

AMERICAN KDS  
KARATE-DO SHOTOKAI

# JUST FOR KICKS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF AMERICAN KARATE-DO SHOTOKAI



## Message from the President

Dear Karateka,

We hope this newsletter finds you all well and happily coping with the current state of the world we find ourselves in! In this issue of the newsletter, we have exciting announcements to make:

First, we want to thank 2nd Dan Peter Enyeart for his years of service as our AKDS Secretary. There is much that goes on behind the scenes to make a nationwide non-profit organization function and Peter has been helping in this respect for many years. Peter will now take up a position on the AKDS Technical Group which oversees practice theory, methodology, and grading under 4th Dan Simon Prince, head of our Technical Group.

Second, we are pleased to announce that 1st Dan Rebekah Call has been invited to serve as the new AKDS Secretary! She will now be the behind the scenes guru as it were, to help things move forward into the future—congratulations Rebekah! (See her article in the Meditations section of this issue!)

Lastly, we are in the process of having the organization converted from a "membership group" to a fully tax-deductible 501(c)3 non-profit! This will greatly benefit us in numerous ways, such as the fact that companies can fully write-off their donation matches to our group! More about this in a future newsletter!

I would like to close by saying personally how grateful I am to all of you who give so much to help all of our members grow and develop in this very special martial art that Sensei has so graciously developed and shared with us. May we each continue to develop our practice regardless of the circumstances around us (and until things return to "normal," come join a virtual session every week!).

Sincerely,

Jeremy Crook, 5th Dan

President, American Karate-Do Shotokai

## News

This has been an interesting and unanticipated year! Due to COVID 19, in-person practices have come to a halt worldwide, to be replaced by virtual practice sessions over Zoom. However, before any attempts to flatten the viral curve, American KDS proved to be ahead of the digital curve—we held our first VIP (Virtual Instructor Practice) session via Zoom in February! VIP sessions are quarterly practices for Certified Instructors and Assistant Instructors to exchange ideas for teaching and to build cohesion as a national organization. But VIP sessions

have not been the only success story in AKDS. Weekly practice sessions continue to be hosted by the Southern California club and the Oregon club. Everyone is invited to join! Please contact the lead instructors for the Zoom codes at: AKDSpresident@shotokai.org and AKDSTECHNICAL@shotokai.org.

Practices:

Tuesday 6:30 PM Pacific Daylight Time (Oregon)

Saturday 9:00 AM Pacific (SoCal)

Saturday 3:00 PM Pacific (Oregon)

## Meditations

Karate-Do Shotokai is a martial art. But how often do we think about that phrase, *martial art*? The weekly Zoom practices over the past few months have opened my mind to a new concept: practitioners of Shotokai must fully embody both the martial aspect, as well as the artistry of Shotokai in order to be effective. The two cannot be divorced from each other in our mental and physical conditioning. They are a unit.

My most recent epiphany during the coronavirus Zoom practices was that *every block is a strike*. Although I had heard this many times before, it clicked in a new way. But this realization relied on several other technical elements: leading with the elbow, keeping the hips engaged, and settling my weight in my heels. *Every block is a strike* suddenly pulled all of these elements together, and I felt like my body was working as a single unit. Everything felt smooth. Fluid. *Artistic*. But at the same time, there was an increase in mental presence, which influenced my timing and intent. I was grounded. Connected. *Martial*. Both aspects—*martial* and *art*—became a unit just as my body and mind worked as a unit.

This experience highlights one of the many amazing things about Karate-Do Shotokai: its philosophy, practice, and technique naturally develop the mental and physical conditioning necessary to become true *martial artists*.

Rebekah Call, 1st Dan

Secretary, American Karate-Do Shotokai

## New AKDS National Contact Information!

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