



THE

VITAL FORCE

Journal of T'AI CHI CHIH Joy Through Movement

Volume 9, No. 2

Summer Solstice

June 1992

MUTTERINGS FROM JUSTIN

Holy and Unholy: Is there anything that is not Holy? Isn't every rock and blade of grass sacred? Can't Holy and Unholy be manipulated, as Krishnamurti suggests? From one point of view, each word is the word of God; Every happening points to Reality. Seen this way, What is Unholy? Bad Karma? Bodhidharma answered the Chinese Emperor, who asked for the 'Holy Truth'--"Vast emptiness and nothing Holy about it." The term "Vast Emptiness" is hard for most to comprehend, but that is another matter.

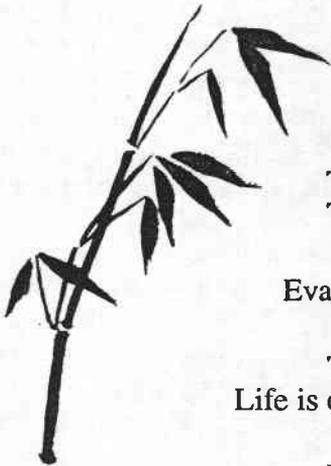
Flower on the Hillside-
The First Snow.
Life dies and is renewed again.

Striving, striving, striving--
The years are soon used up.
The brilliant rising sun will set when day is ended.

Evanescence--What is it that remains?

There is rebirth, but no-one who is re-born.
Life is constantly renewed, but, as for Justin---who knows?

Walking thru the snow in great peace,
there was no sense of destination.



Justin Stone is the originator of T'ai Chi Chih! Joy Thru Movement.
Steve Ridley is the Spiritual Head of T'ai Chi Chih.

This journal is dedicated to T'ai Chi Chih teachers and practitioners worldwide.
May it serve you in "Knowing the Real."

Reflections.....Along the Way

There are so many highlights in this issue. As the expressions poured forth in a variety of themes--for conference, for teaching, for living!--we've grouped them in a Contents Page. Now you can make your way through without missing a message.

Also, please see the insert "What I Can Write About--Some VF Topics" for ideas on relaying your experiences. As they continue to enhance you why not continue to reflect them outward? After all, that's how this issue you're beginning to read came about. To the creative life pulse!

Joy in the Heart,
Joy in the Mind,
Joy in the Soul.



Liz Salada for
The Vital Force

GRATITUDE

Thanks to the assistance of a handful of northern CA teachers, the last (Spring) VFJ was prepared for mailing in quarter time! Special appreciation goes out to: Hope Ridley, Linda Meyer, Dona Marriott, Vicki Brodie, Linda Braga, Sandy McAlister and Lois Mahaney, who lent their helping hands in loving service to manifest this project. This month we'll repeat the (June VF) mailing and socialization after practicing T'ai Chi Chih together--the way we start all our group meetings.

At the beginning of this year, we announced a few operational changes to consolidate energy and economize resources. Thanks to Vital Force readers who have utilized this framework, which has proven very useful in maintaining the journal. Specifically, these operations remain:

- deadline for submitting VFJ information by August 1st for (September) issue;
- 1st class mailing option (\$5.00 additional) for those having bulk-mail difficulties; and
- increase to Canadian and out-of-U.S. subscriptions (\$5.00 for extra postage).

Again, thanks to our conscientious subscribers who help conserve our budget by promptly renewing subscriptions (by noting expiration date on mailing label). We are also grateful to acknowledge the kindness of the following contributors who have generously donated (\$5-\$100) to our special projects fund:

Justin Stone, Steve Ridley, Dyanna Chowka, Corinn Codye,
Carmen Brocklehurst, and Jean Katus.

We will continue to apply these resources to teacher outreach and referral, and as the fund grows, to additional special issues of VFJ.

MANY THANKS TO ALL!

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CHI, KI, PRANA, SHAKTI

Intrinsic Energy

Vital Force



READER'S COMMENTARY

Especially for Lois--

I met you in my first T'ai Chi Chih class and meet you again many times anew. How is it we have come together-blessed to play, as service called us?

My dear friend, we share ourselves openly and this is love! Happy 75th Birthday, to a (for sure) special spirit (that's you, honey!)

Liz

Mother's Day past and still approaching
Awaiting the birth of a child***

I dare to call mine, first
While celebrating your life-
Just 75 years now, and still so new!
Embraced by such friendly spirits--
How does this ultimate opening begin
How will it really end

Liz Salada

***Editor's Note: For those of you who are wondering about the the second line in the above poem, **Liz and Brian Salada** welcomed the arrival of **Trever Arlen** at 4:36 am on Friday, May 15, 1992. He weighed in at 8# 15 oz. 6 gms. Liz is doing fine 'tho the labor was a difficult 9 hours. Brian will be able to help out for a few days, then Liz's parents will be arriving from Florida..Liz and I had the VJF pretty well along toward completion before the joyous event, so tying up loose ends won't be much of a problem (we'll probably do it between feedings and diapering.)

-Lois

Connie Hyde, Cedar Crest, NM comments:

Having a Teachers' Review Class at our Summer Conference, during which we can accept input on refining our movements, I heartily support. Thank you, Linda Braga!

Chris McLain, Fargo, ND writes: It is refreshing to hear of the progress that the Vital Force staff is making as it evolves. Who knows what other creativity will spring forth. It is a joy to be able to share and work together to further the communication/distribution of this link we all appreciate. The way that it is put together is just very easy to follow. Thank you all who are contributing.

Roxanne Post, Riviera, AZ writes: What a beautiful issue of *The Vital Force* I've just received! As usual, I read it cover to cover and loved every bit of it.

Vicki Brodie, Burlingame, CA shares this: Once when another teacher and I were discussing the importance of regular T'ai Chi Chih practice, the suggestion that when we don't think we need to practice T'ai Chi Chih, (when we're too tired to practice, or when we don't feel like practicing)...is probably when we need to practice it the most. For example, I was very worried about my son moving to Sweden with a friend who exhibited bizarre behavior. One morning while it was so quiet outside, I practiced T'ai Chi Chih on our patio while focusing on some of my favorite plants. I was physically and emotionally exhausted, but the T'ai Chi Chih practice helped me perk up so I could face an extremely difficult situation. It really helped me have some serenity in the midst of activity, or to phrase it another way: my T'ai Chi practice helped me remain calm in the midst of a crisis situation.

MORE MUTTERINGS FROM JUSTIN

If TCC is hitched to other activities, no matter how worthy, it will, in time, fade. To use TCC as the key to open the door to pushing other matters is wrong. Keep them separate. Best to examine motives--at rock bottom level--for this type of activity.

* * * * *

Some TCC teachers are doing well financially--unfortunately I am not one of them--and I am all for it. The workman is always worthy of his hire. But do not be an opportunist. Hypocrisy is one way to be popular, but it is better to bring your words and your actions together, so that they say the same thing.

* * * * *

It is easier, of course, to sell Illusion rather than Truth. The truthful man is thought either to be humorous or cantankerous.

* * * * *

When acknowledging an introduction, Reps would say: "Thank you for your life."

SYNERGY: Co-Sponsoring T'ai Chi Chih Events

Liz Salada, San Leandro, CA

Sharing in the planning and preparation for T'ai Chi Chih community events may be quite a rewarding experience. Often in teaching, we are alone in leading our group of students, and solely making decisions about our classes and schedules, etc.

Collaborating with others allows for yet another dimension of synchronicity in practice. Drawing on a reciprocal guidance expands or amplifies the possibilities of what may be accomplished. During this process, recognition of each person's natural progression or creative input may foster a flexibility in supportive relationship, as well.

Perhaps it is merely joining for a common aim (which underlies the external play of events) that makes this conceivable. Now, however, it seems to reflect a wonderfully natural interaction known as synergy; where (according to the *I Ching**): "the scope of what can be achieved together far surpasses the total of what can be achieved separately."

(**I Ching* or Book of Change, maybe the oldest book on the planet, was a co-operative effort spanning many centuries. From observing the natural cycles and patterns, a fluid guide to the way things change developed--relaying our interconnected system of relations with all things.)

FROM JUSTIN

Three great inventions of Modern Man:

1. Kleenex
2. Scotch tape
3. The Salad Bar

What did we do without 'em?



REJUVENATION AND LONGEVITY

John J. Barbour, Bullhead City, AZ

In a recent note from Master Steve Ridley, the sentence, "you are teaching physical prayer", stimulated these thoughts which I will share with you.

The original intent of the creators of T'ai Chi Chih and other similar forms of physical movement, was to give to us, a process that could stimulate both rejuvenation and longevity. Often we feel the need to commune with nature and do so by going out on the porch, into the hills or mountains, or simply into our garden among the trees, the birds and the flowers. This communing is actually a form of prayer. At the word, "prayer," if you are an agnostic, you might sneer and that's fine--go ahead and sneer. Prayer in the West is defined as "a communication in which we hopefully plead with a Supreme Being for our needs." In the East, it can be defined as "communication with THAT or the process of becoming one with THAT", the eastern concept of our Supreme Being.

Imitation is the best form of compliment, sincere compliment is the best form of communication. In the movements of T'ai Chi Chih we are communicating with Nature, the function of Chi, by imitating It's movements. We fly with the birds, our feet like the roots of the tree are grounded in the earth and we sway gracefully back and forth in the breeze; carrying the ball and pulling taffy we are children at play and through the other movements, we unite ourselves within the eternal dance of Cosmic Energy. Cosmic Energy, the Chi is timeless and so is our communication with this Timelessness, we can gradually embody it, and so attain longevity. This Cosmic Energy, the Chi, is also perfect health and function, therefore in our daily commune with it on this level, we can again, embody it's perfect nature and function and therefore achieve rejuvenation.

In effect then, T'ai Chi Chih is a beautiful physical prayer, a continuous bodily harmony and joining with Life and it's laws and since our body, mind and emotional functions are actually one, this harmonizing of our body affects our minds and emotions and can eventually result in serenity, peace and an in-depth perception of the essential perfection of life, and therefore, ultimately, a grateful, enduring love for all things great and small.

ARE WE THERE YET?

Jeanne Jacobs, Stanwood, WA

Last June, I attended the Teacher Review in Victoria B.C., before the Teacher Training, and found it most beneficial and worthwhile to my understanding and growth as a teacher. While working on Push Pull, it was suggested that in order to keep the continuity, connectedness, and flow in the hands, we use the concept of returning before we arrive. As I practiced it this way I realized the feeling of the flow of the movement, preventing the extensions of Yin and Yang from becoming "sticky."

Recently while teaching Push Pull it occurred to me that this concept of continuous Yinning and Yanning of the hands helps to keep me non-attached. For how is it possible for me to be invested and attached to my destination when I am continually in the process of arriving?

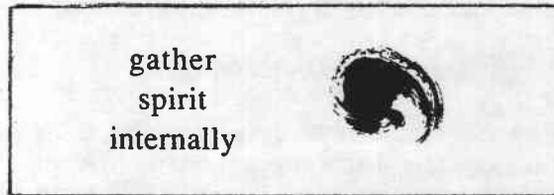
"Being Peace...Making Peace"
Jennifer Biehn, Oakland, CA

"Learning to live and work with integrity and inner peace is becoming difficult for me in this complex and confusing world. Participating in the Educator's Sangha* has brought much depth to my understanding of being and making peace at the college where I work. Meditating with educators strengthens my inner resolve; sharing ideas broadens and opens my thinking. I have learned that "being peace" is as important as "teaching peace".

*A sangha is a community which supports each other, here in building peace within ourselves, our homes, and our workplaces.

Jennifer has presented T'ai Chi Chih to her co-workers at San Francisco State and to educators who've attended the monthly Sangha.

For more information, please call or write: Jennifer Biehn, 510/261-8714
5233 Fleming Ave., Oakland, CA 94619



Everyday Gathas* for Teaching
Jennifer
Spring 1991

Breathing in
I calm mind and body
Breathing out
I smile

Breathing in
I see what needs doing
Breathing out
I let go of all else

Breathing in
I feel compassion
Breathing out
I practice nonattachment

Breathing in
I experience as is
Breathing out
I feel peace

Breathing in
I bring joy to my work
Breathing ;out
I smile

*Gathas' are small prayers
or "remembrances."

MAKING USE OF VITAL FORCE

Steve Ridley

The atmosphere in which we live is saturated with Vital Force. Each molecule of air is pregnant with Chi! This radiant Energy is ever available to us. It surrounds us with dynamic potential always, and directly contributes to our health and spirituality to whatever degree we allow.

T'ai Chi Chih is a wonderful, efficient means for us to more consciously connect our mind-body with the radiant Energy that pervades the atmosphere. Through regular practice, we become greater receptors, generators and transmitters of Vital Force, and we come to understand how best to utilize this Energy.

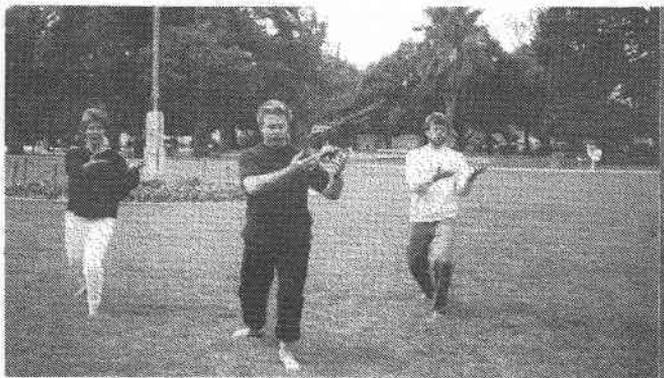
Each time we practice T'ai Chi Chih can be a new beginning, representing an improved effort and capacity for drawing increasing quantities of Vital Force into ourselves.

T'ai Chi Chih practice is an opportunity for continuing growth and expansion. It is a living, evolving involvement that demands a perpetual internal activity of release and renewal. We let go of accumulated waste energies (stale, stagnant, crystallized tension energy), while surrendering and opening to fresh, vibrant Creative Energy. This useful process requires a conscious willingness and renewed effort to motivate it. Otherwise we tend to stagnate, while living within our tensions and undigested creative energy, making little evolutionary progress.

There are many complex systems that aim to develop spirituality, and they tend to be less efficient than T'ai Chi Chih, because of their complexities. Spiritual evolution is directly fostered by our ability to receive, process and utilize Chi. The more complicated a system of spirituality is, the more difficult it is for the individual to open to and make progressive use of the Vital Force. Complex systems of spirituality often appeal to the intellect, and prompt analysis, with little if any authentic spiritual transformation being accomplished.

Some have been motivated to analyze T'ai Chi Chih, to attribute "meaningful" symbology to its movements and to draw correlations between T'ai Chi Chih and religious belief. Frankly, these conceptual overlays only add restrictions in the form of ego-tensions, that inhibit the full functioning of pure T'ai Chi Chih. Justin Stone recommends that we "fast from thoughts" while practicing T'ai Chi Chih. T'ai Chi Chih is most potent when approached through a feeling, intuitive mode of being.

(cont. on p. 9)



Practice
in the Park
San Mateo, CA

(cont. from p. 8)

A creative Prelude to T'ai Chi Chih practice

Seat yourself comfortably on the floor or in a chair. Be still and relaxed.

Breathe slowly, deeply and rhythmically, and feel that you are inhaling and exhaling through the soles of your feet, for several breath cycles.

Then place your feeling awareness within your tan t'ien (2" below your navel), and continue to breathe slowly, deeply and rhythmically within this space for several more breath cycles.

Transfer your focus of feeling to your head top, and breathe in and out through this space.

Finally, return feeling attention to the soles of your feet, continuing to breathe slowly, deeply and rhythmically for a minute or so.

Embrace your environment with the fullness of your being. Be grounded, centered and open to the abundantly rich supply of Chi that surrounds you. Stand and begin T'ai Chi Chih practice, alertly and expansively, consciously drinking the Vital Force into every bodily cell.

Participants in
Meditation Retreat
San Jose, CA



OPEN COMMENTARY

Here is a letter from Virginia Shilson of Albuquerque, NM with a statement I made and her attempted explanation.
Justin

"There is re-birth, but there is no-one who is reborn.."

My first inner response was a remembrance: When I returned from India I remarked to at least a couple of people, "I am not the same person who went to India." Rebirth? Certainly not of the physical body. What then? Reborn into a different level of consciousness? I honestly do not know, but long to learn.

My second response was a reaction to something I read, (paraphrased here): 'We are all separate cells in the body of humanity.' Our body cells are short lived. They are quickly sloughed off and replaced by new, healthy tissue. Is our evolutionary pathway like that? We slough off one level of consciousness and easily and naturally slide into another? A newer, fresher state (or level) of awareness? Is that death and rebirth?

That leads to the subject of reincarnation. I have no insights into this process, but many people I truly respect KNOW that reincarnation is a fact of LIFE. Certainly, the physical body does not reincarnate. As you ask, what then? Some say that if we had lived previously we should remember another life. Mind and brain are separate. Do we not remember past lives because memory is stored in the cells of the deceased being?

If thoughts are energy, aren't all thoughts always available to everyone, old and young alike? If I pick a thought "out of the blue" and utilize it as part of my own thinking, the thought I selected is not "used up." It goes out into the universe again as a rearranged thought, like atoms reorganizing themselves to make a new molecule out of a previous, different molecule. Memory is thought. When I reincarnate, the chances of my filtering through all the memory stored in the "big computer in the sky" and coming up with remembrances from MY past life is pretty remote.

Consciousness is energy. A dead body is energy. From a mass of organized energy we came; to a mass of energy we return. No one. Every one. One.

Who indeed, is reborn?

* * * * *

REINSTATE WHAT IS INNATE

Steve Ridley

As we succeed in accelerating the unfoldment of our innate Knowing, to realize increasingly broader states of perception-awareness, our recognition is that we have been living in a world of conceptual constraints; a world of our own making that does not match or do justice to our innate Knowing. The countless transitory veils of limitation are lifted one by one, allowing our innate Knowing progressive revelation in this world of forms.

ACCORDING IN A RELATIVE OR AUTHENTIC WAY?

Steve Ridley

T'ai Chi Master Justin Stone advises that there are two things to accomplish: "Know who and what you are. Accord with impermanence. You cannot accomplish the second until you have accomplished the first."

When these two things are accomplished, we are liberated or Wholly Human. This accomplishment is the true aim of T'ai Chi practice. It can be called the "Great Circle of Completion." Knowing our Actual Identity is half of the circle. Living in the world while established in our Actual Identity is the completion of the circle. In this state of awareness we know our Authentic Nature, beyond the operations of yin and yang (the play of opposites), and we are able to live harmoniously within the framework of yin and yang or "impermanence" because our outlook is Comprehensive--unified in, through and as the complex diversity of change."

First we achieve the 'Vertical' then we complete ourselves in the 'Horizontal'; first one must awaken to recognize his/her Actual Nature above and before the ego-orientation, then one is able to truly accord in impermanence. Otherwise, true accordance is impossible, because one is bound to whatever degree, by ego-orientation, and cannot possibly recognize the real nature of Impermanence from this vantage point. The best one can do from the ego-orientation perspective, is to live in relative "accord" with Impermanence, by applying coping strategies and living according to conceptual rules. When one awakens and sees the true, behind the scenes functioning of Duality or Impermanence, one is able to authentically accord, because one then understands the Non-Dual, the Permanent and the inseparable, unified Reality ever present, in and through the Impermanent. Most only see the surface, changing conditions and the seeming separateness of all "things," and in this relational standpoint, one can only cope as best one can, responding to the changing scenes, according in a relative way.

embody the
essence that flows
through you



Movement Notes:

JUSTIN SHARES MOVEMENT REMINDERS

In response to a question posed him regarding a particular student's problem area, Justin replied with the following suggestion:

"How students move is more important than memorization of movements. Teachers do not pay enough attention to showing students how to move softly (and where they can, it's better if they crouch a little to do a lower TCC.)"

Those are good reminders, and may carry more clout if teachers know they come from "the source".

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Question: Would you clarify the second half of Daughter in the Valley, regarding the placement of the hands as they are being drawn back toward the face? **Jeanne Jacobs, Stanwood, WA**

Dear Jeanne: Thank you for your question about clarifying the return movement of the hands on Daughter in the Valley, the complementary movement pattern to Daughter on the Mountaintop.

Justin and I differ slightly in the way we execute this particular movement, and since Justin is the originator of T'ai Chi Chih, you might prefer to consider his explanation. Since you asked me, I will do my best to describe and explain how and why I perform the movement as I do.

The basic formula for each T'ai Chi Chih hand movement is: half of the particular circular pattern is accomplished while shifting the weight from one foot to the other, then the completion half of the circular pattern is accomplished as the weight shifts back again to the beginning foot. This applies to front-to-back movements as well as side-to-side movements.

Justin intentionally named the 2 "Daughter" movements to generally describe their complementary patterns. Daughter on the Mountaintop signifies that we start with the hands at a low position in order to raise them to a high position (mountaintop), while shifting the weight to the forward foot. This accomplishes half of the circle, and as the weight shifts to the rear foot, the circle is completed by bringing the hands gradually back to their low starting position. Daughter in the Valley is essentially the opposite idea, though the hands describe a slightly different, reverse pattern of Daughter on the Mountaintop.

Daughter in the Valley signifies that the hands "start high to go low," with "low" being the hand position from which we begin our returning portion of the movement. Let's go through the complete pattern as I understand it:

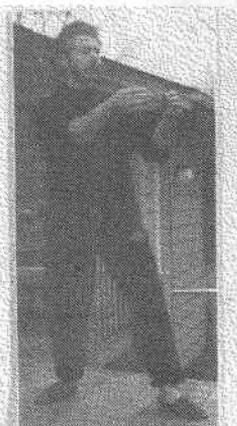
(cont. p. 13)



Starting Position



Halfway Position



Double Weighted
Returning Position

Daughter in the Valley Notes (cont. from p. 12)

Center your weight fully on your right foot, knee bent, with your left foot extended to the front, resting on the heel. Your hands are a few inches in front of your shoulders in a pushing posture with palms facing forward, fingertips upward.

While gradually shifting your weight forward, simultaneously bring your hands out away from your sides and downward in a nearly vertical descent - an arcing downward motion that describes the bottom half of a circle - until the palms nearly meet, 2-3 inches apart at the instant that the weight is fully displaced on your left, forward foot. The hands are approximately 1 foot above the left knee, fingertips down, with arms nearly fully extended. The objective of "starting high to go low" is accomplished at this halfway point.

To continue the movement: as the weight gradually shifts to your rear (right) foot, simultaneously lift your hands upward, out away from your torso, with arms nearly fully extended. Your hands remain 2-3 inches apart during this ascent until you reach the double weighted phase of the weight shift. At this double weighted phase, your hands have reached shoulder height and they are still out away from your torso, with arms nearly fully extended. From this point, as the weight continues to shift to the back, your hands begin to separate while being drawn back toward your shoulders in a horizontal "V" shape, until they reach the starting position (pushing posture) at the precise instant that the weight is fully displaced on the rear (right) foot.

From my understanding, based on practice and compliance with the principles of movement delineated in the "T'ai Chi Classics," to the best of my ability, the above description of Daughter in the Valley is sound. In my opinion, if the hands rise prior to the backward shifting of weight (returning), proper synchronicity is broken and the potential unification of flow is severed, because the hands push up independent of the leg movement, which the T'ai Chi Classics refer to as a "hollow move." In other words, if after having arrived fully on the front foot we find ourselves pushing our hands upward before shifting our weight to the back, we are making an empty hand movement, without the simultaneous power of the shifting weight to support it.

To summarize: Daughter in the Valley "starts high to go low" (Valley). The general formula for all TCC movements is to describe the first half of the circle while shifting weight from one foot to the other, then to complete the circle while shifting the weight back again. The hands reach the extreme positions of the particular circular pattern at the instant the weight becomes fully centered on either foot. If we deviate from this basic principle of movement (formula), we are moving hands independent of the legs, and therefore miss the potential power of the movement. T'ai Chi is done primarily from the legs and waist, without separate hand movements independent, "ambitious hands" are not T'ai Chi hands. If you find that you are performing what might be called "Daughter Halfway Up the Valley Wall," you might want to pattern the movement as described here, and you will likely find that you get more "juice" from the movement.

JOY,

Steve

TAO TEH CHING
#34

The Great Tao is universal like a flood.
How can it be turned to the right or the left?

All creatures depend on it.
And it denies nothing to anyone.

It does its work,
But it makes no claims for itself.

It clothes and feeds all,
But it does not lord it over them:
Thus, it may be called "the Little."

All things return to it as their home,
But it does not lord it over them:
Thus, it may be called "the Great."

It is just because it does not wish to be great
That its greatness is fully realized.



GETTING STARTED AFTER ACCREDITATION

This is some of the history of my teaching experience since the completion of teacher training under Justin Stone, Santa Barbara, CA, December 1989.

I was a student of Fran Dukehart, who recommended I become a T'ai Chi Chih teacher. After completing that training under Justin, I continued as a team teacher with Fran in San Luis Obispo. That was an exhilarating experience. Fran is a superior teacher, innovative, creative, and decisive.

Recently I retired and was given the opportunity to teach T'ai Chi Chih in Morro Bay. One of our beloved teachers, Martha Immel, was teaching here and recently moved to Oregon. She asked if I would be interested in taking over her classes. It's been a growing, satisfying, and esteeming experience. We will hold a class by the beautiful Morro Bay Estuary this summer--an inspiring out-of-doors area. It will be good to see the class I graduated with at Menlo Park in July! I'm excited about taking Seijaku from Justin, as well. See you there!

Billie Blair Miller

"All in all, I am amazed and delighted at how many doors have been opened to me by TCC and by how much I am learning as I step through each door."

I received my teacher accreditation with Steve in Bemidji, MN in May of 1990. In the first year I went to several of the tennis/health/fitness clubs in the surrounding towns and found them quite receptive to the idea of an alternative to step aerobics and led several classes in that setting. A new age bookstore was an enthusiastic sponsor for several classes. I taught TCC to a group of 3rd grade children and their practice became a show stopping moment in the annual Parent's Day Program. (Weren't we all proud!) I also was asked to do a series of lessons for cable presentation for the Department of Aging for the State of Vermont. Over a year ago I became a staff member of the Muscular Therapy Institute and have been teaching there on a regular basis since then. (That is, when I am not in Mexico!) All in all, I am amazed and delighted at how many doors have been opened to me by TCC and by how much I am learning as I step through each door. Even with several months of teaching lost due to surgery, there are more possibilities for classes and teaching than I can keep up with. My heartfelt thanks to Justin, Steve and my original teacher, Theda Gillespie.

In the peace of the practice,

Betty Comey
Arlington, MA

Seeking the Right Connection

Often times it is not that we require a new teaching to further our growth, but a renewed commitment, effort and willingness to dive more deeply into the study and application of our chosen and worthy path.

- Steve

METHODS FOR PRESENTING TCC:

Mini Courses & Retreats for Companies

Donna Shaffer, San Jose, CA

When submitting a proposal to a California Bay Area company for a class, I indicate the benefits of T'ai Chi Chih in the work place along with a paragraph to be used in promoting the course. The more homework I have done on the company, the more successful I am in getting the class into their program.

After teaching weekly on-site classes to California Bay Area companies, I now find that a four-day T'ai Chi Chih mini-course is the most effective. In a total of four hours, 11 movements can be taught. Every quarter that I teach a mini-course, it is left open for any students who wish to repeat it. The company is charged a flat fee of \$200 with a maximum of 15 students.

I have also started a one-day TCC seminar for companies held at a nearby retreat center. In this course, I teach 12 movements. It has been well received as many people want to leave the workplace to rejuvenate and the retreat center offers a place of peace. I do all the administrative functions (securing site, etc.) while the companies publicize the event to their employees.

These two types of courses offer a very inviting way for businesses to help their employees reduce their stress levels. Anyone who would like more defined information on how to proceed in setting up classes of this type, please contact me. 4603 Mossbrook Circle, San Jose, CA 95130, 408/378-3485.



TCC COMING TO THE EAST COAST???

Betty Comey, Arlington, MA

A couple of us here on this end of the continent have been wondering about the possibility of getting together to meet each other to exchange/share experiences of our practice and teaching of TCC. A few addresses have been gleaned from the mailing list, but perhaps YOU were overlooked. If you are within range of Boston and would be interested in such a gathering, please contact Betty Comey, 31 Lockeland Ave., Arlington, MA 02174, 617/646-7528. No firm date has been settled on but perhaps summer or fall would be reasonable to plan for. If there is interest indicated, the date will be arranged. At this moment the hope is to meet here at my home, just 30 minutes from downtown Boston. How about it...New York, New Jersey, Maine, wherever you are...send along a note, give a call. Let's see what we might come up with. Why should all those Californians have all the fun?

CEREMONY FOR CLEAR COMMUNICATION?

Or-- How To Drink Each Other In
Liz Salada, San Leandro, CA

One of the more centering activities that I recall from the 1991 Conference in Minnesota last year, was the 'Vietnamese Tea Ceremony' led by Jean Katus and her assistants, Jeanne Engen and Chris McLain. A beautifully simple ritual, which allowed us to quietly honor each other's presence, created a profound settling within our large group. While serving and drinking tea together was the means, the sharing that followed was most nourishing. It came from a clear deep place, which I guessed as the source of our union.

Perhaps we will meet again in this way at this summer's 1992 conference, through the ritual of joining at Vallombrosa, to practice T'ai Chi Chih, to sit and share, or sometimes just be. Breathing in our clear deep air in this place where we are fortunate to come together.

* * * * *

A method for developing communication skills that is sometimes used in groups is that of dyading. Two people (a dyad) sharing one-to-one, through taking turns in listening and speaking roles. Somewhat different than dialoguing, because there is no interruption, not even non-verbal response, when being the listener, that is all you do. Usually this takes place for a 3-5 minute period per person. A few deep breaths are taken and then the roles switch. The listener becoming the speaker the same time period. Sometimes a specific topic or question has been posed for the speaker to contemplate or free topic choice is encouraged.

The merit of such a method is that it allows each person to speak their ideas and feelings freely without comment (agreement/disagreement) of the listener being interjected. The message or communication stands on its own, just as it is, and is thereby honored without judgment (as is the person who opened himself in sending it).

At the end of the dyad there is another 3-5 minutes of open dialogue, without the formal structure. During this time any response to what was shared with or by your dyad partner may be acknowledged, or any additional thoughts that have come up may be voiced. At anytime during the whole process silence is also respected, if a lull occurs, it is considered natural, too.

* * * * *

The true spiritual Way
consists of nothing less
than the arduous work
of removing everything
we never were!

Steve

It is a spiritual life when we are rightly
resolved within. All are symbols, props,
mirrors, which can be utilized wisely to
assist our destined Re-membering.

Steve Ridley

VIEW POINTS

The Vital Force offers a forum for focused exchange among readers. Feedback on articles/topics and diverse "viewpoints", expressed in constructive ways, are most welcome. "Viewpoints" may be submitted as a brief commentary/letter or other format; send to VFJ/Viewpoints.

VIEWPOINTS: TCC FAMILY MATTERS

Chris McLain

Our theme at the 1991 Conference for T'ai Chi Chih International was "On the Family," and we experienced mass miscommunication while we were organizing this function. In fact, the miscommunication continued to our transport committee missing the flight Justin was on!

One specific issue that came to the surface is our T'ai Chi Chih family communication--a matter that truly needs inspection. I find with communication, one often hears from their own perceptions: not from the intention nor experiences from which the statements are offered. And so on.

What are the entering conditions for becoming a member of the family? Entering conditions are not understood often. Individuals entering certification often do not hear with the deeper meanings that Justin has aspired. For example, few people in our culture this day understand how to live integrity! TCC teaches this.

How does one continue to have respect for your "parents, grandparents, great grandparents"? (This TCC family has been developing since 1974, and Justin speaks to us as the great-great grandfather founder!) How do we stay connected once we "leave the nest"? (i.e., our beginning classes, practice sessions with the minimal 1-2 year preparation toward taking the step of certification).

Often times, the results of unclear entering conditions and guidelines leave individuals floundering and confused. There is a sense of once being out there as a certified instructor: "What do I do next?" Then some have evidenced the idea that they are here to "outshine their teacher" instead of "honoring their teacher and working together with the chi." Thus, the subtle competition, that our current culturals' demise evidences, begins to express in our own midst. I know this is congruent with our current lifestyle of mixed messages, yet it also causes deep despair within relationships.

What to do about this?

I have been pondering these issues since 1985 when I became certified. After the conference in the Midwest last July, I knew it was time to articulate these thoughts. There will be time and space offered to discuss these concerns at the 1992 conference in July. Please join me in session for contemplation in these family matters. (cont. p. 19)

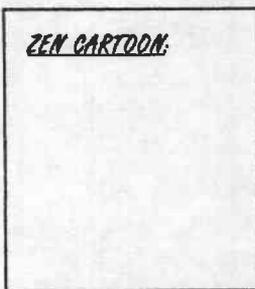
QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER/CONTEMPLATE PRIOR TO THE 1992 CONFERENCE

posed by Chris McLain

1. How do you as an instructor transmit the integrity of the chi to your students? How do we instructors offer the students input on the differences that this form offers from the aerobic quick shot that has been the only basis most individuals have experienced?
2. How do you deal with the healing crises as they manifest in your students? What have you identified or found these crises to manifest as? In addition, do you have any statements or students who would like to have their experiences aired for a promotional tape? When Justin first originated this form with teaching in 1974 (Justin Speaks on T'ai Chi Chih), he had no idea of the ramifications and healing potentiality that was being unleashed. (RE: Story of Catholic priest whose sense of smell was restored after one session.)
3. The mysterious and miraculous healing experience that individuals have attested (see Vital Force testimonials since 1984 and the personal testimonials that each of us as instructors has heard) have yet to be bound up in research study/volumes to aid credence in our statistically proven mental prowess nation. How do you embrace these students' astounding expressions and the confusion that often follows. How do you offer them support or Validation for
 - EMOTIONAL CRISIS:
 - PHYSICAL CRISIS:
 - SPIRITUAL CRISIS:
 - RELATIONSHIP MANIFESTATION:

Bring your thoughts and resources to Vallombrosa!

* * * * *



Connie Hyde's husband, Jim, writes: "We attended Steve's TCC-meditation workshop. It was wonderful, gentle, yet powerful. A friend asked: 'Well, are you enlightened now?' I responded I wasn't sure but I was most definitely lightened."

TCC TEACHERS CONFERENCE & SEIJAKU UPDATE

Pam Towne, Conference Coordinator

There is growing excitement among California teachers over hosting the coming Conference & Seijaku Accreditation! Conference program plans are developing based on your input through letters, phone calls & comments on registration forms. Plans include plenty of TCC practice (in silence as well as refining our movements), optional meditation after TCC practice, deepening our understanding of the philosophy and principles underlying TCC, enhancing teaching methods, networking, a choice of workshops and a forum to address pressing issues.

A new feature will be spaced to display creative artworks fostered by your TCC practice that you would like to share with us. There will be a few easels and several 6' & 8' tables available in a display room.

Special thanks to each of you who sent in your deposits by January! You made it possible to pay Vallombrosa's required deposit to reserve the space for all of us! If you have sent a deposit and haven't yet received a Confirmation Letter, please contact Pam. If you are flying, please return your arriving and departing flight info ASAP. Thanks!

Good news for late registrants! Vallombrosa doesn't require a final count until June 18, so late registrations will be accepted on a space-available basis until then. Call Pam if you are close to the deadline.

SEIJAKU check-in begins at 2:00 pm, Wednesday, July 1st. Our first instructional meeting will be at 4:30, Wednesday. The course will conclude about 2:30 pm Friday with the presentation of accreditation certificates to the new Seijaku Instructors.

CONFERENCE check-in begins at 3:00 pm Friday, July 3rd. Our first session will be Group TCC Practice at 5:00 pm. The conference will conclude by 3:00 pm on Sunday.

SEE YOU AT VALLOMBROSA!

July 1-3 SEIJAKU ACCREDITATION & REVIEW
Wed. 4:30- Vallombrosa Center, Menlo Park, CA
Fri. 2:30 pm CONTACT: Pam Towne (805)987-3607
Cost: \$300+accommodations, Reviewers pay
accommodation costs only

July 3-5 T'AI CHI CHIH TEACHERS CONFERENCE
Fri. 5:00- Vallombrosa Center, Menlo Park, CA
Sun. 3:00 pm CONTACT: Pam Towne (805)987-3607
Cost: \$195/shared room + meals, \$143/Commuters
with meals, \$225/private room + meals

1992-1993 T'AI CHI CHIH CALENDAR

CALENDAR INFORMATION SPECIFIC TO SEIJAKU & CONFERENCE
INCLUDED ON PREVIOUS PAGE

1992

June 18 Conference & Seijaku Late Registration Deadline

June 22-27 TCC Teacher Accreditation Course, Denver, CO - FULL

August 1 New VFJ Deadline! Submit your news and information for the September Conference issue of The Vital Force. See VFJ Operations pg. 38.

October 1 \$25 Deposit Due for TCC-Meditation Workshop with Steve Ridley
To: Susan Hudgens, 787 Sweetwater Way, San Jose, CA 95133
Please see more information under November 7 event date below.

October 19-24 TCC Teacher Accreditation Course, Denver, CO
Mon-Sat Contact: Steve Ridley 303/322-7717
1921 Jasmine, Denver, CO 80220

November 6 Informal Gathering with Steve Ridley. Sharing Focused for TCC Teachers
Friday and Candidates Preparing for Northern CA June Accreditation
Evening Contact: Liz Salada 510/278-3263

November 7 TCC-Meditation Workshop with Steve Ridley, San Jose, CA \$50
Saturday Contact: Susan Hudgens 408/926-5664 or Liz Salada 510/278-3263

November 8 TCC Practice in the Park with Steve Ridley, San Mateo Central Park
Sunday Contact: Vicki Brodie 415/343-4275 or Hope Ridley 415/341-3089

1993

March Exploring Meditative Ways Retreat with Steve Ridley, Bay Area, No. CA
Sat & Sun Contact: Liz Salada 510/278-3263 or Susan Hudgens 408/926-5664
Friday eve Informal Talk and Practice for Teachers & Candidates precedes retreat

April 1 Application Due and

April 25 Recommendation Letters & \$175 Deposit Due for Candidates of

June 1993 TCC Teacher Accreditation Course, Bay Area, Northern CA
Contact: Liz Salada, 1477-155th Ave., San Leandro, CA 94578

TEACHER NEWS

Theda Gillespie says: Life is great here in Napier, New Zealand. We are just entering our fall season. Five hundred thousand boxes of fresh picked apples leave this weekend (March 5) by ship. I am busy with T'ai Chi Chih and other meditation classes. This year I teach for the Community Education staff at Colenso High school--three classes a week, 2 hours; plus a class of "60 & up" club. Will look forward to seeing you in July!

Meara Joy Rybczyk, Milton, VT sends "Greetings from the Northeast Kingdom--happy Spring--we saw our first robins today! It's quite a wondrous sight--what a difference from Santa Cruz, CA. My classes are doing well--growing and expanding. Much love and chi!

Barbara Riley, graduate of the June '91 accreditation course in Alameda, CA, has begun to teach T'ai Chi Chih to some of her yoga friends. Though not advertising to the general public, she happily includes referred students in her class which meets in the garden at her Orinda home.

Chris McLain writes: The opportunities have been magnificent when presenting TCC for Medical Staffs. Especially when the futurists and planners in the hospital say, "Chris, hang in there with your practice! In the next decade we are going to be having a floor for the healing arts! Visualization, movement, therapeutic touch etc, etc." So! T'ai Chi Chih as I offer it to the nursing community helps them to stay grounded, centered and clear when they offer healing touch. To unruffle the energy and facilitate relaxation, one's own energy needs to be unfettered and free of ego--open to the intentionality of healing. I've presented several times at St. Luke Hospital's Meritcare and other area hospitals in the Fargo, ND area. I am preparing an inservice to offer to nurses in labor and delivery to sharpen their skills and assist the high touch (juxtaposed to high tech) in the one hospital unit where the procedures are NATURAL! Birthing is Natural.

Donna Shaffer, San Jose shares this: I was asked to work with Apple Developer Events-Apple Computer, in March for a special event held in Sunnyvale, CA. The theme had an oriental flavor and 20 software developers from the US, UK and Japan were in attendance. As part of the theme, each morning was begun with 30 minutes of T'ai Chi Chih done beside an outdoor pool. Over the four days, everyone was able to learn a few TCC movements well enough to enable them to focus each day and to take home with them for daily use.

Dorcas Heuners and **Paula Arnold** presented T'ai Chi Chih in connection with a Sacred Dance Guild workshop on May 9 in Medina, MN. The workshop was entitled "The Spirit Moves Where it Wills...an ecumenical, intercultural festival celebrating movement and spirituality." The brochure advertising the event was beautifully done with brush strokes symbolizing the spirit movement. Paula also did an in-service for an *Activity Professionals Group* in March in St. Paul, MN using the in-service as a National/Continuing Educational credit for Activity Professionals.

MORE TEACHER NEWS

Steve Ridley offers a Spiritual Renewal Night as an opportunity for T'ai Chi Chih practice and sitting Meditation in a supportive environment.

All are welcome to attend Mondays from 5:30-6:30 pm in Denver. The purpose of this involvement is to provide new as well as experienced practitioners a format for balanced usage of these evolutionary methods. For more information call 303/322-7717.

Ellen Greyson, Santa Barbara writes:

Even tho' I have not been able to teach T'ai Chi Chih very much during the past year, I do try to live by T'ai Chi principles. As "Extremes" are my way of Life, I really need the balance that comes from TCC, and I know that my practice has helped me through some recent changes.

The most wonderful thing has been happening to me over the course of the last year, and it's not easy to explain in just a few words. I feel as tho' I have a "new body", which has been freed of many of the pains I've suffered in the various joints, knees, ankles, back, shoulders, etc. for years. In combination with some intense chiropractic treatments and the flowing of the "Chi" through my (effortless) efforts, I've been able to realign "everything" and often feel "no pain." This has helped my whole life in every aspect including strengthening my relationship with my husband, helping me perform my job, and increasing my enjoyment with my loving and faithful "puppies" who seem to instinctively be "T'ai Chi Masters".

Mara Carrico of Encinitas, CA is teaching three classes a week (one each, am, afternoon and pm) at a Shiley Sports & Health Center in LaJolla, CA. She also schedules T'ai Chi and other classes at Rancho LaPuerta Spa in Tecate, Mexico.

Betty Comey, Arlington, MA: As I teach and practice TCC I often think of the weeds in my garden. The seeds, sown so easily, nurtured by time and nature spreading in such a natural waylike weeds! And it seems as tho' there are seeds of TCC sprouting all about me. One has only to plant the first of the seeds and it spreads...responding to nature...like weeds! I returned from six weeks of teaching at Rio Caliente in Guadalajara, Mexico. The guests were most receptive to TCC and it was such a pleasure beginning each day with our practice in the valley of the hot river. Since returning home I have resumed teaching TCC/Movement/ Body Awareness to students enrolled in a two year program at Dr. Ben Benjamin's Muscular Therapy Institute. I also have a series of classes for a health club in Concord, Mass. and am teaching TCC for a seminar of 85 participants in a week long program sponsored by The Learning Center of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. A week ago I went to Hartford, CT to give a talk/demonstration to the women's group of the Unitarian Universalist Church and have a date to do a similar program for a nearby Oriental Health Center. There are requests for private lessons or courses that I have yet to work into my garden....er....my schedule! And so....from the initial planting the work and the practise spreads.

RESEARCH UNDERWAY FOR HEALTHY AGING

A newsletter for the *Center for Healthy Aging*, Boikan Conference Center, Chicago area, has an article about T'ai Chi Chih. To quote: "The ancient Chinese may have something to teach us about coping with the life in the '90's. It's a simple, effective way to tone the body, improve flexibility and coordination, and help you remain calm in times of stress. From lowering blood pressure and cholesterol to increasing energy and self esteem, TCC is a self-applied health enhancement...."

The Center will offer a 12-week T'ai Chi Chih class for members beginning in the Spring. The class will be taught by Nancy Meyer, R.N. and **Hannah Hedrick, Ph.D.** Members may participate in a research study to help determine specific health benefits derived from this activity.

TCC & HEALING RESEARCH

Chris McLain, Fargo, ND writes: **Colleen Heising**, TCC instructor and I are working with a research physician from the Veterans Hospital in Fargo, ND on "Alzheimers and T'ai Chi Chih". This is the first research that has been done relating to the power of Movement with Alzheimers. The researcher, Dr. Alberto Pontillo, originally from Chile, is excited about movement as he has screened ALL research with Alzheimers and has found nothing that addresses TCC or movement effects on Alzheimers. (In 1985, I started a group of Alzheimer patients at a nursing home, Villa Maria, and Colleen became certified and has continued to work with the group. We are excitedly awaiting the results of the "statistical/research stat list." We'll keep you apprised of the results.

TCC FOR CHRONIC PAIN

Marty Wilkes, R.N., Maple Plain, MN

T'ai Chi Chih is now an established component of the Chronic Pain Program at Sister Kenny Institute, Abbott Northwestern Hospital in Minneapolis. The classes are taught by **Mark Louris**. In my new position as a nurse at the clinic I am able to see how much the patients enjoy TCC and encourage them to continue with their practice when they leave the three week program.

At Sister Kenny, the patients receive holistic treatment including physical exam, exercise training, nutrition counseling, biofeedback, acupressure, psychological and spiritual counseling and group support. It is a wonderful and highly successful program, paid for by insurance. I have been asked to give an inservice for the staff which I am sure will make them more likely to promote TCC to their patients. Chronic pain clinics are a growing industry throughout the county and present a great opportunity to share the benefits of TCC.

A SHOWER OF POWER

Carmen Brocklehurst, Albuquerque, NM

Justin shared a very simple exercise with us at the 1991 T'ai Chi Chih Teachers Conference. This exercise was to be done at the end of our T'ai Chi Chih practice and after practicing the Nei Kung, (found on page 49 of Meditation for Healing - GREAT book for us and our students). We were supposed to sit with our eyes closed and imagine a beautiful blue/violet light coming down over our heads like a waterfall, first, one full shower from our heads down to our toes and then in three cascading impulses, again from our heads down to our toes, and resting in the beautiful pool of blue/violet light at our feet. This was wonderful when Justin did it with us.

Later at home I kept trying to do this, and could imagine the shower, but there simply was no light, or if there was light then no feeling of shower, and I really worked on it. Then one day when I was in the shower I got the idea of feeling the water as this beautiful blue/violet light and what a great experience I had - and it didn't take long (don't have to worry about using too much water). So for those of you who need a little help imagining - try a shower of Power today and enjoy.

Love and Share the Chi.

Participants in
Meditation Workshop
Albuquerque, NM



A LESSON IN PULLING TAFFY

Steve Ridley

Teacher: "Overlap your forearms so that they nearly touch, and draw them past each other, keeping elbows close to your sides, as you simultaneously shift your weight."

Student: "But we only have two arms!"

Teacher: "Oh? Then do the best you can."

(This recently occurred in one of my public classes.)

THE ART OF TEACHING FROM THE HEART

Lia Ridley, Denver, CO



Teaching is a sacred and special opportunity to share the very best and highest in us, with those who have been placed in our trust. I discovered this during my first day as a public school teacher, when I faced 32 curious and eager fourth graders. I was deeply touched by their surrendered attitude, as they waited for me to begin.

My entire first year was a wonderful give-and-take relationship, in the true sense of the meaning. That year I slowly began to discover the secret of success in teaching: to always come from a place of love, respect and patience while dealing with every student, regardless of the circumstance (academic or social).

Through the years, in a variety of different teaching situations, this principle was not always easy to apply. Occasionally, I found myself contracting out of self-concern, in response to challenging circumstances.

When I allow myself to teach, act and relate from the heart, it never fails to be rewarding and fulfilling for everyone involved. At times this requires swallowing of pride and the denial of ego assertion, but how much richer these occasions of learning are, when teaching flows from a balance of love and intellect.

* * * * *

Each thought-act
is a vehicle of Consciousness

What is done
may not seem significant/meaningful

The Consciousness-clarity
with which a thing is accomplished
brings the true contribution.

Every thought and action
carries who we are
Impressing the process of life
at hand.



- Steve

EVENTS FEEDBACK ON T'AI CHI CHIH-MEDITATION WORKSHOPS

A NATURAL EVENT Described by Susan Hudgens

Birds were singing, the spring air was moist and cool, the sun was shining. Fresh and bright was the day and so were the students and teachers at Steve Ridley's T'ai Chi Chih-Meditation Workshop on Saturday, April 25 in San Jose, CA.

With over 35 people in attendance, the room was filled with enthusiasm and cheerful greetings. T'ai Chi Chih and Meditation in alternating segments transitioned smoothly and effectively. The mood was calm and helpfully energetic.

We push-pulled like a wave, rocked like the wind, and dove deep with meditative focus, utilizing our collective energy like a sun-shower soaks the earth with soft and gentle rain--replenishing, rejuvenating, offering new growth.



Group practice
in
San Jose, CA

Connie Hyde, Cedar Crest, NM

It was leap-year-day in Albuquerque. Standing in a circle of 40 folks outside, birds singing, blue skies, Steve Ridley led us in T'ai Chi Chih. His blend of sitting meditation and movements in this one day workshop is balanced as well as filled with information useful for the new and the well-practiced meditator. I felt a quickening, a resonance with what Steve shared. I am bathed with his word, reminding us of our true identity. Thank you to Donna Bundock and Loretta Shiver for arranging this workshop. Steve, thanks for being here!

Thank You, Steve

Loretta Shiver, Albuquerque, NM

Thank you, Steve! Spring arrived in Albuquerque early this year with a wonderful meditation workshop on February 29. Thirty-five people spent a sunny Saturday with Steve Ridley learning about and exploring meditation and T'ai Chi Chih. There were many practiced meditators and several beginners, TCC teachers and students of TCC all working together under Steve's gentle lead. Practicing out in the sunshine reminded us all that it's time to start T'ai Chi Chih in the park again. Sitting quietly in the dimmed library we found deep peace and stillness. It is always wonderful when we come together. Thank you, Steve, for sharing yourself with us; it was a joy to have you here. And even though the light is still with us, we look forward to the next time we can bring you back!

MAKING NEWS

Alison Douglas, Wyandotte, MI forwarded a full page article (with two pictures) which appeared in the local paper--its title was "T'ai Chi Chih: Seniors learn how to relax with Asian technique." Following are excerpts from the article.

The 45-minute session was almost hypnotizing in its slow-paced thoughtful progression. Leading the group through the movements, Douglas' soft voice was as much a part of the session as the movements. "We want to feel the joy of life. Stress and tension are not our natural state." Gentle, rocking motions of the feet and fluid hand movements make up the routine. The seniors were urged to concentrate on the uniformity of their movements instead of straining to see how far they could extend. The instructor stressed the importance of a calm, centered attitude. For the seniors taking part in their first lesson, the exercise was a revelation. "I feel relaxed but not tired," one student said. "I have a bad back and legs, but my doctor said this was good, and it is."

Hope Ridley, Menlo Park, CA was featured in an article published in The Times. under the section called Roads to Fitness. Titled "There's more to being fit than meets the eye", the reporter said, "For most people, the road to fitness included only those activities related to maintaining cardiovascular efficiency and developing muscular strength. Along the way, other important aspects of total fitness are either ignored or neglected. Flexibility, balance and correct posture are also important components of overall fitness that require our attention and effort. The ability to handle and reduce stress brought about by the hectic pace and pressures of daily life is another factor comprising total fitness. T'ai Chi Chih is an activity which concentrates on these vital fitness areas....It consists of movements which emphasize self-awareness, relaxation, peace of mind, and internal energy balancing along with developing flexibility, balance, and correct posture." Hope Ridley is an experienced instructor who will be teaching a series of introductory T'ai Chi Chih classes at the Foster City Recreation Center (Foster City, CA).



Sandi De Leon

2044 Cortez St.
Needles, Calif. 92363
(619) 326-2294



**Acceditd Instructor of
T'AI CHI CHIH**

Deborah Bosse invited students to a "Joy through Movement" Open House in Pleasanton, CA to assist their awakening process. She wrote, "While engaging in various kinds of physical activities that enhance circulation and muscle tone, it's important to remember that the mind also needs 'toning'. Take time to explore new ideas and concepts with the same vigor and enthusiasm that you bring to the exploration of outdoor activities and adventures."

MORE MAKING NEWS

Lisette Tingsdahl, Janesville, WI was presented in a two page article (with pictures) in the April/May issue of New Avenues. To quote portions: "During the course of our life we learn technical and practical skills necessary for survival. However RELAXING which is also a skill to be acquired, is yet to be included in educational curriculum for our children. So people seek out relaxation classes, once the tension pattern is cemented into their life. Well, better late than never!To relax is to empty the mind so the body can let go of tension which inhibits the blood flow and consequently the flow of CHI. When we empty the mind (no thoughts) the cerebral cortex rests. On an electroencephalogram, the alpha waves become greater in amplitude and slower in rhythm (different yet than sleeping wave patterns). This alpha wave pattern occurs when practicing T'ai Chi Chih, focusing the awareness on the Bubbling Spring (soles of the feet). In this quiet state, the vital organs experience a rest also as the metabolic rate can readjust for efficiency without any resistance due to tension. ..T'ai Chi Chih contributes to life quality. In it's simplicity it can teach us how to get in touch with our essence and how to prioritize in every area of our life. Then we are centered and become more efficient in handling our responsibilities.

*Body, mind,
spirit connection
'becomes', and
all is, as it is
meant to be."*



Lisette Tingsdahl

POETRY SHARED

MY BIRTHDAY 1992

Connie Hyde

In The Sandia Mountains,
Doing T'ai Chi Chih
Woodpecker with sharp eyes
Black, pointy eared squirrels
Wind through the pines
Later, returning home,
Road choked with fire trucks
Volunteers watering our garage
Fire moves through grief singing
The Song of Creation

External perfection
a vain dream,
a hope; ego-preference
seeking outer conformity

Awakened Consciousness
is constant comfort
Riding easefully
the ups and downs

Perfection is
seeing True.

-Steve

A TEACHING EXPERIENCE WITH ADOLESCENTS

SHARING IS GOLDEN

Carmen Brocklehurst, Albuquerque, NM

Recently I was invited to share a T'ai Chi Chih demonstration with a group of young "At Risk" teenagers who have gotten themselves in trouble with the law, school or their parents. The boys and girls did not look like a rough bunch. All were dressed well, and I would have thought they were a regular bunch of teenagers, getting together for a community social, yet they were at this gathering by judicial mandate. I was warned that they might possibly be rude or use foul language or not participate. Only one young girl with a broken arm did not try the movements. It was a simple 30 minutes, if you don't mind seeming lack of interest. Some of their comments while we were doing the movements were "Are we going to do anything else?": "My drama teacher says some of the same things you do about balance." "I'm getting tired, do I have to keep doing this?" "How do I stay in my feet?" "My what...(tan t'ien)?" One girl didn't make any comments at all, she just giggled all the way through and kept trying to get others attention with her imbalance. But they did keep doing the movements and I did continue to talk about balance and how the movements tell us a lot about life. There were three adult leaders as part of the group and they were doing the movements along with the group and made comments whenever one of the group was less than courteous. At the end, one of the students had to leave right away, his father had come to pick him up. He hadn't made any comments, but after saying his good-byes to the group as he turned to go he said, "This has been really good. This is the most calm I have been in a long time." Then he got a far away look in his eye. The comments from the other students were that they felt calm, quiet, and one even said, "in my feet, it really feels different, I can't explain it." At the end of my presentation I told them that I would very much like to be invited back to share a full T'ai Chi Chih class with them. I told the leaders that there would be no charge as this is a non-profit group.

A couple of days later I got a call from one of the directors who was very interested in taking a full T'ai Chi Chih class. He apologized for the students that had been rude. I knew that it was not really their intention so I told him not to worry. He told me how long the students had talked about T'ai Chi Chih after I left and then he said that one of the mothers had called to inquire about the activity that they had because her son was finally excited about something and she wanted to know where he could take this class. Again I offered to share a T'ai Chi Chih class with them. He told me that we would probably set it up in the summer for the fall. Hopefully this will be so.

At home I again got the feeling--we (all the T'ai Chi Chih Teachers) have something so very special to share, something that can make a difference in the world, we are so lucky. Thank you Justin. Sharing with our communities is one way that we can put back something into the river. Check with your United Way office for organizations who need what we offer in T'ai Chi Chih. I look forward to your accounts in VFJ articles.

STUDENT EXPERIENCES. . .

VACATION IN CHI LOCATION

I have tried many times to reach a meditative state by sitting still, trying to concentrate on one thing. I haven't had much success with this, unless guided by a teacher or other person. Then I found, "Joy through Movement", T'ai Chi Chih.

When I first started T'ai Chi Chih, I was concentrating so hard to do the moves correctly that I was still not reaching any "meditative state", but did derive pleasure from practicing. Now that I am familiar and more comfortable with most of the moves, I find I can concentrate more on the location and movement of Chi, and this brings me closer to where I want to be.

While doing T'ai Chi Chih, time goes away, the movements become automatic, one set flowing into the next. Not having to put much attention on doing the moves, I can picture the flow of energy in and around my body. They seem much like electrons in an atom. My mind and body become warm and soft, my whole being serene.

This where I want to be, this is my sanctuary, my "vacation" from the cares of the day.

Don Pride, Sarasota, FL
Student of Diana Daffner

WHAT A DIFFERENCE!

Steve, I wanted to thank you for helping me to learn T'ai Chi Chih. I've been practicing now for three months and what a difference! I can now write this card, without pain. No more headaches, no more vomiting, no more back pain. I was able to plant my garden yesterday! I rejoiced over pulling weeds! I can even button my blouse and curl my hair. I thank God for telling me in my meditation to go take your class. He even sent me a second catalog by a rather tortuous route when I ignored the first one.

Thank you for helping me learn to practice the presence. You are a wonderful teacher.

Jean Maguire, Denver, CO

* * * * *

COMTEMPLATIONS

Steve Ridley

If you do T'ai Chi Chih well and practice consistently, you will experience an increasing capacity of Knowing, which will naturally express in the confident ability of teaching it usefully and well.

* * * * *

T'ai Chi Chih allows us to access and incorporate our inborn Perfection, while we achieve progressive degrees of proficiency in our practice. By working toward perfecting our T'ai Chi Chih, we simultaneously uncover and actualize the innate Perfection that we are.



KARMIC KOMMENTS
from Good Karma Publishing
Jean Katus, Publisher

We want to let everyone know of the slight change that has occurred with the publishing of Good Karma materials. As of April 1st, Good Karma has purchased the remainder of Satori Resource's inventory which we had in stock and will be publishing the materials that Satori previously published (T'ai Chi Chih book, T'ai Chi Chih video, Meditation for Healing, "Justin Stone Speaks on T'ai Chi Chih," "Spiritual Stories of the East, Vol. 1 and Vol. 2"). This does not mean anything new for those who order T'ai Chi Chih-related materials from Good Karma because we have served as Satori's selling agent since last May, as you know. It simply means that previously-owned Satori materials, as well as Good Karma publications, will all be published by Good Karma. We would like to thank Corinn Codye for her past work with Satori and to express our gratitude to her and Justin Stone for making this Satori-Good Karma transfer possible. As always, we welcome comments and suggestions from T'ai Chi Chih teachers and students.



Our next publication will be a reprint of Justin's Climb the Joyous Mountain, a book we've wanted to make available for a long time. Though no definite date has been set for its arrival to you, we trust that it will be "in the works" by the time you receive this newsletter. With luck, it may even be available at the conference. In the meantime, we'd like to share with you a portion of Steve Ridley's new foreword to the book:

"...We are fortunate to have this current edition of Climb the Joyous Mountain, originally published in 1975. It presents a vitally significant spiritual message, in very human terms, through Justin's distinctive and compassionate voice.

" Justin states his views on Chinese Taoism, Indian Buddhism and other approaches to spirituality. He clearly and decisively explains the "meaning of suffering" and describes the inherent tendencies and inadequacies of the 'human condition,' while suggesting possible antidotes. (Cont. p.33)

Karmic Komments (Cont. from p.32)

"Justin's apt title, Climb the Joyous Mountain, admonishes and challenges us to earnestly begin our quest of true self-understanding and fulfillment. Climbing a mountain is an appropriate metaphor for embarking on the journey of spiritual remembrance. We aspire to attain the ultimate satisfaction of living wholly, of actualizing our deepest potentials, through a persistent effort to overcome all that seems to restrict us.

"This uphill path is arduous and difficult until we come to the point where we are able to discern that actually, we have always been 'That' which we have been attempting to apprehend! What we truly are, at the core of our existence, prompts our spiritual journey so that It may realize full expression through the mind-body. The spiritual quest is nothing more than the conscious act of encountering and resolving the self-created limitations we have superimposed upon our 'core nature.' Our core nature or essential identity is ever joyous. Justin explains this fact by stating, 'Joy is your natural state, though it is usually covered over. When the Mind returns to its natural condition (free of restrictive conditionings), you are joyful.'"

NIGHT BLOOM

Comments by Steve Ridley

I am grateful to Justin for his creative piano recordings these past few years. I often play the tapes while writing, painting or doing other work at home which provides an enriching flavor to the environment. In fact, I have noticed the house plants responding well to

Justin's keyboard synthesizer renditions in particular--I prefer the acoustic piano tunes. Because Justin is an important Teacher for me, his musical expressions represent additional ways for me to learn from him, beyond language, and to know him more intimately as a person. Each of his musical tapes has something unique to say. His latest recording, "Night Bloom," is my overall favorite. It is complex yet palatable with a depth of maturity that gives subtle nourishment. A wide range of melodious impressions harmoniously flow in unified continuity throughout the album. "Night Bloom" is much like a gallery showing of Justin's impressionistic and abstract painting, each one unique yet sharing in a consciousness of commonality. I believe that each listener will find a special connection with Justin through "Night Bloom," an unusual offering of personal knowing and reflection.

Night Bloom

Justin (alone)
Stone



SPIRITUAL STORIES

This accounting of
MY ADVENTURES IN GUJARAT
is warmly dedicated to my dear friend
Dorothy Anne Seeger

whose invitation took me to India and
whose patience, love and consideration
helped fill my pilgrimage with blessings.

My trip to India was a personal quest for
spiritual fulfillment at the feet of my Gurus.
Was I successful? I permit you to decide.

Virginia Shilson, Albuquerque, NM

Ahmedabad, the City:

I feel possessive about Ahmedabad. It is "my town." If one were to ask me why I love it, I would respond, "First and foremost, because the people are so loving and gentle and generous." And there are many people, several million, I heard.

There are no sidewalks beside the crowded, paved streets. Cattle and water buffalo really do have the right of way; they saunter across the roads in a most confident manner. They have a leisurely attitude toward all the street commotion.

There are many dogs and they are all look-alikes in size, shape and color. All the dogs accept each other; I never once saw a dog fight or heard dogs growl at each other. Haughty-looking camels pull the big carts, lots of goats wander around. Innocent little donkeys trudge along, heads hanging downward, looking sad and depressed. Perhaps in reality they are fastidious animals and care where they step.

Lots of bicycles in the streets. Some are used by merchants who miraculously balance large loads of wares on these delicate vehicles. Motorcycles outnumber bicycles by far. I've often seen man and woman on one vehicle, her colorful sari blowing in the breeze.

The rickshaws are everywhere. The engines start like one starts a lawnmower, except they use a stick instead of a rope. Every vehicle that owns one, honks his horn. The larger vehicle appears to have the right of way. The thing I marvel at is I never saw an accident in the streets. More of a wonder after dark as it is rare for a bicycle to have a headlight.

I feel so privileged to spend a full month here. It offered me the opportunity to savor the full flavor of "my town".

First meeting with Guruji

Shortly before I arrived in Ahmedabad, Guruji fell and injured his shoulder which was of great concern to everyone.

(cont. on p. 35)

Spiritual Stories (cont. from p. 34)

My major purpose in making the trip to India was to sit at the feet of Guruji and meditate. I was deeply moved by the opportunity to sit in his presence. I cannot say why. Sometimes tears rolled down my cheeks, but behind all emotions was one of joy and thanksgiving. I was filled with love for being invited in.

How many disciples have the chance to be this close to their beloved guru? I felt so blessed. When I was able to control my emotions, I sat up starry-eyed and joyfully happy. I asked myself, "Who am I? Why am I here?"

Every afternoon we were in town, we took the motorized rickshaw and rose 1/2 hour for the honor of sitting at the Guru's feet. Sometimes Guruji was awake and alert and talked and answered questions from the disciples. Sometimes he slept, perhaps his back to us, and we sat in silent prayer offering him what strength and energy we had available for him.

I recall the first time we faced each other. His brown eyes were quiet and deep. I felt I was penetrating that depth and quietness. Every time I visited him, I silently expressed gratitude for the opportunity to be able to be in India with all these people. "Who am I? Why am I here?"

Every moment, I was learning a lesson. I always knew I was blessed with these wonderful experiences, and prayed I would reflect these lessons wisely.

(Part one--to be continued.)

"Need a Traveling Teacher?"

These certified T'ai Chi Chih teachers are willing to travel to teach, even out of their immediate area:

Valinda, CA	Pam Towne -	805/987-3607
Arlington, MA -	Betty Comey	617/646-7528
Salisbury Cove, ME	Lucy Hocking	207/276-3923
Bemidji, MN	Jeanne Engen	218/751-3173
Waskish, MN	Laura Collins	218/647-8858
Two Harbors, MN	Gary Halden	219/834-5282
Maple Plain, MN	Marty Wilkes	612/426-7021
Albuquerque, NM	Carmen Brocklehurst	505/299-0562
Albuquerque, NM	Janet Yannacone	505/262-0427
Fort Yates, NM	Jean Katus	701/854-7435
Fargo, ND	Christeen McLain	701/232-5579
Janesville, WI	Lisette Tingesdahl	608/755-1960
Ste-Agathe-des-Monts Quebec, Canada	- Lise Calestagne	819/326-0933

Other teachers who are available to travel, please contact Good Karma and the Vital Force to be added to this list.

TEACHING AND LEARNING TOOLS

UPDATE ON BOOKLETS BY JUSTIN

Sense and Essence is hot off the press! You are invited to "hear" Justin's talk from the August '91 TCC Conference by requesting this booklet. The booklet is available FREE of charge by the T'ai Chi Chih World Foundation; the postage/envelope will cost you 55 cents. To receive your booklet, contact Connie Hyde, P.O. Box 349, Cedar Crest, NM 87008.

BREATHING METHODS FOR HEALTH AND HARMONY

Steve Ridley has compiled a new booklet which includes a useful variety of breath-movement sets, traditional yogic breathing methods, and other health promoting approaches of conscious breathing. (See his flyer insert if you are interested in ordering details.)

In addition to teaching T'ai Chi Chih regularly, Steve also offers meditation and breathing classes through Hamilton and Gove Community Schools in Denver, CO.

He writes, "The way that we breathe reflects our state of mind and degree of vitality...we can learn to expand personal power and joy...and realize deeper peace and contentment by breathing consciously."

SHEN EMERGING ©

Words of wisdom regarding T'ai Chi are artistically presented with artwork reflecting the written message on the 54 cards Dyanna Chowka utilizes in her T'ai Chi Chih classes. She has found the creative tool she designed to be instrumental in enhancing students understanding and participation in a fun yet contemplative way.

Examples of Shen Emerging© are reprinted (with Dyanna's permission) in this VFJ issue to illustrate the gentle reminders and points of focus for T'ai Chi Chih practice.

If you are interested in ordering the attractively designed and packaged cards,
CONTACT Dyanna Chowka, P.O. Box 1467, Eastsound, WA 98245

Please note: the retail price is now \$14.95 plus \$1.50 shipping and handling (s/h). A wholesale price of \$10.50 each set--for order of 5 or more--plus \$2.50 s/h is now being offered as well. May you be enriched by Shen Emerging©.

VIEWPOINT ON USE OF TCC VIDEO

Vicki Brodie, Burlingame, CA

It seems that after becoming accredited, some instructors don't realize we still need to brush up on the T'ai Chi Chih movements. I am not trying to patronize anyone nor be presumptuous in making the following suggestion, because I know there are many others who have been doing TCC a lot longer than I have, but we all need a little help from time to time. One way I have found helpful (especially when I've been with others who do the movements differently than how I am trying to do them), is to look at and study Steve's practice tape soon after I get home. I don't mean practice with the video, but sit, watch, and study it. It really helps me rethink and refine the movements.

THE MAN REFLECTED IN HIS WRITING



Paul Reps spent most of his ninety years wandering the globe, finding humor and surprise in life. His studies in Buddhism led him to translate Zen and pre-Zen writings in his (most famous) compilation of *Zen Flesh, Zen Bones*. He became well known for his "picture poems"-his intentionally crude or "primal" style of Japanese Sumi-e painting, which offer insight when pondered by the attentive eye in a zen kind of way.

Paul Reps led a rich and varied life...lectured about his work at several universities, built his own house in Hawaii and taught the world how to live simply, without the material possessions we in the twentieth century seem to find essential.

He died in Los Angeles at age 94 in July 1990. A true spiritual man, he expressed the joy, wisdom, and playfulness seen around him in *Let Good Fortune Jump on You* (Good Karma Publishing).

Justin Stone met Paul Reps in Los Angeles in 1954. In the foreword to this book, Stone writes: "Though Reps studied Zen and was close to Zen figures and though he became immersed in Sufism for a time, he was a unique man and followed his own way, the "Path of Joy," as he explained it.

I could tell innumerable amusing stories about this remarkable person...but anyone reading his books will see the man reflected his writing.

Reps was a timeless man who never owned a telephone. "Phone me in the rice field" he would say. Those who did have had their lives enriched."

Let
good fortune
jump
on
you

TEACHER DIRECTORY AVAILABLE

Additional copies of the TCC Teachers' Directory are available for referral purposes and communication among accredited TCC instructors.

Teachers may request a copy of the new directory by sending \$5.00 to:
The Vital Force, 1477-155th Avenue, San Leandro, CA 94578.

Consult VFJ for updates to information contained in the directory. Each quarterly issue will include new listings of recently accredited teachers, changes of name, addresses, and phone numbers. Please keep us up to date on any changes to your listing by sending all new information to our address above.

This is a wonderful referral tool to support the wide-spread teaching of "Joy Through Movement!"

CONTACTS FOR T'AI CHI CHIH

Justin Stone: Originator of T'ai Chi Chih

and conductor of Sejjaku (Advanced TCC) Courses
214-A Congress, Pacific Grove, CA 93950

Steve Ridley: 1921 Jasmine, Denver Co. 80220

(303/322-7717) Spiritual Head of

T'ai Chi Chih and conductor of

- Teacher Accreditation Courses
- Teacher Renewal Workshops
- Exploring Meditative Ways Workshops
- Lectures & group practices in T'ai Chi Chih
- his creative works and supportive materials

Jean Katus: (701/854-7459):

- Publisher, Good Karma Publishing, Inc.
- P.O. Box 511, Ft. Yates, ND 58538
- Distributor of T'ai Chi Chih instructional materials and others related to spiritual practice
- contact for teacher referrals
- conductor of 1991 Teacher Survey

CONTACTS FOR THE VITAL FORCE - JOURNAL OF T'AI CHI CHIH

1477-155th Avenue, San Leandro, CA 94578

Liz Salada: (510/278-3263)

- Publisher, The Vital Force, journal subscriptions and submittals
- Publisher of T'ai Chi Chih Teacher Directory

Lois Mahaney: (510/276-5718)

- Editor, The Vital Force:
- contact for teacher referrals
- update to mailing list and Teacher Directory

MAIN DISTRIBUTORS OF T'AI CHI CHIH MATERIALS

Jean Katus 701/859-7459, Good Karma Publishing, Inc.

P.O. Box 511, Ft. Yates, ND 58538

- Albuquerque, NM - Carmen Brocklehurst 505/299-0562
- Edmonton, AB, Canada - Guadalupe Buchwald 403/489-6748
- Bemidji, MN - Jeanne Engen 218/751-3173
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- Camarillo, CA - Pamela Towne 805/987-3607
- El Cajon, CA - Suisan Webster 619/441-1165



Teachers' Directory

August

1991

THE VITAL FORCE Journal of T'ai Chi Chih is published quarterly on a non-profit basis by The Vital Force, 1477-155th Ave., San Leandro, CA 94578 510/278-3263

Liz Salada, Publisher; Lois Mahaney, Editor
Yearly subscription: \$20.00; \$25.00 outside of U.S. If teachers would like extra copies of THE VITAL FORCE for their students, please send \$2.50 for each copy desired.

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VITAL FORCE JOURNAL OPERATIONS:
PUBLISHING AND MAILING SCHEDULE: Bulk-mailed quarterly-to subscribers only-during these months: March, June, September, and December. Additional special issues as announced.

INQUIRIES: If you have not received your issue by the 30th of these months, please contact us. We are offering a **first class mailing option** to those who regularly have difficulty receiving bulk-mail. If you choose it, your subscription rate will cost an additional \$5.00/year to cover the extra expense for special handling (and you'll have 'guaranteed delivery').

SUBMITTING INFORMATION: Deadlines are now by the 1st of the preceding month of issue (i.e. February, May, August, and November), unless indicated otherwise. Lengthy articles should be typed and double spaced to be considered for print. FAX service is available, if you are in need of fast delivery of your VFJ submittal. Our FAX is 510/276-5541. You will also be responsible for covering our expense for receiving your FAX. Cost: \$2.50 for first page, \$1. each additional, plus 25 cents for cover letter which should be addressed to VFJ/Liz Salada and include our phone number 510/278-3263. This way we will be informed when your communication arrives. Thank you.



Summer

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- I am a teacher; send me the Teacher Directory. Enclosed is \$5.00
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