

# Yoga Spirit Academy



VOLUME 4, ISSUE 6

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2011

## New Class begins November 19 and 20

Yoga Spirit Academy offers 200-hour yoga teacher training in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Our curriculum covers postures, breathing, meditation, yoga history, philosophy, lifestyle and ethics. The 200-hour training is the international standard for yoga teachers

and provides the foundation for more specialized forms of Yoga. Classes meet one weekend a month for a year. Check out our website [yogaspirittulsa.com](http://yogaspirittulsa.com) or contact the Director Janet Parachin at 918-261-9786.

How will  
Yoga change  
your life?

2012 training dates are available from the Director or at <http://yogaspirittulsa.com/yoga-teacher-training.html>



We can make our  
minds so like still water  
that beings gather  
about us,  
that they may see their  
own images, and so live  
for a moment with a  
clearer, perhaps even  
with a fiercer life be-  
cause of our quiet. ~  
William Butler Yeats,  
Irish poet and play-  
wright

## Images from Texas Yoga Retreat

Oklahoma was well represented at Texas Yoga Retreat since 10 of us traveled from the Tulsa area to Austin. The event takes place each year at a beautiful ashram, Radha Madhav Dham. It's a wonderful weekend celebrating all things yoga—

postures, pranayama, meditation, lectures on history, philosophy and ethics. Next year's retreat will be October 5-7. Check out [texasyoga.com](http://texasyoga.com).

Many thanks to Molly Kurtz for sharing these images!



Shannon in Kids Yoga



Peahen and her chicks



93-year old Esther back bending



Molly and Tara



Radha Krishna



## Upcoming Workshops

**Restorative Yoga and Yoga Nidra** with Janet Parachin at Yoga Co-operative at The Farm. Sunday, November 13 and December 11 2:30 to 4:00 pm. \$18 in advance or \$20 at the door. Contact Janet at 918-261-9786 or [jparachin@cox.net](mailto:jparachin@cox.net)

**Yoga for Shoulders and Arms** with Stephen Saunders, December 3 1:30-4:30 pm at Tulsa Yoga Therapy. \$45 Contact Stephen at 918-835-5927 or [stephen-yogi@yahoo.com](mailto:stephen-yogi@yahoo.com)

Yoga Spirit Academy, 11134 E 75th Place, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74133  
918-261-9786 <http://yogaspirittulsa.com>  
Janet W. Parachin, Director

## Reverse Panhandling By Victor M. Parachin

Generosity is so important in Buddhism that there are many words for the various ways of being generous. (This is much like the Eskimo language which has many words for snow.) One Buddhist word for generosity is *dana* and it translates as “distribution of gifts.” Could the following be an example?

Once a year a man in the Los Angeles area practices what he calls “reverse panhandling.” He goes to the exit ramp of a major California freeway and, like other homeless people, holds up a cardboard sign. However, unlike the homeless whose signs read: “Will work for Food” or “Please Help,” his signs read: “I need to give” or “I love to help” or “Please take

my money.” He is there with handfuls of \$10 dollar bills and he gives them to any driver who extends his or her arm. Each time he's out there, he gives away approximately \$1000. That's *dana* – the distribution of gifts.

I presented this story to our meditation group recently and asked what they thought of the man's actions. The responses varied:

“He's grandstanding,” one individual said skeptically.

“He's changing a social paradigm from taking to giving,” said another.

“He's obviously not attached to a thousand dollars,” was another comment.



Still others said that his action made them re-think their own levels of generosity and how they could be generous to more people in more ways on more occasions.

Whether or not his approach is one to model may be debated. However, what's not questionable is the concept of *dana*, the distribution of our gifts. This is something all of us could do more. A friend of mine was recently eating alone at a restaurant. In the booth next to him was a young mother with three boys. He overheard her ex-

plaining to the boys “this is a special time and this isn't something we can do often.” My friend realized this was a single mother on a tight budget treating her boys to a meal at a restaurant. He called over the manager and gave him his credit card saying, “Please use my card to pay for everything this evening. And, don't tell them who is paying.” My friend then left the restaurant. He returned a few hours later to pick up his card and the meal receipt. The manager sincerely thanked him and said: “When I told the mother that someone was paying for her meal, she began to weep out of amazement and delight.”

*Dana*, the distribution of our gifts. It's a Buddhist concept worthy of our reflection and action.

## “Spotlight” on Shoulder Blades By Janet W. Parachin

In the past few issues we've been exploring upper back muscle tightness and neck pain. We'll finish up this month with two more exercises that help to loosen up the scapulae—our shoulder blades. At least 18 muscles attach to the shoulder blades in the upper back, making them very mobile. Of course, if any of these muscles are tight, then the shoulder blades are less mobile. Also, when some muscles are tight or weak, other muscles have to compensate for them. And this has an impact on our movement when we use our



shoulders to lift a box and throw a ball, or simply to eat and move a mouse around.

The first movement can be called “spotlights.” Lift the

arms to the sides palms up and bend the elbows. Turn the palms toward your face. Pretend you have spotlights shining on you through your palms. Keeping the upper arms parallel with the floor, bring your elbows together (they may or may not touch) all the while keeping your palm spotlights pointing toward your face. Press the shoulder blades together as you open your elbows and let the shoulder blades slide apart as you bring your elbows together.

The second movement takes the work a bit lower into the tips of the scapulae and the latissimus dorsi muscles. Reach the arms in front of

you, palms up, hands about rib height. Bend the elbows and pull them straight back until you feel the lower tips of your shoulder blades press together. Reach the arms out again and feel the shoulder blades move apart.

You can do these exercises while standing or seated. You can coordinate the breath by breathing out when you pull the shoulder blades together and breathing in when you take the shoulder blades apart. Try to keep your shoulders, neck and face relaxed. Do each one for 10 repetitions, relax and repeat, if you like.