

# Yoga

Calming the Turbulent Waves

## Jean Lien

Cultivates the Body-Mind-Spirit Connection



by Greg Lilly, Lifestyle Editor

Stress reduction, says yoga teacher Jean Lien, is the primary factor her students list as their reason to learn yoga. “The goal of classical yoga is to calm the turbulent waves of the mind,” Jean says. “Controlling the mind is considered the key to happiness.”

Jean began yoga classes in the 1970s and has practiced continually since 1991. Her fulltime job as a medical technologist at Eastern State Hospital and the demands of being a wife and mother “prompted my sabbatical,” she says of the gap in the ‘80s, “but in retrospect, I realize I should have kept it up. It’s such a wonderful thing when you’re leading a busy, stressful life.”

### Classic Consignments Furniture & Accessories



New Arrivals Daily!

Open Mon - Sat 10 am - 5 pm  
**Summer Hours**  
Now Open Sundays 12 noon - 4:00 pm.

The Village Shops at Kingsmill  
1915 Pocahontas Trail D2  
(Route 60 across from Kingsmill)  
757-220.1790

www.classiconsignments.com



### Studio Apartments Starting at \$3,495

Semi-private rooms from \$2,600.

- Spacious Apartments
- Wellness & Fitness Programs
- 24-Hour Care Staff
- Short-term Recuperative Stays
- Month-to-Month Rentals

757-565-3583



935 Capital Landing Road • [www.springarborliving.com](http://www.springarborliving.com)



Her son, JP, was old enough in the early 1990s that Jean felt she could attend an after-work class. Eastern State provided yoga sessions led by Rosie Taylor, and Jean and a co-worker decided to go. "I've been attending classes every week since 1991," she adds.

Recently, Jean took her interest in yoga to a more in-depth level and became a registered yoga teacher. After her retirement from Eastern State, she began working at Anahata Yoga Center of Williamsburg. She had practiced the asana, or physical poses, but discovered much more. "I met a self-proclaimed yogi at a workshop, and he said he didn't do the physical poses," Jean says. "I thought: What does he mean?"

She wanted to learn more and decided to enroll in yoga teacher training. In Buckingham County, VA, Jean attended a workshop at Satchidananda Ashram founded by Swami Satchidananda. Integral Yoga was the focus, and Jean found this type of practice met her needs by combining the physical movements with the yoga philosophy.

"Swami Satchidananda believed the physical practice was just as important as the mental,"

Jean says. In 2009, she became a certified Integral Yoga Beginner Teacher.

Jean lists four branches of yoga: "Karma yoga is the yoga of service; Jnana yoga involves self-inquiry; Bhakt yoga is one of devotion to God; and Raja yoga is the eight-limbed path that includes the physical and breathing practices, along with sensory control, concentration, meditation and contemplation. It was called Raja yoga," she adds, "because only kings had the time to practice with the goal to be happy in life."

In her classes, Jean touches on the different branches, but the physical aspect is the primary focus for her students, which falls under the hatha style. Hatha yoga is the slow and smooth practice of the physical poses (or asanas). "It's not real strenuous practice," Jean says. "You do a pose, then rest, pose, then rest. It's a controlled activity. We feel the mind can be controlled with the poses and the breathing, that's what hatha yoga is."

The foundation is the body and mind connection. "As a teacher," Jean explains, "it's important to learn what the students are looking for and adjust the class to that. Yoga is not a

physical exercise, but rather incorporates body, breath and mind," she says. "You relax the body and the mind can relax. Your breath is the intermediary that hooks it all together – a mind, body, breath connection."

She talks of "mindfulness" – students involve their mind in what their body is doing. "And you're breathing," she adds. "You inhale and exhale to every part of the posture."

The mental benefits of yoga stem from this mindfulness. The poses and the breathing allow deep relaxation, concentration and meditation. "A person can move to the silence of the inner self," Jean explains. "This silent conscious can provide guidance to live our lives to the fullest. We all think we're our body and our mind, but we're not the body or the mind, we're what we are inside. When we realize that and get there, that's what brings us true happiness and peace. That's getting into the spiritual aspect."

When the practice of yoga reaches into the spiritual side, some students pull back. Although yoga has roots in Eastern philosophies, uses Sanskrit terminology, and is practiced in some religions, it is not a religion. Jean underlines that by stating it again: "Yoga is not a reli-

## Losing Weight is Not Just About the Scale

*It's about living a healthy life...*



**We provide a Physician supervised, whole body approach to weight loss**



Renee Moss, MD

**LOOK BETTER. FEEL BETTER. BE BETTER.**

- Customized Improvement Programs include: dietary changes, exercise, stress reduction, nutritional supplementation, and lab testing
- Lose 10 lbs. per month
- Maintain muscle mass and energy while burning fat

**Reneau Medical**  
Center for Age Management & Aesthetic Medicine

Call for an appointment **757-345-3064**

120 King's Way • Suite 2550 • Williamsburg • 2nd Floor of Riverside Health Care Center

[WWW.RENEAUMED.COM](http://WWW.RENEAUMED.COM)

Please Join Us for Our

## Grand Re-Opening Thursday, July 29 . 5 - 9 pm

Please come and enjoy  
**FREE hors d'oeuvres along with live music!**

Now thru  
Sept. 23, 2010 **20% off glasses!** Excludes insurance  
and other discounts.



Debby Bauer-Robertson, Optician & Jeanne I. Ruff, Optometrist  
*Partners in Exceptional Vision Wellness*  
**Love Your Vision... Love Your Eyewear!**

**Jeanne I. Ruff, OD, LLC**  
*Vision Wellness & Optical Boutique*

1107 Richmond Road at the corner of Bacon Avenue

**757-229-4222 • [www.ruffeyes.com](http://www.ruffeyes.com)**

gion,” Jean says. “It can be a spiritual practice, if you want it to be. Each person can determine how they want to use yoga: as a physical practice or as a spiritual practice.” That is why she stresses talking with a potential instructor to explore the facets you want to incorporate.

On the physical side, Jean says, “Hatha yoga benefits the respiratory, endocrine, circulatory, digestive, nervous, lymphatic, skeletal and muscular systems.” She adds, “Bones are strengthened, and muscles are stretched and toned; the heart is strengthened by inversions. Certain poses restore and improve balance.” Other physical aspects she lists include how the poses and breath work modulate the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems. Twists and forward folds flex and lengthen the spine. The series of movements and mindful breathing stimulate glands and organs, along with enhancing lymph drainage and blood flow.

“The breath is a magical thing,” Jean explains. “It helps relax the muscle groups and helps relax the mind. The breath is the big key. In my classes, I try to do breath work in every class. It is important for the teacher to facilitate

the breath work since the student is thinking about the poses.” She advises that instructors should talk and guide through the whole class, not in the motivational ways of an aerobics instructor, but in a focused method of ensuring the body, mind and breath connection.

The goal of yoga is not to have sore muscles the next day. “It’s a daily practice,” Jean says, “not a rigorous workout. It’s a body-mind connection.” Deep relaxation is part of the final stage of yoga practice, a relaxation of the mind and body. “The whole goal,” Jean explains, “is to move to that inner silence.”

Both men and women study yoga in the Williamsburg area. Jeans says that 30% of her beginning students are men. The “no pain, no gain” concept of fitness is difficult for men and some women to overcome. “Exercise and well-being don’t have to leave you sore.”

Stillness of mind may be difficult for some, but everyone has experienced it. Gazing at a sunset, losing yourself in the flow of water over a stony creek bed, or escaping into music are examples in mind-body relaxation. Jean suggests a way to practice clearing your mind and going to that peaceful state is to sit and focus

on your breath. “As thoughts come into your mind,” she says, “you acknowledge them and let them go. Focus on the breath. You sit there, and a thought pops in your head: ‘What am I going to have for dinner? Gee. I’m hungry.’ Let it go. Focus on the breath. You’re working with the mind, which is like a rebellious child, and bringing it back to stillness.”

Even in the traumatic times in life, yoga practice has helped Jean. “In 2000, I was diagnosed with breast cancer,” she says. “I was concerned that the radical mastectomy would change my yoga practice, but yoga actually enhanced my recovery. I am a ten year survivor now.”

Yoga has been a stabilizing practice in Jean Lien’s life and a part that she wants to share with other people through her teaching. The many branches and styles of yoga offer rich and varied opportunities to deal with and calm the stresses of life. “Come to a class to try it,” Jean suggests, “let the teacher know what you are looking for.” Toning, flexibility, concentration, and calming “the turbulent waves of the mind” can make yoga practice a healthy discovery for your life too. NDN

**Thomas Nelson**  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
Explore. Excel. Succeed.

# TNCC is for me!

**Sydney Carnifax**  
First-Year Student  
*Recent graduate of Lafayette High School*

**REGISTER NOW FOR FALL CLASSES!**

“Once I heard Thomas Nelson Community College was offering the dental hygiene program at the Historic Triangle Campus I knew it was for me. I have been working for a dental office for two years and have been able to shadow the dental hygienists to see what they did. I am excited about earning an Associates Degree at TNCC. The school is brand new so they have all the new technologies. Plus, it is going to be a lot less expensive for me so I won’t have any student loans to pay off after I graduate.”

**HISTORIC TRIANGLE CAMPUS**  
4601 Opportunity Way, Williamsburg  
757-253-4300  
www.tncc.edu

# You Can Choose Your Physical Therapist!

**It’s true!** While most doctors will give you the name of a local physical therapy provider, you are really free to select the services of the physical therapist you are the most comfortable with. When it comes to therapy it really is all about you.

Shiela M. Robison, MSPT  
15 years experience as a  
Licensed Physical Therapist

**Physical Therapy  
Massage • Fitness**

**For An Appointment,  
Please Call (757) 258-1221**

312-J Lightfoot Rd.  
Visit Our Website [www.reachforperformance.com](http://www.reachforperformance.com)

**REACH  
FOR PERFORMANCE, INC.**