



# TIKK NEWS

Spring 2012

*"We must care about others & take charge of ourselves in 2012"*

Texas Isshinryu Karate Kai

Perfecting Character Since 1991

## 2012 brings another milestone for TIKK

### Kai celebrates 15th Gasshuku April 13-15

By AISHA ESPINOSA  
San Kyu

Last year marked the 20th anniversary of Texas Isshinryu Karate Kai.

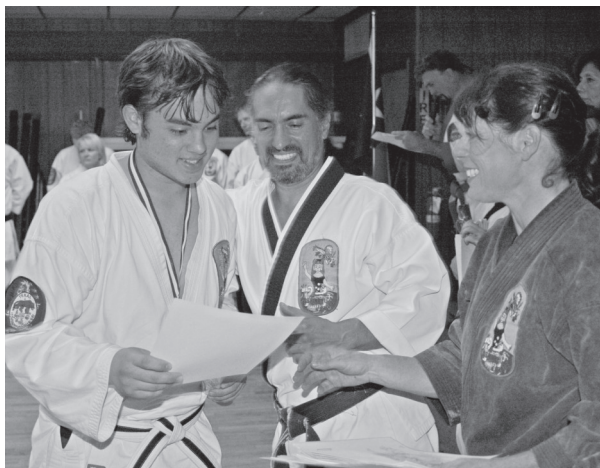
One of the kai's biggest milestones yet, it was celebrated at the Summer Shiai, with a memorable performance by the Good Ole Blues Brothers Dojo Band, which made its first appearance outside of the Gasshuku.

(See GASSHUKU, Page 8)



Kyoshi Shihan Kristensen works with then Ik Kyu Taylor Casale at last year's Gasshuku at Camp Summit in Copper Canyon.

## Sensei Paloses lead Denton dojo to 10-year mark



Sensei Tony Palos and Sensei Tina Palos enjoy watching one of their students, Andrew Freeman, get promoted at a past shiai. The Denton dojo recently celebrated its 10-year anniversary.

By LAURA MURRAY  
Ni Dan

Ten years can mean a lot.

For the Denton dojo of Texas Isshinryu Karate Kai, it means going from a high-ranking brown belt leading 10 students in self-defense to two world-champion fourth degree black belts leading classes numbering some 50 students in three locations.

The Denton dojo recently marked its 10-year anniversary since starting March, 2, 2002. This is the date when then Ik Kyu Tony Palos started an eight-

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## KYOSHI'S CORNER

*Think positive*

With more than 60 years on the planet, I have had my share of adversity, especially growing up in the 1950s. Without a dad, my Mom had to work and my brother and I had to do a lot on our own. I kept a positive attitude and tried to do the best I could in everything I did.

On the other hand, my brother did not, and it led to his own demise. If you always think negatively or always have self pity, you will get caught up in a negative life.

You must have the right attitude—a positive, winning attitude. This means to be positive in words, acts and feelings. So many people in my life tried to push their negativity on me, and that won't work.

I say if you think you can, you can. Be true and you'll come through. It all comes down to: the power of a positive, winning attitude. —*Positively,*

*Kyoshi Shihan Kristensen*

## CALENDAR

April 17	Mr. Kent Kirkpatrick's Birthday
April 25	Mr. Johannes Kroll's Birthday
May 4	Sensei Susan Harris' Birthday
May 11	Sensei Tommy Thomas' Birthday
May 18	Mrs. Jennifer Wiederkehr's Birthday
May 24	Sensei Jeannie Rupp's Birthday
May 30	Hanshi William H. Duessel's Birthday
June 15	Sensei Carol Gue's Birthday
June 30	Mr. Shane Murray's Birthday
July 22	Kyoshi Shihan Kristensen's Birthday
July 27-28	Isshinryu Hall of Fame Tournament, Chattanooga, Tenn.
August 5	Mr. Tyler Murray's Birthday
August 8	Mr. Steve Kroll's Birthday
August 25	Summer Shiai, Location TBA

## NEW STUDENTS

October 2	Blake Dennis, Granbury
January 1	Joaquim Kroll, Coppell
January 1	Brynn Pergantis, Coppell
January 15	Mark Vasquez, Flower Mound
January 15	Alexandra Vasquez, Flower Mound
March 8	Grace Nordley, Granbury
January 5	Bryan "BJ McSpadden, Granbury
January 30	Shaden Medlin, Granbury
January 30	Zane Terrell, Granbury
January 5	Miranda Rainer, Granbury
February 2	Shane Carlson, Granbury
February 2	Luis Valdez, Granbury
February 2	Carter Mager, Granbury
February 2	Gaun Ashford, Granbury
February 14	Olivia Fleming, Plano
February 20	Hunter Gibson, Granbury
February 27	Joseph Jenkins, Granbury
March 6	Ethan Stokes, Denia
March 6	Cole Nissen, Denia
March 19	Tucker Whitaker, Aubrey

## TIKK NEWS

TIKK NEWS is published periodically by karateka of Texas Isshinryu Karate Kai, established in 1991, and is distributed to students at all the school's dojos and to others interested in TIKK activities.

**Publisher**

Kyoshi Shihan Robert Kristensen

**Editor**

Ni Dan Laura Murray

**Coppell Dojo (Main)**

1203 Crestside, Suite 230, Coppell, TX 75019  
(817)491-1130

Visit us on the web: [www.txikk.com](http://www.txikk.com)

**Aubrey**

All About Fitness  
(940)390-0192

**Denton**

Brickhouse Gym & Denia Recreation Center

(940)390-0192

**Flower Mound**

Flower Mound Community Church

(817)491-1130

**Granbury**

YMCA

(214)923-1924

**Plano**

University of Gymnastics &

Elite Champion Gymnastics

(469)688-4732

**Waco**

Baylor University

(214)226-6734

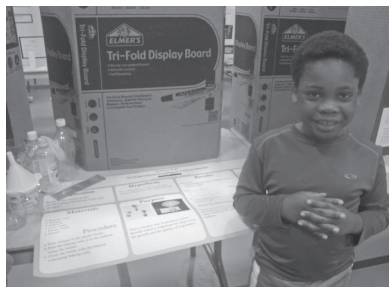
**Affiliated School located in Nevada**

YOUTH CORNER

Karate training has improved white-yellow belt **Jeremiah Bessa's** life and especially his academic career, reports his father Yawo Bessa.

"As a result of his regular practice of karate under Sensei Tony Palos and Sensei Tina Palos, Jeremiah has become more focused and disciplined," he said.

Mr. Bessa said he believes those two qualities contributed to Jeremiah, almost 7, earning third place in the 2012 Science Fair at his school, Olive Stephens Elementary in Shady Shores.

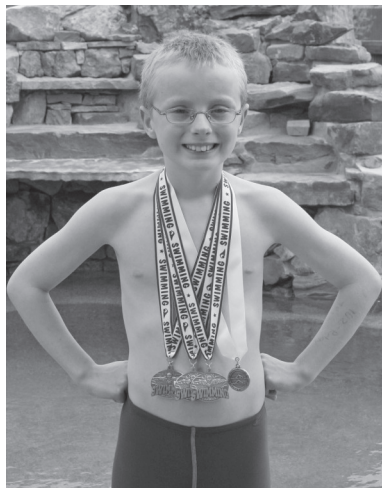


Jeremiah Bessa

Blue belt **Trey Dickey** continued his success in swimming in February by earning four medals at the North Texas USA swimming finals in Addison.

He earned a first place medal in the 100-meter butterfly, two second place medals in the 50-meter butterfly and the 200-meter individual medley and a third place medal in the 500-meter freestyle and finished in the top 12 places in eight other events. Two of his relays teams qualified for the state meet in March.

Only the top 1 percent of swimmers in the state qualifies for the state meet where the competition included more than 900 swimmers. Trey's relays placed 14th and 15th and were one of the

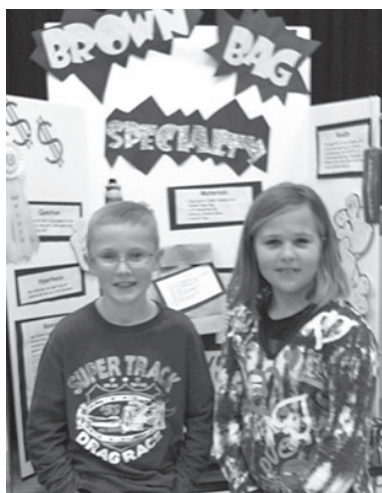


Trey Dickey

youngest relay teams that qualified for the state meet held in The Woodlands.

Another TIKK student also fared well with his science fair project. White belt **Carter McKay** and one of his classmates, Jody Sonderer, from Acton Elementary School in Granbury won the Granbury Independent School District team science fair competition.

The project, which demonstrated a much healthier and a more economical way to make



Carter McKay, Jody Sonderer

popcorn in an ordinary brown paper bag, advances to the regional fair on April 15 at the University of North Texas in Denton.

Carter also is on the honor roll at his school.

Yellow belt **Rebecca Stebbins**, who is in second grade at Hughes Elementary in Roanoke, sold 1,526 boxes of cookies as a Girl Scout Brownie.

In addition her Destination Imagination team won a special honor, the DaVinci award, for outstanding creativity.



Rebecca Stebbins

San Kyu **Aisha Espinosa** is currently working on her Girl Scout Silver Award Take Action project. The idea for her project stemmed from her trip to the Philippines in 2010, when she had the chance to see a public school and talk to a teacher that worked there.

The teacher told her that the school needed books, but could not afford to buy them. So when Aisha started her project in early 2011, she remembered the elementary school in the Philippines and wanted to help.

The focus of her project is to collect books for the Tibag Public Elementary School in the Philippines so that it can start its own library.

(See YOUTH, Page 4)

## TIKK wins 41 trophies at regional karate tournament

By **LAURA MURRAY**  
Ni Dan

A team of 21 Texas Isshinryu Karate Kai students brought home 41 trophies from the 2012 West Central Karate Championships held in The Colony March 17.

The trophy count included six first places, 13 second places, 10 third places and 12 fourth places.

The tournament was a first for several of TIKK's newer students and the competition proved tough for the higher ranks who had to compete against students in other styles who go to tournaments on a frequent basis.

The black belts still managed a fine showing with Mr. Michael Strickland and Mr. Chuck Blommaert taking first in kata and Mr. Kyle Murray earning a second in weapons and kata while competing against fourth degree black belt Adrian Galvan who has won more than 160 grand champion titles.



Julian Chavez

Mr. Kent Kirkpatrick finished second in weapons and kumite despite experiencing a bloody nose. In this tournament, facial contact did not disqualify.

Following are the complete tournament results for TIKK:

### Black Belt Divisions

	Weapons	Kata	Kumite
Tina Palos	3rd	3rd	2nd
K. Kirkpatrick	2nd	3rd	2nd
Kyle Murray	2nd	2nd	3rd
M. Strickland	—	1st	—

Mike Harper	4th	—	—
C. Blommaert	4th	1st	3rd
Luke Hutchison	—	4th	—
Joey Marcella	—	—	3rd
Garrett Marcella	—	2nd	4th

### Advanced Divisions

	Kata	Kumite
Ethan Shah	3rd	2nd
Kelli Kleppinger	1st	1st
Albert Solares	2nd	4th

### Intermediate Divisions

	Kata	Kumite
Fabricio Velez	1st	2nd
Kason Chesky	4th	4th

### Beginnner Divisions

	Kata	Kumite
Jorge Lopez	2nd	2nd
Cody Pratt	4th	4th
Christian Lopez	—	3rd
Alfonso Ortiz	4th	2nd
Julian Chavez	3rd	3rd
Jack Belcher	1st	4th
Dylan Pratt	3rd	2nd

## Youth...

(From Page 3)

Anyone interested in donating should contact her at (972)745-0778.

Both Ni Dan **Kyle Murray** and Sho Dan **Tyler Murray** made the Dean's List for their academic work during the fall semester at their respective colleges. Mr. K. Murray is a senior at Baylor University in Waco and Mr. T. Murray is a freshman at Belmont University in Nashville, Tenn.

Sho Dan **Shane Murray**, a junior at Coppell High School, earned a chair in the All-Region Honor Band in December on

tenor trombone and advanced to pre-area and then area competition where he placed seventh out of the 24 trombones qualifying from the area that includes schools from north Houston, Austin, Waco and the Dallas area. The top four made Texas All-State Band.

In February, he earned a Division I rating on his solo at the regional solo contest and now he will advance to the Texas State Solo and Ensemble Contest in May.

He also is in the middle of his track season and has brought

home a variety of top finishes in varsity competition, including a first and second place in the 1,600-meter run, a second place for the sprint medley relay and a third place in the 800-meter dash.

Purple belt **Deanna Rupp** competed in the National Association Teachers of Singing competition March 24 in Denton and made it to semi-finals. About 20 students competed in her division. Deanna attends school at the Ninth Grade Crossland Grade Center in Granbury.

—**Laura Murray**  
Ni Dan

## Winter Shiai features, tournament, karateka of year

By AISHA ESPINOSA  
San Kyu

Texas Isshinryu Karate Kai held its annual Winter Shiai on Dec. 3 starting off with a tournament in the morning.

The kyu ranks demonstrated their best kata in front of a panel of judges, competing against others in their age and rank division for first, second and third place.

After that, they also competed in kumite, trying to score three points before their opponent.



Junior Karateka of the Year Nicole Van Winkle, Kason Chesky and Maggie Butterfield

Whoever won moved on to the next round, where they fought against other winners in their division for the winning spots of first, second and third.

The shiai came next, with kyu ranks getting promoted to the next level or recognized for their training.

Julian Chavez, Cody Acayturre, Jack Belcher, Charles Davis, Arden Olgivie, Grant Olgivie, Daniel Soileau, Christopher Tziouvannis, Kyra Tziouvannis, Luis Velez, Adriana Velez and Jared Wiederkehr made **yellow belt**.

Fabricio Velez, Grace Kennedy, Jared Brown, Nathan Ellsworth, Ethan Jones, Lauren Schneider and Mark Schneider made **green belt**. Talha Akram, Kason Chesky, Alexander Guardado, Rory Allison and Julian Paulino made **blue belt** while Kurt Dickey earned **purple belt**.

Maggie Butterfield achieved the rank of **ni kyu** while Caleb Clarke, Kelli Kleppinger and Ethan Shah moved to the highest rank in brown belt, **ik kyu**.



Senior Karateka of the Year Steve Pergantis, Dianne Van Winkle and Jovi Espinosa

Finally, the time came for Kyoshi Shihan Kristensen to announce the karateka of the year, an award given to the students for their outstanding efforts during the year.

To the crowd's surprise, he did not call just one name for the senior karateka of the year. He called three: Steve Pergantis, Dianne Van Winkle and Jovi Espinosa.

He also called three names for the junior karateka of the year: Maggie Butterfield, Nicole Van Winkle and Kason Chesky.

### *Dojo quote comes to life for brown belts dealing with venue change*

Kyoshi Shihan Kristensen has always had quotes, mottos, words to live by. However, "Do the best you can, where you are, with what you have," was a quote I had not paid much attention to or really heeded.

But on the morning of Dec. 3, this quote came to mean a lot more.

When my dad and I met the other brown belts gathered at the Denton VFW, we thought that the owner would show up soon, so that we could start setting the place up for the tournament and shiai.

For a couple of minutes we waited, leaning against cars and taking care of what we already could—like paying for ourselves and signing in so we would not have to do it later.

Then, at the exact time the owner had said he would be there, we looked around for an unfamiliar car pulling into the tiny parking lot of the VFW.

But there wasn't one.

So we waited.

The time we had carefully allotted to set up was ticking away. For what felt like forever, we were stuck outside, with the time we had allotted to set up ticking away by the second.

To do something, we double-checked the supplies, realizing there were some things we still needed. A couple of brown belts with the ability to drive were dispatched to get materials while the rest of us continued to wait on the owner.

(See DOJO QUOTE, Page 8)

## Denton...

(From Page 1)

week self defense course at the Elite Fitness gym as part of being tested for black belt. This led to the Denton dojo being established in May 2002.

In October 2002, then Ik Kyu Tina Palos started a self-defense class as part of her testing for sho dan. The two Palos-led classes then joined in December 2002 and moved to the Brickhouse Gym, which was then located on Avenue C near the University of North Texas.

"We just wanted to continue the lineage and tradition, passing on what our teacher gave to us," said now fourth-degree black belt Sensei Tony Palos.

"From personal experience, we know the benefits of Isshinryu karate and how it can help all ages and types of people improve their life in many ways," he said.

In July 2007, the Denton dojo moved with the Brickhouse Gym, which opened a new facility on Unicorn Lake. Then in February 2009, the Paloses expanded and opened another dojo in Aubrey at All About Fitness. Their latest expansion was in October 2010 when they started teaching classes at Denia Rec Center.

Having their own dojos has proved very satisfying for the Paloses. "The best part has been helping others achieve their goals in Isshinryu karate, watching students grow and develop and use their karate skills to have better lives," said now fourth-degree black belt Sensei Tina Palos.

Developing relationships with students and being able to create a family-like atmosphere have added to the joy of having their own dojo, she said.

And like family it is.

"Whether you just started class there or have been there forever, you are family," said purple belt Steve Summers. "You can depend on each other no matter what."

San Kyu Albert Solares agreed. "Dojo Denton is special for all who are part of it. It is a welcoming and friendly environment, and from the lowest to the highest rank, there is always a lot of respect."

This feeling of family has made it easy for parents to entrust their children to the Paloses for their karate instruction.

"Teachers and students are like families. There is a special knot that ties them together," said Aimi Chesky, mother of blue belt Kason Chesky, who started training when he was four in March 2009.

## Denton dojo does it



## Aubrey dojo

The teachers are tough, but caring, she said. "They help students with whatever they can to make them better.

"We are so lucky to have our instructors - not only the Paloses, but also Mr. (Michael) Strickland is a super teacher and so are the other black belts," Mrs. Chesky said.

Deborah Dennis, mother of purple belt Grant Dennis, said her son has learned so much from the Paloses. "They are incredibly patient and are really good at focusing on what Grant needs."

## — 10 years!



### Denia dojo

Patience, perseverance, doing things the right way and always doing his best are some of the lessons Mrs. Dennis has seen her son learn during his six years of training at the Denton dojo.

"We have also seen numerous physical and developmental benefits through the years as well," she said.

While Mrs. Dennis said she sees the Paloses being particularly great at working with young people, adult students at the Denton dojo see them as excellent teachers as well.

"They know how to pass on their knowledge in a very logical and clear way," said Solares, who first started training with them at the Aubrey dojo. "They are great motivators and extremely disciplined."

When he first saw the performances and skills of Kyoshi Shihan Kristensen and the Paloses at the Aubrey dojo grand opening, Solares said he knew he was in the right place and has been training ever since.

"I think that the mental and physical challenge of each day in class and the discipline and traditional training of TIKK are some of the things that have been most attractive to me," he said.

The benefits of training have touched his life in so many ways he never could have imagined before.

"Training with the senseis has made me a better husband and father to my family, better in my job and an all-around better human being," Solares said.

For Summers, the biggest thing he has learned from his senseis is 'Inch by inch, everything's a cinch.'

"You'd think I'd learned that a long time ago," he said. "The quote integrates easily into life and karate and it runs through my mind almost daily."

Summers said he appreciates the different levels of learning that are available. "Just when you think you have come close to mastering a technique, something small and intricate is brought to your attention putting a whole new spin on it," he said.

Ni Dan Michael Strickland, who has trained at the Denton dojo for seven years and also teaches there, said, "The Denton dojo is fortunate to have two very caring individuals with a lot of karate knowledge and experience.

"What Kyoshi says and does they take to heart. I see them teaching the same qualities that a karateka should attain that Kyoshi teaches," he said.

As for the future of the Denton, Aubrey and Denia dojos, Mr. Sensei Palos said he and Mrs. Sensei Palos will continue doing what they have been.

"We will always strive to improve, continue to grow and add more generations of students," he said.

"We are extremely thankful to our teacher Kyoshi Kristensen, for giving us the opportunity to have a dojo, and for all the support he and Shihan Renshi (Kristensen) have given us over the years.

"We are very honored to be allowed to pass on the legacy and tradition our teacher gave to us, and always try to do our best to continue the lineage as a way of saying thank you," Mr. Sensei Palos said.

In addition, the support of Brickhouse Gym owner Mike Jones through the years has been much appreciated, he said.

## Gasshuku...

(From Page 1)

A carnival of sorts also was set up by the brown belts, including fun games like bowling, basketball and even a dart gun.

But all games aside, this year holds yet another milestone: the 15th annual Gasshuku set for April 13-15 at Camp Summit.

The yearly tradition of a three-day training session for the older kyu ranks and black belts started in April 1998 with the theme "The Fire Within."

Since then, the themes for the Gasshuku have evolved, going from "Keep a Beginner's Mind" to things with an even deeper meaning, like "Faith Factor." And so has the number of people.

During the first year, there were only about 17 kyu ranks and four black belts. This year about 60 karateka are expected to attend including students from Nevada Isshinryu Karate Kai and the always inspiring Renshi Sensei Karl Sidnam from Scranton, Pa.

Kyoshi Shihan Kristensen has said that the Gasshuku is a period of time where students can focus on themselves. And it's very true.

## Dojo quote...

(From Page 5)

Finally, the doors were unlocked, and we rushed in, carrying as many boxes of materials and supplies as we could. But the time we were supposed to have to set up was gone, and the parents and kids were already arriving for the tournament.

Almost immediately after bringing in all the supplies from the various cars, we were asked to do various tasks like taping tournament rings and setting up chairs for the audience and judges. By sheer determination, everything was finished just in time for the tournament and shiai.

The time for the seniors' kumpai came, and we gathered together in a giant circle. When a couple of the black belts called for applause for the brown belts, I was dumbfounded.

### Gasshuku Themes Over the Years

- 1998 – "The Fire Within"
- 1999 – "Keep a Beginner's Mind"
- 2000 – "The Eye of the Tiger"
- 2001 – "Hidden Power of the Dragon Within"
- 2002 – "Finding the Balance"
- 2003 – "Unwavering Spirit"
- 2004 – "Stay Focused – Conceive, Believe, Achieve"
- 2005 – "Expect Nothing, Be Ready For Anything"
- 2006 – "Mission Possible – Be the Best You You Can Be"
- 2007 – "Bushido – Way of the Warrior"
- 2008 – "One Heart Way"
- 2009 – "Faith Factor"
- 2010 – "Perfecting Ones' Character"
- 2011 – "Force of One"
- 2012 – "The Power of a Positive Winning Attitude"

For three days at a remote location, there isn't any pressure to do homework, office work, or run mindless errands. For three days, students can focus on their training, their mind, their body and their spirit.

Over the years, the annual Gasshuku has come to be a very changing, personal experience that brings one closer to the peo-

ple around. It's hard not to get close to the people that have survived the 'give it all you've got' workouts, the late nights spent laughing at others' expense, the feeling of togetherness.

Congratulations, TIKK for 20 years of training and 15 years of bringing everyone just a little bit closer together!

What were they applauding for?

It wasn't until much later that I realized we had accomplished something so much bigger than setting up an event in record time.

We had lived by one of Shihan's sayings by doing the best we possibly could where we were (in a different VFW than normal) with what (little time) we had.

And in many ways, I believe it brought us brown belts closer because we had to team up to get things running. It truly made us a team, one that would live through anything we had to face.

—Aisha Espinosa  
San Kyu



## Health, outlook improve with newfound lifestyle

By **STEVE SUMNERS**  
Yon Kyu

A very good friend of mine passed away in December 2008. He was at work in Plano and died in the restroom. My memory fails me, but he was somewhere around 6 feet 3 inches and about 420 pounds. He deserved better.

Having a friend pass away like this opened my eyes that I needed to take care of myself. Everyone knows I quit smoking in January 2009 and began my journey down the path with Texas Isshinryu Karate Kai in April 2009. But no one may be aware of what has happened since.

Not only have I quit smoking, but I feel much better. Sure, I have the frequent muscle pains, strains and so forth, but that goes away with time and care. My respiratory system has improved over the last 3 years in the absence of smoking and the hard training in karate class, but there is still shortness of breath. I've reduced my weight by 15 pounds.

Last December I decided I needed to do something else.

I needed something to compliment my time in karate and make me a better student. I needed something to further develop the muscles and strength karate had created. So when Mr. (Tony) and Mrs. (Tina) Sensei Palos asked me for my New Year's resolutions, to begin running and run a 5K race was written down and turned in.

My wife Susan has been running for around 10 years and I realized that running was something we could enjoy being in-

involved in together. When I retired from the Army in 2002, I swore I would never run again. I'd had enough of the pavement pounding. So 10 years later, here I am, running again.

Since I began training for competitive 5K races in December, I've dropped another 5 pounds for a total of 20 pounds. By the time you read this, I will have run three competitive 5K



Steve Sumners and his wife Susan after the Cowtown 5K

races in the span of five weeks all while continuing my training in karate. I'm no speed demon, but I start and I finish what I begin. I refuse to stop and walk. I run.

On Feb. 11, I ran the Hot Chocolate 5K in Dallas at the Cotton Bowl. My goal was to finish in the top 100 in my age group. I finished 45 out of 108.

On Feb. 25, I ran the Cowtown 5K in Ft. Worth. Again my

goal was to finish in the top 100 in my age group. I knew this would be more difficult because there were more hills and nearly twice the number of participants. I finished 82 out of 181 in my age group. I was also the first participant in my age group from the city of Denton to finish. My time improved a little bit as well.

On March 10, I ran the 380 5K Run in Aubrey. This was a smaller event and I would be coming off a calf injury and had not run for eight days. Somehow, I finished second in my age group and set a new personal best. Susan finished first in her age group.

I've already begun training for competitive 10K runs and it looks and feels promising. It will take a bit, but I know I can do it. I can see half marathons in the near future, but first I will do 10K runs.

My hope is that by reading this, someone will be inspired. This isn't about me, it's about YOU. It doesn't matter if you are male or female, skinny or overweight, young or old. It's a testimony, I hope, that you can relate to and you can say, "I can do that." You can call it getting in shape, a mid-life crisis, a bucket list or whatever you want.

Just get out there and start. Starting is the hardest obstacle. Once you start, you have begun and you are winning.

Running, karate, or just getting in shape doesn't require a special license. It's all controlled by you, done on your terms. It is easy to say, "I just can't do it." I promise you I am no athlete, but in my mind, I am. Tell yourself you can, and you will.

## Black belt compares testing with marathon

By MARK HENDRIX  
Ni Dan

During my years as a member of Texas Isshinryu Karate Kai, I have periodically heard black belts and kyu ranks alike compare black belt testing to running a marathon.

I decided to put this debate to the test and run the Dallas White Rock Marathon in December 2010. I joined the Lymphoma/Leukemia Society's Team in Training (TNT) program and started training.

Initially, I didn't think running a marathon would be overly difficult. I had participated in several local races and had usually finished toward the front of my age group.

However, I had never run more than eight miles and a marathon is 26.2 miles. I guess I somehow thought that the additional 18 miles would not be a big deal.

But I was soon to find out that it was a big deal as I first met with my coaches in August to begin training for the December race.

They informed me that I was in for five months of special diets, injuries, ice pack treatments, running sprints, running hills, more injuries and ice packs, running long distances, running...

Soon I was getting up weekdays at 5:30 am and hitting the streets to run, then trying hard to stay awake at work in the afternoons. Saturdays it was up early again for long runs with my coach and the TNT team.

I found out quickly that my pace coach had been a college track star, and he was fast! Fortunately, he was very patient.

I came to enjoy the camaraderie of my coaches and teammates on those Saturday mornings. Working as a team, the miles seem to fly by on most of our training runs.

As marathon day approached, I knew I had done all of the recommended training, but self-doubts still crept in...

Can I really run this far? Am I too old for this? Will adrenalin make me start too fast and burn me out early?

The night before the race, TNT had a pre-race dinner where we met Leukemia survivors and learned about the races they had run against Leukemia.

I was inspired by their stories and realized they had worked through something much more difficult than a marathon. I was ready to go!

Race day morning was 37 degrees and windy, but I was pretty pumped about the race and hardly noticed. The first half of the race was incredible.

The streets were lined with thousands of people cheering us on and there were bands playing along the way. I felt great and was on pace to qualify for the Boston Marathon.

But as the race continued around White Rock Lake, the crowds dwindled and continuing became a battle of will.

Mile 20 marked the beginning of two miles uphill—the make or break part of the course. I crested the hill but hit the fabled "wall" at mile 23.

My mind said go, but my body complained loudly. I stopped and started several times and started to walk until someone in the crowd screamed, "You're almost there, you can't stop now!"

I broke through the "wall" and finished in 3:38, a time I felt good about even if it was two minutes shy of qualifying for the Boston Marathon.

So, how does this all compare to Black Belt testing?

Well, nothing really compares to black belt testing. However, I can tell you there are some strong parallels:

If you are part of a group of ik kyus testing, you will draw strength from your "teammates."

You will have ups and downs and doubt yourself at times, but if you stay positive you will find inspiration along the way that will help pull you through.

You will hit the "wall" (trust me on that), but if you have trained and prepared, you can find a way to break through.

### Bowl-a-thon bounty

Texas Isshinryu Karate Kai held its annual Bowl-a-thon Feb. 25 in Lewisville to raise funds for karateka travel to tournaments. Kyoshi Shihan Kristensen and brown belts Dianne Van Winkle and Kelli Kleppinger were the top fundraisers and earned special prizes.



## KNOW YOUR BLACK BELTS

## Mrs. Margaret Myers

**KARATE**

**Rank:** Ni Dan.

**I first started doing karate on:** May 28, 2002.

**I first started doing karate because:** A wonderful new friend told me about TIKK and how much her boys loved taking karate. We were taking a kick-boxing class at the time and wanted something more. Thanks, Mrs. Murray!

**The thing that has kept me doing karate has been:** It makes me a better person, it helps me release stress, makes me stronger physically and mentally and has expanded my family. I can't imagine my life without it!

**I achieved my sho dan on:** April 13, 2008.

**My favorite kata is:** Kusanku.

**My favorite karate drill is:** Seiuchin fighting drills.

**My least favorite karate drill/exercise is:** Seiuchin fighting drills (see above).

**The one thing Shihan has taught me that has had the most impact on my life is:** I am capable of so much more than I ever imagined and I am stronger then I realize.

**To me, karate is:** a way of approaching life, an ability to look past the obstacles and see the end goal. Karate has changed both my body and my mind. It helps make me a more confident person and someone who knows that I can handle whatever life throws my way.



**My most memorable karate experience is:** I know you have heard this five other times, but, yes, black belt testing with the Six Pack. It was an experience that taught me so much about myself and blessed me with a bond of friendships that nothing else could compare to. Another memorable experience for me was my very first IWKA tournament here in Grapevine hosted by TIKK. I was a yellow belt and had never experienced so much stress, fear and ultimate joy and pride in one day.

**My goal in karate this year is:** to practice more at home.

**PERSONAL**

**Nickname:** ET Evil Twin, Mrs. Murray.

**Birth date and place:** October 7, 1967 in Smithtown, N.Y.

**Occupation:** occupational therapist.

**Family:** John, married for 20 years, Maddy, 16, Jack, 11.

**I live in:** Irving.

**My favorite pastime or hobby besides karate is:** working out, running, weight lifting, finding ways to become stronger and make me better at karate.

**The three words people use to describe me are:** I would hope people would describe me as friendly, helpful and faithful.

**The two people I'd most like to meet are:** Mother Teresa and Rudy Giuliani.

**I wish I knew how to:** sky dive.

**I'm most proud of:** my

family.

**My favorite restaurant is:** Via Real.

**I'm happiest when:** I am doing something for someone else.

**The best vacation I've ever had was when:** my family goes to Ruidoso, N.M. I love the peaceful mountains, getting away from the electronic gadgets and just being with my family.

**My goal in life this year is to:** trust in God's plans for my life and spend more time with friends and family.

## SENSEI'S CORNER

Some of you may know that Lent is a time to prepare for Easter. Preparing for something gives us time to reflect and make improvements. This can be preparing for Easter, for the Gasshuku, for a karate tournament, etc. As in life, with karate training, be sure to "prepare" so that each and every day can be better.

—Sensei Carol Gue

As the Denton dojo celebrates 10 years, Mr. Sensei (Tony Palos) and I would like to take a moment and recognize Mr. Michael Strickland and Mr. Chuck Blommaert for their part in our success.

After making shodan, Mr. Strickland and Mr. Blommaert have not only stayed excited with their own training, but they also have been very consistent and dedicated in assisting us in every way with our students. For the last four years especially, we would not have been able to grow to three locations and keep up the quality of training without their help.

To Mr. Strickland and Mr. Blommaert: Domo arigato gozaimasta and kumpai!!

—Sensei Tina Palos

Spring!! New season and new beginnings; take advantage and look at everything you do, including your karate, with fresh eyes. Let's get excited and re-invigorated!!

—Renshi Shihan Kristensen

Do something for yourself everyday! Move, stretch, dance, karate—whatever it is that gets you moving, you will feel better and stronger for it.

—Sensei Jeannie Rupp

In the spring, plants bloom and animals peek out from their winter hiding places. Everything seems new again. This is a good time to renew your commitment to karate.

In training with Sensei (Kyoshi Shihan Kristensen), he will teach you a little bit and then a little bit more. Through this process it will all come together, because little things make big things happen.

—Sensei Tommy Thomas



Kyoshi Shihan Kristensen awarded at the December black belt workout Mr. and Mrs. Sensei Palos a plaque to recognize them for their outstanding contributions to TIKK.

Being a family caregiver for my mom and after it all ended, taking care of my own health has been challenging. With all the stresses in our lives today, having the discipline to stay the path for yourself is critical. Keep coming to class even when it is the hardest thing you can imagine doing. Mental, physical and emotional therapy is karate; stay the path.

—Sensei Susan Harris

The seven major virtues of Bushido are: justice, courage, benevolence, politeness, veracity, honor and loyalty. If one or more of these is found lacking, we find our balance lacking.

We should always strive to work on one or more of these characteristics. It is not easy, but if we are to perfect our character, it takes discomfort to grow.

A pearl starts out as an irritation in an oyster shell, and then is formed inside the shell

of certain mollusks as a defense mechanism against a potentially threatening irritant, such as a parasite inside its shell, or an attack from outside. The mollusk then creates a pearl sac to seal off the irritation. The end result is an object of beauty and value.

Life gives us plenty of opportunities to create pearls.

—Sensei Tony Palos