

YOGA FOR THE YOUNG AT HEART

spotlight™

Yoga Connections

...with Susan Winter Ward

Muriel Shinaver takes yoga to new heights at Mesa Regal Resort, Arizona's largest RV community.

With well over 2,000 "residents" moving in and out of this popular resort throughout the year, Muriel's classes have become one of the community's most-favored regularly scheduled events. Thirty to fifty ladies (and a growing number of daring gentlemen) typically opt in for the 8am Monday morning classes, ranging from yoga virgins to experienced "regulars," some of whom have been Muriel's dedicated students for many years.



After spending a decade attending tone and stretch classes, hula, tap dancing, jazz, step aerobics and other forms of exercise, Muriel eventually recognized that what her body really needed was simply to stay flexible, take deep breaths and enjoy some good all-around body stretching. She took her own advice and has now been Mesa Regal's Yoga Class Coordinator for 15 years...and her classes are still growing!

"I discovered Yoga for the Young at Heart about that same time, and it has since been enjoyed by many hundreds of our residents here at the Mesa Regal," explains Muriel. "The benefits from this class are limitless."

"One of our students, after attending yoga classes for a couple of months, even insisted that she was actually taller than when she began," mused Muriel.

Another student, Carol, who has been a yoga enthusiast for over six years, says she thinks about yoga often during the day, and when she catches herself slouching she immediately puts her body back into alignment.

Several years ago, Betty had a sciatic nerve problem so severe that she could barely walk. After attending Muriel's yoga classes she regained her mobility. Betty has since become a devoted believer in her yoga regiment and in its strong influence on the quality of her life.

"Kay discovered yoga after being diagnosed with Parkinson's disease over 25 years ago," continued Muriel. "She taught a class for me,

one day a week, here at Mesa Regal, but had to give it up three years ago. She still attends our Yoga for the Young at Heart classes and, at the age of 78, is adamant that over the years she has felt the healing powers of yoga, believing it has been her lifeline."

Still another of Muriel's students, Yvonne, fought a 30-year battle with rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue, lupus and scoliosis. Today the lupus and rheumatoid arthritis no longer show up on her blood work, and she has her chronic fatigue under control. During all of this she changed her diet and regularly practiced yoga. A chiropractor recently told Yvonne that yoga has allowed her to live a normal life, free of pain. She stresses the need to breathe deeply, concentrate on her movements and to 'feel' what is happening, listening to her body.

"Dot," says Muriel, "who is a great help before our classes start each morning, tells me that yoga is the best thing that ever happened to her. Using proper breathing and relaxation, it changed her body forever, not to mention her mental well-being."

"These are just a few of my students' thoughts about our yoga classes," summarizes Muriel. "There are so many new people arriving every day and of course the newbies want Yoga for the Young at Heart when they first attend my classes."

While there is little doubt that Susan Winter Ward's yoga DVDs deserve a fair share of the credit, it is even more obvious that Muriel Shinaver's dedication and personal touch is the driving energy behind this vibrant and inspiring community. ■



Muriel Shinaver regularly uses Susan Winter Ward's Yoga for the Young at Heart to lead the yoga lovers of Mesa Regal Resort, one of Arizona's largest and most popular RV resorts.