

**PAN-AMERICAN GOJU RYU KARATEDO  
SEIWAKAI NEWSLETTER**

**全米剛柔流空手道  
誠和会社内報**

**Dedicated to Traditional Goju Ryu Karatedo  
ISSUE 47: March/April 2021**

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<http://www.greatlakesseiwakai.com/usa-seiwa-kai-newsletters.html>

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[greatlakesseiwakai@gmail.com](mailto:greatlakesseiwakai@gmail.com)



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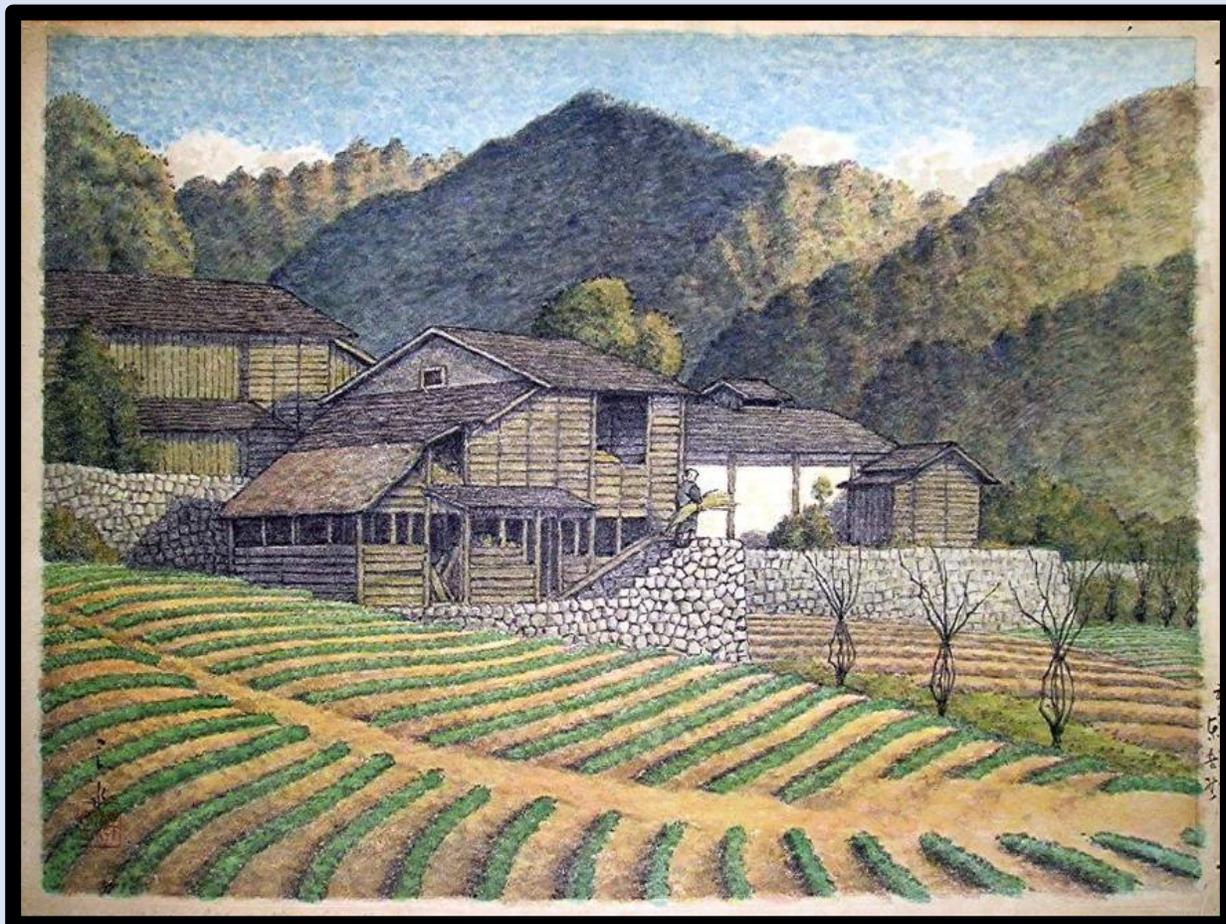
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**Kawase Hasui: Preparatory Watercolor for Woodblock Print**

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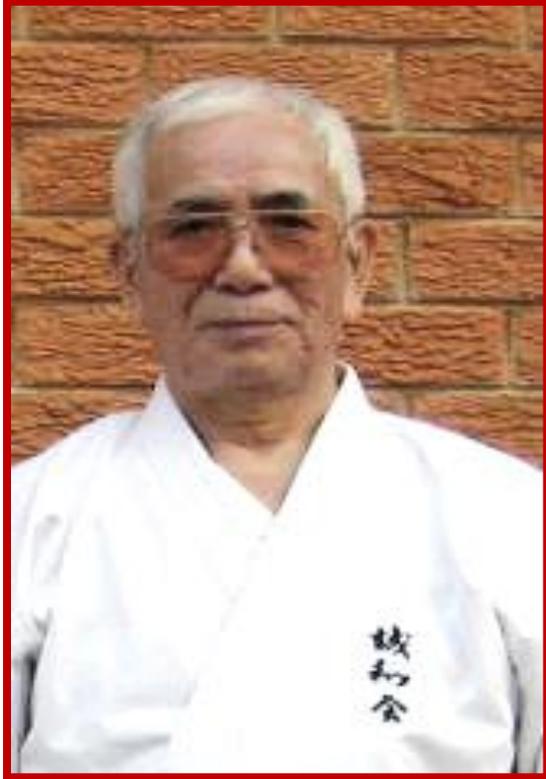
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## Remembering Shuji Tasaki, Hanshi

It has been a decade since Shuji Tasaki Sensei passed away and we should take the time to remember what he meant to us in the Seiwakai and his role in the development of Japanese Karatedo.



Shuji Tasaki Sensei became a student of Gogen Yamaguchi in 1951 and was well known as his toughest fighter. In 1964 he became the very first All Japan Karatedo Goju Kai Kumite Champion. In the following year, Tasaki Sensei placed second in the same tournament while fighting with a broken arm.

It should be noted that Yamaguchi Sensei gave Tasaki Sensei his nickname, Goshu. This is combination of Go meaning hard/tough and Shu which is an abbreviation of his first name, Shuji. The nickname, Goshu, means hard/tough Shuji and it was fitting.

He left Gogen Yamaguchi's organization in 1972 to form the Seiwakai. However, he always remained close to Gogen Yamaguchi and his family and participated in many functions of their organization. Tasaki Sensei attended the Yamaguchi Gojukai association's 50th anniversary as a respected senior and Shihan.

Tasaki Sensei was also one of the most senior members of the JKF Goju Kai. In 1974 Tasaki Sensei was appointed JKF National Instructor. In 1986, he graded to 8<sup>th</sup> Dan and was given the JKF title of Hanshi. In 2009, Tasaki Sensei was awarded a JKF Goju Kai 9<sup>th</sup> Dan for his lifetime contributions to Goju Ryu Karatedo.

Almost paradoxically, Tasaki Sensei was a renowned practitioner of Ikebana, Japanese flower arranging. These two great talents of Tasaki Sensei, fighting and flower arranging, reveal the true *go* and *ju* (hard and soft) aspects of his personality.

The following issues were discussed between Shuji Tasaki Sensei and Leo Lipinski Sensei several years before Tasaki Sensei passed away. That longer interview has been edited for this issue of the newsletter. For those Seiwakai members who knew Tasaki Sensei well, his words should strike a familiar chord. For those Seiwakai members who did not know him well, his words should shed some light on who Shuji Tasaki Hanshi was.

### **Tasaki Sensei discusses Karate-do's importance in the modern world.**

Firstly, spiritually/mental strength is the real value for today. Without this, in this world of trifling things and conflicting values, it is hard to survive. It takes endurance to deal with a definite purpose and target.

**Tasaki Sensei discusses the most important aspect of his teaching.**

My attachment to my students. A teacher notices the difference and tries to think of ways to improve each individual student. He also respects the individuality and characteristic of each person and tries to build them up mentally and physically.

**Tasaki Sensei discusses some differences between Seiwakai and other Goju Ryu groups.**

In older times, Okinawan Goju had no kumite. Kumite was developed in Japan, and they only recently started kumite in Okinawa. Goju Ryu dojo kumite has a strong reputation for its effectiveness, especially in the days of the old school. What has been preserved is the central idea of what it was, in the early days, central to all styles.

Miyagi sensei originated Goju Ryu, and the kumite is very close to the kata. Techniques should be applicable in kumite. We must remember the difference between mere kata forms and the actual use of techniques in combat and kumite.

**Tasaki Sensei discusses the differences between kumite when he competed in the mid-1960s and kumite today.**

There was no point system then, only dojo-style kumite, and all of the presently forbidden techniques were permissible.

The Federation [JKF] was formed in 1965, and instead of dojo-style kumite, the point-kumite system was developed. Goju Kai, Wado Ryu, Shito Ryu, and Shotokan made the Federation. I have had a preference for teaching the dojo-style kumite versus the point-style. That is “teach as he was taught.”



As long as one has one has mastered the Goju Ryu kumite, the other can be adjusted. If trained in Goju Ryu dojo kumite, you can continue after reaching middle age. Point fighting would not result in this. If you lose your speed you lose your karate.

By application, Goju Ryu dojo kumite gives you the edge, as it is not dependent on your youth.

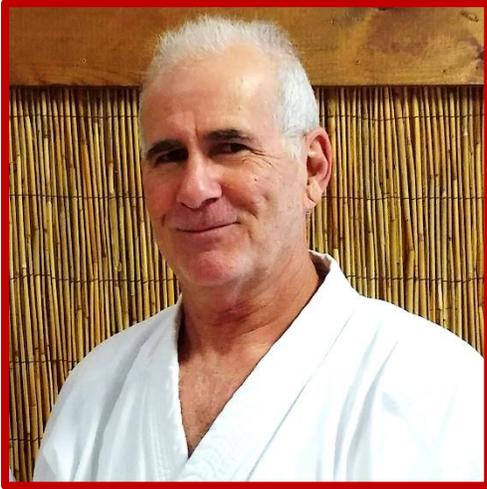
In karate if you step back you lose everything. Side stepping is good, younger have speed, older are slower. Therefore, you must step in to receive. If you train only in modern karate, once you are passed 30 years your karate is over.

**Tasaki Sensei discusses the meaning of Oss**

It is an important Japanese value. OSS means “Endure and suppress yourself.” It should not be used frivolously. Often, I ask people if they know what they are saying. It is an abbreviation of Oshi Shinobu.

# Why Pay Dues?

By Jim Pounds



It has been over one year now since the Covid-19 virus arrived and began impacting our lives in significant fashion. One year that has felt like three. And yet it continues, spiking upward again as I write this. Thankfully, with the push to vaccinate a priority, there is a light at the end of the tunnel that is beginning to grow brighter. There is evidence enough to be hopeful that this crisis will soon be behind us.

We have had to teach and learn in altogether new ways – ways which don't always satisfy us as much as the face-to-face, fist-to-fist traditional way we teach and practice Goju-Ryu karatedo, or any other martial art, and we are tired of it. We are beginning to teach outside or masked and observing social distancing with the doors and windows open despite the spring chill. Things are slowly returning toward normal, but we have all lost much momentum.

From my perspective, the biggest loss is the social aspect of teaching and training Goju-Ryu. When I am honest with myself, what keeps me training after 48 years is the social aspect. Quite frankly, I train for the opportunity to interact with the people I know and have met from around the world who share a set of values and work ethic unparalleled to anything else I do. This commonality transcends that we are from different cultures, different countries, different politics, different religions. That alone makes it amazing and valuable to us and the world.

It is the separation we are experiencing that is possibly the most damaging aspect of pandemic, lockdown, and isolation. Without the training seminars, trips to Santa Monica, Mexico, Toronto, and Japan, seeing our karate family in person, we become more insular. We forget what we are all about.

This aspect brings me around to addressing our dues which support the USA Seiwakai organization. It is that time again. It is actually past time according to our Bylaws, but a new Treasurer and new organizational banking accounts has slowed the process. So be on the lookout for your dues request from Chris Perry Sensei, our Treasurer. And please pay it promptly. If you are financially strapped right now, Perry Sensei is offering the ability to pay in two payments.

This year, more than ever, the dues are important to your organization. The Board has committed to turn USA Seiwakai into a non-profit organization, which costs money for incorporation and legal expenses. This will allow us to expand our outreach to add value to our communities through Karatedo. It will allow us to receive tax deductible gifts for that expansion.

We are also seeking to enhance and expand our Seiwakai presence in the public eye in order to communicate the values inherent in what we teach – especially to youth.

We also stand ready to use a portion of your dues to help USA Honbu Dojo through these hard times and into a better future space that will be available to all of us.

In lieu of training in person, we will offer up inexpensive and short (1.5 hour) bi-monthly Zoom seminars taught by senior instructors beginning in May. Dates and topics will be forthcoming.

I've been asked by some why they should pay annual dues. What's the value to them? This question seems incredibly short-sighted to me. The number one, and possibly the *only* reason needed to justify paying your dues is that this is the organization through which you hold your ranks and titles, which give you credibility as instructors in your community and in the martial arts community. Seiwakai is also the vehicle through which you are a member of the Japan Karate Federation Goju-Kai, which gives you international credibility. And despite these benefits alone, the organization does not interfere with the day-to-day running of your dojo.

We are working for the benefit of all member dojos, often behind the scenes. It is easy in our isolation to forget the many benefits of being part of this organization. I invite each of you to take twenty minutes and read our Bylaws -- particularly our Mission Statement. We have a mission that has been sidelined somewhat because of the pandemic. It is time to move forward, and we need the help of all member dojos.

If you don't have a copy of the Bylaws for your dojo, please contact me directly and I will send you a copy. Make it available to your students.

Hang tough! Be strong! This pandemic will all be a memory soon.

James Pounds, President  
7<sup>th</sup> Dan Seiwakai

# Seiwakai Pan American Seminar 2021

Craig Vokey Shihan, President of Pan American Seiwakai, Announces the Seiwakai Pan American Zoom Seminar Taught from Omagari, Japan by Seiichi Fujiwara Hanshi, Hachi-Dan President of Seiwakai International.



## Dates:

- Friday April 16<sup>th</sup>
- Saturday April 17<sup>th</sup>

## Times:

- Pacific Time: 4-7 PM
- Mountain Time: 5-8 PM
- Central Time: 6-9 PM
- Eastern Time: 7-10 PM
- (All times are Daylight Savings)

## Zoom Link:

<https://zoom.us/j/3109684862>

\*Be stretched out and warmed up, and wear proper karatedo attire.

\*Take water breaks only when Fujiwara Hanshi permits.

\*Have your mic muted and your screen on with your name and country below it.

## Cost: \$70 USD

For payment details contact the following:

### Canada:

- Craig Vokey Shihan

### Seiwakai Mexico:

- Cristina Madrid Shihan

### Mexico Goshukan Seiwakai:

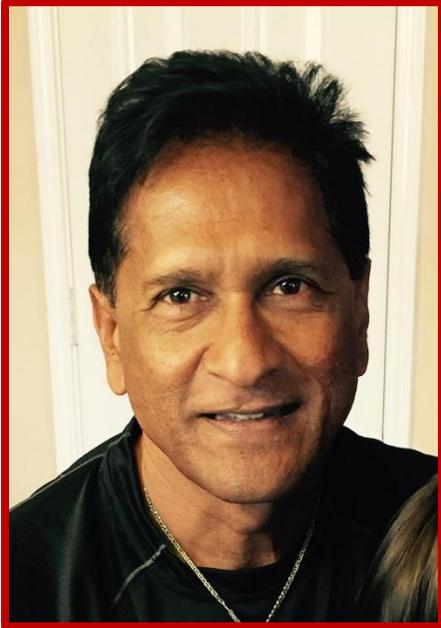
- Eusebido Montes Sensei:

### USA Seiwakai:

- Zen Planner:

<https://kickkids.sites.zenplanner.com/membershipTemplate-view.cfm?membershipTemplateId=083E462B-1A2F-4F10-B2F6-5B021BB24C1A>

## The Seiwakai USA Hombu Dojo Fund



Earlier this week we received a notice from Vassie Shihan and were told that the Santa Monica Hombu Dojo was having difficulty renewing their lease. Consequently, they decided to purchase a new dojo instead of looking for another property to rent. The timing was right since real estate prices are low due to the effects of the pandemic.

A Go Fund Me page was set up to raise money for the new dojo. Much to my surprise, almost \$20,000 was raised in just a few days.

People came forward with generous donations for the new hombu dojo. That is clearly a testament to how much people respect and care about Vassie Shihan and the Seiwakai.

The Go Fund Me page will stay open so that the fund can grow, and a suitable property can be purchased. If you can contribute \$10, \$20, \$100, or more, please go to the link below and contribute what you can when you can.

Vassie Shihan's Go Fund Me page to purchase a Hombu Dojo.  
<https://gofund.me/e6735e53>

Happy Birthday to 藤原聖一 Seiichi Fujiwara Shihan



## Seiwa Kai Around the Globe



## Goju Ryu Karatedo Seiwa Kai International



President: Seiichi Fujiwara Hanshi



Vice President: Satoru Takahashi



Vice President: Vassie Naidoo

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Ben Mare  
(Africa)



Glen Stephenson  
(Oceania)



Gurmit Singh  
(Europe)



Abel Figueiredo  
(Europe)



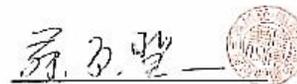
Craig Vokey  
(Pan America)



Eddie Liu  
(Asia)



Goju Ryu Karate-Do Seiwa Kai International  
Member of  
All Japan Karate-Do Federation  
All Japan Karate-Do Federation Goju Kai



Seiichi Fujiwara (President)

*“Lead them by political maneuvers, restrain them with punishments: the people will become cunning and shameless. Lead them by virtue, restrain them with ritual: they will develop a sense of shame and a sense of participation.” Confucius 孔子 (Koshi)*

# The Women of Seiwakai

## By Terri Herrera-Pounds



On March 7, 2021, the Seiwakai International Women's Advisory Board (SIWAB) held their second zoom seminar. Two sessions were held to accommodate the many time zones and ensure female Seiwakai practitioners from all regions had the opportunity to attend.

Approximately 100 women and girls were in attendance, representing Iran, Oman, England, Canada, Mexico, Germany, South Africa, Australia, Slovakia, India, Portugal, Indonesia, Greece, Hong Kong, the USA, and the Netherlands.

Guest instructors Malwina Martin and Joanna Britton taught segments in the advanced portion of the seminar while Samantha Parsons and Sofia Mporou taught segments in the first half of the seminar, which was open to all ranks. These Sensei, along with SIWAB board members, Timmy Singh, Cristina Madrid, Elizabeth Ubalde and Marie Tanabalan, covered concepts of Sen no Sen, Go no Sen, Sensen no Sen and katas Shisochin and Seipai, along with supporting kihon movements.

The women of Seiwakai have the support of Fujiwara Hanshi. As senior instructors, the SIWAB board members were honored to have a two-hour training with him on March 28<sup>th</sup>. We worked the katas Sanshin, Tensho, Seipai, Seisan and Kururunfa, with Sensei emphasizing many key points to be considered when practicing, and when teaching. Sensei has been advised of our past seminars, and strongly encourages us to continue sharing and teaching, and hopes many more women will get involved.

The intention of the SIWAB is to provide a voice and a forum for all female Seiwakai Karateka; to encourage and empower women and girls in our community to be all they can be as Karateka, and also in everyday life. We want to provide the opportunity for women and girls of all ranks and ages to feel involved and included.

Your Seiwakai Women's Advisory Board is planning the next seminar for later this summer. Stay tuned and informed by following our Facebook page, *Seiwakai Women International*. If you have any questions, comments, or things you would like to see covered, please email to [siwab2019@gmail.com](mailto:siwab2019@gmail.com).



The photos below are from Marie Tanabalan



## **Training for Dan Grade Testing From Abel Figueiredo**

On January 31 and March 22, 2021 Seiwakai Europe began offering a new program for Seiwakai members of Europe – training sessions in preparation of dan graded for those members who are on track for next gradings.

The first training sessions were taught by top members of Shihankai Europe – Shihan Rastislav Mráz (goups of yondan and more), Shihan Abel Figueiredo (nidan and sandan) and Shihan Pal Gila (shodan groups). In March, Fujiwara Hanshi led the second session.

For the second session, we had a surprise contribution of Shihan Seiichi Fujiwara leading a first moment on Sanchin for everybody, with deep teachings.

These European Training Sessions for members are divided by groups of participants that are training for black belt gradings. It is a very good project to stimulate the practice they have inside their countries (national, regional and on Dojo), on pandemic difficult times affecting all the members on their practice.

As presented on the project, all the Seiwakai country leaders and instructors in Europe are together, offering energy for healthy practice on each country with their instructors and seniors. The efforts we are doing to motivate Gojuryu Karatedo Seiwakai practitioners on these difficult times link all of us on the same motive: passion for participating in educative karate practice.

Thank you to all the five members of Seiwakai Top Shihankai - Europe. Thank you to all Country Directors in Europe. And thank you to all members that participated of this first experimental training session. And a special thank you to Seiichi Fujiwara Shihan for his teachings.

Members need monitoring in practice to make evolution on mind, body and social connections. We need more feedback for evolution to better organizing the events to all of you.





## Seiwakai International Seminar



Japan recently announced that because of the pandemic, it is not allowing foreign spectators into the country during the period surrounding the Olympics. Consequently, the Omagari seminar will be Zoom and will begin in late July.

Dates will be arranged to accommodate each continent.

More information will be forthcoming.

## JKF Goju Kai Overseas Seminar and Tournament



Since Japan recently announced that foreigners will not be allowed into the country during this time period, the JKF Goju Kai Seminar will be only for those who are living in Japan.