



# Tang Soo Times

Pal Che Tang Soo Do

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229 South Chester Pike  
Glenolden, PA 19036

May 2005

Issue No. 166

## Calendar of Events

May 7 - Lancaster Tournament  
May 11 - Black Belt Clinic Applications due  
May 15 - Family Picnic

## Birthdays

Happy Be-lated April Birthdays!! (sorry!)

Anthony DiLucido Sr.	4/4
Ellie Francis	4/10
Joseph Centrone	4/15
John Alesi	4/19
Matthew Curro	4/20
Jessica D'Angelo	4/22
Christopher Imbrogno	4/30
Kaitlyn Logan	4/30

## May Birthdays

Christine Hartle	5/7
Krishnan Swaminathan	5/9
Spiro Vasilos	5/11
Bianca Salmeron	5/28
Michael Grady	5/30

## Instructor's Angle

Following the recent Black Belt Test in April, a parent came up to me and mentioned the lack of luster performances of some of the candidates testing for Black Belt. Yes, students are sent to the test not being fully prepared to test, not knowing all their one steps, kick steps and forms. But there shortcomings that in no way reflect on your individual performance. It does not taint the "Black Belt" that you will receive. Black Belt is in your heart, once you have *earned* it no one can take it from you, it is yours. The sacrifices and hard work that go into getting to the point of testing are different for everyone. Some schools will allow students to test when they reach the minimum amount of requirements. Other schools will sell you a Black Belt once you agree to pay a certain amount over three years. Once paid, the teacher must uphold their end of the agreement and allow the student, prepared or not, to test.

The standards at Pal Che are different. In the fifteen years our school has been around, thirty-seven students have received Black Belts, ten their second degree, and two third. In June, Connor and Agi will receive their First Degree. In our school's history, one student's parents pushed us into letting him test against our wishes, failed the written test and received recommended rank. (He transferred within weeks to a school outside the WTSDA, and proceeded to drop out soon after.) Fifty-two tests and one failure. In an article in the WTSDA Newsletter it said, "One student in one-thousand will attain the rank of first degree Black Belt." At Pal Che, the ratio is one in nineteen. Pretty good statistics for a small school from Glenolden with no parking.

Yes, those numbers are misleading; some schools have as many students at the present time as we have had in the 15 years. Looking back over the records of student drop outs, I have found we lose most of the students before they have reached green belt. The longer the student stays and acquires the total idea of Tang Soo Do, the more likely they are to reach Black Belt. As I wrote in last month's article, I, as your Instructor will use every trick I can to get the student past the initial road block of green belt. And sometimes I will test a student for a color belt

## Quick Notes

Congratulations to Conner and Agi on successfully testing for Black Belt on Saturday April 16th. Both had an awesome test and represented the school proudly.

Both Youth and Adult Black Belt Camp applications must be in the school no later than Wednesday night May 11<sup>th</sup>.

On Friday night April 15<sup>th</sup>, Special agent Phil Blessington of the FBI stopped in to train. Special Agent Phil is working in Newark NJ and will stop in when he can.

## New Students

Mike Richmond            Nicole Yaunches

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

## Summer Training Shirts

Orders are being taken for summer training shirts. Because the grey shirts did not hold up well to the stains of summer (water ice, juices, grass, etc...) I am ordering Black shirts for summer use. To keep uniformity in the Dojang, these will be the only T-Shirts permitted during class. I know black is hot for the summer. But no one will be exposed to the sun. Shirts can be worn Memorial Day through Labor Day. The cost is \$10.00, stop in the office to place your order.

before the student may be fully qualified. Not all students are on the same learning curve, some grasp techniques early, some late, and some never. But, if I held every student to the same standards all the time, most will drop before ever having the opportunity to discover their *individual potential*. As a teacher, I have a responsibility to lead and challenge everyone who walks in *our* Dojang to be the very best they can be. The balance of running a business within a school is a delicate one. We, at Pal Che have always believed in quality over quantity. However, I will never let the quality of techniques determine the quantity of potential I see in each student.

Everyone who walks into our school has the same opportunity. Kwan Chang Nim has devoted his entire life to creating a system of karate that anyone, anywhere, all around the world, can use as a vehicle to become better in mind, body, and spirit. He has created a belt system that allows students to find their way step by step, weeding out those who don't want to be here. It is my duty to give each student the time they need to find themselves along the way. Along the way exceptions will be made; no one is perfect. Sometimes an exception to the rules backfires and I may look bad in my decision. Other times an exception pays off and the student blossoms once the chance has been given to them. In that case I would do it a hundred times. I try to walk in each student's shoes, never judging them on one performance but rather, on the whole.

A great Master once said, "Judge not lest thy be judged". Throughout our lives we will run into situations where people are put in positions they should not be in. Unqualified co-workers getting a promotion ahead of us based on who they know; the coach's son or daughter playing shortstop, while our child rides the bench. This is why we preach individuality at Pal Che. We try not to compare except for examples used to motivate. If you can look inside yourself after training, testing, or competing, and know you did your very best, it does not matter what others think or do. When you receive a **BLACK BELT** from Pal Che Tang Soo Do, you will know you have earned it.

This Feature Article is meant to be an open letter to all the instructors and trainees at Pal Che Tang Soo Do. Contained in this open letter is something that can be shared with the students and parents as well.

The Martial Arts are uniquely set apart from any other sport because they are a "Way of Life." No other sport emphasizes the mental discipline essential to combining the mind, body, and spirit. Thus, it is the responsibility of all martial arts instructors, as educators, to teach the philosophical aspects of the Martial Arts. Indeed, it is easy to teach the outward skills of the Martial Arts, but this can never be mastered completely without the exercise of spiritual power. More specifically, as an instructor, you must impress upon your students the importance of persistence and perseverance or the value of sticking with a study until progress is established. This is what we call goal-oriented thinking.

Do you as an instructor teach your students to clear their minds before class so that they can rise to the point of complete receptivity? This can have an enormous effect on how the class progresses. In addition, you must teach your students the high standard values of obedience to the good, to the positive, and to growth. Moreover, you ought to demand respect for the flags, for the master instructor, Grand-master and all upper belt levels. Teaching fellowship and camaraderie among the peer group will establish the proper spirit in the school.

Taking time to emphasize these qualities separates the martial arts school from the boxing gym, health club, and weight lifting club. Clearly, the study of the martial arts has that extra dimension above other activities. The Martial Arts instructor must instill in his students a code of behavior by demonstrating the art of bestowing and winning respect without abusive or offensive behavior.

Top martial art master instructors carefully plan their curriculum by breaking it down into weekly lesson plans. Like building blocks, they progress toward the minimum requirement of the next belt level. Each lesson should contain meditation, warm-up, and a philosophical theme in addition to form, techniques, and combination practice. In summary, we teach by "objective learning." This goal-oriented teaching is what develops the character and spirit of the martial arts. A dedicated martial arts instructor can truly say that he has had a positive impact on his students, developing life lasting qualities.

### **Black Belt Health**

Submitted By: Justin Ritter

#### Smoking

It is a well-known fact that smoking is bad for you and also those people who are in the presence of smokers. Warnings such as "Quitting smoking now greatly reduces serious risks to your health" appear on cigarette packages and ads around the planet. And, chances are, your healthcare provider or doctor has said you should quit. Do not disregard this advice. Smoking is indeed bad for your health in many ways. A few ways are:

- Smoking greatly increases your chance of developing cardiovascular disease
- Smoking raises your blood pressure
- Smoking is a major cause of stroke
- Women who smoke are two to six times more likely to suffer a heart attack.

Like I said, smoking can also harm those who do not smoke. It is called second hand smoke or side stream smoke and is blamed for 53,000 deaths each year in the U.S.

#### Harmful Components of Tobacco

Cigarette smoke contains various harmful gases such as hydrogen cyanide, nitrogen, ammonia and carbon monoxide. Carbon Monoxide, the most dangerous of these gases, causes oxygen deprivation. Oxygen binds to a protein found in red blood cells, hemoglobin, and is transported to the tissues of the body. Carbon Monoxide can bind to hemoglobin 200 times more effectively than oxygen. Carbon monoxide also increases atherosclerosis, the narrowing and hardening of your arteries, by promoting the deposition of fats and creation of plaque inside blood vessels.

So, do your best to heed the warnings: "Quitting smoking now greatly reduces serious risks to your health." It is simple advice and anyone can try to listen to it.

Resource: [http://www.pfizerforwomen.com/hc\\_living\\_09.asp?hliving](http://www.pfizerforwomen.com/hc_living_09.asp?hliving)

### **Quote of the Month**

"We wear our Black Belts in our hearts not around our waists."

Kwan Chang Nim

## **Kid's Section**

### **The Looking Glass-A Korean Story**

A long time ago, an aspiring young scholar went to the capital city (seoul) to take Kwago, the state civil service examination. One day he was browsing through a general store and a small reflective object caught his eyes. He looked closely into it. And lo! It showed the image of his own very face clearly on its surface. He remembered that he had often seen the image of his face, usually distorted, reflected in the washbowl, but he had never seen such a mysterious object which reflected his own image so clearly. After the examination he returned home to a small hamlet with the small pocket-size looking glass he had bought.

Back at home, he did not show the looking glass to anyone, including his family members; instead, he hid it in his chest drawer, peeking into it secretly morning after morning. Then, one day, his wife saw his strange behavior: he took something out of the drawer, staring, smiling at it and then putting it away. She became very curious and wanted to find out what he was smiling at. While her husband was out, she looked inside the drawer and found a small shiny object. Picking it up, she looked into it to examine the object, then stepped back instantly, startled by a sudden appearance of a very attractive but perplexed young woman. Incredulous, she shook her head vigorously. She thought, "Maybe I am seeing things!" And so, she peeked into it, again. And there was that same attractive woman, looking a bit peevish this time. Enraged with jealousy, she dashed over to her mother-in-law with the looking glass held tightly in her hand. "Mother dearest, my husband came home from Seoul with a young mistress!" said she, bursting into tears.

Mother-in-law could not believe her son brought home another woman when he returned. "There must be some mistake, dear. Where is she now?" Daughter-in-law handed over the looking glass to her. Mother-in-law brought the object closer to her face and found a wrinkled old woman staring at her! "Dear, where is that attractive mistress you were talking about? I see, instead, a granny visiting us from a neighbouring village!"

Meanwhile, her father-in-law heard all that unusual noise coming from women's quarters and wanted to know what it was all about. He took the looking glass and looked into it for a while. What old woman? An attractive young woman? What he saw was an old, old man with gray hair. Suddenly he knelt down and said ever politely to the looking glass: "Dear late Father, what unhappiness brought you back as a spirit? Have I done anything to make you restless?" And he bowed and bowed on his knees.

Daughter-in-law was dumbfounded by all this. She could swear that she saw a pretty young woman. And what was her father-in-law doing? Puzzled and perplexed, she took the object back and looked into it, again. Behold, there was no doubt about it. That young mistress appeared, again! The infuriated young wife ranted and ranted at the mistress for her crafty disguises. And the mistress was mimicking her with a contorted face and twisted lips! The young woman grew more and more angry, and finally threw the looking glass down hard onto the floor and broke it into pieces.

*This is a funny story developed around simple folks and an ordinary household object, a mirror. On the surface, the story looks like nothing more than a caricature of ignorant peasants who can not recognize even their own faces when they see them. But let us not be too hasty. Suppose one has never seen one's own image, how then would one recognize an image as one's own? Furthermore, even when we do recognize our own faces in a mirror, are we really seeing ourselves in it? The totality of oneself? Suppose what is reflected in the mirror is the totality of oneself, both mind and body, as what one is here and now, how many of us would like to look into that image? In this story, what is emphasized seems to be not the physical shape of man but what is behind his mirror image, the image which the mirror cannot show. The image we see in the mirror may be then, not that of what we are, but that of what we want to see or are afraid to see.*

*In Korean folk ways of thinking, the mirror is often associated with some mythical quality which presages the future. Stories abound with a mirror as such a symbol. For example, a mirror was a token of promise for their future between lovers; it was given by one to another as a symbol of oneself. When such a mirror breaks, it is regarded as a portent of a broken promise or of some misfortune to the giver. If one breaks it intentionally, one may be saying that one no longer wants the tie symbolically associated with the mirror or one may be smashing the nightmare associated with it.*