

# Kung Fu instructor rises to rank of master

by KEATON T. DEPRIEST  
Cheektowaga Editor

In 1969, his friend offered to teach him karate.

Since then, Sifú Norman Mandarin of Amherst has become devoted to his craft — kung fu.

Inspired by the teaching of his mentor, Master Wong Ting Fong, Mandarin wanted to be an expert in kung fu and to instruct others in the discipline.

The two worked together for years, teaching people the deep-rooted philosophy that is part of martial arts.

In July 2006, Mandarin, having fulfilled every condition required in the Right of Passage, was ceremonially given the rank of red sash master, which he said is one of the most valued honors he has received from his livelihood.

"This has been a very rewarding (career)," he said. "You develop a whole series of friends through martial arts."

In Chinese martial arts tradition, a person may assume the rank of master upon three conditions:

- The death of the master of the style.
- A living master no longer feels

able to fulfill his responsibilities and retires.

• It is determined that a new style of kung fu has been created and acknowledged.

Under the tutelage of Master Wong, Mandarin was eligible to reach the rank of master following Master Wong's retirement in 1983, but Sifú Mandarin did not accept because he did not feel he possessed enough wisdom or experience.

Currently, Mandarin teaches from his studio, Mandarin Kung Fu, in Cheektowaga, at the Maryvale Continuing Education building, 777 Maryvale Drive. Mandarin has been instructing others about the mental power and sheer discipline involved in martial arts.

"We are the last of the dinosaurs who teach the old style of martial arts," he said.

For the past 20 years, Sifú Mandarin has been developing diverse and progressive teaching methods for his students. He said he has also devoted most of his life to analyzing the movements to help him better comprehend martial arts and thereby become an even greater teacher.

Reaching black-belt status, he

said, requires a person to be at least 18 years of age because of tradition and maturity. He said that he teaches martial arts to people who want to learn not only self-defense techniques but the history and rules of kung fu.

"We teach a different style. This is the type of system in which a person should be dedicated to the training, to become the best at what they want to do," Mandarin said.

As an instructor for more than 30 years, Mandarin, 64, said he has learned a vast amount of wisdom from kung fu and martial arts.

"The most valuable thing martial arts teaches you is to become a better person," he said.

The Amherst resident said he currently has a small enrollment of approximately 60 to 70 students.

For more information about Sifú Norman Mandarin, visit his Web site at [www.mandarinkungfu.com](http://www.mandarinkungfu.com).



Mandarin

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## Family night benefits Lions Club

The Homewood Theater Company will stage an evening of family entertainment, "Autumn Leaves, Jack-O'-Lanterns and Ghost Stories" at 7:30 p.m. Oct. 13, 14, 20 and 21 at Ascension Lutheran Church at 4640 Main St., to raise funds for the Amherst Lions Club to be used in support of visual screening for young children.

Amherst residents Marty and Mary Sue Bauer will present a readers theater production to amuse people of all ages and promote early diagnosis of

potentially serious eye problems in small children, who are screened at various Lions events.

Mary Sue is president of the Amherst Lions Club, and her husband is a past president.

Admission is \$6 for adults and \$3.50 for children younger than 12. The funds will be used to buy film for a special camera able to detect problems from lazy eye to early cataracts and other diseases of the eye in small children.

Reservations can be made by calling 636-5798.



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