



GMA News Feb 16

Upcoming events:

Feb 6 th	Adult FAST Basics 9:00-12:30
Feb 6 th	Stickfighting 1:30-4:00
Feb 12	TTCA testing 5:30
Feb 13	Lil Dragon Testing beg 9:00-10:15, int/adv 10:15-11:30
Feb 13	Transition camp 1:00-2:30
Feb 20 th	Black belt prep 9:00-10:30
Feb 20 th	Demo Team 10:30-12:00
Feb 27 th	BJJ seminar with Evan Mannweiler 1:00-4:00
Feb 28 th	TKD sparring scrimmage at Total TKD. Leave 2:30
March 5 th	GMA at sweat-a-thon (we go at 9:50)
March 5 th	Black belt prep 11:00-12:00
March 5 th	Demo team 12:30-2:00
March 12 th	Demo Team 9:00-11:00
March 12 th	Black belt prep 11:00-12:00
March 12 th	Stickfighting 1:00-3:30
March 18/29 th	TTCA Black belt testing and tournament
April 2-3	Dr. Yang Jwing Ming seminar—Indy.

****Demo Team will also have small group practices on Friday evenings in late Feb/March. Listen for announcements in class and on Facebook.**

Valentine Passes Coming Soon

Don't forget to look out for our annual Valentine Day Guest Passes to share with your friends. If they bring one in, they get the bonus and you still get the referral credit on your tuition.

GMA Wishes a Happy Birthday to:

Nico Inman (2-7)	Elizabeth Dodds (2-7)	Anthony Gramlich (2-7)
Adam Murray (2-9)	Finnegan Vandewalle (2-10)	Keegan Spires (2-14)
Jackson Harper (2-14)	Liam Gadberry (2-15)	Joe Fritch (2-17)
Anna Fritch (2-18)	Katheryn Clephane (2-19)	Jazmin Fischer (2-20)
Minda Ruba (2-27)		

Quotes of the Week

This month we will be revisiting our focus points.

Don't forget GMA website, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

Want to be the first to know when the school closes for weather? Need to double check the special events calendar or pics? Check the GMA website and our Facebook group, and sign up for email announcements online. Like the GMA Martinsville Facebook page for other public announcements and promotions. Follow us on Instagram and Twitter @Gentry_MA for lighter notes.

Training Anniversaries

Collyn Dodge (TKD 13 yrs)	Cathy Petraits (TCC 6 yrs)	Josh Roberson (TKD 5 yrs)
Clay Thacker (BJJ 5 yrs)	Miki White (TKD 13 yrs)	Eric Kachelmeyer (TKD 3 yrs)
Luke Kachelmeyer (TKD 3 yrs)	Kye Pearson (BJJ 1 yr)	



This Month in Martial Arts History (selected from “Dates with Destiny” in *Martial Arts Success* by John Corcoran.)

Feb 1882 Jigoro Kano opens the Kodokan and becomes the founder of Judo.

Feb 2, 1965 Brandon Lee’s (son of Bruce Lee) birthday

Feb 12: 1968 Jean Jacques Machado (BJJ pioneer) birthday

Feb 22 1972 Kung Fu debuts on TV and starts a craze.

Feb 26 1988 Bloodsport with Jean-Claude Van Damme is released, inspiring Mr. Sieg and countless others.

Do you “get it?” Musings on Grades, Performance, Mindsetting, and Being Clutch.

Tis the time of year for me to go over the syllabus and cover expectations in my college courses for the spring semester, and at the same time review the course evals from the previous semester. Naturally, some comments become rather recurring. Some may be valid (like the ones saying I am great teacher ☺). Some are humorous (like the ones that say comment the class is too early—when they voluntarily signed up for it at that time). But others betray a lack of understanding or attitude necessary for self-defense. I preemptively address some of these attitudes at the beginning of the course, but sadly not everyone listens or retains, and it is still a recurring comment (though much less frequent). One common one just reappeared in my self-defense course, and it’s a cautionary tale for all martial arts/self-defense students.

The issue is that I pull the students out of line in small groups of 2-3. I have them execute the selected technique based on identified criteria. The critique went something like this: doing the techniques while everyone else is watching is stressful (insert their better idea here). Another variation is “I got nervous with you staring at me. I can do better.”

First of all, I am pretty sure that doesn’t work in any other subject—“I really do know that physics formula; I just got nervous on the test and forgot it.”

More importantly, and I am just theorizing here, but maybe, just MAYBE, if you ever are attacked, it might be a little stressful. Just saying. I pre-emptively tell my classes the first day, that you signed up for a class to help protect yourself, and if you can’t handle the stress of me or your peers looking at you while doing the moves (often in air), then bigger picture, we have a MUCH BIGGER problem.

Another common and somewhat related complaint is that a person came to class, tried hard and had perfect attendance. The class should be more based on participation. I can appreciate this one a bit a more, but they should appreciate that I typically have a hard time objectively quantifying who is trying harder than whom (though I often have my suspicions.) But more importantly, this also indicates a mindset issue. While I hope they enjoy the class and receive other benefits such as fitness or stress relief, ultimately the class is about being effective in defending one’s self. If someone is sitting on top of you, punching you in the face, do you expect them to stop when you exclaim, “But I had perfect attendance in my self-defense class!”?

Sigh. They think they are explaining how my grading is unfair. What they are really telling me is they haven’t learned very much in this class. Regardless of how well they did or didn’t do skill wise, they obviously missed the boat when it came to “getting it”. A big part of self-defense is having the proper mindset, which includes not blaming circumstances for your own inadequacies in getting the job done. More importantly, of having the attitude and spirit to overcome any shortcomings and still find a way to win.

I hope that most of our students actually do “get it.” And the martial arts have many ways of helping with this. Many of these are underappreciated aspects of training. Breaking boards is sometimes scoffed at as being unrealistic or not very worthwhile. But as any student who is down to their last attempt to break or else



fail a belt test can tell you, it can be stressful and requires a calm mind and confidence. Tournament matches are not the same real fights in a lot of way, but it still a pressure situation and requires management of adrenaline. Demo team is flashy and fun, but making sure you don't forget under the pressure of hundreds of people watching is a challenge for many. As one of my favorite sayings goes: No pressure, no diamonds. These are all cases of stress inoculation. Inoculation is a little dose of something in order to better deal with a bigger, more potent dose. And that is what a lot of martial arts is. These little tests hopefully make us better prepared for the real thing. Of course, our FAST classes give a heavy dose of inoculation (hopefully, more like a full vaccination). But I think a lot of people underappreciate all the other ways in which martial arts helps us become more clutch and more mentally strong.

Our classes reflect that these things matter. That mindset matters. And we try to inculcate a better attitude, a black belt attitude, in many areas. It is our hope that our students are mentally stronger and have a better attitude than most—not only for self-defense but for success in life in general. That they “get it.” And now maybe some of you better get where we are coming from. --BLS