



ISKF Alaska Region Newsletter

Celebrating 25 years of Shotokan Karate in Alaska 1982-2007
November 2007

Juneau Shotokan Karate Dó Club *with Sensei Diana Stevens*

As part of ISKF Alaska Region's 25th year celebration, this month we will highlight the Juneau Shotokan Karate Dó Club headed by Sensei Diana Stevens.

Sensei Yaguchi at Juneau Dojo April 2007

The Juneau Shotokan Karate Do Club was established in September 1983 by Jason Hayes and Diana Stevens. This club started with community schools in the kindergarten room of Glacier Valley Elementary School. It then was moved to the music room at Mendenhall River Community School.

In 1984 Brad Winton a local Judo instructor with the Glacier Valley Judo Club invited JSK to conduct classes on judo's off nights at 9447 LaPerouse, giving them an opportunity to split the expenses and



giving us a chance to have a dojo. During that time the wall in the middle of the dojo was taken down and the floor was expanded by several hundred square feet. While the two clubs shared space we would occasionally have what we called "friendship workouts". The judo students would join us in classes that were modified to allow them a brief training in karate and they would reciprocate showing us various beginning throws and falls. For several years we trained on a concrete floor with thin Styrofoam mats on which vinyl cover tatami mats were laid. It was an interesting surface to practice on, not only did the temperature of the floor seem to match the temperature outside (it was a very cold floor) but with so many people practicing on them, they became uneven and the vinyl developed tears and holes. Sensei Golden used to scold us every time he came to Juneau about getting a new floor and eventually we did put in a flooring system that includes 467 tires laid directly on the concrete floor with joists running on top of them and a plywood floor. Not only did the new floor allow our feet to stop turning blue, but we have a nice spring in our jumps and cushion in our sweeping techniques.

Around 1985 Diana had a job interview with Jim Douglas, who was at that time the Southeast Agent for the Cooperative Extension Service. Somewhere during the course of the interview they talked about karate and from that conversation the Juneau dojo joined 4-H and became the first karate club in the United States to be part of 4-H. She decided not to take the job, but stayed friends with Jim until his retirement and the dojo is still affiliated with 4-H and remains one of the largest 4-H clubs in S. E. Alaska. In the middle 90's Diana became the Chief Instructor of the dojo.

Doug Murray joined the club in 1985. Doug attended college in Fairbanks, studying Shotokan karate with Mr. Charles Scott, where his dad John Murray also studies and is an instructor for Mr. Scott. Doug also trained several years as a teenager in the Glacier Valley Judo Club. Doug has gone on to be a very important part of the Juneau dojo and has been teaching the beginning youth class for many years. Doug's son Phillip Murray is a Nidan and his daughter Malin is a first kyu in the dojo. There are 3 generations of Murray's practicing and teaching karate. Way to go Murray family!

Over the years the Juneau dojo has undergone a lot of spirit building with many significant projects at the dojo including several floor projects, building of bleachers, interior renovations, and a heating & ventilation system and community events such as summertime picnics, special trainings, and clinics that have brought the karateka together

forming a tight knit community. For over twenty years Diana with other female students have taught a self defense class at the local women's shelter AWARE, and several other such classes as requested within the community. Because of that continuity and spirit the club has always been able to send a strong contingent to the Alaska Summer Camps in Anchorage and to several Shotokan National tournaments. In addition the Juneau dojo has been very fortunate to have frequent visits by Masters Okasaki, Yaguchi, and Koyama in addition to our statewide leader Sensei Nakazawa.

The Juneau dojo is now 24 years old and has had many students pass through its door. We are now occasionally getting people we taught as kids bringing their children to the dojo. We have a solid core of karateka, many whom have been with us for quite a number of years. It's a special place, this dojo and we have played an important role in this community. We

are grateful to be part of the karate family known as the Alaska Region and equally as grateful to be affiliated with ISKF. More information about the dojo and pictures can be viewed at our website

www.juneaushotokan.org

Jason Hayes works on the tire floor at the Juneau Dojo.



Calendar of Events 2007 and 2008

2007

November:	Nov 10	Winter Karate Championship, Lathrop High School Gym 9AM,
	Nov 30	Kyu Testing at UA Fairbanks
December:	Dec 8-9	Dan and Kyu Testing and Clinics, Master Yaguchi , Anchorage
	Dec 10	Dan and Kyu Testing and Clinics, Master Yaguchi , Juneau
	Dec TBA	ISKF Alaska Board Meeting

2008

January:	Jan TBA	Kan-Gei-Ko
March:	Mar TBA	ISKF Alaska State Tournament
	Mar TBA	Testing and Clinics, Master Yaguchi – Anchorage and Juneau
April:	April 5	Alaska State Open Championship, Anchorage
August:	August 14-17	Alaska Summer Karate Camp, Birchwood — NEW Date!
October:	October 8-14	ISKF Shotocup, Toronto, Canada — NEW Date!

Alaska Team Places in ISKF National Tournament

Members of the 2007 ISKF Alaska National Team participated in the ISKF National Tournament in San Francisco, on October 20 and 21, 2007. Tournament results are below:

Senior Kata	3 rd Place	Dan Rogers
Senior Kata	1 st Place	Phillipia Holness
Senior Team Kata	1 st Place	Charles Holness-Mike Tavoliero-Dan Rogers
Youth Team Kata	1 st Place	Kyle Lindsey-Charles Wood-Jackie Wood
Adult Brown Belt Kata	2 nd Place	Heather Foltz
Adult Brown Belt Kumite	3 rd place	Heather Foltz
Youth Kumite Women (Age 16-17)	3 rd Place	Rebekah Martin
Youth Kumite Men (Age 14-15)	2 nd Place	Kyle Lindsey
Youth Kumite Women (Age 14-15)	2 nd Place	Jacquelyn Wood
Youth Kumite Men (Age 16-17)	2 nd Place	Charles Wood
Collegiate Kata	1 st Place	Ben Cheeseman
Women Team Kata	3 rd Place	Amber Nakazawa-Jennifer Frazier-Janet Hagensieker
Women Team Kumite	3 rd Place	Amber Nakazawa-Janet Hagensieker-Phillipia Holness
Youth 3 rd Kyu and above Kumite (Age 12-13)	3 rd Place	Ethan Kramp

Schedule for Master Yaguchi Training and Testing

Saturday, December 8:	4:00 PM	Testing at the Alaska Shotokan Karate Boys & Girls Club
Sunday, December 9:	2:30 PM	Instructor Trainee Clinics at Eagle River Dojo.
	4:00 PM	General Training Clinic at Eagle River Dojo. Following training we will be celebrating Master Yaguchi achieving 9th Dan! Please be sure to mark this date.
Monday, December 10:	(evening)	Juneau Dojo

The Way Continues, an excerpt by Sensei Catherine Pinch

Sensei Catherine Pinch is close to publishing her book, *The Way Continues*, about Master Yaguchi. Below is an excerpt where Master Yaguchi tells a story about Master Nakayama and katas.

For many years I preferred sparring to *kata*. *Kata* consists of “forms”, a pre-arranged series of movements emulating defense against multiple attackers. Someone seeing a *kata* for the first time might think of it as a kind of dance, but it's actually a form of self-defense training for the mind and body. Each move has one or more possible defense and counter-attack applications. There are beginning, intermediate, and advanced *katas*. In Shotokan, we have fifteen official *katas*, originally developed or incorporated from other styles by Sensei Funakoshi, the founder of Shotokan karate, and eleven other recognized *katas*.

Practicing *kata* seemed like a waste of time to me. It was stupid. It was for girls. Sparring was much more exciting, fun and "macho".

One time, though, even though I was training very hard and sparring every day, I began to go into a slump of sorts. I had a hard time creating the focus, shock and power I was used to. My punches felt slow and soft compared to where I had been. I trained and trained, and sparred all the time, trying to re-create the feeling of speed and power, but could not bring it back.

Finally, desperate, I talked with Master Nakayama.

"Sensei, I have lost my focus and power.... I feel terrible when I train. What should I do?"

"Work on *kata* and basics," he said.

"But I have been sparring and training very hard."

He repeated, "Forget the sparring. Work on just *kata* and basics for a month. Then come back to me."

So I did. I practiced all the *katas*, from the most basic, beginning *katas* up to the advanced *katas*. Every day I practiced basic techniques, stances, hip rotation, kicks and punches, and did no free sparring. Although it is always difficult to judge oneself, I began to feel some of my old quickness and power return.

Then I competed in the 1962 All-Japan Tournament on Kyushu Island. The last round before the finals we did a *kata* named *Empi*, which is a quick, fast *kata* with a jump at the end. When the scores went up, I had the highest score! I couldn't believe it. To my very great surprise, I was in the finals in *kata*! I had scored better than some of the most well known *kata* practitioners in Japan!

In the finals, we could choose which *kata* we wished to perform.

Having never considered myself to be a *kata* competitor, I hadn't planned to be in the finals. Not only that, I had never thought about an individual *kata*. When my name was called, I walked into the ring.

Sensei Nakayama was the head judge for the finals round. He looked at me, and said, "Kata name?"

I stood there, silent. A *kata*? I hadn't realized I would have to decide my own *kata*. Sensei Nakayama said again, a little louder, "Kata name?"

I stayed silent. I was standing in front of a large crowd of people, and the room was silent, everyone waiting for me to announce my *kata*. Sensei Nakayama leaned forward and said quietly, "Any *kata* will do – just say the name!"

Now I was really flustered. I couldn't think of a *kata*. "I don't have one," I choked.

Sensei Nakayama said again, quietly but becoming irritated, "Just say a name! Quickly. Everyone is waiting!"

Finally a name came to me. "*Nijushiho*!" I said.

Master Nakayama looked relieved. "Begin," he said.

And I did the *kata*, *Nijushiho*. I came in at fourth place that year. Who knows – I might have done better if I had not hesitated for so long.



Happy Thanksgiving!

Special greetings from Regional Director Nakazawa



Anchorage Mayor Begich (third from left) with the Board and Instructors of the Alaska Moving Arts Center. This photo was taken at the 20th Anniversary Celebration of the Alaska Moving Arts Center on October 6, 2007

This upcoming Thanksgiving ISKF Alaska Shotokan is thankful for many things. Normally, after a really BIG year as we had in 2006, organizations usually experience a low energy year because so much was needed to gear up for our hosting of the Nationals, but not us! In addition, with the Independence of ISKF from JKA, many long time friends are now on the 'other side of the fence' so to speak. But through these activities and experiences, I am very pleased that we have the following things to be give thanks:

- This year has been a pivotal reworking and rededication of our ISKF Alaska mission of "to keep training."
- We have continued our 25th ISKF Alaska Anniversary year in great form.
- At the 2007 Master Camp we had one of our largest representations by ISKF Alaska with 16 members and 5 of our Alaska dojo represented.
- It was very rewarding to see Janet Hagensieker, a long time contributor to ISKF Alaska, receive the Meritorious Service Award from ISKF President Judge Ribner and Master Okazaki at our 2007 Nationals in San Francisco.
- Ms. Hagensieker, along with our women's team of Amber Nakazawa, Phillipia Holness and Jennifer Frazier again finished again among the top women's open division teams in both kata and kumite by winning 3rd in both events.
- This year, due to their strong showing in the San Francisco Nationals, we have several members that are eligible to participate in the 2008 Shotocup to be held in Toronto. Compared to the past when we had only one person on the ISKF US National Team which was limited to our Junior Team members.
- The 20th Anniversary event for the Alaska Moving Arts Center and the Eagle River Dojo was very successful. Special thanks to AMAC contemporary dance instructor Stephanie Wonchala for MC'ing the event; Sensei Pat Andrews for helping out with the auction; Susan Rembert, Andy Rembert and Janet Hagensieker for putting in long hours in making sure the food arrangements went smoothly; to AMAC board VP Thomas Wood, a former karate-ka, for contacting numerous businesses in Eagle River in support of our 20th Anniversary Event; and to David Horst for making sure everything went smoothly. So many people helped out and made contributions, therefore — AMAC Executive Director Becky Hesser and I want to say THANK YOU!!!

I can also report that Sensei Holness and Heather Foltz, of the UAF dojo, are recuperating very nicely following injuries suffered in the National tournament.

A very tough opponent is cancer. Long time Alaska Summer Karate Camp Director Susan Jones and our good friend Sensei Todd Hardy in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, are both showing much progress. Our thoughts and prayers for a speedy and complete recovery are with them.

Lastly, I would like to say my family and I sincerely appreciated the notes of condolence from ISKF members far and wide regarding the passing of my mother, Mitzi Nakazawa. Some of her happiest moments were when she came to Alaska and helped out in the early days of our Alaska Summer Camp. A safe Thanksgiving to you and your family.

— Sensei Nakazawa