

**July 2010**  
**Monthly Communication**  
**Sensei Cline, NW Region Director**

As most of you know, I am not enthralled with the accommodations or the culinary offerings at Master Camp. However, after returning from Camp this year, I reflected on the diversity of the participants attending this major event. Thirty-one countries and five continents were represented; many individuals spoke little to no English and represented every socio-economic status in existence. Despite the language barriers and the cultural differences, every individual was able to communicate in some form or another, whether it was physical, verbal or by sheer will. The camp operated and functioned as a single unit, with a common purpose; it was an environment in sync. With the camp population being more than 75% black belts, one can't help but wonder if the veteran status of most of the campers contributed to this sense of balance. Or, was it the mindset of the world, hungry for world peace, tired of natural and manmade disasters and worn down by daily news of war and unrest? Whatever the reason, I think we all walked away from the week in Pennsylvania with the belief that anything is possible, a belief and feeling that carries us through to the next training, the next camp, the next competition. We were led by four Japanese instructors representing three different countries, and supported by a dozen accomplished individuals from the western hemisphere. As one of the largest, most diverse, yet most cohesive camps in the world, there was cause to celebrate; celebrate a camp in balance, individual lives in sync, and the ability to understand and accept the differences. I'll be there next year, and I hope many of you will join me.

**Niju Kun**

The 18<sup>th</sup> Niju Kun is our focus for this month: "Do not forget: (1) strength and weakness of power; (2) contraction and expansion of body; and (3) slowness and speed of techniques."

**Kata of the Month**

Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced: Bassai Dai, with 42 movements and kiai points at movements 19 and 42.

Black Belt: Chinte, with 33 movements and kiai points at movements 9 and 32.

**Technical Focus**

Driving power from rooted stance to front stance, vertical fist punch, finger strike, hip rotation, scissors strike with hammer fists.

**Upcoming Events**

38<sup>th</sup> Annual **Mountain States Camp**, Greeley Colorado, July 29-August 1. Guest Instructor: **Sensei Okazaki**.

See the annual calendar on our regional website which lists regional, national and international events. <http://iskfnw.org/default.htm>

## **Instructor Spotlight: Matt Thomas, Godan**



### **Where and when did you start training with the ISKF?**

I joined the ISKF in the mid eighties in Santa Rosa, California. I had been practicing Kempo Karate in the Bay Area at the time but at the urging of a childhood friend who was a Shotokan practitioner I looked for a Shotokan school in my area.

### **What were the reasons you started training?**

My introduction to the Martial Arts was with a Chinese exchange student who was going to Fresno State in the late 60's. Most of my close childhood friends did some type of training in boxing, judo or karate. To this day most of my childhood friends still practice some form of martial art and it has always been a topic of discussion for us and has kept us close over the years. The Green Hornet was my favorite TV show in the 60's.

### **Who are the 2-3 people who have most influenced your martial arts training, and why?**

Although Bruce Lee, Jim Kelly, and my childhood friends got me interested in the

martial arts, Yaguchi Sensei and Sensei Field have been most influential in my path of development in Shotokan karate. I have trained in several different systems Changquan (Chinese Long Fist) in the 60's, Shorin-ryu in the 70's, Kempo in the late 70's, and Shotokan from the mid 80's to present. I am glad that my friend recommended Shotokan. I found Shotokan to be very well rounded and I feel it has helped me physically as well as mentally.

Once I started training in Shotokan I have never looked back. I realize that it is the best system for me. The ISKF in my opinion has the most proficient, knowledgeable, thoughtful and understanding instructors. From the beginning of my training in Shotokan to present Yaguchi Sensei has been there always positive and gently prodding me to do better in life as well as karate. Okazaki Sensei has also shown me that we can show the public through our actions that karate is here to make the world a better place. Sensei Field helped me develop toughness, endurance but also fairness and humility. I had the privilege to train with Sensei Field directly in the late 80's through the mid 90's. My karate improved so much during that time. I still miss the team training even though it was grueling at times; Sensei Field had a way of making the experience quite fulfilling and of course my level went up leaps and bounds. That type of training for those who seek excellence in karate is a must.

### **Anything else you'd like to add?**

Presently I am training under another outstanding instructor and martial artist Cathy Cline. I have known her for many years as a friend and Senpai I feel honored that she is our regional director.