

The Year in Review *continued from page 3*Introduction to
Tai Chi Notre Dame

Roseanne Lappin

Tai Chi was chosen as one of the workshops offered to students and the significant women who influence their lives, at the Notre Dame Girls High School at their Health & Wellness Event for Women, this past October 20th.

Workshops presented at the event included various types of massage, meditation, emotional and psychological wellbeing, nutrition, and an Introduction to Tai Chi workshop was presented by Roseanne Lappin of the Tai Chi & Meditation Centre.

The mother, daughter and students who attended each of the 2-30 minute workshops, were eager to learn the meaning of Tai Chi and QiGong, an integral part of Tai Chi, enjoyed experimenting with feeling their Qi and learned some fundamentals of Tai Chi including the proper alignment of the body by standing in Wuji posture and connecting with heavenly Yang and earthly Yin energies. The idea of being physically fit while being relaxed, without the "burn" of muscle building, was well received and the phrase "like iron wrapped in cotton", raised some interested eyebrows!

I am happy to have volunteered for this event and to have contributed to the growing awareness of the importance of providing students with a different approach to physical activity that can

be incorporated early into their lives. Yes, it's never too late to turn your life around, which I know from experience is possible through the physical, mental and spiritual transformational practices offered by the Tai Chi & Meditation Centre, but why wait until "fall" when you can do it in the "spring"! I understand that Tai Chi is being considered for inclusion in High School phys-ed programs and I say YES, START NOW! ☺

Roseanne Lappin is an instructor-in-training at the Tai Chi and Meditation Centre. Last year, her debut competition earned her a Silver Medal in Tai Chi Sword!

Name that
Newsletter Contest!

A our newsletter needs a new name! Actually, it doesn't have a name. We are looking for something that would accurately describe the essence of what our newsletter is all about.

If we use your submission, the next two regular classes of your choice are FREE!

Sorry, contest open to members of the Tai Chi and Meditation Centre only.

Please submit your entry to your instructor before January 31st 2007.

Push Hands
Happenings

Colin Outram

2006 has been a rewarding year, working with such a respectful, friendly and skillful group of students. Class content will continue to grow and integrate some

of the deeper martial aspects of push-hands moving towards combative theory and practice. This is an exciting time for exploring push-hands together; to allow your body and mind to flow like water, and to observe all this and more through a new set of eyes, now, naturally connected. ☺

Weekly classes are Mondays 6-7 p.m. Instructed by Colin Outram.

Congratulations!

Congratulation goes out to **Eric Johnson**, who placed 1st place in men's fixed step push-hands at the **Canadian Chinese Kuo Shu Federation tournament on October 14, 2006**. Also participating earlier this summer in the **Pan American Kung Fu Championships**, were **Ben Phillips** and **Frank Carone**.



ERIC JOHNSON PRACTICES PUSH HANDS WITH ROSEANNE LAPPIN.

The
Tai Chi and Meditation Centre
Newsletter

Balance Body, Energy & Spirit

Winter/Spring 2007 • www.powerofbalance.com

Can Tai Chi & Meditation Help Change the World?

Andy James

Gmeet many people who are deeply concerned about the direction in which our collective lives are moving but feel too overwhelmed or insignificant to believe they can make any real difference out in 'the world.

Much of this feeling of helplessness arises from complexity, which in turn is a consequence of our tendency to divide life into different spheres or boxes - work, leisure, family, health, politics, entertainment, social action etc. - which we continually juggle. Society rewards us if we master certain domains or boxes that are socially desirable.

This process, however, is not without its costs. Firstly, the unceasing struggle to meet different kinds of deadlines is stressful and damaging to our health. Secondly, the process of fragmentation, which continually divides and specializes, is actually adding to life's complexity and conflicts. This process, by definition,

cannot lead to integration and wholeness. Thus it is not surprising we feel increasingly alienated, unheard, conflicted, powerless and lacking fulfillment and meaning in our lives. As competition and conflict increase, cooperation becomes more difficult to attain.

What can we do? As a first step, we can become aware that there are alternative and more integrative ways of being and of responding to life's challenges - for both the individual and society. Practices like meditation, taijiquan and qigong are actually about personal integration - learning that our bodies, subtle energies, emotions, thinking and higher minds are all interconnected. They never actually function as disconnected boxes.

As we become more whole, integrated and balanced within ourselves, we begin to recognize similar dynamics and possibilities in other people and in the "outer" world. All the separate

conceptual boxes we use to describe the external world - economics, politics, religion, environment etc. - are just as interconnected as our own internal boxes. Eventually we begin to realize that even the distinction between our "inner" and "outer" worlds is not as clearly defined as we think. As a consequence, we are able to recognize cause and effect in a far more subtle and complex way than at present. Our "realities" and possibilities expand accordingly and are reflected in our personal and collective lives. As the Buddha pointed out, we are the result of our own thoughts. ☺

Shifu Andy James is the Chief instructor and founder of the Tai Chi and Meditation Centre. The beautiful Harmony Dawn Retreat Centre in Hastings was his dream come true and he now resides and continues to teach there as well as at the Centre.

upcoming events

Winter/Spring Calendar 2007

TAI CHI CHUAN FORMS

Level 1 Introductory begins Wednesday 10 Jan, 6-7 pm. and Saturday 13 Jan, 2-3 pm. 12 weeks
Or come to the ongoing beginners classes Monday, 5-6 pm, Thursday 1-2 pm, and Saturday 12:30-1:30 pm.

MEDITATION & QIGONG RETREAT with Shifu Andy James
Weekend April 6-8, (\$275 plus GST) and whole week
Apr 6-13 (\$675 plus GST).
Please confirm ASAP with at least a 50% deposit.

INTRODUCTION TO INSIGHT MEDITATION (VIPASSANA)
Jan. 29, Feb. 5, 12. Donation or cards.

MEDICAL CHI KUNG, Certificate Program Level 1A
Fridays, 7:30 - 9:30 pm begins Feb 9th, 2007. (16 weeks)
Certificate Program Level 1B, begins Tuesdays 7:15 - 9:15 pm
Feb. 13 (16 weeks)

For other upcoming events or more information, please see our separate flyers or check the website: <http://www.powerofbalance.com>

MEDICAL QIGONG REGULATION EXERCISES

Sunday February 4th, 2-4pm.

SHAOLIN POLE, 2-PERSON
Tuesday 6:00-7:00 pm, starts Jan. 16th, 16 weeks

QIGONG WEEKEND RETREAT
At Harmony Dawn Retreat Centre, Hastings. May 2006.
Call for information.

MINI WORKSHOPS begin March 2007. Look for our separate flyer or check the website for details.

TAI CHI FOR ARTHRITIS. Sunday, January 28, 2007 2 - 4 pm.

QIN NA FUNDAMENTALS, XING YI QUAN LEVEL 1 INTENSIVE.
Sunday, March 11, 1 - 3:30 p.m. and 4 - 6:30 p.m.

PUSH HANDS FAIR PLAY Sunday Feb. 25th, 1 - 4 pm

TORONTO: 745 Danforth Avenue, Suite B3, Toronto, Ontario M4J 1L4 Telephone: 416-465-6122

EMERGE INTERNAL ARTS
Tai Chi and Meditation Centre

about our centre....

<p>The Tai Chi and Meditation Centre is a Subsidiary of The Taoist and Buddhist Meditation Centre, a Non-Profit Organization Founder and Director: Andy James President: Donna Oliver Treasurer/Manager: Suzanne Taka Directors: Sheila Furness, Jeff Willis Editor/Publisher: Donna Oliver Contributors: Articles: Sheila Furness, Roseanne Lappin, Donna Oliver, Colin Outram, Design & Production: Donna Oliver. Distribution, Webmaster: Colin Outram</p>	<p>The Tai Chi and Meditation Centre Newsletter welcomes letters from readers. Please direct correspondence to: The Tai Chi and Meditation Centre, 745 Danforth Avenue, Suite B3, Toronto, Ontario M4J 1L4 Telephone: 416-465-6122 or via website: www.powerofbalance.com</p>	<p>Tai Chi and Meditation Centre Instructors Currently certified are as follows: Chief Instructor: Andy James Principal Instructors: Sheila Furness, Donna Oliver, Colin Outram Suzanne Taka, Jeff Willis Assistants: Carolyn Johnson In Training: Roseanne Lappin</p>
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Second Spring –
Qigong for Women at Mid-Life

Sheila Furness

On Sunday, October 1st, around 2:00 p.m., the heavens opened –soaking participants as they were making their way to the Second Spring – Qigong for Women at Mid-Life mini-workshop. Being good Daoists, we had to go with the flow, changing the curriculum to suit the moment. Hot tea and qi scattering exercises to dispel the damp and cold were in order.

We then explored the traditional Chinese approach to menopause, or Second Spring. In TCM, menopause is viewed as an energy conservation measure. Some of energy that went toward reproduction and caring for young children can be freed up for personal (often spiritual) growth. The term 'Second Spring' suggests a time of rejuvenation and renewal, with less focus on the symptoms of menopause and more emphasis on how we can achieve balance at this transitional time of our lives.

As our hormone and energy levels change, many women will experience irregular menstruation, hot flashes, night sweats, insomnia and psychological changes. Qigong, (energy cultivation) is an ideal self-care practice to help alleviate these symptoms. We practiced exercises, such as "Opening and Closing the Three Burners", from Dr. Jerry Alan Johnson's textbook Chinese Medical Qigong Therapy, which can help balance the Yin and Yang energies of the body. As we performed the gentle, flowing movements, we drew fresh, pure energy deep into the tissues of the body while inhaling. We imagined Excess Heat and toxic energy being purged from the body while exhaling.

We also practiced several of the exercises from the Crane Frolic, which are especially good for calming the heart and mind, and cooling the body. Ongoing practice of qigong nurtures the



QIGONG PRACTICE IN THE STUDIO WITH SHEILA FURNESS

mind, body and spirit, teaches us self-acceptance, and connects us to the flow of life--allowing us to embrace the challenges we face as we transition into Second Spring. ☺

Sheila Furness is a full instructor and teaches the Wudang Qigong classes on Saturday morning, Monday evening Meditation classes, as well as special workshops throughout the year.

Medical Qigong Therapist Certification Courses, A and B

Shifu Donna Oliver

Both courses are taught under the auspices of the International Institute of Medical Qigong (Chi Kung) and are the first 2 of 4 courses offered in the Medical Qigong Practitioner Program. (see www.medicalqigong.org)

The Level A course is open to those who want to improve their personal health and well being. It concentrates on cleansing, balancing and circulating energy. Level B

course consolidates the first (A) and in addition focuses on building, sensing and projecting energy. Each course is worth 50 hours towards certification. Upon completion of both courses, the participant will be familiar with basic Qigong healing routines.

A test is written at the end of Level B and upon passing a certificate of completion is issued. The graduate may then go on

to become a Medical Qigong Practitioner or Therapist. The recommended method of training is weekly classes, Level A will start February 4 at 7:30 p.m. on Fridays, Level B will start February 13 at 7:15pm. on Tuesdays except for the first Tuesday of each month. Both are 2 hour classes that will run for 16 weeks each. ☺

Course Teacher: Shifu Donna Oliver.
Cost: Each course will be \$530 for members of the Tai Chi and Meditation Centre and \$583 for non-members, including the GST. Half-price for repeats.

Students are required to sign a study course agreement before commencing the course.

Qigong treatments are available with Certified therapists.

For more information, check out our website at powerofbalance.com or call the Tai Chi and Meditation Centre, 416-465-6122.



DAOIST YOGA WAS ONE OF THE MINI-WORKSHOPS OFFERED IN THE FALL OF 2006.

PARTICIPANTS PRACTICE THE "TIGER". A MOVEMENT BENEFICIAL TO THE SPINE.

The Year in Review

Tai Chi and Meditation Centre Supports
YWCA Week Without Violence

Sheila Furness

October 15 to 21, 2006 marked the 10th annual YWCA Week Without Violence world wide effort led by YWCAs in over 90 countries to promote community response to all forms of violence from the social and exclusionary to the direct and physical. As part of the Week Without Violence, the Toronto YWCA focused on the theme of wellness and self-care through activities at their shelters for women who have experienced violence.

To support this effort, Sheila Furness lead an introductory Tai Chi workshop for staff and residents of 1st Stop Woodlawn community providing specialized shelter for young women, aged 16-25, as well as emergency shelter for mature women of

all ages. Workshop participants ranged in age from early 20's to mid 70's, so we began with qigong exercises to encourage relaxation and a sense of well-being. We also focused on the basics of tai chi structure to allow the flow of energy and improve posture during daily activities. We then practiced tai chi walking, especially important for the older women to help prevent falls and hip fractures. ☺

Many of the participants commented on how much better they felt after just an hour of such gentle exercise. It was wonderful to see such a diverse group of women come together to share the stillness and balance of tai chi in the midst of upheaval in their lives.

May At Gaylord Palms

Colin Outram

On the weekend of May 25th, 2007, the 9th Annual International Chinese Martial Arts Championship is being held in Orlando, Florida at the Gaylord Palms Resort and Convention Center.

Coaching is available for students of the Tai Chi and Meditation Centre interested in participating in next year's tournament in Orlando. Areas of competition include taiji forms, bagua forms, xingyi forms, fixed/moving step push-hands and san shou (sparring). Challenging and testing your skills

through quality, National tournaments will provide you with a rare opportunity to learn from and connect with friends in the martial arts community. More information to be posted in the studio, speak with Colin for details. ☺

Colin Outram is a Full instructor teaching Push hands, Pa Kua and Xing Yi on Monday evenings. This year his students competed at the Pan Am Games held at U of T and CCKSF in Markham Ontario. (See below)



BEN PHILLIPS (R) GOES UP AGAINST A THOUGH PUSH HANDS OPPONENT AT THE PAN AM GAMES, U OF T.



FRANK CARONE (L) TRIES OUT HIS SKILL IN THE MOVING STEP PUSH HANDS, PAN AM GAMES.

A Healthy
Celebration!

Suzanne Taka

Congratulations go out to the Big Carrot Health Food Store, a successful landmark located in the Carrot Common, on the completion of their store expansion.

The Tai Chi and Meditation Centre joined in on the four-day grand re-opening celebrations on Friday, September 29, 2006 at their beautifully renovated store with a demonstration of the Tai Chi short form played by instructors Donna Oliver and Suzanne Taka. Big Carrot staff as well as interested shoppers were encouraged to participate in and sample the first sequence of movements up to grasp the sparrow's tail and single whip. Chi Kung instructor, Sheila Furness led a short lesson on Wudang Chi Kung for participants to also experience the calming effects of this ancient healing art.

This was indeed a wonderful afternoon of reconnecting with community and introducing ourselves and people to the activities of the Centre.

Suzanne Taka is a full instructor and teaches the beginners Tai Chi classes on Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday and private classes by appointment. ☺

A "Boaring" Chinese New Year Celebration

Yes, it's the year of the Boar, and the annual Chinese New Year celebration will be held on the 24th of February at the Forest View Restaurant, Spadina and Dundas in Toronto. \$25 per person.

This is a bargain compared to most events of similar caliber. Demonstrations are included. Cash bar. Please book your tickets asap, by calling 416-465-6122, or with Suzanne Taka. ☺