

A Decade of Dedication was the theme for the Action Martial Arts Hall of Honors 2010, held once again at the world famous Tropicana Casino & Resort in Atlantic City, NJ. The world's largest gathering of martial arts superstars, film and combat celebrities, and renowned Masters from around the world once again gathered to meet, greet, and share with the thousands who congregate from around the globe.

It was almost a dilemma, this event coined by many as the greatest martial arts event in the world. How to make the 10th Anniversary special? The Action staff put on its thinking caps and went to work, putting together the most Action packed weekend, with class, honor and a lifetime of memories.

The weekend started off Friday in the north tower of the hotel with 6 seminars, and 3 separate certification programs with Soke Michael DePasquale Jr, Guro Julius Meligrutto & Kempo International's own from Sweden Hanshi Jorge Jorgensen. During the time 12-7 PM Action had put out a complimentary coffee area with bagels, danish and muffins for all that showed up to enjoy the day. To our surprise over 500 people showed up to chat, train and just mingle.

As Friday evening rolled around the night life at the Tropicana was starting to heat up. Well admitted by Action's staff, what took place was not planned. Around 7 PM gathering at the Tango Lounge on the main floor of the Casino, hundreds of guest met and had a few drinks, planning for the rest of the evenings. It was wild looking across the room. There were groups of fans talking and taking photos with their favorite celebrities Joe Lewis, Bill Wallace on one side of the room, Don Wilson and Cynthia Rothrock 20 feet away. Across the room stood Dan Severn, James Lew, Michael Jai White and Chuck Zito. It was great to meet, greet and have a photo opportunity. About 9:30 p.m. the crowd started to thin out. No, they didn't go to sleep. They just moved on to the 20 restaurants and dance club within this world famous casino & resort. There were parties going on all over to the wee hours of the morning. And to think this wasn't even planned. It was amazing! ndbertsch@yahoo.com

It seemed like the evening didn't end when there it was 7:30 a.m. Saturday morning and martial artists by the dozens entered the seminar & expo area. Walking in I noticed some of the big wigs giving out info packs, such as Century Martial Arts, Asian World, MACHO, Yamazato & Shaolin Brand Products and 40 other interesting tables from MA supplies to TShirt companies. There was also no loss for the media showing up - Martial Arts Today / Black Belt TV, UCW Radio and TV, New England Martial Arts Cable show, MMA Confidential Cable, Martial Force Online, Martial Arts Warrior Online, Budo International USA, TWK Times, and Artie Clear's Sports Radio Show broad casted live. There were 30 seminars held by some of the world's best Martial Artists. We are proud to report that over 2,000 Martial Artists showed up to be a part of this record breaking event! Suffice it to say, with the dire economy and troubling times we are facing, the Martial Arts world still managed to come together in support of one another in spite of it all. That says a lot about what we as Martial Artists stand for and also, of the importance and recognition of our event worldwide - with 16 countries in attendance.

Once again, we were honored by some more new faces this year including the Master Jeff Speakman, Grm Oso Tayari Casel, GM Al Dacoscos. As Master Goldberg stated to me, that "He is so appreciative of all the Celebs that show up, but in his eyes everyone at the event is a celebrity in their own right! You can see it on the expo floor to the seminars all the way through the banquet that everyone is on the same level, no egos, no rank, no bull, it's almost like a class reunion". Just the list of all day Free Seminars showed that everyone wants to give back. Where else can you train with such names as, Grm Oso Tayari Casel, Grm Stephen Hayes, Jeff Speakman, Cynthia Rothrock, Bill Wallace, Don Wilson, Joe Lewis, Prof Ronald Duncan, Master Orlando Riveria, Dan The Beast Severn, Grm George Alexander, Grm Ken MacKenzie, Christina Bannon Rodriguez, Soke Depasquale Jr., Soke Tom Gettling, Hanshi Jorgen Jorgensen, Shihan Dana Abbott, GrmJurg Zeigler, Master Bob MacEwen, Master Danny Lane, Shihan Tito Alan,

Shihan Mark Walker, Shaolin Monk Sifu Shangwei Wu, Master David Nemeroff, Master T. Dilallo, Grm Mark Shuey, Guro Julius Meligrutto, Grm. Kevein Cullen, Hanshi Jorgen Jorgensen, Guro Greg Pichardo, Sifu Tu Guo Shun. I Also saw a few Special people partaking and watching on like like David Toma and Jeff Smith Wow, I never saw so much knowledge in a room and all happy to partake.

3 o'clock rolled around and I felt like the day was over when I reminded myself the best was yet to come, the 10th Anniversary Bash. So I went back to my room to freshen up and get dressed in my best. I came down to the banquet floor around 6pm! The waiting line to enter was about 2 blocks long. But as the reputation of this event hold Action did not disappoint. As I waited, there was a classical Violist playing soft dinner music and as we moved along there as another person entertaining the guests as a mime, dressed as a Samurai warrior. As we moved on to the entrance, there was a group of Action Staff greeting each guest and giving them a small entrance gift. It was class. That's the only word I could think of as I entered the hall and looked into the largest banquet room in Atlantic City. It was big as a football field with decorative lighting and a 5 piece band playing on stage behind the Celebrity seating stage.

After a few cocktails, I moved to my seat with a few friends. The lights were dimmed all the way down and a small spotlight hit the middle of the stage where Sifu Bam Johnson was standing. As the light opened on him, he was joined by his Lion Dance Team, which displayed fantastic aerial and martial arts stunts. What a great way to open the night. Like clockwork the event opened with the MC Soke Mike Depasquale, introducing Comedian Joe Piscopo, who did the opening intro of the President and Publisher Master Alan Goldberg. After a small thank you speech, a seamless array of event proceeded - the Marine Color Guard with Sifu Romelletti singing the National Anthem and the opening prayer by Dr. M. Willett.

This year, Action announced a special set of Awards called the Apex Award, which is given to a pioneer that brings an art from the Orient and proceeds to take hold in the Martial Arts World in a big way. This year there were 2 given and as I may say to my surprise it was well deserved. First was DoJuNim Ji Han Jae with the expansion of Hapkido and Shihan Richard Bowe with Aikido. As dinner was being served groups of awards were being given out, with photos of all new inductees to be printed in the Action magazine.

During a break the band played and people were dancing and enjoying themselves with improv photo times. As everyone was asked to get to their seats, the surprise of the night had come as Comedian Joe Piscopo sang his special rendition of New York-New York for the whole room. It was great, funny, and just a class act to be added to a class event. This whole song can now be seen on YouTube.com

(http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D7eWAqo_MvU).

Finishing the Awards and dessert was a little depressing knowing the night was soon coming to a end. 10:30 p.m. rolled around and everything was finished. But to all our surprise the band played on for another 90 minutes and the cameras flashed all the way thru the night.

Proud to say this year's event this landmark banquet was another outstanding success, with a full house of over 1200 people. Thanks again to all who attended and who have continuously given us their support. This weekend I heard so many coined names for this event, like Micheal Depasquale's "The Greatest Martial Arts Event on Earth", Joe Lewis mentioning "The Gathering of Champions", and so many still calling it the Academy Awards of Martial Arts.

I look forward to our 11th year Hall of Honors banquet in 2011 of which plans is already underway. Master Goldberg is planning to expand the Party with UCW Radio as a Sponsor to bring you a Friday night Free cocktail party

I hope to see you all there to celebrate this special milestone event. Until then, health and happiness to all! Have a wonderful 2010! See you all next year!

Roving Reporter Shihan John Gurrieri