

Fundraiser Kick-off Party

The Women's Group is sponsoring a fundraiser kick-off party to raise funds for the 30th Anniversary Celebration in 2006.

Enjoy a night out together dancing, and bring your kids, families and friends!

The event will take place on Saturday May 21st from 8pm to 1am at Stepping Out Studios (37 W. 26th St, NYC). Proceeds will be donated to the Seido Juku Benefit Foundation in the name of the Women's Group at Seido.

"We certainly welcome support for our Kickoff Fundraiser Party", says Kyoshi Judy.

"Donations of goods and services, as well as volunteer help at the party are needed most. We sincerely hope our party will get people excited about Seido's 30th Anniversary Celebration in June 2006. If we can accomplish that, our efforts will have been a success!"

For information or to volunteer, please contact Senpai Maya Harty at maya@seido.com or Kyoshi Judy Curiale at jcuriale@seido.com.

This event is just the beginning. For information on future fundraising events, contact Kyoshi Jim Baum at jbaum@seido.com.



World Seido Karate Organization

61 West 23rd Street
New York, NY 10010

Calendar of Events

April 2005

- 2: Promotion – Sandan & above
- 3: Promotion (final day) – Black Belt
- 23: Promotion – All children
Promotion – Adv. White thru Brown

May 2005

- 4: Inter-dojo Tournament – Kata
- 6: Inter-dojo Tournament – Individual Kumite
- 7: Inter-dojo Tournament – Team Kumite
- 14: 13th Annual Children's Benefit Tournament
- 21: Promotion – All children
Promotion – Adv. White thru Adv. Yellow
Women's Group 30th Seido Anniversary Fundraiser
- 30: Dojo closed – Memorial Day

June 2005

- 3: Black Belt Clinic and Meeting
- 4: Black Belt Clinic and Meeting
- 5: Black Belt Clinic and Meeting
- 25: Promotion – All children
Promotion – Adv. White thru Brown

July 2005

- 4: Dojo closed – Independence Day
- 15: Annual Summer Camp
- 16: Annual Summer Camp
- 17: Annual Summer Camp
- 23: Promotion – Adv. White thru Adv. Yellow

Publisher: Kaicho T. Nakamura
Editor-in-chief: Kyoshi Akira Nakamura
Editor & Layout: Michelle Price



SEIDO.com

Honbu News

Spring 2005



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

- A Black Belt's Journey
- 30th Anniversary Fundraiser
- Spring & Summer Events Preview



A Black Belt's Journey

It has been almost a full year since that Sunday morning when I got my brand new black belt. I don't actually remember the preparation leading up to that month, but I remember the people who helped me prepare. I remember all the advice, the congratulations, and I remember the people who were closest to me during the process. I know that I was physically prepared. I'm pretty sure I remembered my material. So, yes, I was prepared.

The anxiety before that first Wednesday night almost killed me. I remember each of those three Wednesday nights and the anxiety of not knowing what would happen that night.

by Angel Tang

Those days were excruciatingly painful – trying to focus on work during the day, chalking it up to yet another unproductive day. I sat at my desk pretending to work while really I was just riddled with anxiety.

There was no release from it. So I did what any good karateka has been known to do – I cried. I was so worried about the imminent public humiliation. I can't even remember why I was so scared. What would happen if I forgot my material? Would it result in death? Would my family be punished for my apparent sins? In my mind these weren't possibilities but absolute certainties.

> continued on page 6

Message From Kaicho

Dear Seido Family Members:

It is difficult to believe that March has already passed and that we are quickly approaching spring. After a cold winter, the warmer weather has begun to hint at its arrival. Hopefully, it is now here to stay.

2005 started with a strong show of spirit and dedication at this year's Kagami Biraki. Since then, attendance has been steady and class energy has been high. We have also gotten off to a very enthusiastic start in preparing for the 30th Anniversary Celebration which will be held in June of 2006 at Columbia University. Although we still have over a year to continue planning, I have no doubt that time will move quickly. I encourage all of you to get involved in one of the many committees if you have not already done so.

As you may know, this special event will be called *Saiten*, or celebration of togetherness. The focus will not be on the tournament, but on the unique opportunity for all Seido members from around the world to come together and create strong positive energy. The memories from this tournament will launch Seido into the next 30 years.

The anniversary celebration here in New York is not the only one coming up. In September, I, along with Shuseki Shihan Charles Martin and Kyoshi Akira will be traveling to England to join Kyoshi Roger Thyer-Jones in the commemoration of his dojo's 20th anniversary. Then, in December, I will fly to New Zealand, where Shuseki Shihan Renzie's dojo will have been open for 40 years. (Shuseki Shihan Renzie himself will be celebrating his 60th birthday!)

Here in New York, of course, we can all look forward to a number of upcoming annual events. March 20th marked the annual women's seminar. I am very proud that, over the years, the number of women in Seido has grown steadily. I thank the organizers of this important event, which recognizes those women who started this trend and those they inspired.

In May, we will be holding the Inter-dojo Tournament, where members will compete here at Honbu in Kata, Kumite and Team Kumite. Summer Camp, which has once again become a part of our annual calendar, will take place in July. I hope that everyone will take advantage of these special events, as they bring members together in the spirit of celebration and fun.

I hope that you are all enjoying your karate training. Remember, that you do not only study karate, but karate-do, which is a way of life. This means you must always adhere to a proper, moral way of living. This way of living is called *Rei Setsu*, which means discipline and a proper attitude.

In closing, I would like to thank everyone for your hard work and dedication. Seido Karate would not be the strong organization that it is today without your support. I wish you and your families my very best.

Sincerely,



BOARDROOM INC.

281 Tresser Blvd., Stamford, CT
06901-3246
www.BottomLineSecrets.com
1-800-274-5611

qbt | Connectivity
to Bank on...

665 Broadway, Suite 1101
New York, NY 10012
www.qbt.com
212-358-7000

For information on placing an ad in Honbu News, please contact us at info@seido.com

Summer Camp

Last year's summer camp provided a stunning opportunity to train with the sky as our ceiling.

Strong kiais, meditation, and games (including a hilarious tug-of-war) filled our days at Mt. Saint Alphonsus.

The weekend wrapped with skits (including Kyoshi Akira's singing debut), and heartfelt reflections on summer camp by all.

Summer camp will take place July 15-17. Info can be found at Honbu. Hope to see you in July!



Photos c/o Kyoshi John McGettigan

Inter-dojo Tournament

Belts of all levels are welcome to compete in the annual May Inter-dojo Tournament at Honbu. Events include Kata, Kumite and Team Kumite.

Past participants consider the tournament to be a fun, exciting and supportive event.

Training for the tournament and ultimately standing in front of the judges and performing adds a new dimension to your training. But if this year isn't your year to compete, we hope to see you there supporting your fellow karatekas! Osu!



Photos c/o Seido Archives

A Black Belt's Journey

< continued from page 1

Then I got my black belt, and this feeling quadrupled. Within two weeks of having my black belt I knew unequivocally that I didn't deserve that belt. For me it had always been something I knew required qualities I didn't have and could never attain. I had spent the last four years of my life at Seido, and I was finally a black belt. But for some reason it didn't mean anything to me.

Everyone was so impressed, but I didn't feel like it had been any sort of achievement. It had just snuck up on me, and now I was stuck with it.

For the first few weeks I went to class, excited to learn new material. Then I started traveling more and working much more, and I started to feel like I couldn't keep up. Instead of just coming to class when I could, I avoided the dojo altogether. Before long, nine months had passed, and I hadn't even taken 30 classes.

Everyone in my promotion class had gotten their embroidery at six months except me. I still needed more than 30 classes. It was an impossible endeavor. I was ready to quit.

"Whether I felt deserving of the black belt, I was still responsible. My belt is black. I am a black belt."

Finally, after months of complaining about my situation without quitting, I decided to stop the drama and knuckle down. I had to suck it up and face the humiliation and dig myself out of that 30-class hole.

In class when the instructor would say "Senior shodans do this and this", I'd look down at my belt and see that it was blank. Nope no embroidery, I'm still a kari shodan. More public humiliation to endure. I went to class despite this because secretly I liked being a black belt. I really wanted that stripe. I just didn't want to say it out loud.

When I was a color belt I was a dojo addict. My cohorts and I were dojo addicts together. But I suddenly became a dojo delinquent. Yet the stripe really did matter to me. I had to show up and just take the classes. I was a belt chaser filling my class quota (am I allowed to say that out loud?).



Angel (third from the left) during 2004 promotions

Then a funny thing happened. I showed up to class intending go through the motions, but I left class feeling *good*. I realized that I liked taking class. I found things to work on, I obsessed about my form, and I actually cared. It seemed inconceivable!

I took meditation class as part of my 30 class quota. While my intention was to take it as a filler class, I was again hit with more self-discovery. Kaicho said "Be proud of yourself as a karateka." In the context of my anguish du jour, I heard those words, but I wasn't proud of who I am and all that I had accomplished. I was reluctant to accept my role as a black belt. I hated when color belts told me I was a role model. "Oh, I suck, nobody should consider me a role model," I would respond. In reality I was eschewing my responsibilities through self-deprecation.

Looking back I realize that whether I felt deserving of the black belt, I was still responsible. My belt is black. I am a black belt.

The theme for this year's Women's Seminar was commitment. Kyoshi Judy spoke about how commitment means more than showing up to class and training hard. It means finding ways to make Seido meaningful for others. Doing what you have to do only when you want to do it isn't very fulfilling, and that is why I had been unhappy as a black belt.

On Monday March 21, 2005, I received my new belt from Kaicho. It felt SO GOOD. I LOVE LOVE LOVE my new belt! I am an *official* shodan now. I should also mention that the most important part of this process was that I was not alone in it. I could not have gotten my belt without a fellow dojo delinquent, my friends, my seniors, my instructors, and Kaicho.

I should also caveat that I still have many regrets that I have not exorcised, and the weight of my insecurities might keep me out of class at times. But accomplishing something in the face of life's obstacles (even if self-inflicted) really is the source of ultimate satisfaction. I will really cherish being a senior shodan. I might actually even deserve it!!!

Kagami Biraki

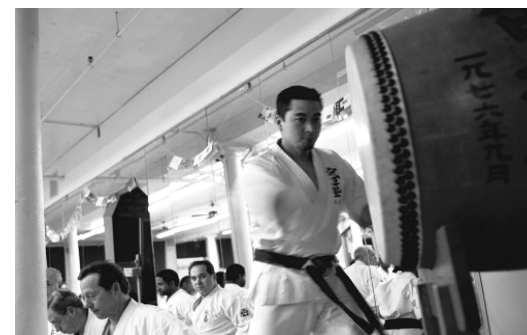
By Shaun Smith

At Honbu on January 9th 2005, karateka from far and wide came together for Kagami Biraki--a traditional celebration for martial artists held on the second Sunday of the New Year. It is a very special annual event for replenishing one's energy and renewing one's commitment to training in the year ahead.

Approximately 300 people attended--thank you, Kyoshi Michelle, for counting! We packed the dojo for a rigorous morning of training led by Kaicho, and for the opportunity to hear his message for 2005.

Kaicho's message for this year is *E SHA JO RI*: we must not take for granted what is around us. We cannot assume that our loved ones will always be on this earth, nor that things will always be the way that they are now.

Even on that day, people who planned to attend couldn't make it at the last minute due to illness and other unexpected events. Kaicho explained that we must appreciate our family, our friends, our loved ones and our health everyday because the reality is that we will not always be together and unexpected things can happen.



Kaicho also counseled us to make the most of every moment. So many of us walk around grumpy or glum or irritated--an energy that feeds on itself and brings us and those around us further down. Time on this earth is too precious. Kaicho's lesson, therefore, is to practice smiling more in the upcoming year and to appreciate our loved ones and our lives.

The day wrapped with each and every karateka greeting each other and wishing each other a safe and happy new year.

It was a great instruction and celebration, bringing a smile to my face and appreciation to my heart every time I think of it. Thank you, Kaicho.



Photos c/o Senpai Udom Surangsophon

Black Belt Dinner

By Amelia Sheftall

This year's Black Belt Dinner was a great success. Everyone in attendance experienced the annual feelings of pride and fellowship, along with the chance to relax and socialize with fellow Seido black belts.

We appreciated and enjoyed seeing Shuseki Shihan Charles, Sei Shihan Chris, Sei Shihan Best, Sei Shihan Sana, and Sei Shihan Reeves, just to name a few of Seido's many respected senior black belts.

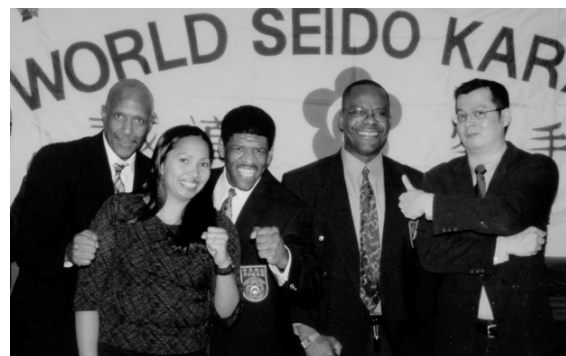
The usual hosts--Sensei Billy and Sensei Vincent--were out of town, so Senpai Bill Belida stepped in this year. His efforts resulted in not only wonderful food and service, but a timely end to our dining so that the real party could begin!

A big thank you also goes to Anthony Macagnone, his manager Miles, and the staff at SPQR where the dinner took place.



Kaicho spoke about the upcoming 2006 Seido 30th Anniversary events and tournament. It will be an incredible opportunity for Honbu color belts and black belts to welcome the international Seido community to New York City with a week of camaraderie and spirited events. We are up for the challenge!!

The evening concluded on an even higher note with memorable stories from various senior black belts about the history of the annual black belt dinner. Many others followed up with humorous anecdotes and even singing! For the record, Senpai John Relkin wins the prize for his rendition of "Strangers in the Night", which brought cheers from the crowd!! Osu!!



Photos c/o Senpai Jean Jaques & Senpai Udom Surangsophon

Junior Black Belt Outing

By Layla and David Luciano

On February 12th 2005, we attended the first ever Junior Black Belt Outing!

Sensei Akira arranged for all of the present and former Seido junior black belts to go to Lazer Park in NYC's Times Square for a game of lazer tag. Junior black belts are 15 years old and under.

After grabbing some slices at a pizza place, we got on the subway and headed for 42nd street in Times Square. We walked a few blocks until we spotted the big "LAZER PARK" sign in flashing lights. When we walked inside, everyone scurried down the stairs already up for some Lazer Park action!

Some of the Lazer Park veterans already knew what to do. For example, they led everyone to the lockers and saved us some quarters by shoving as many coats as possible into one locker!

After putting our coats out of sight and filling out our lazer tag codename cards, we played video games to pass the time before lazer tag started. Bobby got up to the third level in a boxing game. He was so into it that his punches made the game shake (and us too)!

It was finally time to play some Lazer Tag. We were so anxious that we got in trouble for talking every five seconds during the orientation! We split up into two teams, and we wore either red or green team vests. We got so into the lazer tag game that after both of our missions ended, everyone was all sweaty and smelly!!

We had a great time that day. All of the former junior black belts are grown up now, and soon so will the present junior black belts. But we'll always be together. We feel very proud to be a part of the Seido junior black belt family.

Women's Seminar

By Michelle Price

"Commitment" was chosen as the theme of the 2005 annual women's seminar. Most of us thought that we already knew what the theme meant. Yet karatekas arrived Sunday morning from Maryland, Central Queens, Honbu, and other Seido branches to find out.

The day began with a warm welcome from Kyoshi Judy and Kyoshi Meredith. Kyoshi Michelle led the warm-ups and basics, reinforcing that we must commit to each kick and punch in order for them to be effective.

Our spirits lifted by the hundredth hiji mawashi. Every inch of the floor had a karateka committed to executing strong techniques and learning that slowing down and focusing on executing a technique correctly makes that technique precise and powerful when speed increases.

Still we wondered if we really knew what was meant by the theme "commitment". Perhaps we would find out after basics, when we split into four seminars.

"Realizing that we're supported in our journey to become karatekas while we ourselves help make the dojo a place where others can take this journey brings the idea of commitment full circle."

Kyoshi Judy led a session where she and Kyoshi Meredith not only answered questions about training, but also told backstories and their intriguing perspectives. Senpai Amelia taught us in Pilates that having a strong core and focusing on alignment are keys to recovery, preventing injury, and having a lifelong career in any sport.

Kyoshi Michelle polished the black belt women's bo and jo techniques, while Kyoshi Sandy and Kyoshi Maureen explained to mostly new students the intricacies of the Seido system and postures.



But why "commitment"? When we reconvened, Kyoshi Judy shared her thoughts on the theme. While training takes personal commitment to improve one's own kicks and punches, the type of commitment that keeps each of us coming back is our commitment to Seido.

Think about it. We all have different kinds of "strengths"—not just physical, but also mental and spiritual. Whether you're a man or woman, able-bodied or disabled, blind or with sight, one strength is dominant in the beginning as a white belt.

It is at the dojo where we learn from each other and develop other kinds of strengths. This development can only happen if we're committed to making the dojo a supportive place where our fellow karatekas can have the courage to expose their weaknesses and turn them into strengths.

In particular as women, "commitment" is a reminder that returning to put on our Gis to train and fight when at times the physical and mental challenges of becoming a karateka can make us feel alone takes a great deal of inner strength. Realizing that we're supported in our journey to become karatekas while we ourselves help make the dojo a place where others can take this journey brings the idea of commitment full circle.

The day ended with a slideshow of the past thirty years of Seido women, including (as Kyoshi Michelle pointed out) Sensei Jean Battle, the first woman in Seido to make black belt. Looking around, we realized that personal commitment got us here, and our commitment to Seido keeps us here to welcome more into our paths.



Photos c/o Senpai Heidi Grasing