



# ZenQuest Martial Arts Center

55 Pittsfield Road-Building 10, Lenox, MA 01240

(413) 637-0656 \* [zenquestmac@sprynet.com](mailto:zenquestmac@sprynet.com) \* [www.zenquestmac.com](http://www.zenquestmac.com)

An Okinawa Karatedo Association, Demian Mata Jiu-jitsu Network and Siyodtong Boston Affiliate

## NEWSLETTER September 2020

### Staying Up

The coronavirus situation has been difficult for everyone in different ways. For those who become infected, the consequences can range from asymptomatic and unaffected to very ill and devastated. Those of us who are not infected by the virus are faced with a variety of inconveniences. These are things like quarantines, wearing masks, restricted travel, or being unable to enjoy our favorite restaurant or sports events.

Aside from the somewhat obvious, there can be some more hidden effects for many of us as the situation drags on. Not the least of these are the way that the pandemic effects us mentally and emotionally. Many people are now having to deal with the consequences of a long period of reduced activities and socialization, boredom, and fear. All of this can leave us struggling with increased levels of stress, anxiety, depression and even PTSD or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. They are also prone to something called COVID fatigue or ZOOM fatigue. This is the 'burnout' we can experience from the long term consequences related to the pandemic.

Now, more than ever, is a good time to commit to martial arts training. Practicing martial arts has all of the benefits of other fitness activities but tends to reduce our stress, anxiety, and depression more. There are several reasons for this. First, intense physical exercise stimulates body chemistry to make us healthier and happier. Punching, kicking, and throwing things also tends to purge stress by venting our frustrations and addressing the 'fight-or-flight' instincts triggered under stress. But just as importantly, martial arts training typically includes a regular practice of focus, calmness and stability. Regular training in this mindful physical activity is designed to help us extend these crucial traits into every aspect of our lives.



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## Kids' Classes This Fall

With 'back-to-school' now upon us and the fall season around the corner, parents normally sort out their children's activities for this time. But, this year brings uncharted territory and uncertainty for many parents and kids. With continuing concerns about the Coronavirus, many school systems are starting the year with some or all learning via remote learning. This is expected to possibly continue until there is a vaccine and/or cure for the virus and experts are predicting that this will likely take months.

With these remote learning or hybrid models children are faced with struggling with excess screen-time and greatly reduced activity levels. In view of this new reality, having kids get out for in-person activities in a very controlled environment will be more important than ever. With strict safety precautions in place, children CAN reap the benefits of physical activity and socialization.

ZenQuest is prepared to strike a balance between safety and activity for kids during this time. With social distancing, face coverings, temperature checks, limited class sizes and durations, controlled foot traffic, positive ventilation, extensive cleaning and sanitizing, and appropriate activities, we are confident that we can provide our children's classes while also minimizing risks. We believe that kids can have some relief from the unique challenges they're faced with in the coming months and are prepared to help. For a full listing of the safety measures being used at ZenQuest please visit our website at [www.zenquestmac.com](http://www.zenquestmac.com).

**Please contact us ASAP if you plan on having your children attend classes during this time.**

Class reservations are on a 'first come first served' basis. Due to controlled class sizes there is limited space available in our children's classes at this time. We are looking at adjustments to the schedule to accommodate as many students as possible. Let us know if you have any questions or concerns in this matter. As always thanks for your continuing understanding and support.



## Mindfulness & Safety

With the current restrictions we are required to follow, it is important that all students stay mindful of a few things to keep things running as smoothly as possible. First, knowing and following all of the safety precautions is crucial to the safety of everyone. This includes arriving for each class 5 to 10 minutes prior to it's start. After a temperature check, shoes must be carried to the 'fitness room' and placed on one of the shoe racks. Next, sanitizer must be applied to hands and feet at the training room entry door, then students should proceed to a 'social distancing' spot in the room for their class. Water bottles and spare masks can be placed at a back corner of their space. Once the class is finished, students can gather their belongings and exit the training room in order to pick up their shoes. Shoes should be put on near the exit door, then the student may proceed to the playground area and walk to the front of the building. Parents should be ready to receive their children at that time.

Transactions for tuition or gear can be made in the front area, but making payments online or over the phone is preferred. **Since, instructors are signing students in it is VERY important that students or parents pay close attention to when their tuition payments are due.** In some cases reminders may be sent by email if needed since normal reminders are not available to students and parents at this time.

Since classes are currently limited in size it is also very important that students and parents keep their class reservations up to date. Many classes are at capacity at this time with waiting lists for other students to join. If a student can no longer attend a class that they had reserved, they should notify Sensei Connie ASAP. Students who miss three classes in a row or stop paying their membership, without communicating why, will be assumed to have made a schedule change and adjusted accordingly.

Please call 413-637-0656 or contact us via email at [train@zenquestmac.com](mailto:train@zenquestmac.com) with any questions or adjustments. Thanks!

**IMPORTANT DATES**

July 6, 2020  
IN-PERSON CLASSES RESUMED

**WELCOME NEW STUDENTS!**

**YOUTH** - Layla Wixsom, Syllas Ketcham, Lily Hecht, Wyatt Hayden, Merek Mackey, Ben Chagnon

**ADULTS** - Jake Martin, Marcus Drake, Chris Morawski, David Morawski, Sarah Hecht, Holly Heck, Tiffany Brower

**WELCOME BACK** - DeSean Scales

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**

Shaun Supranowicz 9/5  
Colton Jennings 9/5  
Michael Jezak 9/6  
Isaac Cornellier 9/10  
Victor MacDowell 9/15  
Abbigail McLaughlin 9/15  
Michael McHugh 9/16  
Shawn Dowling 9/16  
Jordyn Simmons 9/18  
Michelle Moreau 9/19  
Ian Bridgman 9/20  
Ryan Timm 9/20  
Isaiah Dixson 9/23  
Cooper Kennedy 9/25  
Kaiden Hurley 9/26  
Leanne Maschino 9/28  
Robert Haywood 9/29  
Evan Basnet 9/29  
Ayden Jezak 9/30

**RECENT PROMOTIONS****CRANES:**

1 Gold - Parker Lamont, Callen Parker

**TIGERS:****DRAGONS:**

9kyu - Quincy Rocca  
6kyu - Devyn Fillio

**COBRAS:****UECHI:**

8kyu- Susan Doerr

**PYTHONS:**

3stripe white- Nico Dory, Enzo Dort,  
Jordyn Simmons, Lilou Wilhelm  
Grey/white - Ashley Heck  
1stripe grey/white - Leanne Maschino  
Grey - Luna Wilhelm  
1stripe grey - Levi Giumarra, Sadie Giumarra

**JIU-JITSU:**

3stripe white - Todd Dort

**MUAY THAI:****Terminology****Endurance**

Japanese: Taikyu

Brazilian: Resistencia

Thai: Kwam Cutoun

**“Best Martial Arts Academy”**

**ZenQuest Martial Arts**

*Berkshire Eagle's  
Readers Choice Awards  
2017, 2018 & 2019*



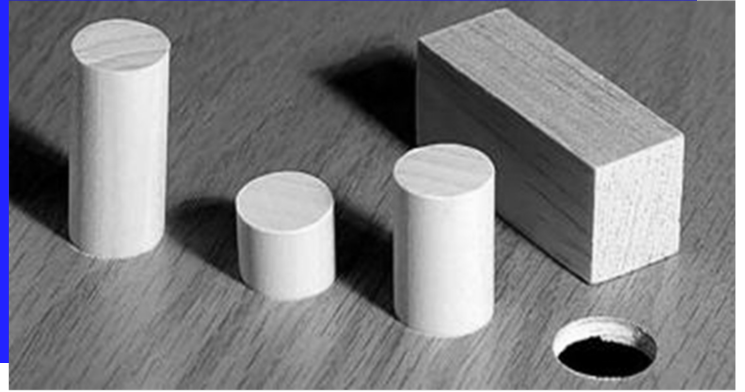
## Making Adjustments

With limitations on class sizes and several classes full or nearly full at ZenQuest, we are looking at ways to accommodate as many students as possible. We've already made some adjustments to the class schedule and are planning on more of these based on current trends in enrollment. At present, the most space available is in our younger children's Karate classes (Tigers, Jr. Tigers and Cranes) and Teen level Karate classes (Cobras.) There is also plenty of space in our 'Martial Arts Strength' or strength and conditioning classes.

Depending on how class attendance plays out over the next few weeks, we will add classes and possibly temporarily convert weaker classes to accommodate the overflow from others.

We are also considering a reconfiguration of the training space at ZenQuest for this purpose. For some time now, we have thought about converting the space in the 'fitness room' to additional mat space. Doing this now would allow us to increase the limits on some classes.

Stay tuned for these adjustments over the coming weeks.



## Squeaky Clean

With the return to our 'in-person' classes, we have adopted a routine of intense cleaning and disinfecting in the gym. Training room mats and surfaces are disinfected after each class. Similarly, common area floors and surfaces are cleaned on a regular basis. Positive ventilation and the use of a dehumidifier helps keep the environment fresh and dry, too.

Students are also required to keep their own gear clean and follow all safety precautions. Many of these are designed to keep the dojo as clean as possible.

In addition, a professional cleaning service is used at the beginning of each week. Our own Stephen Tremble of 'Priority Cleaning' uses a fogger to disinfect the entire facility on top of all of the other cleaning rituals currently in place.

We appreciate everyone's efforts in helping with the new cleaning routines. Please remember that bringing your own sanitizing wipes to use is very helpful, as these tend to be in short supply lately. As always, thanks for your support!



(Continued from page 1) **Staying Up**

All of these aspects of martial arts practice can have a synergistic effect and make a huge difference in how we process the world and react to the things that happen from day to day. Even as the crazy 'rollercoaster' of 2020 plays out, we can stay calm, focused and happy. We can avoid emotional crashes and the feeling of helplessness.

All of the classes at ZenQuest include mindful activity that will reduce stress and help students 'stay up' in their mental and emotional state. Even with the restrictions on training that are required at this time, classes are continuing to provide this essential training. In fact, some aspects of the current class modifications require a heightened sense of mindfulness and provide new perspective on a student's chosen art.

So, as Sensei Toshio Higa used to say, "please continue" your training through this challenging time. If you've thought about training in the past but haven't actually started, do yourself a favor and consider doing so now. Learn to 'stay up' in your life!