

Couple opens Bikram yoga studio on Orchard Lake

BY PAUL R. PACE
STAFF WRITER

The benefits of yoga have been around for years, but now a more intense style is growing in popularity: the Bikram yoga method.

The owners of the Bikram yoga studio in Plymouth, Melissa Mazza Cornett and Ernie Cornett, opened their second facility in Farmington Hills at 28857 Orchard Lake this year.

Melissa gave up a nice job at General Motors to take the intense Bikram yoga training program in California.

"I decided to go for it, and it's the greatest decision I ever made," she said.

Her husband used to lay cement, but he too gave up his full-time job and took the training. He used to have a bad back from the heavy work, but the yoga has helped relieve the pain, he said.

Now the couple split their time running the two facilities.

The 90-minute classes are conducted in the heated studio that hovers in the 100-degree range. The sessions consist of a series of 26 postures and two breathing exercises.

Farmington Hills resident Valery Yelizarov said he likes the Bikram yoga so much he and his 14-year-old son Emin attend classes four or five times a week.

"The nice thing about it is the heat helps to relax muscles," he said. "Plus it's beneficial to remove the toxins from the body when you sweat."

Yelizarov said since starting the classes in May, he lost 30 pounds.

"I feel much better and more focused and I'm able to realize a whole list of side benefits from it."

He said he also works out and swims, but the Bikram yoga benefits the mind as well as the body.

"That's what I like about it," he said. The specialty yoga was originated by Bikram Choudhury in his native India.



Jozlyn Jarcunpoon of Troy practices Cobra pose during a Bikram's Beginning Yoga Class.



Christina Watkins, visiting from Connecticut, practices Triangle Pose.

Eventually, his 26 posture series became popular across the world and more and more people are flocking to California to learn under his instruction and become certified.

Bikram's style is known for being a regular regimen for famous athletes and actors, said Ernie.

John Zimmerman of Dearborn has been visiting the Farmington Hills facility around two or three times a week.

The recreational hockey player said the classes bring about a boost of energy in him.

"It's a great cardiovascular workout," he said after a class on Wednesday. He

added the class works up more of a sweat than a round of hockey.

"It's refreshing," he said. "I used to go to a chiropractor, but I haven't been since February."

Melissa said it's not her or her husband's goal to build a yoga empire, but just focus on helping the clients who use the two facilities.

"We've got our heart and soul in this," added Ernie.

Plenty of their business comes through word of mouth, they pointed out.

Doing a class is a "way to step outside your normal life for 90 minutes," Melissa said, adding the classes aim to improve health, well-being and promote happiness.

Drop-ins are welcome and classes are usually held in the morning, afternoon and evening to fit people's schedules.

Participants are encouraged to wear summer-style clothing or bathing suits, to bring a mat, drinking water and to refrain from eating two to three hours prior to class.

The Farmington Hills facility offers dressing rooms and showers, clothing and other items for sale. Call the Farmington Hills Bikram yoga at (248) 489-9923.

pace@oe.hometown.com | (248) 477-5450



PHOTOS BY PAUL MURCHMAN/Observer

Suzanne Gossett of Westland practices Standing Forehead to Knee Pose during a Bikram's Beginning Yoga Class in Farmington Hills.

Blue Circle offers an interactive way to enjoy a Christmas tea

Start the holidays in style this year, with Blue Circle's "A Christmas Tea".

Guests who attend this event at The Longacre House on Sunday, Dec. 15 will experience an elegant, five-course repast, prepared by Chef Russell Chessin of The Longacre House - and that's not all. This event comes with a twist: It's interactive.

Beginning at 2 p.m., guests will enjoy a lively seasonal atmosphere, steaming hot tea and a menu that includes fruit and cheese, tea sandwiches, baked cheese en croute, scones with cream and curd and dessert.

They will also be part of what may be the most interesting ten of their lives - one never knows

what might happen at this historic Georgian manor, set on the crest of Farmington Road in Farmington Hills.

This interactive event allows attendees to choose their level of participation. Joni Hubred, editor of the Farmington Observer and author of the Blue Circle's murder-mystery "Murder at the O&E" last

spring, has crafted an entertaining afternoon. Those interested in being actively involved should contact Blue Circle soon, because roles for men and women are limited.

The Longacre House is a fitting backdrop for "A Christmas Tea". The oldest portion of the home dates back to 1869. One hundred years later, in 1969, the home was given to the

Farmington area for use as a community center.

Tickets for "A Christmas Tea" are \$25 and are available from Denise at The Longacre House and Farmington Bakery in downtown Farmington, or by sending payment to Blue Circle, P.O. Box 1008, Farmington, MI 48332.

For more information call Denise at The Longacre House,

248-477-8404. The Longacre House is located on Farmington Road between 10 Mile Road and 11 Mile Road in Farmington Hills.

Blue Circle is a nonprofit, civic-minded group promoting cultural enhancement of the Farmington-Farmington Hills community by organizing and executing unique events and educational programs.

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