



# Chito-ryu Karate-Do



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## U.S. CHITO-RYU KARATEKA GO HEAD OVER HEELS FOR SENSEI DAVID AKUTAGAWA



On Saturday the 20<sup>th</sup> of October the U.S.Chito-kai held their annual fall seminar at Northern Kentucky University as part of their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. Having two of the most significant Chito-ryu karate disciples in North America, Hanshi William Dometrich & Shihan David Akutagawa, made this seminar extra meaningful for all those present.

After formal bowing in and a brief warm up period Sensei Akutagawa took over the black belt division for a most invigorating afternoon. The training started off with a warm up session of break falls and rolls. Although Sensei Akutagawa thought that the mats at N.K.U. were a little too thick for proper footwork, most karateka were grateful for the extra padding by the end of the day. Sensei was very impressive with the speed and agility with which he demonstrated all of the techniques. It was impossible not to adopt his enthusiastic attitude toward the training and in relatively short order the entire class was going head over heels.



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Sensei Akutagawa moved on with an in-depth study of Sanshiryu kata. First he talked about the technical aspects of kata, the movements techniques, bunkai, rhythm, and finally the art the kata. He said that although Doctor Chitose's Chito-ryu katas were shorter in length than many other styles of karate, he felt that the Chito-ryu kata were extremely sophisticated. Sensei said that our Seisan kata was probably one of the most complete katas when it came to displaying what Chito-ryu karate was all about. He also noted that the many open hand techniques of the higher level katas were hallmarks of Doctor Chitose and his kata.

Working his way though Sanshiryu, Sensei Akutagawa demonstrated numerous applications for each of the movement sequences. Sensei used many of the movements as entering techniques to be followed by a throw or a takedown. The training gave ample opportunity to practice the break falls and rolls that they warmed up with earlier in the day. As if Sensei's technique wasn't already enough to completely discourage his opponent, he ended each series with some type of finishing technique designed to either control or disable them. He demonstrated a wide variety of strikes, chokes, arm bars, joint locks and numerous painful manipulations of the human body to the delight or dismay of many of the black belts.

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## EDITORIAL: A MESSAGE

2008 has arrived, a new year, perhaps a new start, or re-start.

There were once two men who went to work for the same company on the same day, in the same year. Twenty years, later one of the men was the head of his section within the company while the other was the president of the company. Both men were brothers, twin brothers, and they both had equivalent educations. What happened? The same thing that happens every day in every aspect of our lives to similar people.

The one brother (lets call him section leader Roger) had accumulated twenty years of experience while the other brother (lets call him president Nick) had also accumulated twenty years of experience. The difference was beginners mind; an oft discussed subject in the martial arts. Roger had twenty years of experience - the same year over and over. Nick had twenty years of growing in the job. He became wiser and more proficient as he developed into the man his boss was looking for.

This year lets attempt to grow and learn, more so than in the past. Lets look at life as an adventure, and every day try to learn something new. Look at the world as a big present; a gift. Look, listen, experience and learn. Don't take yourself too seriously, but take life seriously. It is all you really have; so use your karate-do to enrich your life. Be kind, treat everyone as brothers and always cultivate your beginners mind.

*By: William J. Dometrich, Hanshi  
US Chito-kai Founder*

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Head over heels, literally

After taking a post seminar poll, perhaps "Akutagawa" should be pronounced "Ouch-I-got-ya".

In addition to the Saturday seminar, Sensei Akutagawa was most generous with his time over the rest of the weekend. On Friday evening he sat with the National Test Board for the Black Belt test, which lasted several hours. Despite

running late into the evening, he took the time to address each test candidate and gave everyone positive criticism and encouragement. Saturday evening was spent at the banquet, and Sunday Sensei held an extra training session for the upper ranked instructors.

One would be at a loss to describe Sensei Akutagawa with just a few words, but some of the following come to mind: inspirational, motivational, budo spirit, excellent technique, and the open minded attitude of the great jazz saxophonist Art Pepper (you had to be there). Finally, it goes without saying that this was one great Chito-ryu karate weekend. Thank you a thousand times to Sensei Akutagawa for sharing your time, your knowledge, and especially special personality.

Bonsai ! Bonsai! Bonsai!

*By: John F. Wellbrock  
Hombu Dojo*

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## FOUNDER'S FORUM

## Titles, titles, and more titles

Egocentrism is rampant among exponents of modern budo. All exponents at some time become embroiled in heated rivalries propagated by ambitious leaders vying for dominance of organizations that have been created to further the progress of the various ryu. Examples of the failure of exponents to achieve spiritual maturity abound. Many exponents of today's modern budo grope around in a maze of classical traditions that they do not truly understand. Many exponents of the martial arts expect to reach a high degree of technical skill and leadership but have failed in the most basic understanding of the essence of the art of budo. Many senior students have been given key positions within an organization only to fail as authority is thrust upon them. They fail because their own self importance became more important to them than their sensei, or the mission of the style and organization.

The purpose of modern budo is to strengthen yourself physically, mentally and spiritually. To be better able to serve your sensei, your family, your neighborhood, your nation and the world in general. Ego is the biggest handicap to proper understanding of the essence of the martial arts. The essence of martial arts training is not to finish; it is the trip. What then, does this have to do with titles?

When I first started in the study of karate-do over 50 years ago I called my teacher "sensei". Now we have Sensei, Shihan, Renshi, Kyoshi, Hanshi, Hanshi-sei and others. Some more modern based styles have masters, grand masters and great grand masters. I was at the dojo one day as some of the older students were introduced to a visiting martial arts practitioner a few minutes before class started. It sounded something like this:

"This is Renshi Murphy, I would also like to introduce you to Sensei Jones and Kyoshi Johnson. Those two working out together are Shihan Rodgers and Sensei Green".

As this continued I began to feel as if I was in a Marx Brothers movie. The title Sensei has many applications in Japan. Doctors are Sensei of good health; lawyers are Sensei of rules of society. Police are Sensei of social order. Because karate-do is a *martial* art, lets take a look at the military for some guidelines. I address an Lt. Colonel in the Army as "Colonel" not Lieutenant Colonel. I address a General as "General" not Brigadier

General, Major General or Lieutenant General.

In the martial arts, we should introduce everyone as "Sensei". Sensei is a good word and sufficient for all people on all occasions. Introductions might sound like this: "I would like to introduce you to the U.S. Chito-kai Chairman, Hawkins Sensei, or our U.S. Chito-ryu founder Dometrich Sensei. Lets stop wearing the titles out - it is starting to sound like a big ego trip. One of the goals of budo is to kill the ego.

Lets stop feeding it, call everyone Sensei and you can't go wrong.

*By: William J. Dometrich, Hanshi  
US Chito-kai Founder*

## Editors Note: About Japanese titles

The titles we use in the US Chito-kai are those originated by the Dai Nippon Butokukai in the early 1900s. According to Patrick McCarthy, the original titles were Hanshi and Tasshi. Tasshi was later replaced with Kyoshi (although Tasshi still seems to be used occasionally) and the title Renshi was added later. The literal translations are inconsequential, but they all include the character "shi" which roughly equates to teacher or expert, and then there are various iterations of "highly qualified" or "well trained". These are all "Shihan" or "master teacher" titles. We like to say Shihan is to Sensei as Professor is to teacher. In Japan, Sensei and Shihan are used in conversation and salutations, the other titles are not. You will never hear someone say "Hello Renshi Yoshida". Much less will you ever hear someone refer to themselves by their title, or even as Sensei for that matter. "My name is Sensei Blowhard" is a totally unacceptable conveyance. It is acceptable to include someone's title when introducing them and it is appropriate to include ones own title on official written correspondence. But to sign ones own correspondence as "Sensei Smith" is not appropriate.

Also, in Japanese, salutations are usually placed after the name, as in: Nakamura Shihan. But they also tend to put the last name first so I think that our western custom of using the salutation first as in "Sensei Monkeyfoot" if not literally precise, is probably OK based on usual and customary American parlance. You will hear it used both ways in English.

In the USCK our Renshi, Kyoshi and Hanshi titles are all certified by the DNBK. Other organizations may use the titles but they are not necessarily recognized by the DNBK

That being said, we will likely continue to call Dometrich Sensei "Hanshi", mostly because we like it that way.

CK



**INSTRUCTOR PROFILE:  
JAMES ACAMPORA**

**Name:** James Acampora

**Born:** February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1956  
Abbington PA

**Children:** Desiree 21yrs  
and Destiny 18yrs

**Education:** Bachelors in  
Computer Science,  
Plumber, and school of  
hard knocks

**Current Employment:**  
Owner/ Manager of Home  
Remedy Remodeling Co.  
Specializing in bathroom  
remodeling

**Martial Arts**  
**Experience:** Started

training in Karate-do  
under Shihan Art Rott in  
1981, Longwood Florida. Started teaching for Shihan Rott in  
the 90's at the Yoseikan of Orlando dojo. Started Yoseikan of  
Orlando II in Altamonte Springs Florida.

**Karate Rank and Title:** Yon-Dan Chito-Ryu and Chief  
Instructor of Yoseikan II of Orlando dojo

**Extra Curricular activities:** Ball room dancing and fitness  
training.

**Things that are important to you:** My Children are  
number one with Karate training running second.

**Professional affiliations:** Security officer for Northland  
Community Church with a congregation of 17,000.

**What's on my night-stand:** Besides bills, Japanese  
instruction in preparation for upcoming trip to Japan.

I am proud and honored to have a Chartered United States  
Chito-Ryu Dojo under Hanshi Dometrich in the fine tradition  
started here in Florida by Shihan Art Rott.

James has honored his sensei, by picking up the reins after his  
death and establishing a dojo at his home to carry on for his  
sensei Shihan Rott. James has also picked up the tradition that  
Shihan Jim Matthews started in south Florida of a winter  
getaway for all the northern karate-ka to get out of the bad  
weather up north in February. James is an excellent organizer  
and a big asset to the United States Chito-kai.



**Something to Say**

I want to start by saying what I feel;

*WOOD AND FOOD ARE SEASONED.  
WHISKEY AND WINE ARE AGED.  
A WELL BUILT MUSICAL INSTRUMENT DEVELOPS A  
BETTER QUALITY THE MORE YOU PLAY IT.  
CEMENT WILL TAKE UP TO FOURTY YEARS TO CURE.*

What I am trying to say is that I have been watching a group  
of 50 year veterans of Chito-ryu karate that are 50 years + and  
seeing in my book what is called as good as it can be.

This group is seasoned, aged, sound, toned, and hardened in a  
way they should be.

*THEY ARE HARD BUT SOFT SPOKEN.  
THEY ARE SEASONED WITH YEARS OF HARD  
TRAINING AND GUIDANCE.  
THEY ARE SOUND AND TONED SO WHEN YOU SEE  
THEM PERFORM OR INSTRUCT, PEOPLE WATCH AND  
LISTEN TO THEM.*

Watching them instruct our new generation, which is now  
harder to train because of our society and parenting of today,  
they are still able to do a good job. It makes me very proud of  
who I am and that I can say that I belong in this group.

Hanshi can pick any one of these fine people to do a fine job  
and they can handle anything at a moments notice and he can  
go to do something else knowing everything is going to turn  
out great.

At one point in time I think there was some little doubt about  
us 50 years olds, because we might have been brought up with  
hard old school training (if you have been there you know what  
I mean) but seeing is believing, I know that we believed in  
Hanshi Dometrich and Okusan and that is what made us what  
we have became today.

*A CHIP OFF THE OLD BLOCK  
AN APPLE NOT FAR FROM THE TREE  
MOST OF ALL PEOPLE WITH SOUL*

Thank you Hanshi and Okusan for being the mold for us  
antiques.

P.S. There will be many more 50 year olds to carry on.

*By: Michael A. Messinger  
Yoseikan Bridgeport, WV*



## Good Times



On the morning of October 20, 2007, two days after O-Sensei's 109<sup>th</sup> birthday, members of the USCK Board of Directors, dojo heads and shihan-kai met to discuss the progress and the potential of the USCK. The overall tone was one of success and hope.

Hanshi was pleased to report that, since 2004, our organization has grown by 30%. Chairman Hawkins urged us all to think beyond what we think is possible in terms of future growth and development. As proof and motivation, he sagely pointed out that in the "Bruce Lee Hey Day" of the 70's, Hanshi did not have a cadre of black belts at his disposal. Yet and still, the USCK had 1000 members. With the depth and breadth of experience and the sheer number of skilled black belts in the organization today, we can and should be able to exceed 1000 members while still maintaining and even improving the outstanding standards of training and traditional martial spirit.

Vice Chair, Sherry Kembre discussed mission and vision statements of the USCK which coincide the goal of growth and cultivation of O-Sensei's legacy. Members of the organization are encouraged to maintain communication and share ideas of success.

Dr. Laura Stith (AKA Deck) joined the meeting to discuss the challenge and hope for the future which lies with our children. Recently featured on local news channels as an expert in child and adolescent psychology, Dr. Stith was able to explain the various stages of developmental growth. This shed considerable light on what children are capable of mentally and physically in each of the age specific stages. She reinforced the importance of educating ourselves about our students in order to determine the best and most effective methods of teaching. Listening to Dr. Stith brought home the fact that we now have so many skill sets at our disposal and such a growing wealth of knowledge, the ceiling is unlimited in terms of our potential.

Hanshi spoke briefly about the modalities of future teaching resources. Watch for DVD's and Chito-ryu instructional manuals. All of these tools will facilitate teaching and learning and a more uniform promulgation of Chito-ryu. Hanshi also announced that Gerald Beshears will serve as National Chief Instructor and Cyna Khalily as Deputy Chief Instructor. They serve at the leisure of the Technical Director – Hanshi.

Co-founder and Chief Administrator, Kyoshi Dometrich, encouraged the group to be diligent in communication. The three primary modalities for communicating beyond participating in the national events and black belt class, are monthly reports, emails and newspaper contributions. Let's all strive to make our Chief Administrator's job easier.

The meeting adjourned on a high note which was sustained through four hours of training and culminated in the annual USCK banquet. The theme of the Banquet was the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the USCK. In his visit in to the States in 1967, O-Sensei charged Hanshi and Okusan with the duty of establishing the USCK. He renamed the soon to be Hombu dojo, 'Yoseikan', to mirror the name of his own dojo in Japan. No doubt, O-Sensei would be pleased with what the co-founders have done and with their steadfast loyalty to his legacy.

A great and plentiful meal was enjoyed by all, after which we were treated to a keynote speaker as well as a photo presentation of the USCK history. Sensei Akutagawa was in his speech just as he was in this teaching and everyday demeanor. His kindness and generous spirit were bountiful. His love and respect for O-



Sensei and for Hanshi were manifest throughout his talk. What I found most touching was Akutagawa Sensei's anecdotes and recollections of how much O-Sensei loved Hanshi Dometrich. It was bitter sweet to hear about the depth of affection that Dr. Chitose felt for his American student. Akutagawa Sensei reported that, during his annual visits to Japan, O Sensei spoke often and with great pride regarding Hanshi and the USCK.

I was profoundly grateful that Akutagawa Sensei shared those recollections with us. His words and reverent tone buoyed my already sky high spirit. If you were looking for some affirmation, that was it. Dr. Chitose did not just pick some Yankee to teach Chito-ryu in the States, then cross his fingers and hope for the best. He saw in his student what the student could not see in himself. He entrusted Hanshi with his legacy and was later, Akutagawa sensei tells us, full of pride and downright boastful of Hanshi's accomplishments. To be associated with and taught by the direct, beloved, respected and hand picked link to progenitor of Chito-ryu is heady brew.

We got to see some photo proof of that teacher/student relationship in Kembre Sensei's photo presentation. There were so many great shots of O-Sensei at the dining room table completing calligraphy on certificates, sitting seiza before his American progeny, discussing karate with Hanshi in matching kimonos on the couch, training with Hanshi in the yard and in





the dojo, smiling with the family and with students. Together with Kembre Sensei's recollections, this made for a great end cap to the journey down memory lane.

The evening ended with awards of rank as well as national and local awards from Hanshi and Okusan: Sho Dan – Emma Gage, Lauren Fuller, Reggie Corbett, Michael Shaefer, Karen Ruperto, Suzanne Schlegel; San Dan – Mark Lingo, Regina Rossini; Yon Dan – James Acampora; Go Dan – Warren Pochinski.

National Awards:

Yu (Valor) awards in gratitude for military service to our country in the spirit of Chito-ryu to Steve Nassano, David Hewitt and William Jansak

Excellence – Steve Wilhelm and Eric Ford

Outstanding Dedication, Spirit, Honor – Mina K. Ludwig

Humanitarian – Wesley Ernest

Special effort – Kevin Drummond and James Acampora

Special service – Cyna Khalily, Willie Elliott and John Wellbrock

Hombu Local Awards:

Uchi Deshi – Don Schmidt

Special Dojo Service – Joseph Petty and Michael Schaefer

Per Okusan's request, somewhere *in medias res* ('In the middle of things' – a little Latin for my Sensei's pleasure) and in order to score a seat at the grown-up table, I had the honor of reviewing the highlights of 2007. In case you missed it, um, apparently I thought every one of the events in 2007 was 'a really good time.' Truth, however, is an absolute defense to redundancy. I really did have a really great time at every one of the 2007 USCK events. But 2008 will hold even better times. See you there and we'll prove it together.

By: Mina K. Ludwig

*Yoseikan II Cincinnati*

## Testing

Recently I had the pleasure and honor of sitting on a Test Board with Hanshi Dometrich and Sensei John Wellbrock assisted us. We tested about 10-15 students in the belt range from white belt to brown belt. All in all, all things considered, it was a well conducted test which gave each student an indication of how they were progressing on their journey to being the best person they can be. I hope that each student realized that the goal of karate training is not to obtain belt rank, but to become the best person that we can be.

I just wanted to make some points about this test and hopefully some benefits of the testing process itself. First, and most important, a test begins the moment that the student finished their last test. So, for every student, that tested on Saturday and those that are planning on participating in the next test, which should occur in about three months, your test has already begun.

Each and every student should be preparing for the test with every class they take. Therefore they should train everyday and every class as if this is the test day, because in many ways every day is test day. It is one aspect of life, that test i.e. challenges are what makes life and growth possible. An example of this is in the movie "A League of their own." In this movie, the character plays by Gena Davis, tells Tom Hanks, playing her manager, that she is going to quit because it just got to be too hard. And Tom Hanks says: that right, its suppose to be hard, it is the hard that makes it worthwhile, if it were easy, everybody would do it. I think this summaries tests and life. It is the hard that makes it worthwhile.

I would also like to say to students, as you train for your test content, specifically the kata for that specific test and/or anything else you need to know. Please do not neglect or forget your basics. Many students in this test did not perform Uchi-Hachi Dachi, correctly. In fact, they did not bend their knees nor turn their toes inward. I, of all people, am very aware of this because on my last test, Hanshi drilled us on Uchi-Hachi Dachi for fifteen minutes, and this was my Yon-Dan test. So, it is important for all of us, as always learning and practicing students



that we not neglect nor forget any of the basics. Because it is basics that make karate the great marital art that it is.

Also, students should practice for a test on their own. Each and every day, students should go over the required materials for their test. This is very important for learning, because repetition is the royal road to learning. It is necessary for students to practice everyday because one day they may be faced with the real test, the only test, that really matters: and that is the confrontation on the street with someone who intends to do them harm. And when students have adequately prepared for the test in the Dojo, they will be ready for the confrontation on the street.

By: Willie Elliott,  
NKU Karate Club





## Embu Tai Kai held for Shihan Arthur Rott

On November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2007, the annual event was held to commemorate the passing of Shihan Arthur Rott, a member of the USCK Shihan-kai and Chief Instructor of Yoseikan of Orlando from the early 1970's through 2001. Arthur Rott owned a grocery store in Covington and became associated with Chito-ryu karate through his son Bill, who joined the Kushin Kai in mid 1960's (later to be renamed the Yoseikan at the request of Dr. Chitose). Bill Rott trained hard and in 1967 was promoted to shodan at the age of 15 by Dr. Chitose himself. Arthur Rott enjoyed visiting this tough dojo environment, which at the time was located off Madison Avenue in an alley in a converted 2-story garage close to his grocery. After watching his son progress for some time, he joined at the age of 44. Later, he would sell his warehouse to William and Barbara Dometrich. It is on this location that the existing US Chito-kai Honbu now stands.

In the 1970's, he moved to Orlando and began teaching karate at his home. In the late 1980's he moved to a 5-acre property and built a very large dojo amidst a pine forest, very much resembling a traditional Okinawan dojo. As he got older he contracted diabetes, however, health challenges could not keep him out of the dojo, and he continued to teach and train until the day he died. His favorite kata to work on, especially as he got older, was Sanchin.

Shihan Art Rott passed away on November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2001 at the age of 83. Just one month earlier, he had attended the United States Chito-kai year-end event at the Drawbridge Inn, where many karateka would unknowingly say goodbye to him for the last time. Shihan Art was a constant, positive force in the lives of hundreds of students. The beauty of Shihan Art was his positive outlook on life, his ever-ready smile for others, and his consistent teaching for over 35 years. His karate legacy lives on through his many students and the three Chito-ryu karate schools in Central Florida.

So with these memories in our hearts, we gathered on November 10<sup>th</sup> to honor our teacher. The event was attended by over 20 participants and more than a dozen observers representing 7 schools and 4 different martial arts including Toyama Ryu, Aikido, Chito-ryu Karate and Krav Maga. In many martial arts, an annual event is held to honor one's teacher. Some do so during the anniversary of their teacher's birthday, others hold events on the anniversary of their teacher's passing. In this case, the Embu TaiKai was held with demonstrations and training to commemorate Shihan Art's passing on November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2001. This practice is observed in Okinawa yearly, with special events normally held on the first, 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 33<sup>rd</sup> anniversaries. This is done so that at least 2 future generations of students will remember the special teacher who has passed.

We began the day with warm ups from Sensei Gina Rossini and Karen Ruperto from Sensei James Acampora's school. We then had demonstration of kata from the students from Sensei Acampora and Binkley's schools. Next we had an excellent class taught by Sensei Acampora, covering primarily ukemi waza,

Sanchin kata and some of its bunkai. Everyone enjoyed this segment of class very much, made that much more special because Sanchin was Shihan Art's favorite kata.

We were also honored to have Sensei Steve Fasen and some of the students from the Aikido Club (who operate the Shindai Dojo where Yoseikan of Orlando III is located) teach a segment on Aikido. Not only is Sensei Fasen a Yon Don in Aikido, he is also a black belt in Shotokan Karate, thus he was able to build on concepts taught during the Sanchin class, relating them to Aikido techniques. His students demonstrated many throws, and all of the participants had a chance to get on the mats and practice some of the Aikido techniques presented.

Last, but definitely not least, we were fortunate to have Mr. Bob Elder, 7<sup>th</sup> Dan and head of the US division of Toyama Ryu provide a cutting demonstration. Bob was a good friend of Shihan Art's for many years. He kindly invited all of the black belts to try cutting. For many of us, this was our first time trying this art, thus a big thrill. I'm happy to report everyone left with all fingers, toes and kneecaps intact.



During the bowing out, each of the head instructors had a moment to speak about Shihan Art. Several aspects of his character stood out from the comments, including his generosity, kindness and his extension of friendship to all. He was a friend to many martial artists in the Central Florida area, and now with three Chito-ryu schools in Orlando, we endeavor as his students to carry on his great spirit and his love of karate-do.

We ended the event with lots of food and beverages. Much camaraderie was enjoyed. Our thanks go to Sensei Elder, Fasen and Acampora for all bringing students and sharing in the training and demonstrations. The presence of you and your students made the event very special. Arigato!

*By: Jamie Binkley  
Yoseikan of Orlando III*



## EXPOSURE



Hanshi and Okusan have done it again! They invited their good friend Sensei Akutagawa to be the special guest instructor for the 2007 celebration of O-Sensei's birthday. During the weekend, we had the opportunity to train with Sensei Akutagawa who spent many years with O-Sensei and lived in Canada to help spread Chito-ryu. In recent years he has been involved with Shito-Ryu. Not only did we have the privilege of training with Sensei Akutagawa during the clinic on Saturday, Sensei Akutagawa made himself available on Sunday at the hombu to continue learning about Chito-ryu karate and technique. What a perfect opportunity we had on Sunday to train along side a Japanese disciple of O-Sensei who speaks English and is able to convey to us more insight about O-Sensei and about the martial arts we choose to study.

Hanshi, Sensei Hawkins, Mathews, Beshears, Kembre, Colling, Elliott, Ludwig, Collis, Johnson, Ditterlizzi, and I did not squander a second opportunity to train with Sensei Akutagawa. Sensei Akutagawa does not consider himself to be a teacher. Rather, he is a student because he is learning also when he expresses to other students his views on the application of technique. Just another example of keeping the beginner's mind! Sensei Akutagawa's kicks and technique were amazing for an elderly gentleman. Hopefully, his secret is karate training! The reality is that it takes some luck to make it to the upper years of life without some sort of medical infliction or other calamity. Unfortunately, I am not going to be able to express the details of all that was covered during this three hour training session.

I could write a lot just about hip snap because we explored this concept, but it is difficult to write about a feeling without being too verbose. Taking a proper stance and performing proper hip snap, not to be confused with hip rotation or hip thrust, involves a feeling that only you can experience by training. We listen to our sempai who attempt to describe the concepts of hip snap by emphasizing proper stance, contraction or compression or tightening of core body mass, contraction of other body muscle, proper posture, breathing, relaxation, et al. On August 14, 2005, at Audra in West Virginia Hanshi sat us down under the big oak tree and told us that it is not hip vibration, but hip snap to execute a punch or other technique while performing Chito-ryu karate. Hanshi told us to refer to it as hip snap, not vibration.

When we begin learning hip snap at the 6<sup>th</sup> kyu level the hips tend to "wobble". Excessive wobble detracts from your body connection so as you continue training try and reduce the wobble to a compact hip snap. Sensei Akutagawa's "furigoshi" explanation, a word that is referenced in the fall 2007 newsletter, was demonstrated in his execution of a punch. His technique was a compact movement and not exaggerated to the point that his hips were moving to the rhythm of Chubby Checker's famous The Twist. Hanshi's hip snap is a compact movement as he demonstrated during the session. Other components about hip snap were discussed, but judging by the size of this paragraph I may be getting too wordy. In short, keep training with a beginner's mind.

You know ju-ji uke? Everyone should who has learned Rohai kata. It is the block/strike, cross-armed technique Hanshi keeps emphasizing is done with the right fist "palm up". This technique is present in Rohai - second move, Chinto kata - moves 8, 11 and 12, Sochin kata - move 25, and finally Sanshiryu kata - move 28. The written descriptions following the pictorial explanation of the kata in our manuals states that the move is a "ju-ji uke" which Sensei Akutagawa emphasized is unique to Chito-Ryu. He said that other styles do not do the ju-ji uke, but rather a cross arm block called kosa-uke.

Sensei Akutagawa also talked about uchi hachiji dachi and how to improve this basic stance. Again, another feeling you can only experience by training. It may also help to have that magical strand of hair as Sensei Akutagawa mentioned. Hair or no hair, listen to your sempai about correct posture and it will help your karate.

Perhaps you are familiar with the term yo-ryu-bi. Sensei Akutagawa explained that the concepts of yoryubi is important for martial arts. Yo meaning the necessity and the center of the being, ryu meaning flow as in the flow of the movement and bi meaning beauty. Yoryubi is the basic tenets of any martial art.

Taisabaki drills were also practiced and I noticed that one particular movement reminded me of my introduction to Tai Chi Chuan when Sensei Lau was a special guest instructor. Sensei Akutagawa called it neko ashi as he combined this movement with suri ashi, yori ashi, chidori ashi to demonstrate side stepping and entering. His movement was very flowing and beautiful.

Sensei Akutagawa demonstrated a kick drill that he referred to as "happo (eight directions) geri (kick)". Using the right leg, it starts with (1) hiza geri, (2) ushiro geri fumikomi, (3) agi ushiro kakato geri kintama (kin), (4) mae geri haisoku kin, (5) mae geri kiagi chudan, (6) yoko geri to the right, (7) yoko geri fumikomi 45 degrees to right, (8) yoko geri fumikomi 45 degrees to the left. Most of these terms are in your manuals or easily translatable.

Hanshi and Okusan have exposed us to quality and compassionate martial arts practitioners. Prepare a list of special guests and I am sure you will agree that we are fortunate to have the opportunities we have had.

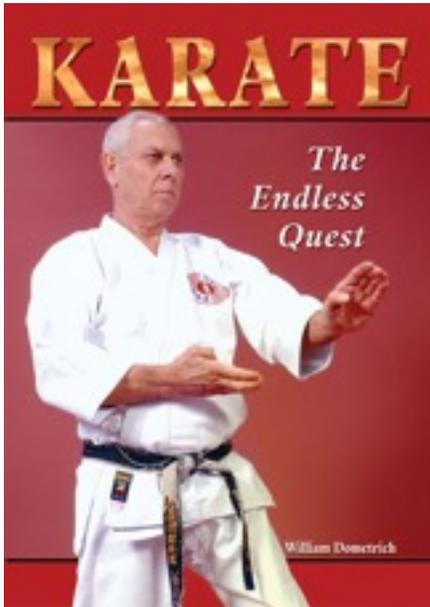
*by Don Schmidt,  
Hombu Dojo*





## Book Review

Karate: The Endless Quest (2007), by William J. Dometrich, reads like a novel. While it is the historical account of Hanshi Dometrich's efforts to learn karate-do; it reads like an exciting novel. It is a page-turner that leaves the reader unable to put the book down until the last page is read. However, I would



caution you against this. Especially if you are a student of karate-do, or a student of any martial art, you will want to read and reread this book each year in order to mine all the nuggets of wisdom contained within.

As the title (Endless Quest) suggests, the story contained within is of Hanshi Dometrich's quest to learn karate-do. And this story follows the journey of the soul which is composed of five stages: The Call; The Search; The Struggle; The Breakthrough; and The Return. These stages are discussed by Moody, 1997, in the text *The Five Stages of the Soul* in this manner: (1) The Call which is when a person hears the call to begin their search. Hanshi Dometrich heard this call in 1950 when he read an article in "True: the Men's Magazine." It was an article about karate-do and led to the next stage, The Search, which is the search to find a teacher. In Hanshi Dometrich's case this led to Chitose, Sensei, who originally refused to accept him as a student, basically stating he only taught Japanese. After a period of time, Hanshi Dometrich was given the opportunity to view a class and to decide if he wanted to join the Dojo. And he did join. The next stage is The Struggle, which is the process of letting go of our old self and taking on the new self. The struggle also consists of enduring trials, passing tests and all the

other challenges encountered during the quest. Hanshi Dometrich's first test began with his first class, and sitting in *seiza*. Surely one of the most painful positions ever encountered by a Westerner. Another significant part of the struggle is the search to find the "real secret" of karate-do. It is the search that will continue for a lifetime, and is actually the Endless Quest. Also, another part of the struggle is belt testing, and there is always the failing of a belt test. The next stage is The Breakthrough which is making a quantum leap into a state of at-oneness with something beyond ourselves. For Hanshi Dometrich a part of the Breakthrough was the realization that he was no longer a Baptist, that he had become a Buddhist. The Breakthrough is personal for each karate-ka. So while this was the Breakthrough for Hanshi Dometrich, each student will have his/her own. Another part of the Breakthrough was the passing of his Shodan test, because it was here that he learned that acquiring this belt only meant that the karate training would now truly begin. The beginning to finding out the true understanding of karate-do. The final stage is The Return, which is going back to ordinariness of everyday. Although, the person who has experienced the Breakthrough is not the same and will never be the same again.

As Hanshi William J. Dometrich demonstrates the return for him was the true beginning of his mastery of karate-do. This can be seen in all the master pieces he has created, in all the students that he has trained. If a student or non-student wants to experience the quest of a true karate pioneer, they need only read this book.

*By: Willie Elliott,  
NKU Karate Club*

Further testimonials:

Reading your book has been very informative, knowing you has been a boost for me in my life.

Thanks for everything,  
Dick Spencer

I read the book, now I want to see the movie. So informative and detailed I could almost sweat at times, when Sensei described the "work outs". He also has a way with words, just as he used his voice like a "whip" in class. Sensei was always "Business" and I was blind to all that was happening in those times. The book was like a time capsule and I relived events and experiences Sensei vividly portrays. We needed an "American Sensei" and we got Him! He is to America what Dr. Chitose was to the Orient. I am thankful for the book, the teachings and memories .

Karate-ka for life  
Don Rigsby



## Celebrate the Memories



L to R: Back row: Beshears, Dometrich, Collis  
Front row: Adams, Williams, Fox

The past is sometimes best forgotten but how can it be when the past helped to shape our lives today. As often happens friendships are formed but often drift apart for one reason or another, however memories are never lost. In early December a few students from the sixties and seventies participated in the celebration of one of Hanshi and Okusan's friendships.

Charles Williams was once a student with the Yoseikan Honbu and he celebrated his eightieth birthday. Attending the celebration were Hanshi and Okusan, Sherry Kembre, Jerry Beshears, Howard Fox, Gene Adams and Terry Collis. Some may recognize the names from hearing of the many travel and war stories of the past. As was mentioned above, the past has helped to shape today; many friendships have helped to mold where we are today and will help to shape our future. Unfortunately, time just keeps on ticking and we often lose touch, however no matter what the cause of distance that comes between people of the past the ties that once bound relationships are often still in existence and the memories cannot be forgotten.

I grew up with the many of those in attendance at the birthday celebration and I enjoyed getting to see everyone from my past. Mr. Williams looked great as did his family, wife Joyce, son Terry and daughters Mickey and Ruth. I remember fondly gathering at their home for dinner and traveling to Key West, Florida.

My family and the United States Chito-kai would like to wish the Williams family good health and many more birthdays to come.

*By: Sherry Kembre  
Hombu Dojo*

## FT. BRAGG HOLIDAY



On 14 Dec 07, the Fort Bragg Yoseikan had our holiday celebration. We routinely use the Town Hall Center for our training and expected to use it for the party since it was our normal day to have the facility. As we drove up to the building, we saw an unusual array of vehicles parked in the lot. The building was already being used for a military holiday gala. We all gathered to discuss where we should have the party. The Gabrysiak's graciously volunteered their home for the occasion.

This turn of event couldn't have worked out any better. Their home was beautifully decorated and there was room for everyone. We all brought an ethnic covered dish to share. It was wonderful to see all the different culture's food mixed onto one table and it was delicious, too. After we ate, we assembled in the living room and had a kid's gift exchange. Every child brought in a unisex gift, wrapped it and left it in a pile with the other gifts. The children then drew numbers to see who would be the first to pick a gift from the pile. All the children were delighted by the presents they received. Afterwards, all of Sensei Po's karateka presented him with a gift. He was given two heavyweight bags to carry his interlocking mats in. After the gift exchange, Tiffany "Samurai" Byrd played Happy Birthday on the piano for Gary Isaacs while everyone sang. The cake was cut and we all reminisced over the last year together. It was discussed that several karateka and family members are still deployed for the holidays. We all wish them the best.

The holiday celebration eventually came to an end. We ate, laughed and shared with one another and are refreshed and eager for the next years training. We definitely need to work off all the extra food we ate. Bring it on, 2008!

*By: Renea Dunn  
Ft Bragg Yoseikan*



**Chito-ryu Banner Flies Over Afghanistan**



In August 2007, Hombu Dojo student David Hewitt flew a mission in Afghanistan

As a Chief engineer on a C-130 he placed a license plate of the United States Chito-kai over the door of the C-130 (as you can see in the photo.) David also presented Hanshi Dometrich with a flag that was flown in the mission. The honbu welcomes Dave back home.

He will continue to fulfill his military obligation with his reserve unit out of Louisville, KY. Dave works for Delta Airlines and plans to continue his martial arts training.

class scheduled at the honbu while he was on leave. He is stationed in Ramadi, Iraq and is there until May of 2008. Since Steve was unable to attend our Chito-kai National banquet in October 2007, where his award of valor from the organization was announced, Chief Instructor Renshi Jerry Beshears presented him with his well-deserved plaque while he was visiting the honbu.

**Holiday Workout Orlando Florida**



The Florida groups came together during the month of December for a holiday workout at James Acampora's Dojo, Yoseikan II of Orlando Florida. Jamie Binkley of Yoseikan III and students along with Alan Regel of St Petersburg Yoseikan attend the get together.

All enjoyed a gift exchange and cookout. Sensei Acampora hosted a Japanese exchange student, Manami, from Hiroshima, during the month of December, who also was there to enjoy the festivities.

**Home from Iraq**

During the month of December, Yoseikan Honbu dojo student Steve Nassano, was granted a 10-day leave to come home. Unfortunately he had to leave on December 23<sup>rd</sup> and didn't get to spend Christmas with his wife and family. Steve took every



Destiny Acampora and Manami





## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Birthdays:**

Kathy Webster - November 1.  
 Sherry Kembre, Renshi - November 21  
 Jerome and John Wellbrock - December 2  
 Barbara E. Dometrich, Kyoshi -December 4  
 Theresa Brandenburger - December 5  
 Paul Webster - December 7  
 Wes Ernest - December 16  
 Laurie Pichon - December 16  
 Lawrence A. Hawkins, Jr. esq., Kyoshi - December 17

**Condolences:**

A legend passes: Dan Ivan, November 11, 07. Bone Cancer.

**Get well wishes:**

Hanshi Dometrich, Hernia operation

**Congratulations:**

Charlie Williams Turned 80 years, December 14<sup>th</sup> A surprise party was held, by his daughters and son.  
 November 10<sup>th</sup> - 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Kai-Shin Karate Canada -  
 Monty Guest founder of Kai -Shin was promoted to 8<sup>th</sup> Dan by Masami Tsuruoka.

**Dojo Visits:**

Wes Ernest and family visited Yoseikan II Orlando the last week of October

Renshi Beshears and Shihan Khalily visited Yoseikan of Neapolitan Yoseikan, Mark Chisenhall dojo on Saturday November 10<sup>th</sup>.

Kevin Drummond from West Va, Yoseikan, visited the Honbu on Sat. November 17<sup>th</sup>

Sgt Steve Nassano serving in Iraq was home on a 10 day leave during December. Steve participated in all classes at the Honbu available to him and went back to Iraq on December 21<sup>st</sup> to complete is tour and will be coming home again in May 2008.

Renshi Jerry Beshears visited and taught class at Anderson Yoseikan on Dec.10<sup>th</sup>

Renshi Steve Wilhelm, Taught a class on break falls and rolls at the Anderson Yoseikan on January 3<sup>rd</sup>

The Yoseikan Honbu was surprised with a visit from Charlie Hass a former San Dan on Dec 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Special Memorial Seminar :** November 10th a special class was held by, Jamie Binkley, Yoseikan III Orlando Fl. James Acampora's Yoseikan II dojo participated

**National Test Board:**

Honbu Dojo: October 19, 2007

Ik-Kyu: Chad Bauer - Northern Ky University  
 Matt Fornaro - Charlottesville, Va.

Sho-Dan: Emma Gage - Charlottesville Va  
 Lauran Fuller - Charlottesville Va/ North Carolina  
 Karen Ruperto - Yoseikan II , Orlando Fl.  
 Michael Shaefer - Honbu Dojo  
 Reggie Corbett - Honbu Dojo  
 Susan Shlegel - Kama Yama Yoseikan

San-Dan: Mark Lingo - Anderson Yoseikan, Oh.  
 Reginna Rossi - Yoseikan II, Orlando Fl.

Yon-Dan: James Acampora: -Yoseikan II of Orlando Fl.

Go-Dan : Warren Pochinski - Ft Bragg North Carolina

**Honors**

Dylan Kembre Son of Renshi Sherry Kembre was honored to march in the Rose Bowl parade in Passadina Calif on New Years Day with the Lakota West High School marching band the Fire Birds.

**New Dojo Location:**

Yoseikan II Cincinnati moved to 10490 Taconic Terrace in Woodlawn November 2007.

**Coming events:**

Kangeiko - January 25/26<sup>th</sup>, 2008

Chito-Ryu Seminar - March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008

Kyoto Japan - April 23 - May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2008

Shochugeiko - July 26, 2008

West Va Camp - August 2008

**The United States  
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