



LIVING TRADITIONS

Newsletter of the Thai Healing Alliance International - Volume 9, 2010

THAI Croatia Retreat a Great Success

By Cristina Muñoz Gándara, RTT

The 2009 International Thai Massage Retreat & Conference was held from June 24-28, 2009 on the beautiful island of Iz, Croatia. For the first time in Europe, students, practitioners and teachers from different lineages gathered to share the healing spirit of *nuad boran*. Thai massage therapists from eight different countries attended the conference. The nearby village of Veli Iz was a popular destination for morning and evening shopping, restaurants and cafes. Morning yoga, meditation and tai chi were available; swimming was popular after class, and sunrise and sunset walks along the beach were a real treat. There were two main workshops each day, plus one group presentation, discussion or meeting.

Ralf Marzen (Germany, UK) taught specialized techniques for using the feet in Thai Massage. Soon, everyone was using soles and heels to apply pressure, while stretching our partners and working sen lines with our feet. Ralf led another workshop on the last day, taking the group back to the essence of *nuad boran* as a meditative process and listening experience. This allowed the group to rediscover Thai massage as a true gift of connection and loving kindness, not merely as a series of postures and techniques.

Noam Tyroler (Israel) taught two workshops dealing with Thai pressure point therapy. One targeted lower back pain and another featured acupressure for headache, jaw and neck pain. His precise illustrations, excerpted from his new book, as well as his knowledge and thorough instruction, helped to expand and deepen our familiarity with Thai pressure point work and point therapy routines.

D'vorah Swarzman and Bob Haddad, (USA) led a shared presentation on the use of body weight and breath work in *nuad boran*. Bob demonstrated practical ways to work with both the therapist's and the receiver's breathing patterns, and D'vorah led us in surrendering our body weight to our partners and demonstrated flowing, dancing Thai bodywork.

Danko Lara Radic (Serbia) offered "Specialized Grips and Holding Techniques", a workshop that gave us a view of his personal approach to Thai massage. His full body torsion was serious fun! His second workshop focused on ways to work with our elbows in as an alternative to thumbs and palms.



Above: D'vorah Swarzman works the upper torso of Ralf Marzen while compressing one of his legs.

Danko's sense of humor and generous spirit were a blessing, and his fire dancing at night on the pier in front of the hotel was fabulous.

Davor Haber (Croatia) led an expert class on spinal twists. In addition to teaching us some completely new twists, he brought a new awareness to the classic Thai spinal twists by showing variations and refinements using precise placement of feet and hands, and bringing more attention to the breath. Davor also led a group discussion on The State of Thai Massage in Europe, which sparked an interesting discussion and led to the formation of a European committee for THAI.

Niclaire Skye Mann (England) offered a presentation called "Improving General Delivery Techniques", and spoke about the importance of maintaining clients in a para-sympathetic state. Geoff Pritchatt (Scotland) led a workshop on Royal Style Thai Massage. We learned the formalities and protocol of working in Royal style, while at the same time working important pressure points used in this type of Thai massage.

Hans Lutz (Germany) and Bob Haddad (USA) co-taught a workshop called "Lifts and Suspensions in Nuad Boran", in which we learned various ways to suspend arms, legs and back. We also learned and practiced full-body suspensions, which sometimes led to falling over each other and occasional bursts of laughter.

continued on page 2

IN THIS ISSUE:

THAI Croatia Retreat	1
Licensing Dilemma	1
Diabetes & Thai Massage	3
Rocky Mountain THAI	3
Amulets & Magic Spells	5
Jivaka in China	7
Thai Long Boat Racing	7

The Thai Massage License Dilemma: One RTT's Story

By Jill Roberts, RTT

When I first discovered Nuad Boran, I was not a massage practitioner. I was just a middle-aged yogini who loved Thai food and massage. Perusing a spa menu, I thought, "Mmm...Thai yoga massage... that sounds great." After my wonderful first session, I definitely wanted more.

My appetite eventually took me to Thailand, where I trained at four different schools. Once home, I practiced for several months, did further training and received my RTT designation through Thai Healing Alliance. At first I wasn't too concerned about obtaining a legal massage license, as I had convinced myself there were gray areas in the professional regulations of my home state of Delaware, USA. Of the two Delaware Thai practitioners I could find, only one was a licensed massage therapist. Just to be safe, I avoided the infringing words and language and I marketed my offering as "Thai Yoga Therapy."

Initially, it felt awkward explaining its comparison to "Thai massage." If it was the same thing, why was I calling it "Thai Yoga"? While I offered several reasonable responses, it always crept into my thoughts that someone might sense that I was walking a thin line between good intentions and practicing illegally.

As my client base grew, not one client ever inquired as to whether I was licensed, but I continued to feel a bit insecure about my grasp of the musculoskeletal system, something that was not emphasized in my Thai training.

continued on page 2 ...

Licensing Dilemma, *continued*.....

Since Nuad Boran is so comprehensive in its ability to promote healing, my clients were not only seeking relaxation, but also dealing with real health issues. I felt I owed it to them to become more knowledgeable in anatomy, which massage licensing required. But most importantly, Nuad Boran was growing in popularity and I knew that once Delaware became familiar with it and me, I was going to need that license.

So I set my sights on a 300-hour Massage Tech certification (CMT), which seemed somewhat complementary to my interests. I was further empowered by one clause in the regulations: "The Board may, upon request, waive the 'single school' requirement for good cause..." I wondered if I would be permitted to bypass the typical path of attending one school so that I could apply my hours from several Thai schools directly at the source instead. It made sense to me, but what if I was denied? What would I do then?

Well, the Universe usually points us in the right direction, even when the slope seems slippery. As luck would have it, that spring I injured my knee skiing, and after surgery I had nothing better to do than take the required anatomy course and make late night calls to Thailand to request several Thai school transcripts.

I was told that once I submitted my application, it would be reviewed prior to the monthly Board meeting and that I would not be able to directly address the Commissioners. So I attached an addendum to the application pointing out where I felt my courses filled certain requirements. For example, I listed my longer courses such as Old Medicine Hospital, Sunshine Massage School, Loi Kroh and others in order to meet the 140-hour requirement for theory and practice. Shorter courses such as Luk Pra Kob, Foot reflexology massage, oil massage and THAI conference workshops seemed appropriate for the 100 hours of electives. And my 80 hours of anatomy and physiology at Del Tech Community College more than met the 60-hour anatomy requirement. As most of my courses were approved

by THAI, I felt that would impart a sense of continuity to the path my coursework had taken.

The day my application was reviewed, one Commissioner said, "You appear to have more training than most CMTs have."

"She spoke to me," I thought. "That must be a good sign!" But it was only after the motion was made to approve all the applicants that I was finally able to take that deep breath and smile - something my adventures in Thai healing had well trained me to do.

For those considering licensure without the typical schooling - be curious. Read all your State's or Province's massage licensing definitions and requirements. Be tenacious. Find the right people to interpret the licensing codes to you or consult an attorney. You may just find out that what is written and what is practiced are two different things. And lastly, be confident. You are a member of THAI and your coursework is approved by the world's only non-partisan membership organization to endorse authentic training in traditional Thai healing arts.

***THAI Croatia Retreat, continued***

The Korinjak Hotel sits right on the shores of calm Adriatic waters, and many rooms had direct views of the sea from the balcony. Meals were served in the hotel's covered outdoor dining room. After the first day, relaxed by island life, just about everyone was leaping into the sea during free time, and running off to town for coffee in the morning and dinner and drinks at night. The good energy continued throughout the 4 days and nights, and the closing ceremony on Sunday afternoon was a testimony to the true community spirit that was generated on the island.

Because of the beautiful natural surroundings, centralized location, and success of this event, THAI is planning to hold another Conference on Veli Iz in 2010. With the help of THAI Director Bob Haddad, and local coordinators Danko Lara Radic (Serbia) and Davor Haber (Croatia), the 2010 event should be a wonderful opportunity for continued study and growth in Thai massage. Remember June 23-27, 2010 on the island of Iz, Croatia!

To view photos and commentary from the 2009 Croatia Retreat, visit: <http://thaihealingallianceeuropangathe.shutterfly.com>

Diabetes and Thai massage – no contra-indication!

By Karen Ufer, RTT

The story I'd like to share is one about a strong experience in the treatment room. It is the story of learning about the need to gather a client's background information on his/her illness. It is the story about the impact of certain conditions, which are not in our direct control, but which nevertheless influence the outcome of a Thai therapy session. It is the story about recognizing the person that we touch as our teacher.

What happened?

I was giving a Thai bodywork session to a client of mine, who I'll call Jeff. He came for his second Thai session to my treatment room. It was a Tuesday afternoon and no one else was present in the house. Toward the end of the 1 1/2 hour session, it looked like Jeff had relaxed completely and had fallen asleep - even starting to snore – very much like at the end of his first session. So I decided to give him some peace. I left the room, went to the restroom, washed my hands, drank water and changed my sweaty shirt. When I came back into the room and asked him if he was all right, Jeff did not answer. He had lost consciousness and his eyes were wide open. He was bathed in sweat and his shirt was wet. He was breathing and he had a pulse, but it seemed like his physical body

was shutting down. Jeff, what are you doing? What's going on here? I grabbed the phone and called 911. "Do you want to report an emergency?" Yes! And something else: Dear God, Jivaka, everyone, please help us!

I stayed next to Jeff holding his left hand. Both of his arms and hands went into spasm. A tsunami of fear flooded the treatment room. After five minutes, family support arrived and we waited for the ambulance. The paramedics realized very quickly that we were dealing with diabetic shock. The blood sugar was down to 19. The threshold is 40 – anything below that is life-threatening. They managed to bring Jeff back, stabilized him, and he had regained consciousness by the time they left for the hospital. The next day, he and his wife came back to pick up his car and some personal belongings. Jeff was fine.

Background information

The first time I met Jeff, he came to try Thai bodywork because of chronic pain in the left hip area. After completing the intake form we spent half an hour discussing all the health issues he'd reported. Jeff is a 73 year-old man with long term diabetes II, high blood pressure,

heart surgery with 3 bypasses, 3 spinal surgeries (including fusion of several lumbar vertebrae), 1 surgery on the cervical spine, 2 surgeries to the right rotator cuff, 1 surgery to the left shoulder, and 1 hip surgery to remove the piriformis muscle on the right side to relieve his sciatica. The latter was the cause of an imbalance in the pelvic area and his pain in the left hip was what he was hoping to address in his sessions with me.

After the session, I realized that the complexity of the health issues had distracted me from asking more about the stability of his diabetic condition. I was much more concerned about the implications of the vascular and spinal status of the client on Thai bodywork.

This was the first time in my practice I had to deal with such a complexity of disorders. Did I feel comfortable about it? Well, I doubted that I could find a way to give him what he needed. I thought his body would introduce me to a new level of sensitivity, sensing and feeling. So it's important to always be careful and to always listen. I could never have imagined what happened on my mat that day.

continued next page...

THAI travels to the frozen north

By Kath Rutland, RTT

The Natural Health Practitioners of Canada held their last conference in Canmore, Alberta... the heart of the Canadian Rockies. The NHPC invited THAI to attend in order to further relations and cooperation between the two organizations and to enable THAI to connect with NHPC members interested in, or already practicing *nuad boran*. I was happy to coordinate efforts for the booth at the trade show and, along with Bob Haddad, to host and promote an informal Thai massage discussion and workshop on the Friday evening of the conference.



Above: Panorama of the Canadian Rocky Mountains, near Canmore, Alberta.



Above: Canadian THAI members Irina Bondarev, Annette Caesar and Kath Rutland pose with Bob Haddad. Canada is a country of immigrants: Irina is from Russia, Annette is from Germany, and Kath is from England.

The Friday night gathering was a great success! The room was filled with attendees, several of whom had no previous experience in traditional Thai massage. Bob offered a synopsis of *nuad boran* and he presented THAI as an organization. An open discussion on the state of regulation in Alberta and Canada followed, and then we offered an hour-long demonstration of ergonomics and techniques in traditional Thai massage. After this wealth of information, all participants took to the mats to practice and receive. It was wonderful to witness the glowing energy in the room, particularly in the sharing of new experiences. For the first time, western massage therapists were exposed to the delights of *nuad boran*. Everyone attending the presentation left their contact information in the hopes of more of the same.

With this foundation in place, we have now created a practice group and a Thai massage network within Canada. Since Canada is quite a large country, the practice group is centered in Calgary and southern Alberta. We hope to spread out across the country as time goes on. The seed is small, but great things will follow.

Diabetes & Thai Massage, *continued*

Because of his delicate health history, my repertoire of Thai techniques was very limited. My focus was on intensive foot reflexology, careful line work along the legs, careful stretches, avoiding deep compressions, no double leg work, no arterial compressions, no twisting, and guiding the client to breath deeply in order to facilitate deep relaxation. The boomerang area around the left hip joint seemed to be inflamed – I felt an unusual heat there. This meant that I could only approach this area indirectly. So I worked around the hip, not on the inflamed area, using line work and the pressure points that were still comfortable. I also gently laid my hand on the inflamed area intending to send it healing energy. But instead I received a transfer of heat into my hands and from there my whole body heated up as if I'd gotten a fever. I started sweating.

The first session went well. Jeff felt great and even found some pain relief. I was exhausted, and although I do not like cold showers at all, this time I was craving one. I admit that when Jeff came back for a second session, my mind was still set on paying attention to his vascular and spinal limitations. That mindset was the reason why I had speculated that Jeff was going into a coma as a result of stroke or a cerebral bleeding.

While speaking to Jeff's family after the incident and learning more about the development of his diabetes, I found out that a similar event had happened before the diabetic shock on the Thai mat that day. The reason he had suffered such a sudden and dramatic decrease in his blood sugar was a *change of medication* a few weeks before – resulting in a dangerous instability that he hadn't mentioned at his first appointment. The drop of blood sugar was such that he couldn't feel it coming on, in order to warn others.

Another factor was that he'd had lunch that day, but his appointment was scheduled at 4pm for 90 minutes. So by the time we finished the session he had a *nutrition deficiency*. Too much time had elapsed since his last food intake.

Conclusions

We know that traditional Thai bodywork is not contra-indicated for diabetes. I searched the internet for information and I spoke to experienced Thai teachers and shiatsu practitioners to see if they had any advice. We found only one incident of a diabetic crisis at the end of a Reiki session on an older woman, and that was mostly related to nutrition factors. Interestingly, there were plenty of reports on successful management of diabetic disorders with Thai massage, shiatsu, acupuncture and even yoga. For Jeff, we didn't have an exception to the rule, but we learned to account for two very important conditions especially in older clients: *stability of medication and the nutrition status of the client*.

So in the future, if a client circles 'diabetes' on the intake form, I will insist on more detailed information about the current condition of the person, for example:

- * how stable is your medication?
- * when was your last incident of a sudden drop of blood sugar and what happened as a result?
- * did you ever suffer from diabetic shock?
- * when did you last eat food?
- * do you carry anything with you in case of emergency?

Only when I know this information will I feel comfortable enough to give a long Thai bodywork session to someone with diabetes.

Revelations

My story would be incomplete if I stopped here. There is much more to it on deeper levels of processing this energy experience. Let me use the image of an enormous iceberg floating innocently in the freezing cold water of limited awareness. Now if you choose to only see the tip of the iceberg - then stop reading here! But if you want to know how it feels when the iceberg hits you and cuts your heart open, continue reading!

Imagine that you are sinking deeper into the truth about the oneness of life and death – dying is no different from living. Asokananda taught his students to always be aware of death sitting on our doorsteps. We connect to the healing energy of the universe through our prayers and through right action. But risk is present anywhere (even on your mat), any time (even during your Thai session) with any one (either you or your client). This can instantly become so true - so close - so real. My experience with Jeff was my time to entirely surrender my ignorant mind to this truth.

I was experiencing an energy flow in the physical body that I'd never felt before, as if a wide door had opened, and the vital energies which we are so familiar with in our work were being drained from my client's body. Realizing I had no control, my powerless mind bombarded me with my worst fears: my client was having a stroke, going into a coma, probably dying. If I have done something wrong, if I have harmed a human being, then face it, I am finished. I could not live with that. I would never be able to touch another human body again.

I felt completely helpless waiting for help to arrive. And Jeff – he was in a raging river, holding on to a weak branch of a tree – resisting a powerful current – in a tug of war. All you can do is put your trust, all you believe in, your love, all your compassion into that little branch – to hold on to his hand and tell him repeatedly: please - Jeff - stay with me - don't go away – not now – not here - stay with me - please stay with me. That was my mantra for an endless moment.

When the paramedics arrived I wanted to move and make space for them. It was difficult to remove my hand from his hand. His grip was so tight. He was holding onto me for his life. His hand felt glued to mine. In our training we learn that we are one with the body that we touch. Now I truly know what that means.

I am grateful that Jeff's soul decided not to depart from my mat and that he remained unharmed. I am even grateful that what happened occurred on my mat and not on his way home, alone, in the car. I am grateful that the universal plan allows me to continue to touch other physical bodies – with the awareness that we are all constantly dying. I am grateful for understanding that honoring the presence of death in life may be the last and ultimate step of self-healing.

Om namo Shivago! I pray to you, you who bring light to everyone, you who have perfect wisdom, you who know everything.

Karen Ufer, RTT

Scottsdale, AZ, USA



Protection Amulets and Magic Spells of Thailand

By Chris Jones

There are four types of magical amulets in Thai culture. The term to describe these amulets as a whole is *khawng-khlang*, which may be translated as 'sacred, potent objects.'

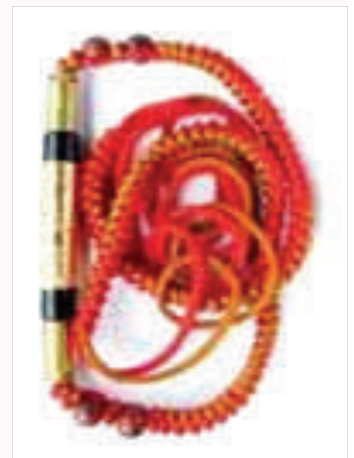
The first type is the *khruang-rang*, which means material substances transformed into stone or copper. These amulets will protect people if they are held in the mouth or on the body. They include *khot*, which are stones found in nature such as stone eggs or meteoric ores and also various types of seeds found in jack-fruit and tamarind plants. These amulets are used mostly by poor people, since they often may be found freely rather than having to be bought.



The second type is the *phra-khruang*, which are small statues or figurines of the Buddha which also protect the person or, if larger in size, an entire household. They may be cast from a mould or else be in the form of a votive tablet. These may be used to complete a vow – i.e. to thank the Buddha for a blessing – or else as a talisman carried around the neck.

The third type is the *khruang-pluk-sek*. *Pluk-sek* means 'to arouse the potency of a person or object by means of a spell or incantation' so a *khruang-pluk-sek* is a very powerful form of amulet. Most of the spells used are incantations based on ancient Sanskrit verses – Ancient Sanskrit is known as Pali in Thailand. When the spells call for being written down, the Khmer (Cambodian) alphabet is used rather than Thai which is not considered to be suitable for magic. Khmer characters are believed to have runic qualities.

The *takrut* is a long, hollow cylinder made from metal which has passed through many stages of magical arousal. They are worn around the neck either singly or together with a suitable number of other *takrut*, perhaps a total of three, five or seven. A *salika* (mynah bird) is a tiny *takrut* that can be kept between the teeth and will allow the user to become a very persuasive talker. Just as in Malayan cultures, there are several types of magical items in this class which can bestow various benefits on the user. Many of these items are derived from tantric beliefs and practices.



A *takrut*

The fourth type is *wan ya* – the use of certain plants and roots to create folk medicines to try to combat disease and the actions of *phi* – spirits. Many people, especially those in rural villages where the level of education is often low, believe that illness and misfortunes of all sorts may be attributed to the actions of malevolent spirits. Fortunately, local shamans are able to combat these spirits with the aid of *wan ya*, which they search for in the surrounding forests and mountains. Every living thing has a spirit and sometimes even inanimate objects such as cars may be brought to life through suitable magical spells. Once they have received a spell, then they will be more likely to protect the people who use them.

Photos from The THAI Retreat & Conference, 2009 - photos by Arnold van Winkel, RTT



Top left: The combined altars at the Retreat, with offerings, photographs, personal and spiritual items.

Top right: The five main teachers at the 2009 Conference - from left to right, Davor, Bob, Danko, Noam and Ralf.

Center left: Bob demonstrates a full body suspension. *Center right:* Participants gather for the twice daily chanting of the Om Namoh.

Bottom left: D'vorah works Ralf's neck with her toes as she opens his shoulder area with her hands.

Bottom right: Davor demonstrates "the tango", a playful and graceful spinal twist.

MEMBER CHAT

It's great to be able to receive the newsletter online - and hopefully a great savings in postage for THAI. I was very happy to read of Jack's visit to the US; he's long been one of my Thai Massage 'heroes'. I've been to him for bodywork when in Thailand over the last 10 years and have been a physical & energetic recipient of his growth as a practitioner; I hope to work with him as a teacher when I next go to Thailand. He has a huge amount to offer in technique and spirit.

I was also happy to see Bob's letter to the magazine about the shallow & sloppy reporting some people get away with! Shame they didn't see fit to put it in print, but good to know someone's prepared to say something. Thank you for the hard work.

Best wishes & Metta to all. — Fiona Smith, RTT, U.K.

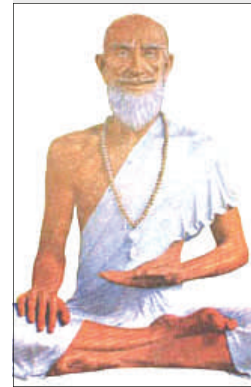
In my own Thai practice, I've found that the great and wide open spaces of Canada can make it challenging to maintain a community of like-minded individuals. The Natural Health Practitioners of Canada's annual conference is sometimes out of reach for many Canadians and it can be difficult to justify the cost of attending such gatherings.

I wanted to address this issue and create something on a more local level that was specific to Thai Therapy – something to bring people together in order to share ideas and experiences and continue to learn from each other without having to spend a lot of money. So I organised a gathering of Thai practitioners in Calgary, Alberta. The NHPC and THAI (Thai Healing Alliance International) provided my source for many contacts, as did my teacher Shawne Klassen here in Calgary. THAI provided some seed money.

Our gathering was a small affair, but a big success. We started the day with a yoga warm-up and flow series that got us all moving, and prepared us to practice Thai. Some of the people had never experienced yoga or Thai Therapy, so it was a fun opportunity to share with them. Shawne gave a good introduction for novices, and a return to basics for the longer-practicing folks. Later in the day we had a chance to share a few moves unique to our various teachers. It was great to discover new ideas and to work on different people.

We hope to hold additional workshops in Calgary. If anyone in Canada is interested, please contact me at garykath@telus.net. Or, please feel free to hold your own event in your local area.

Sawatdee kha! — Kath Rutland, RTT, Alberta, Canada



JIVAKA'S CORNER

In order for Buddha's teachings to flourish after his death, and so that sentient beings be given the opportunity to understand the dharma, Sakyamuni Buddha ordained sixteen *arhats*, dwelling in different lands, to disseminate his teachings in order to benefit mankind. Jivaka, the father of Thai medicine, was

one of these *arhats*. Arhats worked to extinguish defilements and afflictions. They were conversant with the true teachings and had reached the other shore, never to be subject to the relentless cycle of birth and death. As their cultivation is complete and their righteousness exemplary, these saints are worthy of offerings from sentient beings.

After the arrival of Buddhism to China, *arhats* became a source of creative ideas for artists and began to be figured in Buddhist paintings, gardens and altars. Today, Jivaka's image may be found throughout China. Chinese-inspired images are quite different than Thai and Hindu statues of Jivaka. The image below is referred to as "Jivaka, the Heart-Exposing Arhat."



Thai Culture Spotlight : Thai Long-boat Racing

Long-boat racing is one of the traditional rites which marks the end of the Buddhist Rain Retreat. The boat races mainly take place in the eleventh or twelfth lunar months (around September or October of each year), when the water level is at its highest. At this time, racing is held nationwide, but the most popular areas are in Phichit, Phitsanuloke, Nan, Angthong, Pathumthani, Suran Thani and Ayutthaya.



Long-boat races are usually held in cities and towns that have major waterways flowing through them, but they are not restricted to a particular region or province. Long-boat racing is considered a national sport in Thailand, and its history can be traced back to the Ayutthaya period over 600 years ago. In the early days, boat racing was a means to keep boatmen in top physical and mental shape so they could defend the country to their utmost ability.

Racing boats are usually made from dugout tree trunks, and can accommodate up to sixty oarsmen sitting in a double row. The oarsmen usually dress in the same color or in a uniform of some type. The festive events draw thousands of local and foreign spectators who watch the races along both sides of the riverbanks. Trophies and prizes are always awarded to the winning teams.

Adapted from Essays on Thailand, by Thanapol Chahchaidee. All Rights Reserved.



Thai Healing Alliance International

Executive Council

Bob Haddad, Cristina Muñoz Gandara, Paul Fowler

Advisory Council

Richard Gold, IPSB; Alan Phillips, Esq.;
Max Scheuermeier, Sunshine Massage School;
Cocky Tassanee, Loi Kroh Massage School

Executive Committee Member:

Danko Lara Radic

THAI Sponsors

Emerald level: Bob Haddad

Lotus level: Robert Gerry, III, Rick Gold

Saffron Level: Kim Cramer, Cristina Muñoz
Gándara, Peter de Munter, Amber McCormack,
Kristin Nuttall, Jill Roberts

Bronze Level: Tanya Boigenzahn, Naomi Brisman,
Hillary Hilliard

Mailing address: P.O. Box 16247, Chapel Hill,
North Carolina, 27516 USA

Contact: info@thaihealingalliance.com

Living Traditions, Vol. 9, 2010
Publisher - Bob Haddad

© 2010 Thai Healing Alliance International

Letters to and from THAI

Hello,

I have noticed that there are asterisks indicating teacher training courses aren't valid toward Basic or Practitioner membership (RTT) in THAI for 300 and 600 hour teacher training programs. I was hoping that by attending a 300 hour program I would be getting one of the best educations available.

Sincerely, - HD

Dear H,

Many other types of courses such as foot massage, reflexology and herbal compress therapy are not valid toward RTT status. In other words, there are quite a number of "asterisks" in our official course listings. A 300 hour program, however, is valid toward RTT, as long as you complete THAI's additional requirements.

THAI is a non-partisan organization and we encourage members to study with a wide variety of teachers in small increments, rather than simply taking one "program" from one school or teacher. In our experience, that approach to study is often more narrow in scope than the

more natural process of learning in small increments, spending more time to practice, and then returning to study again with the same teacher or a number of new teachers. All too often, the problem with "programs" is that they don't allow adequate time for the student to truly learn by doing, to learn from one's own mistakes, and from client feedback, which is almost always the best way to learn.

Since there is no such thing as "certification" for Thai massage, and since no one "teacher training" program can be complete in scope, you may want to try the slow-but-sure approach, with LOTS of time in between to practice on friends and clients. Traditional Thai massage can not be learned completely in a pre-defined curriculum. It takes years of practice and work to refine sensitivities, to understand energy blockages, and to learn enough to be a capable practitioner. In addition to our members in Thailand, there are plenty of qualified teachers around the world that offer incremental courses. Many of those are listed on the THAI web site by clicking on "Upcoming Courses & Workshops."



Thai Healing Alliance International

P.O. Box 16247 Chapel Hill, NC 27516 USA

International Thai Massage Retreat & Conference

Veli Iz, Croatia 23-27 June, 2010

The Thai Massage Retreat & Conference is the only event of its kind in the world of traditional Thai healing arts. Open to all students and practitioners of traditional Thai massage, participants must have a minimum of thirty hours of Thai massage study with any teacher around the world. You do not need to be a member of THAI to participate. The conference begins on Wednesday, 23 June and ends on Sunday, 27 June. All participants must arrive on Iz island on Wednesday, 23 June.



Above: Danko Lara Radic uses body weight to work the shoulder socket with his elbow.



The registration fee for this event, including all workshops and activities, is 329 euros. To reserve your space, a non-refundable deposit of 100 EUR is required, payable by credit card on the THAI web site. Some of the finest teachers of Thai massage will present a wide selection of specialized workshops over this 4 day event. There will be scheduled

practice and trading time each day, and social activities at night. A certificate for 35 hours of study is awarded.

For more information and to register for the Conference, go to:
www.thaihealingalliance.com/EuropeanGathering.html