

*"I know of no more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by conscious endeavor." - Henry David Thoreau*

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## VISIT RASA SPA: MULTI-DIMENSIONAL APPROACH TO HEALTH



*"We want to be a haven, a retreat, where you can get a sauna, read, take a nap, or spend time in our Tranquility Room."*

There are quite a few battles being waged inside the Island Health and Fitness complex—battles against weight gain, lethargy, aging, cholesterol, osteoporosis—and Rachel Hogancamp is on the front line of a battle of her own.

Hogancamp, who co-owns Rasa Spa with the Cayuga Medical Center, wages an ongoing battle—using as her weapons education, outreach and a desire to see people get healthier—against the perception that Rasa's only purpose is to provide pampering, luxury and what one might call "non-essential frivolities." In truth, Rachel states, "It's really more about giving

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## Chatting with Ciaschi, Communing with Comereski

Terry and Barbara Ciaschi attended the International Health and Racquet Sports Association trade show in San Francisco in March, and came back with a few ideas. Terry shares them with the *Island Beat*:

"There were hundreds of vendors – everything from equipment, accessories, marketing, health and beauty – and we go to see what's new and different in the industry. We look for ways to make the club better, more efficient. We looked at a new strength training line that

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Terry Ciaschi



John Comereski

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# WELCOME NEW STAFF: MONA & SCOTT

Hey, IHF members, you might want to stop by to say hello to new Front Desk Associate, Mona Vaswani. (If she looks familiar, you can check out an Academy Award-winning movie, in which she starred.)

Mona, a California native, has extensive training and experience as a professional dancer, and came to Ithaca via Las Vegas. When asked to provide a glimpse into her extended 15 minutes of fame, Mona laughs, blushes a bit, and says, "I have 20 years experience as a dancer, and I danced on cruise ships, and made a few appearances." Appearances? Do tell... "Well, appearances like *MADtv*, *Mad About You* and *American Beauty*." (For me to say that her brief appearance as the short-

haired cheerleader in Best-Picture winner *American Beauty* qualifies as "starring" in the movie, is a stretch, but hey, dancers are flexible.)

When asked what she likes about IHF, Mona replied, "I like the laid back atmosphere, and the people have been very nice."

Members seeking an Exercise Physiologist with a penchant for crunching numbers (as well as abs) might want to sign up for an appointment with Scott Yaple. Scott, who came on board in January, has 12 years of experience as a Personal Trainer, was the Director at (now closed) Lakeshore Fitness, and has worked for several years as a volleyball coach. Scott was also an accountant at the Baseball Hall of Fame in Coopers-

town. (I was tempted to make an embezzlement joke, but Yaple is also big into Mixed Martial Arts and Ultimate Fighting, so, from a self-preservationist standpoint, I refrained.)

When asked about his favorite part of the IHF job, Scott summed it up succinctly: "The members!"

— Steve Lawrence



## Ciaschi/Comereski

(Continued from page 1)

delivers a full body workout in a much shorter period of time. We're also looking at more group classes, and learning more about the Les Miles programs, like *Body Pump* and *Body Vibe*. Basically, we're looking at ways to make the whole (club) experience a lot more fun."

*Ciaschi reminds members that there is a Suggestion Box at the front desk, and also invites member feedback and questions in person, or at [terryc@islandhealthfitness.com](mailto:terryc@islandhealthfitness.com).*

**John Comereski** says: As always, we'd like to thank you, our members, for choosing Island Health and Fitness. We are very grateful for the opportunity to help you reach your fitness goals!

In efforts to accommodate our members on weekends and during the holidays, we have taken a close look at our current hours and how we can fulfill most of our member requests for various hours of operation.

Future hours of operation will be based on attendance during the following 2009 schedule:

### 2009 Weekend Hours:

**Sept 1 – May 31**

Sat: 7am–7pm Sun: 8:30am–6:30pm

**June 1 – Aug 31**

Sat: 7am–6pm Sun: 9am–6pm

### 2009 Holiday Hours:

Memorial Day .....Close at 3pm  
 July 4<sup>th</sup> .....Close at 3pm  
 Labor Day .....Close at 3pm  
**Thanksgiving Day ..... Closed**  
 Christmas Eve .....Close at 3pm  
**Christmas Day..... Closed**  
 New Year's Eve .....Close at 5pm  
 New Year's Day ..... 9am–3pm  
 Easter Sunday ..... 9am–3pm

## Laughing Fit



excesses, and then one obviously overweight member said, "I eat moderately, I drink moderately, and I exercise frequently."

"Hmm?" said the manager. "And are you sure you have nothing else to add?"

"Well, yes," said the member. "I lie extensively."

*"I have to exercise early in the morning before my brain figures out what I'm doing."*

Some members of a health club were having their first meeting. The director of the group said, "Now, I'd like each of you to tell us the facts of your daily routine."

Several people spoke, admitting their

## Visit Rasa Spa

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people an opportunity to take control of their own health.”

In 1995, Hogancamp started Bodyworks, a small massage business that is still a part of Rasa. She recalls, “Terry Ciaschi (IHF’s Membership Services Coordinator and a driving force behind the facility’s coming to fruition) contacted Mary Tabacci (who teaches a spa course at Cornell’s Hotel School), and inquired about the possibility of including a spa at Island Health and Fitness.” Hogancamp and Tabacci met to discuss the idea, Ciaschi got in the loop, and Rachel says, “I saw it as a great opportunity, and I knew that if I was to do a spa in Ithaca, it would have to be health care related. “As a result, there is considerable overlap between Rasa and many of IHF’s other providers. “We have specials with the Cayuga Medical Center,” Hogancamp points out, “and we will work closely with the Physical Therapy folks at Island Health and Fitness.” Oncology massage is another treatment that is offered at Rasa, and Hogancamp is always open to considering more ways to serve those who visit.

Hogancamp’s philosophical approach to health is a multi-

dimensional one, and she sees a definite connection between emotional and physical well being. “The more you pay attention

to your whole self, the more productive you are,” she offers. “Your work, your relationships, your family—it reminds me that one of the most important parts of our mission is to pay attention to people’s whole health, so to speak. We’d like to be more than a place to get a massage—we want to be a haven, a retreat, where you

can get a sauna, read, take a nap, or spend time in our Tranquility Room.”

Rachel invites everyone to visit Rasa, and points out that gift certificates are available. Many IHF members are unaware that they receive special benefits and discounts from Rasa. Among these benefits are: deep discounts on the first visit to Rasa Spa, 10% off every Monday through Thursday on all services and access to Rasa’s mailers, with the latest news and specials, early notice on classes, lectures and other special events, and special offers available only to list members.

To learn more about Rasa Spa, please visit us online at [www.rasaspa.com](http://www.rasaspa.com), or call us at 607-273-1740.

— Steve Lawrence

**Some benefits of body and skin care:** · Increases circulation · Increases flexibility · Increases body awareness · Reduces stress · Reduces pain · Assists in injury recovery · Alleviates depressive symptoms · Increases range of motion · Encourages emotional balance · Aids in relieving soreness · Improves immune function · and much more.

**Rasa Spa Services:**  
· Massage · Wraps · Facials · Reflexology · Waxing · Lectures · Tranquility Room · Meditation Classes · Scrubs · Shiatsu · Hot Stone · Ananda Hot Oil · Thai · Wholeness Healing · Purna Hands and Feet · and much more

## Behind the Beat

If you enjoy reading *Island Beat*, you might be interested in knowing a little about the two guys behind its production.

Anyone who has lived in Ithaca for a while is probably familiar with the name **Steve Lawrence**, and won’t be surprised to see his byline on most of the stories that appear in the *Beat*.

Over the last fifteen years Steve has written hundreds of stories which focus on local sports (or, more accurately, on the *people* who play them), for the *Ithaca Times*. If you like what you read here, give his weekly column a look.

The name of **Ron Reposh**, the editor and designer of the *Beat*, is probably *not* known to most of you, and that’s the way it should be. An editor’s job is to stay in the background and make the writers look good, and a designer’s job is to wrap the words and pictures up in a package that’s easy on the eyes.

Ron is the proprietor of **wadiano productions**, a design studio that produces “designs that work, for web and print.”

If you like what you see here, visit Ron’s website, <http://wadiano.com> for a look at more of his work.

### Marathon Hard-Case:

*In June 2003, Lloyd Scott set a new world record for the slowest marathon time by finishing the Edinburgh Marathon in six days, four hours, 30 minutes and 56 seconds — while wearing a 130-pound “hard-hat” deep-sea diving suit!*

*Among Scott’s subsequent feats:*

*Completing an underwater marathon walk of the full length of Loch Ness wearing diving equipment and running the Edinburgh marathon in a suit of medieval armor!*

# MEMBER PROFILE:

## Kathy Connell — Measure of Success

**K**athy Connell laughed when I asked her how she came to join Island Health and Fitness in September of '08. "My doctor was mean," Connell said. "Told me I had to join. Said I was too fat, my cholesterol was too high and so was my sugar."

As an overnight manager at Tops, with two kids at home, Kathy hadn't found the time to work out since her

### *Kathy says:*

*I feel a lot better, and I surprise myself with what I can do.*

*The practical applications are great, too.*

*I'm a lot stronger, and I can do a lot more at work.*

mid-twenties. "I waited until my kids went off to college," she says, "then I had time to myself." She added, "I came here, looked around and it made sense. My brain is fried when I leave work, so I joined, asked for a trainer, and first I had Shanae, then Julie." (It was Julie, by the way, who recommended Kathy be profiled for her dedication and work ethic.)

Kathy says that she and her doctor struck a deal that, "If my numbers (cholesterol and blood glucose) were okay, we wouldn't say anything about my weight." When Kathy made the commitment to work out, she felt she was a step ahead on at least one level. "My

job is very physical," she states, "and as a result, I'm probably a lot stronger than most 47-year-old women are." After grinding it out for a few months, she went to see her physician, and was pleased to learn that "My cholesterol was down 50 points — maybe due in part to the fact that I eat oatmeal every day — and my blood sugar was in the normal range." She laughs again, and adds, "My doctor was amazed, and said, 'Nobody ever listens to me!'"

Connell has settled into a regimen that sees her do 50 minutes of cardio and 50 minutes of weight training, three times a week. Keeping her initial priorities in mind, she laughs yet again, shakes her head and says, "I haven't lost a single pound! It's totally ironic."

While Kathy's "measure of success" is getting the numbers down, she is pleased to convey that she does "feel a lot better, and I surprise my-

self with what I can do." She adds, "The practical applications are great, too. I'm a lot stronger, and I can do a lot more at work." She laments only one fact: "I work with guys 6 feet tall and half my age, and I can keep up with them with the lifting and stacking, but I'm still short and still need a step stool."

Connell presses on with a sense of purpose, saying, "I have to remember I'm at mid-life. I'm 47, not 27, and I can't expect miracles." That said, Kathy says, sounding very convincing, "I do feel like I'm better able to conquer the day."

— Steve Lawrence

*Each issue of the Island Beat features a member profile that spotlights someone special from the Island Health & Fitness community. If you have a suggestion for a member profile, get in touch with Steve Lawrence or John Comereski.*



**Kathy Connell: "I came here, looked around and it made sense."**