



DECEMBER 06 GMA NEWSLETTER

Upcoming events:

Dec 1 st	TTCA testing
Dec 2 nd	USHF black belt testing and ceremony. Tentatively 1:00-5:00
Dec 2 nd	Stickfighting seminar 9:00-12:00
Dec 9 th	Leadership team 9:00-10:30
Dec 9 th	Demo Team 10:30-12:00
Dec 9 th	TKD brown belt (black belt prep class) 1:00-2:30
Dec 10 th	Master Chen Tai Chi seminar in Indy
Dec 16 th	Tai chi seminar 9:00-12:00
Dec 16 th	TKD black belt class 1:00—2:30
Dec 16 th	HKD black belt class 2:30-4:30
Dec 22 nd	GMA Christmas Party—Morgan County Fairgrounds 4 H building, starting at 6:00 pm. No class.
Dec 20 th	Deadline to register for Winter Daycamps and ensure we have the gear.
Dec 27 th	Winter Weapons daycamp 9:00-3:00
Dec 28 th	BJJ daycamp 9:00-3:00
Dec 29 th	HKD testing
Dec 30 th	TKD 2 nd kup class/prep session—(tentative)
Dec 30 th	BJJ open mat and UFC fight night: time tba

Special Congrats for big student promotions!

To our lil dragon graduates: J Burress and Taylor Dodge.

To our new black belt ranks in HKD: Mr. Josh Enneking, Mr. Josh Stecher, and Mr. Marc Shotts (2nd dan).

GMA's Team Caique members place in BJJ Michigan Open

Congrats to Daniel Wiggins for placing 4th in a really tough and large division in his weight class.

Congrats to Mr. Sledd on a very close 2nd place finish against some of the top BJJ players around.

Xmas Party, Dance and Awards Banquet

This years Christmas party/awards banquet has been scheduled for Dec 22nd at the Morgan County Fairgrounds from 6:00-7:30, with a dance to follow later till 9:30 or so. 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 may not have full 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 Friday. 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! Deadline to register to ensure the gear is here for the camp is Dec 20th.

Winter Weapons camp, Dec 28th. Kali stickfighting with an emphasis on stick-and-dagger and knife Price includes the sticks, training knife and carrying bag. For those doing the regular stickfighting classes, we will be sure to do some stuff not seen and not included in the levels, but it is still a great way to build and progress. No experience is necessary however, and it is a great way to be introduced to the art.

Ground and Pound Camp with Mr. Sledd on Dec. 29th. 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



GMA Wishes a Happy Birthday to:

Clayton Smith 12/03	Austin Brummett 12/03	Michael VanZant 12-12
Brenner Williams 12/09	Richie Long 12/12	Drew Wilson 12/12
Collyn Dodge 12/12	Mark VanHuss 12/18	Michaela Reidy 12-12
Kyle Wells 12/21	Carl Underwood 12/26	Luke Monts 12/28
Tim Thombleson 12-29	Griffin Selch 12/30	Mrs. Yoshida 12-26

Training Anniversaries

Tylor Martins (TKD, 5yrs.)	Josh Stecher (HKD 5 yrs.)
Jesse Stuard (TKD, 3 yrs.)	Branden Edwards (TKD, 2 yr)

Quotes of the Week

This month we will be discussing key concepts of integrity.

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 Friday Dec 22nd on account of the Christmas party...see you there.
- Holiday class cancellations: No class on Monday Dec 25 or Tues Dec 26th on account of Xmas. Classes resume Wed, December 27 and run through that Friday Dec 29th. No class on Mon. Jan 1st. Classes resume on Jan 2nd
- 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, cancel evening events or let out 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, listen to WCBK, etc.

Martial Arts—the idea or the real thing?

There was a scene in the movie “Failure to Launch” (pretty good flick btw) that is in regard to boats, but the minute I saw it I thought it was a great description of the martial arts as well. A boy is talking to his mentor who sells luxury boats, and the child exclaims “I love boats.” The character played by Matthew McConaughey countered something like this... “No, you don't love boats. You love the IDEA of boats, the freedom, what it represents. What you don't see is the expensive boat payments, the maintenance and upkeep, the time it takes to go sailing, the learning that has to come, the troubling times when the sea gets stormy. You love all the benefits but haven't thought about the commitment.” Or something like that. I am sure most people, including my wife, would say that he says it better than I do anyway. (I presume she means she likes the way the scriptwriter phrased it.)

But I don't think it is too hard to see where I am going with this. We constantly get people who say they love the martial arts, but it turns out they really loved the IDEA of the martial arts more than the actual lifestyle. They like the idea of the benefits. They can see themselves being more confident, of having that quite assuredness in a stressful situation, conflict or even a simple presentation. They say they should become more physically gifted: more fit, more flexible, stronger, explosive, more coordinated. The martial arts values of discipline, honor, responsibility and respect appeal to them (or for their kids). They envision how their quality of life would be so much better if they only had a little more of all these things. We agree...it certainly would...that is why we do what we do, because we believe that the martial arts are the most important lifestyle choice out there (aside from religion).



But then they find out that it takes work and commitment, and sometimes they aren't able to make the lifestyle adjustments needed to make the IDEA of the martial arts become their reality. They do the action principles or listen to the quotes of the week but they don't apply themselves to make it a habit in their overall life. They write out the assignment and forget the lesson. They aren't able to make the "boat payments" in sweat and occasional bruises. They find they didn't bargain for all the "boat upkeep" when it comes to practicing at home...putting in all the time behind the scenes so you can enjoy the actual trip. When the sailing isn't so smooth in the martial arts and we temporarily get set off course, some decide to turn back instead of braving the storm and conquering the sea.

Perhaps a less metaphorical way of summing it up is by quoting what one of our students wrote in their black belt report, "[working for] black belt has meant that I have not been able to spend the night with a friend on Friday night due to a class that I must attend on Saturday morning. This has been hard for me sometimes. I have had to give up a lot of time with friends to participate in martial arts activities." Of course, he was with other friends while he was here...but the point is not missed...we realize that it takes hard work and that our students (and parents) sacrifice a lot. Please don't think for a second that we don't realize that or appreciate that, the GMA team certainly does. But at the same time, it is also what we have come to expect. Why? Because that is what everyone else who has come before you has done to get to where they are in the martial arts. It is the nature of things. It is the reality of the disciplined martial arts lifestyle that rears its ugly head once the honeymoon is over. I remember coming home from college for a short visit and some of my closest friends from high school getting together and asking me to go out with them. I remember answering that I had TKD that night; I couldn't miss the opportunity to train while I was home. Sometimes that meant I was late, sometimes that meant I missed them altogether. And sure, part of me was disappointed...but I knew it had to be done for me to continue on the martial path. And I also knew that it was worth the sacrifice, though I probably didn't appreciate it as much as I do now.

There are several of our students who have adopted the lifestyle. They love being a black belt, not just the idea of a black belt, and I am not just talking about an ego trip when you tie it on. I am talking about enjoying working out with their martial arts family. They talk about things like loyalty and honor and other "gentry" qualities. They are among the people who sacrifice the most yet complain the least, because it really isn't a tough choice for them. They not only accept but embrace what comes with being a black belt--including the responsibilities of leadership. Because black belt isn't an abstract fantasy that they wish about, black belt is a real way of life that they are living. They accept the maintenance, payments and other things that come with owning the boat so that they can enjoy the benefits that everyone dreams of. Whereas most people would rather watch from the shore and say, "I wish I was on that boat," but aren't really willing to make the payments.

A similar example can be found in our BJJ classes, where we have had our share of guys come through who want to be tough guy MMA fighters, yet their attendance is sporadic. They don't train as frequently as other guys and yet get frustrated because they aren't getting good enough to hang with the people who are outworking them. We have also seen the difference in the parents of some of our former students. They sign their kids up for class because they want us to teach them commitment but then let them quit the minute the child realizes that we don't play freeze tag and babysit like some schools, but actually make them earn their rank. They want their child to be confident but let them run away from obstacles. Now, I am certainly not trying to say that every former student of ours falls into this camp, but there are certainly some that do. I also see several other "black belts" at DPU and other places who might have something dark around their waist, and they are in love with the idea of being a black belt, but it is clear that they don't get the whole concept of being one. They might have "earned" their black belt by showing up and paying their tuition on time but not much else. They don't show the respect, the technique, the attitude or responsibility that a black belt should have. What I find interesting is it isn't just my opinion, but invariably all my lower rank students pick up on it also... "that person is a supposedly a black belt?"

I frequently remind our students that there is a difference between being martial artist and doing martial arts. Which one are you or will you be? Are you trying to "be more"? Are you trying to live the martial arts lifestyle of discipline, honor, respect, fitness, etc.? Those things sound great, don't they...there is a reason that the ideas are so alluring? We can help you get them. But you have to stop just toying with the IDEA and do what it takes to make it a reality. ---BLS