

# OMPAGE

## Wide World of Yoga

**WEDDING BELLS** In October, frequent *YJ* contributor Jeff Waggenheim married yoga teacher Sarah Swersey—and *YJ* likes to think we had a small part in the union. The couple got set up after relatives on either



side realized Jeff and Sarah both loved sports, yoga, and music. After Jeff sent an introductory e-mail, Sarah responded: "I find it very interesting that I am writing to you right now, considering it was only days ago that I read your latest article in *Yoga Journal*." Jeff explains, "she had noticed in the author bio that I had written about Kripalu, and she felt that she had a sense of who I was."

**MORE YOGA, PLEASE** Many teachers encourage a sense of playfulness during yoga, but Shelly Greenberg, founder of the Evergreen Yoga Studio in Bethesda, Maryland, has taken this one step further. The More Yoga Game bills itself as a yoga class in a can. It includes 108 activity cards, six glass jewels, and a chakra scroll—the first one to reach the Crown Center wins. The cards

include instructions for asana, pranayama, and yoga philosophy, and can be played alone, with a group, while travelling, or used as a script for new teachers. "I've always wanted the whole world to do yoga," says Greenberg. "In my studio, I can only teach 100 people a week. This way I can get it out there." Contact [www.moreyoga.com](http://www.moreyoga.com), call 1-888-MRE-YOGA, or e-mail [shelly@moreyoga.com](mailto:shelly@moreyoga.com).

**TEENS: CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS** Mary Lynn Fitton has seen the empowering benefits of yoga for teen girls firsthand—for the past six years, she has practiced yoga with high-risk girls. Watching their self-esteem rise, body inhibitions fall away, and confidence blossom has inspired Fitton to collect their stories. Fitton, a family nurse practitioner and yoga instructor, is putting together a book called *The Art of Yoga: Young Women Creatively Expressing Their Relationship with Yoga*, which will include collage, painting, journal entries, poetry, and photography. "My hope is that girls will recognize themselves and perhaps feel less alone. This union is what yoga is about." Call (541) 482-6127 or e-mail [theartofyoga@aol.com](mailto:theartofyoga@aol.com). —Nora Isaacs

### ON THE COVER

## Barbara Benagh

BARBARA BENAGH, owner of The Yoga Studio in Boston, Massachusetts, taught her first class after stepping in for a yoga teacher who canceled at the last minute. Eventually, she went through the Iyengar Yoga teacher-training, where she failed the teacher assessment. "The process was so miserable that I vowed never to seek another teacher certificate—and I haven't." She studied and taught Iyengar Yoga for about 12 years, but when she began struggling with chronic injuries, she realized she needed to seek a gentler approach, which she found with Angela Farmer. "She was doing some pretty revolutionary things with her yoga. Her message was very simple: 'Dare to be.'" Through working with Farmer, Benagh says she found her own voice. "I have followed that voice ever since, and from it my teaching style has evolved, which is very eclectic." —Nora Isaacs



Note: Not just teens  
Also book name is:

### READERS SPEAK OUT

Do you think yoga teachers should be regulated?



JOANNA WILLIAMSON

Austin, TX

Because of yoga's increased popularity, there is a danger in having fitness professionals who attend a weekend workshop on yoga at a fitness conference come back and consider themselves "yoga experts." I have experienced firsthand what it is like to work with people who are truly under-qualified and undereducated and who work with clients. It's not true that all fitness professionals are this way, but the low standards allow far too many under-qualified individuals into the field. Yoga instructors should protect their unique and valuable set of skills by making sure new professionals adhere to a certain standard and by encouraging states to register or license yoga instructors.



NANCY PFEIFFER

Pagosa Springs, CO

I understand and realize that because we are in America, and not India, that it's a sue-happy country and there should be some regulation. But having a license doesn't make you all-knowing. And not being licensed shouldn't keep people from teaching yoga if they've practiced long enough. It's a very gray area.



MARK KOSIEWSKI

Chapel Hill, NC

The idea of regulating yoga teaching in the United States sounds like a good idea in theory, given the number of poorly informed teachers out there. I understand the impulse to protect the public. Yet regulation, in my opinion, of a set of belief systems as diverse as those found in yoga is not only a gargantuan task, if you are to give the traditions any justice at all, but clearly an unconstitutional assault on our freedom of assembly. The movement to standardize the "industry" of yoga, while well intended on the surface, is a recipe for restrictions in thoughts and ideals.