

# Yoga finds welcome home in Norwood

By Bill Freeman

**Asphodel-Norwood** - The tension-releasing world of yoga has found a welcome home in Norwood. Caroline Owen of Wavelengths Yoga is buoyed by the response her classes at the Pine Street Centre have received since moving to the area two years ago from Toronto where she still instructs.

Always fond of the Peterborough area, she lucked into the perfect home here.

"I was just looking for a little more calm and peace in my life and life around me," Caroline said during a chat. "I do feel very lucky. The community here is fabulous. I'm really very pleasantly surprised about how generous they are and how willing they are to open themselves up and do something like yoga."

Caroline discovered yoga 15 years ago while working in a children's bookstore. One day a week the owner would move things and lead yoga sessions. She was enthralled.

"I was really taken by it right from the start. I actually knew I wanted to teach from that first class."

It was life-changing. There was more clarity and delight in the things around her.

"I noticed everything. Everything looked more vibrant. Life just seemed so vibrant and joyful after that first class. I felt a huge shift happen after one class and I thought 'I want to share this.'"

She studied at Sheridan College for two years, then with Esther Myers for six. In 2003 she travelled to India to study and since 2006 has continued with TK Dekischar. She's also been a Thai massage practitioner since 2002 training in Thailand and Canada.

"You never stop learning about it. It's really a lifetime of learning. In 15 years of studying I've probably learned one per cent of what there is to know. It's essential to be connected to a lineage through a teacher so you're always fresh. You're always learning because yoga is so vast."

Yoga is about finding a life balance beginning with 10 areas of your life that should be "cleaned up" and importantly pledging yourself to non-violence.

"Then you start to move your body and prepare for meditation. The poses are designed to prepare you for meditation, to be still and calm. Even before that you prepare with your lifestyle and you move into higher states."

Yoga is "very non-competitive," she says. "Listening to your body is very important. No matter what I'm saying if it doesn't feel good for you don't do it. We'll modify it and

make it work for your body.

"Yoga should never bring tension into your body. Yoga is about releasing tension."

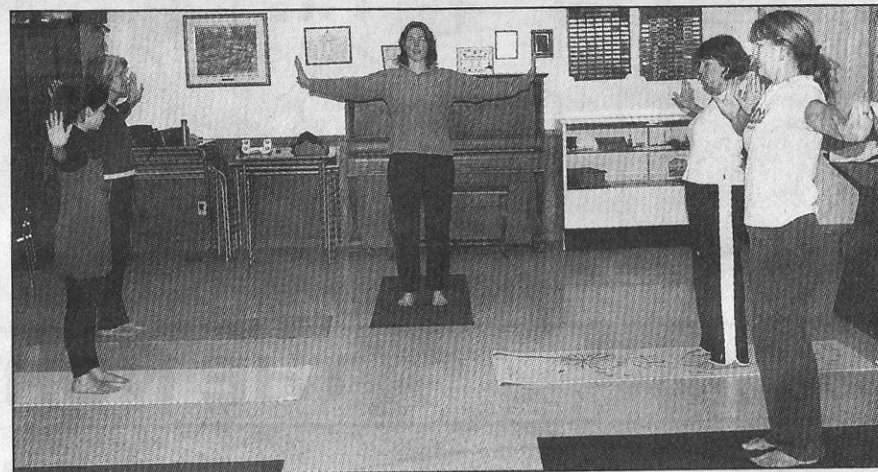
In a class with others, students focus on themselves.

"Ideally the mat is their space. You shouldn't be worried about what other people are doing. It's of no consequence."

Yoga is perfect for all ages and kids love it, she says.

"A lot of the poses are like animals and trees and mountains and they use a lot of visualization. It helps teens and children a lot with their concentration."

"They tend to do better in school with their concentration if they have learning issues. The concentration and mindful-



*Finding repose: Caroline Owen of Wavelengths Yoga has found a warm welcome in Norwood. Her two Pine Street classes are nearly full and she plans one or two more in the new year. Photo: Bill Freeman*

ness yoga brings to them kind of calms them down."

She plans a couple of more classes in

the new year which is good news.

"People just come. They're liking what's happening with their mind and body."