



Goat yoga - Exactly what it sounds like

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
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SHIPMAN – River Bend Yoga is working with animals to help lower the stress of those practicing the ancient art of body and breath – and those animals are goats.

Vicky Delaney of River Bend Yoga said the owner of Horseshoe Cross Farms approached her as a yoga teacher to see if she would be interested. Lisa Reid, who runs the farm with her husband, Jim, had received three goats as a house-warming gift when the couple bought that farm. A person with whom Lisa Reid worked suggested goat yoga, Delaney said, but she had never heard of it. After some research, however, Lisa Reid discovered goat yoga was an actual concept in practice across the United States.

“She bought a couple more goats and we started doing free sessions in her garage in the middle of winter with family and friends,” Delaney said in an email.

But why goats?

“Goats lower stress levels of the participants,” Delaney said. “They at times will get on the participants' back, shoulder or hip when in certain poses and the added pressure can feel good. The best part of Goat Yoga is Savasana or 'corpse pose' at the end of class when the goats come cuddle with you. Goats are social creatures and crave attention, so if you are on the ground, they will be there with you.”



The next Goat Yoga event will be Oct. 21, which is a Sunday. The class begins at 11 a.m. and is set to last about an hour and 15 minutes. The farm, which is located at 5364 Bachman Road in Shipman, is open until 1 p.m. following the class to allow people to meet some of the other animals.

Other animals at the farm include a miniature horse named Crystal, who does tricks and often visits nursing homes and 4H groups as well as a miniature donkey named Fran who is considered the family guardian and pet. There are also other goats not involved in the Goat Yoga as well as three mules, three quarter horses and one mustang horse along with dogs, cats, geese and a pig or two, Delaney said.

If someone does not have access to goats, Delaney said yoga can be done at home with dogs and cats, who will also sometimes assist or compliment practice. She said practitioners should invite household pets to their mats and spend some time with them.

River Bend Yoga opened in June 2014 and offers yoga, meditation, hot yoga and aerial yoga as well as many different workshops to “help students better understand not only yoga, but also themselves.”