



# AJA NEWSLETTER

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## Freebies = Happiness & Win-Win-Win!!!

George Kirby, AJA BOD Chairman

Sensei, can I have my **FREE** AJA patch?

Sensei, can I have my **FREE** AJA membership card?

Sensei, who won last/this year's **FREE** national awards?

Sensei, how can I download my **FREE** issue of the AJA newsletter?

If your students are asking you these questions and all you can do is give them a "deer in the headlights" look, you need to get moving to avoid the impact.

AJA patches and membership cards are available from Materials Coordinator Jef Rice, at [jefrice@premierjitsu.com](mailto:jefrice@premierjitsu.com).

Just contact him. They're both **FREE!** It really looks nice if all of your students (AJA members) are wearing an AJA patch on the left chest. It shows visitors that your dojo and students all belong to a national organization. It also helps develop self-pride in your dojo. The membership cards are a real asset because you and/or your students can record events they participate in & it's all in one place – on their card.

AJA National Awards are coordinated by John Landry at [johnmlandry@aol.com](mailto:johnmlandry@aol.com). If you missed last year's awards program, get into the 2013 awards program. It's also **FREE!** I'm sure there are students in your dojo who are prime examples of

what you're striving for. Give them the recognition and the respect of their peers. It also lets everyone know that you're looking for nominees & may raise the level of competence and participation in your dojo. (Check those membership cards for what they've done.)

The AJA Newsletter, which could also use important news from your dojo (promotions, demos, other events or important items, poetry, cartoons, pix of class, etc.) is available by contacting Will Harris at [WHarris@LPC.com](mailto:WHarris@LPC.com). The link, which should be sent to you anyway as you're the sensei of your dojo, can also be given to your students, unless you want to print

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## Interesting Times

Will Harris, AJA Newsletter Editor

This particular issue of the newsletter comes at an interesting time for me personally. As I am wrapping up another successful little league baseball season (I've coached my son's team for the past 7 years), I have once again been asked to coach the All Star game. We play in a rather large league and it is quite an honor to be asked to coach the all stars.

I find coaching to be a very rewarding experience. I get to give back to the community

while sharing my love of the game with my son and many of his friends.

What does any of this have to do with the AJA? On the surface, nothing. But those same values I've learned throughout my martial arts career are at play here. Learning and developing a skill. Loving it. Sharing it. The whole idea of "giving back."

Without people willing to give back to the community, sharing

their knowledge and their passion, the very things we love and are passionate about will disappear.

I started out by saying this is an interesting time for me, but so far in this article, I've only scratched the surface. I recently learned that my long time sensei and close personal friends, Professors Wade Susie and Karen Curley, have decided to hang up their gi and retire from teaching. This was shocking news to me

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## Undergrad Research Shows Self-Defense May Not Be a Fixed Concept

Matt Kelly

*Editor's note: This article was originally published in UVA Today on March 6, 2013. Matt Kelly serves as a General Assignments Writer for University of Virginia Media Relations. The original article can be found at: <http://news.virginia.edu/content/undergrad-research-shows-self-defense-may-not-be-fixed-concept-0>.*

The right of self-defense in Virginia courts has been fluid, defined by the culture, gender and the times, according to research by a University of Virginia fourth-year student.

Amelia K. Nemitz, 21, of Potomac Falls, an Echols Scholar and distinguished history and Spanish double major in the College of Arts & Sciences, used her 2012 Harrison Undergraduate Research grant to examine the doctrine of self-defense and some of its implications.

"My project focuses on the way in which the socio-cultural construct of gender influences the right of self-defense and the outcome of self-defense cases, particularly in the state of Virginia," she said.

A student of United States history and law, Nemitz said the courts have viewed self-defense differently based upon the gender of the defendant.

"Associating the right of self-defense with an aggressive, dominant masculine identity, Virginia courts often have had difficulty understanding the actions of women who kill their abusive husbands, boyfriends or significant others as self-defense," she said. "While Virginia courts appear to have readily considered self-defense the actions of men who aggressively defend themselves and their homes against attacks by other males – an act which constitutes an affirmation of existing gender roles – Virginia courts seem to have struggled to interpret similar situations in which women attempted to justify killing an abusive but dominant male figure in their life as self-defense."

Her project on the connection between gender and self-defense actually lies at the crossroads of her life's greatest passions: American legal history, women's

rights and self-defense.

"Since 2009, I have been studying the art of self-defense with a retired police veteran and have had the honor to achieve the rank of instructor within his program at the Reston Institute for Self-Defense," she said. "As both a practitioner of self-defense and a student of American legal history, I was instinctively curious about why there existed such variation between the self-defense laws maintained by the various states and the historical circumstances under which these laws arose."



Photo courtesy Dan Addison

Nemitz examined appellate-level cases of men defending themselves against men and women who used a self-defense argument for killing a man.

"Virginia judges conceived of the right of self-defense as masculine right," she said. "Consequently, when these women attempted to claim self-defense after killing the dominant male figure in their lives – an act which inverted the existing gender power dynamic and threatened the very masculine gender construct on which the right of self-defense was based – Virginia courts struggled to understand the ac-

tions of these women as self-defense."

Nemitz said her research, while focusing on how gender influences the right of self-defense, examines ways in which social and cultural beliefs may influence the legal system. Understanding these influences may allow for the legal system to compensate and produce a fairer and more equitable experience.

"The research I have done to this point opens the door for a great deal of future research," she said. "Though my thesis focuses primarily on the relationship between gender and the right of self-defense, my conclusion that the right of self-defense can be – and often is – influenced by social and cultural forces could lead to a wealth of research concerning the connection between the right of self-defense and other socio-cultural constructs, including race and class."

Nemitz said investigating the way in which gender in particular affects Virginia's conceptualization of the right of self-defense is a reflection of her commitment to women's rights and ending gender violence.

"As the current president of Sexual Assault Peer Advocacy – an organization at U.Va. which seeks to create a community of support for survivors of sexual violence and to raise awareness about the issue – and a member since the first semester of my first year, the issues of sexual violence, gender constructs and women's rights have long been issues that are close to my heart," she said.

U.Va. history professor Charles W. McCurdy said Nemitz was asking a question not posed before. He also said it was unusual for an undergraduate to delve into historical and legal records this way.

"She is investigating an important question that not even professional legal historians have investigated before," he said. "The quality of the work thus far is very high."

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## Tampa Lighthouse for the Blind

Dean Dunwoody

The Lighthouse has an extracurricular program they call Transitions, which is for youths aged 13-20 years old. The program is designed to teach life skills. The participants have various levels of vision impairment ranging from degraded focus and light perception to total loss. In addition, many participants have other complications and disabilities. I am teaching self defense and encompass some

basic mobility skills. The primary focus is to teach them how to be independent. I have 30 students and we practice basic techniques designed around the individual's ability. Techniques include simple break aways from a wrist grab, lapel grab, counters to chokes and voice commands. We have practiced light ukemi and waza but limit interaction to me as the aggressor. Several students have problems tak-

ing any significant impact, so this assures a safe environment. As with most martial arts instruction, repetition is key and I have worked diligently to not only teach the techniques, but to instill self-confidence and establish an environment for success and achievement. These kids are awesome. ☺

## White Marsh Dojo News

Wade Susie

There has been some excitement around Sensei Wade Susie's dojo, as members have won two AJA awards. First, Karen Curley, hachidan, won the Northern Region Outstanding Yudansha Award for 2012. She has helped Sensei Susie, hachidan, teach classes and handle administrative responsibilities since he began his dojo in 1974. Karen has participated in many Northern Region Shiais over the last 23 years and has won a number of first and second place trophies in both kata and kumite competitions. She has helped Sensei Susie put on numerous martial arts demonstrations for church and scouting groups, thus helping to spread knowledge about Budoshin. She also served on the AJA Board of Directors as Secretary for a number of years.

The second AJA award went to Jay Baldwin, ikkyu, who won the Northern Region Outstanding Mudansha Award for 2012. Jay is a serious student who frequently trains several times per week. He arrives early at the dojo to help set up mats, and he helps teach the youth jujitsu class that meets before the adult class he attends. He also enjoys helping other adult students understand the techniques in Budoshin. Jay is continuing his education at UMBC and expects to graduate in 2014 with a master's degree in cyber-terrorism.

Another piece of news concerns John Frank who trained with Sensei Susie beginning in 1990 and eventually earned the rank of nidan. Then life led John in other

directions. He stopped training to marry and start a family. He also became a Baltimore City police officer and works as one to this day. He returned to Sensei Susie's dojo to pick up his jujitsu training, and on April 24, 2013, he earned the rank of sandan. He is a dedicated student with a strong respect for the art of Budoshin. He brought both his children to train in the youth class. Abbey and Carson Frank have each received their yellow belts and wish to follow in their father's footsteps to earn a black belt someday. Sensei Susie is proud to teach and train with a police officer who protects the citizens of Baltimore. ☺

## Upcoming Events

### 10th Annual Budoshin Ju-Jitsu Summer Camp

When: August 16-18, 2013

Where: Santa Clarita, CA

Contact: George Kirby

[senseigk@budoshin.com](mailto:senseigk@budoshin.com)

### Budoshin Jujitsu Seminar featuring George Kirby

When: November 2, 2013

Where: Arlington Budoshin Jujitsu Dojo  
Arlington, VA YMCA

Contact: Thomas Salander

[thomas@budoshin.com](mailto:thomas@budoshin.com)

Have upcoming events? Please let us know! Send an email with the details to:

[AJAnewsletter@comcast.net](mailto:AJAnewsletter@comcast.net)



## Interesting Times

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because even though I knew this was an unavoidable certainty in the future, I had no idea the timing was so soon.

I began my martial arts career in 1985, studying under Sensei Jim Howard at what was then called the Northeast YMCA. I mainly joined the class because my brother wanted to do it but didn't want to go by himself. A few years into our training, life took my brother in a different direction and he stopped training. I continued in class and never looked back. I always remember there was an interesting black belt in the class named Wade that always liked to show

“hidden” techniques.

In 1990, our sensei transferred out of state for work and Wade took over the class as sensei. Over the years, our name was changed to the White Marsh YMCA, enrollment grew, and I learned a tremendous amount from my “new” sensei. I put “new” in quotes because Wade had been teaching since 1974, but I had only known him as the really good black belt in our class. I've actually met all of my closest friends through the dojo. It truly is an extended family. For another perspective on this aspect, please see the open letter below that one of our students felt compelled to

write from Afghanistan upon learning of Sensei Wade and Sensei Karen's impending retirement.

While I've had the great honor and privilege of training with Professors Susie and Curley for the past 28 years, I was humbled when they approached me and asked me to take over their class. It represents a tremendous opportunity for me to give back to the art and to the community every single week. And although I've been training for 28 years, I am now the “new” sensei. These are indeed interesting times. 🌀

## An Open Letter to Sensei Wade, Sensei Karen, and the White Marsh Dojo

I am proud to have been your student and a part of the White Marsh Dojo for most of my life. I remember joining the kid's Jujitsu class when I was very young at the White Marsh YMCA in that small trailer on Lillian Holt Drive. I remember watching Will, Vern, Mark, Pablo, and Mike throwing one another around under your watchful eyes. It was not considered a good throw unless feet brushed the drop ceiling and the trailer shuttered from the strike of bodies hitting the mats. I remember playing in the mat closet and watching my Dad during Chin-Na. I remember learning simple things like my left from my right, respect for others, and that knowledge and skill in all respects is a great responsibility. I learned that being a student and a subordinate is the only way to truly be a great teacher and leader. I learned that being a great teacher and leader is to truly care for and nurture your students and subordinates.

Whether these lessons were directly expressed or simply learned through observation, they have served me well through my life. The example set by my Senseis and the knowledge imparted, not just of the art but of life, has made me the man I am today. It has made me a man of confidence, a man of strength, a man of integrity, a leader. As I have chosen to join the Army, it became evident that all of these attributes and lessons you have instilled in me placed me above my peers. Without the both of you, I would not be the man I am today. I strive daily to be a better man, and to make you proud to call me your student.

The Dojo has always been there for me when I was in need. My greatest trial, as I am sure you are well aware, was the passing of my father. He was one of the hardest hitting men you trained, is what you told me. As death tends to do to all children, I was scared, lost, and alone. My family did their best to support me, and they did a good and loving job of it, but I still felt alone. I remember asking my Mom if I could go back to Jujitsu again, since I had stopped due to my Dad's illness. My brother and I could have asked anything of her after Dad died, and she would have moved heaven and earth to help us, just to make us feel better. To her, taking me to class was a request she gladly obliged. I returned to the Dojo, to the familiar faces, those same blue mats, and the same acceptance for which I had been longing. I still remember my Mom telling me after I returned to class, “I'm glad you started back with them again, they're good people.” Maybe I am biased, but after all these years I am still inclined to agree.

As I sit here in Afghanistan, reflecting on how important my Senseis and Dojo were to my life, I realize how incredibly fortunate I am to have the support of the Dojo. I also reflect on how much I regret not being able to be there for the Dojo in its time of need. Leaving the Dojo behind as I left for the Army hurt me deeply. Leaving family is incredibly difficult, leaving two families makes it that much worse.

The art is worse for your retirement, leaving large shoes to fill. I hope that my fellow students will do their best to fill that void, because if just one more child can find the peace that I did, it would make the world a better place. While the expressed goal of any Dojo is to train martial artists, this Dojo is in the business of building up good men and women, men and women of character who are always looking to better themselves and others. The Dojo has given me many things, but the most important will always be the relationships it has grown. Teachers, students, peers, brothers, sisters, and friends. None of you are far from my thoughts.

For all that you have given me, I am sincerely grateful. I can never thank you enough for all you have done. I miss and love you all.

David “DJ” Stuart 🌀

## Undergrad Research Shows Self-Defense May Not Be a Fixed Concept

*(Continued from page 2)*

The research has given her insight into the workings of the legal system and prepared her to enter U.Va.'s School of Law in the fall. She plans to eventually work as a prosecutor.

"More than anything else, this research has given me great confidence in my research skills and has confirmed my passion both for law and the art of self-defense," said Nemitz, a Lawn resident, one of the chairs for the Vigil Committee for Take Back the Night, member of

Sexual Assault Peer Advocacy, Cavalier Marching Band, Phi Eta Sigma, Golden Key Society, Sigma Alpha Lambda and the National Society of College Scholars.

"This project reaffirms the depth of my commitment to the issues of self-defense, gender, women's rights and the law."

The research awards support students who present detailed plans for research projects that have been endorsed by a faculty mentor. A Faculty Senate committee selected the winners, who receive up

to \$3,000. Faculty mentors who oversee the projects receive \$1,000.

More than half of U.Va.'s undergraduates are engaged in some form of research, including classroom and independent work. Students who conduct research make better candidates for fellowships, graduate and professional school admissions, and career placement, according to Katherine Walters, assistant director of the Center for Undergraduate Excellence. ●

## Freebies = Happiness & Win-Win-Win!!!

*(Continued from page 1)*

the newsletter up for them. It's **FREE** too! The AJA Newsletter is our main form of communications between the AJA, dojos, sensei, AND students. Don't shortchange yourself or your students from this benefit.

So what are you waiting for? Everyone likes freebies – especially when there are no strings attached. Your students will be happier with you. As sensei we all need to "get on board" and actively support the AJA. This is the easiest way to do it - and it doesn't cost you a dime! You will

be happier with the AJA. The AJA (staff) will be happier because it's helping you fulfill your responsibilities as an AJA sensei. It's a win-win-win for everyone. ●

## Recent Mudansha Promotions

Name	Rank	Date	Dojo
Jeff Rohaly	Yonkyu	01/01/13	Classical Budo Dojo
Pat Closs	Yonkyu	01/01/13	Classical Budo Dojo
Steven Trauth	Sankyu	10/20/12	Belle Chasse Martial Arts
McKenna Daly	Sankyu	02/14/13	Maru Martial Arts
Carlos Villamayor	Sankyu	09/01/12	Reston VA YMCA Jujitsu
Ned Libby	Sankyu	11/01/12	Reston VA YMCA Jujitsu
Tony Ashe	Sankyu	09/10/12	Reston VA YMCA Jujitsu
Tymur Kurtanisze	Sankyu	10/01/12	Reston VA YMCA Jujitsu
Hung Vo	Nikyu	10/31/12	Reston VA YMCA Jujitsu
Jordan Tucker	Nikyu	11/01/12	Reston VA YMCA Jujitsu
Dennis McCafferty	Nikyu	08/25/12	San Fernando Valley Martial Arts
Troy Walker	Ikkyu	08/01/12	Reston VA YMCA Jujitsu

## About the American Ju-Jitsu Association

The American Ju-Jitsu Association was founded in 1972, by George Kirby and William Fromm at the request of their sensei, Jack Seki, for the purpose of bringing different ryu of the art together in an atmosphere of mutual cooperation and respect. Since that time it has grown from two dojo to approximately twenty-four, plus international affiliates. The AJA has established itself as a reputable organization within the martial arts community and works closely with other major Ju-Jitsu organizations in the United States and internationally in areas of mutual concern.

The AJA is a non-profit amateur athletic association registered with both the state of California and the United States government [IRS code 501(c)(3)]. It is a non-profit corporation with a charitable foundation status. Although originally recognized by the IRS as a "social club" because there was no other way to recognize the AJA as an amateur athletic association, formal recognition of the AJA as a true amateur athletic association, according to the criteria of the United States government, was secured in 1976 under the Sports Act of that year. To our knowledge, the AJA is the only martial arts organization in the U.S. that is classified by the IRS as an amateur athletic association. ☉

## Yudansha Promotions

Name	Rank	Date	Dojo
Paul Coleman	Shodan	12/01/12	Reston VA YMCA Jujitsu
Andy Sparks	Shodan	01/21/12	San Fernando Valley Martial Arts
Antonio Ramon	Shodan	01/21/12	San Fernando Valley Martial Arts
Cheri Zoe' Walker	Shodan	01/21/12	San Fernando Valley Martial Arts
Amelia Nemitz	Nidan	01/05/13	Reston VA YMCA Jujitsu
David Tucker	Nidan	01/30/13	Reston VA YMCA Jujitsu
Michael Harden	Nidan	01/05/13	Reston VA YMCA Jujitsu
Louise Wynn	Nidan	04/10/12	Vancouver Institute of Self Defense
Jeff Wynn	Rokudan	04/10/13	Vancouver Institute of Self Defense
Ron Breines	Shichidan		Kakuto Ryu Jujutsu

## Cell Phones Save Lives

George Kirby, AJA BOD Chairman

As some of you may have heard, I recently had a heart attack (myocardial infarction to my coronary artery). Thank goodness for my calm wife Adel, great paramedics, and the phenomenal medical staff at Henry Mayo. I was resting quietly in ICU with a stent in my coronary artery in less than 3 hours. I came home two days later and am doing well. Doctors do not expect any permanent damage, and I am slowly resuming normal activities.

I was about 25 feet from my front door when I had the heart attack. I would have never made it to the door if I had tried. Fortunately, even though I was doing yard work around the house, I had my cell phone with me. I was able to speed dial Adel, who was in the house. She came outside and went through the 911 call

process.

Why didn't I call 911? I was concerned that I wouldn't make it through the call. Lessons learned: (1) Always carry your cell phone with you, and (2) if you are seriously ill or injured, have someone else make the 911 call for you whenever possible. Remember, the goal is to get help to you as soon as possible.

I don't wish this experience on anyone. I am truly grateful that Adel remained calm, that the paramedics arrived quickly, and that the nearest hospital had a new cardio unit recently opened.

Keep your cell phone with you! It saved my life. It could save yours. ☉

## AMERICAN JU-JITSU ASSOCIATION

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