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February 4, 2019

www.TheBusinessNewsOnline.com

Vol. 16, No. 20 \$1.00

Mind, body skills taught at Kim's Tae Kwon Do



Kim's Tae Kwon Do in Green Bay is celebrating its 45th anniversary. Pictured at a recent event in front of some of their students, are (left to right) Judo Master Ed Manning, Grand Master Yung Sam Kim (founder) and Master Penny Duggan, who has owned the business the past 25 years

Business started 45 years ago to teach self-defense has hundreds of students

By Nancy Barthel

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Yung Sam Kim couldn't be happier with the way Kim's Tae Kwon Do, the business he founded 45 years ago in Green Bay, has flourished.

He owned and operated the business, originally located at 1501 University Ave., until 1993 when Penny Duggan, who first began studying at the school at age 12, purchased it.

The 8th Degree Black Belt will be age 78 on April 9. Born in Korea in 1941, Kim served in the South Korean Army and studied economics in the early 1960s. His life would then take him first to Europe where he helped train the 1968 French Olympic team, then to the American Midwest where he landed in Chicago in 1971.

From there, he decided to widen his search for the right location to start a business. He considered Milwaukee, Sheboygan and Manitowoc until he learned that no one was teaching Tae Kwon Do and Judo in Green Bay.

"I was lucky to find Green Bay — nice place, nice people," he said.

The business opened in 1973, and it was a year later that then 12-year-old Penny Bero started taking classes at Kim's Tae Kwon Do.

"I became Master Kim's highest ranking student," Duggan said. By age 14, she was teaching.

"She has good technique, and she was the best student, the best leadership," Kim said. Duggan is a 6th Degree Black Belt, and at age 17, also met her then future husband, Dave Duggan, at the school. He also works in the business.

She has a degree in business and marketing from the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay and also works in marketing at Pieper Automation in Green Bay along with owning Kim's Tae Kwon Do.

When Kim decided to move to Chicago with his wife and two kids, the decision was an obvious one for him: Duggan would continue the school. "I purchased the assets of the business and incorporated Kim's Tae Kwon Do Center Inc. in October 1993," she said. The school today focuses on Tae Kwon Do, Judo and self-defense.

"Master Kim pledged his loyalty and support to the school, so at that time he became the grand master of the school and I became the master of the school, sort of like principal and vice principal. He oversees our belt rankings and provides advanced training seminars," Duggan said.

Kim's influence in the business is still very much a daily presence.

"You will find he is very humble, kind and patient," she said, and it is with that spirit that the school has carried on his traditional teachings, emphasizing the philosophy and tenets of Tae Kwon Do: "courtesy, integrity, perseverance, self-control and indomitable spirit."

For the past 25 years, home base has been Redeemer School, 205 Hudson St., on Green Bay's west side where Duggan rents the gym Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings. Affordability is one of the hallmarks of Kim's Tae Kwon Do and

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— Penny Duggan, owner,
Kim's Tae Kwon Do, Green Bay

prices remain the same as 45 years ago, she said. It costs \$25 per month per person or \$60 per month per family. Individuals can train as often as they like for that price and a complimentary class is available for beginners.

Instruction is also provided at local churches, schools, the YWCA, and area park and recreation programs in Allouez, Ashwaubenon, Bellevue, De Pere, Howard, Oconto and Pulaski, as well as at the Kroc Center in Green Bay. They also teach to home-schooled students.

Kim's Tae Kwon Do also offers self-defense instruction to groups and businesses, as well as to individuals. During those classes Duggan teaches

how to avoid dangerous situations, the basics of blocking an attack and also that the way you use your voice is key to self-defense.

The business has 15 instructors, and everything they do is "family-oriented," Duggan said. Each class includes people of varying ages, from children to grandma and grandpa, and varying abilities. One family has three generations taking classes.

Andreas Schuck, whose two children, Jordy, 14, and Tiara, 12, were in class one Thursday evening, spoke about what Kim's Tae Kwon Do means to his family. "You find friends for a lifetime here," he said. Both children are 2nd Degree Black Belts. "Duggan always teaches respect and self-confidence," Schuck said. "Everybody appreciates each other."

Ed Manning, the school's 4th Degree Judo master challenges people to "name another sport that is this family-oriented. The nice thing is once you get older, if you learn to fall properly, you won't break things."

"We adapt for people who want to learn," Duggan said, speaking of people who live with physical and mental challenges.

For example, one current student finds the martial arts help him deal with his Asperger syndrome and Tourette syndrome, she said. "We taught a boy who was blind," she said. Another student in a wheelchair learned how to throw someone over that wheelchair.

To those who would like to try the martial arts, don't be intimidated, Duggan said. "In class you compete against yourself."

Kim's Tae Kwon Do has both a profit and nonprofit side. "We volunteer a lot," Duggan said. In December 2018 the Green Bay Packers Foundation granted its nonprofit arm with \$3,000 to buy safety and other equipment. In 2018, the school raised \$12,631 for the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

Today, Kim's Tae Kwon Do has about 400 students which includes those enrolled in its outreach programs. "We probably have 100 Black Belts in our school," Duggan said.

"Our motivation is this is our extended family," she said, "and we all share our skills and techniques with one another."