

CAMPUS CULTURE

Yoga: an alternative way of exercising the body and mind

SHANNON EHRIN
culture editor

For those who do not ski, snowboard, have a gym membership, or have never laid a hand on any form of workout equipment, there is an alternative exercise that is not only good for the body but also the mind and soul: yoga.

In a nation full of crazy dieting antics and non-stop infomercials advertising the newest exercise device, yoga, provides an outlet for people who still want a physical workout or to find peace within themselves.

The winter months are harsh for everyone. People feel less inclined to leave their houses, let alone exercise, unless it is necessary. While some households may have the means to get in the recommended 30 minutes of cardio each day, others do not have treadmills or elliptical machines available at all times.

Even those who do have elaborate apparatuses may not use them as often during winter because their bodies cannot take the stress. All workout regimens require commitment, and yoga is convenient enough to be done at home, or anywhere for that matter, without the use of any extra materials.

Yoga is a meditative practice of posing in different postures that largely deal with the chakras or energy centers of the body. It is beneficial to anyone and everyone who wishes to try this popular practice. This sport is for people who do not want an overly strenuous and grueling workout, but something more calming that can tone and shape the body.

Yoga releases the strains of daily life. It's a time to connect with your inner self and be in a state of peace. You become aware of your body and mind and go deep within your soul, while getting to the root of what's troubling you. This is a way to manage emotions in a different and more positive light by still challenging yourself

in different poses.

The Columbia College of Physicians and Surgeons has concluded that yoga helps strengthen the body and can greatly reduce anxiety and depression.

There are countless ways that yoga improves the health and well-being of human beings.

People have experienced improved breathing, blood pressure, immunity, memory, balance, and the list goes on and on.

Each semester, Behrend offers two yoga classes.

Both are basic beginner classes, but in the past there has been a second, more advanced class for those looking to become proficient in yoga.

Brian Streeter, Athletic Director at Penn State Behrend, has had a very positive response from students re-

garding the yoga classes. Behrend has included yoga as a kinesiology class for at least six years now. About thirty students occupy each session, keeping the atmosphere quiet and "mellow," Streeter says.

Lani Weissbach, one of Behrend's yoga instructors, approached Streeter about teaching yoga.

Streeter says, "[It was] an opportunity to give students something different other than your typical soccer or basketball class."

Weissbach has been practicing yoga for 14 years and has been an instructor for 11 years. Besides teaching at Behrend, Weissbach also instructs yoga classes at the Glenwood Park YMCA.

"I have seen amazing results

with the yoga classes I teach at Behrend," Weissbach says. "At the very least, students feel more relaxed and less stressed, and at the most they are utterly transformed. They quit smoking, health problems go away and they feel they have a new lease on life, in a way. It is very gratifying!"

Yoga classes are offered every day of the week, including an afternoon class for faculty and staff. Thought has been given to providing weekend yoga classes, but no official plans have been made.

Christina Mucha, a freshman majoring in accounting, is enrolled in one of the yoga classes. Mucha was familiar with yoga, but never had any "formal experience."

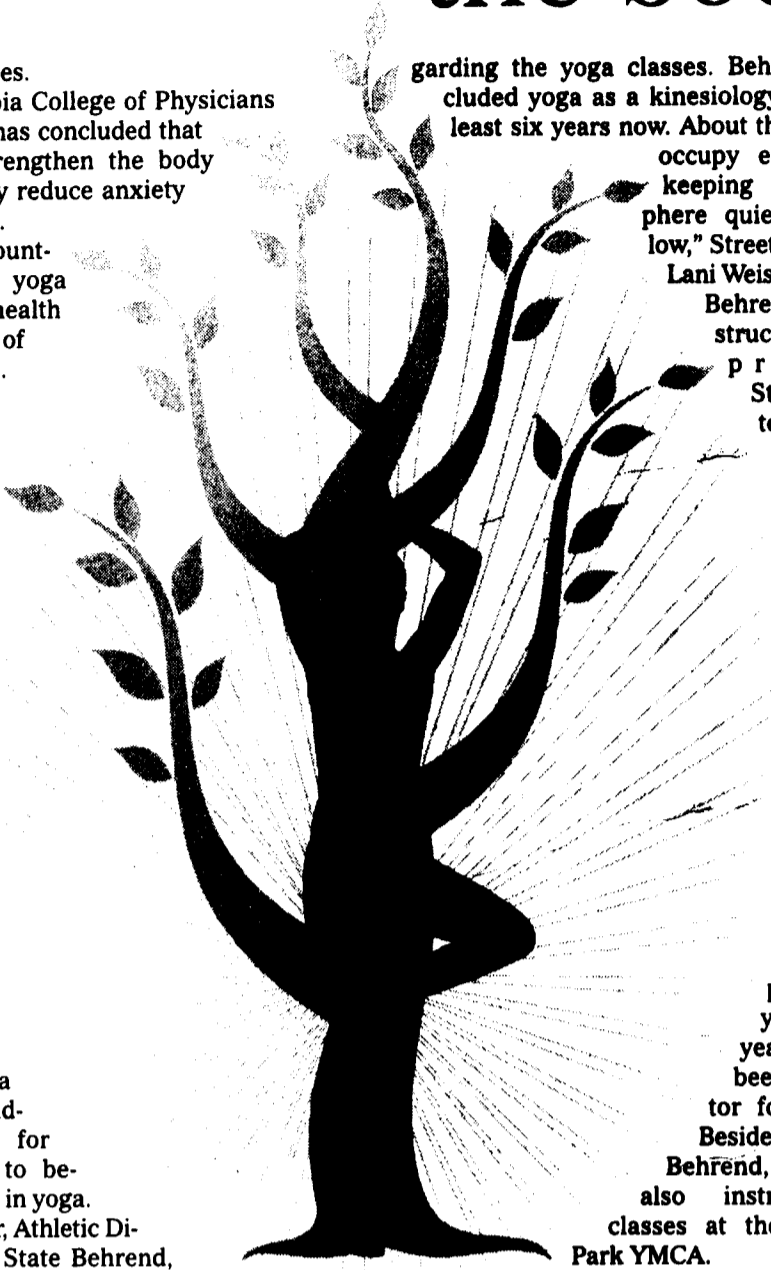
"I really like it. Honestly, it's my favorite class," says Mucha. "I leave feeling better and rejuvenated and at peace with the world. It's good for the body, and it's not physically exhausting," says Mucha.

In June, a Zumba class, another aerobic fitness class combining different dance movements and cultural music, will be offered to faculty and staff for a trial run and then eventually to students in the fall.

Streeter says "we would rather offer kinesiology classes that are lifetime skill classes for students that benefit them the rest of their lives."

While not all students are able to take the yoga classes here at Behrend because of the limited number of spaces, the Erie area has plenty of studios that also offer various types of yoga for people who are new and may not know much about the proper movements and breathing. Some even waive the fee for the first class.

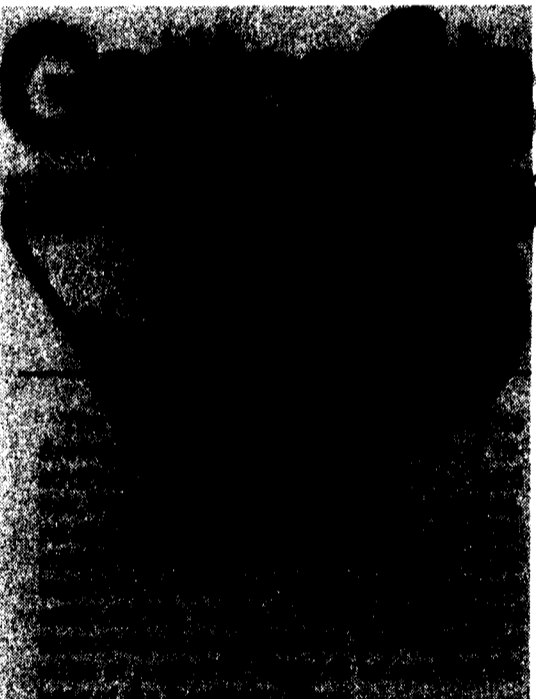
Weissbach says "that if you are a beginner interested in trying yoga, try to find a good teacher, as this can make a world of difference in your understanding of the material and being able to truly embody it. DVDs are okay, but not nearly as effective in transmitting the ultimate depth and wisdom of this ancient practice."



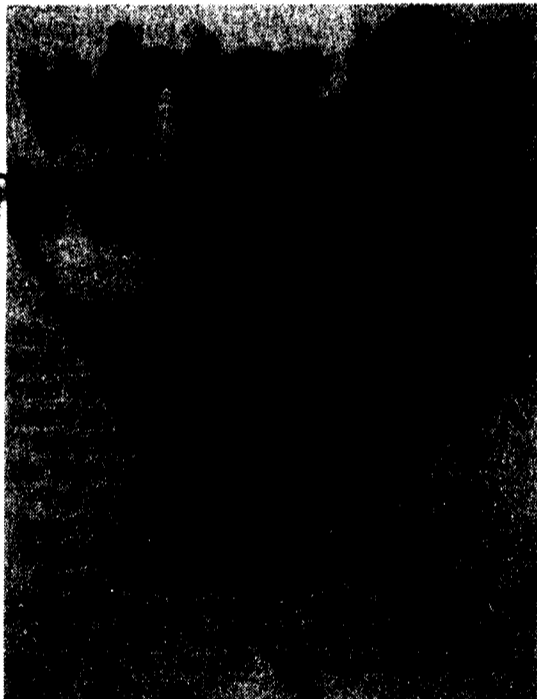
Wesleying.org

CAMPUS CULTURE

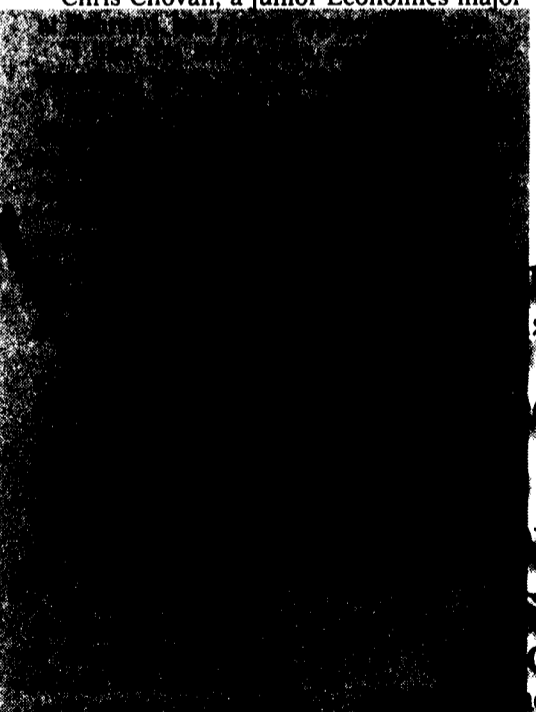
MUSIC



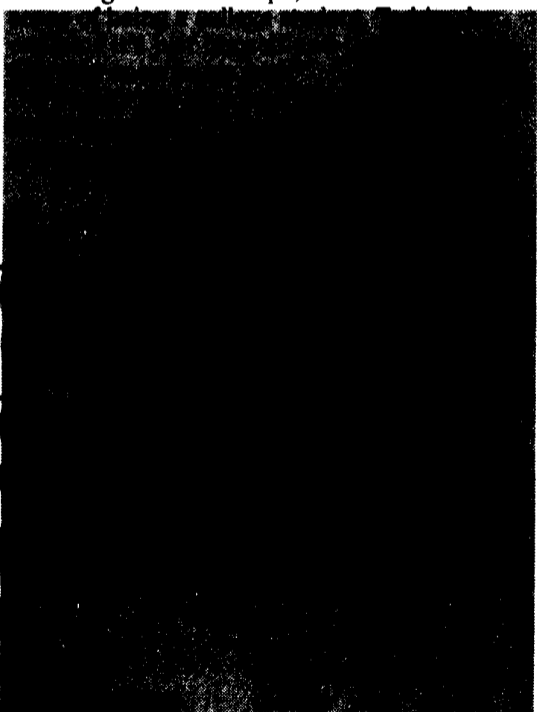
Chris Chovan, a junior Economics major



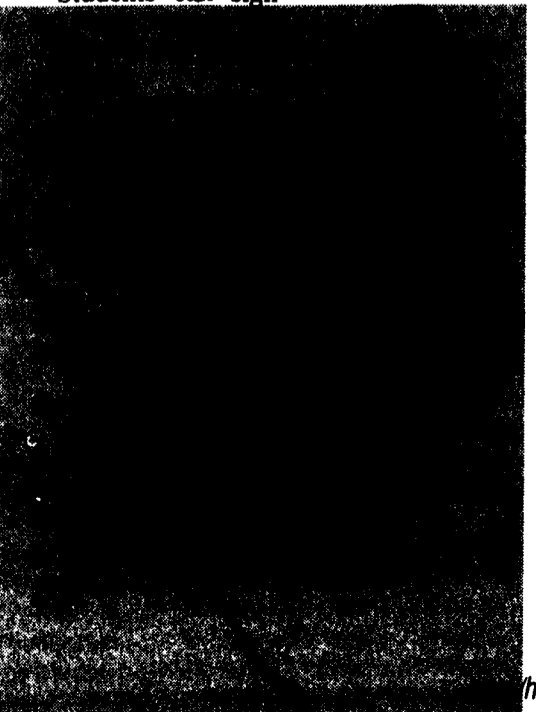
Gliding down the slope, Chovan loses all



Students can sign



work with snow-



Radio Empire

DAN KINEM
senior reporter

Straight from the depths of Erie comes the pop-punk powerhouse known as Radio Empire.

In a scene that is plagued with countless hardcore bands that sound the same and music that is just lacking in general, Radio Empire comes to save the day with their original sound and energetic performances.

Forming from the ashes of past bands like Stillframe Sky and Fireworks Effect the members have come together to provide great music with a soul and are only bound to continue to grow and keep mastering their sound.

I was lucky enough to sit down and talk [through Facebook Chat] with the lovable Jess Scutella, who plays drums in the band and is currently a Freshman BLASC Major at Behrend.

Q: What is your band and what are they all about?

A: Radio Empire is the name and we started writing together last year in March. Myself, Tyler James [vocals and guitar], and Tyler Woodruff [bass] make the band now. We are proud to say we are an extremely hard-working band that attempts to write the most personal music and relate to our awesome fans and friends.

Q: How did the band form?

A: Well, after Tyler's old band broke up he immediately started writing with a new state of mind, with an old member of our band Johnny Fleming. He then started asking around and T-woody (Tyler Woodruff) and I jumped on!

Q: What have you guys as a band already accomplished and what do you hope to accomplish in the future?

A: Being together as a band for less than a year now has been pretty crazy. We have released a self-titled EP (Extended Play) and survived a two-week tour that expanded out to Indiana. We have also opened for such bands as Bayside, Mayday Parade, The Wonder Years, The Audition, and Grave Robber. Which makes us pretty lucky! We also just released our full-length album, entitled "Wishing Well." We are extremely excited to just play more and more shows, meet more amazing people, and go as far as possible with this band.

Q: How can people listen to you and get your album?

A: Well, of course, anybody can come to our shows and pick one up. Or very soon people will be able to purchase both of our CDs online at iTunes, Amazon and MySpace. Plus, our music is on other various music websites, such as Last.fm, Purevolume, and iLike. So check them out there!

Q: Why should people listen to you guys?

A: Well, besides being a pop-punk band we write stuff that is also out of the typical pop-punk boundaries. It's all about making sure that people enjoy it and can even tell us how they relate. That makes it worthwhile for us.

Q: Any last words or thoughts?

A: Well, we are here, and we are putting everything into this band! We like to say we are unstoppable! For some of us this is our last chance with music, and we hope everyone can relate and enjoy it as much as we do! Please come talk to us or add us on MySpace at <http://www.myspace.com/radioempiremusic/>



Contributed Photo: facebook.com

From left to right: Jess Scutella, Tyler James, Tyler Woodruff