

With the rain this year, Water Tiger School was able to be a part of the annual event twice! Once in Patchogue within the weatherproof comfort of St. Francis De Sales Parish Hall on April 12th; and then in Central Park's East Meadow on April 19th!

WTC&QD – Patchogue

This year, like last, saw more than 60 Long Islanders from Suffolk and Nassau Counties joining to celebrate the Sixth Annual World T'ai Chi & Qigong Day. Although the actual number of participants was the same as 2002, this year's attendees participated in greater numbers during this year's various workshops. Only four of the 60+ people joining us at Parish Hall chose not to actively participate. We also received proclamations from both the Village of Patchogue and the Suffolk County Legislature!

The following is a brief review of the seven facilitators:

Judith Budd-Walsh, Harmonious Movement T'ai Chi of Hauppauge, joined us for the first time and led a workshop of various warm-ups and took people through the first section of the Yang-style Long Form.

Ron Rebhuhn of Westbury returned for his second year and workshopped the Primary Xiang Gong (Fragrance Qigong) set and a medical Qigong set.

Spencer Gee, The Spencer Gee Wellness Corp of Old Brookville, also returned for a second year. He presented A T'ai Chi Workout, exercises he has designed to introduce non-practitioners to the art of T'ai Chi. His disciples in the Filipino art of Pananandata also gave a series of casual demonstrations.

Dr. Michael Posner, The Wholistic Health and Healing Tao Center of Long Island in Huntington, joined us for the first time and focused on T'ai Chi Qigong and other healing Tao practices.

Bob Klein, The Long Island School of T'ai-Chi-Ch'uan of Sound Beach, returned for his second year and workshopped his renamed Spirit Breathing exercises, Zookinesis®, based on the movements of the tiger, eagle, crane, snake, tortoise, dragon, and other creatures; and he led various T'ai Chi Push Hands techniques.

Bill Donnelly, Green Cloud Kung-Fu of Holbrook, returned this year to lead a workshop based on technique, Qigong exercise, and martial application on The Eight Doors, or the eight primary energies of T'ai Chi.

McElroy Laoshi and several WTS students simply demonstrated various short forms from the Water Tiger School lexicon. Our work included Grasp Sparrow's Tail to the Four Cardinal Directions, Dragon Strikes to the Four Diagonals, and variations on Cloud Hands & Horse's Mane.

The attendees donated a total of \$138.00 to send to Bill Douglas in support of his continuing endeavor to grow this annual event. One participant generously contributed to this total by throwing a \$100 bill in the basket!

Another success in Patchogue!



Art by DavidChenArt.com

"Alone we can do so
little . . . together so
much."

-- Helen Keller

WTC&QD – Central Park

Although there were fewer participants than anticipated – about 250 to 300 instead of the 1,000 expected the previous weekend, the Central Park event could be described as amazing. Laoshi and two students, Matt Kintzel and Patricia Hsieh, joined in the group demonstration at 10:00 AM in Central Park's dusty East Meadow. Laoshi and Matt were then able to participate with a Moving Push Hands presentation during the "special demonstrations" later in the morning.

Laoshi tells us that playing Grasp Sparrow's Tail and Dragon Strikes allowed for a continuous view of the other participants. "As we played to the four cardinal directions and the four diagonals," he says, "we were able to see the great variety of T'ai Chi the morning had to offer." With a smile, he adds, "There was sameness in the differences; and differences in the sameness."

According to Laoshi, the small Patchogue contingent was also able to experience the power of the proverbial "little old Chinese man." Part of the "special demonstrations" included a presentation on rooting and song or dynamic relaxation. "This older, slight, Chinese gentleman," recalls Laoshi, "moved into the center of the circle." What the WTS group saw next included two of the "old" man's students pushing against him while he stood, unchallenged, in forestance. The two then gathered 15 volunteers from the crowd. They created a chain of pushing. The first pressing into the chest of the teacher, each after pressing into the hips of the prior. The teacher did not waiver. Laoshi describes what happened next with a sense of amazement, "There was an ever-so-subtle change in the teacher – a nearly imperceptible compression followed by a slight expansion – and we could see that energy begin to move through the chain of those pushing, increasing as it moved. By the time it reached the end of the chain, the last two or three guys were completely uprooted!"

From being a part of the massive demonstration to witnessing sword forms, martial applications, and the "little old Chinese man," the morning was a marvelous exploration of the art we practice!

