



GMA News June 07

Congrats to our new black belt and other awards:

We had some milestone promotions in the HKD program in the month of May. Congrats to our new black belts Mr. Frank Aba-onu and Mr. James Holmes. Additionally, Miss Stephanie Brown received her 2nd dan, and Mr. Shaun Watts became our first 3rd dan student in HKD. Congrats to everyone.

A special congrats and thank you to two special students who received GMA's highest honor, the gentry or kunja certificate: Mr. Josh Enneking and Mr. John Bossnack.

Break-a-thon Results

Thank you to everyone who worked very hard to make our break a thon and annual picnic a huge success. Our final tally was \$2,100. At the time we reported it to Project Action, it also ranked among the top three nationally. Overall, we broke 360 boards as part of the collective effort to set a world record. We don't have the official tally of the record attempt yet. But thanks again to everyone who worked so hard. Also special thanks to the parents committee for their help in organizing and grilling. Also please help us thank our sponsors as well for donating all the wood-helping us keep our cost down: Newcomer, 84, Bender, Black (B-ton and Greencastle) and UBC in Ellettsville.

Congrats to Mr. Miller and Miss Tipton

June brings us the much-anticipated event of the year; the day Amanda finally gets Mr. Miller to tie the knot—on June 9th. Congrats to the couple. We are quite fortunate enough to have a strong group of instructors that allow us to cover classes during the festivities, and Mr. Sieg and others will be covering Mr. Miller's classes while the couple enjoys their honeymoon. It won't affect the school, but we wanted to make you aware of the adjustments.

SUMMER ATTENDANCE REWARD and Referral Program

As usual we have our summer attendance reward program starting in June. Look for details on how you can be a part of a party at the end of the summer for strong attendance during the hot summer months. We also have a special referral program for over the summer as well. See the handout in class for details.

Upcoming Events

- June 1 Relay for Life Demo- Fairgrounds 8:00 pm (team meet at GMA at 6:00)
***NO TKD/HKD class on June 1st on account of summer camp and relay demo. BJJ will meet
- June 2 Lil Dragons testing: beginning 9:00-10:30, intermediate/advanced 10:30-12:30.
- June 2 Leadership team 1:00-2:00
- June 1-3 TTCA summer camp
- June 9 TKD black belt prep class 9:00-10:15
- June 9 Hoosier Open BJJ tournament
- June 15 TKD TTCA testing 5:30
- June 22-24 Tai Chi seminar with Master Chen, Bloomington
- June 25-29 HKD day camp
- June 29 HKD testing
- June 30 Stick fighting 9:00-12:00
- June 30 Kids FAST Class 1:00-3:30

New Day camp Added

We have added a new lil dragon class camp on July 2nd and 3rd from 9:00-3:00. We will extend early registration for this camp since it has been added only recently to the calendar. Also, don't forget about the new stickfighting camp July 18-20. We are excited to expand our camp offerings due to popular demand.



Minor class schedule adjustments

A reminder that TKD purple belts will now be combined with the green belt class in order to adjust for class sizes. This will hopefully continue until we open our second classroom once construction is completed on the other building; purple belts will have their own class at that time. We apologize for the short notice but believe it to be in the interest of best serving our students.

Also, a note that the Friday daytime HKD class has now been moved to 12:15, the same time as the Tues slot.

Fathers day invitation

After inviting the mothers to join the kids in class for mother's day, we would be in trouble if we didn't offer the same to our fathers. Dads, Grand-dads, etc. are welcome to join their kids in class the week following Fathers day—June 18-22.

Happy Birthday to these students

Tori Dillon	6-05	Sarah Smith	6-21	Cameron Adamson	6-25
Josh Turner	6-06	Jia Jones	6-21	Bobby Brouse	6-26
Ashley Luttrell	6-07	Brandy Potter	6-22	Mandi Kestler	6-27
Alex Hermann	6-09	Tyrus Martin	6-22	Ethan Jones	6-28
Devon McCabe	6-15	Nevin Markitan	6-24		

Training Anniversary

Congrats to those students who are celebrating a year or multiple years of training with us:

Timothy Thomas (LD, TKD 4 yrs)	Drew Wilson (TKD 4 yrs)
Abigail Farnen (TKD 3 yrs)	Gabe Wilson (TKD 4 yrs)
Seth Wilson (TKD, 4 yrs)	Rob Pounders (HKD, 2 yrs)
Noah Wilson (LD, TKD 4yrs)	Jacob Bryson (LD 1 yr)

Quotes of the week

This month we will be talking about the relationship between success and failure.

Please keep us posted

A reminder as summer approaches that if you have vacation plans, we would appreciate being kept informed, so we don't worry if we miss you in classes. Thanks.

GMA – A No Fly Zone at for Helicopter Parents

Most of us have heard of the term helicopter parent, referring to parents who “hover overhead” of their kids, quickly coming to their aid and bailing them out. Maybe fewer have heard of the lesser used term of Black Hawk—referring to those helicopter parents who cross the line into unethical behavior. No, before I get to how to this subject relates to GMA and martial arts, let me first make some disclaimers. First, believe it or not, my inspiration for writing this musing didn't come from anyone at our school (some of you could be letting out a sigh right now.) It actually comes from college. I have seen parents at both universities where I teach call and complain about professors and students grades. Parents call to “cut through the red tape” in order for their child to receive preferential treatment—treatment to which they are not entitled and often doesn't exist. Stories circulate about on campus job interviewers having parents set up their child's interviews (and even come to them) and even trying to negotiate salaries for their offspring. Now those cases would probably fall under the black hawk category, but I'll admit that even I am guilty of hovering at times. You want to make sure your child is doing the right thing, being polite, playing nice, etc. When you are trying to get out the door it is often easier to tie that shoelace yourself than having your child struggle to do it (and have it come undone again in a matter of minutes). I have to constantly remind myself to give Haley those chances to practice—and fail as part of the process. And of course, that is the most difficult part and the biggest reason for helicopter parenting. We care so much and want to protect them; we want to see them happy and succeed instead of hurting and failing. Obviously, a good parent has to hover some, it is finding that balance that is hard. And we certainly appreciate all the involvement that our parents have in their child training here at GMA—not only getting them to class and the other events, but helping them study, watching them do the forms at home, etc. We know that often



the parent could pass the test as easily as the child, since they have done it mentally along side them for so long...well, not exactly, but you get my point.

So against this personal backdrop, I have given lots of thought to the flight patterns around GMA. In theory, martial arts practice is the one place that helicopters should be grounded. After all, martial arts is about personal responsibility and personal work ethic. Our kids “learn to earn” as they go through the ranks. Parents can of course support, but ultimately the kid has to put in the time and effort to get the results. No one is going to swoop down and do it for them. And sometimes that is the biggest lesson to be learned by the student.

Just as it is hard for parents to watch their kids fail, it is just as painful for our instructors. You might have heard me say that I am more nervous during my student’s black belt exams than my own...because I can control my own performance but have to leave our students test to themselves. During checkmark time before testing, we really are rooting for every kid to succeed, and I try to give them as much of a chance to succeed as I feel I can. But ultimately, I might also have to give them the chance to fail. It is painful for us to see the disappointment in their faces. But if we were to swoop down and rescue them, we would be destroying the integrity of the testing system, the standards at our school, and our kids would never be challenged to push themselves.

So you see, sometimes martial arts schools are just as guilty—either by condoning helicopter parenting or doing their own version of it. There are many examples that seem superficial, but I believe are truly significant. Example one: A kid comes in with his/her belt undone. I tell the kid to fix their belt. Some schools use Velcro belts because you don’t have to tie them. I believe most know the philosophical underpinnings attached to the way we tie the belt, which would be lost if we went to Velcro. But it would be avoiding the problem rather than helping the child. Taking time out of class to have him/her fix the belt can sometimes be a disruption, and I might even appear to be callously standing there, watching them struggle with it, but the situation is quite analogous to waiting as your child learns to tie his shoe. Beyond that, here are some other teaching lessons: respect, etiquette and self-presentation can be either reinforced, or by me letting it slide those same lessons are downplayed as not important. Example two: many schools (and we have been advised to) place dots on the floor for children to stand on when lining up for spacing purposes. And never mind about rank—that takes too much time. Just find a spot. Admittedly, we tried out the X’s on the floor for spacing purposes, but the problem is that there are no X’s in the woods at summer camps. Being able to organize themselves quickly and quietly (in theory) is another skill set I think martial arts students should be able to have (and need in grade school, etc). Is it a pain waiting for a big class to line up...YES, but I consider the pain to be of the necessary growing pain variety.

Granted, those pains and those examples are minor ones, but there are certainly lots of cases of black hawk hovering in the martial arts as well, and again, the school can either condone it or make a stand. At DPU I have had parents (who have never done martial arts) of kids (who have never done martial arts) tell me how their kid didn’t deserve the grade they received. I tried to diplomatically explain why they did and as the instructor, I reserve the right to make that call. It is natural to compare you kids to others in the class or an activity, and it is hard not to be myopic (we have all seen funny looking babies yet no one ever has one themselves.) We occasionally have parents take offense to a perceived slight of their child and get something like “and he is much better than that other kid.” They are entitled to their opinion but generally it is an unqualified one. If they know so much about what to look for why aren’t they teaching their kids martial arts instead of us? Perhaps this example sums it up best: One kid was having trouble getting his checkmarks before testing, in part because he failed to get make the help sessions we had tried to set up for him. The dad explained to us that if his son didn’t test this time, he was pulling him and taking him to another school. We gave him every opportunity but the kid couldn’t do his forms, and we never saw him again. Now...some schools might have tried to let him test and rationalize it as “if we keep him, maybe he will catch on later, he just needs encouragement,” or “we don’t want to hurt his self – esteem”, but the kid wouldn’t learn any more martial arts—only that people respond to anger and demands and extreme behavior gets results. He wouldn’t have “learned to earn” his belt, only that you need your parent to apply some leverage.

As a parent I certainly realize it is hard not to be emotionally invested in your child, but sometimes to appreciate the bigger lesson that martial offers to teach -- the way to becoming a better student, you have to ground yourself a little bit. The funny thing is, sometimes the kids are more accepting than the parent because they are starting to “get it”. Other times that isn’t the case, perhaps in part because they have been hovered over all the time. Those times may be hard for the kid, and we realize it is hard for the parents also because it is also hard on us. We don’t want to see any of our kids fail. But ultimately, we want them to be able to take off and fly on their own!