

TANG SOO TIMES

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DECEMBER 1999

PAL CHE TANG SOO DO

229 SOUTH CHESTER PIKE

GLENOLDEN, PA 19036

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Dec 25 - No classes. Christmas day.
- Jan 1 - No classes. New Year's Day.
- Jan 10 - Gup test at Dojang. No adult class.
- Jan 16 - Winter Championships at Valley Forge. No classes.

MONDAY NIGHT CLASS SCHEDULE

- Dec 6 - Regular adult class.
- Dec 13 - Sparring class. All ranks welcome.
- Dec 20 - Regular adult class.
- Dec 27 - No class.

MASTER'S CORNER

This is the 100th edition of our Newsletter. This issue will contain selected articles from the past 99 Newsletters. Following are highlights in the history of our Dojang.

- Apr 2, 1990 - Opened our doors. Began with intro classes.
- Apr 16, 1990 - First formal classes. 12 students enrolled.
- May 6, 1990 - Grand opening of Tang Soo Do Institute. The East Coast Demo Team as well as our 19 original students put on a small demo.
- Aug 3, 1990 - First Gup test at Dojang. 16 students tested.
- October 1990 - First Dojang newsletter published.
- August 1992 - Dennis DiMarco receives master rank at the World Championships in San Diego.
- May 1993 - First Black Belts from our Dojang. Of the 5 who were successful, only 2 continue to train.
- June 1994 - Three children from our Dojang participated in the Region 8 Youth Video Project.
- August 1994 - Ron Raver promoted to Master rank at the World Championships in Orlando.
- November 1994 - Our first Tournament Grand Champion - Ms. Crystal Prentice.
- October 1995 - Raised \$450 for Lisa Bosch Bone Marrow transplant fund.
- February 1996 - Dojang splits up. Master DiMarco moves to MacDade Blvd. 15 students remain.
- October 1996 - First Black Belt from Pal Che - Scott Mueller.
- March 1997 - Raised \$750 for St. Jude Children's Hospital.
- February 1999 - Raised over \$2000 for St. Jude Children's Hospital.
- May 1999 - Began Tiger Cubs program ages 4 to 6.
- October 1999 - First White Belt to Black Belt from Pal Che - Dave Voorhees.

SELECTED MASTER'S CORNERS

August 1996 - "How do you get a Black Belt? You find a competent teacher and a good school, begin your training and work hard. Someday - who knows when - it will come. It is not easy, but it's worth it. It may take one year; it may take ten years. You may never achieve it. When you come to realize that the black belt is not as important as the practice itself, you are probably approaching the black belt level.

At whatever level you achieve, if you think you deserve a black belt, or think you are good enough to be a black belt, you are indeed way off the mark and a very long way from reaching your black belt.

Train hard, be humble, don't show off in front of your teacher or other students, don't complain about any task, and do your best in everything in your life. This is what it means to be a black belt.

The real black belt, worn by a real black belt holder, is the white belt of a beginner, turned black by the color of his blood and sweat."

So, don't ask how long it takes to make black belt. Don't ask if you will be eligible for the next gup/dan test. Train! Forget about the external influences, which will primarily be your ego. Let it go! Just train! Leave your preconceived notions at home or in the changing room! Train hard - train often. Promotions are external. Train for your self and your self-alone. Promotions and rank advancement will happen.

January 1997 - I once read an article written by Master Sang Kyu Shim wherein he stated that water was one of the best Tang Soo Do teachers. Looking back on that article, I felt that I understood what he was talking about - water is soft and yielding yet can wear away the strongest rock. I never thought any more about it. That quote I could use in teaching Tang Soo Do to my students. The parallel was perfect - or so I thought.

As I think more about that statement, there are a lot deeper meanings hidden in that simple sentence. Water is pure, it reflects the heavens. Water never fears being divided because it knows it will flow back together in time. It is eternal. Water is powerful. It can be soothing, comforting and cleansing, it can be enormous, mighty, and overpowering. Its nature is constant. It is dangerous, it is mysterious.

Water is unafraid. From any height it will plunge fearlessly down. Water is balanced - no matter what the situation, it will seek its own level when left alone. It conforms to any situation in a balanced way. Water is accepting: it washes away filth, and yet, when it is still, it is the filth that settles, while water returns to its pure nature.

How is all this accomplished? Through humility! Water accumulates because it seeks the lowest ground. It goes into deep ravines and dirty places. And, in so doing, it gathers together and the resulting force is unstoppable. In the same way, only those who are humble can become great for they have accumulated the moral force within them.

December 1997 - Everything we do in life forms a road. Our life spans, our aging, our career, our endeavors, our relationships—all of these form a sequence that becomes the road we walk. When we walk along a road, we should not regret another road not taken. Those who are mature accept this. We cannot travel on one path while walking another. If we go to one destination, then it is inevitable that we will miss others.

It is tempting to linger upon regrets and suppositions, especially when times are unhappy. Maybe we could have been more famous or richer. Maybe we could have done more as we grew older. But it is far better to remember that we make our own road one-day at a time. If we have been fully involved with our own lives and have been making our own decisions, there is no reason for regret. As we grow older, it becomes critical to fulfill what we find important. The more we understand our goals, the more we can properly gauge how close we are to them. That gives us a very powerful understanding.

The road each of us walks is our own personal *DO*. All the principles we use in following universal *DO* are also applicable to our personal one. Just as there is only one great *DO*, so too is there only one *DO* for us—our *DO*. To be true to that, to be sure in that, is never to be separated from the essence of wisdom.

October 1998 - In order to obtain silk, silkworm cocoons must be boiled before the thread can be pulled out. It takes many more hours of dyeing and weaving to make finished cloth. Perhaps that is why the idea of practice is equated with the refining involved in the process of making silk. Beginning students are raw, like the thread that comes from the silkworm. Only after the refinement of practice can they become like precious finished silk.

When the students went to the masters of old to learn the **WAY**, the masters

therefore emphasized the word, "practice." As long as the student practiced, then understanding of the **WAY** was possible. There was no restriction based on gender. There was no requirement that one come from a certain class. There was no stipulation that one have some mysterious talent. Young and old, rich and poor, any were welcome to follow the **WAY**. But they had to make the effort. They had to purify themselves of bad habits and misconceptions. They had to work to acquire skill, so that they could not only help others, but also live their lives in independence. That took a long time. It took practice.

The more you harmonize with the **WAY**, the more easily you can go back to it. The more you apply the lessons from the dojang to your daily situation, the more skillful you become in moving through the intricacies of life. All this is elevated by practice. Like a person reeling silk, those who follow the **WAY** constantly draw themselves into finer and finer levels of understanding.

December 1998 - There is a saying common to the martial arts: "When the student is ready, the teacher will come." The student's search is just as critical as the actual meeting.

The search prepares you mentally and tests you. Are you sincere? Do you really want to study? Or, is it simply an infatuation? In any martial tradition, we can find stories of disciples who weren't ready, or weren't capable, or weren't sincere. Simply entering into a martial path is no guarantee of success. From that perspective, the arduousness of the search is part of how you come to understand your motivation and how the master will come to know your sincerity.

The search is also how you narrow down what you really want to study. You want to uncover the knowledge and techniques that will best resonate with your soul. The search for a teacher is difficult. You have to feel comfortable with each other, you have to like each other, and feel a kinship with one another. Then, the possibilities of success are much greater.

"When the student is ready, the teacher will come." This phrase is true. The search is how you become ready. Rest assured, that for the "ready" person, the way can be found. An awakening can be found with just one word, just one gesture - but only **IF** the student is truly ready.

SELECTED FEATURE ARTICLES

October 1990 - This article is excerpted from the writings of a very dear friend and talented Martial Artist, G. Morgan Becker, 1989 WTSDA Instructor of the Year. It appeared in his September 1986 Dojang Newsletter. This was the first Newsletter feature article.

How many people in general, or how many students actually practicing a martial art really know the true meaning of "Black Belt?" The answer is not many. Why? Mainly because too many individuals only know and understand whatever they see and hear about "karate" and the martial arts from what they learn on TV and see in the movies. As all students at our dojang know and appreciate, real "karate" is not all that glamorous. It requires a lot of hard work and serious effort.

Above all, the Black Belt is not a symbol of one's ability to beat up the ordinary man on the street. It is not a sign of some superman. It is the representation of a certain amount of knowledge of a martial art. A Black Belt need not be the best fighter in class, or the toughest person in the training hall. The most important value in receiving a Black Belt is in the very mastery of one's own conduct.

Earning a Black Belt means that the holder has set a good example to others as a human being. He/she will be able to set aside his/her own desires in order to help others. They will have firm control over their own emotions and temper, even in a difficult situation. Good Black Belts will conduct themselves wisely and conscientiously. They will be able to determine their own moral precepts and be ready, willing, and able to stand for the difference between right and wrong, and weigh the outcome of their actions on themselves and others.

All this really means is that a Black Belt should not be a symbol or mark of physical power. It should rather represent a sign of character.

The great Korean master Mas Oyama described karate as a "...way of life, the purpose of which is to enable men (and women) to realize their full potentialities, both physical and spiritual. If the spiritual side of karate is ignored, its physical aspect is meaningless." In his book, This Is Karate, he states very clearly that, "The ultimate purpose of karate is to develop the better features of human character rather than merely to strengthen human beings against physical enemies."

Each person has a different reason for studying karate and getting a Black Belt. Therefore, each person will have developed some of the aspects and requirements for a Black Belt more highly than others. For example, some practitioners may be very good technicians, yet may have little knowledge of the art which they practice. Others may be wise and understanding and not have developed as proficient technicians.

However, as one's training in the martial arts continues, one should become aware of a stronger calling, the molding of oneself into a better person, not only in

fighting ability, but also in dignity and honor. This has traditionally been the goal of genuine martial art students.

February 1991 - The 'Long Gray Line' is a term used to describe the corps of cadets at the United States Military Academy at West Point, NY. Cadets, officers, and alumni of this distinguished university are very much aware of this legacy and are proud of their heritage. Even Hollywood has glamorized these facts and the tradition surrounding this institution. This legacy and heritage dates back 190 years when the Academy was founded. Their motto: "Duty, Honor, Country" sounds strangely familiar to me. However, as a Tang Soo Do practitioner, I've heard it said in these all too familiar words: "1. Loyalty to Country; 2. Obedience to Parents; 3. Honor Friendship; 4. No Retreat in Battle; 5. In Fighting, Choose with Sense and Honor."

Tang Soo Do also has a very rich and heralded legacy stretching back through the centuries to the Hwa Rang Dan (Flowers of Youth) of the Silla Dynasty. We have every right to be proud of our heritage, the Hwa Rang Dan were probably the greatest warriors the world has ever seen. As a Black Belt, I challenge each and every student to join Tang Soo Do's 'Long Gray Line' stretching 10 times as far back as West Point's and become a Black Belt. It's not an easy task to accomplish, for if it were, attaining Black Belt would have no meaning.

It's easy to wear a Black Belt. For \$5 you can go to any Martial Arts supply store and buy one. That, however, would be a hollow victory. There is more to being a Black Belt than just wearing one. A Black Belt is, and must be, a Black Belt in the heart and mind - and lives by the principles and tenets 24 hours a day - not just in the dojang. The trappings worn by a Black Belt are just "window dressing" and are used to show the world the level of expertise the wearer has achieved.

Attaining the rank of Cho Dan, or first degree Black Belt, should not signify the end of your journey. If your goal is to reach Black Belt and then drop out because you have reached your goal, then it's time to re-evaluate your ideas of just what being a Black Belt entails. Our founders believe that attaining Black Belt is merely the end of one journey and the beginning of another. The newly promoted Black Belt has now cleared the mind and is ready to truly begin to learn what the martial arts, and more specifically Tang Soo Do, are all about and what they have to offer to people living in our times. This journey is not a two, five, or even ten year journey, but instead a journey lasting the rest of your life. Make that commitment. Walk with us on that never-ending journey to the beat of a different drummer:

.....DUTY.....HONOR.....COUNTRY.....

June 1991 - The 'Path' to obtaining a Black Belt may best be compared to climbing a mountain. To a new white belt, he looks at the mountain from afar and says to himself, "It doesn't look that steep or difficult. I'll get to the top in no time."

However, as he begins his training and gets closer to the foot of the mountain, he begins to see that it is indeed much more of a difficult task than he first thought.

The orange belts are in the undergrowth of forests that lie at the foot of the mountain. They know the mountain is there, but because of the dense forests they cannot see it. It is all they can do to stay on the trail. They can, however, hear their Sahbumnim somewhere ahead of them saying, "This is the way, come this way. The path is over here."

Green belts have broken through the undergrowth. The mountain is not steep and they make rapid progress towards the summit. "How could anything be this easy? Sahbumnim has said this mountain is difficult - boy was he mistaken. I'm gonna break all speed records in getting to the top of this mountain. My Sahbumnim will be so proud of me."

The brown belt has passed the easy part of the climb. Now the path is very steep. He must be strong and powerful to continue the climb. Your Sahbumnim is pushing and pulling you without really touching you. "How does he do it?"

The red belt must be quick and agile. He walks a narrow, dangerous path that does not seem to be making any progress towards the summit. Luckily, all the climbing done to this point has caused all muscle groups to work in unison. This path has pitfalls such as ego and lack of humility that can cause one to falter in the quest. Your teacher is nimbly moving in front of you - indicating the path.

The blue belt has now almost reached the summit. The air is rarefied, and he must clear his mind and prepare for that final assault. How bad do you want to reach the summit? You can turn back now, those last few steps are extremely dangerous. Who would know? The pinnacle is only a short distance away. Your Sahbumnim can only nod his head and point to the goal. You must do it yourself.

You've reached the summit. You stand there; proud and erect. You take your Sahbumnim's hand. He smiles at you and you notice a glistening in his eye. He welcomes you to the brotherhood as he bows to you. The legacy has been passed. You look down and see the path you've followed. You see the other students at various levels along the mountain. They look up at you and decide to try harder. You're yelling encouragement to them, giving directions and help. But you can't touch to help them, they must do it themselves as people have done for two millennia.

You look around to enjoy the view. Then you see it!!! Another mountain!!! Only this one is more rugged, more difficult!!! This is the mountain of E Dan, which only one Cho Dan in five will be able to climb. Then it strikes you like a ridge hand to the temple, There will ALWAYS be a higher mountain!!!

July 1991 - This article was written by our Instructor Trainee, Ms. Jean Sowa, and is entitled, "Salutations."

On the street, people greet each other with a smile, a handshake, a nod or even a hug. It is a way of acknowledging another. Usually the type of greeting chosen depends upon the relationship between the two people. Some might be considered formal (handshake or salute) and others informal (smile or wave of hand). Regardless of the salutation we speak, they all convey a degree of respect, warmth, consideration, esteem, and appreciation.

In the dojang, how you bow, how you salute, and how you conduct yourself are all part of your salutation to the art and its instructors. While a variety of greetings exist on the street, only one is acceptable and used in Tang Soo Do. This is the bow! If it is Kwan Chang Nim, Sahbumnim, or a new tenth gup that you are greeting, the bow is the same. Remember, a serious approach (one of the 14 attitude requirements) is necessary for proper salutation. First, stand at attention, feet together, hands at your sides. Eyes should focus on the one you are greeting. Bend forward at the waist with eyes on the ground. Looking ahead when you bow is disrespectful. Not losing sight of the person can be translated that you do not trust them.

When bowing, one must bow at the waist approximately at a 90-degree angle. To bend less or to only flex your neck is incorrect. After completing the bow, rise slowly. Pulling up too quickly conveys a sense of disrespect and disinterest. Again, bowing is a greeting. Rising in haste is similar to pulling your hand back when someone is ready to shake it.

Bowing to an instructor should be done upon entry into the dojang and both at the beginning and end of class. Students bow to the instructor to display respect and to thank them for teaching. Instructors, on the other hand, are thanking the students for giving them the opportunity to teach. Students make it possible for instructors to share what they have learned. Without students, teachers would not exist. Bowing to fellow students is also a display of respect and appreciation for the opportunity to practice Tang Soo Do techniques.

Respect for the flags is done by saluting. One first stands at attention and raises the right arm to the left side of the chest. The fist is clenched with the palm facing down. Pause. Lower arm and then enter the dojang. The same steps are followed when leaving the dojang. These actions exemplify respect to the native country (USA), to the country where Tang Soo Do originated (Korea), and to the World Tang Soo Do Association. The bow, the salute, and the removal of one's shoes prior to entering the dojang reinforce the sacredness of this room. The sole purpose of the dojang is to train the mind and the body.

A salutation also goes beyond the initial greeting. It involves one's conduct throughout the entire class. Standing straight, paying attention, overcoming idleness, listening and following instructions are other examples. Another is never to turn your back on an instructor. If you are asked to sit down, you should walk backwards to the rear of the room. This behavior shows respect and honor.

There is also protocol for sitting. Knees are bent with feet tucked under thighs. Shoulders and spine should be straight. Hands are placed on the knees, and during meditation, the head is flexed forward. Eyes are closed, mouths are silent, one does not move until the command to do so is given.

Tang Soo Do is not just kicks and punches. It is a way of life accompanied by rules, codes and tenets. The salutations and examples of conduct behavior mentioned above are found in these rules, codes, and tenets. Furthermore, the discipline needed to become a successful practitioner begins right here and now.

May 1992 - The animal associated with Tang Soo Do throughout the years has been the Tiger. The tiger moves with grace and economy of motion, yet at the same time keeps hidden the savage fierceness and power which is associated with this beautiful animal. When we talk about a student having the "Eye of the Tiger" we are not just quoting some Rocky movie to try and motivate you.

Red belts should be eager at class to practice and 'perfect' techniques in anxious anticipation of the Black Belt test that lies ahead in their future. They should not be sitting around in quiet or semi-quiet cliques before class talking about anything but Tang Soo Do. A Black Belt instructor can look at a student and see this burning desire in their eyes. As instructors, we are passing on the legacy of several millennia to you. Wearing, or rather achieving, Black Belt status is no light matter with us. You are our future - you will teach others, who in turn will teach others, and so on and so on. In you we are alive; for something we say, or do, or how we act will affect you. This will be passed on, and generations from now, some student will trace his heritage and discover that what he is being taught was taught by Mr. DiMarco or Mr. Raver. We must be extremely particular when we recommend someone for Black Belt.

Currently, we are dismayed at the lack of intensity displayed by our senior belts. Of people eligible to test for Cho Dan Bo at the June 5 test, only two people

display the "Eye of the Tiger", that burning desire to want to be the best of the best, the desire to walk with us to the beat of a different drum, the desire to be one in a thousand - A Black Belt.

August 1992 - I sat at my computer looking at the screen for quite a while pondering just exactly what I should write about for this edition of the Newsletter and was drawing a blank. I read some old newsletters from other dojang to try and get ideas but nothing would come to me.

Recently, I received a letter from my friend Morgan Becker in Florida and he said that he was inspired by my 'back to basics' classes for the advanced ranks and that he tried it in a class consisting of his senior students. He said they loved it!

Almost at the same time, my wife wondered out loud to me what was the purpose of keeping the doors closed in this heat and punishing the students. What purpose did it serve?

You've read Kwan Chang Nim's article in the WTSDA Newsletter wherein he outlines training in Korea in both hot and cold weather and how they were treated by their instructors. Tang Soo Do strives to develop the mind, body, AND spirit. If you attend a class that pushes you to the extremes of your endurance, where physically you are spent, and on top of that, the temperature is 110 degrees, there are two choices that you have. You can quit! Who would blame you - the instructors must be crazy to do that to you in this heat. OR, you can attempt to block out the discomfort, forget about the sweat in your eyes, ignore the burning in your lungs, and push yourself on to the threshold of your limits. That very decision is the beginning of forging of self-discipline, perseverance, and indomitable spirit. Traits that Tang Soo Do strives to develop.

What good does this do!?!? In life, not the dojang, but on the street, in the work place, in the schoolroom, on the playground, and on the sporting field - the ability to put pain, discomfort, or any external influence out of your mind so that you can focus on your assigned task is what good it does. I enjoy golfing. Have you ever noticed that spectators are asked to be quiet while someone is getting ready to hit a golf ball? Can you imagine fans being asked to be quiet while someone is attempting a game winning field goal in football or a free throw in basketball? Focusing your attention is something that golf doesn't teach.

Sports in general do not teach what Tang Soo Do strives to develop. In sports, there are teams competing or in some cases individuals competing for their team (wrestling, for example). That is the difference. Sports are competitions between individuals or teams where there is always a winner and a loser. Tang Soo Do is different. Not tournament Tang Soo Do - but rather the Tang Soo Do that exists daily in the dojang. Those hours spent with your Sahbumnim practicing hyung, il soo sik, and jae yu dae ryun. Those countless hours spent stretching stiff and aching muscles. In that Tang Soo Do, there is no loser because there is no competition between people or teams.

Your only competitor is yourself. Your spirit must be brought to co-exist in harmony with your mind and body. That very ability of your spirit to come to the forefront and be on an equal footing is what good it does.

Sometime when they don't realize what you are doing, watch a ranked black belt or master and see the peace that exists within their eyes and in their everyday actions. That internal peace is the good that having the mind/body/spirit coexist in harmony. Pushing your body and mind to their very limits so that the spirit has a chance to develop is the good that it does. To the beginning student this may seem difficult to understand and believe, but it happens. I can see the difference in students who are now red belts and cho dan bo from when they were white/orange belts. If these people would honestly look at themselves they too could see the difference in themselves.

To train in Tang Soo Do for you and you alone - to push yourself beyond limits that at one time you thought were impossible for you to achieve is what good it does. 'Back to basics' is not something new, something that I thought up, but rather a way of understanding what several millennia of practitioners have endured. Treat yourself - walk with Kwan Chang Nim, other masters, black belts, and thousands of others. Walk to the beat of a different drummer. Only we can understand, "WHAT GOOD IT DOES."

August 1993 - At the recent Dan Clinic in Millersville, the souvenir "T" shirt was inscribed with the Korean symbol for "Do" with the inscription, "The Path I Chose." Wow! That really grasped the essence of what Tang Soo Do is all about. You have been exposed to many articles about Tang Soo Do being a path (Tang Soo Times - May 1993, WTSDA Newsletter - Fall 1992). The Do or Way of the Warrior is the Path a Tang Soo Do Black Belt walks.

Not a path of physical fighting as the word warrior indicates to many people, but rather a path where battles are mental. In this day and age where everything is handed to us, perseverance is not needed. We can get a fast food meal, we can buy anything we want with a piece of plastic rather than plan and save, we get instant gratification.

As your training progresses, watch the many distractions that can be presented to you - your friends are going to the movies but you have class. What's one class more or less? Your friends are making fun of you - what good is being able to fight with your hands and feet when almost everyone carries a gun? It's 100 degrees outside, let's go

to the pool. Who wants to spend the evening in a smelly, hot karate class? The distractions go on and on. Our records of prior students are full of people who were dropping out for a month to play baseball, soccer, or any other myriad of sports. People who were stopping for a short time because their family gave them grief about the time spent in the dojang. Students were dropping out because they were tired from working during the day. People were dropping out for the summer to vacation, etc, etc, etc. The list goes on and on. These are the battles a Tang Soo Do warrior faces everyday. A Tang Soo Do Black Belt has the same number of distractions that you have, maybe even more. The warrior confronts these distractions, balances Um and Yang, works out a solution, and stays on the chosen path.

No one ever said it was going to be easy. To the contrary, we always will tell you that making Black Belt is something special; not because a Black Belt is a superman but because it takes a commitment of time, energy, and effort. This is a chance for you to see what you are made of inside. You can drop out for any number of reasons, reasons limited only by the imagination of your mind. Or, you can grit your teeth and stay with Tang Soo Do. You can become one in ten thousand, and you will be able to call yourself a Black Belt. Then, after becoming a Black Belt, you can make a further commitment of yourself and begin the journey to become a Martial Artist.

This "Do" is not an easy road to walk, however it is the one we have chosen. Come, walk with us.

November 1993 - At the conclusion of a recent class taught by one of our Instructor Trainees, he talked to the class about teamwork. In this talk he drew a parallel between the Phillies and our dojang students. Mentioning that last year the Phillies were in last place and that no one gave them a chance this year to do anything. However, as you all recall they were three outs away from going to the seventh and deciding game of the 1993 World Series.

The parallel of this is that they got where they were because they believed in themselves and they had teamwork. Our dojang, as well as any other *traditional* Tang Soo Do dojang, relies on the teamwork between students when practicing techniques on one another. This includes trust and confidence that you will not be injured when practicing one steps, self-defense, takedowns, and sparring. Also, if you make a mistake your classmates will help you to correct this mistake, not poke fun at you. We work with one another to ready each other for a promotion test. This is the way it SHOULD be.

However, when it boils down to real life situations - in the street, at work, at school or at any place OUTSIDE the dojang - the warrior stands alone! If your schoolmates are ready to go out drinking - the warrior stands alone! If your friends are doing drugs - the warrior stands alone! If everyone is picking on someone because they are different - the warrior stands alone! You know what is right and do it. The warrior stands alone! In business, profit is king, but not at the expense of doing what is right - the warrior stands alone! How many times have your friends teased you about going to karate? Do you go anyway or do you back down so that they do not think you are different? When you are young it is very difficult to be different than the crowd. Peer pressure can be a burden, but be different. Exert peer pressure for what is good and right. Stand alone!

We are a brotherhood of Black Belts. We all have paid our dues to be called Black Belts. We stand as one - stretching back thru the millennia of time - however, in times of life and death situations on the battlefield, the warrior stood alone! Granted, we are not normally in life and death situations, but we do have to make decisions every single day - decisions that affect ourselves, our family, our friends. As a warrior you may never have to face a life and death situation on the battlefield but you may have to stand alone against the tide of conformity and do whatever is right, not what is easy or wrong. **THE WARRIOR STANDS ALONE.**

August 1994 - The title of this month's article is entitled, "Yaki-ire", and was written by Chief Instructor Ron Raver.

Although we study a Korean martial art, the title of this article is a totally Japanese word and has nothing to do with the martial arts. Yaki-ire is the process of heating a sword until it is red hot, and then plunging it into a trough of water. This is probably the most dramatic moment in the swordsmith's day. In the popular imagination, the glowing blade, the darkened smithy, the hissing bellow of steam - all these make the yaki-ire an almost mystical experience, whereby the metal structure of the blade itself is transformed, and a sword is born. This is performed at night with the lights out because the master swordsmith must be able to see the true color of the heated blade in order to judge its temperature.

A successful yaki-ire demands considerable skill and complete intimacy with one's materials. The smith does not work from mass-produced factory steel. Every batch of metal he handles has unique properties, some of which the smith has intended, and others he must simply contend with. He judges the temperature of the blade entirely by eye, and then must not hesitate to seize the exact moment for quenching.

As I said in the opening statement, this term (yaki-ire) has nothing to do with the martial arts. Why then, am I writing about it? It is simple: as instructors in

the ancient Korean martial art of Tang Soo Do, we are in effect master swordsmiths. Every student we accept has unique properties, some of which are intended and some we must contend with and slowly change through the years of forging. We must judge the student's physical, spiritual, and mental growth strictly by eye. When the student is ready we must, without hesitation, seize the moment for testing.

At some point in everybody's training comes the time when the forging is complete and the quenching must take place. This is the test. For even with the master swordsmith, yaki-ire, as often as not, ends in a ruined blade that must either be re-worked or discarded. The parallelism still holds. We can look in a student's face and see the burning desire to learn our beloved martial art. In others we do not see this. In that student, we have to work harder, we need to light that spark in the student. If we cannot, that student may need to be discarded.

The entire process of taking a beginning student and turning out a black belt is yaki-ire. Then, upon receiving the black belt, we begin the next stage of the sword manufacture - the polishing. Let us not forget, we are all students of Tang Soo Do, and as such, we all fit somewhere in the sword manufacturing process. As I am your master swordsmith, Kwan Chang Nim is mine.

September 1996 - This month's feature article was written by Joe Centrone. Joe did not give it a title so let's just call it, "Take it To The Bank."

"I asked God for strength, that I might achieve.

I was made weak, that I might learn humbly to obey.

I asked for all things, that I might enjoy life.

I was given life, that I might enjoy all things."

This is a quote from a famous baseball player named Roy Campanella who early in his life struggled with being one of the first Negro players in the major leagues, and later died a crippled man in a wheel chair. He had experienced both the highs and lows that life has to offer.

This quote means a lot to me and basically sums up a week in my life earlier this summer. One day asking for the strength to make it through my E Dan test, and just a few days later asking for my life.

In life you discover that it is not the good times that get you through bad times but rather the struggles and difficult times that shape your character and spirit. Our training teaches us to be obedient to our parents and to honor our friends. Without my family and friends I could not have recovered as I did. We learn things like no retreat in battle, indomitable spirit, and perseverance. These are the tools I used to get myself through my accident and subsequent recovery.

Why are you taking Tang Soo Do? Why do you push yourself to train while you are injured? Why do you train when at times you do not feel like attending class? These are some of the questions I used to ask myself. Do you ever ask yourself some of these same questions?

Recently I had been injured in an accident and found the answers to these very questions. I hope none of you ever have to go through what I did to find those same answers. What I found out about myself was that when faced with what others believed to be an impossible task to recover, I was able to summon what was needed to get back on my feet. The love and hope of family and friends is the first thing needed to rebound from the most catastrophic circumstances.

But, what about the times when you are alone with just your thoughts for company? What can you use to find encouragement when there is no one else around, not just in recovery but in any tough situation you may come across? My Tang Soo Do training is what helped me get through some tough private moments. Not the physical aspects of my training, but the mental toughness that the physical training brought on.

During the first day of physical rehab at the hospital I was doing leg exercises with the therapist standing over me yelling encouragement. Hearing her count reminded me of a lesson from one of my early classes in karate and I began to cry. The therapist thought I was in pain and told me to stop. But, these were tears of joy. I was reminded of an extremely hot night when we were working on what seemed like instinct. We were so exhausted that I remember thinking that it was crazy for us to train like that.

Master Raver would often tell us that "Karate was like a bank, the more we put in, the more we could get out." He told us to remember this particular night and put it in our bank, because some day we could withdraw it from our account. Lying on that therapy table I finally realized the lesson from that night's class so many years before.

October 1997 - Everyone gets discouraged in their training at one point or another. The longer we train, the more dark periods of failure, discouragement, and frustration we can remember surviving. Through the years, however, we learn to resign ourselves to it and manage to continue somehow - going one step at a time. Beginning students, as you might suspect, quit easily when they meet their first obstacle. They soon lose interest when the training becomes too hard or they cannot catch on to Tang Soo practice as easily as they had hoped.

In our martial arts training, we understand that quitting means defeat, but why does this feeling rise up in ourselves and why is it so uncontrollable? Why do we become frustrated in our training? Why do we reach plateaus? Why do we stop progressing? Why does everything suddenly become meaningless? We all ask ourselves these questions at one time or another.

We create ideal situations for ourselves in our minds, and when events go contrary to our expectations, we become discouraged. We imagine that we have the right to be happy and we deserve to be happy, so any condition contrary to or outside of this condition is not really a part of our lives. We think that when we are happy we are living our lives, and when we are not happy something from the outside is interfering with ourselves.

In martial arts we realize that both happiness and unhappiness are a part of our lives. We train to accept both equally. Of course, if given the choice between the two, we would take happiness like everyone else. But, unfortunately, we cannot choose between the two.

When we are making good progress in our training, we are quite proud of ourselves. When we begin to slow down, when the techniques don't work quite right, when our style doesn't seem to make sense anymore, we become discouraged and think about quitting or looking for another martial art. Success is a part of our lives, but failures and disappointments are a part of our lives as well. We should accept both equally as fundamental to our martial arts training.

We take notice of good and bad only because they are things that we discriminate between. In martial arts, however, we cannot discriminate, just as we cannot choose our opponents or the circumstance of the encounter. And, in dealing with the opponent we are often working at some disadvantage, which we overcome by virtue of our training and technique. This is what makes Tang Soo Do so interesting. The same can be said for life as well. Martial artists survive day-to-day, welcoming adversity and using our skills and personal power to slowly but surely reach our goals and aspirations. The energy we use can be called the power of life. In whatever job we have, however dull and meaningless or however fine and distinguished, we accept both with the same mind. This is the essence of our training - and - this is also what makes Tang Soo Do training so difficult at times.

When we become discouraged with our training, there is nothing wrong with being discouraged; it is only another part of our training. The important point is to not misunderstand it and quit, but to keep training just as before. After a while, we find that there was no reason to be discouraged with ourselves at all.

February 1998 - This month's feature article was submitted by E Dan Joe Centrone. He did not give me a title for the article, so I'll call it the Martialist's Way of Living.

In the past year and a half I have been forced to look at the reasons I continue to train in the martial arts. Physically, my body does not recover well from the rigorous training we endure. Mentally, I find myself frustrated because of my physical limitations. So, why continue?

Once I see myself beyond these minor setbacks, I remember why I continue. When I first started Tang Soo Do, my goals weren't clear. I enjoyed the training and learning self-defense, but I was not thinking about the long term.

As the months turned into years, I began to see the intrinsic side of the martial arts; where at first karate had been a sport and hobby, it was now becoming part of my life. Not in the sense of becoming obsessed with the training aspect, but more in the way my life had changed in the process. Before, I had been someone who "took" karate, now I was someone who was "living the martial way."

What does this mean, "living the martial way?" The martial way is a way of living. It is a holistic discipline aimed at the pursuit of excellence, not just in the dojang but in life. I know that all of you are familiar with the meaning of 'DO' in Tang Soo Do. It translates to the 'WAY,' or how to live. At our school or 'DO' jang (the place where the way is taught), we believe in living our lives according to the codes and tenets described in our Gup and Dan Manuals.

Like the Commandments of the Bible and the Golden Rule of the Buddhists, our codes and tenets describe guidelines for us to live an honorable life. In the book, Living the Martial Way, Forrest Morgan breaks honor into three basic tenets - Obligation, Justice, and Courage. In upcoming Newsletters, I will talk about Justice and Courage, but for now I want to talk about Obligation. Obligation is the root of all warrior honor, and meeting one's obligation is the principle part of what makes a warrior honorable.

No matter how old we are, we all have an obligation to someone or something. As children we have an obligation to our parents, elders, and siblings. As parents we have an obligation to our children and spouses; as employees to our employer, as students to teacher, and as teachers to students. One of our obligations as students is to pay dues. Now hold on, I know what you are thinking, all this talk about honor and he leads us down the road to a financial issue. This is about more than money - it is about a need to survive in today's world. In earlier times, students and teachers would conduct class in their homes, in open fields, and even in temples. Today's regulations make it difficult to teach out of the public eye. Because of

legal and ethical standards, schools need to be available to the public.

Despite what many people think about martial art schools, we, at Pal Che, are not in this for the money. The instructors at this school receive no pay for their time. Knowing what I know about Sahbumnim he would be more than happy to see a zero as opposed to red ink at the end of each month. At Pal Che Tang Soo Do we are not selling you a service but rather giving you a part of our lives.

Returning to the book, Living the Martial Way, "...Qualified instructors devote many years to mastering their craft. They spend countless hours in the training halls, usually following days spent at full time jobs. They pay for their expertise with blood, sweat, and broken bones. In fact, a classical warrior is probably the most highly trained professional in our society. So, how do you think your monthly pittance of dues can pay for your training, it only supports your instructor and the school, making it possible for him to offer you his art..."

Recently, I noticed some students, rather than pay their monthly dues, watch hours of training time disappear - a small setback in their master plan to obtain a Black Belt. Too often we have seen students vanish for months at a time and then reappear and act as if nothing has happened. Maybe it is the fact that you can be a no-show, no-pay student and suffer no harm. One of the qualities of a traditional martial art school (and make no mistake about it, Pal Che is a traditional martial art school) is the benefit of not having to pay a funding company and receive a coupon book for your dues. Notice we call them "dues" as opposed to payment. You are joining a fraternity, a family, and as in a family we need to communicate. Instead of ignoring your obligations, call or come in and talk to Sahbumnim - something can always be worked out.

As you continue on your path I hope you will understand the martial way is not a month-to-month hobby, but rather a life long commitment to living as a warrior.

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

A WARRIOR STANDS ALONE!

