

# What's New in the Community

By Jen Eberbach

*This ongoing column features upcoming events within our Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti and surrounding areas' Mind-Body-Spirit communities, new (during the past year) practitioners and holistic businesses, as well as new offerings by established practitioners and holistic businesses.*

## NEW PRACTITIONERS and NEW BUSINESSES

### **Organic Bliss offers natural and organic products for beauty, personal care, and everyday living.**

Owner Melissa Bryant hopes that the store will provide "people looking to change to an organic lifestyle, or people already living an organic lifestyle" with natural, toxic-free products that are not tested on animals. "I want this to be a place where people can come and not have to worry or even read a product's label, because they know that everything that I have in here has already been researched. It's the purest products I could find," Melissa said.

Conscious consumers will find a wide variety of organic, natural, eco-friendly products, including bath and body supplies, spa items, clothing, home and kitchen items, and baby products. Melissa researches each product extensively, by looking at ingredients and company practices, as well as assuring that the packaging is safe for the environment. She lamented that many people are unaware of the large number of organic, natural products that exist on the market today, and is enthusiastic about sharing the products that she carries with others.

Before setting up shop, Melissa utilized her finance background working in the mortgage industry. However, she explained that her dream has been to move into the retail business. "I knew that I wanted a change and that I wanted to be a part of the local Ann Arbor retail business community. I just needed a product." It was during her own transition into an organic, natural lifestyle that brought Melissa's answer. She reported, "Personally, I started doing more reading about natural products and shifting my focus about what was important to me. I got interested in the whole industry that way."

She quickly became acquainted with how difficult and time consuming finding organic and natural products can be. "It's intimidating and overwhelming. You don't know which products are good and which ones aren't," she said, elaborating that many of the popular stores that carry organic products also carry non-organic products. Conscious consumers often have to spend a lot of time researching products and companies, and reading labels to find products that meet their personal, ethical standards. She also spoke about the hassle of searching numerous stores to fill your cabinets with the products you want, which leads many people to turn to the internet. "I wanted to take that out and do the work for them," Melissa said, enthusiastically adding "the store brings it all together in one place."

Melissa decided to open Organic Bliss on the summer's Solstice. When asked if the date had personal significance, she replied, "My store has been something that has been wanting to come out for a while. For me this is not just a store, it's moving into a new lifestyle." She explained, for this reason,



**Ann Arbor-based eco-friendly travel company, Journeys International, has been taking adventurous souls to exotic locales for 30 years. (Read about them on page 9.)**

she "wanted to do it on a special day." She has long taken an interest in metaphysics and spirituality, and she noted that the day represented the idea of "transition." For Melissa, opening the store constituted "something new being born."

In the long-term future, Melissa wants to host events at the store that teach people about organic living and natural products. She would also like to continue to develop her product line to meet the needs of the Ann Arbor community. Organic Bliss is located at 225 East Liberty Street. For more information about Organic Bliss, visit online, at [www.organicblissproducts.org](http://www.organicblissproducts.org). You may phone the shop at (734) 761-3047, call toll free at (866) 663-1970, or email [contact@organicblissproducts.org](mailto:contact@organicblissproducts.org).

### **Beth Chen recently started a new Life Coaching business in order to help people make difficult life decisions and examine their thoughts and beliefs.**

Beth counsels people who are making major life changes, seeking to change negative behaviors and beliefs, or looking for help with a wide variety of personal concerns. Beth conducts sessions with clients over the phone, which is standard practice in the world of life coaching, however she is happy to meet with her clients face-to-face. She has found that "sometimes people are less self-conscious over the phone than they might be face-to-face," she

said, adding "they feel more comfortable opening up that way." Beth holds a B.A. in psychology, from the University of Michigan, and a law degree, from Columbia, and she worked as a lawyer in Washington, DC and New York City for years before pursuing a career in life coaching. She is currently receiving on-going training from life coach, columnist, and author Martha Beck.

According to Beth, many people hold themselves back from reaching personal fulfillment, by holding onto "negative, unexamined thoughts." She elaborated that these thoughts are unconscious, and people are commonly unaware that they exist. "They don't always know what the thought is," she said. "When someone has a deep, down negative belief, it affects many aspects of their life," she said, adding that even though we may not be consciously aware of our beliefs, "we set about in our lives to make those thoughts true, because we like to be right. We like to prove our beliefs."

Her life coaching aims at "bringing thoughts and beliefs out into the open, and asking 'is this a thought that is servicing you and your goals or not?' If the answer is no, we work on changing that." During sessions, Beth utilizes tools and specific techniques that she has learned during the course of her studies. She explained that during an initial session with a new client, she likes to begin by "identifying the area of least satisfaction in their life." Once she has a good grasp of her client's concerns, she utilizes exercises that will benefit the particular needs of the individual, including visualizations. She explained that "a lot of what life coaching is about is working on people's thought processes."

Although Beth counsels clients dealing with all types of issues, she says that she is finding a niche with "people who are looking to downsize their career." "Maybe they are stepping off a busy professional track and looking for a simpler, saner lifestyle," she said. Beth made this transition herself



**Beth Chen**

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a job that was so ill-suited to my essential nature took a large toll on my life, and motivated me to simplify my life," she said, elaborating, "I could tell it wasn't fulfilling me on a deep level." She realized that her true calling involved "relating to people, understanding them, and helping them improve their lives," she said. However, her decision to make the transition to life coaching was not an easy choice. "It is very scary to let go of everything you know, but I hope I can be that person to say it's all going to be ok and here's how you make the decision of whether it's right for you," Beth said. You may contact Beth Chen by phone, at (734) 255-0847, or email [beth@inner-evolution.com](mailto:beth@inner-evolution.com). Her website, <http://inner-evolution.com>, will be up and running shortly.

**Parent Coach Kathi Waters is starting a new business, Listen to the Children, and offering several new classes on the parent-child relationship.** Her work will commence upon her completion of a certification program through the Academy for Coaching Parents International, in January 2009. "The model of coaching I follow is one of empowerment; it is based on the belief that we are all creative, resourceful, and whole," she explained. Kathi has worked as a residential counselor in an adolescent group home, a therapist in an adolescent residential center, a school counselor, and a Play Therapist.

Through participatory self-reflection, Kathi helps parents "formulate a vision" for parenting that is based on their "ideals," she said. It is easy for parents to get off track "because day to day reality sets in and we get so mired down that we lose touch with our ideals," according to Kathi. She hopes that her coaching sessions and classes will "encourage parents to examine what relationship they want and the hopes that they have for their children," as well as "what things they don't want," she said. For example, Kathi suggested that many parent-

Crazy Wisdom Community Room. "Healing the Feeling Child," will be held on Saturday, January 17th, from 1 - 3 pm. She will also lead a seven week "Connection Parenting" workshop series, entitled "Meeting the Needs of Children," on each Thursday between January 29th and March 12th, from 7 - 9 pm, except for one week in February when the class will be held on Wednesday, February 25th. Her "Connection Parenting" workshops follow the model that Kathi's trainer Pam Leo writes about in her book Connection Parenting. For more information about Kathi Waters and Listen to the Children, visit online, at [www.listen2children.com](http://www.listen2children.com). You may contact her by phone, at (517) 522-3057, or email, at [listen2children@gmail.com](mailto:listen2children@gmail.com).

**Marie Slottow opened a new Reconnective Healing™ practice, Good Vibrations Healing Practice, out of the Theracare Therapeutic Massage and Healing Arts Center.** She received certification by attending founder Dr. Eric Pearl's seminars, which teach practitioners his unique energy work method of aligning a person's individual energy with the magnetic grid of the earth. Marie graduated with a degree in Economics from the University of Washington and competed as a scholarship athlete for the UW Women's Gymnastics Team. "I wouldn't have predicted my life's work would be as a healing practitioner," however "due to challenging life circumstances, I began a journey that led me to the book, The Reconnection, by Dr. Eric Peal, and felt a compelling need to learn more," she said.

Marie offers Reconnective Healing™ sessions, which focus on particular problems, ailments, and health issues. She explained that the technique does not cure diseases, and it is not meant to replace medicine or psychology, however by "balancing a client's energy mentally, emotionally, and spiritually, it really helps with working through issues." Marie also performs The Reconnection™, a two-part session meant to be a long-lasting axiotonal alignment, which helps us "evolve and align with the changing vibration of the earth," she explained. "People who had a personal Reconnection™ tend to experience an increased frequency of synchronistic occurrences affirming that they are on their intended path," according to Marie.

In the future, Marie is planning on getting certified in Dr. Pearl's new "Reconnective Kids™" workshop, which will be open to kids age 4 - 14. The workshop is designed to be a 4-day seminar in 2 ½ hour sessions that teaches kids through interactive play. The Theracare Therapeutic Massage and Healing Arts Center is located at 2350 Washtenaw Avenue. You may contact Marie Slottow by phone, at (734) 546-6594.

**Mara Bell Mancini-Lander started a new Intuitive Guidance business, and she is offering new, on-going classes on "Conscious Parenting" that meet on the first Tuesday of each month, from 7-9 pm, at the Body-Mind-Spirit Wellness Center on South State Street.** Her interest in parenthood began with her "personal journey becoming a mother." She explained that having her two girls "opened me up to intuitive awareness," and she experienced a "greater sense of wisdom." During her pregnancy, she became "concerned about how the mind, body, and spirit changes during pregnancy," she said. Although



**Mara Bell Mancini-Lander**

pregnancy opened her up in positive ways, she also became aware that "pregnancy also opens you to collective fears and anxieties," and "can be a really shocking transition for new mothers," she claimed.

Each class session includes a grounding exercise, guided meditation, lecture and discussion sessions, and a final meditation. A central theme in Mara-Bell's approach to parenting is developing an awareness of the archetypes we chose to live. Her interest in the cultural symbols we utilize to make sense of the world is based in her academic background in Folklore Studies. She believes that "life can be viewed from a symbolic perspective," and that "we engage archetypes everyday." According to the Mara-Bell we utilize archetypes, as they apply to our lives and circumstances. Although these can be beneficial tools to deal with life's challenges, Mara Bell claimed, "we aren't supposed to be only one archetype. People can get trapped in certain patterns of behavior."

She hopes that her classes will help women "look consciously at conflicts with their children and collective fears," and "create a community of women like those our ancestors have had," she said, adding that "we don't have that same community today." "Parenthood and pregnancy is a really vulnerable time for women," she said, adding, too often "we feel like we have to do it alone." To find out more about Mara Bell Mancini-Lander and the classes she is offering, visit her online, at [www.expandingconsciousness.net](http://www.expandingconsciousness.net). You may contact her by phone, at (734) 417-3143, or email [info@expandingconsciousness.net](mailto:info@expandingconsciousness.net).

**Jeannie Ballew opened a new energy healing business this summer, Chi Time with Jeannie.** After suffering from health issues, Jeannie took an interest in alternative medicine and energy work. In 2001, she began studying Reiki and pursued her Level III certification with Reiki Master Ray Golden. She has trained with and been a long-time client of Energy Medicine Master Barbara Scholz. "I started on this path to help heal myself and others, more so than as a career," she said, explaining that, for years "I wasn't practicing for money, but rather as a love offering." However, she said that many of the people



**Kathi Waters**

child relationships are "disconnected," due to the "awesome responsibility that parents feel to teach their children right from wrong, because we think of them as a reflection of us." Parents who rely too heavily on their role as "authority," or "disciplinarian" can "weaken the connection they have with their children," she said.

Kathi will hold two new parenting classes in the

that she worked on encouraged her to pursue energy work professionally.

Jeannie teaches her clients a daily, five-minute Energy Medicine routine that is meant to “strengthen your immune system and increase your overall stamina.” She stressed that “it teaches people how to treat themselves,” Jeannie has used the routine herself in order to “focus on physical issues,” and claimed that it made a real difference for her. After practicing the routine, she reported that people noticed a change in her. “It comes through in my daily life,” she said. She also offers Reiki and Energy Clearing sessions for clients seeking assistance to “keep their energy field in a natural pattern and to feel better,” she said. Jeannie prepares for her sessions with meditation in order to be “in a grounded, clear space,” that allows her “to be present” with her clients. Jeannie’s own health and wellness continues to benefit from her energy work. “I think of my lifestyle as preventative medicine,” she said, reporting that during her sessions with clients, “I benefit from the energy coming through me, because it’s universal medicine.” You may contact Jeannie Ballew, by phone, at (734) 994-6663, or email, at [jmballew@provide.net](mailto:jmballew@provide.net).



**Jeannie Ballew**

encourage people to approach the places they visit, “in an appreciative way,” and “not as an escape,” he said.

Journeys offers a wide range of travel opportunities to locations all over the world, including many remote places that tourists do not usually visit. Travelers can choose to go on pre-scheduled group tours or work with Journeys to create custom trips. Will explained that Journeys travelers tend to be “adventurists,” who are willing to forego luxury and amenities in order to have a unique cultural experience. He highlighted a trip to Nicaragua that Journeys is currently developing. The trip will have travelers visiting small, fair trade coffee farms. Will explained that many Latin American coffee farms are making the transition to sustainable production, and that he is “trying to support that process,” he said.

Journeys also recently began offering new holistic treks to Nepal, including “The Himalayan Yoga and Meditation Trek,” which first commenced last October. This 12-day tour visited Buddhist and Hindu sites, temples, and rural communities, and gives participants many opportunities to do yoga and meditation sessions with local priests and monks. Will and Joan first met in Nepal, when Will was working for the Peace Corp and Joan was volunteering. “The Peace Corp experience for me was a very awakening and profound three years of my life,” Will said. “Journeys presented itself as a way to recapture those feelings and create good, rewarding personal relationships.” Journeys offers numerous different trips to Nepal and encourages travelers to visit anytime of year; however it is diligent to consider that the area experiences its monsoon season from late June to early September.

Journeys encourages travelers to give back to local communities, and they are currently developing a collaborative relationship with Global Volunteers International, a service program that runs short-term volunteer projects in the United States and abroad. The collaboration will provide opportunities for people to travel with the purpose of volunteering. Will explained that Journeys creates relationships with local communities through volunteering, and supports relief efforts during trying times and natural disasters. “The concept of a long-term relationship is another thing that we try to build, so that during good times and bad you can help each other out. It’s like a friendship,” Will said. He hopes that by volunteering on a short-term basis, people will get a “taste of the experience.”

To find out more about Journeys International, visit online, at [www.journeys.travel/](http://www.journeys.travel/). You may contact their Ann Arbor office, by phone at (734) 665-4407, or call their toll free number, at (800) 255-8735. Email Journeys at [info@journeys.travel](mailto:info@journeys.travel), or stop by their office at 107 April Drive, Suite 3.

**Hypnotherapist Mary Jane Bricka performed a Past Life Regression (PLR) session on me at A Wakening Within, the Ypsilanti-based energy work and hypnotherapy business that she recently opened with her husband Jim Ross.** I met Mary Jane in a past life, although I am referring to my teenage years, when I was her 8th grade history student at Slauson Middle School. After teaching and working as a principal for the Ann Arbor Public School for decades, Mary Jane decided to retire and focus her attention on growing a holistic business with her husband. A Wakening Within offers hypnotherapy and past life regressions, as well as Reiki, reflexology, the Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) and other healing modalities. Mary Jane was trained at Sylvia Brown’s school, and Jim is a certified traditional USUI Reiki Ryoho II practitioner.

I approached the past life regression session and the idea of past lives without any specific expectations. I had no idea what it would feel like to be hypnotized, or if I would be hypnotized at all. The couple explained that many of Mary Jane’s new clients come to her very curious and unsure about what the experience will be like. Jim has

## NEW OFFERINGS BY ESTABLISHED BUSINESSES and PRACTITIONERS

**Ann Arbor-based sustainable travel agency Journeys International is offering new holistic and eco-friendly trips. They are also developing a collaborative project with Global Volunteerism to encourage travelers to give back to the communities they visit.** Journeys International was founded by Will and Joan Weber over 30 years ago in order to provide eco-conscious, sustainable travel options that are respectful of the environment, culture, and economy of local communities all over the world. Will Weber explained that sustainable tourism “is not about no impact, but to have a positive impact on the cultures and environments that we visit as tourists,” he said. He notes that Journeys accomplishes this by working with local businesses owners who have “good ecological principles,” and by paying attention to “how managers treat staff,” as well as by choosing “activities that are non-consumptive,” minimize travelers’ carbon footprint, and avoid draining the local community of its resources.

Will indicated that one of the most rewarding experiences that Journeys travelers report is that “people didn’t expect to meet such nice people,” whether they are the local guides, people from the local communities they visit, and other travelers. He explained that one of Journeys’ most important goals is to encourage interpersonal relationships between travelers and local populations. According to Will, the trips allow travelers to “get to know people on a personal and insightful level.” He hopes that the trips



**Journeys International**

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been hypnotized by Mary Jane and compared hypnosis and past life regression to a "state where you are half awake and half asleep. You are sort of in a dream world, but you know where you are, you know if you are lying in bed," he said. Mary Jane wanted to reassure me as a newbie that during hypnosis "your mind, your spirit mind, will never take you to a place you aren't ready for. It always keeps you safe."

By leading a client into a state of deep relaxation, Mary Jane is able communicate with their subconscious mind in order to help them raise their self-esteem, stop smoking, manage their weight, and deal with a wide range of personal burdens. On the other hand, Past Life Regression utilizes hypnosis as a tool that accesses the subconscious mind, but it is also "remembering," she said, reporting that "in order to access past lives we need to put the conscious mind aside and let the subconscious mind take over, because that is where we store all of our memories." Mary Jane believes "some issues don't get resolved, both personal issues and issues with other people. When a soul incarnates in a body, it brings with it the memory of all of those unresolved issues," she said.

After a thorough introduction, I felt prepared to lie down on the lounge chair, close my eyes, and explore my past lives. Mary Jane began with a guided relaxation and visualization that settled me into a state of hypnosis. Once I was completely relaxed, she suggested that I imagine walking into a past life scenario. Then she asked me a series of questions in order to determine who I was, where I was, who I was with, and what I was doing. At the end of the session we talked about the messages I thought I was sending to myself in order to determine if there were any patterns. Under hypnosis, I felt very present and a relatively awake, however I was able to conjure quite vivid imagery of three potential past lives. My first had me living in Mongolia sometime before the reign of Genghis Khan. This experience was particularly interesting to me, because after I went home I started researching Mongolian history to find that many of the details that I saw were historically accurate.

A Wakening Within is located at 61 North Huron Street, in Ypsilanti. To find out more about Mary Jane Bricka and Jim Ross or to book an appointment online, visit <http://www.a-wakening-within.com>. Contact Mary Jane by phone, at (734) 717-7098, or email [mjbricka@comcast.net](mailto:mjbricka@comcast.net). Contact Jim by phone, at (734) 657-3066, or email [jimross1@comcast.net](mailto:jimross1@comcast.net)

**Clairvoyant Intuitive Healer and Teacher Molly Indura is painting artworks that record her "energetic rememberings." They are currently on display at her Healing Temple and she plans to pursue exhibition opportunities.** Her artistic process follows the direction of her spirit guides, as she chooses shapes, colors, textures, and artistic materials. She rarely knows what she is going to paint before she starts. "I just listen to my guides, and trust that," she said. I had a chance to visit with Molly and view her artworks. I was struck by the vibrant colors and metallic tones that she utilizes in many of her works. Each painting is unique, however Molly pointed out that several symbols and shapes reoccur in multiple paintings.

Some artworks image symbols from particular spiritual traditions, exemplified by Molly's recent work, Tree of Life, which depicts the ten aspects of the Divine Personality from early western mystery schools like Qabalah. Other paintings diagram

energetic relationships, such as can be seen in *As Above, So Below*. In this work, many small orbs huddle together within two larger orbs, which are connected by a single, broad brushstroke. Molly identified the small orbs as "the spirits of many individuals." Molly explained that she believes the work diagrams the energetic relationship between individuals and collection consciousness, as well as how we are all connected to other spiritual dimensions. Not all of her works are as conceptual or symbolic as these examples. *Nebulous* literally represents the gaseous bodies that float around in outer space. Molly calls the interlaced patches of bright colors and cloudy forms "a snapshot of an actual cosmic body."

Molly owns Be the Light and provides a wide variety of intuitive services and healing modalities. To find out more about Molly Indura and her business, visit online, at [www.bethelight.org](http://www.bethelight.org). For information about viewing or purchasing her artworks, email her at [mollyannindura@hotmail.com](mailto:mollyannindura@hotmail.com).

**Martial Arts Instructor and Life Coach Keith Copeland has created a 4 DVD home study course, entitled "Elements for Success."** The home study course includes footage of a 10-hour seminar Copeland taught on the topic of personal change. The DVD materials are supplemented by worksheets containing exercises that are designed to help people identify aspects of their personality, determine their strengths and weakness, better relate to others, and create positive results in their lives. He is also planning to develop the course in the future to include seven week teleconferences and "mastermind groups," which will allow participants to work on the material together.

Keith's material is based on eastern philosophy's approach to the characteristics of the four elements; earth, wind, water, and fire. He explained that his personality profile model is based upon his belief that every individual exhibits each of the four elements in their personality. However, each of us is stronger in particular elements. According to Keith, we are commonly held back from reaching our full potential, because of "self-imposed limitations," as well as "patterns" of thoughts and behaviors. By "reflecting on how our thoughts influence our behaviors" and how, in turn, "our behaviors and actions produce results," Keith's home study course aims to be "a vehicle for self-actualization," he said.

Keith Copeland's "Elements of Success" will be available at Crazy Wisdom and through the Quest Center for Martial Arts, where Keith teaches To-Shi Do. He is also offering one of the DVDs for sale separately, which introduces the elements in a more concise fashion. Contact Keith Copeland through the Quest Center, which is located at 2111 Packard Street, Suite E. Visit the Center online, at <http://www.quest-martialarts.com>. You may contact the Center by phone, at (734) 332-1800, or email [questcenter@sbcglobal.net](mailto:questcenter@sbcglobal.net).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Marc Lerner will lead a seminar with therapist Michael Andes, entitled "Practical Harmonizing – Effective Tools for Handling Major Life Challenges," on January 21st, from 7 – 9pm, in the Crazy Wisdom Community Room.**

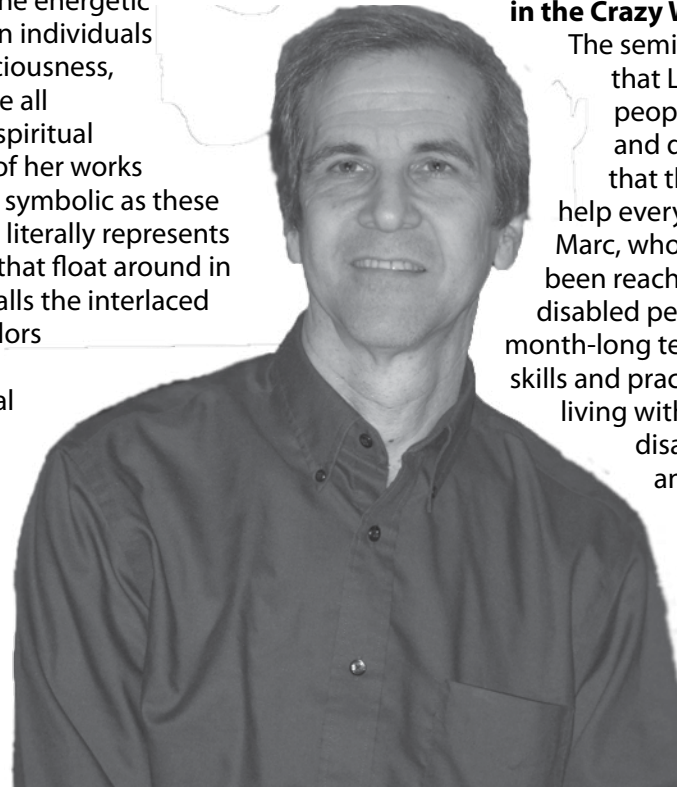
The seminar utilizes "inner technology" that Lerner has developed to help people dealing with chronic illness and disability issues. He explained that the seminar is designed "to help everyone deal with difficult times." Marc, who is a long time MS patient, has been reaching out to chronically ill and disabled people for 25 years, and leads month-long tele-seminars that teach life skills and practical techniques for people living with disease, chronic illness, and disabilities. He also authored an e-book, "I Found a Healthy Way to Be Sick and So Can You," which is available for download on his website, <http://lifeskillsinc.com>.

Marc organizes his seminars around practical techniques that are meant for people to practice in their daily lives and manage difficult circumstances. These techniques include exercises

for accessing "a positive self-image," establishing "self-trust," working with the breath, and looking at the mind as a "bio-computer." He explained, "The purpose of my seminar, in a way, is to change habits," especially "mental habits and thought patterns." By giving people the tools they need to deal with their hardships, he "helps them face their challenges from a conscious confidence," he said. Marc spoke at length about the differences between surface level consciousness, which he terms "the thinking mind," and what he calls the "Wisdom of the Body." He explained that "whenever we face a challenge, we deal with it from our intellects and our personality," aspects of our thinking minds, "but when you face a health crisis you need to tap an inner wisdom. You need to go beyond intellect and personality." While "the thinking mind" is superficial, "The Wisdom of the Body goes beyond thinking," and is better prepared to deal with trying or extreme situations, according to Marc.

Marc's MS has brought him many hardships, but he looks at his illness from a positive perspective. "It forced me to go beyond thinking," he said. Marc, who has worked with numerous Vietnam War combat veterans, related his experience of "going beyond thinking" to the experience a soldier feels when their life is in danger. Marc explained, "their life was more important than any thought in their body." He elaborated that "when you go to that level, it's like being in the zone, it's being in the moment," adding, "when a person faces a life threatening illness, they are forced to that depth." Although an individual may be facing incredible challenges, "it's those spiritual moments that give you incredible ability to do something," he said.

In order to give me a sense of the work he does, Marc walked me through one of the exercises he teaches that helps people "get in touch with positive and negative self-image." He began by explaining, "Every time you think, you think to your self image. If you have a positive self-image, you get positive responses. When you have a negative self image, you get negative responses." He began the exercise by asking me to think of a goal and



**Marc Lerner**

then to "let it slip into the background." Then he asked me to think of the worst experience I've ever had, name it, and characterize it in two words. With the memory of my worst experience floating in my mind, Marc told me to "give a creative nickname to that character." Then we repeated the process for the best experience I have ever had. At the end of the exercise, I was left thinking about my two nicknamed characters, which Marc identified as my negative self image and my positive self image. "There are ways that I teach people how to create conscious habits, so that you can trigger" you positive self, Marc said. For example, he suggested that every night before bed and each morning I should put a finger on my pulse and affirm that I am my positive self image. He explained that the technique is a useful tool to use whenever I find myself dwelling in my negative self image. You may contact Marc through his business, Life Skills, Inc, by phone at (310) 399-6829, or email [marclerner@lifeskillsinc.com](mailto:marclerner@lifeskillsinc.com)



**Susan Boyes, LPC**

**Art Therapist Susan Boyes, LPC, will offer a workshop, entitled "Drawing on Power," on February 22nd, beginning at 1 pm in the Crazy Wisdom Community Room.** The workshop "will connect Shamanic and Art Therapy themes as an exploration of personal power, identifying power animals and places of power," Susan wrote. She reported, "Incorporating Shamanic Healing practices, we will use creative arts methods to access unique personal strengths." Susan will introduce participants to Shamanic ideas, as well as discuss neuroscience, and "how art and the brain operate." She will lead participants through an "experiential exercise," which will have them making art with materials that she will provide, as well as doing "guided visualizations" that relate to the workshop's themes.

Before completing an M.A. in Art Therapy at Southwestern College, in Santa Fe, NM, Susan studied Shamanic healing at the Foundation for Shamanic Studies, under the guidance of director Sandra Ingerman. Although she offers Shamanic healing, Susan keeps this work completely separate from her art therapy practice. "When I'm hired as an art therapist, I'm not hired as a Shaman," she clarified. However, the "Drawing on Power" workshop is "a way to combine the two things I love, healing in other dimensions and art," she said. Although the workshop utilizes Art Therapy, Susan stressed, "it's not consulting or Art Therapy. It's an art workshop about personal power."

Susan is the founder of the Center for Creative Growth, where she provides Art Therapy consulting services to people dealing with a variety of physical and emotional issues. She works with people

suffering from psychological issues, like anxiety and depression, as well as physical issues, which is exemplified by the work she does with Traumatic Brain Injury patients in order to activate their cognitive and motor functions. She is also very interested in neuroscience and the relationship between the left and right hemispheres of the brain, and she incorporates her knowledge of the subject into her approach to art therapy.

Art therapy "is not about being an artist," nor does she see purpose in "interpreting someone's art." Instead she asks her client's about the "personal meaning" of symbols, colors, and other details contained in the art they make. Some of Susan's Art Therapy clients choose not to talk about their art at all. "You don't have to confront it. Sometimes the very act of drawing it is enough," she said, adding that a client's art can operate like a "third party in the room that takes pressure off of them." Susan said that as a graduate student, "I did a piece of art that was really important to me," in class one day, "but I never had a chance to talk about it, so I didn't have the benefit of someone asking me questions or processing it." However, she believes that she benefited from the exercise. "It was kind of a message or code to myself that I didn't even know I was sending," she said. According to Susan, "doing art is healing in itself. I think art is kind of magic that way." During her workshop, she will direct participants to discuss their art with the group, however she stressed that there will be no pressure to talk. According to Susan, participants who opt out of discussing their work will still benefit from the activity. For more information about Susan Boyes and the Center for Creative Growth, visit online, at [www.centerforcreativegrowth.com](http://www.centerforcreativegrowth.com). You may call the Center, at (734)478-2394, or email Susan at [susan@centerforcreativegrowth.com](mailto:susan@centerforcreativegrowth.com)

**The new Body, Mind, Spirit (BMS) Center, located in Lambertville, MI, will host the 1st Annual Toledo Body, Mind, Spirit (BMS) Festival, on April 4th and 5th, at the Lucas Country Recreation Center in Maumee, Ohio.** The BMS Center provides services and classes to people with life threatening illnesses, including hypnotherapy, Reiki, sound therapy, and transformational healing sessions. Certified Hypnotherapist, Reiki practitioner, and meditation facilitator Gordon Harris opened the non-profit center, after having a near-death experience in the summer of 2008. His personal story, "My Awakening," is available online, at [www.bodymindspiritcenter.info/My\\_Awakening.html](http://www.bodymindspiritcenter.info/My_Awakening.html)

The 1st Annual BMS Festival will "provide an outlet for those individuals ready to eradicate stress and dis-eases and start living a happy, healthier, fulfilled life," according to the BMS Center. The festival will feature free lectures and classes, well-known keynote speakers, authors, and over 150 exhibitors from all over the nation. Keynote speakers will include CBS Psychic Radio host Kimmie Rose Zapf, SomaEnergetics President and Developer David Hulse, and speaker and author Ken Harsh. Festival participants include a diverse array of holistic and alternative practitioners and businesses, and healthy product and services. There will also be products such as jewelry, artwork, and books, to name a few. The festival welcomes to you bring the entire family and will provide special arts and crafts activities for the kids.

The Lucas County Recreation Center is located on 2910 Key Street, in Maumee, Ohio. Admission is only \$3.00 per person and children under 13 get in free. For more information on the BMS Festival, as well as Gordon Harris and the Body, Mind, Spirit Center, visit [www.bodymindspiritcenter.info](http://www.bodymindspiritcenter.info), or contact the Center by phone, at (734) 274-2840, or email [contactgordon@aol.com](mailto:contactgordon@aol.com).

**The Michigan Organic Food and Farms Alliance (MOFFA) will host its annual conference, entitled "Local Organic Food: Sustainable Prosperity for Michigan," on Friday, March 5, from 7:30**

**- 9:30 pm and Saturday, March 6, from 8:30 am - 6pm, and 8 - 10 pm, at the Kellogg Center on the campus of MSU.** MOFFA is a non-profit organization, which was founded in 1992 "to create more public awareness about the nature of industrialized food supply and its environmental and social hazards," according to their mission statement. The organization offers membership services, which are utilized by many farmers, food coops, educators, environmentalists, food businesses, and activists. MOFFA services the community by educating the public and advocating for organic food and farming. The conference will feature keynote speakers, sessions and break out groups on local organic consumer education and activism, organic production, and organic marketing, an organic film festival, and a post conference organic music event. Michael Philips of Lost Nation Organic Orchard will contribute a speech, as well as another local organic food personality, to be determined. Online registration and additional details will be available on the Michigan Organic Food and Farm Alliance's website, [www.MOFFA.org](http://www.MOFFA.org), after January 1st, 2009. The website will contain all of the information you will need to join the event. Contact the organization by phone, at (248) 262-6826, or email [moffaorganic@yahoo.com](mailto:moffaorganic@yahoo.com)

**Social worker Tanis Allen, ACSW, is offering a new workshop series, entitled "Trusting Our Guts - Body Image, Eating Issues and Parts of Ourselves,"** which explores the eating-related and body image issues that many people experience in our culture. Tanis explained that "parts of ourselves" exist "that may contain particularly extreme beliefs that manifest in a variety of ways." The workshop series will discuss how we "manage these burdens" with behaviors like "compulsive or emotional eating, restricting or minimizing our physical needs and desires for nurturing and pleasure in our lives, and using food to numb ourselves."

Tanis teaches the Internal Family Systems (SM) or "parts of Self" model of psychotherapy, an internationally-utilized model developed by Dr. Richard Schwartz, Ph.D. She completed advanced Level 2 Internal Family Systems (SM) training, in 2007, and uses this model extensively in her psychotherapy practice. She works with clients who are "struggling with eating issues, depression, anxiety, grief issues, and relationship concerns." She has found Dr. Schwartz's model to be "an approach to treatment and personal growth, which is non-pathologizing, highly collaborative and respectful of the client's internal system."

The first session in the workshop series will take place on January 25th, from 2 - 5 pm in the Crazy Wisdom Community Room. Tanis said that it will highlight "the discovery of personal resources and insights," and focus on "issues of self-trust and 'gut knowing' that are so often denied as a result of the anxiety, shame and loathing that many of us feel in relation to our bodies." Additional workshops in the series will be announced.

*Please note that the "What's New" column is part of the editorial (not paid-for advertising) part of the journal, and the editors may or may not include what you submit. Whether the editors include material or not will depend on space considerations, as well as other editorial issues, such as the need for high resolution jpgs and the overall mix of stories included in the "What's New in the Community" column in a given issue.*

*If you would like to submit information to be considered for this column, please e-mail*

*Jen Eberbach at*

*communitynews@crazywisdom.net*

*or drop off or mail to the store:*

*What's New in the Community, 114 South Main, Ann Arbor, MI 48104.*

*The firm deadline for submissions for the next issue (May to August 2009) is March 1, 2009.*