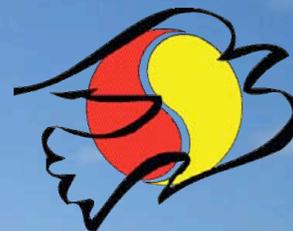




BAHAMAS & CARIBBEAN  
AIKIWA WADO KAI  
KARATE DOH/KUBUDO

## Reflections of BAHAMAS 2010



I felt a great joy in being part of this historic visit by the Toronto Wado-Kai Karate Club once again to the land of our affiliate Bahamas Wado-Kai Karate Club. It has been a real delight meeting and greeting everyone, and watching both the Canadian and Bahamian karatekas meet, mingle, share and train together. It was a wonderful way to relive the 37 years of association with Freeman; and it was especially brilliant to see Annamae and their grown children after so many years, Neesy (Cheryl Denise; making the trip from Fort Lauderdale, Florida with her daughter Mya) and Frank (coming up from Nassau).

There certainly has been the feeling of a closer connection between the groups in recent times. There was the year-long planning of this trip with all the communications between the BahamaMamas, Sensei Lenore Eng and Veronica Cizmar, and Freeman's many supporters in organizing the trip; there was Freeman's visit last June at the Wasaga Beach Training Camp 2009 and, since our visit south, Anton Carey has already visited Toronto the first weekend in April, hot on the heels of our return home.

I wish to again congratulate Sensei Freeman and Annamae on their new ranks of Rokudan (6th Degree Black Belt) and Yodan (4th Degree Black Belt) respectively. It was really nice to be able to make these presentations on your home ground.

It was 18 years ago when the first large group ventured to the Bahamas. We had a wonderful time this year. Although the weather was unusually cool, it certainly did not put a damper on the festivities and training, enhanced by the enthusiastic Bahamian hospitality. Let us not wait so long for another opportunity to connect.

I also want to personally thank our BahamaMamas, Sensei Lenore Eng and Veronica Cizmar for their leadership, dedication and commitment to this successful endeavour.

Best Regards,  
Sensei Dave Manara, 9th Dan

This is a formal "Thank you" and my "brief reflection" of the events and experiences of BAHAMAS 2010. "I have had my say... literally and figuratively... I look forward to others' comments and feedback"... I am ready for my close-up now!

I leave the details to various groups and individuals, to document the true extent, depth and the coverage afforded this special issue. On behalf of the leadership of Wado-Kai Karate in this Region, I congratulate all for the significant, singular contributions to our efforts here, and in particular, to the Grand Bahamas-wide Community Youth Karate training/development programs and initiatives. We look forward to our continued (corporate) thrusts into our sister Caribbean nations, and local communities, as we continue to grow and develop our Bahamas base.

### Spring/Summer Programs and Schedules 2010

- Annual Spring/Easter Tournament and Demo: SJW Centre Tues/Wed, April 13-14
- Trophies/medals and ranking award presentations: Wednesday, April 14
- Earth Day April 22, 2010 recognition: April 19-23
- Annual "In Honour of Mothers Day" Centre Demos & Essays-May 3-7
- Karate Programs Annual "Mothers Day Open House"-SJW: Monday, May 10
- "Karate T-shirts Saturdays" Summer Program: Kick-off June 26 of the 10 week, 10am-noon Saturday morning program for neighbourhood youth. Venue/Registration-see Sensei Freeman

Regards,  
Sensei Freeman Thurston, 6th Dan

Chief Instructor – Community Youth Karate Training & Development Programs  
Founder / Chief Instructor Bahamas & Caribbean Aikiwa Wado Kai Karate / Kubudo (B&CWKK)

## Toronto Wado-Kai Participants

Eric Bergman-Ajax/Pickering  
Julie Bergman-Ajax/Pickering  
Leaton Bernard-Bloor Street  
and Markham  
Michael Boisvert-Ryerson  
Mary-Anne Cizmar-Seikikai

Veronica Cizmar-Seikikai  
Joseph Corrado-Bloor Street  
Nadia Corrado-Bloor Street  
Lenore Eng-West End  
Marilyn Gaudio-Thornhill  
Renee Giesta-Ryerson

Russ Gowan-Port Perry  
Ina Kerklaan-West End  
David Manara-Thornhill  
Mike McCarthy-Ryerson  
Alex Nguyen-Thornhill  
Larry O'Grady-Seikikai

Cyndy O'Grady-Seikikai  
David Pignataro-Ryerson  
Nancy Rickard-Port Perry  
Adam Shapiro-Seikikai  
Marley Shapiro-Seikikai

## February 12-13, Day 1 and 2

- We were welcomed to Freeport with warm breezes, welcome signs and the sounds of a junkanoo band.
- Sensei Eric and Julie Bergman led the first beach seminar. Julie began with a killer workout that resembled 'boot camp' with lots of V-crunches, pushups, lunges, squats and low stances drills. At one point Eric even fell over trying to keep up with her! When the second half of this dynamic duo, Eric, took over he challenged us, our teaching methods and ways to direct/answer students' questions in class. He was clearly sharing the expertise of his years in presentation and marketing.
- Group shared an afternoon at Lucaya Market shopping.
- Dinner was graciously held at the home of Sensei Freeman and Annamae Thurston. Food, hospitality and libations were abundant for the first meeting of TWKK and BWKK...and we met the \*Real Bahamamamas\*.

### Karate is Better in the Bahamas!

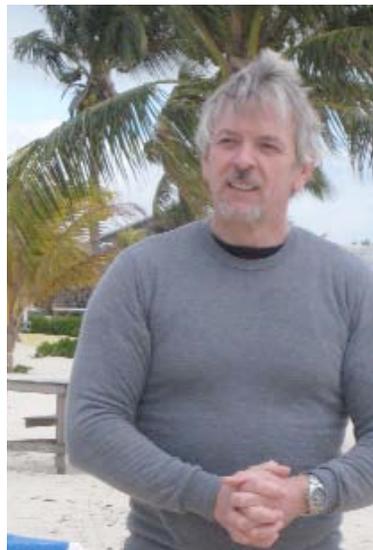
by Nadia Corrado, Bloor Street

I left Toronto on a plane full of strangers but returned from the Bahamas on a plane full of warm, wonderful karatekas with whom I shared many amazing stories and experiences. I had the pleasure of meeting people from all walks of life, from professionals to business owners to costume designers, all sharing one common goal – to practice the sport and art we love so much on a beautiful tropical island.

Nothing can beat learning from the diverse selection of sensei every morning when the sun is beaming on your face and the waves of the ocean are lapping onto the sand. The sound of the water rushing to shore and the birds chirping nearby were a perfect backdrop to our classes, especially Sensei Thurston's 'Fluttering Palms Kata'. I was quite impressed by the grace and elegance of this big, strong man performing the kata. Later that evening, I felt like a graceful ballerina performing this kata to Yanni's, 'Nightingale' and accompanied by the Bahamian karatekas.

The Bahamian karatekas were warm, friendly and made us feel so welcome, as did the other residents with whom I came into contact. I especially recall an incident at the beautiful pristine beach across from the Lucayan National Park where a group of school children were having lunch by the shore. They were so cute all dressed in their school uniforms. They seemed so happy, carefree and having so much fun, but they managed to find a couple of minutes to smile and chat with me, a total stranger.

Although a stranger to this island, I always felt safe and at home with my extended karate family. I look forward to returning. From the interaction with my fellow karatekas and Bahamian community, to our excursions, to the beautiful beaches, it is true what they say... "It's better in the Bahamas".



Eric and Julie led with a combination of **BOOT CAMP** and 'How to answer questions with ease'.



Ina (white belt) was surrounded with ample knowledge and support from Sensei Alex and Leaton.



# Lucaya

# Market

Our own \* SUPERMAN \*

Mike awaits to have his hair braided.



Guys 'shopped 'til they dropped'



An 'all-you-can-eat' resort and Alex is still hungry!



Canada's next top female model



Canada's next top male model



Meeting 'local colour'

BEER - 2.50  
IMPORTED BEER - 2.75  
JUICE - 1.50

## A trip that would bond our groups together

by Sensei Veronica, Etobicoke Dojo

The Bahamas trip was indeed an incredible and a once in a lifetime experience. I only wish more karatekas could have joined us to feel the warmth of our Bahamian colleagues whom we are now proud to call friends.

From the moment we landed at Freeport airport we knew this would be a trip that would bond our group together. Despite the unusually cool weather (we were not prepared for that one) there was never a complaint. Actually, the cool climate was a blessing for our morning workouts. Two hours of training led by a different and dedicated Sensei each day, improved our overall technique and provided us with a wealth of new knowledge that we have all brought back to our dojos. Sensei Freeman's fluttering palms kata was a delight to do to the music of 'Nightingale' and was an inspiration when performed with the Bahamian group at one evening of demonstration. A beautiful way to unite the two cultures through a shared love of karate.

It is difficult to describe the warmth of our group. Having breakfast, lunch and dinner each day, a wonderful outdoor

excursion and sharing the hot tub at night under the stars gave us such great moments that we will remember forever.

Planning the trip with Sensei Lenore was an absolute joy! Our friendship grew quickly and solidified our love for, and dedication to Wado-Kai. Many dear friends have resulted from this trip. I am proud and honored to count Lenore as one of them!

If we plan another trip, I highly encourage more karatekas to join us. Memorable does not begin to describe it!

Valentines were delivered surreptitiously the night before



If 'a photo is worth a thousand words'...can you tell we had a good time?  
THANKS TO SENSEI FREEMAN AND ANNAMAE FOR INVITING US TO THEIR HOME.



## February 14, Day 3

- The morning began with a Valentine at each door.
- Beach Seminar by Sensei Mike McCarthy used a rope to replicate the 'line of attack'. Drills focused on shifting out of the 'line of attack' using blocking, multiple kick combinations over the rope and the addition of weapons.
- Valentine's Day Church Service at Third Day Ministries.
- Beach Seminar by Sensei Leaton Bernard. We were thrilled to have BWKK join us. Assurances were made to partner BWKK and TWKK members, to allow us to 'play' together and get to know each other better. Partner drills used the four main blocks and body shifting while imagining we were on 6 posts. A difficult task, yet fun to do in partners.



## Learn on a daily basis...

By David Pignataro and Renee Giesta - Ryerson

Our experience during the Bahamas Trip 2010 was a once in a lifetime opportunity. It allowed us to learn on a daily basis while also permitting the ability to relax and socialize on the fine white sands of the Bahamas beaches. Reflecting with our Bahamamamas in hand and the meeting/interacting with our karate family from around the world was uplifting. We really enjoyed meeting other Sensei. Each class was unique and focused on a variety of karate concepts. Training with senior black belts furthered our advancement in karate through their wisdom, experience and suggestions for improvement. As a non-karateka member (Renee) it was a great feeling to be welcomed as one of the group especially at the 'Bahamamama Spa' evening with the girls on the trip. Overall this trip allowed us to create new friendships and form new relationships to last a lifetime. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to the Bahamamamas who organized and coordinated an unforgettable trip.



## KEEPING IT REAL with line of attack drills using rope



## Protecting the beach and protecting ourselves



# A SUNDAY MORNING IN THE BAHAMAS

by Ina Kerklaan, West End

As part of the itinerary for Valentines Sunday, a church service has been planned by Freeman. We have been warned they sometimes last four hours. We are picked up at 10:30am by a fellow named Torino Lightbourne, his son and daughter. Our group includes Lenore, Veronica, myself, Cyndy, Larry, Mike and Leaton. After a long drive we end up at the rear of a low slung building...looking nothing like a church.

We are greeted at the door by a tall, elegant woman in pink (Josephine Baker without the bananas). When we enter, as guests of honour, we are seated in the second and third row behind a sensual looking lady in red...the pastor's wife...or co-pastor. When everyone is seated the service begins with a young woman speaking, followed by the lady in red. What starts out slowly with words of praise begins to build with music and the lady in red in front of us begins to pace and praise. As the service builds she takes off her earrings, then later her shoes and soon there is clapping and pointing to the heavens with singing and then dancing. We try our best to fit in by clapping to the beat and moving our hips. I look behind us and Mike, Larry and Leaton are doing what looks to be 'the grapevine'. When we finally start winding down, the lady in red is in tears, she is so moved. We end the praising by greeting each other in peace. Where I go to church, this usually means a polite smile and a handshake. Not so in the Bahamas. I have never hugged so many strangers. One fellow even came around for seconds. Baskets are now passed around as a collection is taken up for the building of the new church. I think this must be close to the end of the service. My head hurts from drinks the night before, and I need to go to the washroom.

As it turns out the hugging and collection were just part of the half-time show. A nice looking man in a well cut suit, monogrammed shirt and crocodile shoes takes to the pulpit. The lady in pink at this point sits on the left side front row and lady in red, the pastor's wife, sits on the right side.

The pastor makes a joke about French kissing his wife at the airport and lady in red blushes coyly. As he begins he calls the same young woman who opened the service to come back up to the front. She has changed outfits to a version of Lulu Lemon monogrammed in glitter with the words "Dancing Girl" on the front. I feel I am watching a version of "So you think you can dance Bahamas" as she gyrates to a spiritual beat. This is the opening act for the pastor's

sermon for Valentines entitled "Love thy neighbor". As the pastor begins to preach the congregation hangs on his every word. Both lady in pink and lady in red even take notes. Again the sermon ebbs and flows as the pastor speaks getting louder and more animated as time goes on. His passionate words, coupled with his pacing up and down the aisle and pulpit area, make it necessary for him to mop his brow frequently. Words of praise are being shouted out by the people now. To make his point at times the pastor focuses his attention on members, guests and eager prodigies. As we all praise the Lord and are urged to 'love thy neighbor'.



Like little kids, we are all feeling restless at this point. My head aches, Leaton is hungry, and is chewing on an old piece of gum he found in his suit, while Veronica eagerly envisions our afternoon karate workout with the BWKK group and Lenore smiles on as she watches the church service play out.

The service ends after only two hours and we make our way out of the church. There are more hugs and the pastor, together with ladies of pink and red, both say their goodbyes and hopes for a pleasant rest of our stay in Freeport. Leaton eyes the cookies the kids are eating as we load ourselves back onto the bus.

We return back to our sacred place, the resort. We eat, drink and laugh as we reflect on our Sunday morning adventure with the rest of the group and surely 'love our Bahamas neighbors'.

**'Alleluia'!**

# BWKK joins TWKK



Leaton begins with 'the circle of love'!



Playing together!



Following Sensei Leaton and **EXTREME REALITY** drills!



We pair up to practice 'protecting our space'.



The bo comes out and the fun begins.

TWKK 'Killer' gets taken down by two separate BWKK 'light weights'



## February 15, Day 4

- Beach Seminar by Sensei Larry O'Grady who is always full of fun games, drills and enlightenment!
- Arrival of Sensei Dave Manara and Marilyn Gaudio
- Press Conference at YMCA. The next day the news feed was on television and photos graced the front page of the sports section. Who would have imagined?
- BWKK reception at the community center with Sensei Manara and Freeman awarding belts and medals to well deserving BWKK members as well as impromptu kata performances along with Leaton Bernard.



Sensei Manara and Sensei Freeman speak to the Bahamas television and **PRESS**



Massages



Stretching



Helping Visitors



Power Transfer



Couple Sparring



Belt Game



Belt Power

## Continuous Laughter & Camaradrie

By Larry O'Grady, Seikikai

It was a pleasure to travel with such a great group of fellow karatekas! Cyndy describes the whole week as one of continuous laughter and camaradrie! Working out on the beach every morning was 'totally awesome' especially with the caliber of Sensei leading the classes. Each session was a great learning experience.

One of the highlights of our trip was a very unique experience for Leaton, Mike, Lenore, Veronica, Ina, Cyndy and myself. On Valentines Day Sunday one of Sensei Freeman's students and his father came by to take us to their church service. After a 40 minute drive around Freeport, we finally arrived at our destination, an old theatre hall, where we were ushered into a 12'x20' room with no windows and stacking chairs. We were greeted by the associate pastor of the Third Day Adventist Church and escorted to the front of the hall as special guests. The music started, the people began to

sing and dance. You could feel the energy building in the room! Now picture this. You had four lovely Caucasian women and one Jamaican fellow, plus two white dudes with no rhythm. The ladies were in the very front row and the fellows were in the second row standing and swaying behind them. Can you picture the following standing 'dancing' 'clapping' side-by-side...Leaton, Larry, Mike... This is where years of karate discipline is of great help. At one point during the service Leaton is begging for food and I get a vision from the movie 'The Blues Brothers' scene where Dan Acroyd and John Bellushi are in the Baptist Church and get the urge to dance and do back flips down the full aisle of the church. I envisioned Mike doing back flips down the aisle of the Church (meanwhile Mike is actually clapping, swaying very conservatively to the music). It took great effort not to laugh out loud. Needless to say Brothers and Sisters, AMEN and ALLELUIA are new greetings used in Toronto Wado Kai. If the opportunity ever comes up again I would highly recommend all karatekas to participate in at least one Bahamas karate trip! You won't be disappointed! Kudos to Veronica and Lenore for organizing the trip!

# SENSEI MANARA GREET'S BWKK



## 'It was nice!'

By Alex Nguyen, Montreal

I signed up for the Bahamas trip about a year ago without knowing much detail and who would be going. I had never been south of Boston, so this was my chance to visit the Bahamas and hopefully meet real Bahamians. Between the time I signed up and the actual trip, I got a new job with CN Rail which forced me to relocate to Montreal - I thought about cancelling the trip, but I'm glad that I stuck with it.

Grand Bahamas island certainly is a beautiful place full of friendly people. The beach was clean, uncrowded and the water was clear. It was our luck to arrive to this tropical paradise while there was a huge cold front hanging around in the southern US. The temperature was cool, the wind was blowing and the sun was playing hide-n-seek. Good thing that we Canadians had no problem with the mild beach temperature of around 10 degree Celsius. It also helped that we were able to bolster our innate abilities with a lot of rum, scotch, tequila, beers and cappuccino while hanging out in the hot tub.

Each morning, we gathered at the beach for a workout. The classes were led by a different Sensei every day and it was great to see the contrast in teaching techniques within our organization. My favourite class was led by our guest instructor, Sensei Freeman, who showed us a brand new kata he created called 'Fluttering Palm'. This is not a standard karate kata. It looked like it was heavily influenced by Tai Chi and Kung Fu with wide circular hand techniques, deep stances and constant flow from one movement into another. Without a doubt, the performance of the kata at the demonstration was priceless. I taped the whole thing.

If you ask whether the trip was worth it, I would definitely say yes. I have been with Wado-Kai since university and have known some of the people almost as long - but it took the trip for me to get to know them well. By spending 8 days and 7 nights together with this group of people, I got to know them better than I ever did in my entire 21 years with the organization.

I would highly recommend that people grab the opportunity the next time it presents itself, and go visit some of our sister clubs. I hear there is one opening in Jamaica.

P.S. Big thank you to Lenore and Veronica for organizing the trip and the hospitality of BWKK.



Sensei Manara shakes hands with everyone



BWKK karateka perform impromptu katas that include Leaton...



...as a proud Sensei Annamae looks on.



- TWKK group excursion to Lucaya National Park to see 'Ben's Cave' and the Lucayan cavern system where on top of layers of salt water, floats the fresh water healing 'fountain of youth'. We hiked mangroves, ate conch for lunch on a spectacular beach, watched a 'conch cracking demo' and saw local landmarks and sights...all guided by 'the best tour guide ever'!
- Bahamas and Toronto Wado-Kai Karate combined for the evening seminar led by Sensei Dave Manara at YMCA. He captivated the group with his calm demeanor and ability to connect with everyone. It was a special sight to behold when he had the children spread out in a circle around him. As the circle closed in with punches as they stepped, you could feel the 'Sensei Power' being shared with the kids. One yellow belt even managed to practice a punch on Sensei Manara.

## **REWARDING! ENJOYABLE! FULFILLING! MEMORABLE! My Bahamas 2010 experience!**

by Sensei Leaton Bernard, Bloor Street/Markham



The enclosed paragraphs and pictures will conjure emotions! Those who were present will smile, sigh, nod and nod again, and smile again! Some will laugh out loud! And there will be HUGS!

I thoroughly enjoyed the camaraderie and fellowship - time well spent with my karate family. Meeting new family members and feeling their genuine spirit, trust, warmth, and friendship - much like we have known each other for decades!

Read and embrace each person's recollection herein, tag along and just picture yourself there...

Having been a part of our Wado-Kai organization since Nov 91, I have been privy to the tales from Sensei Borda, Dods, Manara, Thurston who told of their travels to the Bahamas - of the rare combination of vacation, adventure, and karate fellowship. I vowed to jump at any opportunity to experience such a trip.

Lenore and Veronica, the assigned Bahamamamas, got the plans going early 2009 and I was part of the committed group before Karate Camp in June. Fast forward now to greeting each other at the airport on Feb 12, 2010 - adventure bound!

Everything went as it was meant to - pure harmony and glee on our flight in... feeling like children on a school trip to the amusement park! As we closed in on our destination there was anticipation and movement in the cabin as we chatted about the adventure ahead.

In our anxiety to beat the rush to clear customs and meet our awaiting BWKK airport transport, some of us missed the photo opportunity at the airport --- the Toronto Wado-Kai 'Welcome banner'! Despite the amount of "weapons" and associated combat accessories in our checked

baggages, we cleared security without incident (no comments Sensei McCarthy)...

We arrived at the hotel, checked in, dropped our luggage to began our adventure. But soon thereafter, we were boarding a plane back to Toronto on Feb 19! Where did all the time go?

Well, each morning we gathered for breakfast greeting each other with smiles and hugs as we recall we are truly here in Freeport, as a family, and how lucky we are for the opportunity. I enriched my bonds and forged new ones with all the karatekas and their relatives.

The daily morning 'beach seminars' led by our volunteer Sensei were educational, exciting and well attended - spouses and friends of the visiting karatekas caught 'training fever' and participated in their first karate classes. They were quite an interesting treat to work with! Others who stopped by to watch and participate included a fireman from the USA and a student from Germany - we made some new friends! My training seminar was switched to the afternoon and created an opportunity for our BWKK karatekas to train with us. We filled the beach with an array of white gi / training attire and varying belt colours - a curious and entertaining attraction for those out for a beach stroll and other resort occupants.

Between the morning training sessions and the evening schedule, we found an assortment of activities to keep us busy or relaxed - the hot tub was always a favourite warming spot when the beach was too windy or overcast. Sensei McCarthy and I made a pact to hit the gym daily and did so as long as we had no conflicts with our karate family activities. We sweated out in the sauna and replenished with 'appropriate' supplements. New katas like Pinan Colada comes to mind :)

Our church visit was a fellowship of dances and songs - Hallelujah! Good clean fun and an educating sermon delivered by an invigorating wife and husband team with a supportive and enthusiastic audience that touched our spirits and emotions! Church fellowship and worship is a common Bahamian Sunday practice.

Continued...

## HIKING MANGROVES AND CAVES

Most of us took a day excursion to explore some of the island with two qualified guides who imparted the history of the island. The island is predominantly flat and usually is flooded in several areas during hurricanes. Even in the most severe hurricanes, no lives were lost. The 'laid back' island attitude blends right into the "...go with the flow and ride with the tide..." feeling. The island has no real wild animals. Cats, dogs and chickens were seen about but no livestock like cows or goats - those usually predominate Caribbean countries. Foods like meats and milk are usually imported and sold at a premium. What a lush sunlit island with smiling faces and warm hearts everywhere!

We toured the 40+ acres of Lucayan National Park - named after the Lucayan Indians, the island's original inhabitants. This is home to mangroves, orchids, rare animals and insects, an abundance of wild birds and colourful fish life. The park has entrances to a network of caves.

'Ben's Cave' is the entrance to the Lucayan cavern system; one of the longest surveyed in the world. Also the home of thousands of harmless bats. On top of the depths of sea salt water of the underground, floats the healing "fountain of youth" fresh water said to sustain long life and health. One taste left me a believer!

'Burial Mound Cave' marks the famous spot where the remains of several Lucayan Indians were found preserved under a mound of rock under 6 feet of water. Those bones were removed from the discovery site and are still in some of the world's museums.

The 'Mangroves' are home to a variety of birds, vegetation and sea creatures like the bone fish and conch - two of the most sought after island seafood delicacies.

According to our guide, the natural vegetation also provide healing and life sustaining supplemental benefits. A few examples are:

- Sage - for a relaxing tea
- Strong back - supplements the human male's mating capabilities
- Pond bush - alternate medicine for hypertension and diabetes
- the Love vine - good tea for the immune system or an aphrodisiac (part of the '7 man concoction')... also beaten, squeezed and used as shampoo.

The walk through the large park acreage led out to an amazing and spectacular beach. That beach, although very cold that day even under the glorious sunshine, just had to be explored. It was one of the most beautiful Caribbean presentations I had seen! It was all the eyes could see for miles. You could wade for what seemed like a half mile with the water still below my waist level. We stayed for about an hour, explored and captured the scenery in various group and "modeling" shots!

Continued...



## BEACH

Our arrival dressed for the cool weather.



We resort to 'natural change rooms'



Beach and friends made a wonderful day!



Touring can really make one hunger for some native dishes. For lunch we dined at the guide's favourite eatery 'The Diamond Sunrise Restaurant and bar'. We smacked lips and licked fingers to native dishes like breaded conch, fried plantain, rice'n peas with corn and tartar sauce! We were also treated to some history, life of the conch and a demo on removing the conch from the shell. Conchs are a raw delicacy in salads or cooked in stew, breaded and fried. To wrap up the excursion we visited the same guide's aunt's house, where we got free hugs, purchased souvenirs and an assortment of native home baked treats.

We startled at a lighthouse nearby with a breathtaking scenery overlooking the sea. A popular photography spot especially for soon to be karatekas newlyweds David and Renee, who were coaxed into a touching and intimate pre-honeymoon shot!

Note that during the excursion, I found two locations appropriate for a floating dojo - subject to approvals from Sensei Manara and the Bahamas Port Authority :-)

Sensei Annamae and Freeman Thurston graciously hosted a TWKK / BWKK evening at their house where we were treated to music and a feast of island food delights and assorted spirits. We had the opportunity to meet two other martial arts leaders who later participated in the demonstrations at the YWCA - Sensei Ivan Moss (Jaguar Jui Jitsu and Karate) and Sensei George Wiggins (Shotokan (ISKF) Karate Academy). It was a rewarding social gathering as it created more opportunity to meet and indulge further into our karate family roots.

The press conference with the island's newspaper, 'The Freeport News' made us into immediate celebrities with a full photo spread in the Sports section next day! Smiling, inviting faces in crisp Toronto Wado-Kai crested gis made for a striking presentation! The BWKK reported that the combined karate group was still the topic of several conversations on the island even after we departed.

Another interaction with our BWKK group at the YWCA / Community Centre gave us more chances to meet and greet and chat with each other - smiling faces, warm hugs, and open hearts! Anxious and excited, humans from across the seas far away bonded because they shared something in common - Toronto Wado-Kai Karate! It is here where you feel and understand that karate is not just a martial art, but a community built on integrity, on trust and friendship. These sessions were best described as a 'meeting of family members' training and sharing our karate knowledge. Who else can you just meet and genuinely feel you can trust? I got a chance to share kata and sparring with the different belt levels... and another rewarding experience.

At another meet and greet at the Community Centre, I noticed that Sensei Manara quietly made his way to all the BWKK karatekas shaking each hand as he greeted and introduced himself. He also got the chance to congratulate and be photographed with each of the many who had received trophies or some karate related award



Best Restaurant Food and View!



The Happy Couple



(including belt level promotions). Just imagine each karate-ka in their 'Kodak Karate Moment' with this Sensei - the President and Chief Instructor of the Toronto Wado-Kai organization! "He came to me and shook my hand."! Congratulations Sensei Manara on a successful community organization! You continue to inspire us all.

Continued...

Parents and other community members came out to watch a spectacular display of martial arts at the YWCA featuring our own TWKK / BWKK, Sensei Ivan Moss (Jaguar Jui Jitsu and Karate), and Sensei George Wiggins (Shotokan (ISKF) Karate Academy). It was an exhilarating and electrifying evening! The community of Grand Bahamas is certainly benefiting from the presence of martial arts in their lives. It was comforting and rewarding to experience the fellowship and respect that our martial arts leaders expressed to each other.

The Wado-Kai Awards Presentation night featured several presentations to our Caribbean / BWKK Sensei and the affiliated dojos in our Florida and Caribbean areas - visit [torontowadokai.com](http://torontowadokai.com) and see the additional clubs in Jamaica, South Florida USA, Trinidad and Tobago, and Turks & Caicos Islands. Bahamas 2010 organizers Veronica Cizmar and Lenore Eng were also presented with gifts from our group for our appreciation for an effective and successful undertaking.

I refused to say good-bye to our family - just a promise to keep in touch and visit again soon. There are several Facebook links to our karate family. Feel free to join. With the presence of the internet and all the supporting mediums, I encourage you all to make at least one connection, explore each other's experiences and lives and grow with each other! If you have not met in person, one day you will! For those who have met, continue to nurture relationships and look forward to the day when you will travel and embrace again! I am hoping to see all of the Bahamas 2010 visitors again on the beach as early as this June 18 at Wasaga where we can share, smile, train, fellowship and recollect the Freeport Bahamas shores again.

Finished.



Not many can punch Sensei Manara and still talk about it!



**SENSEI POWER**

TWKK and BWKK share tips and knowledge



February 17, Day 6

- Beach Seminar by Sensei Freeman Thurston teaching us 'Fluttering Palms' for the first time, in preparation for the Demo/Tournament that night!
- Relaxing on the beach
- Group Demos at YMCA of Kata, Kumite, Kubudo and Musical kata featuring:
  - Bahamas Wado Kai Karate
  - Toronto Wado Kai Karate
  - Jaguar Jui Jitsu & Karate Freeport
  - Shotokan Karate Academy Freeport



## What an amazing time!

by Cyndy O'Grady, Seikikai

Couldn't have planned for, asked for, special ordered, a nicer, kinder, more generous group of people to travel and share time with! From the get go everyone got along, laughed, talked, worked out, laughed, drank, ate, smiled, and laughed some more. The sun shone! It was a 'tad chilly' at times, but who cared since all you had to do was go to the bar and order a cappuccino with a little 'something something' in it to warm you up!

A few lessons gleaned from a Bahamas karate wife...

- sand in your (behind) crack can be a good thing, especially if it's sand from the Bahamas !
- white belt, black belt... no matter the colour, they all hold up your pants
- good fortune comes when least expected. It can be from the sky above (Renee knows what I mean !), a great facial and massage, wonderful conversations with new friends, enjoying a 'little' conch or two, even while building sand castles, or riding the waves in a kayak, knowing the shore is right there 'waiting' for you...
- generosity of spirit and heart are inherent traits of all Wado-Kai, traits to be cherished.....

# Fluttering Palm

## Sensei Freeman looked elegant



Everyone ready for the Flutter?



low lunge...



bird pecking!

## We looked spastic!

notice all the different directions ?



The key was to **'go with the flow and ride with the tide'..**



...plus imagine the pecking bird and fluttering palms

**BWJJK hosted a Demo/Tournament featuring:  
 TWKK (Sensei Dave Manara), Jaguar Jui Jitsu & Karate (Sensei Ivan Moss) Shotokan (ISKF)  
 Karate Academy (Sensei George Wiggins) and BWKK (Sensei Freeman Thurston)**



All Wado-Kai perform a unifying 'Fluttering Palm' kata



**Bahamas Wado-Kai Karate**



**Shotokan  
 Karate Academy**



**Jaguar  
 Jui Jitsu & Karate**

**Toronto Wado-Kai**



February 18-19, Day 7 & 8

- Beach Seminar by Sensei Dave Manara featuring self defense and takedown techniques with his favourite target Sensei Leaton.
- Spa Day hosted by Bahamamamas with facial, massages and manicures.
- Awards Presentation Dinner - Bamboo Restaurant
- TWKK Departure



The last day and getting a bit silly!



# BAHAMAMAMAS SPA



With 5 sisters, Larry was totally comfortable with a facial and as our 'Masseuse'



Julie acted as our 'in house Manicurist'



Cyndy



Renee and Veronica



Mary-Anne



Marley



Who gets their nails painted? ...only a secure male.

## Award Banquet Guests of Honour



Awards,  
Presentations  
and Birthdays



‘Big Kids’ and ‘Little Kids’ (You decide?)



### A three-fold pleasure

By Lenore Eng, West End

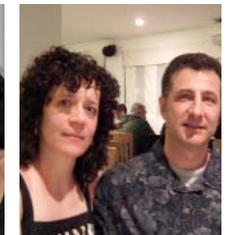
Our trip was located on an island with stunning vistas and warm, hospitable people. The lasting memories and the friends we have made, will be remembered by all those who shared the special event.

For me the pleasure was three-fold. First, ‘the pleasure is in the process’. The time, energy planning and the new friends, made the memories worthwhile. Veronica and I shared the same enthusiasm, passion and work ethic. Getting to know her, is to love her and my privilege. Thank you! Working with the ‘BWKK team’ and ‘devoted duo’ of Sensei Freeman and Annamae warmed my heart. From the beginning we had the support and commitment of a host of karetekas anytime we asked. To those involved...Thank you!

Second, the trip itself! Experiences each day with a group who were so easy-going, made ‘the trip a pleasure and each person a treasure’! I have always talked so highly about ‘karate people’. Having my dear friend Ina finally meet them and be so welcomed, was a treat both for her and I.

Thirdly, the ‘post-trip’ includes the fellowship of Wado-Kai, who are a community of people I’m proud to call friends. Sharing photos, camaraderie, stories, drills and techniques, welcoming Bahamas guests, making efforts to stay connected with Facebook, Flickr and websites have been the delights and will continue. Thank you Sensei Manara for providing us the forum to meet and learn as well as BWKK for sharing their island hospitality and hearts with us.

Warm Couples



Many thanks to Larry and Cyndy for all the photos to save and share the memories!



To see all the 1,500 high res photos  
contact: [bahamamas@live.com](mailto:bahamamas@live.com)



**BWKK and TWKK  
GROUP HUGS  
and MANY THANKS!**

