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BUDO

news

The Official Publication of the International Kokondo Association (IKA)

September 2011



Upcoming IKA Events:

- **Sept 18:** Honbu Yudanshakai
- **Oct 14-16:** Bakersfield, CA Seminar
- **Oct 23:** Honbu Yudanshakai
- **Nov 11-13:** Seattle Seminar
- **Nov 20:** Honbu Yudanshakai
- **Dec 2-4:** Florida Seminar

...more dates to come



Kaicho's Korner

Another great National Seminar, so many people to thank, Mr. Bursiewicz and Mr. Phelps for helping with the transportation and wood respectfully. I especially want to thank Dr. Fiona Plows and Mr. Paul Ward for the two breakout sessions on teaching self-defense classes outside the primary curriculum and teaching kid's classes so they are engaging and educational. The Masters who bring such dedication and wide knowledge base to their teaching, as well as being some of the nicest and most down to earth people you will ever know.

Then a very special thanks to Master Joaquin Betancourt. To run a seminar of this complexity, maintain a smile and a helping hand to everyone, takes a unique person of extraordinary intelligence planning and sense of humor. Master Betancourt has all of that and masterful skill in martial arts.

We spent a lot of time talking about the "old days." We tried to bring to memory and life the great Master of Kokondo's past, and his contributions to the present, obviously, Master Robert Longo. Shihan is the founder and therefore is always on all of Kokondo-ka's minds when teaching or learning. Master Longo passed long ago. Most of Kokondo no longer has a memory of him. It is our duty under the codes of loyalty and honor to make sure that this man is remembered through stories about him and

Inside Budo News:

- **Kaicho's Korner**
- **Tributes to Legendary Kokondo karate sensei, Master Longo (9th dan)**
- **My 1st IKA Int'l Seminar**
- **Testing at Internationals**
- **Kokondo Word Search**

through the emphasis on technique that he demanded from others and most especially from himself. This Budo News is dedicated to Master Longo. You will read many reminiscences and stories from those of us who trained with and knew him best.

Kokondo: The way of the past and the present. This is what we are learning; this is what we are doing. The arts of the ancients brought forward to deal with weapons and tactics that they would not have been familiar with. But it means more than that; it means that we honor our own past to inform our present and to prepare our future. The 2011 IKA National Seminar achieved this recognition with alacrity and clarity. My thanks to all who came, trained and helped. You are appreciated more than I have words to express.

OSSU!

Master Longo: My student & friend

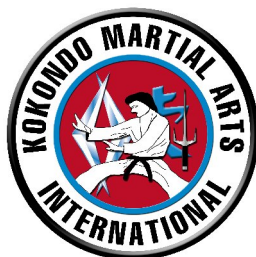
Originally written for a tribute on the 2nd anniversary of Master Longo's death

By Shihan Paul Arel

Master Robert Longo, a man with an interest in improving himself first and then passing it on to others. He was never hesitant to ask me a question about a certain technique or kata.

He knew he'd get a straight answer. And I was never hesitant to ask him a question about a problem. I knew I'd get a straight answer. He was a man of varied talents; A gun enthusiast, an art lover, a martial artist, a family man and a gourmet. I once told the story of one of our flights on the way to the National Kokondo Seminar in Seattle. I think it bears repeating because the humor in it was unmistakably related to his type of humor: Knowing Master Longo's involvement in gourmet clubs and his excellent taste in fine food, my wife Susan had many times threatened him with secretly ordering a McDonald's Happy Meal (as a practical joke) on one of his flights. Since it was she who made the flight reservations for us, she could indeed put a plan into action. Master Longo sat in an aisle seat opposite me. Down the aisle comes the stewardess holding a McDonalds box. "Mr. Longo," She kept saying, as she got closer to our seats, "Mr. Longo?" She looked at a little boy who was in front of Master Longo then did a double take at Master Longo

and back to the kid; "This can't be right..." and looking at Master Longo she said, "Did you order a Happy Meal?" and Master Longo sort of sang out: "Nooo...but I know who did." I ate the happy meal. Turns out I made out better than he did. His meal was even worse. Anyone who knew him inside and outside of the dojo saw him as genuine. No pretension, no flash, just the ever articulate engineering approach to everything he did. Veracity was certainly his common virtue. A powerhouse of technique...a sensei who could put you in a kata and have you hold the stance for what seemed forever...all to one's own benefit. He made the greatest of impacts on all Kokondo-ka. "Look Sharp! Feel Sharp! Be Sharp!" I'm so proud of the fact that he passed on the techniques we taught him Just the way we would have including my favorite saying: "Take care of the little things and they'll take care of you". He was a "powerhouse" in every respect.



Master Robert Longo

June 9, 1934 - June 24, 2001 Ten years gone but never forgotten!

By Kaicho Howard & Master James Scanlon (retired)

Originally published in Budo News immediately following the passing of Master Longo

Master is a title earned through a lifetime of sacrifice and hard work. Robert Longo was such a master. He worked diligently to become the International Kokondo Association's (IKA) National Kokondo Director. His expert skill and strength helped earn him the second highest rank that the IKA has ever bestowed, 9th Dan in Kokondo Karate. His ability to demonstrate the power and intrinsic fundamentals of a technique were truly those of a Master.

Robert Longo began his training with Shihan Paul Arel more than 30 years ago. With a background in engineering, Master Longo immediately recognized Shihan Arel's incomparable insights into the mechanical dynamics of the martial arts. Shihan Arel inspired Robert Longo to study and ultimately to absorb that information to an unprecedented degree. He maintained his loyalty to Shihan Arel throughout the rest of his life. Ultimately moving beyond sensei and student to deep friends.

Master Longo's many accomplishments in life are too numerous to relate but the highlights are: his very successful career as a nuclear engineer and his various hobbies.

Master Longo developed a taste for the finer things in life: Fine wines, gourmet food, bird watching, reading and music. He was an expert shooter competing on the Metacon Range handgun team. He was also a NRA handgun instructor of infinite patience and care.

Master Longo demonstrated the same integrity and personal power in all that he did. The dedication to detail gave him incredible insight into all of his activity: on the range, at the supper table, laughing with his grandchildren, talking with his daughters, looking at his wife, shooting at the range, explaining bunkai, demonstrating kata. All were given his powerful attention and generous heart.

Although Master Longo referred to himself as "A Kindly Old Grandfather" this was a far cry from the drill instructor persona he could adopt with ease at both Honbu and at national events.

Suggesting the participants suck up the pain and fatigue and concentrate on the technique in question. The dojo halls echoed with commands like: "Bend that front knee more." "Make that stance longer, wider" "Lock in, Focus, Kime, Power." "Smile, Smile Snarl" and "Take care of the little things and the little things will take care of you".



During class Mr. Longo demonstrated the quiet traditional method of teaching a technique, only to be followed minutes later with the explosive command "Hagime" to begin a kata. When describing the transitions from one technique to another, Mr. Longo would quote Red Skelton saying "Who remembers Red Skelton? He used to say about Guzzlers Gin, Smoooooth" you need to keep your techniques smooth. Mr. Longo would give detailed explanations of the mechanics of a technique, breaking them down and clarifying not only why but also how the technique worked. When he did a kata or demonstrated a technique you could always hear the pop of Mr. Longo's gi. Students would inquire how they could get a gi that popped like his. His wry response was, "Lots of practice."

Robert Longo's untimely death has left all who knew him or knew of him feeling the personal loss of such a dynamic and powerful Kokondoka.

The International Kokondo Association on behalf of its entire membership wish to thank Master Robert Longo for a lifetime spent "taking care of the little things so they could take care of us." Master Longo will be remembered.

Kokondo's True Elder & Friend

By Master John Fearn

I probably met Robert Longo in 1972. This is the year that we took our black belt test together. In those days the IKA hadn't yet developed into the structure it enjoys today so there weren't many joint activities. A year or so prior when I was a brown belt we did have a karate tournament at the University of Harford which only recently I pondered if he participated in it (the wooden trophies were handmade). There were about 1/2 dozen of us who took the black belt test together and as a result of not faring too well we all had to participate in special classes for the following 7 weeks to finally get promoted. In times when we just didn't get together much this 7-week sentence would equate to many times that today. Since we were just "grunt" brown belts and everyone was only concerned with passing the test I know that I wouldn't have shared a single word with him during this training.

Our friendship grew subtly over a period of years. He was a very staunch and strict practitioner whose loyalty was unmovable. In most ways our attitudes towards the proper etiquette regarding Kokondo were very similar. That common ground and time yielded a very respectful friendship. I could pretty much know his thoughts on a matter before he spoke and it only took brief eye contact to convey concurrence.

Over the years we all mellow and mature. Master Longo did it ever so gracefully. That Buckingham Palace guard stern expression morphed first into an ever so slight curl of the upper lip to an unquestionable smile. He will always be one of Kokondo's true elders and my good friend.

Master Longo – My Friend

By Master Thomas Wood

I first met Master Longo at an outdoor class sponsored by Vinny Lynch. I was in a group being taught Bassai. I recall we would do a few moves, and practice them over and over, learn a few moves more, practice, etc.

When I transferred from the Tolland dojo to Honbu in Newington was when I really started

to train under Master Longo. I liked his stern approach to teaching.

I became good friends with him and his wife Beverly, as my wife and I would celebrate New Year's Eve with the Longos and the Arels. When we played cards on these get-togethers Master Longo was always my partner.

Engineer & Karate Master; Robert Longo

By Master Joaquin Betancourt, Ph.D

In the seventies I entered a meeting for the purpose of which was to address regulatory concerns regarding the safety of the mechanical structure of the fuel assemblies designed by my company. The mechanical design team at that meeting was headed by a stern and, I thought, tough looking "*hombre*". His name was Bob Longo. He looked and sounded like a very intelligent, well rounded, and very precise individual. He was not afraid to say what was on his mind in a very courteous and effective way. Once in a while there was this smirk on his face.

A few years passed by with minimum interaction between us. Then one day I went to a Shiai (tournament) in South Windsor at the old Wapping Center building. I had just started Jukido and was taking my oldest son, Marc, to participate in the Shiai. When I approached Shihan to see if I could do something for him, he being my Sensei, I heard a "Hello Joaquin." My introduction to Mr. Longo, the Kokondo Karate Master. Again there was this smirk on the face, but you could tell it was more of a nice smile saying now that you know what I do outside work, I am glad you are in the system. Anyway that is how I have remembered it.

From there on it was very hard for me to separate Bob Longo from Mr. Longo. I know at work he expected me to call him by his first name, but I was not able to do that. As time passed and I appreciated more the man's knowledge and powerful techniques it became even more difficult. But whenever I saw him at work there was always a nice smile and a very friendly gesture toward me. I appreciated that, but still the man scared me sometimes. I remembered one time I was talking to him with someone else and this person ask him if he could take Shihan. His response as expected was very simple: Only if I can have the first punch, otherwise it is over for me.

Master Longo's approach to Kokondo Karate was no different than his approach to his work. He was a gifted engineer that was able to apply his engineering knowledge to the martial arts in an unparallel way.

Knowing Master Longo

By Master Robert E. Robert

"How many of you personally knew Master Longo?" asked Kaicho Howard at one of this years' session of the National Kokondo Seminar. Come-on Kaicho! I said to myself. What reason could you possibly have for asking such an obvious question? Of course everyone knew him. They remember what I remember most; his aptitude, his craft, his speed, his stillness, his grasp, his bow, his handshake, his demeanor, his attitude and the enduring shades of nuances that penetrate our subconscious.

Well, I was wrong...*yes there is a first for everything regardless of what I told you.* When the show-of-hands went up I was astonished that less than half of the students actually interacted with Master Longo at one time or another. But how did this happen? Ten years didn't seem like a lifetime but in recollection it very well can be the prelude of a lost legacy.

In the weeks that followed Master Longo's death the era of optimism about the world's future ended abruptly with the World Trade Center and Pentagon terrorist attacks in September 2001. As the 10th anniversary of the attacks approaches there will be many things done here in the US, as well as abroad, in memory of the lives that were lost that fateful day and the many lives lost continuing to protect our freedom. I am certain that many of us will recall where we were, what we were doing and who we were with. Many children enrolled in Kokondo today may not have even been born when the terrorist attacks occurred and those that are a little older many not remember much at all.

This anniversary of Master Longo's death and the question posed by Kaicho quickly suggest



that in another ten years many less hands will unify in recollecting his existence. We Kokondo-ka that were privy to his weekly classes then have a responsibility to continue his lessons in the daily life from the martial ways of Kokondo.

In his karate dojo the world ended and as I see it budo life began. Not that Master Longo performed acts of greatness, organized feats of grand strength nor did he require us to drink the Kool-Aid, quite the contrary. Master Longo just knew his stuff and he knew it well. It is almost impossible to quantify exactly what makes a

great sensei but as a direct student of his I find myself each day trying to emulate his teachings. When he demonstrated his mastery, quite convincingly, he did it well. Often times without discussion or conversation. Commencing with a *bunkai* application he would repeat the sequence three to four times organizing each exhibition in a different location so not to neglect any *deshi*. A man, in class, of a few words he consistently stimulated our minds so to not allow any stray thoughts or emotions to intrude his rigorous training regimen. Some call it being in the "Now" or often referred to in classical budo as *Jiki-shin* or "Direct Mind." Without allowing intrusions of either past or future thoughts we were able to maximize and capitalize on his instructions so that we were able to deal with each present moment's situation most effectively and efficiently. At no time, unless petitioned for, did we ask for further clarification, have him describe in greater detail the methods or approach or express another instructor's interpretation or suggestion of similar techniques. If you did the technique well, he said nothing. If a hand was out of position, a kick was without hip and power he demonstrated it again. That was his craft. And his craft was his ship.

Outsiders may not understand the watchful way that he conducted his class but those that spent their evenings under the leadership of this accomplished martial artist, engineer and man can echo the fact that his *bunkai* interpretation was reasonable, understandable and adaptable. As Gichin Funakoshi once wrote "Victory and

defeat are determined by attention to simple things", this maxim could in some very practical way be the source for each painstaking way that he conditioned and hardened us. Perhaps there are other ways that classical karate can be passed down from teacher to student but the paths that we walked together have created a journey that will be preserved for many years to come.

Many tragedies have occurred in the last ten years. Without question, losing both Master Longo and Shihan has been devastating to Kokondo and to me personally. For me I lost mentors as well as two very special friends. It has been said that "We remember what we understand; we understand only what we pay attention to; we pay attention to what we want." Although I find myself each day trying to recollect each of their wisdom, I know someday that their bright light will start to dim slightly. I now find Master Longo's last teachings are memories of yesterday's past. There is no stopping or even mitigating his spirit in my dojo. For those that remember the kindly ole grandfather. The one who was guaranteed to unfold the handkerchief. One which was meticulously sewn into the inside jacket of his karate gi. Remember now how he dabbed his forehead when the onset of perspiration occurred above his brow and remind yourself of his expectations of your strength and weaknesses' and continue to promote his existence for the next 10 years and for many decades beyond. For the tradition of a masterful spirit shall still shine bright within your heart.

An Introduction to a Master

By Sensei Mike Stevenson

One of my most enjoyable memories of Master Longo was from the International Seminar in 1999 in New London, CT. This was the first time I had flown back East for a seminar. In the lobby, waiting to sign in for the seminar I saw many people. However I did not recognize most of them, I was the only West Coast person in the room at the time. Master Longo entered the room and went around speaking with several different people. He turned and looked at me, and for an instant I was a bit nervous. Very quickly a big smile was on his face and he came straight toward me, again not sure if I should be nervous. He shook my hand and introduced himself to me (as if that was necessary). We talked for several minutes while we waited in the line to sign in for the seminar. He made me feel very welcome and a part of the Kokondo family.

During the seminar we had a session where we were in groups of three people. Two would attack the third and we would trade off who was in the middle. Master Howard came to us and said "Go invite Master Longo to join you." My two partners and I looked at each other, and I know I was thinking how educational (and painful) that could be. When none of us moved Master Howard said "It was not a

suggestion". In other words it was an order. When we asked him to "play" he smiled and was happy to join. We then spent the next several minutes being refreshed on just how good Master Longo was.

Several years later I found out that Master Longo wanted to work out but nobody would ask him to participate. I am grateful for Master Howard's suggestion that we invite him to join us. It was a great experience with a great man. I will never forget Master Longo, what a great martial artist he was, and what a great man he was. And I am still honored that I was the West Coast recipient of the 2001 IKA award for excellence...The Master Bob Longo Award.

Master Longo Story

By Master Richard Dinus

Long before I met Master Longo, my sensei told me about his strength and precise karate technique. I had also seen a small black and white photo of him in the Kokondo guidebook so I had an idea what he looked like. This still didn't prepare me for what I experienced at the Kokondo International Seminar in 1994 when he commanded a gymnasium full of Kokondo-ka to form lines at the beginning of the seminar. But I wasn't too unfamiliar with this situation – I'm back at Air Force basic training and here's the drill instructor.

Good- all I have to do is follow directions and keep my mouth shut. What I didn't realize was how bad my technique was. It seemed that every time we made a move Master Longo yelled out corrections which I'm sure were all directed to me. When he walked by I kept my stance low and focused my technique to the best of my ability and didn't dare make eye contact. This worked in basic training so it's gotta work here – right?

When asked a question, he often answered by demonstrating a technique and for some reason I always seemed to be standing nearby. As a result, several times throughout the seminar he would use me as an uke to demonstrate a technique. This brought back memories as well....

- The time I crashed my bike going about 25 mph.
- The time I was running through the woods and didn't notice a log across the trail about 12 inches up from the ground (forward roll please).
- Falling off a ladder



I think you're starting to get the point here.

Needless to say he left many impressions with me but the most lasting was on the final day of the seminar. After three days of hard work I was frozen in a kata move like I had done so many times before. As Master Longo walked in front of me, he looked over at me and as our eyes made contact his face transformed into a huge grinning smile like Santa Claus then he quickly looked forward again and kept walking. I was caught completely off-guard – HE SMILED AT ME! This was the start of a friendship that lasted many years.

I miss him dearly.

Experiencing Honbu's Karate Master

By Sensei Peter Dylag



How do you define a man in words that only when you experience him, can you get to know him?

Master Longo is one of those men.

Master Longo would start class at 7 not with a call for two line but with a ear piercing and radiating crake that sounded like planks of wood were just slapped together and then you realized it was his hands that made that sound! We all moved very quickly into lines to bow for the beginning of class. Master Longo would start with a stretch and (light) exercise, you know some sit ups, crunches or leg circles and a few pushups to get us warmed up. Well pushups were a little different, we only did 5 or so but it took us at least 5 minutes to complete. The thing I remember most about Master Longo is his hands. Looking over at him doing pushup I noticed Master Longo was on his finger tips! Not the finger print but finger tips, his finger were not concaved liked the rest of ours who tried to do a pushup on our fingers, but straight and they looked like there was no effort at all in keeping them there.

For those who had the honor and privilege to be able to work with him at seminars or Honbu could get a sense of his power merely by grabbing his wrists. Imagine holding on to an oak hand rail that was a little bigger than you own grasp and then it would move!

Master Longo's power came from his understanding of dynamics as an engineer and mastering the three principles of Kokondo taught to us by Shihan Arel.

The amount of power, speed and kime he generated was incredible. When doing kihon waza Master Longo's gi would always have a snap or a pop and for the longest time we speculated he starched his gi to get that pop we all wanted. One night after class a couple of Dans asked for help with their technique. Well Master Longo came out of changing room and being summer he was wearing a light shirt. He performed a technique and that pop was still there, amazed the Dans asked "how did you do that?"...he smiled and said," practice!" and walked away.

I guess what sparked my memories of his hands was a photo of Mr. and Mrs Longo holding our two sons. They were the first to come visit Tracey and I at the hospital. The photo of Mrs. Longo holding Sean and Mr. Longo cradling Aaron with his left arm and protecting him with his right hand that almost stretched the length of his body. Looking back I see how that kindly old grandfather taught us. Those hand guided us to take care of the little things and the little things will take care of you. Those hands protected us from harm by teaching us that its technique and not brute strength that gives you power. Most importantly those hands were also there to put us back in our place when we thought we were good enough not to have to practice basics. Wishing I could shake those hands one more time, I say with a low, respectful and sincere bow, "Ossu! Master Longo.

Kokonyo & The Karate Master

By Sensei Vince Peterson

My favorite memory of Master Longo is connected to Kokonyo. It was the summer of 2000 at the Seattle Internationals and Shihan decided it was time for me and a group of other black belts to "get it right". He assigned several Masters to the group. In true Kokondo style we worked and worked through the kata, stopping only briefly to discuss corrections then continuing with the work. Shihan started the next section of the seminar, but the other students and I asked permission to continue with Kokonyo. He agreed and assigned Master Longo to the group. He took us back to the corner and we worked Kokonyo for the rest of

the day. There was a particular move I was trying to improve, and he took the time to walk me through the intricate details. I practiced some more, and he stood close to me, watching me out of the corner of his eye. He would make another correction, watch me some more. It was then that I realized something about Master Longo: The harder I worked, the harder he worked for me. This memory is with me each time I practice that piece in Kokonyo.

Master Longo's dedication to the art and to his students is unrivalled. He truly was a great Master.

Grateful

By Sensei Chuck Martin

I attended my first National Seminar at Boise State University (1991). We only had enough mat space for roughly half of the group, so Shihan Arel left the kyu's to (then) Mr. Howard and the dans worked on the hardwood. Shihan then left the room to have some discussions. For the next hour-and-a-half the dans worked on Pinan Three and Konsho.

Since I had previously never been outside of the St. Louis dojo, I was unfamiliar with the gentleman that was leading our group. It didn't take very long to note that he was not happy with the quality of the Kokutsu Dachi stances that tended to get higher and higher as the group became more fatigued. The roaring voice declaring "You are black belts, dammit. Suck it up!!" was enough to get most of us back into a deeper stance. Those that lagged behind were given the additional encouragement of having their leg bent with a kick to the calf. I made a mental note to avoid that need for manual adjustment.

Moving to Konsho, the group was given a brief rest as we were asked about the bunkai for a series of movements. The person asked didn't seem to provide the desired answer so I was asked to get into formal position and attack with a right mae-geri. The combination of haito-shuto-mawashi geri-seiken was more than enough to bring me to the floor but my fall was interrupted by the subsequent sweep followed by a full-power ura-ken that thankfully stopped no more than a quarter inch short. Our session leader looked at the assembly and questioned them with an "OSSU?" to which they responded in kind. He then looked down at me with the same question. I answered with a strong "OSSU!" as well, which was rewarded by the completion of the ura-ken into my sternum.

My first encounter with Master Longo left me A) knowing this individual was very, very good and B) wondering just who this borderline lunatic was. Thankfully, we were able to formally introduce ourselves to each other later on and I could tell in his words and actions that his skill and dedication also translated



into a respect for those that worked hard and a low tolerance for those that didn't. While perfection of technique was the goal, perfection of effort was what mattered. Meeting Shihan, Master Longo and the other higher ranks for the first time in this way cemented the respect I had already gained for Kokondo.

Since my only encounters with Master Longo were through the Nationals, I did not have the privilege of the consistent exposure to him enjoyed by our people on the East Coast. I did, though, make it a point to station myself close by at every seminar. Over time, I seemed to have gained a measure of acceptance as I would often get to be uke when he needed to demonstrate a point (I still remember losing a sizeable amount of chest hair when someone asked about a particular movement in Seinchin) or when he would approach me and my partner while practicing a technique. He would smile broadly, hold up his index finger, then lay waste to one of us with an incredible "addition" to what we were already practicing. If I was lucky, I was able to share a table at one of the meals with Master Longo. There were always great little tidbits of information that I'd get from our conversations.

So in a way I never "got to know" Master Longo in the same way as many of my fellow Kokondo-ka, which is my great loss. On the other hand, every time I have to opportunity to listen to the stories of those more fortunate in their exposure to this extraordinary human being, I also know that I am getting to know him more with each one. For that, I am grateful.

Man's Man

By Sensei Sheldon Shirey

I would describe Master Longo as a "Man's Man". I met him in 1991 at the National seminar in Boise Idaho. He had a real presence about him. He had complete command of the group. One memory that stands out is working Konni, we worked it over and over and over. He broke it down to focus on the "little things". His demonstration of a technique was a joy to watch. His focus and power were superb. As a

relatively new Shodan it was a great learning experience to see what a technique was "supposed" to look like. He was also a very approachable and caring gentleman. He also had a soft side to him. He was extremely important to the very foundation of the IKA. Master Longo Talked the Talk and Walked the Walk. It was an honor to have known him.

My Master Longo Remembrance

By Sensei Alex Hallock, Ph.D

The first time I met Master Longo was during a very confusing and chaotic day. I had been in Kokondo for a week or two, and there was a Saturday, day-long seminar with many people arriving from dojos around New England. I did not know anybody and was probably barely proficient in obi-tying-waza. There were too many people for us all to work out in one room, I was assigned to do kata with Master Longo in a basement room of the old gym. We form up, I've never done any kata before, and he announces Kihon 3 and off everyone goes with me comically trying to figure out what is going on. I remember looking at his face to try and find some signal and he remains supremely stoic. Everyone around me clearly knows what is going on and I am, at this point, simply trying to get out of the way of people around me. We form up again and I'm looking for some sign of what to do and, not a flinch, we are off again. I'm trying to follow, but I have no concept of kokutsu dachi, let alone kihon 3. Eventually I trip some sort of "you are not meant for this group" threshold and he helps me to practice basics in the corner while correcting the kata of people working out behind him (I presume without looking).

We met again nearly a year later at my first International Seminar in Kent, CT. It was at the beginning of the seminar, and we partnered together to do a double wrist grab escape from the beginning of pinan 3. I do my bit - feeling not too bad about it, and then it was his turn. WHAM WHAM incredibly precise, robotic almost, and powerful. I try to do something like that in response, he just nods a little and then WHAM WHAM again. I remember thinking several things at once: I'm not going to stop or step out, I'm not going to get frustrated that I seem to have little to no effect on him, and OW. Before I joined

Kokondo, I had been on the crew team so I had notions about being tough coming from lifting hard and acting like a jerk. Master Longo (and others over the course of that seminar) showed me that mental and physical toughness could come from the confidence one gains in long, patient, exacting practice to the point that you could get your body to do exactly what you want when you want it. It is a lesson I have not forgotten.

Growing to Know Master Longo

By Sensei George Rego

My first experiences with the legendary karate master of Kokondo were scary. It wasn't anything that he himself did – it was just the presence and poise of the man. There had always been a rumor that Master Longo didn't like Jukido-ka. I had also heard through the grapevine that he didn't like kids. I was both.

Of course, at a later time – I learned that neither of these rumors were true. At the time, however, they were very real in my head. My experiences with Master Longo were essentially identical for the first few years. Kid's Jukido class would end and as it ended, Master Longo entered the Newington, CT honbu dojo. He placed his shoes and gi bag in the exact same position every day and walked along the far wall until he reached the makeshift changing room. It was rare that I saw him come out in gi – that was my opportunity to get the heck out there!

Over a period of years, I stayed a little while longer and actually saw him come out of the room and occasionally perform kata. As a sankyu in Jukido, I began taking formal karate classes. Then I saw the Master at work. He didn't speak to me much and I was afraid to talk to him. However, I do remember him coming to me frequently to make minor adjustments to my stance and kihon, usually without speaking. As minor as it might sound, one of my favorite memories of those karate classes was him once telling me "good job" on a technique as I was working with one of my Jukido instructors, Sensei Sandy Nukis. When I was approaching yellow in karate, Shihan Arel informed me that was going to test me for shodan in Jukido soon. At that point, I temporarily discontinued formal karate in order to spend all of my dojo time on Jukido.

During my second IKA International Seminar, my first in Seattle, Washington, I had an important series of experiences with Master Longo. My mother arranged for me to fly with



Shihan Arel, Master Longo, and Master Howard (Kaicho). Although I was quite comfortable with both Shihan Arel and Master Howard, I wasn't at all comfortable with Master Longo. As a result, I was unusually quiet during the plane rides and lay over in Denver. However, by the end of the trip – our relationship would change.

During the first night of this seminar, various senior sensei led a series of grueling karate kihon combinations. I was struggling but trying my absolute best to keep up with the sequence. I tried with all my heart but was failing miserably. I began to wonder if discontinuing the formal karate classes before Jukido shodan testing was the right call. During a series lead by a drill sergeant like Master Longo, my struggle hit its peak. Then, he did something amazing. The drill sergeant turned over his kihon to another senior sensei and took me out of the group. For the next fifteen minutes, he helped me alone in the corner of the dojo while everyone else continued. Amazingly, the man

who was a drill sergeant a few moments ago...and the man who inspired anxiety in me since long before I was a young teenager struggling at this seminar...was patiently and gently leading me through these techniques. I was embarrassed at first, feeling as though my failure was so extreme that he needed to take me aside. However, by the end – I felt inspired. I felt honored. Throughout the rest of the seminar...in fact, for the rest of the occasions we crossed paths at any Kokondo event until his passing, I had the feeling that he made it a point to come and check on me. I felt like he quietly was watching out for me.

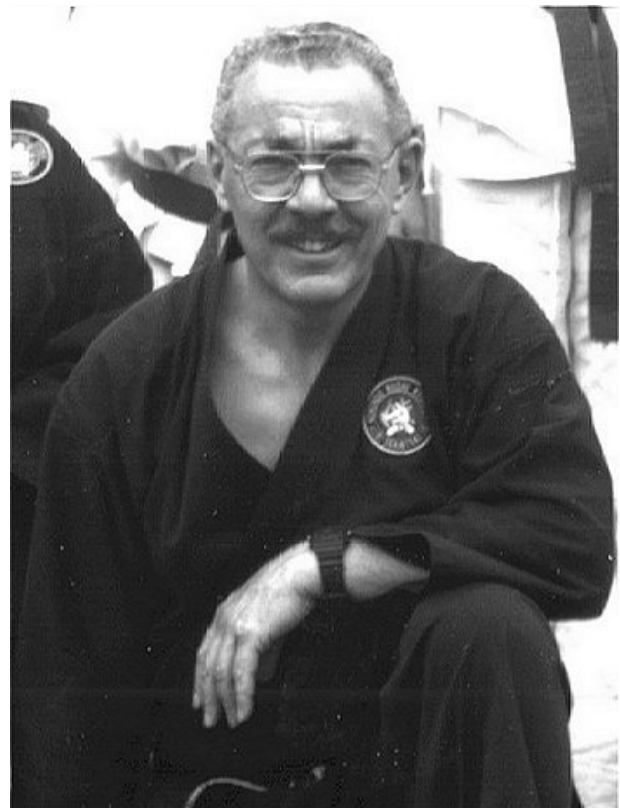
During this same seminar, there was some down time in which my buddy Rick Comeau and I somehow managed to tag along to a Japanese store with Shihan Arel and Master Longo. Shihan Arel picked up some cucumber sushi and then we headed upstairs to a store that contained a large collection of martial arts related books. Rick picked out a book written by Donn Draeger on Judo's Randori-no-Kata...I was struggling to make a decision of my own. Master Longo must have sensed this. He walked over to me and asked me what I wanted to learn most about. I stuttered as I explained that I was very interested in learning more about the history of Japanese martial arts. He looked over the bookshelf and suggested (ironically enough) another book by Donn Draeger. This time, a three book set on Classical & Modern Budo. It was an excellent choice! I still pick up these books a few times a year to touch up on my history. I think of him every time I do.

As we left the store, I was in the back seat of the car we were riding in. Master Longo was in the front passenger side. He grabbed one of Shihan Arel's cucumber sushi and asked if I would like one. I HATED sushi and was an extremely picky eater. There was no way I would even consider eating sushi as a younger teen. As a result, I politely declined and said, "No, sir. Thank you." He then gave me a death glare...and firmly said, "You really should have it. I want you to try it!" I froze! No words came out. I had no choice. I was going to have to eat the sushi! I couldn't refuse! He must have

sensed my panic and/or seen my face turn as white as a ghost – he then smiled and actually laughed and said, "I'm just kidding George! Don't look so worried!" He kept chuckling. After the fright subsided, it hit me that he **actually** smiled and laughed. I also realized that he actually knew my name. He called me George. From that day forward, I can't recall him ever calling me Mr. Rego – I can only recall him calling me George both inside and outside of the dojo.

Lastly, when I received my instructor's certificate at the April 1999 awards banquet, shortly before moving to Florida. I remember him finding me and telling me that I was going to do really great things. I was honored and touched. He sent me a Christmas card that year. I was honored and touched again. I still feel that way when I receive the occasional note, Christmas card, or email from his wife. In 2005 I was awarded the Master Longo Award for Excellence – this honor is still beyond my ability to articulate.

He was a special man. I'm honored that I took instruction from him and that our lives touched.



Respected & Humble

By Master Jeff Soltez

I was first introduced to Master Longo at the first Kokondo National Seminar. My clearest memory of that event is being in a small room with him leading us and it being crowded with karate black belts. We had done a few techniques under his direction when he stopped us and uttered a phrase I have borrowed many times, "I need some one flexible for this next technique." You could see students begin to shrink back from the circle. It is funny now to think back on that reaction because Master Longo was so good at not really hurting you. Sure, you knew you were hit or twisted in some awful manner, but he didn't really hurt you. He told me once, "I can take a technique just to the point before doing damage." I hope to be that good some day.

One other memory. I have never seen anyone wrestle Kaicho to the ground. He and Kaicho were both laughing, but it appeared Master Longo got the best of him even though Kaicho ended up on top.

Finally, Master Longo was dedicated to Shihan, the students and the system. You could feel it in his presence in the dojo. He was greatly respected, but always willing to be humble and never seemed to stop trying to get better even though he was incredibly talented and highly skilled.



Longo Memory

By Sensei Aron Cummings

I remember visiting Honbu in the spring of 2000, very soon after becoming a probationary shodan in karate. Shihan called out for two lines and everyone hustled into place. However, this wasn't good enough for Master Longo, who shouted, "MOVE!!!" We all moved faster. He projected a very intimidating aura, but was also extremely courteous and helpful during the class.

From Fear to Awe...to Awe

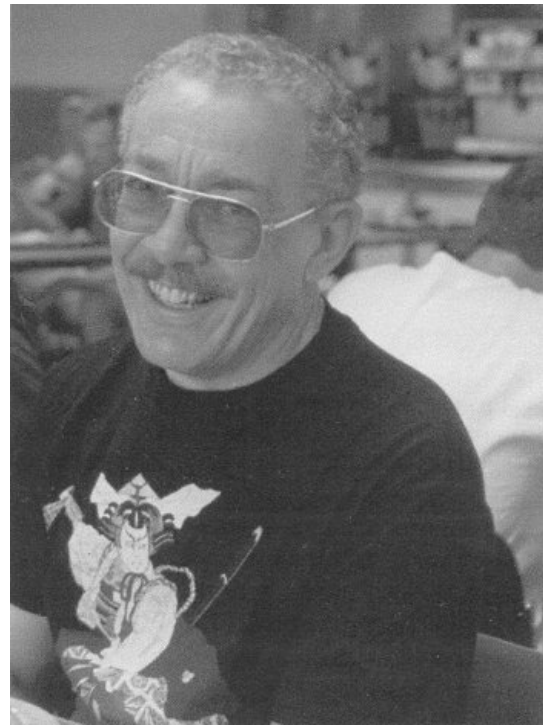
By Kaicho Gregory P. Howard

I, as all of us who knew, respected and loved Master Longo, have so many memories. I want to use three memories which illustrate the changes I saw in the man as he aged and mellowed. My first memory of him was from the perspective of a youngster. Shihan Arel was unable to attend a Honbu Jukido Class one afternoon. In fact Shihan needed his assistant instructor, Master Costa and all of the higher ranks to do some demonstrations. Therefore, he left us in Mr. Longo's hands. I was a quiet shy child with a bad back but I was an orange belt and one of the senior members in class that day.

I was not prepared in any way for the scowling, imposing man with the starched Gi and perfectly tied black belt in the front of the room. We had set up on the mats in our usual formation and were in two lines, facing front as usual. "Sensei Ni Rei Ossu," all set so far. It was the same as Shihan if not quite as friendly. Then he says face inboard. Richard Webster my friend and also an orange belt, was across the line from me looking at me like a deer caught in the headlights. Well let's see I thought "inboard... nothing, hmm an inboard motor is in the back of a boat so I naturally, turned to the back of the room. Mr. Longo reacted by picking me up and physically turning me around in the correct

position. I was horrified that I had single handedly let down the collective honor of our class, Jukido and of course Shihan Arel. Master Longo then proceeded to teach a series of basics. I was in awe and terrified of this serious snarling man.

Some years later Shihan needed someone to cover his class in Avon, CT. Once again a very serious instructor was trying to get the recalcitrant children to behave. Luckily no students were stupid enough to turn and face the back of the room. However, this new instructor was rapidly losing his patience. I am of course the new instructor. What made this day unusual is that I had to finish a test that Shihan had started. The parents were allowed to watch these tests. Shihan realizing that I would have my hands full with the test asked Mr. Longo to come help with class discipline. Mr. Longo used the old hulk TV shows line "You don't want to see me angry; you won't like me when I'm angry!" This rendition usually worked to make even the most troubled kid stay in line. Hell, it still worked on young nervous Nidans. I finished the test and as predicted by Shihan everyone landed where he had expected them to, including one child who failed miserably. I had even gone so far as to coach this kid from the table. Mr. Longo's raised his eyebrow at my coaching but understood what I was attempting. As the class ended, I read the results and we congratulated all of the students on a job well done. Mr. Longo told me he's going to change and he'd be right back. I turned from him to confront this very upset parent. This man was livid that his child did not get his stripe. He said that he had watched the test and his son did not do as badly as another child who made it. I asked him when he had become a black belt. (I had grown out of my shyness at this point) This guy was big! He put his finger on my chest and pushed me back saying all sorts of nasty things about my parentage. I was both shocked and to be honest frightened. (Did I say this guy was big and angry)? I was backing away when I bumped into the solid wall of mass. Then in my ear came a most welcome voice. Mr. Longo had returned and told the man that if he poked me one more time it was literally going to be the last thing he did on this mortal plain. I stepped



to the side so Mr. Longo could stare this Neanderthal down. I was never so happy to see Master Longo in full intimidation mode protecting me. The man wisely backed down which proved his IQ was higher than a rodent. I turned to thank Mr. Longo who just shrugged and said after all the breaks I had given the man's kid he should have thanked me. I was just so honored to stand in Mr. Longo's presence.

This last story comes closer to the present. At this point I was no longer easily intimidated by anyone or anything. I was at home one evening. The phone rang, I answered and it's not a voice I recognized. "Is Greg there?" "May I ask who's calling?" Too many telemarketers were calling to identify myself immediately. "Bob" thinking quickly I ran through all the names of anyone who might call me and said "I don't know a Bob" "You do too" now I'm getting ticked, "look who is this" "Think," the phantom voice intoned. I gulped and literally stood up with the telephone receiver in my hand. Master Longo! I gasped. "Yup Bob." He said laughingly. He was just making a social call.

I started knowing this great man in fear and awe. The Fear disappeared the awe never did.

KOKONDO WORD SEARCH

K	O	D	N	O	K	O	K	A	R	A	W	I	T	K
A	A	A	A	I	K	O	T	A	T	A	M	I	U	I
M	E	R	Q	A	H	J	C	T	K	Y	P	M	D	S
A	O	M	A	S	H	A	I	A	C	D	I	R	O	A
E	D	J	X	T	E	A	Z	L	I	T	L	A	J	M
S	N	I	O	E	E	A	K	I	E	M	O	E	O	U
N	O	G	G	A	S	H	O	G	U	N	S	X	K	R
A	I	O	E	H	W	K	A	R	A	T	S	R	E	A
I	P	T	I	B	U	A	P	E	K	L	E	E	V	I
V	M	A	P	T	E	D	L	M	O	F	D	I	Z	A
S	A	I	P	O	T	O	A	B	E	I	S	S	R	Y
P	H	O	O	T	N	W	C	R	Y	N	E	Y	E	Z
I	C	K	N	A	E	W	E	D	O	G	K	I	S	S
L	A	K	E	G	N	E	N	E	R	G	I	Y	H	K
E	K	I	P	I	O	T	H	E	L	L	O	A	O	A
J	E	A	B	R	P	B	U	N	K	A	I	M	D	T
U	O	H	T	A	P	A	U	L	A	K	O	E	A	A
D	I	S	H	A	O	B	T	W	O	R	L	D	N	O
Y	E	S	E	E	N	K	D	A	N	U	A	R	R	O
E	R	Z	Q	K	W	A	I	Z	U	S	E	W	O	N
L	M	A	R	T	I	A	L	A	R	T	S	Y	A	M
O	H	S	O	K	N	A	S	A	I	I	N	K	Y	Y
W	H	O	L	E	O	K	P	R	C	J	U	N	L	C
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T	I	K	I	B	U	G	L	I	K	J	U	B	R	O
E	I	K	G	U	N	G	T	H	W	T	F	O	A	R
R	U	Y	I	M	A	N	S	H	A	W	D	R	O	O
J	K	U	R	D	A	S	I	L	Z	N	K	Y	K	D
A	G	I	R	L	O	F	H	E	A	M	E	N	D	U
R	H	A	J	I	M	E	W	R	I	J	U	D	O	B

ANSWERS: REFEREE, WAZA, KI, KARATE, RANDORI, IPPON, REI, OBI, JUKIDO, DOJO, MARTIAL ARTS, JUJITSU, AIKIDO, KATANA, WAKAZASHI, SHOGUN, KATA, BO, KAMAE, MENKYO, WAZA ARI, BUDO, YAWARA, KOKONDO, SAMARAI, CHAMPION, PLACE, YAME, KYU, OPPONENT, DAN, WHISTLE, SAI, SANKOSHO, TATAMI, JUDO, GI, SHODAN, JIGOTAI, ARIGATO, HAJIME, BUNKAI

My 1st IKA International Seminar

By Kelly C. Spencer



The annual IKA International Seminar is known for its extensive and intense training. Students whom have attended the previous seminars talk about the rigorous criteria covered and the many hours spent in the dojo. I was very excited when I made the decision to attend this years' seminar because I knew that as an orange belt this training would be essential for my progression in my Jukido studies. Fellow students shared their stories to try to get you ready for internationals but, no words, not stories can prepare you for what you are going to experience.

Walking through the double doors into the boarding school gym, our dojo for the next three days was an eye widener. I looked around at all the new faces, then looked at their obi's and then I looked at my obi, I was the lowest ranked kyu there. Immediately my nerves went into overdrive and the intimidation was extreme. My own personal struggle is my lack of confidence in my techniques. Though I train hard and with immense spirit I get easily frustrated when I make mistakes. I had to continuously remind myself that we are all here to learn, everyone makes mistakes and is however expected. I learned techniques that were *out of*

my pay range so to speak. Only at internationals will you see an orange belt throw Harai! Internationals was the most physical and mental challenging weekend of my life. No matter how tired I was or how much my body ached I continued to push myself because I wanted to make my Sensei, my dojo and most importantly myself proud.

It was so exciting see Kaicho Howard and Master Robert again and to meet other Masters and high dans. Having the experience of working one on one with so many new people and dans was an amazing experience. Learning more about our history and listening to stories about Master Longo and Shihan Arel made it a very personal experience. I learned how humble they all are and how they have spent most their lives dedicated to IKA, making this all happen and most importantly, still exist.

There were so many great things about Internationals but one that was the most personal for me was getting to see my Sensei as a student. The speed and power he reflects in every technique was extremely inspiring. I know that our dojo members and I were all very excited and proud to be trained by Sensei Rego and to represent his dojo. We look up to him in more ways than one and every day we strive to be more like him. My life has changed for the better ever since I walked through our dojo door, I will continue to make him proud. I want to be someone he talks about one day as the young woman who started as a wimp and became a warrior.

I would have never made it through internationals without the confidence and strengths of my Sensei and fellow Florida Jukido Academy family, thank you all for your support and love. I look forward to Internationals 2012 in Seattle WA.

Ossu!

Testing at Kokondo's Biggest Event

By Mr. Conrad Troha Jr.

Hello everyone, my name is Conrad Jr. I am a shodan in Jukido Jujutsu and a probationary shodan in Kokondo Karate as of this year at the 2011 Kokondo National Seminar. This year was my 3rd Seminar and was by far the best Kokondo Seminar I have ever attended. The amount that we were all able to learn about Shihan and Master Longo from this past seminar was an incredible amount and I am so grateful for all of those who made it possible.

Though I had attained both my probationary Shodan and permanent Shodan in Jukido Jujutsu already, my experience of testing had still been limited to that of my home dojo. We hold an annual December seminar here at the Florida Jukido Jujutsu Academy. And so, during the December seminar after my foreign exchange in Japan in 2009, Kaicho Howard and the Masters ended up testing me for my first dan rank. I thankfully passed and was awarded the rank of probationary Shodan; I was then awarded my permanent Shodan the following year. And though it was a stressful black belt test, the test was the same general feeling as any other test that one experiences in their own dojo. Everyone knows those feelings of stress and anxiety. You are now up in front of everyone and all of the pressure is on you. You know that feeling of frustration when you feel like nothing is going the way that you expect it should. And though that feeling is dreaded by many, including myself, I was able to see the comfort that also exists among those tests, during this past seminar. The comfort of knowing that the people who are watching you are the people you work out with on a daily basis and that the person who is testing you is the person who personally taught you most of the things that you know.

Ever since any Kokondo-ka's first day in the dojo he is being pushed out of his comfort zone and into that void of the unknown that we all fear so much. However, over time one becomes conditioned to those feelings and learns how to cope with them on the spot. And, that conditioning happens at home during each class, but more so, during each rank evaluation. The higher up into the kyu ranks a Kokondo-ka reaches, the better that individual will deal with



the stress of being put on the spot; or at least that is the goal. And so, when one is testing in their own dojo, it is like performing a dance in the dance studio you always practice in or playing guitar in front of your peers during a talent show or some other local get together. As opposed to performing in front of an audience that you have either never seen before or have had very little exposure to.

I will never forget that morning. Me and a fellow dojo mate from Florida were walking to the dojo that morning and I remember turning to her and saying, "Dang, I am sore. I really hope we get to watch some testing this morning so that we can relax." Good thing I opened my big mouth, right? And so, we bow in and sit down; I am there for maybe half of a second before my name is called, along with Mr. Williamson, to step onto the mats. The next thing I remember is standing in the middle of the mats, in the best fudo dachi that I can muster, with every eye pointed inward toward me. When I finally realized what was going on my legs began to quiver vigorously and an all too familiar feeling coursed through my body. This was a feeling

that I was convinced that I had been conditioned to already. It was that feeling of strange eyes watching you, that feeling which drops your stomach and gives you the sweats. There was that feeling of nausea when the chief instructor gave a command and I realized then that it was for me. And not only was this the most stressful thing that I have ever done, it was also the most difficult.

It was then that Kaicho asked Master Robert to pick an attack for my uke and for Master Fearn to pick a kata that I would need to use to defend from said attack. I was positive that I failed my test during that portion, because I needed Kaicho's help for almost every attack Master Robert called. My mind went completely blank and I could not think to save my life. Not really, but that is how I felt at the time. And that is what high anxiety and stress will do to a person. The rest of the test went okay, Mr. Williamson joined me and we performed bunkai from Konni and some sequential self-defense. Those portions were less stressful only because they were things that I had done before. But particular elements of my technique still began to crumble under the pressure.

Even though I know that I will not be tested again for some time, the thought of what will

come when it happens is terrifying. And so, the only thing that we can do is continue to push ourselves past our comfort zone every day so that when that time comes, hopefully we will be ready. Whether that be the next dan test, class you are asked to teach, or the time that guy pulls a gun on you for your wallet, you will be conditioned enough to the fear and stress to be able to keep a level head and come out on top.

Budo News

Interested in submitting an article or an article idea? Submissions can be made to the following email address:

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