

Martial Arts

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Jacqueline McDowell, a 12-year-old white belt who has been studying martial arts under Smith for six months, bought home a gold medal in the points sparing competition.

"I want to be a fifth-degree black belt," McDowell said.

Her mother, Selena McDowell said, "He is an excellent teacher. He takes his time with his students. I was a second-degree black belt myself."

Selena McDowell became a second-degree black belt prior to an accident that now has her wheelchair bound. Although Selena's days of competing are over, the setback has not kept her from being her daughter's biggest fan and motivator.

"I tell Jacqueline she can go as far as she wants to if she continues to work hard, listen to Grandmaster Smith and apply the class code," she added.

Martial arts teaches respect, discipline and honor.

"The training is priceless," said Witz, who earned the first of six black belts in 1955 at the age of 15. "I had a former student who is now a rocket scientist tell me that the knowledge gained training for his black belt prepared him for his scientific studies."

Smith's students range in age from 4 to 28. But don't let the age gap fool you. Make no mistake, Smith takes his classes seriously and only instructs students who do the same.

Once class begins, there is no "foolishness or clowning around." It is time to focus. The technique is a proven winner.

"I won because I wasn't scared," said 11-year-old LaBrishun Hardwick, another world champion. "Grandmaster Smith teaches us to stay focused and that's what I did. I stayed focused on my objective and I stayed on attack and never moved back."

Students, who must master discipline, are tested on physical and verbal skills. Smith has a designed test on the history of the martial arts, theory and definitions, including class code and eight ingredients for effective people.

"Our class code is pay attention to your teacher, respect your parents, think positive thoughts, train hard and study hard," said Kalif Smith, a fifth-grader at Kitt Carson Elementary School. A son of the instructor, Kalif Smith is a purple belt studying to advance to a brown belt.

His 5-year-old brother Kamal and 8-year-old sister Jamila are also students of their father.

"I decided to get them involved because I felt it would be a good idea for us to do things together and establish relationships," said Grandmaster Smith. "I don't make them practice. They do it on their own at home."

Students and parents agree that the two biggest benefits from this class are physical exercise and discipline.

William Hall, a 27-year-old armed security officer who began studying Martial Arts at 10, stopped practicing at 16 due to an injury.

"We're having fun learning theory and the discipline of the arts. This vehicle can be used in all areas of life. You become more confident, mentally and academically and physically," said Hall. Hall placed third in Kenpo Forms and is studying to become a purple belt.

Yolando "PacMan" Ferguson is a counselor at Doolittle. Ferguson is a professional kick-boxer who began studying the martial arts under Grandmaster Smith "about six months ago" and has since become a brown belt. Ferguson competed in the continuous sparring competition but was disqualified in the last round for a "minor technicality."

"That championship should have been mine," he said. "I never should have given them (judges) any reason to be able to disqualify me. I will win the next tournament."

"There was a time when if that (disqualification) had happened to me, I would have gone off on somebody, but now I'm centered and don't go off. This class is good for people who lack discipline or have short fuses like I used to. Taking this class has definitely taken that edge and attitude off me," he added.

Classes are held evenings except Friday and Sunday. Saturday classes are held in the afternoon. The fee is \$15 per month, which includes admittance to other activities offered at Doolittle.

Call 229-6374 for more information or visit the Web site at www.geocities.com/grandmasterkraiguar.

Moseley-Braun nabs CAAN support for Kerry

By Albert C. Jones
Sentinel-Voice

Presumptive Democratic presidential nominee John Kerry did not make a personal appearance during last Saturday's Caucus of African-American Nevadans-sponsored candidates forums at Victory Missionary Baptist Church. Instead, he sent an ambassador.

Carol Moseley-Braun, former ambassador to New Zealand during the Clinton Administration and a one-term U.S. Senator from Illinois, presented on behalf of Kerry, whom she once challenged to be the Democrats' standard bearer.

U.S. Senator Kerry, who represents Massachusetts, won an overwhelming endorsement, receiving approval on 44 of 45 ballots. President George W. Bush, who was not represented at

the candidates forum Saturday, July 17, received one vote.

Steven Horsford, a Democratic national committeeman and a state senate candidate, introduced Moseley-Braun.

"I worked with John Kerry for several years in the U.S. Senate," she said. "When you work with someone for six years, you get a real good sense of who he is, where his head and heart are."

Moseley-Braun said there is a difference between the two major party candidates for president.

"There is a stark contrast," she said. "John Kerry is a decorated Vietnam veteran, who received a Bronze Star, a Silver Star and three Purple Hearts. He volunteered for service. The men he served with in Vietnam are still his friends. A photo I have seen of African-American men

standing with John Kerry who he served with speaks volumes.

"In the Senate, John Kerry was always on the right side with me on issues that impacted African-Americans," Moseley-Braun said. "He opposed the Confederate flag, favored helping minority businesses and fought for social justice. This is the biggest contrast between presidential candidates that I have seen in my adult life.

"Bush lost the goodwill of the international community after 9/11," she said.

"We have to turn this around. We have a chance to turn this around. President Bush is leading the way in confusion and despair. This administration has played on fear since September 11," Moseley-Braun said, outlining Kerry's platform.

"John Kerry will restore

and rebuild confidence in the American people," she said. "I take seriously the challenge to keep our country strong and the land of opportunity. John Kerry will create jobs, hope and opportunity."

"Providing affordable and accessible healthcare is important to Kerry. He has a plan to fix the healthcare system," Moseley-Braun said. John Kerry has a plan for America. I hope you will communicate this with all Americans."

Cordell Stokes, CAAN spokesperson, said representatives from the Bush campaign and the Nevada Republican Party were contacted but did not respond.

Nineteen of the 60 candidates invited presented during the forum, which was the second of three sponsored by CAAN. The third and final forum will hear from judicial and board of education candidates on Aug. 7.

CAAN

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stored Atkinson, with back pay, to his Clark County job. He was one of several legislators who work for governmental entities that were forced from their jobs earlier this year after allegation of double dipping surfaced.

"I think I took a public whipping," Atkinson said. "I think it was wrong. I went to arbitration and the decision ruled in my favor. I was made whole. I think what happened was unjust — wrong. I am happy to have my job back."

Clark County has adopted a policy that says, "You have

to be on leave the entire time without pay" during the legislative session, Atkinson said.

"I think that is appropriate. The thing with me is tell me what the rules are and I will follow them. The problem was there were no rules."

Democrat Peggy Pierce (District 3) received favor during the forum. Pierce, who is seeking a second term, spoke against building a pipeline to "import" water from the rural Nevada counties of Lincoln and White Pines as too costly but favored "turf replacement with desert land-

scaping. Water is one of our most important issues," Pierce said.

Speaker of the House Richard D. Perkins, a Democrat representing District 23, received endorsement after publicly assuring CAAN Chairman Louie Overstreet that he would work with Williams. Perkins was critical of Williams, who received media attention over a litany of allegations earlier this year.

Incumbent Democrat Barbara Buckley (District 8) presented through a letter. She was endorsed.

First-time candidates Mo

Denis, a native of Cuba running in District 28, which is 65 percent Hispanic, and Kirk Kaplan (District 5), both Democrats, were endorsed.

No recommendations were made in Districts 29 because of a tie vote and Districts 13 and 14 because candidates did not show. The caucus adopted a rule that a no recommendation choice will appear on future ballots.

"We have to be careful about endorsing candidates if they do not respond," said Rose McKinney James, a founding executive board member of CAAN.

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