

North Dallas women find 'oasis' from daily grind

By PAUL CULP

"Connecting your body and mind" is the job of the Oasis Mind and Body Conditioning Center, according to owner/trainer Alice Ann Dailey.

The Oasis, located at the Preston Forest Village, Preston Road at Forest Lane, offers seven mind/body methods, including an Inner Body Work Out, which is an Oasis exclusive program "designed by a doctor to strengthen inner muscles and reshape the body," Dailey said.

Other forms of workouts include: Neuromuscular Integrative Action, Awareness Through Movement and the Pilates Method (proper body alignment), as well as dance, yoga and tai chi.

Dailey started the Oasis in 1992. She is certified to teach in various mind-body methods. She grew up in Oklahoma and is a Chickasaw Nation tribal citizen. Dailey graduated in 1985 from North Texas State University with a master's in exercise physiology and minor in nutrition.

When visiting with several Oasis customers, representing a cross-section of occupations and preferences in exercise programs, it's easy to see they have their own special reasons for taking part in the workouts.

Carol Cook is an occupational therapist at University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. She's been in the business for 28

years, graduating from Texas Woman's University in 1977 with a master's degree in occupational therapy. More recently she received a master in fine arts from the University of Dallas.

In addition to her busy therapy schedule, she teaches sculpture and 3-dimensional design at Northlake College. Her specialty at Southwest is working with burn victims, concentrating on hand, elbow and shoulder therapy.

"I like the Inner Body Work out at the Oasis because it helps teach proper movement, posture and body alignment. In fact, I've learned a lot that I can use in my work. My patients would find this program useful as a follow up to our treatments," Cook said.

The Rev. Laurel Hallman has been senior minister at the First Unitarian Church for 18 years. She has been ordained for 25 years, receiving a master of arts from the University of Chicago Divinity School, with a doctor of ministry from Meadville Lombard Theological School in Chicago.

"I started going to the Oasis with a friend over four years ago. I go to the Inner Body class. It is not aerobic. It's more like Tai Chi or Yoga. I do lots of mental work in my profession. I find the class helps clear my mind," she said.

Ann Wood is a licensed attorney, but she put that career on hold to stay at home with her three children, ages 7, 6 and 5. She started exploring eBay sales in 2000. By



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

A LITTLE HELP: Betty Reiter watches Alice Ann Dailey, owner/trainer of the Oasis Mind and Body Conditioning Center, instruct author Jackie Waldman on the use of the Pilates Reformer which is used to re-educate the body.

2002 she was selling luxury items she found at sales or around her house. In 2004 she started a consignment business with 30 or 40 clients regularly dropping things off at her home for her to sell on eBay.

"I started at the Oasis to lose weight after my third child was born. I use the NIA program that features dance and integrated aerobics. I love the intensive exercise and the music. I also do Pilates once a week," she said.

Jackie Waldman was a happily married mother of three, with a successful business, when in 1991 she was diagnosed with MS. At first she was frustrated and mad about her situation. After seeing the movie *Schindler's List*, she became determined to do what she could to help others. She started volunteer work and started to feel better. In 1995 she helped organize the Dallas Random Acts of Kindness week and continues to take part in the event. In 2000 she compiled a book, *The Courage to Give*, 30 stories of people who had problems, yet started helping others and changed their life drastically.

"I try to eat a lot of protein, take Avonex to slow the MS progression and take NIA classes at the Oasis. For MS it's really important to keep moving. What better way than to dance. It lifts me physical-

ly and spiritually," Waldman said.

Betty Reiter is the owner of Better Reiter Boutique, featuring exclusive women's European sportswear and accessories, located at the Plaza at Preston Center on Villanova Drive. Reiter, a native of Paris, came to Dallas in 1981. She worked in high end retail, and then started her own shop in 1994, located in Preston Center. Seven years ago she opened at the present location.

Her store carries a number of exclusive French and Italian labels

and she also has her own line of imported French sportswear. She makes several buying trips a year to Paris and Milan, but she keeps up her Oasis visits regularly.

"I like Pilates. It is lots of stretching and breathing. It's a thinking exercise, not just running up and down. I'm not a disciplined person, but I try to do it two to three times a week. It makes me feel good," she said.

Paul Culp is a North Dallas resident.



GETTING FIT: The Rev. Laurel Hallman, senior minister of the First Unitarian Church in Dallas, and Carol Cook, an occupational therapist, take part in Firm and Focus Fitness exercises.



MOVING AND GROOVING: Ann Wood enjoys the tension relief of MIA exercise at the Oasis Mind and Body Conditioning Center.