

SEIZAN®

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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

South Atlantic region, has spent countless hours every quarter, assimilating the wide array of content into each issue's final form. Her efforts continued even as she moved to Beijing in 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 of 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.

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Current Events: AAKF Winter National Training Camp

Southampton, November, 2011

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 12th and 13th, 2011. This karate seminar was a wonderful opportunity to introduce AAKF's high caliber Senseis 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.

The seminar was headed by Sensei Robert Fusaro, 8th dan, from Minneapolis, who started his training in 1955. 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 from all over the country: Sensei Mahmoud Tabassi, 7th dan, Washington DC; Sensei Falah Kanani, 6th dan, JKA San Diego, CA; Sensei Alex Tong, 6th dan, JKA Dallas, TX; Sensei Toru Shimoji, 5th dan, Traditional Karate Atlanta, GA; Sensei Albert Cheah, 5th Dan, JKA Orange County, CA; and Sensei Richard Kageyama, 5th Dan, Monterey Park, CA. Each of the above named instructors has 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.

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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.

S. 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?

K. 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 others.

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-to-day 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, or 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 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 routinely 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 winning the gold medal that same year. During the 2011 AAKF National 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.

Editorial: Back to the Future Continued

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.

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

Perspectives: South Atlantic Region National Training Camp

Atlanta, June, 2011

By Maggie Garrett

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 *enbu*. We warmed up by doing several basic *katas* and learned to strengthen our core under Sensei Fusaro. Each Sensei took turns in 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*, which were very helpful to applying the *kata* mentally and improve our techniques. We also got to observe several groups doing *bunkai* and *enbu*, 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*. It 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?" 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.



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



Sensei Robert Fusaro and Sensei Toru Shimoji supervising the South Atlantic Region National Training Camp, Atlanta June 2011



Ms. Maggie Garrett,
age 13, holds the rank
of 2nd kyu and trains
at Traditional Karate
Atlanta under Sensei
Toru Shimoji



Sensei Richard Kageyama, 5th Dan, is chief instructor of the Monterey Park Karate Club in California. The Monterey Park Karate Club celebrates its 20th Anniversary in 2011.



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

Q & A Continued

With the budget under control, AAKF was able to defray some of the cost incurred 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 certificate format for all *kyu* ranks in order to cut cost. As our financial cushion becomes more abundant, we are looking at supporting 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 Anne 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 Anne 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. My most challenging aspect 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.

Current Events: Winter National Training Camp Continued

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. Senseis Jay Nacu, a new member to the AAKF and located in Chicago and Vassil Peytchev, Madison WI, current liaison for the AAKF Great Lakes 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 than impressed and proud to be part of the AAKF and their leading instructors and members. This seminar left everyone even more motivated to build the new North Atlantic region and to 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 devoting their time and energy to pass along their karate experience and insights.



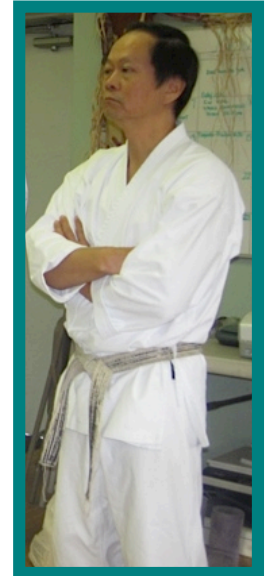
Instructors and participants at the AAKF Winter National Training Camp organized by the North Atlantic Region, November 2011

Photo Gallery



The study of body connection for oi-zuki under Sensei Robert Fusaro at the AAKF Winter National Seminar

Sensei Albert Chea supervising the AAKF Winter National Seminar



Sensei Alex Tong, instructing students on the importance of correctly applying body mechanics in karate at the AAKF Winter National Seminar



Sensei Falah Kanani, Chief Instructor of JKA San Diego, displaying great care by assisting Dean Daly, the youngest participant at the AAKF Winter National Seminar





AAKF Members Excelled in the 2011 Pan American Championship



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Photographs published courtesy of: Helene Ely, Rose Marie Kearney (North Atlantic region) and John Bell (Southwestern Region)

Event	Position	Athlete and Region
Women's Individual Kata	2 nd Place	Soolmaz Abooli Mid-Atlantic Region
Women's Kogo	2 nd Place	Soolmaz Abooli Mid-Atlantic Region
Men's Individual Kata	3 rd Place	Taichiro Kajima Western Region
Men's Fukugo	1 st Place	Sasa Panic South Atlantic Region
Women's Team Kata	2 nd Place	Taichiro Kajima Western Region
Man/Woman Enbu	3 rd Place	Soolmaz Abooli* Laurie Elliot** Priscilla Tipeni*
Man/Man Enbu	2 nd Place	Bryan Hays* Soolmaz Abooli*
	1 st Place	Marcus Wenner*** Bryan Hays*

*Mid-Atlantic Region, ** North Central Region, ***Southwestern Region

Look for a detailed account and photographs about the Pan American Championships in the March, 2012 issue of *Seizan!*