



## **Peterson's Martial Arts Mu Sa Kwan Tang Soo Do Federation**

### **WHAT IS A GRAND MASTER?**

When one pursues the martial arts for a number of decades, there reaches a point in time where the title of Grand Master is at long last within reach. After learning all there is to know about one's particular martial arts style, theoretically speaking, one gives pause to consider precisely what qualities, characteristics, and personality traits differentiate, separate, or elevate, if you will, the Grand Master from the other masters and students of the dojang.

After examining and scrutinizing every detail of what it is I "do," how I "act," or what is I "say," I have determined that the Grand Master is much more than a leader of leaders and students. The Grand Master is, above all, a teacher, a professional in his/her own right. Just as we look to our nation's teachers to exemplify the ideals of a role model to all concerned, the Grand Master is a role model as well. We seek to emulate the thoughts, words, and deeds of the Grand Master.

Granted, the Grand Master is a veritable fountain of knowledge with regard to martial arts techniques. Through the Grand Master's teachings, we master forms and applications. It is less apparent to most of us that the Grand Master is also a knowledgeable business person, managing the dojang and dealing with the day-to-day issues of money management, advertising, and public relations techniques. By virtue of the business venture the Grand Master undertakes, s/he must even be proficient in the use of a computer for promotional, organizational, time-saving, and, obviously, communications purposes. When we attend a clinic or a tournament, we are participating in an event that requires months of planning, from the decision of a convenient site, to ordering appropriate trophies, to overseeing and attaining qualified judges.

Yet behind the mask of the warrior and promoter of the martial arts, there exists a human being with a spiritual edge. The Grand Master is the person that we all strive to be, in that our culture values those persons whose morals are beyond reproach, those who whether or not they may be Christian in the formal sense of the word, live a life whereby following the Ten Commandments, as presented to believers of the Written Word, are effortlessly obeyed. The Grand Master demonstrates honor in every aspect of life. Indeed, it is this unwavering devotion to honor that distinguishes the Grand Master from all others.

Continuing the analogy of comparing the dan ranks to the higher levels of education, at 6<sup>th</sup> Dan the student has earned his/her master's degree and now begins studying for his/her doctorate (PhD) degree. Upon reaching 8<sup>th</sup> dan, s/he has earned his/her doctorate (PhD) degree. The learning process doesn't end there, but continues to allow the student to research, teach, and pass along all the information s/he has learned, to further martial arts and its education to others.