



TAIJI POST

Newsletter of the Peng You Taiji Quan Association

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Canada Day 2007

**140 People Play Taiji Fan on Canada's 140th Birthday
Thunder Bay, Ontario**



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The Peng You Taiji Quan Association

is a non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of health, friendship and happiness through Taiji. We are a voting member of the Confederation of Canadian Wushu Organizations. Our routines conform to international standards approved and published by the Chinese National Sports Institute.

All our instructors are qualified and personally trained by our Grand Master, Professor Wang Jian Hua, Chairman of the Physical Education Department of Beijing Normal University and by our chief advisor Master Zeng Nailiang, retired head coach of the Chinese National Wushu Team. We offer a variety of programs including special classes for older adults regularly held at:

The Thunder Bay 55 Plus Centre, Herb Carroll Centre, Frank Murphy Community Centre, Anishinabe Mishikiki, Thunder Bay Multicultural Society, Kakabeka Falls 60 Plus Club, and The Canada Games Complex.

The Peng You Taiji Quan Association

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Taiji Post Horse Stance

Photos this issue thanks to: Mary Lou Rabb and Mike Richardson.

Chen Workshop a Great Success

By Janet Fuchek

At a Chen style Taijiquan seminar, held Sept. 22-23 at the Thunder Bay 55-Plus Centre, practitioners got treated to more than just the friendly smile of local instructor Peng Youlian. They were graced with the presence of another Taijiquan great who led the weekend's event - 49-year-old Jack Yan - now of Toronto but originally from China.



The guest instructor, a seventh Duan, imparted his vast knowledge of the Chen style to 38 participants from Thunder Bay, Schreiber, Terrace Bay, Winnipeg and Minnesota.

Yan describes his roots in Taijiquan, a sport which will be showcased at the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing, China: "My grandmother was in martial arts and her brothers," he says of his early influence. "It has become a sport nowadays. Different people like me still try to stick to

tradition. We need both tradition and modernizing it."

For more than four decades - since the age of seven - Yan has been involved in the martial arts. He studied other traditional systems like Tongbei, a type of Kung Fu, as well as freestyle combat and weapons forms.





As for his association with Peng: "I heard about him a long time ago," says Yan of Peng. "He's really famous in Canada and China."

The guest instructor, who, along with wife Tracy has two daughters, Amy, 7, and Nicole, 11,

enjoyed his time in Thunder Bay: "It's tremendous," praises Yan. "It's a cold place, but there are very warm people. I feel grateful I can be accepted by a group like this. It's just so nice to have a group of people who love the art and keep an open mind and be very welcoming to a different culture and also feel like doing something positive."

Yan outlines the advantages of his prized pastime: "I think the main thing is balance in life and relaxation from a busy lifestyle," he figures. "It teaches good values and respect. It has health benefits. There's the self-defense aspect."

He praises the beautiful forms of Taijiquan as a reflection of traditional Chinese culture and as a source of artistic enjoyment: "It's a very empowering feeling," he concludes of the art. "It's something I do as part of my everyday life."

Chuck Stone of Ely, MN was one of the participants in the weekend seminar. A seven-year practitioner, he also instructs Taijiquan.



Stone, who picked up some of the history and basic principles of the art, says he enjoyed learning from an expert like Yan.

Duncan MacKay of Terrace Bay was equally pleased with the opportunity: "I've never done the Chen style before," he says. "The instructor is first class. The group size is great. I find the Chen style a really interesting style."



Taijiquan instructor Tat Lui of Winnipeg will remember not only the techniques but also the friendship aspect of the weekend: "I could get connected with people from Thunder Bay," he says. "Everyone is so helpful and friendly inside and outside class. It's like a family. These are my brothers and sisters here."

Regardless of their experience or intent, it would seem that participants at the recent seminar certainly benefited from the advanced Taijiquan skills of guest instructor Master Yan.



Chen Workshop Graduation Photo

Co-Authored Paper Wins Third Prize in The Taijiquan Thesis Seminar of the International Taijiquan Exchange Competition of Jiaozuo, China August 22,

**HEALTH, FRIENDSHIP, HAPPINESS:
AGING GRACEFULLY THROUGH TAIJIQUAN**

by

Peng Youlian M.Ed. and Doug Rabb Ph.D.

Abstract

We begin by briefly outlining some of the recent scientific research demonstrating the benefits of taijiquan for seniors. We then argue that all the research studies in the world are not going to benefit seniors unless they actually practice taijiquan on a regular basis, unless they actually get out and do it! The rest of the paper outlines the many ways in which one Taiji Association in Canada has been successful in attracting seniors to taijiquan and in maintaining a high compliance rate, that is keeping them interested enough to practice taiji at least twice a week over an extended period.

This particular Association, The Peng You Taiji Quan Association, has been in operation for seventeen years and still has many of the same students with which it began. All classes start with uniquely created Warm Up Exercises which help students experience the benefits of taiji without having to wait to memorize an entire Form before seeing health benefits. Though the Association is open to all styles of taijiquan we teach mainly the modern style including Taiji Fan and Taiji Sword.

We regularly publish the results of recent taiji research and other educational articles on taiji in local and national papers as well as in our own newsletter, *The Taiji Post*. We also publish books on taiji and research articles in international academic journals. This plus holding International Taiji Festivals and Conferences helps to make members of the Association feel they belong to one large taiji family and are participating in something larger than just a local taiji club. This is also accomplished by bringing top level Taiji Masters from China to visit and conduct workshops on a regular basis. The most dramatic example was The International Forum on Taiji Quan 2006 held in Thunder Bay last summer. The academic sessions of the Forum brought together for the first time in history, Aboriginal Elders and Healers with the Grandmasters of Taijiquan and other Chinese experts to compare and discuss Native American Healing and Traditional Chinese Medicine. As Taiji is a bridge

connecting the cultures of East and West Grandmaster Zeng Nailiang has helped us popularize taiji in Canada by creating a Taiji Hockey Stick Form, since Hockey is Canada's national sport. Our growing local team of certified taiji instructors offer programs at different levels with flexible teaching techniques so that everyone enjoys the classes. Everyone can find a class they feel comfortable with, and can progress at their own pace to higher levels of taiji practice. We even offer classes in sitting taiji and taiji in the water at local swimming pools. The beauty of taijiquan is that every senior is able to do it. Our paper concludes by explaining the deeper meaning of its title.

Canada Day 2007

Tat travelled from Manitoba and Chuck and Danielle from Minnesota.



Four members of Peng's Fan Club.

This year Peng joined Doug and Mary Lou teaching taiji for arthritis at the Frank Murphy Community Centre. We held the Alzheimer's Coffee Break Fundraiser between classes. Thanks to all who participated.



Peng You Taiji Quan Association

CHRISTMAS PARTY



**Saturday December 1
6:00 p.m.**

**Polish Alliance Hall
102 Court St. South**

**Tickets \$25 members
(\$30 non-members)
available from instructors**