



# **INTERNATIONAL KOJOSHO KARATE FEDERATION**



**Volume XXIV N1**

**IKKF Newsletter**

**Spring 2012**

## **THE EMPEROR'S WISDOM**

An ancient story tells of a Chinese Emperor who assembled the great sages of his vast empire. Mind you, this was not just a handful of smart people getting together but a collection of China's Greatest Thinkers.

The emperor challenged these sages to create something new - an object that was small enough to be easily carried on one's person; inexpensive enough so anyone could afford it; yet attractive enough to make the owner proud. It should cause anyone coming in contact with it, regardless of their education or station, to ponder its purpose. By its very nature it should comfort those under duress, and inspire those who would seek its hidden philosophical meaning.

He gave these sages one year to complete this seemingly undoable task. At the end of that year, the sages presented the Emperor with a simple but attractive ring - no precious stones or decorations - just a plain ring with the kanji engraved inside reading "This Too Will Pass".

This is a popular story with many variations that has been handed down for several thousand years. Some of the details have been lost - for example, we can only guess at exactly what the Emperor said when he first saw the ring. However, it gives the reader an insight into the Chinese mind.

Now consider generations of Masters of the arts of self-defense, all attempting to develop a vehicle to assist in the education of their students - something that could weave together the many aspects of true self-defense; something that words alone, or for that matter movement alone, cannot accomplish; something capable of reaching students at all levels of development. Distilling one perfect version of martial reality that will address all situations and answer all questions from all students is just not possible. In order to be all encompassing, the study has to cover a multitude of things: basic movement; advanced movement; timing; distance; target area; fitness; breathing; mental focus; inner strength; and a student's true understanding of their own abilities. In the end, what each student is left with is all the information they have retained and the results of all the hard work they have done to make that information their own.

Each student is not only unique in all the above aspects, but also unique in all of the experiences that have shaped their own individual mindset. And that unique mindset is the foundation for the reasoning and execution behind the mental and physical skills that allow the student to perform effectively. Mental imagery - how the student perceives himself or herself - is an essential aspect of the work involved in developing true and effective ability.

For example, if the student trains under a gifted and demanding teacher who places in the student's hands something that works well for most other students but that, for whatever reason, the student believes simply cannot work for her, that student will not succeed. Genuine confidence is attainable only when the student realizes that no one can defeat all attackers all of the time, and that everyone can and will be confronted by superior opponents. Better to have fewer skills that do work well for you, than to have all of the skills that work well for others but not for you. Your mental image of both yourself and your own ability must be as brutally honest and realistic as your ego will allow. And our egos don't give up their own inflated images easily.

The ancients looked to different animal and element concepts to reach beyond the sheer speed and brute strength aspects of training, and like the Emperor's Ring, cause the serious student to ponder how these animals evolved and survived and even flourished in spite of routinely facing opponents with superior skills - after all, learning to survive to fight another day is a critical part of martial arts training.

Given the many aspects of the study and the individual benefits derived, not everyone will have the same reasons for studying the martial arts: hobby; fitness; sport; self-confidence; recreation; cultural understanding; camaraderie; personal goals. No matter - harnessing the Animal & Element imagery that is at the very core of the Kojosho System, and using that imagery to broaden your awareness about aspects of the attitudes, technical skills, weapons, postures, motion and strategies that are shared by those entities and you, can be a great help to a seeker of true martial arts Wisdom.

Mr. F. Absher

國際古城松空手道連盟

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## DENTO-KOSHO

*Dento-kosho* is an expression in Japanese. *Dento* means "tradition." Interestingly, it is written with two characters: the first meaning "transmission", the second "heritage." In other words, "tradition," the tradition we're always talking about in some martial arts circles, exists only when it is passed down. A suit of armor behind glass in a museum isn't "tradition." It plays a part in tradition only when it is used, metaphorically or even literally, from one generation to the next. The same goes for martial arts. They aren't "traditional" if they are not transmitted. They are dead. Or at best, a stuffed taxidermy exhibit.

*Kosho* means "personal interpretation" or "insight." It is *kosho* that animates *dento*. **It is our insight into the art, fortified correctly through years of training in the fundamentals**, that allows *dento* to continue. Those following a traditional path then, are not doing it for the sake of tradition itself. Tradition is rather a means to an end. **Tradition depends upon the continued contributions of personal insight into an art. Conversely, those personal insights and interpretation mean nothing if they are not grounded in the established traditions of the art.** It is a cycle.

The notion that tradition and individual insight and personal interpretation are mutually exclusive is a curious one. Certainly that notion is not a part of any "traditional" Japanese art and never has been. Tradition and personal interpretation are, by necessity and by the very definition of an "art," martial or otherwise, absolutely vital in their harmony.

Contrary to popular assumptions about the rigidity of his arts, the fighting man was not blindly loyal to a standardized way of looking at his equipment or his arts. He recognized the need to be flexible and to modify things if necessary. We should consider a similar approach to our own training. An uncritical reliance on dogma or inflexible standards is perhaps useful for a certain stage of learning. Rote learning, just trying to absorb the lessons uncritically and doing it "because Sensei says so," is sufficient until we gain a deeper understanding of a practice. As one advances in a realistic combative art, however, this attitude can become robotic and stale. **Always under the guidance of a qualified teacher, we eventually have to begin to make the art our own.**

from **The Essence of BUDO**  
by David Lowry

## KOJOSHO - The Philosophy of a Kempo Karate System by Soon Fook-Leong

The first Kojosho edition of this Kojosho System book was published in 1982. It has been reprinted several times since then. The latest revised edition is now available which reflects newly discovered historical information as well as documents the "heritage" katas *Hakutsuru*, *Hako*, and *Hakuryu*. To order send a check or money order for \$20.00 US to:

IKKF PO Box 688 Tijeras, NM USA 87059

**This is the 29th consecutive year of publication of the IKKF Newsletter.**

If you would like to have your article, book or movie review, or personal experience regarding the IKKF, the Kojosho Shinkokai, or any other traditional Martial Art considered for publication please send a copy of your manuscript to the Newsletter Editor at the address below.

You may contact any IKKF affiliated school or individual in any country through the IKKF World Headquarters. Enclose your correspondence to the school or individual you wish to contact in an envelope addressed to:  
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**THE INTERNATIONAL KOJOSHO KARATE FEDERATION**  
in on the World Wide WEB at  
<http://www.kojosho.com>

**BLACK & BROWN BELT PROMOTIONS**

The annual winter Kojosho Black & Brown Belt Testing was held on Saturday, January 7, 2012 at the Kojosho Moon School Dojo in Albuquerque. Mr. Absher conducted the event, assisted by the Kojosho Board of Regents. The day-long test covered basics, hard-line forms, Kojosho Forms, self-defense, and sparring. Mr. Absher announced these promotions at the traditional awards banquet that evening:

**GODAN**  
**Fifth Degree Black Belt**  
**Jack Renna**

**SHODAN**  
**First Degree Black Belt**  
**Amanda Castillo**  
**Dan Castillo**  
**Paul Mysza**

**Second Kyu Brown Belt**  
**Travis Sullivan**

**Congratulations from the Kojosho Board of Regents**

**KUDOS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- \* The Theme for this year's Kojosho study is:  
***IN SEARCH OF THE ANIMALS***
- \* **This will be the 42nd annual Kojosho Spring Camp!!**  
 An extraordinary record by any standards. And some of the Kojo-Codgers attended the very first one!
- \* Annual Black Belt dues are a part of the responsibility of being a Black Belt in all traditional systems. All Kojosho System Black Belts share this tradition. Kojosho Black Belt dues are quite modest compared to the amounts required in most other organizations. In recent years the income from these annual dues has been used to fund improvements at the IKKF World Headquarters, and to help support System tournaments and special classes.

**All Black Belts please note that annual Black Belt dues for 2012 are now due.**

Dues can be sent to:  
**Mr. Michael Pierson**  
**PO Box 51416,**  
**Albuquerque, NM 87181**



**Leopard kills man, scalps another in Indian city (Jan 7, 2012)**

An amazing photo sequence of a leopard attack. Note that in the 1st photo the man has taken a defensive position with his knee blocking the leopard's frontal attack, his right arm defending and his left fist blurred as he throws a reverse punch. The leopard has slipped just to the right side of the man's extended right knee. In the next photo, the man's right arm and right leg have barely moved, and his left punch has traveled less than 12 inches. In that short time, the leopard completed a left hook around the man's right arm and up his back which lifted up a piece of the man's scalp (the man survived). This may give you some idea of what you're up against when you face a Kojosho leopard.

Practice harder! And remember not to try to pet a leopard!

## The International Kojosho Karate Federation Expands to Africa

In late 2008, a Kojosho Kempo instructor stepped off a jet at OR Tambo International Airport outside of Johannesburg, South Africa, and within 3 days had started regular training with a new student. Although his primary duties entailed the care and protection of the 86-year-old mother of another martial artist, whose son was deploying out of country, Kojosho had landed! The American and the African martial artists had known each other for years; the SA martial artist introduced the new Kojosho Kempo instructor to the new Kojosho student.

The duties entailed in caring for and protecting his friend's mother also involved living in Laudium, a "suburb" of Pretoria, where a remarkable mixture of cultures created a truly exotic setting. Within hearing, the calls to prayer from the closest five mosques could be heard clearly, while up the street, a large Hindu temple served a large and very active congregation, as did several other Hindu and related temples in the vicinity. Exploring the Gauteng Province region, containing both Pretoria and Johannesburg and many smaller cities and towns between [there are new, African, names now after the 1994 change of governments, but these are not easy to recognize or find on maps yet], the extraordinary cultural diversity became ever more apparent, with an accompanying mixture of innumerable martial arts from around the world.

The first Kojosho Kempo dojo was hosted by Ashley Fourie's boxing gym, one of the leading professional boxing clubs in South Africa. Deepest thanks go to Ashley Fourie and Shayvonne Pattison and others for their gracious hospitality, and support. From an out-of-town martial artist teaching an obscure style, the new and only Kojosho teacher in South Africa became a licensed boxing ass't coach as well, assisting in numerous ferocious fights from ringside, with powerful lessons deeply learned from the boxers.

As of April, the African Kojosho Dojo has relocated to the Lam Rim Tibetan Buddhist Centre and Temple in central Johannesburg. Kojosho studies are in the Conference Hall, part of a complex well over a hundred years old. The Hall is over sixty yards long and 25 yards wide, not including the full-sized stage on one end and a community kitchen at the other end, with wood floors throughout. Basics take a bit longer than at the Home School, but the learning and exercise should be that much deeper! To make up for additional "basics-time", classes for intermediate and advanced students are 1.5-2 hours Tuesday and Thursday evenings, and 2-5pm on Saturday afternoon. The Hall's deep quiet surrounds all students, including the instructor, in a peaceful and mindful space, encouraging deeper concentration on both Kojosho skills and Kojosho core values.

Among the many traditions brought over from the Home School to the first Kojosho Kempo school on the African Continent, mopping the floor before each training day begins remains as important a source of diligent meditation time for the Kojosho instructor as it was at the San Pedro School in the early-mid Seventies. However, there is no Tex Cobb snoring in the middle of the mat who must be carefully awakened to get the job done, sometimes a risky business!

Deepest Regards, Thanks, Affection and Love go to Mr and Mrs Absher, and to all the Instructors and fellow students, all the way back to the beginning of the Seventies, whose wonderful patience and extraordinary skills have made this step possible for the Kojosho System to Africa, a new continent. Equally, such acknowledgments also go to Colleen du Plessis-Venable, almost 4 years a Kojosho student in Africa.

The transcendent obligations of *giri*, taken on with the greatest respect and willingness, will now be passed on to new generations of students in Africa, as they, too, become Student/Teachers of the Kojosho System.

Mr. Gordon Venible

For additional information please see: [www.kojosho-africa.org](http://www.kojosho-africa.org)  
If you find yourself in South Africa, please call Gordon at [076 035 4684](tel:0760354684)



**NEW MEXICO KOJOSHO CLASS SCHEDULES**

ALBUQ Heights Moon NE—1 Blk N of Indian School 505-228-5592	MWF MWF	5:00 - 6:00 6:00 - 7:00	Juniors Mixed Adults	Fred Absher & Staff
	T TH T TH	5:00 - 6:00 6:00 - 8:00	Juniors Mixed Adults	Shane Absher
Cedar Crest	W W Sat Sat	6:45 -7:45 7:45 - 8:45 11:00 - 12:00 12:00 - 1:00	Juniors Adults Juniors Adults	Shane Absher
Apple Valley Ranch 505-281-5294	T TH T TH	5:00 - 6:00 6:00 - 7:00	Juniors Adults	Fred Absher
Deer Mountain Training Club 3821 Hawkins NE 505 710-2500	T TH	6:00 - 8:00	Mixed	Peter Renna & Jack Renna
Las Cruces NMSU	MW MW	7:00 - 8:00 8:00 - 9:00	Mixed Advanced	David Barnhart
Cuba H.S. Kojosho	Schedule Varies			Victor Velarde
Roswell H.S. Kojosho 500 W Hobbs	M T W TH F M W	7:15 - 8:00 AM 6:00 - 7:00 PM		Mike Kakuska
Clayton Kojosho 14 South 2nd 505-374-2168	T TH T TH T TH Sat	5:30 - 6:30 6:30 - 7:30 7:30 - 8:30 7:30 - 8:30 AM	Juniors Begin Advanced Open	Tim Hodo
Alamogordo Kojosho Powerhouse Gym	T TH T TH	6:45 - 7:30 7:30 - 8:30	Juniors Adults	Rick Guidry
Durango Kojosho Durango High School	M T W TH F	7:00—8:00 AM		Greg Spradling

**KOJOSHO SYSTEM CALENDAR**

2012		2012	
January 7	Black / Brown Belt Testing	August 4	Tournament (Albuq)
February 9-15	KICKS Costa Rica	August 17	Colored Belt Testing (Albuq)
February 18	Instructor's Seminar	October 20—21	Fall Camp
March 9	Colored Belt Testing (Albuq)	November 10	Instructor's Seminar
April 7	Tournament (Albuq)	November 23	Colored Belt Testing (Albuq)
May 26 - 28	Spring Camp		
June 1	Colored Belt Testing (Albuq)		
July 7	Black / Brown Belt Testing		

## THE SPIRIT OF THE MARTIAL WAYS

*Budo no Damashi*, the “spirit of the martial Ways,” is something that transcends the limited capabilities of the body. It is that part of the budoka’s personality not immediately evident. It is molded by those long hours practicing the art’s basics, fortifying the spirit, and by the even longer hours spent learning advanced techniques that will take a decade of work before there is some kind of understanding of their movements. *Damashi* is nurtured by the courage necessary to face a vastly superior opponent in a match, with the hope not of winning but of gaining some insight from the encounter. It is a refined sort of toughness that cannot be acquired through the cursing of a drill sergeant or a football coach, or even through a teacher’s instruction. Rather, *damashi* is an attribute attained through an intensely individual commitment to the martial Way, the ultimate aim of which is in the perfection of the self.

In talented and dedicated budoka, *damashi* is what eventually spills over from their practice in the dojo and influences their everyday life. It allows them to meet successfully the rigors, setbacks, and challenges of life with the same calm determination that they draw on to approach similar experiences in their training.

*Damashi* is a subtle strength. It is really discernible perhaps, only to more advanced students of the martial Ways who have at least started on their own journey toward making *damashi* a part of their own character. Even so, *damashi* is one of the vital elements that distinguishes the budo from sport or entertainment. Its presence is one characteristic that distinguishes the budoka from the athlete. Patiently developed as a part of serious training and long, long commitment to an art, *damashi* is a kind of fortitude. Illness, injuries, the toll time takes on our bodies; any of these might prevent a budoka from ever getting out on the dojo floor and physically practicing their budo again. Life’s uncertainties can take this from us. Even so, *damashi* allows those of us who follow the Ways to continue on. We may remain worthwhile as human beings, stable of center, at peace with ourselves and with the rest of the world. Physical power and technique are transient. Grace and dignity are timeless. *Damashi* is the element that elevates budo in such a way that we can realize this and embody it.

Let’s be absolutely clear: There is no graduation from the budo. There is no summit, no peak you reach at which point you can say “I’ve climbed to the top: there is no place higher for me to go.” Instead, the path of a martial Way is like working your way slowly up a hill. It is not a steep or treacherous one. But if you have never climbed before, the path can look and feel intimidating. And it is deceptive. You approach the top—or at least what you believe to be the top—proud of your accomplishment. And then you see it. Once you have reached the summit, three or four larger hills loom up in front of you. Each of them must be climbed. When you climb the first, it affords you a view of half a dozen more peaks that are even higher. The second reveals another vista, of other peaks that are more like mountains. Each time you tackle a new climb, you are rewarded the same way. Another landscape, filled with more mountains. You cannot, in fact imagine having the time or energy or resources in what remains of your life to climb even a fraction of those peaks you have glimpsed in the distance.

The great joy and the wonderful benefit of following a martial Way—please understand this—is in the process. That is a big reason it is called a martial Way. It is a path. It is not a destination. There are endless destinations along the Way. Some of us will reach more of these destinations than will others. In the end, what matters is not how many summits we climbed. The value of budo is in the process of spending our lives doing that climbing.

The notion that I am embarking on a journey I will never finish, that I am going into a place the dimensions and boundaries of which it is impossible fully to know, can be daunting. That is what we sign up for when we begin to follow the path of budo.

from **The Essence of BUDO**  
by David Lowry

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James H. Hawkes 1936—2012

### **Sensei Was Martial Arts Pioneer in U.S.**

Grandmaster James Hawkes, one of the early pioneers of karate in the United States, co-founder/co-director of the United States Karate Alliance and an internationally respected teacher, died at his Albuquerque home Monday. He was 75.

Hawkes, a Bernalillo County Sheriff's deputy from 1977 to 1993, was a 10th-degree black belt and instructor of Shorin-Ryu Okinawan karate. He operated Jim Hawkes Karate dojos in Albuquerque since the early 1960's, paving the way for full-contact karate and mixed-martial arts here.

As a competitor in the 1960s and '70s, Hawkes won or placed in more than 250 local, state, regional, national and international tournaments. Black Belt magazine named him one of the top 10 fighters in the country in 1967, 1968 and 1969.

Hawkes was a member of the elite Trias International Society, the United States Karate Alliance Hall of Fame, and was the first Amateur Athletic Union karate president in New Mexico. He was also a national and state Coach of the Year multiple times, based on accumulated tournament points of his students.

"His passing is a huge loss to the world of martial arts and a profoundly personal loss for me and the rest of Sensei's dojo family," said Journal reporter Rick Nathanson, a friend and student for 33 years. "The gifts he imparted in the dojo will last us a lifetime, but he was far more than just a repository of martial-arts wisdom. His humor was legendary, he was astoundingly well read, and the sheer breadth of his many other interests was stunning."

Fred Absher, a local karate school operator, competed against Hawkes in the 1960s and '70s. "He was a giant and one of the originals from karate's earliest days," said Absher, who also called Hawkes "a good friend."

"He was the man to beat regionally and in the top 10 nationally—just an awesome opponent, and one of those guys you really didn't look forward to fighting. But Sensei Hawkes was well respected and always generous, even with his competitors, offering insights on how they could become better at their own game."

Albuquerque lawyer Cathy Davis became a Hawkes student in 1981 and went on to become a world champion competitor. "People would come from all over the country to train with him and improve their fighting and forms," she said.

While stationed in Clovis and exercising at a gym on Canon Air force Base, he had his first exposure to karate: "At the other end of the gym were these guys wearing white pajamas. They moved in unison, going through what looked like precision, choreographed fighting techniques. I like what I saw and asked the instructor if I could join in."

That instructor, martial arts luminary Ken Funakoshi, awarded Hawkes his first-degree black belt in Japanese Shotokan karate in 1960. When the railroad transferred Hawkes back to Albuquerque, he began training under James Kennedy, a former Air Force serviceman who had studied in Okinawa under karate master Fusei Kisa. Hawkes earned his black belt in Shorin-Ryu from Kennedy and then took over the dojo when Kennedy left Albuquerque in 1962.

At a tournament in Phoenix, Hawkes met Grandmaster Robert Trias, who had founded the United States Karate Association in 1948, the first and largest national karate organization in the country. Hawkes became a regular tournament competitor and fought on the highly regarded USKA national team of the 1960's.

When Trias died in 1989, his association fell into disarray. Hawkes was instrumental in helping establish the United States Karate Alliance as a way to maintain Trias' principles and organizational framework.

Albuquerque Journal Friday, March 9, 2012

### **Blinded By Views**

The Buddha tells the following story: Once upon a time there lived a king. One day, the king instructed a servant to round up a gathering of men who had been blind since birth. The king further ordered that his servant introduce an elephant to this group of men, such that each could examine it for himself. To the first, the servant presented the head of the elephant, to the second, the ear, and so in turn. At this point the king approached the blind men and asked of each, "Tell me, sir, what is an elephant like?" Each answered according to his own experience, saying in turn that the elephant was like a water pot, a basket, a plowshare, a plow pole, a granary, a pillar, a mortar, a pestle, and a broom.

This much of the tale is generally well known, But how it ends, and the point the Buddha was making is less commonly recognized. In its original telling the story goes on to say that these nine blind men began quarrelling about the nature of the elephant, each one saying, "The elephant is not like that, it is like this." Eventually they came to blows and began striking one another with their fists. The king sat back and watched with great amusement.

The Buddha told this story in response to a conflict between many teachers of different traditions living in the same vicinity. In the story, the king seemed to know the extent to which views, beliefs, and opinions in human beings link directly to very primitive instincts for defending what belongs to oneself and attacking what is regarded as belonging to others.

The point of the story is not just that most things have multiple different perspectives, but the absurdity of being attached to only one viewpoint and the harm that can ensue when one does so. So by all means let's disagree on things, and even, if need be, let's do so vociferously. But let's also try not to take it all personally. All views, even correct views—are best held gently, rather than grasped firmly.

From Tricycle magazine, Summer 2011, by Andrew Olendzki

# INTERNATIONAL KOJOSHO KARATE FEDERATION

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