

# The Vital Force

*Journal of the Tai Chi Chih® Community*

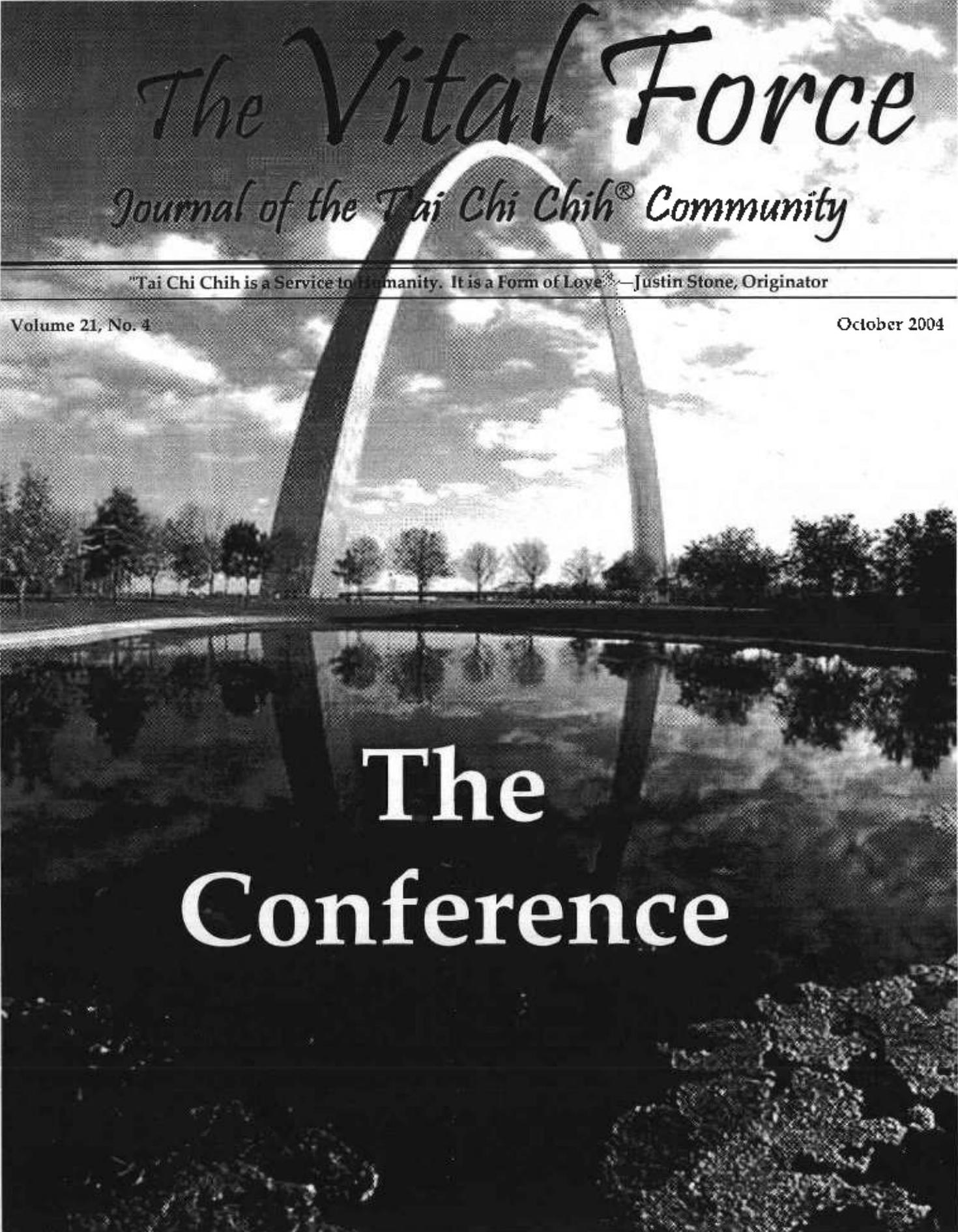
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"Tai Chi Chih is a Service to Humanity. It is a Form of Love."—Justin Stone, Originator

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Volume 21, No. 4

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## The Conference

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## Contributors

**Donna Aldous** lives in Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan, Canada. She was accredited in Edmonton, Alberta in 2002 with Ed Altman and Sandy McAlister leading. She enjoys teaching classes and attending functions with other TCC practitioners. A highlight for Donna was meeting Justin Stone in January 2003 in Albuquerque, NM and practicing TCC with his community.

**Trisha Bachman** is a 20-year-old who hails from Glen Burnie, MD. She majors in English and holds an extended minor in creative writing. She finds that TCC fits in perfectly with her lifestyle while helping to improve it.

**Kelly Baker** studies education and psychology at UMBC. (University of Maryland Baltimore County). She keeps very busy, and is thankful that TCC has become a much needed outlet in her life.

**Victor Berg** is a student of Justin Stone, who makes sure there are no easy answers.

**Nancy Jo Bleier** is from Sitka, Alaska, who through T'ai Chi Chih may be contributing to the melting of the polar ice cap. Sightings in the Lower 48 abound.

**Linda Braga** is as busy as they come. She is a fixture at all the TCC events around the country. She is a TCC animator and advocate, poet and special needs educator.

**Catherine Bricussel** lives and teaches in France. She has many things to say about T'ai Chi Chih. TCC has led her to a happy divorce. TCC has led her sharing the lives of people in some countries all over the world. TCC has made her feel comfortable with homeless people and very wealthy people of different cultural and religious backgrounds. TCC has helped her get rid of many things she didn't really need. TCC helps her understand and accept the needs and choices of her own children and not what she would expect to please her.

TCC is every day in her life. TCC is actually leading her to a total change of life. It is continually pushing her to letting go go go in order to make her go go go! Like an onion, you peel and peel and it is endless, but you can't go back. It can also lead to the unexpected, but it is worth it and rewarding.

**Living in Albuquerque, Carmen Brocklehurst** feels blessed to be able to practice weekly with Justin at the T'ai Chi Chih Center. It is a special time of great learning. It is felt and commented on by all the teachers who come to visit, so that they can get to know Justin better. It is time well spent.

**Debbie Cole** is learning balance and circularity as she discovers the "joy" of clipless pedals on her bicycle. After completing her first metric century (100K) bicycle ride in the rolling hills of Lancaster County, PA in August, her next step is an English century (100 miles) in southern Maryland.

**Cathy Dalton** lives and teaches in Minnesota. She is a singer and composer and has deeply contemplated the spirituality of motherhood.

**Sher Dano** is a very busy T'ai Chi Chih and Seijaku teacher, enthusiastically sharing her discoveries with others. Sher is currently involved with a National Council on Aging (NCOA) pilot project, a collaboration with three other organizations to promote interest, availability, and funding for more research of T'ai Chi and Qigong for seniors.

**Sr. Carol DeAngelo**, a Sister of Charity of New York, is Director of Mission Integration at St. Cabrini Nursing Home in Dobbs Ferry, Westchester County, NY. Sr. Carol assists staff, residents and Board members in creating and sustaining a culture and environment that supports SCNH mission and values. Sr. Carol also works part time in her One Earth Community Ministry: Caring for Earth, self

and others. In addition to offering classes and workshops in Tai Chi Chih, she mentors and offers workshops in areas of eco-spirituality, health and wellness and non-violence. Sr. Carol DeAngelo can be reached at 914-693-6800 ext. 510.

**Ted Fleischman** was accredited in Minnesota in 2001 by Ed Altman and still considers all of the teachers and students there as his extended family. Ted became interested in TCC after surgery to remove an acoustic neuroma, or auditory nerve tumor, which left him without hearing or balance on the right side. After months of physical therapy they felt his recovery was as good as it would get at about 70 percent, not enough to solo his sailboat. As he practiced TCC he quickly regained almost all the lost balance. He was recently recruited, then rejected for a study of balance problems in post-op acoustic neuroma patients because his balance was as good or better than those in the control group. He enjoys sailing (even solo), photography, stained glass, reading and working with audio/video equipment. Ted lives in Kansas City, Missouri with his wife Lucy Ann (also an accredited TCC instructor), two cats named Salvador and Dali "on loan" from his artist son Noah, and Maggie, the black lab rescue dog.

**Pat Flynn** became accredited to teach T'ai Chi Chih Joy thru Movement in October of 2002 and Seijaku in January of 2004.

**Brent Gibbons** loves music and plays the guitar. He finds that TCC is another way for him to practice meditation.

**Kathy Grassel** has lately been a student of non-violence training, during which she discovered she had a lot of hidden violence inside her, much like mad dogs waiting to

pounce. Alas, one more obstacle blocking the door to Truth, which she knows to be dwelling within her somewhere, also waiting to pounce.

**Siobhan Hutchinson** became accredited in 2002. She asks students to contribute to a charity in return for lessons. She gets great joy from TCC practice, her gardens, and animal friends, and is at the age where she frequently laughs at herself. Recently, Siobhan realized one of her long-term dreams already became a reality: She lives on a farm even though it is one acre and in a development. The gardens attract diverse wildlife, including hummingbirds, red-headed woodpeckers, an escaped parakeet, ground-hogs, the neighbor's rooster and hen, and a mutant-sized wild rabbit who likes massages. These critters settle by the deck to watch Siobhan and friends do TCC practice. The rooster crows especially loud during Bird Flaps Its Wings. When not playing outside, Siobhan enjoys the excitement of sales and is a student of life and its adventures. She hopes to have "awe" in her life throughout her whole time here.

**Dorene Krause** lives in Midland Park, NJ, and became an accredited instructor in November 2003. She was introduced to T'ai Chi Chih by Val Drucker and was intrigued by the gentle movements and the philosophy. She is grateful for the gift of T'ai Chi Chih in her life and is now sharing this gift with others.

**Sheila Leonard** is a Presentation sister from Newfoundland, Canada. She was accredited in New Jersey in November 2003.

**Lorraine Lepine** was born in La Belle Province, Quebec, Canada. Raised on the farm in the most beautiful Laurentian plains near Montreal until she went away to university.

Lorraine lived in Montreal from September 1973 until July 1992; Saskatchewan until March 2000; Raleigh, NC until August 2002 from where she

moved to Kansas City, KS where she now lives with her husband and two children, Julia (now in Montreal studying at McGill U.) and David, senior in high school. T'ai Chi Chih, besides her family, is one of her greatest passions in life. Lorraine has been actively teaching TCC since November 1999.

**Athene Mantle's** love of nature is presently expressing itself through her exploration of Native American Medicine. She loves the symbolism assigned Mother Nature's creatures and can frequently be seen pouring over the books that describe the meanings of a wide variety of animals (Medicine Cards). She shares her home with a resident hummingbird, a sassy squirrel, a one-legged blue jay, and occasionally with some deer who come in and mow her woods for her. She doesn't need to count sheep because the frogs in a nearby creek serenade her to sleep every night. The mother and son Cooper's hawks that nested in her oak tree have "flown the coop." She finds solace in her recent close encounters with a bear, a pair of coyotes, and two very cool ravens (all in Yosemite) and a sea otter as well. In spite of the nature girl that she is, she has put in a request that the volume be turned down on the ants.

**Sharon Matesi** was and is a student of Lucia Veteran and was accredited in 2002. She teaches in Pennsylvania.

**Catherine Millman** began T'ai Chi Chih Joy Thru Movement in 1999 with Gale Portman in hopes of relaxation. At that time, she and her husband had four children under the age of seven. She was Type A and had a tendency to frequently get sick. In addition, every few months she would lose her voice for about a week. In her first TCC class, she noticed the tingling between her hands. The unending mental chatter at night began to cease. She began to handle situations more calmly and with greater ease. After three months, she noticed she hadn't gotten sick. Gale planted the thought that she might want to consider teaching someday. She then knew: this was something she must

do. After a year she felt ready for teacher's accreditation, but Gale felt she should let her practice mature. She says wailing was the best thing she could have done. She became accredited in 2000. Classes began immediately and doors opened without knocking. In 2002, she became accredited in Seijaku. She notes that she hasn't lost her voice since her first class and is as healthy as she's been in her life. She sees the person she used to be, cherishes the person she is, and looks forward to who she will become.

**William Nielsen** has been an accredited TCC teacher since 1987 and was accredited to teach Seijaku in 1991. He says his TCC teacher, Jeanne Engen-Duranske taught him how profoundly the right teacher can change one's life, prompting him to become a teacher himself. He currently teaches TCC and Harmony Qigong full-time in the southwest suburbs of Chicago.

**Ann Rutherford** grew up on the Monterey Bay, an area that now is a National Marine Wildlife designation. As a child, she used to sit on the beach and watch the seaweed being pushed by an incoming wave, and pulled back out to sea. She shares this image with her students when she is teaching the importance of weight shift. "Your weight shift is the wave," she tells them. "Your hands and arms are merely being pushed and pulled by the wave; they cannot, on their own, initiate any movement." It works.

**Jeni Simas** just finished the requirements for her Theatre-Performance degree from UMBC. One of the last classes she took was TCC, and it has made a huge impact on her life. She is learning to control some of the constant pain from childhood surgeries and injuries that have plagued her for more than a decade thanks to TCC. Also, she has learned the wonderful beauty and perfect simplicity of letting go of a few things that were holding her back in life and just making her sad all the time.

**Sharon Sirkis** was accredited in 1997 by Ed Altman. She recently completed

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## Justin Stone

her fourth year as a sundance firekeeper, where her training in karate and TCC served her well. Sharon keeps herself sane by seeing the humor in things, thus originating "The Lighter Side" column for the VFJ.

**Lisa Thorburn** teaches at Kaiser Permanente in Fremont, CA. She is the web mistress for the International TCC website ([www.taichichih.org](http://www.taichichih.org)) and the Northern California TCC website ([taichichih-norcal.org](http://taichichih-norcal.org)).

**Judy Tretheway** has volunteered for seven years as the facilitator and teacher for the Folsom Prison program. She has become a Hospicic Chaplain and Spiritual Director and has taught Qigong classes for Kaiser in the Sacramento area.

**Justin Stone** was once a big band leader and in the course of this career joined the Musician's Union. Later in life, about to enter a fancy dinner party, he had the occasion to refuse to cross a picket line, much to the chagrin of his rich companions who had thought he was "one of them."

**Beverly Weil** first awakened to the power of the flow of the Life Force Energy within her while receiving acupuncture treatments for personal healing. This awakening totally transformed her life. She felt deep gratitude and a strong desire to find a way to help others discover the healing power within them. Several years later she attended her first Tai Chi Chih class. As with the acupuncture, she deeply felt the flow of the Chi. Gratitude filled her, and she knew immediately she would become a teacher. She is dedicated to helping others discover their own inner healer/teacher—the Chi.

Beverly is also a pianist/teacher and composer of *Improvised Inspirational Music for Healing and Inner Peace*, creative writer, is interested in philosophy, psychology, spiritual studies, energy healing, music and sound healing, views nature as teacher, enjoys hiking and swimming, and is a grandparent who sees in the spirit of the child the effortless beauty of "joy thru movement."

## The Beauty of Life

By Justin Stone

Beauty is not something that can be defined. Some say it is in the eye (or ear) of the beholder. It is true that the musician or student of music does not depend on technical understanding. It is open to all.

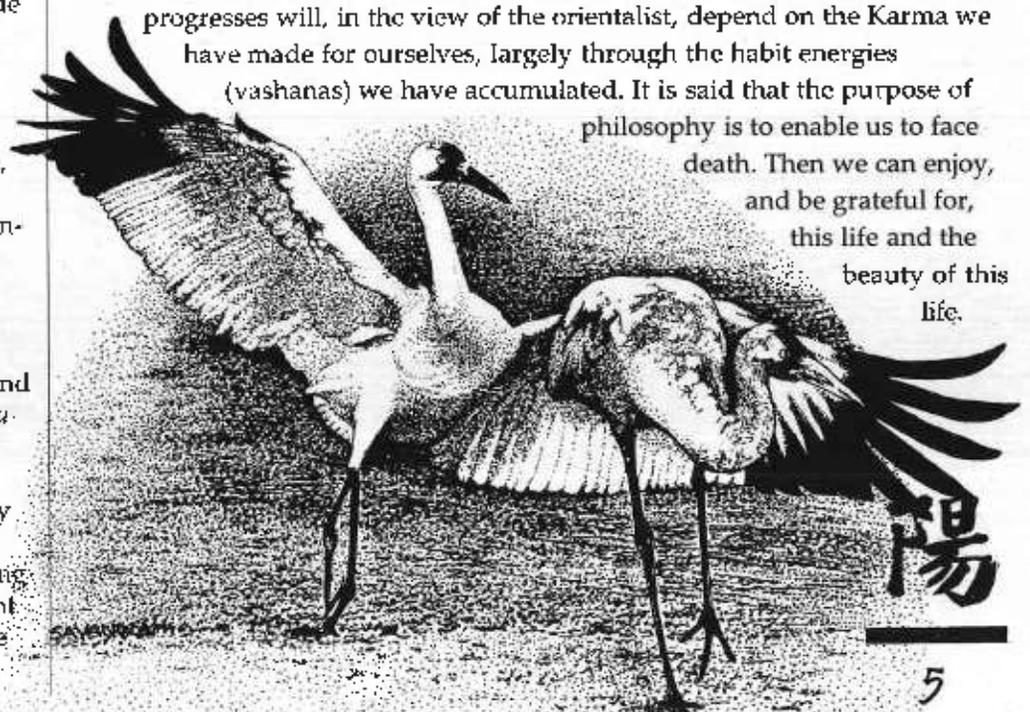
The early riser has the pleasure of seeing the dawn, and the outdoors person will revel in the purity of the first dawn. Perhaps the poet touches something in us that brings unexpected joy. The Zen student will see the beauty of Reality in the sight of a tiny bird on the bare branch of a tree in winter.

The beauty of life can only be grasped by one who comes to grips with the inevitability of death. We cry at the death of a beloved one—understandably—but we are really crying for ourselves. We are deprived of the company of one who has meant much to us. If we attempt to live in that memory, we will never enjoy the beauty of today.

In Japan the plum leaves pierce the springtime snow, and the miracle of it touches our soul. We know the life of the plums and the tree is limited, but the beauty is here now, to be appreciated.

The one who single-mindedly sets his life on making money will seldom be open to enjoying beauty. There is nothing wrong with making money (hopefully to use some of it to help those less fortunate). There are, of course, exceptions to this last statement. When I was in the financial world I had a client, a Dutch doctor whom I greatly admired. He was very skilled in playing the stock market and consistently made money. In his spare time he hired a violinist, a viola player, and a cellist from the Los Angeles symphony to make up a string quartet with him on second violin, and so enjoyed the great beauty of music. He seemed open to all the other beauties of life and was an enjoyable conversationalist in quite a few languages.

It is my belief that we would do well to be grateful for this life. How it progresses will, in the view of the orientalist, depend on the Karma we have made for ourselves, largely through the habit energies (vashanas) we have accumulated. It is said that the purpose of philosophy is to enable us to face death. Then we can enjoy, and be grateful for, this life and the beauty of this life.



## The Conference



## Hosting the 2004 International TCC Teachers Conference ~ Experiences and Reflections

By Catherine Millman



What an amazing adventure! As peace and fulfillment continue to permeate my Soul, I'd

like to share with you what hosting a TCC Conference has been for me. As you probably can expect, there is well over a year's worth of planning, preparing, negotiating, giving and receiving AND WORK! The balance of our St. Louis Committee (Kathy Albers, Bobbie Anderson, Decdie Cote, Susan Kissinger, myself – Catherine

Millman, Anne Perkins and Gale Portman) couldn't have been better! Each of us brought unique strengths to the table and after a

short amount of time, were given the reins in trust and a *knowing* that this was the way to go. As we came together so long ago, it was decided that *community* was our goal. We feel a strong sense of community within T'ai Chi Chih Joy Thru Movement and wanted it to shine.

There were many "firsts" for this conference:

(1) It began with *how* our committee ran. We did not have one person overseeing and delegating to the rest of the group. We acknowledged that each of us were intelligent, capable and accountable. Therefore, it was decided to utilize our individual strengths and choose what projects to take on. Others could give suggestions and if a strong disagreement occurred, we would turn to Kathy Albers for clarity. (*This disagreement never happened.*)  
 (2) It was important for us to honor Justin Stone's request for Teacher Training to be more affordable. A T'ai

Chi Chih Teacher Candidate Scholarship Fund was established.

(3) The Silent T-shirt Auction of new and vintage TCC T-shirts, along with generous donations, brought in over \$1,000!!! The proceeds went into the General Scholarship Fund.

(4) In addition to the auction, Nancy Werner-Azarski donated a beautiful TCC quilt wall hanging. The quilt was raffled and used as a backdrop to the stage. Nancy's quilt brought in over \$400 which also went into the General Scholarship Fund. Thank you Nancy!

(5) We wanted to have a Seijaku practice and were given Justin's permission to do it. Two areas were designated: an outdoor beside a sparkling fountain was used for the TCC practice, and an enclosed area (our movement area) was used for those accredited in Seijaku. By glancing at the Evaluation Forms, this was a success!

It was decided *not* to have breakout sessions. We didn't want to miss a

thing! A new idea by Susan Evans was to carry small convenient schedules (4" x 5 1/2") with a St. Louis attraction on the back. She was instrumental in creating these. We had a great deal of help from Ted Fleischman who videotaped the event. Ted, Athene Mantle and others were our photographers. Their assistance saved us a \$1,200 bill! As you may now see, the chi supported us in many, many ways.

Through my eyes, the conference flowed beautifully. The Sheraton Westport hotel facilities, staff, food and services were excellent! There was a

great sense of joy and community wherever I looked. Sr. Mary Francis Reis surprised us the day before the conference by volunteering to do miming. She quietly and playfully brought much to the activities. Gale Portman led us through a beautiful symbolic ceremony with each of us stringing different colored beads together from the North, South, East and West to converge at the center crystal. We brought back the

talent show where tears of compassion and joy flowed freely. James Hecker's powerful story of his journey from Folsom prison (with strong dedication and support from Justin Stone and Ed Altman) helped show me a deeper inner potential of *all* and strengthened my commitment as a T'ai Chi Chih Teacher. In the Candlelight Rededication Ceremony, Bill Walton sung a glorious prayer in Hebrew, interpreted in English by Ron Richardson. The talents in our com-

munity are truly amazing! A "free movement interplay" demonstration by Sr. Cecile Remy and Sr. Alice Holden was so inspiring that after the Candlelight Rededication Ceremony, we were welcome to explore our own *free movement interplay*. There were drums, rattles, dancing with scarves ... I must say that our chi was not just flowing, IT WAS UNLEASHED! (Ohhh how I wonder what pictures came of this!) Even our Guide, Sr. Antonia, floated through the crowd with a scarf in hand.

Entertainment included storytelling,

finement led by Sr. Antonia, Pam Towne and Sandy McAlister. This was followed by the open practice.

One couldn't help but notice the strong sense of unity between Sr. Antonia, Pam and Sandy as they guided us with movement, wisdom and pure intentions. Throughout the conference *the speakers were inspiring and the practices gently flowing*. Our St. Louis Committee held strong during this conference. We each knew the others' responsibilities so well that if one of us wasn't available, another could take it over with ease. We found a rhythm

and flow ... the flowing from our center ... the chi guiding us thru our journey. The pure joy of T'ai Chi Chih.

I met many new and old friends whom I cherish. Quiet ... inspiring thoughts of Ed and Noel Altman went through my mind as I reflected on the many gifts that they brought to our T'ai Chi Chih Community and *how much* they gave of themselves. I looked into the eyes of our new Guide, Sr.



The St. Louis committee joined by the TCC community's leaders, Sr. Antonia, Sandy McAlister, and Pam Towne.

music, singing, poetry, a crystal craft and an hour of Crystal Bowl Reflections led by Charlotte Bright. Bradford Smith played the Native American flute during our practice opened to local students. I loved how the sound of the flute echoed and then silence with the sound echoing in my mind. Both Charlotte and Bradford are long time students of Kathy Albers and move beautifully! Local students had the opportunity to purchase a Silent Auction T-shirt and join us in a movement re-

Antonia, with Pam and Sandy beside her and I felt *peace* ... I note the joy and stillness of my mind when practicing T'ai Chi Chih. And I look forward to renew again with our *amazing and inspiring* community in August of 2005 in Albuquerque, NM. I am thankful for all of you ... all who share this incredible experience and journey of T'ai Chi Chih Joy Thru Movement.

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## Flowing from the Center

Opening and closing remarks by Sr. Antonia Cooper, OSF, T'ai Chi Chih Guide

### Gratitude

I'd like to open with words of gratitude to Justin Stone, and for this 30<sup>th</sup> year that T'ai Chi Chih has been in existence. This is also the 20<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of the *Vital*

*Force Journal*, which you will read about in the most recent copy you received when you arrived.

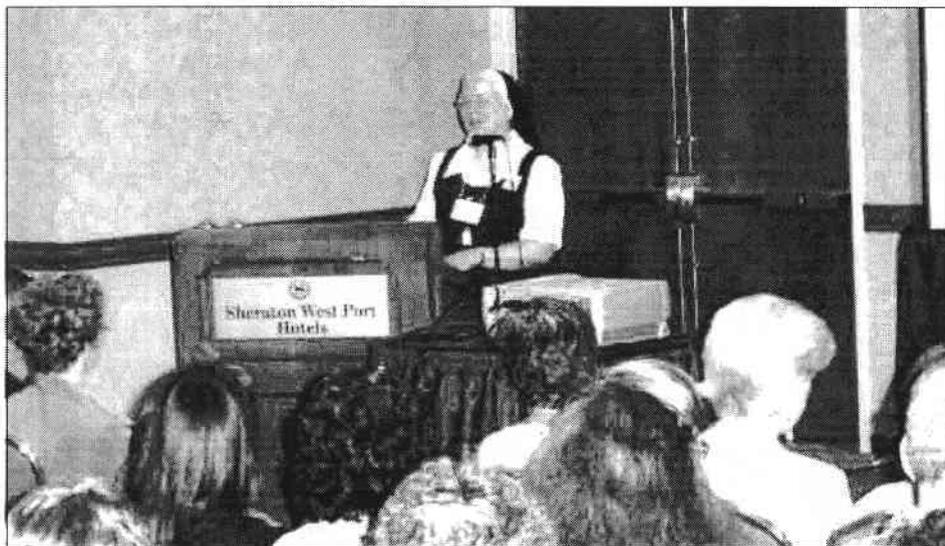
Gratitude to the St. Louis Teachers, especially to the committee for their hours of planning that have given way to this marvelous gathering - our invitation to "Flow from the Center."

Gratitude to each of you, TCC Teachers from around the world, for your dedicated practice and teaching, and for your openness to be here and to enter into that flow.

### Invitation

I'd like to invite you to sit quietly for a moment in order to get in touch with your "Heart's Desire" for this time of Conference. What do you desire most for these days together? For the future of TCC? For your practice? For your students?

My heart's desire for each of you is to BE here with a "beginners mind" as an "Empty Cup," to make the most of our



- mental focus on the T'an T'ien and/or the soles of the feet, the Bubbling Spring.
  - proper yinling and yangling, which means a full weight shift, and
  - moving/flowing with softness and continuity.
- Flowing from the Center is Unifying when all the parts are moving as one, the TCC form be-

comes unified. As Justin said on this year's video: It is not "what" you move, but "how" you move.

Isn't CHI amazing? We just never know where Chi might take us. During the 2000 Conference in New Jersey I was asked to share some insights on how I "opened the Northeast" to TCC... But I had no such insights. I simply taught classes and students simply wanted to know how they might become teachers - and Chi made it happen.

I also shared at that time that I entered my particular religious community because I didn't want to teach - I got really nervous in front of large gatherings! Now, four years later, I stand before you as "Guide" - Chi continues to take me to uncharted and very unexpected places.

### Flowing from the Center

How might we best Flow from the Center in the T'ai Chi Chih form, according to the way that Justin Stone teaches it?

FLOWING includes our

comes unified. As Justin said on this year's video: It is not "what" you move, but "how" you move.

T'ai Chi Chih practice Unifies - it draws spiritual persons to itself because it is a spiritual practice, often referred to as a moving meditation. This unifying element drew us to become teachers and drew each of us together for this particular conference, at this particular time, and in this particular space. Justin often says that TCC teachers are very nice people! Just look around - I think he is right!

When flowing from the Center, CHI becomes the matrix for change. Do you remember how you were before you began to practice TCC? Recall all the changes that have taken place within you over the years you have been practicing.

Circulating and balancing CHI gives way to wellness and wholeness. Entering into the Cosmic Rhythm changes us and our world, whether that world view is our household and area of the country where we live, or if it has extended beyond those boundaries to the global community. Justin

recounts stories from individuals who have attended teacher accreditation saying it was one of the most transforming weeks of their lives. He has received countless letters of how TCC practice has changed lives physically, mentally and spiritually.

One of the outstanding gifts that TCC practice has given us is inner integrity and sincerity, which Justin refers to as T E H. Both of these gifts or values are counter-cultural. They bring an inner peace and calm that is beyond words and beyond other experiences.

As Guide of TCC, I am sincerely asking each of you to be attentive or "awake" during these days together: notice how you are moving and deepen your awareness of how you are flowing from the center... or not flowing from the center. Our Conference will offer many opportunities for refinement in over seven hours of moving together!

Teach your students well. Teach them to refer to this specific form of movement as T'AI CHI CHIH and don't be satisfied by merely saying T'ai Chi. I invite each of you to

whisper CHIH when it is not added. Here is a little story to make that very point. Several years ago I was home on vacation and told my Dad that I was going out to do my T'ai Chi Chih practice. I was aware that the phone rang during the practice time. Upon my return Dad proudly reported that he told the caller that I was outside doing my Ho Chi Minh! .....So much for "getting it right." He did remember the Chi part!

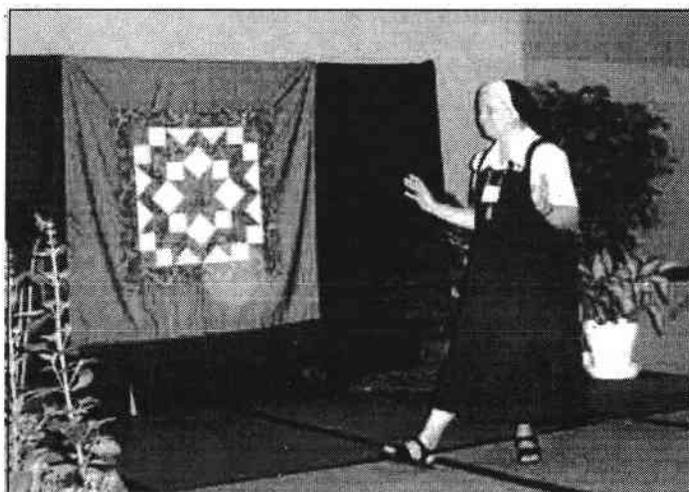
We will honor Justin Stone every time we include "Chih." It is important that we recognize Justin as the Originator of TCC as we make a point

to include this in our teaching.

Give your students an example of your integrity and sincerity - in the way you move - in the way you teach - and in the way you live your life!

### Envisioning the Future

As the Conference comes to a gentle conclusion, and we return to our families, homes and places of work, it is important to set our focus in the future. In considering the future of T'ai Chi Chih, it is my hope that Teachers will continue to develop a deeper under-



Sr. Antonia demonstrating Daughter in the Valley. On the stage is Nancy Werner-Azariski's hand-created quilt.

standing of the TCC form in their daily personal practice so that they will be able to impart the principles within the movements to their students.

When teachers are teaching *How to move*, students will experience greater circulation and balance of Chi which will then lead to countless benefits of mind, body and spirit. Teachers will also be more confident in assisting students who are preparing for Teacher Accreditation.

I am grateful to our Teacher Trainers Sandy McAlister and Pam Towne who continue to be available to offer Intensives for students and their

teachers, as well as for teachers only, especially in those communities that are not currently sponsoring teacher candidates for accreditation. An Intensive is the only format in which students and/or teachers have an opportunity to refine their TCC form through individual attention and help.

You are also encouraged to deepen your awareness of TCC through learning the practice of *Seijaku*. I attended Seijaku Accreditation in 1994, and auditing a few years later, found Seijaku giving me an abundance of energy.

Since a practice was offered here at the Conference, it helped to renew those who knew it, and piqued the interest of those who did not. Please consider sponsoring a Seijaku Training or Retreat in your local community.

Please contact me with any requests for Trainings or Intensives so that Pam, Sandy and I can coordinate calendars (908-370-3616 or antonia1CC9@aol.com).

The T'ai Chi Chih form will reach the

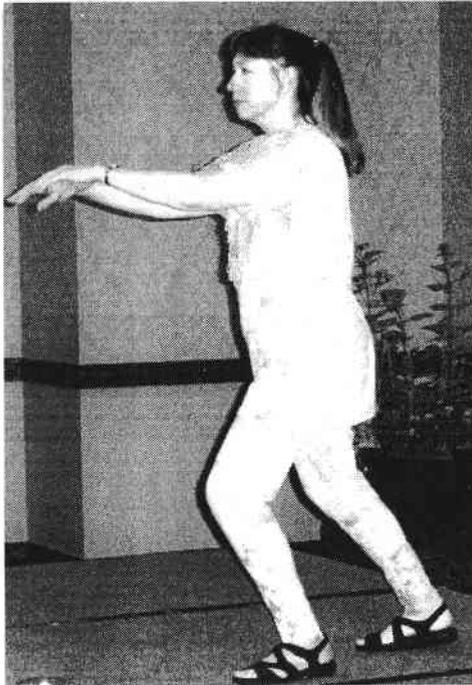
public's attention very soon through the medical profession and insurance companies, and when it does, it will be the dedicated teachers who will be representing it. It is my hope that you continue what was begun here at the Conference, and deepen it through your inner sincerity (T e h) and integrity. I am grateful to each of you for your fine efforts in spreading TCC throughout the world.

Peace and all good,  
Sr. Antonia

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## Two visions for the future of T'ai Chi Chih

By Pam Totone, Teacher Trainer



**T**here is a bright future for T'ai Chi Chih...and for those who practice it. I see it improving our quality of life both now and as we mature. The benefits of TCC practice are particularly appealing to seniors who want to be healthy, vigorous & productive. Justin Stone is a living example of the health, serenity, longevity and creativity benefits!

Over the 20 years I've been teaching TCC, I've found I'm teaching more and more seniors. This is partly because I'm now a senior of 58 years myself, and partly because there are more people over 55 as the "baby boomers" mature. It's never too late to start practicing TCC, and we get benefits at any age. Yet, I look forward to the time when there are hundreds of

thousands...even millions...of people who've been doing TCC for 10, 20, 30 years or more!

Like the "Hun-

dredth Monkey" effect, I see us teaching a "critical mass" in terms of the numbers of people practicing TCC regularly...that percent of the population which triggers a transformation in our planetary consciousness...first here in the USA, then around the world...which can bring about peace. I look forward to the time when T'ai Chi Chih is a household "word" and peace prevails on our planet.

My vision for us as TCC teachers is that we get the maximum benefit from our TCC practice. I encourage us all to practice regularly. As we teach more & more classes it's easy to let personal practice slide. **Listen to Prajna**, the inherent wisdom of the Chi. **Find balance** in every area of our lives, between giving and receiving, teaching and practicing TCC. **Take care of ourselves**, so we give from our overflow rather than from an empty well. **Use the advanced tools** Justin has given us...Seijaku and the Jing. **Know that this is a transformational practice**. As the character of the Chi changes, we change. **Be open and receptive** to the flow of this wonderful CHI!

By Sandy McAlister, Teacher Trainer

**I** think of the story that Nancy Adams told about her experience of doing T'ai Chi Chih in a circle and seeing everyone connected to the center of the circle from the Tan Tien.

That gave me the idea of "Connection." We are all different, with different jobs, family situations, goals, but a common connection of T'ai Chi Chih brings us here and connects us together as a community. Think about that connection. How can we become more conscious of that connection and be more ACTIVE in strengthening that connection?

When we travel to another city, call a teacher there and ask to do a practice with him/her. Ask if they are teaching a class while you are there and if you can attend. Not only do we have an opportunity to learn from each other but we are strengthening our connection.

Our connection in the United States is strong and is gradually spreading out. We have many teachers in Canada and a few in other countries. A new community is building in Italy. It won't be long before we will be having a teacher training course there.

Whether we travel or not, we can strengthen the T'ai Chi Chih connection with our intent and our hearts. Each time we do our practice we are creating and sending out a vibration. Doing our practice with an open heart and grounded energy allows for the flow of that connection. It is as if there were these invisible threads of T'ai Chi Chih energy emanating from us as we do our practice, reaching out for and like threads, connecting. As those threads of energy spread out into our world, they are felt as peace and love.



## Utilizing Research

Moderated by Sr. Alice Holden

Summary submitted by Diana Welsh-Durkin and Debbie Cole

Saturday dawned with a concentrated conference agenda. Presentations which addressed the body, mind and spirit were offered and graciously received. Then the time came for all conference participants to call upon the Light at the Top of the Head and Light at the Temple.

After Roberta Taggart's impressive work regarding "UCLA Research Updates," an open floor discussion ensued. Topic: "Utilizing Research" moderated by Sister Alice Holden. Many suggestions were offered concerning the dissemination of research material available at this time. Three main research topics/articles were discussed:

1. UCLA Research
2. Wall Street Journal follow-up
3. Prevention Magazine, Rodale Press, April issue, 2004, page 91

Suggestions included:

1. Presenting legible and professional copies of above materials to medical doctors and health care professionals
2. Presenting legible and professional copies to insurance companies (New Mexico's Blue Cross/Blue Shield is considering coverage for T'ai Chi Chih classes as preventative, or as prevention, of more serious health related issues.)
3. Observation that two studies (rather than one) hold more clout in the medical and

insurance world.

4. Accessibility of said studies by linking to related websites; e.g. *Prevention; Psychosomatic Studies*
5. Teachers involved in health care, hospital, and university systems should consider developing and writing articles for above publications with clear, detailed testimonials of students
6. Utilizing graduate students wishing to conduct research or looking for research opportunities

• Janet Oussaty, a teacher from New Jersey involved in a university, can provide assistance in how to work with higher learning institutions.

• Bonnie Sokolov, a Rochester Minnesota teacher, has the Mayo Clinic almost in her back yard. Bonnie has given herself the 12-month mission of inviting the Mayo Clinic to revisit their past endorsements of T'ai Chi Chih and Justin Stone's video.

• Sister Antonia Cooper suggested a compilation/collation of all research materials related to Tai Chi Chih for

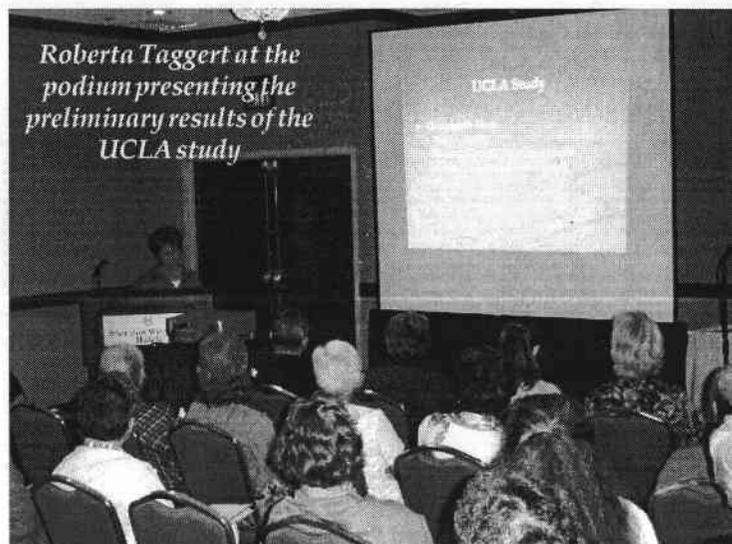
easy access by teachers.

• Dr. Irwin, lead doctor of the UCLA research, has given permission for any T'ai Chi Chih teacher to use research findings

• We can all help by documenting student comments. To be most useful, those comments would be specific, quantifiable remarks about their emotional or mental health being improved. Some teachers hand out self-evaluation forms at the beginning of a class series and then follow up at the end with another self-evaluation, allowing a comparison of how the questions were answered (e.g. How stressed are you?). Another helpful resource would be the guidelines that Hannah Hedrick suggests in her article about how to approach healthcare facilities to offer ICC classes (*VFJ* June 2001).

• One teacher expressed frustration regarding unprinted information submitted four years ago to the *Vital Force Journal* involving an informal study of T'ai Chi Chih and congestive heart failure in conjunction with a Cincinnati hospital.

• The discussion ended with Sr. Alice Holden endorsing the need for personal accountability by the teaching community in order to bring all of this to fruition.



Roberta Taggart at the podium presenting the preliminary results of the UCLA study

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## Inspiring My Teaching from the Inside, Taking Out the TCC Trash, or Inside-Out: Doing My TCC Laundry

By Debbie Cole, speaking at the Teachers Conference in St. Louis

The bottom line: this is about clearing the debris to make room for the inspiration available to all of us. It may be expressed differently (sometimes quite uniquely) in each of us, but it is there, ready for cultivation. For me, the inner teacher has taken on the tendency to speak in rhyme; maybe I read too much Dr. Seuss to my children!

Early on, my inner teacher mimicked the voice of Sharon Sirkis, my teacher and mentor for teacher training. Sometimes it sounded a lot like Ed Altman. But these days, through poetry and writing, I am learning to hear my own voice and I'm trying to listen to what it has to say. Some of you may be familiar with my poetry and writing from the *Vital Force*. What you may not know is that I didn't write poetry (or anything else) before my teacher training week, which was a turning point in my life.

My husband and I home-school our children, so I am constantly aware of being a teacher. Not that everything I do is worthy of being taught, but, I believe by our individual actions we affect other things, other people. By cultivating, deeply, my personal daily practice (nurturing this inner teacher), I feel it keeps some of the debris out of the way so that the "Chi" or Prana, can more easily be expressed through me. By devoting time to my daily practice, I



*And before you know it,  
The student surpasses and learns*

*More than you thought you knew  
how to teach*

*As far as they go, there is more to reach*

*Point the way to deep down inside*

*Then buckle up and enjoy the ride!*

This was also partially inspired by a student who called me after the first night of class to thank me "for making the decision to teach."

Wow, what a thought! How many lives have been changed because T'ai Chi Chih classes became available in a particular area? This is not something to be taken lightly. This is a very important undertaking, and to continue to nurture that inner teacher, as well as empower and enhance my own life, I feed it a daily dose of T'ai Chi Chih or Seijaku practice. It is my honor and privilege to clear the debris for and touch base with my inner teacher.

As that student expressed gratitude, I too express gratitude to Sharon for being there when I was ready to learn and especially to Ed Altman for being the one to introduce me to myself and whose teachings continue to inspire me. I also want to express gratitude to each and every teacher here. Your mere presence has helped strengthen my practice. I also feel gratitude for my inner teacher working so hard to bring me up to speed. I realize that my job, many times, is just to get out of the way.

feel I'm doing some small part in promoting peace and tranquility on this planet.

This is a deeply spiritual practice for me, as I know it is for many of you. Sharing it seems to strengthen it and encourage it to grow. In fact, there is nothing like the reward of a student really "getting it." That idea inspired this poem:

### *When a Student Can Flow*

*When a student can flow from the center  
With softness and continuity*

*It is more prized than a mere  
Financial gratuity*

*It is the essence within  
That has been transmitted again*

*To ever flow out into the universe*

*The spark has been lit*

*It smolders and burns*

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*Real  
Simple  
Let it go  
Simplicity  
Allows one  
To grow  
Truth*

My daily practice helps keep the garbage at bay. The inspiration flowing, it brings me back to the present moment, giving me moments of insight and clarity. It also helps me recognize inspiration in other settings as I'm going about my day, as I ponder which venue may be the best to start a new class or a new way of presenting the material.

### *Spark of Intuition*

*The spark of intuition  
Leads my way*

*It's there to guide me  
Be it night or day*

*Whether I'm in a circle  
Or at a classroom front*

*When I'm still and quiet  
I don't have to hunt*

*It's there with me al-  
ways,  
It won't let me down*

*I just have to remember  
To "let it go"—and  
ground*

Throughout all this, my perspective is ever changing. With each new insight, I seem to come up with different challenges and new

ways to view these challenges. Then, the process starts all over again.

*I am changing  
I am morphing  
Where do I go from here?*

*Onward, upward  
Through the fog  
Even if it's not clear*

*Trusting my intuition  
Honing my instincts  
Learning to let go and live*

*Finding my gifts  
Simplifying my life  
Exploring what I have to give*

*Sharing my knowledge  
Sharing my possessions  
Sharing my wisdom from within*

*Whittling it down to essential components  
So, again, I'm allowed to begin*

*Now as I travel around this bend  
I experience the full circle of life again*

With my desire for inner sincerity, or

teh, and my desire to live in the moment, allowing time to just BE, my intention is to one day truly live up to my name —[teh-BE].

I would like to leave you with one last writing. This was written within a different spiritual community, but I also had the TCC community in mind as I wrote it.

### *Explorers*

*We are explorers of the spirit,  
Astronauts of the internal,  
Divers of the great depths of the soul.*

*This work is not for the faint of heart.  
The digging required would exhaust any  
miner,  
But the nuggets are worth more than gold.*

*There is a risk of finding out more than one  
wants to know  
Or unveiling something that  
Promotes a potentially challenging "oppor-  
tunity for growth"  
Stretching beyond our own limitations,  
Making way for the new seeds one wishes to  
water,  
The new experiences yet to come.*

*We are truly a brave bunch  
For once you've started this trek,  
There's no going back—only pushing for-  
ward  
Toward the depths of one's soul.*

*May God help us and guide us on this long  
and arduous journey.  
May Gaia accept and comfort us as we con-  
tinue.  
May the wisdom of the Buddha bring peace  
to our hearts.  
May our own con-  
science lead the way.*



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## Inspiration from My Practice and Insight from Mother Nature

By Athene Mantle

Gale Portman and the conference committee asked me to speak about "Inspiring Your Practice From Within - How Does Your T'ai Chi Chih Practice Inspire Your Teaching" for the 2004 Conference in St. Louis this summer. At the request of Kathy Grassel and other attendees I have submitted the exact text of my presentation as follows. I hope you enjoy it.

I had just hung up the phone after one of several conversations with Gale Portman. I stood leaning against the doorjamb of my back bedroom. I was gazing out of the window past the lemon tree into the space beyond. I was contemplating the question at hand, "How does my T'ai Chi Chih practice inspire my teaching?"

At that moment, a beautiful little hummingbird flew into the lemon tree and was hovering from blossom to blossom drinking the nectar. And I thought, of course, the hummingbird represents JOY in Native American medicine. It's the JOY of T'ai Chi Chih that inspires me from within. Suddenly the hummingbird flew to the open window, hovered there momentarily looking directly at me as if to say, "Yes, Athene, this message is for you."

As he flew off, I saw that the inspiration from my T'ai Chi Chih practice is in the joy of exploration, the joy of discovery, the joy of sharing, and the joy and bliss of flowing on the river of chi that comes of simply "Letting Go."

I stood at the open window feeling warm all over from the strong presence of Mother Nature and these lovely thoughts. I heard the



cries of my hawks, a mother and son that have been residing in my Oak tree. First from the mother hawk came the full-bodied experienced cry and then from her teenage son came a perfectly echoing cry, but it had the sound of youth and inexperience.

I had witnessed for weeks now, these patient lessons of mother to son of their amazingly varied calls. And I thought of course, it's the fullness and depth of my own T'ai Chi Chih practice that I bring to my students that they might first echo my experience and then fly on their own.

How fitting I should hear the hawks just now, I thought, as hawks in Native American medicine represent the messenger. Hawk medicine teaches us to be observant and to pay attention to the signals.

Isn't that what I'm doing in my T'ai Chi Chih practice and when teaching? I'm constantly observing myself and my students moving—flowing. I'm constantly paying attention to the signals that tell me, "Hey, there's something here that you need to let go of so

that you can flow more softly."

One message was loud and clear after my accreditation and that was that my journey was just beginning. The next four years became a journey of exploring and discovering at conferences, workshops, auditing trainings, a retreat, an intensive and a weekly continuing class where I attend as an eager student.

During this time I have made many refinements. The symptoms have been varied, but they have always pointed back to one cause—the hips: the hips not moving fully and freely.

While auditing the teacher training in Canada, I had a very profound experience when I recognized a lifetime pattern of holding my hips tightly tucked under. Auditing a teacher training in New Jersey, I unleashed a waterfall of tears as my hips moved just a little more completely in forward and back weight shift. I discovered an emotional pattern existed there within that extra little bit of weight shift and that pattern was that *I didn't want to go there!*

Auditing at the Chicago teacher training and attending the Santa Barbara intensive, I discovered a more complete side-to-side weight shift. I found myself shifting into space that I had no idea existed before. (Are you beginning to wonder as I did, how did I ever get accredited? Beats me.) That little bit of space had no reality for me before. Now, shifting to the right felt great but shifting to the left into to that little extra bit of space was like trying to pull a rat from a cat's mouth. It just didn't want to let go!

Do you know that there's a flip side to Hawk medicine? That aspect is when you shut down your powers of observation and allow your emotions

to override your perceptions.

I believe this left side issue was tied into patterns on many levels and also to a broken leg experience of 20 years ago. Hmm. It's true that I had clouded vision about this issue and couldn't see the solution, and it's true that I really wanted to know how to solve the problem, but I can't help thinking that the Universe could have perhaps found a more gentle way to get the message across. For I proceeded to break my baby toe on the left foot. I was then forced to walk for four weeks rotating the weight to the inside of my left foot. As a result I was forced to awareness of a whole restrictive movement pattern in my left hip. And in the end, I was forced to establish new movement patterns throughout the pelvic girdle and out into the whole body. Wow! That was some message. Or, was there a bigger one?

Over time, these experiences have brought change and evolution to my personal life and to my teaching. But as with the eye of the hawk and his higher vision and greater perspective, a more encompassing awareness began to emerge. Was the observing being done now more with the inner eye? And were the signals pointing to messages on another level?

Now in my students, I could see patterns just as I had seen them in myself—patterns of resistance, patterns of fear, emotional patterns, mental patterns, patterns of denial, patterns of protection, patterns of which they were unaware, patterns in which they were locked.

Now, not only did I see the students not shifting the weight all the way forward but I saw a pattern of fear—a pattern of protectiveness around the knee and a pattern of reluctance to be

fully present in the forward weight shift. It turns out that this student had an old knee injury. Now, not only did I see a student's hips tucked in tight, but also I saw a pattern of restriction that was being reflected in their whole practice. And when I saw big arms and fancy hands I looked past that and saw their fear and resistance to being in the lower part of their body.

Most of this is left unspoken. But by observing these signals, these patterns, I believe that my understanding is deeper—the message is more complete. And it has enhanced greatly my ability to assist my students toward our goal of “letting go” and “flowing softly” from the center.

Standing at the window, I was filled with gratitude for these insights. I thanked my hummingbird and my little hawks. And I thanked Mother Nature for these moments of reflection.

## Conference Impressions

The conference was once again an amazing experience. Our hosts were well organized and very relaxed. They provided us with a wonderful four days. I enjoyed the presentations and movement refinements. I was very inspired and touched by Jim Hecker's story and his message from the Folsom Prison TCC practitioners. It was delightful to see our leadership trio, Sr. Antonia Cooper, Pam Towne, and Sandy McAlister, working in such unison. My appreciation and thanks to all those who serve the TCC community and to all those who made the conference such an enjoyable experience.

— *Athene Mantle, Hay Area, CA*

only the Botanical Gardens of St. Louis but also in each conference participant has been awesome. Thank you, St. Louis teachers for the wonderful time of flowing from the Center.

— *Nancy Jo Bleier, Sitka, Alaska*

Although it had been five years since I had attended a conference, for me, it was the best! I was encouraged by the healthy direction in which TCC is going and think Sr. Antonia is going to be very good for all concerned. The talent show was fantastic! Jim Hecker got to all of us, and Sr. Alice caused all of us girls to laugh our makeup off!

— *Sher Dano, Surprise, AZ*

I have just returned from the conference in St. Louis, having had a great time. Well done St. Louis! On

the last day the next two conferences were announced and it was mentioned that the conferences might be held every other year in Albuquerque “because we don't know how long Justin will be with us.” I am very concerned, as I think if this happens it would have a very detrimental effect on the attendance of the conferences in the “off” year. I wonder what others think. I think that if Albuquerque has it every other year there shouldn't be a conference elsewhere. Alternatively Albuquerque could have it every year until Justin can no longer attend or Albuquerque could host the conference at much wider intervals, maybe every four years.

— *Susan Evans*

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As always TCC conference surpasses all of my expectations. Friendships expand as does my TCC practice. Seeing beauty in not

## T'ai Chi Chih "Intensive Care"

Panel presentations about intensive experiences  
By Sheila Leonard, PBVM, Newfoundland



**S**ood afternoon, everyone. My name is Sheila Leonard. I am a Presentation Sister from Newfoundland, Canada. It is indeed both a pleasure and a privilege to be here today to share my experience of the first T'ai Chi Chih Intensive in Ringwood, New Jersey, May 2003.

Quite literally, and figuratively, I have come a long way to be here today, and attending the Intensive has truly been a key piece of that journey. The Intensive proved to be an invaluable personal gift, making it possible for me to go more confidently to accreditation training and then to set up my own classes. Today I feel very awed, honoured and grateful to be part of the T'ai Chi Chih teaching community.

I had first found T'ai Chi Chih, or perhaps more accu-

rately, T'ai Chi Chih had first found me, back in '92-'93. From the beginning I had dreamed of being an accredited teacher.

Time, distance and other commitments had made it impossible early on for me to pursue my dream. I was 1000 miles away from the nearest teacher, but the dream was still strong. I felt I knew the basics, I had two videos and the books to work with, and I had a lot of enthusiasm, but no opportunity for regular 1-1 teaching and feedback. And then it happened!

In 2002 I retired from teaching in our school system and promptly went on-line for T'ai Chi Chih! I not only found the guidelines for accreditation but in my searching I also found an upcoming accreditation training date, as well as something called an "Intensive." I wasn't sure how "intensive" I wanted to get, especially after having just retired from being in school as teacher/administrator since 1969, but

my dream edged me on. Little did I know then how key the Intensive would be on my journey.

My journey from then to now has been one amazing thing after another ... no coincidence ... as the path kept opening up before me! Not only were both events being held in New Jersey, but the host lived in Ocean Grove where I had first learned T'ai Chi Chih and where I still had occasion to visit. And New Jersey is much closer to Newfoundland than many other T'ai Chi Chih event sites!

I knew I had a lot of learning, re-learning, and refining to do before going to accreditation training. Yet I was determined and up for the challenge. However, I learned, to my dismay at first, that determination wasn't what it was all about. I learned how much I still needed to learn, compared to what I thought I knew. The "Intensive" I now term "Intensive Care," as I see how it provided me with the guidance, support, encouragement and

confidence I needed to move my dream forward. I simply needed to be open and willing and let it happen.

More than being just something of a dry run for accreditation training, (including helping to build stamina . . . it was indeed hard work!), the Intensive - and the days were just that - gave me the precious gift of quality T'ai Chi Chih time. Two key images come to mind when I recall my Intensive experience - that bread takes time to rise and jelly takes time to set . . . and you can't force either before it's ready. So, too, with our T'ai Chi Chih practice.

I learned that T'ai Chi Chih has a timing all its own and I couldn't "make it happen," and that it simply takes as long as it takes. As I became willing to allow my own practice to mature and deepen, I came to know at a deeper level that T'ai Chi Chih is about far more than learning the mechanics of the moves.

The Intensive was a mix of teaching, individual and group practice, partner work, and reflection, along with some fun time, of course! The experience took me inside the moves, took me inside the essence of T'ai Chi Chih, took me inside myself . . . to places I had never been . . . Justin's "inner landscape."

I came away from Intensive with a new sense of softness and continuity, of simply flowing, of flowing from the centre, and of letting go. The principles became more clear, more focused as I learned more about feeling the moves rather than simply doing them, and my own movements became softer and more refined.

We had a wonderful trainer, a wonderful host, wonderful accredited teachers who came to audit and support and encourage, and wonderful committed fellow students. ]

was awed to see seasoned teachers, including our trainer and host, still seeking to improve their own practice.

No matter how much I've learned or how much I've practiced, there is always so much more to discover, so much deeper to go . . . the teachers present modeled that beautifully. They were always willing to share, to learn, inviting feedback, sharing freely what they themselves were working on, and graciously accepting other peoples' critiques. Theirs was a great testimony to the spirit of lifelong learning and growing, for teachers as much as for students.

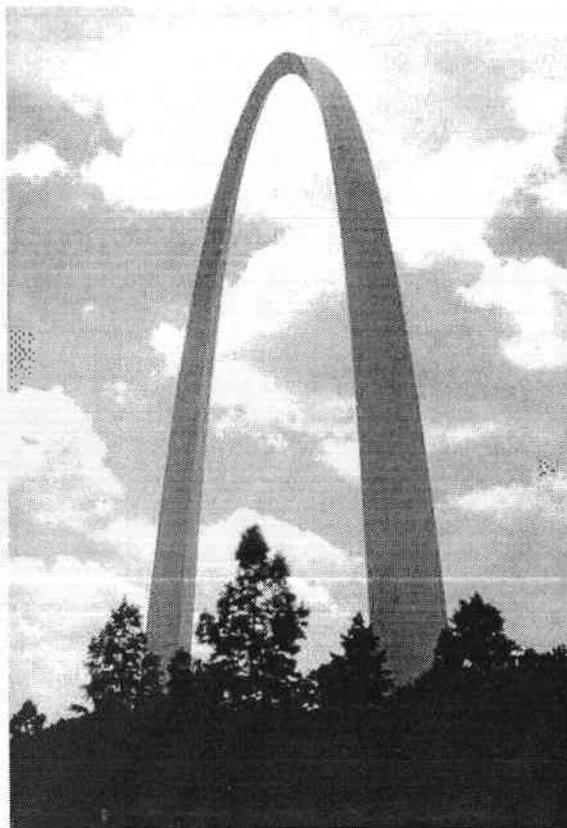
T'ai Chi Chih has become a priceless gift in my life, and the intensive had only heightened my desire to share it, for it is still forever true, that "Sometimes to keep something you have to give it away."

In summary, the Intensive took me deeper into the essence of T'ai Chi Chih that Justin speaks about so eloquently, and in the process it helped me discover yet another New-found-

land which I continue to know and love more deeply. I know somehow that what I have found in T'ai Chi Chih is also there for others to discover for themselves in turn as I continue to invite them to share the gift and help them unwrap it through my teaching. The Intensive is another wonder-full way to that. I do hope more and more teachers will avail of the experience and encourage their students as well.

I'd like to end with a quote from the July 2003 *Vital Force Journal*, following my Intensive:

"For the first time I have some to experience and to understand the movements . . . as an integrated whole . . . and I have begun to more clearly and really experience the Chi. I leave more deeply committed to daily practice and to growing with it. The spirited atmosphere of these days, of the group, was key to all of the above being able to happen for me. Thank you so much, for so very much."



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## A picture speaks a thousand words

By Kathy Grassel

**A**nd lots of pictures speak tens of thousands of words. Ted Fleischman has graciously made the pictures he took at the conference available for anyone to look at, download and copy. You may access and save/print any photo you like by going to [www.taichichihofkc.org/private/](http://www.taichichihofkc.org/private/). Ted says these pictures will be on his website until December 1. Ted thinks

it would be an idea to use the photos for your brochures and/or classes, for movement refinement, and for your portfolios.

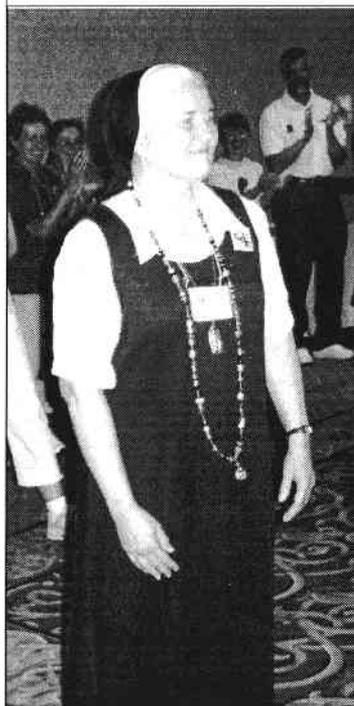
Web mistress Lisa Thorburn has also put up Ted's photos, along with Athene Mantle's, at [www.taichichih.org](http://www.taichichih.org). Look under Events. Lisa has broken them down into categories for your viewing convenience. There's a link to Athene's photos of the California teacher train-

ing, which are located on the northern California TCC website, also maintained by Lisa.

Thanks to both Ted and Athene, and to Lisa for taking the time to put them on our community website. Look at it this way: If the *Vital Force* were to print all the photos, it would add an additional 50 pages on top of what it already is. Now there's a weighty proposition!



*The audience loved James Hecker as he told his story of life in prison, discovering T'ai Chi Chih, becoming a teacher to other inmates, and now his new life on the "outs."*



*What? Is that Sr. Antonia wearing jewelry?! Why, yes, so it is. The necklace was crafted with great love, each person stepping out of the grand circle to add one bead, so finally the shiny parts made a colorful whole to present to our Guide.*



*Teacher trainer Sandy McAlister wears many hats. One of them is holding classes in sitting T'ai Chi Chih. Many teachers in the audience have a keen interest in this form, and will take Sandy's pointers back to their communities.*



*"Down" time. Cathy Dalton sang an original composition at the conference talent show.*



Girls gotta have fun: Sr. Margaret O'Connor, SC, Wayne, NJ; Beverly McFarland, Cedar Crest, NM; Sr. Antonia Cooper; Carolyn Perkins, New York, NY; Edie Budney, Upper Montclair, NJ

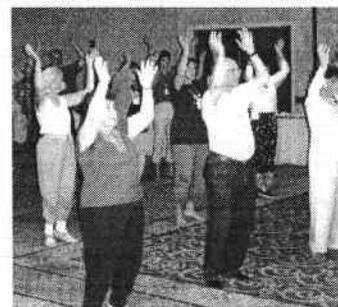
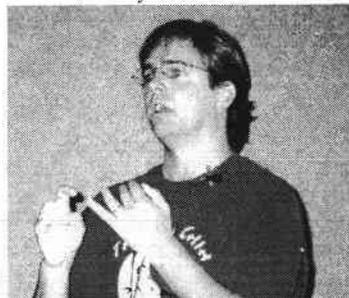


Rededication



Marlene Brown's famous TCCT-shirt logo. Her husband is the designer. After many attempts, he was about to give up when suddenly, Marlene exclaimed, "That's it!"

That's Victor Berg below wearing one of the shirts.



It's true, occasionally mealtime combined business and pleasure. Nobody seems to be minding here. This table's discussion subject was Intensives. Is it possible that the trepidation of students taking an Intensive affects digestion?

## Our T'ai Chi Chih Community: Keeping It Pure

By Beverly Weil, New York

The 2004 T'ai Chi Chih conference in St. Louis was a joyous time of warmth and sharing as we gathered to strengthen our connections with friends and colleagues and benefit from the many opportunities for refining our T'ai Chi Chih practice and enhancing our teaching skills. As always, I have been enriched by all that I experienced and shall continue to cultivate the seeds that have taken root within me, knowing that my ever-deepening level of growth will extend out to my students as well. I am grateful!

*It seems to me that our T'ai Chi Chih community is our collective soul, and each of us is an equal part of the greater whole. The essence of the T'ai Chi Chih community is our Chi—our Collective Chi—and the Chi is our source of power and strength. The quality of our collective Chi is a reflection of our individual Chi. By each of us refining and purifying our individual Chi through our T'ai Chi Chih practice, we will also be affecting and enhancing the quality of our collective Chi. Justin has said that we must "keep T'ai Chi Chih pure." We also need to keep our T'ai Chi Chih community pure, flowing freely and effortlessly from a center of love, thereby enabling us to function from a higher consciousness of loving wisdom (prajna).*

The life of our T'ai Chi Chih community should flow in accord with the T'ai Chi Chih principles. Justin says in *Spiritual Odyssey* that "Awareness is the root of T'ai Chi Chih...softness

and continuity is the Essence....Love Energy is the fruit." *As a community we need to remember to sink into the Essence and be guided by the Chi. It is im-*

portant for each of us to be aware, and constantly ask ourselves: Is our T'ai Chi Chih community functioning from Love? Is there a sense of unity (or division)? Are we coming from softness? Are we functioning in accordance with the principles of Yin and Yang, flowing effortlessly from the substantial to the insubstantial in the areas of assuming responsibility? For example, if one member is feeling weighted down by too much responsibility, are we restoring the balance by allowing the energy flow to shift some responsibility to another member? For instance, perhaps the community could have been asked for a volunteer to take on the responsibility of printing the very useful Teachers Directory so that it could still be available to all without extra cost.

We need to keep "balancing the soil" of our T'ai Chi Chih community, working to keep our ground fertile and pure. Our T'ai Chi Chih practice is our source. It provides the "tools" for

cultivating our "soil." In the essay "Balancing the Soil," Justin says, "In T'ai Chi Chih practice the character of the Chi gradually changes....We do not fight the problem...but the problem cannot grow in the new, balanced soil." (*Spiritual Odyssey*). In our T'ai Chi Chih community we want to sow seeds of positivity, keeping out weeds of negativity. We are each responsible. We are each important. Each voice needs to be heard. Each of us is the community.

As we flowed together in unison at the last practice on Sunday morning, the power of the collective Chi could be deeply felt. There was a sense of harmony...a profound stillness. In this stillness, ego is dissolved...we are One, in Love.

May we each rest in the stillness, and may we each be guided to do our part to keep our T'ai Chi Chih community pure, so that its Essence and function may always be a reflection of Love.

### Do you need insurance to teach?

By Sher Dano, Surprise, AZ

Recently I was asked to teach T'ai Chi Chih Joy thru Movement through the Muhammad Ali Parkinson Research Center. For the first time ever, I was required to have professional liability insurance, even though all my sign-in sheets contain a lawyer-approved waiver. This turned out to be quite an education! I learned that one must belong to a fitness and wellness association in order to be eligible for this insurance, and that fellow TCC instructors were joining yoga, Pilates, and other similar associations. So I continued to search until I came across The Tai Chi Arthritis Association of America, which was at least in the vicinity of my interest. Membership was only \$45 yearly, compared to others at much higher rates. So for your information, you may check it out at [www.taichiforarthritis.com](http://www.taichiforarthritis.com).

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## Loving Light

A single candle  
A flame alone  
A loving guide  
A spirit of oneness

Sharing the light  
growing from  
the silence  
and darkness

An inner circle of  
flickering light  
spreading warmth  
and friendship

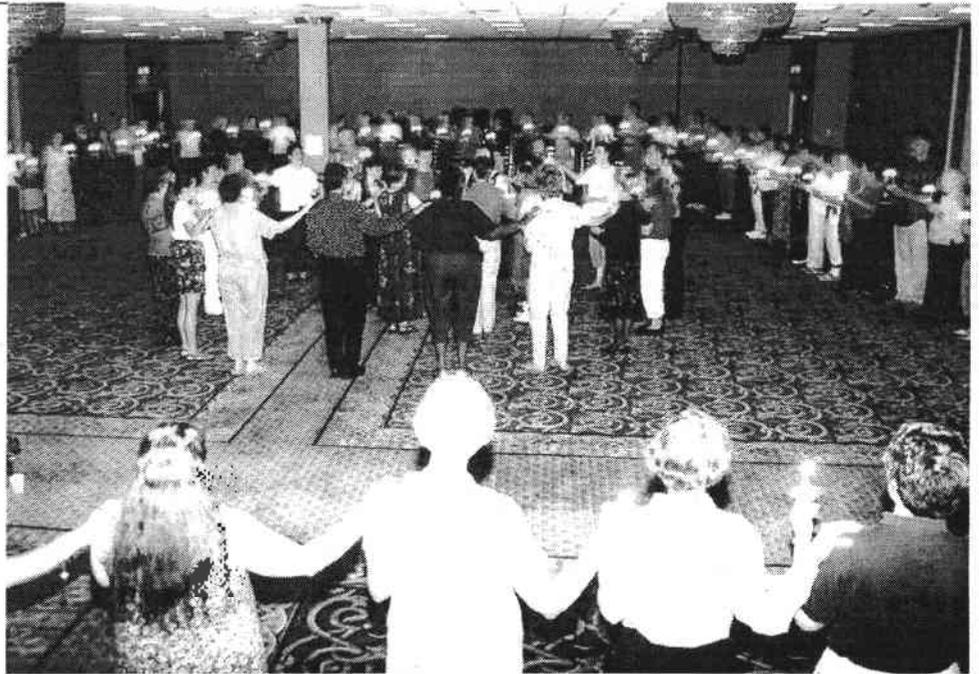
Radiates joy  
from within  
Travels outward  
in all directions

Three circles aglow  
so full of love  
A gentle rhythm  
moving as one

Beautiful words  
sung so softly  
Many voices  
uniting as one

Feel the peace  
Receive the love  
The silence returns  
No longer solitary

—Dorene Krause



## Connections

By Carmen L. Brocklehurst, Albuquerque, NM

Many, many thanks to the St. Louis team who did a great job of providing us with the place, space, and a terrific program to make so many connections. This allowed us to get to know each other better, and to open our minds, bodies, and hearts so that we can be better T'ai Chi Chih teachers. The amount of effort that went into the preparation and execution of the '04 Conference was truly an act of love and selfless service.

Because Albuquerque is hosting the 2005 Conference, we led the last morning practice. Ann volunteered three of us to accomplish this task. With each movement, the sea of T'ai Chi Chih teachers became more and more intimate. Spatially we were not that close. (After all, there were about 115 T'ai Chi Chih teachers from various parts of the world.) But we quickly began to move as "one sea of energy," as it says in the Nei Kung (the meditation found in Justin Stone's *Meditation for Healing*). To look out and see the sincerity in the teachers' faces, as each did her or his practice, was a joy to behold. T'ai Chi Chih is so beautiful that it calls us

home to experience that which is, that which we truly are. It was as if the walls in the room disappeared and each one of us was connected to everything, everywhere.

Experiencing connections at the T'ai Chi Chih Conference is the just the beginning of becoming aware, daily, that we are constantly finding ways to connect with people of like mind and heart. As we come into contact with people, we quickly sense the Vital Force that is so alive within us during our T'ai Chi Chih practice. The more a person has an inner life, the stronger we sense the Vital Force within them. (It's usually expressed as peace.) This should be our clue that others can sense the chi or Vital Force in us also. What connection do we make with others? Our T'ai Chi Chih practice helps us make joyous ones. Each connection can be a way of saluting the Highest in each person. It is also a way to love and share the chi.

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## Mirror, Mirror, on the Wall

By Linda Braga

**I** wrote and presented this poem for the entertainment on Saturday night of the TCC Conference. In preparing my presentation on "Partner Practice" for the TCC Conference in St Louis, I was awakened one morning at 3 a.m. A parody of a phrase from the fairy tale about Snow White kept running through my mind. This happens to those of us who are elementary school teachers, or those who have gone to camp and have a thousand zany camp songs in our head. I got up and wrote it down, knowing that I would not recall it the next morning. It is about having someone be "a mirror" for you, a partner to help you improve your TCC form. The rhyme speaks for itself.

Mirror, mirror on the wall, is my TCC BEST of all?  
 Are my feet in just the right stance? Or is my movement more like a dance?  
 You say my weight shift is incomplete? And ask, is my attention still in my feet?  
 Is my form so soft and flowing, or is my EGO really showing?

Mirror, mirror, standing there, please be kind, but be sincere.  
 I help me see what I can't see. Light up the "unknowing" part of me.  
 Do I move just like a clown? Or do I have my heels down?  
 Is my posture out of line? Now is not the time to whine!

Do I move with style and grace? Are both my hands in the right place?  
 With wrists relaxed and waist open, my form should be good, at least, I'm hopin'.  
 Am I flowing from Dan tien? Am I making mistakes all over again?  
 Mirror, mirror, please, take over. Perhaps I need an extreme makeover!

Sink down here, straighten there, I'll continue to compare, compare.  
 I'm working so hard; I want improvement, so I can enjoy my Joy Thru Movement!  
 Spiral down left, flow to the right, I'm working hard 'til I get it right.  
 Let tension melt, let ego go. Ah, now I'm beginning to FEEL the flow.

Mirror, mirror, tell me please, am I soft enough in the knees?  
 Hold fast here, let go there. Now I'm beginning to move with flare.  
 Fingers relaxed and both elbows in, the river of Chi is flowing again!  
 Moving from center, my head in alignment, Now I'm beginning to LIKE this refinement!

Heel down first as I move to the side, My waist is turning! I'm glowing with pride!  
 Remember the knees must be over the toes. I wonder if that applies to my nose?  
 Complaining won't get me where I want to be. I WANT refinements to the nth degree!  
 Today, tomorrow or now is just fine. Please remind me again to straighten my spine!

I'll practice and practice the new things I'm learning, and keep my waist open,  
 and turning and turning.  
 My TCC movements were once inferior, but lately, they're looking much more superior!  
 Thank you to friends who helped me refine, and now when I move, I look just divine!

## A Chi-full Vacation, A Chi-full Conference

By Catherine Briussel

**I**t had been three years since my last conference and stay in the States and I missed it and I needed it again. So I had it planned by saving time, money and energy, the three being of course connected. And I want to share the feeling and experience I got throughout this special time.

Doing T'ai Chi Chih is fine. We find a nice place to do our practice, we relax, and we focus on the movements. But in life we are always confronted by situations, obstacles and then, that's through our attitude, our behavior, our way to face it, that we can check if it works. And we know it should, it usually does, but sometimes not quite. Well I had to face losing my luggage both ways, for a couple of days, having flights delayed, and missing two connections.

Then there was this fire alarm during the first night at the hotel. Some people were really stressed but none of the T'ai Chi Chih teachers seemed to be affected. Serenity.

But then there was the way I felt the energy when I arrived at the hotel. I must say I felt oppressed by the place, the colors of the rooms, no windows, air conditioning too cold for me, walking on synthetic carpets. It was as being trapped in a pan with a lid on top of my head. So I really needed to escape outside, walk by the little pond, watch the geese, enjoy the little breeze and take deep breath to come back in.

But pleeececaaaaaaaase, don't get offended with what I am saying! I KNOW it is difficult to find a place. I know you are looking for reasonable prices. And the rooms were indeed very comfortable. I know the team of T'ai Chi Chih teachers from St Louis has done a tremendous work and they

welcomed us so well. And I am grateful for all that!

And then something happened!

SHIFTING!

SHIFTING OF THE WEIGHT!

SHIFTING OF ENERGY!

I entered one of the conference rooms

And I could feel the Chi

Created by our community

Changing the entire atmosphere,

I could let go,

I could feel myself like a little blade of

grass

Amidst the lawn,

I could feel myself like a little drop of

water

In the river

I didn't pay anymore attention to the

room

Except the crystal lights

I fully enjoyed

Just

Being there.

The next point I would like to express is the fact that the choice of a



*Catherine all dressed up on the stage for the talent show*

name, a word, a title always has a deep meaning. "Gateway to the Chi" Flowing from the center. The symbol of the Gateway Arch printed on paper and on the shirts. So I wanted to see the Arch in St Louis. And I went there. And once I was there I wanted to take a ride to the top.

And it was really something! Spectacular, visionary, ambitious, astonishing! One of these amazing monuments that is a landmark in architecture. I was glad I could see it. Huge modern constructions, some bridges or the Opera House in Sydney for instance have a real effect on me. Eero Saarinen was able to imagine this Arch and then create it.

And then I made the immediate link with Justin and T'ai Chi Chih. For me choosing the symbol of this Arch and walking through this Gateway means that we are entering a new dimension, a new opening. It is taking a solemn step both in our individual practice and also as a community.

I highly appreciated the partner practice at the conference. To conclude I have mentioned a "Chi-full Vacation" and indeed I have had two weeks vacation with two of my wonderful T'ai Chi Chih friends, Marlène Brown in Cincinnati who has helped me a lot right from the beginning for my accreditation and Jan Arrott in New Mexico who is a soul sister. Finishing my stay in Albuquerque with Carmen and Brock and spending time with Justin has been a blessing. Each of them is a gift in my life.

I am just so grateful for this cheerful chi-full conference and vacation.

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## An Invitation to Albuquerque!

By Sr. Antonia Cooper, TCC Guide



Excitement is building as plans are underway for the 20th Annual T'ai Chi Chih International Conference to be held in Albuquerque, NM next year.

Although Justin was unable to travel to the conferences held the past three years, we are looking forward to having the Originator in person, rather than hearing from him in a video message. Justin is planning to give a spiritual talk as well as input on how to move, furthering our understanding of the TCC form so that we may be able to teach it with deeper integrity.

It is my hope to see many of you at the 2005 gathering, and that each teacher who registers will make a special effort to encourage another teacher to come and experience "Joy in the Heart"!

With gratitude to the Conference Committee, I greet each of you with peace and all good.

Please see Conference Information and Registration Form in this issue.

## And Yet Another Invitation to Albuquerque

By Ann Rutherford, for the Committee

Justin Stone, originator of T'ai Chi Chih, and all the T'ai Chi Chih teachers in Albuquerque wish to extend a hearty invitation to all teachers to join us in celebrating Joy in the Heart, the theme of the 20th T'ai Chi Chih teachers conference to be held August 4-7, 2005. This is your opportunity to deepen your commitment to your own personal practice as well as commune with the originator and your fellow teachers. Please find the registration form enclosed in this issue. Bienvenidos!



Ann Rutherford at the St. Louis conference

## Call for Participation in the 05 Conference

By Ellen Tatge, committee member

As we work on the program for the 2005 Conference in Albuquerque, we want to include opportunities for members of our teacher community to share information about the work they are doing to share the benefits of Tai Chi Chih. Do you have something you would like to present in the following venue?

1) **Update for 2005:** medical research, grants, programs to target specific populations or groups (e.g., a lupus support group, or an adolescent at-risk group). Purpose of this session is to share what is being done to "get TCC on the radar" and get its effects documented and acknowledged, but also to spur each other's creativity. Do you have some information you would like to share?

If you are interested in presenting a short update - can be 5 -15 minutes, please contact Ellen Tatge via email at [tatgehall@juno.com](mailto:tatgehall@juno.com) with your ideas. Thanks for considering our request. Please contact me if you want to discuss these ideas further. This is an opportunity for us to network and get our collective creative juices flowing!!



# 20th Annual International T'ai Chi Chih® Teachers' Conference



Thursday, August 4 - Sunday, August 7, 2005



## "Joy In The Heart" In Albuquerque, NM

Come and experience **Joy In The Heart** in the enchanting Southwest, home of T'ai Chi Chih originator, Justin Stone! The Albuquerque T'ai Chi Chih Association is pleased to be hosting the 20th Annual T'ai Chi Chih Teachers Conference to be held at the Marriott Hotel, 2101 Louisiana Blvd. NE, Albuquerque, NM. Registration begins at 3 pm on Thursday, August 4, and Conference 2005 concludes at noon on Sunday, August 7. Room occupancy will be available after registration at 3pm.

	Double	Single	Commuters
Early registration and payment due by Dec. 30, 2004	\$360	\$520	\$300
Registration and payment by March 1, 2005	\$380	\$545	\$325
Registration after June 1, 2005	\$405	\$580	\$350
International Teachers by June 1, 2005	\$360	\$520	

Residents' fees include conference fee, all meals beginning Thursday at dinner until Sunday at lunch and overnight accommodation. Commuters' fees include all of the above except overnight accommodation.

**To register** please complete the following information and mail this form postmarked by above dates with the appropriate check amount (made payable to the T'ai Chi Chih Association) to Guy Kent, 2225 Dietz Pl. NW, Albuquerque, NM 87107-3109. Phone: 505-345-0031 (e-mail questions to [guykent@yahoo.com](mailto:guykent@yahoo.com)). An alternate contact is Ann Rutherford at [ruthergary@aol.com](mailto:ruthergary@aol.com) or (505) 292-5114.

You can also go to [www.TaiChiChihAssociation.org](http://www.TaiChiChihAssociation.org) for conference information.

The Marriott has extended the Conference room rates to include 8/1 through 8/10 dates for out-of-towners who want to extend their New Mexico visits. Check out Albuquerque and New Mexico sites and events at [www.virtualAlbuquerque.com](http://www.virtualAlbuquerque.com), [www.indianpueblo.org](http://www.indianpueblo.org), or [www.ncwmexico.org](http://www.ncwmexico.org).

### Attendee Information

Name \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail (for confirmation) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Double occupancy roommate preference \_\_\_\_\_

### Payment (in U.S. dollars)

Conference cost: \_\_\_ Double, \_\_\_ Single or \_\_\_ Commuter ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(check choice and refer to above rates)

Voluntary Scholarship Donation (see back for details)..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Vendor Table fee \$30 (see next page for details)..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Conference Shirt, additional \$25/shirt

100% cotton, preshrunk, long sleeve, stone colored T-shirt with conference logo

circle your Unisex size : S, M, L, XL, XXL (add \$2 for XXL) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total check amount (payable to T'ai Chi Chih Association)..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

Please note that the usual \$50 non-refundable fee will apply to all cancellations.



**The Marriott Hotel** is located eight miles from the Albuquerque Sunport (airport) just off of I-40 on Louisiana Blvd. Transportation to the hotel and back to the airport will be the attendee's responsibility. Guests can make shuttle reservations through either Sunport Shuttle 1-866-505-4966, or through Airport Shuttle 1-505-765-1234. The hotel is offering discounted rates of \$85/room from 8/1 to 8/10 for people who are extending their stays (mention the Conference to get the discount). You can check out their facilities at [www.marriotthotels.com/ABQNM](http://www.marriotthotels.com/ABQNM). The hotel has an indoor/outdoor pool and is within walking distance of the Coronado and Winrock Malls and several restaurants. If you have transportation, you can visit area attractions such as the Sandia Mountains and tram ride, Historic Old Town and shops, the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, National Atomic Museum, the Albuquerque Museum, Museum of Natural History, Explora, and the Rio Grande Zoo and Aquarium. For information about Albuquerque and surrounding areas you can log onto the Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce website [www.itsatrip.org](http://www.itsatrip.org) and [www.virtualAlbuquerque.com](http://www.virtualAlbuquerque.com).

**Directions from Albuquerque Sunport** Exit west on Sunport Boulevard to I-25 North. Take I-40 East; exit onto Louisiana Boulevard North. (It's right there to the West of Louisiana Blvd.)

**Partial Scholarships (first come, first serve basis by April 1, 2005)** Our partial-scholarship program is intended to help colleagues who are not able to afford the full cost of attending the conference. Priority will be given to those who have not been given a scholarship before. To apply for assistance, download the form at [www.TaiChiChihAssociation.org](http://www.TaiChiChihAssociation.org) or contact Vic Berg to get a form or to ask questions e-mail [vicberg@comcast.net](mailto:vicberg@comcast.net). While waiting to hear from Vic, fill out the registration form, check the box under "Partial Scholarship Application," and send in your registration minus any fee.

**Vendors (deadline is June 1, 2005)** Vendor tables will be available for a \$30 fee (non-profit excluded). Please bring your own table coverings and displays. You must contact Jan Arrott for pre-approval at (505) 454-6115 or e-mail [janarrott@hotmail.com](mailto:janarrott@hotmail.com). Please note that ONLY items relating directly to T'ai Chi Chih and the principles of the Tao symbol will be sold. Further guidelines are on the web at [www.TaiChiChihAssociation.org](http://www.TaiChiChihAssociation.org).

**T'ai Chi Chih Association** The Association is placing the conference information online at [www.TaiChiChihAssociation.org](http://www.TaiChiChihAssociation.org). You can go to this website for forms, conference information and related T'ai Chi Chih information. The T'ai Chi Chih Center is located at 3107 Eubank NE, Suite 19. Teachers are encouraged to extend their stays to join our Tuesday morning teacher practice at 9:30 a.m. We'd love to practice with you and share the Center!

#### Menu selection

All meals will be a variety of food including fish and chicken unless all the vegetarian menu is selected.

Regular       Vegetarian

#### Teaching experiences

Please list any experiences related to teaching specific TCC populations that you would be willing to share.

#### Partial Scholarship Application (first come, first serve by April 1, 2005)

Yes, I am applying for a partial scholarship through Vic Berg.

#### Vendor Application (deadline is June 1, 2005)

Yes, I have pre-approval from Jan Arrott. (check box after approval)

If the name of the business is different than the attendee's name, please print the business name here.

Description of items to be sold (please be specific)

#### Talent Show

If there is a talent show, what talent would you like to share?



## Body, Mind, and Spirit

### "Forfending" illness with T'ai Chi Chih: Victor Berg on TV



**T**ai Chi Chih is finding its way into the media, slowly but surely. Often the mainstream media is loathe to report

anything unless something happens ("Chief of Police Caught in Vice Ring"), or, at the very least, that a story contain what is called a hook ("Originator of T'ai Chi Chih Receives Nobel Peace Prize") before they will go on to talk about T'ai Chi Chih itself. Be that as it may, avid enthusiasts of T'ai Chi Chih have persisted and had the door opened unto them. Victor Berg is one of them. The following is a transcript of Victor's appearance on the City of Albuquerque's "Mind, Body, Spirit" series on the City's Fitness and Wellness series, a half-hour segment on public-access TV Channel 16. The host is Dr. Julia Bain of the City's Risk Management Division. Employee Health is a section in the City of Albuquerque's Risk Management Division, providing services to over 5,000 city employees. Its mission is to promote a sense of community and increase wellness among city employees and their families by providing education and counseling about physical and mental health.

Hello and welcome to "Mind Body and Spirit." I'm Dr. Julia Bain, and today we are going to talk about T'ai Chi Chih. I'm going to begin by doing some word vocabulary with everybody, which I do every time I do a show. I got this great calendar for my birthday and it gives a new definition every day. So the word for today is "forfend—to ward off, prevent, to protect, preserve—forfend." And since we're going to be talking about T'ai Chi Chih, Victor Berg, my guest tonight, is going to be throwing it into

the dialogue. Victor, welcome to the show!!

**Victor:** Thank you and thank you for having me.

**Julia:** And you are a certified T'ai Chi Chih instructor, is that correct?

**Victor:** Yes, since 1990.

**Julia:** Well, I am thrilled that you could join us today so that you could talk to me and the Albuquerque community—well, New Mexico at large I suppose—about T'ai Chi Chih. Let's start off by defining it. What is it?

**Victor:** The word "tai chi" means knowledge of energy. T'ai Chi Chih means knowledge of the supreme ultimate.

**Julia:** Most people might be more familiar with Tai Chi.

**Victor:** Yes, T'ai Chi Chih is a series of 20 movements, and its purpose is to circulate and balance the life force that is within all of us. The universe is energy, and that energy flows through the body through what are known as meridian channels. So the purpose of T'ai Chi Chih is to circulate and balance the chi. By doing so, there are great health benefits, great mental benefits, balance and well-being. It's also called T'ai Chi Chih Joy Thru Movement. There is a joyous state of mind that comes from doing it.

**Julia:** Is that Chinese? What language is that?

**Victor:** It is Chinese, but it was developed by an American, Justin Stone, who lives here in Albuquerque. Justin Stone is 87 years old. He's in wonderful physical shape that he attributes to T'ai Chi Chih. For example, he recently had an MRI for something and they said that he had the bones of a 30-year-old. He attributes that to T'ai Chi Chih.

**Julia:** He's living proof.

**Victor:** Yes, absolutely. T'ai Chi Chih is different. When people think of tai chi, what they think of generally is Tai Chi Chuan. Tai Chi Chuan is the slow movement you might see people doing in the park. It's 108 movements connected. You have to learn all 108 movements in one long movement. It takes many years to learn and practice it. Not many people have the discipline to take it that far. That's why Justin, who was teaching Tai Chi Chuan, realized that maybe one out of every 10 people were going to take it long enough to get the benefits.

**Julia:** It would take a lot of devotion.

**Victor:** Exactly. Justin created T'ai Chi Chih—20 movements, easy, can be done in street clothes. It doesn't require physical strength; it doesn't require physical balance. Many of our teachers and students started T'ai Chi Chih in wheel chairs. By doing T'ai Chi Chih, by circulating and balancing the life force, their ailments one by one started going away. One teacher who started at age 79 in a wheel chair, at 89 years old she jogged past me in the rain.

**Julia:** Victor, that's QUITE a testimonial.

**Victor:** There is a recent UCLA study done on T'ai Chi Chih by a Dr. Irwin. They showed that T'ai Chi Chih boosted the immune system by 20 percent. Of the people who participated in the study, the average participant age was over 70.

**Julia:** So it is user-friendly because you don't have to be an athlete, or athletic,

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or in any kind of shape at all to benefit from it?

**Victor:** Exactly. We've got people who have come to it with great pain and their pain has been steadily alleviated. Blood pressure has been lowered. As a matter of fact, Justin has his own story about blood pressure whereby his blood pressure for some reason shot up high. He had medicine that brought it down, but it made parts of his body go numb, which is somewhat scary, and so he got rid of the pills and did T'ai Chi Chih three times a day and his blood pressure came down to 110—really low—through consistent practice of T'ai Chi Chih. One of our teacher's cholesterol level dropped 120 points. She stopped doing T'ai Chi Chih and it went back up. She did it again and it went back down. So it has numerous and varied health benefits. Now, the reason why is, when the intrinsic energy—when the chi is circulated and balanced—what happens is that the body does not allow illness in.

**Julia:** Prevention!!!

**Victor:** Yes, exactly, prevention.

**Julia:** So, how can we use "forfend"?

**Victor:** It will "forfend" illness.

**Julia:** Perfect! [Both laughing].

**Victor:** So, in other words, the purpose of T'ai Chi Chih isn't to heal. The purpose of T'ai Chi Chih is to circulate and balance the intrinsic energy, the life force.

**Julia:** Okay, but don't stop taking your blood pressure medication...

**Victor:** No, let me be very clear. When you are sick, go see a doctor. When you are ill, take the medicine. But, T'ai Chi Chih practice helps. And it has come at the right place at the

right time. There's not a better time for T'ai Chi Chih because health care right now is absolutely overwhelmed.

**Julia:** We're in a crisis.

**Victor:** Medicare and Medicaid are struggling to keep up with costs. Health care costs are out of control. If you don't work for an employer that provides health care insurance, boy, I hope you don't get ill. The best way to

mendous amount of stress, that can create physical problems that can raise your blood pressure and even create heart issues. Well, the corollary to that is that the body has an effect on the mind. When the chi is flowing, there will be a sense of well-being in the mind because the body's well-being will have an effect back on the mind. Thus it's called T'ai Chi Chih Joy Thru Movement.

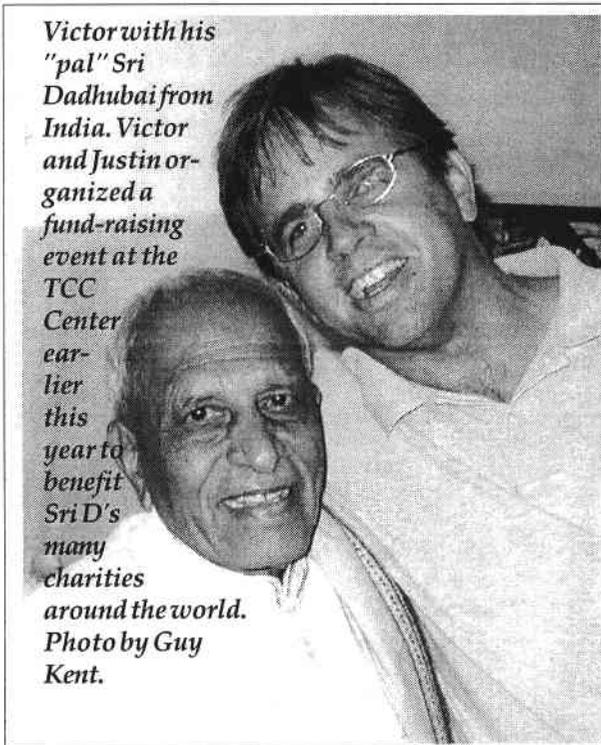
**Julia:** I like that. It's almost like a poem, you know?

**Victor:** It's true, when you do a lot of T'ai Chi Chih, and the chi is really flowing, there is a joyous state, and that is something I can testify to. Now of course if you don't practice regularly, then everything is pretty much useless. In order to get the benefits, you do have to do it. The wonderful thing is that it is very simple, very easy.

**Julia:** How long does it take? And do you do it every day?

**Victor:** It depends. Fifteen or 20 minutes, going up to 45 minutes when you have a full practice. Students just starting out may do maybe 10-15 minutes a day; it doesn't take much. I taught a

*Victor with his "pal" Sri Dadhubai from India. Victor and Justin organized a fund-raising event at the TCC Center earlier this year to benefit Sri D's many charities around the world. Photo by Guy Kent.*



bring health care back into line is to keep people healthy. So T'ai Chi Chih is coming along at the right place at the right time.

**Julia:** And having people be pro-active and feel like they're the captain of their own ship, where they can do things like T'ai Chi Chih, to bring themselves into balance, to...forfend...chronic illness from getting worse, or having acute situations pop up because you're in balance in more ways than one. You know, it not only affects your body; it affects your mind, too, no?

**Victor:** The mind has an effect on the body. Studies have shown that if you are tense, or if you are under a tre-

class earlier today. It was the first time they did it, and a lot of people were feeling heat coming off their body and feeling a trembling in their hands—these are all signs that something is happening, that the chi, the intrinsic energy, is starting to get stimulated, starting to move. This is not out there in left field, this idea of chi. The problem right now is that medical science doesn't have the equipment to measure energy. While we know that the universe is energy, we don't have the equipment to measure it. Well, that being said, acupuncture is being embraced by the medical community because it works. It's based on the exact same principals as

T'ai Chi Chih, that the energy is flowing through channels. They are able to figure out where it's blocked and able by using needles to apply pressure to certain areas to alleviate the blockage.

**Julia:** I know T'ai Chi Chih has only been around for 30 years, but Tai Chi has been around for thousands of years.

**Victor:** 900 C.E. thereabouts.

**Julia:** Thank you for correcting me.

**Victor:** Unfortunately, over that 1100-year period it has evolved into a martial art. In other words, somebody added a move here, a move there, and the focus of Tai Chi Chuan has changed to the point where now it is not about health or healing; it is about martial arts—unless you get a rare teacher who really understands what it's about.

**Julia:** So all the people doing it in the parks?

**Victor:** They may get great benefits if they've been doing it long enough. If they've applied themselves and they've practiced, they can get great benefits from Tai Chi Chuan. It is a wonderful discipline. The reason why T'ai Chi Chih was created is that it's more direct. It's simple, it's easier, and it can get to wider audience.

**Julia:** And non-violent.

**Victor:** Yes, there's no martial art about it. If you try to stop somebody coming at you doing this [arms doing Around the Platter], it isn't going to happen [laughing]. So, prevention in this case, or... forfending... is to walk away.

**Julia:** Hey, Victor, is this a good time to segue and for you to hop up and maybe show us some moves?

**Victor:** Sure, sure.

**Julia:** Okay, since we're talking the movement, I'd like to see some and I'm sure everybody else would to.

**Victor:** [standing up, doing Around the Platter]. What it's about, look here, T'ai Chi Chih is done from the waist

down. The whole name of the game here is relaxation of the upper body. The upper body has to be absolutely soft. This is hard for people, because when you see people, they're rigid—they're rigid in the wrists, they're rigid in the waist, they're the Walking Rigid.

**Julia:** We're all TENSE!!! Everybody is TENSE!!!

**Victor:** This is a very tense world we live in right now, so... to continue, the name of the game is you have to get the upper body absolutely soft, and that means the lower body has to do all the work. You can do it in your street clothes, or clothes that I'm wearing [referring to his clothes, for today an oversized suit], easy to do, doesn't require a lot of physical fitness. If you're elderly and you have trouble with your knees or anything like that, you don't have to go as low. You can stay here [straightening up a little], stay up a little higher, take a shorter step.

**Julia:** So you're going around like in an oval shape?

**Victor:** Yes, T'ai Chi Chih is absolutely circular. Circularity is the secret of the universe. I mean, the planets are circular; the whole idea of a turbine that creates electricity is a form that is circular. Circularity is the key to T'ai Chi Chih, so every movement in T'ai Chi Chih is circular. You notice the forward and back isn't; this is what is generating the energy. The upper body is what is distributing the energy, and that's why the wrists are soft, the upper body is soft. You might see me bouncing a little bit. That's not intentional; that's the energy moving through the body. The hands right here [attention to trembling of the fingers] are being stimulated by the flow of chi through the body. I am not doing this; this is a side effect that happens to many teachers and students.

**Julia:** Your fingers are moving invol-

untarily?

**Victor:** Involuntarily, yes.

**Julia:** When you do this you're not going to break a sweat?

**Victor:** You could, but it's not because of the physical exertion. It's usually some sort of internal weakness and the movement of the chi starts pushing toxins or whatever out of the body, and that can cause a sweat.

**Julia:** So, Victor, part of the specialness of this whole activity lies in the circular movements, right?

**Victor:** Right, and it's also the softness. The key element of it is that it is being done below the waist. What most people do is they come in with tension and they're thinking tension, and they think "arm exercise," and so they do it like this [demonstrates vigorous arm movement, no body movement], which is all arm exercise. You're not going to get the benefits doing that. It has to be done from below the waist; that's this moving back and forth while the upper body is just so soft and so relaxed. That's the key element of T'ai Chi Chih. The relaxed body is what allows the chi to flow. The lower legs are generating the energy; the upper body is distributing. [Doing Around the Platter Variation] They are sending anesthesiologists to China because the Chinese have learned that they can shut off feeling to any part of the body through manipulation of the meridian channels that flow through the ear. So by putting a needle in, they can do any sort of operation without anesthesia.

**Julia:** Well, what do you know!

**Victor:** My daughter actually had a cavity fixed without any Novocain.

**Julia:** Brave girl!

**Victor:** They used acupuncture right there.

**Julia:** Really?

**Victor:** Yeah. So, this

isn't that far-fetched. Even though the studies can't prove the existence of chi, the effects of it are starting to be noticed and starting to be embraced, whether it's acupuncture or dental work with no Novocain.

**Julia:** Okay, Victor, show us a movement that would be the challenging.

**Victor:** Here's the wonderful thing about T'ai Chi Chih. If you understand the lower leg movement, back is straight up and down, that's 90 percent of T'ai Chi Chih. Believe it or not, these simple little movements can have a profound impact on people's lives. There are so many people who have come to T'ai Chi Chih and said, "T'ai Chi Chih has changed my life." These simple little movements, all of sudden they're feeling heat; their hands are moving, and there's a sense of well-being.

**Julia:** And one of them is 89 years old and running through the rain.

**Victor:** Yes, exactly. Illnesses are falling away. It's just absolutely come at the right place at the right time, especially where health care is concerned. Let me show you then one of the more advanced movements. This is called Passing Clouds [demonstrates]—not too difficult. This is about as advanced as it gets.

**Julia:** What a beautiful move!

**Victor:** This movement is the one movement that looks close to a Tai Chi Chuan movement. T'ai Chi Chih is an entirely unique set of movements. Some people think it's a shortened form of Tai Chi Chuan; it's not. It's entirely new, created by Justin. This is the one movement that looks similar because they have a movement called

Wave Hands in Clouds. [Continuing the movement] This is about as complicated as it gets.

**Julia:** I'm relaxed just watching you.

**Victor:** It's wonderful. The biggest challenge is that people are so unaccustomed to being relaxed, they're like, I don't know what to do with myself, hey, I'm getting relaxed here.

**Julia:** Like, I'm getting nervous, I'm so relaxed [laughing].

**Victor:** They want to go to sleep because that's the only time they're accustomed to being relaxed is when they're ready to go to sleep. They don't know what else to associate it with. So for the first time, they are actually achieving a sense of relaxation that they haven't had. [Starts doing Push Pull.]

**Julia:** It's so calming. Good, Victor.

**Victor:** So at the very end, we do a pose. Its purpose is to help bring the energy back together. That's it.

**Julia:** Yay! [Applauding]. Namaste! So, how has it changed YOUR life, having T'ai Chi Chih such an important part of your life, practicing daily?

**Victor:** Daily practice is recommended without a shadow of a doubt, and any multiple times a day. As Justin said, he brought his blood pressure down 70 points by doing it three times a day. How has it changed my life? I feel it all the time; I feel it when I'm not doing the movements. It's a marvelous feeling to have the chi flowing, to feel this wonderful thing happening.

**Julia:** Even when you're not doing the movements?

**Victor:** Right.

**Julia:** So if you did your T'ai Chi Chih movements at 9:00 in the morning, then at 8:00 tonight, you're still going to feel warm and calm and good?

**Victor:** It depends. It depends on the individual mind. When I'm quiet and pay attention, yes, I will feel the flow; I'll feel the vibration in the whole body. I feel it specifically in the feet. The vibration starts in the feet and moves all the way up. So in a sense it's really magical. It's neat. Justin says this, too, and I believe that in 10 or 20

years, the American Medical Association will become aware of the role of energy in the body and it's going to revolutionize medicine. Right now, they look at just at physical and chemical standpoints, which is fine. I'm not saying not to take medicine, but medicine can be as deadly or damaging as the illness they are trying to treat. You read about all these gazillions of side effects to medicine, it's kind of scary. There are no side effects to T'ai Chi Chih, none, other than when people's lives start changing, which happens a lot, and the body and mind reacts.

**Julia:** You know you see those commercials on TV promoting some sort of medicine. They then say, "Taking this medicine may cause seizures, headaches, diarrhea, constipation, listlessness..." I mean they just go on and on, and you think yourself, why would I EVER take this medicine!

**Victor:** Well, I suppose sometimes you don't have any other recourse. If you've got some problem like high blood pressure, high cholesterol, you might truly have no other recourse. I think T'ai Chi Chih will be embraced by the medical community also, by health care providers, because they are having trouble keeping costs down. Everybody is having trouble keeping costs down. It's going to be really tough to get this monster under control. One of the best ways to do it is to get people healthy on their own.

**Julia:** Yes, everybody wants to feel good, feel well, and have energy.

**Victor:** We have countless letters and testimonials from teachers and students about asthma, pain, blood pressure, cancer, migraine headaches. One of our teachers had suffered from migraine headaches forever. When he'd see the aura indicating the onset of a migraine, he would start doing T'ai Chi Chih, and the migraine went away. He said, "Now I am free." West-



ern medicine doesn't really have a cure for migraine headaches. They can control the pain; that's about as much as they can do. From a Chinese perspective, this isn't magical; this is when the body is functioning correctly, and when the energy is flowing correctly through the body, there is no room for illness. In other words, the side effect of circulating and balancing the chi is healing.

**Julia:** I love it! What is most important thing, Victor, that you want the audience to know when they're done watching this TV program and they say, "Wow, Tai Chi Chih! I want to know more about that"? Why don't you talk about the Tai Chi Chih Center and tell us your phone number? If people really would like to get into this, I think we should give them every opportunity to contact you, learn more about it, and find out how to take lessons and classes; maybe you could even mention a good book. I do have a brochure here. [Camera on Tai Chi Chih Center's brochure]

**Victor:** Well, the best way to learn Tai Chi Chih is from a teacher. The reason why is that most people, unless they are strong athletes, aren't going to have the body awareness to know when they are making a mistake.

**Julia:** So you need the feedback.

**Victor:** You need the teacher to be there to say, "You're leaning," "Oh, I am?" Even many teachers doing practice around Justin don't realize they are leaning and they've been doing it for five or 10 years. "I'm leaning? I didn't realize that." So it's a matter of body awareness. So I'd say for 99 percent of the people who want to learn Tai Chi Chih need to learn it from a teacher. The good news is Albuquerque has a high number of teachers.

**Julia:** How many do we have?

**Victor:** Hundreds.

**Julia:** Hundreds?? Hundreds?? Is it because Justin is here?

**Victor:** Yes, because Justin is here. And also Carmen Brocklehurst, who is Justin's longest student, who has been teaching people here for years and years. The Center is a space where Tai Chi Chih teachers hold their classes. It's non-profit. That phone number is 505-299-2095.

**Julia:** What is your phone number?

**Victor:** My phone number is 459-4935.

**Julia:** We're going to say that again in a minute, so you out there [looking at the camera] have time to go get your pen and your pencil and your paper.

**Victor:** The circulation and balancing of the chi, Tai Chi Chuan does do eventually, and it's the same thing yoga is working with, but with yoga you have to have a pretty good amount of physical fitness. All of these things are working on the same principal, which is energy. They are growing in prominence because people are looking for something.

**Julia:** One thing I really appreciated about my yoga class, Victor, was the spiritual component, about how peaceful and connected I felt. Just spiritually I felt, well, in very good shape.

**Victor:** When the body starts getting balanced, there is a sense of well-being that happens mentally. You could call that spiritual. It very much is. Some Hindu beliefs say that the whole purpose of life is to be happy, to have joy. If you're happy, if you're not having joy, you're wasting your time. So...

**Julia:** Well, I have to agree with that. Isn't that kind of the point? Given the fact that life is hard for everyone—we all have traumas, we all have problems. Joyfulness is the goal.

**Victor:** But how do you get there?

That's the secret. Everybody wants joy and peace, but are you going to find peace in the mall? Are you going to find peace in your new car in the traffic? Peace at work with the uncertainty of the economy and everything

else? Where are you going to find peace?

**Julia:** You have to make time for it, and self-create it. Victor, any final thoughts before we say, "Until next time."

**Victor:** I would just encourage people to go out and find a Tai Chi Chih teacher.

**Julia:** And your phone number again?

**Victor:** 459-4935.

**Julia:** Okay, everybody got that? Victor, you're doing a very good thing. I feel better just having spent 30 minutes with you.

**Victor:** Well, thank you for having me. I appreciate it.

**Julia:** And maybe you'll come back sometime and tell us how things are moving along with all your classes.

**Victor:** Sure, I'd love that.

**Julia:** It's been a blast! Thanks, Victor, take care of yourself.

**Victor:** Okay, you, too.

**Julia:** This is Dr. Julia Bain. Tai Chi Chih. It sounds fascinating to me. Personally, I'm going to give it a try. Until next time, be happy and be well.

**Announcer:** This has been Employee Health Services "Mind, Body and Spirit." For more information, call the City of Albuquerque's Employee Health Services at 768-4613. Let the Employee Health Services staff help you be your best at work, at home, and at play.

## As East Meets West

By William Nielsen

Years ago, my wife and I attended a gathering devoted to creating greater public awareness of the now more widely known Nine Gates Program. The featured speaker of the evening was Dr. Gay Luce, an ordained Tibetan Buddhist monk. This was unusual in that she was an American, and a woman. She was also wonderfully unusual in her perspective on life, love, and the pursuit of happiness.

As she spoke about life, it was the first time that I had been exposed to (or, perhaps receptive to) such a vast and open perspective. Simply stated, life is its own purpose. Anything that we can philosophize or imagine will always fall far short of the reality. We would be better served to stop all such speculative foolishness and address the fundamental problems. What instincts, and processes, are inherent in the way we experience the world? Can we learn to be less emotional? Can we learn to take our life experience a little less personally? She talked about love, how our ideas about a subject so mysterious and vast are far too limited. She spoke of our tendency to measure the depth of our relationships by their duration in time, as if time was somehow involved. She stated boldly that we could be together for just a moment, just an evening, and be in love, deeply and passionately. It can happen, if we are willing to risk opening our hearts to each other. She was right. She appeared in my life for just a few hours

one evening long ago. I love her still.

She talked of our quest for happiness. How we search for it everywhere, as if it is to be found some-

where outside of ourselves. "You are what you are looking for," she said. Can we willingly give up searching? Can we come to see that if we accept whatever happens to us as if we had chosen it, instead of resisting Life, we would be embracing it, and would be embraced in return? Any thing you accept fully will take you into peace. This is the miracle of surrender.

Lastly, I remember Dr. Luce saying the most memorable thing of the evening, "Without a practice we tend to get small." The value of any spiritual practice lies in its capacity to take us beyond our habitual "personal" perspective, to move us beyond our conditioned response to life, to hone our skills of perception. The universe has hidden within us its own inclination – self-consciousness. We use it quite naturally to make some kind of sense of this wild unfathomable experience in which we find ourselves. But a much greater potential is realized when it is used to perceive what lies within. What lies at the heart of this "Life" experience - Pure Awareness. With "the ten thousand things" constantly vying for our attention, this is no simple thing. It requires great discernment. Awareness without an object appears (or more accurately does not appear) as nothing at all. Small wonder that we miss it. Regarding enlightenment, the sages over the centuries were right. There is nothing to find. It is difficult to grasp that the universe is looking out through your eyes. ...until you begin to practice.

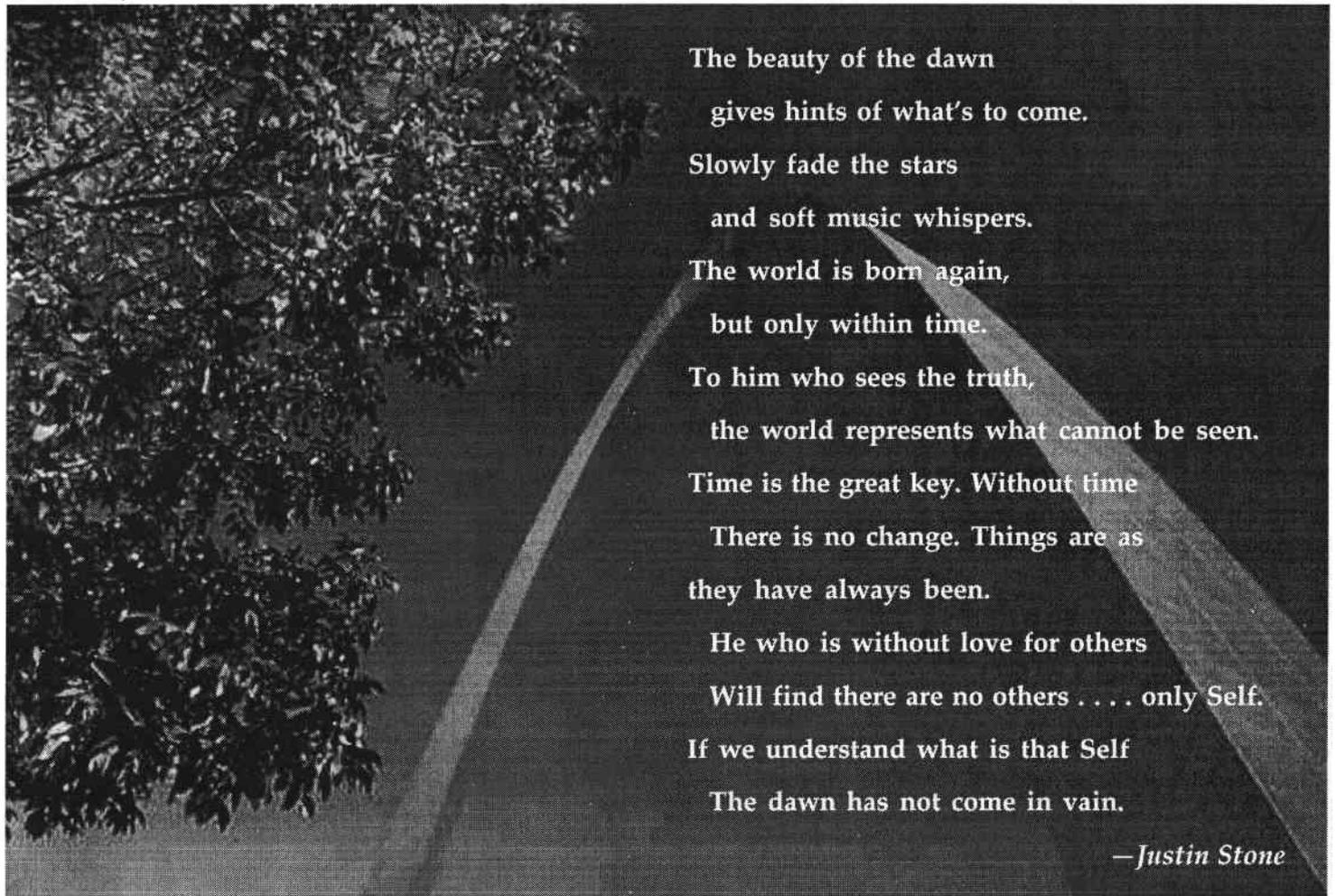
The importance of a practice such as TCC in our daily experience cannot be adequately expressed. It is a key to the kingdom that lies within. It is a way to the truth. In coming to it again and again access to insight is assured. One day at a time, it slowly works its magic. It changes things. It is simple, profound, and it can easily be shared with our fellow travelers. Justin

brought into the world a gift that so desperately needed to be born. An enlightened perspective is needed. I believe an evolutionary impulse is moving us inexorably in that direction.

We are experiencing a time when the T'ai Chi and Qigong traditions of the east are moving out into the world, and helping to heal it, the only way it can be healed, one heart at a time. TCC serves admirably as a bridge between east and west and has made the many benefits of these ancient practices accessible to countless western practitioners. Roger Jahnke OMD in his book *The Healing Power of Qi* states that, "The arrival of T'ai Chi and Qigong in our culture may well go down in history as one of the great medical breakthroughs of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century." It is no small thing that TCC has been helping and healing for 30 years already.

"May you live in interesting times," goes the ancient Chinese double entendre. It appears to be a particularly crucial time; when we must determine and demonstrate through our individual actions where we collectively go from here. I hesitate to speculate on Life's purposes these days. As Eckhart Tolle reminds us in *The Power of Now*, "As soon as you honor the present moment, all unhappiness and struggle dissolve, and life begins to flow with joy and ease. When you act out of present moment awareness, whatever you do becomes imbued with a sense of quality, care, and love - even the most simple action."

TCC is a simple action that has the power to change our lives, the power to anchor us in the moment, the power to awaken us to fully realize who and what we truly are. As I move through the form with joy and ease, at home in the movement of life itself, intent on the perfection of the present moment, it is then I realize most fully the precious gift TCC imparts.



The beauty of the dawn  
 gives hints of what's to come.  
 Slowly fade the stars  
 and soft music whispers.  
 The world is born again,  
 but only within time.  
 To him who sees the truth,  
 the world represents what cannot be seen.  
 Time is the great key. Without time  
 There is no change. Things are as  
 they have always been.  
 He who is without love for others  
 Will find there are no others . . . only Self.  
 If we understand what is that Self  
 The dawn has not come in vain.

—Justin Stone

Clear  
 Window  
 Birds Fly Past  
 Continuous  
 Effortless  
 Blurs of  
 Life

— Trisha Bachman  
 (student of Sharon Sirkis)

Soft  
 flowing  
 movements heal  
 body and mind  
 spirit soars  
 toward  
 God

— Sheila Holtgrieve  
 (student of Sandy McAlister)

One  
 spirit  
 flows into  
 all our movements  
 T'ai Chi Chih  
 heals the  
 world

— Sheila Holtgrieve  
 (student of Sandy McAlister)

Pain  
 Sadness  
 And Crying  
 Melting Away  
 As I Rock  
 Back And  
 Forth

— Jeni Simas  
 (student of Sharon Sirkis)

What  
 is Tao?  
 What is what  
 is Tao? Bah! Birds  
 fly t'ward the  
 sinking  
 sun

— Brent Gibbons  
 (student of Sharon  
 Sirkis)

I  
 used to  
 be afraid  
 Now I'm ready  
 to face a  
 brand new  
 day  
 — Kelly Baker  
 (student of Sharon Sirkis)



## T'ai Chi Chih at St. Cabrini Nursing Home

By Sister Carol DeAngelo, S.C., Director of Mission Integration and certified T'ai Chi Chih instructor

**I**t's so relaxing!" says a frail resident who has difficulty breathing, is weak and in a wheelchair. "I feel so peaceful!" says a woman who recently celebrated her 100th birthday. "I feel so energized! More relaxed and better able to work," says a CNA (certified nurse assistant) who cares for residents unable to assist themselves in activities of daily living.

We are a growing T'ai Chi Community at St. Cabrini

Nursing Home (SCNH) and we are experiencing the benefits of T'ai Chi Chih—harmony, peace and sense of oneness. Since most residents have limited mobility, flexibility and physical strength, our practice focuses on breath and hand movements that can be done seated or from a wheel chair. As we practice a modified form of T'ai

Chi Chih, we acknowledge the Source of Power and Infinite Energy within us, recognizing that our names

for the Universal Life Force and our belief systems may be different. We also acknowledge and name the creative potential and power within us though we may also experience physical and cognitive diminishment. In our intentions, our presence, breath

physically, a comfortable attractive well-lit room, with about 20 people in chairs in a two-row semi-circle and another 10 to 15 seated at tables around the room's perimeter, drawing, reading, or just resting quietly. These are the ones who choose to be

present for the T'ai Chi Chih session. About 10 registrants opt or are asked to participate in other activities in side rooms because of incompatible verbal or physical behaviors.

Imagine the emotional tone in the room as we begin



*The young do not have a monopoly on radiance:  
Elisa Parra and Gladys Bolanos at a T'ai Chi Chih session*

and movements, we call forth gifts of peace, hope, joy and unconditional love for ourselves and the extended community of life beyond our four walls.

The following snapshot gives a flavor of how T'ai Chi Chih has been welcomed at SCNH. I offer a weekly 30-minute session for the SCNH Msgr. Terrence Attridge Adult Day Health Center registrants, varying in age from the 40s to 90s, and with varied physical, mental and emotional health challenges. Let your imagination picture the T'ai Chi Chih practice -

— some people very verbal and loud, constant walking, etc. The class begins and everyone is invited to just be themselves — to participate to the extent that they can — to just be — even if it is to listen to the music or just observe. Gradually, the room quiets. And at times when it doesn't, we remind ourselves that the world is much like this room, noisy at times, many things happening, but that the true quiet comes from that deep center within us. Once we can go to that center, we can know deep peace, even though we might not always feel it. And when we do, we share this peace



## N.C.O.A. Pilot Project Follow-up

By Sher Dana, Surprise, AZ

with others. So often, as it happened the other day, the once noisy room becomes very quiet and peaceful, with the agitated people quieting down. As observed by a staff member, "The entire group calms down – even those who are not doing the movements."

Our attention and intention are focused on recurring themes such as living in the present moment, honoring our bodies, moving with gentleness, flexibility, continuity, not rushing to finish a movement or to do it perfectly – but to just be and know that we are loved and special.

SCNH is no stranger to chi – the vital life force – within each person and within the organization and the Universal Life Force. Sponsored by the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart and rooted in the Catholic healing ministry, SCNH offers many programs that uplift and strengthen the spirit in those who live and work here. Named after St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, foundress of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, SCNH has a rich tradition of compassionate love, respect and dignity. We try to foster a spirit of hospitality, welcome and inclusiveness that reaches beyond the 304 residents who live here and the hundreds of others who are served. Our relationships extend beyond the U.S. to Swaziland, Australia, Brazil, Philippines and beyond. A family member who comes daily to be with her husband remarked, "Tai Chi Chih gives me such a sense of community." We want the greater Tai Chi Chih Community and others to know that in our practice, we join in prayer and intentions for peace, non-violence, hope and joy – for you and our world.

This is a follow-up to the article which ran in the April 2004 Vital Force, p. 31. There were a total of 18 sites that participated in the collaborative project of The National Council on Aging (NCOA), The Healer Within Foundation (HWF), and the Institute of Integral Qigong and Tai Chi (IIQITC). Also joining in was the Research Dept. from the University of IL, and the Center for Healthy Aging.

Participants numbered 349, with the mean age of 73, and were placed into two groups, experienced and novice. Eighty-nine percent of all participants enjoyed the program; 91 percent stated that they wished to continue, and 67 percent of all participants found the program helped them to be more active than usual. Most importantly, both groups significantly reduced their perceived stress from pre- to post-test as measured by the combined PSS score.

The results of this pilot project were presented to the annual conference in San Francisco in mid-April by Jim Firman, CEO of NCOA and Roger Jahnke, OMD, to a packed room, where interest was high, and feedback was enthusiastic. Both the NCOA and the ASA have moved three very interesting things onto their agendas: falls prevention, physical activity, and chronic disease self-managed care, all of which are addressed by Qigong and Tai Chi.

In addition, another very important meeting was held with the research team from University of Illinois and the key players of the Center for Healthy Aging, all of whom agreed that the preliminary findings merit further investigation. NCOA representatives expressed interest in a much more rigorous study and the capacity to find funding to do so. There was also discussion of some other interesting steps: 1) to catalogue Qigong and Tai Chi activity throughout the US and 2) to convene a panel of experts to further refine the needs of the aging community and the best pathways to meet the needs through Qigong and Tai Chi.

According to Dr. Jahnke, the NCOA was very happy with the pilot. It has triggered three things:

1. A national roundtable will be convened to explore the topic of Qigong and Tai Chi with research agency and a few Qigong and Tai Chi experts at the table.
2. A second, much more rigorous pilot will (may) be implemented.
3. The details will be worked out for how the program (Easy Chi or some other name) will be distributed, how facilitators will be trained, and how much it will cost.

These are huge accomplishments, and Dearnne Hodgson and I are proud to have participated in their leveraging.

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Fall breeze brushes cheek  
Morning Tai Chi Chih practice  
Ah, moving stillness  
— Debbie Cole

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## A Saluki Named Sprite

By Pat Flynn

*Many articles have been written about what T'ai Chi Chih does for the actual practitioner. Very few touch on what T'ai Chi Chih does for those people around the T'ai Chi Chih practitioner, and even fewer are about our 4-legged friends and faithful companions. This event deeply touched not only me but those involved. I am very thankful for the T'ai Chi Chih Intensive in Ringwood, NJ and everyone who was there. Without it, all of you and that wonderful thing called Chi, I seriously doubt this would have happened! Thank You!*

**O**n my way home from the Tai Chi Chih Intensive in Ringwood NJ, I stopped overnight to visit a friend. Linda is a long time breeder of a type of dog called Saluki. The Saluki is of Middle Eastern descent and is conjectured to be one of the most ancient forms of our modern-day domestic dog. Linda had just recently returned home from one of her trips with a Saluki from Iran. I had briefly met this dog once and was most anxious to see him again as we had immediately become fast friends. While there, I saw Sprite. Sprite and I had met once before and Linda had asked me if I could try to work with her. She gave me her leash and Sprite tried vehemently to get away and was doing flip flops at the end of the leash. Not a pretty sight seeing a full-grown saluki doing this!! The fear that exuded from her was astronomical!! Sprite had closed herself off to everyone and everything except Linda.

Keeping this in mind, I decided to totally ignore Sprite during my visit at Linda's. Linda and I planted a few flats of flowers and did some needlepoint and Sprite was al-



to reach out to me and when I finally sat down, Sprite was nosing the entire back side of me and was very accepting of me. I was able to touch Sprite on the top of her head and gently hold her front paws. Both of these actions are very threatening to a dog like Sprite. Linda was in tears! This was apparently the

first time anyone other than Linda could get comfortably close to her. Linda asked if I could help her with Sprite. I told her I was too far away to be of much help but I could teach her what I just did. So, I taught Linda a few T'ai Chi Chih movements emphasizing the more esoteric side of T'ai Chi Chih. In other words, I began teaching Linda complete surrender (a novel concept for control freak America) through T'ai Chi Chih. When I see Linda again, I will teach her a few more movements. Sprite slowly reverted back to her *habitual* self but was ever so slightly more relaxed about it. It is up to Linda now and the journey will be exceedingly long but more than simply worthwhile.

Afterward, Linda told me Sprite's story. When Sprite was only three days old, the heat lamp that was above the whelping box fell into the whelping box, missing mom and all

ways at a distance from us, afraid to come near. I got up and started to do a T'ai Chi Chih practice and a thought happened. I stopped the practice and explained to Linda what she needed to do. Well, we did a little experiment with Sprite. Linda took Sprite and sat with her on the patio couch and did not talk to her or reassure her in any manner and just quietly sat beside her. I was across the patio from them and re-started the T'ai Chi Chih practice. With each movement, I took a step closer to Sprite and Linda until I was directly in front of Sprite with my back to her. This took probably 15-20 minutes. I proceeded to sit down on the couch (perching on it) with Sprite between me and the back of the couch. It brought tears to Linda's eyes to see Sprite actually curious and comfortable with absolutely no fear in her eyes and no need to run away. Linda said she was continually trying

babies except Sprite. The heat lamp severed and cauterized her thigh down to the bone. Sprite underwent surgery without benefit of anesthesia. Anesthesia is not something a three-day-old puppy can handle. For many days after surgery, Sprite continually moaned, apparently from pain. There was doubt that she would survive. Well, physically she did survive. However, she carries her scars in the form of fear. Many people have said to Linda that Sprite's injury is no different from docking tails and cropping ears which is usually done at three days of age. Both Linda and I beg to differ. It is generally accepted that at three days of age, the nerves of the tail and ears are not developed; hence it is believed there is no pain in the docking and cropping procedures. However, the nerves in the thigh are developed. They would have to be in order for a puppy to crawl to its mother for warmth and nourishment. For a three-day-old puppy that is not even aware of its self much less its environment to have this much pain is very unsettling. It is even more unsettling that Sprite had to become aware of her self much earlier than would naturally occur – the pain being the catalyst. It is no wonder that Sprite lives in deep fear. It is also no wonder that Tai Chi Chih helped Sprite. It brought her back to the place where she was before she was so painfully and deeply hurt – her first three days of life.

Sun

Shines Bright  
Shadows Dance  
Upon the Ground  
Chi Flows Soft  
Within  
Me  
—Lisa Thorburn

## Tai Chi Chih ..A Way of Life

*By Ray Welles, a student of Barbara Riley for the last three years*

**A**lways enamored but never a devotee of Eastern mysticism and meditation, I utilized their insights in my Ministry and Family Therapy practice for decades. Perhaps, I should not have been so terribly surprised when my orthopedist announced there was not much more he could do for my spinal stenosis and noisy aching knees with traditional medicine. But, why don't you try Tai Chi? An internist enthusiastically repeated his recommendation.

Now, nearly two years later I rarely experience spinal discomfort and my knees feel 20, perhaps 30, years younger.

What began as a quest for pain relief has assumed an important role in my spiritual life. Prayer sometimes seems terribly passive. It's nice to "do" prayer. Tai Chi Chih has become moving prayer.

I especially enjoy its counter-culture character. By temperament and training, I am prone to strive to be efficient, quick, and first in line. My culture idolizes a winner with the most records and endorsements.

It is so refreshing, in my ripening years, to cultivate gentleness and softness and reap no reward for being the first to finish 20 moves. It's teaching me to be more fully present in this moment, not some other time. I cannot tell, and no longer particularly care, how much chi is set in motion by my practice. I do know and experience a growing sense of wonder, and a frequent inclination toward gratitude.

## The Gift

*By Lee Moore, Castro Valley, CA, student of Sandy McAlister*

**I**f I could give a gift of the movements of Tai Chi Chih, one group would be people with anxiety and panic disorders. Seven years ago I was scheduled for two operations. My panic and anxiety levels were extremely high. My first step to relieve my anxiety was "acceptance," acknowledging the fact that I had no control over the scheduled operations. My second step was to be faithful to my Tai Chi Chih classes and doing my Tai Chi Chih at home. On both days of the operations, I did my Tai Chi Chih at home before going to the hospital. While in the hospital, I did my practice visually several times. You can't imagine the peace and serenity that filled my body and spirit. When I went through the doors of the operating room it was like I was a flowing spirit, free of all anxiety! Thanks to Tai Chi Chih! Thanks for the gift!

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## Trainings, Intensives, Workshops, Retreats

### Bad Habits No More at the New Jersey Intensive

By Lucia Veteran, Lake Winola, PA

My sincerest thanks to Dan Pienciak and Sr. Antonia for creating the opportunities to share and continue learning the Tai Chi Chih movements in a supportive, friendly environment wherein new friendships are formed and old contacts renewed—an environment enhanced by the beautiful grounds, outdoor swimming pool, and nurturing care of Sr. Rosemary and her staff at Mt. St. Francis Retreat Center within (or bordering) the Ringwood State Park in New Jersey. How fortunate we are in the Northeast to have all this available to us. I left the June 23-26<sup>th</sup> Intensive with a feeling of renewal, wishing everyone could have easy access to this opportunity, and...wishing that some billionaire would manifest and buy Villa Maria so we'd have a Tai Chi Chih Northeast Center—a place to refresh oneself wherein everyone regardless of background, religion (or non-religion), or level of TCC practice would feel welcome and return home having learned a lot about the movements and about oneself.

I had been struggling with Anchor Taffy for some time and Sandy picked it up almost immediately. "Complete the wind-up BEFORE stepping out..." So easy!! My first reaction was concern that I had been teaching it incorrectly, but this was quickly put to rest when a former student now accredited and also attending the Intensive showed us that she was able to do the move correctly. When I got home I immediately checked with another teacher/former student, and learned that she too had a correct understanding of the move. I was reminded of Justin's words, "Tai Chi Chih will teach you Tai Chi Chih," and I concluded that I must have fallen into a bad habit until Sandy spotted and corrected it. Justin says, "Don't do the movements carelessly," and apparently I had done just that. This correction alone made my attendance at the Intensive very worthwhile because that correction affected the ease of all the Taffy movements and gave me a clearer understanding of the Taffies. I also picked up a new and exciting awareness in several other moves. It

amazes me that so many (seven) years after starting the Tai Chi Chih movements and doing them on a daily basis that they can still feel fresh, new and inviting.

I encourage everyone to attend an Intensive. It was great fun to be with other teachers—especially seasoned teachers like Janet Ousatty, Nancy Adams, and Dan—and with Nancy Hall who became accredited when I did. I loved sharing the learning experience with students who will go on to become accredited teachers. Being with teacher candidates helps one to be in touch with "Beginner's Mind," to see the moves in a new and detailed way. My thanks to each participant for being at this Intensive.

And, my very special thanks to Sandy McAlister who is a role model of teaching, compassion, fun, laughter, fairness, lightness of being, sharing of self, and who still manages to be "as tough as nails." Being with Sandy is another great reason to attend an Intensive.

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## Oh!oh!oh! uff!uff!uff!uff!uff!uff! sluch!!! Boom! TCC Intensive in Houston, Texas, April 2004

By Lorraine Lepine, Overland Park, KS

**T**hank you to Caroline Guillot and Sr. Carletta for organizing the TCC Intensive. Thank you to the Dominican Sisters who welcomed us into such a calm, serene environment in the heart of Houston. I also extend a warm thank you to Sandy who did a great job teaching us patiently all the TCC movements in detail.

I needed this Intensive since I had been certified in 1999 and was a bit rusty. The movements were well ingrained in me, and I thought I was doing them right. Well! What a surprise. I had the impression that I was learning some movements again for the first time. Do I need to say that if you did not go to any type of renewal since your accreditation that you might consider doing one?

I have been back for a week and since then my usual, flowing practice has become a time to relearn all the movements slowly in order to reintegrate the new learning. What's the use to put myself in such situation? Why am I putting myself through that? I know that the rewards are going to be greater than what I can measure at this point.

My own experience of releasing tension became totally different. As Sandy pointed out to me, I was very soft but had no form. By the time we reached Daughter on the Mountain Top, the tension in my neck had reached a maximum. No words and no feedback were helping me to release the tension since the internal slate that was creating it was still out my conscious awareness. Finally letting go, I imagined that I was cutting all the strings that held all my feelings

of being responsible for everything, from all that I put on my shoulders. We are now doing Pulling in the Energy. Wow! Through the gentle guidance of Sandy who was holding my hand to experience the movement, I was releasing the hold at my neck. She again spoke about "being soft without sacrificing the form."

We are now doing Anchor Taffy, sinking, turning much more at the waist oh!oh!oh! uff!uff!uff!uff!uff!uff! sluch!!! Boom! We were filled with sounds that were helping us to move softly, release even more. Very meaningful words! Onomatopoeia! We all got the swiveling of the hip as if we were on a sailboat following the wave of the ocean. No more intellect to guide us through the experience, the experience of gliding, swiveling the hip, turning the waist, all done in one continuous, flowing movement.

"The intent you bring in your practice will bring you a long way, further than anything else." My intent coming to the TCC Intensive was to relearn every movement more deeply. I also had the intention to discover my true nature more clearly.

We are now day 3 of the TCC Intensive. The new way of doing the movements feels like the adjustments of a whole new system of wheels shifting my perception, my experience of BOOM! The understanding of the interrelation of softness and form became clear for me. I have been working on softness to the point where I no longer felt my body but only the energy. Before that I remember experiencing so much tension. I had no idea what softness meant. Did I had to go to extremes in order for me to under-

stand balance between softness and form, like the Yin-Yang symbol, in the softness there exists some tension (form) and in the form exists the softness? This breakthrough of understanding helps me to realize that the state of mind underneath all this was this: I am either very controlled, tensed in a state of protection, or I am very soft, erased, nonexistent. So I need to bring myself toward a state of balance of existing with a form while being very soft. This understanding gives me the power to be more myself and choose to do softly whatever I choose. I am giving myself the right to existence without control, just allowing, flowing, and being.

The tension was no longer releasing what I was holding from my life experience but the holding against simply existing trusting that I will be safe in this world no matter what happens. Now both softness and form coexist, my shoulders have dropped down; my elbows release easily and stay easily along my body.

When we do our practice, Sandy encourages us to notice our state of mind, really notice it, feeling our body, the movements. Becoming aware of what this practice really does. Stand still. Find something to be grateful for and bring it into your day, your life. I am very grateful for the TCC Intensive format that the TCC Community created to help us teachers and students to refine, to deepen our practice and to become a better person.

## San Francisco teacher training – a Joyous week

By Athene Mantle, Host

There was “a whole lot of” yinning and yanging going on in San Anselmo, California early this summer. No it wasn't a rock-n-roll jam session. It was a joyous week-long *T'ai Chi Chih* teacher training from June 28 to July 3. Twelve candidates from the western U.S. descended upon the otherwise serene San Francisco Theological Seminary in search of their *T'ai Chi Chih* teacher's accreditation.

The lovely San Francisco Theological Seminary campus was the perfect setting with tall trees and distant views as well as beautiful architecture to nurture the candidates and auditors alike in their process. The quaint little town of San Anselmo just a few blocks away, offered delightful restaurants for our dinners. Many of the 18 auditors joined us for the delicious catered lunch we shared daily in the campus cafeteria. All of the candidates and the teachers who stayed on site enjoyed private dorm rooms.

The yinning and yanging of *T'ai Chi Chih* was certainly reflected in the week as much of the experience for everyone was about balance.



*Back row left to right: Trainer Sandy McAlister, Janelle Taggart, Karen Goran, Margaret Talbert, Carol Wong, Glenna Dockery, Jan Kovac, Jan Block, Denise Singerline. Front row seated: Pilar Triggs, Bevo Zellick, Maureen Murphy, Carol Selby-Nelson, course host Athene Mantle.*

The candidates came with a certain amount of confidence in their skills and yet with apprehension for the training process. Teacher trainer Sandy McAlister quickly put any fears of encountering a rigid taskmaster to rest as she gently yet firmly led all of us in movement review for the first few days. Her skill as a long-time instructor and as a teacher trainer was very apparent as she took us through movement refinement and then on to the finer, more subtle points of *T'ai Chi Chih* practice. We were also very fortunate to have had teacher trainer Pam Towne auditing and volunteering her assistance for the entire week. Many thanks to our two devoted teacher trainers.

Auditing teachers found themselves seeking that balance between refining their own personal practice and teaching skills with that of playing the role of teacher and assisting candidates. It is always interesting to note how much we teachers learn from working with the candidates. Many of the eighteen auditors came for the first few days of movement review while others came for the week. Donna

McElhose (Chicago, IL) and Sally McLaughlin (San Rafael, CA) returned at 8:00 a.m. all week long to work with candidates on special points before the day's training began. Roberta Taggart (Redondo Beach, CA) who stayed on site for the entire week was of invaluable assistance. A special note of gratitude goes out to all those teachers (too numerous to name) who assisted in some way. Please know that the candidates were extremely grateful for the contributions of all of the auditors.

All of the candidates had worked hard in their preparations before teacher training, although it was apparent that those who had attended an Intensive clearly had the advantage

over those who had not. Many commented that if they had known how valuable and important it was to attend an Intensive before teacher training they certainly would have done so. Many of the candidates attended a "teacher prep" course. One of the many benefits was that here they had the opportunity to form a bond with each other. This connected feeling spilled over to the whole group and there was a very strong sense of unity and support among all of the candidates during training.

The candidates worked very hard all week and definitely experienced the ying and yang of many things. They worked as a group and they worked individually. Sometimes it came easily and sometimes they struggled. They experienced how their practice can fall apart and then how it can amazingly come back together in a beautiful new way. They had time for socializing and they had time for quiet contemplation alone. They had time for laughter and fun and time for serious study and self-examination. They made lasting friendships. They built inner awareness and self-confidence. They enjoyed the moment and they built a future as *T'ai Chi Chih* instructors.

In the end all 12 candidates came away with their *T'ai Chi Chih* Teacher Accreditation. However, amazing things happen in a week of doing that much *T'ai Chi Chih* practice and circulating that much chi through the body. It's certain that they came away with *much* more than a credential from this wondrous and strange week-long phenomenon called *T'ai Chi Chih* Teacher Training.

Congratulations to our 12 new *T'ai Chi Chih* Teachers.

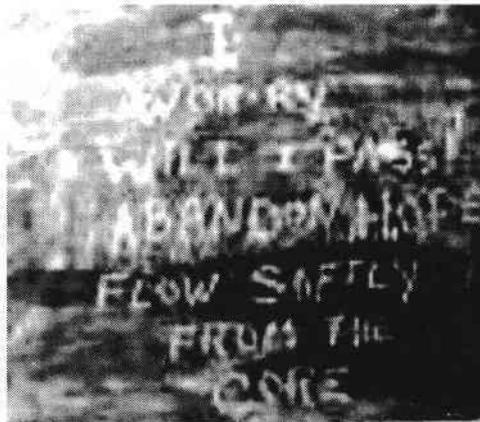
Thanks to Justin Stone for the gift of *T'ai Chi Chih* © Joy Thru Movement.



Some of the auditors



Janelle Taggart and Roberta Taggart



I  
worry  
Will I pass?  
Abandon hope  
Flow softly  
from the  
core

—by Roberta Taggart,  
pyramid poem written  
on the chalkboard at  
the training



Joy Thru Movement

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## Responses from the candidates to teacher training (and other snapshots)

**T**eacher training was both challenging and positive. My experience of TCC was greatly deepened and precious friendships were formed. — *Karen Goran*

**T**eacher training was an invaluable help for me personally and has greatly enhanced my life. I am very excited about "passing it forward" to many others to improve their lives as well. — *Jan Block*

**I** think the teacher training candidates bypassed superficial differences and focused on enjoying and supporting one another. I was truly amazed that 12 women, so different from one another, were so very compatible while working earnestly to earn their T'ai Chi Chih credential. I think that my greatest asset at the training was the foundation laid by my T'ai Chi Chih teacher, Sandy McAlister. She is an excellent teacher and I was carefully trained in the movements. I also appreciated the teacher preparation classes given by Athene Mantle. She encouraged us to practice demonstrating and leading T'ai Chi Chih movements in as many ways as possible before the training. So when we were asked to lead the movements at the training, we were well prepared. She also alerted us to the requirements of the presentation we would make at the training. And very importantly, she encouraged us not to assume that we were finished

products, but to come to the teacher training with open minds, ready to examine our practice anew. I believe I would have been

greatly benefited by attending an Intensive, because it helps prepare candidates mentally and emotionally for the intensity of the experience. I also think it is important for candidates to experience something that is very disconcerting: when we correct one aspect of our form, the entire form becomes unbalanced and there is a period of adjustment before a new balance is achieved. And when we receive multiple corrections, this imbalance is even greater. In the teacher training process, I think the trick is not to panic, and the challenge is to remain calm during the intense evaluation process. Many candidates who had attended Intensives told me that it was exactly the same as teacher training, except for the fact that if we did not "do T'ai Chi Chih well" we would not be accredited. The role of the auditors was also key in our success as candidates. In addition to being a source of comfort and support, they provided a new perspective on explaining the movements. Their unique teaching approach often supplied just the element we needed to understand what our practice lacked. They were a very valuable part of our training process. In regard to my class, I took steps to make contact with the Kaiser person responsible for setting up classes in the Fitness Center, but he has not contacted me in spite of several attempts to move him in that direction. I have been overwhelmed lately at work, and so it may be for the better. I am not giving up, however. I plan to have a class before the end of the year, even if it is not with the Fitness Center. — *Glenna J. Dockery*

**I** made it!!! I am now an accredited T'ai Chi Chih teacher. The week was so moving that it could not have happened were it not for those WONDERFUL AUDITORS AND TRAINERS. Their outpouring of love, support and constructive comments has touched my heart forever. Definitely, a one-time experience that you had to be there to receive the full impact of the CIII surrounding all of us. I was determined to get as much as I could in the way of preparation for this milestone in my life. The teacher prep allowed me to focus on why I wanted to be a teacher. Each meeting was exciting because it covered various aspects of T'ai Chi Chih. I was thirsty to learn. Being part of a group preparing for teacher training enabled me to look at my strengths and weaknesses so I can become a better practitioner. The individual private lessons were also valuable to me. My success was hinged on how much I wanted to be accredited as a T'ai Chi Chih teacher. In my heart I wanted this goal to be real I would travel 3 hours one way from Marysville to the Bay Area twice a week to work with Athene Mantle, my instructor and sponsor of the teacher prep course. Attending classes as a student gave me insight into the various ways and techniques used by other teachers. I wish to thank them for allowing me to join their classes as a beginning student. — *Carol Wong*

**I** had four thoughts about our T'ai Chi Chih teacher training. (1) I had a good time. (2) I thought it was a serene and meditative atmosphere in which to do TCC. (3) The accredited instructors were positive, encouraging and very helpful. (4) I

thought the teacher candidates were a warm, supportive, very interesting, and diverse group. Basically I thought the 2004 summer TCC candidates were terrific. —Margaret Tulbert

ight o'clock in the morning and a group of women are standing around the circular maze outside the library of the San Francisco Theological Seminary. Suddenly they begin rolling their hips—backward, forward, side to side. Twisting and turning their pelvises like a coven of deranged burlesque dancers. Whatever those poor seminarians imagined they saw, it was really only Donna McElhose and Sally McLaughlin warming up the teacher candidates for a session on waist turns. I wonder if we will ever be invited back? —Carol Nelson-Selby

eacher training took us in new directions, some of which we were striving for; others were

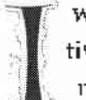
unexpected. It was a life altering experience. —Maureen Murphy

here was a unity among the students and the teachers that resulted in a kind of “wholeness” which was expressed in all of the candidates becoming accredited. —Jan Kovac

n our second day of Teacher Training, Sandy McAlister was explaining to us that some people may have emotional breakthroughs and that if it that happens, it's okay. Let them release. As I listened, I thought to myself “Not me. I don't have anything to release.” Wednesday night was my meeting with both Sandy and Athene Mantle. I was told that I do T'ai Chi Chih from the waist up, that they felt I wasn't connecting with my lower body, and that I was blocked. That is when I had an emotional release. I was not able to

walk until I was three years old. I was taken to the doctors every week. Until I was five years old, I had metal braces on my legs while I slept because I was pigeon-toed. When I was 25 years old, I had varicose veins stripped from my legs. I suffer from spider veins. I don't like my legs. I never wear shorts. I dress up my upper body and cover up the bottom. My hips are tilted down and I was never able to have children. When I sleep on my left side, it goes numb. The left side of the body represents the feminine side, which I was rejecting. I went back to my room and cried myself to sleep. Finally, the next day, the fourth day of training, I was able to connect to my T'an Tien and I moved wonderfully for the first time. Teacher training was one of the hardest things I've ever been through in my life, but it also has been one of the most rewarding. I thank all of you who were there supporting me. —Denise Singerline

## Auditors Response to Teacher Training June 2004

was thrilled to see how effectively partner practice techniques were used during the week with candidates and auditing teachers. It served to deepen and clarify their understanding of specific movements. Everyone was an “engaged learner.” It was very powerful. In terms of my own learning, I came away from the accreditation with a whole new “bag of tricks” in how to teach TCC. I am much more grounded and clear about the essentials of particular movements and that has helped me to become a better teacher. I look forward to another accreditation! —Linda Braga

Still of consideration are teacher candidates who come to training less prepared because they did not attend an intensive, a workshop, and or a teacher prep course. This adds undue stress to those candidates. Fortunately, the Northern California Teachers “audited” in abundance and provided great enthusiasm and support for the candidates. This was a congenial and hard-working group of candidates who “pulled out the stops” and made tremendous strides toward moving to the next level with their TCC practice. Auditing is a privilege and a source of great joy for me as a teacher — an opportunity to give back to the TCC community and strengthen the bonds between new teachers and

those who are more experienced. —Roberta Taggart

Wow, what wonder to audit a teacher training for a week! (My fifth training). This was an opportunity to see others and myself grow! As candidates grew I noticed something inside me growing. For all of us, it was confidence, courage, and change. Together we were enjoying the impermanence and flowing into Joy and into Life! —Donna McElhose

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## Graduation Day

By Pilar Triggs, Hayward, CA

**I**t was Saturday, the last day of T'ai Chi Chih teacher training, graduation day. I woke up at 3:40 a.m., far ahead from 5:30 where I had set my alarm. I got up, sat at the side of the bed and observed myself. I have been coughing the night before as I have been since Tuesday and last night. I found my chest wheezing while I lulled myself to sleep. I started with itchy, watery eyes and sniffles the first day of training while we were getting up the footpath beyond Alexander Hall to go to the Training Room in Geneva Hall. It was a magnificent view, with trees and flowers. Allergies, I then thought. I haven't had them for quite a while.

I sleepily went to the shower room and had a warm shower. I felt light, I felt healthy. My chest was clear. No coughing. No asthma. Did I just go through "cleansing"? I wondered. My husband came at 8:00 to load my things in the car after which we went to breakfast. It was great to see him for the first time after almost a week. It was a warm morning and the light breeze touching my face was so refreshing. It was a brand new day, a brand new feeling. Everybody was joyous. All the stress and the uncertainty of the previous days were all gone. Inner peace dwelt in my heart from the experience I shared with my fellow candidates. We all felt equal, so

supportive with each other, and we have gotten closer as the days go by. The teacher, the host, and the auditors were so patiently leading us the way from the very start. After a short class, we received our certificates and we hugged each other, knowing this is not the last time our paths cross. We are finally accredited teachers, and we are beginning again, back to step one. After saying our goodbyes and sharing tears of joy after our last practice together, I was ready to head home. I felt like I was floating while I was going down the steps of Geneva Hall, as if the clouds were passing by and they carried me along. The sky was crystal clear, the sun was shining brightly, and the birds were chirping joyous tunes while probably resting within the trees and flowers that were all around me. I could even hear church bells ringing within. We were in the freeway and I just sat back while my husband drove. Cars cutting in front of us here and there, on freeway entrances and freeway exits, reminded me I was back to the busy world again, the world I live in. Calmly, I sat back and thought: Would it be nice if everybody learned and practiced T'ai Chi Chih? You would see smiling faces everywhere. There would be peace and harmony all over the world and people wouldn't be cutting in front of each other in the freeway. Wow!

We stopped at Vallejo for lunch and

everybody in the diner was very pleasant. After a very filling lunch, we walked to the Value Center nearby and we found in the boutique a pair of beautiful, heavy, solid brass unicorns gracefully prancing on their deeply rooted hind legs as if proudly showing off the single horn in the center of their foreheads, often symbolic of purity or chastity. "What an alignment!" I said to myself. The two unicorns were very similar but one is \$10 more expensive than the other. My husband asked the salesperson why, and he was told to wait for the manager who should have been coming back shortly from her lunch break. My husband waited while I wandered to the back of the store. I was getting back to the front area when my husband found me passing by the clothes rack. He said the manager lowered the price of the more expensive piece and he got them both at the same price. "Aren't they quite expensive?" I asked. He said that they symbolize purity, and they bring good luck, and that I was happy, and he was happy. A voice came from behind me saying she was happy, too. I looked back and here was this very dignified-looking lady, all smiling, highly-spirited, looking at us right by the clothes rack and we all laughed together. What a lovely day! This joy and inner peace within me must be contagious. Thanks to T'ai Chi Chih. Thank you, Justin.

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## The Minnesota TCC Intensive: Not too Big, Not too Little, But JUST RIGHT

By Cathy Dalton, Marie Dotts, and Judy George

The T'ai Chi Chih Intensive in St. Paul, Minnesota was a wonderful experience in "just rightness." Throughout the Intensive, Pam and Sr. Antonia held us in a place of loving discovery. As we rediscovered each movement, Pam let us feel what it was like to do a movement "not too big, not too little, but just right."

The Conference began with each participant receiving a beautiful handmade quilt square saying "We are holding you as you deepen your practice - MN TCC Teachers."

The intention of the Minnesota Teachers, as Nancy expressed so wonderfully in her quilt squares, was to do just that - hold each participant as they deepened their practice. This set the stage to explore our practice in a safe, playful, caring environment. Many participants expressed that the deep sense of community experienced in this environment at the Intensive was very important to them.

Throughout the 3 1/2 -day intensive, as Peg gently said, we learned, refined, learned more and then refined more.

This learning was done in a safe space of loving kindness, honoring each person's unique journey. While on this journey students and teachers alike laughed and cried, sometimes at the same time.

Participants of the Intensive had many reactions to the experience of practicing T'ai Chi Chih together. Anna realized "T'ai Chi Chih is a tool which can help [her] through tough times, decrease stress and help [her]

change previous behavior patterns." Peg noted that "the chi was slowly leaving my head and migrating [downward]." She said, "I felt it in my heart, body, legs, t'an tien and being. It was amazing and exciting." As Judy says, "it was a time of recognizing our vashanas, or habit energies, and letting go, physically, emotionally and spiritually."

Nancy Werner-Azarski printed cards for us with quotes from Justin Stone. We took the time to read each quote and in this way felt connected with Justin through his words. One particular quote was very meaningful for Marie. The quote from Abandon

To work and be playful  
to be intentional and relaxed  
to be connected within and without  
new joy thru flowing not alone but together  
—Joanne Ellison

To know the One within  
To allow it to touch and fill this body with light  
Within and without  
For truly there is no boundary between us  
—Cathy Dalton

I hope read, "A great teacher is like one who stands over us as we hang desperately from the cliff, treading on our fingers until, in pain and desperation, we have to let go. What is this 'letting go'? It is giving up the small identity with which we have saddled ourselves, the personality through which the life force is temporarily manifesting." In this safe space, Marie felt she was able to let go of her hold on the cliff. It is in the letting go that she al-

lowed herself to open more to receiving and giving.

Besides finding the "just right" of T'ai Chi Chih, Pam also reminded us that how we do anything is how we do everything. For example, if we are holding tension in our shoulders in Push Pull, we are probably holding tension in our shoulders in other moves as well. She also invited us to let T'ai Chi Chih be as simple as it is.

Yuen summarized many of the participants' experiences of the intensive. She said, "After three days of T'ai Chi Chih, I found myself with a very happy mind in several ways. The teachers are so humble and they are always ready to help students. Pam was so kind, warm, patient and organized. I feel so blessed to be with such a group of people, it seemed like a second life and [the group was] a new family to me. With Pam's and the teachers' help, I have been able to correct my movements and improve them with continuous practice. I would like to do my T'ai Chi Chih practice as simple as it is."

The response to the Intensive was overwhelmingly positive from both teachers and students.

Sharon asked herself, "My response to this TCC Intensive class? Has it been, is it being, worth my time, my energy, my money? Yes, to all three."

Using Joanne's play on Pam's words, we could say that the Intensive was not too big, not too little, ...but *Justin* right.

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## Joy, Joy, Joy..... Yahoo!!!

By Faye Mohr, newly Accredited T'ai Chi  
Chih Instructor

To My Dear Family and Friends,

This past weekend I attended a T'ai Chi Chih Retreat in Saskatoon at Queen Retreat house.

Leading the retreat was Pam Towne, TCC Teacher Trainer from California. As most of you know I have been practicing T'ai Chi Chih, (often called, Joy Thru Movement) off and on for a number of years. I really believe in the benefits of regular practice for circulating and balancing the Chi energy for health and well being.

I attended Teacher Training in Edmonton in Sept. 2002 and was "deferred," along with two others, to deepen and soften our practice before teaching. On Sunday morning of the retreat, Sept. 19th, Pam said that she could joyfully announce that Faye, Byron and Rhonda (the other two deferrals) were now fully accredited teachers!!

What celebration ensued—no less than Canadian Idol!!—as about 13 of the attendees at the Saskatoon retreat, who were also at the Teacher Training in Edmonton, gathered around us. All were as happy as we were to have the circle completed. Joy, Joy, Joy..... Yahoo!!

The learning and growing will always continue, and my understanding and movements will deepen. I am so happy that now I can share the gift of T'ai Chi Chih with family, friends, and anyone else, interested in learning

the 19 gentle movements and one pose that can so enhance one's life. I hope to plan and set up classes soon.

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## Deferred No More

By Byron Gill

My wife Rhonda and another student, Faye Mohr, and I were deferred from a previous teacher training that we attended in Edmonton in September of 2002. We had completed the accreditation process and were deferred. At the conclusion of the retreat Pam Towne announced to the group that we had improved enough to now become fully accredited teachers. This now has completed the full circle of the accreditation process.

I want to thank the T'ai Chi Chih community to allow this to happen. I believe that we were the last of this type of accreditation/deferment process. This process has allowed me the opportunity to grow and improve. I have been able to practice and learn from many teachers and students. The love and sincere caring in this growth process has been just wonderful. It has taken me a long time to simply get out of my own way and to embrace the Chi that has become so beautiful in my life.

I know that this accreditation process has changed. I can only praise the whole process that I have just gone through to allow me the time to grow as I have needed. The fact that the T'ai Chi Chih was brought into Canada is so valuable. To be able to have accredited teachers in Canada, who have shared their love, continued encouragement, and teachings with me. This encouraged me to continue to deepen my practice. The ability to attend accreditation, intense weekend retreats and conferences such as Banff in Canada only continues to strengthen and allow

### Teachers Earn Full Accreditation!



Left to right: Byron Gill, Rhonda Gill, teacher trainer Pam Towne, and Faye Mohr

Heartfelt congratulations to Faye Mohr of Calgary, AB and to Byron and Rhonda Gill of Christopher Lake, SK for earning their full Accreditation to teach T'ai Chi Chih! It was wonderful to see the progress that each have made in how they are moving...now flowing softly from the center and yinping and yanging correctly. All three have truly demonstrated Teh...the power of inner sincerity...in deepening their practice of TCC since being "deferred" at the Edmonton Teacher Training two years ago. They will be fine teachers!

This brings near completion the former process of "deferring" teachers at a Teacher Training by requiring them to improve certain aspects of how they move, and then be approved by a Teacher Trainer before beginning to teach TCC. If you, or anyone you know, have been deferred and you want to complete your accreditation, please contact me.

—Pam Towne, Teacher Trainer

students to continue to progress. The geographic space of Canada makes travel timely and quite costly. However T'ai Chi Chih continues to grow and develop despite the challenges of such a vast country.

I look forward to be able to share the knowledge of TCC to other students. I believe that the giving of T'ai Chi Chih is one of the ways that we will be able to maintain it. The flowing from the centre that was shared with me is so valuable that I must now pass it on to others.

As this circle of the journey becomes complete I now realize how small a circle of life I have. As a student and practitioner I now have the responsibility to broaden that circle and continue upon the circular path that is so important to all of us.

Thank you, Justin and thank you, Ed, and a big thank you to all of you who have contributed to the success of my practice. I know that today you would be proud to see us in Saskatchewan complete this accreditation process here. Thank you Viola, you have made this day special. You started this journey with us quite some time ago and have seen it come full circle.

I thank you and embrace the process to be able to complete the final stages of the accreditation. I know that there are no simple answers to the most difficult question as to how to nurture and bring forth the best teachers while keeping the practice of T'ai Chi Chih as pure and simple as possible.

T'ai Chi Chih has been an open ended discovery about myself. It has allowed me to become a more open person to all that life puts forth and as soon as I got out my own way great things began to happen. It just gets better and better all the time.

T'ai Chi Chih has done for me what I could not do for myself.

## Retreat in Canada a big success

By Donna Aldous

We had a wonderful retreat in Canada in September. Everyone attending said the same thing that Melba Cariou from Meadow Lake commented, "The TCC weekend retreat was everything I had hoped it would be. The relaxed atmosphere in a beautiful facility made it very special." Twenty-nine participants throughout Canada enjoyed teacher-trainer Pam Towne. Lidia Paice summed it up very well, "Pam helped immensely with the precision of movements and being guided in her gentle and loving way. It was wonderful to meet her in person." The theme, "Attending to the Intent" for many was the catalyst to take the time away from home and to concentrate on themselves. What was really monumental was the full accreditation of the three deferred teachers of the September 2002 training in Edmonton, AB. When Pam announced to Faye Mohr from Calgary and Rhonda and Byron Gill of Christopher Lake, SK of their success, Cathy Brochu stated for all of us, "The circle is finally complete." She also stated that it meant doubling the number of teachers at Christopher Lake and makes it a possible hotbed of TCC activity. Rhonda responded in her feedback, "A joyous weekend! My heart is so full of the love, gratitude for the support that the TCC community has extended, that only my tears of joy can express my love and happiness." Faye wrote, "As I reflected this morning, a warm feeling filled my being and I am grateful to know life unfolds as it is meant to."

Student Bob Dill of Prince Albert, SK said, "Surely, the positive energy (chi) which is generated by a group of folk who are entirely focused on well-be-

ing of body, mind and spirit cannot be underestimated."

Lidia Paice of Manitou Beach, SK shared this: "This weekend provided another blissful opportunity for me to take my TCC practice to another level, and my understanding of the principles to a greater depth." Mildred Weber of Greig Lake, SK added, "It has been a privilege and a wonderful experience to practice and learn with so many TCC people. I will take with me a refreshed spirit, lessons learned and a renewed commitment."

For Viola Bens it was "a weekend of deep renewal in my TCC practice. Pam brought a wonderful gentleness and softness which allowed me to flow more softly as a whole-- hands, legs, everything moving as one." Rita Beth of Moose Jaw enjoyed the opening evening with the sacred circle dance. She found it extremely powerful and very connecting--bringing everyone together. Pam had asked us at lunch on Sunday to sit with our geographic family and plan how we wanted TCC to grow in our communities. Cathy Brochu felt that the excitement of planning and anticipating future events and regular practices goes a long way to solidifying the TCC community in Saskatchewan. TCC renewals at Christopher Lake, SK and Manitou Beach, SK and a Calgary, AB event were only some of the possibilities mentioned.

Thanks to Pam Towne for her guidance and support. What an ambassador for TCC! It was worth all the worry and work. This will not be the last project for Saskatchewan. We will be in touch.

## Northeast Pennsylvania now a haven for T'ai Chi Chih

By Sharon Matesi, student of Lucia Veteran

*Lucia Veteran (at far right) with students from five counties in northeast Pennsylvania.*



Just a few short years ago, T'ai Chi Chih was unknown in northeast Pennsylvania. So when Lucia Veteran made the area her year-round residence, she was concerned about being far away from her New York/New Jersey community.

To know Lucia is to know that she is open to the ever-evolving changes in life. As a newly accredited teacher, she embarked on bringing TCC to the region. I was

fortunate to be among her first students while Marion Demko followed soon after. Today, we are both accredited teachers and give classes in various towns within the region.

To date, there are well over 100 students including several serious students looking forward to accreditation. To celebrate the growing TCC community, a group practice was held at Marywood University in Scranton where Lucia teaches in the Senior Learning Center. Students came from

the surrounding five counties to enjoy a summer morning practice. Lucia would say that it was the Chi that brought us all together. Another lesson learned from TCC.

I wish to express my gratitude to Lucia, Sr. Antonia and Justin for bringing TCC into my life. I also wish to thank Dan Piensiak, who provides the many opportunities for us to gather and learn.

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## TCC In Prisons

## Establishing Practice Groups at Avenal State Prison

By Judy Tretheway, judytre@surewest.net



**D**ear Friends:

My trip into Avenal Prison last Wednesday and Thursday was a powerful experience for myself, the Chaplain and about 150 men who came to the six classes. Each class, three on Wednesday, and three on Thursday, got better and better. Even in the last class which was elbow to elbow we were all able to rest in the chi and find the flow.

I taught six moves, two for each weight shift...Rocking Motion, Bass Drum, Carry the Ball (modified without stepping), Push Pull, Light at the Temples and Passing Clouds (simplified). We learned the six moves after a experience of finding our central core to discuss alignment, a little exercise to understand the principles of soft knees, and a standing meditation to set our intentions and the chi field. Then while they sat I did a demo of all 20 Tai Chi Chih (the form that was approved for Folsom Prison) moves while discussing principles and answering questions. Rested and inspired, they were back up on their feet and experiencing another practice

of the six moves with less talk and a firm expectation of moving in synchronized manner. We finished with more standing meditation. Everyone got it. Most of the classes ended in a closing circle doing push pull, with their loved ones, then the institution, then the world in the center. Men from all (and no) faith traditions were present.

The expectation is that I will be invited back by the Chaplain if there is reason for me to come; i.e. they have been practicing and are ready to learn more movements. I expect to go back in November. A difficult format, but yet so much better than nothing. It's a 225 mile trip four-hour drive.

Each of the six yards is a prison all of its own and there is no movement of the men between yards. So it was like going to six different prisons. On most of the yards I was delighted to encounter several men who had attended my classes at Folsom. They will be a big help getting the practice groups going.

The Catholic Chaplain who sponsored my visit practiced with the men each class and was delighted to move on with the chi (life-force energy) rather than effort. He recently sponsored Mike Kelly who has been instrumental in getting Centering Prayer groups started in Northern California prisons so the men have been given two significant meditative practices to help them find the peace with that will sustain their healing within a very difficult environment. Several yards already had Buddhist groups with established meditation practices.

As for myself, I was truly amazed at the ease and flow of my presentations. The words came, the movements

taught themselves, the questions arose that needed to be answered. I was easily able to be the vehicle of a compassionate presence that I prayed to be. Thank you to each of you who supported my journey with your prayers. I felt your love flowing through me and so did the men.

Please continue to hold these men in your prayers as they now must face the personal work of developing a practice where ridicule and barriers are common and serene surrounding are absent. The only place of beauty they have to look upon is the sky.

September 2004 update: My August into Avenal trip was canceled because the Chaplain was too busy, but I expect to go in November (prison-time is sloooow). Keep the chi flowing.

In October I plan on attending a California Chaplains conference to see about teaching TCC in other prisons and distribute a handout I have developed to promote contemplative practices from all faith traditions in prisons (See [http://thecentering.org/freedom\\_within.html](http://thecentering.org/freedom_within.html)).

I have just begun a practice group at New Folsom (next door to Old Folsom), a highest security prison. A group of about 20 men there have been praying for me to come and study a variety of QiGong styles using different books. Our first class together will be September 30, 2004 and then every Thursday morning before I go into Old Folsom prison in the afternoon.

Send me chi on Thursdays!!

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## TCC On Location

## Driving Irish is TCC with Wheels

By Siobhán Hutchinson, NJ

Courage is being afraid but still proceeding with the act. Okay, so the thought was how hard could it be to do a self-drive from Dublin to Shannon? A manual shift is no problem in the States, so what if it is on the LEFT in Ireland? Ha, ha, ha. Feeling like a fish out of water, I have to re-learn how to drive. Everything is awkward on the left. Heck, how many times do I use my left hand for intricate tasks? Remember learning Tai Chi Chih for the first time? Did

you feel like your eyes saw and your brain understood some things but your body just could not get it? Where the heck was third gear? For two days it just couldn't be found. And, then sometimes it was found and then lost again. And, all of a sudden third gear was a no-brainer. Yes, that is where my foot/hand should be.

And, the narrow roads with no shoulders! Just to be safe, a number of times the car just had to be stopped to allow the oncoming car in the next lane to pass. Yeah, the side mirrors were so close to touching. All

right, I did close my eyes for a second a couple of times, it was that close. Okay, and maybe someone on the first day may have had their side mirror

alertness, but a relaxed attitude was key. How many times in the States do we drive on autopilot, mindlessly getting to a place and wondering how we

got there? Justin reminds us not to do Tai Chi Chih carelessly. How much in the "now" do we practice?

There were road maps but they were crude to our standards and at the end of the trip we understood why even natives had difficulty explaining routes. Sometimes you just have to go



"touched" by ours. My niece and navigator said she had found religion and would go to church after this. What was she talking about? We just screamed a few times when another car or truck was coming a little too close for comfort. Remember Accreditation or the first time TCC "encouraged" something to bubble up? Oh, the rush of the rapture and Chi.

Then, all the twists and turns on almost every roadway. You never knew what was around the bend. Exciting though it was, driving was never so in the "now." There was no time and way to take a sip of anything and drive at the same time. The radio? It was never turned on. Concentration,

with your gut instinct or flow with the Chi to get there. There was no booklet to explain the road symbols. Even the local police could not provide one. You were on your own and had to ask people what some meant. The language used, "heed the speed" and "no surface cover ahead" made you stop and say, "I think I know what they mean." Like soft knees. There were no stop signs, just yields. Softness and continuity with traffic.

In New Jersey we are dismantling all our circles or you may call them rotaries. In Ireland, roundabouts were everywhere. "You go straight on the roundabout." What? "You make the left on the roundabout." What if the

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roundabout has more than four roads stemming from it? Which left are they referring to? Polarity? Circularity? These directions too were somehow magically understood in the last couple of days of driving. Practice, Practice, Patience, Patience, Time, Time. All unfolds and is understood at some point.

One of your fears comes up. You have to face it head on. What do you do the second it unfolds? Rounding a bend, all of a sudden a herd of sheep covering the whole road is at a gallop. Hitting the brakes hoping the person behind is not too close, I heard laugh-

ing. My own. What could we do? We had to go with the flow and just accept. All of a sudden the sheep dodge left directly in front of us. There was the farmer's lane just there and we did not know it. You could not prepare. You just had to accept, let go, and go with it.

Then, you drive to Dingle and all the signs are in Gaelic. Gaelic is not a romance language, so do not try to figure the phonetics. Note my first name only seems to roll off the tongue easily there. For the first time, I did not have to explain it and spell it everyday. Yeah, I know I have a rough life! Ha! I

cannot explain it, but when my niece kept asking if I was sure I knew what the Gaelic sign meant and I kept saying yes. Somehow I was confident that the Gaelic spelling for certain towns, I clearly understood. We got there without having to stop and ask directions or look at a map. Was it the trust in the Chi?

Ireland is magical and challenging. So is T'ai Chi Chih. Sometimes I want the explanation, at other times I just like to marvel in the wonder of it all. We got back safe and sound, but touched, inspired, changed a bit, and we just have to go back for more.

## The Lighter Side

During the first time I introduced music to my college TCC class, at one point the emergency lights in the room started to blink. As we evacuated the building, one of my students, Guillermo, said he suspected it was me who was responsible for the techno light show as an added attraction to the music. —Sharon Sirkis

I only allow one absence in my college TCC class. Laura, one of my students, stayed after class to tell me she'd be taking her one absence the next class. "I'm going to use my get-out-of-jail free card," she said. —Sharon Sirkis

Jan, a 95-year-old lady I teach at the retirement home, apologized for missing the previous TCC class because of a hair appointment. Jokingly I said, "What's more important, your hair or your..." To which she interjected, "Or your spirit? My hair! I cannot tell a lie!" —Sharon Sirkis

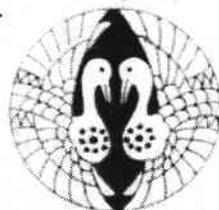


### No Butts About It, They Had a Great Conference!

Submitted by Sheila Leonard, who may or may or may not be one of the anonymous derrieres. The models are showing off the license plate holder, this year's giveaway item in our conference packets. The license plate holder reads, you guessed it, T'ai Chi Chih at the top, Joy Thru Movement at the, er, bottom.

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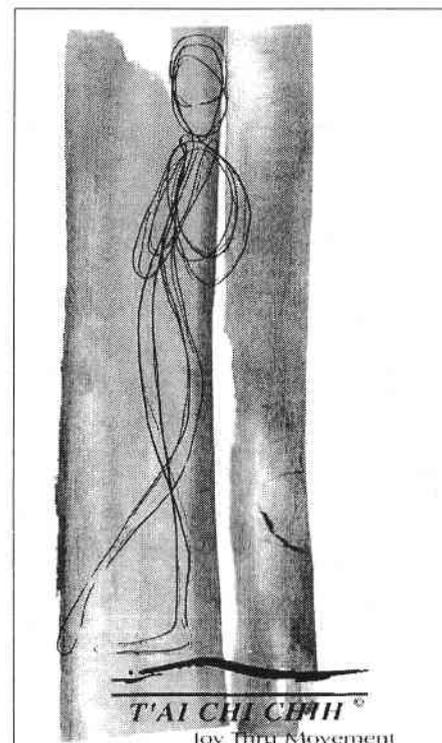
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October 22-24, 2004	Seijaku Teacher Training w/ Pam Towne Fee: \$400 Auditing teachers \$50	Ringwood, NJ	Dan Pienciak 732.988.5865 wakeupdaniel@aol.com
Nov. 13, 2004	Teacher Renewal w/ Sandy McAlister Fee: \$35	Albuquerque, NM	Connie Hyde nmhoule@nmia.com (505) 281-1040
Nov. 15-20, 2004	Teacher Training w/ Sandy McAlister Fee: \$450	Albuquerque, NM	Ann Rutherford ruthergary@aol.com (505) 292-5114
Feb. 1-4	TCC Retreat w/ Sr. Antonia Mt. Calvary Retreat House Open to teachers or students \$325/double or \$375/single (per person)	Santa Barbara, CA	Pam Towne (760) 944-9544 ptowne@inreach.com
Feb. 15-18, 2005	TCC Retreat w/ Sr. Antonia Mt. Calvary Retreat House Open to TCC teachers only \$325 per person/double or \$375/ single	Santa Barbara, CA	Pam Towne (760) 944-9544 ptowne@inreach.com
March 7 - 12, 2005	Teacher Training w/ Sandy McAlister Fee: \$450 No fee for auditing teachers	St. Paul, MN	Carol Mockovak 4300 West River Parkway S., #407 Minneapolis, MN 55406 612/729-9040 <a href="mailto:caroledith@usfamily.net">caroledith@usfamily.net</a>
March 11 - 13, 2005	TCC Workshop w/ Pam Towne. Fee: \$60	Tupelo, MS	Ron Richardson 2331 Quail Creek Rd. Tupelo, MS 38801 <a href="mailto:r-richardson@attworldnet.com">r-richardson@attworldnet.com</a> (662) 844-6473

The St. Louis TCC Committee: bottom left: Anne Perkins, Gale Portman, Kathy Albers, Susan Kissinger. Top left: Catherine Millman, Deedie Cote, Bobbie Anderson, Andy Anderson



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