





PREACEFUL

出 入 来 来 来 来

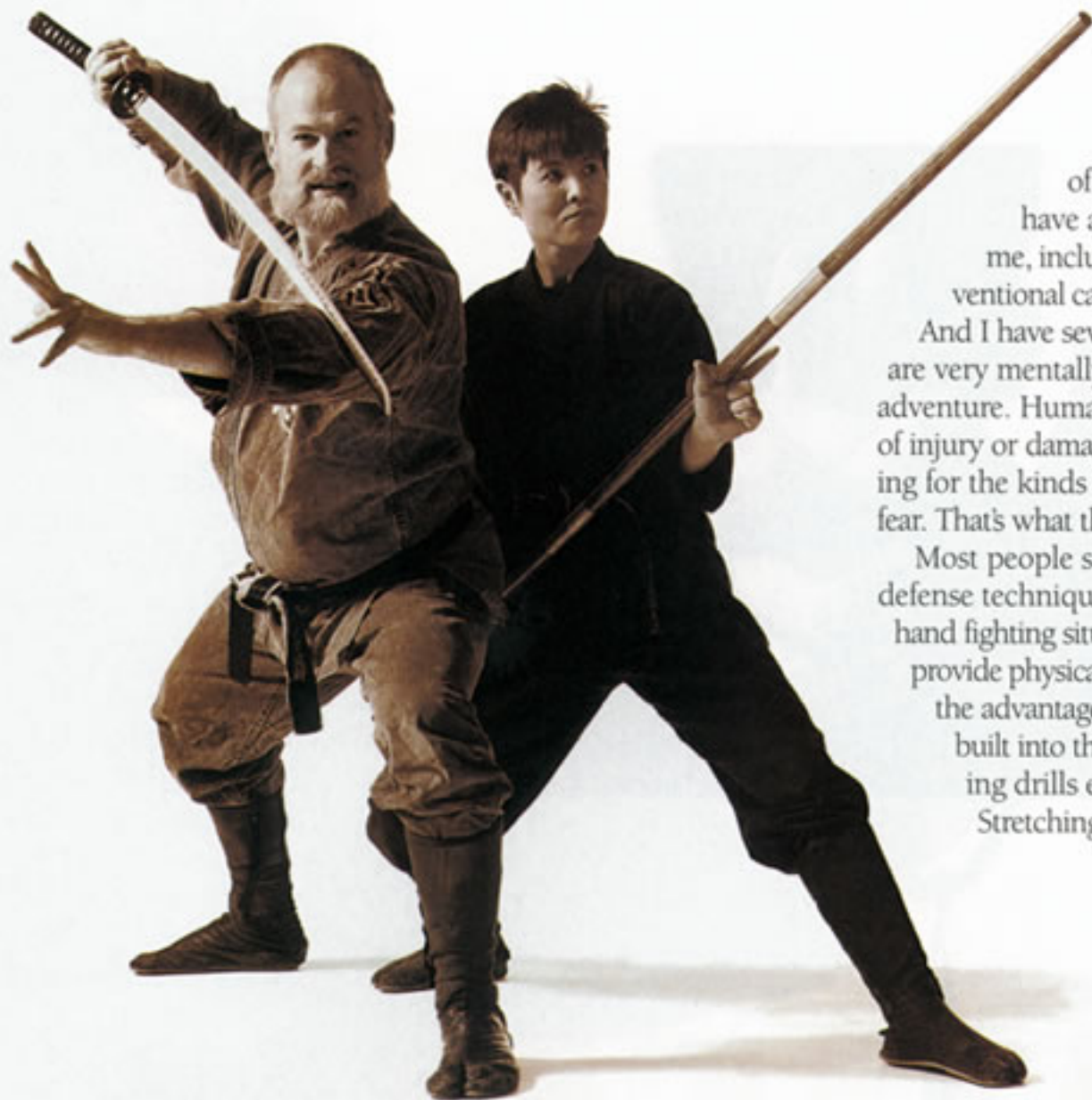
MARTIAL ARTS TRAINING CAN PROVIDE THE STRENGTH AND CONFIDENCE THAT CAN HELP YOU PREVAIL IN THE TRAINING HALL AND IN THE HALLS OF THE WORKPLACE.

By Edward Pittman *Photography by Kent Barker*

Three opponents circle him, then attack. One by one he grabs an arm, a hand, a leg, and turns them, almost gently, before tossing them to the ground. For Stephen K. Hayes, the foremost American practitioner of Togakure-ryu ninjutsu, it looks simple. After 29 years of practice, it probably is. Hayes is one of the hun-

dreds of Associate Club members who practice some form of the martial arts, from the defensive circular style of Aikido to the graceful, slowly sweeping gestures of Tai Chi Ch'uan to the head-on, rock 'em sock 'em style of Tae Kwon Do. ■ Regardless of what style one practices, the martial arts are more than a self-defense or fighting system. Other physical benefits include stress reduction, often dramatic increases in physical stamina, better overall muscle tone, and improved flexibility. And the impact of martial arts training can be more than physical: Many long-time practitioners report the ability and confidence to tackle tough situations in the workplace to such difficult-to-quantify sensations as expanded awareness and an overall sense of peace with their place in the world. ■ And Hayes has been studying ninjutsu for a long time. In 1975, after years of studying and teaching Tae Kwon Do, he traveled to

Martial artists sometimes use meditation techniques to relax the mind and body and increase awareness. In ninjutsu, mystic hand positions (such as the Lion, above) help to focus the mind.



Japan in search of Masaaki

Hatsumi, the 34th generation grandmaster of Togakure-ryu ninjutsu. He found Hatsumi, and it changed his life. "When I went to Japan I felt I came alive," says Hayes, a member of the **Dayton Racquet Club** in Ohio. "It just blew me away, the way they so effortlessly countered a lot of my best techniques. So I sold my karate school, sold my home, sold my car, said good-bye to all my friends, and moved to Japan to become a student of this ninja martial art." Since then Hayes has written 15 books on ninjutsu, been elected to the Black Belt Hall of Fame, and became the first westerner to hold the title of *shidoshi*, or senior master instructor of the nine historical family arts of Togakure-ryu ninjutsu. He also serves as a bodyguard for the Dalai Lama, the spiritual leader of Tibet and winner of the 1989 Nobel Peace Prize, whenever the Lama visits North America; he starred with Richard Chamberlain in the movie *Shogun*; and in 1991 he was ordained as a Tendai Buddhist priest. The rest of Hayes' family studies ninjutsu, too. His wife, Rumiko, assists in teaching in the *dojo* (or training hall), and with translating material for Stephen's research. "She is a constant reminder that the martial arts are not about being big or externally tough," says Hayes. "If you know the techniques, then size, age, and gender really don't make that much difference." Their two daughters, Marissa and Reina, also train, but Hayes says he doesn't push them to embrace ninjutsu. "What I'm hoping is that one will become a lawyer and one will become a financial wizard," he says, laughing. "That's what we really need in the family."

Although the martial arts might seem a logical choice for individuals with law enforcement or security careers, it's also great exercise for everyone else. "My students come from all kinds of occupations and age groups," says Hayes. "I have a lot of health professionals who study with me, including Dr. Richard Stack, the director of interventional cardiology at Duke University Medical Center. And I have several students who work in occupations that are very mentally demanding, and they find us stimulating adventure. Human beings fear the unknown, the possibility of injury or damage or death, and all human beings are looking for the kinds of answers that will deliver them from that fear. That's what the martial arts can provide."

Most people study the martial arts for the powerful self-defense techniques, which can be very effective in hand-to-hand fighting situations. Learning how to defend yourself can provide physical payoffs other than personal security. Most of the advantages of aerobic training and weight training are built into the martial arts. Punching, kicking, and blocking drills elevate your heart rate and respiratory rate.

Stretching before and after class (and sometimes during) is a necessity to prevent injury, and

increases flexibility. Most movements

rely on erect and healthy posture,

and the entire body in motion

delivers the action rather than

just one muscle group, as in

weight training. "For example, we

keep our knees bent a lot of the time," says

Hayes. "This is constantly conditioning the

large muscle groups of the legs as well as the little muscles in the knees. In many cases, those untrained muscles will give people a hard time if they overuse them. Staying flexed for 50 minutes is a pretty big deal for a lot of the new students. And you can concentrate on certain aspects of our art to become a very muscular, toned individual. A lot of people seem to be attracted to martial arts now as a way of teaching themselves how to cope with stress. And I don't mean a way to avoid stress or eliminate it. What they're studying with us is a way to survive stress and ride the energy that most people would call stress-producing and use it to produce positive results."

Another characteristic that separates the martial arts from most other forms of exercise is the fact that there is (depending on your art or your teacher) some inherent danger in practicing them. Mental awareness is as important as the physical action. During weight training you can allow yourself to become distracted. You can have a friend count your repetitions for you, while you think about something else. But in the martial arts, says Hayes, "If you're paying attention to the wrong thing at the wrong time, you get thrown around or you get hit. That may frighten some people in the beginning, but once they get over that initial discomfort it becomes

extremely stimulating. Here's one time in our day when our heart is pumping, and our muscles are being used against resistance. We are completely, totally, mentally there. Our spirit and sense of identity of who we are in relation to everything else is in complete coordination with our intentions and our physical actions. We're not thinking about the past or the future. We're in the moment."

There's a common misconception about martial arts: Some people fear or dislike the training because they think it's about violence and about preparing for confrontations. "What we're doing is cultivating a sense of fearlessness and

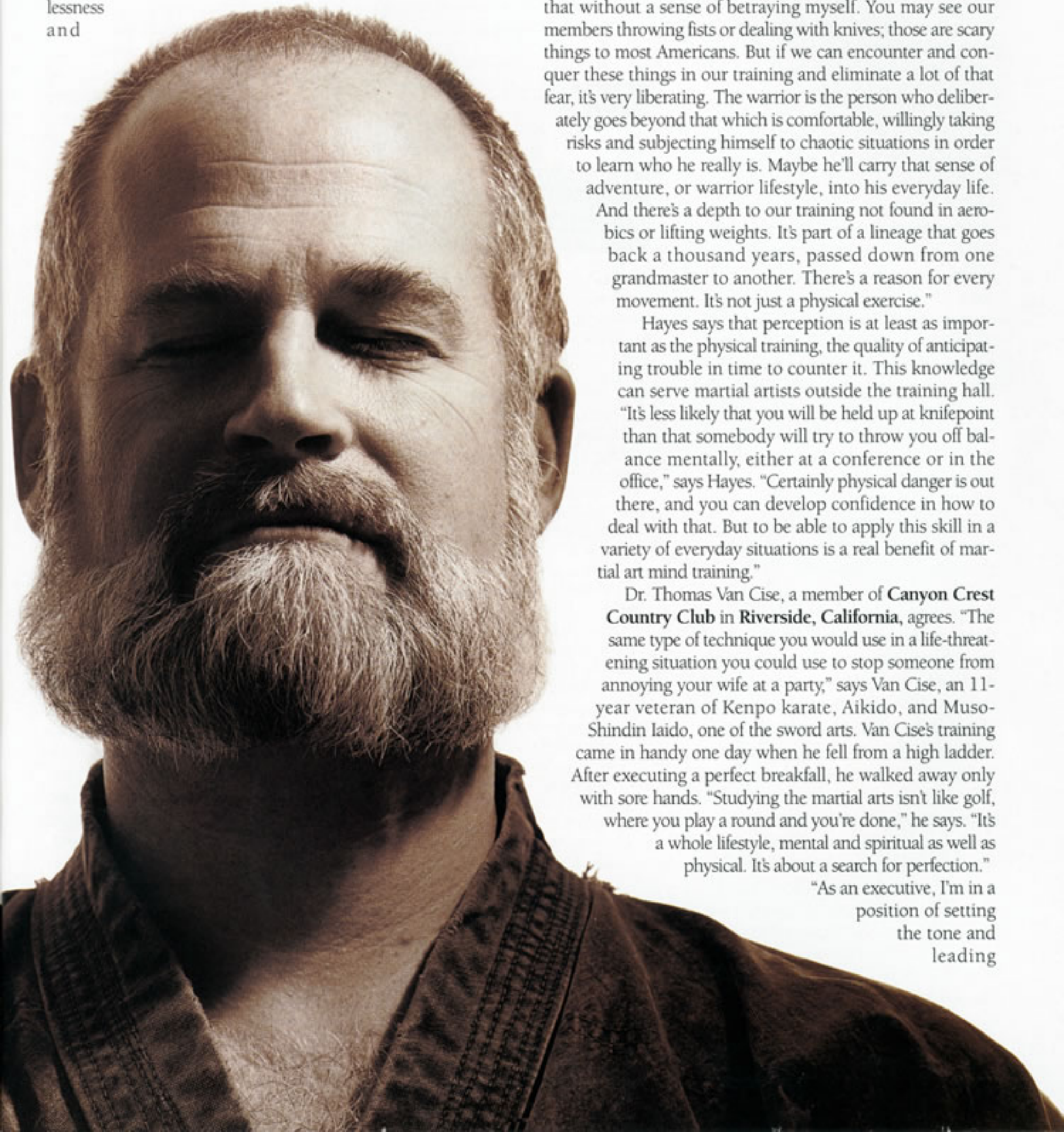
inner strength," says Hayes. "In a parking lot altercation, somebody may think I took his parking place. If I'm unsure of my manliness or fear that I will be taken advantage of, I might get into an argument with this person, and the next thing you know, great violence is done. If, however, I'm very confident of myself, I can look at this guy and say, 'You know, you're right. My mistake. I apologize.' If I'm strong, I can do that without a sense of betraying myself. You may see our members throwing fists or dealing with knives; those are scary things to most Americans. But if we can encounter and conquer these things in our training and eliminate a lot of that fear, it's very liberating. The warrior is the person who deliberately goes beyond that which is comfortable, willingly taking risks and subjecting himself to chaotic situations in order to learn who he really is. Maybe he'll carry that sense of adventure, or warrior lifestyle, into his everyday life. And there's a depth to our training not found in aerobics or lifting weights. It's part of a lineage that goes back a thousand years, passed down from one grandmaster to another. There's a reason for every movement. It's not just a physical exercise."

Hayes says that perception is at least as important as the physical training, the quality of anticipating trouble in time to counter it. This knowledge can serve martial artists outside the training hall. "It's less likely that you will be held up at knifepoint than that somebody will try to throw you off balance mentally, either at a conference or in the office," says Hayes. "Certainly physical danger is out there, and you can develop confidence in how to deal with that. But to be able to apply this skill in a variety of everyday situations is a real benefit of martial art mind training."

Dr. Thomas Van Cise, a member of **Canyon Crest Country Club in Riverside, California**, agrees. "The same type of technique you would use in a life-threatening situation you could use to stop someone from annoying your wife at a party," says Van Cise, an 11-year veteran of Kenpo karate, Aikido, and Muso-Shindin laido, one of the sword arts. Van Cise's training came in handy one day when he fell from a high ladder. After executing a perfect breakfall, he walked away only with sore hands. "Studying the martial arts isn't like golf, where you play a round and you're done," he says. "It's a whole lifestyle, mental and spiritual as well as physical. It's about a search for perfection."

"As an executive, I'm in a position of setting the tone and leading

Rumiko Hayes (practicing with Stephen, left) is a reminder that the martial arts are not about size or external toughness. Like her husband (below), she knows that real strength comes from within.



by example," says Marvin Sparks, president of the Springfield, Ohio, television station WTJC and a member of the Dayton Racquet Club. "The martial arts, as I understand them as a beginner, are a means of exhibiting that kind of leadership without aggression, exhibiting it from an inner strength. That's what appeals to me: to be able to have the strength to lead by example, without intimidation, without the negative aspects of authority."

"Stephen teaches me a way of life and a mind-set that encourages me to really pay attention to myself and to the world around me, to be more aware," says David A. Piser, club massage therapist, who has studied ninjutsu for 10 years and trained with Hayes for the past three. "To be able to face any circumstance, no matter if it's on a physical level or an emotional level or something in between with assuredness, self-confidence, balance, and dignity, and to create an outcome more positive than if I were not so aware of myself, how I operate, and of my place in the world."

Beyond weight-training programs, aerobics classes, or running, the martial arts can give you self-confidence and a sense of security, as well as reduce stress and build a healthy, toned physique. And they can broaden your view of the world, encouraging a sense of awareness most forms of exercise don't address. Ask your athletic director or manager about joining a program at your club (or starting a new one).

"My involvement in the martial arts is a very stimulating way of life; everything that I do can somehow trace itself back to that core," says Hayes. "It allows me to do things that as a child I never thought would be possible. As a kid growing up in Dayton, I never dreamed I'd be in a movie with Richard Chamberlain or be the bodyguard for the king of Tibet, or be responsible for bringing this centuries-old art to the western world. I know I'm never going to be finished with this. There's always more in terms of mastery, understanding, self-control, self-development, and sharing it with others. There's always more knowledge. There's always more wisdom that can be gained." ❧

Associate Editor Edward Pittman holds a Sanhyu brown-belt rank in Shuri-te Okinawan karate, and has admired Hayes' work for many years.

Rollin' on the River

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 47

(something my friends in Santa Barbara will no doubt be thrilled to know, seeing as there is no calliope within a thousand miles of Montecito). The other named me a Professor of Dixieland, no small honor. Both will come in handy on my next steamboat adventure, which I hope will be soon. ❧

*Santa Barbara-based writer William Tomichi is the editor of *Entrée*, a luxury travel newsletter. He is also a professional musician (trumpet) and a student of traditional jazz. His secret wish has always been to run away from home and play Dixieland on a steamboat.*



THINKIN' OF STEAMBOATIN'?

For more information on the *Delta Queen*, *Mississippi Queen*, and *American Queen*, contact The Delta Queen Steamboat Company, 30 Robin Street Wharf, New Orleans, Louisiana, 70130-1890, (800) 543-1949. Cruise prices vary according to length of cruise and cabin type. Children are welcome and cruise for free in selected stateroom categories if accompanied by two full-fare adults aboard the *Mississippi Queen* and *American Queen*. The six-night New Orleans round trip I was on is priced from \$870 to \$3,620 per person, double occupancy. A three-night cruise ranges from \$490 to \$1,840 per person, double occupancy. A 16-night cruise starts at \$3,980 and ranges to \$9,420 for the AAA suites. Shore tours are \$10 and up.

There is no smoking in the dining rooms of any of the three vessels, and a no-smoking rule applies in the rooms on the *Delta Queen* (above). Smoking is optional in the rooms of the *Mississippi Queen* and the *American Queen*. The handicapped are easily accommodated on the *Mississippi Queen* and *American Queen*.

Some cruises feature itineraries along the lower Mississippi and Arkansas rivers; the Arkansas Delta to Tulsa, Oklahoma; the upper Mississippi from St. Louis to St. Paul, Minnesota, including Mark Twain's home in Hannibal, Missouri; and the American wilderness following the Ohio, Tennessee, and Cumberland rivers, the same waterways our pioneers used to travel westward. Some cruises are built around special themes such as an old-fashioned Thanksgiving. Others focus on World War II nostalgia, baseball, gardening, fall foliage, the Civil War, the Kentucky Derby, Dixieland jazz, or big band music.

Big Easy Eating

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 50

classic local sandwich overstuffed with mortadella, salami, and cheeses with olive salad) and inspired salads with wine by the glass off a great list.

Now chef David McCelvey says he has added a pastry kitchen to Nola, along with a private dining room for savoring all-over-the-map creations such as Caribbean-style grilled free-range chicken with sweet-potato and banana casserole, or a mixed grill of homemade spicy andouille sausage, boudin from nearby Lafayette, free-range chicken, and Mississippi rabbit with crowder peas and southern greens. McCelvey says he has also instituted a five-course tasting menu, which he describes as "a great way to taste crawfish and crab and Oregon morels and foie gras — everything good at one time."

The ambitious New Orleans eater may be like me, though, someone who would prefer to put together a tasting menu from a dozen or so different restaurants: for example, grillades and grits at Café Atchafalaya in the Garden District, crawfish enchiladas at Gabrielle on Esplanade Avenue, a Ferdi po' boy at Mother's cafeteria in the central business district, crawfish étouffée at Dooky Chase, new-wave oysters Rockefeller soup at G&E Courtyard Grill, traditional oysters Rockefeller at Galatoire's, and duck any style at Upperline uptown.

JoAnn Clevenger, who owns Upperline, shares this philosophy and prints a list of her personal must-tastes on her own menu, along with tips on what to see and hear and do in town. "It helps people have a better experience," she explains, citing specialties ranging from the oysters Bordelaise at funky Mandich's to the crabcakes at swanky Gautreau's to the gumbo at the lunch counter at Krauss's department store downtown. She can be certain that customers she sends away will be back for anything cooked by her chef, Richard Benz, whether a crawfish tamale with tasso and andouille or the garlic dessert: whole cloves stewed with honey and spices and sensational over ice cream.

The new world order in New Orleans is also reflected in the menus at the recently merged **City Energy Clubs**, near the French Quarter at 1100 Poydras Street and 1515 Poydras. Exec-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 70