

# AUBURN NEWS



(508) 832-2222/Email: editor@stonebridgepress.com

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## Burn campers gain self-confidence

BY ELLIE OLESON  
NEWS STAFF WRITER

AUBURN — Each year, traumatized children who have suffered severe burn injuries have a chance to meet friends and heal physical and emotional scars at the Connecticut Burns Care Foundation's Camp in the Berkshire Mountains of Massachusetts.

This year's campers were also given a chance to hear someone say, "You can!" after months or years of being told, "You can't," thanks to McCoy's Action Karate martial arts schools of 614 Southbridge St., Auburn, and Spencer.

On July 26, a total of 22 faculty, staff and students from the school, including local students David Tran and Kendra, Tom and Jacob Hilt, visited the camp in Union, CT.

"Our goal was to empower, educate and entertain the children," said Paul McCoy, co-owner of the schools.

Action Karate Super Star team members and senior instructors from both schools put on a 20-minute, high-energy demonstration in coordination with the Institute of Martial Arts of Wallingford CT.

They then instructed the campers in "Stranger Danger" physical techniques, as taught by Black Belt Schools International's "Kids Smart Anti-Abduction System," and also instructed them in the art of focus and power through wood breaking.

McCoy said the school is doing what it can to help allay fears of child abduction, which have been increased in recent months and years.

Most organizations and businesses focus on the



Campers, who are all burn victims, at the Connecticut Burn Care Foundation Camp demonstrate their power and self-confidence by breaking a board after training by McCoy's Action Karate teachers and students from Auburn.

Courtesy photo

recovery of lost children through updating photographs and maintaining a record of fingerprints and even DNA samples. Action Karate has taken what McCoy calls a "proactive stance" by teaching safety techniques to area children in an attempt to prevent abduction.

"Bringing physical safety to children is one of our main missions, but when you get to do that with children as unique as these campers, you

can't ask for much more," McCoy said.

He said the campers were all enthusiastic learners, noting, "These children were excited to learn and then use these specially designed techniques. They were a joy to teach."

Action Karate teaches its "Stranger Danger" program freely to any organization for children, and has developed a system where children don't just hear it, but also experi-

ence the techniques and attitudes required to increase their personal safety in situations of abduction, he explained.

Action Karate co-owner Anne McCoy said, "The kids had a good time, while feeling empowered. It was wonderful. Teaching at the Children's Burn Camp was an opportunity to bring fun and skill to children who are both capable and in need."

The 43 children at the

camp are all burn survivors, aged 8 to 18, from New York City and surrounding communities. They were sent to the camp by the New York Firefighters Burn Center. Most of the children had their burn injuries treated at the Burn Center at New York Presbyterian Hospital.

Counselors at the camp include 10 firefighters from Connecticut, as well as nurses and therapists from the Burn Center and

other volunteers.

Anyone interested in volunteering next summer is asked to call the Foundation at 1-718-379-1900 and leave a message.

For information about an exhibition or "Stranger Danger" program for children, contact Paul or Anne McCoy at McCoy's Action Karate (508-832-4110).