

SOUTHBRIDGE NEWS

EVENING

People Places and Things



Courtesy photo

NEW BLACK BELTS

AUBURN—Six students earned the most coveted rank in karate, the Black Belt, at McCoy's Action Karate recently.

Sean Smith (Auburn), Marnae Evans, Keenan Mahan, Kennedy Evans, Ryan Mahan, Zachary Sharron, Peter Boyd (Charlton), Caroline Bercier, Meredith Bercier, Bryan Erickson (Oxford), Lillyanna Peniza (Leicester), Zackary Fitzgibbon (Sturbridge), Tyler Leveille (Southbridge), Robert Stetson (North Brookfield), Chase Flibbert (Dudley) and Cameron Hooper (Thompson CT), excelled through 15 plus hours of testing over 4 weeks, including running, sparring (a controlled form of fighting with protective gear), bag work, sit-ups, push-ups, forms (a pattern of fixed self defense moves choreographed), Self Defense, breaking, a written and an oral test.

The physical and mental requirement of the Black Belt test are designed to put them in the top 10 percent of the nation physically while at the same time testing the courage, compassion. When asked what the hardest part of the testing process was, "The Physical Test, defiantly the physical test," replied Lillyanna Peniza of Leicester MA.

"We take family goals very seriously here," said Paul McCoy, one of the Master Instructors and McCoy's Action Karate. You can tell from the large number of names that are the same on this testing list. When asked what the most memorable part of her journey to Black Belt was, Marnae Evans, a mother of 6 living in Auburn said, "They way that the staff and students accepted my family."