

DMMA members attend Tang Soo Do Federation tournament



DANIELSON — On June 7, members of the Danielson Martial Arts Academy attended The Federation Challenge Tournament hosted by The Cheezic Tang Soo Do Federation. DMAA took home numerous medals in each division.

- 9-10 Year Olds:
Boys:
Dexter Gagner:
4th Sparring
- Junior Blackbelt 9-10 Year Olds:
Girls:
Autumn St. Jean
2nd Forms
1st Weapons
- Junior Blackbelt 13-14 Year Olds
Boys:
Colby Densmore
1st Breaking
4th Forms
1st Sparring
4th Weapons
- Junior Blackbelt 15-17 Year Olds:

- Girls:
Kyra Dionne
2nd Forms
1st Sparring
- Boys:
Hunter St. Jean:
2nd Breaking
4th Forms
3rd Sparring
2nd Weapons
- Blackbelt Adult:
Women:
Dawn Dionne:
1st Forms
1st Sparring
Cathleen Anderson:
2nd Breaking

- Melinda Densmore
3rd Breaking
2nd Forms
2nd Sparring
1st Weapons
- Men:
Brian Densmore:
3rd Breaking
3rd Forms
4th Sparring
1st Weapons
- For more information regarding classes at Danielson Martial Arts, please call 860-779-0699 or visit their Web site at danielsonmartialarts.com.

Organic is a SNAP at Assawaga Farm

BY CRIS CADIZ

PUTNAM — A good landmark to find Assawaga Farm’s winding dirt driveway if you’re zooming along on Route 44 from Putnam is the small park next to Five Mile River. Just past it on the left is the farm entrance. The word “assawaga” is the original Native American name for Five Mile River. It means “place between” or “half-way place” in Nipmuc. Tucked between two waterways, Five Mile River to the west and the Mary Brown Brook to the east, Assawaga Farm is literally the “place between.”

Farm founders Alex Carpenter and Yoko Takemura discovered the property ten years ago, as they searched further and further from New York City, where they had met and lived before deciding to start their own farm. Like many, they struggled to find affordable property. “Eventually, we found the Quiet Corner, which we didn’t know existed,” says Takemura. They were pleased with Putnam’s accessibility to Boston, Providence and Worcester and with the quality of the land. “The property is completely bound by the river,” says Carpenter. “This was really good, prime agricultural soil—the best we could find in our budget.”

Embraced by two streams, the land featured fertile ground and excellent biodiversity. The property had historically been used for cattle, later for hay, then lay fallow for 15 years. It had never been sprayed with chemicals. The perfect place to start an organic farm. “When we saw the land for the first time, a bald eagle flew over,” recalls Takemura. “And a coyote ran across the field. We were like, if that’s not a sign, then what is?”

Fast forward ten years. What was once an empty field surrounded by towering white pines and mature deciduous trees is now a farm with one acre of perfectly neat rows of vegetable and flower beds edged by a hedgerow just under the forest canopy.

“We’ve got 26 different varieties of native or regional pollinator perennials plus a lot of woody things like elderberries,



Alex Carpenter and Yoko Takemura of Assawaga Farm.

hazelnuts, bush cherries, June berries,” says Carpenter. There are 16 permanent 100-foot beds. Crops include garlic, onions, asparagus, brassicas, greens, rhubarb, peppers, herbs, plus tomatoes grown in the high tunnel. Assawaga Farm specializes in some Japanese varieties of herbs, greens, peppers, and eggplants, but being certified organic really sets them apart. They also sell berries, cut flowers and open the season in spring with a popular plant sale of veggie, flower and herb seedlings and dahlia tubers. Two large high tunnels, a greenhouse and a post-and-beam barn complete the infrastructure. Carpenter and Takemura are nearly finished building their own house a short walk from the barn. All of this—plus digging a well and installing the long driveway and parking area—they built from the ground up. “It’s a slightly less orthodox way of going at it,” Takemura admits. “Most farmers are looking for a farm. We don’t know many people that buy raw land and build the house they live in.” Assawaga Farm is a hand-powered, no-till farm and one of the few certified organic farms in the region. Basically, this means they use natural processes and materials to grow crops while promoting ecological balance and preserving biodiversity. They follow additional guidelines: minimizing use of fossil fuels and plastic, avoiding all pesticides including organic ones, and installing perennial wildlife and pollinator habitats. They encourage resource recycling, such as making their own

compost and sourcing compost materials (like leaves) from the community. “We are stewards of the land and as such we strive to keep the land productive for many future generations to come,” Carpenter and Takemura proudly state. Carpenter says they have steadily evolved the past ten years, noting “A lot of farmers want to get bigger and bigger. If anything, we want to get more and more compact and focus on the quality and the efficiency of our farm.” Six years ago, they thought it would be just the two of them; they didn’t want employees. But they started hiring farmhands and don’t regret it. “We realized it’s nice to have help and we can be more efficient that way,” says Carpenter, who appreciates being able to quit at 4 or 5 p.m. and take Sundays off. They also enjoy mentoring. “What we’re doing is different from a lot of farms, so being able to pass that on and inspire people is important,” he says. “Now we have an amazing crew and our work-life balance in the last couple of years has been fantastic.” Assawaga Farm’s on-site market happens in the barn every Saturday morning from late May through November. Every Thursday, they pack up a van and head to Brookline to sell produce and flowers to Boston dwellers from June to November. While they’ve always taken SNAP at the Brookline Market, this year Assawaga Farm is taking advantage of a new UConn Extension initiative, Grown ConNECTed

for All, which encourages Northeast CT SNAP recipients to buy healthy food at local farms. SNAP (the federally funded Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) can be used to pay for food grown or produced by small farms who are SNAP certified retailers. This includes vegetables and fruit, meat and dairy, preserved goods, honey, maple syrup, even seedlings so that customers can grow their own. Accepting SNAP as payment entails a farm to use a smart device that connects to a card reader. This allows customers to meet the farmer where they are, whether it’s at a farmer’s market, at the farmstand or farm store, or even out in the field. Assawaga Farm wasn’t sure they’d get any SNAP recipients at their on-site market, so they wondered if the cost of participation would be a wise investment. However, the program waives fees for farms for two years, helps them with the application process, and provides the SNAP/EBT card reader, all at no cost. Petros Papadopoulos is a farmhand at Assawaga Farm and proud to help provide beautiful and flavorful produce for their loyal customer base — “people who value food that has never been sprayed with harmful chemicals and that lasts in the fridge.” “Being a smaller farm a bit off the beaten path adds real barriers to accessing our food, but we work to keep our prices accessible,” says Petros. “Grown ConNECTed has given us a cost-free way to accept SNAP, which means more potential customers can choose our produce without payment type standing in the way. Everyone deserves access to food grown with care; accepting SNAP is a concrete way we can make that real.” Assawaga Farm’s on-site market in East Putnam is open to all every Saturday from 9 a.m. to noon. They accept SNAP and FMNP (WIC and Senior Farmer’s Market Nutrition Program). See their website for a weekly veggie list and to sign up for e-mail updates.

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5:30 in the morning by motor. Arriving at their destination, the picnickers will have lunch and probably ascend the mountain, returning home late in the evening. The Baccalaureate service is to be held on Sunday evening at 7:00 o'clock in the Westfield church. The program will be in charge of Rev. Harding W. Gaylord and ministers of other churches in the vicinity will be in attendance and will occupy places upon the platform...On Wednesday afternoon the high school baseball team will meet the Alumni nine in their annual contest. Alumni who desire to play on their team are requested to get in touch with Norman A. Reeves at once. Thursday afternoon at three o'clock the Class Day exercises of the graduating class are to be held in the Town Hall and at eight o'clock the Commencement exercises will be held at the same place. Friday evening June 25, the annual reception and dance will be given by the alumni at Wildwood Park..." (p.1).

The class motto was Pret d' accomplir (Ready to Accomplish). The colors were garnet and gold; the class flower was the Jack Rose. Officers were President-Denton Gallup, Vice President-Mildred Tillinghast; Secretary-Helen Keech, and Treasurer-John Crosby. The class photo included the following individuals: J. D. Potter, Fay Logee, Josh Crosby, Mildred Tillinghast, Denton Gallup, Helen Keech, Leslie Conklin, Gladys Cooke, Henry Stoddard, Walter LaPierre, Elizabeth McGorty, Beatrice Foster, Zylpha Coddington, Robert Fulton, Thelma Cogan, Ralph Bowen, Elsie Laine, Sadie Gorman, Helen Caffrey, Rose Milone, Gunner Gunderson, Helen Brown, Ruth Litch, Flora Keech, Edith Gallup, Mary Young, Rosa Nielsen, Scott Page, James McMerriman, Reuben Shekleton, Paul Young, Douglass Logee, Wanda Neijadlik, Doris Potter, Ella Sheffield, Elmer Major, and Harold Warner.

I found photos for only two sports in the 1926 Killionian. The Girls' Basketball Team had Miss Bryant for a coach. Players were Henneault, Beckett, Lambert, Hammett, Keech (Mgr.), Clark, McGorty, Stevens, and Foster. The Boys' Basketball Team pictured Brennan, Fulton, Potter, Conklin (Captain), Allen, Gallup, Crosby, Logee (Mgr.), Barrett, Brundage (Coach), Spencer, and Stoddard. Perhaps you recognized the name of a relative in the graduating class or in one of the sports lists. The Killingly Historical Center is home to the Killingly High School Alumni files. They are a good place to search for relatives as teens and reveal much about a person's interests.

While I was in the Transcript, I checked to see what was happening in local sports in 1926. This was an era when the local mills sported teams. "Assawaga wins by Early Lead. Dayville Nine Defeats Team from Harrisville 8-5. All Subs Get in Game. Playing before the largest crowd of the season...piling up a large score the local team gave all the men a change to get into the game. Lavalley, playing center field, caught a fly, and made a perfect throw to the plate, getting the runner out." Players for Assawaga were Weaver, 2nd; Bebeau, ss; Teatreault, 1b, p; O'Neill, rf; A. Fortier, rf; Lehrer, rf; R. Fortier, 3b; Gregoire, cf; Russell, lf; Gasiorok, c; Lavalley, p, cf; Brennan, lf; Rivers, Mathieu. (The Assawaga mill was in Dayville, later the site of Prym's factory on the Five Mile River). (WCT, p. 3).

Have you heard of a restaurant called The Laurel? (There was no location given in the ad. I wondered if it was located in Killingly or perhaps Brooklyn). "Special dinners from 11.30 until 2 o'clock week days. Sunday, chicken dinners 12.30 to 2. Special suppers 5 to 7 on week days. Sundays, a la carte. Try our strawberry shortcake. Saturdays, baked beans and brown bread. Tuesday, doughnuts." I haven't had brown bread in ages. It wasn't something that I grew up with in Pennsylvania. (p.4). There was also an ad for The Pariss Rose Garden, A. H. Stebenne, Prop., Miss Lillian Parr Assistant manager, Main Street Danielson. "We have it-The Tasty Delicacy Ice Cream Chocolate Coated Made in the Sanitary Place Special for Saturday and Sunday-Rainbow Dish. Bring your friends, we will welcome you. Soda and Light lunches." If you were a young man in 1926, you might sport a snazzy straw hat. Shumway Clothing was advertising "Lamson-Hubbard Straws. Young men's flat-foot Sennit. Always a leader." NOTE: The Windham County Transcripts can now be accessed directly at <https://killingly.historyarchives.online/>

Margaret M. Weaver Killingly Municipal Historian, June 2026. Special thanks to Suzanne Gosselin for assistance with the new direct access to the Transcripts. For additional information email me at margaretmweaver@gmail.com or visit the Killingly Historical Center at 196 Main St., Danielson, Wednesday or Saturday 10 a.m.-4 p.m. or call 860-779-7250. Like us at Facebook at www.facebook.com/killinglyhistoricalsociety.