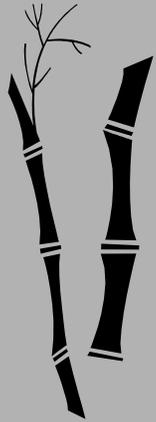


Xin Qi Shen Dojo



# Sun, Sand, Wind, Water Bandon 2002

FIRE, EARTH, WIND, and WATER; we had it all this year at Bandon. As I sit here looking out over the ocean waves, the sun reflecting off the water so bright and warm that my eyes take time to adjust to looking at normal things, one thought pops in: There's no place like Bandon, There's no place like Bandon. The wind blowing across the sand, the water and sand playing back and forth, with the sun blazing down. It's perfect.

This year we had a few unfortunate events. First, Derryl, after preparing to teach the Chan Si Gong and looking so forward to it, wasn't able to make it, he came down with the flu ☹. Kim, our regular from the first visit here, injured her back and wasn't able to come either. Then, some members who swore they'd be here had work, or life popped up to say NO. Russ, you weren't the only one.

This year we had a cozy small group. But even so, things just moved on, flowed and went great. (sorry you missed it guys, we really did miss you too, but . . .) Bandon's energy and beauty cleanses, nourishes, and invigorates. As I write this the wind is blowing strongly but the sun is out and it doesn't matter that the wind is blowing and Sunday the wind stopped.

It looks like we have a full schedule of instructors for future retreats. I'm happy to say

all of the guest instructors, so far, have decided to come back as regulars. So aside from schedule conflicts we have a highly skilled group of steady instructors for the coming years.

The new guy this year was Roger Cloutier. Roger is an excellent masseur as well as a practitioner and gifted instructor of the internal arts. He has been a regular at Michael Gilman's Energetic Retreat as the massage therapist and is usually booked solid. His Five Animal Frolic Qi Gong is the best I've seen and I'm very pleased he likes Bandon as much as the rest of us and wants to return.

Bob Iden is another of our regulars and focuses his practice on body mechanics and zero force, effortless power in push hands. Bob is trained in William Chen's Taiji Quan.

Kim Ivy wasn't able to make it this year but her Jade Body Qi Gong has been a favorite over the years. She's the one out on the beach before any of us, doing cartwheels and practicing as the rest of us are getting up.

Ken Wright has become a regular as well. Last year was his first year and I think he's hooked. This year Ken came from a two-week push hands workshop with Sam Masich. Ken's love is push hands. His emphasis has been moving-step and walking pattern push hands focusing on strong basics.

The one voted most popular is Derryl Willis, who was hit with the flu a day before the retreat. Definitely missed and it even angered a few members that he couldn't make it. Derryl's new name will be Mr. Chen Taiji since we never see

## Master Chen Xiao Wang visits Seattle October 5&6!

him not practicing. He just might be the incarnation of Chen Chan Xing.

Then there is Mr. Bagua, can you guess? Joel of course. Joel Hartshorne is to Bagua what Derryl is to Chen . . . infatuated. Perhaps the incarnation of Tung Hai Chuan.

Another favorite from last year was John Camp. John can be called Mr. Fu Bagua. Super popular as a teacher and applications play-partner. John wasn't able to make it this year but has a standing reservation for future visits.



Another regular and local is Gene Burnett. Gene is a long time member of the club who has moved to southern Oregon. Gene has been researching the Yang form, push hands and body structure. His focus is applications and push hands.

We're already planning for Bandon 2003, August 1,2,3rd. Most of us have our rooms booked and I advise anyone interested to book early. There will be a family reunion there next year so many of the rooms are taken already. Will we see you there? Doesn't matter, we'll have a good time anyway.

P.S. Check out the wuji website photo album for pictures of this years Bandon.

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# Words can mislead, Actions speak truth!

Most instructors, regardless of art or field, have met other practitioners claiming to be advanced, highly skilled, or knowing the secrets of the art. I've met some students having attended various seminars and workshops claiming they can circulate the qi completely now. Well, if so why isn't your form any better? If so, why isn't your skill any better? If so, why isn't your health any better? If so, why isn't this 'advanced training' or superior knowledge apparent? And I don't mean showing off. If you look at Masters Tchoung, Gao Fu, Feng, or Mr. Yueng there is something 'special' yet casual about how they move and their energetics. They don't show off but you definitely know, they know something. The security of body language, the security of not needing to promote themselves, and the security of not caring speak volumes as to who they really are. As an instructor of the internal arts for a few years I've noticed a definite progression and signs of advancement as students move through the art. There is a definite maturation process that the body shows as a student practices forms.

## Beginning to Advanced

1. Awkward
2. Stiff
3. Single Handed
4. Out of Time
5. Strength
6. Floating – weight upperside
7. Coordinated
8. Smooth (relaxed)
9. Solid Weight – underside
10. Movement Thick (Xu Fa)
11. Casual, quick, easy, no form
12. Hidden

## AWKWARD

As a beginner in the art everything is awkward, all movements. Begin-

ners try to think about the movement as they are learning or doing it. There is confusion, embarrassment, and a very unnatural look to the forms and postures. There is an apparent difficulty in performing the movements.

## STIFF

Once a student has a sense of the postures there is still a stiffness in the entire body. The beginner tries too hard to be correct, there is too much tightness in the muscles. As new students work their way through the form their movements are more like a stick figure. Especially the arms. The arms move like sticks instead of living tissue.

## SINGLE HANDED

This is one thing that pops up not just at the beginning levels but also when learning weaponry. As students focus on the primary movement they forget, or don't have time to think about, the secondary hand. As one hand is active the other hand is dead or limp. It's hard to think about coordinating both hands at the same time.

## OUT OF TIME

As postures and movements of the form are learned and remembered the next stage is hurrying from one movement to the next. The hands are usually ahead of the weight and waist. There is also a rush or slurring one posture into the next, not letting each posture arrive.

## STRENGTH

Even though relaxation is our primary focus there is a tendency to use or try to apply strength on some of the more noticeable, applicable movements. Punches for instance, there is a tendency to either speed up the punch or use power and strength while punching. All of a sudden a coordinated movement

becomes merely an arm or shoulder movement. The same holds true for any other striking movement.

## FLOATING

Light but not floating, rooted but not heavy, is the oral teaching from the Yang family. Our goal is to be soft and relaxed. Until understanding what that really is, students begin to move in a light, careful, floating manner. This indicates still holding onto strength while trying to be gentle. It's like tiptoeing through the form.

## COORDINATED

The next level of progress is when the mind and body begin to interact and cooperate with one another. The forms and movements have been done a few hundred time so that the hands and feet are moving together. This is when the student really begins to learn and study the movements they've been doing so far. This becomes one of the interests of practicing and polishing movements and form.

## SMOOTHNESS

As the coordination improves in the forms there is greater mindfulness and feeling in the movements. All of a sudden the movements begin to become fluid and smooth. This is actually a result of understanding moving relaxation. There is a super pleasant feeling while practicing now, and this become the study and reason to practices. Practice is soothing and peaceful instead of trying and thinking about the next movement. It's restful.

## SOLID

Aikido people call this weight underside. As relaxation in movement is practiced, there is less fighting gravity. We begin to feel the

*(Continued on page 4)*

# Back to School!

Perhaps due to the school systems starting in the fall, September seems to be more the start of a new year than January. This is the time class enrollment grows and lost dojo members seem to come back. As long as I've been teaching I've also used September to start the yearly curriculum. Summer is over and it's time to start working.

## BASICS

- ↳ Do I have your current email, phone and address? If there is a change in classes and I need to get in touch with you, can I?
- ↳ Club fees are made to: wuji.com
- ↳ Club dues should be paid during the first week.
- ↳ Base club fee is \$70 monthly.
- ↳ If paying cash, put a name tag or note with your fees. After teaching a full session I can't remember who gave me what.
- ↳ Only ask questions pertaining to the current class.
- ↳ If you miss a session ask a club member to catch you up or wait for a review.

## WEDNESDAY BASIC TRAINING CLASS

Autumn: Emei Qi Gong - Tian Shan Qi Gong  
Winter: Fa Sung Gong - Chan Si Gong  
Spring: Nei Gung Bang - Bagua Qi Gong  
Summer: Zhan Zhuang - Tree Qi Gong - Wild Goose

## WELCOME BEGINNERS

Wednesday is our beginning session for all classes. We'll be progressing through the Emei Qi Gong method which will loosen muscles and begin to work on basic coordination. From here we will filter into the Tian Shan Qi Gong method which focuses on softness and energy flow. For the first month, the second hour of class we'll focus as a group on the common basics for Taiji and Bagua. Starting the second month during this second hour you will be given individual lessons to work on. Each week's lesson will be refreshed the following week along with the new information.

Keep in mind:

- ↳ We have a large book and video library. Check out is for two weeks. This is done by signing the item to be checked out in the booklet along with your name. When you return it just put a line through your name.
- ↳ Many of the forms taught are part of the video library. If you want, we also sell copies of the dojo form tapes for \$25.00
- ↳ Wear only clean shoes in dojo practice area. Some members prefer to practice barefooted.

- ↳ Uniforms are not encouraged, just wear something comfortable. We do have club shirts & sweatshirts available.
- ↳ There are also a limited number of books available for sale. I will be discontinuing them, so what is on the shelf is all there is.

## CONTINUING MEMBERS

We're hitting the ground running. Unfortunately with the evenings getting dark around 8:30 we have to move back to the dojo. The exception to this is the morning classes. We'll be outside until it's too cold to be outside.

Since there will be no beginners in the continuing classes the first hour will be a group training period.  
*See list*

Due to space limitations in the winter we have to be a bit more mindful and respectful of others. As a group doing the form, *follow the leader*. Whoever is leading the session sets the pace and timing of the forms. This is a good practice of listening and following.

## OVERWHELMED?

If you can't keep up with the flow of your group or lessons are going too fast, you always have the option of dropping back a group.

If you have questions on a previous form or movement watch when a younger group is working on it and tag along to that group.

### YANG TAIJI

6:30-7:30 Zhan Zhuang - Tuishou - Applications  
7:30-8:30 Form instructions  
8:30-9:00 Section 7&8 advanced

### BAGUA

6:30-7:00 Basic drills & stepping  
7:00-8:30 Circle Walk: Inner Palms & 8 changes  
8:30-9:00 Partner drills

### CHEN TAIJI

8:30-9:00 Intermediate Tuishou  
9:00-10:00 Zhan Zhuang - Tuishou - Applications  
10:00-11:00 48 form instruction - Pao Chui Instruction

### WEDNESDAY

6:30-7:30 Qi Gong  
7:30-8:30 Form work  
8:30-9:00 Advanced

### ROUSHOU - Mondays

7:00-9:00 Five or more are required to start a new group.

There is a signup sheet in the dojo book.  
This class is for dojo members only.

(Continued from page 2)

heaviness of our limbs and the weight of our body. This is the next step to real relaxation. The body moves very comfortably and securely. When you move outside your circle of strength you can feel yourself beginning to float. This is a grounding sense and the beginning of rooting.

**THICK MOVEMENT**

This level combines the smoothness and the solid levels. When one first reaches the solid level there is a tendency to hold postures and focus on the heaviness of the movement. After this stage, as practice of the form resumes, the smoothness of the form takes on a thick, strong-looking character. A connectedness. The power ripple from the ground to the hands can be seen, the movements have a pleasant quality to watch. Xu - storing and Fa - issu-

ing energy are apparent. Just think about Derryl, Bruce, Joel, Russ, or Tom as they practice their forms. You can see this thickness in their practice.

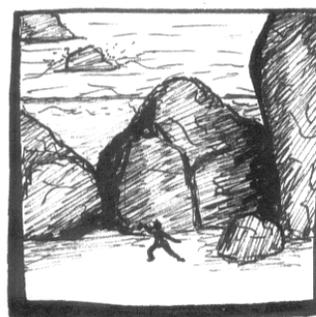
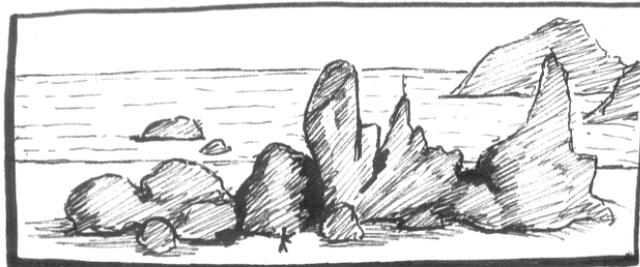
**CASUAL**

Here the circles and movements become more natural to the individual. It's nice to watch but not really engaging or as pretty as the thick stage. Forms and practice don't look that special. There is skill but the movement don't look any different from just walking. The forms are becoming internalized and the circle smaller.

**HIDDEN**

This is where the practice and forms aren't impressive at all. It looks more like the individual is playing around than practicing. The level of skill is so high that their entire life is practice and it's all play. It's all natural.

**BANDON**



**Tai Chi on the Beach**

Doodle by R. Soini 2002

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