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Katie McQuaid's Scene in Manchester: Yoga in the park is 'a great way to get grounded'

July 21, 2017 9:36PM





Scene in Manchester

Katie McQuaid

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THEY SAY YOGA can keep you “grounded,” so **YogaBalance** is taking classes all the way to the forest floor.

Last fall the Hooksett Road studio worked with the city to have a wooden yoga platform built across the street at Livingston Park overlooking Dorrs Pond, and for the next four Saturdays it will hold classes there.

“There’s something really special about practicing yoga outside,” said YogaBalance manager and instructor **Kate White**.

Dorrs Pond is a peaceful gem here in our city. On any day you can find people running or walking on the 1-mile trail, as well as fishing and picnicking. I’ve even seen people meditating, painting and playing instruments.

“I think it’s one of the best parks in Manchester,” said White. She and her students often walk the path before or after classes. One student, **Marcia Morgan**, came up with the

idea for the platform.

“She approached us and then got the city involved. When she spoke with us, we thought it would be great to have a dedicated area for stretching and meditation space and agreed to pay for it,” White said. The 8-foot by 10-foot deck was built by the city and is open for the public to use.



Kate White of YogaBalance, right, gives a yoga demonstration in the woods off teh Dorrs Pond trail in Manchester on Friday. Also pictured are, from left, Julie Ramsey, Susan Gosselin, Pauline Pinard Bogaert, Arzu Kelekci and Eric Cohen. (DAVID LANE/UNION LEADER)



The studio’s first Saturday yoga class, held last week, attracted 11 students and a few curious onlookers. One passing

runner decided to join the yogis after her jog, White said.

The Hatha-style classes run from 8 to 9 a.m., are \$12 each, and open to all ages and levels. No registration is required, but if you need to borrow a mat for the class you should contact YogaBalance ahead of time at mail@yogabalance.com.

Students accustomed to the pristine, distraction-free environment of the YogaBalance studio will find the outdoors presents special challenges perfect for bringing their practice to the next level.

“Yes, you might have small little friends crawling over your mat,” White said. But finding focus, peace and stillness among the bugs, dirt and random onlookers is good practice for dealing with the imperfections of life.

“It’s a great way to get grounded,” she said.

To find the yoga deck, start in the Dorrs Pond parking lot and begin to walk clockwise on the trail. Continue about one-tenth of a mile and look for the sign for the YogaBalance yoga platform just set back from the trail on the right.



Kate White (foreground) of YogaBalance gives a yoga demonstration in the woods off the Dorrs Pond trail in Manchester on Friday. Also pictured are, from left, Julie Ramsey, Susan Gosselin and Pauline Pinard Bogaert. (DAVID LANE/UNION LEADER)



Picnic in the Park

Downtown Manchester has some beautiful green spaces, too, and the **Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce** is encouraging more residents and downtown workers to use and appreciate them with its **Picnic in the Park** event this Wednesday, July 26.

With help from **Wells Fargo Advisors** and other local organizations, park visitors can enjoy music, games, and activities from noon to 2 p.m. Attendees can bring a bag lunch or purchase a meal from one of several food trucks.

The **Training Station** will also hold a free kickboxing class from noon to 1 p.m.

“Our vision for this picnic is to encourage everyone in this community to come together and enjoy the outdoors during their lunch hour,” said **Michael Skelton**, Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce president and CEO. “We want the community to realize just how much potential our city parks have and what beautiful green spaces we have so

close by.”

Tonight’s the night for twilight

Don’t forget to check out **The Currier Museum of Art’s** first-ever summer block party tonight from 5 to 9 p.m. The free indoor/outdoor event includes live music, dance performances, hooping and juggling acts, art making, face painting and more.

Food and drink will be available for purchase, and at twilight there will be a lighted parade led by students from the Currier Art Center wearing their handmade mythical creature costumes.

Doesn’t that sound magical?

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