

We all have friends or relatives who, instead of living and learning, live and repeat. They seem to be saying, "I live in the world AS IF my opponent within is stronger than I am." I would like to work with people who say they want to study at Seido but never start, and those who actually take classes, but then leave for no good reason. Helping people learn to get out of their own way is a great source of happiness for me. Osu!

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# Honbu News

Spring 2002

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World Seido Karate Organization

61 West 23rd Street  
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In Remembrance of Senpai Susan Ramsey



## Upcoming Events

### April

5 Friday  
 Promotion: Adv. Brown  
6 Saturday  
 Promotion: Sandan & Above  
7 Sunday  
 Promotion (Final Day):  
 Adv. Brown - Nidan  
20 Saturday  
 Promotion: All Children,  
 Adult White - Adv. Yellow

### May

8 Wednesday  
 Inter-Dojo Tournament - Kata  
10 Friday  
 Inter-Dojo Tournament - Individual  
 Kumite  
11 Saturday  
 Inter-Dojo Tournament - Team Kumite  
18 Saturday  
 Promotion: All Children, Adult White  
 - Adv. Yellow  
27 Monday  
 Dojo Closed - Memorial Day

### June

6 Sunday  
 Black Belt Clinic  
15 Saturday  
 10th Annual Children's Benefit  
 Tournament  
21 Friday  
 Promotion: Green - Brown  
22 Sunday  
 Promotion: All Children, Adult  
 White - Adv. Yellow



## Message From Kaicho

Dear Seido Family and Friends,

February marked my sixtieth birthday, and I am simply amazed and delighted by the outpouring of good wishes from all my students. I received birthday cards, email messages, and calls from almost every American and International Seido branch. I am especially grateful for the videotape I received at Black Belt dinner. The taped messages—from more than 50 branches in eleven countries around the world—were a wonderful gift, one that I will treasure for many years to come. I am so thankful to everyone who contributed to the making of the tape and to all those who organized and attended my surprise birthday party at Honbu. I am truly touched by all the effort that was made and so thankful that Seido students share such a loving and generous spirit.

Since our 25th Anniversary Celebration, I have felt a great amount of support from the members of the Seido family around the world. Through such support, Seido is now experiencing a great renewal of spirit and commitment. I am truly pleased and grateful for the help of our students and instructors, and for the good deeds of so many people this year. It is a living tribute to the values that are the foundation of our organization.


Earlier this year, many students attended Kagami Baraki. I would like everyone to take a moment to remember the message from this year's training: "Fugen Jikko." The phrase literally means "no words, action," and serves as a reminder that we all must take time to renew our dedication to our training. More importantly, this message should guide us all in acting as sincere individuals and in letting our honest deeds speak for us, instead of our words. With such a spirit as a guide, the Seido family can only grow stronger and healthier.

Again, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to everyone who has helped to make 2002 such a remarkable and enjoyable year.

Osu,



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## Book Review



Karate Kyohon is a comprehensive and detailed instructional manual for the Seido karateka. It's instructions are clear and easy to understand. Each technique is broken down into small steps and well-illustrated by accompanying photographs and diagrams. In addition to basic techniques, Karate Kyohon also includes instructions for several katas, kihon and yakosoku kumites, and even basic and intermediate self-defense. Even it's design, with its small size and paperback binding, makes it easy to refer to during training at home or in the dojo. As a Seido student who began training in 1986, I wish this book had been available back then! But Karate Kyohon's instructional material is very useful even for senior students, who must continue to review and practice basic techniques as much as any new student.

The most powerful part of the book for me was the first chapter on the Meaning and Significance of Karate, especially the section on Karate for Weaker People (page 18), which tells of Kaicho's first encounter with a physically-challenged but spiritually and mentally determined student. Although he had spent many years in his training focused on strength and tournament competition, Kaicho realized that the true value of Karate is that it can help the weak get stronger, not just the strong improve. This is what I love about Seido, and it was very moving to read it in the first section of what might have been a simple instructional book. I hope that readers who may buy Karate Kihon to improve the how of their Karate will also pay equal attention to the first chapter to truly consider the *why* as well.

-Matthew Josefowicz  
Shodan

# SEIDO.COM

What's New at [www.seido.com](http://www.seido.com) by Sensei Akira Nakamura

As most of you are aware, the Seido Honbu website was completely re-designed last October with many improved features, as well as a more user-friendly navigational layout. The introduction includes several historic Seido action photos, many of which have never been seen before. The sequence of photos is flashy, exciting and accompanied by the sound of intense Japanese drums. The intro has been very popular; in fact, we have already received many compliments from all over the world!

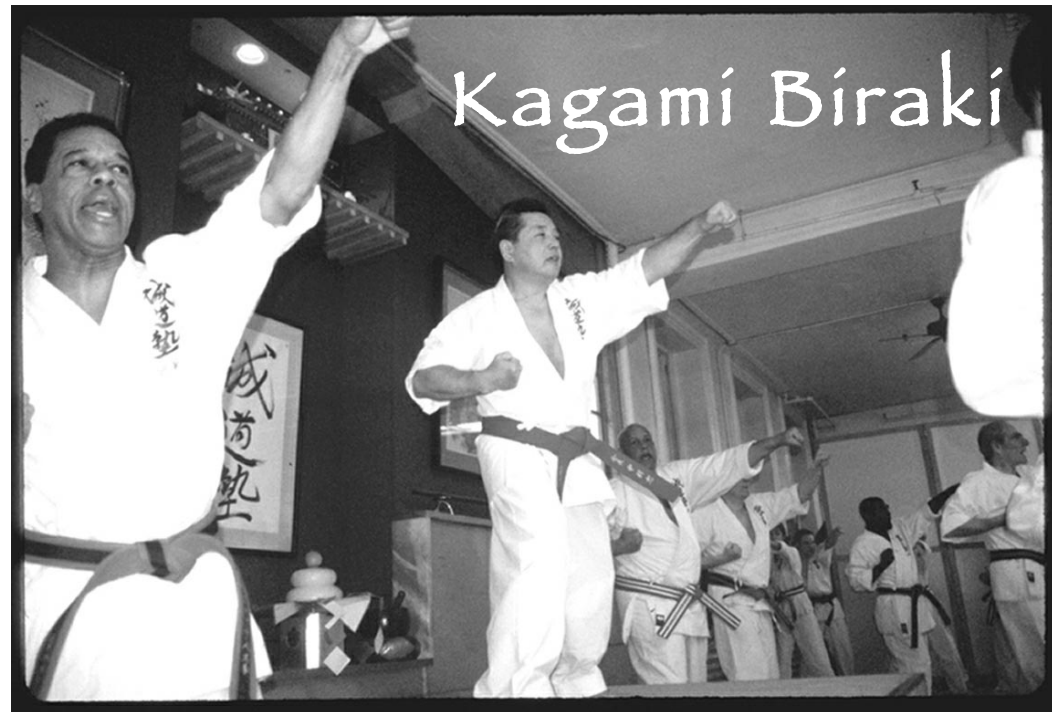
For ease of navigation the homepage is now divided into three major sections: Technique and Spirit, Seido Juku Benefit Foundation and Seido Karate 25th Anniversary Celebration. Each section contains links to new and interesting topics available on the site for the first time. For example, people interested in learning more about Seido can now sign up for a free trial class—online!

Of special interest is "The Seido Lounge," a place where Seido students and community members from anywhere in the world can interact and discuss karate by posting messages. In response to the large number of Japanese students worldwide, Japanese language text is available.

On April 8th, we will be launching a new section under Seido Community called "Honbu Online." In addition to Honbu News there will be photos and video footage from recent events such as Kagami Biraki, Black Belt Dinner and Kaicho's surprise 60th birthday party. It is my hope that through this technology we can help bridge the distance between Honbu and Seido branches. I am confident that as the website evolves, students worldwide will feel a closer connection to Honbu and our organization will be more unified than ever before.

Of course, our new website wouldn't be possible without a great team of volunteers working on the site night and day. The website team consists of Barclay Dunn, Carlo Blackmore and Elle Pelekh. They welcome any feedback or suggestions you might have for the site. If you wish to contact them, they can be reached via email at [bdunn@seido.com](mailto:bdunn@seido.com).

So if you haven't had the opportunity, please take a couple of minutes to see what's new at <http://www.seido.com>.



# Kagami Biraki

Hundreds of Seido students, from the newest white belts to the most senior Shihans, joined Kaicho at the annual Kagami Biraki (literally “mirror opening”) gathering at Honbu early on the morning of the second Sunday of January to welcome the new year and to rededicate themselves to their karate training.

With the third floor filled to bursting with eager karatekas, Kaicho began by settling students into a deep kiba dachi stance and leading them in hundreds of shita-tsuki short punches. The kiais filled the room, and the mirrors and windows quickly steamed up. Despite the limited room, the vigorous workout included kicking and push-ups, with all students pouring all their energy (and sweat) into building a tremendous shared spirit that reinvigorated everyone.

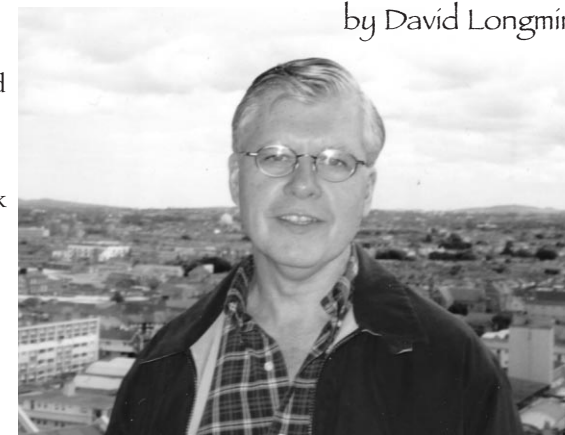
After the workout, Kaicho gave his annual address. This year's theme was “Fugen Jikko.” The literal meaning of the phrase is “no words, action,” and the message is one of dedication and sincerity of purpose. By focusing on our deeds rather than our words, we are more honest; more true to ourselves and to others.

Inspired and invigorated, students and seniors began a new year together.



# How I Became A Green Belt For The Second Time

by David Longmire



Nine years ago I had just passed promotion for green belt. I had also begun a four-year post-graduate training program in gestalt therapy. I got so busy teaching and going back to school that I had to stop studying at Seido. I never took a kumite class before I left, so I mentally turned kumite into a very big deal.

In January of this year I became aware that I was feeling very weak and out of shape and was starting to characterize myself as “old”. I didn't like this state of mind and body, so after walking back and forth past 61 W. 23rd St. about 20 times, I finally found the courage to climb those familiar stairs. Kaicho welcomed me back warmly and told me how strong I looked. I couldn't believe my ears, but I thought if he saw something positive about my ability to study and learn, why ask questions.

I started back as white belt and had no major problems until it became time to consider taking out my somewhat faded green belt from the very deep bottom of my trunk. Then I started “knowing” certain things. I started knowing I was too old and too unathletic. I “knew” I should quit because I could never be the best—A+ or nothing! I came to classes, very ambivalent about being there, and, surprise-surprise, I became very sloppy.

I had signed up to help sell merchandise at the 25th tournament. I half-heartedly took the #6 train to Hunter College. However, while watching the kata competitions, something important happened: I fell in love with karate all over again. While helping sell merchandise, it dawned on me what wonderful people I was working with. After coming home that day, I asked myself, “What if I don't have to be the best at Seido? What if I can be my best? What if I can let myself not know what I'm capable of achieving? What if just go to class, involve myself as best I can in the moment and see what happens? What if I allow myself to take in all the support I'm already getting at Seido? What if I let Kaicho's meditation lectures, that had meant so much to me all summer, really matter?” Not knowing became a lot more exciting than my previous “knowing.”

So after talking to Kaicho and Sensei John, I put on my green belt and finally took kumite class. Then my biggest fear came true. After two classes of having fun and getting off easy, I took a punch to my left upper chest. (Guess who didn't have his hands up!) When I breathed deeply, it hurt for about two weeks. Then it went away. This was hardly the near-death experience I had been imagining. I learned that my “knowing” I couldn't possibly handle kumite class did not confirm my actual experience.

So what do I know now that is real? I know that I'm improving in small increments, that I am capable of studying with a committed attitude, and that I can keep Seido spirit, even when my mind and body are not yet responding the way I want. I also know that because I am (and always will be) two years younger than Kaicho, I really have no excuse.



Kyoshi Ino & Senpai Leigh welcome Maxwell Thomas Maquirang. Born December 15. 6 lbs. 14 oz

Senpai Rafael & Ivelisse welcome Rafael Enrique Baez. Born January 27. 6 lbs. 7 oz

# Women's Seminar

This year's Women's Seminar was held Sunday March 24th. The dojo was filled with Honbu's most senior women, white belts, non-Seido students and every rank in between. This was a day to focus on our training and our relationships with each other. After welcome speeches from Kyoshi Michelle and Kyoshi Maureen, we began a rousing group workout. Then we faced the difficult choice of deciding in which of the exciting clinics we would like to participate. The second floor was filled with kiais as groups focused on kumite and street self-defense; the third floor was utilized to perfect katas and yoga asanas. Afterwards we all repaired to the third floor for closing words from Kyoshi Judy and a heartfelt message from Kyoshi Debbie. In remembering her sister's battle with cancer, Kyoshi Debbie reminded us all that karate training develops a strong will and knowledge of our bodies. If we feel something is physically wrong, we must use that will to seek treatment—and if one doctor tells us we are fine, we must ask a second doctor and maybe a third.

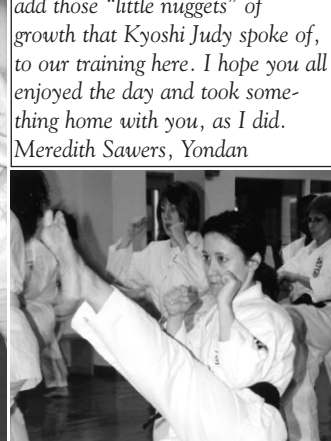
The morning finished with a wonderful breakfast buffet and the opportunity to talk with old friends and new.



*I always have a great experience with Women's Seminar. Being connected and supported by women of Seido. I always learn new things. I love seeing women from the other dojos, students that we normally don't train with. Regardless of how busy I am, I always feel great after the seminar. I never miss it. It's my best spent Sunday. Esther Yang, Brown Belt*



*This was my 6th Women's Seminar. In past years I have felt in awe of the senior women and I still do. Their talent and strength and commitment to Seido Karate is amazing. This year as a workshop instructor myself, I felt in awe of the newer students. I was impressed by the enthusiasm of the color belts. It seemed clear that these are the future senior woman of Seido. Lisa Morris, Nidan*



*I think days like Sunday, when we all took the time to train together, add those "little nuggets" of growth that Kyoshi Judy spoke of, to our training here. I hope you all enjoyed the day and took something home with you, as I did. Meredith Sawers, Yondan*

*I thought the seminar was really uplifting and informative. Despite the early hour I felt full of energy and very welcomed. I went home with a feeling that I'd really learned something—spiritually and physically. Sigi Hammer-Webster, Guest*



*It was very empowering to see so many women working together. Virginia Gonzales, White Belt*

*Each year at Women's Seminar I am reminded of the strength, dedication, grace and resolve of the women who train at Seido Karate. It's a proud moment for me, and I am always mindful of, and grateful for Kaicho's continued recognition of the women's group. Judy Curiale, Godan*

# In Memorial



## Senpai Susan Ramsey

Having begun her training in 1976, Senpai Susan dates back to the infancy years of Seido Karate.

Through her training and dedication, she was a pioneer who helped shape the foundation of Seido. Although hesitating to consider herself a leader, in fact many of us were led by her example of consistent hard training, attention to detail, and a spirit that always pushed forward—even in the toughest of times.

Actively training into the mid-80's, Senpai Susan, then a Nidan, felt a need to focus increasing amounts of her time and attention to her career & growing family. To this day, she remains one of the few students who was able to step away from active training yet remain soundly connected to the Seido system. Each spring she would generously dust off her gi to attend Women's Seminar. As a show of support, you would often see her at special events like Black Belt Dinner and Seido's annual Benefit Tournament.

Understandably, most of you reading this never met Senpai Susan. But perhaps the following best paints a picture of the person we knew—

On a clear crisp day this past February, the church where Senpai Susan's memorial service was held was filled to capacity. Standing room only. Fully half of the hundreds of people in attendance were from Seido Karate. Kaicho & his family, senior students, and even former students

who knew Senpai Susan from earlier days, were there. All these Seido people were in attendance that day to show their respect for this woman—a woman who hadn't actively trained at Honbu for over 15 years, yet who compelled each one of them to come to acknowledge her strength & contribution.

Truly, that show of respect and acknowledgement is testimony to the impact this woman has had on the World Seido Karate Organization. We extend our deepest sympathy to Senpai Susan's husband, Kyoshi Melvin Ramsey, her children Megan and Lauren, and to her sister Kyoshi Debbie Kreiling.

Osu.

—Kyoshi Judy Curiale



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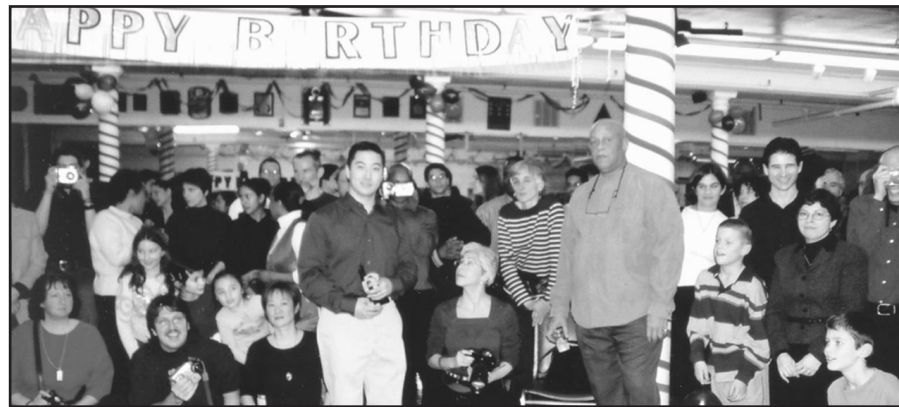
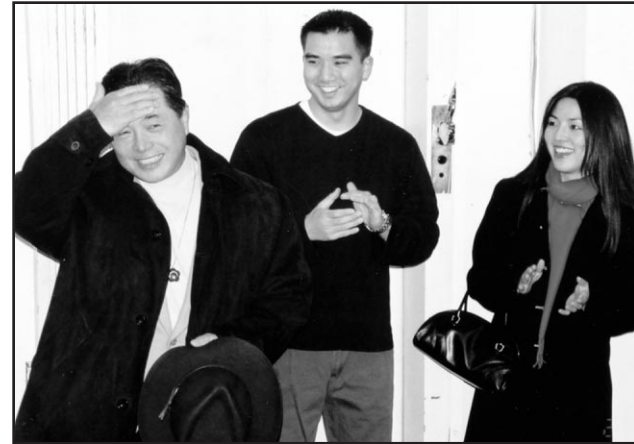
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# Kaicho's Surprise Birthday Party



On February 19, 2002, students, family, and friends gathered at Honbu for a surprise party for Kaicho's sixtieth birthday. Plans had gone smoothly and Kaicho was truly surprised.

Many came early to help decorate, putting up streamers, balloons, and banners. Everyone mingled and waited anxiously for Kaicho. At about 7:30, word was given that he was on his way in. The elevator was set to open on the third floor, and he, Mrs. Nakamura, and daughter Megumi emerged to shouts of "Surprise!" Kaicho was momentarily speechless. Around the room were Kaicho's son Sensei Akira, daughter Kaori, and close friends, along with students and students' families. After recovering from the shock, Kaicho thanked everyone for coming and giving him the biggest surprise of his life.

Japanese students from Honbu presented Kaicho with a red chanchanko (vest) and zukin (hat), ceremonial wear given to Japanese men when they turn sixty. Kaicho also received a red obi (belt) from the dojo in Chiba, Japan. Mrs. Nakamura explained that in Japanese culture, when a man turns sixty he is considered to be "reborn" and starting the circle of life again. Babies in Japan are called akachan, aka meaning red.

Two televisions played the video incorporating greetings from Seido karateka around the world; this video was first presented to Kaicho at the Black Belt Dinner. Food and drink were brought by guests. As an additional surprise for Kaicho, Kuma and Makoto, chefs as well as honbu students, prepared sushi all evening.

In honor of Kaicho's birthday, students donated a total of \$1,020 to Seido Juku Honbu, the fund established for the development of a new and permanent Honbu.



# Use Your Eyes, Not Your Ears by Margaux Gray



A little while ago, on a crisp, sunny morning that quickly turned into an overcast Saturday in New York, Kaicho was preparing a unique promotion class: a visit with the Deaf Program as instructed in sign language by Kyoshi Margaret Welsh. The class was designed to give students an idea of the challenges those with disabilities face everyday. It was a challenge for all, as eyes had to be used at all times since a voice was not. All hearing students were given foam ear plugs and made to fill their mouths with a mouthpiece to simulate the impair-

ments of speech and hearing. Kaicho explained briefly what it is like for the deaf—the need for sign language, lip-reading, fingerspelling, and, sometimes, speech.

There was some initial confusion among the blackbelts while they tried to follow Kyoshi Margaret's sign language, but with demonstrations by the deaf students, it was clear what was desired. At one point, Kyoshi asked students in sign language for the same number of push-ups as their age; some who did not understand began kicking or punching to the amusement of the deaf students! Sensei David Hood said, "Not being able to speak and having to rely on strange hand gestures for communication was very disconcerting." The misunderstandings by the students helped them to see just how difficult clear communication can be. Sensei Rick Spates observed, "It was a challenge. It opened new things and I learned that they communicate in a different way." Laura Tesch from Chicago added, "I don't know sign language, but I loved it; we had the movements of Seido karate which gave us a common language."



This class was just the beginning of the communication barrier breakdown however as Kaicho urged all to further their knowledge and understanding of deaf culture, American Sign Language, interpreting and the Seido Deaf Program. The class ended with rousing round of "applause" à la ASL—the hands being waved vigorously, yet silently in the air. If you could have heard it, it would have drowned out all sound and filled the dojo. For more information go to [www.soundbytes.com](http://www.soundbytes.com).



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# Farewell To Senseis Roger & Roxanne



Close to a hundred Seido students and their families gathered at Honbu on Saturday, March 16 for a farewell potluck party for Senseis Roxanne and Roger Blatz, who are moving to New Mexico this month.

Over 20 years ago they moved to New York City from the Midwest, planning to spend only 5 years here. During these years, both have been active contributors to life at Honbu. Sensei Roxanne has been teaching white belts—adults as well as children—for 15 years; Sensei Roger for 6 years. Sensei Roxanne has been a teacher at the Blind Association Program for the past 13 years and Sensei Roger has been a teacher with the Deaf Program for the past 8 years.

Kaicho presented the Senseis with a plaque honoring their contributions over the years, stating “Sensei Roxanne and Sensei Roger are exceptional members of the Seido family. For almost twenty years, they have dedicated themselves—as students and instructors—to cultivating the values that Seido represents. Both Sensei Roxanne and Sensei Roger strive to give back to Seido part of what they have gained from their training. This selflessness is a living example of the phrase “Ippa Do Ban Pa Sho” (one wave sets a thousand in motion). I can’t thank Sensei Roxanne and Sensei Roger enough for all they have given to me and to our organization over the years. I hope you will join me in wishing these kind, generous, and wonderful people all the best for the future.”

Sensei Roxanne gave a brief speech, saying that although they are moving west to be closer to their families, it was hard for them to make the decision knowing they’d be leaving their Seido family behind.

Look for a new Seido branch in New Mexico!

### Excerpts from Sensei Roxanne’s farewell letter:\*

...June 1985 my fourth class was taken with Kaicho, who tested our overhead blocks with a shenai. I was scared to death, but Kyoshi Gisela was the assistant and she soon took me one-on-one and I felt better.

...I feel that this program [the Associated Blind program] exemplifies all of the true Seido principles of making karate available to all who want to devote their lives to becoming better individuals.

...My children’s program has been the joy of my life. My “kids” and their parents are part of my extended family.

...My white belt class is also a joy. I get to help introduce people to Seido Karate and I want them to enjoy it the same way I do. I want them to get to know each other and develop bonds with each other, this is what makes karate special.

...We have so many people to thank that it would be difficult to name everyone. I do want to give thanks to Kyoshi Gil and Kyoshi Ino who were some of my main instructors and were such an inspiration to me.

\*complete text available at seido.com

### Excerpts from Sensei Roger’s farewell letter:\*

...When we moved to NYC 21 years ago we didn’t know anyone. Now we are leaving so many friends and acquaintances behind. Of course, Kaicho is at the pinnacle of this group of people who have influenced me so much.

...We all learn and grow with Seido Karate. For all of us to do that, it is necessary for others to give their time so that we may learn. Seido uniquely recognizes that there is a need for all walks of life to benefit from karate training. We all come up in an environment where we recognize that fact. Yet, if there are not enough volunteers for these special programs, then they simply do not exist. Sensei Roxanne and I have been actively involved in two of Seido’s special programs for many years. For those programs to continue, volunteers will have to meet a threshold of presence. It is often said that it is good to give back to the system what it gives to you. Please feel free to try to give to the special programs if not the mainstream classes. The reward for giving what you know to others is great. The special feeling you get teaching what you know to the handicapped is beyond description.

# Black Belt Dinner

Over 130 Seido black belts gathered on Friday evening, February 15th, for the Annual Black Belt dinner at Sal Anthony’s SPQR Restaurant. In addition to Kaicho, Shuseki Shihan Charles Martin, Shihan Chris Caile and Shihandai Michael Reeves, there were dozens of kyoshis, senseis, and senpais—including the newest shodans who proudly carried on the tradition of serving the most senior members at the head table.

This year, the dinner doubled as a celebration of Kaicho’s 60th birthday. The highlight of the evening was a video with birthday greetings, sketches, songs (and in one case, push-ups) from Seido branch chiefs and their students from around the city, the country, and the world.

The show included messages from many childrens’ programs and special programs (YAI, Seido Blind Program), as well as a highly-produced musical number from our Hollywood colleagues at Seido Los Angeles. New Zealand Seido branch chiefs Shuseki Shihan Andy Barber and Shuseki Shihan Renzie Hanham opened and closed the show. The first images were of black belts at water’s edge working with bos and Shuseki Shihan Andy walking out of the surf to deliver his birthday message. The video ended with Shuseki Shihan Renzie recalling his first time hosting Kaicho in New Zealand and wishing Kaicho a healthy and happy birthday. Their messages, and those of all the participants in the video, were filled with respect and gratitude-sentiments shared by everyone in the room.

By the end of the evening, everyone was also filled with the outstanding and plentiful food. As always, the event was a great opportunity to socialize with fellow senior students from Honbu and nearby branches.

