



# AJA NEWSLETTER

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Summer 2018

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## Improvised Self-Defense Tools

*By Jeff Wynn*

We *never* call these “weapons” – because that word could leak into court proceedings and you are no longer clearly a victim in a confrontation.

However improbable, people fear two things more than any other: a home invasion or being eaten by a shark. Being struck by lightning is far more likely if you track the actual statistics. Nevertheless, it is probably a good idea to at least think about what you might be able to use as a self-defense tool in a number of more realistic possible scenarios, including an irate driver whose car you just wrecked while playing with your cell phone.

On 9/11 I was trapped in San Antonio, Texas, at a geophysics convention. I was chairing a large symposium as part of that much larger science meeting when a courier came to the dais and gave me a piece of paper, asking me to announce the attack on the World Trade Center towers and the Pentagon. I advised the ~500 people present to feel free to leave and call their families, and they left in droves. When the last presenter was finished (his hands were shaking violently and he cut his talk short) I left to call my wife, who worked at that time about a block and a half from the

*(continued on page 2)*

## Northern Regional Shiai and Seminar

*by Samantha Finley*

Daitobukan Dojo in Towson, Maryland, is once again holding its annual seminar and self-defense waza competition. This year, instructors include Dave Boesel, teaching ground submissions; Will Harris, combat jujitsu; William Stockey, karate; and Dave Patton, jujitsu.

The doors open at 8 AM on Sunday, July 22 at the Orokawa YMCA in Towson (600 W Chesapeake Ave). Walk-ins are welcome, but those wishing to preregister or find out more may do so at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/aja-2018-northern-regional-self-defense-shiai-seminars-tickets-47555259060>.

White House. It took three hours to reach her... it took that long to get through the Metro tunnel under the Potomac River and out of Washington, DC into northern Virginia.

After three days it became apparent that there was no chance of taking a plane home from San Antonio to Virginia, so I rented a car and drove home (Hertz had a no-charge policy for distant drop-offs that week). It took seven hours just to get out of Texas, and near Dallas I stopped to get a car-charger for my dying cell phone. While waiting at the counter of an electronic store, I struck up a conversation with a police officer. "Box cutters! They used BOX CUTTERS!" he almost yelled. "When you're in a knife fight, you accept the fact that you will get cut, get past that, and do what you have to do. I can't believe that people were intimidated by box cutters!" Truth is, there were people on American Airlines Flight 93 who were *not* intimidated by box cutters and overpowered their hijackers to prevent that flight from reaching the White House. My wife considers those people her personal heroes to this day.

So how would you deal with someone wielding a box cutter, or a 10 cm/4-inch knife blade? How close are you to a magazine 24/7? They're *everywhere!* You can roll one up into a very effective baton in just a few seconds. Try it. It's pretty stiff and gives you a much longer reach (30 cm/12 inches) than just using your hands (figure 1). We actually practice using this thing in our "Take the Line" random-attack, putting-it-all-together sessions at the end of each of our classes. The student with the rubber knife or karambit typically cringes when facing the Full Magazine (always available in your front seat pocket on an aircraft).

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Figure 1: Just a rolled-up magazine can be a useful self-defense tool

### Recent Yudansha Promotions

Name	Rank	Date	Dojo
Akagi Kayashima	Shodan	April	Budoshin Jujitsu Yudanshakai
Marco LaRocca	Sandan	May	Kaiwan Budokai
Michael W. Johnson	Shodan	May	Quest Academy
Roger Chen	Shodan	June	Reston Virginia YMCA Jujitsu Dojo
Chris Murphy	Shodan	June	Reston Virginia YMCA Jujitsu Dojo

### Recent Mudansha Promotions

Name	Rank	Date	Dojo
Robert Aitken	Yonkyu	February	Reston Virginia YMCA Jujitsu Dojo
Darrin Fox	Nikyu	April	Ho'on Dojo
Bert Roepe	Sankyu	April	Reston Virginia YMCA Jujitsu Dojo
Gabe Duque	Shichikyu	April	Kaiwan Budokai
Derek Roper	Shichikyu	April	Kaiwan Budokai
Matt Clark	Nikyu	May	Ho'on Dojo
Dylan Grieco	Nikyu	May	Towson Daitobukan Dojo
John Grieco	Nikyu	May	Towson Daitobukan Dojo
Lillian MacFarlane	Rokyu	May	Reston Virginia YMCA Jujitsu Dojo
Ana MacFarlane	Rokyu	May	Reston Virginia YMCA Jujitsu Dojo
Adam Auerback	Nikyu	June	Ho'on Dojo
Elliott Morton	Sankyu	June	Towson Daitobukan Dojo
Erika Deckard	Sankyu	June	Kaiwan Budokai
Michael Lancraft	Sankyu	June	Towson Daitobukan Dojo
Raphael Reggie	Yonkyu	June	Towson Daitobukan Dojo
Marco Kirikos	Rokyu	June	Towson Daitobukan Dojo
Mark Sandy	Rokyu	June	Reston Virginia YMCA Jujitsu Dojo
Michael Fowler	Shichikyu	June	Reston Virginia YMCA Jujitsu Dojo

## Sensei

To have your students' unregistered promotions featured in the newsletter, please send them to [Newsletter@AJA-email.org](mailto:Newsletter@AJA-email.org)

## Improvised Self-Defense Tools

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Another possibility: Have you ever been on the losing side of a fight with yellowjackets or hornets? I speak from experience here, having accidentally shot myself in the eye while flailing around with a can of insect spray. I lavaged the eye pretty fiercely from a canteen of water and have no lasting side effects. There was no death or injury either – at least on my side of the fight. I don't think many people carry wasp spray in their car, but if you do, it's a powerful reach-out-and-touch-someone chemical spray and is cheap and readily available. Wasp spray has freon-like chemistry to freeze the flying critter until the other chemicals can take effect... and typically can reach out 7 meters/20+ feet. Most people have a can in their house. Like the rolled-up magazine – and this is important – it is not viewed by law enforcement or courts as a weapon. Speaking from experience, it pretty much shuts down any human action for a while.

As soon as you finish reading this article, make a pass through your home, apartment, and/or car. What can you use as a self-defense tool that you see? I have added an ASP telescoping baton, discreetly visible between the driver's seat and the middle console, so it is not a concealed weapon (in a traffic stop many years ago I took care to declare it to the officer, who stared at it and then said thank you). There are other, simpler things you can add. Believe it or not, a ballpoint pen works wonderfully as a Kubotan. You can use it to mark the perp if you end up tangling with him, and when the point is retracted, you can scrape him and collect a DNA sample.

Back to home invasions. While extremely rare for the average person, there have been several incidents in our neighboring city of Vancouver, WA. They always correlate with meth, with drug deals gone bad. In an article previously published in the Kokoro Newsletter (<http://www.budoshin.com/kokoro.htm>), I made several crucial points if you suspect that someone has broken into your house:

1. Call 911 immediately and keep the phone line open. This is your evidence trail.
2. Lead your way out of the house with a flashlight in your other hand. It will serve to temporarily blind anyone you encounter along the way. If it's a mag-light it is also a baton.
3. Make your way to your front door and exit. This saves the police from having to break down your door to help you, with all the ensuing repairs and cost that implies.

4. Then leave the perp to the professionals – that’s why we have police. They have been trained and are willing to risk their lives every day to protect people like you and me. They are never paid enough, of course.

5. Do *not* attempt to confront the perp with a handgun. You are statistically likely to lose that confrontation in any number of ways. There are also serious down-range effects, including explaining to your family and neighbors why there are several holes in their house or apartment (and maybe additional innocent victims). Blasting away with a handgun – even in your own house – quickly removes you from the list of innocent people. “But judge, I was really mad,” just won’t cut it.

In bad or dangerous situations, always follow the guidance that the Department of Homeland Security gives for dealing with an Active Shooter, in order: Run, Hide, Fight.

[www.dhs.gov/active-shooter-preparedness](http://www.dhs.gov/active-shooter-preparedness)

[www.dhs.gov/options-consideration-active-shooter-preparedness-video](http://www.dhs.gov/options-consideration-active-shooter-preparedness-video)

[www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/active\\_shooter\\_booklet.pdf](http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/active_shooter_booklet.pdf)

Finally, your home, office, workplace, and vehicle are full of things you can use to defend yourself... you just need to open your eyes and see them.

## Content

If you would like to contribute content to the AJA newsletter, please send it to  
**Newsletter@AJA-email.org**  
We're always looking for

- Articles about jujitsu, your students, or your dojo
- Upcoming events
- Personal interest events

## AJA Update

by Dave Boesel

AJA is pleased to announce the accession of new members to the Board of Directors (BOD) and to administrative directorships:



**Barry Stebbins, BOD Secretary.** Barry is sensei at the Midori Judo Club in Columbus, OH, which he and Harold Zeidman formed in 1996; both had previously been students in another judo club in Columbus. He has a black belt in judo and is a Rokudan in jujitsu. The style of judo he practiced emphasizes self-defense and has much in common with jujitsu.

The Midori Judo Club was a member of the U.S. Judo Association until 2009, when the Jujitsu Division, including Barry and Harold, broke away over the differences concerning traditional Japanese jujitsu and sport jujitsu. They joined the American Jujitsu Association and also formed the American Traditional Jujitsu Association.

Barry taught science at Roosevelt Junior High School in Columbus for 36 years, during which time he used his skills to, as he put it, “[break up] an average of one fight each and every day.” Among his other activities, Barry coached volleyball while teaching in high school and is a state-certified volleyball official.



**Harold Zeidman, BOD Director.** Harold began studying martial arts in 1973 at the University of Chicago and became First Belt on the university’s karate team. He began studying jujitsu in 1977 and is now 8th dan; he is also a ken-jitsu practitioner. In 1996, he and Barry Stebbins founded the Midori Judo Club in Columbus, OH, where he serves as lead instructor. They left the U.S. Judo Association in 2009, founded the American Traditional Jujitsu Association (ATJA), and joined the AJA. Until his recent accession to the Board of Directors, Harold served as AJA’s Chair, National Standards and Certification Board, a role that Vice President Jeff Wynn now fulfills. Harold has also served as vice-chair and promotion board chair of the U.S. Judo Association.

Over the years Harold has hosted and instructed at jujitsu clinics, and published several jujitsu articles on the web, including [“Kuzushi? What’s That and Why Do I Care?”](#), [“Basic Principles of Midori Ryu Jujitsu”](#), and [“Selecting a Jujitsu Dojo.”](#)

In professional life, Harold is a Certified Public Accountant and retired

partner from KPMG, one of the “Big 4” international accounting firms. He is married with three children and three grandchildren. His hobbies include road cycling, bridge, and military history board strategy games.



**AJA's new Membership Director, Thomas Dineen,** replaces Kristine Wiscarson, who retired after eleven years of outstanding service. Tom is an Ikkyu in Budoshin Jujitsu, working toward Shodan. For years he was a student in Dennis McCurdy's (and currently Paul Klara's) Diatobukan Dojo in Towson, MD. Now he practices at Will Harris' Baltimore School of Self Defense. Tom is also a Shodan in Iaido – a Japanese sword art – and a brown belt in the Korean compilation art of Han Guk Mu Sool.

Outside of the martial arts world, Tom is a Securities Regulator at FINRA (Financial Industry Regulatory Authority), in Rockville, MD, a not-for-profit organization which aims to protect American investors and market integrity. Tom lives in Baltimore with his wife Rebecca and daughter Alexandra.



**AJA's Newsletter Editor, Samantha Finley,** started training in jujitsu at Dennis McCurdy's Daitobukan Dojo in Towson, MD in 2006, and continued with Paul Klara when Dennis retired. She earned her Shodan in 2010 and is currently a Nidan. Samantha started practicing jujitsu at age 12, joining Daitobukan together with her dad, Scott, who is now AJA's Webmaster and BOD member.

Samantha attended the University of Chicago, where she got a BA in English Language and Literature (class of 2016). She also has N5-level certification in Japanese from the Japanese Language Proficiency Test. Among Samantha's other activities is her interest in theater, especially stage combat. She was recently certified by the Society of American Fight Directors in Single Sword. Keep an eye on Samantha!



**Brian McClernan is AJA's new Awards Director.** His job is two-fold:

1) overseeing the selection of awards for Outstanding Dojo and Outstanding Student at the Regional and National level each year and obtaining the award plaques and 2) purchasing and distributing AJA patches to senseis. The patches are free upon request to Brian ([awards@aja-email.org](mailto:awards@aja-email.org)).

Brian, now a Yondan, learned jujitsu at Daitobukan Dojo under Dennis McCurdy, Terry Feelemyer, and Paul Klara. After becoming a Yudansha, Brian started teaching a few students in his basement in Westminster, MD in his Ho'on Dojo. As his class grew, he moved his dojo to the YMCA in Westminster, MD. He is now teaching in his own independent dojo at another location.

Brian's career has included work as a private investigator and bail bondsman. He is married with an adult son.

## Upcoming Events

If you would like your event featured in the AJA newsletter, please send it to [Newsletter@AJA-email.org](mailto:Newsletter@AJA-email.org)

### Concussion Awareness Students and Parents

Injuries or concussions are very rare in AJA dojos. However, they do occasionally occur. Here is some useful information from the CDC on concussion awareness for [students](#) and [parents](#). For general information, go to

[www.cdc.gov/headsup/basics/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/basics/index.html)

### Training & Certification

If you're an instructor and not yet Concussion Awareness Training certified go to [www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/training](http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/training) to take the free 30 minute course, pass the free exam, and secure your free Concussion Awareness Training Certificate. This is an insurance coverage requirement.

Also, make sure you're making the information presented in Students & Parents: Concussion Awareness available to your students and their parents on a regular basis, either by printing up the documents and handing them out in class or providing students and parents with the links so they can download the information themselves.





## 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.

## Board of Directors

Position	Name	Email
President & Chairman	David Boesel	President@AJA-email.org
Vice President	Jeff Wynn	VP@AJA-email.org
Secretary	Barry Stebbins	Secretary@AJA-email.org
Treasurer	Marc Tucker	Treasurer@AJA-email.org
Western Region Director	Tony Damigo	WRDirector@AJA-email.org
Southern Region Director & International Competition Coordinator	Thomas Salander	SRDirector@AJA-email.org
Northern Region Director	Paul Klara	NRDirector@AJA-email.org
Director	Gene Roos	Director@AJA-email.org
Director	Scott Finley	Webmaster@AJA-email.org
Director	Harold Zeidman	Director2@aja-email.org

## Administrative Staff

Position	Name	Email
Awards Director	Brian McClernan	Awards@AJA-email.org
Certification Director	Barry Stebbins	Certificates@AJA-email.org
Communication Director	John M. Landry, Ph.D.	Communications@AJA-email.org
Historian	Mike Balog	Historian@AJA-email.org
Membership Director	Tom Dineen	Membership@AJA-email.org
National Standards & Certification Board Chair	Jeff Wynn	NSCB@AJA-email.org
Newsletter Editor	Samantha Finley	Newsletter@AJA-email.org
Recruitment Director	Brian McClernan	Recruitment@AJA-email.org
Webmaster	Scott Finley	Webmaster@AJA-email.org

