

The Newsletter of the  
**Twin Cities T'ai-Chi Ch'uan Studio**  
2242 University Ave  
St Paul, MN 55114  
(651) 767-0267

# Wu-Dang

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www.tctaichi.org  
email: mail@tctaichi.org

Paper copies complimentary for Studio members.  
An e-version is available. Please email.

## A FOND FAREWELL

By Sifu Ray Hayward

After 18 volumes and 60 editions, I am announcing the end of our Wu-Dang Newsletter. It started as a monthly publication to keep students informed and to be an outlet for writing and sharing. We published a 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition (copies are still available) and we have had some great editions. Guest contributors, from the Studio and from friends and colleagues around the country made our humble publication a treasure-trove of Tai-Chi information.

We will still publish our monthly Wee Wu-Dang e-newsletter and will email updates about schedule changes and events. You can give us your email to receive mailings. Hard copies will be posted on the mirror. Just think of the trees we are saving!

Thanks to all the writers and contributors; please make submissions for the e-newsletter, as well.

## YEAR OF THE RABBIT

by Sifu Ray Hayward



Feb. 3 is the Chinese New Year and ushers in the Rabbit Year. We will be celebrating Feb. 26 at 5:00pm at the Studio with a banquet at U Garden to follow. Sign up for the banquet at the Studio.

## Remaining TEACHER TRAINING SEMINAR

By Sifu Ray Hayward

Teacher training and tutor refresher course,  
Fall/Winter 2010-2011

**Saturday, March 12**  
Tutor Training and Update

This seminar is free and open to any current Studio member. If you regularly tutor at our Studio, you need to have attended either the Oct. or Nov. class and are required the March class. There are new policies and teaching strategies being instituted for assimilating new students.

## NEW SCHEDULE Jan. 15-June 15, 2011

by Sifu Ray Hayward

The only new classes are a Wednesday night Pa-Kua from 8:30 to 9:30, which you can join as a new student until March 1.

The Saturday Meditation class from 9:00 to 10:00am will be open to new students March 15. Other than those changes, there are no new classes scheduled until June. If you have any questions, please ask.

## OUTGOING BOARD CHAIR

by Rondi Atkin

I have four things to say as I step down from my four years on the board, including two as chair:

First, it's no coincidence that "step down" is the standard term used here, implying downward movement from an elevated position: It has been a privilege to serve the Studio, our Sifus, and our lineage.

Chairing the Board has taught me to read spreadsheets and has helped me develop organizational and leadership skills. It has given me a profound sense of achievement and has forced me to face my shortcomings. For this and more, I am grateful.

I would like to thank Sifu Ray, Sifu Paul, Kim, and fellow board members for your work and support. I would also like to thank Studio members and friends who have supported the Board's efforts through generous contributions of time, attention, skills, and money.

Finally, I am happy to pass the gavel to Anita Ryan, resume my role as a student, and continue to serve the art of T'ai-Chi through the development of my practice.

## NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

by Kim Hayward

Our board revolves two to three members on and off each year. We thank Rondi Atkin our outgoing chair, and Sharon Nyberg our outgoing vice chair, for their years of wonderful service.

Our newly elected members are: Lesley Kadish and Karin San Juan. We look forward to their contributions.



Our current board: Anita Ryan, chair; Dennis Kelly, vice chair; Ralph Jerndal, secretary; Tom Hautman, treasurer; Rich Palmer, Lesley Kadish, Karin San Juan

## INCOMING BOARD CHAIR

by Anita Ryan

In his early 40s, after years of unhealthy living, T.T. Liang became gravely ill. In an attempt to find a cure for his disease, he approached Cheng Man-ch'ing, a well known and highly skilled Chinese physician and T'ai-Chi master. As part of the examination, Cheng Man-ch'ing felt Liang's pulse. "What is it that you feel?" asked Liang. Cheng Man-ch'ing replied, "I feel the pulse of a dead man." Certainly not a very good prognosis!

Liang became first a patient and then a primary student of Cheng Man-ch'ing's. His health returned, and for the next 60 years Liang devoted himself to the study and practice of T'ai-Chi Ch'uan. Because of his healing experience with T'ai-Chi, Liang developed a passion for the wide dissemination of his martial art. He transmitted this passion to his own students, who in turn have been sharing Liang's knowledge, wisdom and art through their work at the Twin Cities T'ai-Chi Ch'uan Studio.

This year the Board of Directors of the TCTCCS will be refocusing their efforts on Liang's mission, the sharing of T'ai-Chi Ch'uan's benefits with as wide and diverse a population as possible. During this first quarter of the new year, planning will focus on bolstering the foundation of the organization and on supporting Sifus Ray and Paul as they work on sharing Liang's T'ai-Chi legacy. Because the Studio is a community that relies on the participation and feedback of its members, board directors will be putting out feelers in an effort to obtain your thoughts and ideas. However, don't wait for us to call you. If you have something you would like to share, let us know. If you want to contact me directly, send me an e-mail ([anita@fbsdevelopmentgroup.com](mailto:anita@fbsdevelopmentgroup.com)) or grab me after class.

I am excited about the new year and the possibilities that the Studio will have for all of us. If I don't talk to you individually during the next month, I will look forward to visiting at February's Chinese New Year celebration. Happy New Year to you all!

## ILLUMINATING THE IDEAS OF T'AI-CHI CH'UAN

by Mike Cain

As a consultant with an international information technology company, I have had the good fortune to be placed in many situations around the world where strategy, survival and service are required to be successful. Of course this is in regards to the numerous interpersonal relationships initiated and cultivated in a business environment, rather than actual life or death scenarios. Nevertheless, all of the philosophy, principles and methods espoused within the art of T'ai-Chi Ch'uan can be applied.



As I discover more about the simple yet profound concepts symbolized in the yin-yang diagram, and duly manifested in the Solo Form and Pushing-Hands

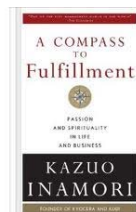
methods, I have come to realize that the Way of T'ai-Chi can be applied to engagements everywhere – assuming of course one is aware of such things. Much like studying the physical sensations of adhere, join, stick, and follow, the mental sensations can also be illuminated, studied and practiced. Over the years I have begun to play with, codify and test some of these concepts in different situations. As they have become solidified in my mind, I have continued to nurture them and started to share applications with my colleagues and protégés.

Consider the idea of simultaneously “caring and not caring.” This notion is something that has been very interesting and useful in my personal and professional life. When engaging others, we

tend to care too much or not care enough. And, of course, if we choose to care or not care, it's usually at the wrong time. Just as we use the symbol of T'ai-Chi to represent duality and balance, caring and not caring must be separate, balanced and ever changing. It should also be noted (with a smile) that the mental implementation of “caring and not caring” is just as simple as staying relaxed, balanced and still... just prior to being pushed!

Through countless opportunities, I have slowly come to understand that being of service and practicing truly selfless behavior is difficult. To have any hope of progressing in these areas, one must cultivate mental abilities and techniques just like learning how to physically balance relaxation with proper alignment. Whether we are acting as a mentor, consultant, educator or service provider - for free or fee - our effectiveness can be elevated by approaching the engagement with the same awareness and attitude exhibited on the warm wood floor of the Studio.

I hope to illuminate more of this idea, as well as a few tangential concepts in a small set of future seminars. (\*See below for the first date.)



Finally, I recently discovered this quote by Dr. Kazuo Inamori in his new book, *A Compass to Fulfillment*.

“Our lives take on their true meanings when we do our best at the ordinary things in life: working hard, being thankful, thinking good thoughts, doing the right thing, practicing self-reflection and self-discipline, refining our minds, and elevating our character in everyday life.”

**The first of Mike Cain's seminars will be Thursday night, February 10.**

## WITH GRATITUDE to my friends at the studio by Paul Abdella

On Oct. 6, 2010, my father passed away peacefully at home after a long illness. I wish to thank all those at the Studio who expressed their condolences to me in person, or through cards, emails, gifts, flowers, or attending the memorials. Your support and acknowledgements have meant more to me than I can say.

When I was 10 years old, I saw my dad watching a boxing match on television one day. He was an avid sports fan so it wasn't unusual to find him doing this. I watched the bout for a few minutes with him then asked who the boxer was, the one with the fast hands and the fancy feet. He said he was Cassius Clay but he had recently changed his name to Muhammad Ali. I asked him why and don't really remember his answer. I guess I didn't really care. I only cared about the answer to my next question. "Dad, can I do that?" I wanted to box. He muttered something evasive and the subject was dropped.

About two months later, he said there was a Judo class starting up downtown at the YMCA. It was a six week class and was I interested in joining? There was a momentary sting as my last hopes for boxing lessons left the room. That feeling was quickly replaced with one of excitement as visions of me tossing my neighborhood friends and foes like cordwood filled my head. I couldn't wait to get started.



The reality of the class was very different. It wasn't easy. In fact, it was extremely difficult. Each class began with a lot of conditioning: endless calisthenics, running, duck walks up and down stairs, and Ukeme (falling practice). There was a lot of that. The workouts seemed to get more intense every week. I found myself strangely attracted to it all and the six weeks flew by.

Toward the end of the session, we were allowed to try Randori, Judo's version of free sparring. I was matched up with a kid bigger than I. I admit to being scared when it was our turn to come out on the mat and, for the next two minutes, attempt to throw each other. Once the match had started I

was surprised at how quickly my nerves settled and how aggressive I became. I made some valiant attempts to throw my classmate but the biggest surprise came when he attempted to throw me. I could sense his intentions through my hands and was able to neutralize all his throws. The match ended in a draw but by then I was hooked. I stayed at the St. Paul Judo club for the next six-and-a-half years, until the Bruce Lee craze put me in hot pursuit of a Kung Fu teacher.

My dad always supported and encouraged my efforts in the martial arts. At one point he even studied T'ai Chi with me and learned the first section of the long form. I try to always follow his example and be encouraging to students and people in general.

You never know what might grow from a little encouragement. Thanks again to all of you.

*My dad taught high school math for 35 years. He loved teaching and hated to take an early retirement at age 63 for a health condition. One of his former students who went on to college sent him this short essay. It was an assignment for a creative writing class that the student took. -Paul*

## **Mr. Abdella**

**by Chris Vigliaturo**

**October 1993**

My favorite teacher was my 11<sup>th</sup> grade Algebra teacher, Ed Abdella. He was an unlikely hero for a wisecracking 16-year-old in the early 80s. He wore polyester pants and dress shirts, invariably blue or brown. His eyeglasses were the black horn-rimmed style so popular in the 50s. His graying hair was sort of unruly, and he had Elvis Presley sideburns. He spoke in a soft, raspy baritone, as if his throat was sore.

He usually had a large smear of chalk on his pant leg from fetching his handkerchief to wipe his dust-covered hands. Chalk was everywhere in Mr. Abdella's classroom. He had three blackboard panels at the front of the room, with two more slates on the east wall. His soft, beige chalk readily flaked into a shower of dehumidifying particles wafting through the room, drawing moisture from every pore and facial cavity, and depositing a layer of dust on every horizontal surface.

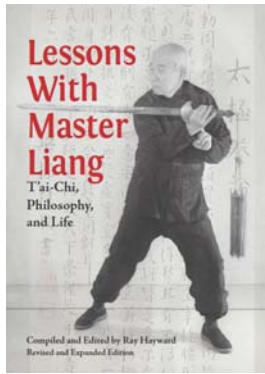
In spite of his unassuming demeanor, Mr. Abdella commanded respect from us students. My best friend, Tom, and I sat next to each other in the first row. One morning as Mr. Abdella presented derivations on conic sections formulas from his 10-page handout, Tom and I got restless. I had just used up a spiral-bound notebook, and I began to unwind the binding from the cardboard covers. Tom got a hold on the other end and began unwinding it. Soon my notebook became a fishing rod and I became a deep-sea fisherman, fighting to land a marlin on the deck. Tom, holding the other end of the wire, became the fish, tossing left and right, struggling to break the line. We drew quite a bit of attention to ourselves. Mr. Abdella stopped talking, took

two steps toward us, and waited. It took a moment to realize he had stopped the lecture. Within seconds of noticing however, we put down the notebook and were staring sheepishly at our desks. In a confident, quiet tone he asked, "Are you done?" No Answer. "May I continue now?" Softly and in unison, "yes." And that was that. He resumed teaching-no further discipline required.

School ended at 2:25, and most teachers were gone by 2:45, but Mr. Abdella usually stayed until 5:00 or later. I hung out in his classroom, where we hackers wrote programs on Apple II Micro computers. Mr. Abdella checked papers, entered grades, and looked ahead to the next day's lesson. He was almost apologetic whenever he had to kick us out to go home. Often, however, he was still working long after my enthusiasm for computers had petered out for the day.

Sometimes, at about a quarter to five, he allowed himself a rest. He sat down at his desk, removed his glasses, and rubbed his tired eyes. Without glasses, the lines on his face were more noticeable, and those compassionate brown eyes looked tacky, as if late nights grading Algebra papers and years of chalk dust in an overheated top floor schoolroom had robbed them of their sheen. I watched and wondered how old he was: 55, 60? He had to be close to retirement.

No one I knew was more patient and kind to his students. In a world of Chevy Chase and David Letterman, I am glad to have known an outdated old man who cared so much about sharing boring old Algebra with unruly roomfuls of teenagers. In all the years since, I never met anyone who better embodied the quiet beauty of teaching.



Shu Kuang Press & Publications is proud to announce the publication of Sifu Ray Hayward's revised, updated, and expanded new edition of his book.

This book contains more than twice the photos of previous versions and many additional class notes, interviews & more!

Publication is expected in early February. There is a limited edition Hardcover (\$60). Paperbacks (\$25). Order yours now!

### From Sifu Ray on the Retreat 2011

We are currently looking for a new location for our annual retreat. I would entertain some ideas for themes and classes at our gathering. I have something in mind, but am willing to see what the "retreaters" would want.

For snow days or questionable weather—to find out if class is canceled, you have two options:

1. Call 651-767-0267
2. Check the TCTCCS Facebook page

## MIA Sung Dynasty Art Tour

In early April, the Studio will host a tour of the Minneapolis Institute of Art to view Sung Dynasty Art. More information and a signup will be coming soon. Look for the date, then mark your calendar. This is a free event.



## Class Schedule for January 15—June 15, 2011

Monday		Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Saturday
12:30-2:00 Solo Form (all levels-join anytime)				12:30-2:00 Solo Form (all levels-join anytime)	9:00-10:00 Meditation & Chi-Kung (enrollment closed, open to new students on 3/19)
6:00-7:30 Solo Form (all levels-join anytime)		6:00-7:00 Solo Form Refinement (instructor authorization required)	6:00-7:30 Solo Form (all levels-join anytime)	6:00-7:00 Prof. Cheng's 37 Postures Short Form (all levels-join anytime)	10:00-11:30 Eclectis (join anytime)
7:30-8:30 Weapons T'ai-Chi Sabre, Applications & Fencing (prerequisite: Solo Form completion)		7:00-8:00 Pushing-Hands & San-Shou (enrollment closed)	7:30-8:30 Hsing-Yi Ch'uan: Level II (prerequisite: 5 Elements)	7:00-8:00 Study of Master T. T. Liang's Book (enrollment closed)	11:30-12:30 T'ai-Chi Review & Practice (prerequisite: Solo Form completion)
8:30-9:30		8:00-9:00 Southern Praying Mantis (join anytime)	8:30-9:30 Pa-Kua 64 Mother Palms (join anytime)	8:00-9:00 Pushing-Hands (enrollment closed)	12:30-2:00 Solo Form (all levels-join anytime)
Liu Ho Pa Fa (join anytime)	Introduction to Pa-Kua (join anytime)				

**NOTE: The Studio will be closed Monday, May 30 for Memorial Day.**