

**Church to present
'Wonderful Life'**

Zion Dominion Global Ministries and The Rev. R.L. Hennings will present "Wonderful Life" at 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 22 and Sunday, Dec. 24 at 895 N. Forest Road. For more information, call 250-7040.

Defend yourself!

Professional tips for self-defense



Jim Cvetovski, owner and operator of WNY Karate, demonstrates on Tara Philipps, of Williamsville, how someone can be attacked, while Akemi Isselbaecher, also of Williamsville, looks on.

Photo by John Rusac

by ELIZABETH TAUFA, Reporter

You can never predict if and when you might be attacked. You could be coming out of a store at night, or walking to your car, or taking out your garbage. While you can't prevent these things from happening, you can prevent yourself from being seriously harmed or even killed.

The Training Edge

Steve Spoth, owner and operator of the Training Edge, 8200 Main St., said that confidence in yourself is the most important thing in warding off an attacker.

"The biggest thing is to have built some confidence in yourself that you can handle a situation," he said. "And the more training skills you can acquire, the better off you will be."

The Training Edge, according to Spoth, specializes in practical, streetwise self-defense that is military tested and used.

Spoth says that women are at risk because they do not believe they can fend off an attacker who is bigger than they are.

"Every woman should take a self-defense course," he said. "Education is key because it puts them in the mind-set to survive something like that."

The Training Edge offers free self-defense classes for women about four times a year.

At those classes, Training Edge instructors teach the basics of self-defense, including

strikes with the palms, elbows and knees and maneuvers for escaping holds from different angles of attack, including from the floor.

Self-defense classes also include high-pressure attacks that involve having to fight your way through a circle of attackers and having an attacker surprise you.

As far as what women can do without a self-defense class, Spoth's advice was simple.

"Being cautious is the biggest thing," he said. "If you're walking out of somewhere and you feel something inside of you that isn't right, turn around, go back inside and get somebody to escort you."

He noted that precautionary measures can be as simple as making sure doors and windows are secure in the home and being aware of parking spaces.

"People get so caught up in their busy lives, they forget things," he continued.

For more information on the Training Edge, call 565-9568 or visit www.thetrainingedge.com.

WNY Karate

The most important thing is to be prepared, according to Jim Cvetovski, owner and operator of WNY Karate on Transit Road in Williamsville.

"From day one of my students starting martial arts, my number one priority is self-defense," Cvetovski said. "Other schools can lead students into a false sense of security by not teaching practical self-defense."

Some tips for people to defend themselves against attack don't even involve physical contact.

"Half the battle is not getting yourself in a situation where you become a victim, where

you're vulnerable," Cvetovski said. He noted that people who get attacked often aren't paying attention to their surroundings. They are talking on their cell phones or concentrating on other things.

He also noted that people tend to park in dark, secluded areas as a matter of convenience, rather than thinking about their safety.

"Don't walk like a victim," Cvetovski said.

Part of self-defense is also about presenting confidence in the way that you walk and hold your car keys.

However, Cvetovski stressed that, above all else, self-defense maneuvers must be practiced in a realistic setting.

"The people who attack you probably aren't women or children; they're big strong men," he said. "You need to practice bringing down someone who's bigger, stronger, taller, faster than you."

The self-defense training at WNY Karate is based on the principle that you will not be as strong as or stronger than your assailant, but that you will be

able to subdue that attacker and save yourself from harm.

In the wake of the murder of Clarence resident Joan Diver, Cvetovski will be holding a month of free self-defense classes in January. The class will include such basic techniques as grabs, chokes, strikes to vulnerable areas of the body, kicks and

Other options for self defense in the area:

- Master Chong's Tae Kwon Do, 5921 Transit Rd. in East Amherst
- Master Gorino's Pil-Sung Tae Kwon Do, 839 Niagara Falls Blvd. in Amherst
- Master Khechen's School of Tae Kwon Do, 3117 Genesee St. in Cheektowaga

blocks.

While basic movements can be learned in a month, Cvetovski noted that the techniques must be practiced until they are second nature in order for them to be perfected.

"You will panic if you don't know what to do," he said. "I feel good that my students can get out of almost any situation without panicking."

For more information on WNY Karate, including the month of free classes, call 631-5065 or visit www.WNYKarate.com.

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