Spotlight On Southwestern Region's GKK Women

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Gail Oblinger; Gail Oblinger is a member of the Bakersfield Fajukan Dojo. She is relentless in her training and devotion to karate-do despite having difficulties with her knees. Her tireless efforts have made everyone who comes in contact with her stop and take notice. Recently, Ms Oblinger was featured on the front page of the Bakersfield Californian, a large newspaper in that city. Additionally, three local television stations had also run a news story featuring this remarkable woman. Gail had attended a 24 hour black-belt test, which is the tradition for that dojo. This is a great feat for anyone. But, what makes it an occasion warranting such tremendous publicity is not the advancement of another person into the ranks of the coveted black-belt mystique. No, what makes it a story that got everyone’s attention is that Ms. Gail Oblinger is 71 years old. Ms. Gail Oblinger is truly an inspiration to us all.

Kayti Quesada; Kayti Quesada, began martial arts training at age 5. Her earliest training was in Okinawan Goju-Ryu. Later, she made great advances in a Chinese style of karate. Additionally, Ms. Quesada, has been a stand-out soccer player and coach. She is also a student and teacher of yoga and massage. Currently, she has black-belts in both karate-do and traditional jujitsu, as a member of the GKK’s Seijitsu Martial Arts School, located at the LifeStyle Fitness Center in Visalia, CA. Her interests are extensive with respect to martial arts. She is finding herself within the realm of Goju-Ryu kata and has made the study of kata a strict discipline. However, there can be no question that her passion for sport martial arts lies in Brazilian Jujitsu. She travels extensively for training and competition in this popular grappling sport. Her tireless efforts have not gone unrewarded. For, at the Pan American Games this year, Ms Quesada was the Gold Medal Champion in her weight division for Brazilian Jujitsu.

Rachel Reitz; Golden West High School, in Visalia, California will graduate many students this year. Included in those being honored is Rachel Reitz. Ms Reitz, is a GKK black-belt and member of the Visalia Karate-Do which trains at the Whitendale Recreation Center. She has always been active in school sports and other activities, and has been an assistant Sunday School teacher for her church's small children's class. At her dojo, she trains in karate-do, traditional jujitsu, and bojitsu. She is an exceptional kumite player. Recently, she volunteered to begin a Tiny-Tots Karate program for the City of Visalia Recreation Department. The class began with twenty 4-6 year olds. Never having been one to run from a challenge, Ms Reitz has done a remarkable job in keeping her class alive and the attention of these little tigers in check. So popular is her class, that it is consistently full and boasts a lengthy waiting list.