



Toronto Academy of Karate, Fitness and Health Inc.

THE WAY

December 20, 2011

DOJO ACTIVITIES UPDATE 2011/12

Dear karateka and friends,

For those of you who were unable to attend the Holiday Party, I thought I would provide you with a summary of the highlights from the first nine months of the new dojo as well as an update on some exciting events that I have planned for the coming year. It has been a very challenging transitional year for all of us but I think we have done very well in the first nine months.

Here is a list of our accomplishments for 2011:

In April ...

We designed our new crest, which was updated because there was a legal requirement to change the name of the dojo when Konzak Sensei retired.

We negotiated the rental for the Annual Tournament so it could return to being a one day event.

We also confirmed the relocation of the Annual Outdoor Training Day event to Lake Simcoe.

Gillian Lynne-Davies organized an unbelievable retirement dinner on April 30 for Konzak Sensei and family. Many dojo alumni attended from the USA and Canada and the evening also felt like a reunion of many old dojo friends. In fact, there wasn't enough time to see everyone as the evening just flew by. Others who helped to make the evening a success are Janet Lum, Kim O'Connell and Matt Goldblatt. Check out the photos on our Facebook page.

In May ...

For the first time in many years we held a one day tournament on May 15 at Deer Park Public School with over 60 karateka participating, representing all belt levels. The Orillia dojo joined us at the event, as well as some students from the Scarborough program. For the first time ever, photos were taken of all winning rings by David Goorevitch, and put on our newly designed certificates which were then presented to the top four competitors of each ring. Participation Certificates were also designed and given to all karateka who took part. Matt Goldblatt took some amazing photos and videos that day which we will be adding to the new dojo website in the new year. I want to thank the many volunteers who helped to make the day an incredible success and I would like to extend special thanks to Andy O'Breslin, Pietro Cammalleri, David Elder, Greg Berezowsky, and Gino Spatafora for their leadership.

In June ...

We designed and produced 100 new dojo T-shirts with the new crests for summer training.

In July ...

The summer Outdoor Training Day (previously called the "Farm Training") was held on July 9 for the first time at a new location on the beautiful north shore of Lake Simcoe near Orillia. We trained hard all day in a beautiful park setting on the lake and had a fantastic barbecue lunch. Everyone, including extended families, children and guests, had a great time swimming and canoeing at lunch time. There were also four important black belt promotions including Grace



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Kopec who is an energetic 80 years old karateka! I want to thank Gerry Ramsay, chief instructor at the Orillia dojo, for helping me organize the marketing and set up of the event. I also want to thank him for bringing the event to the attention of the local media which resulted in a number of very favourable articles in the local newspapers.

In November ...

Janet Lum invited Gerry Lin, one of our longstanding black belts from the 1970's, to return after 10 years to lead over 60 karateka in an exciting yoga / karate class. Check out the photos on our Facebook page.

In December ...

Tom Battenham and family, Matt Adamson, Gino Spatafora, Ken Smit and others helped to make our annual dojo Holiday Party a great success! We had over 60 people attend the party this year and the food was amazing. The children enjoyed our traditional game of Piñata and we ended the evening with a visit from Santa's helper. Please look for the photos on Facebook soon.

We now have new Membership Cards available in the dojo. Make sure you pick one up in the coming weeks. We should all be very proud to be members of "The Best Martial Arts and Self-Defense School". The new cards serve as ongoing a reminder of your significant accomplishments.

We also have new Promotion Certificates available for each belt level. If you don't have one for your last promotion, just let me know and I'll fill one out for you.

We have promoted over 70 students in the last nine months and we have increased our main dojo membership by 50%. Our growth will continue into 2012 as we are adding another After 4 Kids Karate program early in the new year.

Coming In January 2012:

I will be taking the lead with Janet Lum, Mark Caspi and Robert Steckling to establish the core knowledge that a karateka will be required to demonstrate for promotion at each belt level. We will also be finalizing the New Members' Booklet.

We have been working hard on the new design for our dojo website and I'm hoping we can go live early in the new year.

I am also in the midst of planning a special seminar class which will be held early in the new year focusing specifically on fitness and health. The session will be entitled "So you think you're healthy!"

You don't want to miss this informative and potentially life changing free seminar. Our featured speaker is John Wilson, biochemist and health and nutrition expert. He will talk about why you need to be healthier than most people and you will hear about other athletes and how they are coping with the extreme stress of rigorous exercise. You will learn how to protect your body from this stress and how you can change your life! You will have the opportunity to have your antioxidant level checked and quantified with the revolutionary Biophotonic Scanner recently featured on the Dr. Oz Show. Discover how healthy you really are, and how you compare to others. Enjoy your karate and your life even more by experiencing optimum health and train with minimal joint pain for the rest of your life.

This is just the first of many special classes with guest speakers and instructors that I am planning for the new year and you will be pleased to know that many of these classes will be taught by former black belts from the dojo who will focus on teaching Yoga, Tai Chi, Judo, Jujitsu and other martial arts.



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Coming in May 2012

I am pleased to announce that we are nominating Konzak Sensei for induction into the 2012 Canadian Black Belt Hall of Fame. Their annual dinner will be held on May 26 and will be hosted by Bruce Winstanley from the Calgary dojo. In conjunction with this event, we will be organizing a trip to the Rocky Mountains for anyone who is able to attend. The trip will include the Black Belt Hall of Fame Dinner followed by a week of training and hiking in Banff, Alberta. Banff National Park is one of the most stunning outdoor sites in Canada and the week will include karate training, white water canoeing, horseback riding, golfing, group barbecues as well as a number of social events. I will share more details on this exciting event as our plans begin to solidify.

Coming in the fall of 2012 (or the spring of 2013)

We will also be organizing an exciting trip in late 2012 or early 2013 which will take a group of people from the dojo to Japan to tour the birthplace of karate-do. This trip will visit many famous sites, temples, shrines and will include some karate training.

Being Sensei of our dojo has been an exciting challenge for me and I am very proud of where we are today. In case you don't know, our dojo now includes over 100 members at the main dojo, 400 members in the Scarborough program, 20 members in Orillia, 8 members at Erindale UTM, 6 members at the JCC, 20 members at St Alban's and 13 members at our After 4 Kids program. When you add it all up, that's well over 500 active karate students who train together on a weekly basis!

Finally, I want to give a special thanks to Gino Spatafora and Karin Grubner for their unconditional assistance throughout the year, to Nicole Senyl for all her hard work on our social media efforts, to the program instructors Mark Caspi at St Alban's, Pietro Cammalleri at the JCC, Lisa Kelly and Ken Smit at the After 4 Kids program, Jason Bутtenham and Tadesse Yihdego at Erindale UTM, Daniel Santolini, Michael Stuart, Tom Bутtenham, Chris Bутtenham, and Karin Grubner at the Scarborough program and the class instructors Linda Browne, Laurie Baudot, Andy O'Breslin, Chris Bутtenham, Robert Steckling, Randall Craig, Jordan Kalpin, Karin Grubner and Matt Goldblatt.

While I am singling out these people, I do want to acknowledge that many other people have contributed to the success of the dojo over the last nine months and I just wanted to let you know how much I appreciate everyone's the help!

Well, that's all I can think of right now. I'm sure there will be other things happening in the coming months and I'll keep you posted as new plans develop. Please forgive me if I have left anyone out of the list of volunteers and feel free to contact me if you have any questions or comments.

Best wishes to all and have a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah and Wonderful New Year ... See you soon!!

Bert Freeman
Sensei

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