



Family News

SEPTEMBER 2019

IMPORTANT DATES:

SEPTEMBER



Labor Day
School is CLOSED

TESTING SCHEDULE:

Pre-Test: September 4 - 12

Test: (Fri) September 13

Make Up Test: (Fri) September 20

(all students will test during the same time as regular class. Testing for advanced belts (brown and up) will begin at 4:45 pm. Please remember to bring your testing paper, testing fee, and sparring gear (purple belts and up).



West America After Care

now accommodates the 1:40 pm pickup for Edna Maguire Kindergarteners daily!

Make sure to apply early to guarantee a spot.



Upon arrival at WAAC, students will have time to unwind and enjoy a healthy snack. Students will complete their homework and have reading time with the tutoring team. After, students can play board games, do arts and crafts, or have outdoor supervised play.

Tae Kwon Do classes occur at their scheduled time (for those who are enrolled) and students are walked over before their class to get changed.

You do not need to be a part of the Tae Kwon Do program to join the aftercare program.

After Care is available 1-5 days a week.

E-mail westamericaaftercare@gmail.com

or visit www.westamericaaftercare.com for details and quick online registration!



Welcome Baby Mila...



Congratulations!
Chantal and Richard Serrano

Born July 22, 2019 at Marin General Hospital, weighing 6 lbs 11 oz.

We are a Black Belt School... First and Second Degree Black Belt Test



Earning a black belt is a significant milestone. These 1st and 2nd degree candidates have demonstrated they are worthy of this big achievement in life. Sensei is very proud of all of you!



From l to r: Sensei Carlon, first degree candidates Josh Holzer, Renn Smith and Wendy Dalia.



Second degree candidate Jonathan Garsson.

Taekwondo and My Life

A Reflection by Wendy Dalia

My first exposure to martial arts was as a teen, watching my Dad practice Aikido during my school break visits with him. I remember being especially fascinated by the shoulder rolls he made look easy. I contemplated taking classes myself, but it always felt a bit intimidating to start and so I never followed through. About nine years ago, I once again became a martial arts spectator, but it was here, at West America Tae Kwon Do, where I regularly sat on the bench watching my kids. Like many parents, I scrutinized and “coached” from the sidelines, but really I wished I could jump into the fray. At the time, my life’s schedule couldn’t accommodate that, but a little over four years ago, life chang-



es opened up space for new adventures and, fortunately for me, an adult white belt class was just beginning. So in I jumped, quite literally.

My Tae Kwon Do practice came into my life at a time when I very much

needed something to grab onto. I had recently lost my mom, left my job, and was actively shifting my priorities. I thought Tae Kwon Do would be a good distraction and a pretty cool thing to do with the kids, and it was, but it quickly became more than that. For me, the dojo has provided a sanctuary. I walk through the dojo door and I’m in a supportive, though challenging, learning environment. I’m in a place where the outside world takes a break and I can be present and focused in the moment. Though they may look easy, even the most basic blocks, kicks, stances, and slow kicks require focus, muscle strength, and balance. Every class provides a new challenge and almost every class pushes my limits physically and mentally. I have really enjoyed the feeling of empowerment that comes with learning these new skills. So pretty quickly, Tae Kwon Do became something I really wanted to do for me.

Being able to test for my first degree black belt represents over four years of consistent practice, failure, quite literally falling on my back side on multiple occasions, getting back up again and again, and practice, practice, practice. There have been any number of instances during my journey to get here today that a new technique was introduced and I thought “I will never be able to do that”. Maybe I’m too old. Maybe I’m too fragile. Maybe I’m not strong enough. There were days of great frustration - with my body for not doing what I wanted it to do; with

my knees for rejecting what I was asking of them; with the injustice of being surrounded by teenagers who seem to be able to lift their supporting leg on jumping kicks with ease and somehow have tapped into zero gravity. It would have been easy to give up anywhere along the way, but perseverance and indomitable spirit are two of the five tenets of Tae Kwon Do and I have been working hard to embrace both, regardless of the challenge.

Practicing Tae Kwon Do has taught me more than I expected. I expected to learn the mechanics of the art, but the lessons I’ve received go far beyond that. I have learned acceptance. I have learned patience. And



I have learned to take a healthy dose of humility with a smile. I have also learned that while I need to respect and listen to my body’s limitations, I also need to believe in myself.

That mind-body connection is so important in Tae Kwon Do. It is a lesson I struggle with and work on in every class, especially when working to set aside my fear and trust in what I have learned. Some techniques that once seemed impossible, have become possible. Not perfect. Not what my mind would like them to be, but possible. It’s these small victories that give me the strength and confidence to keep trying, to persevere, and to face new challenges, both here in the dojo and elsewhere in my life.

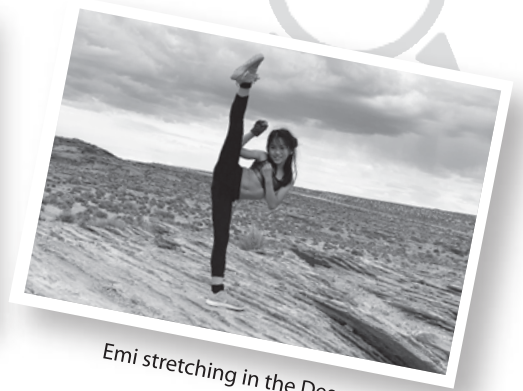
Postcards from Places This Summer



Elsen Palumbo practicing on a beach in Carmel.



Charley Fiber with mom Lorie at the Stonehenge.



Emi stretching in the Desert.

AUGUST STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

Way to Go!



WHITE BELT
James McCabe



BLUE BELT
Aidan Trias



BROWN BELT
Demir Kocoman



YELLOW BELT
Sebastian Barteau



RED BELT
Kaiya Forzley

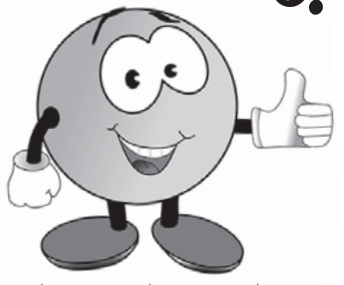


ORANGE BELT
Eli Etemad



SKUNK BELT
Ben Miller

Good Job!



PURPLE BELT
Gisele Williams



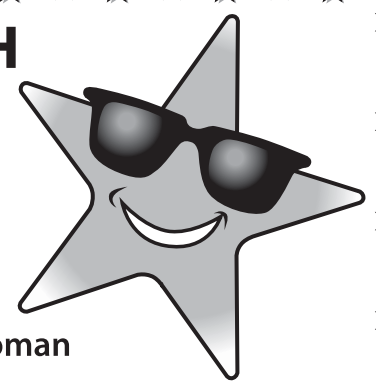
BLACK BELT
Max Perkoff



GREEN BELT
Ronan Corbit



ADULT
Mason Reilly



You Are A Star!