



## March 2025 Newsletter

### Starting My Journey

My start in the martial arts began in October of 1990. On a Friday evening I went to the homecoming football game for Byron High School. I don't remember who we were playing and didn't care at the time. I was going to meet up with some friends, watch the game and have fun like any other sixth grader would. Instead I got beat up by four people for no reason. Actually, they had a reason in their minds. The day before one of them pulled a knife out on the bus and threatened me with it. I knew he wasn't going to do anything and wasn't worried about it so I just let him do his thing to impress his friends. Somebody else however reported it to the school. The next day the Elementary Principal calls in the person who threatened me with the knife and finds it in his pocket. So of course I'm blamed for reporting it and get beat up by him, his cousin and two of their friends.

The next week my parents took me to meet Master Fred Gommels and get enrolled in his martial arts program that taught TaeKwonDo. Right away I found something I loved doing. School sports never held any interest for me because if you played your heart out and lost you still got yelled at by the coach and made to feel like a failure. Not exactly positive reinforcement. With the martial arts it was an individual pursuit. It was up to the individual to excel as far as they could. I liked this individual approach mixed with the relationships that develop with the people you train with.

Over the years there have been ups and downs like you would expect with anything else one may do. I however have continued to train and grow as an individual. After I had earned my black belt in TaeKwonDo I wanted to fill in some of the areas that were lacking, throwing and ground work, and took up Judo. I enjoyed training in Judo and even entered a few tournaments taking everything from dead last to first place. As much as I enjoyed Judo the club was not able to maintain membership and ended up closing. At this time I started training in Master Gommels Hapkido program and eventually earned black belt rank in Hapkido.

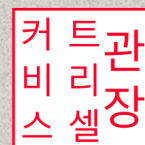
Around this time I met a person in the martial arts who ended up becoming my wife, Nicole. We now have two children who are also involved in the martial arts and a busy home life. I have continued with TaeKwonDo, Hapkido and was able to join a new incarnation of the Judo club and eventually earn my black belt. As long as my body holds out I will continue to train. I joke with people that don't understand why I train that "It's cheaper than therapy." This however is very true. No matter what problems may be going on in my life I can workout for a little bit and forget about them. For me, this helps me decompress and come back to the problems with a fresh outlook.

I hope all of you who are training with us have had and continue to have many positive experiences with your martial arts journey. For those of you who have an interest for you or your child in training with us more information can be found at the links below.

Take care,

*Kirby Strissel*

Kwan Jang - Martial Arts For Health & Wellness, LLC  
Administrator - Korea/USA Simmudo Association





## Perseverance

The Chinese character on the logo was chosen for what it means. There are a handful of meanings for this character but the three that are of importance here are:

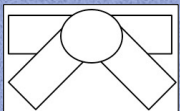
- Perseverance
- To Persevere
- To Endure



All of these can be interpreted to mean facing and working through a challenge or difficulty. In the martial arts we are faced with this in the course of our training. This can come in the form of learning a new technique or form, working around an injury, sparring against a more skilled partner or just taking that first step to begin training in the martial arts. What we learn and do in class as we face and overcome these obstacles will have an affect on our development in the martial arts.

But, we are not trying to just make good martial artists. It is more important to become a better person. Hopefully we can overcome these challenges in our training but more importantly take these lessons and apply them to other areas of our life such as school, work and relationships with others.

## Thursday March 13, 2025 Promotion Test



**White Belts**

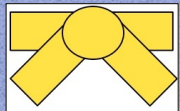
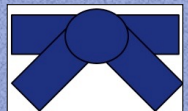
**5:00 PM**

**Yellow Belts**

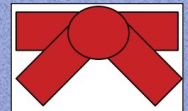
**6:00 PM**

**Green, Blue & Red Belts**

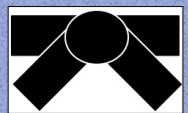
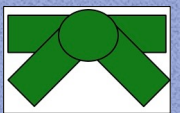
**7:00PM**



**There will be no regular class on test night. We will use this evening for those students that are testing.**



**Feel free to attend another class earlier in the week if you normally just attend Thursdays.**



**If you have any questions contact Kirby Strissel.**

