



Thursday, October 13, 2005

Martial arts studio swings into 20th year of classes

By Howard McEwen
Enquirer contributor

With a roundhouse kick and the cracking of a board, Fry's Taekwondo Family Center will celebrate 20 years of teaching self-defense on Friday with Gala Anniversary Black Belt Testing.

The school started as a bet between two friends in 1982. Each bet they would last longest in the tae kwon do class they saw advertised at their local gym. Charlie Fry, who had recently lost weight and looking to lose some more, didn't realize the wager would turn into a calling. Soon he was attending every class he could fit into his day.

"I found myself working out harder," said Fry, who is also The Enquirer's photo editor. "It built great self-confidence and self discipline."

By the middle of 1984, he was teaching classes regularly and in 1985 he took over the helm of the school. While the school offers adult classes each night, it caters to children. The "Lil' Dragons" program for 4- to 6-year-olds teaches the basics of martial arts. The children also learn interpersonal skills like respect and self-discipline as well as fire safety.

Cindy Day, whose 12-year-old daughter, Carly, began studying three years ago said her daughter's self-esteem improved.

Peggy Piccola, director of development and computer teacher for Holy Trinity Schools, advocates martial arts for her students.

"Tae kwon do helps children channel that extra energy in a positive way. Not only does the art of tae kwon do promote respect for others as well as themselves, but it promotes personal discipline," she said. "It's a great activity for children with ADD or ADHD."

Fry encourages students of all ages to use martial arts to improve themselves.

"When students walk into the school, they take their shoes off," he said. "I tell them to leave their problems in their shoes and let's work on you."

IF YOU GO

What: Gala Anniversary Black Belt Testing, Fry's Taekwondo Family Center

When: 7 p.m. Friday

Where: Holy Spirit Parish Center, Ninth and Saratoga, Newport

ADVERTISEMENT

[Print](#) | [Go back](#) | Copyright 2005, *The Enquirer*