



Dozens make rank at Winter Shiai

By Mary Ann Shah and Andrew Freeman

TROPHY CLUB, Tex. -- Texas Isshinryu Karate Kai capped off their year with the annual Winter Shiai.

One of three “contests” held a year, nearly 30 karate-ka received rank after testing and demonstrations. Countless other received stripes.

“Each day, in every way, the kai gets better, and better,” Hanshi Kristensen said. “And we learn and continue to try to make it better than the last time.”

Demonstrations included kata and various routines. There was a 50-50 raffle drawing that included cash prizes and a 55” TV, donated by Mr. Jovi Espinosa’s company. The television was won by Granbury dojo’s Keith Fuerstenberg, white belt, 11.

“I drove the TV to his house to deliver, he lives in the middle of nowhere.” Sensei Jeannie Rupp said. “He was very excited.”

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T.G.I.O: Thank Goodness it's Over

By Jim Wallander

GRAPEVINE, Tex.— 2017 was quite a year for many people, and I am one of those people. It was a year for me that was like playing dodgeball as a kid. But it was like playing dodgeball with balls made of cement.

As many of you know, I am an optimist. (While I think I am an eternal optimist my two younger sons informed me I am not an “eternal” optimist, so I took out the word eternal. Choose your battles wisely.) And throughout 2017 I had a lot of opportunities to be optimistic in the face of some challenging situations.

But there are a number of thoughts and quotes that went through my mind to kind of/sort of sustain me. And I'd like to share some of those with you. Just some food for thought- I hope you don't get indigestion reading this:

Those who fail to plan, plan to fail. (Unknown)

Everyone has a plan. Until they get punched in the face. (Mike Tyson: boxer/philosopher)

Save face! Train so you don't get hit in the face. (Hanshi)

It can't get any worse! (Unknown but said by billions)

It can get much worse and will, especially if you say it can't get any worse. (Me: so we do NOT say “It can't get any worse!” anymore.)

Regardless of how bad you think you have it, there is a person in a hospital right now who would give EVERYTHING they have to be you for one year. (Kevin Elko: sports psychologist to University of Alabama Football and dozens of other teams.)

There is a silver lining in every cloud. (Unknown)

There is rain, hail, deadly lightning and the potential for tornadoes in clouds. (Scientific fact)

Plan for the worst and hope for the best. (Unknown)

If anything can go wrong, it will. (Murphy, presumably the day after St. Patrick's Day)

But at the end of the day- which is when I usually go to class in Grapevine- there are quotes that do keep everything in check and in the proper perspective. And each of us have lived these to one degree or another.

Stay the path.

If you fall down seven times, get up eight.

Gentleness can only be expected from the strong.

So regardless of what is going on outside, we really train ourselves and our students so that we can handle anything. Inside and outside. Mind, body and spirit. And that is the gift of Isshinryu that we will enjoy for all of our lives.



NOTICE: One week left!

Grapevine, Tex. -- It's not too late! The award nominations deadline for the Isshinryu Hall of Fame have been extended to 11:59 pm ET, Friday, April 20, 2018.

Visit <http://www.theihof.com/nominations> and submit your nominations! If you have questions, please ask your Sensei.

It's not Paradise, but it's close

By Andrew Freeman

TROPHY CLUB, Tex.—Junior karate students had their own little Gasshaku the second to last weekend of March.

“It was great,” Kyoshi Maria Kristensen said. “Everyone always has a lot of fun.”

Nearly 90 students participated in the event, which also included pizza and games. Their testing followed a shiai. Students later received rank in their respective dojos.

The junior Gasshaku differs from the senior Gasshaku because it's only one day, but gives the junior students a small taste of the camp experience.

“I like to see the teachers growing, and the students giving 100%,” Kristensen said. “They're pushing themselves because it's a very long day for them.”

Two Wolves

Submitted by Sensei Jeannie Rupp

One evening, an old Cherokee told his grandson about a battle that goes on in each person.

He said, “My son, the battle is between two wolves inside of us all. One is Evil- It is anger, envy, jealousy, sorrow, regret, greed arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority and ego.

The other is Good- It is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith.”

The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather, “Which wolf wins?”

The old Cherokee simply replied,

“The one you feed.”





Biggest Bowlathon yet

By Maria Kristensen

LEWISVILLE, Tex.—TIKK’s Annual Bowl-a-thon was held February 18th at the AMF Lewisville Lanes.

As usual this was a fun TIKK event for all students, families and friends. The participation to this year’s bowl-a-thon was beyond our expectations.

Over 70 bowlers knocked pins, laughed and enjoyed fellowship while contributing to the KAI’s goal of helping students, subsidize families, grant scholarships and other needs that may arise.

Thank you to all who participated as well as to our sponsors, Dymatize and Alliance Corporation, who donated some of their great products for this occasion.

No room for complacency

By Sensei Mike Harper

PLANO, Tex.-- I’m sure there are times in our lives that we do something just by going through the motion. We feel pretty familiar with the particular thing that we are doing, or we are distracted by something else which takes our concentration away from the present.

This can really occur with almost anything that we do. Karate is no exception. Take basics for example: we’ve done them a thousand times so we’re pretty good at them, huh? What about the back foot when we step forward on just basic one (Listen Juniors and Adults)? Is it straight, is it off to an angle, are we lifting the heel? Are we stepping too deep, or is our stance too narrow? That’s one step, one basic. Wow. That’s a lot to think about and we haven’t even gotten to the punch. What if you’ve done it so many times that it’s now a habit?

Personally, I’ve done ten jillion pushups. I don’t know how many that is, but it’s a lot. Guess what? Two weeks ago, Hanshi saw how I could improve the technique. He gave me instruction on the basic pushup. I’m a Sensei, and I received needed instruction on a pushup. How great is that, because I want to improve, and Hanshi wants us to be the best we can be. The point is this, appreciate your teachers and focus on your improvement.

They are seeing things that you don’t or can’t. Our goal is to help you develop into the best karate person that you can be. Movement means something, make it count the most by doing it correctly. And the payoff? Doing it correctly over and over will take care of a bad habit and turn it into a good one. The good habit will serve you well.

Granbury, the Winningest Dojo?

By Mary Ann Shah

GRANBURY, Tex.-- Yes, you heard it here!

Sources have uncovered that Sensei Jeannie Rupp’s mother won the 50/50 drawing two years ago.

Then, during the Winter Shiai Student Keith Fuerstenberg won the TV! And to follow up this amazingly successful run, Student Alexander Daugherty won the Junior Spring Shiai drawing.

Investigations into this phenomenon are ongoing. Until then, Granbury stands as The Winningest Dojo!

T.I.K.K Essays: Thoughts on the One Heart Way

Life as a Shodan

By Mr. Grant Dennis

DENTON, Tex.-- Since becoming a black belt in August of 2016, I have had many great experiences.

I get to help out with the white belts and kyu-ranks. I also enjoy learning and working on weapons training with other black belts. As a black belt, I have also experienced the great friendship amongst all of them. I definitely feel like I am a part of the “karate family.”

Another thing I really enjoy is having the responsibilities as a black belt and assisting the senseis. As a black belt, I help lead the students through drills as a group and watching their progress in their karate training.



Gasshaku Slip and Slide

By Andrew Freeman

DENTON, Tex.-- I've been training at TIKK for over 8 years. If I were to choose the best thing that has ever happened to me, it would be during my training the first time I attended the Gasshuku.

It was back at the old Camp Summit. When I first went to the camp, I had just made San-kyu four months before at the Winter Shiai.

One thing about the Gasshuku that I'll remember is that it had rained heavily that week. I got mud all over my Gi, front and back, while practicing with a partner. I was upset that my Gi was dirty, but my mom managed to get most of the mud out when I got home.

This is just one of many memorable moments, but I know there will be many more in the coming years.

More than kicking and punching

By Kason Chesky

DENTON, Tex.— Dictionary.com defines ‘karate’ as: *a method developed in Japan of defending oneself without the use of weapons by striking sensitive areas on an attacker's body with the hands, elbows, knees, or feet.*

This definition is accurate, but it in no way describes well enough my experience here at Texas Isshinryu Karate Kai. It doesn't mention the valuable lessons I have learned doing it. I've learned much more than just self- defense. I can now hold my own against a group of attackers, but I've taken away things much more valuable than how to punch.

The ultimate aim of Karate lies not in victor or defeat, but in the perfection of one's character. This quote seems to me to really capture what Karate is all about. Not only is this the goal of Karate, it should be the goal of life. No one can be perfect, but *striving* to be perfect is the closest thing there is to being perfect. Isshinryu taught me to always aim for perfection; not only of myself, but in the things I do.

Karate, to me, was and still is an integral part of my life. What it means to me is too enormous to put into words, but it helped me get through a lot of things. I encourage anyone to start doing Isshinryu, because it will improve anyone's life; no matter who they are. TIKK is a second family to me, and the dojo is my second home.

HANSHI'S CORNER

“You must try to be the best you, you can be. You must give all your effort, and not settle for ‘that’s good enough.’ Remember, good is the enemy of the best.”

- Hanshi Kristensen, April 2018

SENSEI'S CORNER

“This is the Gasshaku, and testing week. As I help those testing for Shodan rank, the memories of my own testing come back. My advice to you is to just do what you always do, give it all you have and then dig deeper. When you are exhausted, and think that you cannot move one more muscle, don’t give up, and keep telling yourself ‘one more time and we’ll be done.’ Say it, and believe it! Remember that you would not be testing if your Sensei didn’t think you are ready. Trust your teacher and enjoy the experience!” - Kyoshi M. Kristensen

“Life has so many challenges along the way. Things can distract and unfocus us and can change the way we complete our goals. Stay the path and you and your family will be better for it.”- Renshi Susan Harris

“Every day we are faced with choices. But did you know that whatever you choose, there will be a sacrifice? There is no way around this fact. World class musicians, Olympians, professional athletes, all know this. There is no shortcut to success or improvement. For example, if you want to make the Olympic team, the commitment to train is tremendous. You would put your life on hold. No social life, loss of sleep if you have a job to support yourself, early hours, late nights are not unusual. But the opposite choice is also true: not training seriously is pretty much a guarantee to achieve mediocrity, not to mention that you won’t make the team.

You don’t have to be this fanatical in your karate training, but you can make a choice to use your karate training to be excellent in everything you do in and out of the dojo. You alone have control over this decision. Just making the decision to walk into the dojo for first time is a choice to improve your life. There will be sacrifice. Instead of staying home enjoying your favorite tv show, you’ll be on the dojo floor training and improving your health. Or you can choose to stay home because you’re too tired to go to the dojo, and as a result, slow down your progress. If the next time you find yourself felling unmotivated, or just “in the mood” to come to class, think about your choice you have: stay home and sit on the couch, or come to the dojo. You’ll be glad you chose the dojo and took another step to excellence!” – Renshi Tony Palos

“ ‘Good, better, best, never let it rest; until your good is better and your better is best!’ As we go from white belt to black belt, progress is easy to define and to set goals for. The skills and kata that we need to practice to achieve the next belt color are pretty obvious, and we have a Sensei & instructors helping us along the path. Our belt colors change pretty frequently and it is an exciting journey.

‘The rest is up to you.’ After earning Shodan, we still have a Sensei and also Hanshi to guide us, but we become more responsible for how we will train. Consistency, effort, attitude - we have to decide. Many things can distract us from training consistently: there are life events (family, career changes, injuries, other commitments), our bodies just keep getting older, and it takes longer to change rank...

SENSEI'S CORNER

... 'Stay the Path.' However, if we take a long term perspective and view our karate training as a lifelong commitment, continue training our best each and every day, and don't ever stop, we will gain a higher quality of life as we age, get thru all life events so much better, and stay so much healthier - mind, body, and spirit. For inspiration, look at karate masters on You Tube training hard and even competing in their 60s, 70s, and older! We can do it! Zenryoku!" – Renshi Tina Palos

"Sometimes we can find ourselves talking negatively about our self or a situation. I ran across this poem (*Two Wolves*, p.3) and it really resonated with me. It's a matter of changing our mindset, something we all have within our power to do." – Sensei Jeannie Rupp

"I think there is great wisdom in this quote: *"Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not: nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not: the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent."* - Calvin Coolidge (30th President of the United States)- Sensei Steve Gellman

"Learn the basic stances, punches, kicks and blocks. These form your foundation. If your foundation is weak, whatever you build on it will collapse."- Sensei Michael Strickland

"We have exceptional students at TIKK. I always enjoy hearing about what our students have accomplished whether junior or adult. As a sample, in Plano, Matt Lyall has run 1 or 2 non-stop 100 mile trail runs and makes 30 plus mile runs regularly, Saachit Rathi (Junior) is quite successful on the tennis court and as a student, Ethan Gonzalez recently became an Eagle Scout, Marcie Winkle was lifting heavy weights (nearing 300 lb. not recommended) until one week before giving birth to her 3rd healthy child, and Reyansh Jha (Junior) just took second place in story writing in school. We black belts read the very entertaining, and well written story. Many others are accomplished in their own rights, including Surachit Kumar M.D. as a new student. If you are recognized for an accomplishment, please let your teachers know so you can be acknowledged." – Sensei Mike Harper

"You just never know where your karate can take you. Back when I was taking my then seven-year-old to karate more than 20 years ago, I never dreamed that one day the two of us would be teaching others the art of Isshinryu. I am so thankful for all of the blessings my family has experienced from Texas Isshinryu Karate Kai. Although my two other sons, who earned their black belts at TIKK, no longer train, I know that the principles and lessons they learned helped to mold them and make them who they are today. It is especially sweet that I get to spend one evening a week with my son, who is still active at TIKK. Thank you Hanshi and Kyoshi for sharing your love of Isshinryu and blessing our family as you have." – Sensei Laura Murray

"To Succeed: 1) Do the best you can where you are with what you have 2) You can't control the wind but you can adjust the sails 3) Do not wish to be anything but what you are and try to be that perfectly 4) If you fall down 7 times get up 8 times 5) If you don't climb the mountain you'll never see the view 6) Each day in every way, get better and better.

If you have been to the main dojo in Grapevine you have seen these saying, but have you put them into practice? These sayings may not sound like much, but if you put them into practice in your everyday life they really can help you succeed. We can't control everything we go through or that is thrown at us but we can adjust our attitude and how we choose to deal with the wind by our actions, thoughts and words. On our door as we leave the it says "the rest is up to you" and it means we come to the dojo to learn the tools and when we leave it's up to us to put those tools to use to become the person we want to be, to perfect our character!" – Sensei Margaret Myers