



YMAA News is a quarterly publication. Back issues are available for free download at [www.ymaa.com](http://www.ymaa.com)



## FOREWORD

By Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming

Dear Friends and Readers

I sometimes wonder what it means to my students when they hear me say that I have translated historical Chinese documents into English in an effort to preserve the ancient Chinese martial arts in its current state of value and quality. I also wonder what they think when they read about my ongoing effort to establish a non profit Qigong research center called 'The Qigong Public Research Foundation' in California. I know what it means to me; lots of hard work and dedication.

What those monumental tasks do to me is bring back memories of when I was a college student cramming for a difficult test and trying not to worry about whether I would pass it or not. But then, if you worried yourself sick about taking the test, why take it at all. Wouldn't it be much easier to just toss the pen and paper in the waste basket, sell your exam books, jump in your car if you we're lucky enough to have one, and drive home to your parents where you could become a couch potato? Most people would call that, "throwing in the towel," or just plain "quitting."

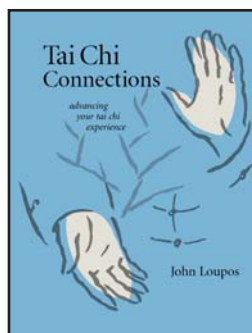
That's not what life is all about especially when there's so much satisfaction to be derived from teaching martial arts. Not only do you have to show yourself to be a reputable teacher, but a patient one as well. All teachers, no matter what subject they are teaching should get as much out of their profession as they put into it.

There have been times when I thought that teaching Tai Chi was just too complicated; just too much time spent trying to "get things right," such as Repulse Monkey, or Brush Knee to name just a few. But why give up trying to perfect each move; to make it not just good, but great? No dedicated teacher gives up. No dedicated student should give up either.

So, when I am traveling or teaching a seminar someplace around the world, teaching should never stop with my absence, it should continue in the best tradition of YMAA. Which brings me back to my opening statement; I will continue to take the time to translate and incorporate historical Chinese documents into my way of teaching martial arts. I want YMAA students to benefit from everything that both my instructors and I teach. Who knows, maybe the day will come when one of these same teachers will be in the same position. I doubt seriously if any one of them will be satisfied with just teaching the bare rudiments of Kung Fu. We all must go the extra mile.

I will be there to help YMAA pave the way for future human spiritual cultivation. Thank you.

## Book Review



### Tai Chi Connections Advancing Your Tai Chi Experience

by John Loupos

\$20.95 214 pages ISBN 1-59439-032-0

Do [we] connect our Tai Chi or does Tai Chi connect us? This and much more is discussed in, *Tai Chi Connections - Advancing Your*

*Tai Chi Experience*, by John Loupos.

Loupos, who has written several other informative Tai Chi books, digs deep, exploring the nuances and technical intricacies of Tai Chi Chuan. His examinations include: Opportunities in Slowness, Attention and intention as dynamic ingredients, Tai Chi as a path to congruence, Tapping into 'earth' force, Putting the brakes on momentum, The unspoken nuances of Tai Chi stepping, Moral and ethical mandates of being a teacher, and much more.

As the author reminds us "Tai Chi offers the prospect of better health, vitality, peace of mind, and increased personal energy. The essence of Tai Chi is contained in subtle, yet profound qualities, which, when nurtured with regular and correct practice, will result in significant personal gain."

*Tai Chi Connections* is just what its title implies, a deeper and more thorough investigation into the structural and 'real life' aspects of Tai Chi.

Other books by John Loupos: *Exploring Tai Chi Contemporary Views on an Ancient Art* and *Inside Tai Chi Hints, Tips, Training, and Process for Students and Teachers*.

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# PATTERNS IN THE YANG TAIJIQUAN SOLO FORM

BY JEFF PRATT

There is a pattern in the Yang Solo form that teaches its most important lesson. That pattern is the repetition of the postures of Ward Off, Rollback, Press, Push and Single Whip. This series of postures is repeated eight times in the solo form. Out of one hundred thirteen movements, forty are dedicated to this pattern. They are repeated because:

- The Eight Energies and the Five Directions are encompassed completely in these movements.
- The basic stances that support these movements are fundamental to good martial power or Fa Jin and good neutralization or Hua Jin.
- The postures of Ward Off, Rollback, Press, Push and Single Whip contain the essence of the Yang Solo Form.

If you were setting out to teach Taijiquan to someone how would you go about it? What would you want to convey to your students? How would you order the many factors that make up a martial system? In Taijiquan we have the basic theory that is drawn from Daoism that underlies all of the art, which is the concept of Yin and Yang arising from Wuji and the force of Taiji always seeking balance, a return to the Wuji state of infinite potential. Through poetry written by adept practitioners over the years, each teacher has added his experience to the insights of the past and deepening the theory of the art. The solo form, though, is the most practiced element that a Taijiquan player has in his repertoire. Whether you are a beginner or an expert, you practice for martial purposes, health or spiritual growth. The solo form is in the heart of your training.

The same form can be performed in the slow elegant manner usually seen in public or in the fast explosive style exhibited by the adept. Regardless of the reason for our training we all practice the same form. The same sequence of movements is done by every practitioner teaching each one a different subtle lesson.

It is such a good learning tool that I have to ask the question where did the solo form originate? Geographic and cultural origins are inevitably pointed out to the new student. If a Taijiquan player has not heard of Chen Sen Feng and Chen Village or the Yang Family lineage, I'd be surprised. While these are important, they are not the issues I want to address.

How did the form evolve? Did Chen Sen Feng sit down one day at his desk and jot it down or did it evolve organically over the course of generations? Where does the form come from conceptually? Underlying all of Taijiquan

is the Daoist principle summed up in the phrase: "Taiji comes from Wuji and is the mother of Yin and Yang."

Where Wuji is the original source of all things, Yin and Yang are the manifested world and Taiji is the link between source and manifestation. Taiji is referred to as the "Tao" or "God." Taiji is the force that moves the manifested world (Yin and Yang) back toward its original state (Wuji). Seeking to balance Yin and Yang and return to the infinite potential of the origin.

In my experience Taiji has been the will or focused mind. That part of ourselves that perceives the world and allows us to question our place in the world and through effort change what we perceive.

All of the aforementioned is perhaps a little too much to drop on a new student who has just walked in off the street, so on a more discernable level; we have the Eight Energies and the Five Directions. The Eight Energies, Peng (Ward Off), Lu (Rollback), Gi (Compress), An (Push), Cai (Pluck), Lie (Rend), Tso (Elbow Stroke), and Kao (Bump) is kinetic expression of will or intent. They are the way a Taijiquan player deals with an opponent. These energies comprise all the various techniques in the Long Form. Most forms have at least two of these energies, and some have many more. Single Whip, for instance, contains all of the Eight Energies. It is the most satisfying and intriguing of the postures in the Long Form.

The Five Directions are the platforms that the Eight Energies rest and move on. The Five Directions; Forward, Backward, Look to the Left, Beware the Right and Central Equilibrium can be employed in several ways. First, as the direction one moves in response to the enemy's actions. Second, they define an area of space with an individual's Dan Tian as that space's center. Third, they act as vectors that fix the position of the Dan Tian and allow the establishment of Root. Pair the directions together Forward with Backward, Left with Right and Central Equilibrium acting as the vertical axis and we get something like the following diagram.

If we assume the Dan Tian is the origin or the place where the vectors meet then the Five Directions can be used to define the location and the activity of the Dan Tian during an application or in the practice of the solo form. Central Equilibrium is the most intriguing of the Five Directions since it isn't paired with a complimentary opposite as are the other four.

*(continued on page 3)*

The reason why I have the liberty of making Central Equilibrium its own vector is this; Central Equilibrium is paired or defined relative to the other four directions. The other four directions are straight forward and amenable to interpretation, Forward, Backward, Left and Right. But what does Central Equilibrium mean? In context with the larger concept of Taijiquan it is the person performing the art whose equilibrium must be maintained. Since Taijiquan players consider all motion/power to be controlled by the Dan Tian, Central Equilibrium refers to equilibrium of the Dan Tian.

The Five Directions lead us to the concept of “Root,” your connection to the ground. Power is drawn from the Root for offense and sunk into it for defense. Root allows the smooth beautiful motion across the ground that a skilled martial artist exhibits. Root is the dynamic balance of all forces on the body and allows effortless motion and perfect stillness. A Rooted person is a centered person who possesses the quality of Central Equilibrium.

Since being centered or having Central Equilibrium is an internal matter and “Root” is an external one, it is always relative to something else, usually the ground beneath our feet. Imagine a person floating in deep water unable to touch anything else. They would be perfectly capable of changing their own orientation thus possessing Central Equilibrium. But, if another object is placed in close proximity to this person, say another swimmer, a push against the new object is as likely to move both the first swimmer and the new object. But, as our Taiji swimmer touches the bottom of the pool a Root is established. Then he becomes much more effective at manipulating our second swimmer. The previous explanation leads to the conclusion that a Rooted person is a Centered person, but a Centered person is not necessarily a Rooted person. The explanation isn’t perfect since a good swimmer is much more effective in the water than I’ve described.

A better way of envisioning the relationship between center and root is to imagine an environment without gravity. A Taijiquan practitioner learns first to cope with gravity. It is the first force that must be balanced. One of my main rules for good Taiji practice is; “Don’t fight gravity.”

The Long Form is a mnemonic tool for learning the principles of Taijiquan. It slowly moves a person through the combinations of the Eight Energies and Five Directions in a choreographed response to an imagined attacker allowing the practitioner’s body to learn correct structure (skeletal alignment), Balance and Root. The Long Form moves from the relatively linear movements of the first part (Brush Knee and Step Forward.) To the rotational movements (Wave Hands in Clouds) and aggressive kicking in the second part to the beautiful spiral Fa Jin patterns (Fair Maiden Weaves with Shuttle) and directional

changes in the third part of the form. What is the most important part of the form? The question is too broad to answer definitively. However, the sequence of movements Ward Off, Rollback, Press, Push and Single Whip is repeated eight times, too many times to be a coincidence. Many teachers have worked on the form over the years with ample opportunity to make changes.

Respect for tradition is part of martial training, but it is difficult to accept that much repetition unless the material was important. A fighter has to develop instinctive responses to attacks. Taijiquan uses the Eight Energies and the Five Directions as the basis for all of its techniques. The form continually returns to that repeated series to set the pattern into muscle memory. So the Eight Energies and the Five Directions are available when needed. The conscious mind need not be consulted. On many occasions I find myself using unconsciously Taijiquan in daily life. One example is using the body structure found in the posture “An” to open and shut a door. I regularly have to pass through a set of very heavy fire doors reminiscent of an airlock at my job, because my work requires a very precise regulation of the temperature and humidity. As I approach the doors, I’ve noticed my deep Roots, my chest arcs and my back rounds to support my arms as I open the doors. Other people frequently struggle with these doors. I find them easily opened when my body uses Taijiquan. I feel the inertia of the door countered by the power flowing from my legs through my torso, arms and hands. The moment that I connect with the door and feel its weight pass into the ground through my body is similar to the feeling I get while Pushing Hands. It took hearing my co-workers struggle with the door on several occasions to get me to think about what was happening. Sometimes I would pass through the doors without breaking my stride; on other occasions I struggled with the doors as much as anyone else when I wasn’t Rooted or some part of my body wasn’t properly aligned.

When opening the doors was effortless I was using the “An” energy. I cannot take credit for this because my body was doing Taijiquan without me. In other words (my mind) was too busy with work.

Practicing Taijiquan teaches my body at some level below the conscious. The repetition of the Eight Energies and the Five Directions has sunk in. When I needed to use Taijiquan, it was there. Opening a door or simply walking with Root is a long way from combat. These simpler, smaller signs of progress in my practice give me hope and the confidence that the Taijiquan method is purposeful.

## YMAA AROUND THE GLOBE

### WORLD TAI CHI AND QIGONG DAY

This year's World Tai Chi and Qigong Day (WTCQD) on April 30, 2005 got off to a great start. Many events took place around the world. Here in Boston, Jeff Pratt, YMAA senior Tai Chi instructor, took his push hands class to the Arnold Arboretum where they practiced qigong, centering and the Yang Long Form. (Photographs can be seen on the WTCQD web site). Canadian media reported in one article, T'ai Chi Event to Spread Peace: There's more to World T'ai Chi and Qigong Day than spreading the gospel of the gentle movement and meditation practice that is credited with a plethora of health benefits.



Scotland's Edinburgh WTCQD event donated all proceeds from their daylong Tai Chi workshops to a *Scottish Trust for Burn Victims of War*. For more information go to their web site at <http://worldtaichiday.org/ScotlandWTCQDburnVictimFUND.html>".

Governors and mayors in Buenos Aires, Argentina, Silicon Valley Calif., Osasco, Brasil, and Hasting Neb., officially proclaimed WTCQD 2005 with various outpourings of support. The Kansas WTCQD contingent spoke with the governor about integrating Tai Chi into public education and penal rehabilitation, and gave the governor their *Attention Deficit Disorder and Tai Chi Study* to look over.

Go to "<http://worldtaichiday.org/WTCProclamations.html#anchorMayors>" for more information.

WTCQD also reached out this year to special education, Rotary International Clubs, and to Multiple Sclerosis, and Arthritis foundations. World Tai Chi and Arthritis Day is now officially linked with World Tai Chi and Qigong Day, and next year will hold worldwide events.

### SIGHTINGS

**Dennis Willmont**, YMAA Tai Chi practitioner, author and acupuncturist, conducted a Healing with Essential oil Workshop and Book Release at the Whidden School of Fitness in Marshfield, Mass., June 10 and June 13, 2005.

**Jeff Rosen**, longtime YMAA Tai Chi instructor, hosted a push hands gathering in Western Mass., July 12, 2005. Rosen hopes to make this a yearly event. Anyone who has practiced Tai Chi Push Hands is welcomed to attend. Those who haven't can tag along and enjoy the food and the fun.

### MEDICAL MIND

A recent study in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* found that 14 of 70 products contained high levels of lead, mercury, and/or arsenic. In Ayurveda, the traditional medicine system from India, herbal remedies often contain heavy metals, which are believed to have therapeutic value. But the products may cause serious toxicity at recommended doses, the researchers warn, especially in children and pregnant women. A previous report explained 12 cases of lead poisoning associated with Ayurveda medicines.

There's a little yellow plant that can be used to treat exercise-induced injuries or prevent soreness caused by training. Research has shown that arnica (*Arnica Montana*), applied topically on unbroken skin or taken internally in homeopathic dilutions, can reduce pain caused by osteoarthritis or trauma. Because arnica can be toxic at high concentrations, be sure to consult your healthcare provider before taking it internally.

Don't fall for claims made by Hydroxycut, a weight loss supplement sold in drugstores and on the internet. It contains supposed fat-burning, metabolism boosting ingredients such as hydroxycitric acid (from the herb *Garcinia cambogia*), *Gymnema sylvestre* (another herb), chromium and green tea extract. The evidence that these compounds aid weight loss is sketchy or conflicting, and there are no studies on Hydroxycut itself. You don't even know how much of some of these ingredients you're getting, or even if they're safe.

### BOOKENDS

Here are some books and DVDs that have gained in popularity over the past few months and are a definite "must read/view" for martial artists. *Arthritis Relief - book*, (3rd edition) by **Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming**. *Sunrise Tai Chi - DVD*, by **Ramel Rones**. *Martial Arts Instruction - book*, by **Lawrence A. Kane** and *Tai Chi Connections - book*, by **John Loupos**.

## SPECIAL TOPICS

QIGONG - A PART OF YOUR  
EVERYDAY LIFE

BY YANGLING JOHNSON

Qigong, an Ancient Healing Practice, with Relevance to 21st Century Psychotherapy are the topics in my books, *A Woman's Qigong Guide* and *Qigong for Living*. Having emerged from the 90's and the "decade of the brain," we have seen a renewed interest and respect in their therapeutic relationship and their ability to affect the plasticity of the brain toward greater integration and the subsequent experience of well being. This pursuit of optimal brain functioning in the medical field has led researchers to a renewed curiosity about the ancient consciousness practices such as meditation, which has been shown to draw upon and enrich right hemispheric (brain) functioning. This is an area that I focus on in keeping with this renewed appreciation for the therapeutic contributions of ancient consciousness systems. In my books you will read about the experiences of an ancient whole systems approach to development that can expand your capacities and help you draw from deeper sources of knowledge in your role of self healing.

**What is eating right?**

A German-American Chinese medical practitioner, Dr. Fruehauf, told his audience, "If you set your mind on Chinese natural health care, you will discover a gold mine." More than 7,000 years of health care built on balancing the qi (chee--; vital energy) between the mind and body, has shown that first it comes from eating right, then exercises such as tai ji and qigong. The last option is medicine.

Briefly, the Chinese cultural way of eating right is about:

- How to balance your emotions and health by eating nutritional food.
- How to adapt to changes in your body, hormonal changes, life style changes, climate changes and environmental changes, etc.
- Find YOUR optimal way through herbal food. (For example, licorice in herbal formulas, green onion in herbal food cooking as a harmonizer.) The complex theories of Yin-Yang and Five-Elements are practiced using natural flavors and ingredients, etc.

**Qigong is the Heart of Chinese medicine.**

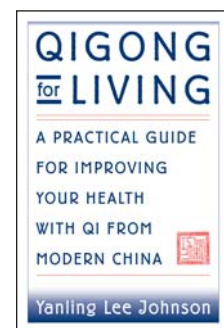
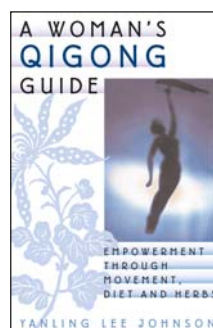
Based on how Chinese whole health care is developed, and the information in the Yellow Emperor's Nei Jing, in the I Ching and in the many other ancient books, there is no doubt that qigong is the heart of Chinese medicine. By simply paying attention to the Chinese vocabulary and terms that are used daily, regarding Chinese medicine and diet, you will see how this heart-spirit connection functions. It is something that deeply and profoundly occupies Chinese culture.

**Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) working on the vital energy in living people versus Western medicine theory based on autopsy.**

TCM is directly related to the inner spirit because it is generated from the universe, the fountain of qigong practice. The essential theory in TCM is derived from the I Ching theory. For example, the terms, qi, yin and yang, five element, etc. all came from the qi exercise, the earliest "qi-gong," dao yin. The Yellow Emperor's teacher, Pengzu (Grandpa Peng) taught the Yellow Emperor how to practice the dao yin (mind guiding breathing). Dao yin, the quiet exercise, later developed into many styles that include movements such as qi-gong, tai chi, and other martial arts. The first person who named such mind-body balancing practices such as qigong, was Immortal Xu Zhi-Yang (about 1,600 years ago).

The fundamental theory of TCM (qigong theory) is that TCM shares almost all the terms that are used in qigong such as the channels and collaterals, the Eight Extra-channels, and acupoints. All of these terms and names originate from qigong practice. Most TCM treatment methods also originated from qigong practice. For example, Chinese tui na is a qigong way of healing patients. Thus tui na is quite different from massage and is not an accurate way to translate it as massage. TCM orthopaedists is also a qigong practice. No TCM orthopedist can do his or her job well if they are not thoroughly educated in qigong and practice at a high level. There is a huge fundamental difference between the treatments of Western orthopedists and their TCM counterparts.

All the ancient TCM practitioners practiced qigong or tai chi and were great masters. Chinese martial arts originated from qigong and the majority of masters have TCM knowledge especially on tui na and orthopedics. Almost all the Daoists, and many Confucian scholars, including officials and generals, have some TCM education which includes eating correctly.



## MARTIAL ARTS FUN IN THE SUN (AND RAIN)

Though YMAA practitioners tend to be less prone to enthusiastic comments than other tai chi practitioners, I think it is fair to say that our YMAA/Western Mass gathering left folks gushing. Of course, thanks to some biblical downpours, the event left some of us gushing in more ways than one.

In short, despite the absolute lack of structure I offered participants, the YMAA turned out for a day of open practice and picnicking. It was great to see so many people enjoying the park and really inspiring to see so many instructors make the trek to train. It felt more like a day in 1995, than 2005, watching Roger Whidden, Dennis Wilmont, Paul Mahoney, Joe and Carol Best, James Noble, Dvorah Eisenstein, Jim O'Leary and Jeff Pratt, pushing, doing forms, sword and saber sets, and practicing the fighting set in the fields.

For those of us who might have flashed back to an earlier day in our training lives, there were many other reminders that time did not stand still. Zenzelee Best, allegedly age 10, towered over most of us. The Whidden trio wrestled in the mud and availed themselves of the park services like the young adults they have suddenly become. As for me, I had plenty of reminders that it wasn't 1995, racing with Anna to the paddleboats, or repeatedly retying the pants that Jake enjoyed untying.

And, if we didn't get enough reminders of the turning of our own lives, we had the pleasure of being joined by a great turnout of the newest, dedicated YMAA practitioners, most of who have officially worn off the shine that comes with being the new kid. Getting tossed around by Brian Muccio, Mark Klein, Dan Salive, Bill Buckley, Dan Rothstein and the other members of the 'new generation' reminded me that the group's skill set continues to expand.

In addition to the great YMAA turnout, we were fortunate to be joined by area instructors such as Rob Zilin, Joe Carroll, Michael Burkhart, Stan Baker, Marcia Roy and many of their students. Of course, the event's co-sponsor, Jeff Felberbaum lent plenty of spirit, enthusiasm and bodies to the event.

As the day wound down at its own pace and the second set of thunderstorms rolled in, Roger, Rick and I found ourselves in the rare position of practicing our form in the middle of that biblical downpour. I also suddenly felt myself motivated to 'get lower' hearing Dr. Yang's constant cajoling in my head, knowing that if I could honor that command and stay low, I was the least likely member of the bunch to be struck by lightning.

Thanks to everyone for coming out. Maybe we can make this an annual, Tai Chi anarchist gathering.

*Rosen is a YMAA Tai Chi instructor*



**Jeff Rosen leads Rodger and student**



**Jeff Rosen pushes with Daniel Rothstein**



**Rodger and Joe practicing Tai Chi Fighting Set**



**Rodger and Jim (engaging)**

**YMAA Qualified Active Instructors: 6/30/2005**

**MASTER: Shaolin/Taijiquan**  
Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming

**INSTRUCTORS:****Shaolin**

Jeffery Bolt (Houston, TX)  
George Dominguez (Boston, MA)

**Taijiquan**

Jeffery Bolt (Houston, TX)  
Jeffrey Pratt (Boston, MA)  
Jeffrey Rosen (Boston, MA)  
Roger Whidden (Marshfield, MA)  
Vadas Mihaly (Hungary)

**Chin Na**

Jim Noble

**Shaolin ASST. INSTRUCTORS**

Adam Dzieciatko (Gdansk, Poland)  
Adam Wypart (Katowice, Poland)  
Alex Kiesel (Andover, MA)  
Bartlomiej Grad (Krakow, Poland)  
Christopher Fazzino (Andover, MA)  
Celso Barja (Portugal)  
Corlius Birkill (South Africa)  
James O'Leary (Boston, MA)  
James Yang (Boston, MA)  
Jaroslaw Koza (Gdynia, Poland)  
John Gilbert Jones (Seattle, WA)  
Karol Lubecki (Gdynia, Poland)  
Kazimierz Szyrowski (Poland)  
Krzysztof Marcinek (Gdansk, Poland)  
Maciej Ciesielski (Gdynia, Poland)  
Makula Zsolt (Hungary)  
Marek Sadowski (Gdynia, Poland)  
Mark Seidel (Scranton, PA)  
Mariusz Sroczyński  
Mike Orlandella (Boston, MA)  
Mike Vasicek  
Narcyz Latecki (Acton, MA)  
Pawel Antonowicz (Gdansk, Poland)  
Pedro Rodrigues (Portugal)  
Piotr Czerepek (Gdansk, Poland)  
Rafal Kulbalka (Gdansk, Poland)  
Rafal Szulkowski (Sopot, Poland)  
Ramel Rones (Boston, MA)  
Ravi Dixit (Boston, MA)  
Robert Was (Krakow, Poland)  
Simon Pang (Boston, MA)  
Tai D. Ngo (Boston, MA)  
Targos Mariusz (Wroclaw, Poland)  
Tomir Kaczmarek (Poland)  
Victor Casqueiro (Portugal)  
Zbigniew Panasewicz (Krakow, Poland)

**Taijiquan**

Adam Wypart (Poland)  
Alex Kiesel (Andover, MA)  
Barbara Wypart (Poland)  
Carol Shearer-Best (Boston, MA)  
Charles Yotte (Paris, France)  
Chris Hartgrove (Boston, MA)  
Corlius Birkill (South Africa)  
Dennis Wilmont (Boston, MA)  
Florence Leonard (Paris, France)  
Gerard Ashe (Boston, MA)  
Harold Dupuis (Paris, France)  
James Noble (Boston, MA)  
James O'Leary (Boston, MA)  
Jaroslaw Koza (Poland)  
Jean-Louis Laneres (Paris, France)  
John Redmond (Derry, NH)  
Joseph Best Jr. (Boston, MA)  
Kazimierz Szyrowski (Gdansk, Poland)  
Kovesdi Andras (Hungary)  
Ludovico Romeo (Napoli, Italy)  
Marek Sadowski  
Mariusz Sroczyński (Warsaw, Poland)  
Mark Falco (Andover, MA)  
Mark Rits (Boston, MA)  
Nicole Laneres (Paris, France)  
Pascal Plee (Paris, France)  
Paul Blake III (Andover, MA)  
Paul Mahoney (Boston, MA)  
Pedro Rodrigues (Portugal)  
Pedro Graca (Portugal)  
Phil Goldman (Boston, MA)  
Piotr Ziemba (Poland)  
Ramel Rones (Boston, MA)  
Robert Was (Krakow, Poland)  
Sarkozi Ildiko (Budapest, Hungary)  
Victor Casqueiro (Portugal)  
Victor Marques (Charenton, France)

**Chin Na**

Aaron Damas  
Charles Yotte  
Corlius Birkill  
David W. Grantham  
David Camara  
Douglas Johnstone

Glenn Burselson  
Jim Noble  
Joseph Caulfield  
Mark Rits  
Mike Vasicek  
Mike Johnstone, Nick Woolley,  
Pascal Plee, Paul Green,  
Stephen Frankel and Victor Marques

**COACH INSTRUCTORS:**

Pascal Plee (Paris, France)  
Pascal Mongellaz (Martinique)  
Milan Vigil (Memphis, TN)  
Parviz Sassanian (Holland)  
Erik Elsemans (Belgium)  
Carol Stephenson (Dublin, Ireland)  
Lewis Paleias (Hollywood, FL)  
Richard Levesque (Quebec, Canada)

**YMAA Headquarters Locations****YMAA International Headquarters**

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Tel/Fax: 27(0)12 362 5568  
Email: school@ymaasa.co.za  
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**YMAA Branch Schools (America)****YMAA No. Andover**

65 Flagship Dr., S-B  
N. Andover, MA 01845  
Director: Alex Kiesel  
Tel: (978) 725-3600  
Fax: (978) 725-8929  
email: yangsandov@aol.com  
www.yangsandover.com

**YMAA Marshfield**

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## EDITORIAL

Now that summer has finally arrived in New England and the hot weather is upon us it's easy to skip classes, not from high school or college but from your martial arts practice. Well, if that's what you're thinking of doing, my advice is, DON'T DO IT. As Dr. Yang always says, *practice makes perfect*. On a more personal note, I find that summer is the best time to practice, no matter where you are, whether it's inland or near the sea shore. Most Tai Chi practitioners are well aware of the fact that you don't need a whole lot of room to practice. To practice Qigong takes even less room because most times, you're standing still. Ramel Rones, in his *Sunrise Tai Chi* DVD, talks about practicing early in the morning. I find that time extremely invigorating because as Rones says, "that's when everything comes alive. The birds are chirping, the air is sweet and Mother Earth is energizing herself preparing for another long day of supporting all of her children and the headaches that many of us heap upon her each day." With that said, we should all strive to make practice time our own "special event" chalk full of deep breathing, physical awareness and a deep and profound spiritual awareness.

The time you practice is yours to do with what you want. One morning, not too long ago, I had the pleasure of practicing in an empty, wide open soccer field. Little did I know that I was being watched...not by another human, but by a dog. I was half way through the form and spotted this rather large black Labrador Retriever innocently sitting there looking my way. The Lab was probably asking the question, "What in the world is that silly person doing?" Needless to say, I was asking a similar question, "What is that Lab looking at?" Finally, the Lab's owner came over and also decided to watch...a little distracting, but nonetheless I took it as a complement. *Wow, I must be looking good*. Then a woman, who I presume was his wife, walked over and also decided to watch. *Now, I knew I was really looking good*, but my thinking got the best of me. I began to lose my sense of concentration and my form degenerated into something that resembled a badly choreographed ballet. Still, after I finished, they walked over and said they enjoyed in their words, "my performance." As they left, I could have sworn the Lab turned around and smiled. Maybe he knew more about Tai Chi than I gave him credit for.  
DAN HOOD



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## Editor's Corner

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Despite the hot weather, Dr. Yang's South African seminar was a huge success. YMAA students from all over the world attended and were treated to a rigorous and almost non-stop workshop covering much of YMAA's curriculum. However, thanks to Corlius Birkill, it was not all work and no play. Birkill hosted many events including a tour of an animal game reserve that featured a few thrills. Anyone who's not used to seeing 500 pound lions roaming free certainly would be surprised to see one looking them squarely in the eye. I might add however that a game warden or two kept a close eye on any lion who happened to get a little too frisky. Plus the lions are fenced off from spectators.

## Attention Authors

YMAA Publication Center welcomes manuscripts on Martial Arts and Qigong. If you've got a book in you, let us know.

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