and parents) to reaffirm the benefits of continuing the martial arts journey. As Christmas turns to New Years and new goals, we hope a bit of a timely one.

Why is important to us? Because living the martial way and “being more” doesn’t happen easily and overnight. Life changing, empowering, positive habits rarely get turned on like light switches. They are the product of continued practice and refinement. Sound familiar? Qualities of respect, self discipline and work ethic, black belt excellence, personal responsibility, honor...these qualities are slowly instilled in our students. Now, we promise that we try to start the process from day one in our classes. And granted, some students come to us better prepared in these areas than others, others learn more quickly in class, but still others take more time to learn these things and become more long term projects. People often look at those longer term projects as a way to criticize the martial arts, citing them as an example that the martial arts aren’t working in their lives. It may be true that they aren’t angels yet, but my question is what would those



“projects” be like without the martial arts at least tempering their behavior. In truth, many of the truly bad apples will weed themselves out because they ultimately can’t handle the structure. Those that are still around are at the very least diamonds in the rough, and as long as they are committed to us, we will stay committed to them.

On more than one occasion however, we have had parents drop their kids off and expect us to fix years of bad modeling while in their two free weeks. Now, we have lots of examples of rather dramatic turn arounds and improvements in school, behavior at home, etc., but as I said, things don’t happen overnight. One example comes to mind. We talked to the parent of a white belt who went on about how much her son loved the classes, that he was doing better in school, and they even used a quote of the week when he was about to give up on his homework. “We have tried all types of sports and activities; I am so glad he has finally found his thing here.” The next week we started prepping him for testing, and let’s just say he needed a lot of work. As soon as he realized that play time was over and we expected hard work, he wanted to quit—he wanted to do boy scouts instead. I sat down to talk about it: “If you want to stop training because you don’t enjoy it anymore, that is one thing, but if you want to stop because it has gotten harder, that is just plain quitting.” The look on his face told the whole story. The best reason he could give on why he wanted to do scouts over tkd...scouts had popcorn at their meetings. Mom was very disappointed, “I was really hoping this was something he’d stick with; I guess we will keep looking.” I am sure that boy will eventually find “his thing”....so long as it doesn’t require any of the effort or challenges that up to that point he had been allowed to run away from.

Ok, perhaps that was a bit of a tangent, but the moral of the story is this: if you want the benefits of the martial arts, you have to be doing the martial arts.

*What does it mean to us.* “I’m in” is a pledge—a pledge to black belt and beyond. A chance to recommit to living the martial way and taking it to the next level. It means that we won’t let a piece of wood stop us from continuing, even if it is a short term set back. It means that we “will never retreat from battle” when we think the going gets tough or it takes us longer to reach our goal. It means we focusing on our own growth rather than trying to keep up with others in a rank race, etc. It means pushing through the lulls and feelings of burn out that inevitably happens, to take it to the next level because we set a goal and now a pledge. It means accepting personal responsibility for your own growth and improvement—that “practice at home” or “fix this” means just that. Realizing that more power, better stances for upper ranks, means what it says. We sometimes here comments like “things are much harder at X belt than white or yellow.” Well, yeah! Shouldn’t a black belt be work harder, have more power, etc. At some point the line has to be drawn.

I’m in means committing yourself to the work ahead and diving in. Even if we are a black belt, it means not patting ourselves on back for black belt skill but rather keeping white belt humility because we realize how much more we have to learn. It means not slacking off in either attendance or effort between now and the next test, thinking there is plenty of time, but rather realizing the next test won’t ever come unless we are preparing for it the entire time.

Of course, this doesn’t just apply to the martial arts but translates into school, work, home, etc. Being “in” doesn’t stop at being “in class”. It means living “in the lifestyle”.

*How does it work?* This month we will have large posters in the front of the dojang with this theme. Students will get the chance to sign the poster as a pledge that they are going to do whatever it takes and get the most of out of the martial arts this coming year—to black belt and beyond. Often, kids are not taken at their word, but we will hold our students to that pledge. We don’t want any student to sign that poster lightly. The next time they hit a stumbling block, we will be pointing to their signature on that poster, reminding them that obstacles are what we see when we loose focus of the goals beyond them.

Looking back on the past 20 years, I know that martial arts is one of the greatest influences to help me become the man I am today (at least the parts I am proud of). Because of the martial arts I am more safe, more fit, more well, more confident, more responsible, more of a leader. I can look back at each step, each degree of black belt, and see that just when I thought I had “gotten there”, I would later find out that I hadn’t seen anything yet. As 2005 draws to a close it is time to set our goals for 2006. We hope that “being more” through martial arts training will be part of your plans for the upcoming year. There are many people at our school that can testify that martial arts can change your life, but those successes don’t come overnight. They take as much practice and reinforcement to master as any kick requires. You need to be “in” for the long haul. Some of us are “in” for life. We are looking for students who are interested in stepping up and saying that they are “in” for at least the next level. So the question is, are you in?

--BLS