



OUR NEWS

WINTER BREAK FUN SHOP!

School is out, but the training continues



The Fun Shop is an all-day educational program designed to help students develop self-confidence and improve self-esteem through fun activities. The program was created by Grandmaster Clifford C. Crandall, a retired superintendent of schools and founder of the American Martial Arts Institute. This was the 30th year of the Fun Shop and the students become more well-rounded and better prepared

for success in school, sports, and family commitments. On February 16 and 17, twenty children ages 6-12, attended this year's Winter Fun Shop. The Fun Shop was overseen and organized by Headmaster Eric Staloch with assistance from multiple black belt instructors.

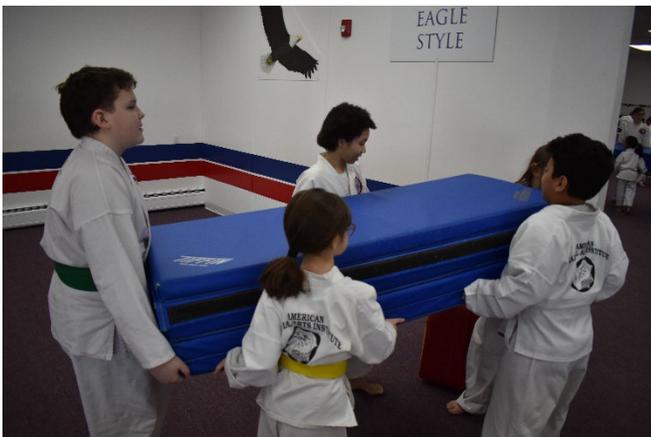
MONDAY'S FUN



Monday started with team formation. Students were be put into their teams, learned each other's names, and were given a Team Name. This started the process of building their collaborative skills and basic leadership concepts. This was followed by **Spin the Wheel and Hit the Target!** Students spun a wheel with challenges listed such as push-ups, burpees, kicks, sparring drills, or team challenges. They then threw foam balls against the 6-foot inflatable "dart board" to find out how many they would do. It was a great workout and a lot of fun. The morning continued with the **Sparring Class.** Students learned the rules of sparring, and how a traditional sparring competition division is

run and judged. Time will be taken to discuss sparring gear, safety, and horseshoe-structure. This helped to prepare them for the sparring competition in the afternoon. Time was also taken to discuss our school's

tournament, planned for March 2027! Following two hours of physical activity, students learned to play **Chess**. Chess helps with pattern recognition which is also important in sparring concepts. Time was taken with higher ranks to discuss strategies that also apply to sparring, such as combinations, blocking, spacing, timing, and set-ups. Sensei Salsberg assisted in teaching chess with our giant chess board. During lunch, the brown belts played on the giant chess set. A group picture was taken before lunch.



LUNCH. Students either brought their lunch or had pizza, eating at tables set up in our observation area. Once done eating, they had time to play mini-golf, practice katas, use the giant connect four set, and more.



The afternoon began with the **Extension Tool Class**. Sensei Salsberg taught students about the extension tool our school offers such as the bo, tonfa, sai, kama, sword, and others. Headmaster Stalloch and Master Freleigh assisted. Time was taken to discuss our school tournament's extension tool division. Then it was back to physical action. During the **Floor Skills Class** students learned and practiced shoulder roll, cartwheels, and "Meet Mr. Floor", which are required during testings in our school. This was followed by the **Sparring Competition**. After the first rounds, students with sparring gear learned more sparring gears with practice rounds and whacker

sparring. White and orange belts practiced testing requirements in small groups with more individual attention. The day concluded with **Sumo Wars!** Students used the "bubble suits" on the mats in an exciting competition to see who can move the rubber pig from one end of the training hall to the opposite team's goal. Bubble sumo is rarely done in regular classes and is a favorite activity each year. Students played chess and practiced katas until picked up by parents between 4:30 and 5 pm. Regular classes were still held in the evening!





TUESDAY'S FUN



Tuesday's excitement started with **Katas to Music** and a **Tournament Competition**. Students practiced their kata for 40 minutes to exciting music in small groups focused on improving skills. Students who did not know their entire kata learned more. This was followed by a traditional kata tournament for yellow belts and higher with everyone demonstrating pal-gwe 2 for the judges. Next was **Karate Man Says!** Similar to "Simon Says", with students competing to see who could follow the directions the best. Three great rounds! This was followed by the final rounds of the **Sparring Competition**. Winners are listed below.

After the competition, students with sparring gear practiced with multiple rounds for another forty-minutes, and white and orange belts practiced come-along techniques and ippon kumites.



Following lunch, Sensei Strachen presented a class called "**Our School**" Topics included an overview of our **school's roots and history**, and answered questions such as What is a Grandmaster? What is a Master Instructor? What is American Eagle Style? What other styles does our school offer? And more! Students toured

the school to see certificates, pictures, and resources. A highlight of the day included the **MEGA Obstacle Course**. It filled all of room 3 including, mats, bags, axe throwing, agility barrels, trampolines, and more. While teams were waiting their turn, they **learned self-defense techniques** with Master Freleigh and Master Chuff with help from other instructors. Next was a class about **Board Breaking and Meditation Demonstrations!** This was NOT a class to break boards. Headmaster Stalloch taught what breaking is, how to set up for fundamental board breaks, and the power of the mind and its role in breaking demonstrations. Brown Belts received an opportunity to break. Headmaster Stalloch demonstrated walking barefoot on broken glass.



This skill is rarely demonstrated. Time was taken to discuss the demonstration. The day ended with **Whack-a-doo Karate**. Students worked as teams using double-ended padded “whackers” normally used for blocking drills to move a balloon to the other team’s goal. The activity required hand-eye coordination. A great cardiovascular workout!





**The SUMMER FUNSHOP will be held in July 2026,
and next year's Winter Fun Shop will be held in February 2027.**

Kata Competition Winner

Joe'l Cabral



Sparring Division

1st Place – Leif Hurlburt

2nd Place – Larry Matthias

3rd Place – Ronald Raymer



ABOUT OUR ARCHIVES

The American Martial Arts Institute maintains a library at its main office with records of rank promotions, events, publications, media coverage, photographs, and videos. These are in the form of photo albums, copies of our publications, preserved news articles, and digital files such as videos and photographs from events in our history. In 1998, the American Martial Arts Institute launched its first website. Since then, the website has undergone many updates to keep up with changing technology. Many of our school's events and history are recorded on this website; however, not all testing results are maintained online (although testing records are maintained at our school). Events prior to 1998, are kept at our school library. This webpage documents some of our school's history.

For more information visit AMAI-EagleStyle.com.

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