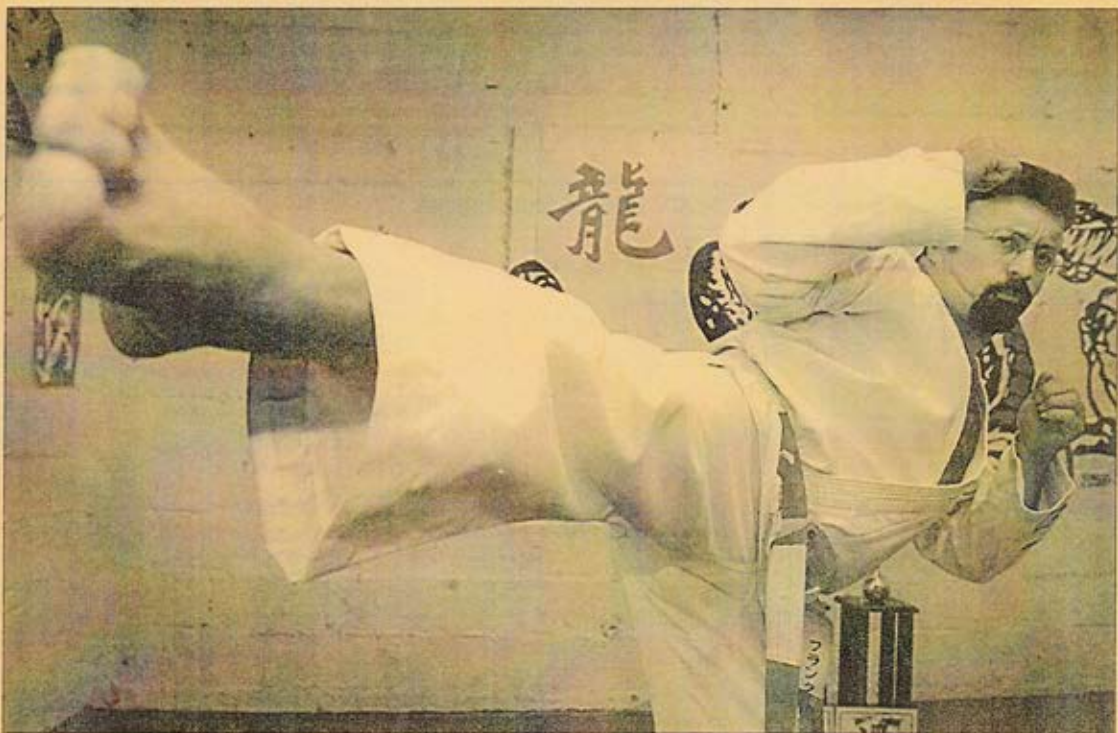


Alive and kicking



Academy of Martial Arts owner and master instructor Frank Caliguri puts his best foot forward at his training academy in Lower Burrell.

JEFF SWENSEN, staff photographer

Kata master comes out of retirement to capture world title

By Paul Kogut
Staff writer

Combining drama and martial arts prowess, Frank Caliguri came out of retirement to capture his first world masters kata title.

Kata is the performance of 30 to 130 continuous movements in a fighting pattern without an attacker.

The last time the 52-year-old Caliguri competed in the United States Karate Alliance (USKA) World Championships three years ago, he placed fifth.

But Caliguri was going to attend the annual championships in New Orleans from Aug. 2 to 5 as part of his duties as a member of the organization's hall of fame committee anyway.

And he was intrigued by some of the competitors.

"I felt confident, but I didn't know if I'd do anything," Caliguri said.

"There were some masters there with a very high ranking. Normally, you don't see that many high caliber people turn out."

Caliguri is the owner and master instructor at Academy of Martial Arts, which has locations in Arnold and Lower Burrell.

Caliguri began training about six

months before the competition. He competed in the kata masters division for men 45 and older with sixth-degree or higher black belts.

About 30 competitors entered the same division as Caliguri.

"I felt like I wanted to get out there and do it one more time," said Caliguri, an eighth-degree black belt. "I was working pretty hard. I heard the competition would be pretty good."

Caliguri's wife, Nancy, also emerged from retirement — of seven years — and took third place in the women's masters kata division.

Nancy was promoted to sixth-degree black belt at the world tournament by the United States Karate Alliance and the International Karate Kobudo Federation.

The highest degree black belt is 10th.

"She's gone through some injuries, but she's been working out regularly again," Frank said.

"The injuries are gone. I was going, and she said she'd compete, too."

Ryan Kish, 13, of Lower Burrell proved his versatility at the world tournament.

Kish claimed second place in kata,



JEFF SWENSEN, staff photographer

Masters of Martial Arts members who placed in the recent world championships are from left, Frank Caliguri, Nancy Caliguri, Kelli Caliguri, Amy Trulik, Ryan Kish and Josh Caliguri.

third in kumite (fighting) and fifth in weapons.

Amy Trulik of Apollo finished fifth in black belt women's kumite.

The USKA 2001 national points standings are final.

Kelli Caliguri of Lower Burrell

ranked fourth in women's intermediate kata and 10th in kumite. Josh Caliguri of New Kensington ranked fifth in advanced kata. And Jason Caliguri, also of New Kensington, ranked 10th in men's brown belt kumite.