

*Matt Randall's* **Black Belt Academy, Inc.**

# **Black Belt Final Exam**

**Saturday  
June 25, 2011**

A collection of essays from our degree candidates on the true meaning of Martial Arts training and Black Belt Leadership.



# *Matt Randall's* **Black Belt Academy, Inc.**

Dear Students, Parents, Friends, and Relatives:

When a student tests for Black Belt at Matt Randall's Black Belt Academy, Inc. we ask that they submit an essay along with their application for the test. What we discover in these essays is often that our students learn much more than punching and kicking along their journey towards Black Belt Excellence. Yes, there are physical requirements, techniques to master, fitness challenges to be met, and lots of blood, sweat and tears along the way. In the end, what they really learn may surprise you.

For the Black Belt exam, these students have demonstrated remarkable fitness, stamina, strength, and speed. Each student, regardless of age, has undergone rigorous training, countless hours of practice, bumps, bruises, successes and failure along the way toward achieving their respective degrees. They have endured where others have given up. They pursued higher aspirations while others sat and watched. They have overcome challenges that others saw as obstacles. They have beaten the odds and become winners in a small and very select group. For this, we award them the coveted Black Belt.

As you will discover throughout this collection of essays, martial arts training develops the body, mind, and soul equally. Here, in their own words, our students will describe for you the greater impact martial arts training has had in their lives. We sincerely hope you will enjoy and appreciate the constant and never-ending improvement that their training has brought them at this level and what it will bring them as they continue their training towards higher goals and levels of proficiency.

I am very proud of each and every student who tested at this exam and encourage you to join us in celebrating another big step in their long road toward mastery of the martial arts, leadership, and personal development.

Congratulations Black Belts,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. Randall". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Master Randall  
6<sup>th</sup> Degree, Senior Master Instructor

# *Matt Randall's* **Black Belt Academy, Inc.**

## Degree Candidates

Name	Degree	Age
Kylie Nelson-Marois	1 <sup>st</sup> Dan	9
Zachary Nelson- Marois	1 <sup>st</sup> Dan	9
Samantha LaRochelle	1 <sup>st</sup> Dan	12
Stephanie Lane	1 <sup>st</sup> Dan	32
Larry Lane	1 <sup>st</sup> Dan	48

*This is a list of all candidates who filed applications for this exam. While we do everything in our power to ensure that they are properly prepared, it is possible that some candidates on this list did not complete or pass the exam at this time.*

# *Matt Randall's* **Black Belt Academy, Inc.**

Black Belt Essay by Kylie Nelson-Marois

In life, I use my indomitable spirit by using my skill at a game called Stratego, being brave, and never giving up. When I use my indomitable spirit, I think of a dragon because they never give up and they have a lot of courage in a fight. Learning my multiplication tables was very hard, but I kept on trying. Division seemed difficult to do, but I tried it anyway. Spelling is very hard for me, but I work at it every week.

I use my courtesy by helping Zac and my parents. I am polite and nice to other people. Courtesy reminds me of a cat because they are gentle and kind. In the morning I greet my teachers and say "hi" to my friends. I help classmates who are stuck on their work. When I am in a circle or lesson I don't interrupt. I also don't run in the classroom. At lunch, I sit with my chair pulled in. At recess, I follow the rules like not throwing snowballs at people. At the end of the day, I hug my parents to show them I am glad to see them.

I use my integrity by being honest, being kind and telling the truth. Integrity reminds me of a dog because they are honest to their masters. The dog relates to me because I am honest to my parents telling them what I did. In school, I need to be honest when I take a test or when I do an SRA. I must not peek at the answers. I also need to be honest when I am with my friends when we play games like Capture the Flag and Freeze Tag. Staying in line and not cutting is also a sign of Integrity.

In life, I use my perseverance by never giving up on things that are hard. I biked around Eagle Lake in Acadia National Park for 7 miles and that was very hard. I also ran a 5K race, which was hard too. I learned my multiplication tables in the winter. I practiced every day with my Mom. It was hard, but I learned all 12 tables. I also learned cursive handwriting this year. It was very challenging to learn the letters, but now it is fun. I also learned division. It was very difficult. I thought I could not do it, but then I did do it. I learned a lot of math this year.

I use my self-control by doing the things my mom asks me to do. I go to bed when mom asks me to. I take my dog out, do my math and put my clothes away when I am asked to. Learning my multiplication tables was very hard but I kept on trying. Division seemed difficult to do, but I tried it anyway. Spelling is very hard for me, but I work at it every week.

# *Matt Randall's* **Black Belt Academy, Inc.**

My Thank You Letter by Kylie Nelson-Marois,

I want to thank all the people that have helped me to this level. First of all, I want to thank my parents for help on lots of things. Here are some of them: push ups, crunches, and self defense. They also drove me to class for three years.

I also want to thank my mentor, Mrs. Devries. She helped me with the kicks a lot. Mrs. Devries is a great role model.

I want to thank my teacher Marlane. She helped me with some of the write ups.

I want to thank my brother, Zac, who helped me with my self defenses.

I really want to thank my friend, Matthew Stiles. He really helped me and is the best role model. He is a great friend to have.

I also want to thank my fellow students for helping me, too.

I also want to thank Mr. Bell for help on the forward roll.

I most of all want to thank Master Randall and Mrs. Randall for helping me with board breaking and a lot of other things.

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To Master Randall:

My goal is to collect 100 or more food and/or new toy items for dogs and cats. I will donate them to the Cocheco Valley Humane Society In Dover, NH.

Collection of items will be done through family, friends, classmates and my parent's colleagues. I will do an oral presentation to each individual or group except for my parents work colleagues. An email will be submitted on my behalf to each school district that my parents work in. I will explain that I am doing this project because I love animals and I want to help them. I will also share that I am planning to test for my Black Belt in June of 2011 and this project is one requirement of this test.

Collection of items will done through individual contact and not through drop off boxes.

I will stop collecting items on December 20, 2010.

Sincerely,  
Kylie Nelson-Marois

# *Matt Randall's* Black Belt Academy, Inc.



**AUGUST TO DECEMBER 2010**

**Kylie Nelson-Marois'  
Black Belt  
Community Service  
Project  
age 8**

*For my Community Service Project, I donated food and toys to the Cocheco Valley Humane Society Animal Shelter. I collected a large amount of food and toys. At least, a good amount of animals will get food and toys.*

*I felt happy that I collected 102 items for the animals. I was able to give toys to the cats and dogs in their cages which was a lot of fun.*

*I want to thank my classmates, parents and friends for their help with my project.*

# *Matt Randall's* **Black Belt Academy, Inc.**

Black Belt Essay by Zachary Nelson-Marois

Courtesy means to be polite. I am polite. I learned some from home and some from Tae Kwon Do. I use courtesy at my dining table. I also use it at Tae Kwon Do by saying, "Yes, sir! Or Yes, Maam! or No, Sir! Or No Maam!" I also say thank-you and please. Sometimes, I hold the door for other people. I also help my sister with her math and spelling by giving her hints. I feed my pets, Thumper (my bunny) and Yoshi (my bird) every day. I also put away my clothes. Sometimes, I make my bed and clean my desk. I use my courtesy everywhere. At school, I also use courtesy. I say "hello" to my teachers and sometimes my best friends, Clyde and Finn. At lunchtime, I put my napkin and place mat down on the table and also pull in my chair so no one trips on my chair. I don't run in the classroom so people don't fall down and get hurt. At recess, I follow rules to make things fair like not throwing snowballs at people and no two sleds both going at once. I hug my parents at the end of the day.

Indomitable spirit means to never give up. I have lots of examples that I never give up. I sometimes play with Lego sets and I never give up until I have built the entire kit. I never give up when playing family games. I play music, piano and violin, and I never give up on practicing. I always practice at home several times a week. I never give up in Tae Kwon Do either. I just keep doing it until I get it. At school, I had fractions to do and sometimes, they turned out to be a little challenging but I always kept going and at some point, finished it. We have a thing called "Open Project". On Friday afternoon, we are allowed to do pretty much any art project we want unless we don't have our work finished. I have to keep going and often, I finish my work. In skiing, it is hard for me to stop. I keep trying to stop, and soon, I will get it. I am also working on not interrupting the teacher during lessons or when someone else is talking. I bet soon I will get it.

To have Integrity is to be honest. Almost every day, I have a list of chores to do. I can play but sometime in the day I have to get the chores done. And I usually play before, but I do get my chores done. When all of my chores are done, I get to have the rest of my day free. Honesty fits in with chores because your parents tell you to do them, so you do them. In school, I need to be honest when doing a test because if I look at another person's paper, I will know how to spell the word. I need to be honest with my friends when playing Capture the Flag because if I look at where someone puts the flag, then I know where the other team's flag is. I should also be honest in sledding because if I cut the line, that would not be nice. Also, you need to be honest when you play Freeze Tag because if you get frozen and you still run, then you are cheating.

Perseverance is to always stick to what you are doing even if it is very difficult. I once ran a 5K road race and I thought it was very tiring but I kept going until the end. I know when I take my Black Belt test, I will need to have a ton of perseverance. I rode my bike around Eagle Lake in Acadia National Park when I was going on a camping trip in Bar Harbor. I also thought that that was tiring. I still kept going and I made it to the end of that, too. Fractions at my school were hard, but now I can get them done a lot easier. Cursive was a little hard, but I was able to get it done. Now it is easier for me and I am a pro at that type of writing. At the start of the year, I had a lot of trouble finishing my work everyday. Now, I do not need to complain about it because almost all the time, I finish my work. At home, I also had a marble tower that is really

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cool that my Mommy and I built. It was very complicated because sometimes when my Mommy or I put on a piece, some of the marble set collapsed and Mommy and I had to flip back in the instructions. However, we did not give up. We kept going and one time we finally got it.

Self-control means to control your feelings. When my mom tells me to do something, I do it. When I play games and I lose or win, I am a good sport. When my mom tells me to feed my pets, I do it. I play video games for 30 minutes a day, and when my times up, I stop. If my mom tells me I cannot play that day, I do not get into a tantrum. In school, I also need lots of self control. I need to listen to what my teacher says in a lesson. In a lesson, I also should wait to ask questions and not "blurt out" words. When I work, I have to focus on my work and not distract myself and other classmates. I also have to wait until 9:30 to have my snack. Last, I have to share with my sister and other classmates materials that all of the classmates use.

# *Matt Randall's* **Black Belt Academy, Inc.**

My Thank You Letter by Zachary Nelson-Marois,

This is a thank you to all the people who helped me through my Black Belt training.

First, I want to thank my parents for helping me with my training when I was stuck on something. At first, I had a hard time at crunches and now, since my Mom helped me with it, I am better at them. I also thank my parents for helping me with board breaking. I also thank my parents for driving me to class.

I thank Mr. Bell for being my mentor and helping me with board breaking, self defense, and so on.

I thank Kylie for doing self defenses and other stuff for Tae Kwon Do, even though sometimes we don't work together so well.

I thank Matthew Stiles for being my co-mentor. He helps me a lot because we live right near each other. We have play dates often and we do mentoring for a little of the play date. We worked on my Black Belt Kama form, board breaking, and more parts of the Black Belt test.

I thank Mrs. Randall for helping me with board breaking on Saturday mornings.

I thank Master Randall for teaching me at Super Sessions.

# *Matt Randall's* **Black Belt Academy, Inc.**

To Master Randall:

My goal is to collect 50 or more winter coats, hats and/or mittens for children who would go without this winter. My main focus will be in collecting the coats. I will donate them to Dover Housing Authority In Dover, NH. A family friend will help me with the donation as I want to make sure that the clothing goes to children who are in severe need.

Collection of items will be done through family, friends, neighbors, classmates and my parent's colleagues. I will do an oral presentation to each individual or group except for my parents work colleagues. An email will be submitted on my behalf to each school district that my parents work in. I will explain that I am doing this project because I want to help children who are less fortunate then me. I will also share that I am planning to test for my Black Belt in June of 2011 and this project is one requirement of this test.

Collection of items will done through individual contact and not through drop off boxes.

I will stop collecting items on December 20, 2010.

Sincerely,  
Zachary Nelson-Marois

# *Matt Randall's* Black Belt Academy, Inc.



**AUGUST TO DECEMBER 2010**

**Zachary Nelson-Marois'  
Black Belt  
Community Service  
Project  
age 8**

*For my Community Service Project, I donated coats, hats, and mittens to the Dover Housing Authority. I did this for the kids that did not have anything to wear outside. There were two reasons, one is that they would be able to play outside in the snow and also they would be very warm.*

*My goal was to get 50 coats and a few mittens and hats. I knew they could pull the hood up if it had one and put their hands in the sleeves. I got more than 50 coats and donated them on December 7th. I collected a total of 74 coats and snowsuits. I also had 10 pairs of mittens and 8 hats.*

*I felt warm inside that at least 74 children can play in the snow, now.*

*I said Thank-You to lots of people like my classmates, my family and many more people. I am grateful for their help with my Community Service Project.*

# *Matt Randall's* Black Belt Academy, Inc.

## *How I Use My Martial Arts Training Outside The Academy*

Matt Randall's Black Belt Academy showed me saying ma'am and sir is polite. I use my manners in public. I use sir/ma'am more often. Sir/ma'am is useful for quite a few reasons. For one, if you need help from someone and don't know their name, you can call them sir/ma'am. And if you just want to be polite, ask if you may call the person sir/ma'am. But be aware of the fact that some people don't like to be called sir/ma'am.

I think Matt Randall's Black Belt Academy teaches you how to defend yourself and confidence and discipline.

I have learned more manners and confidence, discipline, focus, and courage. I can do more push-ups than most football players in my class of physical education. And I really use more confidence and courage more than anything. I love to help people out and I am usually very brave. If I hear a curious or obnoxious or scary noise I will have to find out what it is.

I also use a little discipline. I change the trash without being told. I also redecorate my room, remind people about chores or events, and even help with the chores or events. I definitely have a lot more focus, because I am not as spacey.

I would like to thank the Matt Randall's Black Belt Academy because since I started, I have been less shy, and a great student in Middle School.

I feel I could take any bully face-to-face. And I have, but, not physically. That's the thing at the Academy; they teach you that physically dealing with the bully isn't the only way. They show you that even the right words or body position can help, too. They do cover what to do if nothing works. They have techniques and holds and even defenses. Yes, defenses. Defenses are just as important as offenses. I have dealt with quite a few bullies in my life and I realize that the victim usually becomes the next bully if you're not careful.

One day, when I was in elementary school, I encountered a few boys sitting in the back of the bus. There was two of them. One being my friend, I thought it would be okay to sit back there and watch the road pass under us as the bus moved along. But, my friend whispered to the other boy, "Pull her hair! Do it dude, come on!" The boy nervously tried, and soon as he got close enough, I spun around and said, "Pull my hair and I'll... well... just don't okay!" And, he didn't.

***Never trust someone too much, and be yourself.*** Those are my top rules.

That is how Matt Randall's Black Belt Academy helped me. Joining Matt Randall's Black Belt Academy can help many people be a strong athlete and a well-trained athlete, too.

You will learn many, many, many lessons in Matt Randall's Black Belt Academy, but, the most important one is that not every situation needs to be dealt with physically.

*Sincerely,*  
*Samantha LaRochelle, a student.*

# *Matt Randall's* **Black Belt Academy, Inc.**

## Thank you letter

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to: Nicole LaMarco.

from: your daughter, Samantha.

*Dear mommy,*

*I would like to thank you for taking the responsibilities of both a mentor and a mommy, and training me in the best way you could.*

*I apologize for being so difficult, while you were only trying to help.*

*Thank you for your encouragement. I realize it must've been hard to encourage someone who whined, argued, talked back, and even complained.*

*I also want to thank you for your "never give up attitude" example. You always kept me practicing and ready. I love how you did 200 push-ups and crunches with me, and cheered me on if you got done first.*

*I was happy to be reminded about the "three things you say to an instructor" while in the pretest.*

*You showed me how keeping your hair in a ponytail helps out because:*

- 1. It doesn't cause distraction.*
- 2. It doesn't stick to sweaty gear*
- 3. You cannot play with it when it's up.*

*It really does help to keep your hair up and I can say so confidently for I have tried and noticed the difference.*

*You showed me what it was going to take for me to pass. You told me there was a place beyond my limit. and you even let me see your black belt test.*

*I understand what it takes for this, and all there is to do is my form, my typing, and my wall[limit]. I have to pass that wall and step into the world beyond.*

*I'm sorry I chose to go to my dad's house and test in June. It felt like a good idea since Tays wanted to see me so bad and everyone was saying I should test in June anyways, but now I'm not so sure that was the best of choices.*

*I was so happy to see you got your black belt and now I will get mine.*

*I love you sooo much and I am proud of you always.*

*Love your daughter, Samantha.*

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Master Randall,

I am helping my school (Somersworth Middle School) by selling magazine subscriptions through QSP. My goal is to raise at least \$500, and I need to take consistent action because I only have about one week. 40% of the money goes to my school. I will complete this project by 9/27/10.

Sincerely,

Samantha LaRochelle

Master Randall,

I raised \$180 for Somersworth Middle School through the QSP program.

Sincerely,

Samantha LaRochelle

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Master Randall,

I would like to check in because I thought of another way to reach my goal. I was thinking I could collect a bunch of box tops from around town, in my house, and wherever else I can think of. I would just like your approval before I start doing it. Thank you.

From,

Samantha LaRochelle

Master Randall,

I have collected 54 Box Tops for my second community service project.

Sincerely,

Samantha Lynn LaRochelle

# *Matt Randall's* **Black Belt Academy, Inc.**

How I use my martial arts training outside the Dojang  
Stephanie Lane

When I began training at MRBBA I was looking for good self defense moves. The reason being I have a job that occasionally puts me into situations where my personal safety could be at risk. I knew I wanted to join a martial arts school and Matt Randall's fit the bill nicely. After having trained for several years now, I have learned many different things that help me to feel more confident and empowered everywhere I go. I was also looking for physical fitness conditioning to increase my stamina at work. It can be hard to get through the day and find the motivation to complete my work when I am exhausted. And finally, learning to balance not just on one leg, but my whole life has been the most important way I use my martial arts training outside the Dojang.

One of the times I use my training the most is when I am working at Hampton Beach, especially at night. There are many patrons that enter the restaurant under the influence of drugs or alcohol. They can be belligerent and confrontational. I have learned through my training that my confident body language will deter most individuals from thinking I can be a target. By using good eye contact and firm verbal commands I let these antagonists know that their behavior will not be tolerated. My intentions are not to pick fights with these people, but to get them to settle down. In some instances, they have to be asked to leave because of their behavior. They grumble and protest, but my training to be self-confident and indomitable gets them in the end every time.

Another area of training I mentioned was the physical fitness conditioning. My job can have long hours and be physically demanding. Before I started training I found I was always tired after 3 or 4 hours of working and needed to take a break. I wanted to be more productive and have more energy, I just wasn't sure how to do it. (Coffee sure wasn't the answer, either!) Then I noticed something happening to me after a couple of months of training. I wasn't getting as tired as quickly as I used to. My martial arts training had helped me to build my endurance without me even realizing it! Now I can work 7-8 hours straight without stopping and I am able to accomplish many more things at work. And best of all, when I am done with work, I still have energy to do other activities like hiking or taking the dog for a walk.

Finally, the balance I have learned through my training has been the most important. I used to (and still do sometimes) take on way more than I can handle. I just want to do it all! But I have learned that I need to balance everything in order to be successful at anything. If I want to run and eat cake, I have to sleep and take vitamins. If I try to make something in my life too big or too important, the other areas suffer. Hearing, talking, and teaching about balance has forced me to accept the fact that it truly works and use it in my daily life. I use what I have learned about balance to make it possible for me to work, play, volunteer, train, and sleep all I want and still be effective at all of them. It's the best feeling in the world, and I will continue to use my martial arts training to perfect it.

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Stephanie Lane

The person I want to thank for helping to bring me this far in my training is my husband, Larry Lane. There are many others that deserve honorable mentions, but without Larry I would not have been able to even begin training, let alone get this far.

Larry gave me the encouragement I needed to begin my training. I was kind of thinking that I was a little too old and a little too busy to start training in something. I sort of believed that if you did not start training when you were younger (still in grade school, for instance) then you would be at an extreme disadvantage compared to others who started earlier in life. I also was not sure I would be able to balance my career and all my personal obligations while also training in the Martial Arts. I work a full time job that has varied hours including nights and weekends. He assured me he believed I would be able to handle all of them without a problem. So I decided to give it a try.

He has also given me the most support during my training. I know he pretty much has to because he's my husband, but he has really been there for me. He has been very helpful especially when there are times I need a little extra help with my technique, and he is always willing to practice with me. I eventually talked him into training with me, not only so he could better help me train, but also so he could benefit from the training. He has reassured me at times when I was disappointed with my skill level or performance in certain areas. It has been invaluable to me and I know I would have struggled through these times to overcome my hang-ups.

I want to thank him for holding me accountable as well. There have been days I needed a little extra push after a long, tiring shift at work to turn right back around and go work out instead of parking my butt on the couch and grabbing a bag of chips. It has been hard to commit to a regular training schedule when my work schedule can vary so much. He is the master of the guilt trip when it comes to skipping workouts. His rock solid dedication has been an inspiration to me throughout our training. He has been a man on a mission, and he never hesitates to remind me that I have one too.

Most of all I want to thank him for taking this journey with me and not just supporting me or telling me I need to go to class. He very easily could have continued to play basketball with his buddies two or three nights a week while I went to class. But he decided this was so important to me, that he wanted to be there experiencing it with me. I believe it is a much more noble idea to leave the sidelines as a cheering spectator and actually jump into the race together all the way to the finish line.

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Black Belt Community Service Project – Stephanie Lane

I will be bringing the employees of the Newburyport McDonalds to the Ronald McDonald Charity House in Boston, Mass to cook dinner for the families that are staying at the home. I have a signup sheet for the employees hanging on the employee communication board at the store so we can track who is going to attend. The employees who are interested in going have until the 7<sup>th</sup> of March to sign up so we have time to draft a schedule to cover those who are participating.

Once we know how many employees are attending, we will choose a day that both the store and the Charity House agree on to cook dinner.

This will be very beneficial to the families at the home because it will allow them to relax and spend more time with their sick children.



# *Matt Randall's* **Black Belt Academy, Inc.**

## **How I use my martial arts training outside the dojang. Larry Lane**

I joined MRBBA primarily to get involved in the same activity / sport as my wife, Stephanie, and why not measure progress by marching towards the honorable achievement of earning a black belt. Due to the excessive passive activities in my job today (meetings, emails, voicemail, phone calls, driving, more meetings and emails) I actually “unwind” by engaging in demanding physical activity whenever I have the opportunity. Basketball, trips to the gym, an occasional snow or water ski run, anything with fast action and a high level of activity works well for me. Coming out to kick and punch the coaching mitts and slammer pads is a great equalizer to a long day.

Because Stephanie was a member of the ITP team, I jumped in to learn more about what I thought would be martial arts but turned into be about how to share what I have been learning with others. A month later, I found myself up front leading classes as a fledgling yellow belt. Luckily, I received a gray belt so that the advanced rank students wouldn't wonder what was going on. I shed the gray belt after leading about 30 classes. Color didn't seem to matter as the students and parents began to trust me to provide the level of training that they needed. Leading classes really started to become a fun activity and began to grow at that point.

Being in a position of leadership at work since my teenage years, and a Dad for over 20 years, I am always looking for “new and improved” ways to motivate others to want to excel. Successful leaders in the business world have two things in common. They understand or have excellent knowledge of the business that they are leading and they know how to motivate or inspire others to want to succeed. Lacking one of those two areas makes it difficult to be a great leader. Although most real world situations differ greatly from a martial arts class, there are many elements that are shared. People always respond better when treated with courtesy and respect. Positive results in all aspects of life are more likely when efforts are combined with discipline and perseverance. Bad results are also avoided by maintaining self control. Keeping people focused and engaged enables them to learn, grow, and achieve more. It is also helpful to keep people motivated by having “new material” to present. If you conduct a meeting to educate people about an important area of the operations, and you meet weekly using the same agenda delivering the same message, people will sleep at the meetings or at the very least, lose their mental alertness level to a point where nothing will be retained. New concepts, ideas, and goals must be periodically introduced. It is great to have a new resource to draw from in the process of business evolution. In the business world, much like the martial arts world, there is no such thing as status quo. You are either growing or run the risk of stagnating. There is no flat line or “happy medium”.

# *Matt Randall's* **Black Belt Academy, Inc.**

My list of people that I would like to thank for their inspiration, knowledge, and guidance is long: The Randall family, Master Lindquist, Mr. Bell, Mr. P, all of my co-instructors, the many students who have put their trust in me with their training, the many parents who have taken the time to share their views on what is important to them with the training of their children. Master Lindquist who has taken time out of his schedule to provide some additional intense training down the final stretch to the black belt test is greatly appreciated. Although my helmet now has a few permanent footprints, I have learned to focus more on keeping my guard up. My original SWAT team members who are now co-instructors, Miss Hayes and Mr. Schultz, and of course the very lovely Mrs. Stephanie Lane who not only sacrificed a bone in the interest of training, but also encouraged me to take the time out of a hectic and busy schedule to get involved with the Academy. The experience has been tremendous and I look forward to a continued journey of learning, training, and helping our terrific students to achieve new levels.

One person that I would like to especially thank for being an amazing black belt role model is Mr. Luke Dobson. I was impressed from the day that I first met Mr. Dobson with the confidence, professional conduct, Do Jang culture, "yes I can" optimism, and of course his martial arts skills. After meeting him, I quickly decided that if this young man could be all of that at such a young age, then anyone with a positive attitude and a little self discipline could succeed on the journey to earning a black belt.

Mr. Dobson is always a great training partner and you have to admire his courage as he holds his ground with many training partners who are at least twice his size, although he is catching up quickly. He has always cheerfully offered to pitch in and help with classes and has been great with leading the weapons /forms part of the class as his skills are much greater than mine making it easy for him to teach it. He would often sacrifice his own training time to help when I have frequently called on him and he has done so with a super positive "Yes I can" attitude.

One of my training highlights is having the opportunity to have Mr. Dobson as a mentor during the final preparations for the upcoming black belt test for both myself and Mrs. Lane. He is patient, enthusiastic, knowledgeable, and handles the role like a real professional. He is also extremely thorough and quite comfortable offering constructive feed back which I value tremendously. I hope to someday be able to take on that responsibility and handle it as well as he does.

*Larry Lane*

# Matt Randall's Black Belt Academy, Inc.

## Community Involvement Project

Larry Lane

My community project involved working with Roger Allen Park Association to raise funds sufficient enough to purchase a scoreboard for one of the fields at Roger Allen Park in Rochester, NH.

Roger Allen Park is an outdoor sports field complex that has been serving thousands of athletes from the surrounding communities for many years. It offers baseball, softball, t-ball, football and soccer fields for league play.

By coordinating efforts between the association, the local McDonald's Restaurants, and the surrounding community, a total of \$2948 was raised to purchase and install a scoreboard at one of the fields at the park. The scoreboard will be there to benefit the leagues, athletes, and parents who visit the park for many years to come.

## New McDonald's reopens at old location; weekend sales benefit local school's track

By JOEY CRESTA  
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**ROCHESTER**—McDonald's on Wakefield Street has a history in this community going back to 1971 and this weekend part of its proceeds will benefit an area school in celebration of the restaurant's grand reopening.

The fast-food chain's location on Wakefield Street has been closed since March while crews made renovations to give it an updated look. The overhaul faced a setback when someone committed an arson in early September. Investigators never found those responsible.

According to owner Peter Napoli of The Napoli Group LLC, the fire set construction back about a month. Officials held a cocktail party celebrating the reopening Thursday night. Those in attendance included owners, managers, city councilors and other familiar faces in the community.

The gala was a fancy affair for what is normally considered a low-key eatery. Ushers outside the building donned top hats, bow ties and coattails as they checked invitations and held doors open for guests.

The inside of the restaurant also presents a new look for McDonald's. The decor comes in shades of black,

### ROCHESTER

brown and orange, giving it a sleek, modern feel. A fireplace crackles in a corner and flat screen televisions adorn the inner walls.

Napoli said the renovations give it a more upscale casual dining feel. The alterations come on the heels of McDonald's evolved menus, with Angus beef burgers and more salad options prominent on the familiar menu hanging above the front registers.

The outside features two ordering points for drive-thru customers. It will make ordering on-the-go a quicker experience, Napoli said.

The restaurant reopened to customers on Friday, Napoli said the community has always supported his restaurant and the new facility allows The Napoli Group to reinvest into the community. During the gala, The Napoli Group gave a check that will provide funding for a new scoreboard at Roger Allen Park.

Also in celebration of the reopening, 10 percent of all proceeds earned this weekend, Nov. 13-15, benefit the Chamberlain Street School.

Principal Steve LeClair said the funds will go toward resurfacing a quarter-mile track be-

hind the school.

"It's a real godsend," he said.

LeClair said the restaurant's convenient location makes it a prominent part of the community. He remembered the times that events were held at Spaulding High School when McDonald's offered a quick chance to "zip across the road" and grab a coffee or a bite to eat. "This really is a place that's in the fabric of our community," he said.

Economic Development Director Karen Pollard agreed. She said nearly everyone has fond memories of McDonald's. Given current challenges related to the recession, she said other businesses are in "duck and cover" mode, but The Napoli Group saw it as a chance to adapt its restaurant into something that Rochester residents and McDonald's customers want in today's world.

"This is a result of that vision," she said. "I can honestly say I've never been in a McDonald's like this one. It's like the McDonald's of the future."

Ronald McDonald will be at the restaurant today for a meet and greet. On Monday and Nov. 23, cheeseburgers will be available for 38 cents to celebrate the restaurant being in the community for 38 years.



**OFFICIALS CONVENE** at the renovated McDonald's on Wakefield Street to commemorate its reopening Thursday night. From left are co-owner Sal Napoli, senior area supervisor Larry Lane, co-owner Peter Napoli, restaurant manager Mykle Lepene and vice president of operations Tim Doyle.