

50% OFF
Gift Certificates
 Dining, Golf & More
 CLICK HERE

Browse Sections:

- eds
- ers
- ne Guide
- nd Now
- inity
- report
- l Raves
- ar of Events
- inment
- Guide
- ina Latina
- s & Finance
- s Columns
- opes
- er/Technology
- g/Food
- ling/Advice
- Issues
- ing
- n
- ist Archives

Weather Cams:

Now browsing: [Hometown News](#) > [Sports](#) > [St. Lucie County](#)

Local Sports online for St. Lucie County brought to you by:
[All Smiles Dentistry](#) (Dental)

Karate champion is minister of self-defense

Excellent Rating: ☆☆☆☆☆ (0 votes)

Posted: 2009 Mar 13 - 00:44



By John MacDonald

Sports writer

3/16/2009
10:34 AM



CONTINUE Y
FREE
 SUBSCRIPTION

CLICK HERE

Subscribe Today

Featured
 Properties
 Click Here



Join our Mailing

Your email address

Subscribe

Archives Calendar

<< Mar, 2009

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 29 | 30 | 31 | | |

Search Stories

Body

Search

[anaveral](#)

y of [WESH.com](#)

e Coast

y of
[coWeatherCentral.com](#)

Partners:

[com](#)



While some might say that records are made to be broken, Fred LaSala feels the same way about boards, concrete and barriers.

The 48-year-old, who operates several karate schools in St. Lucie County, lists three world power breaking championships among his ever-growing list of accomplishments, but his primary goal is reaching out to others.

"People say to me, 'what do you do? Beat them up and then pray for them?'" LaSala said.

"We offer a Christ-centered martial art," LaSala said. "The emphasis is on the Lord. It's all about discipline."

It wasn't always that way for the White City resident.

"I was a spoiled brat," LaSala said. "My family put me in karate school and I didn't want to listen so I originally quit."

As a teenager, LaSala turned his attention to wrestling where he quickly excelled.

"I wrestled throughout high school," LaSala said. "I stayed with it and went to a lot of wrestling camps."

During that time, LaSala didn't completely close the door on karate. Despite being unable to find the right fit, his knowledge of martial arts and grappling proved to be a deadly combination.

"I became pretty dangerous," LaSala said. "I was like Rocky (Balboa). They called me 'the regulator.'"

"If somebody owed you money, you would come to me and I would get your money."

Still searching for answers, LaSala discovered tai chuan do. Founded by grand master Ken Champ, the martial art combines different styles of karate and self-defense, incorporating the best techniques available from disciplines such as jujitsu and aikido.

LaSala's training proved immensely beneficial, not just immediately, but over the course of his career. He has won 13 state championships in fighting, breaking, kata, weapons kata and self-defense. Besides the three world power breaking championships, he also holds a submission grappling title.

LaSala won a silver medal in a jujitsu competition for the Wide World of Sports and has been inducted into three different martial arts halls of fame.

"I'm just a little Italian, but it's not about the size of the fight in the dog, but the size of your heart," LaSala said.

While LaSala found a lot of success on the mat, he still couldn't pin down happiness.

"There was still something missing," LaSala said. "One day a pastor came and knocked on my door and asked me why I would be going to heaven."



[Order Photo](#)

"I told him because I was a good person. He told me that's not going to get you to heaven.

"From then on I left Jesus up front and I got in the back seat."

Looking for a way to combine his faith and knowledge of the martial arts, LaSala began his Karate for Christ Ministries and now operates six schools in Port St. Lucie and Fort Pierce. His programs have also become a family affair with his wife, two sons and daughter all accomplished students and teachers.

"It's something our whole family can relate to," Stacey LaSala said. "We're always there to push each other."

The 18-year-old - who started when she was 4 - is a standout in her own right, earning many championships, including a 17-and-under crown in self-defense.

"I was very proud," Stacey said. "I wanted to win it for my dad."

Stacey is just one of the success stories that LaSala's dojos have produced.

"We teach everything from what you would see in a Steven Segal movie to Mr. Miyagi," LaSala said. "We preach the gospel and do martial arts.

"I've been extremely blessed and it's my way of giving back to the Lord."

[Read more Sports stories from the St. Lucie County community newspaper...](#)
