Tai Chi finds many low-impact exercise fans

BY HEATHER NEEDHAM

To say Sally Rich's class of thi chi students at Newburg United Methodist Church in Livonia is dedicated is an understatement. One student had a good portion of his back replaced following injurice in the Koraan War. A handful have multiple sclerosis. One student uses her walker to support herself while also does the moves. Another has arthritis and cannot do high-impact exercises. Typical classes draw about 35 to 40 people, but the recent heat wave caused those numbers to dwindle a bit. On a day when the temperatures soared into the mid 90a, 18 people showed up for class. They exercised in a room that wasn't air conditioned, with only

open windows and fans for ventilation. An icy cold water fountain quenched thirsts during the brief broaks, and some het exercisers splashed their faces to col off. Thi chi is like former President Teddy Rossevelt's famous foreign relations quotation: "Speak softly but carry a big stick." Tai chi's anso is the soft voice but its effectiveness is the big stick, health

"It's a total body workout," Rich said. "Your heart rate gots up to aerobic levels without impact on the bones and muscles." Some tai chi classes are just for seniors, others for younger people. Rich's classes are open to everyone, and to seniors, that's part of the

appeal. "The seniors like being with younger people," said Rich, adding that the classes attract veryone things, "We don't segregate class-things, "We don't segregate class-

things. "We don't segregate class-est." The nonprofit Taoist Tai Chi Society offers the classes 7 p.m. Mondays and Wodnesdays at Newburg United Methodist Church, 36600 Ann Arbor Trail in Westland and Nardin Park United Methodist Church, 29837 11 Mile in Farmington Hills. Donations cover building rental. The instructors are volunteer.

Started in monasteries

Tai chi got its start in Taoist monasteries in old China. Its characteristic slow, graceful movements are key to the low-impact benefits, practitioners say.

Impact Density, practicular, asy. Taoist tai chi arrived in North America in 1970. Master Moy Lin-Shin coined the term "Taoist tai chi," a result of incorporating Taoist internal arts, traditional Chinese medicine and Taoist meditation into the art that is practiced today. Its 108 move-ments cover nuexly every muscle

practiced today. Its 108 move-ments cover nearly every muscle in the body. Kathy Shipley of Plymouth has multiple esterosis and uses her walker for balance. "I'm a relativo newcomer to the class," said Shipley who's been attending for just under two months. "It's just an opportunity for me to move around and do the best I can. Physical exercise in general is very good for me."



Jeanette Karwan of Livonia agreed. "I have MS and I have a hard time doing other exercises," she said, adding that even a stationary bicycle has given her trouble. "Emo-tionally and physically. I feel more energetic. I use up as many calo-ries as I would walking 3 1/2 miles. "I think it's just made me feel a lot better." Conrad Dowel of Westland is a Korean War veteran and has artifi-cial components in his back and an artificial ley. Despite this, he became a black belt in karate and other martial arts. When it became a black belt in karate and other martial arts. When it became a black belt in karate and other martial arts. When it became difficult to keep up with karate, he turned to tai chi. "The exercise is phenomenal," he said. "It strengthens you up. It's an altogether very enlightening exercise." Ho said the class' meditative qualities help keep his mind focused and the physical qualities keep his body in shape. Hoaked on tai chi

Hooked on tai chi

Dan Duranso of South Lyon turned to tai chi because arthritis ando uther exercising too difficuit. He's been hooked for two years. "I've been told i's good for arthritis," he sold. His doctors also rec-mended swimming, but he said it's not always easy getting to a control of the sold of the sold of the sold set of t

The most striking thing he's noticed about tai chi's benefits is that

The most striking thing has noticed about the chi's benefits is that his arthritis feels better. "I think my joints have stayed loose which means less pain," he said. "I don't stiffen up as much. I'm tired when I'm done, but I don't

said. "I don't stiffen up as much. Im three when I m outer, our server." sche." Shirley Thon of Dearborn has diabetes, multiple sclerosis and uses a wheelchair. She ahowed up at class but decided the heat was too much for her. She has renped some physical benefits, however. "My arms are a lot stronger," ahe said. She attends classes with her husband and caregiver, Robert. Classes will be offered at Newburg United Methodist, Nardin Park United Methodist and St. Paul United Methodist Church, 165 E. Square Lake, Bloomfield Hills. For information, call (248) 332-1281.



NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING NO THE OF POBLIC HEARING OUNTY DESIGNATION OF OAKLEY PARK ROAD AS A NATURAL BEAUTY ROAD IN THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP

IN THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF WEST BLOOMPTELD The Beard of Read Commissioners for Oakland County and the Charter Township of West Diomfield in the your comments as the proposed designation of Oaklay fark Road from west Woodlore Street sast to Yuko Beach: Elementary School as a Netural Beauty Road. We invite all interested citizent to attend and represe their views or request information on the matter in time for such views to be considered in the final decision. For this purpose, we have scheduled a public hearing. DATE: Wednesday, September 29, 1099 TIME: 730 PM. PLACE: Twin Beach Elementary School Media Conter, 7149 Oakley.

PLACE: Twin Beach Elementary School, Media Center, 7149 Oakley Park Road, West Bloomfield

Park Road, West Bloomfield Your attendance at the meeting will give the best opportunity for presenting your views and gaining desired information. However, we welcome your written statement to us. Stedd your comments the: Road Commission for Oakland County, Permits & Environmental Concerna Department, 220 Ponties Lake Kond, Waterford, MI 43228. (Tyou require Lepariment, 2420 Pontiae Lake Road, Waterford, MI 48232. If you require accommodation in accordance with the provisions of the Americans With Diabilities Act, please provide our Permits 4 Environmental Concerns Department (249) 854-4931, with five days advance notice. You may obtain more information about the public hearing and the proposed Natural Beauty Road designation in advance by contacting our Permits & Environmental Concerns Department at the above address or telephone number.

WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO HEARING FORM YOU BOARD OF COUNTY ROAD COMMISSIONERS Rudy D. Lozano, Chairman Larry P. Creke, View-Chariman Richard G. Skarrit, Commissioner By: Brent O. Blair, Managing Director

Publish September 16 and 23, 1999





Getting in shape: Because of MS, Jeanette Kurwan of Livonia had a difficult time doing exercises until she found Tai Chi. Now she's a regular at Newburg United Methodist Church's class. At far right, Sally Rich conducts class.

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