

# Passing The Torch

kind light of fate was shining down on him.

The next week, Grandmaster Lee arrived wearing slacks and a dress shirt. He sat on a chair in the back quietly observing the class for about a half hour. Suddenly, though he had not taught a class in almost thirty years, he stood up, waved the students aside, walked to the front of the class and began teaching! Although he knew very little English, he effectively communicated

master. He continually asked questions and wrote down the answers and comments. Realizing that this persistent American would not quit or go away, Grandmaster Lee elicited a promise from the younger man: the style must be passed on in an unaltered, traditional state.

What had begun as a chance encounter had now come full circle: a dedicated master, hungry to learn and to grow in his art, gets his wish and a grandmaster realizes his vision to pass on the art he loves and as he wants it remembered and practiced. For approximately two years, Grandmaster Lee worked with Master Wiedenman and his top instructors. Much of the work is documented by videotape and includes interviews and training sessions.

Sadly, on August 29, 2000, Grandmaster Nam Suk Lee passed away but not before Master Wiedenman reiterated his promise and solemn commitment that the traditional form of Chang Moo Kwan would live on. The torch had been passed...



*Grandmaster Lee and his son observe and grade students at The San Pedro Boys & Girls Club in California. From left: Chong Hack Lee, Grandmaster Lee, Master Fullerton, Senior Instructor Alex Paredes, and Assistant Instructor Irida Johns*

through his motions.

Ecstatic that Grandmaster Lee had taken the initiative to teach the class, Master Wiedenman seized the moment and asked if he would be interested in teaching another class. True to form, the Grandmaster did not give an immediate answer. However, two days later during a telephone conversation, Grandmaster Lee agreed to return and teach twice a month. Over time, the lessons evolved into private instruction for Master Wiedenman and his top four instructors.

Not only were Master Wiedenman and his four instructors reaping great rewards from the experience, Grandmaster Lee seemed to be receiving benefits as well. There was a notable sparkle in his eyes and a new spring in his step. It was, in retrospect, as if he had come home and renewed the flame of passion for his art.

## The Revival

After several months, the Grandmaster and the Master began to talk more frequently and more freely to one another. Master Wiedenman expressed his desire to know all about Chang Moo Kwan. He told the Grandmaster that he was willing to "empty his cup" to learn Chang Moo Kwan's pure form to pass to future generations. Firm, but polite, Master Wiedenman never wavered in his desire to learn from the Grand-



*Wearing his new dobok and belt, gifts from Master Wiedenman, Grandmaster Lee poses after a private lesson with his two top students.*