

Melinda Farbman, Yoga Instructor at the LJCC

By Lauren Abeles

My first experience with yoga class was over 20 years ago. With no understanding of what yoga really was, I took a spot in the back of the room and tried to follow the instructor's moves. I came away confused as to how this would help me and why people loved it. I tried a few other yoga classes over the years, but I didn't feel a connection to the teacher or what I was learning. Fast forward to 2007 when I moved to Charlotte and joined the JCC. I decided to try many of the classes that were offered at the J. I finally tried one Sunday morning class with the yoga instructor Melinda, and I was hooked. What I realized is that yoga is like a pair of jeans. Sometimes it takes many pairs to try on before you find the right fit. The difference I felt right away with this class, was the instructor. She was spiritual and calm, yet she brought a positive energy to the room that was infectious.

Melinda Farbman is my yoga instructor at the Levine JCC in South Charlotte. She is certified with the Yoga Alliance having completed two 200 hour trainings and is now taking an advanced 500 hour training with the nationally known Vinyasa teacher Rolf Gates. Practicing yoga since college, she taught elementary school in NY before moving to Charlotte in 1996. She feels a strong connection to the Charlotte JCC, having met her husband there in the parking lot, two weeks after she



Melinda leads her weekly Yoga class.

moved to Charlotte. She started teaching a Sunday morning class at the J in 2005 and has grown quite a following since then. Her classes are packed yet she has been able to get to know many of her yoga students over the years. "The feeling at the J is so warm, a feeling of community and family. My experience is so personal. I love seeing the progress of my students." She is especially grateful to her husband Mark and children Adah (age 12) and Jonathan, (age 5) who allow her to practice and teach yoga every day. You might even see Mark in one of Melinda's classes.

Melinda sees one of yoga's many benefits as being a therapeutic tool that can provide people with a safe environment to work out their stress. Yoga is a non-verbal healing practice that allows

people to feel better. The Vinyasa Flow Yoga that Melinda teaches includes a series of sun salutations and warrior poses plus a line of postured sequences meant to open up the lines of the body in an order that is progressively deeper, safe and feels good. Her classes usually ends with "Savasana," a final resting pose that brings about balance and total relaxation.

Yoga can be very appealing to people of all ages. Melinda has students that are in their 70s and she has taught children as young as five years old. Doctors recommend it for different reasons; combatting depression, anxiety disorders, flexibility for athletes and meditation. It trains your body to breathe through your nose which stimulates your sympathetic nervous system. This raises the dopamine levels in your body, which makes you feel more at peace. It also helps people with insomnia, improves flexibility, and increases metabolism by helping to regulate the body's digestive and respiratory systems. It is very inclusive. You can start at any time and you don't have to make any kind of commitment. It's such a simple way to do something so good for yourself. You don't even need to buy special shoes or equipment. Yoga mats and blocks are provided at the JCC and the classes are even included in your membership fee.

When asked what she would tell a person who isn't sure that he or she wants to try yoga, she says,

"If you have an inkling that you would like it, or that it would be good for you, but you can't get yourself to that first class, then do it for someone else. Sometimes if we can't do it for ourselves, we can do it for someone else. Just dedicate the time spent in the first yoga class to someone you love." That is good advice. You just

might find that you love yoga as much as Melinda and I do. ✨



Charlotte Jewish Film Festival

(Continued from previous page)

through Israel's birth and development as a country using clips of Israeli film as a "lens" on society. Then on March 3, enjoy an evening of music and film sponsored by Temple Israel and the Yiddish Institute of Charlotte as we screen the documentary "Sholem Aleichem: Laughing Through the Darkness," the story of the famous Yiddish writer who brought us Tevye and so much more. Attendees that evening will also be treated to a special performance of Jewish music with a ragtime flair by champion pianist Ethan Uslan. Finally, the Festival comes to a close on March 11 with the hilarious presentation "Jews in Toons: An Animated Evening of Entertainment" featuring longtime Emmy Award winning writer/producer of The Simpsons Mike Reiss. Mike will regale the audience with "The Simpsons and Other Jewish Families" as he shares rarely seen clips and inside

stories. This is sure to be a wonderful end to a fabulous festival.

Follow the Festival on Facebook

"Like" Charlotte Jewish Film Festival on Facebook to keep up-to-date with all the events and films. Find out about exclusive offers for our Facebook friends. Get your tickets now as many films did sell out last year. The All-Festival Pass makes a great Valentine's gift for the film lover in your life. We look forward to seeing you at the movies.

The Charlotte Jewish Film Festival is brought to you by the Levine JCC and the Charlotte Chapter of Hadassah, and is made possible, in part, with funding by the Arts and Science Council and the North Carolina Arts Council, an agency of the Department of Cultural Resources, and the National Endowment for the Arts, which believes that a great nation deserves great art. ✨

Join us for our Open House



Charlotte Jewish Preschool
LEARN • GROW • CONNECT

Full day Programs Ages 1 to Pre-K
Half day Programs Ages 2 to Pre-K

2012/2013 Open Enrollment Begins

OPEN HOUSE
Friday, January 13

- Meet the Director at 9:30am
- School tours begin at 10:00am

cjpkids.org • info@cjpkids.org
704-944-6777

facebook.com/The-Charlotte-Jewish-Preschool

CJP is a partnership of Temple Beth El, Temple Israel and the Levine Jewish Community Center.

