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# THE OKAMI KAI HOWLER

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## Welcome Back!

By Sensei Campsall

*An interesting way of thinking has been crossing my desk recently. "Start this year thinking about how you want it to end!"*

*To me that says a lot. I strongly believe that realistic goal setting is a good way to push yourself when training in martial arts. Saying you are going to have a certain belt by a certain time can give you the drive to get yourself into the dojo when you need the extra incentive. Where do you want to be in your studies at the end of 2006? It is true, there are times when we have to acknowledge that we don't always reach our goals, but nobody ever accomplished anything by doing nothing. We have two people attempting to be Okami Kai's first black belts in April. I can see lots of potential for more in our school. It may not be possible for you to be the first shodans in our school, but you could be the second or the third. It just takes time, effort and the intelligence to realize that you can be much better off in December 2006 than in December 2005. The word potential means it is possible, it just hasn't happened yet. All of us have the potential to be better than we are now...it just hasn't happened yet. 2006 is the year to make things happen! Welcome back!*

## OPERATION: JAPAN News

Our next meeting for anyone interested in helping or finding out information about our upcoming trip to Japan is **Monday Jan. 16, 2006 at 8pm.**

A very small amount of money has already been raised and now we need a place to put it. Suggestions on how we set up a bank account will be taken at this time as well as suggestions for future fundraising ideas.

This meeting is for anyone and not just for people who were at our first meeting in November.

## Wolf Pack Report

No one attended 10 classes last month so the Ichiban title is vacant. Sensei is also still looking for report cards from last month.

Blue Pack [2281 points](#)

Green Pack [2094 points](#)

Yellow Pack Congratulations Senpai Rob Rilling for being chosen as the first ever two time Ichiban title holder! [1749 points](#)

Red Pack Get to work Red Pack! The year is almost half over! [387 points](#)

## Kid's Tactic!

There is still time to register for both Kid's Tactic seminars on **Saturday Jan. 21 starting at 12:30pm.** Children 6 years of age and older can take one or both of the hour long classes taught on this day.

The **Bully Buster** section will be taught first and will offer helpful advice on how to handle a bully and what to look for so that bullies can be avoided.

At 1:45pm the **Street Proofer** section will be taught. Information regarding stranger interaction, what child abusers look for, and what to do in case of an attack will be taught. Parents are more than welcome to watch as they may find this very informative for themselves.

Price is \$15 per seminar or both for \$25. Space is limited and this is not just for Okami Kai members so reserve your spot today!

## Valentine's Day Dinner

Our annual Valentine's Day Dinner will be taking place at Scrambles restaurant on Sat. Feb. 11 at 7:30pm. All adult members and parents as well as their friends are welcome to join us for this enjoyable evening. Please let Sensei know if you would like to attend so reservations can be made.



# 1<sup>st</sup> Kyu Karate Essay

By Senpai Mike Alexander

In grade four I began having troubles academically. I couldn't focus, and didn't pay enough attention in class because of it. I began to decline as a student, lose confidence in my abilities, and started giving the attitude that it didn't matter. I also had trouble eating properly and exercising right. I had a different metabolism than all of the other kids and I didn't really care at that point. About two years later I started taking Karate. At first I started because one of my friends was in it, but then I started to really enjoy it.

As I grew up, I began to find school less and less interesting. Sometimes it was because the work was too easy, and sometimes because it was too hard. I had real focus issues, almost like I had ADD. I still don't know what it was, but I just couldn't concentrate on my schoolwork. At first it was just at school, but then it carried into my work at home. I couldn't keep my mind on something for a period of time. My grades began to fall, and I wasn't doing the greatest. When I first started Karate there was no real change. It wasn't until about nine months later, at orange belt, that I started to change. I wouldn't ignore the lessons that the teacher was giving so much and I could concentrate on the subjects that I didn't like a bit better. I still had a long way to go though. It was during grade seven that I started to pick up my marks a lot. I was fortunate to have an excellent teacher, who took the time to understand the different needs of everyone in the class. He took a lot of time helping me and sometimes he would even give me different work to do. At this point I was picking up in school, and there seemed to be a connection with my Karate. The days that I would be having trouble in school I would go to train and I would find that after the class I could concentrate much better. At this point I was a blue belt, and I found that I was really starting to get into the training. I got to Karate as often as I could (not nearly as often as I would have liked though) and spent time at home practising. That was the academics dealt with, but I was still in pretty bad physical shape.

At first I didn't notice and didn't care that I was out of shape, but then it began to have an effect on me. I found that even if I got a bit of exercise I would not maintain a decent weight. I wasn't old enough to know about metabolism, but I could see that even though I ate the same as my friends, they were a very healthy weight. They could also outrun me without a problem. I started Karate and there was no major change. Until about orange belt there was no real difference. I got my orange in about grade six. That was when I started to find a difference. I was becoming faster, and I wasn't as heavy. I could run for longer periods of time, and I was starting to be picked sooner at recess when we were playing sports. By the end of grade seven I was an average weight, and could keep up with most of the people in my class. I began to feel a lot better about myself. This was all because my friend introduced me to the martial arts.

I found out that he was taking Karate one time when I was over at his house. He had never mentioned it but one night when I was over he asked me if I wanted to come and watch. I agreed to, mostly because I didn't really have anything else to do. Once I got there I thought that it would fun to do some of the things that they did. I think that what really caught my eye was the Judo. I probably wouldn't have joined if my friend wasn't training, so I am very fortunate for that. He quit at blue belt, but I stayed in because I found how much it had already helped me and how much I enjoyed it. I could come to train on a bad day and I would feel better, and I could think so much more clearly afterwards. It was a real help to me.

Karate has helped me a lot. Since starting Karate I recently received an Honours award. My current average is above 84%, and I am known as one of the people to go to for help in Science and Math. In my gym class I have the third highest mark. I can outrun almost anyone in the eight hundred metre, and I'm the third fastest in the one hundred. My focus on the martial arts has really picked up, especially in Karate. I am grading in a weeks time, for my first kyu, and I have developed the necessary skills to be a strong fighter. Without Martial Arts, none of this would have happened.

*Sensei's Note: Senpai Mike was asked permission before this essay was posted. Senpai Jonah Goldberg's essay will be in next month's Howler. Both of these gentlemen are receiving 30 points for their Wolf Pack. As mentioned in last month's newsletter, anyone who provides an essay for the Howler will be given the same amount of points. Although, there are no Wolf Packs for adults yet, we also welcome their submissions.*