



GMA Newsletter

March 2016

Congrats to our milestone black belt and other promotions; good luck to others

Congrats to Jeremiah Deckard, who went through ceremony to officially become the first Martinsville student to reach 4th dan (in any program).

Also congrats to our newest Lil Dragons graduate, a big milestone for that age: Logan Whaley

Good luck to our TKD black belt testing candidates: Miss Megan Gens (2nd), Mr. Luke Wilson (2nd), Mr. Nate Wilson (2nd), Josh Roberson, Gauge Clephane, and Eric Kachelmeyer.

Upcoming events:

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 18/19 th	TTCA Black belt testing and tournament
March 26 th	Hapkido black belt pretest 9:00-11:00 ish
March 26 th	Evan Mannweiler BJJ seminar
April 2-3	Dr. Yang Jwing Ming seminar—Indy.
April 9 th	USHF seminar, College of DuPage, Chicago
April 10 th	GMA Movie Premier Matinee! See details below.
April 13 th	Little Dragons Testing (4:30 White/Yellow, 5:15 Orange/Green/Purple/Red)
April 28-30 th	FAST instructor regional training/certification and FAST Basics course on the 30 th @2:00

Tournament news and notes:

- Remember to wear your Team Gentry/ Hero in Training and GMA Parent t-shirts to show your support.
- Make sure all gear is clean and white.
- GMA group photo will be taken at 9:30 at venue of the tournament. This is the photo to be used for the local paper, website, etc. There will likely be a line into the room at that point, so don't be stuck in line while we are doing the photo. Please be in full uniform at that time.

Class schedule adjustments:

There will be no TKD class on March 18th. All instructors will be at the tournament.

There will be no BBC on Thurs. March 17th, demo team practice instead.

Quotes of the Week

This month's QOW will be dedicated to the concept sportsmanship martial arts style as we focus on the upcoming tournament.

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.

Red Carpet Movie Premier Night

GMA movie stars come out for a matinee on April 10th at 3:00 (camp participants be there no later than 2:30). We will be making a "red carpet" event for our movie camp participants, and the whole school is invited to the premier!



Show up a bit early if you want to catch a glimpse of stars arriving. Watch the movie and enjoy popcorn. We will also be watching another full length feature—although it won't be as entertaining as our blockbuster release. Families and friends are welcome. Students are encouraged to bring buddies. Please arrive early to help with the Hollywood atmosphere. Parents committee will be decorating in the afternoon prior and would welcome help.

Birthdays:

Caedmon Patterson	3-3	Kenyan Tackett	3-3	Logan Whaley	3-10
Aleah Spires	3-14	Amanda Spires	3-27	Nikou Maddox	3-28
Luke Gamble	3-28	Lise Roberson	3-29		

Training Anniversaries

Mike Dodge (BJJ 10 yrs)	Dan Wiggins (BJJ 10 yrs)	Noah Lambert-Adams (HKD 5 yrs)
Jeremy Johnson (BJJ 3 yrs)	Liam Gadberry (LD, TKD 2 yrs)	Jackson Gadberry (TKD 2 yrs)

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

- March 1, 1907 (-Feb 2 2003) GM Won Kuk Lee (founder of Chung Do Kwan) birthday
- March 10, 1940 Birthday for Chuck Norris
- March 11, 1967 Birthday for Renzo Gracie
- March 19, 1931 Birthday for Ed Parker, Sr. (famous for Bruce Lee demo and taught Elvis Presley)
- March 24, 1950 Birthday for Peyton Quinn—Reality based training pioneer, influence on FAST program
- March 10, 1921 Chojun Miyagi and Gichin Funakoshi (important to our line) hold the famous demonstration for the future Emperor of Japan—putting Okinawan Karate "on the map"
- March 20, 1971 South Korean President Chung-Hi Park declared TKD as Korea's national sport
- March 30, 1990 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles debuts in theaters—creating a craze.
- March 31st 1999 The Matrix debuts in theaters—changing the way movie fights are done, and changing perceptions of what we do!

What to Do When You Don't Know How to Hold a Sword (Ego, Correction, and Learning)

One of my favorite martial arts writers, Dave Lowry, in "The Karate Way" recounts an acquaintance who was a high ranking instructor that had the chance to return to Japan and train with a senior in their lineage. I am sure he had hopes of gaining some nuance and refinement that most could not give him. One can imagine his angst as he trained, looking for nods of acceptance and assurance, only to be met with a deadpan expression. Finally, he is given the feedback he was looking for, only it is not the refined correction that is going to unlock even newer heights.

The comment was "You do not know how to hold a sword." And that was it. Years of dedication summarized with a comment that he had not grasped one of the most fundamental lessons for beginners. As Lowry points out, the ego will allow for two options. The first is outright dismissal of the opinion. The second is to say thank you and return to your own world never to consider it—a more polite option with the same outcome. His friend, however, chose to humble himself and ask to be taught. While this situation isn't that uncommon in martial arts, his response certainly was.

Some of my colleagues went on a martial arts tour of China last year. One member of the delegation was a tai chi instructor, although he was quick to correct everyone that he was actually a tai chi master. While most were on the trip to observe and learn, the trip did require some demonstrations in the spirit of reciprocity. Most did so with reservation and humility, but the tai chi master was quick to grab the microphone and share what he knew. My favorite part of the story is when they visited the Shaolin Temple and got to train with a monk. The tai chi master once again put himself front and center, only the monk was less diplomatic than most



and commented that “it was all wrong. I know tai chi and nothing you did was right.” The “master” was quite sullen for the rest of the trip.

I witnessed a similar experience at a GM Chen TCC workshop with a gentleman who traveled far for the seminar. When I introduced myself, it wasn't long before I got to hear how he had been taking private lessons from some instructor I should be impressed with for years. Let's just say his form was different. GM Chen spent most of the opening night's sessions trying to correct him and get him used to our way. I wondered how it would be received. In actuality, GM Chen was giving him quite a complement by paying so much attention to him, when most of the senior students got little to no attention at all. Or the student could have thought he was being picked on and retreat back to his world of private lessons where I am sure he is told that he is doing great. We never saw him the rest of the weekend even though he registered for it, so I presume the latter. A second lesson to be taken from this is that when the instructor is correcting you, he isn't picking on you because he doesn't like you. It means he still thinks there is hope. If he doesn't like you or has given up hope of you amounting to anything, he will just ignore you altogether.

But the real lesson is that there will be times in our life where things will smack us in the face and make us question our entire perception of reality. How will you react? Will you get defensive or defiant? Will you retreat to your safe place and stick your head in the sand? Or will you be humble enough to look at the possibility that the other side is right, and be willing to change, even if that change is painful?

There have been many times in the martial arts—from GM Kim Nam Jae's Hapkido school in Korea, to pushing with Tai chi masters, to rolling with BJJ world champions (or far lesser competitors even)—where I feel as though “I don't know how to hold a sword.” The martial arts are great at keeping you humble. I *could* retreat back into my own little fiefdom of GMA where I am one of the top dogs and feel proud of that. But that is like being proud of being the tallest hobbit. Now don't get me wrong, we have been both lucky and purposeful to make sure we have learned from some of the best. I have not, nor do I ever expect, to be faced with a crisis of faith that causes me to reject everything we have done as wrong or inferior. No one has ever told me I am way off base, I just felt like it myself, because I am made aware there is still much more room to improve.

I guess the moral of the story is that I hope none of our students at GMA are ever like “that guy” who thinks he already knows everything or knows way more than he does. Martial arts should not inflate egos, but rather make you humble, lifelong students. As the old saying goes—continual progress down the path isn't helpful if you have taken a wrong turn. While perhaps not on that grand of a scale as told by Lowery, martial arts will keep you humble with failures that require you to either go back to the drawing board or go into denial. Which will you do when faced with your “hold a sword” moment? --BLS