

New Business

Flirting for Fitness

By Julia Skillin



As I began this article, I couldn't help going between two mindsets. On the one hand, while I spoke to women and read what they had to say about their experiences, I kept thinking, "This is really great!" On the other hand, after I finished talking or reading, or when I attempted to explain what it was I was researching, I continually found myself thinking, "But it's pole dancing." And indeed, on the face of it, that is what Yoga Flirt is, but the experience as described by the women who have participated in the classes is something more.

Before she started Yoga Flirt, Cathy Weiss was a schoolteacher, and would never have presumed to call herself anything more than "cute". After watching a very tasteful pole routine done by a woman much like herself on an episode of Oprah, Cathy says she decided, "I had to do that!" And for the next two years,

she took classes, enjoying the experience immensely, saying, "I loved feeling sexy and womanly rather than just cute."

After her two years of pole dancing classes, Cathy started training to become a yoga teacher, then moved to the Central Coast and opened Yoga in the Vines, which, she states, "left no room in my life for pole dancing. But I missed it!"

The decision to open Yoga Flirt came after the success of Venus Pole Fitness' intro to pole fitness class in 2008. But pole dancing alone was missing an important element: "Pole dancing lacked the wisdom of yoga and yoga lacked the embracing of the female body. I decided to combine the two and Yoga Flirt was born."

As I spoke with her, Cathy expressed a concern that too many

women think too little of themselves, and do not feel comfortable in their own skin, always wanting to be something more, something different. One of Cathy's goals is to prove to women that, "regardless of shape or size, all women have the ability to be sensual." The larger objective, beyond the idea of the traditional workout, is the "internal experience... acceptance", stated simply, that where women find faults in themselves is what makes them wonderful. This realization is a, "je ne sais quoi...magical experience. It is a safe environment [for women] to learn more about themselves."

Cathy opened Yoga Flirt in Atascadero with a workshop, followed by two classes, and, a year and a half later, Yoga Flirt was a full-fledged business. Of those first classes, she has four women who are still taking classes. The bond between the three 21 year old women and the one 54 year old woman is a testament to, Cathy says, the

"bonding experience, the sisterhood" that has emerged from the classes. She also stated that the "experience transcends age perceptions"

In March of this year, Cathy opened a San Luis Obispo location, on Sacramento Dr. In addition to the 8 week Series Classes, which require pre-registration, summer strength classes will be open to anyone who is interested, and take place from 8:45-9:45 a.m. on Saturdays, starting on June 26. Individual sessions cost \$18, or five sessions may be purchased for \$75.

It must be noted that the classes are only open to women, no "professional" pole dancers/strippers are employed, and anyone who wishes to attend must arrive on time, as the doors will be locked to ensure the privacy of the class. For more information, or to sign up for a class, visit yogaflirt.com, or call 835-1725. ❖

Action Heroes

CASA: A Voice for Abused and Neglected Children

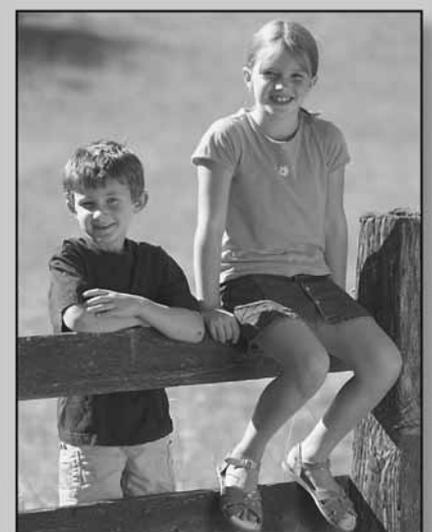
In San Luis Obispo County, 3,500 children are reported as abused, neglected or abandoned every year. Those removed from abusive homes are more likely than others to face homelessness, unemployment, even prison as adults. But thanks to specially trained



community volunteers who speak for the best interests of a child in the court system, they now have a much better chance at life.

According to CASA's Cathy Orton, "When children enter foster care, they suffer many losses — parents, home, school, and often their siblings who are placed in separate foster homes. For many children in the foster care system, their CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) volunteer becomes the most consistent adult in their lives, the person who knows them best, offers them a stable connection, and advocates for services and appropriate placement."

On Saturday, August 21, SLO County residents will have a chance to thank the extraordinary "action heroes" of CASA during their 8th Annual "Rendezvous at the Ranch" fundraiser. At \$100 per ticket, enjoy dinner by Chef Jose Dahan, live music, silent and live auctions. The evening starts at 5:00 p.m. at the Santa Margarita Ranch. Call (805) 541-6542 or visit www.slocasa.org for details.



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