



THE PEACEFUL DRAGON

MARTIAL ARTS, Tai Chi, YOGA & MORE!



Newsletter

March, 2006



www.thepeacefuldragon.com

704.504.8866

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM



QUARTERLY PROMOTION DAY FOR CHILDREN

Saturday, April 1

Please check with your instructor if you have any questions about requirements, what you should be working on to prepare, etc. This is a very important day for all students. You must make every effort to be there.

PARENTS NIGHT OUT SEMINAR VALUABLE FUN FOR ALL

The seminar took place on Friday, February 17. Over 30 children had lots of fun while learning valuable techniques and strategies for self-defense, including weapons defense, ground grappling and more. The evening culminated with a challenging obstacle course that kept the kids cheering with excitement. Keep your eye out for the next one in May! A special thanks to the parents who brought refreshments and volunteered to help out with the event.

CHILDREN'S SUMMER CAMP SCHEDULED

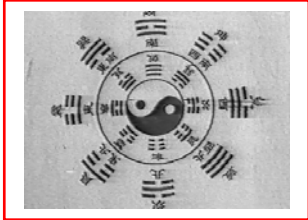
Several people were disappointed that we had to cancel the camp last year due to low participation. This year we've lowered the price significantly, and we've added the After School Program; we expect many from this program will want to participate in the summer program as well, so we expect to be holding the camp this year.

The highlight offerings of the camp are authentic martial arts studies, Chinese language, lion dancing, crafts, sports and games. The camp runs weekly from June 12 to August 24. Please check out the full details at www.thepeacefuldragon.com/summercamp.shtml. Space is limited, so plan ahead to be sure you are able to attend.

WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS

MASTER PARK TO CONDUCT WORKSHOP

Friday, April 21 (5pm-10pm) and Saturday, April 22, (11am-5pm)



Renowned master Park Bok Nam brings an exciting curriculum to this workshop, which includes advanced fighting methods and applications, and qigong for health and strength. Bagua is one of the three internal martial arts and Master Park is one of the world's highest level practitioners. His unique teaching style helps make the universal martial principles of qi development, movement, combat and mental focus accessible and understandable.

Students at every level of training – adults and Young Dragons green sash and above – will benefit from Master Park's insights and vast experience. If pre-registered, price for the public is \$150 for one day, \$260 for both. Price for Peaceful Dragon students is \$100 for one day, \$180 for both. At the door add \$20. Make your plans now for this valuable opportunity to train with one of the world's exemplars of the art of Bagua. Cash or money orders only are acceptable payment. *Note: Elbow and knee pads are recommended for fighting applications.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FIRST SACMAT GETS PARTICIPATION FROM PEACEFUL DRAGON

February 4, Asheville

The Southern Appalachian Chinese Martial Arts Tournament held recently in Asheville under the governance of CACMA (Carolinas Association of Chinese Martial Arts) was the first, with hope of many more to come. Several students from *THE PEACEFUL DRAGON* traveled to compete in this tournament and Year of the Dog celebration, despite the fact that Master Sbarge and Instructors were unable to attend due to their trip to New York to be with Grandmaster. Congratulations to all who participated in this event and represented the school. The following students placed in their events.

Junior 10-12 Empty Hand Forms Intermediate – Cole Mumpower, gold

Junior 15-17 Empty Hand Forms Intermediate – Sunny Kasogi, bronze

Junior Empty Hand Forms Advanced – Carrie Chun, bronze

Junior Weapon Forms Intermediate/Advanced – Cole Mumpower silver, Carrie Chun bronze

Junior 14-17 Girls Advanced Sparring – Carrie Chun, gold

Adult Empty Hand Forms Beginner – Robert Beaver, Silver

Two Person Forms – Carrie Chun and Sunny Kasogi, bronze

Adult Men's Beginner Sparring – Robert Beaver, Silver

A.C.C.S CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATION A HAPPY EVENT

Celebrating the New Year with Grandmaster is a special opportunity anticipated by students from many schools. This year was notable for several reasons. Space is at a premium in New York and so this was the first year that a large space was available so that Sifus, Masters, and their students from A.C.C.S affiliated schools could relax in relative comfort. The buffet, a combination of Chinese and Italian, was also new and well-appreciated by all. Many students were recognized for their training, efforts, contribution and dedication, from one-year up to *Gao-Shou*, some who have been with

Grandmaster twenty years or more. Venerable Guolin was there to help present awards, lending a memorable significance for those who received a certificate or belt from him. And eight of our own from *THE PEACEFUL DRAGON* traveled to be there, along with Master Sbarge and Debra, to be acknowledged in front of the other schools as Instructor Levels entering the lineage. The new family tree was prominently on display. Grandmaster's love of the arts and of his students was continually apparent. For years he has wished for everyone to be able to get out on the floor and dance and this year for the first time there was space to do so. [Click this link http://www.kungfu.org/newyearparty2006.pdf](http://www.kungfu.org/newyearparty2006.pdf) for a **stunning collection of first rate pictures of the celebration, including some of Grandmaster joyfully dancing!**



In addition to attending the celebration dinner, several of us spent a day visiting many of Chinatown's herb shops and watching a colorful Chinese New Year parade. Debra and Sifu also visited Venerable Shi Guolin's Chinatown school and observed his classes. And they visited the renowned Chuang Yen Monastery where they were fortunate to have a private conference with the Abbot, Jing Tung. Sifu also visited his kungfu brother, John Scattaretico, in Westchester County, NY, and was invited to teach his weekly class for an evening. Sifu Scattaretico (Scatt as he is

known) has just purchased a very nice building in Somers, NY and plans to open a full-time school. He was here in Charlotte with his family last week observing our school's operations and training with our staff.

HOME COMING

Debra came to the United States seventeen years ago from Taiwan. She has never been back since then, and while she has been able to see some family, there are so many connections that have not been possible to maintain. Master Sbarge and Debra therefore look forward to a long anticipated trip which will have them to Taiwan from March 15 – 28. Peaceful Dragon staff and instructors will do everything possible to keep things running smoothly during this time, but trust that all students and families will be understanding while our leaders are away.

STUDENT PLACEMENTS

Master Sbarge has spent a lot of time visiting adult classes over the past couple of weeks, meeting individually with each student to be sure that everyone is in the most appropriate Block Level in our new adult training program. Email Sifu@thepeacefuldragon.com or call 704.504.8866 right away to set up a time to meet if you have not yet met with him. It is important for the continuity of your training that you are in your block as soon as possible.

NEW SERVICE FOR STUDENTS

We have a book-borrowing section in the Common Area thanks to donations from Master Bob Sbarge's collection and from students. The books cannot be taken out of the building – they are for reading here only. Any student who has books they would like to donate is welcome to do so. Please note that books should be on topics relevant to the guan, any-thing on Martial Arts, Asian philosophy and culture, health, TCM, religion, etc. There are a couple of important considerations for all students: *THE PEACEFUL DRAGON* is not a library, but people in the Common Area need to be respectful of those who may be trying to read. Those who are reading, when you finish, return the book

to the shelf where you got it. Also, we would like to start a children's book collection to include any topics appropriate for children, so donations are appreciated!

Sifu's MONTHLY LECTURE

The topic for March is **Practical Chinese Medicine**. Doctor Lauren Leung will be the guest lecturer. All students are encouraged to attend for this topic which has an important bearing on your training; following tai chi class at **7:30 pm** Wednesday, March 1.

COMMUNITY NEWS AND NOTES

David Crowe has a concert (see ad), David Pankey's jazz group has one coming up, Sam Illardo is coming out of "retirement" to take an exciting new job; somebody else may be having a baby or planning to go into retirement.... Wouldn't you like to know about the important events in the lives of your fellow students? Wouldn't you like to share your own? Well now you can post your news (and pictures!) in *THE PEACEFUL DRAGON* Newsletter. Send your items to the editor, maibu@carolina.rr.com by the twentieth of each month.

WISDOM OF MA FOREN

The Choice for Mind, Body and Spirit



Even if you did not study the martial arts you would need something else to manage your health and to exercise the body. To do nothing would eventually lead to many problems with your body. Almost every doctor in the world says exercise is a major factor in maintaining health. So the question is, what will you do to maintain the body? Not everybody wants to study martial arts, and I can understand that; but to do nothing, that I cannot understand.

If you decide to quit for whatever reason, be sure to find something else to replace what our training offers. Of course nothing else will offer you the self-defense aspects. Gyms only offer strength programs or weight loss. You can get some exercise with some kind of sport activity, but very little else, except some general exercise and losing a few pounds of excess fat. So what other choices do you have? I have thought about this and I really can't come up with anything that beats our art for a full development of mind, body and spirit.

In addition, our art has a very interesting history that makes for many exciting revelations as we move through our studies. In all my years I have never become bored with my training. There is always something else to master or study. There is a never-ending process of discovery of some aspect of my being. The defensive aspects become the least important as our mind develops toward a better understanding of human nature. The more you train, the less chance that you will ever fight again. We always have to keep in mind that the art tries to lead a person away from violence by understanding what violence is and where it comes from. The more you know about your human nature the more you can control it and direct it towards positive actions, rather than fighting. To me the study of this art is about far more than fighting. It is the art of non-fighting. It is the art of self-discovery. It is the art of awakening the sleeping consciousness.

So whatever else you choose, be sure it has some meaning and purpose behind it; don't just do things to burn off calories. This gets old fast, and in time you will give up. Get into the habit now of doing things that will benefit you in developing the mind, body and spirit. To do anything other than this has

little value. I cannot direct you to any other activity, not because I am biased towards the art, but because I honestly can't think of anything other than our art which does such a complete job of self-development. In the beginning years you won't look very deeply into our philosophy, but in time you will have no choice, because everything will point to it. In the early years it is a physical thing, but in time it becomes a mind thing. Then, all of sudden, it becomes a spiritual thing, and it is then that you have the chance to fully awaken. This awakening is called enlightenment. Now I ask you, what other activity offers that?

I say these things for those who may be on the verge of quitting. If you do, then you do; you are just not meant to study this art. It is not for everyone. A teacher's job is to try to make you aware, and that is all I am doing here – telling you to think before you act. If you leave you might just be losing the only chance you have for your own self-deliverance.

We all go through these feelings of depression and melancholy concerning our training. They will pass. Just don't allow them to take control of you or you will likely regret your decision years later. If you think enough, you will come to the same decision I have: this art has it all. It has the potential to carry you to the end of your days. As the years pass, your wisdom will grow, the skills will grow, and most importantly, your spirit will be renewed.

Now get hold of yourself and realize that you are doing the very best for yourself at this moment. Before you throw it away, just think. Then whatever you do was meant to be; this I can accept.

Buddha Bless



This is the sixth installment of selections from Grandmaster's email. Any student who wishes to receive email directly from Grandmaster Ma Foren should visit <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 very important, 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.

ON THE DRAGON PATH

Why Take a Workshop?

By Michael Ballantyne, *Laoshr*

Out of the few hundred students who belong to *THE PEACEFUL DRAGON*, there is usually only a handful attending any particular workshop. Personal interest, finances, and schedule conflict are some of the obstacles that may prevent more students from taking advantage of sometimes rare opportunities to acquire the level of training offered here. Many people face obstacles enough just with their regular training; so, why take a workshop?

All things considered, a workshop is one of the best investments there is. When you pay your monthly tuition, as much as anything else, you pay for access to quality training; the more classes you are able to come to, the more exposure to special knowledge you receive. Workshops offer knowledge at a different level than your regular classes. For example, you might learn a form in a workshop that would otherwise take a month to learn because in a workshop the learning is compressed in time. This is one reason why workshops are often described as intense. In addition to the form, you may be exposed to history, theory, technique and application related to the form, all condensed into a one or two day presentation.

Therefore, it is important to approach workshops with a different attitude than you might sometimes have in your weekly classes. If you come to class one day more prepared to chat than to practice, or having not practiced the material you learned the week before, you might be able to catch up and not feel too much detrimental impact on your development. If this tends to be your habit, though, then your development will be slow or may stall altogether. Lack of commitment is a major cause for students to lose interest. Not *understanding* the value of what is being offered is a problem as well.

Students should come to workshops with one focus: absorb as much as possible in the time available. This means, do not give in to the distractions that may be present around you. Certainly there is time to be pleasant or helpful with your fellow students – this is part of *wu-de* – and there are occasionally funny moments, but there is not time for frivolity. To get the most out of a workshop, your attention should be on the teacher. When the teacher is not teaching, your attention should be on remembering the material that has just been shown; taking notes, burning in movement or technique, or even just resting your mind so you will be fresh when it is time to begin again. In this way you make the most of your investment.

Sifu is not one to push an agenda; he would not want you to invest in something for which you really had no interest. At the same time, he is fond of reminding us that the time is going to go by no matter what we do; we might as well be doing something that is good for us. Grandmaster's article makes the case for martial arts training to be the best choice that develops mind, body and spirit together. Workshops are the icing on that cake: sweet and concentrated.

DRAGON CLASSIFIEDS

THREE CHANCES TO HEAR AWARD-WINNING MUSIC
BY THE PEACEFUL DRAGON'S OWN

DAVID CROWE

WORLD PREMIERE

Psalm 138

FOR CHOIR AND ENSEMBLE

*Celebrating the
Dead Sea Scrolls Exhibit*

Carolina Voices

Friday, March 3, 8 pm
St. Peter's Episcopal Church
115 W. 7th Street, Charlotte

Sunday, March 5, 5 pm
Temple Beth El, Shalom Park,
5101 Providence Rd., Charlotte

\$20 General Admission; \$10 students.
For tickets and information:
704-374-9124 or www.carolinavoices.org



Mill Village

FOR ORCHESTRA, VIDEO, & NARRATOR

Charlotte Symphony Orchestra

Saturday, March 4, 8 pm
Winthrop University, Tillman Hall, 701 Oakland Ave., Rock Hill, SC
\$15. Tickets and information: 704.972.2000 or www.charlottesymphony.org

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.

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.

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.