



DECEMBER 17 GMA NEWSLETTER

Upcoming events:

Dec 1 st	Demo team practice 6:30
Dec 2 nd	Bloomington Open BJJ tournament
Dec 2 nd	Leadership team Xmas outing 12:30
Dec 2 nd	Demo Team Performs at MHS varsity game (demo team meet here 5:00; perform approx. 8:00)
Dec 9 th	GMA 20 th anniversary celebration: (see schedule below)
Dec 12 th	Christmas Party and Awards Banquet @ Fairgrounds 5:30
Dec 15 th	TKD retesting/makeup testing only (both BB stripe and colored belts) 5:30
Dec 16 th	FAST Stress Shooting Extrazaganza 9:00-3:30/4:00
Dec 25-26 th	No class, Merry Christmas
Dec 27 th	Winter Weapons camp—cane 9:00—3:30
Dec 29-30 th	Martial Arts for Movies/Stage 9:00-3:00
Jan 2 nd	Catch up camp 1:00-4:00
Jan 4 th	Capoeira daycamp 9:00-3:30
Jan 6 th	Spar Wars 5:00-9:00

GMA Celebrates 20 Years

To commemorate 20 years as a school, we are hosting an entire day of special classes for both our students and community, fun events, and a reunion:

- 9:00-10:30 Firearms, self-defense and the law, presented by long time martial artist, gun enthusiast, and lawyer Tony Oliveira. Relevant to anyone who has taken our stress shooting courses, or anybody wanting to make sure they fully understand the legalities of owning and possibly using a firearm. Focused on where you can carry, avoiding NFA violations, etc..
- 11:00-12:30 SSBD silat study session with Adam Rector. Intended to benefit both Hapkido and Kali students, Adam will be leading a cross training that is relevant to both groups.
- 1:00-2:00 DODGEPAD
- 2:15-3:45 TKD Sparring workshop by Master Randy Wilson. All TKD students welcome to work on their sparring drills and strategies with friend of our school and excellent instructor, Master Wilson
- 4:00-5:00 Social and Reunion—and cake. Hopefully many of our old students and staff will come to visit, but we would love as many of our current students to stay as well.

Xmas Party, Dance and Awards Banquet

This years Christmas party/awards banquet and dance has been scheduled for Dec 12th at the Morgan County Fairgrounds. Arrival and set up will be from 5:30-6:00. The dinner and awards banquet will begin at 6:00. Following the awards, Santa will make an appearance and there will be a dance that will continue until 8:30 or 9:00 pm. This is a chance to join in some fellowship, recognize some key students and parents, and give Santa any last minute list revisions. Sign ups for the pitch in dinner will be posted soon. We also need a very close idea of people attending for seating arrangements. No classes will meet that Tuesday. We hope everyone will be able to share in our annual event. Parents committee would welcome help with set up at 10:00 at the fairground.

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 some of the weapons or gear needed for the seminar and you can put the gear under the tree!

Winter Weapons Camp 27th This year we will return to one of Master Sieg's favorite weapons—the cane. It has been 4 years since we have taught one of the staple weapons of HKD this comprehensively. Not just important to our HKD students, but a great intro to weapon work with one of the most versatile (and legal) weapons there is.

Movie/Stage combat camp Dec 29-30th. Things that look good on the big screen aren't always what they appear. Come see how they do the stunts without getting the stars hurt. Mr. Yoshida, who has worked on martial arts



films and done fight choreography, will show some secrets. Participants will make their own movie fight scene, and we will unveil our action stars at a red carpet event. The release date of this debut has not been set. Great for anybody in demo or anyone with interest in movies/theater, etc. Both the camp and red carpet event were a huge success last year. However, as before, spaces are limited. Only a few can become action stars in the latest Yoshitech production!

Catch up camp Jan 2nd. Fallen behind or gotten a little rusty on account of the holidays. Or maybe you just want some extra practice? It is a busy time and people get out of the routine. Here is your chance to get the new year started right with extra help focused on testing requirements. We keep it cheap to give everyone a chance to get extra work in.

Capoeira Camp Jan 4th: Capoeira is a fascinating kicking art from Brazil. Supposedly developed by slaves, it is unique in its acrobatic movements and often set to indigenous music. We have had a camp in the past, and are bringing it back with a guest instructor by popular demand.

Spar Wars NIGHT! We will also be having a SPAR WARS/ parents night out on Sat, Jan 6th from 5:00-9:00. Obviously we are getting into the spirit of The LAST JEDI, but it also provides us a chance to educate in the disguise of fun. As some of you might have learned from the ESPN documentary, Jedi and light sabers were largely based on Eastern martial arts themes and the art of Kendo. The night will include pizza, basic kendo instruction, sparring and games, and we plan to teach a choreographed light saber duel which you can film. The event will include an action flex light saber that is safe and durable for actual sparring (but unfortunately not cheap—this is an actual training weapon with a Star Wars theme). Participants are encouraged to dress up in a Star Wars theme as much as they want. There will need to be a minimum number of sign ups, which must be done in advance to get the light sabers. Previous Spars Wars night or Weapons camp with the light saber will obviously get a huge discount.

Training Anniversaries

Collyn Dodge (BJJ 9 yrs)

Dominic Tejera (BJJ)

Tim Meier (HKD 2 yrs)

Minda Ruba (TKD 4 yrs)

Caelyn Meier (HKD 2 yrs)

Maddux Nikou (LD, TKD 2 yrs)

Quotes of the Week: This month, with goal setting around the corner in Jan, we will be talking about the differences between the habits and behaviors of successful people and unsuccessful people.

And the NOMINEES are:

This year we are announcing those students who are nominated for our yearly awards:

Student of the year: *Launa Perryman, Debbie Rahman, Nathan Hall*

Black Belt of the year: *Ryan Spires, Aleah Spires, Richie Long,*

Most Improved Student: *Drew Willis, Nico Inman, Launa Perryman (BJJ), Jack Higgins, Samantha Cushing, Liam Gadberry*

Competitor of the year (TKD): *Luke Wilson, Noah Wilson, Jackson Gadberry, Jackson Harper, Ethan Dickerson*

Competitor of the year (BJJ): *will be determined after the B-ton open Dec. 2nd*

GMA Wishes a Happy Birthday to:

Caelyn Meier 12/2

Taylor Jones 12/12

Mrs. Yoshida 12/26

Richie Long 12/07

Hunter Szekely 12/20

Triton Brummett 12-27

Kyler Chylaszek 12/12

Nathan Hall 12/23

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! *The last day to order Xmas items to ensure shipping (assuming availability) is Dec. 13th. Keep in mind, some things are already back ordered past the holidays.*



Give another person the chance to “be more” this Christmas

Don't forget that you can get a gift certificate for a uniform and month of classes –100.00 value, for only a 25.00 cost to you (BJJ uniforms more). If you know anyone who has ever “thought about” doing martial arts, or if there is someone you know who “this would be good for”, this is your chance to get them off the fence and really reaping the benefits of training.

Class Cancellations for Holidays, class adjustments, and general policies

- No class on Tuesday, Dec 12th on account of the Christmas party...see you there.
- Holiday class cancellations: No class on Dec 25th & Dec 26th on account of Christmas. Classes will resume Tues Dec 27th (evening classes and camp). No Tai Chi class on the 27th on account of camp
- 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 morning delay, we will meet as normal (tai chi in the morning will follow the 2 hr delay). 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* incorrect, or when crews have all day to work on the roads. When in doubt, simply call, check the website and facebook/twitter, check your email for announcements, listen to WCBK, etc.

Celebrating 20 years—Another Classic About Misfits

Now is the time of year where I usually write a yearly review, hopefully that illustrates a larger theme. As we celebrate our 20 year anniversary of GMA, I get a chance to reflect and review on a much grander scale. On Dec 7th, 1997, GM Choi gave me a set of flags to recognize my school as we promoted our first handful of yellow belts. Those flags still hang on the wall at DePauw, but a lot has changed in Martinsville. We have certainly had memorable moments and milestones, and I would be remiss not to point some of those out for nostalgia, posterity, and to educate our newer members.

In that span, we have moved three times. We started in much humbler beginnings on the square, in what is now the Veteran's memorial, teaching on a wooden floor smaller than our secondary classroom. The floor had water damage and had warped, and I literally taught class with a hammer in my hand in order to nail down finishing nails that popped up as we moved position on the floor. It was like whack a mole however, because it usually just meant another nail would pop up somewhere else. Our “changing room” was a bathroom the size of an airplane lavatory, where I was scared to sit down because I was afraid I would go through the soft floor. Still, it allowed us to start to get a following on just a couple of nights a week, and we moved as soon as we could, along with Martinsville Academy to the location on W Washington. That is where we were able to have a full time schedule, offer all the arts we wanted, and additional programs and events. Eventually, we and MAGS outgrew that shared space and we were blessed to be able to move to our current location 7 years ago.

In twenty years, our school has grown and matured. We now have students who are more advanced in rank than I was when we started GMA. The current career tally is 49 Hapkido black belts (9 became e-dans, 3 became sam-dans, and 1 became 4th dan). We have had 136 Taekwondo black belts (37 became edan, 10 sam-dan, and 3 sa-dans). Our BJJ program has produced 2 brown belts and 3 additional purple belts to date. We even have produced one certified tai chi instructor as well. This depth obviously has many advantages for our school as a whole in terms of flexibility, leadership, etc.

In addition to providing the best instruction we are capable of, we have also striven to grow and inspire our students by exposing them to special opportunities. We have hosted 1 Olympic Gold Medalist and 6 different world champions. We have also hosted 2 different world renowned experts and best-selling authors in the world of self-defense and 3 different Grandmaster ranks. These distinguished guests have come from Korea, China, England, Brazil by way of San Diego and all over the US. And then there was our trip to Korea, where we were able to be inspired by famous masters and the surroundings.



Throughout our history, we have always tried to be involved and an asset to the community. This goes beyond parades, festivals, and even contributing to sweat angels. We have had charity benefits for autism awareness and raised enough money to dig a well in Africa. We have walked barefoot in the parade as part of a shoe campaign and done food drives, sponsored families at Xmas, etc. We have raised money for one of our own students with cancer and continually kept our own scholarship program going. We have volunteered our building for other charity events. We have volunteered our expertise for school safety days, PE classes, and field days, for girl scout troops, Chamber meetings, benefits for the Y, at the senior center and nursing homes, for at risk youth, law enforcement and SWAT training, National Guard training, and domestic violence groups, offered free active shooter classes, and more. We have collectively done tens of thousands of Random Acts of Kindness during September. I believe these things are important to model and motivate people to give back and support the community. But this is all secondary to our primary impact: changing people's lives and helping them BE MORE through martial arts training, so that they are better students, more responsible and respectful persons, healthier and more empowered adults, etc

There have also been a few unintended impacts of our longevity. We have had 6 pairs of students get married, with another pair engaged. 5 of those couples are both black belts. Since starting training as a child, I have always appreciated the camaraderie of the martial arts, but even I did not anticipate the importance of the relationships I would have at GMA.

We have garnered our share of trophies and accolades. Perhaps the most noteworthy is having our Movie Camp be featured in a national martial arts magazine. But while I wanted to take a moment to appreciate how far we have come, we also need to appreciate one more aspect of GMA.

This past Halloween, our group costume theme as the Rudolph and the Isle of Misfit Toys. We sometimes joke that I often feel like King Moonracer, the monarch of the island. In the Xmas special, he is described as going out every night and looking for misfit toys and when he finds them, he brings them back to the Isle. Only in my case, when I find them (or they find us), we give them two weeks free. Joking aside, I am proud that we are a place that "misfits" call home. We are the place that the wall flower can find confidence and their voice to stand up for themselves. For the timid to find courage and fighting spirit. For those that have tried other sports but rode the bench to find their niche and succeed on their own. For the kid with ADHD to find more focus. For those with rough upbringing to find role models and teaching for success. For our homeschool kids to find a larger community. For all our students on the spectrum or with other challenges to grow in the arts. For those who need more support than just showing up at the gym to lose weight or get back into shape. A place for the kid who is afraid of public speaking to become a leader. A place where those with bad experiences can regain some ownership of their safety. A place the family can grow together.

I have often said that martial arts studios should not be viewed as reform schools but more like success academies. And we have had lots of great people come through our doors. It seems like my misfit analogy is contrary to that statement, but even the best of us have at least one area in our life where we are more of a misfit or nitwit (as the Rudolph song goes.) GMA's mission statement reads as "taking people where they are and helping them get to where they want to be through the best martial arts training." The part of Gentry that gives me the most pride is that most of the time, we do just that. We meet and accept people where they are, with their struggles and baggage, but we don't allow them to remain there. We help them to BE MORE through the unique and multifaceted, life lessons, benefits, and empowerment that martial arts provide. We have over 20 pages of testimonials to support that. And if that was just lip service or empty promises, I don't believe we would have lasted for 20 years. I am grateful, blessed, and honored, for all of our past and current instructors, staff, and students that have made GMA that special home for the misfit in all of us. That is what makes us a classic.