

Sensei Speaks

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BETHEA'S KARATE STUDIO

Our Thanksgiving Basket

Special points of interest:

- *A time for giving to the less fortunate.*
- *Getting healthy is important.*
- *Who is the S.O.M.?*
- *Family Karate*
- *What's in it for me?*
- *My competitive years*

Here we are coming to the end of 2019. It has, thus far, been a really great year for all of us in just being alive. Then, to just sit and think about the many wonderful things that have happened to us and our families realizing that we are blessed. We have homes and all of the amenities that we can afford. We don't have to wonder if we will have the next meal or from where it will come. Now that I have said all of this we come to the one day of the year that has been set aside as Thanksgiving. I say that everyday is a day of Thanksgiving but we have this as a tradition in this country. Please don't misunderstand because this one day was set aside at the birth of the country.

I am asking all of the students to participate in bringing goods in to go into our basket. It has always been that the students will bring in canned goods and other items and the Dojo will provide the meats for the basket. I am confident that all of us can afford to bring something in for this great cause. All that is brought in will go to the family that we have chosen.

It is really extra special to see those families and their expressions of gratitude. That makes our giving worthwhile.

It has been our custom in the past to service the same family at Thanksgiving and Christmas. At Thanksgiving we only service the family with whatever food

has been brought in. During the Christmas holiday, we include other gifts in the basket. We will get the sizes of family members in case there are those who will go out and buy things or give things that you no longer use. So, let's start looking in the cupboards and cabinets to see what will be there for you to bring. Let me say thanks now!



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How Healthy Are You?

Not too long ago I sat in a meeting that gave out some disturbing information. That information was some statistics about the health of Howard county. I know that there are a few of you who live outside of Howard county but I can't imagine that your county is that

much better off. I won't try to give the exact numbers but very few people in the county is involved in any kind of exercise program. Along with that is the fact that there is a high percentage of smokers. The county is plagued with heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure,

cancer, and then you add stress to these. Do you factor in to these statistics. I hope not.

Since we are here for fitness we are going to do our part to encourage families to become more healthy. Karate is one of many avenues to fitness.

Congratulations To Our Graduates

Ju-Kyu

Mr. Ligon

Ms. Lopez—Li'l Dragon

Ku-Kyu

Ms, Eschelman

Mr. Ellis

Ms. Spicer

Shichi-Kyu

Mr. Lopez

Ms. Eshelman

Rok-Kyu

Mr. Williams

Thus far we have had a number of excellent graduations. I don't recall one instance where a student has come forward and not been prepared to do what was required of them. I do have a concern with the graduations and that is something that I have to resolve. That is, when there is a person going to Purple and Brown belt we are not having the time to review all of their

material. As said I will resolve that. This will be done through scheduling. At this point I am thinking that there will be different days for testing lower and higher ranks. What is important is a good review for rank upgrade. Every student deserves that after all of his/her work.

We are changing graduation from monthly to every three months. This will bring about improved learning and proficiency in performance.

Intensifying Workouts

“Every time you ask for guidance, you receive it. Every time you ask yourself, “What is my motivation?,” you ask the Universe, “Help me to see,” and help comes. God is that Universe.

We have come down to that point where we are ready to boost our fitness and abilities in karate. As I have said previously, there will be an intense change in the manner in which the class is run. We will start working with music and you may make suggestions for the music.

I am confident that we will improve our karate and our ability

to do techniques. I have no doubts about any of you and your ability to keep up with the class but we want to appeal to you. Becoming more active will be a benefit to all of us. We will also take time to address our competitiveness whether or not we compete in tournaments. As it is we compete daily in our school activities. We want to

know and understand aspects of competition.

Sooooooo, let's get ready to rumble at Bethea's Karate Studio. There is nothing too big or too small to handle in our training. We may not be the best but there is no one better than we are. I will be a champion in life just as I am in karate. Stand back and watch me work..

Student Of The Month



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I have gone through the entire class and weighed all of the pros and cons. I highly commend all of you for the energy that you are putting into your training. Yes, I am pushing you harder and being a little less tolerant. However, you are having to reach for what you want and that is good. Through this I have selected a **Student Of The**

Month. Our S.O.M. selection is Mr. Ayden Miles. I am extremely proud of this young man because he is really putting forth his best effort to do all of the things that I put in front of him. He is in class regularly and works on his material as asked. He is preparing for his Black belt and is becoming more aggressive towards learning karate. What

makes him special is that hegan as a Li'l Dragon. Congratulations! The picture of Mr. Miles was when he was age 5. I am very proud of him and his perseverance. Yes, he may have wanted to give up but his grandparents have remained with him and guided him. This will be a very successful young man in life.

Top Mount Martial Arts

Recently, I visited Family Karate in Missouri. I have visited before but each time has been different. It is very family oriented and comfortable. The students and the parents are so warm and friendly. They treated me as if I am part of the family and they were willing to fill me in on what is happening with them. The students are also very eager to learn more about their karate. As I watched each class, there were those

who got off to themselves and worked on some material that had been previously covered. That spoke volumes for what Mr. Culpepper is doing with the students.

They have a tremendous after-school program. Many of the students get off the bus right at the Dojo. Once in the Dojo they are provided a snack prior to the beginning of their training. The program includes kids of all ages. The older students

are senior karate students and they assist with the training. The class runs from 4—5p.m.

The workout with the Brown and Black belts was very good. This was a dedicated and devoted group who seems to be taking their karate very seriously. In the school is also a very unique program that has attracted many of the parents. They are also working very hard and growing the school to large proportions.

What's In It For Me?

There are many things that we will do or have to do in this lifetime. Often times we will have to call upon other people if we are to accomplish the task at hand. That is where this story truly begins. Your supposedly friends will always jump on board when it appears that there is something in it for them. As the task goes and the friends see that there are some

good things coming their way along with you they are happy. They proclaim you as their best friend and throw many accolades in your direction. During these times they will always try to stay as close to you as possible. Generally, there is no reason for any distrust in any of your friends. Most friends are, often, as close to you as your siblings and will do anything for

you. This is done with no questions asked. However, when the friend or friends want something and you are unable to do what they want the friendship goes sour. That is not and never was a friendship. Just as most are, people are only in it for what they can get. The bottom line is always "what's in it for me?" Beware of these people, they are painful to you.

"Spiritual partnership is a sacred commitment between the partners to assist each other's growth. Spiritual partners recognize their equality."

Suggested Reading

Most of us tend to maintain a library on things of interest to us. As martial artists, there is certain to be many things of interest to us and some of it we are not immediately privy to it. However, I would like to suggest that you start your martial arts library now. I am only suggesting that you start collecting or reading those books

that you can understand. Along with this you may have articles out of newspapers and magazines that you thought were significant to you. These articles should be in a notebook along with other things that you may have collected.

One of the books that I am suggesting to you is the "Bubishi".

The one that I have is by Mr. Patrick Mcarthy who is one of karate's greatest historians. This book offers a great deal of valuable information that every student should have and know. Another suggested book is "Living The Martial Way". This is a very interesting reading that gives insight into the Dojo and student/sensei relationships.



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**“KARATE BEGINS AND
ENDS HERE!”**



Special Events

November 3rd—Return to Eastern Standard Time

November 5th—Kids' Chanbara

November 10th—Holiday Tournament —Taylor High School

November 13th—Brown/Black Class 10-11a.m. & 7—8:30p.m.

November 16th—Rising Star Championships—Louisville, Ky

November 18th—Sensei Leaves For California

November 22nd—Dojo Closed Camp California

November 23rd—Dojo Closed Camp California

November 24th—Sensei Returns

November 27th—Deliver Thanksgiving Basket

November 28th—Happy Thanksgiving

November 29th—Dojo Closed

November 30th—Dojo Closed

We are having a Christmas Sale on our martial arts equipment / supplies \$50 or less 10% off; \$51 to \$80 = %15 off and \$81 to \$100 = 25% off. Sales tax will be added after the discount is deducted.

Karate History—My Competitive Years

Some of you may have heard or read already of my competitive years. However, I thought that this would be a good time for those who have not. I competed in the first competition in Indianapolis in 1973 at the Tyndall Armory. That competition set the wheels in motion. I continued to compete for the next five years and never placed in an event. For a person who was growing out of a low self-esteem/image, and the lack of confidence, this caused some regressive thoughts and actions. I always tried to find fault in the judging or any number of other reasons for my losses. It always registered with me that there

must be something that I was not doing.

Finally in 1978 Mr. Stidham talked me into entering a breaking competition and I got 1st place. This disturbed me because it was something that I did not practice. So, I began to practice harder at my karate. All of a sudden I began to place 3rd in the competitions that I entered. I was not competing in weapons in the beginning. I was somewhat satisfied with 3rd place but I knew that I could be better than that. This caused me to push harder and harder.

Then I retired from the military and it was on. I was determined

not to let anything or anybody stand in my way of being a champion. Even though I was going to school, I would train very hard pushing myself to limits that I had never reached. Then I began capturing 1st place in the competitions. I don't want you to think that I was always 1st because I was not. There were 2nd's, 3rd's, and no places but far more 1st's. I won four USKA World Championships in three different decades. I won other International Championships and all were primarily in fighting. My competitive years spanned a period of 31 years. You can do the same with training.

