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World Seido Karate Organization Honbu

World Seido Karate Organization
61 West 23rd Street
New York, NY 10010

Upcoming Events

May

17 Saturday
Promotion: All Children, Adult White - Adv. Yellow

21 Wednesday
Inter-Dojo Tournament: Kata (Adv. White - Adv. Brown)

23 Friday
Inter-Dojo Tournament: Individual Kumite

24 Saturday
Inter-Dojo Tournament: Team Kumite

26 Monday
Dojo closed - Memorial Day

June

6 Friday - 8 Sunday
Black Belt Clinic Weekend

14 Saturday
11th Annual Children's Benefit Tournament

20 Friday
Promotion: Green - Brown

21 Saturday
Promotion: All Children, Adult White - Adv. Yellow

July

4 Friday - 6 Sunday
Dojo Closed - Independence Day

18 Friday - 20 Sunday
Summer Camp

26 Saturday
Promotion: All Children, Adult White - Adv. Yellow

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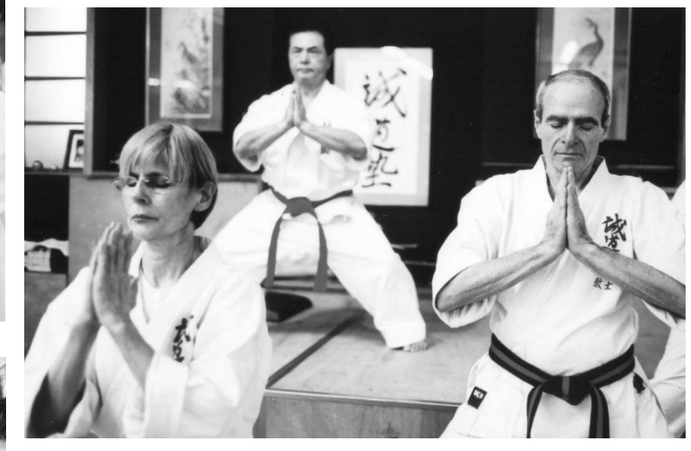
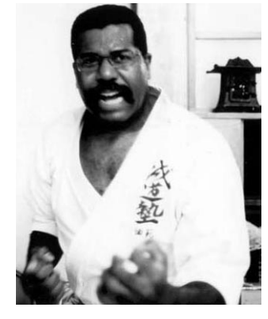
Honbu News

Spring 2003

- Kagami Biraki
- Black Belt Dinner
- Ithaca Tournament
- Women's Seminar





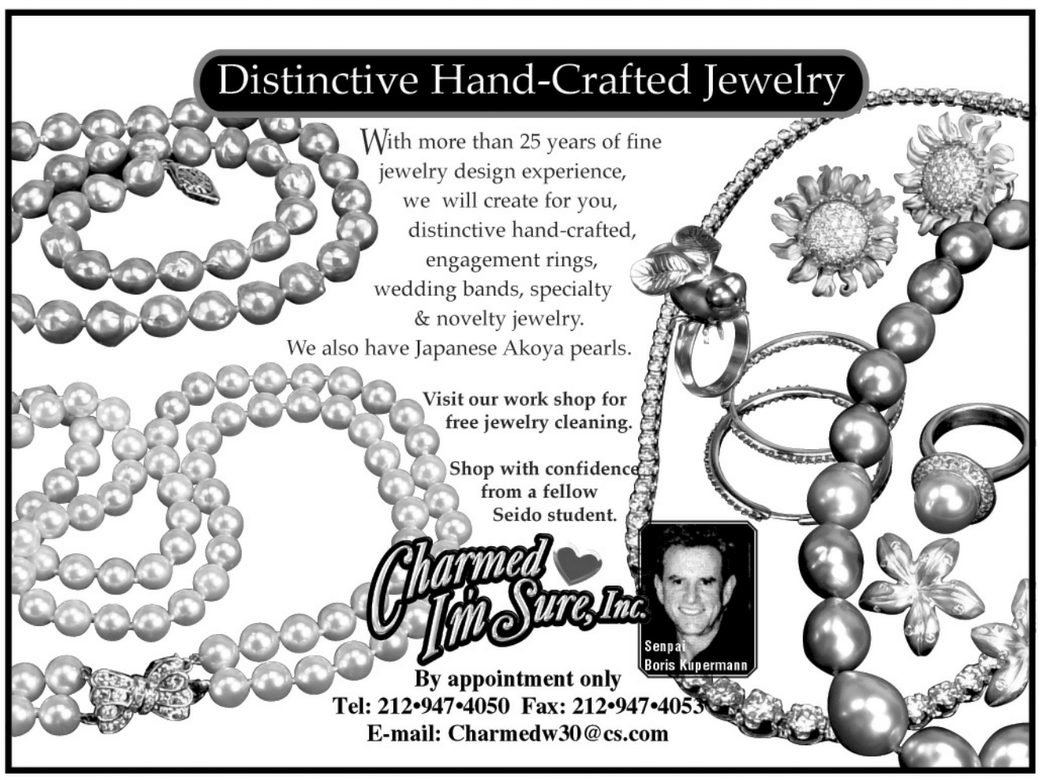
Message From Kaicho

After a very long and cold winter, it is a beautiful feeling to have spring finally upon us. It has been a difficult season for several reasons. Recent events in our country and around the world have brought hardship to many people, emotionally and economically. The war in Iraq was accompanied by threats of terrorism that have made us uncomfortable in our own city. The threat of SARS has many people frightened, particularly those who have family in that area of the world. These crises have made life difficult. Yet through these uncertain times, the Seido family has remained strong. You have come together to support one another through these difficulties. Membership has continued to increase and attendance has been high. I am very proud of this continued dedication.

We have had many successful events so far this year, beginning with Kagami Biraki, where we generated much strong, positive energy. I believe this energy set the tone for Seido students this year. Students must always keep Ichi Nichi Issho: "one day, one lifetime". No matter how difficult things get, we must remain with a non-quitting spirit. There are examples of this non-quitting spirit throughout the Seido family. Shihan Solly faced the terrible loss of his mother and his brother within the span of one month. Yet he has carried on and has continued as a great leader for his family and his students. Sensei Usui, a branch chief in Japan, has had to rebuild his life after he lost his entire home to an electrical fire. His dojo was located within the house and was also lost, yet three days later, he held class outdoors in order to continue his program. Karin Hillman also showed this special spirit when in the middle of her black belt promotion, her townhouse was struck by fire. Although she had to live in a hotel for some time, she continued her black belt promotion with great strength and spirit.

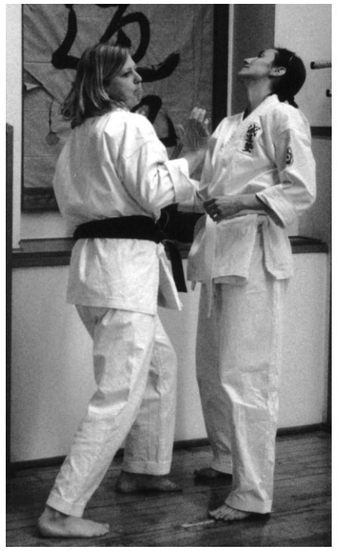
We have many events to look forward to. This year, black belt clinic will be held over an entire weekend, during which we will hold special seminars exclusively for program leaders and instructors as well as those geared toward each level. Seido summer camp should also be a wonderful event. The beautiful 400-acre facility has never before hosted a martial arts event, but was very impressed with Seido. I am thrilled to reintroduce this event to our yearly calendar.

It seems that as time goes on, life gets more complicated. Yet we are karate-ka, which means we must appreciate every day, every moment. We may all think we have a long time to enjoy life, but really, no one knows what the future holds. You must continue to show your dedication and your strong spirit. More importantly, no matter what happens, never give up. I thank you all for your dedication and support. I encourage you to keep a strong spirit throughout all of life's gifts and challenges.



Ah! The Country Life

by Lisa Morris



We all know that the mental, physical and spiritual strength we get from Seido Karate doesn't stop at the dojo. It goes far beyond. I've recently tested how far it goes. Take my new life for instance.

After 21 years of life in the city and 12 years in the fast paced world of publishing, it was time for a change. I no longer got a thrill walking down the crowded streets, dodging people with cell phones glued to their ears. I was starting to bang on way too many cab hoods. I no longer got a rush from setting up photo shoots with glamorous stars. It was getting harder and harder for me to hold my tongue as 'NSync's publicist screamed at me that there was no Chicken Parmesan for the boys to eat at the cover shoot. The line that I had used for the last 7 years as a joke when frustrated with my life no longer seemed as out of the question. "Maybe I should just move to the country and become a carpenter."

I was spending more and more weekends up in the country and finding it harder and harder to head back to the city. The idea of putting in a hard days physical work and then going home to sit on your porch, play with the dog and look at the stars seemed more and more like the life I really did want. But how could I make it happen?

A little thing called "Job Elimination" sent me on my way. I literally skipped down to Human Resources. I took my generous severance package and did cartwheels to elevator banks. Off to the easy life in the country. Horseback riding, picnics, biking, gardens, swimming holes, gorgeous sun sets…

Well here's the reality.

I was lucky enough to get an internship with a contractor. A wonderful, patient guy who is teaching me everything I ever wanted to know about carpentry, construction, painting, electric and plumbing. We've done roofing, siding, installed windows, laid down floors, and turned a garage into a family room. My boss/teacher (of course I've Osu'd him more than I can tell you, leaving him scratching his head) has been good humored when I almost shot him in the head with a nail gun. He just laughed and laughed when I spilled a full gallon of paint on myself. I'm very grateful for his patience.

But here's where the Seido Spirit comes into play. My boss treats me as a total equal with the men that work with us. I appreciate this greatly. But this also means that I'm carrying really heavy things all the time. Guys on the job have offered to help me and my boss always waves them off saying, "She's strong. She can do it". Part of me is proud. Part of me wishes someone else would carry the compressor upstairs. One moment in particular I clearly called on my Seido training was when I was asked to just prop up a huge plate glass window that was probably 8x5 feet and weighed over 300 lbs. The guys were trying to quickly frame out the window while I held onto it. My arms were shaking. My nose was itching. I kept breathing deeply and thinking "OSU! I can do this!" The guys would ask if I was ok, and I squeak out a "Sure! I got it" But ever fiber of me was praying that they'd hurry up and finish.

I've been up on scaffolding 20 feet in the air in the freezing weather with bare hands using metal power tools. I've been on a roof in the extreme heat with the tar melting to my work boots and sweat dripping into my eyes. One day my boss told me that a bunch of guys on a separate work crew asked him where he had found me. They told him, "She's not that fast but, damn, she never stops working". Osu!

I appreciate each and every day I spend up here. I thank Seido and Kaicho for the strength that has helped me both in being brave enough to make this change in my life and to face the hardships that have come with that change.

This morning I set out to start my vegetable garden. Armed with 37 packs of seeds I dug into the earth first with a shovel, then a pick ax. Solid rock. Every single swing was met with a resounding "CLANK!". But did that stop me?

Good thing there's a farmer's vegetable stand down the road.

Women's Seminar

by Robyn Ryan

This year's Women's Seminar was held on Sunday, March 23rd. I was sleepily emerging from a cab and the first person I saw was Kyoshi Michelle. Kyoshi's hug and loud osu did more to invigorate me than my still steaming cup of coffee, so I threw it away and we bounded up the stairs together. The lobby was already buzzing and it was 45 minutes until we began our morning workout. As you can imagine, the locker room was overflowing, but it was wonderful to hear dozens and dozens of warm greetings and "so glad to see you" chatter. Shortly before 8am we started casually stretching on the second floor and promptly at 8am nearly one hundred women faced the shinzen, ready to begin.

The theme for this year's seminar was Growth and Challenge. As Kyoshi Meredith spoke on these subjects I'm sure everyone from the newest student to the most senior black belt reflected on their own challenges and how they've grown by meeting them. Karate is full of emotional and physical challenges and it is wonderful to be in such a supportive environment whenever a new one comes along.

After a preliminary workout to loosen our limbs and kiai our way out of any lingering sleepiness, we were offered an array of workshops in which to participate. Kyoshi Michelle taught falling and rolling techniques; Kyoshi Meredith, Senpai Cindy and Stacee Kopatsis gave kumite tips and instruction; Lisa Morris taught street self-defense; Kyoshi Deborah, Rhetta Aleung, Maya Harty and Karen Tortorici helped students ready their katas for competition; and Amelia Sheftall talked about the principals of Pilates followed by a succession of poses and exercises based on the discipline.

We followed these workshops with a final bow and recognition to those who donated their time organizing the day, those who traveled near and far to attend and to our senior women who paved the way for all of us because, after all, sometimes watching someone do what they love with joy is the most inspiring lead.

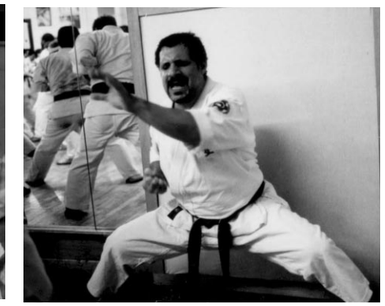
Kagami Biraki

Kagami Biraki is our official kick-off for the new year. This is a day to rededicate ourselves to our karate training and focus on what the coming year will hold.

This year's Kagami Biraki took place in the early hours of January 12th. The third floor was a sea of white gis and the mirrors quickly steamed over as students of every rank were put through their paces in a rousing kiba-dachi-filled workout.

When we caught our breath Kaicho spoke about *Ichi I Sen Shin*, which basically means "I will focus my mind and spirit on one thing." Kaicho discussed how easy it is, especially in a city like New York, to become overwhelmed as we try to accomplish so many things—and in an effort to "do it all" we are oftentimes unsuccessful, then frustrated. He urged us to focus on one goal for the new year and work faithfully to achieve it.

We finished the day invigorated, inspired and ready for the challenges ahead.



Black Belt Dinner

by Daisuke Koh

This year's Black Belt Dinner was characterized by the return of old friends and the welcoming of new black belts. It was held at S.P.Q.R located in little Italy. The menu for the evening included a variety of dishes and flavors, which added to the excitement and diversity of the atmosphere. The combination of good food and great company was exactly what everyone needed, to let down their guard and relax a little. With the world's political climate such as it is, our gathering seemed to take on more significance. As I looked around the room at all of the faces smiling, talking and laughing, I thought of something Kaicho had said to us many times; Kizuna. The energy throughout the room was so strong, warm and welcoming. It was so clear that Black Belt Dinner is not just about expectations, or putting on a black jacket and eating good food. It is a symbol of unity, friendship and tradition, which we should all feel proud to be a part of.

Ithaca/Cornell University Championship Festival

by Chris Harper, Ithaca Dojo

After a sustained standing ovation of applause by festival participants and audience members, Kaicho strode to the table covered with a red cloth sash. He bowed toward a photograph of Maceo Reeves, the late son of Shihandai Michael Reeves. Kaicho then signed the red cloth sash—a memorial of the younger Reeves, a U.S. Marine who died of leukemia.

Senior black belts signed the sash after Kaicho, including Shihan William Best, Shihan Dai Michael Reeves, Shihan Dai Sana Bennett Shihan Dai Don Carter, Kyoshi Judy Curiales, Sensei Olen Lane, Sensei Akira Nakamura, Sensei Edwin Natal, Sensei Jeff Evenson, Sensei Joan Metsch, Sensei Gregory Height, Senpai Mary Wilson Lane as well as the more than 150 Championship Festival Tournament participants. The sash tribute marked the start of the 11th annual tournament, held at Cornell University's Newman Arena on Saturday, March 29, 2003.

"The purpose of the festival is to bring about awareness for the fight against leukemia, particularly to encourage bone marrow donors to register to help those in need," said Sensei Olen Lane, Ithaca Dojo Branch Chief and Director of the event, "and to emphasize the need for more people to reach out to others."

The opening festival ceremonies included the U.S. and Japan national anthems played by flutist and green belt Jessica Love, Sensei Lane's "Seidaiko" taiko drumming group, a white belt demonstration of basic techniques and junior black and brown belts, dressed in traditional hakamas, performing a group demonstration of Boken (short sword).

The tournament included kata, shiai and kumite for adults and children with participants from branches across New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, including Ben Richman, a 10th grade student from the Ithaca dojo and a junior shodan receiving his adult kari shodan belt in a special evaluation test by Kaicho during the festival. Ben, who has undergone numerous operations, has been an inspiration to many Seido members.

The 2003 Championship Festival ended with all participants receiving awards, a special tribute demonstration of Ganki-Sho sai kata by Shihan Dai Michael Reeves and final words of encouragement and hope for the future from Kaicho.

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