



# Wudang<sup>12/17</sup>

A MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER



## From Sifu Paul

Greetings, everyone,

The chill and bite of the season is in the air as we move toward the still point of the winter solstice and the year's longest night. This is a magical time for meditation and deep reflection as we embrace the darkness and the promise of returning light.

The Wuji Gong Primordial T'ai Chi form is the perfect practice for the season. It will be taught after the holiday break. In the interim, enjoy our Healing Tao Sampler beginning on Wednesday. Be sure to check out our new web site, our Meet the Tutors feature, the new class schedule and more. Cheers.



## New Web Site

Our beautiful new web site is up and running! It features a clean, refreshed design while retaining the essence of our studio's visual style. The new Squarespace platform makes it easy to navigate, and it features many video samples of our classes. Thank you, Todd Nesser, for your vision, hard work, and beautiful design. Thanks to Amy Sparks for technical support. Check us out at: [tctaichi.org](http://tctaichi.org).

## New Two-Color Shirt Sale

There is a sign up for our new two-color studio shirts in the practice hall. The new shirts are white cotton with our logo in red and name in black. Short-sleeve and long-sleeve shirts are available. Get some of each—they make great gifts.



Twin Cities T'ai Chi

## Holiday Closure

The studio will be closed for the holidays from December 24 through January 1. Classes will resume on January 2. There will be some open practice time during the week off if you would like to come in and practice. The days and times will be posted at the studio.

## Meet the Tutors

Question: What has eight heads, has 164 years of T'ai Chi experience, and always leaves you feeling good?

Answer: Our team of T'ai Chi tutors at the studio.

Twin Cities T'ai Chi is fortunate to have such a diverse, dedicated, and experienced group of instructors. Although we know them by name at the studio, knowing a little bit of their T'ai Chi journey helps us appreciate them even more. Get to know them on the following pages.

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New two-color T-shirt design now available

## LaVonne Bunt

LaVonne has been practicing T'ai Chi for twenty years. What brought her to T'ai Chi was a life-changing trip to China. Women in the park on a Sunday morning asked the group she was with to join them in their practice. Upon returning home, her search to learn more began. Six or so weeks later, she walked into Twin Cities T'ai Chi. She's been here ever since. "T'ai Chi is a calming and centering energy practice. It challenges me to continue to refine and expand what I have learned, and it is humbling to see the vast body of knowledge and energy work yet to be grasped." LaVonne teaches several Solo Form classes a week at the studio. "What I like most about teaching is opening a path of discovery for both student and teacher. Each of us has a different learning style. It is finding how to convey the practice in a way that is consistent with the inherent discipline within the T'ai Chi form that enables us to share that practice together, whether doing the Solo Form or other related practices."

## Lynn Dennis

As of this December, Lynn has been practicing T'ai Chi for twenty years.

"I began seeking a calm, meditative practice to help quiet my always-busy, often-worried mind, and I've found that. Now when I'm

stressed, I have tools I can use to relax and calm my mind and body." She has learned the full curriculum of T'ai Chi practices, including two-person training. "The greatest surprise to me has been that I now enjoy two-person work, which at first was scary and stressful to me. Learning to work with a partner has helped me to become a more resilient and confident person without losing my sensitivity." Lynn's devotion to teaching has led her to share her knowledge at the studio as well as with students at the University of Minnesota. "I love meeting new students and matching my teaching style to their unique learning style. My favorite thing about teaching is when my student shares a way in which T'ai Chi has helped them—often through stress relief or better balance."

*"My favorite thing is when my student shares a way in which T'ai Chi has helped them—often through stress relief or better balance."  
—Lynn Dennis*

## Tim Dennis

Twenty years ago Tim Dennis, started coming to the studio and, as he puts it, "I just haven't stopped." A visit to an orthopedic surgeon about his back yielded the advice that he try something more conservative before having surgery. "It turns out that T'ai Chi is not only more conservative but also more effective for me. It has brought balance into my back and into the rest of my life too." The freedom from back pain revealed another benefit of T'ai Chi for Tim: the ability to remain centered through the momentum of life's uncertainties. "From the still point in the middle of an empty step, I can put my foot in

## Contact Us

For timely updates, follow Twin Cities T'ai Chi Ch'uan on **Facebook**.

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LaVonne fell in love with T'ai Chi on a trip to China

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T'ai Chi helped ease Tim's back pain





new directions. In that advantageous position, I have leverage over my life.” On the experience of teaching T’ai Chi Tim, states “Students are wonderful. They bring an energy and perspective that reminds me why I do this. They provide a mirror to the understanding that I think I have of the practice. I owe it to the tradition to share this marvelous stuff, and students give me a chance to repay that debt.”

### Dan Frederick

Eighteen years ago, Dan was looking for a meditation form and found two students from Twin Cities T’ai Chi teaching a class in River Falls, Wisconsin. After about a year of study they encouraged him to go to what they called “the Big Studio,” and he’s been studying, practicing, and teaching here ever since. “Teaching the form forces you to break down the movement in far greater detail than occurs just by doing it.” For Dan, “The most significant benefit I have found is the concept of yin-yang; it explains to me why the world is in balance or not and what action one can take.” Dan teaches the form on Saturdays.

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—Dan Frederick

### Tom Hautman

Tom has been practicing T’ai Chi at the studio for eighteen years. He had thought about studying martial arts for a while but was not

interested in the competitive aspect. A neighbor of his knew of his interest and told him about Twin Cities T’ai Chi. Tom was also looking for something to stay in shape for other sports he was into: paddling white water, sea kayaking, cross-country skiing, back-country skiing, and rock and ice climbing. “Tai Chi has given me an awareness of the physics involved in the sports I enjoy, which makes it easier and more fun to train for them.” Tom enjoys teaching T’ai Chi to students at all levels of experience. “Everyone learns differently. I enjoy the challenge of finding what clicks for someone. The ‘aha!’ moment is fun for everyone, and I gain a different viewpoint into the art of Tai Chi.”

*“The ‘aha!’ moment is fun for everyone, and I gain a different viewpoint into the art of Tai Chi.”*  
—Tom Hautman

### Linda Hermanson

Linda has been practicing T’ai Chi for thirty-three years. She began T’ai Chi with studio founder Jonah Friedman in 1984 then studied T’ai Chi with Master Liang every other Saturday from late 1984 until he left Minnesota in 1989. She took up the practice with a group of friends who shared a common interest in spiritual work. Her long-term commitment to T’ai Chi has cultivated a sense of “well-being, relaxation, and a better attitude towards life. Tai Chi never fails to deliver.” Linda has taught many students at the studio, and she enjoys “sharing the

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Linda started  
practicing T’ai Chi  
in 1984



wonders of T'ai Chi with new students and getting to know them better while we work together."

### Kim Husband

Kim has studied and practiced T'ai Chi at the studio for twenty years and studied at other schools for a couple years before that.

A happy accident brought her to T'ai Chi. In college, she went to the theater building to meet someone, but they didn't show up. She did, however, notice a T'ai Chi demonstration happening and went to see that instead. She was hooked and has been practicing ever since. "The greatest benefits I've found in T'ai Chi are that I am my best self while practicing—relaxed, focused, patient, adaptable—and I meet the most interesting people through the studio." Kim has learned the full curriculum of T'ai Chi practices the studio offers and has taught all of them at various times. She also teaches her own class in Hastings called Blue Dragon T'ai Chi. "I like teaching T'ai Chi because it's fun to share something I enjoy and because I love seeing people go home smiling."

### Christopher Knutson

Christopher has been practicing T'ai Chi for fifteen years. He was looking for a nonaggressive movement meditation practice to keep himself limber and that had a function besides just stretching. He found it in T'ai Chi and at the studio. "Besides the beautiful community

that came with the studio, T'ai Chi has given me a sense of personal strength and centering that allows me to live a calmer life with more resilience." His study of T'ai Chi moved from practice into teaching. "I am a teacher at heart. I started my working career as an elementary teacher. It is a pleasure to see students progress through the form, and it makes my form better."

—With gratitude and appreciation to our tutors that help guide the way.

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—Christopher Knutson*

## Toast the Tutors

We will be hosting Toast the Tutors—a little get-together in appreciation of our T'ai Chi tutors to be held at Urban Growler near the studio. The event will be in January, and the exact date will be announced. Let Paul know your preference for a Friday or Saturday evening.

Thank you, tutors!

## Upcoming Classes and Schedule Changes

Beginning in December, the following classes will begin and replace those currently in that time slot.

### Monday weapons class 7:30–8:30

This class will begin learning the cane. If you would like to give weapons a try, the cane is the perfect place to begin. It features basic movements that have simple applications that contain elements of both the sword and the saber. Open to members who have finished the Solo Form.

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Kim is her "best self" when doing T'ai Chi

## Journeying

*I remember passing this temple before;  
Once again I cross the bridge I love.  
Mountain and river have waited for  
me;*

*Flowers and willows open warmly.  
Fine mist covers the countryside;  
Sunbeams linger over the warm sand.  
The worries of traveling are all gone*

*now;  
Where could I find a better place to  
rest?*

—Tu Fu

## **Tuesday Pushing Hands**

### **Foundations 6:00–7:15**

Pushing hands are partner practices that develop skill in sensing movement patterns in a partner and learning to control and redirect them. Pushing hands are a bridge between understanding the movements of the Solo Form and its use as a martial art. This class teaches the fundamentals of Ward off, Roll Back, Press, and Push. This is a great introductory class for beginners and experienced practitioners alike.

Internal qi breathing and bone rooting qigong opens every class. Open to members who have finished the Solo Form.

### **Tuesday T'ai Chi 43 Postures Form:**

#### **New and review 7:15–8:30**

The 43 Postures Form teaches an application for each of the postures in the Solo Form in the order they appear in the form. Come and learn the first sequence, called Symmetry 1, if you are new or come and review the symmetries you already know and learn some additional training methods that will deepen your skills. Open to members who have finished the Solo Form.

### **Wednesday Healing Tao 7:30–8:30**

The month of December will feature a Healing Tao sampler. On December 6, we will practice the Inner Smile, a seated practice designed to bring a practitioner to deep states of self-acceptance and gratitude.

On December 13, we will practice the 6 healing sounds/5 animal frolics. This is a seated, standing, and moving practice, that clears negative emotional patterns affecting the five vital organs. This is a dynamic and easy-to-learn practice that leaves you feeling clear and revitalized.

On December 20, we will practice the micro-cosmic orbit. The most well known of the Taoist alchemy practices, this meditation moves qi in two deep energy channels in the body, bringing increased circulation and healing throughout. There is both a standing and a seated practice. No experience is necessary for any of the above practices. Come and see what they're all about.

Beginning Wednesday, January 3, we will begin learning the Wuji Gong Primordial T'ai Chi form. This is not a T'ai Chi Ch'uan form. This is a qigong form with two simple patterns to learn. Wuji Gong literally means "develops skill for entering the Supreme Mystery." Primordial T'ai Chi is a bridge between the cosmic infinite Self and our physical finite self.

This form is a magical, powerful 800-year-old lineage ceremony. It integrates the magic square of feng shui, the dynamic inner water and fire coupling of Taoist alchemy, the healing benefits of medical qigong, and the earthly transmission power of China's original T'ai Chi form! 7:30-8:30 for 12 weeks. The cost is \$144 for nonmembers and free to members.

## **Saturday Schedule**

### **Edicts: Boxing Fundamentals 9:30–10:30**

Learn the fundamentals of boxing and acquire the five elements of martial arts—speed, timing, accuracy, power, and foundation—through carefully selected drills and practices. Great for reflexes, conditioning, and understanding the core principles of martial arts. This class is safe, fun, and open to new members.

### **The 12 Animals of Liu Ho Pa Fa**

#### **10:30–11:30**

The 12 Animals class will begin learning the Crane, which teaches T'ai Chi-like folding techniques. Open to new members.

### **The 43 Postures Form 11:30–12:30**

The 43 Postures Form teaches an application for each of the postures in the Solo Form in the order they appear in the form. The class is now open to members who would like to begin learning Symmetry 1. Those who have been working in Symmetry 5 will begin learning Symmetry 6.

## **Seeking Submissions**

If you have an idea for an article you would like to submit for the Wudang, please contact Paul at the studio or send us an email with your proposal. We'd love to hear from you.