



Japanese martial arts on display at upcoming Wood River open house

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
February 11 2019 10:12 AM



WOOD RIVER – Martial arts enthusiasts and newcomers alike are invited to join Ronin Academy Jujitsu.

Ronin Academy Jujitsu operates within the walls of Yi's Martial Arts Fitness Academy, located at 18 East Ferguson Ave. in Wood River. Yi's Martial Arts Fitness Academy is owned and operated by Grand-Master Chris Lee, but Ronin Academy Jujitsu is managed by Anthony Springman. Springman has been training in martial arts for 15 years and has a brown belt in Japanese Jujitsu, also called Nihon. Springman has also trained in Brazilian-style Jujitsu, where he reached the level of blue belt.

Springman has participated in 15 mixed martial arts (MMA) fights and has cornered professional fighters. He himself is trained by Eric Clarkson, who is a second-degree black belt as well as a 2018 Muay Thai champion. Clarkson is the owner and operator of River City Mixed Martial Arts in St. Louis, and he oversees the program and teaches classes twice a month. He will be demonstrating during an upcoming open house at the facility.



That open house will take place on Feb. 17 from 12-3 p.m. and will feature free pizza, soft drinks, snacks and a t-shirt giveaway. There will also be hands-on instructions and demonstrations for anyone who may be interested in learning more about Nihon. There will also be a crash course (quite literally) in the Tae-Kwon-Do art of board-breaking.

As far as the Jujitsu course, Springman said it is a great method of self-defense and weight loss. Versions of Nihon, which is considered the original style, are utilized around the world. In Russia, it is Sambo, in Korea, it is Hapkido and worldwide, it has the popular name of Kodakon Judo.

“Jigoro Kano, the founding father of Judo, emphasized that a student's intellectual and spiritual growth was just as important as his physical development,” Springman said in a Facebook message. “Students of Jujitsu will not only strengthen their overall health by improving cardiovascular health, strength, coordination, balance, weight loss (I lost over 100 pounds in about 18 months) and proper falling techniques, they will also instill positive traits such as: patience, discipline, confidence, work ethic, persistence, focus and grit.”



For overall mental health, Springman said student of Jujitsu are forced to face their fears. The martial art forces students into bad positions and forces them to escape.

“Students soon realize their inner potential to overcome any difficult situation in life,” he said. “A common misconception that parents have about their children taking martial arts classes is that they will get hurt. Kids are going to get hurt no matter what activity they participate in. In Jujitsu, the first thing we teach is how to fall properly without injury. The next thing we teach is how to get back up to a standing position as quickly and efficiently as possible.”

Parents who may be interested in entering their children in such classes can contact the Ronin Academy on Facebook or at its website, www.altonkarate.com. They can also call (618) 251-KICK or (618) 560-6368. The Feb. 17 event is free and open to the public.