



Dragon's Den

唐手道

VOLUME 25 ISSUE 1

FEBRUARY 2025



Spirit

By Grandmaster Vaughn

Vaughn's Dojang
2808 Audubon Village Drive
Audubon, PA 19403
610-676-0691
www.vaughnsdojang.com
www.facebook.com/VaughnsDojang

Inside this issue:

This newsletter features a recap of last year's events, the in-house tournament, Methacton self-defense classes, holiday party, volunteering at Founding Forward and Bethesda Project, and a student essay!

Thanksgiving at Bethesda Project	2
In-House Tournament	3
Methacton Self-Defense Classes	4
2024 Holiday Party	5
Bethesda Project Collection	6
Testing Your Knowledge	6
Congratulations	7
Kids' Corner	8
2024 Accomplishments	9
Student Essay	10
Founding Forward Volunteer Day	11
Cartoon	11

Upcoming events:

March 22—Region 8 Spring Tournament
April 12—Region 8 Dan Testing
May 6—Youth Black Belt Camp
June 5-7—US Masters' Clinic
June 20-22—Adult Black Belt Camp



Tang Soo Do proposes that to get the most out of training in TSD one must work on development in three areas: mind, body, and spirit. I think that most everybody gets the part about mind and body, but what about spirit?

Becoming strong in mind and body is important and should be a large part of anyone's training.

It takes hard work to develop a strong mind. It takes having conversations with oneself about commitment, trying always to do the right thing, staying the course, and not making excuses, but making an effort to learn how to think. It takes convincing oneself to not drop out of a hard physical workout. It takes mental control to not allow one's temperament to turn violent.

Developing a strong body is easy to understand. Everyone wants one, but it takes sweat and hard work to be considered fit for the rigors of martial arts. One needs to be committed to the work ethic needed to stay in shape.

Developing a strong spirit is a bit harder to explain. It takes a lot of discipline and learning what to strive for. Training in a class at the Dojang can boost one's spirit, especially training with people one enjoys as friends. By sharing the struggle, one can feed off the spirit of others. This is how to

develop what is called the martial spirit; it keeps building by sharing the challenge of pushing yourself beyond what you think is your limit.

Another aspect of the spirit can start with working on humility. The more you practice humility, the stronger you become. It sounds counterproductive, but it takes strength to be humble and it takes a strong mind. Grandmaster Shin used to say, "True strength comes from practicing virtue."

Remember, our spirit is who we really are. Martial training demands that we make it a major goal to get to know ourselves. Just think how much you have learned about yourself since you have been in TSD.

Spirit can win when you are ready to quit. Spirit can lead to defeating a superior fighter, such as "It isn't the size of the dog in the fight, it is the size of the fight in the dog," one of my favorite sayings.

Spirit is not all about winning. A gentle spirit can sometimes be just as strong, or stronger, than a boisterous spirit. Spirit is what pushes us on to greatness. It is what pushes us to help the less fortunate. Spirit is what pushes us to tears when considering the struggle of others. A strong spirit is what pushes us to win.

Learning how to read the spirit of others is a tool of a superior fighter and of superior instructors. One of the great values of teaching TSD is learning how to read students' spirits. It is a great study of human nature. As an instructor, you get to see folks and how they react in a life and death situation such as we do in sparring class, or at test time.

It may take years for this kind of enlightenment to develop in an instructor, but it will come if one searches and works for it.

As you can see, there are many kinds of spirit. We in TSD strive to develop what is

(Continued on page 2)

Spirit

(Continued from page 1)

called a discerning spirit. This kind of spirit allows you to see your opponent's intention and their next move. It helps the instructor to evaluate students and to guide them to their right path.

In ancient culture, the sword was considered an example of the swordsman's spirit. The warrior is directed to polish their spirit or soul as they polish their sword.

When thinking about your path in TSD, it is very important to remember that

we are to build a strong mind, a strong body, and a strong spirit. When contemplating spirit, I recommend one considers that God has given each of us our spirit. It is up to us to work on it and polish it and to contemplate on what God has in mind for us to accomplish with it.

Giving Back at Bethesda Project

By Bhushan Bhoir, Sam Dan Sin Moo Hapkido

Bethesda Project's Our Brother's Place is a shelter for homeless people in Philadelphia. There are many unfortunates in the City of Brotherly Love who take shelter at Bethesda throughout the year, but the needs become much more dire in cold and frosty weather. Vaughn's Dojang family is a patron to the facility by giving donations as well as helping on Thanksgiving morning. Master Altieri has been leading the effort, I believe, for over 20 years.

Master Altieri, Master Painter, Mr. Braun, Master Altieri's friend, and I volunteered at Bethesda Project on Thanksgiving morning 2024. The staff at Bethesda is very welcoming. After checking in, we entered the kitchen and met a new kitchen manager who knew her routines. She was directing her staff and giving us instructions on meals to be prepared, ingredients to be used in each food item, just like a pro. All I could experience was the generosity was overflowing, literally, through every step of meal preparation. We prepared mac and cheese, stuffing, and a few other lunch menus.

I did see a lot of food donations when I first visited Bethesda Project on Thanksgiving 2022. I felt there were many more donations this time, though, at least that morning. We helped serve muffins, donuts, pastries, fruits, juice, and warm coffee for breakfast. One

could see the pain of helplessness in the eyes of some visitors; at the same time, others facing their tough reality with smiles. After serving breakfast and cleaning up, we returned to the kitchen and prepared a couple more lunch menus. To wrap up our visit, we helped with cleaning utensils and dishes,

cleaning countertops, and packing the food items to store back in the pantry.

The two hours we spent at Bethesda on Thanksgiving morning was the best start of the day. After returning home, I spent the rest of the morning with my wonderful family, but the satisfaction of helping that morning was immense!



In-House Tournament

By Master Scott Summers

On February 8th, we held our In-house tournament for 2025. The tournament offers every student an opportunity to show off their talent in a familiar surrounding with recognizable faces. This was our first in-house tournament since 2023, and involved 55 participants, and dozens of volunteer judges, score keepers, and assistants.

The program provided parents, as well as new competitors and volunteers, the opportunity to learn more about how a tournament is run, the events that are

available, how scoring is accomplished, and the joy of meeting new friends and learning how they can better themselves. In talking with parents, I believe many were happy with the results, and I hope this results in an increased involvement in regional tournaments coming up this year.

I want to thank the many volunteers who stepped up to make the program so successful, but especially Master Lipstein for helping to acquire the necessary seating, Mr. Clark, whose persistence in getting Spark up and running (along with

others) made registration so much easier, Miss Luneau who not only helped get the judges ready, but helped coordinate the judging assignments on the day of the event, and finally Mr. and Mrs. Mentley who spent many hours building and rebuilding competition divisions and ordering and coordinating the medals. Without this team, the event would not have happened. We learned a few things, and we are already planning for the next one.



Vaughn's In-House Tournament

By Nirupam Jayadevan, Cho Dan

A tournament is something every student in the World Tang Soo Do Association should participate in. I have been to a few, and this most recent one has helped me learn a lot of things about myself, and the experience of the event.

In this past tournament, weapons, open-hand forms, and sparring were the activities to compete in. In every tournament, a set of judges rates you based on your form. For sparring, it is like a bracket in which you have to earn your way to the gold. All of these activities help a student know what they need to work on. A student can now understand that they need to work on an open-hand form, for example, from the judges'

feedback. Also, tournaments are fun. This past tournament, a lot of people from the dojang came together to compete in one place. This makes the entire event enjoyable and lively.

My experience from the event was great. I learned a lot such as how to present myself, what I need to work on, and how to be a scorekeeper and timekeeper. I understood that I needed to present myself with confidence. I also understood what parts of what forms I needed to work on in order to have a better form. Lastly, I gained a better understanding of how to keep score and keep time for a ring. At first I had a whole different perspective of how this goes. I

always wondered what it was like to do something like this. After doing it, I realize that a lot of work goes into this tournament. I also enjoyed my time at the event. I had a lot of fun competing and helping with the ring.

Overall, I strongly encourage every student in the studio to consider competing in a tournament. It offers a wonderful opportunity for learning, personal growth, and fun. By participating in a tournament, students can gain valuable information, improve their skills, and build good relationships with their peers.

Tang Soo!

Methacton High School Self-Defense Seminar

By Master Scott Summers

On January 27-30th, we held our annual self-defense classes at Methacton High School. The program is presented to the Junior female students. It teaches them situational awareness of their surroundings, how to use posture to not look like a victim, how to use the voice to clearly state their intention to a stranger, basic strikes with both their hands and feet to defend themselves, and basic escape techniques should someone grab them.

The information is provided to them over two separate gym classes starting with awareness, voice, and strikes presented on the first session, and escape techniques and an opportunity to break wood in the second session. Most of the information is met with some skepticism and "giggling," but many of them walk away with a greater appreciation of what they can accomplish.

Over the past 5+ years, the program has been presented by our teenage female Black Belts, which results in a

better reception from the students, with the support of many senior Masters and instructors. Our female instructors this year included Miss Aarya Bhoir, Miss Isabelle Voight, Miss Anushka Nair, Miss Priyanshi Kumar, Miss Saanvi Prasad, and Miss Pranavi Bhagavathula. Supporting them were Grandmaster Vaughn, Master Lipstein, Master Altieri, Master Painter, Master Summers, and Mr. Bhushan Bhoir. I want to thank everyone for their participation in another successful event.



2024 Christmas Party

By Saanvi Prasad, E Dan

As the evening unfolded at the Vaughn's Dojang Christmas Party, Masters, instructors, students, and their families and friends came together to celebrate. On this eventful night we shared and celebrated our community as a dojang, and our many accomplishments throughout the year. As a student attending this Christmas Party for several years now, it brought me joy and happiness to reconnect with people I haven't seen for a while and to make new memories with my Tang Soo Do friends. Some individuals were recognized for their outstanding contributions and accomplishments. Congratulations to Master Altieri for achieving the Region 8 Humanitarian of the Year award. Congratulations also to Mr. Ryan Clark, the Instructor of

the Year, and to the Speers family for Family of the Year. I was honored and humbled to be selected as the Student of the Year. All the students who were promoted in 2024 were also honored.

There were incredible demonstrations from the All Stars and the Hapkido

students to kick off the evening while showcasing our martial art skills. The Christmas Party has been a long tradition in the dojang. Grandmaster Vaughn and all the other Masters pitch in every year to create an enjoyable and memorable evening. The party was also filled with a

lot of dancing, laughter and delicious food and dessert alongside the drink (my favorite being a Shirley Temple). As the evening drew to a close, smiles and laughter filled the air, with everyone leaving the celebration feeling a little closer. I hope those who came to the party enjoyed it as I did. I look forward to the New Year for our dojang and to many more celebrations in Vaughn's Dojang!

Tang Soo!



2024 Bethesda Project Collection

By Master Altieri

Thank you for your generosity to the 2024 annual Bethesda Project collection.

Father Domenic Rossi founded the Bethesda Project 45 years ago. Our Dojang has been assisting this organization for over 20 years with meeting their goal of providing not just a home for the unhoused in Philadelphia, but a family.

Your kindness is helping the Bethesda Project mission "to be family with those who have none." During a 5-week period, we collected 12 boxes of items including coats, hooded sweatshirts, socks, soap, sweatpants, thermal underwear, hats, boots, deodorant, toothpaste and brushes, gloves, shaving cream and razors, etc.

Please know you are making a difference in so many lives in the Philadelphia area. As Tang Soo Do students, we are required to help others.



One of the purposes of our training is to be a better person; we are fulfilling this purpose by helping the Bethesda Project.

Since the day I met Kwan Chang Nim Vaughn, he stressed the importance of helping those in need. Thank you again for your generosity.



Testing Your Knowledge

By Scott Thompson, Sah Dan



- Choon Bee means...
 - Sit
 - Rest
 - Get ready
 - Bow to instructor
- A yell to focus your mind and energy is called a...
 - Ki Hap
 - Mahk Ki
 - Cha Ki
 - Moo Ki
- In the UM-YANG symbol, the red section represents...
 - Unity and brotherhood
 - Perfection
 - Night, dark, feminine
 - Day, light, active, masculine
- The command to perform a hyung without a count is...
 - Bahl Cha Ki Choon Bee
 - Ku Ryung Up Shi
 - Kyung Yet
 - Ku Ryung E Mat Cho So
- The Korean flag is called...
 - Hyup Hoi Ki
 - Kukgi
 - Soo Ki
 - Tae Keuk Ki
- Which of the following is one of the 14 attitude requirements?
 - All-out effort
 - Honor friendship
 - Practice humility
 - Improve self-control
- Grandmaster Shin was recruited into the Korean Air Force in the year...
 - 1953
 - 1965
 - 1958
 - 1968
- Grandmaster Shin's first organization in the United States was founded in the city of...
 - Philadelphia, PA
 - Burlington, NJ
 - Burlington, NC
 - Trenton, NJ
- Ho Sin Sul means...
 - One-step sparring
 - Free sparring
 - Two-step sparring
 - Self defense
- The Korean term for balance is...
 - Chung Shim
 - Moo Shim
 - Chon Kyum
 - Shim Kong

Answers: 1. c 2. a 3. d 4. b 5. d 6. a 7. c 8. b 9. d 10. a

Congratulations!

To Our Newest Cho Dan Bos:

Madelyn Bell Vidhu Dadi Gretchen DeGele

And To:

2024 Instructor of the Year –
Mr. Ryan Clark



2024 Family of the Year –
The Speers Family



2024 Student of the Year –
Miss Saanvi Prasad

KIDS

IDS

Kids' Corner

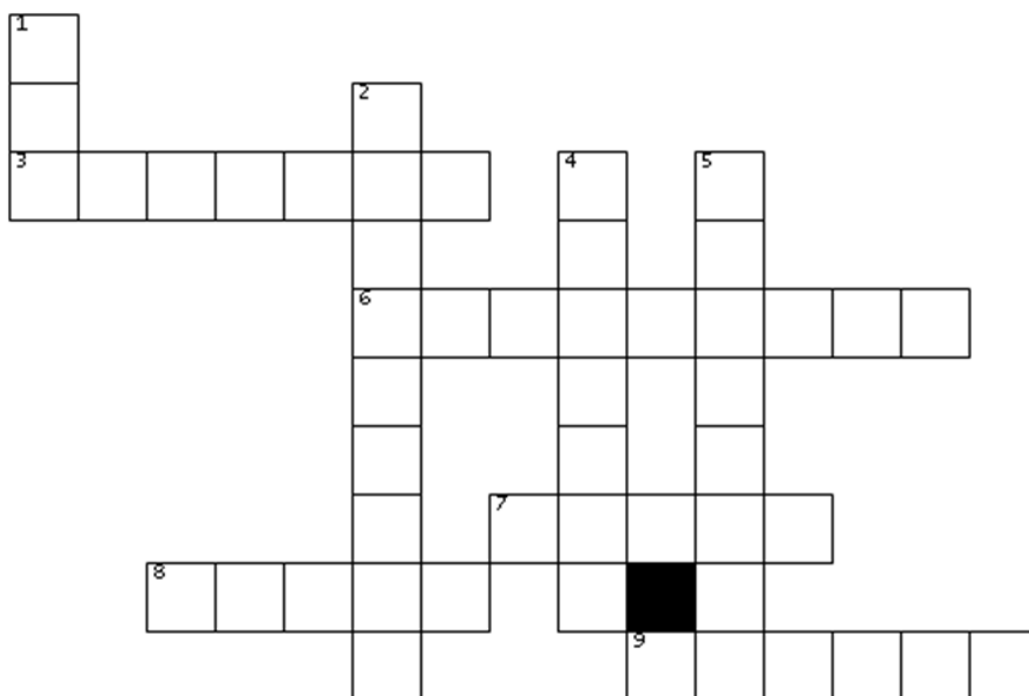
KIDS

D
I
K

Tang Soo Do Crossword

By Priyanshi Kumar, Cho Dan

Use the clues below and your gup manual to solve the crossword!



Across

- 3) An early Korean dynasty that was founded in 18 BC
- 6) The name of our Martial Art
- 7) The Korean word for forms
- 8) An early Korean dynasty that was founded in 57 BC
- 9) The Korean word for the uniform we wear to Karate

Down

- 1) The Korean word for a colored belt
- 2) 10th gup belt
- 4) An early Korean dynasty that was founded in 37 BC
- 5) Korean term for blue belt

Vaughn's Dojang 2024 Major Accomplishments

DAN PROMOTIONS—TANG SOO DO

- 3rd Dan - Dung Hoang
- 2nd Dan - Samantha Brinton, Rich Fitz-Gerald, Anushka Nair, Annie Sahu, Atiksh Singh
- Cho Dan - Farya Bakar, Saanvi Biswal, Reyansh Gautam, Nirupam Jayadevan, Eva Kansal, Priyanshi Kumar, Shaurya Mahajan, Lucas Sbarbaro, Shantanu Shukla, Amarveer Singh, Charvani Velaga, Isabelle Voight

DAN PROMOTIONS—HAPKIDO

- Cho Dan - Isabelle Voight, John Williams

AWARDS

- Vaughn's Creativity team won co-3rd at the Region 8 Fall Championship on October 26th
- Many of our students won medals at the various Championships in 2024
- Ms. Vaishnavi Vatsal was awarded a \$3,500 Region 8 Scholarship

INTERESTING FACTS

- Grandmaster Vaughn has been training in martial arts for 55 years and during this time he has promoted close to 1,000 Cho Dans (Black Belts) and higher rank
- GM Vaughn was honored at the Region Championship on October 25-26
- 3 of our Instructors have been training under GM Vaughn for almost 34 years
- 8 of our Instructors have been training under GM Vaughn for 20+ years
- Our school has one of the best Instructor retention rates in the WTSDA
- 20 of our Students were promoted to 1st Dan or higher rank in TSD and Hapkido
- Mr. Amarveer Singh scored 100% on the Black Belt written exam

REGIONAL AND WORLD TSD DUTIES

- GM Vaughn, Master Lipstein and Master Winsko hold positions on the WTSDA Board of Directors (Master Winsko also is the head of the Legal Affairs committee)
- Dr. Thompson leads the WTSDA 's Scholarship Committee
- Dr. Painter is on the Region 8 Scholarship committee and he is on the WTSDA Publications and Legal Affairs committees
- Mr. Mentley is the Region 8 Treasurer
- Ms. Luneau is the Region 8 Instructors Class Secretary, the Region 8 Social Media Co-Chair and the Judging Coordinator

ACTIVITIES

- Installed new floors and painted the back part of the studio
- Taught several women's self-defense programs at Methacton High School and at our studio
- Collected several items for the Bethesda Project to support the homeless of Philadelphia
- Donated sparring gear to those in need in studios in Africa
- Gup Graduations, BB Promotions and Celebrations
- WTSDA Championship in Greensboro, NC
- Region 8 Spring & Fall Championships
- Masters Clinic in Florence, Alabama
- Youth and Adult Black Belt camps
- Hobby Day
- Dojang spring cleaning
- Cleaning up branches at Freedoms Foundation (now called Founding Forward)
- Served breakfast on Thanksgiving morning at the Bethesda Project
- Phoenixville YMCA Fun Fest
- Car washes and bake sales to raise money for the Demo Team

School and Karate

By Divisha S. Maheshwari, Cho Dan Bo

Editor's Note: Miss Maheshwari prepared this essay for her Cho Dan requirement. It is being reprinted with her permission.

As a student, almost everything I do tends to somehow impact my academic life, whether it be positive or negative. Every aspect of my life somehow manages to revolve around school, since, technically, that is one of the biggest things going on in my life currently. Saying this, I feel like it's important to acknowledge the relation between two similar things—karate and school. Although karate enhances the mind, body and spirit while school is more critical thinking, they are still quite similar and affect each other in ways that one might not realize.

As I mentioned, karate does seem to be more on the physical side. The stances performed in class help strengthen the legs, the arms, and especially the core and back. All of the stances require having the back straight. And, over time, it does grow into a habit. By practicing good posture during training, it also helps keep a posture while working==or, in my case, during school or class. I feel more confident and bold with a better posture, and it keeps my back muscles from getting sore, especially since I have to carry around a very heavy backpack all day up and down three floors multiple times.

Karate can also affect mental health. During training, some of the techniques may seem difficult, and practicing can also be rigorous. Being able to go through all of this isn't just overcoming a physical barrier, but also a mental one. When the body starts to get tired, the mind tells you to stop, to give it a break, and to rest a bit. Karate can increase one's mental toughness by instead telling yourself that you can push through, and you can do it. For example, I went from watching Black Belts perform difficult techniques and thinking "I'll never be able to do that" to instead thinking "If they can do it, why can't I?" Karate changed my mindset. It encourages an "I can do it" mentality and taught me to never give up. It's one thing to say the words, but it's another thing to see it in action. Earning new belts and learning new techniques helped me as a beginner to feel more confident in what I could do and helped

boost my self-esteem. These are visible achievements that can automatically give me a sense of pride. This can affect my school life by making me feel more confident in answering questions and it makes me want to give my best effort in everything rather than settling for "good enough".

Karate can also increase a sense of belonging. During training, the class usually trains in groups. This can make one feel more comfortable in their environment. The higher ranks can look at the lower ranks and recall that they were once in that position. The lower ranks can look at the higher ranks for help and guidance. This sense of belonging makes it easier for me to own up to my faults and ask for help in fixing them. I've told so many beginners about times when I was in their position and messed up, and instead of feeling uncomfortable, it makes me feel lighter. In school, I also feel more comfortable asking for guidance when I struggle with something. I feel brave enough to answer a question knowing I might get it wrong, and I am able to laugh at my mistakes and learn from them rather than hastily trying to cover them up. This also impacts those around me and helps them acknowledge their mistakes, too.

Karate also promotes dedication and hard work. Going from white belt to Black Belt takes lots of time and effort, as it should, but not everyone has the motivation and patience to go through the entire journey. But for those who push through, for those who tell themselves that they can do it, they learn the importance of patience. As karate students move up the ranks and earn a new belt, they see the milestones and realize how important it is to take the time to go through everything and understand the process behind it. This also goes hand in hand with the concepts taught in school. Memorizing a technique or definition is one thing, but truly understanding it and learning about it is another.

Karate also requires and teaches self-control and concentration. When

working with partners, it's important to control techniques; otherwise one may end up hurting oneself or their partner. Additionally, concentration is also required. Without concentration, one may be confused about a technique that they didn't pay much attention to, or one might just get distracted from the task at hand. Distraction could lead to an injury. Similarly, not having self-control or concentration in school could also lead to consequences such as detention or dropping grades. Because karate requires such discipline, that discipline becomes a habit, and, in turn, is also applied in school. I learned to practice focusing in class and having self control while doing homework so I don't get distracted. This leads to better outcomes, such as raising my grades and understanding techniques better, which are clear results of my efforts.

Lastly, karate can develop a sense of leadership. As a higher rank, I must push myself to do the best I can do, knowing that the lower ranks are looking up to me. The higher ranks learn to be instructors and take charge of a situation. I have to be a leader to guide newer members and keep them included. This is very beneficial for school, especially group projects when people are unfamiliar and uncomfortable around each other. These leadership skills can help pull a group together and keep everyone actively engaged in the assignment. I can help people feel more comfortable and give them an important role rather than feeling left out. And even when it comes to sports, the team must work together to win a match, because "teamwork makes the dream work." These days, leadership skills are a requirement almost anywhere, whether it be academically, physically, or even in a career. It is important to be able to take control of a situation before it goes out of hand.

As you can see, karate and school, as similar as they are, have a greater impact on each other than one might think. The training and discipline taught in karate can be applied in school, which is helping me excel academically now and in the future.

Founding Forward Volunteer Day

By Don Otto, Sam Dan

It was a very cold winter day at the Founding Forward campus in Valley Forge on December 14, 2024. A small group of Vaughn's Instructors weathered the conditions and assisted with directing more than 100 vehicles into the parking areas on the campus. In conjunction with the National Wreaths Across America Day, Founding Forward hosted a special event called "Wreaths Across the Grove." The Friends of the Medal of Honor Grove honored the fallen, including 3,500+ Medal of Honor recipients



who are recognized in its Medal of Honor Grove. It concluded with a wreath-laying ceremony throughout the Grove. Grandmaster Vaughn was there as well to support this special event and help us stay focused on our parking duties. We thank the Founding Forward leaders for their great work and allowing us to train on the campus grounds during the year.

Tang Soo!

JUST FOR KICKS

