



Dragon's Den

唐手道

Volume 26 Issue I
September 2026



Spirit

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 featured article from KCN Vaughn, stories from our youth participating in tournaments, black belt tests, and our demo team. You will also hear from one of our adults members reminiscing on adults camp.

Spring Championship	2
Adult Black Belt Camp	3
Demo Team Update	4
Sam Dan Essay	5
Bethesda Project Collection	6
Testing Your Knowledge	6
Congratulations	7
Kids' Corner	8

Editors: Jennifer Luneau, Ridham Khambhati, Phalith Moza, Isabelle Voight

Upcoming events:

September 19 - Judging Certification @ VFMA

September 26- Black Belt Test @Oxford HS

October 23-24 - Fall

Championship @ Kalahari

December 6 Holiday Party - Mark your Calendars!

January 30 - In-house Tournament

By Grandmaster Vaughn



In the philosophy of Tang Soo Do, we are taught to train the mind, body, and spirit. Most people who begin the journey toward Black Belt want to become physically strong and mentally alert, but the third part can be harder to define. What does it mean to become strong in spirit, and how do we train for that kind of strength? I believe (in Tang Soo Do) a good fighter must have a strong spirit, but a very great fighter has a superior spirit. To achieve that level, one must spend time developing an internal strength. God has given each of us a spirit, so we need to study how to develop it in a good way. You might ask, how do we do that: develop a strong spirit? Grandmaster Shin used to say, "To develop power, practice virtue". I think it means we should practice building power and strength in mind, body, and spirit. If you leave one of these three out, it becomes unstable, like a three-legged stool with one leg too short; it will not be functional. Balance in all three is vital in the hope of becoming proficient, as a great fighter must be.

There is a history of battles where the army that wins is smaller in number than its opponent, but through determination and skill, they overcome that handicap. Credit is given to the spirit of the underdogs. They had the drive, the need, and the will to win, but most of all they had a stronger spirit than the other guy.

Getting back to virtue, how does one practice it? Good question. You can practice it every day. If you can help, you help. If someone needs a hand, you offer them yours. If an elderly individual needs to cross the street at a busy intersection and they look unsure, you offer to escort them across. Practice giving way in the supermarket. This builds character. In a story about King Arthur's court, Sir Galahad was once asked what he credited for his great power in battle. He replied, "When I fight, I have the strength of ten because my heart is pure".



Grandmaster Shin and Grandmaster Vaughn pictured together in China

(Continued on page 2)

Spring Championship by Noah Chiang

This spring I was feeling very confident and prepared, most tournaments the hardest part of the day is just sitting in the sidelines for so long. This tournament was different. The morning before every tournament I have a set schedule: wake up early, eat a healthy breakfast and stretch. Unfortunately when I woke up for the spring tournament my body completely failed me. I couldn't stomach any food and I was unable to physically prepare. Against my better judgement I just hoped that the stomach pain would fade and I could just focus on competing.

I was lucky enough to recover from my morning sickness before I arrived at the location for the tournament. With three years of competition experience I already recognized the majority of the people in my ring. I know by now who I need to worry about in each category. With my previous knowledge of my competitors and the weeks of training I put in the month before I was happy with the performance I gave. Placing in both Hyung categories and earning 1st in sparring felt like a well rounded and good show of my capabilities.

Although not every tournament goes exactly as I imagine or how I wish they would go, it is always a good experience to interact with students from other dojang's and have skilled judges with different perspectives than my own instructors tell me where I need to improve.



Top Row: Master Lipstein promotion to 6th Dan, John Kerestus preparing to spar, Varunavi Sharma performing Sip Soo, Phalith Moza performing Jin Do, Ridham Khambhati performing Ki Cho Jang Gum Hyung.

Second Row: Saanvi Prasad sparring, Virinchi Hubli receiving a trophy

Adult Black Belt Camp

By: Priyanka Devraj

For years, "Black Belt Camp" existed only as a legendary, looming milestone in my karate journey—an event the seniors talked about with excitement. I thought I understood its demands after watching my daughter pack her gear and head off to face the day itself. However, observing from the sidelines did nothing to prepare me for the reality of stepping onto the mats as a participant. Being on the mats with a large group of fellow martial artists firsthand transformed the camp from a story I had heard into a defining experience of my own martial arts path.

Going to camp was a rare step away from my family and a completely new experience for me. Though I felt ready, I was also quite anxious.

Luckily, my friends had given me a helpful breakdown of the first day's schedule, which eased my nerves. The first evening turned out to be a great start, featuring insightful presentations from senior students and a welcoming pizza party.

Saturday morning delivered the real, unfiltered reality of Black Belt Camp. After finding a moment of peace during our early morning walking meditation and eating breakfast, the intense training commenced. The instructors cleverly paired physical warm-ups with interactive quizzes—a dynamic challenge I thoroughly enjoyed. As a Cho Dan Bo, I stood at the tail end of the formation, yet I held the exciting power of recording our team's answers first. The atmosphere quickly turned serious during the morning session of basic drills, one steps, self defense and bong training; by the time it wrapped up, I was already feeling tired.

The second half of the day was much more enjoyable because we got to select our own workout sessions. I chose the weapons classes, as that training excites me the most. Learning a new Bong form proved to be a unique challenge; it was highly complicated, but that is precisely what made it fun. When the physical training finally ended, we got some time to relax before heading to the auditorium for the next presentation session.

Sunday provided a rejuvenating shift in energy. We began our morning with the gentle movements of Ki Gong before coming together as a collective group for basic drills and training. To close out the camp, we focused on deep stretching—a rewarding transition that felt like a true breath of fresh air. After pushing my limits over the weekend, this final session dramatically accelerated my recovery and melted away the accumulated physical exertion.

Filled with so many personal firsts, this camp proved to be an incredibly rewarding experience. Having stepped out onto the mats, I now understand the strength it takes to endure. I am eagerly looking forward to what the next year will bring as I continue down this path toward my black belt.



Adult Members enjoying lunch at Elizabethtown College, June 2026

VFMA Demo Team

By Om Andia

Last year, I watched several of my friends participate in a martial arts-style performance group known as Demo. At first, I had no interest in joining because I did not know much about it. However, everything changed one Saturday when I watched the team perform an act that they had clearly put a tremendous amount of time and effort into. Their performance immediately caught my attention, especially the use of various weapons, the acting, the choreography, and the intensity they brought to every move. It was exciting to watch and unlike anything I had seen before. Seeing their dedication and teamwork inspired me, and by the end of the performance, I had decided that I wanted to join the Demo team the following year.

Before joining the Demo team, I had already decided that I wanted to use a sword, and I was excited when I got the chance to do so. I liked its design, balance, and the way it moved during different techniques. My friends and I were responsible for creating a sword form, which meant combining different movements into a pattern that looked smooth, coordinated, and appealing for the audience. During the first two weeks of practice, we worked hard to finish our choreography. Once the form was complete, we focused on polishing every movement, improving our timing, and syncing our actions so that we performed as one group. By that point, the first scene of our act was beginning to come together and was nearly complete.

In my opinion, these first few weeks have been an amazing experience. I have enjoyed spending time with my friends, learning new skills, and working hard. Every practice has helped me improve while also bringing our team closer together. I am excited to see how our performance continues to develop over the next several weeks, and I look forward to finishing our act and performing it for an audience. Overall, my experience on the Demo team so far has been both enjoyable and rewarding, and I cannot wait to see what the rest of the season has in store.

VFMA Demo Team celebrating their third place win October 2025



Sam Dan Essay

By Saanvi Prasad, E Dan

As I continue my Tang Soo Do journey, I plan to remain committed to volunteering and finding new ways to help others. Throughout the years, volunteering has become much more than a requirement or an expectation placed on me by my instructors. It has become a habit and a mindset that has shaped the way I approach challenges and leadership. The experiences I have gained through teaching classes, helping at tournaments, participating in demonstrations, and assisting with community programs have shown me that even small acts of service can have a lasting impact on others. I believe that volunteering helps strengthen the culture of a studio.

A martial arts school is more than a place where people come to learn techniques but it is a community built on respect, support, and shared experiences. When students volunteer their time, they help create an environment where everyone can learn and succeed together. The reason our studio has been able to grow and provide opportunities for so many students and instructors is because of the countless volunteers who dedicate their time behind the scenes.

When I was younger, I did not always notice the amount of work that happened behind the scenes to make classes, tournaments, demonstrations, and special events successful. As I became more involved in volunteering, I began to see how much time and effort instructors, assistant instructors, parents, and students contribute to the studio. There are countless responsibilities that many people never see, such as setting up equipment, organizing events, preparing students for testing, and making sure classes run smoothly.

These experiences helped me develop a greater appreciation for the people who volunteer their time to create opportunities for others. Because of this, I want volunteering to remain an important part of my life even after I achieve my next goals in Tang Soo Do. As I become a senior in high school, getting ready to go to college, one of my goals is to return during school breaks and vacations to assist classes and help teach students. The studio has played a major role in my growth as both a martial artist and a person, and I would like to continue supporting it even after I leave for college.

Many masters, instructors, and students dedicated their time to helping me throughout my journey, and I want to give back to students and help them in their own journeys. Whether I am assisting a class, helping at tournaments or participating in demonstrations, I want to continue sharing the knowledge and experiences that others have shared with me. I hope to be someone who can help them meet those challenges and remind them that improvement comes through patience, effort, and perseverance. Sometimes the smallest interactions can have the biggest impact on a student's experience.

I also hope to continue growing as a leader through my role as a co-captain of the Demo Team. The lessons I have learned through volunteering and leadership in Tang Soo Do are lessons that I will carry with me into college, my future career, and the rest of my life wherever I am. I hope that volunteering will always remain an important part of who I am. Tang Soo Do has given me opportunities, friendships, and life lessons that I will never forget.

Black Belt Testing By: Vidhu Dadi

The Cho Dan Test was an experience that I had never been through before. Walking into the test room that day, I felt a mixture of nerves and excitement. Everything I had learned was about to be tested, but it was also exciting because I had finally reached this point in my Tang Soo Do journey through perseverance and dedication. The test measured you as a black belt, not a blue belt, and it was challenging in every sense. It demanded exceptional physical endurance, as it pushed you past exhaustion. At times, I almost felt light-headed because of fatigue; there were no water breaks, but a few breaks to catch your breath. I cherished these small breaks. Furthermore, the panel was looking for an intense spirit. We needed a loud voice and the will to push through hardships the test may have posed.

We were tested on everything we have learned in our entire Tang Soo Do journey; they measured our forms, jump kicks, self-defense, one-steps, board breaking, and both simple and advanced techniques.

With each of these components of the test, we needed to show precision, power, and our undying Tang Soo Do spirit.

We were tasked to perform multiple forms and all one-steps that we have learned so far to the best of our ability. The forms required deep stances and power with every move, and the one-steps required timing, precision, and technique. Moreover, the jump kicks were one of the first things we had to do, and they inflicted fatigue that carried on throughout the test. This was the hardest part of the test since we had to do many jump kicks for multiple reps to the fullest extent. The self-defense we were tested on wasn't the traditional ones learned in class; we were grabbed randomly and told to break free in any way. This posed a challenge as some of the grabs were different and harder to get out of.

Close to the end, we had to break boards, this required power and speed as well as accuracy. Finally, we were tested on our endurance with a fitness section at the end where you had to complete numerous reps of various exercises.

The Black Belt test overall was a difficult but also an exciting experience. It tested you on everything that you had learned so far. It tested us if we had the spirit, endurance, and will as a black belt. After the test, I was extremely exhausted, but also proud because I was able to complete the Black Belt test and that all my hard work and dedication paid off.



Vidhu Dadi at his test



Test your Knowledge!



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

February: Advait Danemkula and Vihaa Pddar

June: Aahan Sahu, Andrea Ramos, and Vaanya Agarwal

August: Ojas Gurung, Reon Rony, Ryan Saha, and Advik Bhardwaj

And to our New Dan Ranks:

Cho Dan Promotions:

Vidhu Dadi, Romir Mahajan, Madelyn Bell, Advait Balachandar, Ananya Pranjali, Shikha Mehta

E Dan Promotions:

Amarveer Singh

Sam Dan Promotions:

Ridham Khambhati



KIDS

KIDS

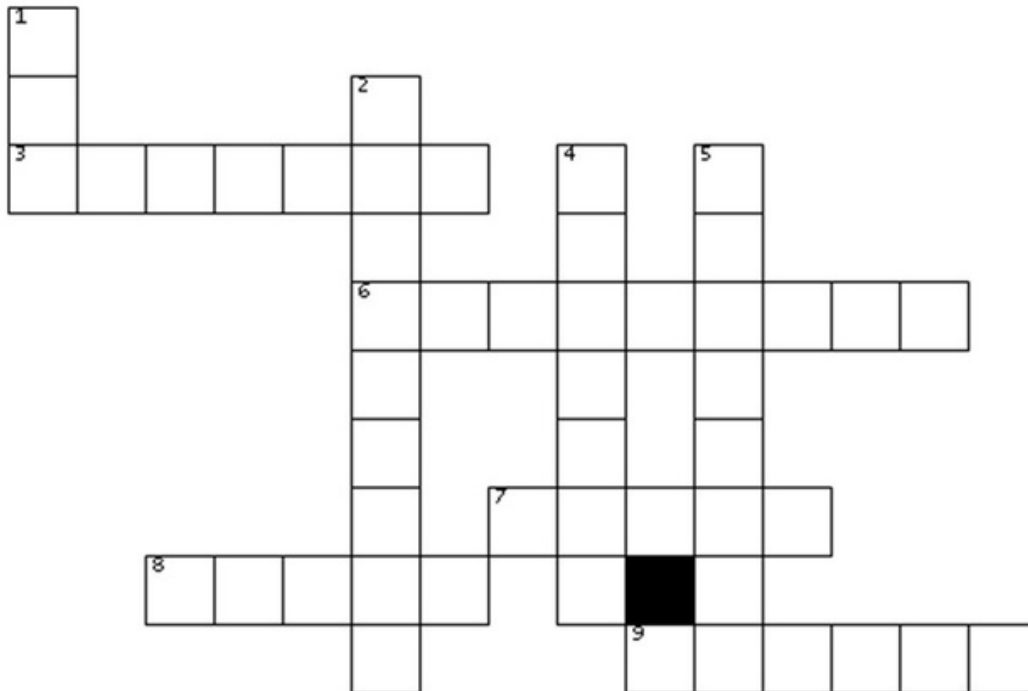
IDS

D
I
K

Kids' Corner

Tang Soo Do Crossword

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

