

LOGIN/REGISTER

EMAILED HEADLINES

HOME DELIVERY

News Jobs Homes Autos Archives Classifieds Yellow Pages CTLinks

Search

Quick Links

LOCAL NEWS

Email Print Comment Subscribe

Jul 20 2006 8:16 AM

Beyond the daily grind
Women can feel fit, empowered with pole dancing

By Deb Keiser SPECIAL TO THE NEWS-TIMES

Pole dancing has moved beyond "The Sopranos" Bada Bing-like strip clubs and into Main Street exercise studios and suburban living rooms.

Oprah Winfrey has tried pole dancing as has "Desperate Housewives" Teri Hatcher.

Pole dancing or exotic dancing is the rage for fun, fitness and self expression. It's big business, too, with classes, videos, books and parties.

If pole dancing moves you outside your comfort zone, you can always use a chair, and in a pinch a mirror will do.

Joni Lowe of Brookfield operates Positive Energy Dance for Women and, since late last year, has been offering A Pole Lot of Fun parties for friends and clients. Nearly every weekend she sets up her portable pole in living rooms from Brookfield to New Canaan. But it's far from the daily grind — it's a job she loves.

"This lets you celebrate being a woman," said Lowe, 37. "You move in a way that



Carol Kaliff/The News -Times
Joni Lowe, pole dancing instructor, demonstrates a move that others in the class will learn.

HOME

NEWS

Local

Region

National

World

Obituaries

Police

Business

Technology

Weather

7 Day Archive

SPORTS

ENTERTAINMENT

OPINION

MULTIMEDIA

MILESTONES

MARKETPLACE

YOUR TOWN

SPECTRUM

FEATURES

ON THE CALENDAR

Go to the Calendar

Submit an event

FROM OUR READERS

Reader Photos

Online Forum

Letters to the Editor

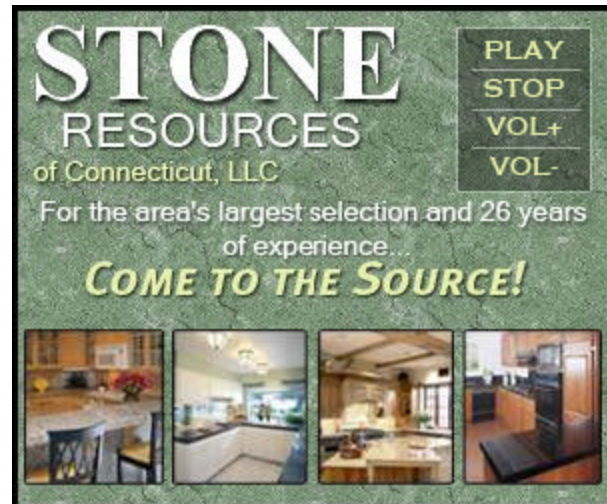


is feminine, sensual and sexual."

Anyone can play host to a pole party. All you need is Lowe and up to 10 women looking for a fun night out. "It's a great way to relax, let your hair down and have some fun," said Lowe, who also teaches sensual dance classes.

"There's no big sell. It's just fun." Once the pole is secured, Lowe sets the mood. The music is turned up and the lights are turned down. The party begins with a non-alcoholic toast to "the Pole Diva in each of us."

The party allows everyone to express themselves in the privacy of a friend's home, Lowe said. It lasts about two hours, enough time to learn basic moves and have some fun designing your own moves by the end of the class. Pole dancing is about positive energy and self-empowerment, said Lowe, a married mother of two. "It is not about your husband or boyfriend. Pole dancing is all about girls having fun."



Leah Stauffer, co-creator of the Art of Exotic Dancing for Everyday Women (AOED), has been saying the same thing since 1998, when her business took off. Stauffer, who grew up in Connecticut, opened an adult learning center in suburban Philadelphia, offering classes in everything from cooking and computers to languages and, you guessed it, exotic dance.

Women came in droves to the exotic dance class. So many that Stauffer now offers classes in 55 locations coast to coast. The first one in Connecticut will be Saturday at A Common Ground studio in Danbury.

"This is a way for women to transform themselves," said Stauffer. "It enhances all aspects of your life and relationships because you gain confidence, develop sensuality and see your beauty."

The introduction AOED class will begin with a long lesson on making eye contact and standing tall. It celebrates all women, and size really doesn't matter. Stauffer feels her program, while it might get you fit, is not really about fitness. It's more about being comfortable in the skin you are in.

"So many women are focused on weight or age that they are blocked from seeing their beauty now," she said. "We tell them that they don't have to wait for that magic, imaginary moment to see themselves as beautiful."

During AOED classes, we work on accessing sensuality and feeling your true essence and true beauty now, which is really within." The workout that comes with an AOED class is an additional benefit.

"Let's face it, moving at anything for three hours is a workout," said Stauffer,

about the introductory class. AOED also offers parties, and if you can't get to a class or a party, both AOED and Pole Lot of Fun offer videos.

Dana LaMendola, 39 and mother of four, is a neighbor of Lowe's. Their kids have play-dates together. LaMendola is proud of her friend, and hardly thinks of this as dirty dancing. "I admire Joni's courage for doing this. It had to be a scary thing to do here in Connecticut, which is a conservative area. But we need to express ourselves as women, to get comfortable with bodies."

The AOED introductory class will be offered at A Common Ground, 346 Main St., Danbury, Saturday from noon to 3 p.m., and again Aug. 27 from noon to 3 p.m., and Sept. 15 from 7:15 to 10:15 p.m.

To register, call (866) HIP-ROLL or visit www.artofexoticdancing.com. For information about Joni Lowe, call (203) 702-7026 or go to www.PositiveEnergyDance.biz

this story has been read 1884 times

Reader Comments

this story has 0 comments. [Post Comment](#)

Subscribe now!

[Click here for home delivery of The News -Times](#)

- LOCAL
- SPORTS
- OPINION
- ENTERTAINMENT
- REGION
- NATIONAL
- BUSINESS

- Sex offender dies in crash, Connecticut boy injured
- Elderly couple killed in I-84 crash
- Judge to decide competence of murder suspect
- Former math teacher wants to add turf
- Irish Festival, Taste of Danbury this weekend
- Career criminal charged in Bridgeport triple homicide
- Orleans out to show they're 'Still the One' on Saturday
- Bethel High senior samples the life of a crimefighter