



July 06 NEWS

****NO CLASSES JULY 4th—Have a Happy Holiday****

Thanks for Making Us number 1

Thanks to everyone who voted for us in the Reporter Times Readers Choice Awards, which we won for Morgan County's best martial arts school.

Special Congrats:

Our newest black belt - Mr. Thomas McGuire for successfully finishing his BB TKD test.

To Bill Kipp and FAST Defense for winning an industry wide award for one of the best self defense programs available, to be presented at an upcoming major convention. We are proud to have this award winning program as part of our school curriculum.

We are proud of our new Team Caique/GMA tournament showing

Congrats to our BJJ competitors on a strong showing at the Hoosier Open, a major Midwestern BJJ tournament. For a newer group, we are really making strides. Special recognition needs to go to the following individuals who placed in their divisions.

Mr. Tim Sledd 3rd place

Corey Rose 3rd place

Mike Dodge 1st place

Upcoming events:

July 1st BB TKD class 9:00-10:30
BB HKD class 10:30-12:30
July 1st Stick fighting seminar 1:00-3:30
July 4th NO CLASS
July 8th Tai Chi seminar 9:00-12:00
July 10-14 TKD Day-camp
July 15th Lil Dragon Testing: Beginning 9:00-10:30; Inter/advanced 10:30-12:00
July 15th Leadership team 1:00-2:00
July 15th Demo Team 2:00-3:30
July 17th HKD day camp
July 21st HKD belt testing
July 21st TTCA testing (projected, not confirmed)
July 22nd FAST Basics in Huntingburg

GMA Wishes a Happy Birthday to:

Jacob Bryson 7-1	Nikki Murray 7-3	Ethan Warrix 7-3
Megan Luecke 7-6	Payton Drake 7-7	Timothy Thomas 7-8
Taylor Dodge 7-13	Nathan Payne 7-15	Abigail Farmen 7-18
Jeff Gabbard 7-24	Mike Dodge 7-24	Josh Thombleson 7-24
Cory Pierce 7-29	Daniel Bradburn 7-29	
Mr. David Yoshida 7-8	Sarah McGuire 7-31	

Training Anniversaries--Special congrats for everyone who is celebrating a year or multiple years of training with us.

Grant Ksenak (TKD, 6 yrs)	Anthony White (TKD, 3 yrs)	Thomas McGuire (TKD, 3 yrs)
Jeremiah Deckard (HKD, 3 yrs)	Hannah Skaggs (TKD, 2 yrs)	Nikki Murray (TKD, 2 yrs)
Jay Vladioiu (TKD, 1 yr)	Bobby Brouse (TKD, HKD 1 yr)	Tiernan Randall (LD, 1 yr)
Kayla Gray (HKD, 1 yr)	Richie Long (TKD, 1 yr)	Austin Clark (LD, 1 yr)
Trent McLain (TKD 1 yr)		

Quotes of the week: With the "lazy days of summer" upon us, our motivational discussions will be around the idea of seizing the day.



GMA—a martial arts Baskin Robbins maybe, but not babysitters

Tis the season for summer camps, day-camps, VBS, and special trips and events. As most of you already know, GMA takes advantage of school being out to offer some special opportunities as well. Admittedly, we aren't the only martial arts school that does this, and through our industry support material, we get lots of advice on how to run such events. Since we have several of these events, (TKD and HKD day-camps, our new stick-fighting program starting, etc.) I thought it might be interesting to compare and contrast our approach with the "industry gurus."

With summer camps, we are told that we can't have a "martial arts" summer camp. We are told to have a "sports camp" with a martial arts emphasis. You see, according to them, our students (or prospects) don't have the attention span to do martial arts all day. We must take them to the pool, go bowling, or add other completely unrelated activities to keep the camp fun and interesting...but wait a minute...aren't we supposed to make martial arts fun and interesting? The bigger question of course is what are we paid to do? We at GMA do not consider ourselves glorified babysitters. The purpose of our camps is not to keep the kids merely busy and appeased. The purpose of our camps is to spend as much time as we can to get the most out of our students that we possibly can. It is a chance for us to mold our students into leaner, meaner martial artists. It is chance for us to do some extra things and teach some new material, like watching relevant videos during lunch. Given the number or repeat "campers," it appears that students enjoy doing that very thing that GMA exists to do—martial arts—not babysitting. On a personal vent, I am tired of watching all the "industry giants" teach their proven classes, where kids run obstacle courses, jump and duck pool noodles and lots of other physical activity but only do a handful of actual martial arts techniques. The instructors spend more time setting up games than actually instructing on technique. Maybe I am missing something, but I simply can't do that in clean conscious.

On another note, we routinely get advice on how to run monthly special seminars. Some of them are good ideas, but mostly, they are how to spin off what we are already supposed to be doing and charge extra for it. "Have a special sparring seminar, where you teach special advanced techniques". Uhhh... shouldn't we be teaching our students the best way we can all the time? "Teach special self defense skills in this self defense camp." If those particular self defense techniques are so important, don't we have an obligation to be teaching them already, rather than holding out? Granted, some of it depends on how schools structure their program. A board breaking seminar (another suggestion) might be a good idea if we didn't already have it as part of our regular curriculum. Currently we are in the process of starting our regularly meeting stick-fighting program. Why? Because there is an interest, students want to learn, but we don't have the opportunity to teach it as part of our regularly scheduled classes. Some might ask why not just add it into our current classes?

Which leads me to the last part of the discussion, the "cutting edge" way to teach martial arts is with what is called a revolving curriculum with phases. In order to keep the students interested, the classes regularly switch every couple months or so from, say, karate to ground fighting and then to some stick fighting program. Now, initially that sounds good. But what really happens is the student doesn't really learn any one thing well and ends up with a hodgepodge of techniques. Even the instructors might be an expert in one area, but then become seriously less qualified in the less familiar phase.

While we are proud to offer a lot of styles, we aren't sold on that type of teaching but prefer to keep the arts separate. First, we do it out of respect for the art(s) and our teachers. Teaching phases is a whole lot easier for those schools who have broken off from their teachers and answer to no one. We try to stay true to teaching what our teachers have taught us, in the manner that they learned or want it taught. Second, different styles meet different needs. We are proud to be able to reach a lot of different needs and interests through our versatility. We want our students to find what is right for them, and then we won't pull the bait-n-switch on them. On more than one occasion I have had a HKD student from college go back home in the summer and join a "HKD-Judo-TKD school". They ended up doing TKD and only briefly ever touching on HKD (and when they did, even the instructor looked like a TKD person trying to do HKD...our blue belt ended up showing their black belt instructor a basic, staple wrist lock!). Now, that aside, the instructor might very well had lots of TKD knowledge to teach, but unfortunately, that wasn't what the student had signed up to learn. Most importantly, each art has its own bio-mechanic, philosophy, approach, and overall flavor. Baskin Robbins has lots of flavors from which to choose, but you don't go there and order them all in the same bowl. While it is true many of our students study multiple martial arts concurrently, we feel keeping the classes and curriculum separate helps the student compartmentalize and learn each language separately. Hopefully they will become bilingual, rather than only being able to speak an unintelligible mix of both.

Parents and students might have wondered why we didn't do something like phase training and blur the lines. Hopefully I have helped explain our reasons and rationales, which range from the philosophical to the practical. So while we are proud to give our student the chance to learn about different styles, we want them to treat each style they choose to learn with equal respect and focus. We don't add new stuff simply because we ran out of stuff to teach and to keep the kids busy. We do it for another chance to give our students serious, quality martial arts training...cause that is what we do. --BLS