



# THE PEACEFUL DRAGON

MARTIAL ARTS, Tai Chi, YOGA & MORE!



## Newsletter December, 2006



[www.thepeacefuldragon.com](http://www.thepeacefuldragon.com)

704.504.8866

### REMEMBERING RACHEL

#### A Disciple-Level Student Known for Her Caring Way

Many of us have been saddened by the loss of Rachel Pennington on Wednesday, November 8, as she returned from Florida with Bob Runge's dad and her son, Rob. She was cut off by another driver and died of head injuries. Like her husband, Bob, also a Disciple-Level student at The Peaceful Dragon for several years, she was most often in a group of fellow students sharing a pot of tea, enjoying a Sunday brunch, and demonstrating her abundance of spirit to those around her. That she did this so quietly and unselfconsciously, made it all the more remarkable that she was usually looking at some part of you that you couldn't see, yet leaving you warm and comfortable with her greater understanding of you. With her copious knowledge of herbal remedies, and her special insight, she was always ready with a useful comment or effective advice for someone. Rachel sometimes would be angry about something, and one always felt the righteousness of it, not of herself but of her concern for the welfare of others and the circumstances they were in. Her beauty was in her actions and always apparent.

#### Fellow Students Remember Her Lovingly

"One couldn't find a more gentle soul. I'll always remember her astrology readings, her infinite wisdom of alternative medicine and herbal remedies. The world is less without her in it."

"Rachel only had one mood that I ever saw – pleasant, kind and loving."

"Rachel always had a smile, inspite of difficulties and always a genuine caring for others."

"About six years ago, Rachel came to my birthday party at my old apartment and gave me a Christmas cactus and at this moment it is thriving so good and it is sitting by my dining kitchen window. Before the day she passed away, I was having breakfast and I just happened to looked at the plant and reminded me of Rachel and how vibrant it looks. I will miss her so."

"Rachel was a kind and generous person; she always had a smile and kind word to offer. I will always remember her fondly."

"Rachel had a warm heart and a giving spirit. She was a genuinely nice person who will be missed."

“Every time I spoke with Rachel I learned something. About health, life, or about myself. She was truly wonderful and will be missed by many.”

“Rachel Pennington was a wonderful human being that gave so much and asked for nothing in return. She spent her whole life helping and caring for others. A living saint! It was an honor to know her during this lifetime and I hope to meet her again someday!”

Indeed, Rachel had set aside her study at The Peaceful Dragon to care for her severely diabetic son Rob, and for Bob Runge’s father who suffers from Alzheimer’s. And, as her focus was continuously outward to others, it is fitting that her memorial here should honor her nature and include those whom she cared most about.

## News From Bob

Bob Runge relates (November 30) that “These first few weeks are very busy in my trying to take care of Rob, Dad and all of the personal business that has to be done, but I can respond to emails in the early mornings or evenings when things are quieter.

Dad is doing real well, but is feeling the loss of Rachel and gets emotional at times. Rob, my step-son, is recovering, but is still in the hospital in Savannah. He has a pin in the right leg, a screw in the right ankle, the left shoulder joint had to be replaced and tonight they are putting pins in the right shoulder which was also broken.” He hopes that Rob will be moved from Savannah by around the eighth as this will reduce the wear and tear of commuting.

Bob says that Rachel is never far from him, “but it is like trying to touch the wind. You can feel it, but you cannot hold it and you still want to. Now I must use and practice what I know and see beyond the duality of the physical world. She is not gone, but Rachel and I have both changed and so has the *form* of our relationship and I must compensate for those changes.”

He has a story about how he and Rachel were driving across Florida after a class one evening when they were first married. He was not working at the time and so Rachel wanted to pay for the gas; but Bob was driving her car and felt he needed to pay. So they argued about who would pay, and in the midst of his stubbornness Bob says he just pulled off the interstate at an exit without paying attention. It turned out there was no return ramp back to the interstate, no gas station, and they were in a bad section of town. Wandering around, they continued to argue about who was going to pay. Suddenly, it dawned on Bob that nobody can give if nobody is able to receive, and he turned to Rachel and said “It’s okay, you can pay.” And in the rearview mirror, he saw an on-ramp and across the way was a gas station.

Bob recognizes that people have a need to give; to make offering and personal gesture; and he says all he can do is accept and bow. Bob is an old soul, as they say, about which he comments that someone once told him that an old soul was just a slow learner. Rachel was cremated on Friday, November 24, and so she is with Bob in a simple, beautiful cherrywood raised box. With so much to do for the living, a memorial service will not happen until after the end of the year. Bob hopes to give everyone a couple of weeks notice.



**Bob wants and appreciates your thoughts and condolences. Phone calls and email are welcome. Home: 803.684.7111 Mobile: 803.322.3067 Email: [robertrunge@earthlink.net](mailto:robertrunge@earthlink.net). Address: 6 Cleveland Avenue, York, SC 29745.**

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Holiday Schedule

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We will be closed for all classes and the After School Program on Christmas Eve Day and Christmas Day, Dec. 24 and 25, and New Years Eve Day and New Years Day, Dec. 31 and January 1. Children who normally have classes on those days should make up their classes at the Tuesday makeup class; adults can make up their classes any other time during the week.

## MASTER SBARGE'S MONTHLY DISCUSSION

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**Wednesday, December 6**

Our traditional year-end discussion is an open forum. All students are encouraged to come with their comments, observations and questions about anything related to Asian culture or martial arts in general, our school or lineage in particular, or their own practice. A lot of valuable sharing comes out of this. At 7:45pm, following Tai Chi. Please join, won't you?

## ADVANCEMENT ACCOLADES

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Congratulations to the new members of our Advanced Training Programs. In the Children's Program, several children applied for and were accepted into the Black Sash Club, and many have been accepted into the Leadership Club. Several adults are currently under consideration for the Disciple and Mastery Programs, and we'll announce all new members next month.

## REMINDER FOR STUDENT SERVICES LINK

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Kathy Crowe, among other things in her very busy job, maintains our web page. She observes that the student services page is looking sparse, with only a few entries, two of which are services from her and her husband David. She emphasizes that the page <http://www.thepeacefuldragon.com/studentservices.shtml> is for the benefit of all students. Adult students, and the parents of any child who is a student at *THE PEACEFUL DRAGON*, can request a FREE listing for their business or service. If you want to use this service, please email [info@kathycrowe.com](mailto:info@kathycrowe.com). Please note that acceptance of your listing does not imply endorsement. Listings and images may be edited, cancelled or refused. Ads for selling stuff will continue to be a separate column in the newsletter unrelated to this service.

## CACMA TOURNAMENT RESULTS

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With competitors from about 20 kung fu and tai chi schools from as far away as Georgia and Maryland, Peaceful Dragon students made a terrific showing. Congratulations to all from Sifu, and thanks to those who came out to support them. Following are the results for Children's and Adult Divisions.

## **CHILDREN'S DIVISIONS**

### ***Intermediate 8 – 11 Open Hand Forms***

First Place – tied, James Adams and Cody Eidsness

### ***Advanced 8 – 11 Forms***

First Place – Emi LeNeave

Second Place – Alex Wright

### ***Advanced 12 – 14 Forms***

Second Place – Cole Mumpower

Third Place – Nicole LeNeave

### ***Weapons 8 – 11***

First Place – Emi LeNeave

Second Place – Cody Eidsness

### ***Weapons 12 – 14***

Third Place – Cole Mumpower

Fourth Place – Nicole LeNeave

### ***Two Person Forms***

First Place – Nicole LeNeave and Cole Mumpower

Second Place – James Adams and Cody Eidsness

Third Place – Emi LeNeave and Alex Wright

### ***Sparring 8 – 11***

First Place – tied, James Adams and Cody Eidsness

## **ADULT DIVISIONS – KUNGFU**

### ***Intermediate Form***

First Place – Robert Beaver

### ***Advanced Form***

First Place – George Lu

Third Place – Carrie Chun

Fourth Place – David Block

Fifth Place – Jessica Henry

Sixth Place – Kevin Deal

### ***Adult Two Person Form***

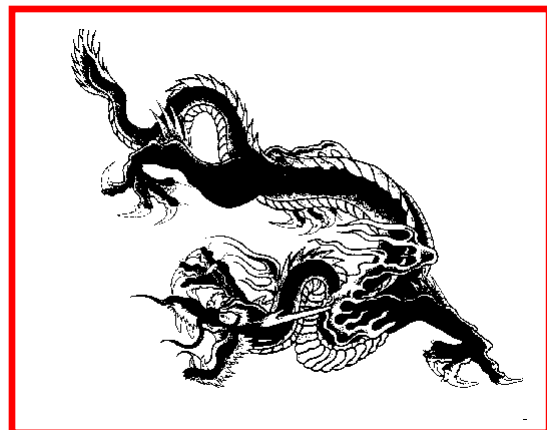
Second Place – Robert Beaver and Jessica Henry

### ***Intermediate Weapons***

Second Place – Robert Beaver

### ***Advanced Weapons***

First Place – George Lu



### **Sparring**

Second Place – George Lu

### **Grappling**

First Place – tied, Carrie Chun, Robert Beaver

## **ADULT DIVISIONS – TAI CHI**

### **Intermediate Form**

First Place – Robert Beaver

### **Advanced Form**

Second Place – George Lu

Third Place – David Block

Fourth Place – Kevin Deal

Fifth Place – Dale Guadagna

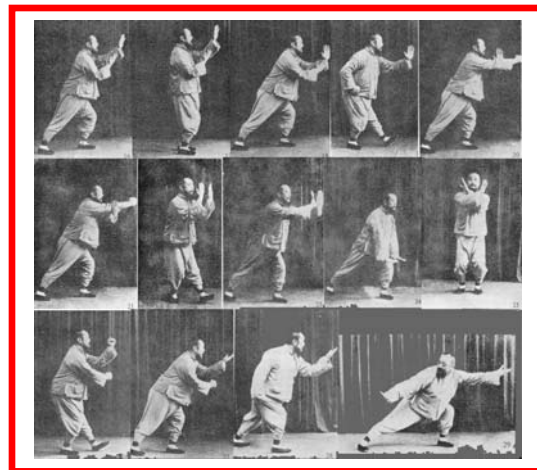
Sixth Place – Jessica Henry

### **Tai Chi Weapon**

Second Place – David Block

Third Place – George Lu

Fourth Place – Carrie Chun



### **Push Hands – Combined**

First Place – George Lu

Second Place – Robert Beaver

Third Place – David Block

Fourth Place – Dale Guadagna

## **EVENTS**

### **CHINESE NEW YEAR DINNER**



This is the premier event of every year, an occasion for sharing, celebration and recognition with fellow students which no A.C.C.S. school student should miss at their *Guan*. At *THE PEACEFUL DRAGON* this year, our dinner will be catered in the Design Center in downtown Charlotte on Saturday, February 17. Details will be provided later. The main thing is to mark your calendar, especially if you are a one-year student eligible to take part in the ceremony to become a formal student of the school, which can only happen after one year of dedicated study.

### **VIDEOS PROMOTE SCHOOL**

You may have noticed a film crew shooting this past week. We're making promotional videos for our Children's Program, Adult Program, and Lyn's Boot Camp. Shooting will continue on and off for the next week or two. Thanks to those of you who took the time to be interviewed on camera. Eventually, there will be links to two-minute spots on our website, and five-minute spots will be used on the premises by our marketing staff.

# WISDOM OF MA FOREN

## REST



There is no question that we always have to practice hard in order to be good at the martial arts, but we also have to rest and give our bodies a chance to heal from the aches and strains as we push ourselves towards perfection of mind, body and spirit. When we rest we should also take advantage of this time to further educate ourselves about the history of our arts, or to read all we can. We have to focus the mind with time set aside for meditation and contemplation. We can also relax by viewing movies that have some relationship to our arts, such as various martial arts movies, history movies, etc. All these things relax us as well as entertain us, while providing more fuel for our thoughts.

Hard work is not all on the Gwan floor, it is hard work off the Gwan floor, too. As for myself, I study the Chinese language in my free time, which is anytime I have a few free minutes to open the books and learn. Others relax with Chinese calligraphy, or Chinese paper cutting or painting, music etc. Anything that enriches your life and relaxes your mind is good, except for endeavors which serve no useful purpose.

There was an experiment done not long ago where three groups of people were asked to improve the mind and body. The first group was asked to just practice their art for a period of time during the day, then forget it and relax. The second group was asked to mentally think about their forms, to see themselves doing them, but not actually moving, just thinking and visualizing. The third group was asked to do nothing but watch the forms being done by others, with no active participation. The results were highest for those in the second group. This group used their minds to see themselves doing the movements. This is no surprise to me. As all the great masters said, if you want to be good, use the Yi mind and focus on your forms or techniques as much as you can. See yourself doing them and the next time you physically try you will be surprised at how much you remember.

Role playing in the mind is indeed a powerful tool and can serve you well if you just calmly sit and mentally visualize yourself doing your art. To the mind it is real, no movement is needed, just focus on your art. Overdoing is as bad as under doing, neither will serve you well. So the bottom line is learn how to rest, but do it in the right way and your body will recoup and your mind will improve. In short, work hard and rest hard, but do it all with some kind of mindful purpose.

To receive email directly from Grandmaster Ma Foren, go to <http://kungfu.org/requestform.shtml> and include a brief thanks for Grandmaster's generosity. Make sure the punctuation and spelling on your email address are correct. And don't forget to add Grandmaster to your approved senders list. If your computer is blocking email, get help from someone locally; Grandmaster Ma cannot help you with these matters.

# DRAGON CLASSIFIEDS

PLANNING TO BUY something for the house or garden, indulge a favorite pass-time, get that hot new DVD or the latest gadget? Consider shopping through Amazon first where you'll find competitive pricing on everything PLUS – through arrangement between *THE PEACEFUL DRAGON* and Amazon – a percentage of your purchase goes to help our school flourish. Get what you want and support your school too!

Go to <http://www.thepeacefuldragon.com/books.shtml> and use Search Amazon.com for the products you want.



What could be more fun than a party right here! That special someone and guests will enjoy lots of fun and games (including the obstacle course), plus an exciting martial arts class. All guests receive a gift certificate for a FREE private introductory class and the birthday boy or girl gets a special present from The Peaceful Dragon! Read all about it at:

[www.thepeacefuldragon.com/birthdayparties.shtml](http://www.thepeacefuldragon.com/birthdayparties.shtml)

Your ad could be here; text and graphics, a scan of your business card, or artwork you submit. The cost is \$5 for students, \$10 for the public. Give your copy to George, or email [maibu@carolina.rr.com](mailto:maibu@carolina.rr.com). Pay at the front counter, by the month.

## NOW brand Supplements a BARGAIN!

Save 20% off retail for these top quality vitamins, minerals and food supplements. Carefully researched and chosen by Debra and Sifu, NOW products are an exceptional benefit for students and invaluable to combat stress and enhance overall health. Orders are placed the first of each month and ready for pickup in a week or so.

## SAVE on Quality Martial Arts Supplies and Weapons

Get 10% off retail for high quality martial arts supplies direct from Martial Arts Mart and waive the shipping and handling fees. Many items are on display for you to try sizes and styles, and any item can be ordered from their extensive catalog.

Fill out one of the Order Forms at the display area near the restroom and give it to our staff along with a 50% deposit at our front service counter. Orders will be placed the first of each month and merchandise will usually arrive within one week and be ready for you to pick up.