

I'm guessing that most all of my family, friends and acquaintances know about my daily walk around Pleasant Lake. A whole lot of other people probably know about it too. Not only do I mention these daily walks in this column from time to time but more than a few vehicles pass me as I make my way around. Take for instance, the school bus, all those plumbers vans and more than a couple trucks of trucks. As they pass me, I wave and the drivers usually wave back.

What you probably don't know is that I also take a yoga class. It's not a daily thing. Although for a little while, I was doing a couple of sun salutations every morning. However, it's been quite a while since I gave a morning salute. These days, I pretend I don't have time. Truth be told, I just haven't made it a priority.



Once a week, I do make it a priority to throw on my yoga pants, grab my mat and get ready to stretch, bend and glide through an hour. Well, two of those things are sort-of but not really true. I did not go to the yoga pant store or even online. Instead, I found a pair of leggings tucked away in the shampoo and vitamin aisle at the supermarket. They're mostly cotton and very comfortable. So comfortable in fact that I went back and bought some more. Once the weather turns cool, they are my hanging-out-at-home pants of choice. The other not quite true thing is, well, I don't really glide. I can more or less hold my own with the bending and stretching but, try as I might, I tend to lurch more than glide.

If you've been thinking that you might like to take up yoga, there are lots of good reasons. Some are much too technical for me for me to explain let alone believe. So, here's what I can say about my practice:

Yoga helps with balance ... anyone who lives anywhere with an icy, snowy winter knows that balance is important. I suppose, the older I get, the more important good balance is. Plus, it's fun to show off and stand on one leg in front of non-yogi friends.

Yoga helps me stay limber ... my mom was a wonderful person and I love her dearly. However, arthritis is part of her legacy. (Running took its toll as well.) Yoga is great for deep stretching and bending and working all the little kinks out.

Yoga helps me build strength ... with all the walking (and before that running), I have very strong legs. However, a number of smart people have been telling me for years that I need to develop better upper body strength. Yoga does that for me. Along with my arms and shoulders, it helps build my core muscles. Increasing core strength has been wonderful for the arthritis in my back.

Yoga helps me find peace and focus ... to-do lists, telephones, texts, email, social media – they are all there, all the time. Together, they tag team to successfully distract and sometimes distress. However, for one hour each week, I can relax and focus on bending, stretching and, yes, lurching from one move to the next. Any noise in my head is stilled while I focus on that little spot on the floor, stand on one leg and find peace.

If you search for them, you can find one hundred reasons to take up yoga. From regulating your adrenal gland to weight loss. Like I already mentioned, some, make that most, of those reasons are too technical for me for me to explain let alone believe.

Namaste and bon appétit!

Spicy Shrimp, Corn and Coconut Soup

With the local corn harvest at its peak, it's to get creative with all sorts of wonderful, corny recipes. Enjoy!

Serves 8

6-8 ears yellow or bicolor corn

Olive oil

About 1/2 red onion, finely chopped

1 carrot, finely chopped

4 garlic cloves, minced

1 (2-inch) piece ginger, peeled and minced

1 jalapeno or serrano pepper, stemmed, seeded and minced

1 teaspoon cumin

1/2 teaspoon coriander

About 12 ounces red potatoes, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch cubes

Sea salt to taste

2 quarts shrimp, vegetable or chicken broth or a mix

3 cups (2 15-ounce cans) unsweetened coconut milk

2 pounds medium shrimp, peeled and deveined

Zest and juice of 1 lime

Garnish: cilantro leaves, unsweetened toasted coconut flakes and/or chopped toasted peanuts



Cut the corn kernels off the cobs and transfer to a bowl. Use the back of a dinner knife to scrape the cobs and release the milky juices into another bowl. Set aside.

Lightly coat a soup kettle with olive oil and heat on medium. Add the onion, garlic, ginger and jalapeno, sprinkle with cumin and coriander and sauté until tender, about 5 minutes. Add the potato pieces and corn juices, season with salt, toss to combine and cook, stirring, for 2-3 minutes.

Add the broth and coconut milk, bring to a boil and reduce the heat to low. Cover and simmer the soup for about 8 minutes or until the potatoes are tender. If you like, remove from the heat and use a potato masher or fork to lightly smash the potatoes.

Raise the heat and return the soup to a boil, add the shrimp and corn, season with salt and stir to combine. When the soup returns to a simmer, reduce the heat, cover and simmer for 2-3 minutes or until the shrimp is cooked through and pink.

Add the lime juice and zest and stir to combine. Ladle the soup into bowls, garnish with cilantro, coconut flakes and/or peanuts and serve.