

Newsletter of the American Amateur Karate Federation

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"We are in the age of participation, and the challenge is to figure out how to be responsive, to help catalyze, unleash, channel the kind of participatory eagerness that is there." Hillary Clinton, 2011.

The December 2011 newsletter marks the eighth issue since its inception in 2010. The editorial staff pledges to continue to inform our membership of significant events within the AAKF community. Yet this is also a watershed moment to rally increased participation from our younger members.

An example close to home is the selfless contribution of our productions editor, Ms. Amy Young. Ms Young, member of the S. Atlantic region, has spent countless hours every quarter, assimilating the wide array of content into each issue's final form. Her efforts continue as she takes residence in Beijing since early 2011,

nursing multiple drafts across the Pacific as each issue takes shape. Amy receives no remuneration for her stellar efforts, only the satisfaction of having given back to the traditional karate community for which she is a part.

However, it now comes the time to bid farewell to Amy as she continues her exciting career in Beijing, China.

Seizan welcomes our new productions editor, Dr. Anjali Krishnan. Anjali was born and raised in India and came to the United States for her graduate education. She recently received her Ph.D. in Cognition and Neuroscience from the University of Texas at Dallas and is currently pursuing her post-doctoral research fellowship at the University of Colorado at Boulder. Anjali has been training in Shotokan Karate for more than twenty years, currently holding the rank of Nidan, and has been a member of AAKF since 2006.

Perspectives: South Atlantic Region National Training Camp By Maggie Garrett, Atlanta, GA

To say the least, my camp experience was phenomenal. It was great receiving feedback from all the Senseis and honestly, it's like nothing I had ever experienced before! I loved the fact that every Sensei got to observe my technique and critique it as required, yet, it was not an uncomfortable setting. I was able to express my technique naturally and, most importantly, have fun.

The first day of the camp was *kata, bunkai,* and *embu.* We warmed up by doing several basic *katas* and learned to strengthen our core under Sensei Fusaro. Every Sensei took turn addressing us as a whole and they all had a distinct way of teaching. After each Sensei had a turn, we were divided into smaller groups where we were assessed individually. Every instructor had individual interpretations on performing the *kata* and that was very helpful to applying the *kata* mentally and improve our techniques. We also got to observe several groups doing *bunkai* and *embu,* which I have never seen

before. The two major things that I took away from this session were, how to better adhere to the floor when performing the *kata* and transitions, and strengthening of our core muscles to produce energy.

The next day's subject was kumite. started out much the same as the first day. We went over connection to the floor again and how to apply our core strength. Afterwards, we did a lot of partner work from energy synchronization to one's opponent, to strategy of sparring. Again, all the Sensei had their turn to teach and we were divided once again. While I enjoyed the entire program, I felt over-stimulated. Everybody was throwing masses of critiques at us and it was very difficult to keep up. However, one person's teachings stuck with me. Sensei Tabassi talked on and on about strategy. We were taught the rules of kogo and then he had two people perform kogo. He stopped and asked, "Now, what was your strategy?"

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Richard Kageyama







"...I would go down there with theories on different aspects of the techniques and compare them against Sensei Nishiyama's teachings."

Richard Kageyama









Barry Power

Q & A with *Richard Kageyama*

Seizan interviews Sensei Richard Kageyama, current Executive Director of AAKF.

- Sensei Kageyama, our younger members outside of Southern California are not aware of your long history of training with Senseis Gene Takahashi and Hidetaka Nishiyama. Could you tell us about your traditional martial arts training and your illustrious competitive career in AAKF?
- First of all, I wouldn't call my competitive career illustrious. My first competition in an AAKF tournament was in 1983 at the Western Regional's in a little Buddhist temple in downtown Los Angeles. I was also part of the Western region team at the AAKF National Championship in San Francisco that year, that being my first ever tournament.
- I started Shotokan training in January of 1972 under the direction of George and Gene Takahashi in West L.A. I really enjoyed going down to San Diego every year for the annual summer training. My approach to summer camp is a little different from others in that I would go down there with theories on different aspects of the techniques and compare them against Sensei Nishiyama's teachings. The ones that didn't compute I would disregard or reevaluate to determine where my theory has gone wrong. In this way, I feel I can improve on understanding my own techniques. Now my focus is to convey what I've learned over the years to

- S. When you became AAKF Executive Director earlier this year, what were the changes that you and the Executive Committee made to improve the day-today operation of the national office?
- K. When I was first asked to take on the responsibility as Executive Director, I initially declined the offer as I had no idea of how the infrastructure was set up, nor how the federation operated.

After much reflection, I decided to accept the task as a way to give back to the organization for the incredible journey that I took through karate-do training, and the camaraderie of so many karate-ka's across the nation especially during summer camp.

I want to apologize for the delays and confusions at the beginning of my tenure. My daughter, Anne, and I learned on the job as we went along, so please bear with us. Anne has been a great asset to the organization and me. She handles all club and individual memberships and correspondences pertaining to AAKF. She also keeps track of the finances with the help of Sensei Tabassi. Currently, AAKF is looking into software that can allow online membership registration. Also, AAKF is moving towards electronic media to communicate to members, instead of utilizing the postal service to mail out information.

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AAKF Member Spotlight: Barry Power, St. Louis, MO.

Born and raised in the Newfoundland winning the gold medal that same year. Province, Canada, Barry Power started training in 1982 at age 7 under Sensei Jerry Lee. He held titles of Provincial kumite and kata champion, Canadian Junior National individual kumite silver medallist (1993), and was the 2002 Canadian National team kumite silver medalist.

In 1999 Barry moved to St. Louis, MO and started training under Sensei Chris Smaby. Since then, Barry has routine won and placed in AAKF kumite events, taking the Central region kumite team to first place in 2003, 2004, and 2006, the same year that he was also individual *kumite* champion. He again took first place in individual kumite in 2010. with the Central Region kumite team also

the 2011 **AAKF** National During Championship, Barry medalled in all three individual events, placing first in fukugo, second in kumite, and third in kata. Power was placed 4th representing the US in the International Goodwill Cup competition in Poland, 2011.

Barry was awarded shodan and nidan by Sensei Nishiyama in 1993 and 1998, respectively, and his sandan ranking from Sensei Smaby in 2005. Barry trains with his brothers Brian and Darrell in St. Louis, MO where they currently teach at two central dojo's as well as several schools throughout the Rockwood School District.

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Current Events: AAKF Winter National Training Camp

By Helene Ely, Director, AAKF North Atlantic Region

The AAKF North Atlantic Region hosted the AAKF National Masters Seminar this year in Southampton New York on November 12 and 13, 2011. This karate seminar was a wonderful opportunity introduce AAKF's high caliber sensei's to this region. All of them are long time members of the AAKF and students of Sensei Hidetaka Nishiyama, founder of the AAKF and a legend in the martial arts world. AAKF celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. It was inspiring to see the strong commitment of all the instructors to follow and continue Sensei Nishiyama's work of propagating karate according to his principles.

Sensei Robert Fusaro, 8th dan, from Minneapolis, who started his training in 1955,

headed the other Senseis came from all over the country and the seminar. Sensei Fusaro captivated all the seminar participants with his agility, speed and in depth explanations of proper alignment and full body connection. His passion for karate and teaching was truly inspirational. The event was continued by equally impressive Senseis, Sensei Mahmoud Tabassi, 7th dan, Washington DC; Sensei Falah Kanani, 6th dan, JKA San Diego, CA; Sensei Alex Tong, JKA Dallas, 6th dan, TX, Sensei Toru Shimoji, 5th dan, Traditional Karate Atlanta, Sensei Albert Cheah, 5th Dan, JKA Orange County, CA; and Sensei Richard Kageyama, 5th Dan, Monterey Park, CA.











Helene Ely



Instructors and participants at the AAKF Winter National Training Camp organized by the North Atlantic Region, November 2011

Editorial: Back to the Future Continued

There are enormous challenges ahead for our organization, in order to sustain Nishiyama Sensei's vision of AAKF as a national organization that overcomes stylistic differences for like-minded traditional karatekas to train, compete, reflect, and grow technically and spiritually. The work of the current executive committee has affirmed both a financially and technically viable infrastructure. But senior instructors alone cannot sustain these efforts. Seizan urges our young members to get involved at the local, regional, and national level. Share your

business, technological, and organizational know-hows for the well-being of AAKF, and elevate the values of our membership that are dear to our heart: common purpose, camaraderie, and community.

Alex Tong General Editor



Anjali Krishnan, Ph.D. (far right), our new productions editor for Seizan, at the 50th National Championship, Atlanta, GA as member of the Southwestern region team



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Sensei Richard Kageyama (far left), during Seizan at the AAKF Winter National Seminar



With the budget under control, AAKF was able to defray some of the cost uncured by the athletes when they travel to a foreign country to compete. It's not a lot but I think it's going in the right direction.

S. What are the additional near term plans to further streamline the national office?

K: Once we get the online registration up and running, there isn't much to do except for tracking finances and filing all government documents. We've standardized the *kyu* certificate format for all *kyu* ranks in order to cut cost. As our financial cushion becomes more abundant, we are looking at defraying more of the traveling costs of athletes and officials for cross-country training as members of the U.S. team.

S. It must be challenging for your daughter Ann and yourself to take on the responsibility of running the national office on top of your day career as an aerospace engineer and your family life. How do you and Ann manage to juggle these tasks from day to day?

K: Since Anne works part time, she uses her off working hours doing the bookkeeping, registration and correspondences. The most challenging part of her work is trying to decipher email address on the individual membership applications. The most challenging aspect of being part of the organization is trying to determine the right course of action to take after evaluating the facts, knowing that the decision made will not make everyone happy.

Perspectives: South Atlantic Training Camp Continued

Both sides were silent. There was none! That was when the light bulb lit. You *need* strategy! It was amazing how much improvement there was after that moment. We also worked on timing (*sen, go-no-sen*) which also helped immensely with strategy.

There are so many wonderful things about that camp, but one of my favorite moments was when Sensei Fusaro said I had improved. I remember he was listing things that needed improvement, just like all the other Senseis had done, but then he stopped and said that it was all above my rank. Sometimes in

karate I feel that I am sprinting in place. Everybody's telling you what you did wrong and you feel like the countless hours contributed to karate a week aren't getting you *anywhere*, then suddenly, the path ahead of you is illuminated and you are motivated even more.

This whole experience was remarkable and one of a kind! All I can say is that I hope I can participate next year! I thank everybody that contributed to making this a unique experience and I hope it continues for years to come.



All of the above named instructors have each well over 30 years of training experience. They covered a broad spectrum from kata performance to kumite strategies, each unique in his teaching approach. The information shared by them filled the participants, instructors and students alike with new concepts and teaching ideas and again inspired everyone by their commitment and love to the art. The atmosphere was truly one of sharing and made it worthwhile for the instructors and students that came from all over the country to participate. Feedbacks were very positive. Sensei Jay Nacu, a new member to the AAKF and located in Chicago and Vassil Peytchev, Madison WI, current liaison for the AAKF Great Lake Region, commented that they not only enjoyed the instructions but will also volunteer to host next year's Master Seminar as well. It was also wonderful to see long time students and competitors like Amy Sperling, Minneapolis and Dr. Janet Hethorn, Delaware, still going strong and supporting these events.

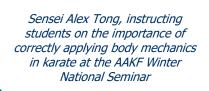
Karate is about continuous learning and improvement, and AAKF is the place to be. The New York students under their chief instructor Helene Ely were more then impressed and proud to be part of the AAKF and their leading instructors members. This seminar left everyone even more motivated to build the new North Atlantic region and become more active in AAKF events. Role models like these karate masters are desperately needed in these troubled times. We are thankful to all the instructors for sacrificing their time to share their karate experience and insights.



Sensei Robert Fusaro discusses body dynamic concepts at the AAKF Winter National Seminar

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Photo Gallery





The study of body connection for oitzuki under Sensei Fusaro at the AAKF Winter National Seminar





Results from the 2011 Pan American Championship



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Upcoming Events: