



Ken Ruettgers.

PHOTO PROVIDED

Sisters to hold prayer day event May 5

Sisters Christian Academy is sponsoring the fourth annual Sisters event associated with the National Day of Prayer.

The event is scheduled for Thursday, May 5, with doors opening at 6:45 a.m. A continental breakfast will be served.

The event will be held at Sisters Community Church, 1307 W. McKenzie Hwy.

The theme of the National Day of Prayer is "Wake Up America." The keynote speaker is Ken Ruettgers.

The Sisters resident is a Super Bowl champion with the Green Bay Packers and has a place in the team's Hall of Fame. He is a husband, father, mentor and author — and a professor at Central Oregon Community College.

Individual tickets and table sponsorships are available. Advance reservations are preferred. For more information call Sisters Christian Academy at 541-549-4133 or Peter Storton at 541-549-2500.

Sisters youths earn black belts

By Jim Cornelius
News Editor

Attaining the black belt is a significant milestone in the development of a martial artist, and three Sisters youths have marked that accomplishment at Outlaw Martial Arts.

Twelve-year-olds Conner Bell and Jaxon Barry earned their black belt, while 11-year-old Shawn Kelm achieved second-degree black belt status. While the black belt is in taekwondo, Master Marty Kaczmarek (Master K) notes that the black belt requirements include boxing skills; hubud drills (a Filipino martial art); judo; and jiu jitsu. The breadth of study is designed to create a proficient martial artist.

"It means a lot to me," said Kelm of his second-degree ranking. "I've been with this program about six years, I think. It's about the second-hardest thing I've done in my



PHOTO BY JIM CORNELIUS

Jaxon Barry, Shawn Kelm and Conner Bell are black belts.

life."

The hardest, he says, was earning his black belt in the first place.

The young martial artist is especially proficient in poomsae (taekwondo forms).

"I enjoy poomsae competition," he said. "You get to see all different styles of your form."

He believes that his martial arts practice has had benefits across his life.

"It can apply to almost anything," he said. He says he is "more disciplined in school, I think. More outspoken."

He says he is determined to "keep working and get that third degree."

Conner Bell says that

earning his black belt "has been a dream of mine for the last six years, ever since I started. It's cool to have two friends to be a black belt, too."

Bell likes the intensity of board-breaking and sparring.

"Conner really stands out for sure in the fighting part of it, the sparring," Master K said. "He's not afraid to mix it up."

For Jaxon Barry, earning the black belt "means I've accomplished my biggest goal in life."

Board-breaking is his best skill.

Outlaw Martial Arts has moved to a new facility in the Three Wind Shopping Center.

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