



'Six-pack' earns black belt rank, makes TIKK history



Sho Dans Mark Hendrix, Laura Murray, Michael Strickland, Glenn Gibbs, Margaret Myers and Mike Harper enjoy a moment after the Spring Shiai. For more on this and other related stories, see page 6-10.



Shihan chops 60 boards.

60-60-60...

Shihan breaks 60 boards in 60 seconds to celebrate his 60th birthday

By **LAURA MURRAY**
Sho Dan

Texas Isshinryu Karate Kai students know that Kyoshi Shihan Kristensen is a perpetually positive person.

When he was about to turn 60 years old, he decided he needed to do something that would make people think that 60 is not really that old...that 60 is not the beginning of the end.

Shihan chose to challenge himself for his 60th birthday on July 22 by breaking 60 boards in

(See SHIHAN, page 5)

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SHIHAN'S CORNER

Have a To Do List for your life, not a Bucket List

Nothing is impossible if you put your mind to it, body to it and spirit to it.

You must work hard and have a plan and work your technique.

Hey, that sounds like karate training?...You think?

Have goals, don't put limits on yourself. Limits are only in your mind.

We Create

Our Tomorrows

By What We Dream Today!

This saying is in my room. I read it every day.

—**Kyoshi Shihan Kristensen**

NEW STUDENTS

April 1 John Munera, Denton
 April 1 Daniel Munera, Denton
 April 7 Micah Maguire, Flower Mound
 April 7 Madeline Olivier, Flower Mound
 April 7 Steve Innis, Coppell
 April 15 Bill Barber, Denton
 May 7 Hanna Boughton, Flower Mound
 May 31 Abby Olivier, Flower Mound
 July 29 Tabitha Byrne, Wylie
 July 29 Erica Byrne, Wylie

CALENDAR

September 4 Sensei Tony Palos' Birthday
 September 7 Mr.. Steve Gellman's Birthday
 September 21 Mrs. Tina Palos' Birthday
 September 27 Western Days Parade, Lewisville
 October 7 Mrs. Margaret Myers Birthday
 October 10 Mr.. Michael Strickland's Birthday
 October 11 Texas State Karate Championships
 October 15 Renshi Maria Kristensen's Birthday
 November 28 Mr. Glenn Gibb's Birthday
 December 13 Winter Shiai, Location TBA

TIKK NEWS

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TIKK patriotic spirit spreads in Coppell 4th of July parade



TIKK students get ready to march in the parade.



Shihan, Renshi and Sensei Thomas celebrate.

YOUTH CORNER

San Kyu **Dean Collins** reports that he recently took a college entrance exam called the Texas Higher Education Assessment and he passed all three sections, which included math, writing and reading.

The passing scores allow him to go directly to the core classes in college and he does not have to take the more fundamental courses.

Dean said he and his brother San Kyu **Ben Collins** are planning on attending North Central Texas College in the fall and then may transfer to the University of

North Texas after two years.

Dean said he hopes to have a career as an author and is currently writing a book, but will be taking a wide variety of classes in college including, math, composition, botany, music appreciation and possibly some art studies and drawing classes.

Green belt and Coppell High School senior **Austin Gillham** recently earned the coveted Eagle Scout rank. He organized a blood drive at his church as his major project.

Sho Dan **Kyle Murray** will attend Baylor University in Waco

this fall and will major in trombone performance.

Ni Kyu **Shane Murray**, who will be an eighth grader at Coppell Middle School North this fall, was elected by his school's student body last spring to serve as the president of the Student Council. He attended a leadership training camp at Austin College in Sherman in June.

Shane also was inducted into the National Junior Honor Society in May. Inductees must maintain a 93 or higher average in all their classes and must show leadership and service in their community.

Everyone should write their own story, not let others do it for them

By **KACI BECK**
San Kyu

Someone in a movie once said, "Everyone has a story they write in their head. And if you don't write it yourself, then someone else is going to write it for you."

I have one question for all reading this. Are you writing your own story? If you are not, then you need to start because it will never be YOUR story, YOUR life until you do.

When we are very young, we don't have a care in the world. I used to love heights. I would jump off tall

parts of the playground, and I loved it. I would dive into the water without a care that I couldn't swim.

As I have gotten older, I have become afraid of just jumping into the water even though I can swim, and I hate heights.

But as I have been in karate for the past three years, I have learned to not be so afraid or shy of everything around me. Karate has helped me start writing my own story in my head. Thanks to karate it is becoming a very awesome story.

That involves some incredible people. These incredible people have become like family. Karate has also introduced me to one of my best friends who I will never forget.

Hall of Fame tournament offers learning, camaraderie

By GREG MIDKIFF
Ik Kyu

The 2008 Isshin-Ryu Hall of Fame Tournament was on July 25-26 in Gatlinburg, Tenn. Texas Isshinryu Karate Kai was represented by Kyoshi Shi-han Kristensen, Renshi Maria Kristensen, Sensei Tommy Thomas, Sensei Tony Palos, Mrs. Tina Palos, Mr. Kent Kirkpatrick, Mr. Glenn Gibbs, Mr. Mike Harper, Greg Midkiff, Daniel Midkiff, Kelli Kleppinger, Elizabeth Kleppinger, Robert Kleppinger, L.B. Herbert and Maggie Butterfield.

Shihan, Renshi and Sensei Thomas all flew while the rest of us drove. The Kleppingers traveled early to visit family in Alabama and worked their way north to meet up with us. The Herbert / Butterfields had family in the area they got to visit.

Sho Dans Kirkpatrick, Gibbs and Harper all traveled together. The Paloses and Midkiffs drove 15 hours straight and arrived weary, but full. Got to love those Smoky Mountain breakfast buffets!

After checking in on Friday, the seminars got started. All four of the new IHOF inductees conducted a seminar. Sensei Daniel Holloway, who is fluent in Japanese, covered a lot of ground in his hour by showing a better translation of the codes of Isshinryu and showed how they translate to the kata and karate.

For example, "The heart is the same as heaven and earth" could better be translated as "The circulatory rhythm of the body is similar to the cycle of the sun and moon." He then showed how this influences karate by demonstrating the power of a circular block against a straight punch.

The second hour was a knife seminar taught by Sensei Georg Iberl. He survived post World War II Germany as a teen, became the middleweight division champion in French Savate kickboxing in 1955 and

then migrated to the United States in 1958 where he discovered Isshinryu.

Sensei Iberl calls it "The Cadillac of Karate." He spent the entire hour repeating nine basic knife attack techniques. He focused on making sure every stab was followed by a twist and slash to ensure maximum damage.

The next seminar was instructed by Sensei Harvey Kennedy. He focused on ground techniques that he learned while studying with the famous Gracie fighting family. His techniques included sleeper holds,

releases from headlocks, applying shoulder locks and a very fun use of a person's collar to apply a choke hold.

The fourth seminar was taught by Sensei Wayne Wayland. He is the number one student of Master Donald Bohan. Although Master Bohan died in 1998, Sensei Wayland demonstrated his loyalty by being a constant reminder

to the martial arts world of Master Bohan's contributions. He has published historical photos, articles and essays on the Donald Bohan Memorial Website, www.bohans-family.com.

Sensei Wayland used his hour by first focusing on how a traditional dojo picture was laid out. He used an enlarged photo of one of Sensei Tatsuo Shimabuku's classes. Sensei Shimabuku is in the middle, his teacher is to his immediate right and his number one student is to his immediate left. And so the alternating of rank continues.

He then focused on general martial arts etiquette and spoke on bowing, approaching judges and the wearing of patches on gis and stripes on belts.

Once the seminars were completed, we had a little time to kill before the Friday night banquet. Some people swam, some people slept and one person



TIKK crew shows trophies won at the IHOF tournament in July.

(See IHOF, next page)

Shihan....

(From Page 1)

60 seconds.

Nearly 60 TIKK students turned out to witness his spry determination, amazing agility as well as his speed and focus of technique as he pounded through actually 62 boards at the main dojo in Coppell. He said he added one for good luck and one for good measure.

Shihan continues to strive to his students that if one continues to learn and work, he or she will only get better with age.

"It's really about keeping a positive attitude and just trying to do the best you can where you are with what you have," he said.



Kyoshi Shihan shows all the boards he broke for his 60th birthday.



Before: 62 boards



After: 124 boards

IHOF...

(From Page 4)

demonstrated various falling techniques on a hotel bed. Senseis never miss an opportunity to teach!

But we were all ready in time for the banquet. The food was good and when dinner was over, the awards ceremony began. Greg Midkiff had been nominated for the Spirit of Isshinryu award. He did not win, but was grateful for the nomination.

The next day, Saturday, was the tournament. We arrived early and got warmed up. Shihan, Renshi and Sensei Thomas all got to judge various events. There were so many high ranking dans, most of the san dans, ni dans and sho dans got to watch and enjoy the tournament. TIKK was well represented in the trophy category.

Sensei Palos took third in weapons, fourth in kata and second in kumite. While working through a pulled muscle in her leg, Mrs. Palos took third in

weapons and fourth in kata.

Sho Dans Kirkpatrick and Harper took fourth and third in kumite, respectively, while Mr. Gibbs placed first in kata with Kusan-ku kata and third in kumite. Mr. Gibbs qualified to compete for grand champion, but was not able to because of an oversight.

Greg took third in kumite and Daniel took fourth in kata and third in kumite. Both Kelli and Elizabeth took first in kata and second in kumite while L.B. took third in kata and fourth in kumite.

After the tournament, Shihan treated all of us to a wonderful restaurant, The Smokey Mountain Brewery. It actually has food, which was very good. But the beer was great as about eight varieties of beer that were brewed on the premises were available. Many people sampled many varieties, and some sampled all. Jokes were told, people laughed and it was a special ending to the tournament.

Six ik kyus cross line to black belt ranks in largest group yet

By LAURA MURRAY
Sho Dan

A six-pack and a brother may sound more like a prescription for trouble, but the two are what sets the 2008 Gasshuku and Spring Shiai apart from all the others.

The six-pack actually was a group of six ik kyus testing their limits to see if they had what it takes to make sho dan after years of training.

The brother refers to "Brother Karl" or Renshi Sensei Karl Sidnam, who managed to overcome his cancer at least for a while so that he could attend the Gasshuku and inspire everyone attending the annual training event held April 11-13 at Camp Summit in Copper Canyon.

Renshi Sensei Sidnam is a longtime friend of Kyoshi Shihan Kristensen and they go back to the days when Shihan lived and trained in New Jersey under Sensei Dale Jenkins.

The six ik kyus, which included Michael Strickland, Mike Harper, Mark Hendrix, Laura Murray, Glenn Gibbs and Margaret Myers, became the largest new class of **sho dans** in the history of Texas Isshinryu Karate Kai at the shiai on April 13.

Their addition increased TIKK black belt ranks by nearly 50 percent, making the number of black belts at 19. The previous largest class of new sho dans was in 2003 when Mrs. Tina Palos, Mrs. Jeannie Rupp and Mr. Steve Gellman tested.

Mr. Harper at the age of 57 goes down in the record books as the oldest person to test for sho dan at TIKK.

The shiai brought quite a breaking event for the audience as all six ik kyus busted through concrete blocks, which were not the usual cinder blocks used for breaking in the past. Shihan, however, provided the most spectacular break of the day with his smashing though of eight concrete blocks to mark his recent promotion to hachi dan, or eighth degree black belt.

The only ik kyu not testing at the Gasshuku was Greg Midkiff, but he still was in the spotlight with his spirit and energy, and Shihan honored him with the Spirit of Isshinryu award as well as the Most Outstanding Male Karate-ka at the 2008 Gasshuku.

(See GASSHUKU, next page)

Gasshuku 2008:



Renshi Sensei Karl Sidnam brought wisdom, inspiration.

"One Heart Way"



Shihan busts through eight concrete blocks to **Gasshuku...**

(From Page 6)

No one at the Gasshuku will forget Greg's auctioneering skills he used in trying to raise funds for Shihan's Hall of Fame travel expenses. He also organized a garage sale to help with Renshi Sensei Sidnam's travel expenses to the Gasshuku.

Mrs. Myers was named Most Outstanding Female Karate-ka at the 2008 Gasshuku.

Just as six ik kyus moved on to the black belt ranks a new group of **ik kyus** came in, including Chuck Blommaert, Daniel Midkiff, Jennifer Wiederkehr, Andrew Black and Tracy Dickey. Dennis Przybyla of Nevada Isshinryu Karate Kai also made ik kyu.

Making **ni kyu**, or the second level in brown belt, were Steve Kroll, Steve Pergantis, Ben Collins, Dean Collins and Carson Dickey.

Moving up to the brown belt ranks and earning **san kyu** were Miranda Banales, Joey Marcella, Garrett Marcella, Brian Tucker, Kaci Beck and Chance Boyd.

(See GASSHUKU, page 11)



Shihan honors Greg Midkiff with the Spirit of Isshinryu award.

Unforgettable Gasshuku brings on new bonds for six ik kyus

By **MICHAEL STRICKLAND**
Sho Dan

Every Gasshuku is special in its own way. For six ik kyus, it was unforgettable.

I learned that no matter how physically exhausted I might be I acquired the mental power to override the body and keep going.

That, for me, was the most important aspect of testing for sho dan. I would never have been able to achieve such a goal without all the 'black belts' help. So I sincerely thank all of them for their time, knowledge and instruction.



Shihan, Sensei and Mrs. Palos watch Michael Strickland put on his belt after he was named sho dan.

There was something that Mrs. Palos had told me months before testing and that was when you make sho dan, you enter a

very close family. At the time I thought that I understood, but now I look back and realize that it has so much more meaning once you cross the line. You create new and stronger bonds with each other. I can tell you that I bonded with five other people that I only thought I knew them before.

For future sho dan testers, just some advice: KNOW your karate, follow the nutritional guide and have the 'I Can Do This' attitude. Remember you will only be doing some light stretching...he he he. Have faith in your instructors.

Black belt testing experience compares to nothing else

By **MIKE HARPER**
Sho Dan

How does a person begin to express the myriad of facets and emotions involved in testing for black belt at TIKK? It's an experience like no other and I wouldn't trade it for anything.

Shihan often reminds us that we can do more than we think. Believe me, you can. Once you adopt the attitude that it doesn't matter what you have to do and that you will not quit or stop, REGARDLESS, you are getting closer to the black belt.

If you are like me, you didn't start out in your karate journey targeting a black belt. I just wanted to study karate, work out and let the belts take care of themselves. The Isshinryu group I initially worked out with stopped. Fortunately, my instructor knew Shihan and suggested that I begin studying with TIKK.

Shihan accepted me as a new brown belt and had much patience with me as I began a steep learning curve on a much higher level of martial arts. Shihan has taught me so much, and his system works. Continue your training with patience. You have a lifetime to learn. Keep in mind that you don't want to be promoted too quickly because that is a disservice to you.

Stay the course and work out on your own. If you can only spare a few minutes a day, do some-



Sho Dan! Mike Harper earns his black belt.

thing. Build friendships within the kai as they will help you along the way. I don't know everyone well, but we have great people in TIKK and I understand now how much the black belts want YOU to succeed.

Also, take advantage of Shihan's teaching. How many karate students, in any style, have a legitimate eighth dan teaching them at all ranks? That is rare and special. Don't take it for granted.

Lastly, thank you, Shihan, for how tough and special you make it to become one of your black belts. I'm humbled, and at the same time, I couldn't be prouder for having endured the long week of testing. I will never forget the few moments at the end of the Gasshuku when, kneeling, we locked eyes man to man, teacher to student, you declared "Sho Dan" and we embraced. You have made me a better person.

Five months to sho dan...life's challenges persist

By **MARK HENDRIX**
Sho Dan

My name is Mr. Mark Hendrix and I was promoted to sho dan on April 13. I began training at TIKK back in the fall of 2001. A lot has happened along the way from white belt to black belt, but the last few months of life as a brown belt were especially interesting...

December '07

Rumors of a possible April testing turn real as I learn that several of us brown belts, maybe more than several, WILL be tested. Temporary panic is replaced with the thought that the testing will not be for five more months. Somehow, I convince myself that this is PLENTY of time (hah!)

January '08

Frequent chatter erupts among our group of ik kyus.

•What will the testing be like? Answer: No way to know, the black belts are mum on the subject...we'll have to find out when we get there.

•What do we need to know? Answer: EVERYTHING (of course.)

•How should we physically condition ourselves? Answer: If you have to ask, you probably won't be ready by April...

Our group of ik kyus begins to form the bonds that ultimately play a big role in getting all six of us (the six-pack) to sho dan.

Work requires two trips to New Jersey and then another to California. I learn to practice kata in hotel rooms.

February '08

The six-pack begins to organize information that must be studied for testing. We do, indeed, need to know EVERYTHING, and we need to know it soon. When all of the information is pulled together, it makes for a rather thick, intimidating binder.

More work travel means learning to study karate notes on an airplane.

A personal scare briefly interrupts my preparation as my doctor says a biopsy is needed. Fortunately, after several anxious days, the results come back

negative...time to get back to testing prep!

Conditioning is in full swing. Several of us get together for squat kicks and pushups on a regular basis. This turns out to be time well spent!

March '08

Deep concern sets in as I think of what has to be done on top of the final month of testing preparation:

- Write a research paper and present it in Boston.
- Work several days on a project in Minnesota.
- Work a telecom trade show in Las Vegas for most of the last week in March.

Fortunately I'm getting better at studying Isshin-ryu facts while traveling...I've entered all of the key information in my work PC and it travels with me. But

just when I think I'm good at practicing kata in a hotel room, I knock over a lamp while practicing Kusanku. Nothing is broken, but it makes a terrible racket. Fortunately no visit from hotel security.

April '08

One can't really cram for black belt testing. I'm glad I have been working at it for months (or, actually years,) but at the same time wonder if I've done enough.

Now testing is only days away. I tell my boss I may not be very productive the week of April 7-11 (the week of testing.) My family is supportive, but at the same time they seem to wonder what I've gotten myself into.

Testing begins and it is every bit the challenge I was led to believe it would be. However, our group of six pulls together and we help ourselves through it. Knowing how we helped each other, I have a newfound respect for black belts who have undertaken the testing on their own.

The final night of testing is tough, but we begin to feel we're going to make it. Adrenalin and teamwork kick in and help to push us through an all-nighter.

The shiai rushes by and we are now up for promotion. It is hard to describe the feeling of accomplishment when one is promoted to sho dan. However, I can tell you that with persistence, patience and teamwork with your fellow karate-ka, it can be done.

To the kyu ranks: STAY THE PATH—you can do it.



Six ik kyus show their "One Heart Way."

Staying the path is key to achieving anything worthwhile

By **GLENN GIBBS**
Sho Dan

I started karate in high school. I was fascinated with the “mysterious” martial arts and my brother, who was already taking karate classes, finally convinced me to go. I went to class off and on for a couple of years, but I lacked focus and commitment at the time and eventually quit.

I spent the next 20 some-thing years telling myself that as soon as I found the time I would start training again.

One day in 2002, after a couple of life-changing events, I realized that the time would never magically appear. If I didn’t make it happen, it wasn’t going to and I would be lying in a hospital bed one day thinking about all the



Sho Dan Glenn Gibbs

things I wish I had done.

So, I made it happen. I started back on the journey. Before I started, my goal was to be a black belt by the time I was 40, then it was by 45. Somewhere

along the way I realized that it didn’t matter when I made black belt. Belt changes would come when sensei thought I was ready. It was more important to just continue training.

Today, I look back and realize that I accomplished that original goal. I also understand now that accomplishing that goal was not the end of the journey. To borrow from the biker’s creed: “It’s the journey, not the destination that matters.”

There are two things I’d like to remind everyone of: 1) Don’t wait for the right time. It almost never appears unless you make it happen and 2) As it says on the wall in the Coppell dojo – Stay the Path – “The path of the Warrior is lifelong, and mastery is often simply staying the path.”

Enjoy the journey from white belt to black belt and beyond

By **MARGARET MYERS**
Sho Dan

So, how does it FEEL?...I have been asked that question many times since April 13 and every time I have a different answer. It is surreal, great, strange, exciting...it is so many things and very hard to describe.

To me the process of going from white belt to black belt is a journey. And a journey that is different for everyone. Black belt testing is part of that journey and it’s an experience that is unique and challenging, exhilarating, exhausting, exciting and different from any other part of the journey.

What I have learned over the past six years is to enjoy each stage of the journey along the way and not be consumed with moving on to the next stage. Enjoy where you are right now — whatever rank that may be — white belt, yellow belt, green belt, blue belt, purple belt or brown belt.

I have great memories that stand out during each one of those stages. Each stage has its own unique lessons and its own way of transforming you into the person you need to be to be up to the chal-

lenge of testing.

Trust Kyoshi and your instructors, they know what you need and they understand where you are in the journey and will guide you in the way you need to be guided.

I want to say thank you to everyone who helped me on my journey. For all of those who told me “you’re doing great,” “hang in there,” those who asked for my help and those who offered their help. Every person in the kai affects every other person in the kai and plays a part in their journey and each part is important and unique.

I am still on a journey, just at a different stage and I am enjoying where I am right now and can look back at where I have been and smile at all the amazing things I have learned and gained on the way.

To my fellow six-pack, thank you for being with me on this journey and I look forward to continuing on as we grow and learn together. To Kyoshi,, thank you for allowing me to make the journey and being there to guide me as I go.

*“Everyone wants to live at the top of the mountain
but all the happiness and growing occurs
while you’re climbing.”*

KNOW YOUR BLACK BELTS

Mr. Clement Caracciolo

KARATE

Rank: sho dan.

I first started doing karate on: October 22, 1979.

I first started doing karate because: I was curious.

The thing that has kept me doing karate has been: the need to stay focused and strong in order to cope with life's challenges.

I achieved my sho dan on: June 28, 1987.

My favorite kata is: Seiuchin kata.

My favorite karate drill is: basic punches, blocks and kicks.

My least favorite karate drill/exercise is: any one that I don't do correctly.

The one thing Shihan has taught me that has had the most impact on my life is: getting older doesn't mean getting old.

To me, karate is: an understanding and appreciation of what a person is capable of achieving beyond the obvious physical aspects.

My most memorable karate experience was: when Shihan Jenkins called me at home to congratulate my being promoted to ik kyu and telling me I would someday be a sho dan. It would be the last time I spoke to him.

My goal in karate this year is: to



continue my training with patience.

PERSONAL

Nickname: none. Growing up as "Clem" in New York City was bad enough!

Birth date and place: May 21, 1946 in the Lower East side of

Manhattan.

Occupation (outside of karate): network consultant/project manager.

Family: my wife Cynthia, daughter Kim, son Jason, granddaughters Alix and Jaime and grandson Jake.

I live in: Flower Mound.

My favorite pastime or hobby besides karate is: driving my Vette in open road races.

The three words people use to describe me are: quiet, logical, stubborn.

The two people I'd most like to meet are: motorsport legends (and boyhood heroes) Jim Hall and Carol Shelby.

I wish I knew how to: really play keyboard.

I'm most proud of: being an American.

My favorite restaurant is: there are many good restaurants that we enjoy but we create our favorite meals at home.

I'm happiest when: traveling with my wife.

The best vacation I've ever had was when: we went to Alaska and drove around for 10 days doing a lot of cool things.

My goal in life this year is to: be happy and enjoy life with my wife, family and friends.

Gasshuku...

(From Page 7)

New **purple belts** were Paula Sue Reynolds, Ethan Shah, Chris Ajayi, Mark McLaughlin, Ethan Tucker, Caleb Clark, Patrick Grigg, Wyndi Liles, Jovi Espinosa and Lucas Soto of Nevada IKK.

Moving to **blue belt** were Colter Henderson,

Haley Tucker, Kristy Tucker, David Van Winkle and Maggie Butterfield.

Earning **green belts** were Melissa Korang, Ishan Vengurlekar, Aisha Espinosa, Adam Wallander, and Kelli Kleppinger.

New **yellow belts** were Lindsey Brandow, Erik Van Winkle and Sarahbeall Shaffer.

SENSEI'S CORNER

Everyone has peaks and valleys in their training. It's normal. Unfortunately, in our society people seem to think it's normal to quit once the novelty wears off and boredom sets in. Then they try to find something else that excites them.

Don't give in to that temptation. Remember what attracted you to karate in the first place. Nothing has changed...only the emotions. Being committed means ignoring those negative emotions and seeing the task through. That is what karate is all about.

Working your way through a rut in your training IS part of your training. If you do that, you will be reminded of what excited you about the martial arts in the first place. Stay the path! Karate is a way of life to those who are committed for long haul.

—Sensei Tony Palos

Competitions are nerve-wrecking, exhilarating, exciting, scary, rewarding and much, much more that make them a great learning experience. If you have never done one, you owe it to yourself to enter a competition.

If you put yourself to the test and do your BEST, you are a WINNER. The trophies or medals are great, but it is the camaraderie with the martial arts community and your fellow karate ka that make competition worthwhile.

Observing other schools and students also is a great learning experience. I encourage you to plan on attending next year's Isshin-ryu Hall of Fame and Isshinryu World Karate Association tournaments.

—Renshi Maria Kristensen

Use your karate training in everything you do. Nobody can take it away from you, but you can lose it if you don't use it. Have confidence, persevere and know that if you put your mind to it, anything is possible. This is true in my life in uncomfortable new situations in work and new, authority-type relationships. It is all about your thinking and how you train yourself to think. Keep focused, complete your thought, be confident and always give your 200 percent and things will come full circle in life.

—Sensei Susan Harris

I would like to take this time to congratulate all of the people who went to the Isshin-Ryu Hall of Fame Tournament in Gatlinburg, Tenn., for you are all winners just by going. TEXAS ISSHINRYU WAS IN THE HOUSE!

My wife and I had a great time. This was my first major tournament that I attended and did not compete, but I had a great time just being there with all of you. I was very proud of Greg Midkiff for being a nominee for the Spirit of Isshin-Ryu. He is number one in Texas Isshinryu.

In all my years of training, I have had a lot of injuries. My latest is my back, which keeps me from training hard. Now I know the true meaning of "train considering your physical strength." We all like to train hard, but there are times when we have to take it easy in our training. One should take this time to go over techniques because as Kyoshi says, "Little things make the big things happen."

—Sensei Tommy Thomas

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