

WORLD T'AI CHI & QIGONG DAY – PATCHOGUE 2002: A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

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Over 60 Long Islanders from both Suffolk and Nassau Counties came together at South Ocean Middle School on April 6th to celebrate the Fifth Annual World T'ai Chi & Qigong Day. There were six different facilitators who presented a series of workshops and demonstrations from 9:00 – 11:00 AM:

Ron Rebhuhn of Westbury was scheduled to present Eternal Spring T'ai Chi, but decided a Qigong workshop was more fitting the moment and in the flow of the morning.

Spencer Gee, The Spencer Gee Wellness Corp of Old Brookville, presented A T'ai Chi Workout – which transformed itself into a combination of T'ai Chi exercises and work with the Filipino art of Pananandata. Mr. Gee is also a Master of the art.

The instructors and students of Water Tiger's landlord, Aikido at Suffolk Aikikai, gave a fast-paced and dynamic Aikido demonstration.

Bob Klein, The Long Island School of T'ai-Chi-Ch'uan of Sound Beach, led two workshops: The first was on Internal Energy in the Yang Form, the second was his Spirit Breathing Qigong.

Bill Donnelly, Green Cloud Kung-Fu of Holbrook, led a workshop on The Rocking Set, designed to help with weight shifting and balance.

McElroy Laoshi led a session on WTS's signature T'ai Chi Qigong Breathing Set.

Open events were scheduled to follow at Shorefront Park, with the weather's cooperation. Unfortunately, the temperature hovered at the 50° mark and there was a strong wind. The facilitators and the participants did not seem eager to brave the openness of the park and the morning drew to a close at 11:00.

Oliver Tan, from Governor George Pataki's office, attended on behalf of and by the request of the Governor. According to Mr. Tan, Governor Pataki has expressed a desire to learn more about T'ai Chi and Qigong and how the arts might fit into his own "whole being health" agenda as governor of NYS. Several attendees who spent time with Mr. Tan say that they expect correspondence with the governor to this end will continue long past the end of the morning. Mr. Tan told us that a NYS proclamation supporting WTC&QD had been drafted. Unfortunately, for the proclamation to be released the Governor must read it into the official record on the floor of the state legislature – and, as of the morning of the 6th, he had yet to be able to do so. It was Mr. Tan's spoken hope that the Governor would be able to complete the reading that afternoon.⁰

The attendees gave donations totaling \$26.

All in all, it was a successful event for Patchogue's second year. We were successful in hosting twice the number of facilitators and nearly twice as many attendees as last year. As the morning was drawing to a close, participants were already talking about how to make next year bigger and better.



Photo from www.WorldTaiChiDay.org

Thanks for making world history with us once again.

— Bill Douglas,
Founder of World T'ai Chi & Qigong Day.

⁰ *Postscript: Unfortunately, the proclamation from Governor Pataki's office has never become a reality. No reason has ever been communicated by Mr. Tan or the governor's office, regardless of our inquiries.*