

# The T.K.D. Flash

A Publication of the Association of Academies of Martial Arts

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## Letter to the Editor

Master Van Hecke

Just wanted to let you know that in my opinion, (The Flash) is one of the best things to happen for the USTF in a good while....(besides the camps, seminars, referee courses, etc).....I just read the one that came out this week and it is extremely well written, good quality information, and I enjoyed reading it last night after I got home from work. I printed it out in color as I plan on making a book and keeping them all in one place as they come out.

My hat is off to you for taking on this venture and wish you the best of luck for success. This will be a great way to get more information out to the masses for things going on in our great organization. The more communication we have, the better off we will be. Thanks again....I look forward to many more issues - TAEKWON!

Master Gary W. Meek, VIII Dan

## TOURNAMENT ACTION COMING UP

The "Battle of the Belts," the Region 6 and USTF-sanctioned tournament, will be held at Harrisburg, MO on September 20. This promises to be expertly officiated and beautifully run. For more details about the competition, contact [region6director@hotmail.com](mailto:region6director@hotmail.com).



Miss Cameo Zugschwert IV Dan Instructor at Sereff Taekwon Do (third row), presents new Gup Nine students. From left to right; Aiden Tighe, Elijah Sisitki, Kobe and Isaiah Segura; second row: Leia Morgan, Hannah Hasauer and Jonathan Tighe

*It is with students like these we know why we teach Taekwon Do to the young, where we can help temper emerging personality traits and instill a sense of justice, integrity, perseverance and self control, necessary to be leaders of men. The hard work and dedication not only by the students, but the parents and grandparents that entrust their children to us each week, pays off three fold in what the children take home with them.*

*--Master Renee Sereff*

A Black Belt Test will be held at Sereff Taekwon-Do in Broomfield CO on September 13.

A Color Belt Test will be held at Sereff Taekwon-Do on September 9.

Master Earl Weiss will preside over a Black Belt test at National Taekwon-Do in Skokie IL on September 17.

Mrs. Jacqueline Karpinsky will host a Black Belt test in Sheboygan Falls WI on September 13. Schools from Region 5 will participate, and Master F.M. Van Hecke will preside.

The Midwest Chang-Hun Tournament was held in Elgin Illinois on July 26. Over 100 participants from IL, WI, NE, KY, and MN participated.

Looking for a tournament, a chance to compete with the best? Don't forget the **9th Annual Wyoming Invitational**, hosted by Casper Rec Center Taekwon-Do, on September 20. Contact Jerry Sisco at [siscokidoo1@hotmail.com](mailto:siscokidoo1@hotmail.com).

Grand Master Sereff's Fall Championship for 2008 will be held in Broomfield CO on October 12. Contact HQ at 1-303-466-4963 for further information.

The United States Taekwon-Do Federation's National Championships for 2009 will be held on June 26 through 28th in Kelso, WA. The Tournament Promoter is Master Dan Huntington. Check out [NWUSTF.com](http://NWUSTF.com).

A Referee Course was taught at Sereff TKD on August 23.

On September 27 Sereff T.K.D. will host an Advanced Ho Sin Sul Seminar with Maj. Frank Hannon. Contact HQ (#above) for details. Your Humble Editor has attended a course with Maj. Hannon--excellent!

Here's your chance! Grand Master Mike Winegar will teach the USTF Class A Instructors Course on November 8th and 9th at Sereff Taekwon-Do in Broomfield CO. Contact USTF Headquarters.

A gup level test was held at the Academy of Martial Arts in Grafton on August 7. Presiding were Master F.M. Van Hecke and others. A total of thirteen students were promoted. Congratulations to Rick Flood and Maddie Mandel, Black Belt Candidates.

**Fourth Dan and qualified U.S.T.F. Ho Sin Sool Instructor Mr. James Alger taught a Level One Ho Sin Sool Seminar at Cadillac MI on August 10. Region 5 is lucky to have him!**

Miss Amirah AbuLughod, Miss Christin Langlois, and Master F.M. Van Hecke taught a four-part course in Women's Self Defense at Grafton Wisconsin the week of August 4.

On August 27 four students tested at Grafton WI for ranks through Gup One. Mrs. Mary Lubner and Master F.M. Van Hecke presided and Mr. Rick Flood Cornered.



First Dan Harley Pals, age 84, lands a trophy Northern. The fish was caught in late June at Elbow Lake, Manitoba Canada. As a result, Mr. Pals will receive a Master Angler's license. The length of this monster was approximately 44 inches and it weighed approximately 30 pounds. Mr. Pals tests for his Second Dan on September 13. His son, grandson and granddaughter are all Black Belts. He is a student at the Academy of Martial Arts, Grafton WI.



Fourth Dan Mary Lubner, in Korea, has a helpful local demonstrate the use of a bamboo potato masher.

### **Benefits of Teaching Taekwon-Do to Special Needs Students: Philosophy and General Teaching Tips**

By: Luke J. Mattias

I founded the Special Needs Academy of Martial Arts on March 6, 2000 as a specialty program for child clients of Ozaukee Therapy Services, LLC, in Mequon, WI. The school has since grown substantially in the past eight years. It was moved to the premises of the Grafton Academy of Martial Arts in 2001, and now offers group and private Taekwon-Do classes to children and adults with a wide variety of special needs. My experience with Taekwon-Do for people with special needs; however, did not begin with the founding of my school. Rather, it began when I began my studies of this great Art while facing the challenges of my own special need of cerebral palsy. My case of cerebral palsy is such that my left limbs are weaker, less mobile, and less flexible than my right limbs. As such, I have limited use of my left arm and leg.

When I was 10 years old, my parents, searching for a physical activity that I could do successfully despite the challenges I faced having cerebral palsy, suggested that I try Taekwon-Do. I loved it from the beginning, and am forever grateful to them for encouraging me to try it. My years of passionate study of the Art have done even more than my parents had originally hoped.

**Taekwon-Do has helped me to overcome the challenges posed by my special need in so many ways and to a very significant degree.** This would not have been possible had my instructors from throughout my 14 years in the Art (there are many of you, you know who you are), not been willing to take me on as a student and to find ways for me to successfully learn and practice the Taekwon-Do techniques that I love so much. Their willingness to teach me and help me to achieve success in the Art has allowed me to earn my Black Belt; and with 14 years of experience to date, achieve my Fourth Degree. For that, I am eternally grateful.

Since Taekwon-Do requires the purposeful use of the entire body, including all four limbs, it forces me to try to equalize my use of my left limbs with my right limbs, and thereby helps me to improve my strength, flexibility, coordination, and balance on my left side (effected by the CP), as well as my right. This is how the Art has helped me physically. Furthermore, Taekwon-Do is an activity that I can do successfully without being held back by my special need and without making me worry about slowing others down or holding them back, as the practice of team sports had sometimes done in the past. Rather, Taekwon-Do is an individual activity in which I could focus on my own progress and improvement at my own pace, while still enjoying learning and socializing with others. This is why Taekwon-Do has been so beneficial for my self confidence, and why it is very beneficial for the self confidence of other students with special needs.

When I earned my Black Belt on February 27, 2000, I immediately embraced my new role of passing on the Art to other people so that they could benefit from it as I have. Less than two weeks later, I started my school, the Special Needs Academy of Martial Arts. My vision for the school had been to provide people with various types of special needs, including physical, cognitive, emotional, social needs, the ability to do Taekwon-Do successfully. The school has

seen continual growth and success over the past eight years. Notable accomplishments include those of my brother, Mr. Anthony Mattias, going from white belt to Black Belt which he earned in 2006. He has been a valuable instructor at the school since that time. Another significant success story is that of my gup one student, Yusuf Quereshi. Other than my brother, he is the only student who is still with the school from its days at the therapy clinic in Mequon. A dedicated student for over seven years now, Yusuf has recently been named a Black Belt Candidate. There are other students of various colored belt ranks who have studied at the Special Needs Academy for durations of as many as three to five years.

There is no magical formula to teaching Taekwon-Do students with special needs. There are, however, several essential attributes that an instructor must have to successfully teach students with special needs. First, the instructor has to be willing to learn about his students' individual special needs; gaining an understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. Next, he must be willing to think "outside of the box", and maintain an open mind while constantly striving to find ways for his students to augment their strengths while improving upon their weaknesses. Then, the instructor must provide adequate individual attention to each student; evaluating the effectiveness of his teaching strategies and helping the students find the most effective ways to execute their techniques. Finally, the instructor must have a high level of patience with the students, realizing that every method he tries will not be successful and that he must have the perseverance to continue to try different approaches until the student is successful. He must have the indomitable spirit within that gives him an unwavering confidence that his students can and will succeed eventually. He has to be willing to allow his students whatever amount of time is necessary to overcome the obstacles that their special needs face them with to eventually achieve success. **If he keeps at it and teaches his students to maintain the same perseverance and indomitable spirit with**

**regard to their own success, they will eventually succeed.**

I personally encourage all instructors of Taekwon-Do to be willing to instruct students with special needs. **The benefits that the Art can give to students with special needs are endless.** For students with physical special needs, it can help them improve their strength, flexibility, balance, and coordination. For students with cognitive special needs, it can help their mental awareness, focus, memory, and thinking skills. For those with social needs, studying Taekwon-Do with other students can help them become more comfortable with working with others in a positive way and can help them to build friendships. The student-instructor relationship can help them understand the proper relationship between themselves as students, and authority figures, the instructors. **Taekwon-Do can help all students with special needs to increase**

Mr. Mr. Bill Jennings and Mrs. Jung Sook Jennings had a great vacation in Thailand from teaching Taekwon Do at the 1st Avenue Presbyterian Church in Denver, Colorado. Here they are both pictured, Mrs. Jennings having flipped a Thai martial artist over her back and back onto its feet, administering a choke hold from behind while Mr. Jennings enjoys her doing the work.



**their self-discipline and above all, their self-confidence.** When a student with special needs, responding to the encouragement of his instructor, works hard to learn a technique and finally, after a long period of time, finds that he is able to execute the technique successfully without being held back by his special needs, he will know one of the best feelings in the world; the feeling of true accomplishment. His instructor will experience the same feeling. **This repeated experience as a student continues his training will build his overall self-confidence in the dojang and in life. His successes in class will carry over to other environments.** This is the most significant reason for Taekwon-Do instructors to be willing to teach students with special needs and for people with special needs to be encouraged to begin training. Through their studies, if encouraged properly and taught by instructors who are compassionate, open-minded, and patient, the student will cease to allow their special needs to stop them from accomplishing their goals.

Had I not had Taekwon-Do, I am not sure that I would have had the self-confidence

to become a professional school teacher entering my second year in the profession this in September, 2008. It has been a blessing to have the Art in my life, and all of the people who have encouraged me in my endeavors in and outside of the dojang. The ongoing task that I face, knowing how Taekwon-Do has helped me as a student with special needs, is to be a passionate instructor to others with special needs and to give back to the Art by helping them to realize similar successes to my own.

[Editor's note: The following article was first published in the Flash in December of 2005 and is here repeated for the benefit of our newly-national readership. References to "Master Winegar" were rank-appropriate at the time of that writing. He is properly referred to as "Grand Master Winegar." We will in future and from time to time revive some of these older articles.]

### **Some Thoughts on Courtesy: A Letter to My School's Faculty**

By: F.M. Van Hecke

For years I have maintained that the most important of the Taekwon-Do Tenets is Courtesy, that Courtesy is not only the precondition of learning but the

The Special Needs Academy of Martial Arts held a gup level test on August 22 in Grafton, WI. Pictured are students, instructors, testing Board members, and the occasional proud brother or sister.



“backbone” of distinctly human character even in its most primitive forms. It’s first in line among the Tenets because it ought to be.

What we confront every day in our schools are students who desperately need structure in life. While I do not believe this to be a singularly “corrupt age” in every single sense, our prosperity and technical wizardry have lessened the need for chores and astute time-management in many households.

Some few students come to us extraordinarily structured in their homes, but without the additional liberation of the spirit which can be derived from expertise in athletics and the attendant physical self-confidence.

But most come to us as children for whom there is little real discipline, little knowledge of etiquette, and a relatively underdeveloped sense of “place” in the world. Their human interaction is often less than their daily hours with the “one-eyed monster,” television.

In many of their households you find love, even what their parents may stretch to believe is “selfless love,” but the modern expression of love is often accommodation, and parents are now under societal pressure to forgive everything, allow everything, provide everything lest they “crush” children by non recognition of their “individuality.”

I am aware that the “self-fulfillment” gurus (Tony Robbins, etc.) have now invaded the martial arts “industry,” that it’s thought to be a big deal to be a “martial arts millionaire.” I’ve seen schools whose curricula are, to my mind, designed to turn out self-absorbed brats. Congratulations to them on achieving their goals. They succeed.

However, it is incumbent upon a true school of Taekwon-Do to do more than teach the mechanics of Taekwon-Do.

I recently attended a seminar at U.S.T.F. national headquarters taught by Master Mike Winegar. While we spent the better part of two days on patterns and airborne kicking technique, I found that to be only the tip of the iceberg.

Master Winegar spent considerable time on the philosophy of instruction. “With respect to what’s truly Taekwon-Do, technique,” he said, “is secondary to courtesy.”

I gave a symposium in Sheboygan years ago on the moral culture of Taekwon-Do. I realize that I myself have in many ways failed to be a good teacher,

living up to what I preach, but that doesn’t excuse my future conduct, and it does not provide an excuse for any teacher of the Art.

I’ve come to the conclusion we’ve got to do better.

Participation in ceremonial events, like saying the Student’s Oath, causes the student to realize there is a fellowship oriented to his same goals.

I have been amazed that our students ask “informally, Sir?” when I ask them to begin class. I have pointed out, again and again, that the assumption, the default, is always to go through complete opening and closing ceremonies for every class. It is only the teacher’s prerogative, not that of the senior student, to allow or even suggest an informal opening or closing of class, and that should take place only a small proportion of the time, typically when class has gone longer than expected or we are otherwise pressed for time. Despite my talking about it, it persists, which means as a faculty we are not presenting a uniform face. Let’s do so.

The courtesy of addressing teachers as “Sir” or “Ma’am” has significance not just in terms of the relationship, but actually causes a change in the student himself, a recognition of the value in another.

I know we all want to be “buddies” to our students, and they all want to be “buddies” to each other, but a huge part of friendship is respect, and we have to grow better people through our efforts. We have to teach, largely by example, that respect can be exported to all fellow humans, not just our own crowd, by internalizing the habit of courtesy.

And we internalize by starting on the external.

What external habits would I like us to adopt that have historically been a part of Taekwon-Do but have atrophied due to ignorance or neglect?

When the student puts on his uniform, it represents more than a gym suit. Because it is a uniform, it says that he is part of something, that he has a place. Studies have repeatedly shown that public school uniforms tend to cut down on cliquishness and the flaunting of wealth, lessen conflict and even influence behavior for the better. That is why, as a general rule, the workout in street clothes should be very rare.

Black Belts should definitely be referred to as “Mister,” “Miss,” etc. When a student neglects a proper form of address he should be reprimanded. Reprimands should generally not be in public (sometimes immediate

public reprimand is the only effective way to do it). But reprimands should be absolutely clear and the student led to a definite understanding of the expected behavior.

Take time to speak with students who are the shy type, those less comfortable in a crowd. Express interest in them and their activities and they'll feel better about themselves and their studies with us. It is very important to do this with children and teens and newcomers--they need the support.

We must acknowledge seniority within our ranks. The following rules generally do not include the Instructor in class, include the Instructor when not in class:

1) When students sit, they should await the seating of their senior before plunking down. Thus, if I have one Black Stripe in a class, I should not see a single Green-belted tail on the carpet before the Black Stripe sits. This rule is strictly observed in the Orient, but it doesn't really slow them down much; you can sit a mere tenth of a second after your senior and you've followed the rule.

2) When students rise from a sitting position, the senior rises first.

Here are some other classroom rules:

1) To enter the workout floor and the dojang, catch the permission of the senior Black Belt. The student is not expected to distinguish between Black Belts of the same rank. But should learn anyway.

2) To leave the workout floor or dojang, the student should obtain permission from the senior Black Belt. This is more liberal in practice because the senior may not be as readily available.

3) Students should acknowledge any correction by a senior with thanks.

4) Students should bow appropriately to a senior. Remember that 15 degrees is a Korean bow. One should come to attention before a bow. The person of lower rank initiates the bow, the senior responds and completes his bow, and then the person of lower rank is permitted to resume upright position.

5) Students should stand at attention when asking a question.

6) Students should generally not initiate conversation during a class. They can raise hands if seeking attention. If recognized by the instructor, the student should come to attention, bow, and then ask permission to state the question or make the observation. "Sir, may I ask a question?" "Ma'am, may I make a comment?" They should continue at attention until permitted to return to position by the instructor,

and should never sit back down (if they were sitting before they came to attention) without permission. Instructors should develop the habit of scanning the environment for students "stuck" in attention position to give permission to go about their business, re-seat themselves, etc., and should as a matter of routine say, "You may return to position (or be seated)" on completion of an answer to a question.

There are out-of-classroom rules as well. When coming upon a senior in the Art in public from the rank of First Dan and up, the student or other Black Belts should bow.

In Denver, I was asked to dinner by a group of Black Belts from Louisiana, North Carolina, Alaska, and Michigan. They arrived at the restaurant before me, but had people "on the doors" for my arrival, stood when I entered the room, did not seat themselves until I had seated myself, did not commence eating or drinking until I did, and did not leave the table without permission, waited until I rose before rising, etc. In drinking toasts they deliberately kept the lip of their glasses lower than the lip of mine. It's important to note that nobody seemed to think much of this and it appeared as natural as breathing air to them. We should keep this kind of courtesy in mind in all our interactions.

It is very important to set an example for our juniors. Starting now.

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Publicize your school, your events, and your activities! Send the Flash your articles, information, photos! Let your students know that they are important enough to rate national notice, that your school and their instructors have significance outside the four walls of your dojang.

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The Little Friends Taekwon-Do program.