

This photograph appeared on page A 3 of *The Albuquerque Tribune* Monday, July 20

T'ai Chi Chih

13th Annual International Teachers' Conference



July 17,18,19, 1998
Albuquerque, NM USA



"IT TAKES A COSMOS"

The little boy yelled at us from a few houses down: "Hey did you see what happened?" He was beaming as he proudly held up his right arm donning a new glow-in-the-dark fiberglass cast from elbow to wrist. His friend quickly joined in, grinning from ear to ear: "Yeah and he did it on MY skateboard!" Such is the Spirit of teamwork!

The 1998 Teachers' Conference was so supported that, from the start, it just gathered momentum and took on its own life July 17, 18 and 19 in Albuquerque. Certainly the Conference Planning Committee worked with great effort to cover the details while aiming for an enriching weekend for the arriving teachers. And there were so many others: merchants and service providers who gave us discounts, threw in extra services or products without charge; hotel personnel who were so sensitive to the needs of our group; and several anonymous teachers whose private donations aided the conference.

Families and friends supported the TCC Conference effort- it seems many people (who are not even directly involved with TCC) had an intuitive understanding and respect for a conference such as this. We as teachers have witnessed this before: how refining and balancing of the Chi begins to effervesce and touch all aspects of our lives. The enthusiasm for this conference by so many was apparant. Indeed, students at the TCC Center in Albuquerque committed their time and energy in helping to prepare the folder/ registration packets. Where does such generosity come from? Giving back is a beautiful expression of the ever-expanding heart... the kind of expression so apparent in those who are continually Entering Cosmic Rhythm.

There were so many highlights (and alas, a few lowlights) of our time spent together. Thank you for responding so thoroughly and candidly to the post-conference evaluations. They will be very helpful for next year's planning committee. Many of you said "Yes! It is time to go to a longer conference!" It will be interesting to see what the St. Paul teachers decide on this. One thing for certain is that our yearly conference is a not-to-be-missed event. Several teachers this year extended

their time in New Mexico before or after the Conference as part of their summer vacation. What a great idea! Plan your family vacations accordingly.

This year your generous donations to the Scholarship Fund made it possible for several TCC teachers to attend who otherwise could not have. The Scholarship Fund was started in 1997 and has already grown significantly. We trust this will be a worthy and long-standing tradition. (Thank you scholarship recipients for asking for help- it is a useful teaching for all of us.)

The highlight for me? The Sunday morning Community Practice really filled my heart. Having teachers and students mingled together for our Tai Chi Chih practice in the cool morning air, with the sun rising over the Sandia mountains to the East... well if you were there, you probably know the feeling. For me it was a dream come true. My wish for every TCC teacher is to someday realize his or her dream in TCC (and I don't think we are limited to one!). Thank you Rob Janov for sharing your divine musical gift with us that morning. Your sensitivity and timing in blending the music with pure silence allowed us to BE in that magical moment.

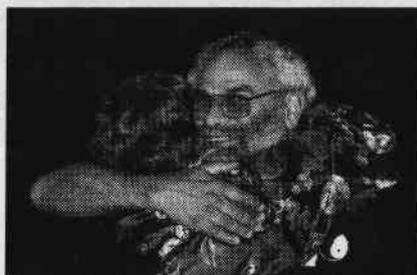
Justin offered little advice for the planning of the Conference except to say that it should be fun and teachers should go home with a positive feeling. Thank you, Justin, for bringing TCC to this world and continually inspiring us to be the best teachers we can. (You can whack me on the head anytime!) A very special thanks to Maggie Berg for all of your detailed, behind-the-scenes work far beyond the role of Conference Registrar. TCC is so lucky to have you! And finally, thank you to my life partner, Ed St.Martin, whose undying support (in every sense of the word) made it possible for me to participate in the coordination of this Conference. Your demonstration of love and its infinite expressions fill me with wonder and eternal gratitude. It heals lifetimes.

Wishing all of us a wonderful year filled with limitless TCC moments. Look forward to seeing y'all in St. Paul in 1999.

In light and love,
Rhonda St. Martin



Rhonda St. Martin and Rob Janov



Dave Schulberg greets a buddy



Jan Arrott greets Sr. Antonia

I was impressed again and again at the conference by the number of teachers who live their lives dependent on, trusting in and surrendering to the universal chi, the "Higher Principle."

That is (seems like) "Entering Cosmic Rhythm" at its finest.

Jan Arrott, Albuquerque, NM

Great conference! They just keep getting better!!!

Justin's talk re: CHI=PRANA=VITAL FORCE=GOD! was powerful. That is what attracted me to T'ai Chi Chih! I had been calling it Incarnational Spirituality, meaning the Divine flowing through flesh, everyone's. Justin verbalized it differently.

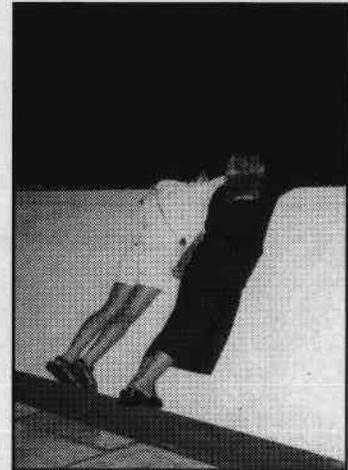
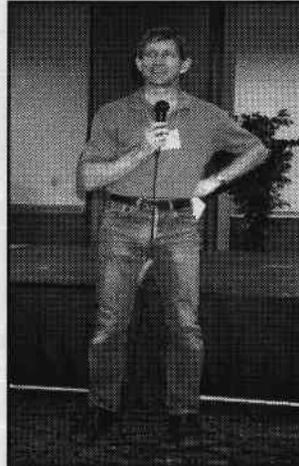
Ed's direction and instruction was most helpful. Great clarity! I have changed my practice a great deal since last year's conference and am sure this year's practice will be better yet: softer, more flowing, and done with greater leisure.

The Saturday sit-down lunch was quite an experience. I felt a bit frustrated at having to choose from so many good options. Then came the summary papers. You did a great job. MANY THANKS!

GOD
IS CHI
IS PRANA
IS LIVING FORCE
IS FLOWING
IS IN
ALL

LIKE
WINDMILLS
TURNING TO
THE UNCARVED BLOCK
WE BALANCE
FLOWING
CHI

Alice Holden, CCVI, San Antonio, TX



Caroline and Uly Messier signed us in Guy Kent--announcements, announcements On the roof, looking out at the lights

A memory I won't forget is the candle lighting ceremony and watching as each one of us lit our candle from the person's next to us. Then supporting ourselves with a hand on our neighbor's shoulder we danced in the glowing light.

It was especially meaningful to me since Friday night is the Sabbath--and each Friday evening I light more than two candles because the beginning of the prayer says "with every holy light I kindle, the world is brightened to a higher harmony." Can you see all the harmony we created with those candles Friday evening!! It was divine. And it is a divine act to teach T'ai Chi Chih. I truly feel it creates a higher harmony and I will continue to do my best to further that creation of harmony.

I feel renewed, rededicated. I will take back to my classes a new approach to shifting the weight. Thank you, Justin. Thank you, Ed. I feel part of a special family and I feel much love.

Shannon Cooley, Bozeman, MT

The candle lighting ceremony was a wonderful opportunity to let go of words and allow the T'ai Chi Chih community to meld our energies. I felt wonderfully connected and "enlightened" by the experience. There are no other teachers to be with in Louisiana yet. I am very grateful for our connectedness. I know it helps me when we are physically apart; I stay connected to that Cosmic Rhythm with each of you.

Justin's video touched me, his willingness to share himself openly and vulnerably.



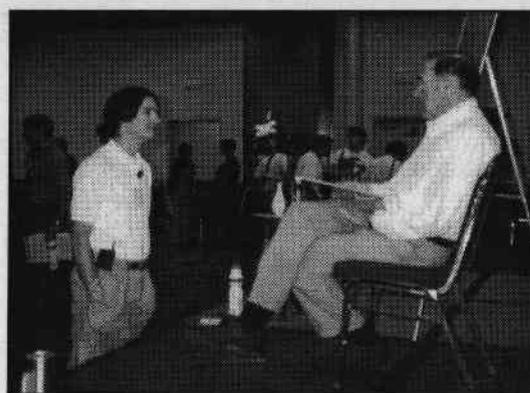
It was magical to do T'ai Chi Chih together outdoors with the soulful music. All were blessed.

I came home more peaceful with a fresh start approaching my T'ai Chi Chih practice as a beginner, aware in each moment/movement to integrate the many refinements I was shown by Justin and Ed. Thank you.

Deborah Brown, Lake Charles, LA



Getting ready to watch the Folsom Prison video



Ed and Justin

I'd like to congratulate the Albuquerque teachers who worked so hard on planning and running the 13th Annual T'ai Chi Chih Teachers' Conference. Everyone I spoke with had a wonderful time and left the weekend very inspired! I'm also very thankful to Justin for the personal corrections I received from him during the weekend.

For me, the highlights of the conference were seeing Justin's videotape of his lecture at Folsom Prison, and the open practice on Sunday morning that was attended by over 170 people. Both of these events reflect the growing impact of T'ai Chi Chih in our communities.

I'm looking forward to the conference next year when it will be held in St. Paul, MN. The teachers in the Twin Cities have a wonderful example of how to run a very successful conference.

Ed Altman, San Rafael, CA



Justin, demonstrating some movements



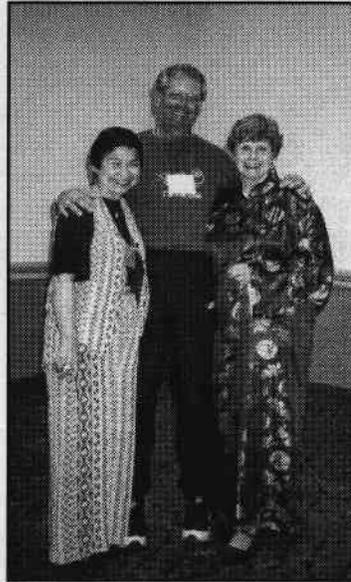
Congratulations to the entire Albuquerque conference planning and action committee -- this year's conference was the best planned of any I have attended! I especially enjoyed the format of the "Birds of a Feather" lunchtime groups which allowed people to interact naturally on a shared topic of interest, the showing of Justin's Folsom Prison talk videotape (which truly captures the mood and feeling of actually being there), hearing Ed speak about the challenges and surprises of giving a T'ai Chi Chih teacher accreditation course to inmate Jim Hecker behind Folsom Prison walls, and seeing so many foreign countries represented by T'ai Chi Chih teachers who started the conference off by greeting us in their native tongues.

Thanks again, Albuquerque teachers, for all your hard work in making this year's conference run so smoothly!

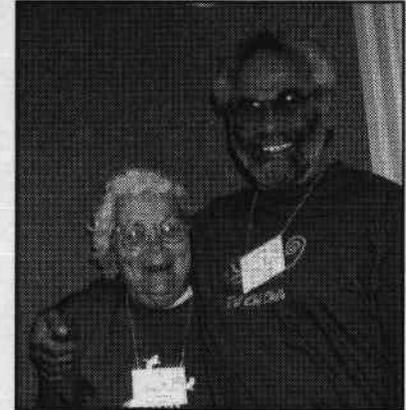
Noël Altman, San Rafael, CA



Catherine Briussel from France



Carmen B., Jim Lester, Pat Huseby



Lois Mahaney and Dave Schulberg

A CHANCE TO SPEND SOME TIME TOGETHER

This is my 4th conference. I have never been disappointed. What a joy it is to see old friends and meet new ones. What a blessing to be able to come together with so much positive energy. There is so much negative in the world, this is a chance to send POSITIVE out to all we can. We know how much good POSITIVE ENERGY can and does do. Let's keep the chi flowing and do our part to change our space, right where we are standing.

Jean Horton, Grand Junction, CO

Even though our T'ai Chi Chih community is growing, it seems as though the conferences are getting tighter and the feeling of community is stronger.

Kathy Vieth, St. Louis, MO

1. Greatest -- the outdoor practice at the Pavilion on July 19th -- music -- great outdoors -- great Chi.
2. Impressive -- the video -- information on the T'ai Chi Chih at Folsom Prison -- cheers to Justin and Ed -- great possibilities for future.
3. The feeling of following the right principles of movement -- stayed with me and hopefully will continue.
4. The organizational efforts of the planning team -- rides to the airport, hospitality, etc.
5. The beauty of New Mexico. Wanted more time to socialize.
6. Follow up -- a group of us organized by Carolyn from Manhattan gathered in Central Park Sunday, August 2 -- Great!!



Sr. Antonia Cooper and Bev McFarland

Sr. Agnes Fleming, Tarrytown, NY



SHARING TIME

Carmen Brocklehurst, Albuquerque, NM

The Annual T'ai Chi Chih Conference was wonderful. I say this with a great deal of joy on two accounts. The first: so many people took the time to tell me how meaningful the conference was to them. The second: it was a treasure to watch the conference unfold and to participate with NM teachers in its unfolding. There were many opportunities for insight. The participants did not go away wanting.

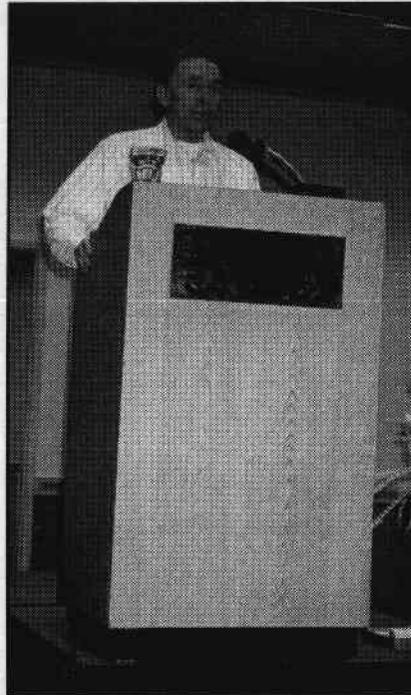
From the beginning, each person felt welcomed as Robert Montes de Oca coordinated a team of NM teachers who shuttled people between the airport and hotel. The first evening, watching the video of Justin's Folsom Prison lecture, the sparks of intuitive insight that Justin shared at the prison lit up our hearts too. Justin gives intelligent talks, not intellectual ones, and his talk at Folsom was one of his best.

Justin proved in 90 minutes that, regardless of circumstances, it is possible to share love. Because of Justin's attitude, the prisoners felt able to respond in kind. One of the key points of Justin's talk was, "Where are your feet now?" We must start from where we are now and go from there. In prison, options are not as discernible or available as they are to those of us on the "outside." On what level do we want to move forward? Are we really free or have we created more of a prison for ourselves than those incarcerated at Folsom? James Hecker, our new TCC Teacher in Folsom, can see the light at the end of the tunnel. Perhaps we might try a little harder to be free in some aspect of our life. The video was a fantastic way to start the Conference, with our hearts and minds open to having a new experience.

Sr. Antonia's ceremony of rededication to T'ai Chi Chih, with its spiral circle helped us find the

quietness of our own being, from which all new things come.

Justin's talk "Chi=Prana=Vital Force" was very powerful. Many teachers talk about Chi or Prana or Vital Force but never realize that all three are the same. We are so fortunate to teach T'ai Chi Chih with the knowledge that we are helping people experience the very substance of the universe, what we ourselves are made of.



We enjoyed the special pointers that Ed gave on T'ai Chi Chih, as well as his talk on commitment which included his experience training James Hecker to become a TCC Teacher. It was great, too, to meet and have time to touch base with other teachers who want to grow their offering of T'ai Chi Chih.

A special invitation went out to Albuquerque community to come and share our Sunday morning T'ai Chi Chih practice with us. Many came, and after talking to some of the students I found that the practice has helped them to become more committed to their own TCC practice. It was wonderful to share our Conference with them.

Of course, the Conference highlight is always when Justin shares T'ai Chi Chih with us. His instructions are so simple, his manner so giving, that it brings us home to the basics and makes our teaching so much more powerful.

I am grateful to Rhonda, Maggie, and all the others on the Conference team for all their hard work. It was a great Conference. I left feeling that I had been blessed. I know I am.

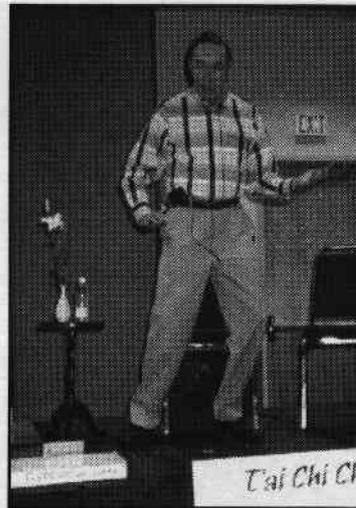
Love and Share the Chi, Carmen



Enjoying Breakfast with Paula Weiner (Chicago), Sister Marie-Ann Main (South Africa) and Sandy McAlister (CA)



Virginia Shilson (Albuquerque)



Justin Stone (Albuquerque)



Pam Towne (Camarillo, CA)



If anybody doesn't know what "Seijaku" means, she/he should've been there when we had silent practices at the conference. That is "Seijaku." I was disappointed not to see teachers I'd become acquainted with years ago, but was happy to meet new ones. The conference revitalized my dedication to TCC and put me back to the "Beginner's Mind."

I've found a life-time and the best friend in TCC almost ten years ago. It has become my "Oasis." Whenever I need comfort, joy I want to share--I go to TCC. I cannot find any way to express gratitude to Justin but to do TCC diligently and carefully.

Love to you all, Shoko Purdy, Albuquerque



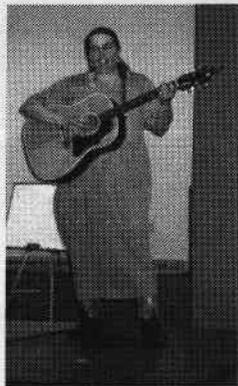
Shakin' it up with Deborah Brown



A Recitation by Jean Katus



Sister Alice -- Poetry and Fun



Songs from Deborah May

TALENT NIGHT



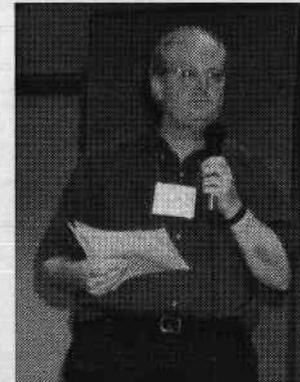
A Story from Neena Mitchell



Cathy Dalton taught us a Song



Uly Messier -- M.C. Extrordinaire!!



A Poem and Song from Mark Moloney



The "Cosmic Cowboys" sang Birthday Wishes



In honor of the Teaching . . . and of the Teachers

Many thanks to the Albuquerque TCC conference organizers, to Justin, to Ed and Noël, and to all of the wonderful TCC teachers who contributed to a supportive and productive conference! The movement sessions were very helpful -- I appreciate the opportunity to receive and to give suggestions for refining the movements, as well as the numerous sessions with Justin demonstrating moves to clear up questions about the difference between a basic "principle" and permissible "style" variations.

I particularly enjoyed the lunch discussions. Our group on TCC and addictive behaviors turned out to be a real self-help/mutual aid session.

Our TCC family is replete with talented, caring human beings who are using TCC in many healing ways. I hope that next year even more of us will attend to honor the teaching . . . and the teachers. I especially hope to see all of my first teachers -- Theda, Lucy and Corinn -- who made it possible for me to share such a powerful transformational tool. And during the next few months I intend to call every teacher in the Chicago area and urge them to get the unique benefits of education and fellowship that occur at the annual meeting. Outreach to special populations, such as the Folsom Prison Project, are increasing at a phenomenal rate and I hope we can share information about the healing directions in which T'ai Chi Chih is leading us. I'm already looking forward to seeing all of you next year!!

Hannah Hedrick, Chicago, IL

The conference was absolutely wonderful! I came home very refreshed and full of enthusiasm. Hopefully next year it will be longer -- allowing us to share more and receive more of other TCC teachers' experiences.

Thank you TCC for uniting us as a family of teachers --and rededicating and enriching our TCC practices.

Joanne Jaramillo, Whittier, CA



Eric Imbody continued on to Bandelier National Monument in New Mexico after the conference. He is demonstrating *Passing Clouds* at the Frijoles Canyon overlook



What does it take to hold a Teachers Conference? Vision! The Albuquerque T'ai Chi Chih teacher (and student!) community recently had the honor of hosting teachers from three foreign countries, as well as across the United States. The Conference provided a great way for us to get together and to rededicate ourselves to our practice. It was made possible by each and every teacher that attended and Rhonda St. Martin.

I single Rhonda out because she held the vision of hosting the conference in New Mexico since at least January of 1997. (I know because she brought it up during a New Mexico TCC Center Board of Director's meeting as an item she wanted to pursue.) Watching from the sidelines it was amazing to see the Conference take shape. Probably most remarkable was during the final few weeks and days as seemed to "fall" into place. The hotel offered concessions on their fees, necessary items were donated, volunteers kept offering their assistance, whatever needed to happen, did. It all came because of the vision Rhonda held as what she saw as a successful Conference.

The purpose of this letter is not only to express gratitude to Rhonda for a most enjoyable and fulfilling conference but to point to an example of how T'ai Chi Chih can work. We all possess the same tools Rhonda used to coordinate the Conference. We just need to hold the vision of what we want. Rhonda could have been easily swayed or discouraged by events that occurred in the 18 months of planning, but she wasn't. Nor did she let the conference planning committee be distracted. The results speak for themselves. I encourage each of us to let T'ai Chi Chih enhance our personal visions of how we want things to be and let our TEH shine through. Rhonda never let go and neither should you!

Thank you Rhonda for your leadership!

Guy Kent, Albuquerque, NM

Attending my first TCC conference was very exciting and fun. Seeing friends from the TCC community and meeting other teachers created a tapestry of ideas and information. Justin's talk was very enlightening and inspiring. And Justin's talk at Folsom prison only proves that he is a true sage and his wisdom and compassion are qualities that touched me beyond words. I was very privileged to have a private visit with Justin, just a few minutes, but as from previous times, I always learn something. In his presence, you are always aware of his TEH and you know there is so much wisdom in his words. I am truly grateful!



The group practice helps fine tune and improve one's knowledge of each movement. Ed Altman, as appointed Head of TCC, is very qualified indeed and did an excellent job of helping all to focus, be aware, and practice TCC in the purest sense.

Back home, the next day, I was very excited and eager to share my experiences at the conference with my students. I believe that the inspiration to do TCC and to teach TCC has a deeper meaning for me now. Can't wait for the conference next year!

Aida Wilkes, Fairfax City, Virginia



ODE TO ALBUQUERQUE

Conference July, 1998

They picked us up,
They brought us in,
With helpful hints
And Southwest grins.

We met, we flowed
Through heavy air
We knew we were centered,
Without a care.

We listened, we moved
We learned a lot
Justin and Ed gave us
All they've got.

We talked, we ate,
We did the "Jing,"
And lit our candles
And boy, did we sing.

Through music and song
And poems diamante,
We laughed and rattled
Our shakers vehemently.

As our circle expands
To include new teachers
We should stop to honor
Our "local" leaders.

They did so much
To make our stay grand,
We owe so much to
The ABC band!

Thank yous well up
From the soles of our feet
To the top of our heads,
And our spirits repeat:

HO HV TSV
HSV HSI CHVI
Thank you Thank you Thank you

Linda Braga
Castro Valley, CA