

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

ISSUE NO. 95

610-522-9120

JULY 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

- Jul 5 - Independence Day weekend. No classes.
- Jul 19 - Gup test at Dojang. No adult class.
- Jul 26 - Black Belt pretest at Dojang. No adult class.
- Aug 16 - Gup test at Dojang. No adult class.

MONDAY NIGHT CLASS SCHEDULE

- Jul 5 - Independence Day weekend. No classes.
- Jul 12 - Sparring class. All ranks welcome
- Jul 19 - Gup test at Dojang. No adult class.
- Jul 26 - Black Belt pretest at Dojang. No adult class.

MASTER'S CORNER

It was an oversight on my part last month by not mentioning that we had three students graduating from high school in 1999. These three students are: George Celona, Eric Hamill, and Jon Blessington. All of us here at Pal Che are proud of you and wish you well in the future. Remember this, the word **COMMENCEMENT** means beginning. All of your experiences and education have been to prepare you for this moment. This is the beginning of the rest of your life.

This last weekend of June was the Region 8 Black Belt clinic held at Elizabethtown College. There were almost 500 Cho Dan Bo and Black Belts at this year's clinic. Thirteen people from Pal Che were there: our largest attendance to date.

Our Tiger Cubs program is finally underway. We have had five children between 4 and 6 sign up so far. Ms. Crystal Prentice is doing a great job with them. Classes are Monday and Wednesday from 9:30 AM until 10:30 AM in case you know anyone interested. We also have our Dojang aerobic program underway. Classes are two per week - Wednesday from 5:30 PM until 6:30 PM and Saturday from 9 AM until 9:45 AM. We still have the programs running at the Ridley YMCA.

NEW STUDENTS

We would like to welcome the following new students to our Dojang and to the worldwide family of Tang Soo Do:

JOHN WEBB

In addition, our Tiger Cub program is up and running. We have several students in this program. They are:

JEREMY BROOKS
ROBERT SEKEL

MATTHEW WHITNEY

CRAIG WHITNEY

We also welcome back to our Dojang ADAM BROOKS, a first degree Black Belt, who has been away from training for about one year.

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.

SUBMITTED ARTICLE

This article was submitted by John Alesi and is about **HONOR**.

Honor is a term misunderstood by many people. There are several ways the word honor can be interpreted. It can be associated with honesty, telling the truth, paying off debts, or fulfilling one's obligations. Honor is also referred to as justice, courage, and saving face. If you are a martial artist like us here at Pal Che, you associate honor with warriorship.

Though we are constantly striving to attain honor, it is not limited to martial artists alone. Everyone in society should work at living an honorable life. Unfortunately, this is not the case. The term honor system is used to describe a way of paying off debts with no way of monitoring when and how much you pay, other than your honesty.

Two examples of the honor system take place right in our dojang. One is as simple as taking a drink from the refrigerator and paying a fee for the drink. The other is in the paying of our monthly tuition on a timely basis. Unfortunately not everyone acts honorably in these areas. Honor is not something that should be expected, but rather an attribute that has been instilled and rooted in people from the time they were children. We should not only be expected to be honorable, we as a society should for the sake of our own honor and dignity want to pay our debts and fulfill our obligations. It is our personal honor at stake and no one else's.

Society as a whole has changed over the years. We no longer

see the deep-rooted integrity that was once present in our morality. For those reading this article, whether you are an adult student or parent of one of the children students, we must continue to try and integrate honor into society in general, not only for our sake, but for future generations as well.

Even though we don't have a cashier at the refrigerator, or monthly payments through the mail, you never can tell what will happen in the future. Considering the fact that Sahbumnim has never, since the doors of Pal Che opened, raised the monthly rate of fifty-five dollars. Consider not only the karate lessons but also the life lessons that we learn night in and night out, It is more than just teaching karate: he is giving a piece of himself to you, and vice versa.

Remember the honor system and try to meet your end of the deal - Sahbumnim meets his.

FEATURE ARTICLE

The title of this month's article is entitled, "Yaki-ire", and first appeared in our August 1994 newsletter.

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.

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

TRUTH IS FOUND WITHIN OURSELVES, NOT IN PLACES FAR AWAY.