

Queen hooked on karate

By RENEE WALSER
Of The Herald Staff

The first question Allen Queen was asked about karate during his exhibition for children at Gaston County Library recently was one he had never been asked before.

"Are all the grunts necessary?" asked one precocious youngster.

Queen laughed and said the boy should get an award for that question.

An expert in karate, Queen held the group spell-bound with demonstrations of kicks and punches. At the end, he had the children learn how to punch correctly and encouraged those interested to take classes.

Queen has a fifth-degree black belt in karate. There are eight levels of black belt. Usually the seventh and eighth levels are awarded to those who have been studying for a life-time, said Queen.

He has taught over 10,000 students but has only promoted eight to black belt status. Usually, the students quit before attaining that rank, he said.

Queen, 41, said he had seen a demonstration of karate on television when he was 15 and got started in classes a month later in his hometown of Lincolnton.

"I got hooked," he said. He has studied for 26 years and instructed for 18 years. He has also written five books on karate, which have been published in the U.S., Canada, Europe and Australia. His latest book on karate will be published this fall by Sterling Publishing Co., N.Y. All of his books are specifically targeted toward elementary and junior high students. Queen said there are a lot of Kings Mountain students featured in his books.

Queen started a karate program at North Elementary School when he was principal there. Two of those students who participated became black belts, he said. The college professor explains in one of his books that karate is a fighting art. It was originally meant to be an art form like dancing. Karate is believed to have been developed in the Orient by men who watched animals fight and tried to copy them. The sport of karate became popular in this country during the 1960s.

"The real fun is in sport karate," says Queen in his books. Sparring between two opponents is called kumite (koo-me-tay). Kumite is seen at karate tournaments where there are usually three judges for each match. Though karate is used for self-defense, Queen said, "The last thing you want to do is use it. You don't want to use it unless your life is in danger."

For that reason, opponents do not actually make contact, especially in the lower levels of karate, when sparring. They come between one and two inches of touching their opponent when kicking and punching.

The first person in a match to score three points as awarded by the judges wins the karate match. At the start of a match, the traditional Japanese bow by opponents toward the judges and each other shows respect.

Queen said you need to have flexibility and speed in order to be a good sparring participant. He demonstrated the skills used in kumite of blocking, striking and kicking.

Usually, the legs are three times as strong as the arms. So kicking should be three times as strong as punching and do more damage. There are three major kicks: side, front and roundhouse kicks. A good karate fighter will know how to combine these techniques during kumite to defeat his opponent.

There are two types of fighters and individuals must choose which approach they wish to use -- usually what is most comfortable for them. The offensive fighters goes after the point instead of waiting



Allen Queen, Kings Mountain karate expert, demonstrates and kick with student Shawn Kime, 13, during an exhibition at Gaston County Public Library.

Some fighters are called chargers because they leap on the opponent in order to score. Some are called bulls because they do not move when they are charged. Bouncers move up and down and from side to side while fixing to strike or defend.

You may have seen the graceful form of karate done solo by students called kata (ka-TAH). Katas look like movements of animals such as cats, snakes or tigers. Or they could look like letters from the alphabet, according to Queen. Some katas were developed by famous karate masters. All katas have names in English such as The Breathing Dragon or in Japanese. Tournaments have competitions for katas, too.

Queen graduated from Lincolnton High in 1969. He received his B.S. and M.A. degrees in elementary education from Western Carolina University. He completed his doctoral program in education at the University of Virginia in 1978.

His regular job is as professor in the School of Education at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Along with his principalship at North, Queen has been a principal in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school system. He has also served as chairman of the Department of Education at Gardner-Webb College and as a classroom teacher.

Queen currently teaches karate only in seminars and special classes. He said he was planning a class for this fall in Kings Mountain, where he and his wife, Patsy, and their son, Alexander, currently live. Oh, yes, the answer to that award-winning question, "Are all the grunts really necessary?"

Queen said the grunts are used to spur self-confidence in the fighter and to intimidate his opponent. They also help breathing and strength. Ai-eee!

Keisha Wells nominated Who's Who

Keisha DeAnn Wells has been nominated to be included in Who's Who Among American High School Students, an honor reserved for only five percent of the nation's high school students each year.

Keisha, a sophomore at Kings Mountain High School, is a member of the Lettermen's Club, Athletes, Junior Varsity Basketball team and Varsity Softball Team. She has participated in summer softball for the past two summers. Keisha attends Second Baptist Church of Kings Mountain where she serves as an active youth member and served as a youth missionary in Smithfield, Va. Keisha is the daughter of Dennis and Carol Wells of Kings Mountain.



Pre-registration scheduled at CCC

Pre-registration for the fall quarter at Cleveland Community College is August 3-5 from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. and 4 p.m.-8 p.m. in the Campus Center Building.

Registration is Thursday, August 27, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. and 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Classes begin August 31 and end November 18.

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It's a girl for Ringenbachs

Captain and Mrs. Todd Ringenbach of Augsburg, Germany, announce the arrival of their first child, a daughter, Mallory Ayres Ringenbach, July 21, 1992. She weighed eight pounds, four ounces.

Grandparents are Mr. and Mrs.

John Clemmer of Kings Mountain and Mr. and Mrs. Doug Ringenbach of Seattle, Washington. The baby's mother is the former Marti Clemmer.

The Kings Mountain grandparents plan a trip to Germany August 12 to visit their new granddaughter.

SHIPPER

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Kings Mountain Hospital.

The bridegroom is the son of Mrs. Ruth Shipper of Ashland, Ohio and the late George Shipper. He is a graduate of Ohio State University at Columbus with B.S. in Pharmacy. He served in the U. S. Army 11 years and holds a commission in the United States Army Reserves. He is employed as Director of Pharmacy at Kings Mountain Hospital. He is a member of Kappa Psi fraternity and the American Society of Hospital Pharmacists.

The newlyweds have returned from a trip to Wild Dunes Resort in Charleston and are residing at 1012 Sherwood Lane.

The bridegroom hosted the rehearsal dinner July 10 at Western Steer in Shelby.

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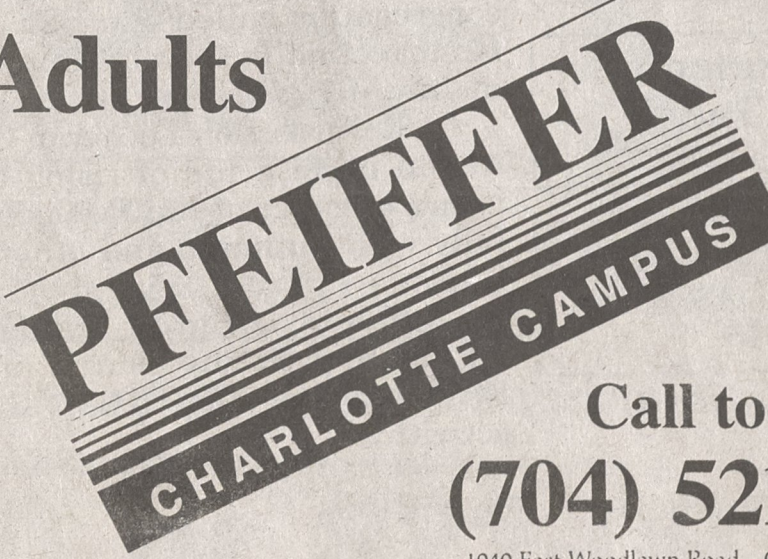
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