



ZenQuest Martial Arts Center

55 Pittsfield Road-Building 10, Lenox, MA 01240

(413) 637-0656 * zenquestmac@sprynet.com * www.zenquestmac.com

An Okinawa Karatedo Association, Demian Mata Jiu-jitsu Network and Siyodtong Boston Affiliate

NEWSLETTER March 2022



The Finish Line

It's difficult to believe that we are now at the two year anniversary of the COVID19 situation. During that time ZenQuest has endured some real challenges including: four months of shutdowns, virtual classes, modified in-person classes, extreme safety measures, social distancing, training dummies, and face coverings. Despite all of that, many students have been dedicated to their martial arts journey, and classes have remained strong.

With the latest surge in the coronavirus pandemic subsiding experts are saying that we are in the final stages of the pandemic. Based on current trends we are planning on making our final transition back to normal soon. This includes:

- Optional face coverings inside of the building
- More physical contact in training and two-person drills
- More sparring and rolling with multiple partners
- A return to team sparring sessions held on Mondays (3/14) and Saturdays (4/2)
- Returning to class durations of up to one hour (eventually)

This will apply to all students regardless of their vaccination status. Students who are not yet comfortable with the pace of the above will be allowed to be more cautious if they choose.

At present, we are planning on making face coverings optional on Monday, March 7th. This is based on recent guidelines issued by the CDC, the Massachusetts Governor's office, and determinations made by local school systems. At that time we will also return to the other 'normal' training items noted, with the exception of increased class durations. This will be put in place when we are certain that sanitizing surfaces between classes can be reduced on a more permanent basis.

Returning to 'normal' will also mean resuming special events like our Advanced Concepts clinics and seminars with world renown instructors. The AC clinics are held periodically for our intermediate and

(Continued on page 2)



<i>In this Issue</i>	<i>Page</i>
THE FINISH LINE	1, 2
AC CLINICS SCHEDULED, KRU MARK SEMINAR	2
PROMOTIONS, DATES TO NOTE, NEW STUDENTS, BIRTHDAYS, TERMINOLOGY	3
NEW KYOKAI WEBSITE, ARIGATO SENSEI LEO	4

AC Clinics Scheduled

Given current trends in the COVID19 situation we are scheduling a round of 'Advanced Concepts' clinics. Our AC Clinics are a way for our intermediate and advanced students to have an opportunity to focus on high level techniques, strategies, and training and teaching tips. Under normal circumstances these clinics happen every three to four months at ZenQuest, and with the pandemic finally winding down, this will continue.

The next Advanced Concepts clinics are scheduled as follows:

- Uechi-Ryu on Saturday, March 5 at 1:00 PM
- Muay Thai on Saturday, March 12 at 1:00 PM
- Jiu-jitsu on Saturday, March 19 at 1:00 PM

The Uechi-Ryu advanced training is open to students ranked *Ikkyu* or Black-Stripe and above. To attend the Muay Thai clinics students must be Blue Prajet and above. Students at Blue Belt and above are welcome to attend the Jiu-jitsu workshop.

As always we appreciate the patience of those affected by the delay in this training. See you all for some great drills again soon!



Kru Mark Seminar

ZenQuest is happy to announce the return of Kru Mark DellaGrotte of Sityodtong Muay Thai! Kru Mark will provide a two hour seminar beginning at 12:00 Noon on Saturday, March 26th. It has been well over two years since our last clinic with Kru Mark DellaGrotte and, with the COVID19 situation subsiding, we will resume these incredible training opportunities.

Kru Mark is widely known as one of the top Muay Thai masters in the world. His knowledge of this amazing martial art is only surpassed by his ability to communicate and help others improve their game.

Pre-registration for this event is \$90, with full price of \$110 at the door. Bring your gloves and shin guards, and a water bottle and towel are recommended. Space will be limited, so secure your spot soon!



(Continued from page 1) **The Finish Line**

advanced students. Our special seminars provide opportunities to learn directly from the likes of Demian Maia, Mark DellaGrotte, Hirokuni Yamashiro, and many others. We have gone ahead and scheduled Advanced Concepts clinics for Karate, Muay Thai and Jiu-jitsu in the month of March. We've also scheduled our first seminar with Kru Mark DellaGrotte for late march. For more information on these see '**Important Dates**' on page 3.

We seem to be finally approaching the finish line after a long and grueling distance race. Although we still need to be smart about the situation we may be able to put this strange chapter in our martial arts journey...and our lives behind us. Special thanks go out to all of the students who've continued to train OR started training in the modified classes during the COVID situation. We appreciate your support more than you can know and will not forget your dedication and willingness to adapt.

New Kyokai Website

The Okinawa Karatedo Association or *Kyokai* is in the process of building a new website. The project had been delayed for months due to the pandemic and the resulting financial effects on the organization. Now, with the help of contributions from affiliated dojos the site is finally underway and should be up and running within a few weeks.

The new site will be a great source of information and resources for students of Uechi-Ryu Karate around the world. It will include lists of affiliated dojos in different parts of the world, and news and updates from Okinawa. Black belt promotions around the world will also be posted on the site.

In the fall of 2021 affiliate dojos in the US and Europe contributed resources to help jumpstart the project. Senseis Mark and Connie were instrumental in organizing fundraising and volunteer work for the site. Several dojos were excited to see the project advance and donated generously.

Huge thanks to everyone who helped to make the new site a reality. Special thanks to Antonis Tzounis of Greece for his work in constructing the site.



Arigato Sensei Leo

One of ZenQuest's favorite all time students recently passed away at the age of 92. Leo was an important part of ZenQuest for the better part of two decades, originally joining us in 2002 at age 71, when we were still known as the Okinawan Karate School.

He set a high bar for his efforts in training and enjoyed helping with children's classes for years. He became a favorite among the Okinawan Masters who visited the school and was always there to help with and participate in special events. Leo earned the rank of 4th degree black belt in Uechi-Ryu Karate at age 84 in 2015. He also cross trained in BJJ and Muay Thai at times.

Leo served in the US Air Force and worked for many years in the Massachusetts' Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. Leo had many stories about his adventures in life and was always willing to share.

Our lives are better because of him and we will miss him dearly. Rest in peace Sensei Leo and condolences to his family.

