

# KIAI ECHO



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*Chico Hula at Convention!*

# Editor's Corner

Once there was a man whose house was flooded. As the waters filled the first floor, he climbed up to the second. As the waters rose to the second, he went out on the roof. As the waters continued to rise, another man came by in a rowboat.

"Quick, get in my boat," the rower said to the man on the roof.

"No thanks," he replied. "God will save me."

The waters continued to rise. The man climbed further up his roof. A woman came by in a motorboat.

"Quick, get in my boat," she yelled.

"No thanks," replied the man. "God will save me."

The waters continued to rise. The man climbed to the very peak of his roof. A helicopter flew overhead.

"We're lowering a ladder. Climb up and we'll save you," yelled the pilot.

"It's okay," yelled the man. "God will save me."

The waters continued to rise and the man drowned. When he arrived in Heaven, the first thing he did was say to God, "Why didn't you save me?"

God replied: "I sent you a rowboat, I sent you a motorboat, and I sent you a helicopter. What more did you want?"

We have a concept in Danzan Ryu known as kokua. Kokua is usually taken to mean giving to others without thought of reward. What does that really mean though?

Helping others is a funny concept. At one level, it seems incredibly simple:

really, how hard can it be to help another person?

Surprising difficult, it turns out! Social psychologist Edgar Schein found that helping involves a very complex process of negotiation and social interaction. Being helped incurs social debt, and that debt can prevent people from accepting help lest they be unable to pay it back. Help can also come in unexpected forms or from unexpected places. The rowboat isn't what we're looking for, so we forget that the goal is to get off the roof before we drown.

At the same time, people will sometimes demand help when they don't really need it. For example, someone recently demanded that I give him a free full page in ad in the Kiai Echo. Why? Well, kokua and, well, kokua, and well, he deserved it because kokua. When he was offered an alternative, he turned it down. Like the man on the roof, he had decided what form the help would take and nothing else would do. The results were similar.

Kokua does not exist to force people to help one another, nor does it exist to enable people to make demands that others then feel compelled to honor. Rather, it is a way of managing social interaction. When an instructor gives of their time and knowledge without thought of reward, then we can accept that help without feeling indebted to that person.

However, that doesn't mean that no obligation exists: reciprocity does not go away. Just as others give to us, so, when the time comes, we then help by giving our time and knowledge to teach others. The obligation is to pay forward, not make demands. ✨

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Address all correspondence to:

Stephen Balzac  
Kiai Echo Editor  
30 Carriage Lane  
Stow MA 01775  
Email: [KiaiEcho@ajjf.org](mailto:KiaiEcho@ajjf.org)

Editor: Stephen Balzac  
Copy Editing: Corwin Coburn, Ed Shatzen  
Contributing Editors: Dan Browning  
Spell Checking: Miriam Webster  
Courier Services: Pikov Andropov  
Safety Monitor: Xavier Onassis  
Music: Bruce Wade Hughs  
Palovian Research: Isabelle Ringing

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# Doing What Comes Naturally

Richard Howell

I have practiced Jujitsu for a long time and I have also attended classes and seminars out of the house in Tai Chi, Yiquan, Systema, Aikijitsu and related “soft” arts. In jujitsu and all of these other classes I have been instructed, constantly, to move “naturally,” to relax and to use no additional effort or allow no unnecessary tension. So it is reasonable to ask what does “naturally” really mean and how does it apply to our training? Natural is something everyone thinks that they know when they see it. But what are they seeing? We need to look at the elements of natural movement and to see how moving naturally leads to better martial arts.

So what is natural? It is a very overused word these days and it can mean a lot of things. There is a natural way of using energy, a natural way of moving and positioning your body and a natural way of thinking. A primary quality of any natural action is to use as little energy as possible for the task. All natural phenomena follow that rule. With inanimate objects it is a law of physics. Using minimum effort also applies to most living things. It is instinctive to do so. Lions on the savanna do not work out. They lie around and do the easiest trick they can do to catch the antelope. Antelope do not work out and spend extra energy either. They saunter along eating grass. They run but only when they think a lion is coming. As a rule, energy is precious, getting energy is difficult, and nothing uses it unnecessarily, except for us. We human beings have a thinking mind and that mind generates ideas and concepts that can easily lead us away from natural physical actions.

Physically, our body’s natural state is primarily determined by the alignment of our skeleton. We are all built on a skeletal frame, consisting of bones attached by ligaments in a particular, human configuration. This means that movement in our joints is enabled and also limited by our ligaments. Each joint has a determined direction of easy motion and a particular position where the ligaments are equally stretched when there is no outside force to move them. This position is often in the center of the range of motion. The muscles are then attached to the bones in such a way that movement through the direction of motion of the joint is possible. But it is only when the muscles are at their most relaxed that natural alignment of the bones occurs. This is also when the muscles are at their best mechanical advantage to flex or extend the joints. Think of a curl when weight lifting. You are strongest when the arm is near

its relaxed, neutral position and the curl gets more difficult as the arm bends. Efficiency is lost as you move away from the natural, relaxed position.

We could see what natural alignment would look like for our whole body by removing gravity and allowing the body to adjust to no muscular effort. There is a way to do this. We have all seen images of scuba divers as they float along in the water. As they float the divers arms are by their sides, their hands are near their waist, their spines are straighter and their legs are extended but the knees are not locked. Divers do not have to work to be in that position, it comes without effort. The diver’s buoyancy in the water counteracts gravity and the diver’s relaxed position

is natural. Now we can imagine our best natural physical nature when we add the stress of gravity. But it is not as easy to achieve due to the force on the large number of joints that are involved with even simple actions like standing still.

A complete description of natural must also include our minds. We naturally feel a wide range of emotions, thoughts, and ideas. Our emotions and reactions are natural responses to the world around us but they often do not support acting in our best natural physical state. All emotions have physiological effects and strong emotions such as surprise, joy and especially desire and fear can lead to

both muscular tension and mental distraction. None of these conditions are helpful in achieving your best movement or making your wisest decision today. It may have been highly effective for our early ancestors to behave like this but it is not always the best response to modern life. In martial arts training this means that you must develop skills to control primary and very natural emotions such as fear in order to have the ability to relax and fully express your natural physical strength and coordination. So it seems we have to discover winners and losers in natural behavior and train to strengthen the desirable ones. Before these emotions and thoughts there is a mind that is quiet and serene, an original mind. This calm may be the state of mind that is our most natural and desirable. Many people practice meditation and similar activities to find a path to intentionally enter that calm state of mind. Meditative techniques are routinely recommended in martial arts training. Only with the mind and body integrated and relaxed can a naturally powerful physical motion be attempted.

So natural has many aspects with relaxation of body and mind as one common denominator. Is it what we normally do? Not

***In martial arts training this means that you must develop skills to control primary and very natural emotions such as fear in order to have the ability to relax and fully express your natural physical strength and coordination.***

usually. It is not unusual for someone to normally move in a way that is based on their habit, but contrary to their best natural motion at the time and even farther from their ultimate potential state. We all have seen people with poor posture or with an unusual walking style. They may have done it that way their whole life but it is not their best natural motion. It does not completely use the power found in the best natural alignment of their frame. Changing our normal motion to something closer to our best natural motion is the goal of much of martial arts training. As an adult we rely on training drills, kata exercises and examples to bridge the gap.

A full exploration of this is worthy of a lifetime of study and there is a compelling reason to take on the task. Classic techniques in jujitsu and the other martial arts are designed to exploit the best natural body positions and motion. We look for relaxation in ourselves and opportunities given by tension in our opponent. The arts would not have become classic if they required extraordinary effort and energy on the part of the performer or if they attacked along directions that allowed easy counter motion on the part of the receiver. As a physical battle continues the combatants become physically tired and finally even exhausted. Only the techniques that exploit our best natural efficiency would have repeatedly stood that test at the end of the day. Those were the techniques that came home and were taught to the next generation.

A second, even more powerful motivation to fully understand your natural self springs from the extraordinary power and efficiency that comes from being at the peak of your natural strength and the effectiveness of attacking someone at their natural, weak openings. In jujitsu, yawara, nage and other familiar techniques exploit weak directions in our opponents body while preserving the power of our own position. Moving along the correct line in a relaxed manner is how we perform our techniques with minimum effort and maximum efficiency. If you have been lucky, you have received a technique performed by someone with that exceptional skill so that it seemed effortless on their part. You had a first hand opportunity to experience a higher level of jujitsu.

If you actually had the technique done to you, you were lucky. But if during your training you were taught some simple exercise and you, even once, even accidentally, had the physical experience of doing an

effortless technique yourself then you won the lottery. It was one of those "I don't feel like I did anything. Did you just go?" moments. The appreciation of how delicate an action is required to be fully efficient can only be understood by having that physical experience. Once you have done it you know that it can be done. Wouldn't it be great to do things like that all of the time?

Every proven master has a personal, unique story but they also have similarities. They are able to produce remarkable output for minimal effort. In other words they perform techniques that we may also perform but they do them with nearly perfect efficiency. We have all seen individuals who have refined their skills to levels very close to peak power. Top Olympic athletes win or lose by 1/100th's of a second and particularly skilled martial arts masters can do seemingly magical things. When someone has reached that personal level they seem almost super human. There is a feeling of "how do they do that? I don't get it. I could never do that." This feeling is wrong. Within the limitations of your body's size and other personal characteristics you can do those things too, but you need to learn how to operate at your best personal level.

Why do you need to work at such a highly refined level and what are the mechanics? One way to understand what is happening is to consider simpler systems like a bicycle or car. Bikes and cars have simple actions, the wheels just go round and round. Even so every engine design has a power curve. For instance, high powered racing car engines and powerful diesel truck engines have a very narrow range of rotations where they deliver high power and only one perfect speed of rotation where all of the power is achieved. That is why racing cars and big trucks have so many gears. By changing the gears, the driver keeps the engine in that best part of the power curve. The wheels go faster or slower but with the full power of the engine transmitted to them. A rider on a multispeed bicycle does the same thing. There is one combination of pedal speed and gear settings that gets you up the hill the fastest and lets you continue go uphill for longer times without a rest. Try riding your bike up a hill using several different gears and you will quickly understand that you have a power curve too.

Human bodies can do much more complicated actions. After all for a car or a bike, the power just spins a wheel. In our ordinary life we walk and run and jump and do gymnastics and

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lots of very complicated stuff. We have a lot of moving parts and because of our very complex motions the power curve for the human body can be very narrow. For a complex action like a push or a strike it is not even a curve really - it is a spike and has an extremely sharp peak. To be even near the peak you need to keep every joint and muscle in your body in its best natural alignment while performing a motion. This is lot you need to get really right and it requires development of sensitivity to internal sensations to recognize what it feels like when you are close. What makes it more difficult is that in the beginning some of these physical skills and internal feelings may be under your radar. Until you look you may not even be aware that they can exist.

Most of us spend our whole lifetime learning to get on our curve at all. We nurture our own skills well enough that we can live, go to work, have some fun and get on with our life. Think of how we as children learned to walk and run. We spend the first twelve years getting to the point where we could walk and run somewhat like an adult and more years training to be even a mediocre track runner. Most of us do not get near the true peak except by accident or through very dedicated training.

So how do we get from OK to our peak level? A driver in a racing car has instruments to tell him when the engine is at maximum power and an assortment of gears to deliver that power to the road. All we have is our minds interpreting the feelings and sensations from our bodies. These feelings are often masked and confused by our emotions and preconceptions. We human beings have too many moving parts to have a simple mechanical understanding of our maximum efficiency. We must develop our personal instruments by learning to recognize the integrated, internal sensations that announce that we are approaching a higher performance state. And then we learn to allow our bodies to move to that feeling. So we need to develop the skills internally, on our own, by training our minds to listen to our bodies and recognize the moments when the power from being more natural is present.

Well great, if it is so well hidden how do we get into that state so we can recognize it, feel it and make it internal? One strategy is to just poke around and hope for some luck. That seems to be too common an approach and it is not too successful. If it worked better everyone would be like the exceptional few and I would not be writing this. There is another strategy with demonstrated success for those who follow it. It is a slow and long process but one that reliably moves you in the right direction. Simply it is this. You perform some exercise or technique that lets your body tell you how to get better. This is an important role of the single person kata in many martial styles. Over time, as you respond to your own body's instruction, you improve. As you improve, your body upgrades the instructions and sometimes introduces new subjects for your attention. Such attentive practice is called "mindful" and the process is the cycle of internal development.

There is a wide range of training choices. One way is to repetitively perform a very simple task that you can do alone, without a partner. Before you start you may not have been paying much attention to how you feel when doing the task. Appropriate tasks are easy enough that you can feel when you

are doing them well or when you are doing them badly. Start practicing at your present best, as slowly as possible and with many repetitions. Listen to your feelings and let your body's response guide your practice and modify how you perform the task. Everyone is lazy and your body does not want to work hard. So to avoid getting tired it will guide you to perform more efficient actions. Thoughtful analysis and external directions from coaches may help you in the beginning but they will only get you in the general ballpark. At some point your own feelings must be your coach. No one can do this for you. You must do it for yourself.

In martial arts and many other sports being at your peak is associated with being in your best balance and keeping the frame of your skeleton in its best alignment. So for jujitsu, tasks that involve balance and simple movements would be particularly useful. To illustrate the process I will discuss a practice I have done for some time. It is a very simple exercise. You stand in one spot in a relaxed manner, hands at your side, feet evenly apart in your best posture. Breath slowly and evenly. Stand for as long as you have time and keep doing it for weeks and months and at every opportunity. You can get external instruction in this practice from some DZR instructors and many Tai Chi instructors. They may also show you other hand positions, breathing patterns or other simple movements like walking with the same relaxed balance.

I will only discuss stationary standing for now but the same comments apply to the movement exercises. While standing, pay attention to what you feel. Sometimes your body will shift into a new, better posture with no instructions from your thinking mind. Let it happen. Stationary standing is called being in stillness. Be still and let your body tell you how you should be. The more you practice the more sensitive you will become to the condition of your body and how it is interacting with the world. Is it windy? Is the ground hard or soft, sloping or level? These and many other things will start to be part of your body's position and your thinking awareness. As you develop, your awareness will continue to grow, your calm mind will be enhanced and you will open to an even deeper sensitivity. All these things bring you closer to your peak.

When you begin your practice, you will be at your personal best for that moment. Then, as training continues, your internal understanding of what is best will evolve. At the same time your body will evolve as well. You will develop strength in areas that you may not have even realized were weak. You will develop an extended range of motion in tight joints, and you will be comfortable in positions that would have been stressful before you began training. Every person has a unique body size, strength, and range of motion. We will not look exactly alike when we are at our personal best. Also our personal best during our training will evolve into a state closer to our best possible state for our frame. Today my posture and practice is much different from when I began. It has become more like the natural posture we described earlier. But I never tried to change. I just changed. Remember a coach externally directing you to an exact posture is helpful but cannot beat your body telling you what feels the strongest. Your body knows you best.

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# *At The Intersection of Grief and Danzan Ryu*

*David Vlcek*

My mother had died, unexpectedly, thirty-six hours earlier.

We'd spent the day attending to the details. Meeting with the undertaker, calling people, preparing for the funeral. The stuff you do when somebody dies. Tomorrow would be the wake and the funeral the next day, but tonight, Thursday night, nothing more could be done.

Thursday night is my Jujitsu night. I think my wife was a bit surprised when I packed up my gi and said I'd be going to class, but really, what could anyone say? Jujitsu class? Why not? When the whole universe had been plunged, just hours before, into a state of unreality, the thought of going to class seemed as sensible as anything else.

At the start of the class, our Sensei, Fil Gutierrez, expressed his condolences. He allowed me to take the first few minutes of the class to talk about her death, how after seventy-six years of near-perfect health she'd had an aneurysm deep in her brain, she fell and hit her head on the concrete, the doctors told us there was nothing to be done, and fourteen hours later, she passed.

After warm-ups, Sensei assigned me to work with Roberto Gonzalez, now Sensei Gonzalez. Robert had been working with me for the last few classes, exploring the concept of Zanshin.

Zanshin... the "remaining mind". In working with this concept, Robert would direct me to execute a technique, and have me try to be conscious of how that technique would finish. Did I maintain eye contact with my uke? What did I intend about our connection? It turns out that it's not enough to just execute a technique and let it go haphazardly, grateful that it's over and that you got through it.

Instead, I learned there's a state of mind – really an awareness that begins with the intention to execute the technique, and continues uninterrupted, with the entrance, connection, and execution of the technique, and its aftermath. I've been taught that it is the lingering spirit of the technique or kata.

Practically speaking, one remains in the final position after having executed the technique (kata), though not just simply "freezing" or archly striking some sort of pose. Rather, upon execution of the technique, the practitioner waits, allowing the muscular and nervous tension to diminish, before returning to the starting position. I understand it as allowing the energy to dissipate in a way which feels wholly fluid with the technique.

Imagine a great pianist, or maybe a classical guitarist. She plays a piece, beautifully and fluidly. At the end, she creates the final note, the final sound. Her finger remains on the key or off of the string for a time, allowing the sound to vibrate and continue until it dissipates. She doesn't "control" that dissipation in any sense. She allows it to happen in a way which flows fully and

essentially from the rest of the piece. Once completed, she lifts her hand from the piano key or stills the guitar strings. Zanshin.

We spent the first hour of class working on Ogoshi – the basic hip throw. We would take turns as uke and tori, and I was performing at what would be well-described as a dull, mediocre level. I didn't feel weighted down by the events of the previous thirty-six hours, but Robert knew differently, and after a time ordered me to stop.

"I want to try something, Mr. Dave," he said. For some reason, early on, I'd acquired the name "Mr. Dave," maybe a sign of respect for my relatively advanced age, and certainly not for any Jujitsu prowess.

He told me to begin running sprints back and forth across the mat, without stopping. After that, it was push-ups, front rolls, back rolls, sutemis, kawami, all told a good twenty minutes of vigorous, non-stop exercise, every moment urging me on to push harder and harder. Then, suddenly, "Okay, Mr. Dave, come here." We grabbed each other kumi-kata – by the sleeve and lapel -- and he ordered me to throw him.

"Good."

It was his turn. He threw me.

"Did you hear that landing? You landed softer." And, I had.

"Now, Mr. Dave.... Rise!"

He was urging me to get up from the throw, quickly and straight.

We did it again. My throw was better. Again, after he threw me, "Rise! Rise!" he insisted even louder.

Again and again.

Then, he said, "Now do it, but this time, I want you to think of the most horrible scene imaginable." As you might imagine, my mind's eye went immediately to my mom's hospital room in her last hours. "Now throw me."

My throw was leaden. No connection, nothing.

"Now, think of something beautiful. Something that gives you joy."

I imagined my mom, years earlier. It was summer, and I was a little boy in the yard as she was hanging sheets on the line.

"Now throw me."

He was light.

"Keep thinking of that. Throw me again."

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He was like air. No weight. Effortless. Complete flow. Then he threw me. I landed soft and nearly silent.

“Now, rise.”

He kept exhorting me. “Rise!”

With each throw, he kept getting lighter, and my falls kept getting softer.

By the end of the class, I can only describe my state of mind as quiet. At peace. The grief still resided, but it wasn't taking over. It, too, had quieted.

The next two days, of course, were the expected blur. The wake and the funeral. While I experienced different waves of emotion, and the grief continued to reside, it never took over, and remained very much quieted.

It's now nearly four years since that took place. Roberto -- always “Robert” to me -- is now deservedly Sensei of his own dojo. I've continued to work at my own Jujitsu path, continuing to fumble through. I visited my mom's grave recently and thought back to that night, and I've concluded two things.

First, my instinct was correct. Before I took up Jujitsu studies as an adult, I observed my young daughter in her own class and I observed her teachers, one of whom was Sensei Robert. I would watch those teachers interacting with my daughter and the other

children, and I saw immediately that there was a strong, calm tenderness and a deep understanding and empathy that they had -- something which went way beyond their years. Even though I was older, I sensed quickly that this was something I wanted. If this is what Professor Okazaki meant by “perfection of character”, I'd found a journey I needed to take. Some years into that journey, I continue to be grateful to my own Sensei, Fil Gutierrez, and Sensei Robert and the other instructors who work alongside him.

Second, wrapped up in all of this, that night Sensei Robert kept completely to the topic at hand, Zanshin. What I didn't realize then, and now only realize in retrospect, is that Sensei Robert was not executing Ogoshi. He was working on an unnamed technique on an unwritten scroll, one of the deep, deep teachings, of Danzan Ryu -- I don't know if it has a Japanese name or Japanese character, but its translation into English might well be, “The compassionate lifting up of another human being who is in pain.”

The next day, Sensei Robert attended my mom's wake, and said very little. Mostly, he stood silently, and was just present -- but present in a way that filled the room and continued to hold me up -- and then he left. The technique began at the beginning of class when I spoke of my mom's death. Sensei Robert immediately formed his intention, and made his entrance and connection, and then let it go two days later. Such is Zanshin. ✨

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*Continued from page 5*

That both mind and body develop together was brought home to me by an injury. I recently broke my foot and had a long period of recovery wearing a cast. Once the cast was off, simple actions that that I had been doing well such as walking slowly still worked great for my good foot. My recovering foot was another matter. It was difficult to find the balance my mind knew should be there. From my training I knew what balance I needed but the strength in my foot and ankle was too weak to hold me in place. After returning to practice, eventually my two sides finally became equal again. It is the same when you're starting to practice. In the beginning full core strength is lacking. So physical strength is then developed over time as your awareness leads you to require it. Your body trains your mind and your mind trains your body.

Once you start to get it, once you begin to understand the feeling of high efficiency for some simple motion, then the difficult process of bringing that feeling into all of your other activities begins. Most of us stand around a lot and we can stand in our best posture as well as any other. You can make practice into habit and isolated habits into general ones. If you have figured out how to stand with very good balance why stand any other way? If you can walk slowly with very good balance why walk any other way?

Only when you can do those things well by yourself is it time to put them into action with another person. This usually presents new challenges. You have spent serious effort to achieve some level of integration of your mind and your body. As soon as another individual enters the situation your mind is caught by

that change. Your mind has abandoned integration with your body and you may not even have the sensitivity to notice. So you become mentally excited and drift away from your natural calm mind and loose your natural body position. Any distraction will have this effect. Try standing or walking on an elevated curb and if you are surprised to find your balance challenged you will see what I mean. It is even more difficult to keep in your best state when you are in contact with another person. When you are able to notice that you are affected, bring yourself back to your simpler practice. Keep returning to your internal peak.

The transition to performing natural, efficient actions without thought as your normal habit does not happen quickly. It requires a constant mindful awareness of actions that you may already feel that you do with some significant level of skill. As you train and live constantly ask the question “Do I feel close to my best, my peak, at this instant? Am I really on balance and tension free? OK what about now, .... and now?” When the answer is, “far from my peak here,” then see if you can fix it. The more often you try the more often you will succeed and the more aware you will become. Good habits are trainable and they are a distinguishing characteristic of the exceptional practitioner. These exceptional individuals always attempt to be at their present personal best while constantly striving to be better tomorrow. The sooner you start the better you will be. I am working on it too.

*Richard Howell, Yodan, is the sensei of Yoshin Jitsu Kai. ✨*

*We're celebrating 40 years of Danzan Ryu Jujitsu!*

## **Camp Kodenkan North 2014**



CAMP KODENKAN NORTH  
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**June 25-29, 2014**  
**Sis-Q Ranch**  
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**Senior Prof Tom Ball • Prof Jane Carr • Prof Bob Hudson • Prof Larry Nolte •  
Prof Don Cross • Prof Dennis Estes • Prof Tom Ryan • Prof Sheryl Hager •  
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Taiko Performance • Martial Arts Demonstration  
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[www.ajjf.org/events/campnorth](http://www.ajjf.org/events/campnorth)



# *A Friday night with Sensei Deborah Fergus*

*Jeanette McGrath*

At Yama Naka Jujitsu, Friday nights are reserved for judo practice. On March 28th, the dojo welcomed Sensei Deborah Fergus, Judo Yodan and National Referee from Michigan. She spent the evening with us after spending a full day conquering the local ski hill, Snowbowl. She incorporated a spirit of play on the mat, exemplified in the warm-ups with a couple of relay races followed by a rousing game of freeze tag. Adults have just as much fun with games as juniors.

Throughout the evening, Sensei Fergus revisited fundamentals, paying particular attention to no-strength judo. She highlighted using leverage and proper positioning rather than sheer strength. Some students discovered the ancient art of squatting (bend the knees!). Another of her many insights was to practice Uchikomi up against the wall to acquire a sense of ideal form. Noticing the angle and position of the back is critical to many throwing arts and can then be applied when working with a partner.

Relaxation and mental flexibility were her focus when the class transitioned to Newaza. She conveyed her point by stopping the engagement with a student to highlight when the student

was using brute force. Sensei Fergus demonstrated a great new no-strength counter to Kesa Gatame, giving hope to students who had been told to 'just bench press them off'. All students experienced a paradigm shift because of this new approach to grappling, even those who have been around for a while.

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the practice and Yama Naka Jujitsu looks forward to welcoming Sensei Fergus back next year. ✨



# Convention 2014

*Photos by Scott Pulling (Chico Kodenkan)*

*Submitted by Delina Fuchs (convention director)*







# AJJF

# STORE BLOWOUT

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# AJFF Business

## AJFF Board of Professors and Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

*April 3, 2014*

### Associate Professors

The BOP has begun work on more clearly defining the role of the Associate Professors. The AJFF BOP would like to thank its current Associate Professors, Professor Tony Janovich, and Professor Bill Randle, for their unwavering support and assistance. Their help and input has been invaluable.

### Kata Manual

Work continues on methods of distributing the Kata Manual more efficiently to AJFF registrants. Methods of the most efficient and secure ways of distributing electronic and printed versions are being finalized.

The Okuden Committee should be finished with its review of the Shinnin and Shinyo portions of the kata manual within the next two months. The History section is also nearly complete.

### Board of Directors

The Board of Professors and the AJFF's attorney is in favor of changing the composition of the Board of Directors to include non-Professors. The exact nature of the Board will be determined over the next year, and implemented by Convention, 2015.

For the present BOD, Professors Ryan and Hager were up for re-election. Prof Hager and Prof Colton were elected to the BOD. Prof Hodgkin resigned from the BOD, and Prof Ryan was re-elected in his place. Prof Ryan was re-elected as Secretary.

### Code of Conduct

The AJFF Code of Conduct was clarified and improved.

### Okuden

After 11 years of work, Sr Prof Ball presented Mokuroku for Shinnin no Maki, Shinyo no Maki, and Shingen no Maki. The qualifications of who will be allowed to receive and give these

documents are still being finalized. Prof Ball also presented kaidensho to select members of the Board of Professors.

### Elections

Senior Professor Ball was reconfirmed as the AJFF Senior Professor.

Prof Hudson was re-elected to the Executive Committee.

### Professor Emeritus

The proclamation was signed and will be presented to Prof Tom Jenkins at the AJFF banquet.

### Council of Senior Instructors

The Council of Senior Instructors (CSI) consists of 6 members: Chair Tim Merrill, Scott Redden, Barbara Gessner, Doug Musser, Jeremy Schoener, and if elected by the school heads, Jess Green.

They will be beginning work on the new sensei booklet originally developed by Prof Carr. They will work on expanding and clarifying it, and will make it available to new and current school heads once approved by the Board of Professors.

### Kappo Video

Some images will need to be re-done. How the video will be distributed has not been determined.

Next Board of Professors Phone Meeting: June 8, 2014, 8:00 AM Pacific Time

Respectfully submitted,  
Nerissa Freeman  
AJFF Board of Professors Scribe

# Palmetto Fall Clinic

Various authors

## Bringing It Home

This was my 7th time attending the Palmetto Jujitsu Academy & Healing Arts Center's fall DZR clinic. This was my first time attending it at our own dojo instead of at a hotel. There is really no other way to describe it except with the old saying "It felt like home." Everything was going great and then the septic tanks in both facilities backed up. Nothing a couple of porta potties didn't fix and it gave us a funny story to tell. I spent the first day and a half in the testing room with Aubrey running exams.

All the exams went very well. As hosts we did our best to help people get to and from places to eat and the hotel where everyone was staying. I had a fun conversation with "big" Jon Girard when they asked where they could go to eat. I began to explain how they could get to the nearest couple of restaurants and after my long and I am sure confusing set of directions John says "So we can walk there right?" to which I replied "Oh god no, you would be gone for a long time if you walked" and then I threw him the keys to my truck and said "Drive it like you stole it!" I could tell by the baffled look on his face this was strange to him. He then tossed the keys to a friend that was with him, Zac Burgess, and he said you drive. I didn't find out until later when we all rode back to the hotel together what the confused look was for. John then explained to me that where he is from people just don't do that sort of thing. I said well you guys are DZR family so that is the way we do it down here with a big smile on my face. I made two new friends out of the deal and we all had a great time. The biggest thing I noticed about this year's clinic that was different than previous years is everybody

## "Southern Hospitality" at its very best!

Palmetto Clinic hosts worked tirelessly to expand and beautify PJA to accommodate participants comfortably. Hotel accommodations were comfortable and conveniently close to the dojo, and staff shared easy conversation and baked

cookies! Yudansha and families offered ready transportation and assistance on call graciously. DZR ohana travelling from across the country were greeted with genuine care and incomparable warmth by Prof Ryan's dojo family. LOVELY Carol, Brenda and Susan ushered "extended ohana" in, registered participants, fielded numerous inquiries, and charged the "receiving area" with Grace and Aloha.

I didn't see many people standing around. We had a live ammo mini target shooting class setup out back that was also a big hit.

Michael Wheeler and Rick White helped run these classes. I really like seeing these classes because so few people in the AJJF seem to know how to handle an actual firearm. It is great to see how many are interested in learning this though. It was nice to see the different range of firearms being handled and proper safety and demonstration being shown. Then of course each person got to empty some rounds into a target. Personally for me I gained some new insights into Shin Yo based on a healing class I was in. Listening to Professor Ryan talk about concepts like Riuko, Tora Niramii, Kiai Dori and Munen Musow and how they can be applied to the healing side really changed how I see those techniques and Shin Yo as a whole. Lyle Najita and Jeremy Cornish also had some great insights in the class that really turned on some light bulbs for me. It was an amazing class. So until we see you again in October stay safe and train hard!

Renshi - Patrick Hedgepath - Nidan

Neither time, distance or expense hindered participants from investing in the extended weekend. Several travelers weathered prolonged airport layovers and drove hundreds of miles to Lexington. West Coast and Hawaii ohana was inexpressibly grateful to participate w/ East Coast ohana, and "Big Jon (G)" made the trek from China to celebrate DZR ohana from New York! PJA ohana from Ashville took turns on the mat as dotting parents, as their jujitsuka infant agilely, confidently moved across mats and gentle arms. Honored, aged participants moved confidently and wisely, safe in the knowledge of their bodies and warm in the care of partners. All would report that it was a worthy investment...





Long standing ohana were celebrated just as new relationships were formed in a culture and atmosphere of Shared Learning and Growth. Champion/Sensei Shinjiro Sasaki proved a veritable wonder on the mat, inspiration to children and adults alike, and was quite a delightful fashion icon. Renshi Pete Pukish and Satori International ohana moved beautifully, spoke directly, and saw expansively. Sensei Mark Saito impressed powerfully “on the mat” as much as he did “off the mat” through the tenderness demonstrated to loved ones. He shared generously via the “Healing” Seminars as he allowed a glimpse into his family’s martial system and cultural lifestyle. Ms. Soo Kim was an absolute delight to speak with and learn from, as her light, agile form effectively brought larger, stronger individuals to tears of pain, then gratitude in Healing, Prof Dennis Estes mentored quietly in his incomparable way, offering encouragement and clarity. Prof Bob Hodgkin articulated movements and concepts in his unique, graceful tempo. Prof Geoff Lane ensured all on his mat reveled in the freedom of knowing their bodies, distances between and how to connect. All instructors and participants brought joy and gratitude in the way that they spoke & moved with easy humor, wit, wisdom and humility...

It was definitely a “Shared Journey” as the spirit of Kokua was demonstrated time and again. Lunch breaks saw “new friends” as well as close ohana crowding into cars whose drivers generously welcomed all. Ms. Katy’s compact car had to be THE all time “champion chariot”, as her passengers boggled the mind & folded themselves in at a word. (80% of them were easily over 6’ and 170 pounds, I’d guess.) Just a few of their credits included ready smiles, happy conversations, and the willingness to jump out and PUSH the car, if need arose! (A “not quite 5’ Miss” had Big-Little Jake perched on her knees, barely breathing, in fear of squishing his seat!) When the plumbing groaned and refused repair for 2 days, countless ohana shared rides to town. Johnnie quietly, remarkably

arranged the generous sushi Happy Hour and buffet on his own. Undoubtedly, the exceptional preparation, planning and seamless teamwork during the clinic helped to allow hosts the opportunity to enjoy a few classes of their own over the weekend.

Prof Tom Ryan was honored at the closing ceremony for his Vision, Passion and Devotion to DZR and ohana. His insatiable thirst for learning and improvement inspire countless individuals and, with ALL our Elders/Instructors, he cultivates a spirit of Gratitude and Responsibility. Here’s to a Legacy that continues to thrive...

The close of the clinic came and went quietly and poignantly. Several participants missed the group photo shot at the end because they were in the back room or outside simply enjoying each others’ company. Still, ohana made time to connect. There were no breaks as hosts; classes resumed immediately Monday morning. Over two months have passed since we bid each other “A hui hou,” yet impressions continue to reverberate.

“Mahalo a nui loa...” Faye Garan

I have been training under Prof Ryan since 2001. I have been fortunate enough to have attended all of the PJA Fall Clinics from then until now. For many years, the Fall Clinic was held at the dojo. There was always good energy and a positive spirit from everyone who attended. But as attendance grew and the number of teachers increased, the clinic was moved to a hotel setting. This provided great accommodations, easy access to rooms and one gathering spot.

With clinic returning to the dojo this year, I realized just how much I had missed this setting. There is something to having

*Continued on page 17*

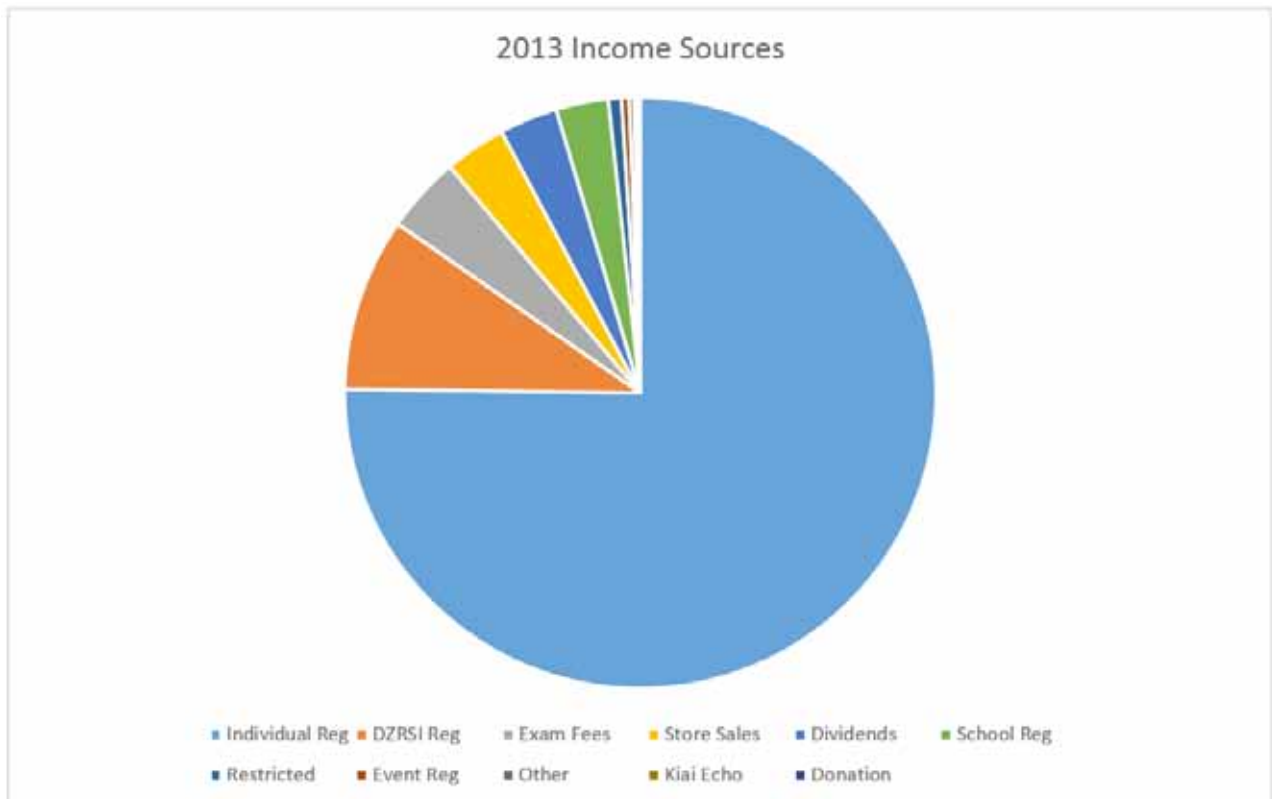
# 2013 Finance Summary

Jeff Meyers

National Manager of Finance

In mid- to late-2013 the AJJF Board of Directors asked me to prepare summary financial information to be presented to the membership. This is one of the steps the Board is taking to become more transparent. Other changes are underway by the Board to also improve the efficiency and scalability of the organization. This is the first report of this type and plans are to repeat this every year in the Kiai Echo published after convention.

people of the organization that fuel the AJJF. This chart shows how important that is financially, and we all know how even more important the people are to the success of the organization. I also see the smallest slices and wonder what can be done to improve them. There are people specifically tasked with growing the donations made to the AJJF as well as increasing the Kiai Echo ad revenue.



At the most basic level the financial activity of the organization can be described in terms of income and expense. In other words, money in and money out. The first chart shows the proportions of all the income sources arranged from largest to smallest. The large light blue section represents income from individual registrations. This is the registration fee paid by you and your students and it comprises just a hair over 75% of the income. As we move clockwise around the pie chart the next largest income category is registration fees from the massage program (The DanZan Ryu Seifukujitsu Institute). This orange colored slice represents 9% of our total income. Black belt exam fees are next in line at 4% followed by store sales at 3% and so on.

After looking at the numbers I always try to find the meaning behind them. When I look at these income sources I see it is the

On the other side of the coin are the expense categories – or “where does the money go?” Again we have a pie chart arranged from largest expense category to smallest as we move clockwise around the circle. The light blue portion is the largest at 25% and represents the insurance costs. Specifically this is the dojo liability insurance and secondary medical insurance provided to the schools and all members, respectively. The second largest category is Central Office contract at 21%. The grey slice represents region spending which is 17% of the total. This is the money allocated to all of the regions to assist them with various events throughout the year. When you or your dojo hosted an event last year and the AJJF reimbursed some of the costs, that money is part of this grey slice. The next largest and yellow slice is the Board of Professors at 15%. This category is almost completely comprised of getting Professors to convention and

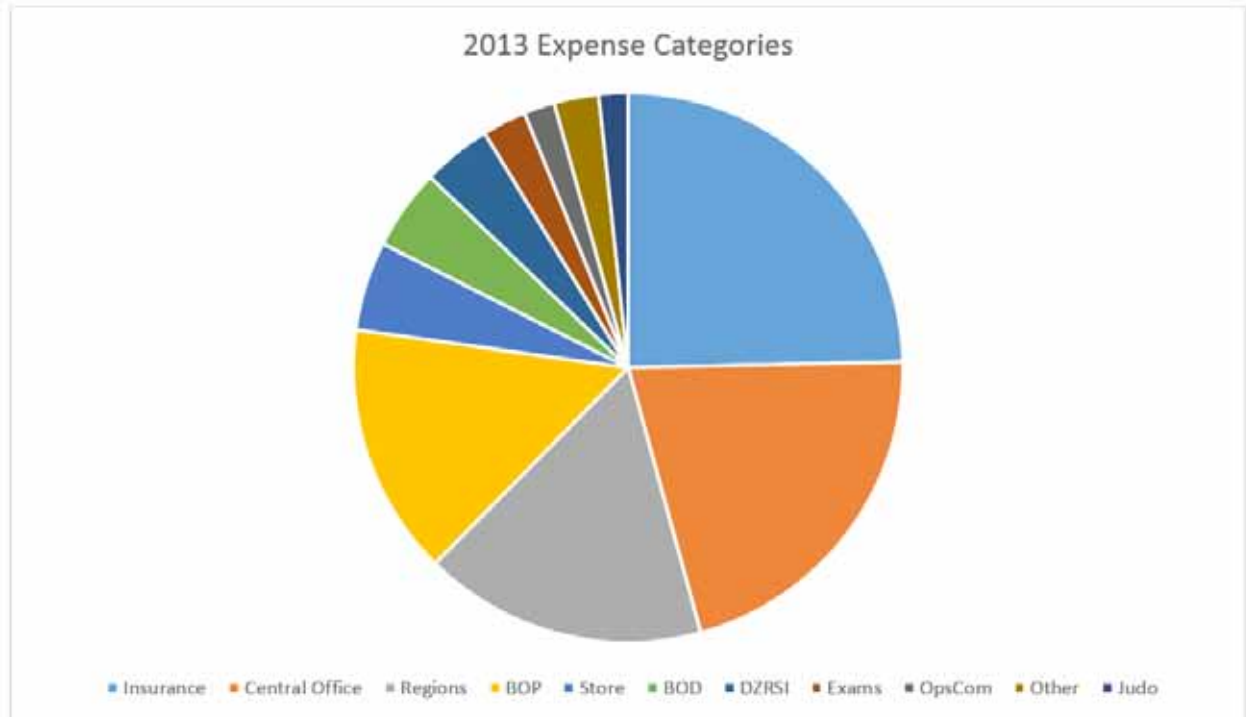


one other face-to-face meeting in September. The remaining slices are much smaller and include the store (buying items to stock the store) at 5%, Board of Directors at 5%, massage program (DZRSI) at 4%, black belt exams at 3%, and so on. The last (and smallest) category is the annual fee the AJJF pays to be a class A Judo organization.

The meaning I find in this chart is a large portion of the expense is for the direct benefit of the AJJF schools and members. The

membership, but now I see how important it really is. Without membership registrations the AJJF would not be able to provide these critical services.

I hope this information has helped you understand the basic financial operations of the organization. I welcome any questions or concerns you might have and will do my best to answer them. The best way to ask a question is via email: [finance@ajjf.org](mailto:finance@ajjf.org). I am also open to phone calls or “live”



insurance (25%), Central Office (21%), and Regions (17%), along with Massage (4%), Exams (3%), and Judo (2%) all together total 72% of the AJJF’s spending. This was a heart-warming realization for me: almost all of the money received by the people of the AJJF goes directly back to the schools and members. I always knew it was important to renew my AJJF

conversations should our paths cross at some future event. ✨

*Continued from page 15*

guests at your home. There is the preparation of getting things in order, and there is the pride of providing a calm and soothing setting for your guests. Hosting the 2013 Fall Clinic at the Palmetto Jujitsu & Healing Arts dojo this year was nothing short of spectacular. We had many guests come and visit our “home,” and the energy and enthusiasm was felt by many.

I am already looking forward to next year. Each time spent with my Ohana reminds me of one of the reasons I love to train DanZan Ryu Jujitsu. Many thanks to all who came and took part in the dynamic training that was available. See you around!



Renshi - David Shaw - Sandan

# *Black Belt Promotions*

## **Shodan**

Chaysen Chong, a student of Travis Prose at Osoku Wakasu Dojo

Silas Gaussoin-Radcliffe, a student of Sensei Katie Stevens from Makotokai

David Gentry, a student of Travis Prose at Osoku Wakasu Dojo

Krista Kido, a student of Travis Prose at Osoku Wakasu Dojo

John Moore, a student of Professor Jane Carr from Redding Jujitsu Academy

Elleigh Wolke, a student of Sensei Monica Villanueva from Kodengan Academy of Martial Arts

## **Nidan**

Allen Richardson, a student of Sensei Ward Melenich and Sensei Sohn Wehseler from Kuroinukan

## **Yodan**

Sensei Kenneth Gadbury, a student of Sensei Jeff Penner at Honshin Kan

Sensei Robert Rainey, a student of Professor William Randle at Lawndale Jujitsu Kai

## **Godan**

Sensei Ben Delich, Seito Kemmei Kai

Sensei Nerissa Freeman, Wasenshi Kan

Sensei Filiberto Gutierrez, Danzan Ryu Chicago

Sensei Lyle Najita, Davis Judo Kai

Sensei Katie "Murph" Stevens, Makoto Kai

## **Rokudan**

Martin Brzykcy, Quest Jujitsu

Tim Merrill, Chiku Shin Dojo

## **Hachidan**

Professor Don Cross, Jujitsu-Do Martial Art Center



**AJFF CENTRAL OFFICE**

Dianna McKinzie  
 (800) 850-AJFF (2553)  
 co@ajjf.org

**AJFF OPERATIONS COMMITTEE**Chair, Operations Committee

Pete St. Pierre  
 (408) 866-5582 (home)  
 (408) 306-0089 (mobile)  
 pete@st-pierre.net

Secretary

Ron Sekulich  
 (530) 574-1191  
 rsekulich@earthlink.net

National Manager of Communications,Chair, Kiai Echo

Stephen R. Balzac  
 (978) 461-4814 (home)  
 kiaiecho@ajjf.org

Webmaster

Patrick Hedgepath  
 ajjf-webmaster@ajjf.org

Chair, Marketing Committee

Thabiti Sabahive  
 (828) 989-5209  
 marketing@ajjf.org

National Manager of FinanceChair, Accounting Committee

Jeff Meyers  
 jeff@js99.net

Chair, Insurance Committee & SanctionOfficer

Kathie Reish  
 808-554-4324  
 insurance@ajjf.org

Chair, Fundraising & Initiatives

Matthew Moller  
 818-359-7541  
 fundraising@ajjf.org

National Manager of Regions

Jeremy Jones  
 mail\_jeremy@yahoo.com  
 (541) 224-4090

Chair, Allied Committee

Prof Geoff Lane  
 (530) 895-0781  
 ProfLane@ajjf.org

National Manager of Events

Delina Fuchs  
 events@ajjf.org

Chair, Clinics and Contests Committee

John Pfund  
 (530) 357-4591  
 dreamusa1@yahoo.com

Chair, Conventions Committee

Katie Stevens  
 conventions@ajjf.org  
 (530) 756-8256 [message only]

Chair, Examinations Committee

Dominic Beltrami  
 (707) 738-0621  
 koshindo@comcast.net

Chair, Awards Committee

Dianna McKenzie  
 dmckinzie@ncbb.net

Chair, Event Tracking Committee

John Pfund  
 (530) 357-4591  
 dreamusa1@yahoo.com

New School Committee

Joe Bendorf  
 schools@ajjf.org  
 (530) 662-5662

Store Manager

Brian Sincomb  
 store@ajjf.org  
 (818) 266-4479

**AJFF BOARD OF DIRECTORS**President & Chairman of the Board

Prof Dennis Estes  
 ProfEstes@ajjf.org

CFO/Treasurer

Prof John Congistre  
 (408) 988-3017  
 ProfCongistre@ajjf.org

Vice President

Prof Geoff Lane  
 (530) 895-0781  
 ProfLane@ajjf.org

Secretary

Administrator of Curriculum (BOP)  
 Prof Tom Ryan  
 (803) 791-0764  
 ProfRyan@ajjf.org

Senior Professor

Sr. Prof Tom Ball  
 (530) 468-2305  
 ProfBall@ajjf.org

Prof Sheryl Hager

(530) 223-2435  
 ProfHager@ajjf.org

Prof Tom Hill

570-992-6939  
 ProfHill@ajjf.org

Prof Robert Hodgkin

(801) 763-0605  
 ProfHodgkin@ajjf.org

Prof Jane Carr

(530) 524-7033  
 Profcarr@charter.net

Scribe

Jessica Conover

**AJFF BOARD OF PROFESSORS**

The BOP includes all Professors in the BOD along with the following officers and additional professors:

Administrator of Internal Relations

Prof Robert Hodgkin  
 Prof Sheryl Hager

Prof Don Cross

(541) 246-4049  
 profdoncross@gmail.com

Prof Larry Nolte

(541) 772-8190 (home)  
 (541) 535-4263 (dojo)  
 ProfNolte@ajjf.org

Prof Robert Hudson

(480) 686-6118  
 ProfHudson@ajjf.org

Prof Kevin Colton

kcolton@socal.rr.com



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Professor Okazaki always believed that the fighting spirit should be balanced by the healing spirit. And for that reason, taught both jujitsu and restorative massage systems to his students.

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We encourage all AJJF members to consider the many benefits of Seifukujitsu training. To learn more about the program or for classes forming near you, log on to [www.AJJF.org](http://www.AJJF.org).

