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Cover photo by Erick Gibson

*A Hindu icon of Shiva as Lord of Dance (Nataraja)
at the Sacred Lotus Yoga Studio in Gettysburg*



Adams County is home to a rich, multicultural tapestry of people, places and subject matter. Inspired by our yoga story (page 38), we wanted to showcase a bit of this diversity on our cover for this issue. This image is an icon of Shiva as Lord of Dance (Nataraja) from the Sacred Lotus Yoga Studio in Gettysburg.

It's the most "comforting" time of the year, which is why we've filled this issue with ideas that celebrate that feeling of coziness and contentment—kind of like the feeling I get each day from driving through the streets of one of the most historic towns in America. It's true that in every issue, we try to convey this comforting sense of place, the feeling that Gettysburg is your hometown (even if you're not a local). And at this time of year, the feeling of coming home—whether it's to Adams County or elsewhere—can be intensely satisfying.

This issue is packed with stories inspired by this theme of home, from selecting the best firewood for your home fireplace (see How 2, page 20) to making your home more energy efficient with solar technologies (page 32). Also in this issue: yoga in Gettysburg (page 38), the work of multimedia artist Andrea Theisson (see Artisan, page 24) and elegant dining at Sidney Willoughby Run (On the Menu, page 52).

It's also a homecoming of sorts for a feature that longtime readers of *Celebrate Gettysburg* may remember: Everyday Heroes. This feature debuted in the pages of this magazine more than seven years ago and was designed to recognize those individuals who selflessly and diligently give back to their community without seeking recognition for the good deeds they perform each day. Do you know someone who personifies the definition of an Everyday Hero? Turn to page 31 and take time to nominate a person you feel deserves this honor. We'll profile the stories of three nominees in the May/June issue.

Speaking of honor, this year will mark the sesquicentennial (150th anniversary) of the Battle of Gettysburg. In recognition of this significant historical event in July, we at *Celebrate Gettysburg* will publish a special edition of our popular *Celebrate Gettysburg Dining & Entertainment Guide* this year. The guide will be an invaluable resource for those of you who are planning to be a part of history at Gettysburg this summer. Containing an events calendar for the Mason-Dixon region, restaurant menus, stories relating to battle anniversary commemorations and more, the *Celebrate Gettysburg Dining & Entertainment Guide* will be distributed to readers and visitors in advance of their trip to Gettysburg. Plus, the guide will be available as a digital edition at celebratedining.com and as a downloadable app for Android, iPad, iPod and Kindle mobile devices. Look for this special edition coming this spring.

There are so many history-making events taking place in Gettysburg this year that we'll be sharing with you in future issues, on our website celebrategettysburg.com and through our social media channels. In the meantime, though, I encourage you to spend a few of these long, cold winter days ahead curling up with this issue in your home and getting cozy with its pages.

Michael Vyskocil

Michael Vyskocil, editor | editor@celebrategettysburg.com

P.S. Don't miss our next Celebrate Gettysburg Behind the Cover event, Wednesday, January 30 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Gettysburg Hotel, 1 Lincoln Square in downtown Gettysburg. Meet the subjects from the stories in this issue, meet our writers and photographers and learn how you can share your story ideas for future issues with us. RSVP by Monday, January 28 to csieg@celebrategettysburg.com.

Life force yoga practitioner Lynn Roby meditates during a yoga session at Gettysburg's Sacred Lotus Yoga Studio.



a yoga

for every body

‘Companion for living’ boosts holistic health for all ages

By Jen Esposito | Photography by Erick Gibson

Many people can feel the effects of life tugging at them from all different directions. Mobile devices keep their users connected to the world 24 hours a day. Let’s face it: We’re attempting to balance home and work-related responsibilities all while trying to forge ahead in a world that’s moving faster by the day. In recent years, yoga has become an increasingly popular antidote to help many people find peace and balance in their chaotic lives.

“Yoga is an ancient practice that helps create a sense of union in the body, mind, and spirit,” says Lynn Roby, a life force yoga practitioner certified in cardiac and cancer yoga at Gettysburg’s Sacred Lotus Yoga Studio.

Roby is a graduate of the esteemed Kripalu Center in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, and has had the honor of studying with many world-renowned yoga teachers at the Center. The

nonprofit facility is the largest and most established retreat center for yoga, health and holistic living in North America.

It’s a “companion for living,” says Julie Aha of Gettyyoga Studio. “I have been studying yoga since 1994 and it captivates me,” she says. Evidence of the early beginnings of yoga dates back three to five thousand years ago, and this ancient practice boasts many benefits that citizens of our modern society might pay top dollar for if offered in pill form.

“Yoga helps keep you in shape physically, can help kick the edge off stress and mental worry, and helps you to enjoy yourself more because techniques are learned to help move stress out of the body,” Aha explains.

While it’s often referred to in its singular form, there are actually many styles and variations of yoga that cover a range of applications from spiritual to the more health-directed forms we



(above) Gettyoga participants stretch their bodies following the lead of yoga instructor Julie Aha. (opposite, top) A yoga class practices the warrior pose during a session at the YWCA Gettysburg & Adams County. (bottom) Lynn Roby (at top right) directs a class through a yoga pose at the Sacred Lotus Yoga Studio.

think of today. A form of yoga exists for all ages and physical fitness levels, and each instructor may put his or her own spin on the poses.

toddler yoga (a yoga utilizing children's natural strength and flexibility to teach youth different yoga practices).

King has been organizing yoga classes for 11 years and wanted to bring yoga to the YWCA to share with its members. Yoga classes at the Y are currently the most popular classes next to Zumba, she says.

Using your own body resistance, yoga helps to build increased strength and flexibility. "I tell my classes to 'be present' in the moment and connect with yourself during that hour," King says. "Each movement is linked to the inhale and exhale of breathing."

Focusing on basic body necessities such as breathing and movement also help strip away layers of stress and provide the participant with a feeling of decompression. "We are learning how to breathe as we did when we were born and forgot," Roby says. "It helps to keep

"A mind that is fast is sick. A mind that is slow is sound. A mind that is still is divine."

— Meher Baba, Indian mystic and spiritual master

Jennifer King, director of sports and fitness at the YWCA Gettysburg & Adams County, explains that instructors might also specialize in a particular variation of yoga, focusing their classes on specific types such as gentle yoga (for beginners and seniors), Vinyasa yoga (a more intense yoga designed for a workout performance), meditative yoga (a mindful yoga to connect mind and breathing), or



us calm instead of in a state of chaos. And in the midst of chaos, we learn how to remain calm.”

Yoga is also a practice deeply grounded in psychology. “The trump card in yoga is the quality of awareness,” Aha says. “You reduce stress by noticing rather than ignoring.” She offers the example of yoga’s use as an effective therapy for pain management.

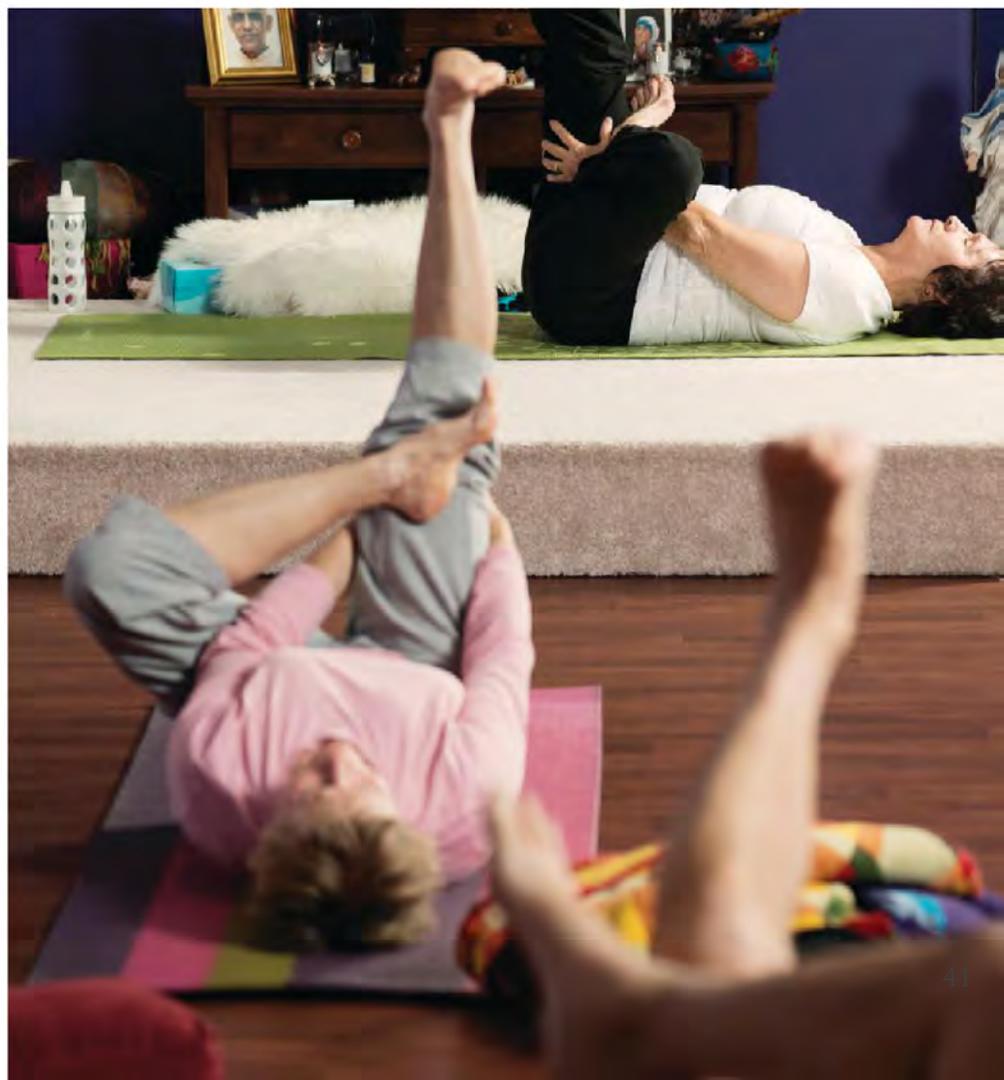
“Often, drugs for pain management take the attention away from pain,” she says. However, when applying yoga principles to this application, meeting pain and then subsequently leaving pain behind requires the participant to embrace what comes unflinchingly. “We need to live in a powerful way,” she says.

Yoga classes are becoming increasingly popular as more participants are discovering their physical, mental and emotional benefits. Aha begins the majority of her yoga classes with the students lying down and shifting from their hectic runaround. The reading of a poem or the insertion of a principle from yoga helps to mentally refocus the class.

After an aerobic warm-up, Aha leads the class through a number of poses – some of which they may know and some that may be new. “I will show a pose, then the student will do the pose, and I will give instruction on how to do the pose,” she says. “At times, I will stop and refine the poses or physically work the poses deeper.”

Depending on the type of yoga being performed and the limitations of the student, a yoga mat, foam blocks/pillows, or bands may be used to help the student achieve specific poses.

Aha also tries to get people into the rhythmic flow of breathing. “I use breathing like a metronome; it is very relaxing,” she says. “I also try to help each student learn all the varieties of yoga breathing techniques as students can use yoga breathing to calm down in situations outside of class.”



Once the active yoga positions are complete, Aha leads the class in “Savasana,” which roughly translates as “the corpse pose.” Lying flat on one’s back with arms and legs extended at 45-degree angles, Savasana encourages the student to surrender all effort and take deep breaths. Class ends with Aha leading a final acknowledgement or affirmation such as “Namaste,” an affirmation of universal goodness that originated in India. “This puts a bow on the class and then everyone leaves,” she concludes.

As always, when beginning any new health regimen, King recommends discussing your health concerns with your doctor. Limitations such as high or low blood pressure or previous injury does not mean that one cannot participate in yoga. Most yoga instructors have customizable programs to accommodate individual student needs such as modified yoga classes in which students can sit in chairs instead of standing or use foam blocks or blankets during poses. Slight changes to poses or skipping certain poses may help to avoid injury.

“Your body is your best teacher,” Roby says. “If your body hurts, that is pain, not yoga.” 

Yoga Practitioners and Resources

Julie Aha Gettyoga Studio

304 York St., Gettysburg
717-337-9977
www.gettyoga.com
julie@gettyoga.com

Lynn Roby Sacred Lotus Yoga Studio

2311 Fairfield Rd., Gettysburg
717-338-9777 or 717-338-9375
www.gettysburgholistichealthcenter.net
lynnroby@embarqmail.com

Jennifer King and Susie Peña YWCA Gettysburg & Adams County

909 Fairfield Rd., Gettysburg
717-334-9171
www.ywcagettsburg.org
fitness@ywcagettsburg.org

Susie Peña (center) demonstrates a stretching seated yoga pose to a class at the YWCA Gettysburg & Adams County.



Performing Yoga Poses

—Descriptions courtesy Julie Aha, Gettyoga



Pose 1. Uttitha Trikonasana (Extended Triangle Pose)

The front foot points to the narrow edge of the mat;

the back foot points to the long edge or at an angle that is comfortable. The hips are also directed to the long edge of the mat. Keep both legs straight. Bend your upper torso toward the front leg; the movement comes from the hips rather than the waist. Lengthen your spine. The front arm rests on the front shin, thigh, yoga brick, or on the floor—not on the knee. The left arm is raised gently towards the ceiling.



Pose 2. Adho Mukha Svanasana (Downward Facing Dog)

With knees and palms on the ground, tip the toes under;

with your feet about 3 feet behind your hands. Push up, taking your knees off the floor. Keep the hips as high as you can and soften your knees. From your hands, push the hips back as far as you can in the direction of your feet.



Pose 3. Utthita Parsvakonasana (Extended Side Angle Pose)

Stand with your feet and hips positioned as in the Extended

Triangle Pose (see above). Keep the back leg straight; bend your front leg at a 90-degree angle. The torso is side bending from the strength of the legs and hips; lengthen your spine. Rest your forearm on the bent (front) leg. Draw the other arm overhead in a straight line with the back leg.



Pose 4. Virabhadrasana I (Warrior One)

Position your feet using the Extended Triangle Pose. Direct your hips and front of your torso toward the narrow (front) edge of your mat. Bend

the front knee and hip. Draw both arms overhead. Adopt the attitude of a warrior as you perform this pose.



Pose 5. Bhujangasana (Cobra Pose)

Lie face down on the ground with your palms (or forearms for a simpler version) on the floor under your shoulders.

Press off the ground with your

hands, lifting your ribcage off the floor. Explore pressing from the hands instead of using the strength of your back to hold you up. Look directly at the floor (for those with neck stiffness) or lift your gaze to stretch the front of the neck.



Pose 6. Urdhva Dhanurasana (Upward Bow Pose)

Before attempting the full version of this advanced

Upward Bow Pose, first try the following modification: Lie face up on the floor. Bend your knees, placing your feet flat on the ground directly underneath your knees. Lift your hips off the ground and place a yoga block or thick book underneath your sacrum and hip bones (not in the waistline area). Bend your elbows, placing your hands flat on the floor directly underneath your shoulders. Fingers should point in the direction of your feet. Slowly lift your shoulder blades off the floor, paying careful attention to the act of bearing your full body weight on your hands, feet, sacrum and the back of your head. Remain in this position and take several breaths to work the pose. Or, if you are able, progress to the full version of the pose: Push firmly into your feet and hands, and lift your head and/or sacrum into the air. Try to keep your knees and elbows from winging out to the sides.