

# LIFESTYLE

## IN THE KITCHEN

The 'Flavor' of Kashmir comes to campus.

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3A The Princeton Packet Tuesday, March 11, 2003

### PACKET PICKS

#### Wednesday

##### King of the city

Kerth Rinschard will read from his novel *The Dead* at Princeton University Bookstore at 7 p.m.

In *The Dead*, a young advertising executive discovers that he may be the heir to the island of Manhattan, if he can find the lost "dead" that is hidden somewhere in the city. Two months later with casino plans are also not to find the documents and the chase is on.

Ms. Blanchard, Princeton alumna, is editor of *Maxim* magazine.

The store is located at 36 University Place, Princeton. For more information, call (609) 921-4300, ext. 245.

#### Thursday

##### Choral traditions

The Choir of the College of William and Mary at Williamsburg, Va., will perform at Princeton University Chapel at 7 p.m.

Interim director Dr. Constantine Drifone will lead the choir. She is associate conductor and director of the Harvard-Radcliffe Chorus at Harvard University. The choir will perform works including Schubert's *Mass in G*, Leonard Bernstein's *Cherubim* (1961) and *The Last and Sorrowful Prayer's Reclamations*.

Princeton resident Katherine Prusik, a sophomore at the College of William and Mary, is a daughter of the choir and a 2001 graduate of the Lawrenceville School.

Admission is free. For more information, visit [www.ahn.church](http://www.ahn.church).

#### Friday

##### Sounds of the '40s

The Princeton High School Studio Band will hold a big band concert at the school from 7 to 10 p.m.

The band will play from an extensive repertoire of 1940s and 1950s big band music. Dress is casual and all ages are welcome.

Admission is \$5. The school is located at 151 Moore St., Princeton. For more information, call (609) 618-4444.

##### Talkies tales

The Princeton Players will perform *The Habits of a Keller Theatre*, Merrimack County Community College at 7 p.m.

Written by J.R.R. Tolkien, author of *The Lord of the Rings*, the tale follows a hobbit, Bilbo Baggins, who embarks on an adventure to search for dragon-guarded gold.

Performances continue Saturday and Sunday at 1 and 4 p.m., Friday, March 21 at 7 p.m., and Saturday, March 22 at 1 and 4 p.m.

Tickets are \$8. The studio is located at 1290 Old Trenton Road, West Windsor. For more information, visit [www.kelleytheatre.org](http://www.kelleytheatre.org) or call (609) 584-9444.

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# The joy of yoga

More and more people are finding contentment in an ancient art



"(Yoga) creates a quiet place for people to feel the silence within themselves and, in doing so, to remember who they are."

Deborah Metzger  
Founder and director  
Princeton Center for Yoga and Health

By Kim Hagg  
Special Writer

When she was pregnant 19 years ago, Deborah Metzger developed an acute case of pneumonia. Her illness was so severe, her coughing so violent, that she fractured a rib. The damage to her lungs proved well after her gradual recovery and the birth of her son. Soon afterward, her doctor diagnosed her with asthma for life in what felt to her like a prison sentence.

Yet, ironically, this chronic disease would become profoundly beneficial to Ms. Metzger by leading her even further into one of the most important discoveries of her life — yoga.

Frustrated with conventional approaches to asthma, Ms. Metzger began seeking a number of alternative health methods and found in yoga a therapeutic practice that quickly "ignited her heart."

At the time, yoga was not widely practiced in the Princeton area. It was only during a visit to The Kripalu Center for Yoga and Health in Lenox, Mass., that Ms. Metzger began making dietary changes, walking regularly and practicing yoga daily. There, gradually, she began to feel a new sense of vitality that led her to change the direction of her life and career. Hoping to bring a similar sense of well-being to others, she decided to teach yoga.

After training intensively at The Kripalu Center, Ms. Metzger began to teach yoga full time in various places around Princeton, including The Body Center, The Arts Council of Princeton, and The Princeton Fitness Center (now The New York Sports Club).

Caring around yoga mats and cushions, she strove to create a comfortable and peaceful space in each of these settings. Yet, she increasingly realized that in order to foster the strong sense of community she had found in Kripalu, she would need to establish a studio of her own. In 1996, she opened the Princeton Center for Yoga and Health (PCYH) in Montgomery.

In the intervening years, yoga has become one of the largest areas of growth in the fitness industry. In fact, IDEAFT (a national fitness organization) reports a 54 percent increase in yoga classes offered across the United States since 1996.

With public endorsement from the likes of Sting and Madonna, yoga has witnessed an enormous surge in popularity that is as evident in the Princeton region as it is in New York City. Offered daily in gyms and fitness centers, as well as many corporations countrywide, yoga is also partially subsidized by some medical insurance companies. It would seem that yoga's offbeat reputation has all but evaporated, and it is now regarded as a mainstream pursuit of health and fitness.

The PCYH, too, has grown dramatically since its inception. What began as a few classes for a handful of students has now expanded into 50 classes for hundreds of students each week. Although Ms. Metzger has used advertising and direct mail, often word-of-mouth has proven enough to attract new students to classes.

Indeed, by the late 1990s, attendance had become so much that PCYH began to run out of space. Ms. Metzger wanted to add a more diverse range to the schedule but didn't have the room to facilitate more than one class at a time. Just last year, in a shift that doubted her studio space, PCYH moved to The Montgomery Professional Center.

Miles from its previous location, the studio is nestled in the far corner of this professional development district off Route 518 on Vineland Drive, with a peaceful view of the woods from its large windows.

For Ms. Metzger, the studio is a "manifestation of my own yoga practice." She grows with it, and with the experiences her students bring.

"We are all living laboratories," she says. Accordingly, in her studio she strives to remain open and to experiment with new ideas, unique classes and teachers with varying areas of expertise.

This is evident in the wide range of classes that PCYH now offers, including not only yoga (Vinyasa, Kripalu, Hatha-Zen, Yoga for a Healthy Back, and Yoga for Seniors, among others), but Belly Dance, Pilates and Feng Shui. Along with regular weekly classes, PCYH also hosts several workshops each month, often led by well-known yoga teachers and, as Ms. Metzger puts it, "local treasures" such as Jamie Steyer-Schmitt, author of *Every Woman's Yoga*.

Three of the many workshops offered this month are "Breath Therapy" (this Sunday) with Jane Marton and Dr. Ed Zullo; "Work and Family Life" (March 29) with Jacqueline Schmitter, MSW Life Coach; and "Yoga in the Female Body" (March 29) with Adrienne Janick, an exercise physiologist.

Offering relief from the symptoms of many common ailments, including asthma, arthritis, hypertension and diabetes, yoga appeals to many 24 in helping potential as well as an unique blend of building strength and increasing flexibility.



Staff photo by Frank Wojtowicz

Instructor Carla Brady of Washington Township demonstrates a stretch during a teacher training session of the Princeton Center for Yoga and Health in Skillman.

To many critics, of course, yoga is simply a powerful workout that tones and firms the body (especially those abs and glutes).

Ms. Metzger has worked in recent years, as yoga has become more mainstream, that yoga classes have shifted, in many people's eyes, to merely a physical workout. Yutaku Iino, who currently teaches at PCYH, agrees that yoga practice seems to be veering away from the spiritual and focusing more on purely physical results.

Yet the initial reason why people come to yoga and continue to practice it differs little to Ms. Metzger. Yoga's emphasis on relaxation and clarity of mind, as well as overall physical fitness, continues to benefit her students and to provide a healthy respite to the accumulated effects of daily stress.

At PCYH, power yoga and hot yoga, two styles known mainly for their aerobic intensity, form their emphasis on meditation, draw the largest crowds. However, these classes include powerful breathing techniques and relaxation exercises both beneficial to health and essential to the practice of yoga. It is important to find a style of yoga that suits each person's unique physiological makeup and a practice that provides an enjoyable and enriching experience.

As Ms. Metzger says, "I am not interested in asking any more how to fit people's lives." But for many students, coming to class regularly can quickly become habit-forming.

Consider the case of Evan Haring of Princeton, a retired schoolteacher. When she first yoga for the first time three years ago at PCYH, the studio she was hesitant, and didn't know what to expect. Her sister urged her along with a gift certificate, but shortly she thought that yoga would be "waaaaay." Now she rarely misses a class.

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Adrienne Janick of New York City, director of Glamour Yoga Training at PCYH, observes yoga teachers in training, right.





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**Deborah Metzger  
Founder and director  
Princeton Center for Yoga and Health**

**By Kim Nagy  
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Consider the case of Janet Haring of Princeton, a retired schoolteacher. When she tried yoga for the first time three years ago at PCYH, she admits she was hesitant and didn't know what to expect. Her sister urged her along with a gift certificate, but secretly she thought that yoga would be "wimpy." Now she rarely misses a class.

# The joy of yoga

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When asked why she has taken yoga ever since, Ms. Haring answers, "Well, I really learned how to relax and find ways to bring it (yoga) into everyday life. When things get to you, you can take it out and use it."

"Also," Ms. Haring adds with a smile, "my husband thinks I've become a much more pleasant person."

For those in the Princeton region interested in trying yoga, there are many alternatives and locations from which to choose, including The Princeton Center for Yoga and Health in Skillman, The Yoga Studio in Pennington and Simply Yoga in Kingston (to name but a few).

In Ms. Metzger's mind, the central requirement of yoga, and how it differs from "exercise," is that "it creates a quiet place for people to feel the silence within

themselves and, in doing so, to remember who they are." But she adds, it is important not to take anything, including yoga, too seriously. As he puts it, "there's gotta be a little play in yoga."

*The Princeton Center for Yoga and Health is located in The Montgomery Professional Center, 50 Vreeland Drive, Suite 506, Skillman. Phone: (609) 924-7294. On the Web: [www.princetonyoga.com](http://www.princetonyoga.com)*