

THE BAY AREA'S MAGAZINE FOR CONSCIOUS COMMUNITY SINCE 1974

common ground

SEPTEMBER 2009 | FREE

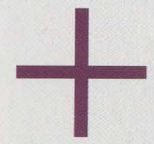
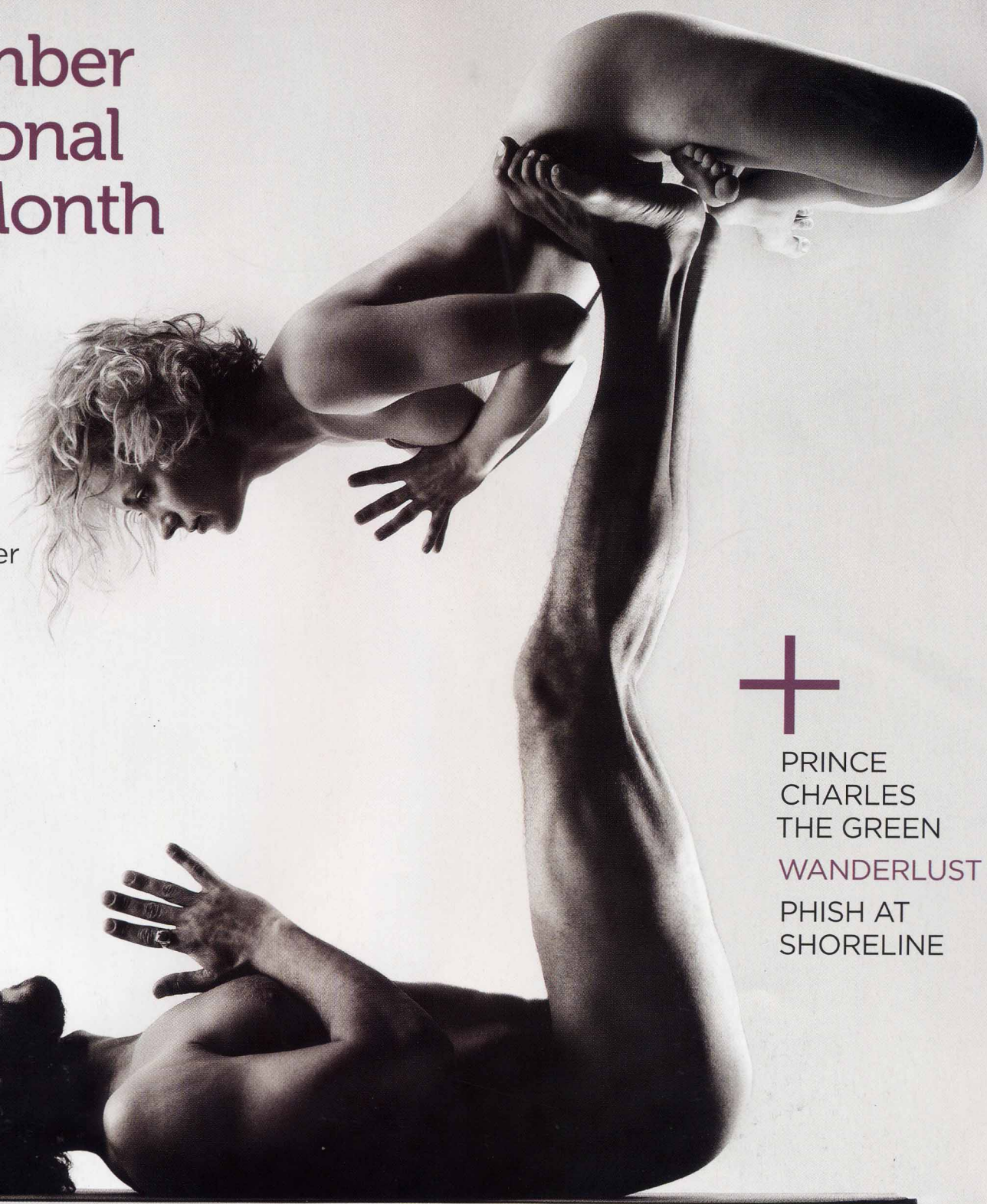
September is National Yoga Month

8 GREATS UNDER 30

Why Gen Y
Stands for Yoga

YOGA CRUSHES

Is Hot for Teacher
a No-no?



PRINCE
CHARLES
THE GREEN
WANDERLUST
PHISH AT
SHORELINE

Tim & Tara Dale

INTERVIEW BY ROB SIDON AND BETH RIFKIN
PHOTO BY FAERNWORKS

Tim and Tara Dale share a thriving business and two beautiful children. As co-owners of the Yoga Tree studios (with four San Francisco locations) and parents of Bella, 6, and Tony, 4, this dynamic mom and pop duo know how to keep things in balance. Next month Yoga Tree celebrates its tenth anniversary, a timely coincidence since *Common Ground* is helping to promote September as National Yoga Month.

» **CG: Happy birthday! You've accomplished a lot together in ten years. How did you get started?**

Tara: I had been teaching yoga in my Marina studio when someone told me that this restaurateur wanted to open a yoga studio and was looking for a partner. I met Tim, and he was very enthusiastic, so together we opened our first location.

Tim: I am a businessman at heart and was going to yoga classes on a regular basis. While everyone else was meditating, I was multiplying and watching the class sizes grow. I noticed the trend and decided to connect my passion for yoga with my entrepreneurial spirit.

» **To what do you attribute the incredible growth that you've experienced during the past ten years?**

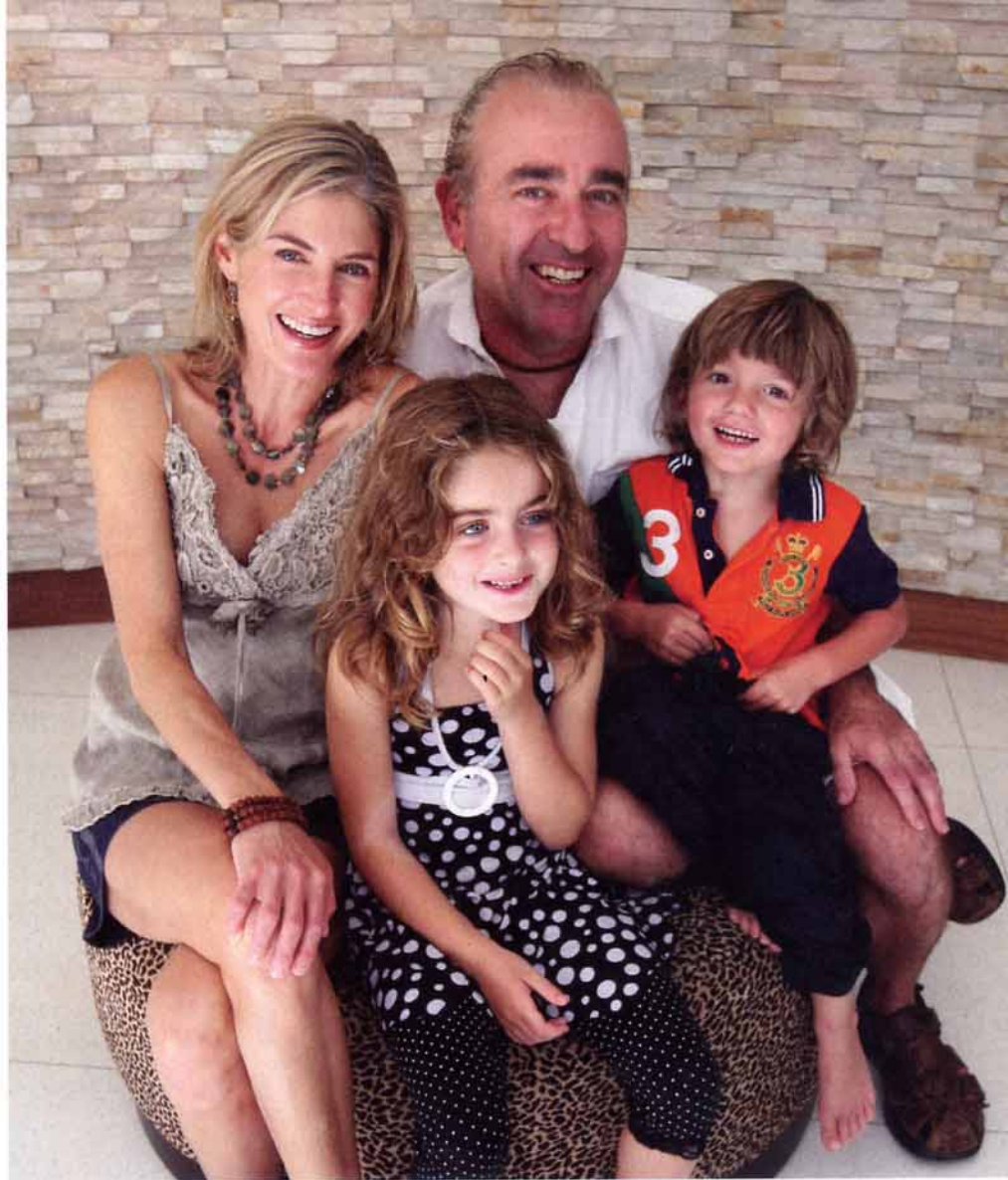
Tim: Foremost I think it is because Tara and I followed our dreams — and that's what our teachers and the people that we inspire are doing. We've had many students and employees become encouraged by their experience at Yoga Tree, so much so that they've taken a path to deepen their practice in one way or another. Our instructor Lauren Slater, for example, started working for us at the front desk, was motivated to complete one of our teacher training programs and has evolved into this amazing yoga teacher. We have a lot of stories like that.

Tara: We also encourage our teachers to continue their education so as the students evolve, the teachers do as well.

» **At face value it would seem you have frenetic lives in the city, but I've never seen either of you lose your cool. In fact, you're always smiling.**

Tim: Yoga taught me how to breathe. I don't think I had conscious breathing before, but once I started doing yoga, I noticed I had a lot of energy, calmness and clarity.

Tara: Yoga helps me move energy and release



stress. It brings me back to my heart and my center. After practicing I feel completely myself again.

» **You are both very involved with the community, correct?**

Tara: We encourage and empower our teachers and provide them the space to hold fundraisers for the nonprofit organizations that inspire them, such as Headstand, Art of Yoga Project, Off the Mat, Trees for the Future and Project Open Hand. And as part of the ten-year anniversary celebration, along with holding some special events with special guests, we're doing fundraisers with the goal of raising \$40,000 for three different organizations. Additionally, if one of our students has an affiliation, and they ask for a pass for an event or cause, we always oblige.

» **Not to mention Power to the Peaceful...**

Tim: Michael Franti is a good friend and a very compassionate and motivated man. Yoga Tree will have a big presence in the park and hold a Yoga Jam on the day after Power to the Peaceful (September 13) in the Green Room to

benefit the festival.

» **Which aspect of Yoga Tree are you most proud of?**

Tara: The people! Our staff is incredible. They have such passion. And our amazing students that come from all over the world to take classes and teacher trainings here. It's about how we change people's lives by creating the space to help them through a difficult time in their life.

Tim: I concur! We're especially proud of our training program because through teaching teachers, we are creating a legacy that is spreading throughout the world.

» **Are you looking to expand?**

Tara: Yes, we want to listen and respond to the needs of the community.

» **Are Bella and Tony budding yogis?**

Tara: Yes, they do yoga. We don't so much teach them directly but they learn from us.

Tim: They are the yoga — their practice inspires us. Our kids keep us so in the moment. 🐾