

WSKF Newsletter



2nd Quarter

June 2026



Ronald Elliott Cyphers

December 24th 1938 – May 13th 2026

“To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die.” – Thomas Campbell

I, like everyone else I talked to, was immensely saddened by Ron's sudden passing. However, hearing that Ron was training as recently as the week before he was admitted to the hospital was not at all surprising to me. Training in black belt class that same Friday was rough, but also, I knew I had to be there for myself, and for Ron. In the midst of training that night a thought dawned on me that shifted my perspective. I realized that Hanshi Grant would have been there to warmly greet Ron. I imagined the two of them sitting together, just off the deck, trading stories and observations, and laughing together as we all trained. I imagined Hanshi Grant laughing as he told Ron to get changed into his Gi, and informed him it was time for a private class, with Hanshi joking that Ron wasn't going to get off that easily. And I imagined Ron smiling from ear to ear as Hanshi told him that. I encourage us all to take some time during internationals to celebrate Ron, and everything that he brought to us. Take some time to trade stories, laughs, and tears if needed. Just remember Ron is still laughing with us.

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Upcoming WSKF Events
6/18 - 6/21 WSKF Internationals – Greenville Dojo
6/21 – Hanshi Grant's Birthday
7/15 – Grand Master Nagamine's Birthday
7/17 – Black Belt Class – Troy Dojo
8/21 – Black Belt Class – Troy Dojo
8/22 – Kuro Obi Kai – Troy Dojo
9/18 – Black Belt Class – Troy Dojo

WATER

From the June 1992 edition WSKF newsletter:

Written by Sensei Steve Kabbord with reference to “WATER, How 8 Glasses a Day Keep Fat Away,” by Donald S. Robertson, MD.

“Incredible as it may seem, water is quite possibly the single most important catalyst in losing weight and keeping it off.” Although most of us take it for granted, water may be the only true “magic potion” for permanent weight loss. Water suppresses the appetite naturally and helps the body metabolize stored fat.

Studies have shown that a decrease in water intake will cause fat deposits to increase, while an increase in water intake can actually reduce fat deposits. Here's why: The kidneys can't function properly without enough water. When they don't work to capacity, some of their load is dumped into the liver. One of the liver's primary functions is to metabolize stored fat into usable energy for the body. But, if the liver has to do some of the kidney's work, it can't operate at full throttle. As a result, it metabolizes less fat, more fat remains stored in the body and weight loss stops.

Drinking enough water is the best treatment for fluid retention. When the body gets less water, it perceives this as a threat to survival and begins to hold on to every drop. Water is stored in extra-cellular spaces (outside the cells). This shows up as swollen feet, legs and hands. The best way to overcome the problem of water retention is to give your body what it needs—plenty of water. Only then will stored water be released. If you have a consistent problem with water retention, excess salt may be to blame. Your body will tolerate sodium only in a certain concentration. The more salt you eat, the more water your system retains to dilute it. But getting rid of unneeded salt is easy—just drink more water. As it's forced through the kidneys, it takes away excess sodium.

WATER Continued

The overweight person needs more water than the thin one. Larger people have larger metabolic loads. Since we know that water is the key to fat metabolism, it follows that the overworking muscles their natural ability to contract and by preventing dehydration. It also helps to prevent the sagging skin that usually follows weight loss—shrinking cells are buoyed by water, which plumps the skin and leaves it clear, healthy and resilient. Water helps rid the body of waste. During weight loss, the body has a lot more waste to get rid of—all that metabolized fat must be shed. Again adequate water helps flush out the waste. Water can help relieve constipation. When the body gets too little, it siphons what it needs from internal sources. The colon is one primary source. Result? Constipation. But, when a person drinks enough water, normal bowel function usually returns.

So far, we've discovered some remarkable truths about water and weight loss:

- The body will not function properly without enough water and it can't metabolize stored fat efficiently.
- Retained water shows up as excess weight.
- To get rid of excess water you must drink more water.
- Drinking water is essential to weight loss.
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How much water is enough? On the average, a person should drink eight 8 ounce glasses every day. That's about 2 quarts. However, the overweight person needs one additional glass for every 25 pounds of excess weight. The amount you drink also should be increased if you exercise briskly or if the weather is hot and dry. When the body gets the water it needs to function optimally, its fluids are perfectly balanced. When this happens, you have reached the "breakthrough point." What does this mean?

- Endocrine gland function improves.
- Fluid retention is alleviated as stored water is lost.
- More fat is used as fuel because the liver is free to metabolize stored fat.
- Natural thirst returns.
- There is a loss of hunger almost overnight.

If you stop drinking enough water, your body fluids will be thrown out of balance again, and you may experience fluid retention, unexplained weight gain and loss of thirst. To remedy the situation you'll have to go back for another "breakthrough." As karateka, we lose quite a bit of water during our workouts. With summer quickly approaching, our water loss during class will even be greater. Did you know that our bodies are 60%-65% water, and losing only 1/4th of that amount can cut our physical performance in half?! That can make a dramatic difference in our training.

So if we are going to make the investment in ourselves by going to the dojo, learning and training with Sensei and the other students, we should make sure that we are physically and mentally able to give it everything we have. Drinking plenty of water throughout the day is one very simple way to do just that.

Seibukan USA Training Clinic – Cumming Georgia – May 2026

Evan McPeek - Yon-Dan, Martial Arts and Family Fitness Dojo-Centerburg, OH

I was among a small group of WSKF members who traveled to Cumming Georgia for a 2 day training clinic with Seibukan USA; The WSKF was invited by Sensei Dan Smith, the head of Seibukan USA. When Hanshi Leistner met Hanshi Smith in Okinawa they began discussing karate, and Hanshi Smith discussed having met Hanshi Grant in the past. The clinic was primarily taught by 3 Okinawan instructors, all from the Shimabukuro family. The head of Seibukan karate, Zenpo Shimabukuro, was recently recognized by the Okinawan government as an “intangible cultural asset of Okinawa” for Okinawan Karate and Kobudo; and the clinic included a banquet honoring this recognition for Hanshi Shimabukuro. This “intangible cultural asset” designation is, at least according to an April 2026 article I was able to find, something that only 23 Okinawan Karate & Kobudo instructors have been recognized with. In 1997, the first time the recognition was awarded, Master Nagamine was 1 of 3 people to be recognized. Hanshi Taira, President of the WMKA, whom those of us who were fortunate enough to make the Okinawa trip met and trained with, was also awarded this designation in April of this year.

While many of the kata we trained during the clinic were different from those we practice as students of Matsubayashi-ryu, the basics were still very familiar. As we worked through these foreign katas, it was very easy, and fun, to apply our understanding of “advanced basics” to them. And while there were some fundamental differences in our Matsubayashi-ryu and their Seibukan, at the heart of it we were all Shorin-ryu, and the similarities were more numerous than the differences. I had a fun time learning their katas, and seeing the potential applications through the classes. I would like to thank Hanshi Dan Smith for inviting us, and if we're fortunate enough to be invited again, I would recommend that any advanced student who is able to should attend. It is training events like these that remind me how lucky I am that I ended up training Shorin-ryu, and that Master Nagamine gave us the Matsubayashi-ryu we recognize, and that Hanshi Grant worked so tirelessly to fulfill his promise to take it to the next level.



Nature and Karate

Lori McPeek – Roku-Dan, Martial Arts and Family Fitness Dojo-Centerburg, OH

As the earth awakens into spring, grass peeking out of the dirt, birds singing to herald the incoming spring, my heart is happy. I love seeing the rebirth of the grass and the early flowers budding. The warm sun shining. I contemplate the passing winter. Animals burrowed into their warm dens. The grass and flowers bid their time under the warm dirt. God nurtured them all.

As I'm sitting down thinking, I liken this rebirth to karate training. Most of us come into karate knowing nothing. We are nurtured by our sensei throughout our training. Glimpses of what lay dormant in us are brought out by our training under the watchful eyes of our sensei. We blossom into martial artists under the cultivation of our sensei. Nature and karate are intertwined.

On Waza

Dewite Daryl Avery, Yondan, Matsubayashi-Ryu

I can't place the exact date, but sometime around 1975 I was training in the Eaton Ohio dojo under Sensei Dan Coover. Hanshi Grant came to our dojo that day to enlighten us. The lesson was on breaking technique. I was a green belt at the time and had broken a couple of boards that were held or braced on blocks and was fairly confident in my abilities. Hanshi explained that we should be able to break a board without anyone holding it. He told us to take a board, hold it out, drop it, and punch it while in mid air. Always up for a challenge, (as I remember, I was the first student to try), I took a board, dropped it and punched it. I was lucky I didn't kill someone at the other end of the dojo where the board landed unbroken. Hanshi then picked up a board and held it in one hand. He explained that it was not just speed and power that was needed to break the board. He said it was technique that was needed. At this comment, he punched the board he was holding in slow motion. I remember that it seemed to take forever for his punch to make contact with the board, it was going so slowly. At the point of contact, he turned the hand, rotating the knuckle and the board exploded. Inspired by this example of waza, we tried again, and again. Before class was over, some of us (including me) was able to drop the board and break it in mid air. It was a lesson that has stayed with me forever. I have seen a lot of breaking demonstrations since that day. I have seen speed, power and technique combined to break all sorts of things. I have never seen anyone break anything that was more impressive than when Hanshi broke that single board in slow motion.

On Strangers, Dynamics, and Facets

Jim Sage – Sandan, Matsubayashi-Ryu

Somewhere in the seventies I found myself at Hanshi Grant's dojo in old north Dayton. As I remember, it was a promotion and I was, at one point, in conversation with Marge Grant, Hanshi's wife. We were strangers to each other, actually, and I was a green belt, but the conversation transcended any semblance of anything but friends pleasantly sharing common interests. Somehow it came out we both liked antiques. At one point she did not hesitate to show me an antique she was especially proud of. She had made a necklace from a button she had bought at Mr. B's antique shop, which was in the neighborhood. It was only a small button, probably Victorian, but elaborate and very pretty and feminine.

That conversation, to me, was a reflection of the quality of this fold of individuals we call shorinryu practitioners. I happen to believe what we are, as a group, goes beyond simply a gathering of like minded individuals with common interests. I think our community is like most others as academics would define us, but there is much more going on in our community.

The unique things we practice, aspire to, and become as individuals, affects not only each of us individually, but affects also the group as a whole. We put so much, maybe even all of our attention on the dynamics of ourselves and our way, our path of training, but there is this other dynamic. If all our energies had colors, and we could see them, what kind of a swirling kaleidoscope would we see in our midst as we train, or even as we simply have conversation.

There are those who, in their pursuit of knowledge and understanding, will dissect the rose, label all the parts, do comparisons, apply measurements, etc. Then there are those who will simply gaze in appreciation, enjoy the fragrance and beauty, and cast feelings of fondness and gratitude.

The scientist, the philosopher, the poet, the romantic are all facets of ourselves.

You know we need the seen and the unseen. And we need to recognize and remember we are community as much as we are individuals. I personally think our greatest quality and strength come from our very basic drive to go within, to draw from the inner light, spoken of in different ways by masters Nagamine and Grant. Know all you can about the rose, but also relax and enjoy, and celebrate its essence. Doing that can be a path in itself. Community is also a facet of ourselves, perhaps bigger than we are able to see.

Mental Mastery: The Five Biggest Mistakes Karateka Make and How to Overcome Them:

Originally Published in January, 1989 WSKF Newsletter by the Newsletter Staff

There are two ways to become a champion. The slow way is to learn from your own mistakes. The other way, which is more efficient, is to learn from the mistakes of others. Not only is it a lot less painful to gain from the experience of others, but once you start doing this you will begin to make fewer mistakes.

I have noticed in my Dojo, that karateka keep committing the same mistakes over and over again.

- **Mistake Number One:** Many Karateka practice their strengths while ignoring their weaknesses.

The Problem: Everyone likes to do what they do best. Unfortunately you do not improve by “polishing” only your strengths but by correcting your weaknesses.

The Solution: Discover your weak links. If you are not aware of them, your Sempai and Sensei probably are. In combat, your opponents are more than happy to point out your deficiencies.

The Moral: “A chain is only as strong as its weakest link.”

- **Mistake Number Two:** Many Karateka have no definite goals.

The Problem: Many drift aimlessly in the sea of training. Just as you can not travel to a destination you do not have; you cannot reach a goal you do not set.

The Solution: Goals need to be established in a systematic fashion.

The Moral: “If you do not know where you are going, you might wind up where you are headed.”

- **Mistake Number Three:** Many Karateka do not succeed because they are afraid of failure.

The Problem: You cannot want to succeed and be afraid to fail at the same time. This puts you in a psychological tug-of-war against yourself.

The Solution: You can chose to view failure as destructive or constructive. It is healthier to look at failure as a rest stop on your road to success, rather than a total breakdown. Failure is most profitable when you use it as an opportunity for feedback.

The Moral: “The greatest mistake that you can make in life is to be continuously fearing that you will make one.”

● **Mistake Number Four: Many Karateka practice but do not improve.**

The Problem: You may have noticed that you do not improve by merely showing up for practice and going through the motions. Just because you are physically active does not insure that you are achieving anything.

The Solution: You get the most out of practice when you are mentally and emotionally involved as well as physically active. Mentally, you need to concentrate—have your mind on what you are doing. Emotionally you should be “UP”...excited and enthusiastic. This type of TOTAL INVOLVEMENT leads to improvement.

The Moral: “Practice doesn't make perfect—only perfect practice makes perfect.”

● **Mistake Number Five: Many Karateka advertise wrong.**

The Problem: Did you ever realize that most advertisements are extremely positive? Ads tells you what is right about a product. Many students are poor advertisers. They constantly give themselves messages like: “I can't do that,” “I won't ever be good enough,” “it's impossible for me to do better.” A student with such negative thoughts will NEVER sell his most important product, HIMSELF, to his most important customer, HIMSELF.

The Solution: Change the station. Find a channel with positive promotional announcements. Once you change “I can't” to “I can,” the “I won't” to “I will,” then the impossible will become possible. After enough of this positive mental programming, you will eventually have a positive mental attitude and a stronger belief in yourself.

The Moral: “You become what you think about most of the time.”