Lee..It's 2019! The year you and your family will begin a wonderful new adventure! Do you know our paths first crossed back in 1994, which makes it 25 years that we've been friends. I can hardly believe it!!! How did we get to be so "mature"?????

I think it's pretty cool to recollect how a simple little 6 week Tai Chi course at a middle school, could have launched a 25 year run of amazing memories and a lifetime full of friendship between us. We've spanned the gamut of life events – from learning Tai Chi, to growing our families, supporting one another in the work environment, and of course through the hardest of things like illness and loss. I so appreciate how we've been able to be there for each other as encouragers through thick and thin.

I love thinking back on our adventurous outing when you, me and Marc went to the Tai Chi Farm. I, always remember the session with TT Liang when he challenged all the big guys to try and take his "money belt". It was also very cool to meet Zhang Luping, and Master Jou before their passing as well. I think back fondly on the many phone chats we had fixing all the maladies of the world – LOL! Our annual picnics at Judy's and so many more memories that this small little snippet of paper just can't contain.

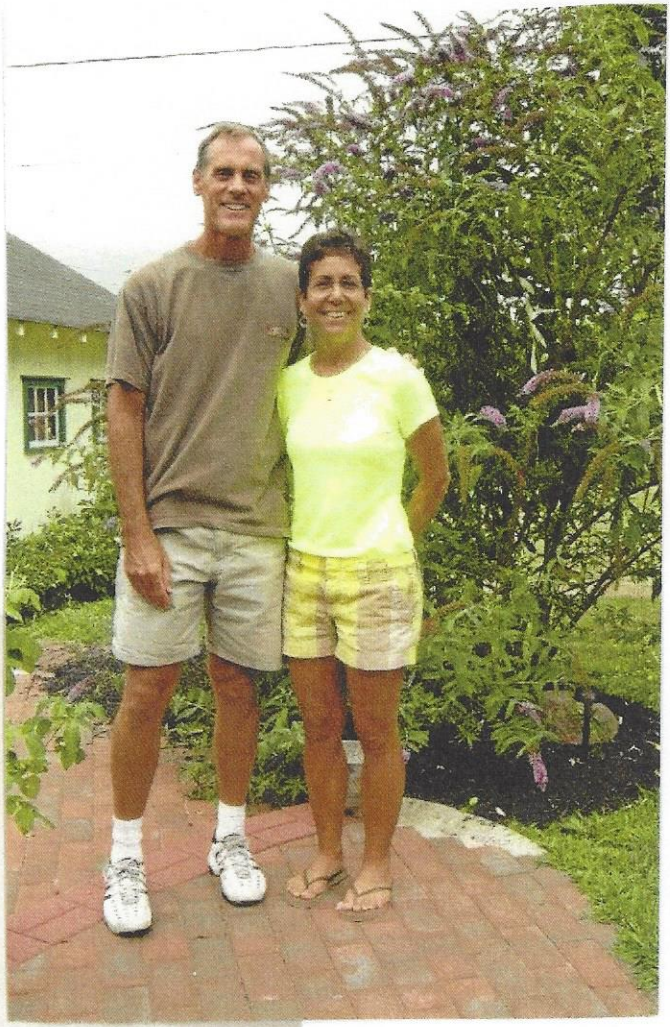
I truly do call you friend Lee. It may not be the kind of friendship where our families get together, or do the things that the "typical" friendships might experience, but I know one thing...that our friendship is lasting, simple, genuine and filled with good intentions for one another.

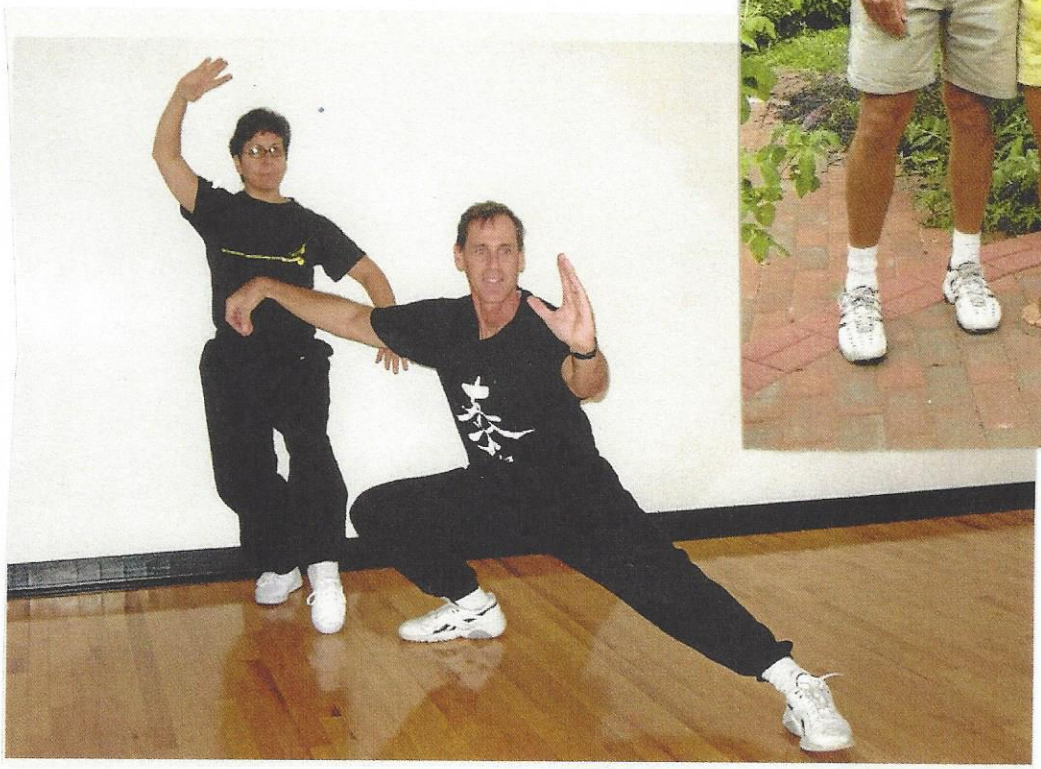
I'm so very happy for you and Debbie in this precious new season of life. With the kids all grown up and careers winding down, it's time to truly enjoy the fruit of all your labor.

I pray that you will have many years of strength, happiness, productivity and joy in all you do. May the coming years in your new home, new State and new beginnings be the best of them all. Be well Lee, and live life to the fullest and for the glory of our great God and Father.

So I'll sign off for now, with much respect for your commitment to our art, your dedication to your students, gratitude for your investment in my life, and love for you, Debbie, Jackie and Kenny.

All my best to you – your friend,
Donna





# Ode to Lee

from

Jeff and Ellen

Every Tuesday at 11:45
we put everything aside,
To practice Tai Chi
with our Sifu, named Lee.

Yin and yang
we couldn't get the hang.
Brush, push,
we felt like mush.

So we practiced each week,
our chi we did seek.
We have found our chi,
thanks to our Sifu, named Lee.

Lee ——

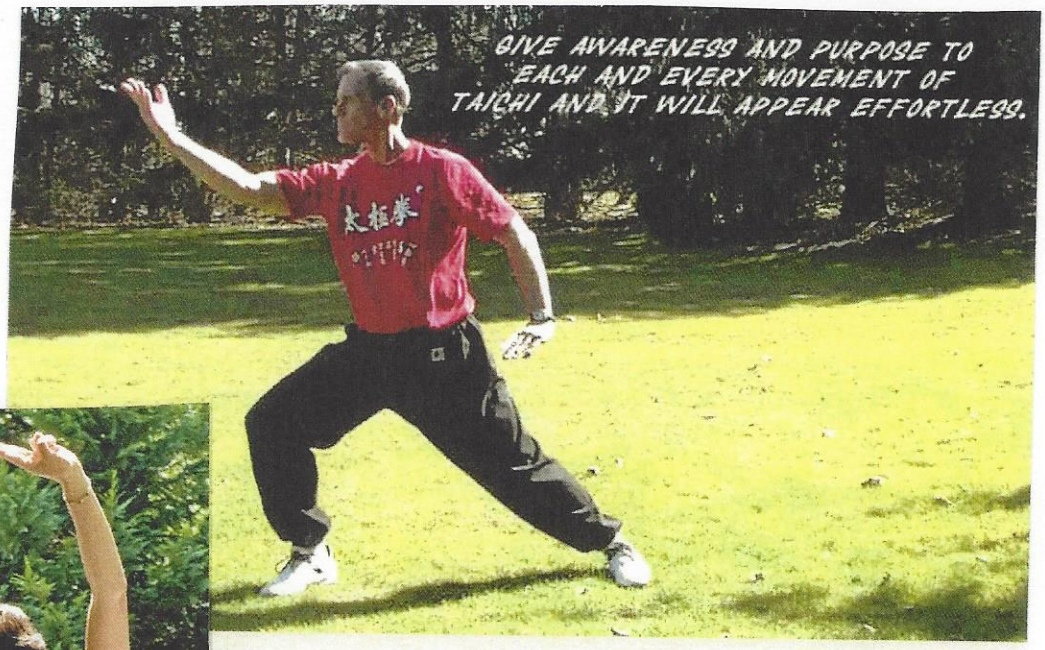
Many thanks for all you have given me over the past years, kindness, friendship and your knowledge of T'ai Chi. I am blessed in having known you for 12 years.

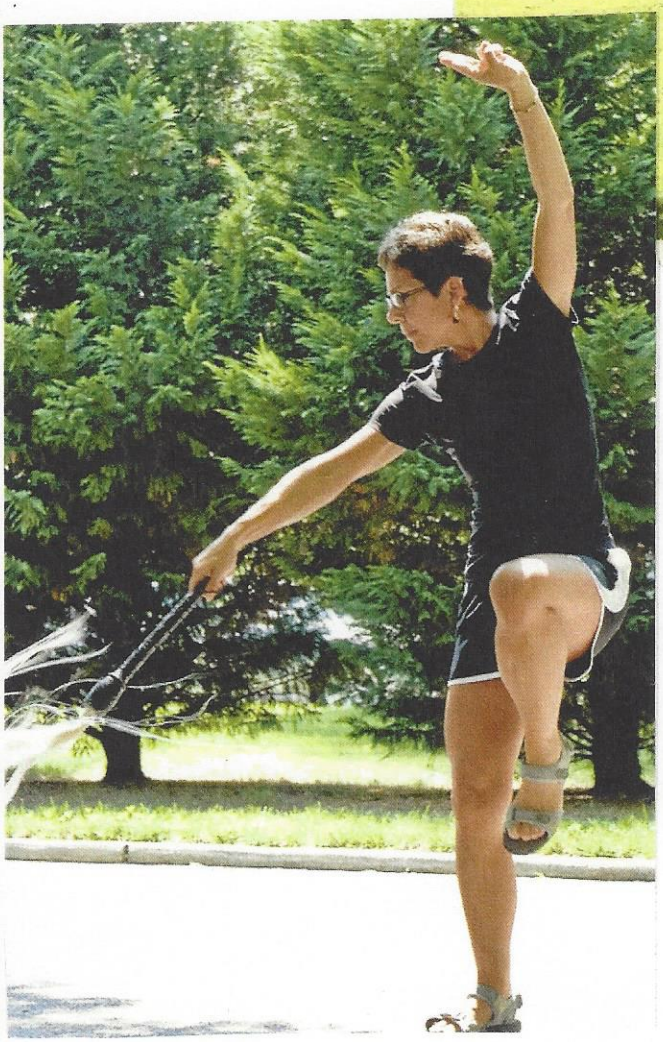
Although I, selfishly, would prefer to have your continued presence, I know that your leaving is a joyful event for you and your family. Thank goodness we have our pleasant memories.

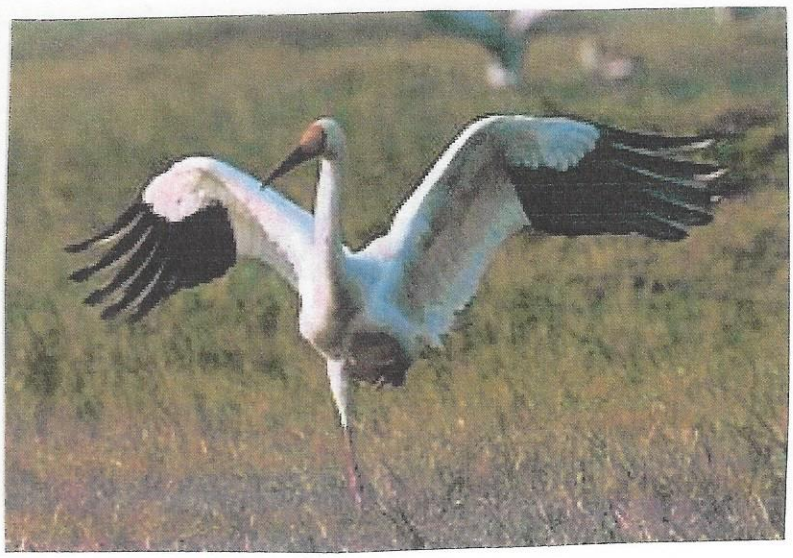
I can't imagine my world without T'ai Chi now, so know that you've done your job well. Being the diligent student (smiles), I found an excerpt from Kahlil Gibran's, <u>The Prophet</u>, that gives expression to this sad, but joyful occasion.

Best wishes, Hugo—

"Shall the day of parting be the day of gathering?
And shall it be said that my eve was in truth my dawn?"


GIVE AWARENESS AND PURPOSE TO
EACH AND EVERY MOVEMENT OF
TAICHI AND IT WILL APPEAR EFFORTLESS.





What I Learned from my Tai Chi Teacher

**T**aoism's philosophy of natural balance, yin and yang.

**A**wareness, mindfulness, cognizance.

**I**ntegration of Tai Chi philosophy in my everyday life.

**C**larity, focus, sharpness, dexterity, quickness.

**H**armony achieved by yin and yang flowing in constant continuous movement.

**I**mprovement of my overall health, agility, reflexes, balance.

**L**et the mud settle, patience, exactness, conscientiousness.

**E**xercise, martial arts, meditation.

**E**ngagement of one's whole self in body, mind and spirit.

*Thank you Lee. You will be missed....Kathy Syp*

身心神

**Body Mind Spirit**

*Dear Lee,*

*What can I say! You are irreplaceable and will be sorely missed. The knowledge you have learned over the your years of study and passed on to us has been very valuable and helpful.*

*I have been Blessed to be one of your students these past 13 years and I wish you all the best on this next phase of your life. I hope you don't stop teaching.*

*Sincerely*

*Suzanne Burke*

IF GREAT SPIRIT WANTED US TO STAY IN ONE PLACE
THE WORLD WOULD STAND STILL: BUT HE MADE IT TO ALWAYS CHANGE.

FLYING HAWK

Dear Lee,

I have been very grateful to have you as my Tai Chi teacher.

After the first class I attended I felt unsure about whether I would return.
There was a lot to learn and I didn't quite picture myself practicing a martial art!

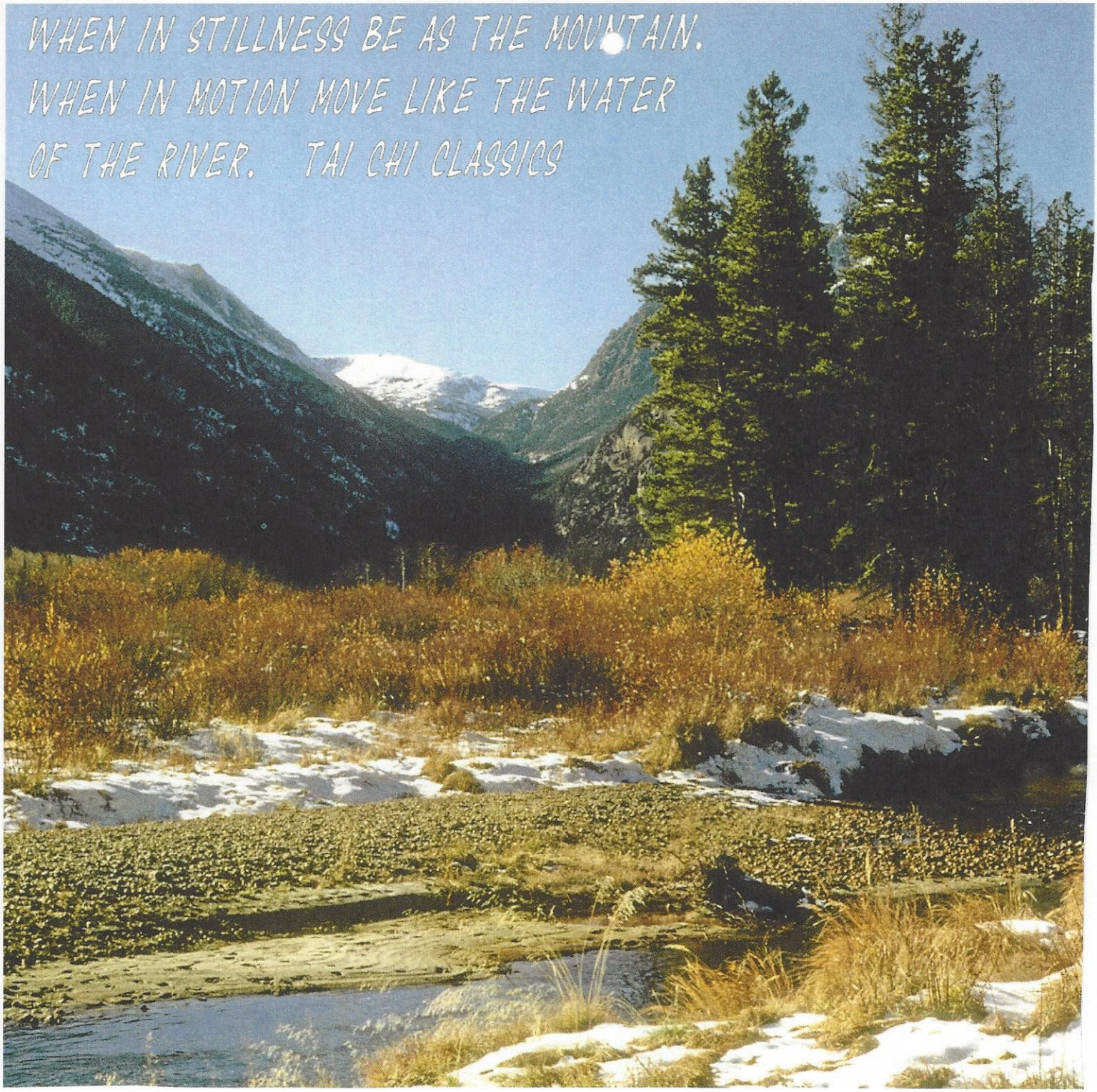
The more "talkative" Bob was very welcoming. He praised you as a person and a teacher and urged me to come again. I am happy I did.

Tai Chi has given me improved balance; more fluidity of movement; a sense of "chi"; of "bubbling springs" and of "rooting". I try to apply it to everyday practical movements involving lifting, turning, using the core.

Your gentle, patient and no stress approach to the class is perfect for me. I will miss you.

Best Wishes in the Tar Heel State.
Our loss will be North Carolina's gain.

Sincerely,
Ruth Meier
(Tuesday Tai Chi)


WHEN IN STILLNESS BE AS THE MOUNTAIN.
WHEN IN MOTION MOVE LIKE THE WATER
OF THE RIVER. TAI CHI CLASSICS

# QUOTES FROM TAO TE CHING

Yield and overcome;
Bend and be straight. (TDC 22)

He who stands of tiptoe is not steady.
He who strides cannot maintain the pace. (TDC 24)

Returning is the motion of the Tao.
Yielding is the way of the Tao. (TDC 40)

What is firmly established cannot be uprooted.
What is firmly grasped cannot slip away. (TDC 54)

Stiff and unbending is the principle of death.
Gentle and yielding is the principle of life.
A tree that is unbending is easily broken.
The hard and strong will fall.
The soft and weak will overcome. (TDC 76)

*"In the curve seek the straight, store – then release.*

*Be still as a mountain; move like a great river"*

-Wu Yu-Hsiang

Dear Shifu Lee,

Despite our short interactions (less than a year), some key Tai Chi fundamentals that I learned from you will stay with me forever.

I enjoyed your teachings and will certainly keep practicing until I can master the moves totally relaxed, and flowing gracefully like water.

Thank you and best wishes for continued success and fulfilment in North Carolina!

John Wang

March 2019

Lee,

I am thankful that I have had the pleasure in knowing you both as a person and as a teacher.

As a person, I saw the caring and thoughtful person that you are.

As a teacher, I saw the patience and dedication that you have.

I will remember that classes that I took with you and such activities as the dragon boat races performance.

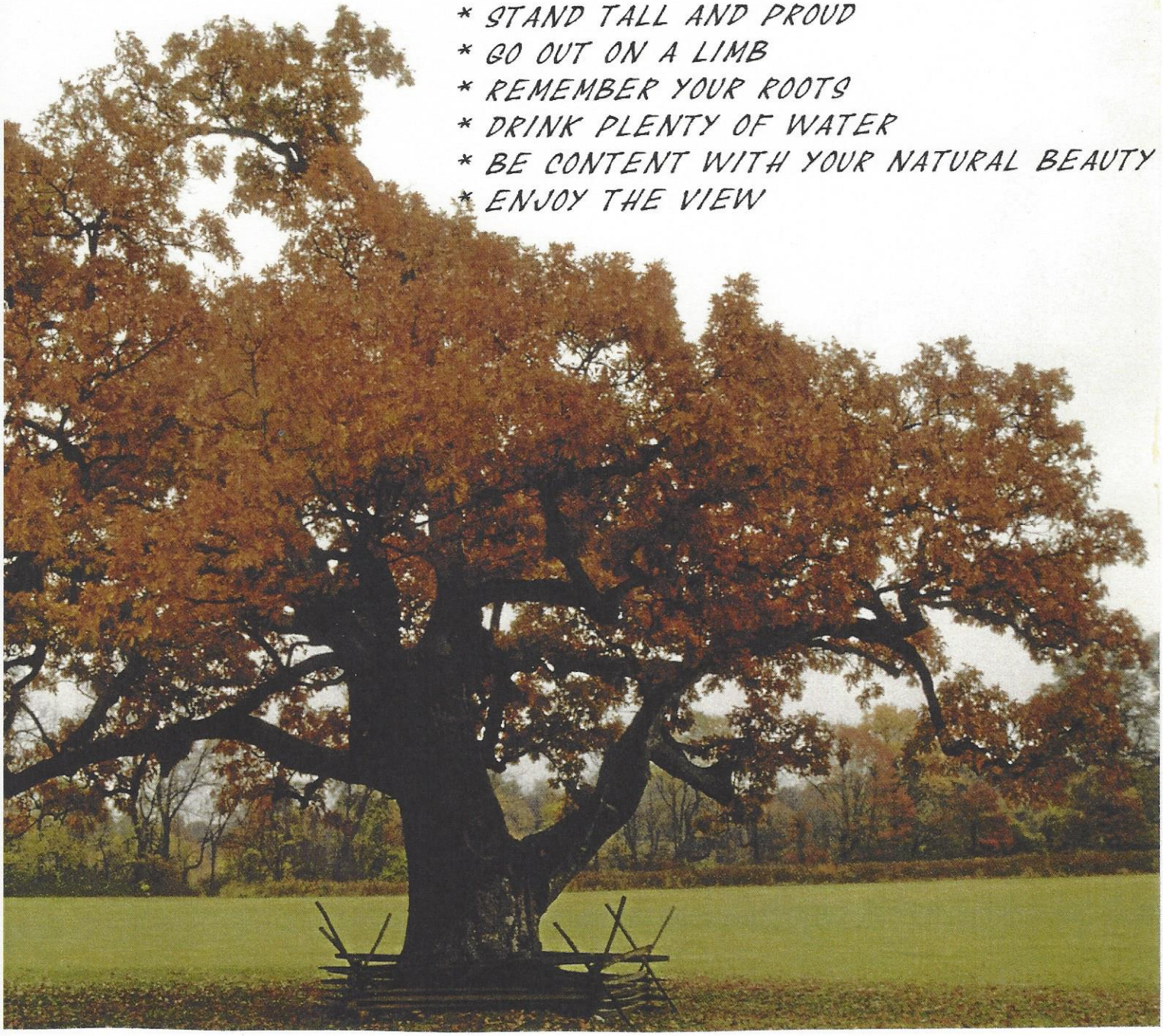
As you enter into a new chapter in your life, we will keep in touch.

The very best of everything to you and your family.

Roberto (Fineman)

ADVICE FROM A TREE:

* STAND TALL AND PROUD
* GO OUT ON A LIMB
* REMEMBER YOUR ROOTS
* DRINK PLENTY OF WATER
* BE CONTENT WITH YOUR NATURAL BEAUTY
* ENJOY THE VIEW



Lee,

It is hard to believe that you and I have been practicing Tai Chi together for 14 years. You were my 1st teacher on my 1st day of class on April 4, 2005, and the rest is history. It was love at first sight – you, me and Tai Chi. Of course you are still the teacher and I am still the student. But I attribute much of my growth to your interest in detail and encouraging me and the others to do our best, but yet not to feel pressured. Just to relax and go with the flow.

I want to wish you good luck + much Chi in your new life in North Carolina.

We will miss you.

Rita Kraft

WITHDRAW FROM THE HUBBUB OF THE WORLD AND QUIET YOUR MIND.
MAKE ROOM FOR GREAT THINGS TO FASHION THEMSELVES TOGETHER.

# 太極L.

Tai chi Lee

Dear Lee,

I am very greatful to have met you in Jersey. You have made everyone loved you. Most of us came to know you through taichi RWJ. Thank you so much for being such a wonderful Taichi instructor To all of us. We wish you smooth transition relocating. Forget us not! We will all miss you.

Pearl and Family of Wong

太極 太極 太極 太極 太極 太極 太極 太極 太極 太極 太極 太極 太極

Hannah
Wong

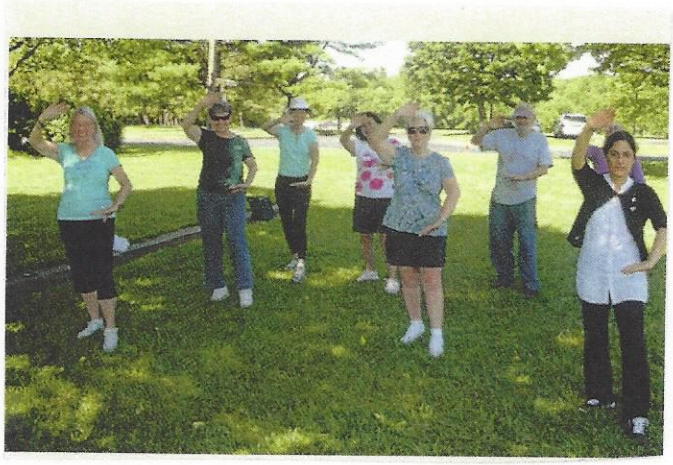
Lee Atwater!! As soon as I saw the name I was sure I knew your parents. We square danced with them for many years. They mentored us. We also had heard some fun tales of your growing up.

Then Lee was my first Tai Chee instructor. I appreciated your patience with beginners. Needless to say that first positive experience kept me returning again ... and again.

As your daughter also gives "help" at R.W.J. I can only say THANKS to 3 generations of Atwater Family.

Best Wishes - God Bless - THANKS!!

Marilyn Stebbins



I don't usually like exercise classes because an hour seems too long, but the time flew by in your class. I always looked
forward to it. I started Tai Chi to improve my balance and I feel it helped. I'm sorry that my schedule didn't
allow me to come in recent months.

Veronica Zweben

Lee, thank you so much for teaching me Tai Chi. More importantly, I appreciate the enthusiasm in the way you teach us. It was so helpful how you explained to us how we can use Tai Chi to improve our happiness and outlook on life. Although my schedule changed and it is difficult to get out of work and get to your classes now, I want you to know that I am much happier and content because you taught me how to incorporate Tai Chi into my daily life.

John Rehberger

Lee - I am full of joy for finding my way to your instruction, albeit I wish it had been earlier! All the best with this new stage of life. Megalove Carrie

4/13/19

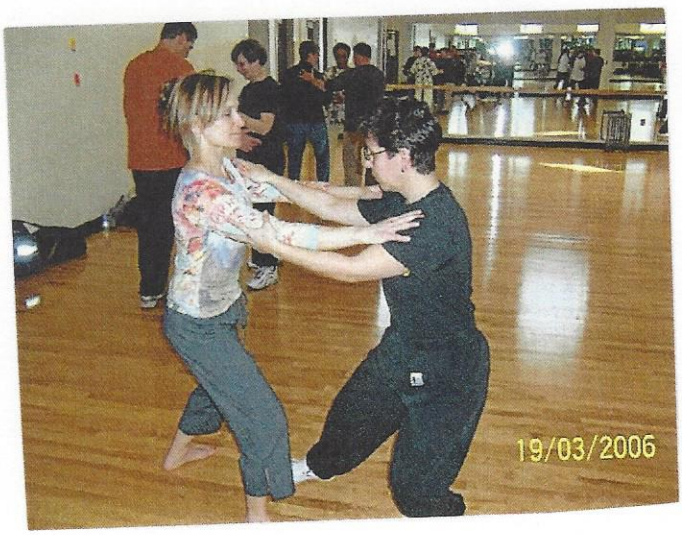
Dear Lee,

Thank you for your excellent Tai Chi leadership here in Hamilton! Wishing you good luck and happiness in North Carolina — Ellen McCourt

Kim Thank You (Helen)

Lee,

Good luck with your new home in North Caroline. Thankyou for teaching in Tai Chi. Nadine Chiarello



Hi Lee!

I have not attended your classes recently (which I regret) however I still remember that you are a great teacher, always gave excellent instruction, and your passion for Tai Chi was contagious.
Wishing you the best of everything in your new town, new house and new life.
Good luck and good bye!

Krystyna Zarska

Dear Sifu Lee,

Thank you for sharing your
wisdom and for introducing
me to the joy of tai chi.

Best wishes always
Susan Jackson

# What Tai Chi Means To Me

by Jes Ortiz

Slow down.

Stop.

Breathe.

Tai Chi means consciously resting within myself, while being mindful of my chi and other's chi around me.

Tai Chi means conserving my good energy and warding off bad energy.

Tai Chi means releasing any stress or negativity and freely flowing with the movements.

Tai Chi is about being in the present moment, moving my body, uplifting my soul, hearing my breath feeling how it moves within my body.

Outdoors Tai Chi is a delight to the senses, listening to the leaves rustling in the breeze, the birds chirping, the warmth of the sun on my skin.

Thank you, Lee, for your beautiful expression of Tai Chi and all of the souls you've touched throughout the years. May you continue to share your gift and build a new Tai Chi family where ever your journey leads you.

[redacted]

As a member of the Robert Wood Johnson Center for Health and Wellness, I have attended Lee's tai chi classes for about seven years. During those years classes have become increasingly popular, growing from 3 or 4 regular participants to as many as 25 students per class.

The Wellness Center's tai chi classes include a mix of students with various levels of interest in the art and reasons for participating; students with levels of experience from raw beginner ("What is tai chi? Is it like yoga?") to advanced practitioner; and students of different ages, degrees of athleticism, and temperaments. Each hour-long class is different because each student chooses whether to attend a particular class on a given day. Working under these potentially chaotic conditions, Lee is able to conduct a class in which each student is encouraged to participate to the best of his or her ability and at an appropriate level.

Lee is able to apply tai chi principles not only to the work we do in class, but also to our lives in such varied areas as tennis and child rearing. Although learning the principles is of primary importance in the class, Lee also provides us with glimpses of what is happening in the greater world of tai chi, and reminds us of the philosophical and martial bases for the practice.

I'm looking forward to at least another seven years in Lee's classes.

[redacted]

Dear Lee:

Thank you for coaching us Tai-Chi, your approch let me know some details I have to pay attention. Tai-Chi is not only the perform of its movement, but also the understanding of Tai-Chi, which we can apply to our daily life, how to increase your balance, how to protect when attack~~ed~~ happened.

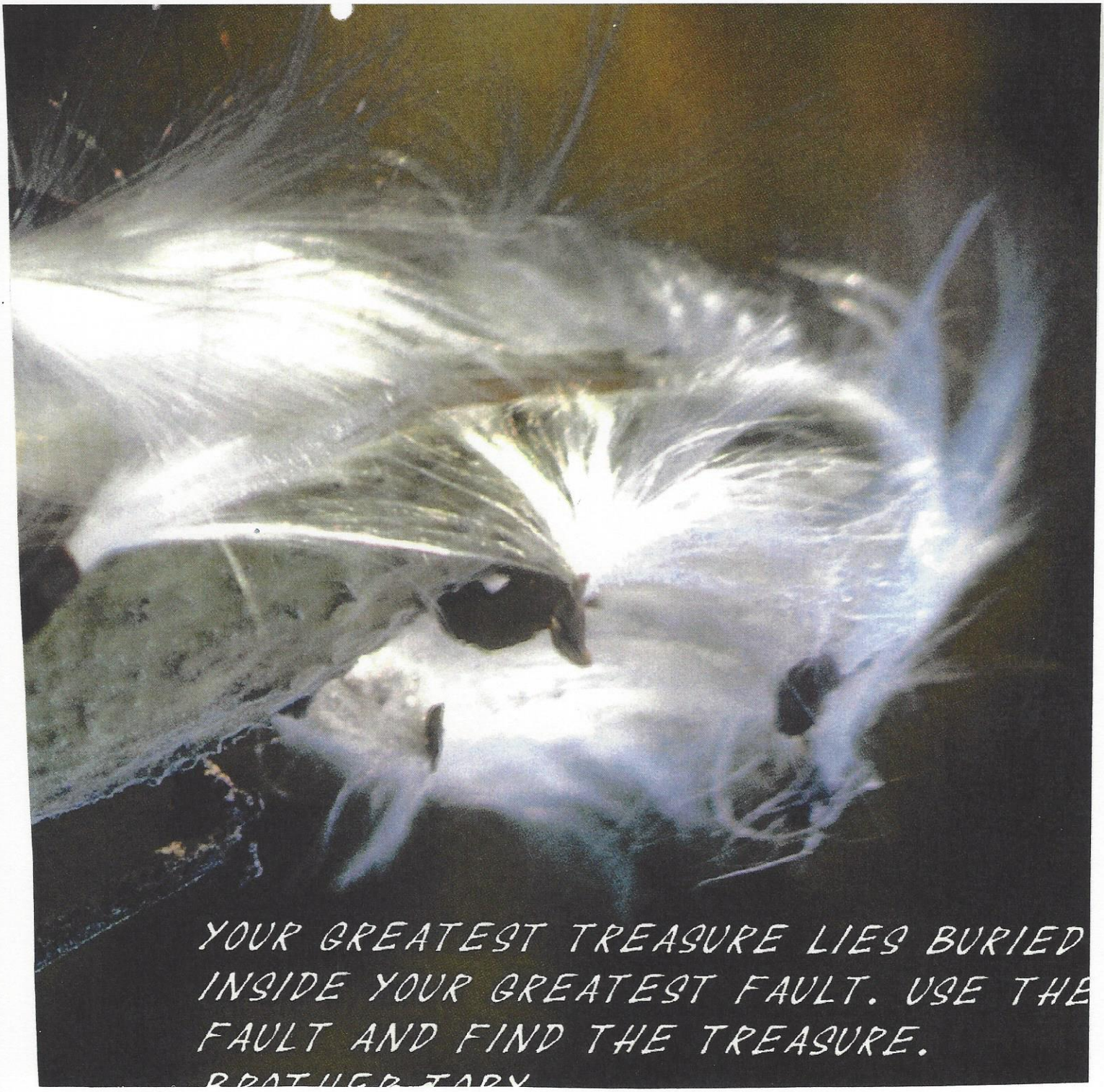
Yin-Yan is another topic which involves many issues. such as: Day is Yan, Night is Yin. So Day time, we have to work, exercise. Night time, we have to rest and sleep. Even Food and medication we have Yin-Yan. Such as: Ginger belongs to Yan which wakes up your body to move. Banana which is rich in ~~mel~~ melatonin so it belongs to Yin's food. Yin-Yan helps each other, which creates harmony that is the goal. And you sometimes try to teach us this, too. Make us know how to breath in and out to match the movement.

over

"I've only practiced with you a handful of times, but I found your classes informative, and your dedication to the practice of Tai Chi extraordinary in that you bring a solid foundation to the study coupled with a genuine warmth and generous spirit. You will be missed by many. I wish you all the best in your new endeavors."
Joanne Klimak

Most importantly I appreciate your patience. and your humble attitude. That's what I need to learn. Thank you very much.

Student
Sue Chang


YOUR GREATEST TREASURE LIES BURIED
INSIDE YOUR GREATEST FAULT. USE THE
FAULT AND FIND THE TREASURE.

13 April 2019

Sifu Lee,

Thank you for being my consummate Tai Chi instructor. These past years have been physically challenging for me. My doctors encouraged me to continue Tai Chi instruction. I was fortunate to be in a class with a master of the martial art. Not only have you skillfully demonstrated the basic movements and alignments necessary for the flow of our "Chi," but you taught by example. Out of class, there were times I observed you jogging past my house on Edinburg Road--your body always in motion; you made me want to keep moving as well.

My current recovery is noteworthy, and my balance is demonstrably improved. Each day I perform several of the exercises and postures you have executed with professionalism. The genuine interest you exhibited in the well-being of all your students, is an added component of my healing process.

Know that wherever life takes us, you have left a legacy as a master teacher and exceptional human being. I wish you all the best in your future endeavors.

Sincerely,

Gilda Rorro Baldassari

always so nice to us ← PLEASANT

DETAILS → explains movements

shows hand positions ← HELPFUL

BALANCE → taught us life lessons

our tai chi style ← YANG STYLE

WAIST → use the waist. it controls !!

always ready to repeat information if we don't "get it". ← PATIENT

TAI CHI

READ EXCERPTS

love the little books and magazines with wisdom ← READ

GROUNDED → basis for tai chi and life !!

Wishing you the best. Be blessed.
Judy - the "babysitter"! ☺ ♥

Lee,
I enjoyed your classes and admire your warm relationships with the class members.

Best of luck in North Carolina

John Arnett

Lee,
I am going to miss you!
Winnie

Dear Lee,
Thank you for your guidance + patience + for helping become happier + healthier via t'ai chi.
All the best to you + your family in NC.
Cathy Shaughnessy

## The Symbol of Tai Chi

The yin yang symbol of two teardrops creates the sense of movement. The left side of the circle is filled with the white teardrop with its bulb at the top as though it's ascending. The black teardrop descends with the bulb shape located at the bottom of the circle. This creates the illusion of a clockwise movement.

**White and Black**

The two tear drops represent the male (yang) and female (yin) properties of chi energy. These properties are found in all matter since chi exists in all things. Male energy is light (white) and active. Female energy is dark (black) and passive. When combined in a balance of power, these two energies create harmony or what is known as chi. This is the same balance of energy that feng shui applications can achieve inside and outside your home.

力量
STRENGTH

**Day and Night**

When examining the yin yang symbol, it's easy to understand how day (white) and night (black) are depicted. Each reigns for an equal (balanced) amount of time. Each begins small then grows larger until the next phase begins. Day gives over to night just as night must give back over to day. This is perfect harmony of elements. Both day and night have specific attributes and properties. The day has the sun and the night has the moon and stars. Certain animals belong to the vibrational quality of day while others come out only at night.

尊
RESPECT

**Birth, Death, and Rebirth**

The Circle of life concept of cyclical nature is as ancient as humankind. This cycle is symbolized with the shape of the tai chi emblem being round and containing the positive and negative energies of the yin yang symbol. This symbol further demonstrates the philosophy of life, death, and reincarnation. The eternity of the soul is cyclical through many lifetimes of birth, death, and rebirth.

**Ten Thousand Things**

The yin yang symbol demonstrates what's known as the Ten Thousand Things. The Ten Thousand Things is a term used to signify all things found throughout the universe. It's an expression of all encompassing just as the chi energy fills all things. That means that within every living matter there are light and dark energies. When those energies become imbalanced in nature, the effect can be in the form of natural disasters.

Lee,
May you continue to practice and teach your indomitable style of Tai Chi.
With heartfelt best wishes that you find peace and happiness in this next chapter of your life's journey. Julie

## THANK YOU LEE !

Along with Tai Chi, you taught me to live GentLEE, GracefuLEE, GenerousLEE, CaringLEE, CompassionateLEE, HumbLEE, HonestLEE, DedicatedLEE, PeacefuLEE....

شکریہ لی!

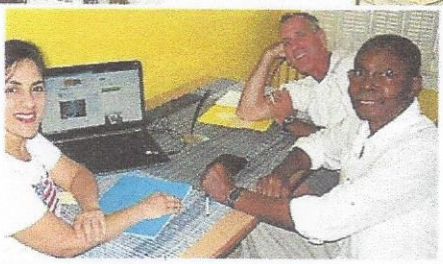
**Sifu, Guru, Teacher, Mentor, Guide, Friend, Brother, Inspiration**

I cannot fully describe all the ways you have helped me transform into a fearlessly joyful 'Player'. My first Tai Chi experience ever was in your class, and it felt like coming home. Your gentle, graceful style made me feel calm, focused and optimistic (perfect recipe for those of us coping with PTSD). That was 2008 and I am still playing, thanks to your encouragement.

The ultimate reward is when you refer to me as a teacher or colleague.... I am humbled every time.

You are a Tai Chi celebrity with a creative, pioneering spirit that is evident in all your pursuits. It was such an honor to co-create Tai Chi Fusion with you.

Tai Chi Inspiration on Blog-Talk Radio was quite brilliant yet you made it look so effortless. We had some amazing guests and wonderful conversations. I learnt a lot.



You generously share your time, energy and wealth of experience via TaiChiLee.com, social media postings and by coming out to lead whenever, wherever we ask.

Our Tai Chi video is very cool. I proudly share it with everyone. You had the vision of getting it done just in time before hurricane Sandy wiped out our beautiful backdrop.

What great fun playing, teaching and doing demos at RWJ, Mercer County Park, the Grounds for Sculpture, The YMCA, Robbinsville Senior Center, ETS, and other venues.

Under your leadership, our Tai Chi family gathers to heal, share joys & sorrows, create precious memories and have fun. I will always cherish moments like Judy's surprise, WTCD and goofy holiday photo sessions.

Wishing you all the BEST!!!

With much love, admiration and gratitude.

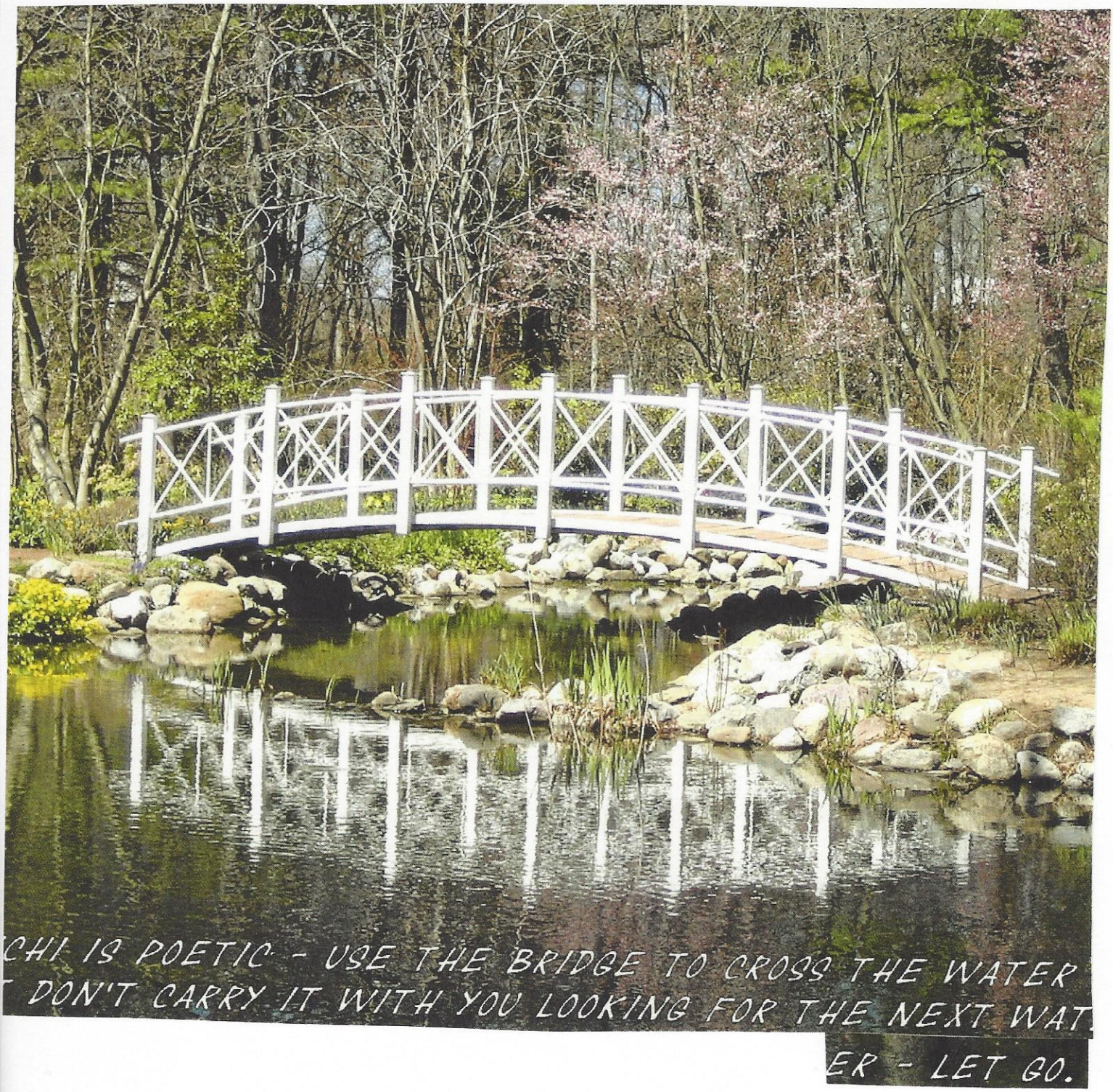
Your student, Aliya

Lee,

I am grateful for the skills and knowledge I have gained from your help, support, and guidance. You are a great teacher with a sound knowledge of the forms and underlying tai chi principles. You helped me understand and appreciate tai chi in a way that was meaningful for me and you patiently repeated moves in the advanced session as many times as necessary for me to learn them. Thank you for making the class engaging and enjoyable to attend. I'm sure I can say with confidence that you have been an inspiration to all of us, and your contributions will forever be remembered. Farewell and thank you!

Bob

Bob Seman


CHI IS POETIC - USE THE BRIDGE TO CROSS THE WATER
T DON'T CARRY IT WITH YOU LOOKING FOR THE NEXT WAT
ER - LET GO.

*Tai Chi quartet*

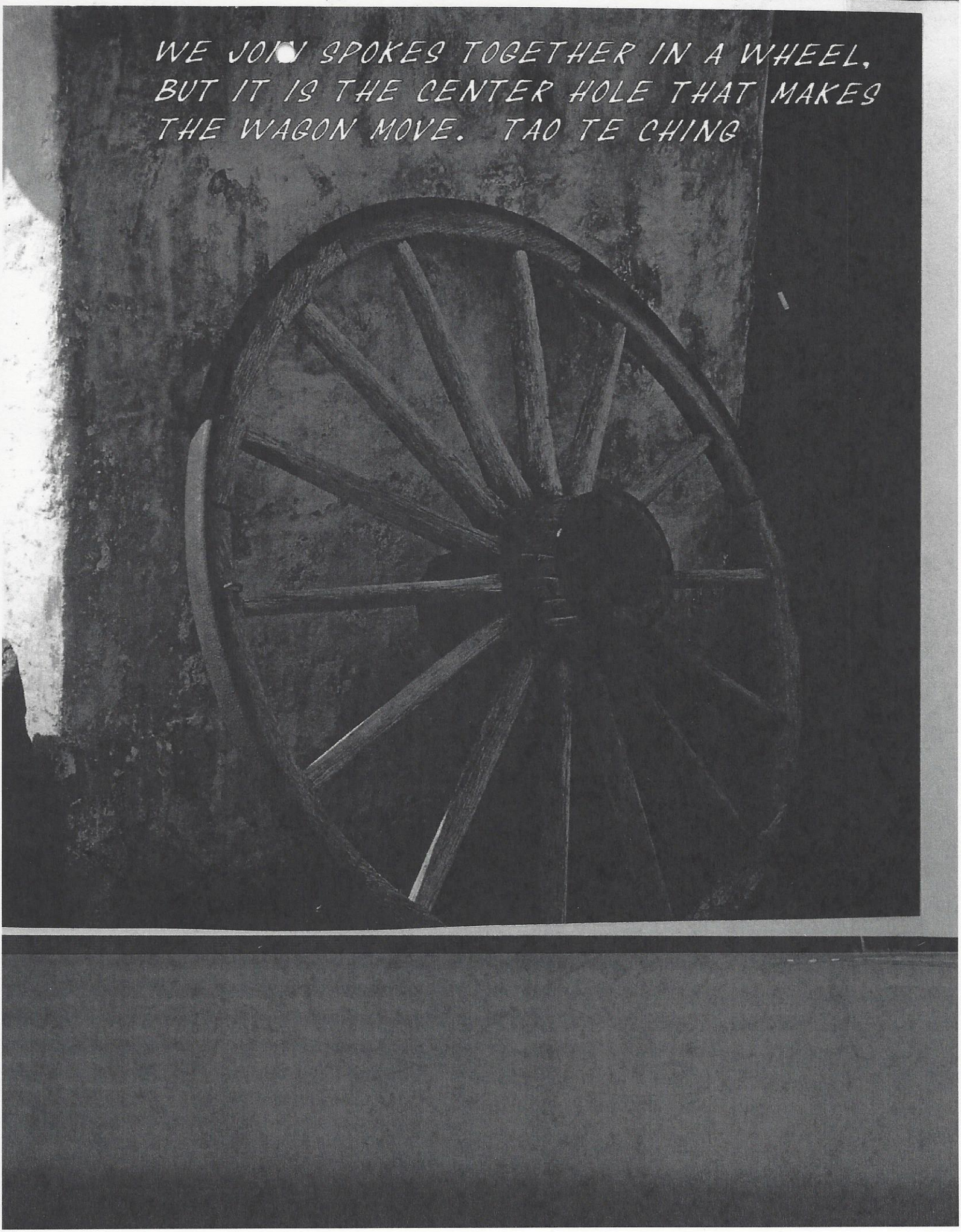
to start Tai Chi class
we stand still and breathe; I watch
the tall skinny trees
across the parking lot, and
imagine I'm one of them

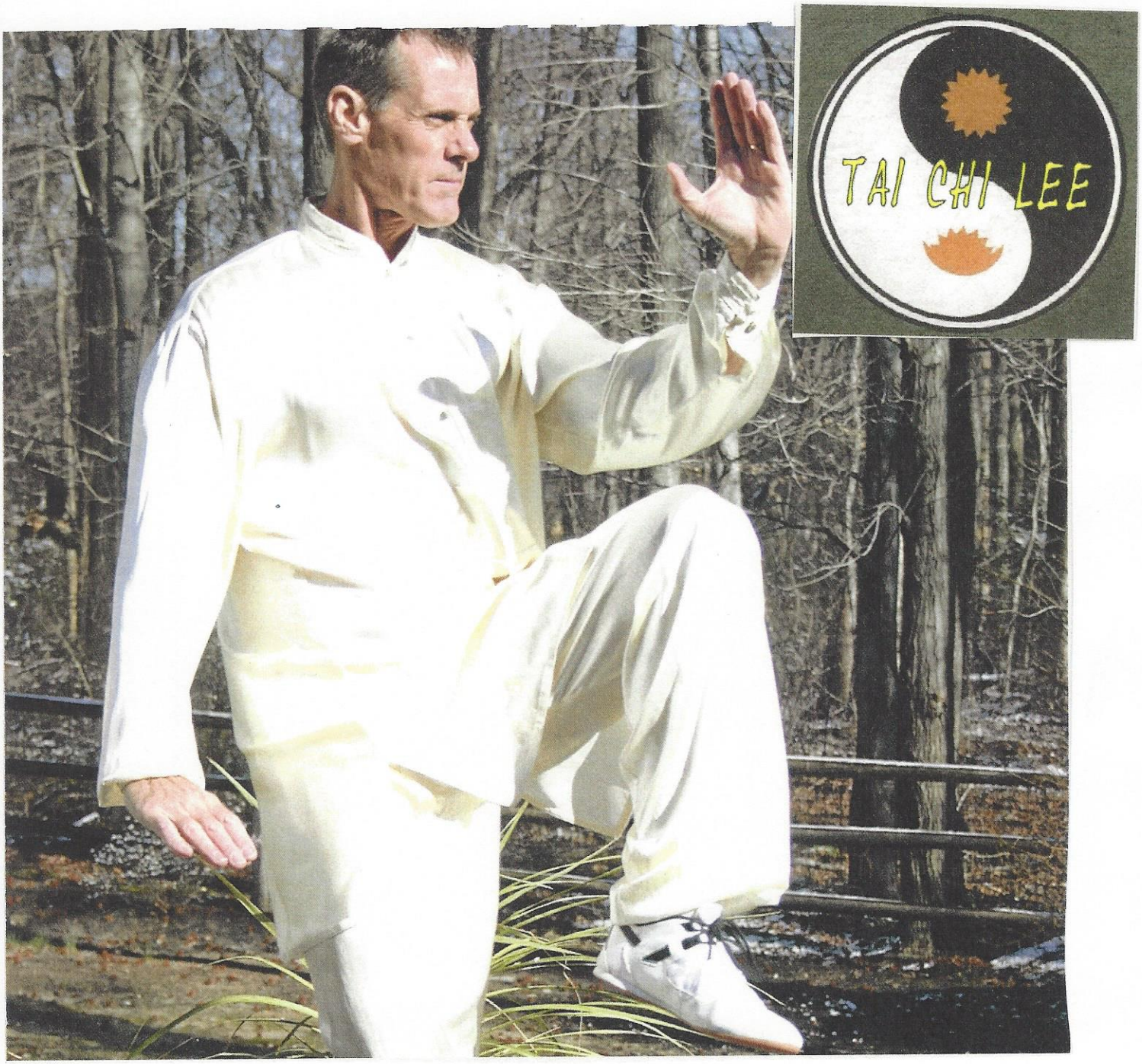
then I push and sway.
though I am short and round, there's
power I raise from
earth, cleansing I pull from sky,
imagination made real.

air is more than air—
it is breath, energy, space.
our dance lets us find
the one still point of balance
hiding within each movement.

I start Tai Chi class,
stand still and breathe. around me,
a community
of players: many motives,
such different paths, one dance.

*--Deborah Roggie*


WE JOIN SPOKES TOGETHER IN A WHEEL,
BUT IT IS THE CENTER HOLE THAT MAKES
THE WAGON MOVE. TAO TE CHING


TAI CHI LEE

ALIYA, IF I WERE TO TRY AN TELL OF AN EXPERIENCE INVOLVING SIFU LEE IT WOULD GO SOMETHING LIKE THIS: SOME MAY OR MAY NOT KNOW THAT I MET WITH SIFU LEE EVERY WEEK FOR PRIVATE LESSONS. ON THIS ONE PARTICULAR WEEK I WAS CONFIRMING THAT WE WOULD MEET AS USUAL ON MONDAY MORNING. SIFU SAID "YAH WE'LL MEET AS USUAL, BUT HAD A APPOINTMENT FOR A COLONOSCOPY ON THE FOLLOWING DAY". I SAID "I DON'T THINK WE'LL BE DOING A TAI CHI SESSION ON THE DAY BEFORE A COLONOSCOPY! SIFU SAID "OH NO PROBLEM, I'LL BE OKAY". WE GENERALLY WOULD MEET AT HIS HOUSE AT I THINK AROUND ELEVEN A.M. WELL LOW AND BEHOLD AROUND NINE THAT MORNING I GET A PHONE CALL FROM WHAT SOUNDED LIKE A VERY DESPERATE MAN TELLING ME THAT THERE'S NO WAY HE COULD DO A CLASS.....

HAVE A HAPPY RETIREMENT AND NEW LIFE IN N.C. YOU FRIEND MIKE P