



Middle States Site Visit

BY DR. MARY ELLEN PETRISKO

Tai Sophia Institute was visited from April 2-5 by a Middle States-selected seven-person team of colleagues from other higher education institutions. The four-day visit, which followed the team's careful review of our self-study and supporting documentation, culminated in the creation of a draft report presented to the entire Tai Sophia community in an exit interview on Wednesday, April 5, and a subsequent confidential recommendation to the Middle States Commission regarding accreditation for Tai Sophia Institute. The team's assessment as reported in the exit interview was summarized in an email from Mary Ellen Petrisko, Vice President of Academic Affairs, on Thursday, April 6, "Walter McCarthy, chair of the visiting team, read the draft report prepared by the team, informing us that in the team's judgment Tai Sophia meets all 14 of the Middle States standards." Mary Ellen continues, "While

basking in this wonderful news, it is important to realize that the formal decision regarding accreditation rests in the hands of the Middle States Commission, which will be considering our accreditation at its June Meeting." The team also conveyed to the community its recognition that Tai Sophia is actually living and breathing our values as reflected in our values statement.

Middle States accreditation would mean that the Institute will continue to be eligible for federally funded student loans, and that other institutions may more readily recognize Tai Sophia Institute coursework and degrees should students want to go on for additional study at other colleges or universities. It is a recognition by peers within the higher education community that Tai Sophia Institute operates in concert with the standards of good practice in higher education that all Middle States-accredited institutions have signed on to.

Walter McCarthy, chair of the visiting team, reads the draft report prepared by the team, informing us that in the team's judgment Tai Sophia meets all 14 of the Middle States standards.



in this
issue...

AHA Grad's
Radical Sabbatical
page 3

Acupuncture
Alumna's
Penn North
Learnings
page 4

Spotlight on
Alumna Author
Lorie Eve Dechar
page 5

Letter from
New Editor
page 4

alumni news

births



Elizabeth Hancock Porter

KATHERINE HANCOCK-PORTER (ACU '94) and husband Philip announce the birth of their daughter Elizabeth "Tess" Hancock Porter on October 29, 2005. Tess weighed in at 7 lbs. 8 oz. and was 19" long.

JANICE CAMPBELL (ACU '02) and her husband Reagan Gibbs announce the birth of their son Deacon Vaclav Gibbs on February 20, 2006 at 3:30 a.m. Deacon entered the world at 7 lbs. 10 oz. and was 20" long.

new practices

BARRY FUDIM (ACU '97) and partner **AMY WHEELER** (ACU '97) have opened a new practice in Barnet, VT and Hanover, NH. Much success to you both!

K.G. DINNING (ACU '94) has opened a new office (in addition to her Frederick office) in the "Sage Moon Herb Shop" in Berkeley Springs, WV. Best of luck with your new venture!

workshops by alums

BARBARA ABRAMS (ACU '93) offered a workshop, "A Day of Presence" on May 6, 2006 in Clarksville, MD. The workshop included heightened presence, inhabiting the body and observing and recognizing the pain-body.

Submissions

Please remember to submit any information about yourself, your practice and other interesting news by September 1, 2006 for the next issue of **Reunion Point**. All of the above information was included because someone told us. Your colleagues are interested in what you are doing, so please help us keep them informed.

seen & heard

Tai Sophia's President and co-founder, **ROBERT DUGGAN** (ACU '72), was the keynote speaker for *The Second Annual Healing from Within* conference held on May 20 at Chesapeake College. Bob spoke on "Symptoms as Wisdom Teachers". The conference was designed to offer new and intriguing perspectives on stress management.

JANET ALTHEN (ACU '98) was featured in the health section of *The View* newspapers in an article entitled "Women Turn to Acupuncture for their Health". Janet described her journey into the study and practice of acupuncture as a way of personal healing and healthy living.

PENELOPE MELAS (ACU '98) was featured in the article "Getting to the Root of Health and Weight Issues" for *The Frederick News-Post* in which she explained her work as an acupuncturist and Sufi healer.

TORI PAIDE (ACU '03) was featured in an article for *The Gazette*, a Maryland community newspaper serving Montgomery County. "Tapping into Sources of Energy for Their Occupations - Asian Arts Provide Well-being for Career Choices" described Tori's quest for a holistic approach to life.

BOB SHAPERO (ACU '81) offered an herb workshop for "non-herbalists" on Sunday, June 25. For future offerings, you can contact Bob via email shapbob@erols.com or call his office at 301-530-7240.

AMY EDDY (ACU '96) after six and a half years in private practice, Amy has decided to pursue her dream of working in integrative medicine. To make that dream come true, Amy and her family will be moving to Ann Arbor, MI where she will be attending The University of Michigan, School of Public Health, Department of Health Policy and Management as a graduate student.

alumni profile

Radical Sabbatical: Taking Time Out To “BE”

LYNN GARDNER (AHA '02) is founder of OutSource UnLimited, Inc., a marketing and sales project management consulting company dedicated to transitional leadership. OutSource assists organizations and individuals to become more powerful, effective, and fulfilled in all areas of the workplace and life.

Lynn developed the Radical Sabbatical as her Project of Excellence for the Applied Healing Arts program. It is designed to be an exploration of our unique truth and destiny. The journey expands wisdom and authenticity about our purpose, our relationships, and the “awe” of our true nature. *RADICAL: of, relating to, or proceeding from the root, of the origin. SABBATICAL: a year of rest for the land every seventh year in ancient Judea.*

Questions that Lynn asked herself were, “What happened to the Sabbatical year for the teachers in our educational system? Why is it foreign to corporate America, the very group that could benefit the most from relieving stress?” She believes that people who dare to take a Sabbatical are on a quest for a significant life change and greater meaning. It is a craving for autonomy and adventure, sometimes called a midlife crisis.

Lynn’s premise is that we are challenged with uncomfortable and sometimes painful symptoms resulting from long work hours and to-do lists, finances, the blogs, clogs, and congestion all around us. We rarely examine the choices we make on a day-to-day basis or notice how they relate to our happiness. Our minds are on automatic. Once creative and open, we are now reactive. It is unusual for us to exhibit the character of our true nature – full of creativity, courage, adventure, curiosity, and playfulness. We catch glimpses of this when we are on vacation, away from it all. The Radical Sabbatical was designed as a culturally, ecologically, and spiritually rich journey to revisit, restore, and redefine our life purpose. We return from this journey with an opening of new insight and with practices that support all the goodness, richness, and abundance we dream of in our life and relationships.

Lynn has taken her own Radical Sabbatical three times during the course of her adult life. She is described by her clients as having compassionate acceptance of where people are and seeing the sacredness of what is. She is a catalyst for bringing into consciousness our true nature, using nature as the teacher. She empowers clients to overcome fears, build confidence and trust that the practical and financial stuff will miraculously take care of itself. Lynn states, “You are not doing anyone a favor – yourself, family, and organization – by staying in a job that does not feed

you on some deeper level.” She notes that in an intensive program of restfulness, stillness, yoga and meditative practices, a person can access greater balance, clarity, creativity, courage, respect, understanding and fearlessness. Being, rather than doing, enables us to discover the answers we are seeking to our perpetual questions and restores our Divine Purpose and Destiny.

Last year, Lynn created a journey – an African Safari – where everyone celebrated the miracle of diversity. The second group journey, scheduled for August 2006, will be to Machu Picchu and the Sacred Valley of Peru. Lynn believes that “traveling and immersing as a group in a timeless

culture and ecology provides a unique and exclusive experience – an experience for observing new dimensions of life and a certain truth of information that collectively raises our consciousness of who we can be.”

As Eckhart Tolle, author of *The Power of NOW*, so profoundly says, “You are here to enable the divine purpose of the Universe to unfold. That is how important you are.” The intention of the Radical Sabbatical, Lynn says, is to allow the participants to learn that by doing less and spending more time being, you are capable of living a life of great abundance. For more information, visit Lynn’s web site at www.radicalsabbatical.net.



Lynn Gardner, founder of Radical Sabbatical

alumni profile

REBECCA SCHIRBER (ACU '01) has been doing full-body acupuncture treatments at Penn North two mornings a week for the last two years. "I can find no downside to this experience," she says.

Originally, as a newly graduated practitioner, she was looking for a way to structure her time and to do as many treatments as possible. Becky says that both of these goals have been realized – and she has gained so much more.

The benefits to any practitioner, especially a newer one, are huge. "I can really see the power of the medicine when working with folks with such pressing issues," she says. "Whether treating a person just one time or every week over many months, I am able to see the true power of this medicine."

Becky notes that many recipients of treatment at Penn North are literally in a do-or-die situation, with very few resources. This circumstance underscores how lifestyle affects each patient's health, and encourages the practitioner to develop skills in assisting folks to track how lifestyle issues directly affect their well-being. Through giving clients homework that assists them in improving the way they live their lives, the practitioner becomes a more powerful catalyst for change.

Something very special about the people at Penn North is the way they take on new ways of being. Becky says that very often when she's given homework to clients and later asked if they had taken it on, they would say something similar to "Yes, I have gotten a lot of very good advice, so now I just trust what is said and at least give it a try." This is a very different response to homework than that of many patients in an acupuncturist's private practice. "Many times the folks in our practices aren't badly off, so they may be less willing to take on responsibility for their own health," she says. "Having a group of patients who are willing to make real changes is a very great motivator for any practitioner to learn how to be persistent and nurture *all* patients into taking responsibility for their own health."

Becky points to another learning: In the Penn North environment, one does not have a lot of time with a client – a situation that creates a great opportunity to learn how to manage time and multiple treatment rooms. It pushes the practitioner to master skills of listening and being present and compassionate, without encouraging the patient to go into "story."

"At Penn North we also have the opportunity to work with Tai Sophia students who are coming up behind us," she says. "The chances to inspire and pass on what I have learned are many in

the Penn North environment. There's something very special about allowing others to see that there is life after school.

"I am very grateful for my experiences at Penn North," says Becky. "I've received and learned so much. This practice is one of the most powerful activities through which I can grow as a practitioner."

Important Updates

Dear Alumni,

As we begin a new chapter of Alumni Relations, one door closes and another opens. After much thought and many meetings, it is our concern that **Reunion Point** may not be serving our alumni community as well as we would wish. At this time, we have decided to take a step back and try a new strategy. **Reunion Point** now will be coming to you three times a year – June, October, and February.

This is your news, and we want you to know that it is being held with deep respect. If you have any ideas or comments concerning this or any other issue, please feel free to be in touch. My email address is phartke@tai.edu, and my phone is 410-888-9048 ext. 6618. I would love to hear about your hopes and dreams for **Reunion Point**.

Also, a brief note on the Alumni Council: The Council has met twice, and is being chaired by Barbara Walker (ACU '00). The members include Geo Derick (HERB '02), Robyn Urbach (HERB '02), Craig Kerr (ACU '00), Barbara Ellrich (AHA '05), Judith Goedeke (ACU '95), Mary Beth Gibbons (ACU '01), Barbara Abrams (ACU '93), and myself. At this point, we are working on redesigning the Alumni Survey. If at any time you would be interested in joining the Council, please contact me. We are meeting on Thursday mornings and are open to alternative ways of meeting, i.e., conference calls, etc. We extend a warm welcome to all alumni who would like to be part of the Council, including those who live out-of-state. We will make it happen.

In the midst of these wonderful shifts, I would like to acknowledge Nancy Thompson for all the hard work and care she has devoted to this position over the years. She has laid the groundwork for the road ahead of me! I look forward with much excitement to my new role in Alumni Relations. Please be in touch!

Pamela Hartke

in the spotlight

Lorie Eve Dechar (ACU '85)

In 1983, I moved from my home on eastern Long Island to study Five Element acupuncture at the newly established Traditional Acupuncture Institute (TAI) in Columbia, Maryland. At the time, I saw myself as an introverted poet, gardener and environmental activist. I pictured my future life as an acupuncturist taking place safely behind the closed door of my treatment room.

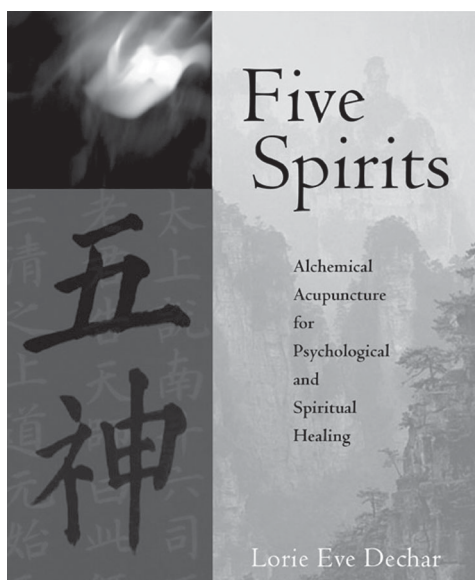
Twenty-three years ago, I would have been surprised to see where my work has led me. During the years that I have practiced acupuncture, I have also trained in Gestalt and Jungian therapy, studied Zen Buddhism, yoga and Tantra. Over time, I've gradually developed my own form of healing, which I refer to as Alchemical Acupuncture. By incorporating archetypal psychology, Chinese medicine and embodied awareness practices, I've found that I've been able to support deep transformation and psycho-spiritual healing in my patients. As my understanding deepened, I began to publish articles and create workshops. I now teach annually at the Esalen Institute in Big Sur, California, lead a mentoring program for new practitioners and am on the faculty of the Tri-State College of Acupuncture, New York, New York. In January 2006, after a nine year gestation, my book, *Five Spirits: Alchemical Acupuncture for Psychological and Spiritual Healing*, was published by Chiron Publications/Lantern Books.

What gives me the courage to face my



fear, find my voice and move into leadership that extends far beyond the treatment room is the conviction - born out of years of personal work and clinical experience - that the spiritual wisdom at the heart of Chinese medicine has the capacity to transform our way of being in the world. Although my book is ostensibly about acupuncture, it is even more about how acupuncture's underlying principles and concepts can help support the transformation of modern consciousness. The book explores how human beings create reality and how our creation of reality affects not only our health but also the way we feel, live and interact with our environment. By melding the wisdom of the ancient Chinese with the insights of modern Western depth psychology, we

can discover new ways to relate to our bodies, our families, our communities and our planet. Although I never expected, when I first walked through the door of TAI, that my work as an acupuncturist would take me this far out into the world, I'm delighted by the journey and continue to be surprised at where it leads me. To learn more about my work, please visit my web site at www.fivespirits.com.



national news

Blue Cross insurance information

For any practitioners who may be dealing with insurance issues, please be aware of the following 2006 Federal BlueCross **Federal Option** plan changes for acupuncture benefits. Acupuncture is now covered for licensed acupuncturists. Benefits are limited to ten (10) visits per calendar year per patient. For more details regarding the 2006 Federal BlueCross plan changes, please visit their web site: www.feplue.org. Please note the **Basic Option** plan did not change; acupuncture must still be performed and billed by a Physician.

Insurance for herbalist

The American Acupuncture Council "has developed a malpractice insurance policy for clinical herbalists, the only product available in the country" according to Harry Schwarz, Tai Sophia Institute's Secretary and Special Projects Administrator. Any herbalist interested in this coverage should call the American Acupuncture Council at 1-800-838-0383 (PT) for information. Please note that their web site www.americanacupuncturecouncil.com does not offer the herbal information on line.

Chinese Herbal Program awarded Student Garden site through grant

The W.K.Kellogg Foundation has awarded the High Falls Garden Fund a \$200,000 grant for a three-year program entitled "Botanical Studies for Oriental Medicine." This grant will enable the botanical studies program to provide educational support to Oriental medicine students and practitioners. As stated in *Acupuncture Today*, "The Botanical Studies for Oriental Medicine program is an expansion of the Student Gardens program, created in 2001, by Jean Giblette and Robert Newman. The original program called for the establishment or improvement of eight medicinal herb gardens across the country. The new funding expands the program to 15 teaching sites, with 12 gardens located at institutions that are either accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine or are candidates for accreditation." Tai Sophia Institute (along with contact person Cara Frank), is referenced as one of the 15 sites listed in the Botanical Studies for Oriental Medicine - Garden Teaching Sites. Congratulations!

National Provider Identifier

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) began a new identifier number for health care providers in 2005 called the National Provider Identifier (NPI). These numbers are required for providers who are HIPAA compliant and/or who submit to Medicare/Medicaid.

While, at this time, the NPI may not be required for acupuncturists who are not doing electronic submission to insurance or otherwise need to be HIPAA compliant, there is a strong possibility that soon all insurance companies will only accept claims from providers who have an NPI. Therefore, your clients may not be able to submit their claim for insurance reimbursement unless you have an NPI.

Eventually the NPI will replace health care provider identifiers that are currently being used, thereby eliminating the need for a provider to have several identification numbers. Even a non-participating provider with Blue Cross/Blue Shield needs to have a provider number for their clients to submit to that insurance company..

There are two ways to apply for a number:

1. web application found at <https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov>
2. paper application that can be found on <https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov> or by received by calling 1-800-465-3203

Only NPI is needed per provider. If you receive information from various health insurance plans, you may use the same NPI for all of them. According to the information published by the Department of Health & Human Services, the NPI must be used on standard transactions with health plans no later than May 23, 2007.

More information on the NPI can be obtained at www.cms.hhs.gov/hipaa/hipaa2, which offers a Frequently Asked Questions section.

Class Gifts

I would like to start a history of class gifts. If you were involved in that process, please send that information to Pamela Hartke via e-mail: phartke@tai.edu - the class and year and what was given to the school. Let's make history - thank you!!!

graduate education

Graduate Education Opportunities

Call 410-888-9048, ext. 6611 to register

Qi Gong Practices for Healing Ourselves and Others

Saturday, June 12, 2006, 12:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Fee: \$75 CEUs: 5

Karl Ardo developed this class especially for practitioners as well as individuals with prior experience in Qi Gong. You will learn powerful Qi Gong techniques - practices that you can incorporate into your life and apply in your work with others. They include "sweeping" Qi Gong, balancing the dantian, increasing chakra energy, and "collecting" Qi. These techniques have many applications: full body clearing, moving stagnant Qi, aligning the Qi field, balancing the body, and integrating body, mind and spirit. You also will learn "Bone Marrow Cleansing Qi Gong," a form that will clear your body after you give others a balancing/healing session.

The Vibrant Life: Simple Meditations to Use Your Energy Effectively

Saturday, June 24, 2006, 9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Fee: \$95 CEUs: 6

The methods taught in this workshop by Donna Thomson, M.S.W., are simple and bring tangible and immediate benefits. Because they can be used by anyone and require no particular background in meditation or energy work, they are appropriate for both practitioners and clients (these methods can easily be communicated to patients). Participants in this program will learn to use meditations to increase empathy and intuition, and to conserve, recharge and protect personal energy. Practitioners (and everyone) can use these simple methods for instant refreshment and renewal in the midst of a busy day; and as clients practice these meditations-if only for a few minutes at a time-they can support, enhance and maintain their treatments.

Bloodborne Pathogens

NCCAOM Safety Course #ACHHB-420 (2PDAs)

Saturday, July 8, 2006; 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Fee: \$45 CEUs: 2

For healthcare professionals needing safety/ethics PDA points (Professional Development Activity points) for NCCAOM recertification. Participants will learn about OSHA regulations; how to recognize an exposure incident; the risks of transmission of HIV and hepatitis B and C in a healthcare setting; how to prevent disease transmission of any kind in the workplace; how to support and follow up with individuals involved in an exposure incident; and how to set up private practices that have appropriate procedures relating to biohazards.

Taiji "RULER" Class

Store, Amplify and Transmit Qi

Saturday - July 15, 2006, 12:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Fee: \$55 CEUs: 3

This unique and powerful Qi Gong system is called the "ruler" system because, during the basic exercise, the palms hold a 10.5 inch wooden object. The system effectively stimulates the important lao gong acupuncture points in the palms of your hands. It can be used for self-healing or as a preparation for any form of bodywork. This form will enhance any Qi Gong form you are currently practicing, and is a great introduction to the power of Qi Gong for those with no previous experience.

NCCAOM Review Class

Fridays - 3:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

July 21 - October 6, 2006

Fee: \$250 / study guide is purchased in class for \$45 CEUs: 27.5

This course taught by Heidi Most offers you one of the most comprehensive ways to prepare for the national exam. Sessions include: what to study, how to study, how to pace yourself and how to prioritize. This structured study experience is timed to give you 11 weeks of class, followed by two weeks to integrate the material before the national exam.

Special Program

Materia Medica of the American West

Monday - Friday, 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

August 28 - September 1, 2006

In-class lecture and presentations of the authors most favored plants. Michael Moore will offer an in-depth discussion of habitat, environmental risks, availability, plant constituents and clinical applications.

Field Lecture/Workshop: An In-depth Exploration of Regional Medicinal Plants

Monday - Friday, 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

September 4 - 8, 2006

Outdoor lectures in regional parks and gardens. Michael Moore will focus on plant personalities, constituents, historical uses, energetics and specific therapeutic applications;

Fee: \$450 per week or \$850 for both weeks.

Be prepared for rain or sunshine!

A percentage of profits will go to the United Plant Savers, dedicated to protecting native medicinal plants of North America.

Simon Mills' book wins award

The Essential Guide to Herbal Safety by Simon Mills and Kerry Bone (Elsevier Churchill Livingstone, 2005) has been announced as the winner of The American Botanical Council newest award - The James A. Duke Botanical Literature Award. The award was presented at the American Botanical celebration on March 23, 2006, in Anaheim, CA, and was accepted by Robyn Urbach on behalf of Simon.

Herbal Medicine Seminar

Simon Mills will be presenting a talk at the upcoming seminar "Herbal Medicine: Perception, Practice and Rational Use" to be held at the University of Pennsylvania, September 19 & 20, 2006. The symposium with nationally recognized experts will focus on: using plants in clinical practice; determining benefits or harm; rational approaches for balanced use; informing the public; perceptions of healthcare providers and the public and botanical research. The symposium is sponsored by The University of Pennsylvania's School of Medicine, School of Nursing and The Morris Arboretum. To receive a brochure or more detailed information please call 215-247-5777, ext.156.

Marketplace update

In order to provide timely information about space available and similar offers, we are now posting these listings on our website, www.tai.edu. Please look at the top navigation under Alumni to the drop down that says "Marketplace." Information will remain online for one month from the date of posting. Please check it frequently to get the latest information. If you have something to post, please send it to reunionpoint@tai.edu.

Reunion Point available via email

If you would like to sign up Reunion Point via email, please send your request along with your email address to me at phartke@tai.edu. Thank you.

REUNION POINT

Volume 17, Number 1. Copyright 2006, all rights reserved. REUNION POINT is published three times yearly. Send news items to the editor by the 1st day of January, May, and September. Inclusion is at the discretion of the editor and Institute administration.

Editor Pamela Hartke

Art Director John C. Wilson

Tai Sophia Institute, 7750 Montpelier Road, Laurel, MD 20723
301-725-1674, 410-888-9048, or 800-735-2968; fax 410-888-9004
or email: reunionpoint@tai.edu

Visit our website: www.tai.edu



**Tai Sophia
Institute**

7750 Montpelier Road
Laurel, MD 20723
www.tai.edu

DATED MATERIAL