

T A N G S O O T I M E S

ISSUE NO. 89

522-9120

JANUARY 1999

P A L C H E T A N G S O O D O

229 SOUTH CHESTER PIKE

GLENOLDEN, PA 19036

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Jan 2 - New Year's Weekend. No class.
- Jan 11 - Gup test at Dojang. No adult class.
- Jan 17 - Valley Forge Championships.
- Feb 8 - Gup test at Dojang. No adult class.
- Feb 15 - Black Belt pretest at Dojang. No adult class.

MONDAY NIGHT CLASS SCHEDULE

- Jan 4 - Cardiovascular Karate class.
- Jan 11 - Gup test at Dojang. No adult class.
- Jan 18 - Regular adult class.
- Jan 25 - Black Belt class.

MASTER'S CORNER

Another New Year! Just some statistics for your information. We started 1998 with 40 students. We registered 36 new students, 3 students returned, and 6 students transferred to us from another WTSDA dojang. We ended 1998 with 50 students. We had one new Cho Dan promoted and two were promoted to E Dan. Our Dojang now consists of 5 E Dan, 10 Cho Dan, 2 Cho Dan Bo, 3 red, 6 brown, 5 green, 7 orange, and 10 white belts.

As you can see from these statistics, the drop out rate is extremely high. People come to the martial arts knowing only what they see on TV/movies and do not realize all the hard work that is involved. People get bored doing the same 'stuff' over and over, their interests change, they can't find the time, they don't have the money the list goes on and on - limited only by the imagination of the student. It all boils down to one word - DISCIPLINE - some have it, most do not. There is more to karate than just kicking and punching. Tang Soo Do is a way of life. One is not a teacher, accountant, technician, etc., that does karate at night. But, rather, is a karate person who is a teacher, accountant, technician, etc.

I hope all had a happy, healthy, holiday season and wish you the best that 1999 can offer. Make a resolution for the new year to learn more about the martial arts by reading at least one "good" book that is considered a classic. Make a resolution that when you come to class you will work harder than ever. Forget about counting hours for your eligibility to test. Train for yourself - not for rank.

NEW STUDENTS

We would like to welcome the following new students to our dojang and to the world-wide family of Tang Soo Do:

JACLYN GIANCATERINO RICHARD WRIGHT ALICIA MATTHEWS
BAYLY KERN MATT BLYTHE

Train often and train hard. You are on the steep portion of the classic learning curve and every class should reveal something new and exciting to you. If you ever have any questions, do not hesitate to ask a senior student.

We also welcome CRYSTAL PRENTICE who transferred back to us from another WTSDA dojang. She is an E Dan and, by the way, her dojang number is 4. She was one of our original students. CRYSTAL is in college and will be training with us intermittently as she continues her education.

FEATURE ARTICLE

Each month I anxiously wait to see if any students are going to submit any articles for inclusion to the Newsletter. Most months nothing is ever submitted. This month Alicia Crispin, a 2nd gup red belt, submitted an article. It is entitled, "A Boat On Dry Land."

A few years ago during a tournament, an instructor turned to me and said, "In order to reach all of the successes one can, they must understand that ambition without knowledge is like a boat on dry land." With that, he walked away and left me with words that seemed to have a strong purpose and an even deeper meaning. After pondering his words and repeating them to myself a couple of times, I realized that his simile was rather self-explanatory. I concluded that he was trying to tell me that I could have all the ambition in the world, but without having the knowledge to match it, like a boat on dry land, I was going nowhere. Then, I was left to ask myself a question, "Was I trying to sail my boat on land or water?"

I always had ambition to learn every technique and fulfill it to the best of my potential, which was why I tried to deny to myself that I was trying to sail my boat on land. Despite my ambitions, attempting the mastery of our techniques was futile because I did not have the knowledge needed to take me there. Sure, I knew all the forms and techniques but despite my Sah Bum Nim's teaching, I never bothered to take into account why that kick was followed by that block. My Sah Bum Nim told me to visualize my opponent and see the reasoning in each technique. Regardless, I chose to rattle off the forms like a machine, figuring that if I had the ambition to do the moves correctly it was just as good as having the knowledge of why I was doing them. Well, I was wrong.

Soon enough I realized that my boat full of ambition was going

nowhere fast and I needed to find some water if I wanted to achieve the goals I had set for myself. Finding the knowledge was easier than I thought, but just required more work. Basically, the knowledge is always right in front of us but we may overlook it. First, I began to do what my Sah Bum Nim told me, I visualized my opponents and felt instantly that my physical well-being was enhanced by acquiring this knowledge. Second, I turned to reading books of the martial arts. Grandmaster Shin's book, "The Essence" had a plethora of knowledge in it, and specifically went over numerous techniques and forms. I finally began feeling like my boat had hit the water, and I was applying my ambitions in the two places it belonged - namely, knowledge as well as execution of techniques.

To this day I carry that instructor's advice with me, as it had carried on to many different aspects of my life. Perhaps as Tang Soo Do practitioners, we should ask ourselves, "Are we trying to sail our boats on land or water."

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE ALONE IS NOT ENOUGH. A TANG SOO DO PRACTITIONER MUST SIMULTANEOUSLY TRANSCEND TECHNIQUE AND DEVELOP INTUITIVE ACTION SO THAT THE ART BECOMES AN ARTLESS WAY, A WAY TO PHYSICAL EXCELLENCE, A WAY TO SPIRITUAL ENLIGHTENMENT.

