

His new book promotes martial arts

By Keith Gillett
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A former local resident who got hooked on the art of Tae Kwon Do not only has become proficient at it, earning a 7th Degree Black Belt, he has penned his experiences into a 256-page book that is on sale throughout the country.

Rory Kyle says he wrote the book to help others use Tae Kwon Do to help build up their self confidence, and titled it appropriately, "Tae Kwon Do Man On Building Self Confidence."

Kyle says he got interested in the martial arts when his father came back from Vietnam.

"My father had learned Tae Kwon Do in the Vietnam War. When he came back, I was a freshman in high school. I got interested in it as well because of the Chuck Norris and Bruce Lee movies. My father was my first instructor," said Kyle.

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Kyle graduated from Mascoutah High School in 1975, then went on to Valpraiso University in Indiana where he graduated with a degree in accounting.

"After high school, I took some martial arts in college. I got deeply involved with it by the time I moved down to Texas in 1985, including teaching some classes," he said.

Kyle earned the title of Master in 1992.

"I opened my own school in 1987 and ran it until the beginning of 2003, so I had it for about 16 years. What prompted me to write this book was that I wanted to be able to see if I could influence a wider range of people over those I could teach. If I could write

a book, I could reach hundreds of thousands, maybe millions of people. I wanted to see if I could reach people who knew nothing about martial arts or had a negative view, in order to give them a different perspective," he said.

Kyle said that it took him over two years to write the book, doing it "a little at a time."

In the preface to the book, Kyle writes:

"I decided to create the character of Tae Kwon Do Man for two primary reasons. First, I wanted to bring a little humor and levity to the subject of the martial arts. Over the many years as both a student and as an instructor, all too often I found that the people I talked with had the idea that most martial artists were stoic, sullen,

and stern-faced individuals who went out looking for reasons to fight. They believed that because the training required such a high level of discipline in order to be successful, a martial artist did not know how to relax, have fun and laugh. In my experience, I discovered just the opposite.

"The second reason for creating this character is twofold. First to hopefully help dispel any myths that only athletic people can become successful martial artists. And second, that martial arts training creates and promotes negative aggressive behavior."

"I chose a self confidence approach because I wanted to take a mental aspect of martial arts rather than a physical thing. I wanted people to understand that one of the benefits of martial arts is mental. If someone is lacking in self confidence, I don't think people would have martial arts on a list- it probably would be way down if it was. I just wanted people to understand that martial arts is an excellent way for people to increase their self confidence," said Kyle.

"The book covers from age 12 and a half to 18, and starts out talking about someone who is shy and introverted. The parents tried to get him to be more outgoing and then mom sees something in the yellow pages about martial arts. The book follows the progress of this hypothetical kid and it's loosely based on a combination of actual students I had during those 16 years I taught and other bits and pieces.

"I found that kids in my course got better grades, got out into sports, and had better coordination. It's not written about any particular student, so it's listed as fiction," said Kyle

The book is published through Author House and is available from the company's website at www.authorhouse.com, or from Amazon.com. Other firms that may have it include Borders and Barnes and Noble. It retails for around \$15.

Kyle currently is an independent insurance agent for AFLAC in Alexandria, Va.



RORY KYLE