



Chito-ryu Karate-Do



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BUTOKUKAI NEWS:

Special Occasion in Honor of Dometrich Hanshi



What makes so unique of our association is not based on just superior skills and styles of traditional Budo, but potent spirit, discipline and caring respect they have for one another. When they appeared together in honor of Hanshi Dometrich, it was like the refreshing new life energy transforming with the misty air of spring and aroma of fresh flowers long awaited in the advent of new season.

Over 100 DNBK International Division Karatedo Yudansha gathered in Norfolk VA USA to celebrate the coveted ceremony of Kyudan rank (9th Dan) from Dai Nippon Butoku Kai which was bestowed to a great martial artist, Hanshi William Dometrich, 73, grand master of Chito-kai USA. This unprecedented honor was awarded in Kyoto last year after the Third World Butoku Sai and later rectified by the board of Hanshi in Honbu Dai Nippon Butoku Kai (circa 1895). He became the first Karatedo practitioner from the western world to have received the highest Dan grade honor from DNBK Kyoto Japan. He displayed great courage, spirit, dedication and martial skills for many years befitted to this insurmountable feat of honor where no one else was able to reach from the western hemisphere. In honor of Hanshi Dometrich, many Yudansha partook to join with this special occasion where the Kyudan diploma sealed by Sosai Haigashifushimi, Jigo was presented to him.

His fellow senior members of Chito-kai across the USA, and Kyoshi Deliberto of Canada, Kyoshi Burgermeister of ISKU, Hanshi Thomas of Bushin Kan, Kyoshi Posenau and Edelman of USA Bushin Kan, Renshi Riley of Boston Komyo Dojo, and Mr. Crisman and new members from Uechi Ryu dojo of RI, and many notable instructors and practitioners from DNBK ID attended to celebrate the grand occasion for the special event to honor a man of great legend and tradition in Karatedo in the US.

After a serene dedication of Harai no Gi through classical Iaido Kata, very energetic Dojo demonstrations were executed with high precision and discipline in very dignified way. They were all impressed and moved by each other's great effort and spirited waza. It was a testimonial of DNBK ID Karate-do essence represented by dedicated instructors and members.

Then, DNBK Kenshoin of Karate-do led the selective training format based on the Dan groups. Kyoshi Posenau, Kyoshi Burgermeister, Kyoshi Diliberto, Kyoshi Holley, Kyoshi Hunsaker, Kyoshi Edelman, all top leaders in DNBK Karate-do have created the exciting training drills for the participants. Although allotted time was so brief, participants from Shodan to Shichidan level enjoyed the broad spectrum of Karate-do skills and traditions. They also engaged in strong

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FOUNDERS FORUM

VINDICATED! (1972-2008)

I am positive that a great majority of the older members of the United States Chito-ryu Karate Federation are familiar with the problem I had with the original founders of Black Belt magazine in 1972 when one of the brothers informed me that they would not do an article about my karate teacher Dr. Tsuoshi Chitose. He then proceeded to degrade Chitose Sensei and Chito-ryu Karate in general. At that time I informed him that our small school was selling one hundred of his magazines a month. "You don't sell all those magazines," he told me, "you send the magazine covers back to us for credit." I informed him that we had never sent one cover back for credit but since that date we stopped selling their magazines.

Fast forward to May of 2008 when I had the distinct honor of being elevated to the karate rank of Kyudan by the prestigious Dai Nippon Butoku Kai while I was in Kyoto, Japan. I would like to thank Dr. H. Tesshin Hamada Hanshi Chair International Division DNBK for his nomination.

And I greatly appreciate his sponsorship of a special training session in my honor in Virginia during April of this year which included guests from various states and foreign countries (see articles in this issue). It was at the completion of this training session that my official certificate of Kyudan was awarded. I have been informed that this is the first time that the Dai Nippon Butoku Kai has promoted a non-Japanese national to this rank. I do greatly appreciate it.

I would also like to thank Sensei Patrick McCarthy for his faith in me, his assistance to me, and recommendation on my behalf when I was considered for DNBK membership. Two of my students approached Sensei McCarthy without my knowledge in 1998 to see what would be required for me to obtain membership in the DNBK. Unfortunately neither of these two students is with me now, but credit is due where credit is due: Sensei George Van Horne (now deceased) and Sensei James Davenport approached Patrick McCarthy on my behalf. A special thanks to both of them.

I also need to give thanks to my wife Barbara Ellen Dometrich. It was she who has over the years taken care of the U.S. Chito-kai, from its inception to the present, and helped it to grow. I need to thank my many students who have worked so hard to make the organization and style of Chito-ryu a success. Last but not least I thank Dr. Tsuyoshi Chitose, my teacher, for accepting me as his student, without which none of this would have taken place.

I was to say the least, a little shocked upon being called forward in Japan to be promoted before my peers. I accepted the honor not as Bill Dometrich, but as Dr. Chitose's United States representative; a Chito-ryu karate practitioner. I was very happy, not for myself, but because of the fact that such an honor was bestowed upon a person who had studied Chito-ryu Karate. Had it been Sensei Masami Tsuruoka, or Shane Higashi or David Akutagawa, I would have been equally as happy because it was awarded to a Chito-ryu stylist.

My mind often returns to 1972 and my conversation with the founder of Black Belt magazine. I guess this just proves he was wrong about Dr. Chitose Sensei and Chito-Ryu.

At long last I feel vindicated.

By: William J. Dometrich, Hanshi

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Yakusoku Kumite drills with all participants and practiced the dimension of practical applications of Kata. Osame no Gi, concluding ceremony was performed very powerfully and gracefully by all six Kenshoin instructors in their selective Kata. Throughout the event, thunderous Kiai and motivational force was never stopped and continually raised the bar of excellence for all.

At the conclusion of the event, on behalf of Honbu DNBK, award ceremony was presented in honor of Hanshi Dometrich. Hanshi Dometrich received the Kyudan Diploma sealed by Sosai, Higashifushimi of DNBK and he also received Most Outstanding Budo Spirit and Lifetime Achievement Award Plaque. Together, the rank and title were recognized for new members. All participating members were congratulated on their outstanding efforts, strong skills, dedication and spirit. They were able to forge their strong camaraderie and friendship through Budo training and showed unfaltering respect for each other. At the ending ceremony, calligraphy of *Kokorozashi*, which means Purpose, aspirations, vision and faith, was presented to all participants as a token reminder that each trainee must define his own philosophy of Budo in his long arduous journey.

It was stated in the ceremony on Hanshi Dometrich that during his long-standing career, his professional attributes and meritorious accomplishments were too many to mention and consistently he has carried the commanding respect in all accounts in the world of Budo. Each dojo group made a strong dedication in this special occasion through their Kata demonstration. Their dignified and spirited presentations showed deep respect and celebratory joy for Hanshi Dometrich who has given his heart and soul so tirelessly and selflessly for his students and the community and the nation through Karate-do.

Today, it made another chapter in history that any brave one with pure determination and persistence and total dedication would be able to reach the most impossible unattainable path if one shall be ready to pursue the vigorous relentless hardship. Hanshi Dometrich has demonstrated such undying spirit in his actions for all his life. In his long time journey, he was blessed with his dedicated and outstanding students who followed his unrelenting strong leadership and guidance. Furthermore, he was also blessed to have Shihan, Kyoshi Barbara Dometrich, his devoted wife and strong Budo lady, standing side by side and underwent the journey of their own unending quest as Budo-ka. They were truly the head of family of Chito-kai USA who built the defining tradition and role model in the world of classical Budo. Dr. Chitose, his mentor teacher, founder of Chito-ryu if

he were here today, he would have been so elated and proud to witness this grand ceremony for his best student becoming one of the most distinguished practitioners in Budo world today.

Japanese old saying points out, "Bushu ni Nigon Nashi", which means Samurai warrior needs no second word. That implies, he is direct, cut all nonsense, straight to the core and truth and get it done to a maximum precision. He was such a man of high moral integrity. His contribution in Budo field goes beyond his Kyudan attainment and his legacy will be remembered by many who follow his path.

As Hanshi Dometrich stated at the conclusion of the event, he encouraged all participants to hold high esteem of Shoshin, beginner's mind in the long journey of Budo. That is clearly the necessary mindset where the trainees must uphold in his incessant struggle for excellence. Unequivocally, the Budo world today is truly blessed by his courageous presence.

*Gassho,
Tesshin Hamada
Chair, DNBK International Division.*



Norfolk or Bust!

Everything was set in motion for what was planned to be a fast, issue-free weekend. The flights to Norfolk and back were non-stop which would limit the time that Hanshi would be cooped-up in travel status. The first bump occurred right from the start as we went through airport security. Hanshi set off the metal detector which prompted the security personnel to do a “shakedown” on Hanshi. Boone County, Kentucky is where the airport is located and Hanshi is a Boone County Deputy Sheriff. Perhaps this is an example of “what goes around, comes around” or karma! He spent several minutes being repeatedly wanded by security as they searched for whatever set off the inquisitive beep. His arms were spread eagle, his shirt tail was hanging out, before he was given the green-light to proceed. Upon exiting the search chamber, Hanshi quipped “if we had driven, we would be halfway to Norfolk”.

Hanshi Hamada’s front page article provides a summary of the DNBK special event in honor of Hanshi Dometrich in Norfolk on April 5, 2009, during which Hanshi Dometrich received his kyu-dan certificate. All we had to do was meet as a group and prepare for our demonstration.

As our group began trickling into the hotel on Saturday, April 4, 2009, we were able to get together and walk through our demonstration that was scheduled for the next day. Kyoshi Hawkins was to call the cadence and he provided good instructions on how to improve our timing and technique. Unfortunately, Kyoshi Hawkins received word late Friday evening that his father was not doing



Dometrich Hanshi and Jean-Noel Blanchette

well and had to make arrangements to return home. Kudos to Carol Hayes for doing everything she possibly could to arrange for Kyoshi Hawkins travel back home.

Not only do these road trips provide camaraderie amongst our Chito-ryu group, but it also provides opportunity to meet others. At the hotel we met Renshi Jean-Noel Blanchette who practices Chito-ryu in Canada and is the artist of a lot of the figures in our manuals. We also had conversation with Kyoshi Deliberto as we relaxed in the lobby lounge. After the training, we shared stories with fellow DNBK members during the luncheon.

This fast weekend in Norfolk was nearing its end so we returned to the airport. Okusan began preparing Hanshi for his walk through the magnetic field. Everything remotely resembling metal was placed in a bag to be x-rayed. Hanshi went through security and the inquisitive beep nailed Hanshi again. The “shakedown” began, but this time, with the approval of security, we got pictures.

*By: Don Schmidt.
YoseikanHombu Dojo*



Eric Ernest Joins the Military



On February 02, 2009, the US Chito-Kai lost one of its long time members to the US Army. Sandan Eric Ernest who had trained with us at the Hombu since January 1993 enlisted to serve his country. Eric over the years represented the US Chito-kai in many AAU tournaments as well as the Windy City Tournaments. In 2001, He successfully brought home the

gold medal in Kumite, Kata and Kobudo at the AAU Nationals and then went on to compete with the National AAU team in Japan. In 2006 Eric brought home the WTKA World Championship in open Karate demonstrating that Chito-ryu kata can win in the tournament setting.

Eric started basic training in Ft Jackson, SC weighing 225 lbs. At the completion he weighed in at a trim 185. In his letters home Eric thanked his parents for allowing him to take karate and asked us to pass on his thanks to the many members who showed up at his going away party. In addition, he wants to thank his instructors and friends for the lessons he learned as a member of the US Chito-kai. He feels the training and discipline he learned as a kyu rank and later as a black belt prepared him for the rigors of basic training. Eric went on to become the stick fighting representative of his company and earned the nickname Godzilla for his aggressive fighting style. Overall Eric ranked in the top 10 % of his company.

Eric is currently stationed at Ft Benning, Ga. where he is attending Officer Candidate School. He place 10th in the elimination phase to secure his spot in the school and currently is the only platoon leader without prior military training. This speaks well of Eric as well as the lessons he learned at the Hombu. Eric is expected to graduate in July as a 2nd lieutenant and hopes to move on to ranger school and then to military intelligence.

Eric wishes to pass on his thanks to all member of the US Chito-kai for their friendship, their support, and their time that was given to him and helped mold him into the

person he is and who he will become. He looks forward visiting us after OCS and stated he has some new exercises to introduce us to.

*By: Wes Ernest,
Yoseikan Hombu*

MARK MORITA VISITS JAPAN



Kuzuhara Sensei, Morita san, Inomoto Sensei

Morita-san, as we all affectionately call Mark, lives at the Honbu dojo. He has done so for more then 40 years, he is our Mr. Miyagi He also holds a sho-dan rank in karate having trained with the brother of Ozawa Osamu Sensei while in college in Japan. For 10 days in April , he visited his brother in Tokyo and while there he made a trip to Kumamoto to visit a friend of his late mothers, who was in her late 90's. He also was able to visit with Masura Inomoto Sensei , Inomoto sensei has visited the Honbu dojo in Kentucky on several occasions. He also visited with Akniori Kuzuhara who visited and stayed with Hanshi and I in the 70's for almost one year. It had been at least 30 years since Kuzuhara and Morita-san had seen each other, they had a great visit and Mortia especially said he enjoyed the horse sushi that is part of the culture of the Kumamoto area.

By: Barbara E. Dometrich



Rely on Change

On the morning of March 14, 2009, the shihan-kai and the shibu-kai assembled at the Hombu dojo for a technical meeting. Ostensibly, this meeting had been intended to allow the shibu dojo instructors, particularly those who live beyond Kentucky and Ohio, the opportunity to ask Hanshi technical questions regarding the USCK curriculum. That was the original intention anyway. But we are trained to expect and adapt to change. And so, it was time for some training and a good dose of change.

Hanshi arrived with an agenda. His agenda was to get everyone on the same Chito-ryu page. He explained his reasoning around originally incorporating standard Japanese Karate Association stances and techniques. He explained how he had sought counsel and assistance from the best and the brightest at the time that he and Okusan were forging the USCK. As we all know, there were highly skilled Shotokan instructors who traveled and promulgated Shotokan karate. There was and is a great deal to learn from instructors of that caliber.

Within our organization, we have developed to the point that we also have highly skilled instructors. What officially began in the late sixties as a fledgling group making its way and learning along the way, has matured to the point that we can forge our own path. That path is designated by Hanshi. It's the path that, in his estimation, is closest to what his teacher would have wanted and what he was striving for in Chito-ryu.

Hanshi had the tacit agreement of O-Sensei to utilize JKA type basics for the first year or so of the USCK student's development. Hanshi believed this type of training was important to the development of strong lower body and dropping one's center of gravity. The top heavy Westerner needs that focus and development. It seems that O-Sensei was less than thrilled, but allowed Hanshi the flexibility to teach as he deemed appropriate and necessary. It is time now to put our greater knowledge and skill to work. The legs, the tanden and the concept of rooting to the ground – all of that still needs to be a point of emphasis. Don't ignore it, don't forget it – these are still critical objectives. But we need to be able to accomplish these goals while teaching Chito-ryu stances and techniques. No more waiting until students are green belts to show them the Chito-ryu gems. If a student joins, they get Chito-ryu.

So the sum total is that zenkutsu dachi and kokutsu dachi are no longer a part of the USCK curriculum. Instead, seisan dachi and shiko dachi, hallmark Chito-ryu stances, are to be utilized. In the Taikyoku kata, each independent down block should be executed in an off-line shiko dachi. Where a down block is coupled with another block, as in Taikyoku san, both blocks will be executed from seisan dachi. All other blocks and strikes will be executed from seisan dachi except that shuto uke will be executed from neko ashi dachi.

Both neko ashi dachi and shuto uke should be executed in accordance with Chito-ryu basics, i.e. neko ashi dachi is the same length as seisan dachi and shuto uke is delivered in a somewhat circular fashion from the base of the rib cage, palm up to palm down, similar to the trajectory of the chudan soto uke except that the hands are open and the block begins with the palm up.

Advanced students can be challenged to utilize in-line seisan dachi along with tsuki kaeshi on the 'wings' of the taikyoku kata. Coming up or down the stem of Taikyoku ichi (or san), advanced students can utilize the rin ten exercise for those three punches. In this way, all students will perform the same kata, but the difficulty level can be manipulated by the instructor.

We can discuss all the whys and wherefores and why nots - but that is a fairly useless exercise, and it is counterproductive to the collective. We have choices about how we will train, teach, and how we can best achieve the objective of the collective. But we must exercise great care in being consistent and working towards the same overall goals. As you teach, be careful not to be inconsistent and/or counterproductive. The ones to suffer and get confused will be the students if and when they receive varying opinions and instruction. In other words, it is for the yudansha to absorb and adopt changes willingly, uniformly and seamlessly so that their students and/or kohai may benefit and learn by example. In this way, we all become better karate ka in possession of better character.

If you have questions, by all means ask. First, however, you might ask yourself if the best course of action might be to simply shut up and train. There is beauty and clarity in simplicity. As Hanshi remarked, no one ever got good at karate by talking about it...which probably means that this article is entirely too long. See you at Shochugeiko.

*By Mina K. Ludwig
Yoseikan Yoshisu*



Train and Sweat – That Hasn't Changed



The 2009 USCK March clinic was a blast as always. Of course the Shibu kai and the Shihan kai had the heads up on some pretty dramatic technical changes, but whether or not the participants knew exactly what was going on, there was one constant – good sweaty training.

Hanshi Dometrich explained again the evolution of the USCK curriculum, and how it is still evolving. For many, excluding zenkutsu dachi and kokutsu dachi from the curriculum seemed like a really big deal – and it is going to take some significant revamping and reanalyzing for instructors to find the optimum training strategies. But in the end, as the clinic showed us, it doesn't really matter what we do. What matters is how we do it, and what 'it' does to us. Are we willing to suspend our concerns and simply train to exhaustion? The answer was, as it should be, a resounding 'yes'.

Training at the Spring clinic began with Chito-ryu basics. Hanshi explained the natural advantages of the Chito-ryu stances. After countless renzoku waza, Hanshi began to integrate the Chito-ryu concepts into the Taikyoku kata. We then moved on to some Chito-ryu exercise kata, again, focusing on stances and transitions. Shihan Mark Chisenhall spent some time with us going over the nuances of tsuki kaeshi, and finally, yours truly and Sensei Matt Scott facilitated some work on Henshuho. Time flies when you're having fun. We only covered 9-15.

There are so many different paths to follow, and everyone is convinced that theirs is the right and best path, the best art, the best ryu. If they are training hard, if they are improving and strengthening their chosen ryu, if they are constantly learning and improving, if they are forging bonds, becoming better and kinder human beings – I say

they are all right. Their art is the best. What we do must be effective, but whether it's this stance or that really does not matter a whole lot. As always, it's a matter of attitude, fervent training and sheer will.

Periodically, we have opportunities to show measurable progress towards being better, more flexible and more accepting people. An obvious example is the curriculum change. Perhaps less obvious is the fact that the USCK, as a group, invited and welcomed many guests to the clinic and after party, including Kyoshi Valentino and three of his students from the Koshinha organization. Everyone seemed to truly enjoy the opportunity to train with old friends and fellow karate ka. Our guests enjoyed themselves and relished the opportunity to spend time with Hanshi, Okusan and the rest of the USCK crew. Banners, philosophy, names, patches, pride in the scheme of life these things matter as little as what stances you are using.

As always, we rounded out the 2009 March clinic with a great pot luck birthday party for Dometrich Hanshi. This was the biggest crowd I can recall seeing and a good time (and too much food) was had by all. With Spring



under our belts, next up is summer training. Practice the changes in the curriculum so that Hanshi will be pleased with our progress.

*By Mina K. Ludwig
Yoseikan Yoshisu*





Memoirs of a Gaijin

It's Friday morning and rainy. My umbrella is up and I'm walking fast to catch the 8:07 am train to Yamato-Saidaiji station where I'll catch another train to Yamadagawa station, followed by a thirty-minute walk and my arrival at work, Omron. Hurriedly I cross in front of stopped traffic near the tracks as a train rushes by. I follow the crowd across the tracks to get to the correct platform, and as I'm walking I begin to hear the ironically inviting jingle



indicating another approaching train. I can't see through all of the raised umbrellas, but I notice the people on my sides begin to duck, and that's when I notice the pole descending in front of me that blocks the tracks from commuters. I lower my head as well, but not far enough, and crack! I get struck straight on the top of my head. In pain I stumble to the ticket gate, run my pass through, and wait for the train. I begin to wonder where I can get ice, and I start to daydream about how nice it was to have just a two day work week (thanks to Golden Week!) and I begin to plan my Saturday despite the head pain.

If it isn't already my lucky day, I'm almost through the work morning, when I receive an email saying that Saturday is Omron's foundation memorial day, and it's a working day! My plans of sleeping in and relaxing this weekend disappear right before my eyes. I'm angry, but what can I do? It's time to pull it together and experience what it's like to be a part of the group even if it means working on the weekend.

Saturday morning passes as a usual working day. A little before 1:30 pm (or 13:30 pm over here) music begins to play over the loud speakers, and I notice two projector screens set up around the office floor. It's pretty far away (and in Japanese), and all I can read is 13:30. I assume something is going to happen and I wait. At 13:30, the screen shows a large room filled with Omron employees

and pans across to the front of the room where there is the Japanese flag and an Omron flag. Together everyone on screen and in my office stand, and more music begins. Even though I have never heard it before (or can't remember hearing it before), I quickly realize that this is the Japanese national anthem (I think the shot of the Japanese flag did it for me). After it finishes, the entire company recites Omron's showa in unison, and then sings Omron's song. We sit and listen to two speakers for the next hour. Within the first few minutes, I am only able to pick out the word "influenza" so I'm sure you can all imagine what he is talking about, and after this I understand a word here or there but I am not sure if he is giving an inspirational speech or a business report. All in all, it is nice to feel included in Omron's traditions. After the broadcast, everyone in the company participates in a form of volunteer work. I get to pick up garbage. I know what you're thinking, Japan is incredibly clean, there's nothing to pick up! I am thinking the same thing, and it turns out my Japanese coworkers agree with me.

Nonetheless, we head outside, grab a trash bag, tongs, and gloves and set out on our hunt. With garbage in such scarcity, it becomes more of a competition to see who can find the most. It is necessary to search through high grass and bushes to find anything, and it is usually just a small piece of foil. After an hour of sweating out in the 85-degree heat, we head back with what we find. Surprisingly, we find a few aluminum and glass cans, and even a discarded bundle of wire. Afterwards, it is back to work until 5:30 when I rush out as fast as I can to reclaim what was left of my weekend.

Everyone asks me what my hobbies are here in Japan and if I have found anything to do with my free time. I usually just spend my time sightseeing and shopping, but today I realized that grocery shopping would definitely classify as a hobby for me here as I spend most of my time outside of work at supermarkets. Once, I spent an hour after work searching through the grocery store looking for the ingredients to make sukiyaki. The store was just remodeled and what I could remember of the layout was entirely useless. Compounded by my inability to read kanji, I basically left without the correct noodles and without the mirin (rice wine). It's incredibly exciting for me to wander around supermarkets trying to read the labels and signs and when that does not work, taking a peak through the bag to determine what the contents are. It's always a surprise as to what you have actually purchased, when you bring home what you bought, attempt to follow the Japanese instructions, and hope for the best when it is finished.

If you had not picked up on it yet, I am in Japan. I am a mechanical engineering student at the University of Cincinnati, and I am participating on a six-month co-op



term (internship for those unfamiliar with the term co-op) with Omron Corporation. All I can tell you (shh!) is I am working on new health care technology. The work is very different from what I have learned in my classes, and I have been doing a lot of on-the-job learning. Expanding my horizons into the electrical and signal processing world is basically what I am doing.



So where am I exactly? I live in Nara, about a fifteen-minute walk west of Nara Park, and I work at Omron's Keihanna Technology Center north of Nara towards Kyoto. I am very grateful for such an excellent location, as I am forty-five minutes by train from Kyoto and forty minutes from Osaka. Weekend trips to these cities are convenient and relatively inexpensive. I went sightseeing to both locations with other students working in Japan from the University of Cincinnati over Golden Week. I plan on taking many more trips around Japan while I am here, including a hike to the summit of Mt. Fuji in late July!

Japan is an amazing place to be.

*By: KiraKembre,
daughter of Sherry Kembre Renshi and the granddaughter of
Hanshi and Okusan Dometrich*

What is the Meaning of Life?

Robert Byrne once wrote, "The purpose of life is a life of purpose." His quip says much in few words. I could say the same about meaning and be done with it. But there's more to the picture.

Many people believe (as I once did) that everything we do reflects our search for (pursuit of) happiness. But we seek something far deeper. I believe that every heart seeks a sense of meaning, purpose and connection.

Meaning: A life that makes sense, that seems worthwhile, that counts for something.

Purpose: An aim, a goal, a practice or profession — a form of service suitable to our talents, interests and values.

Connection: An authentic and deep connection with ourselves, with others, and with the Transcendent.

In the novel *Zorba the Greek* (a tale about the joy of living), one character says to another, "If you could dance what you just said, I might understand." I feel the same way about the question of "meaning." Meaning is not something to be neatly packaged or contained. Life doesn't have one constant meaning for everyone. In fact, from a transcendental perspective, nothing means anything — life simply arises out of Mystery.

The statement that "nothing means anything" could be taken for some dreary existential philosophy (i.e. "if nothing means anything then I might as well kill myself.") But actually, this statement is quite liberating. Because we are free to make up our own meanings. And we do, every day, every moment.

So the proper question to ask may be not "What is the meaning of life" but rather, "What is the meaning of your life?"

What enlivens your spirit? What uplifts your heart? What are you willing to work towards and to sacrifice for? What gives your life purpose and joy? These are more useful questions that speculating about "the" meaning of life.

I have found (and created) meaning in my own life through teaching — sharing what I learned with others. One day I realized that no matter how much I improved myself, only one person might benefit. But if I could influence other people in a positive way, that made my life count for something.

Some people search for satisfaction through self-gratification — amassing money and collecting things and experiences, sights, memories. But the most fortunate among us discover that deeper meaning and purpose and connection are found through service — making a positive difference in another person's life. The surest way to happiness may ultimately come through helping others find joy, success, love.

In the meantime, we can enjoy our own adventures — feel the wind in our hair and celebrate the blessing of having this human experience here on planet Earth. How odd and unlikely that we should exist at all! And how amazing that we are given a life, and experiences, and people and pleasures and surprises and challenges to help us grow stronger and wiser.



Just as there is no one meaning for all, neither is there a best teacher, book, religion or martial art, or best music or work of art or path or exercise or dietary system — only the best one for each of us at a given time.

Life is an experiment. There is no meaning but the one we create. Wherever we step, the path appears beneath our feet.

*By: Dr. Rony Kluger
International Budo Academy
ISREAL*

It's not the Destination; it's the Journey

I must admit that the Orlando area Chito-kai was a bit apprehensive in the weeks leading up to the Winter Getaway 2009. With the U.S. economy sagging, bad weather in the North, and everyone's very busy schedules, we were somewhat concerned that there would be little interest from the Northern Kentucky and Cincinnati area. However, in typical U.S. Chito-ryu fashion, several senior instructors went to great efforts to make the 2009 Winter Getaway a rousing success for everyone. I would like to thank Hanshi Dometrich and Okusan for making the very long drive down to Orlando and for delivering a highly educational seminar in their usual, fantastic way. We had a wide variety of experience in the karate-ka in attendance on this Valentine's Day, including one young man's first class (I'm wondering what kind of first impression this made?). I'd like to especially thank Renshi Byers for making an extraordinary appearance via a "in by 11AM and out at 3PM" airplane flight, so that he could teach Kihons and Kata for 3 hours... Now that's dedication! Hanshi was in high spirits despite having had recent foot surgery and he taught the Yudansha Rohai Dai, Te hodoki, Henshuho, kumite drills, and more with a special treat of reviewing Naihanchi kata. Thanks also go out to all the other senior Yudansha from the Honbu who helped teach, trained hard, and provided inspiration for the rest of us. Renshi Sherry Kembre and Senseis' Don Schmidt and Wes Ernest all brought a piece of the honbu down with them as they assisted in kumite drills. Each year we dedicate the Winter Getaway to someone within the Chito-kai and this year it was Okusan; she's our collective Valentine and can't be shown enough love and

gratitude, if you ask me. The clinic ended with pictures taken under the Hotel's waterfall and the banquet later that night featured the obligatory yet always appreciated gifts, presentations, speeches, and door prizes.

It always seems that each Chito-kai gathering has some kind of special theme or "aura" about it. This seminar felt particularly special by our hosting of Renshi Roland Figgs, head of U.S. Ryusei Karate-do, and a familiar figure to the U.S. Chito-kai for those that have been around for a while. Old pictures of Renshi Figgs adorn the honbu walls as well as those of Yoseikan Dojo II of Orlando (relocated from Shihan Art's original Yoseikan of Orlando). Renshi Figgs showed us that he still possesses his incredible speed, technique, and control. Although Renshi Figgs attended the clinic as a student and not as an instructor, it was frequently hard to keep from stopping what we were doing so that we could look on in



amazement at what he was doing. The U.S. Chito-ryu and U.S. Ryusei share many of the same goals; to learn from whomever and wherever we can, to perfect our waza and character, and to keep our beginner's mind. It is our personal hope that the attendance of Renshi Figgs at the 2009 Winter Getaway initiated a rekindling of relationships that goes back over 30 years and we're deeply grateful that everyone in attendance gave Renshi Figgs the respect that he so richly deserves. As Hanshi said..."Respect everybody and keep your beginner's mind...It's not about the destination; it's about the journey."

We can't wait to see what's up the road ahead...

*By: Gordon Levin,
Orlando area Chito-kai*





Yukinori Kugimiya

If you're looking for Yuki Kugimiya's home in San Bernardino, drive up Lawrence Avenue, past all the normal suburban Southern California front lawns, until you come to an elegant Zen garden. You have arrived. Take off your shoes, enter this home and admire the beautiful *ranma*, the hand-carved wooden panels made by his late father, like those that decorate Shinto shrines in Japan today. Come out to the enormous back yard and pick some of the best tangerines on earth from the bushes around the swimming pool. None of Yuki's friends can ever leave his home without a bag full of fresh fruit, a tummy full of hot tea, and lots of good advice on how to stay healthy.



Yukinori Kugimiya first came to the United States in 1971. He had just performed in the Osaka '70 World Expo for the Japanese karate team with his friend Masura Inomoto (founder of Jikishin-Ryu karate), who had been his introduction to the military and Dr. Tsuyoshi Chitose's dojo. Yuki's talent landed him a prized position on both the dojo and army karate teams, but his decision to enter the military and pursue a career in martial arts had ruined his family's plans for him to continue in his secure position with the railroad. Now the Expo's exciting atmosphere had given the twenty-four year old a desire to see the world outside his home town of Kumamoto. With his service time over and his married older sister already living in Southern California, Yuki left his family in Japan for a visit to the US that has lasted nearly forty years.

Although he spoke no English he immediately began teaching karate classes, mainly in the Los Angeles "Little

Tokyo" area. Soon Dr. Chitose asked him to contact William Dometrich, who had established the US Headquarters of Chito-ryu Karate in Covington, Kentucky. With his brother-in-law as interpreter arrangements were made for Yuki to fly to Cincinnati, where his American life really began. Working with the Dometrich family made him feel he was helping to bring Dr. Chitose's work to this country, and helping welcome O-Sensei on his 1973 United States tour is still one of the highlights of Yuki's life.

Thanks to his new Dometrich "family" and his good friend Mark Morita, Yuki began to speak English while he was in Covington. He was extremely proud of being made a "Kentucky Colonel" in 1972, and has the framed certificate on his wall today. By 1975 he was finally able to bring his parents to America to live with him. Unfortunately, the weather in Kentucky was hard on the elderly couple, and reluctantly Yuki made the decision to move back near his sister in Southern California.

In 1978 Yuki began studying with Kanjitsu Iijima, a Los Angeles Buddhist monk who was also a master of Hatha Yoga. It wasn't long before Yuki also became known as a yoga instructor, something he still enjoys teaching to senior citizens.

In the late '70s Del Saito, a karate instructor Yuki had met several years earlier at a tournament in LA, approached him with an offer to buy the Yoseikan Karate School in San Bernardino. Del Saito had been trained by a student of Dr. Chitose and wanted someone with a similar background to take over when he moved to Oregon. Yuki decided there was a greater need for instructors in the "Inland Empire" (basically everything east of LA) than Los Angeles itself, and began commuting to San Bernardino in 1978. In the early 1980s he decided to relocate permanently, and in 1985 his younger brother, Hideo, also bought a house in the area. Today Hideo and his wife have two sons, Henry and Glen, both of whom are students of their uncle and assist in his martial arts classes.

At 62 Yuki is still actively teaching yoga and karate (although the school itself is no longer in operation), when he's not designing and installing his elegant custom-made Japanese gardens on the side. Recently he was asked to conduct a master class in yoga at the Shinto temple in the Los Angeles "Little Tokyo" district, which was also attended by many of his Inland Empire students. As always, he remains devoted to the precepts he learned from his master, Dr. Chitose, and the yoga mantra of "Happy, Healthy, Holy."

*By: Dani Bayles Yeager
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Birthdays:

Shawna Lingo 3/14/09

William J. Dometrich Hanshi 3/15/09

Mina Ludwig Shihan 3/21/09

Matthew Scott 4/5/09

Jerry Beshears Renshi 7/4/09

Manual Byers Renshi 7/5/09

Anniversaries

Eric and Martha Ford, 10 years May 1st, 09

Hanshi and Okusan Dometrich 54 years June 6th, 09

Weddings:

Honbu students Kimberly Wegford and Mark Suer. June 6th, 09

Congratulations:

Renea and Eric Dunn – baby boy 3/12/09 Renea is student at Ft Bragg Yoseikan

Graduations:

Emma Gage, Charlottesville Yoseikan, High School Graduation June 5th, 09

Tasha Payne, Yoseikan Honbu, High School Graduation May 2009

Condolences:

Lawrence Hawkins Sr., father of Lawrence C. Hawkins Jr. Esq. Kyoshi passed away April 5th. 2009.

Dojo Visits:

January 2009 Hawkins Kyoshi, Laura Deck and Ron Howard visited Mina Ludwig Shihan's Yoseikan Yoshisu Dojo

April 21, 09 Hawkins Kyoshi and Evelyn Disher Hill visited and conducted a class at Yoseikan Anderson.

Travel:

28 Chito-kai and Shotokan DNBK members traveled to Norfolk Virginia on April 4/5th 2009 to attend a Rensei Taikai in Honor of William J. Dometrich Hanshi's Kyudan promotion. Over 100 participants from U.S. and Canada attended (*article this issue*)

Kira Kembre, daughter of Sherry Kembre and granddaughter of Hanshi and Okusan, will be interning in Japan for six months. Kira left for Japan on March 21st. She will graduate from Engineering school at the University of Cincinnati in June 2010 (*article this issue*)

Mark Morita, who lives at the Honbu Dojo in Covington, Ky visited Kumamoto Japan the week of April 9th. While there visited with Masura Inomoto and Akinori Kuzuhara (*article this issue*)

New Dojo Location:

The Louisville Yoseikan Takanoko Dojo has moved to a new location 999 Brent street. takanoko.com

Future events:

West Virginia summer camp will be August 15th at Audra State Park. Contact Kevin Drummond: KCDrummond@aol.com

In the announcement section, we can only announce the events that we are aware of. If there is something that needs to be announced please bring it to the attention of the Editor.

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