

## YOUR STORIES

# Martial arts studio expands

Sorce celebrates re-opening today

By **PETER SORCE**

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Contributor

**South Milwaukee** — With its recent expansion project now complete, Sorce Martial Arts will hold its re-opening and open house Thursday, July 24.

The celebration, from 5 to 9 p.m., coincides with South Milwaukee's annual Heritage Days Festival Evening on the Avenue in the downtown district. In place of the traditional ribbon-cutting ceremony, there will be a belt-cutting ceremony at 5 p.m.

As part of the open house, the community can tour the newly expanded facilities, observe adult and child martial arts classes,

and meet with instructors and staff.

The grand re-opening also marks the 10th anniversary of Sorce Martial Arts at its current location at 926 Milwaukee Ave.

"We're excited about opening the doors of our new facility and sharing everything that martial arts has to offer our community," said Pete Sorce, owner and master instructor.

While the expansion has taken more than a year to complete, Sorce says that the process has been worth it. With more than 250 adults and children actively attending classes, he added: "I wanted to create a special space that models the quality of our programs and not be simply a gym or a toddler playground."

The lower level of the two-story building, which used to

house a pharmacy and small offices covered with aging wood-paneling, mismatched carpeting and little natural daylight, has been completely transformed into a 6,000-square-foot contemporary martial arts school.

The expanded space now features two full-sized training rooms, new ample viewing areas for families, a private lesson room and offices, a lounge area, and new bathrooms and changing rooms. The look and feel of the space is natural, contemporary and open.

Sorce says that he spent a lot of time researching options for a larger facility to accommodate the school's growing student base and additional classes. He considered other existing buildings in the area and new construction, but eventually decided

to stay at the existing location and expand the space.

Pete and Rachel Sorce purchased the building last May, then started the demolition and remodel immediately. Throughout the process, classes in the front half of the building continued as usual.

Sorce Martial Arts offers classes in traditional taekwondo (Korean karate), Inayan Eskrima (Filipino empty hand and weapon art) and Danzan Ryu Ju Jitsu (traditional Japanese Ju Jitsu).

Sorce has been teaching martial arts for 25 years. He started his training at age 6, when severe asthma and allergies prevented him from participating in other sports. From age 10, he dreamed of having his own martial arts school.

Years later, while studying

electrical engineering at UW-Milwaukee, Sorce started the South Milwaukee Recreation Department's first taekwondo program in January 1997. Seven years later in July of 2004, he opened Sorce Martial Arts, with 1,650 square feet at 926 Milwaukee Ave. Within three years, he doubled the size of the facility to 3,300 square feet.

For more information, visit [www.sorcemartialarts.com](http://www.sorcemartialarts.com) or call (414) 755-9068.

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Main Studio Space



Second Studio Space