



# Gentry News Jan 07

**\*\*\*2007—Year of the pig\*\*\***

## **Upcoming events:**

Jan 6 <sup>th</sup>	Tai chi seminar 9:00-12:00
Jan 6 <sup>th</sup>	TKD black belt class 1:00-2:30
Jan 6 <sup>th</sup>	HKD black belt class 2:30-4:30
Jan 13 <sup>th</sup>	TKD 1 <sup>st</sup> kup black belt prep class 9:00-11:00
Jan 19 <sup>th</sup>	TTCA testing, 5:30
Jan 27 <sup>th</sup>	Lil dragons testing (beginning 9:00-10:30, intermediate/advanced 10:30-12:00)
Jan 27 <sup>th</sup>	TKD 1 <sup>st</sup> kup black belt prep class 1:00-2:30
Jan 26 <sup>th</sup>	USHF HKD testing
Jan 27 <sup>th</sup>	Demo team practice 2:30-4:00
Jan 28 <sup>th</sup>	Professor Caique BJJ seminar, Bedford
Feb 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Stickfighting seminar 9:00-12:00
Feb 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Tentative FAST basics class at GMA 1:00-4:00
March 30 <sup>th</sup>	TTCA black belt testing
March 31 <sup>st</sup>	TTCA tournament in Louisville

## **And the winners are....congrats to our award recipients!**

We want to once again thank everyone for a great time at the annual Christmas party and awards banquet. This year we recognized the following students with our annual awards:

Martial Spirit Award—Reese Elliot  
Most Improved Students—Richie Long  
Competitor of the Year (TKD)—Mr. Cory Pierce  
Competitor of the Year (BJJ)—Daniel Wiggins  
Black belt of the Year—Miss Raven Shotts  
Student of the Year—Shae Brouse

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

Alex Childress	1-2	Chacity Selburg	1-17	Makyla Nenedjian	1-24
Alex Rodriguez	1-9	J Burress	1-19	Kassie Hogan	1-25
Ryan Jerome	1-11	Austin Fowler	1-20	Jake Waltz	1-31
Miss Raven Shotts	1-17	Noah Lambert-Adams	1-23		

## **Training Anniversaries**

Mr. Cory Pierce (TKD 7 yrs)	Raven Shotts (TKD 5 yrs)	Ken Hawkins (HKD 1 yr)
Mike Ksenak (HKD 6 yrs)	Zachary Rupert (TKD 2 yrs)	Trenton Clark (LD, TKD 1yr)
Marc Shotts (TKD, HKD 5 yrs)	Ethan Rupert (TKD 2 yrs)	Jia Jones (TKD 1 yr)
Caleb Shotts (TKD 5 yrs)		

## **Quotes of the Week**

Since Jan is the time for new years resolution, we take the chance to discuss goal setting.

## **Introducing intent to promote letters**

We at GMA take your students progress at school very seriously, and we maintain that school performance is a pre-requisite for belt promotion. While we ask that students keep us informed of both the good and the bad, we have had trouble getting report cards on time. Also, sometimes report card schedules don't coincide with our testing schedules very well. In an effort to more consistently and more frequently monitor school performance, starting in 07 we will be



introducing an “intent to promote” letter. This is a letter that students will take to their teachers and get signed before testing, allowing us a timely method.

## **2006 turned out to be the year of the salmon.**

If you know your Chinese Zodiac, I am sure you are quite puzzled as there is no salmon. I will get back to our Pacific rim favorite in a minute. But as it is natural this time of year, our thoughts have turned towards analyzing the past year and planning out the new one. It is a chance to take inventory of 2006 for the school, and I thought I would share a few things, but the image that comes to mind to best describe the year is the salmon.

We have all seen a wildlife documentary chronicling the salmon's unbelievable journey upstream...leaping up waterfalls, dodging bears, etc. to get to the pure mating waters; An amazingly complex journey, but to the salmon, a natural or instinctive journey. To other fish, it is just plain crazy (or so I would imagine). In 2006 we have seen a lot swimming upstream—up the lineage hierarchy—to pure water (a term borrowed from Mr. Sledd for authentic, close to the source teachings). While we still have lots to teach our students, we feel it is natural to start introducing our students to our teachers, so they have the opportunity to learn from purer water. Students feel as though it is an honor, and we enjoy introducing our students—kind of like the parent who takes the kids to meet grandma and grandpa for the first time. Our pedigrees are something we are proud of at GMA. We are also proud of our students.

A lot of schools and/or instructors, however, are not salmon. They would not view swimming upstream as natural at all. Maybe they feel challenged or insecure about exposing their students to someone who is better than them, more senior, etc. Maybe they can't stand the thought of their students knowing there is someone better than them. Often, it is a matter of not being able to maintain relationships—because of money or some other petty reason—and so the instructor is essentially orphaned. The stream is dammed up. Rather, he isolates himself as the big fish in his little pond. Sure, he promotes himself or has a group of people in the same boat (or should I say pond) that promote each other, but overall the pond slowly becomes stagnant because it lacks constant replenishment from the purer source. We at GMA are continually looking to improve ourselves and our students, and 2006 was no exception.

The TTCA tournament was a great one this year. Not only did we bring home 56 medals and have a rockin' demo performance, but more importantly it was GM Choi's 30 year anniversary that brought Chung Do Kwan masters from all over the country and Korea to the event—including legends GM He Man Park (GM Choi's primary instructor) and GM Y.T. Chung (one of the first black belts in the CDK). GM Chung passed away later in the year, but for those who made it to the tournament, it was a chance to meet one of the pioneers. It was chance to get your picture taken with history that is no longer available. It was chance to meet a who's who list of CDK masters in addition to our already rich source in GM Choi.

In Hapkido we recently had Masters Whalen and Thomas, the two most senior westerners in the Korea Hapkido Federation, in for seminars. It was a chance for our instructors and students to learn solid, authentic Hapkido techniques from two people who have traveled further upstream than most anybody. We are optimistic in continuing to lead our students up that stream of knowledge.

In 2006 we became an official training affiliate and member of Team Caique. Professor Caique not only is world caliber, but other world champions regard him as *their* hero! It is hard to appreciate just how clean of technique we have until you compare with other practitioners who don't have such pure water. It was a pleasure to have him at our school and be part of the team at tournaments, seminars, etc.

Last year we once again brought one of the leading experts in self-defense and the founder of FAST defense, Bill Kipp to teach and to certify our team in FAST weapons. Mr. Kipp travels the world teaching FAST. Not only are we the only FAST team in the state, but our students have had regular chances to take class with a pioneer himself. In 2006 FAST won national awards--voted the number one self defense course for women by Black Belt Magazine.

There were several lesser cases of swimming upstream... I introduced a couple of students to my primary kali instructor. We have a growing number of students going to Dr. Yang seminars either locally or in Boston with me. This was the first year I took a student to see Dan Inosanto. In some of these cases, I am not much further up the stream than they are, so I wasn't serving in any capacity as a liaison, but rather both of us were swimming the current together. That is ok, I am not ashamed to say I still have several people I admire in the martial arts—I would be worried if I didn't!

Looking back on 06, it was a good year of great opportunity for our students—opportunities that a lot of people would wish for. Other “fish” are just sitting in their stagnant pond. Is swimming upstream hard work? Just ask the salmon. It takes more time, money, effort. But the real question is “whether it is worth it?”. Once you have tasted pure water, you know. ---BLS