

THE VITAL FORCE

Journal of T'AI CHI CHIH! Joy Through Movement

Volume 14, No. 1

Spring Equinox

March 1997

T'AI CHI CHIH IS JOY!

Justin Stone

People do their thinking with their emotions. This is a sure path to suffering. They manifest hate while speaking abstractly of love. Then they wonder why they have unfulfilled lives.

The Buddhist Abidhamma (Buddhist Psychology) says there are sixty-odd joyous states of consciousness and only three miserable ones. Yet people rush blindly toward the three negative ways. Why? If we know that Craving, Anger, and Delusion cause us suffering, why do we entertain these three? Are we compulsive and compelled to think and act in this manner?



In order to hide the truth from ourselves, we cultivate neuroses. "He went to his Mahasamadhi" we say, when the truth is "he died". Aren't we all going to die?

Spiritual practice causes us to accord with death not to fear it. We know excess attachment and aversion (I love this, I hate that) cause us suffering yet we allow sentiment and deluded emotion to lead us down that path. "Impermanence" is a fact of life; why fear it? Tantra says that every cell in the body can be brought to a point of ecstasy. Inside we have the treasure we are searching for. Why not follow this joyous Way?

Don't go outside your house to see flowers. My friend, don't bother with that excursion. Inside your body there are flowers. One flower has a thousand petals. That will do for a place to sit. Sitting there you will have a glimpse of beauty inside the body and out of it, before gardens and after gardens.

Kabir, 15th Century



*Justin Stone is the Originator of T'ai Chi Chih! Joy Thru Movement.
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



Spring Meditation

The sky a magenta mirage,
as trees stick their twigs in the air,
and fowl in winged procession
proclaim the rebirth of spring.

The stillness of winter is gone,
as buds burst to flower once again,
plum blossoms gracing tree branches
bear witness to cyclical splendor.

VFJ INNER WORKINGS

The strong flow of written contributions and artistic expressions submitted to *VFJ* for this March Issue is both moving and indicative that the T'ai Chi Chih community is open to sharing, enrichment, and growth.

Functioning as the connecting link for teachers, students, and aspiring teacher candidates to the greater TCC community, *VFJ's* purpose is to provide a format which inspires and informs the reader regarding teaching, news, methods, and materials as a way of staying current with the practice of TCC. We reserve the right to discern in choosing and editing articles, letters, and information for publication which constructively reflect this intent.

Your many wonderful letters of gratitude are deeply appreciated. Also noteworthy is the continuing financial support received from our TCC family. Thank you! These contributions allow us to keep subscription fees and TCC Teachers' Directory costs to a minimum.

Teachers' Directory Completed

The 1997 Teachers' Directory has been mailed. Teachers not receiving their copy may direct inquiry to Lois Mahaney (510-276-5718). Our thanks to Lois for the considerable effort of compiling the directory.

Highlights of this Issue

As announced, Justin Stone's article on *Chi Enhancement* is included in this issue (see page 10). Plans for the 1997 Teachers' Conference and Retreat continue to unfold; Timothy Stuetz has planned a week-long program including Seijaku Accreditation, Teachers' Conference and Meditation Intensive (see page 9).

The 'Events Calendar' on page 21 is full of upcoming Teachers' Trainings scheduled all over the country. Please note the announcement on page 20 of the revised Teacher Candidate Preparation Guidelines. Also, during this time of transition, Justin has stepped forward to conduct two scheduled Meditation - T'ai Chi Chih Retreats on the East Coast in June (see page 20) and joins Ed Altman at the Seijaku/Meditation Retreat (details on page 21) to be held at the end of April in Northern California.

Reminder: May 1 is the deadline for Summer *VFJ*.

We are currently receiving wonderful articles for each issue of *VFJ* about all aspects of the teaching environment, students' experiences, poetry, viewpoints, and more! We encourage your written submissions by deadline date please. An exception is any change to the 'Events Calendar' on page 21. Corrections will be taken as close to publication as we can possibly manage. Any last minute changes to the calendar will be taken by phone, please call Roberta Taggart, (408) 252-5406.

May deep peace and abiding grace accompany you as you journey into the glory and rebirth of Spring!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R7' or similar stylized initials.

Roberta Taggart
for *The Vital Force* Staff

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READERS COMMENTARY

READERS WRITE

Thanks to the entire *VFJ* staff and especially you [Lois Mahaney] for all the support you provide.

Jan Martindale, West Linn, OR

I am so pleased that I will be receiving *VFJ* once again. Very generous of Steve [Ridley]. I am happy and well, and I hope you are doing great!

Tamara Johnson, Portland, OR

Thanks to all of you *VFJ*'ers for all the work you do. I look forward to every issue and keep them around to read and re-read.

Karen Scharf Morgan, Rio Rancho, NM

Thank you for your long, long work for *VFJ* and T'ai Chi Chih. Love,

Guadalupe Buchwald, Vancouver Is., BC

I am saving my old issues to give to my students (in hopes they will subscribe). *The Vital Force* is a joy to receive and share! Thanks so much for your wonderful efforts.

Nan Moss Corbin, New Fairfield, CT

Every time I get my *Vital Force* I go through the same process: I sit down, read it cover-to-cover, feel this and feel that, think this and think that (especially this last issue); then, as I finish reading, I'm aware of an increasing urge to do T'ai Chi Chih! Even rereading an old issue leaves me with that impulse and I jump up and do my practice.

So, thank you for a job well done, issue after issue. Love,

Beverly McFarland, Cedar Crest, NM

Thanks for sending the TCC Teachers' Directory, and the reminder about subscription ... Regards,

Ellen Tatge, Albuquerque, NM

Joy Through Movement
T'ai Chi Chih

Glad sounds
sweeping, swirling -
silent strength embraced -
one with air and light and water -
bubbling springs beneath our feet

Inner music
flowing, opening
dull and dormant sources -
rhythmic circles
pulsating passion and peace.



Spheric music
winding 'round us
wondrous, healing sounds
waking joy's pervasive response -
movement's mystic covenant.

Adria Neumann, C.P.
Dubuque, IA

READERS COMMENTARY

LETTER OF THANKS TO STEVE RIDLEY

Dear Steve:

I want to take this opportunity to thank you, thank you, thank you for all the love and dedication you poured into T'ai Chi Chih the past several decades. Words will never capture the deep transformation I've experienced from sharing your presence and insights. A transformation that bestows countless rewards and blessings on my students. The pebble you dropped in the pond will never stop rippling out through the world, gracing the lives of so many.

While I'm going to miss your very clear and inspirational writings in *The Vital Force* and being with you at the Conference this year, I treasure the reality that you are forever in my heart. A heart that is overjoyed on those spontaneous occasions when I'm practicing T'ai Chi Chih and feel as if it's you inside me doing the movements.

With great love, respect, and gratitude,
with blessings for your everlasting peace,
happiness, and sharing of T'ai Chi,

Timothy Stuetz, Anaheim, CA

ANONYMOUS RECOGNITION

I would like to send out a very special recognition to Liz Salada for her fine salute to Steve Ridley in the last *VFJ*. Steve has been an inspiration to us all and a vital part of the T'ai Chi Chih family. Steve has taught us what growth and evolving are all about. Thank you, Liz, for that extra special attention you gave to Steve's many and most respectful years of service.

Anonymous

ON HIGH STANDARDS AND BALANCE

A very special thank you to Liz Salada and the crew at *VFJ*. I know that you received a lot of information in the past few months. The love and the joy that went into the positive organization of all of the comments, opinions, evaluations, ideas, etc. makes me proud to be a part of such a positive and outstandingly

balanced TCC family. Thank you, thank you for the balance that we all need. Keep up the good work! Joyfully,

Susan Patterson, San Diego, CA

To me *The Vital Force* has always been an interesting mix of teacher experiences, inspiration and encouragement plus activity announcements. I'm so impressed with the way you set up the last issue! It must have been especially challenging and you deserve a special thank you. This is a difficult time for many teachers, and you [*VFJ*] provided us with a balanced explanation through the material provided ... Good Luck in continuing your high standards. They are really appreciated.

Hope Ridley, San Mateo, CA

JUSTIN SHARES A LETTER

Dear Justin:

As you can read in the latest *VFJ*, I deeply enjoyed the Teacher Accreditation Course in St. Paul [MN] this past October. ... I was surprised and saddened to read of Steve Ridley's resignation. At first, I had a lot of emotional response, but as I let the feelings flow through me, I came to a place of peace; a wiser aspect of my being that knows all is working out for good; and in time the wisdom behind all such changes will become clear.

I suppose I am more of a devotional type; and I feel assured that there will in fact be a great inner strengthening for all involved with TCC. It takes 'Big Mindedness' and 'Big Heartedness' to allow for all possibilities for individual and group evolution of spirit, regardless of how things may appear on a human scale to our human perception.

May all those who practice and teach TCC come to know that such trials come to offer us all opportunities to deepen our love and acceptance, as well as our faith and attitude of surrender. In the spirit of accepting all that is, With Love,

Barbara Peller Sommers, Cumberland, WI

IN MEMORIAM

Artwork from: *Together We Walk*, 1971

Illustrations by: Pamela Brunke

LEONA B. DEES

1924 - 1966

"Leona is a person, I suspect, who died with no regrets. She lived her life fully." He added, "Happy New year to you, Leona, where ever you are!"

Justin Stone, December 31, 1996

Leona Dees was an unusually gifted person. T'ai Chi Chih held a special place in her heart. During the last few years of her life she began to teach T'ai Chi Chih at the T'ai Chi Chih Center in New Mexico and at the Los Volcanes Senior Center and the Highland Senior Center. She planned to extend her teaching to other senior centers in the Albuquerque area. An enthusiastic volunteer, she spent many hours staffing the TCC Center in Albuquerque.

She and her husband, Marion, had established a T'ai Chi Chih Web Site accessed regularly by those interested in T'ai Chi Chih. Civic-minded, dedicated and caring, Leona exemplified those qualities which made her loved and respected. She will be missed by all who knew her. During her earlier years she served as a WAVE in the Navy assigned to Military Intelligence. After the service, she entered the U. S. Civil Service as a specialist in cryptography. For a time, after the death of her first husband, John Dickey, she owned and operated a flower shop in the Albuquerque airport. Her interests included anthropology and archeology. She also supported local museums through fund raising and volunteer work.

The T'ai Chi Chih community pays respect to her memory, mourns her loss, and honors her selfless service as we acknowledge her passing from this life in the arms of her husband, Marian Dees, on December 25, 1996. Thank you for your life, Leona!

To Marion we extend our heartfelt sympathy in the loss of Leona, your companion, wife, and friend.



TRIBUTE

COMMUNITY HONORS LOIS MAHANEY

Prepared by R. Taggart in collaboration with Liz Salada

The community of Hayward, CA presented an Awards Program honoring **Lois Mahaney** as one of its STAR volunteers on October 24, 1996. Each of the community leaders was chosen to celebrate the twenty years that the City of Hayward has honored its volunteers. The printed program proclaimed:

"Each STAR strengthens the fabric of community life ... and benefits all of us."

Describing Lois, the printed program went on to state, "Her quiet presence and sense of humor are great in any enterprise."



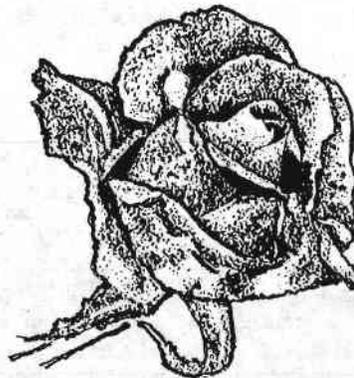
Lois Mahaney receives community award

Many of us know Lois as the longtime editor of *The Vital Force*, Journal of T'ai Chi Chih. She continues to serve *VFJ* and the T'ai Chi Chih (TCC) community as Resource Correspondent. She is responsible for the compilation and production of the *TCC Teachers' Directory*, but she also serves in many other ways, spending countless hours making sure the TCC community stays connected through her outreach/referral measures.

Lois has been involved with *The Vital Force* journal since it's inception. She continues to oversee the mailing of *VFJ*, hosting the quarterly gathering where volunteers collate materials, and then stamp, label and stuff the mailing envelopes (see back page). Over the years she has been instrumental in providing an environment for SF Bay Area TCC teachers to gather, using her home as a focal point for TCC-related events.

Lois, who turns 80 this year, actively teaches TCC in her local community and sponsors "Practice in the Park" every Sunday morning at 8:30 a.m. She manages three newsletters both national and local, does voter service as a board member of the League of Women Voters, and takes on projects for AAUW. A retired school teacher who still occasionally substitutes, she pursues many projects with the California Retired Teachers Association.

The T'ai Chi Chih family takes special joy in celebrating Lois' service to her community, and congratulates her on this special recognition of her devoted work.



TWO STALWARTS OF T'AI CHI CHIH

Justin Stone, Albuquerque, NM

There were two wonderful developments in T'ai Chi Chih (TCC) that have helped bond the teachers together in TEH. They are *The Vital Force* and the Summer Conference, and we are grateful for them.

The Vital Force was first suggested, and edited by Corinn Codye, and Lucy Hocking suggested, and hosted, the first Conference at Asilomar on the Monterey Peninsula, California.

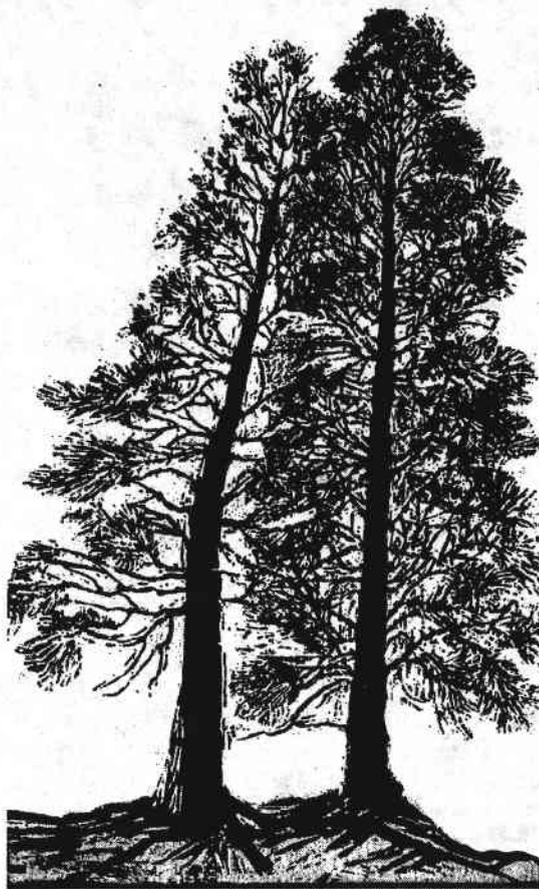
It is hard to believe that there is a teacher who does not want to subscribe to *The Vital Force*! Most teachers wait for it impatiently, and the editor, and Lois Mahaney and Roberta Taggart who work with Liz Salada, have given their time and energy to putting out the journal, it would seem natural to give them all the support we can. (I know when I need an address or some other information, I call Lois, who has it all in the computer.) *The Vital Force* is absolutely necessary to TCC. It is, above all, a place where teachers can write about their experiences and thus help other teachers. I eagerly read these experiences, and all teachers should be encouraged to submit articles, letters, etc.

Two years ago we had a wonderful conference in Denver, CO, hosted by Pat Hill and conducted so ably by Lia Ridley. Last year Susan Patterson was the host in San Diego, CA and Leslie Johnson-Leech was the able mistress of ceremonies. Everyone had an enjoyable time. But more than the fun we had is the opportunity to once again motivate teachers and reinforce the Inner Sincerity with which they teach. *Could anything be more important?*

This year Timothy Stuetz took on the difficult task of staging the conference, simply because no-one else volunteered. I believe we owe it to Timothy to support him in his work and to get reservations in early, not to benefit anybody but to perpetuate this wonderful TCC

'tradition'. If the summer conference were to disappear, wouldn't it be a great loss to all?

There has been talk that Albuquerque may volunteer to stage next year's conference. It has been held there once before and was very successful. *Is this a shameless plea to teachers to support these two institutions? Yes, it is!*



NOTES TO TEACHERS

1997 T'AI CHI CHIH TEACHERS' CONFERENCE AND RETREAT Timothy Stuetz, Anaheim, CA

Since Steve Ridley's resignation [as Appointed Head of T'ai Chi Chih (TCC)] I've received letters and phone calls from teachers:

- ⇒ who are not planning to come to the conference because Steve will not be attending.
- ⇒ who are very confused about the form of TCC they are to practice and teach.
- ⇒ who are coming to the conference to share the Gratitude Ecstasy, and Transformation that TCC has brought to their lives.

Regardless of how you feel about what's taking place in our community, I invite you to come to the conference July 25-27 and share yourself. I invite you to come to the conference and give back just a little part of what you've received from TCC. If you have a clear picture or some deep insights into how TCC wants you to practice and pass on TCC, the conference is a great place to share these. If you are looking for clarity on where TCC is taking you, the conference may be just the place to gain that clarity. Coming together as teachers and dedicated practitioners of this profound and powerful art is a tremendous service to yourself, your students, other teachers, and the world. Moving together, eating together, and sharing together is for much more than ourselves. The energy of love we create together has an everlasting impact on the entire world. Together we create an incredible, vibrating, expansive ball of Chi that Transforms everything.

In deciding whether or not to come to the conference consider these words by Yang Luk-Shen (1799-1872) as notes to The T'ai Chi Ch'uan Classics by Chang San Feng (13th Century):

"This is the theory transmitted by Master Chang San-Feng of the Wu Tang mountain, with a desire to help all the able people of the world to attain longevity and rejuvenation. The technique and art are the least things to be concerned with."

Practicing TCC on a daily basis brings countless rewards and blessings into my life. On days when I practice with another teacher, those rewards and blessings are multiplied. Moving is easier. My mind stays more focused. When I teach classes, those rewards and blessings are multiplied even more because of the group energy. And those rewards and blessings are multiplied even more at conferences where I can be with over one hundred other teachers who bring their dedication, love, and experience to share. This year we will be doing TCC together more than ever (eight to ten times). Think of the love that will be generated with this much movement! The ecstasy! The transformation!

We are also extremely fortunate to have the Golden Harp of Joel Andrews (*Emblissening Movement*) as background music for our Friday afternoon session of moving together and to transport us deep within as he plays a concert Saturday evening after dinner. Joel's divine music, a candle lighting ceremony, a tea ceremony, Justin's sharing of his Chi Enhancement Program and the origination of TCC, and being together are just some of the highlights of this year's conference.

You're also invited to participate in the Seijaku Accreditation course that Ed Altman will be teaching from July 23-25 before the conference and the Meditation Intensive I will be facilitating on July 28 after the conference. This Intensive will allow the experience of the conference to sink deep within and also give you new tools to expand your consciousness and deepen your practice of meditation throughout your daily life. Through TCC, silence, contemplations, chanting, Kundalini breathing exercises, chimes and Tibetan bowls, and several other "treats" you will experience the ever expanding, ecstatic bliss of your inner Self and learn how to hold on to that experience "all the time."

Don't Miss Out! Conference Deposit Due May 1st.
(See related articles on pages 8, 10, and 20.)

CHI ENHANCEMENT
(Development of the inner power, the JING)

At this summer's Teachers' Conference I will teach something new, how to increase the power of the CHI (called JING) for your own practice. The spiritual benefits, added to the physical Joy, are very worthwhile. I call the new development "Chi Enhancement". It is not T'ai Chi Chih (TCC), but, used in conjunction with TCC, it can accomplish wonders. Having found some hints in old Chinese papers, I worked on developing it for my own practice so I could pass it along to teachers. It is not, at this time, to be taught to students, though that time will come. "Chi Enhancement" may eventually wind up as part of Seijaku.

I have never discussed in depth the different stages a TCC teacher can go thru. My observation is that there are three levels, as follows:

1. Having learned the movements and then having been accredited as teachers, daily practice has contributed to the well-being of the practitioners, and there is no better way to learn than to teach. It goes without saying that movements must be done correctly; there are reasons why the movements were taught as they were in the beginning. New teachers are not really ready, at the beginning, to fully understand the substantial and the insubstantial, the polarity, and the meaning of complete circularity, but consistent practice can help bring them to a deeper level, the Essence of T'ai Chi Chih. This first level is certainly compatible with being a good teacher.

2. When the teacher, in his or her own practice, begins to feel that no-one is doing TCC, that TCC is doing TCC, he or she is sinking to a

deeper non-ego level. This is usually accompanied by a sense of purpose. I have received many letters telling me how grateful teachers are that TCC has now given their lives real meaning. They want to pass along the joy. This level is not usually available until TCC has been practiced for a few years, and the danger here is that intellectually (or emotionally) minded new teachers may overestimate their own understanding. But, if they have had a taste of teaching from this non-ego level, progress is sure.

3. The new development, enhancement of the JING, can take teachers to the third level admittedly not achieved by too many. As the inner power is developed, I believe the teacher's own growth is equal to that of the Indian Yogis who have progressed in Siddha training. Possibilities are unlimited, and with the progress comes a sense of gratitude. Obviously such progress is not possible for the argumentative person. I believe the sincerity of teachers will now make it possible for many to advance to this level, with great portent for the future.

Why am I offering such things as Sole Breathing and this new development since I obviously receive no financial benefits from it? Why don't I just keep it for my own practice, as do some teachers I have met in India, Taiwan, Japan, etc.? It is because I feel TCC has a much greater future, one that can benefit the world, if it is kept pure. You, as teachers, have a greater opportunity than you know, and I feel most of you will want to advance beyond the first level. Hence, my offering "Chi Enhancement" at the Conference. *Hope to see you this summer.*

NOTES TO TEACHERS

Art work from Card Series by Tori Fiore, Phoenix, AZ

T'AI CHI CHIH IS THE RAFT, THE GUIDE, AND THE VEHICLE Ed Altman, Fairfax, CA

T'ai Chi Chih is a profound spiritual discipline which has changed the lives of countless teachers and students around the world. The movements are based on specific principles which must be followed to facilitate the unobstructed circulation of the Chi throughout the body. Over time, as the Chi continues to flow and mature, great benefits may be received.

The Chi is *intelligent* energy, and when T'ai Chi Chih is practiced with sincerity and without emotion, it inevitably becomes the teacher of the student. Ultimately, there is nothing which will not be known. This is what Justin Stone calls the "growth of certainty."

The Buddha taught his disciples that the teaching is a "raft." It is useful to get one to the far shore, but then it must be discarded. Some misunderstand this parable, and have even used it to justify why they have altered the T'ai Chi

Chih movements in the name of "evolution." These efforts are misguided.

The Buddha's comments are instructions for how to conduct oneself *after* achieving Enlightenment. Once this is accomplished, and one is free from delusional thinking, what need does one have for the raft?

T'ai Chi Chih is a very sturdy vehicle and needs no modifications. We simply practice the movements correctly, and with sincerity. In doing so, we allow the Chi to take a larger role in directing our lives. The raft becomes the guide as well as the vehicle.

As accredited T'ai Chi Chih instructors, the purity of the discipline we teach must remain our highest concern. T'ai Chi Chih must be kept pure to ensure future generations have the same opportunity to reach the far shore.



TEH --- POWER OF INNER SINCERITY

TEH (Inner Sincerity) is the basis of T'ai Chi Chih. It is the power of Inner Sincerity, as exemplified by T'ai Chi Chih teachers, that has been responsible for the rapid growth of T'ai Chi Chih. The type of person who is drawn to T'ai Chi Chih, and wants to become a teacher, is almost always a deeply sincere person, eager to pass on the benefits he or she has gained from T'ai Chi Chih practice. So often I get letters from new teachers saying, "T'ai Chi Chih has changed my life. Thank you, thank you. I am eager to help others gain the same benefits from the discipline you originated." This is more rewarding than any riches I might have gained from T'ai Chi Chih (but didn't). There isn't the slightest doubt in my mind of the future of T'ai Chi Chih; there are reasons why it is here, and there are reasons why you, the teacher, have been brought to it. It is not by accident that you are teaching T'ai Chi Chih, and you have a responsibility to keep the practice pure and to be completely honest in your dealings with students.

Emotionalism and sentimentality have little use in the practice of the discipline. It was quite a shock to me that, on the basis of rumors and untrue surmises, a few teachers wrote me really nasty letters after having thanked me for bringing them T'ai Chi Chih. My own consideration has always been for the welfare of the teachers, not my own, because I feel deeply the power of the teachers' TEH. It is our jewel, and I fully expect this great power to bring T'ai Chi Chih to deserving people all over the planet. Never underrate T'ai Chi Chih or feel that it exists only for our own benefit.

In future issues of *The Vital Force* I will be teaching, one by one, three disciplines I have developed to enhance the Chi, to help meditation, and to point out the benefits of Sole Breathing and how to do it. There is no profit motive, or any other motive, in my doing so. I could keep these benefits to myself. But they are helpful, and I want to make them available to T'ai Chi Chih teachers. I congratulate you on being a T'ai

Chi Chih teacher! Please never stop trying to improve your practice; this is part of the responsibility of being a teacher.

Note: T'ai Chi Chih should not be thought of as exercise. Exercise implies effort, and effort is counterproductive in T'ai Chi Chih. It must be done softly with the "effort of no effort" to be most effective. Sincere teachers, who practice a good deal themselves, gradually come to realize the true way of movement in T'ai Chi Chih. Those who give careless interviews in which T'ai Chi Chih is cited as "exercise" are doing harm to T'ai Chi Chih. The purpose of T'ai Chi Chih is to circulate and balance the Chi, and to do this, movement must be from the center of the body, not from the shoulders and arms. "How to move" is the most important point of T'ai Chi Chih.



Mount Fuji and Flowers, David Hockney, British, b. 1937. Acrylic on canvas, 1972.

LOVE MADE MANIFEST Corine Reeber, Port Hueneme, CA

I signed up for an Oriental Painting class not because I expected to become an expert, but rather as a way to expand my consciousness through a new discipline.

If I closed my eyes and listened to the instruction as we prepared to apply ink to brush to paper, it was like being in a T'ai Chi Chih class while the teacher introduced us to the rudimentary steps.

"Get your mind in tune to what you are about to do as you get your materials ready. Grind your ink deliberately with round strokes. Hold the ink stick erect so that it does not develop a slant." --- I grind and I grind only to be aware that the ink is not dark enough, so I grind and grind some more.

"Posture – posture is everything! Sit up straight, find your center of balance in relation to the table and your paper. How are you holding the brush? Where is your arm? Where is your elbow? Relax your shoulders. Where is your focus? Relax." My brush touches the paper but the firm gentle strokes elude me, even with all my attention to perfect preparation.

"Practice – practice – practice. Stay focused or it becomes a careless movement." Page after page, I try to be one with the brush, but I know that is not the way – we have to Be ONE.

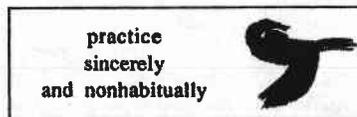
I listen to her stories about her master teacher, a vital 95 year old who still goes out for walks by herself. She tells of when she first met her teacher and was told to sit and watch. She sat and watched, and watched, and watched. Eventually, she was allowed to grind ink and for a time that is all she was allowed to do. She laughs as she recalls all the times her master teacher made her cry, and how she entertained the thoughts that she certainly didn't need this in her life and maybe she would go study computers because certainly they wouldn't make her cry. But she knew it was not computers that would feed her soul.

She talked of the gratitude for the discipline her teacher expected from her because she had been so unfocused. She was grateful that her teacher was willing to take her on, to guide her through that stage of development.

I hear her say to a student, "Keep your elbow up, it will free your arm," and the student replies, "But I like it better with my elbow down, and my brush slanted is easier for me to hold." The teacher gently says, "It will not give you the results you want." Somewhere near the end of the class the student says, "You are right, it is much better the way you said." The teacher just smiles.

The teacher shares that one of the biggest challenges with students is arrogance. They come to class, learn the basic strokes, and want to impose their own style. They are not willing to develop the discipline necessary to perfect the strokes, and let an individual style gently emerge in time.

Several pieces of art were displayed on the wall, and the teacher pointed out, the strong effective strokes and the weak ineffectual ones too. (And I thought to myself, the artist probably thought they were being so individualistic by doing it that way.) To my untrained eye, all the pieces appeared pleasant, yet to the master's eye, the strong and the weak strokes affirmed the artist's level of development. Like a musician listening to a score, the teacher's eyes flowed over each piece with complete awareness of the subtle nuances of each stroke. Would the artists have been proud or embarrassed to have laid themselves bare for the master to see that they had done their work with quiet, gentle boldness or arrogant carelessness?



STUDENT EXPERIENCES

KNEE SURGERY AVOIDED WITH REGULAR PRACTICE OF TCC

Sandy McAlister, Hayward, CA

One of the most satisfying moments to me as a teacher is when a student tells me how T'ai Chi Chih (TCC) has affected their life.

Such is the case with a student of mine named **Joanne Ramirez**. She has been attending my Tuesday and Thursday morning class for nearly two years. Because of her obviously improved mobility, some of her friends have now joined in on Tuesday and Thursday class to receive their own benefits from TCC.

Recently, Joanne Ramirez related this story: I've been in TCC instruction for approximately eighteen months. When I started [TCC] it took me two

to three minutes to get out of the car, and my Doctor told me I was to have surgery on my left knee for a torn cartilage. I had started TCC and was moving better than I had for a couple of years. I told the Doctor I wanted to wait. Thank God, as today I forget I have had knee problems. The Doctor said the muscle has developed around the knee and has protected the cartilage.

I danced New Year's Eve for first time in over two years. I know TCC has given me the ability to get in and out of the car with ease, I no longer walk with a limp; and I can climb the stairs without pain. I'm really thankful for TCC.

LEG NUMBNESS SUBSIDES WITH DAILY TCC PRACTICE

Alberta E. Osborne, student of Leona B. Dees, Albuquerque, NM

About a year ago, I woke up one morning and my right lower leg tingled (like when a part of your body goes to sleep). Then, my right foot became numb and soon afterwards my left foot became numb. They never came back to their natural state of feeling alive.

I saw on the bulletin board ... there was going to be a class on T'ai Chi Chih. I signed up for it.

After my second class, I noticed the feet began to come alive and every class subsequently they improved greatly. There are times when my left foot

feels completely free from numbness and heaviness. ... as a whole, I would say I was easily 85 percent better. I practice every day at home.

This condition was not caused by diabetes. Dr. Borgeson confirmed that with a test I took last July. They [the doctors] gave me no direction as to how to overcome this circulation disorder.

I have to give credit to the dear Lord Jesus Christ for opening the door to T'ai Chi Chih, and to Leona B. Dees for her unselfishness in teaching us TCC. Thank you, Justin Stone, for your tireless work in bringing forth TCC.

PANIC ATTACKS ABATE FOR STUDENT PRACTICING TCC

Lee Campbell, Phoenix, AZ

A woman shared . . . [that] when she left after the first evening [of TCC lessons] that she was pain free and although she has had panic/anxiety attacks daily for the past 6 months, she hasn't had an attack since beginning T'ai Chi Chih.

She says she rocks many times a day, and is serious about learning TCC, even video taping herself after each class so she can be sure she is moving correctly! She now has her support group [for panic attacks/anxiety] ready to learn TCC.

TEACHERS WRITE

TCC BRINGS HEALING WHERE NEEDED

Sister Francis A. Kay, Tarrytown, NY

T'ai Chi Chih accompanied my days, while on an extended Retreat, beginning my sabbatical. In the wonderland of Nerinx, Kentucky, I delighted in the small lakes, woodlands, wide rolling fields, and those strange knobs, peculiar to this area, which poked up their heads to view the terrain. Nature's little people – the squirrels, colorful singing birds, night owls, the deer, all joyfully praised God, in their freedom. Then ten days before my time was to end, I fell backwards from the ladder in my cabin, which led to the second floor bedroom.

This unfortunate fall of six steps, left me with a compressed fracture of the 4th thoracic vertebrae, and

my right side very sore. From the two week hospital stay in Bardstown Kentucky, I flew back to Tarrytown, New York, in a cross-bar brace. The right arm, shoulder, ribs, hip, all tell me I am alive, albeit in need of T.L.C. God has blessed me, I could be immobile for life.

I do have therapeutic exercises, yet the most effective daily discipline has been our "joyous movements." The slow, rhythmic, circular motion of T'ai Chi Chih, bringing the energy to where healing is needed, and gently exercising those bruised ribs and sore muscles, has been more beneficial than I can say. Gratitude fills my heart.

INTRODUCING T'AI CHI CHIH TO CHINA

Ann Doering, Albuquerque, NM

Ni Hao! (Hello! How are you?)

This was the greeting we received upon arriving for QiGong practice in Hangzhou People's Republic of China each morning at 6:30 a.m. Seven other American students and I were studying traditional Chinese medicine, chi gong and T'ai Chi for 2½ weeks during this past October.

The daily program included lectures on Chinese language, practices, sightseeing, acupuncture, massage treatments, meditation and gourmet Chinese meals. Our teachers at the "Resort for Healing" were doctors of Chinese medicine, t'ai chi masters and university professors. Despite the language barrier (we needed a native northern Chinese translator for most of our instructions), we found the informal classes to be comfortable and easy to follow. I was intrigued with the poetic descriptions our teachers used. For instance, T'ai Chi was called an art of slow and gentle movements, like "finding the needle inside the cotton!" The head was said to be suspended from the sky, where energy flows from; and there is rest

in movement. In addition, they told us that the Chinese believe singing restores your strength! No wonder our waitress practiced her joyous songs out in the hallway each evening during dinner.

One beautiful poem they used to describe meditation goes as follows:

*body like a hanging willow, heart like frozen ice,
empty everything from the mind,*

*know that there is no "I", empty and more empty,
get to a status of formlessness.*

One evening I was invited to demonstrate T'ai Chi Chih to my Chinese teacher. He and my classmates were intrigued to see a form unknown to them. Many asked for further information about Justin and his writings. We agreed with our instructors that the "whole universe is open with information." And I thought, Wow, what an honor and a pleasure to be a T'ai Chi Chih ambassador to China!"

Xie Xie! (Thank you).

Source: NM TCC News, Jan. '97

TEACHERS WRITE

SIMPLE WISDOM

Carmen Brocklehurst, Albuquerque, NM

The other night I watched a movie that made me feel good. I laughed, I cried, and I rooted for the heroes, of which there were many. At the end of the movie I asked myself, "What is it about this that makes me feel good?" The answer is that everyone came out a winner. It doesn't sound very deep, but the truth is, that's what we are all trying to do – come out winners.

What does it take to become a winner? It means something very personal, and probably very challenging, for each of us. But it *always* takes thinking beyond oneself. Zen teachers are famous for teaching by example, the great teacher Dogen zenji was often seen by his disciples taking a ladle full of water from the stream, but before he took a drink for himself, he poured half of it back into the stream. Was that because he took too much water the first time?

Or was the ladle too heavy? It is possible that Dogen was trying to show how important it is to go beyond himself, beyond his own immediate wants and needs. He first acknowledged the Source of the water (his benefactor), before himself.

The stream was not asking to be acknowledged for supplying the abundant water. It was simply there; cool, refreshing, nourishing, ready to be of service. This is very much like T'ai Chi Chih. It gives to thousands of people every day (to us and to our students) without asking anything in return. Zen Master Dogen, by returning half a ladle of water to the stream, demonstrated the wisdom that came from his practice, the wisdom of acknowledging the Source. The principle is: *That which we acknowledge is ours forever.*

Signs of Spring

Vickie Brodie, Burlingame, CA

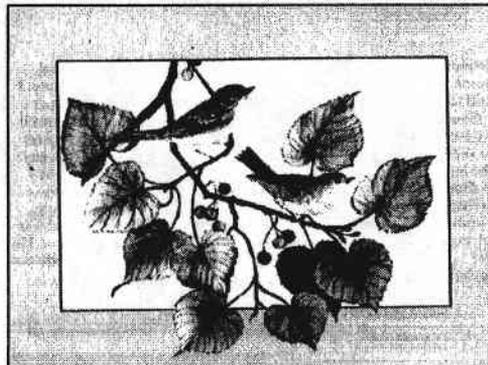
*Bright yellow finches sitting on the birdbath
Two mourning doves sitting on the fence*

*Squirrels running through the tall green trees
Snapdragons continuing their stately bloom*

*A mosquito buzzed by followed by a bee and a fly
And the heliodropsis is full of buds*

*The air is just right ... neither hot or cold
And filled with scent that smells quite sweet*

Spring is definitely here.



*A dove or two and some sparrows
Signs of Spring are everywhere*

TCC IN PRINT

HUMOR IN THE NEWS

Submitted by Paula Favorito, New Milford, NJ

Paula Favorito of New Milford, NJ writes: Sometimes typos can be funny and change the whole meaning of the word. Sr. Antonia Cooper, No. Plainfield, NJ, suggested I send the following article from the January 8 issue of the *Suburban Town News* to *The Vital Force*. The typo is bolded and italicized in the column at right.

HOSPITAL TO OFFER T'AI CHI CHIH COURSE

TEANECK - Holy Name Hospital is offering a T'ai Chi Chih Course on Monday afternoons from Jan. 13 through Feb. 10, from 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Wednesday evenings Jan. 15

through Feb. 12, from 7:30 to 9 p.m. The fee for the course is \$60.00.

T'ai Chi Chih's gentle movements release stress relaxing and rejuvenating the body while refreshing the mind. By circulating and balancing the Chi, the vital energy within us, the movements promote physical, mental and emotional health and well being. The 20 simple *non-marital* movements can be easily done by anyone, regardless of age or physical condition. T'ai Chi Chih provides an effective preparation for prayer, meditation, yoga, massage, running or any other sport.

MONKEY SHINES

Submitted by Jean Katus, Ft. Yates, ND

This picture was sent by Jean Katus, Ft. Yates, ND. It is from the local **PROGRAM GUIDE** for October 1996.

The caption about the program describes the traits of a hairy lemur known as the Madagascar sifaka:

"Madagascar's sifaka has two legged locomotion and playful habits which give the creature an endearing, almost human-like quality."

Ed. Note: Something even more interesting than the description of this hairy lemur is the actual picture of the monkey as he appears to perform what looks like 'Around the Platter.'



WILD WORLD: The Dance of the Sifaka

REMINISCENCE

My first day and night in the Himalayas were quite hectic. Contact with a Yogi, who was a friend of mine, led to my agreeing to meet him in Hardwar at noon on such-and-such a day (Hardwar is a famous spot for Yogis, the location where the fabled Kumbha Mehla is given every twelve years).

Luckily I found someone who would drive me there for a small fee. I had no inclination to ride the old bus; I would have had to balance myself precariously on the roof, hanging on to my baggage and ducking my head each time we came to a tunnel.

When we arrived in the town of Hardwar I asked the driver if he would wait a few minutes while I connected with my friend. Unfortunately, I was unable to do so, though I thought I followed the written directions correctly. He just wasn't there. So I then asked the driver if, for a small additional amount, he would drive me to Laksmanjula, a little way past Rishakish. He agreed.

On the way, there was an incident that left a lasting impression on me. On the way a soft, steady rain began. I was gazing idly thru the windshield when I saw a vehicle ahead, a flat cart pulled by a bullock. On the back was a load of what looked like hay, now dripping wet, and on top was standing a beautiful boy of about ten or eleven years of age. He had his arms out as though doing an Indian Dance, and he was laughing wildly and, apparently, singing as our car passed the cart. For a moment I felt that I was seeing a youthful Krishna shouting his joy of life, and I looked for the inevitable flute. All too soon we passed, and I was sorry to leave this scene of great ecstasy, spelling out what the Tantrics said, that every cell in the body could be brought to a point of ecstasy.

Reaching the bridge at Laksmanjula, the driver collected his fee and immediately took off. I was alone, but not for long. A group of older men and one youth were eyeing me with curiosity. Thinking I

might help, I took a pose as though I was meditating. They looked puzzled, but, finally, the young man nodded and waved to me to follow him. He put one of my two bags on his head, and we took off thru the forest.

I had hurt my foot in Broda and it had not healed, so I was limping along, dropping farther and farther behind, when I heard what I took to be thunder. When the young fellow turned around, I motioned to the sky. He shook his head and exclaimed excitedly: "Tiger!" My foot healed quickly after that, and I caught up and stayed close to him.

Finally, we reached a clearing, and I later found this was the entrance to the Ashram. Eventually I found one man, and he spoke English – he was evidently the caretaker of the grounds. He didn't look like a Yogi to me. After he pointed out the small hut where I would stay, he left abruptly. Only then did I find that there was no way to get inside. The door was locked.

As it was continuing to rain, I looked for a place to stay dry. Fortunately there was a small overhang over the front of the hut, and I huddled under this. There was no way to get anything to eat, so I prepared to spend the night, shivering, but, hopefully dry.

In the middle of the night I awakened to hear shouting, then a bugle blowing. By now there was a wild storm going on and the sound of the bugle was eerie and unexpected. Strange noises went on the rest of the night, but it wasn't 'til the next morning that I found out their meaning. Some sort of a constable had come to lead away the Holy man, who had evidently blown his top from doing advanced Kundalini practice without a teacher. He was smiling and jovial as he was led away, his hands bound. I later found he would be taken to a curious clinic (which I would later use one time), not to a jail. It was not unusual for such events to happen.

POETRY

Artwork from: *Together We Walk*, P. Seymour, 1971
Illustrations by: Pamela Brunke

*Simplicity allows me to shine.
Chi sets me free.
And once again I am amazed
at how blessed I am.*

*Tamara Johnson,
Portland, OR*

*To find my center in
T'ai Chi Chih.
To find my center
in Meditation.
To find my center
in Life.*

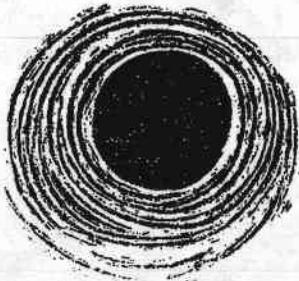
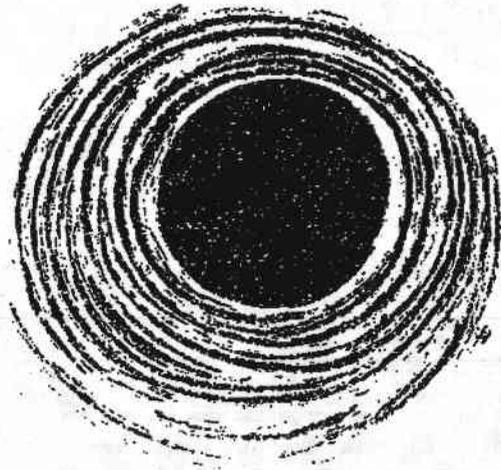
*Rosa Fallon,
Pittsburg CA*

*Moving forward,
moving back.*

*Liberating energies,
finding new places,
new feelings,
new pleasures.*

*Wonderful silence
Breathing deeply
New releases.*

*Rosa Fallon,
Pittsburg, CA*



*Listen to the silence.
Feel the peace
of one-ness
in the still center.*

*Wendy Helms,
Orinda, CA*

CALENDAR NOTES

CONFERENCE CALL

Carmen Brocklehurst, Albuquerque, NM

The registration form for the Annual T'ai Chi Chih Conference came out in the last issue of *The Vital Force* and is in this issue also. This is our opportunity to put half of the water back into the stream, by coming to the Conference to share our energy, ideas and love with our TCC family, and in this way with the rest of the world. Wisdom is a wonderful thing. The more we acknowledge it, by practicing it, the more there is for us to use so we can all come out winners.

DON'T MISS OUT!

Seijaku --- Conference --- Intensive

Conference Deadline for Deposit: May 1st

To guarantee a room for the *1997 Annual Teacher's Conference and Retreat* a deposit is required by May 1st. See flyer accompanying this issue of *The Vital Force*. (Also, see Conference details on pages 9, 10.)

TCC TEACHER CANDIDATE PREPARATION GUIDELINES

Please be advised that the guidelines for teacher candidates have been rewritten. The revised guidelines contain the TCC Teacher Candidate Referral form to be submitted by the recommending teacher prior to the teacher candidate attending Teachers' Training. For a copy of the Guidelines or if you have questions, please note new contact information below for:

Ed Altman, TCC Appointed Head
840 Penny Royal Lane,
San Rafael, CA 94903-2330
(415) 472-1207

STONE TO LEAD RETREATS ON EAST COAST IN JUNE

Roberta Taggart, VFJ Staff

In addition to the Seijaku/Meditation Retreat scheduled for late April in Northern California, Justin Stone will also travel to the East Coast in June to facilitate two Retreats in the format of a Meditation - T'ai Chi Chih Review.

The first retreat will be held on Saturday, June 7th and Sunday, 8th. Justin Stone will conduct the Two-Day Retreat in Melborne, KY at the Moye Spiritual Center located at St. Anne Convent. The retreat format will consist of Meditation and T'ai Chi Chih Review. According to retreat host, **Marlene Brown**, of Cincinnati, OH the Saturday schedule begins at 9:30 a.m. and finishes with dinner. Saturday evening is reserved for Justin Stone to speak to teachers and interested persons in the area. Both meditation and TCC review are scheduled for Sunday. The retreat concludes in the afternoon.

Participants wishing to arrive the evening before, dinner is \$6, lodging is \$25. Please call ahead to make arrangements.

The second Retreat will be held Monday, June 9th and Tuesday, 10th at Xavier Center in Convent Station, NJ. **Sr. Antonia Cooper** of No. Plainfield, NJ is the retreat host. Sr. Antonia indicates that participants may arrive on Sunday after 4:30 p.m. (price included in the cost of the retreat). Please call ahead to make arrangements.

Monday will be a full day from 9:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Justin will give a talk on Monday night from 7:30p.m. - 8:30 p.m. on "*Input and Practice of T'ai Chi Chih*". Tuesday's schedule begins at 9:30 a.m. and concludes at noon.

1997 T'AI CHI CHIH EVENTS CALENDAR

TCC ACCREDITATION COURSES

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Apr. 14 thru 19, 1997 | TCC Teacher Training Location: Melborne, Ky Contact: Marlene Brown 653 Cranford Drive Cincinnati, OH 95240-3915 Ph. 513/742-1866 Teacher Training Fee: \$ 380.00 |
| May 19 thru 24, 1997 | TCC Teacher Training Location: Mercy Ctr., St. Louis, MO Contact: Kathy Vieth, 2426 Sims Ave., St.Louis, MO 63114-3207 Ph. 314/727-1983; Teacher Training Fee: \$ 380.00 |
| June 16 thru 21, 1997 | TCC Teacher Training Location: Albuquerque, NM Contact: Karen Scharf Morgan 488 Pyrite Dr. NE Rio Rancho, NM 87124-4938 Ph. 505/891-2829 (h) Teacher Training Fee: \$ 380.00 |
| June 23 thru 28, 1997 | TCC Teacher Training Location: Camarillo, CA Contact: Pam Towne 107 Calle Vista Camarillo, CA 93010-1711 Ph. 805/987-3607 Teacher Training Fee: \$ 380.00 |
| July 7 thru 12, 1997 | TCC Teacher Training Location: Mahwah, NJ Contact: Sr. Antonia Cooper Villa Maria, 641 Somerset St., No. Plainfield, NJ 07060-4909 Ph. 908/757-3050 (w) <u>Deadline:</u> June 20 Teacher Training Fee: \$380.00 |
| Oct. 13 thru 18, 1997 | TCC Teacher Training Location: Denver, CO Contact: Margaret Manzanares 1315A Bear Mountain Dr. Boulder, CO 80303-6235 Ph. 303/494-5800 Teacher Training Fee: \$ 380.00 |

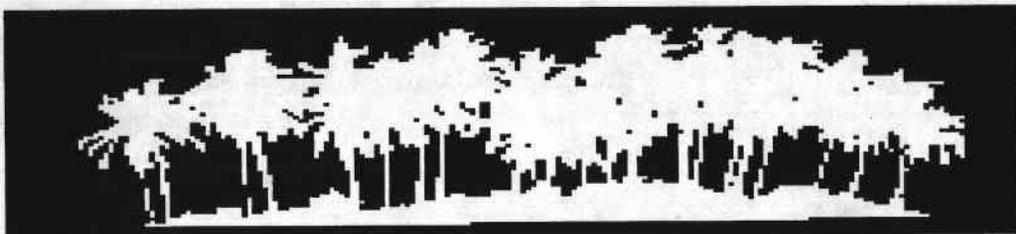
TCC EVENTS

| | |
|--|---|
| Apr. 25 thru 28, 1997 | Seijaku/Meditation Retreat with Justin Stone and Ed Altman Location: San Rafael, CA (bay area) Contact: Noel Altman, 840 Penny Royal Lane San Rafael, CA 94903-2330 Ph. 415/472-1207 |
| <u>\$100 non-refundable Deposit</u> <u>Total Cost Including food/lodging:</u> \$360 Sngl; \$300 Dbl | |
| June 7-8, 1997 | Two-Day Retreat with Justin Stone Meditation - T'ai Chi Chih Review Location: St. Ann Convent, Melborne, Ky Contact: Marlene Brown 653 Cranford Drive Cincinnati, OH 95240 -3915 Ph. 513/742-1866 <u>Details on pg. 20</u> Total Cost incl. food/lodging: \$ 93.00 |
| June 9-10, 1997 | Two-Day Retreat with Justin Stone Meditation - T'ai Chi Chih Review Location: Xavier Ctr., Convent Sta., NJ Contact: Sr. Antonia Cooper Villa Maria, 641 Somerset St., No. Plainfield, NJ 07060-4909 Ph. 908/757-3050 (w) <u>Details on pg. 20</u> Total Cost incl. food/lodging: \$160.00 |
| July 23-25, 25-27, 28 | <u>1997 Teachers' Conference and Retreat</u> Seijaku with Ed Altman Conference featuring Justin Stone Meditation Intensive with Timothy Stuetz Location: Chapman College. Orange, CA Contact: Transformations /Timothy Stuetz 116 Evelyn Dr., Anaheim, CA 92805-3418 Ph. 714/535-0357 <u>See Flyer for Details</u> |
| Note: | If you are hosting a TCC teacher training, retreat, or other TCC event in your area with Ed Altman and/or Justin Stone, please let us know so that it can be included in this Events Calendar. Be sure to include date(s), deadlines, deposit, fees, phone/FAX number(s), and address of the person to contact. Thanks! |

TEACHERS WRITE

TCC STUDIO - FAMILY STYLE

Susan Patterson, San Diego, CA



I have received several phone calls and letters from people wondering about my T'ai Chi Chih studio in San Diego, CA. So, I thought I would take the time to write some thoughts, ideas, and feelings about such a venture for other teachers who are thinking about doing the same.

When I first began teaching TCC in San Diego in 1988, one of the biggest challenges was finding space to teach. Most facilities who would rent space were so high priced that I simply could not afford them. The places I could afford ... seemed to have other groups who would meet once or twice a month which would totally disrupt an eight-week class. After seven years, I had only found one reliable place to teach and by that time there were several new teachers who were finding the same problems with finding a place to teach.

I held my breath, signed the lease, and in July 1995 I had secured a place to teach which has been absolutely wonderful and very enjoyable. One thing that we all agreed on a long time ago was to follow Justin and Steve's ideas through the years that there is no need for an "official" organization. We do not have a board of

directors, etc. We are simply TCC teachers who enjoy the love and Chi we share here as family. My studio is no different than any other place where teachers around the country teach.

The studio does not make any money and takes a lot of work to keep up, but I have always felt that is just fine as long as I am able to teach and spread the joy of T'ai Chi Chih throughout San Diego. We have made a difference here. We come from our hearts with love and have created quite a unique and joyful family.

Those of you who came to the Conference in San Diego, I am sure, could feel the love of this group. We do not need the four walls of my studio to create the "Unconditional Love Connection" that we have here in Southern California.

So, for those of you who have asked, (if it really is necessary to have a studio to create a family like we have in San Diego?), my answer is absolutely not! All you have to do is continue to evolve through your practice and to realize the importance of getting together with other teachers in your area.

TEACHERS WRITE

T'AI CHI CHIH IS AS T'AI CHI CHIH DOES

Mark Jones, Albuquerque, NM

T'ai Chi Chih is Many Things

What is T'ai Chi Chih? I think we can all agree that it's more than a system of movement. It seems to me that it holds different meanings for different people. For me, it is a place of freedom, joy, and love. It is Serenity in the Midst of Activity. What is it for you?

I believe that T'ai Chi Chih has a fantastic, explosive future full of bliss, fun and freedom. Freedom, inherently, is a place of Unity through difference. This is why some people find freedom somewhat difficult ... it's not all neatly tied up – it's often messy.

Sometimes, late at night, I go outside and gaze up at the night sky from my home in rural New Mexico. It is ablaze with countless radiant stars, all different and yet comprising a unified wholeness. I am thrilled at the shining perfection and filled with joy. T'ai Chi Chih seems the same to me: joyous potential the bounds of which are beyond our current conceptions.

Cerebrospinal Refinement and T'ai Chi Chih

T'ai Chi Chih, like Kriya Yoga, Reiki and other "energy work" disciplines, works through time to refine the human cerebrospinal system for greater expression of the innate nature or higher consciousness. This is a naturally occurring process and will eventually bring each person to

a place of unity consciousness, whether through the chain of lives of reincarnation or the accelerated approach of an esoteric spiritual discipline, such as T'ai Chi Chih. My experience of T'ai Chi Chih is that it is extremely powerful and daily practice will rapidly accelerate the unfoldment of consciousness.

During this process of unfoldment or evolution, one may have various experiences, both of a spiritual and "daily life" nature, that are directly brought about by this more rapid evolution. Some of these may be viewed as wonderful by the individual while others may be "hardships" or appear to be occurring too rapidly. I would like to share some of the wisdom of Swami Muktananda, of the Siddha Yoga lineage, regarding this evolution:

"Let whatever is happening run its course. In reality, your nerves are being purified (cerebrospinal refinement) and the accumulated impressions (conditionings) of the past are being wiped out. You will eventually experience such Divine Bliss as will keep you continually bright and cheerful."

from 'The Play of Consciousness'

I have found this excerpt to be very inspiring during periods of what I call "dense vibration" or difficulty, which all must eventually pass, as bliss and joy lie at the core of our being.



ALZHEIMER'S AND T'AI CHI CHIH

Richard Brier, Mill Valley, CA

Recently I was invited to give a T'ai Chi Chih presentation by a lady named Judy who was overseeing a group of ten people who had the beginning stages of Alzheimer's. The group included retired medical doctors, lawyers, and others who had been important and successful in their professional fields. They were in the beginning stages of the disease, and I was told that Alzheimer's was irreversible and generally lasted from three to 20 years. I knew nothing about it besides having heard of the memory loss and the devastation it brings to the families involved.

All I really approached the situation with was a deep faith in the power of the Chi (the life-energy) as manifested in the precious jewel of movements known as T'ai Chi Chih, also called Joy Thru Movement. I've been practicing daily and teaching since 1980 and I firmly know that T'ai Chi Chih is a very simple, powerful and effective tool for self-healing, whether physical, emotional, mental or spiritual. I really didn't know what to expect at the presentation; I just knew from experience that the balancing, stimulating, and circulating of the Chi via T'ai Chi Chih often made the miraculous commonplace. The Chinese have a saying: *"With the cultivating of the Chi, all things are possible."* When I arrived, I told them about the possibility of cultivating the Chi, that was available to them, and that it could help them physically, with their balance for instance, and otherwise.

At the beginning they were quite wobbly on their feet. I mentioned that was often the case with beginners, because for many moving slowly with

awareness was a brand new experience. They seemed to particularly respond when I gave them visualizations of nature, mentioning the spacious sky, the rooted tree reaching to heaven, the rhythmic ocean flowing, the golden warm sunlight.

As we all moved together I used these words and images, watching their reactions closely. I also taught them to move through very heavy air, effortlessly. I spoke slowly, moved with them slowly and encouraged them. Their movements didn't conform very much to mine but that didn't matter. For they were flowing a bit and some were softly smiling. I finished the presentation by asking them to sit and then thanking them for inviting me there. They applauded and I began to leave. Judy, who had invited me there, thanked me graciously and said she'd speak to her advisor about the possibility of an ongoing class. She also thanked me for not treating the group with condescension or judgment. She said the people really liked me, she could tell, and that the T'ai Chi Chih and I brought a really calming influence to the group.

A week passed and then Judy called and said they had decided to hire me. It was to be a 50-minute class each Tuesday morning 11 - 11:50 a.m. At the second class all ten people were there. They all had name tags, which made it easier to connect. I led them through the first two movements of T'ai Chi Chih and the basic stance only. We did many repetitions as I reminded them that the circulation and balancing of the Chi was the key point. I wrote on the blackboard in large print: *"The Chi is omnipotent."*

During the class, I quoted Albert Einstein:

"Imagination is more important than knowledge."

Immediately one of the Alzheimer's group, a bearded gentleman, said,

"And there is no knowledge without imagination!"

He said it with passion and a rich smile. I thanked him for sharing his insight. The group energy appeared much more present than in the presentation. And they were doing the movements more cohesively. It was intense and fun for me. We ended with me thanking them and reminding them that practicing was the key to improved functioning, coordination and balance.

At the end of the class, Judy, the director told all of us that the previous class had taught her something unique in her experience. She usually goes home exhausted, but the night of the presentation class, she was filled with energy. She took her daughter out for dinner and a movie and only later remembered the T'ai Chi Chih class. Bingo! She was very impressed with how energized she felt and now she really knew what I was talking about. At the third class, I gave them a review of the first two movements, Rocking Motion and Bird Flaps Its Wings, along with the basic stance. Everyone seemed to enjoy him or her self, and some of the people were doing the movements more smoothly with better balance.

It has only been three classes but I'm enthused and feel that this may be something very new with many possibilities for those with Alzheimer's disease. Above all, it is the animating principle, the Chi, which, when consciously cultivated, bring about a whole new dimension to the healing process.

Gratitude

*Thank you
for everything
all gifts
all time
all smiles
all frowns*
grace
space
face
disgrace.

*Thank you
for everything
joy
love
growing.*
my desire
my hope
my faith

*Thank you
for everything
remembrance
wisdom
all telling.*
now and forever
awakens
beyond

Only the empty cup can be filled.

*Thank you
for everything
to rejoice
evermore.*
only one request,

Richard Brier, p. 42
Sacred Stories for Remembrance, 1995

TEACHING TIPS

PRACTICE TIPS FOR THE BEGINNING OR PHYSICALLY LIMITED STUDENT

Roberta Taggart, Cupertino, CA

For the beginning student, especially if he or she is physically limited, recovering from surgery or illness, or among the frail elderly, it is important to do enough of the T'ai Chi Chih (TCC) movement(s) to slowly accustom the lower torso and legs to their new effort without doing so much that the muscles become over-tired resulting in soreness. This delayed-onset muscle soreness (DOMS) and other unwanted physical symptoms can be avoided by consistent, regular practice and gradual build-up of practice time.

Here are some practice pointers I have found helpful for the beginning or physically limited student:

1. Move at your Level of Comfort: Remember that your TCC stance need not be low to gain benefit from the TCC moves. Move within your comfort zone. Usually this means that no more than 70% of your capacity should be used in the beginning.
2. Incremental Practice Time: Increase your practice time gradually, adding no more than 5 to 10 percent to your practice time per week. In this way your body can adjust slowly to the new muscle movements (while learning to remain soft in the upper torso) and maintain a relaxed mental focus.
3. Practice Daily: In order to strengthen the muscles being used in the lower torso, be consistent with your practice schedule. *This is especially important during the first three weeks!* The key to building balance, strength, flexibility and endurance is to practice regularly.

4. Warm-up/Cool Down: To prevent muscle tightness and soreness, take time, if needed, to stretch before you practice. Simple warm-ups before practice help inoculate your muscles against soreness. After practice or lesson, massage the area just below the ball of the foot to help with foot cramping; lay flat on the floor with knees up for a few minutes to stretch and release the lower back; apply heat or cold as you would in any other activity to a sore area as prescribed by your health care practitioner.

5. Relax and Breathe: Remember that TCC is done with natural (belly) breathing (this means rhythmic, diaphragmatic breathwork); the kind of breathing we did when we were very little. When we relax into our breathing while doing the TCC form, we allow our internal organs to be massaged which is one of the primary benefits of TCC. Just let it come naturally!

Muscle soreness and its related symptoms may be avoided or eliminated, higher fitness levels attained, and a more consistent TCC practice schedule maintained, if a new student (especially the physically limited, those recovering from surgery or illness, or the frail elderly) can remember to follow these tips. But, more than that, movements will be able to be performed without the muscle pain and soreness that so often accompanies beginning students who do not gradually build up practice time.

Remember TCC originator Justin Stone's words: ***"Practice on the days that you want to, and on the days that you don't want to."*** Reap the benefits without the pain.

TEACHING TIPS/RESOURCES

MAKING USE OF *VFJ* AND OTHER RESOURCES

Lee Campbell, Phoenix, AZ

I gave a student of mine who wants to become a teacher some back issues of *The Vital Force* to read because I think each issue speaks to the integrity, purpose and future of T'ai Chi Chih and the dedication and joy of all teachers. I encouraged him to subscribe now as he works towards becoming a teacher, and other teachers may find issues of *VFJ* to be a useful tool for their students as well. This young man is a Buddhist monk and it is a demanding but rewarding experience for me to be his teacher. His response to T'ai Chi Chih is that it complements his own personal journey and beliefs.

As an aside, his initial comment after reading the various issues was that there was certainly a vital force throughout each issue, and we had a good laugh when I said "that's probably why it is called *"The Vital Force"*!

Ed. Note: Thanks for endorsing the value of *VFJ* with your students and sharing with readers your resourcefulness.

I subscribe to two magazines in an effort to further my study of all things related to "T'ai Chi" and become a better student and teacher. I was surprised but delighted to see quite a nice size ad in a recent issue of *The Empty Vessel* for the new edition of *T'ai Chi Chih! Joy Thru Movement* available from Good Karma (see page 36). As yet, I have not seen such an ad in "*Qi*", the other magazine I receive, although last year I sent Michael Tse, the editor, a copy as a gift. I had written to him in response to an article I found interesting and in reply he mentioned he did not know of T'ai Chi Chih – but now he does!

Perhaps other teachers may enjoy these magazines as I do and find them helpful in their practice and their teaching, so I am hopeful you will make mention of this in the upcoming issue of *The Vital Force*.

STONE PAMPHLETS

Since 1991 Justin Stone has authored six pamphlets on spiritual topics that T'ai Chi Chih (TCC) teachers may enjoy reading and using. The titles and publication dates are:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|------|
| <i>The Spiritual Life</i> | 1991 |
| <i>Evolution Through Chi</i> | 1991 |
| <i>Sense and Essence</i> | 1991 |
| <i>Pranja</i> | 1994 |
| <i>Cosmic Rhythm</i> | 1995 |
| <i>Teaching Tips for TCC Teachers</i> | 1996 |

For the cost of postage and handling (\$1.) teachers may request a free copy of these pamphlets by mail at the address below:

T'ai Chi Chih Center
3107 Eubank NE, #19
Albuquerque, NM 87111

Attn: Book Request

CLASS HANDOUT FOR STUDENTS

Mark Jones, Albuquerque, NM

As a newly accredited teacher [Spring, '96], I plan to give this write-up on T'ai Chi Chih to my students.

T'ai Chi Chih is a new system of Chi Kung (chee gung) discipline originated by an American, Justin F. Stone. Chi Kung disciplines have come to us from the ancient Chinese Taoists and their purpose is to circulate and balance the Yin and Yang aspects of the Chi, or Vital Force. In T'ai Chi Chih (tie chee chuh), we do this with a system of soft, slow movement. Now, let's take a moment and examine the Chi and the Great Yin and Yang more closely.

The Chi has been known by many names in different cultures . . . the Intrinsic Energy, Vital Force, Odic Force, Orgone Energy, etc. It is an all-pervasive, intelligent energy that exists within and without of all things.

Yin and Yang are the Great Opposites that exist in everything and can be observed in nature - Day and Night, Summer and Winter, Hot and Cold, Sun and Moon . . . with the first element in these pairs being Yang and the second, Yin. Since we live in a world that is in constant vibration (the great Vibratory Dance), down to the finest observable levels, we can also view Yin and Yang as merely the **oppositional polarity inherent in vibration**, or expansion and contraction.

T'ai Chi Chih has many, many benefits for those who learn the simple movements and **practice often** (preferably daily!). These include the benefits of good overall health, stress reduction and relaxation, and spiritual development. In

fact T'ai Chi Chih, when translated, means "Knowledge of the Supreme Ultimate," so it is **essentially a spiritual discipline**. The practitioner may, with time, find himself one day swimming in a Sea of Joy as he does the practice, a Joy or Bliss (Ananda in Sanskrit) that springs from the inner Innate or Spiritual Nature. This is why T'ai Chi Chih is subtitled **Joy Thru Movement**.

T'ai Chi Chih is fun, healthy and a Great Adventure. One does not have to believe anything or have any certain philosophical perspective and may choose to utilize philosophy, metaphysics, or religion for obtaining a conceptual grasp or not, as they wish! But simply and basically, **just do the movements**, as Justin says, . . . merely "Practice, practice, practice!" This is the secret . . . the results are cumulative so daily practice is the way of progress, health, and growth. But, remember -- Have fun . . . always!

Yours for Daily practice,



GETTING STARTED

COMPUTER GENERATED MAILING MATERIALS

Example from **Judy Tretheway**, Sacramento, CA

Pictured at right is Judy Tretheway's computer-generated mailer which was submitted to *The Vital Force*. It is one example of how TCC teachers are offering their services and communicating with their potential students. A picture of Tretheway doing TCC on the beach is part of the appeal of this simply done mailer. It is folded in half, addressed, then mailed. It need not be generated on the computer, but this one was.

Joy through Movement

Class schedule - Winter 1997

Lunch hour classes - Natomas
West Side Tai Chi Chih
Tuesdays 12 NOON - 12:45
Harbor Oaks Apartments Club House Use the Gateway Oaks entrance and the Club House is just to the right on the lake. Gateway Oaks Drive runs parallel to 15 on the west side, use West El Camino or Garden Highway, to cross 15.

The case group of this class will be learning the advanced moves and enjoying a time of group practice. \$36 for 6 weeks.

Natomas Racquet Club
Thursday 12:10 - 1 o'clock
In the Aerobics room (locking feet and shoe clothes are first of the Natomas Racquet Club at 2450 Natomas Park Drive.

A new group starting January 9. Nonmembers pay \$36 for special 6 week group pass. Members are free. Join us any time.

Evening classes - Natomas
Natomas Community Service Center
Wednesday 7pm - 8:30
located in the Tai Chi Center at the corner of West El Camino and Tunal Road
A new group starting January 8. \$45 for 6 week class.

In the works:
Wednesday Evening 5 - 6:15 Mind Body Connection class at Kaiser, Rancho Cordova
Early morning class starting in March with Learning Exchange Near Fair Oaks and Howe



Judy Tretheway

Tai Chi Chih

20 joyful, easy-to-learn movements which relieve stress and bring harmony to your life.

A moving meditation you can practice anywhere, anytime.

Slow, gentle exercises which develop balance, circulation & coordination.

No special skills or equipment needed. Easy for people of all ages and physical abilities.

Integrates all levels of being - intellectual, spiritual, emotional and physical. Tap and build your inner strength.

For private or group lessons
921-9184

Example from **Nancy Meyer**, Chicago, IL

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <h3>T'ai Chi Chih</h3> <p style="font-size: x-small;">Rolling motion Slow steps to energy Breath the planet Bless down Dance in the mountain Dance in the valley Curling the ball</p>  <p style="font-size: x-small;">...ing fully ...ing the quality ...light ...ing to be ...ing to be ...ing to be ...ing to be</p> |
|  <p style="font-size: x-small;">MAY 1997</p> | <p>T'ai Chi Chih is a modern form of an ancient Chinese technique for relaxing and balancing the mind and body - a moving meditation.</p> <p>T'ai Chi Chih involves a series of simple, elegant movements that generate, circulate and harmonize the flow of "chi" (life force) encouraging health restoration and enlightenment.</p> |

At left is Nancy Meyer's computer-generated four-fold note which features a colored cover, with colored printing inside. The contents include a list of TCC movements below which is a short description of TCC. The back side carries the simple inscription, "T'ai Chi Chih - Joy Thru Movement" imprinted over a tree.

See if you can envision how this would look folded twice so that four sides show printing with the note opening from the bottom.

'SEATED' TCC FEATURED ON LOCAL TV STATION
Prepared by R. Taggart in collaboration with Sandy McAlister



Sandy McAlister leads Casa Sandoval students in 'Healing Sounds'

Sandy McAlister (Hayward, CA) and Lois Mahaney (San Lorenzo, CA) were featured guests last January on *Transitions*, a local TV program focusing on senior issues and events. The program is moderated by Gerontology Specialist, Helen Ketchum, M.P.A. who invited the two to present a program on TCC which was entitled "*T'ai Chi Chih For Your Health and Balance.*"

Lois Mahaney fielded questions from Ketchum about TCC, stating that TCC is a "simple, non-strenuous type of movement ... you can relax into it." When asked by Ketchum, "Why TCC instead of just T'ai Chi?" Mahaney replied that TCC is "based on the same principles as Ch'uan, which is the one you usually see done in the parks. The man who developed this [TCC] was a T'ai Chi Ch'uan Master, and he found that people couldn't learn it in a short amount of time. So he developed these 19 movements and one posture that can be learned in 8 lessons if you practice."

Ketchum commented that "Statistics show that 30% of those aged 65 and over fall at least once a year. Further studies are showing that falls are reduced by 25% if people take even ten weeks of T'ai Chi.

Mahaney responded by saying, 'Yes, but they have to practice.'"

Mahaney also stated that T'ai Chi "enhance[s] people's balance, and [gives] them a more peaceful attitude in life."

McAlister noted that "seated' TCC is gaining in popularity with seniors who have physically limiting conditions or illnesses which prevent them from being able to stand on their feet for a long period."

Six students from McAlister's TCC class at Casa Sandoval Retirement Community in Hayward, CA performed 10 minutes of 'seated' TCC on the air.

Here are comments by three of the students on how TCC has helped them:

Rose Borla: "... relaxing, has helped my walking and my arthritis."

Mary Cunha: "I feel better after class."

Troje Cossich: "I like exercise. Anything that's good for me, I like to do it."

Lois Mahaney concluded the program by reading poetry from *Spiritual Notes* by Steve Ridley, a well-known teacher from Denver, CO.

Note: This program has aired twice. Helen Ketchum suggested the audience tape the program and use it to try out the TCC moves.

PROFILE

Teacher Candidate Profile Sue Inteman, Wendell, NC

Sue Inteman, is a student of T'ai Chi Chih Instructor Marjorie Peltier, who is Consulting Director with the Vitality Institute in Raleigh, NC. Sue hopes to be a T'ai Chi Chih instructor by winter of 1997 and plans to continue working with Marjorie Peltier and The Vitality Institute.

With background is in social work, Sue has returned to school to obtain a Masters Degree in Training and Development/Health Behaviors and Education. This endeavor will be complemented by her interest in holistic medicine/therapy.

She shares that she has a left facial paralysis which has been 'somewhat' corrected by several micro-neuro reconstructive surgeries. Her physical therapist and she use holistic as well as conventional therapies for neuro-muscular education. Subsequently, she has found T'ai Chi Chih to be beneficial to the healing process.

In Spring of 1996 she completed a paper entitled, "T'ai Chi and Western Elders Well-being". Most recently, she presented a paper to Hospice of Wake County, Raleigh, NC discussing the potential benefits of TCC and stress reduction. She found it difficult to find empirical data on T'ai Chi Chih and stress reduction, however, the research that has been completed was impressive. She did find it necessary to research meditation and exercise with regard to T'ai Chi. (See Teacher News, page 33 of this issue for related information on her study and further details about the patient education manual she is writing which recommends TCC as a pre- and post-operative meditation.)

Sacred Moments

*Before that which is called "the Beginning,"
the Divine Unity encompassed ALL.*

*Being ALL, that which is called male or female,
Father or Mother, we united, and experienced
as One, rather than as separate aspects.*

*The realm of separate seeing allows the ALL to
experience diversity and all that it can become.*

*The human mind allows the One to experience
the uniqueness of each of its aspects.*

*To return to the ALL, the Oneness, is a sacred
experience. In those precious moments, one feels
united with all of life. All judgments and grievances
are suspended. It is as though they do not exist.*

*From the viewpoint of the ALL,
every color of skin is like a different hue
of the rainbow,
every way of praising the Infinite is like
the many melodies of the song birds,
every lesson in life's journey is like another bend
in the Great River.*

*Who are we to judge the rainbow, the song birds,
or the river's flow. We are but a traveler on the
journey of infinite possibilities. And we are the
journey and the infinite possibilities, as well.*

*Life is ALL.
We are a part of the ALL.
And, in sacred moments,
we are at One with the ALL.*

Torie Fiore, 1997
Phoenix, AZ

TEACHER NEWS

CALIFORNIA

Vic and Maggie Berg, San Rafael, CA recently announced the birth of their daughter, Kelsey.

Marianne Merritt, Galt, CA works in the California Prison System. She also teaches T'ai Chi Chih to both staff and inmates. Recently she submitted this poetry:

We Live Our Mindfulness

We, They... Here, There...

Different, yet synchronous and similar.

Not Two!

Inmates living in their mindfulness...

Prison staff living T'ai Chi Chih.

Not important to draw the line...

*imperative to know/feel the "Not Two"
to be well.*

Why? Why Not!

Sandy McAlister, Hayward, CA and **Lois Mahaney**, San Lorenzo, CA, recently appeared on local TV to discuss 'seated' T'ai Chi Chih which is an on-going activity for older adults, at Casa Sandoval, a retirement community complex in Hayward, CA. Lois has appeared previously on the TV program for seniors entitled *Transitions* to discuss the benefits of T'ai Chi Chih. Sandy is one of several SF Bay Area teachers teaching 'seated' TCC.

Paul Ciske, Ph.D. is an exercise physiologist and personal trainer. In mid-October Paul is organizing a week-long T'ai Chi Chih Vacation Retreat on the island of Hawaii. Use your **1997 Teachers' Directory** to contact him, if interested. Paul also owns a personal fitness consulting business and teaches T'ai Chi Chih and a holistic form of aerobics at the Courthouse Athletic Club in Oakland, CA.

Susan Hudgens from San Jose, CA, has been conducting outdoor Group Practice at the Warm Springs Community Center Park in Fremont, CA on the 3rd Sunday of each month at 1:00 p.m. ongoing through May. All are welcome to participate regardless of experience.

The **Seijaku/Meditation Retreat** to be held at the Santa Sabina Center in San Rafael, Ca is scheduled to begin on Friday, April 25 and conclude Monday April 28. This retreat is open to students and teachers who have completed Seijaku training. Contact: **Noel Altman**. (See Events Calendar, page 21, for details.)



IOWA

Sister Nancy Hoffman, Iowa City, IA, is now teaching TCC at Prairiewoods: Franciscan Spirituality Center in Hiawatha. She has already taught a daytime and an evening class and will start a new cycle in January 1997.

Linda and Joe Michaud have been teaching through Kirkwood Community College in Iowa City. 24 people registered for the first class; 27 are registered in their current class. They report that one makes only a modest amount per student when teaching for a community college, but advertising, space and bookkeeping are provided. Interest in TCC is strong in their area.

In Cedar Rapids, IA **Russ Brown** has been teaching TCC for years and is currently teaching for Mercy Hospital Wellness Center. Russ was Linda Michaud's TCC teacher. Russ reports that hospitals with wellness programs for the community are another good place to get started.

TEACHER NEWS

ILLINOIS

Linda Prosche, Chicago, IL, is a graphic designer who has studied yoga for over ten years. A certified T'ai Chi Chih instructor, she is currently pursuing a MA in Health Care Design. Additionally, Linda presents a program called *Bodies that Move* as part of The Natural Healing Resource and Support Center.

NEW MEXICO

T'ai Chi Chih Teachers Association and TCC Center News: February featured T'ai Chi Chih Review and Seijaku Review practice with Justin Stone as fund raisers to benefit the TCC Center in Albuquerque. Justin will also conduct a Two-Day Meditation Retreat in New Jersey on June 7-8, and again on June 9-10. (See page 21 for details.)

New Basic Classes at the Center were started in February by **Robert Montes De Oca, Beverly McFarland, Suni McHenry, and John Jacoby.** **Carmen Brocklehurst** has a Review Class scheduled to begin March 8.

The New Mexico Nurses Association has agreed to responsor the NM TCC Teachers Association in allowing nursing continuation hours for beginner TCC classes. **Rhonda St. Martin, RN,** is the Program Administrator.

A memorial "Celebration of Life" for **Leona B. Dees** was held at the UNM Chapel on February 2 with reception following at the Maxwell Museum. (See page 9 for her memoriam.)

NORTH CAROLINA

Sue Intemann, from Wendell, NC (see her profile on page 31) writes that she is pursuing an independent study on stress reduction techniques

this Spring. The two techniques she has chosen are T'ai Chi Chih and humor. She would enjoy hearing from anyone having a past publication that specifically addresses T'ai Chi Chih and stress management. Use your TCC Teachers' Directory to contact her through her TCC instructor, **Marjorie Peltier.**

Sue also plans to recommend T'ai Chi Chih as a pre- and post-operative "meditation" and exercise in a patient education manual she is writing for the surgeon who did her reconstructive surgery. The manual should be completed by summertime. Additionally, she plans to introduce T'ai Chi Chih to her support group of reconstructive surgery patients.

OHIO

Marlene Brown of Cincinnati, OH reports that the University of Cincinnati has been awarded a grant to study T'ai Chi Chih. Joyce Santana, a nurse will head the study working with Christine Callella through the College of Medicine. **Marlene Brown** also reports that she will teach two new eight week TCC classes (back to back) at the National Institute of Safety and Health beginning in May. She states, "It shows a real change is occurring when a government agency calls to request T'ai Chi Chih classes at their facility." Marlene's busy schedule includes hosting a Teacher Training in April and a Two-Day Retreat with Justin Stone in June. (See pages 20 and 21 for details.)



WISCONSIN

Barbara Peller Sommers, Cumberland, WI has been teaching T'ai Chi Chih to local hospital staff members. During the harsh winter months she conducts private classes until 'spring thaw'.

STANFORD TO RESEARCH T'AI CHI

Prepared by Roberta Taggart, V/FJ Staff

From: *The Times*, January 6, 1997. Bay Area/California Section. Entitled, *Stanford Project Seeks to Assess Unorthodox Ways to Prevent Aging*, by Tom Philp of Scripps-McClatchy News Service

Synopsis: This article describes the federally funded study to be conducted at Stanford University in an effort to research unconventional forms of medicine to be incorporated into the Stanford Corporate Health Program.

Excerpts: When the federal government gave nearly \$1 million to Stanford University medical professor William Haskell to find ways to slow the human aging process, it attached only one string: He had to go beyond where traditional research stopped. Haskell agreed to limit himself to unconventional medicine's unproven pills, meditation techniques, exercises and diets. Stanford's major foray into merging conventional and unconventional forms of medicine mirrors a national trend by millions of consumers who are already devising their own blends of care.

Blending approaches: Stanford is among 10 institutions to receive the first federal funds for research on how to blend conventional and unconventional forms of medicine for specific medical conditions. As a cutting-edge provider of health care for the Bay Area, Stanford also plans to open a clinic to begin providing patients a wide array of unconventional therapies, according to Kenneth Pelletier, director of the Stanford Corporate Health Program.

No fountain of youth: But this is no quest by Stanford for a fountain of youth. Rather the search is for unusual but effective weapons against the symptoms of aging ... Are the slow, graceful health exercises that have been popular in China for a few thousand years just as beneficial as the '90's system of spandex and sweat known as aerobics?

Traditional research has focused more on treating the ailments of aging than on preventing or delaying them through diet and exercise.

"There is no systematic strategy, at any level of the practice of medicine, to promote successful aging in this country," said Haskell, deputy director of Stanford's Center for Research in Disease Prevention. Given that half of Americans can now expect to live to the age of 85, "our challenge is getting them to 85 in good shape, extending both the number days and the number of disability-free days," said Haskell.

Looking for plausibility: That is why he [Haskell] is sticking to "therapies in which there's some biologic plausibility."

Tapping the expertise of various researchers on campus, Haskell is devising some sophisticated anti-aging studies. The first two will test some ancient lifestyle techniques of the East against those of the modern West.

Measurements sought: Using a special device mounted on eyeglasses, for example, Haskell plans to precisely measure everyone's balance to test a theory that those practicing the Chinese exercises end up improving their balance, thus reducing the chances of fractures.

In addition, "T'ai Chi masters view the exercise as mind/body relaxation and stress reduction," said Haskell. Stanford plans to monitor a component in every participant's saliva that is a known indicator of stress.

Potential to aid the frail: If the Chinese exercises measure up in Stanford's tests to more strenuous forms of exercising, Haskell sees the biggest payoff for seniors who feel they are too frail for something vigorous. "The low-impact nature of the t'ai chi-type exercises might allow them to be performed on a more frequent basis." He said.

TCC IN PRINT

Due to the influx of material to be presented in VFJ for the "TCC in The Media" section, we have decided to present a synopsis and an excerpt of each article published about TCC.

From: **The LaCrosse Tribune**, Free Time Section: *T'ai Chi*. Featuring Sister Marian Massman, a certified teacher since 1990, she teaches TCC in La Crosse, WI.

Synopsis:

This May 12, 1996 newspaper article shows several pictures of students doing TCC. The story by Joan Kent, photos by Ron Johnson, does an excellent job of explaining T'ai Chi Chih, its originator, its history, and its benefits. It details the development of TCC, how the movements work to relax the body and quiet the mind, discusses energy and its relationship to illness, how TCC differs from exercise, and the importance of practicing TCC regularly.

Excerpt: Some people call Franciscan sister Marian Massman the T'ai Chi nun. Massman, who belongs to the Franciscan Spirituality Center, teaches T'ai Chi Chih, a series of movements based on Chinese healing principles. "No one has ever questioned why a nun would be teaching T'ai Chi Chih," she said. "It is not a religion. People of different religions practice it." But the series of 20 movements, which balance the "chi," which means energy, does have a spiritual quality, she said. "By quieting, T'ai Chi helps to center oneself so you can here the inner voice of the spirit," she said.

From: **The Record**, September 9, 1996. An article entitled, *Life As a Balancing Act*, by Donna Renton, Staff Writer, features Sister Antonia Cooper and Edie Budney from New Jersey.

Synopsis: This article features Sr. Antonia Cooper and Edie Budney, both TCC instructors from New Jersey They describe TCC and its benefits for seniors. It references the JAMA and Emory University studies.

From: **Berryessa Sun**, September 1996. Section: Community. Featuring **Bonnie McKenzie**, who returned to the San Francisco Bay Area last year and resides in Saratoga.

Synopsis: The **Berryessa Sun** is a local neighborhood paper featuring news and events in the Berryessa section of San Jose, CA. McKenzie, who taught TCC at West Valley College many years ago before leaving the area, now has returned to the area and is featured in this article on senior activities provided at Berryessa Center. The article also features pictures taken of her practice sessions. held at Alum Rock Park in San Jose, CA.

From: **Healthy Alliance Journal**, Vol. III, No. 3. *T'ai Chi Chih ... Healing Through Grace*. Written by **Elissa Maguire**, who is certified to teach T'ai Chi Chih as well as Iyengar-certified Yoga and resides in Winter Park, FL.

Synopsis: Another excellent article oriented toward explaining TCC's relationship to the development of T'ai Chi throughout history. Also contains a well worded description of the way in which TCC allows the muscles to work in a way such that balanced development is concurrent with relaxation. Reference is made to the physiological benefits of T'ai Chi - especially with regard to improved cardiorespiratory fitness.

Excerpt: Slow movements require endurance rather than force and so they develop a different type of muscle fiber. The result is that our muscular responses to stress change over time and we become progressively relieved of the burden of accumulated physical tension.

The changes in our muscles also start to improve our posture. The back muscles learn to relax, enabling them to elongate. The ligaments become more supple and so the movement of the entire spinal column tend to become more supple and more comfortable.

INSPIRATIONAL MATERIALS

"SERENE NATURE" FEATURED IN PBS SERIES

Carmen Brocklehurst, Albuquerque, NM



When teaching T'ai Chi Chih classes I often use the audio tape "Serene Nature." Justin composed this original music for use during T'ai Chi Chih practice, and it's also used on the national PBS T'ai Chi Chih television series (which has shown continuously for over 2 years).

There is certainly other music that could be used, but "Serene Nature" helps me get closest to the experience I had in a serene Japanese garden while in Japan with Justin. All the music in the garden is captured by the sounds on the tape,

eliciting the serenity felt in the garden. The students who come to class stiff and upright are the ones who generally appreciate it the most. They inevitably purchase a tape so they can continue to have the experience every time they practice at home.

Justin's skill as a composer and arranger, combined with his deep understanding, is a treasure to us. He composes music which speaks to the core of our soul, to the serenity within us. This is the music in a Japanese garden which he so sensitively brings to life. Let me personally encourage each of you to listen gently to "Serene Nature" during your next T'ai Chi Chih practice and discover for yourself why it's such a useful tool for your classes.

TWO PUBLICATIONS REVIEW NEW STONE PHOTO-TEXT

Prepared by R. Taggart in collaboration with J. Katus

Two publications recently reviewed Justin Stone's newly revised photo-text, **T'ai Chi Chih! Joy Thru Movement**. The descriptive narrative for each of the articles is excellent. The following excerpts are provided:

For people who have little time to learn or practice the more involved and intricate T'ai Chi Ch'uan form, T'ai Chi Chih offers a simple, though powerful tool for circulating chi or internal energy. This book contains a thoughtful and helpful preface, introduction and general instruction followed by in-depth photographic instruction on the movements themselves. Our staff found the movements easy to follow, using the photographs and accompanied text. We especially like the Six Healing Sounds section at the back of the book, complete with movements. We recommend this book for meditation movement students who want to learn a simplified form or for anyone interested in a simple yet effective energy exercise.

The Empty Vessel/A Journal of Contemporary Taoism, Winter 1997

Vital Force Journal

Justin F. Stone, formerly a T'ai Chi Ch'uan teacher, invented T'ai Chi Chih so that everyone, including the elderly, could easily learn and practice the simple movements, with all the benefits that come from circulation and balance of Intrinsic Energy. His new, revised and user-friendly version of *T'ai Chi Chih* features 468 new photos with instruction that provide clear sequencing of all 20 movements from start to finish; lay-flat binding which leaves the hands free to perform the movements; larger print, and added sections on movements. Highly recommended for heightened energy, serenity and health, longevity, and weight and blood pressure control.

Leading Edge Review,
Winter 1996/97

March 1997

KARMIC KOMMENTS



from **GOOD KARMA PUBLISHING**
P. O. Box 511, Ft. Yates, ND 58538
Jean Katus, Publisher

Oriental Philosophy Videotapes

Good Karma has a resource available that truly cannot be found elsewhere, in any classroom, bookstore or library. We offer a set of 4 videotaped Oriental Philosophy lectures given by Justin Stone. Certified T'ai Chi Chih teachers can rent the tapes for 30 days, either as a set or singly. The material is suitable for classroom or home use and is like having the richness of an entire course in Eastern Philosophy at one's fingertips, presented by one whose knowledge of many of the topics far surpasses that of nearly anyone in the West. Subjects covered in each of the videos are: Lecture #1 - Six Darsanas (Insights), Kashmir Saivism, Tantra, Indian Yoga; Lecture #2 - Zen Buddhism, Channa (Ch'an), Rinzai, Soto, Seven Principles of a Zen Garden, Four Essentials of the Japanese Tea Ceremony, India - Mahayana and Hinayana, Yoga - different types, Mantras; Lecture #3 - Indian Buddhism (continuation of Lecture #2), Four Noble Truths, Noble Eight-Fold Path, References to Japanese Zen; Lecture #4 - Japan and Shinto, Zen Buddhism, Shin Buddhism, New Religions of Japan. If any teachers are interested in renting the videos for their own use or to show to their students or friends, please contact **Good Karma**.

New Teacher Distributor

Welcome to Paula Arnold, new T'ai Chi Chih teacher distributor for the Minneapolis/St. Paul area in Minnesota. With the growing pool of certified teachers in the Twin Cities, we are happy to have a local person to supply teachers with **Good Karma** books and tapes.

Good Karma and *The Vital Force*

To clarify some confusion that seems to exist, **Good Karma Publishing** and *The Vital Force* are two

separate entities. Though we communicate regularly and work together on certain projects, our services are different from each other. Orders of T'ai Chi Chih materials go to **Good Karma**. The teacher directory and newsletter must be ordered through *The Vital Force*. See the next to the last page of this issue (and every issue) of *The Vital Force* for T'ai Chi Chih contacts, a list of who does what.

A reminder that when you send in a change of address to *The Vital Force*, **Good Karma** would also appreciate getting that information. Both entities provide lists of certified teachers to potential students who inquire about teachers in their areas; thus, both **The Vital Force** and **Good Karma** need to keep abreast of any address and phone changes for all certified teachers.

Order form

We provide an order form with every issue of *The Vital Force*. The current one states that it is effective as of 8/96. If you have other than that one, you need to replace it. We provide catalogs when a new one comes out or if you request one when ordering.

There have been some questions on the shipping chart. To use, add up the total weight in ounces; divide by 16; then refer to the chart for the price category into which the total falls.

Serene Nature

If you've not yet heard the vibrant music from Justin Stone's "The Serene Nature/Music for T'ai Chi Chih and Serenity," we suggest you give it a listen. See related article on page 36.

Happy Spring!

For book and tape orders please print and/or type your name and address *legibly* on the order form. Phone (701/854-7459), fax (701/854-2004), or write if you need a catalog and/or order form. Please allow at least two weeks from order date for delivery of your book and/or tape order.

TCC CONTACTS

Justin Stone: Originator of T'ai Chi Chih. 12440 Chelwood Trail, NE, Albuquerque, NM 87112. Conductor of Seijaku (Advanced TCC) Courses; Meditation Retreats and Lectures.

Jean Katus: Publisher, Good Karma Publishing, Inc. P.O. Box 511, Ft. Yates, ND 58538; (701/854-7459); fax (701/854-2004.) Distributor of TCC instructional materials and others related to spiritual practice.

Lois Mahaney: TCC Resource Correspondent for *The Vital Force* and *Teacher Directory*. Contact for database updates, subscription inquiries, teacher referrals, and *VFJ* information: Phone (510/276-5718).

Ed Altman: Appointed Head/T'ai Chi Chih Teacher Trainer. 840 Penny Royal Lane, San Rafael, CA 94903-2330. (415/472-1207) Conductor of Seijaku and TCC Accreditation Courses.

Roberta Taggart: *VFJ* Production. Phone contact for *VFJ* calendar items: (408/252-5406).

Liz Salada: Publishing-Editor, for *The Vital Force* and *TCC Teacher Directory*. Mail contact for journal subscriptions and written submittals for publication. *VFJ*, 1477 - 155th Ave., San Leandro, CA 94578-1922.

MAIN DISTRIBUTORS OF T'AI CHI CHIH MATERIALS

Published by Good Karma Publishing, Inc., Box 511, Ft. Yates, ND 58538

| | | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| BC Canada, Victoria | Guadalupe Buchwald | 604/385-6748 |
| CA, Hayward | Sandra McAlister | 510/582-2238 |
| CA, El Cajon | Susan Patterson | 619/441-1165 |
| CA, Camarillo | Pamela Towne | 805/987-3607 |
| CO, Littleton | Judith Hughes | 303/973-3955 |
| CO, Denver | Margaret Manzanares | 303/494-5800 |
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| MN, Bemidji | Jeanne Engen | 218/751-3173 |
| ND, Fargo | Christeen McLain-Horpedahl | 701/232-5579 |
| NM, Albuquerque | Carmen Brocklehurst | 505/299-0562 |

TEACHER DIRECTORY REFERRALS

The T'ai Chi Chih Teachers' Directory is to be used for referral purposes and communications among accredited T'ai Chi Chih instructors. It is not to be used or sold as a mailing list. Each January, teachers will receive a copy as part of their subscription (new rates reflect this.) Updates to the TCC Teachers' Directory will be published quarterly with each issue of *VFJ* and will include

updated listings of recently accredited teachers, changes of names, addresses, and phone numbers. Please keep us up to date on any changes to your listing by sending all new information to Lois Mahaney (see above). This T'ai Chi Chih Teachers' Directory is a wonderful referral tool to support the wide-spread teaching of T'ai Chi Chih, "Joy Thru Movement!"



THE VITAL FORCE
JOURNAL OPERATIONS



Spring

SUBSCRIPTION FORM

for **THE VITAL FORCE**

Journal of T'ai Chi Chih

The Vital Force, Journal of T'ai Chi Chih, is published quarterly by *The Vital Force*, 1477 - 155th Avenue, San Leandro, CA 94578-1922. Yearly subscriptions: \$30.00 for teachers (includes a copy with their listing in the annual TCC Teachers' Directory), \$25.00 for new students/interested persons (not including a teachers' directory). Please add an additional \$5.00 for out of U.S. or first-class delivery. For extra copies of **THE VITAL FORCE**, please send \$5.00 for each copy desired. Some back issues are available.

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PUBLISHING AND MAILING SCHEDULE: VFJ is published quarterly and bulk mailed to subscribers only -- during the second week of these months: March, June, September, and December. Additional special issues published as announced.

INQUIRIES: If you have not received your issue by the 30th of these months, please contact us. We offer a **first class mailing option** for an additional \$5.00 per year.

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: \$2.75 for the first page, \$1. each additional page plus 25 cents for cover letter which should be addressed to **VFJ/Liz Salada** and include this phone number 510/278-3263 to inform us when your communication arrives. Thank you.

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The Vital Force
A Picture Collage of the VFJ December Mailing

Did you ever wonder, "Who is the force behind *The Vital Force*?" A loyal group of volunteers gathers quarterly at the home of Lois Mahaney (VFJ Resource Correspondent) in San Lorenzo, CA to collate flyers, stuff, label and seal envelopes, and insert the journal in preparation for mailing. Usually, we begin with the mailing tasks, followed by silent TCC practice, and then we eat (pot-luck style). We often conclude with readings of poetry or a seasonal ceremony. Pat Huseby, who contributed the photographs for this article described the December gathering: "*Seventeen of us arrived at Lois Mahaney's to put together The Vital Force. Lois had a lovely decorated table and the food was wonderful. Linda Braga did a Winter Solstice ceremony (American Indian style) and some of us brought our own special poems or readings to share.*"



VFJ Volunteers: Back Row: Linda Meyer, Paul Ciske, Linda Braga, David Shulberg; Mid-Rows: Susan Hudgens, Joanne Sultar, Hope Ridley Barbara Riley, Lois Mahaney, Sandy McAlister, Darlene Ross; Front Row: Noel Altman, Ed Altman, Denise Clark, Roberta Taggart, Virginia Cepeda



Collating: Hope Ridley, Linda Braga, Paul Ciske, and Noel Altman



Stamping: Linda Meyer, Sandy McAlister, Roberta Taggart, Lois Mahaney, David Shulberg, Barbara Riley, Joanne Sultar, and Ed Altman



Stuffing: E. Altman (front left), B. Riley, L. Meyer and S. McAlister



Labeling: D. Clark and V. Cepeda

