



www.thepeacefuldragon.com

TRADITIONAL MARTIAL ARTS
THE PEACEFUL DRAGON
FOR THE CONTEMPORARY MIND, BODY AND SPIRIT
Newsletter
January, 2007



704.504.8866



New Year Message from Master Eric Sbarge

First, a heart-felt wish for a Happy New Year to you. If you celebrate Christmas or Hanukah I hope you had a great holiday, and if you don't celebrate, I hope you at least got a couple of days off to enjoy with your friends and family.

I don't get a whole lot of days off, but in some ways I feel like it's always a holiday because I come to work and get to be with our students and families and friends. If I had more days off, I'd still choose to be here doing my best to teach and pass on the arts that I love and cherish.

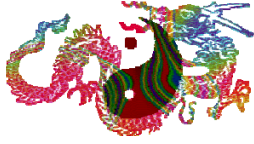
The mission of The Peaceful Dragon remains unchanged: To offer the finest instruction possible in authentic and traditional Shaolin Kung Fu, Tai Chi, Shuai Chiao, Ch'an Meditation, and Chinese Yoga. But as we've grown, the responsibility has spread from just mine, to that of several instructors and assistant instructors. I want to take this opportunity to recognize and to thank the various instructors and assistant instructors who make it possible for these arts to be taught to each of our students here.

We have eight fully-certified instructors, each of whom has trained with me consistently for at least ten years. They are Aaron Arden, Wes Adams, Eric Mullis, Beth Rudowske, Michael Ballantyne, Hank Kadel, Lyn Addy and George Lu. Each of these instructors dedicates the time to lead at least one class and in some cases two or three classes a week here, as well as continuing their own advanced training with me both in the arts and in teaching methodology.

Then we have a solid group of dedicated Disciple Level students and Disciple Candidates who assist the instructors. These students have trained with me at least five years and of course continue to train intensively. As assistants they are discovering for themselves that teaching is one of the best ways to maximize your own learning. These assistants include Kathy Crowe, David Crowe, Dale Guadagna, David Block, Matt Lail, Barbara "Dale" Saufley, Carrie Chun, Frank Tippet, Tim Myers, and Kevin Deal; and finally, Sunny Kasoji, a hard-training student who assists with our children's classes.

When I taught a few private students in New York, and then a handful of students in the park here in Charlotte, I could do it all by myself. But as we've grown, it has only been due to the dedication and sincere efforts of these instructors that it is possible to offer a high quality of instruction to all of our students, both children and adult.

Each instructor is unique: Some have greater skills in one area and lesser in others; but what they all share as a group is a high level of intelligence, an eagerness to learn, and a genuine fondness for and desire to help fellow students. I think you will be hard-pressed to find a more talented, experienced and caring group of instructors under one roof. I am humbled to be their teacher.



Children's Programs

PROMOTION CEREMONY

THE CHILDREN'S PROMOTION DEMONSTRATION AND CEREMONY WILL TAKE PLACE ON SATURDAY, JANUARY 6TH AT 1:00PM. We hope that all of our students will have earned their stripes in class and met the attendance requirement to be eligible to promote to the next sash level. By now you should have filled out the application to promote; if you haven't, see George Lu right away in person, or via email at george@thepeacefuldragon.com, or call 704-504-8866.

This is an important day for young students – please make every effort to arrange your schedule so your child can participate. If it is impossible for you to be there, the make-up day is Thursday, January 18th at 5:30pm.

TEENS AGED 14 AND UP MOVING FROM CHILDREN'S PROGRAM TO ADULT'S PROGRAM

WE ARE ADVANCING OUR FIRST ANNUAL GROUP OF ELIGIBLE STUDENTS FROM THE CHILDREN'S PROGRAM TO THE ADULT KUNG FU PROGRAM. Children who have turned 14 by January of 2007 will move into the Adult Classes starting the Monday after our Chinese New Year Dinner Celebration. This process was announced early in 2006 and will continue once each year as young students become eligible to move.

Please note the following guidelines for the transition:

- Teens will continue to wear the colored sashes indicating their current rank. All advancing teens are either in the Black Sash Club or Leadership Club, but as students in the adult program they can wear any black t-shirt, red t-shirt or the purple Leadership Club t-shirt to class.
- Teens will continue to work towards the Junior Black Sash, which takes an average of five years to earn and roughly correlates to reaching the adult Black D Level (brown chevron). After that, they will train to reach Adult Black Sash, either as a Certified Instructor or *Gao Shou* Level, which takes approximately ten years to reach.
- Teens will train in the adult curriculum, and test every six months with adults. However, they will follow the Children's Program ranking system rather than the Adult ranking system. Note: If they are under Purple Sash level they will move up two ranks every six months; if they are Purple or above, they will move one rank every six months, in accord with the Children's Ranking System.
- When Black Sash Club members move to the adult program, they leave the Children's Black Sash Club and move into the Adult Disciple Program. However, when Leadership Club members move to the adult program, they remain Leadership Club members through age sixteen and then become members of the Adult Mastery Program.
- The tuition for the adult programs is the same as the children's programs: The Adult Disciple Program tuition equals the Black Sash Club tuition, and the Adult Mastery Program tuition equals the Leadership Club Tuition. To know which classes and what other benefits your child is now eligible for, see <http://www.thepeacefuldragon.com/adultbenefits.shtml> and scroll down to either the Disciple or Mastery program.
- ***THE PEACEFUL DRAGON*** encourages teens to take as many adult styles and classes as they are eligible for, depending on whether they're in the Disciple or Mastery program. They are required to take a minimum of two Shaolin Kungfu classes per week to stay on their promotion schedule.

- To ease the transition, we are encouraging new teens to take either the Wednesday evening Shaolin class, or the Saturday morning Shaolin class, or both, along with any other classes. These two classes are led by Master Sbarge.



Announcements

SCHEDULE CHANGES BENEFIT MAJORITY

WE'VE MADE A COUPLE OF SMALL CHANGES TO THE CLASS SCHEDULE FOR ADULT STUDENTS. The new schedule took effect Tuesday, December 26th. The times for Monday night classes were changed by 15 minutes, and the Thursday night classes were flip-flopped. You can see the revised schedule on-line at <http://www.thepeacefuldragon.com/schedule.shtml>. We try to keep schedule changes to a minimum and only make them when it is necessary or beneficial to most students. We regret any inconvenience these changes may cause for a few.

ADULT PROMOTION TESTING SCHEDULED

ADULT PROMOTIONAL TESTING WILL BE ON SATURDAY, JANUARY 20TH AT 1:00PM. This is for all adults in Tai Chi or Shaolin Kungfu who are ready to move up to the next rank level. For additional details, see <http://www.thepeacefuldragon.com/adulttesting.shtml>. Remember to register for your testing at the front counter no later than January 13th. *THE PEACEFUL DRAGON* does not charge any fees for testing.

CONGRATULATIONS

THE FOLLOWING STUDENTS WERE PROMOTED IN NOVEMBER.

Philip McLeod, Alexander Japit, Justin White and Nathan Holben moved to Shaolin Block B.
Phyllis Robinson and Brenda Soltys moved to Tai Chi Block B.

NEW VIP PASS PROGRAM Will REWARD OUR STUDENTS AND BENEFIT *THE PEACEFUL DRAGON*

THE PEACEFUL DRAGON is pleased to announce our new **VIP Pass Program** for friends and family members who may have an interest in learning the authentic martial arts, Zen meditation and Shaolin yoga taught at our school.

Traditional training in these arts is not for everyone. The rewards are great, but as you know, the training can be rigorous for the body, challenging for the mind, and demanding on time and resources. The only way to find out if these arts are right for a person is for that person to try them through our 6-month or 12-month Introductory Trial Programs.

Since not everyone chooses to continue after their initial Trial Program, *THE PEACEFUL DRAGON* must continually promote our school to find new students with the interest, desire and dedication to train in these arts. The **VIP Pass Program** gives you *dedicated students* a convenient way to help promote our school – by referring people you know – and rewards you handsomely if they decide to join.

How the VIP Pass Program Works:

- We've printed a large quantity of *Adult VIP Passes* and *Child VIP Passes*, which are available at the front counter. Take as many of these passes as you like, as often as you like, and hand them out to friends or family members whom you think will have an interest in our classes and will be good fellow students.
- Put your name on each VIP Pass that you give out. **For every four people who come to an introductory class and then join our school using one of your VIP Passes, you will receive a year of training for free!**
- Your friend benefits by saving \$25 on tuition using the VIP Pass.
- We will keep all of your VIP referrals in your folder and notify you when you accumulate four (we recommend you also keep a record as a cross-check). You will then have an additional year added on to your Tuition Agreement.
- And here's the best part: **there is no limit to how many VIP referrals you can accumulate.** Every time you accumulate four more, you get another year of free training. You could train for free for years – maybe even the rest of your life – if new students continue to join *THE PEACEFUL DRAGON* as a result of the VIP Passes you give out to them.

MARTIAL ARTS SUPPLIES ALWAYS IN STOCK

SINCE OUR MARTIAL ARTS SCHOOL HAS GROWN AND WE HAVE PHASED OUT THE RESTAURANT AND ASIAN GIFT SHOP, WE'VE BEGUN TO STOCK A COMPLETE SUPPLY OF MARTIAL ARTS, YOGA AND MEDITATION EQUIPMENT FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE.

We will keep in stock all of the required weapons, training and sparring equipment, which you may need for our various programs, all at competitive prices. Because we are now stocking items, we will no longer place monthly equipment orders. If there is ever something you want that we don't have, we recommend ordering on-line from www.martialartsmart.com or www.centuryfitness.com.

NOW VITAMINS AND HERBS STILL AT 20% DISCOUNT

Though we have phased out the monthly ordering of martial arts supplies, **YOU CAN STILL ORDER TOP QUALITY VITAMINS, HERBS AND HEALTH FOODS** from the **NOW** company each month. Carefully researched and chosen by Debra and Master Sbarge, items from the **NOW** product line are an exceptional benefit for students and invaluable to combat stress and enhance overall health. Simply get the catalog and order form at the front counter, choose the products you want, and turn your order form in. *THE PEACEFUL DRAGON* places orders once a month, and you get 20% off their retail price plus shipping is included!

2007 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS NOW POSTED

CHECK OUT THE 2007 EVENT SCHEDULE at <http://www.thepeacefuldragon.com/specialevents.shtml>. In addition to the special events schedule, this year we have added an addendum schedule to help students better keep track of various monthly and bi-monthly classes, discussion groups and the like. See this helpful schedule at <http://www.thepeacefuldragon.com/inhouseevents.shtml>. Please review the schedule and mark your calendar now for the many exciting events and opportunities awaiting you.

CORRECTION

The Adult Division Tai Chi Advanced Form Fifth Place winner announced in last month's CACMA Tournament results should have been Dale Saufley. Congratulations, Dale. The Editor regrets the error.

Events

ANNUAL CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATION NEAR

FEBRUARY 17 FROM 6 – 11 PM AT THE DESIGN CENTER, 1800 CAMDEN ROAD

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The PEACEFUL DRAGON Chinese New Year celebration provides a deep connection between our practice of martial arts, honor for our lineage, love for our Teachers, respect for the culture that strengthens and renews us, and the camaraderie we share as students, friends and family.

Because of these things, this event is not just another seasonal social gathering, but the pivotal event of our cross-cultural year. New students are formally recognized; the efforts and advancements of many others are acknowledged; special toasts abound amidst the seriousness, silliness, reflection, joy, and anticipation of what is to come in the next year. And we'll have a deejay! See a [map and directions](#), a schedule of events and a dinner menu.

2007 is the Year of the Pig and is especially significant for Sifu and for our *guǎn*. You will want to make your required reservation early. Tickets will be available starting January 5 with sales closed February 11. The cost is \$42.00 for adults, \$21.00 for children 11 and under.

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YEAR OF THE PIG MAY BRING TOLERANCE AND PEACE



The Pig type is usually an honest, straightforward and patient person. Modest, and preferring to work quietly behind the scenes, this person is always ready to offer support when others are ready to give up. Reserved with those they do not know too well, time and familiarity reveal a lively and warm-hearted person behind that mask of aloofness. Pig types have a wide circle of acquaintances, but few close friends who understand them. It is easy to put trust in a pig type because they'll never let you down. Pig types particularly revere nature.

There is a tolerant and peaceful side to their character. Such people are never afraid to allow others their freedom of expression; they do not want to cause arguments and if there is any way to avoid arguing, they will probably take this option. They are not weak, however, and if the situation forces them to fight, these people will rise to the occasion. People of the Pig type are the most admired by others.

There is nothing to keep anyone from enhancing their own fine character with attributes from the Pig. Why not include this in your goals for the year and in your hopes for the world?

2007 Kick-off Discussion

WHAT BETTER TO START THE NEW YEAR THAN NEW – OR RENEWED – GOALS? Join your fellow students on Wednesday, January 3, following Tai Chi class, for a discussion entitled: Developing Your Personal Training Routine(s). Most people need structure to be effective. Learn how others plan their training. Find out what might work for you. With a good plan, you'll be on your way to make 2007 your best year yet!

Ready, Set, Go to China!



It's definite – *THE PEACEFUL DRAGON* is hosting a tour to China for all interested students, friends and family members! Start saving and planning now!

The tour will last approximately 10 days: we will depart Charlotte on Friday, September 28th, 2007 and return on Tuesday, October 9th, 2007. The planned itinerary includes touring Beijing's Forbidden City, the Great Wall, the terra-cotta soldiers at Xian, and training at the famed Shaolin Temple. Master Guolin, 34th generation Shaolin monk and successor to the current abbot, will accompany us on the trip and give us an "insider's tour" of the temple.

The exact itinerary and cost is still being worked out with the Travel Agents and will be available by March 1st. For planning purposes, we estimate the cost to be between \$3000 to \$3500 per person, including airfare, hotels, meals, and ground transportation. If you think you would like to go, now is the time to get or renew your passport if you don't have one. We will provide additional information on vaccination and visa requirements in the next month or two.

Wisdom of Ma Shrya

MIND



Our minds control us, but in reality we should control our minds. This is the root of our problems. We think too much, we listen too much, we question too much, we assume too much, we expect too much, we want too much, we talk too much, we do too much. The list could go on and on, but I think the point has been made. All these things come from the 'comparing and wanting' mind. The secret to bliss is to drop everything.

The mind is in the brain and this is an organ. It can be controlled, unlike the heart, another organ, which acts according to the dictates of the body. The heart works without conscious thought, but the brain does not; it feeds on conscious thoughts as well as all the garbage you pour into it. The trick is what you feed the mind. The brain has to be controlled or it will take control of all your actions and thoughts. But if you learn mind control, the brain becomes your servant, rather than the other way around. The trick is to learn how to focus on only those things which can benefit your inner growth. Thinking should be focused on topics that will benefit your understanding of what is. Don't listen to anything that is negative.

Whatever sounds the ears hear the mind will register them. So choose your audio input carefully. Only allow positive thoughts to enter. They build spirit. Negative thoughts will destroy you in the long run. Assume nothing and expect nothing, let things happen by themselves. Do only the things you need to do, the rest of the time should be used for deep contemplation on the spirit. Talking just tends to cause more problems, so limit useless speech, especially concerning trivial topics.

Truly, your world lies between your ears, it is the mind. When it dies, even if the heart beats, doctors consider you dead. This is true, for life is thinking about life. If you don't know you are alive in your mind, then even with a beating heart, you are dead. The mind is the key - it is the most powerful computer in the universe - yet few know how to handle it. In reality humans only use a small part of the power of the mind. However, if you program your mind positively then that will be enough to find peace. You don't need to be a Chan Master to overcome the mind; you simply have to master your own mind. No one is capable of this except you.

Start now, delete the garbage from your mind, and input only that which is useful for finding clarity of mind, which in turn will bring peace.

NOTICE: if you have not received email from Grandmaster in a while, it may be due to a data glitch that happened at the A.C.C.S. Please resend your full name and email address to Ma Shrfu at: hqaccs@optonline.net. If you've never participated, and want to get email directly from Grandmaster Ma, go to <http://kungfu.org/requestform.shtml>. Include a brief thanks for Grandmaster's generosity. Make sure the punctuation and spelling on your email address are correct. 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 ADS



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

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. Pay at the front counter.

PLANNING TO BUY something for the house or garden, indulge a favorite pass-time, or 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.

