

For thousands of years, people have found spiritual, mental and physical well-being through martial art forms such as yoga and tai chi.

In recent years, the popularity of these art forms has been increasing steadily in American culture.

The rise of workout videos and programs such as Tae-Bo, as well as other augmented martial-arts/aerobic-style videos, is a good indication as to just how much American culture is embracing these ancient practices.

In conjunction with what is quickly becoming the next fad in American exercise, many traditional martial arts centers are now offering classes in yoga and tai chi. One such center is Roseberry's Sho-Rei-Shobu-Kan Martial Arts Center, 1811 N St., which offers classes in yoga and tai chi, as well as karate, aikido, judo, kobudo and jiu-jitsu.

On Sunday, the center held a seminar on yoga and tai chi to introduce the practices to people who may or may not have been exposed to them before. It was an opportunity for people to see just why these two art forms are suddenly becoming so popular.

"One of the things they do is just help people focus their minds," said Patty Cottingham, a yoga instructor for Roseberry's Sho-Rei-Shobu-Kan Martial Arts Center. "Our minds work overtime, and this helps you stay focused in the present."

The seminar began when Cottingham sat down with the nine people in attendance and explained some of the ideas behind yoga.

"Yoga means the way of unification of body, mind and spirit," she said. "We need to maintain this feeling in everything we do."

Members of the group started out by establishing a good posture and then working on breathing – something Cottingham said was very important.

"Anytime we get excited and stressed out, our breathing goes," she said. "So anytime we can maintain our breathing, we can stay calm."

An ancient practice that originated along with sitting meditation in India, yoga helps improve balance, strength and flexibility through a series of movements and poses, Cottingham said.

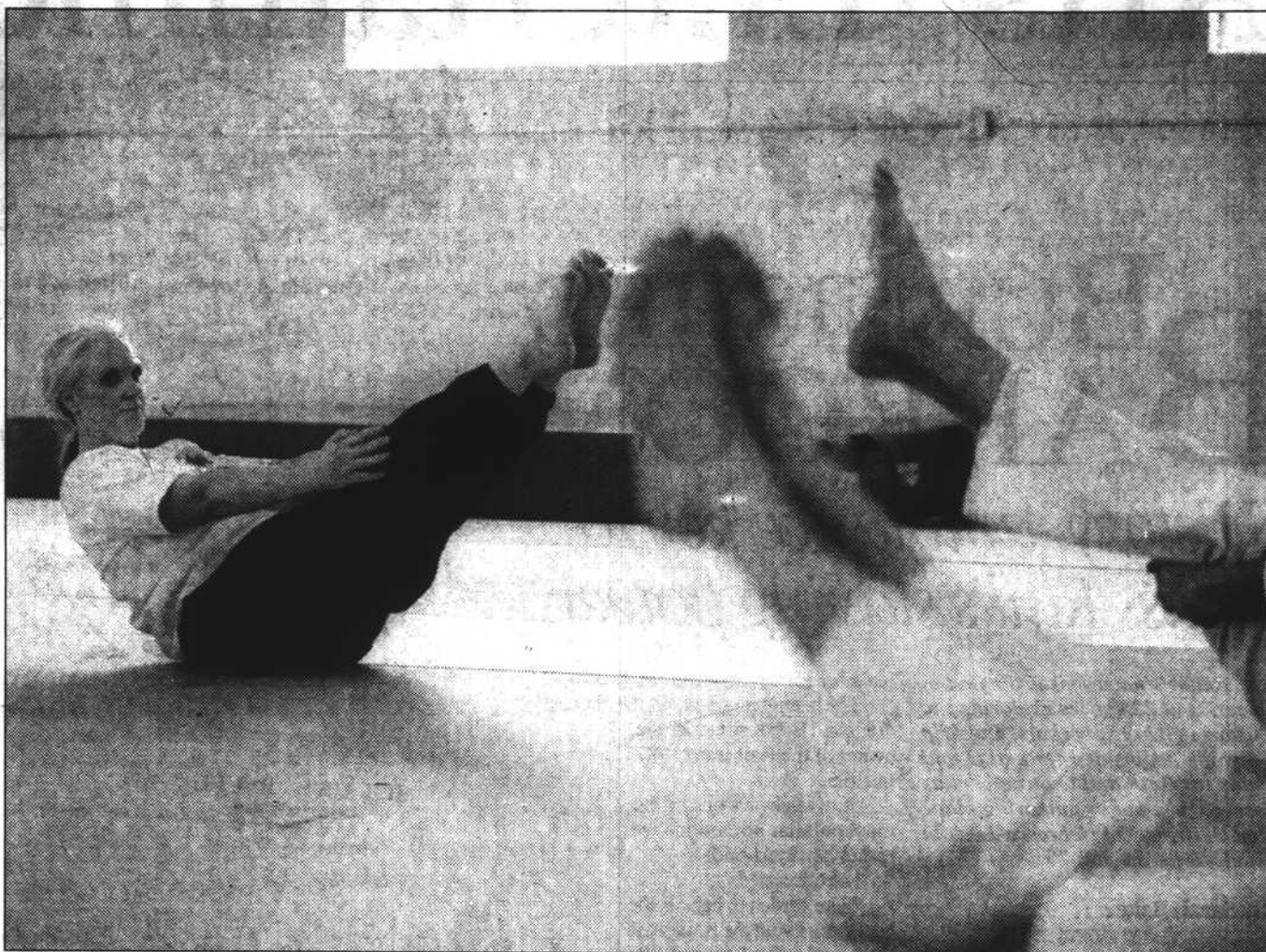
Sunday's group started small with a number of different arm movements while sitting and its members eventually moved on to more advanced poses. All the while, Cottingham offered explanations for each movement's physical and spiritual implications.

"Minds are like children," she said. "little, nasty, rotten children who won't listen. We have to tone that mind to pay attention to what our body is telling it."

After about two hours, Cottingham turned the group over to tai chi instructor Sue Johnson, who led them in a lesson of the ancient art.

Unlike yoga, tai chi is a combination of slow dance-like movements with controlled breathing to produce a relaxed sense of well-being. It is based on the Chinese boxing system and elaborates on a softness that is often overlooked in martial arts, but that is still applicable to self-defense practices.

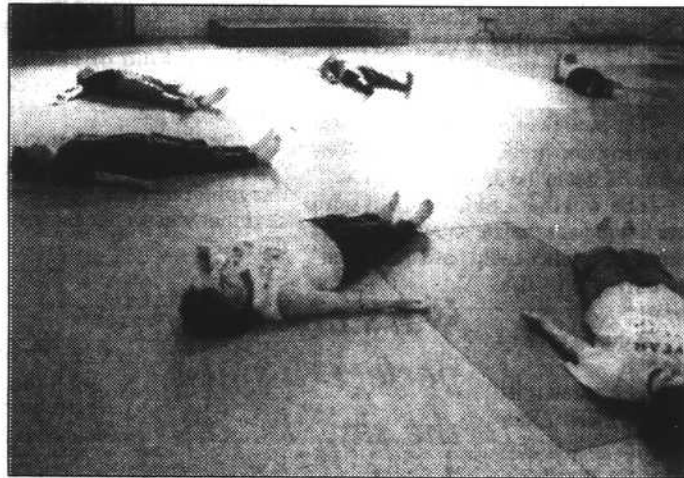
Johnson said that, aside from a few differences, yoga and tai chi were very similar.



story by Jason Hardy
photos by Heather Glenboski

Peace of Mind

Toning body, spirit possible through yoga and tai chi



ABOVE: STUDENTS LIE IN the corpse position, part of a relaxation yoga exercise. Yoga focuses on the unification of body, mind and spirit.

TOP RIGHT: YOGA INSTRUCTOR Sue Johnson demonstrates the boat position Sunday afternoon during a Yoga/Tai Chi seminar at Roseberry's Sho-Rei-Shobu-Kan Martial Arts Center, 1811 N St.

TOP LEFT: JOSH LIBENGOOD PRACTICES the alternative nostril realization breathing technique. Breathing correctly is a major part of yoga.

"The principles are the same," she said. "The focus is on growing as a person."
She said both yoga and tai chi can be powerful tools for self-health and growth, things that peak many people's attention.
"There's a lot of interest," Johnson said. "A lot of health clubs want to offer this, but it's difficult finding qualified

instructors."
No matter how interested the general public may be in yoga and tai chi, Johnson made it very clear that the exercises only work when taken seriously.
"It's not a quick fix," she said. "It has to be a person who is really willing to work on their growth."

Guitar virtuoso brings eclectic style to Lied stage

By Josh Nichols
Staff writer

At the age of 15, Dominic Gaudio picked up a guitar and started playing.

He practiced diligently, finding a talent and passion in playing the instrument.

Growing up in an age when big-hair metal bands from Los Angeles ruled the music scene, Gaudio grabbed a few buddies and started a rock band, "Sabator".

"Our style of music was 'The Red Hot Chili Peppers' meet 'Iron Maiden,'" the 27-year-old musician said in an interview from his home in Chicago.

The hard-rocking teens from New Jersey began traveling while playing gigs and made it as far as Panama City, Fla., where they did a week of performances.

If this is beginning to sound like a "VH1: Behind the Music," no need to worry, the "Sabator" story ends here.

Gaudio said he decided to stop playing and unsuccessfully tried out

the corporate world, only to return to his guitar in 1995.

His diverse blend of sounds, which can be heard tonight and Tuesday night at the Lied Center for Performing Arts, is a mix of classical, Spanish, folk, Indian and new-age music.

He specializes in the six- and 12-string guitar, but also has worked with exotic instruments, such as the Australian didgeridu.

The didgeridu was described by Gaudio as the most "completely unique and amazing" instrument that he has ever heard or learned.

The naturally-made instrument comes from eucalyptus trees that have been hollowed out by termites.

Musicians blow into the instrument and can make a note waver a half step up or down, providing a nice base to set the rest of the music to, Gaudio said.

At tonight's and Tuesday's performances, Gaudio will be accompanied by Ian Hesford on the didgeridu.

The recent attention Gaudio has begun to receive for his music did not

happen overnight.
When he first returned to the music scene, Gaudio traveled around playing Starbucks coffee houses and making \$30 a performance.

More recently, he opened for the jazz ensemble Acoustic Alchemy and for the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra.

He has two compact discs and plans to release a third in about a month.

The new CD includes keyboard, drum, violin, bass guitar and other sounds, whereas his other CDs were basically solo pieces featuring his guitar playing.

"This CD will have more of an edge than a lot of the smooth jazz you hear on the radio," he said.

Gaudio has continued to produce a unique blend of music because he tries not to limit himself to one sound, he said.

Although he can't read or write music, he is able to compose his new music simply by sound and memory.

Gaudio devotes most of his time to playing in benefit concerts

such as the Race Unity Festival in Atlanta and concerts for the Citizens for a Better Environment.

"I like to use my talent to help other people," he said.

Charles Bethea, executive director for the Lied Center, was able to hear Gaudio at a performance exhibition.

He described it as a fresh sound with a different background.

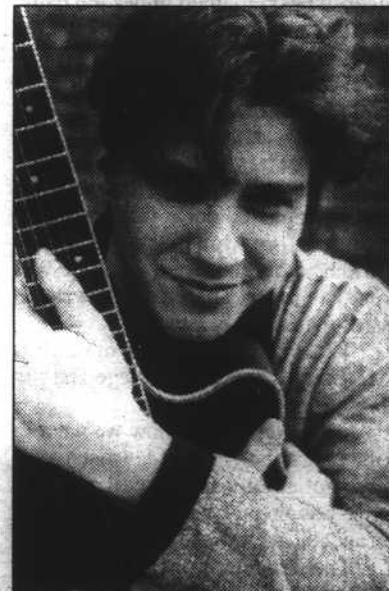
"We have a commitment to emerging artists and considered him to have some appeal to younger people," he said.

Bethea has also had the opportunity to hear the didgeridu, which he described as an odd, natural, yet fascinating instrument.

"It has a booming sound that lies a tone under everything else," he said.

Gaudio said people in Lincoln will get an opportunity to experience a new, different sound.

"Anyone who sees and hears this performance will hear acoustic like they have never heard before," Gaudio said. "They will especially be surprised at the didgeridu."



Courtesy Photo
Dominic Gaudio, a guitar player from New Jersey, brings his unique mix of jazz, blues, folk and new age to the Lied Center for Performing Arts tonight.