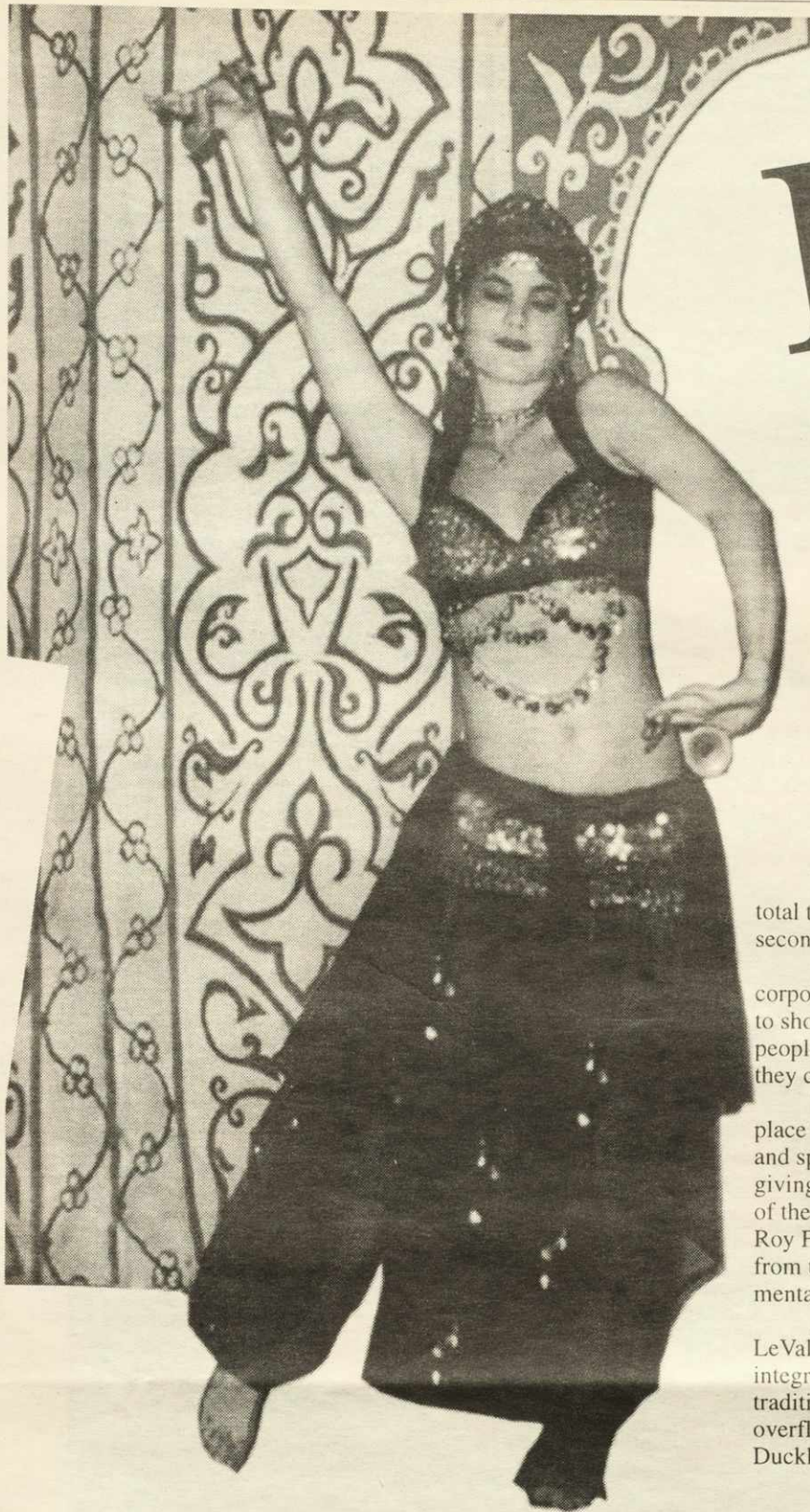


Bellies, juices and cod liver oil



total taking up all of the first and second floors of the SUB.

"The show didn't have big corporate types who were all there to show their product. It was real people, showing each other what they can do."

The show wasn't only a place for natural healers. Doctors and specialists were also on hand, giving lectures. Ducklow says one of the biggest attractions was Dr. Roy Fox, a recognized specialist from the Nova Scotia Environmental Health Clinic.

Another was William LeValley, who told how to integrate holistic health with traditional. "The [room] was overflowing [when he spoke]," Ducklow said.

sensuous and mysterious form of dance. It's an art."

She also said belly dancing and stripping aren't the same things.

"[Dancing] is a natural way of exercising," said Dawson, who's been dancing for over 20 years. Besides teaching belly dancing, she also choreographs new routines to use in performances such as Saturday's.

Belly dancing, in fact, has quite a few health benefits for women. It helps with posture, firms belly muscles, increases stamina, and reduces tensions in the neck and back.

"It completely clears the mind," said dancer Monica Woodyear. "And it prepares

muscles for child birth. That's [one of the reasons] why I'm doing it."

Woodyear, who's been dancing for five years, tells the story of how one dancer in her class recently had a child, and found that building muscle tone through belly dancing helped with her delivery.

"It's absolutely phenomenal how easy it was for one girl."

But Woodyear says it's also good for self-confidence and self-esteem. "You can be any size and still belly dance."

Dawson says it's not something her troupe does for party entertainment. And she doesn't like it when people join her class just for that reason.

Dal hosts holistic health show

BY LEE PITTS

Booths and exhibits from various companies, health and wellness schools, and 'healers' filled the first and second floors of the Student Union Building on Saturday.

It was Nova Scotia's first holistic health show. Each exhibitor promised some sort of physical and mental well-being from natural medicines and remedies.

Everyone was show-casing their product and was eager to give a speech and show the perks of holistic health.

You name it and it was probably represented at the health show. There was protein shakes, massages to release muscle tension, acupuncture, organic teas and medicines, energy bars and organic juices. One company was even selling giant balls used for sitting to help with posture.

There were physiotherapists, psychotherapists and an astrologer. There were even people leading meditation sessions each hour. As well as lecturers talking about what they know best — alternative health care.

With everyone saying their remedy is best, it's hard to know what you should be looking for at

shows like these.

But not all exhibitors were preaching the message that doctors and conventional medicine was bad. While it's true some were there to show an alternative to "pill-popping" in times of sickness, others were there to show how to incorporate healthy living in a daily routine, and to prevent sicknesses from ever occurring.

One exhibitor, who believed fish oil was the way to true health, said you should take fish oil everyday. In fact, "children should take fish oil three years before they're born," she said. (Meaning the parents should drink a teaspoon of fish oil a day long before conception).

Nearly everyone handed out free samples of everything from vitamin tablets to protein supplements and organic drinks.

Other exhibitors were showing how to tone muscles by taking protein shakes and working out.

The Taoist Tai Chi group were also represented at the show, showing how Tai Chi can clear the mind and relax the body.

Stu Ducklow, who organized the event with his wife, were pleased with the how the show went.

"We had 3,000 people attend the show," Ducklow said. "Most of them stayed for the whole show."

There were 100 booths in

Belly dancing and holistic health?

Another attention getter at the holistic health show was the belly dancing group. Six women, donning veils, dangly chains, and puffy pants, looking like something out of *I Dream of Jeannie*, danced around the hardwood floor in the Green Room, to Middle Eastern music.

The women rolled around on the floor, while delicately balancing the hot, burning candles in their hands. They hid mysteriously behind their veils, bumped their hips, slid across the floor, while seductively lifting their hair with their hands.

But what does belly dancing have to do with holistic health?

"It's a very spirited dance," said Bernadette Dawson, who teaches several belly dancing classes each week, and this dancing troupe, at the YMCA on Barrington Street. "It helps women get in touch with their feminine side."

It may get women in touch with their feminine side, but Dawson says belly dancing isn't an erotic form of entertainment, as it's sometimes portrayed in movies. She says dancing is an art form. It's a way of self expression.

"I thought it was a very



Woodyear says anyone can belly dance.

Dawson's classes have people of all ages in it, from early 20s to mid-40s. She teaches a wide variety of classes, from beginner, several stages of intermediate, and advanced.

Bigger plans for next year

This may have been the first holistic health show, but Ducklow says he's already got plans for a bigger one for next year. Ducklow, a graphic designer, originally got into alternative medicine when he realized his daughter suffered from multiple allergies. He says the traditional health care system couldn't help them, so they tried alternative medicines. Now, he says, his daughter is almost completely over her allergies, "with just one or two that are manageable."

Ducklow believes in holistic health, and this show was one way for him to promote alternative medicines to others.