

## SPRING 2018 NWCA NEWSLETTER

From the Editor:

Happy Spring everyone! And I do believe that as I put this newsletter together, that maybe, just maybe Spring is in the air! The temperature today here is a balmy 13' C (58'F). The crocuses are all in bloom, daffodils are up! It's going to happen!

Thank you to all of you who submitted articles for this newsletter. What a great way to keep in touch with our fellow cloggers. I know there are more of you out there who are in a group & would just love sharing what you are doing with all of us! Next edition, let's see lots more articles!

I have a favor to ask of all of you instructors – you know who you are since you have paid your membership as an instructor! LOL Please go to the NWCCloggers.com website & check to see if your information is still correct. I found a huge error in mine only when Mary put together info on me! She took it right from the website. By keeping your information up-to-date, anyone looking for classes will have accurate information. If you find an error, you can either correct it yourself or let Alberta know & she will do it for you!

Now.....on with the news!

We'd like to introduce you to your Board members for this year:

### Mary Dart's Bio

I took beginner lessons with Valerie Mackey Sept. 1981 after seeing it at the National Square Dance Convention in Seattle. I was asked to take over the Tanglefoot Cloggers when Donna LaVergne had to quit. So in January 1989 I started teaching at the Brighton Park Grange in Tumwater, WA. To this day I am still at the Grange, 29 years.

I first cued at NWCA in Sept 1989 and was scared to death. I ran for vice president thinking I wouldn't have to do much and then the president at the time had to resign for medical reasons. So guess what, I'm now president. After getting over the shock and much help from fellow cloggers I was fine and have never looked back. I have been on the board off and on now for 22 years.

I am married to husband Jim for 37 years and he did dance for awhile. Two children Matt and Ann. Ann danced for years and still does every now and then. Daughter-in-law Pamela and three grandchildren, Tiffany 14, Matthew and Anthony 12. Other than clogging I enjoy sewing, quilting, golfing and fishing.

Alberta Stamp

I have been clogging since 1992 and teaching since 1993. I cue and teach for the Olympic Mountain Cloggers in Sequim, Washington. It has also been my privilege to cue at many local and out of state workshops. It has been my honor to server on the NWCA board several times as Publicity, Vice President and President. I am currently the Vice President. I ran for this office because I want NWCA to continue as an association. It is getting more and more difficult to get people to run for the board. Serving on the board is an honor and honestly, except for the workshop not really much work. Please consider running when the next election comes around in September.

Barb Guenette

I have been clogging & teaching now for about 35 years. I was introduced to clogging when a fellow square dancer (you may know her – Reggie Paisley) came back from a National Conventiion & showed me this "new" form of dance! I love dancing of any kind & took to Clogging right away. I had taken tap dancing as a child so it seemed to come fairly naturally to me.

I started teaching right away as there were no instructors in our area & my friend got married & moved away to leave me with our little group. She still teaches in Victoria & I still teach in Nanaimo.

I have been on the Board of Directors for NWCA in one position or another for 18 years (according to our records) because I felt the Canadian cloggers needed a voice on the Board. I also sit on the Board of Directors & Executive Committed for the National Clogging Association. I also mentor other clogging instructors who are wanting to achieve their CCI (certified Clogging Instructor) designation. I achieved my CCI in 1998. When I'm not clogging I love to travel, hike, spend time with family. Together with my husband Larry we have 2 beautiful daughters & 7 grandchildren. We sponsor our annual Sealion Stomp workshop every November here in Nanaimo. 2018 will mark our 28<sup>th</sup> year.

I would like to encourage every member of NWCA to spend at least one term serving on the Board for the Association. It is the perfect way to better understand how our organization works. All it requires is that you attend the Board meetings which are held at workshops & helping to set up our annual workshop/general meeting. Think about it.

### **Donna (Woodward) LaVergne**

**Born & raised in Fresno, CA. Started Square/Round Dancing in 1960. Started clogging in April, 1983 in Tulare, CA with the Clog Hoppers. Instructor: Barbara Humphrey. Danced with exhibition teams - "Sierra Mountain Cloggers", Fresno, and then "Sequoia Rhythm Cloggers", Visalia with Michele John (Smith). Began teaching and cueing for Rocky Hill Cloggers in Visalia, CA in 1985. Moved to Washington in September, 1987. Joined Country Cloggers, and founded the Tanglefoot Cloggers in 1988, Olympia. After a year, I turned Tanglefoot over to Mary Dart because I had moved to Seattle. Currently, dancing with Tanglefoot in Tumwater, and occasionally Country Cloggers in Sumner.**

### *Biography for Mike McDow*

Mike has been Clogging for 37 years and teaching for the past 35 years. He has been involved with clogging workshops throughout the West Coast and Canada, including Jackson, WY. He has taught on many Clogging Programs, including the National Clogging Convention held in San Diego, National Square Dance Conventions in Anaheim, CA (twice), St. Louis, MO, Denver, CO and Portland, OR where he was the Vice-Chairman in-charge of the complete Clogging Program in both 1994 and 2005.

He taught and cued for the Carousel Cloggers weekly in Portland, OR. up and until the end of June, 2013 and was a member of The River City Cloggers Performance group. He has been instrumental in the formation of the Northwest Clogging Association, taking in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana and British Columbia, Canada. He was chairman of the first 5 years of the Northwest Clogging Association Festival along with being Chairman for several of the Oregon Square Dance Festivals. Mike was one of the featured Clogging Instructors/Cueers for the 1989 Washington Square Dance Festival, 1990 & 1997 Oregon Mid-

Winter Square Dance Festival and the 1992 Oregon Summer Square Dance Festival. Mike is a member of 4 regional clogging associations (NWCA/OSCA/NCCA/SCCA) and he teaches at each association's convention. He has held numerous positions in the Northwest Clogging Association and is the current Past- President of NWCA. Mike was honored by being the first recipient of the Valerie Macky Award given out each year at NWCA.

Mike retired from being a Senior Mainframe Systems Programmer/Admin. for Liberty Mutual Insurance Company on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July, 2013. He is currently enjoying retirement in Mesa, AZ where he will spend the Fall & Winter and will be back in the Northwest for during the Spring & Summer.

We're getting ready for another annual workshop. This year will be 31 years. As you can see the theme will be "31 & Counting". We came up with 31 steps that are danced a lot or have been around forever. Check the flyer & you'll see what I mean. Not too early to pre-register & get your free polo. This year will be the same design as last year & Maroon in color. If you don't like the women's style order the mens' polo. Looking forward to another good workshop so come out & have a great time!



## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

As I sit and write – or I guess I should say type,- I think back on all the workshops I have attended and all the friends I have met. Last year I went to 13 workshops or day-long dances. It's always nice to just dance for me being an instructor. It's always nice too, seeing those I only see once or twice a year. Check out the upcoming workshops and plan on going to at least one of you have never been. Just start small. There are so many now and they are all so good! I can't think of a workshop I've gone to and not had fun. Remember they always say "workshops are for getting a start and just learning a new step or two". It's not to learn the whole dance but to say "I like that one" and take it back to class and say "I'd really like to learn this dance".

Thank you all for trusting me to be your president for the next year. I look back and think "no way will I run" and then I say yes. I really do enjoy everything about clogging. I do agree with Todd Harry though, that we need new blood and new ideas. As you can see your new

board has a lot of years running this organization. After each name is the number of years that that person has been on the board one way or another.

Mike McDow	Past President	20 years
Mary Dart	President	22 years
Alberta Stamp	Vice President	16 years
Barb Guenette	Secretary	18 years
Donna LaVergne	Treasurer	4 years

Newsletter Editor and Historian are both on the board too, but have no vote. Those positions are held by Barb Guenette & Mary Dart.

You can see why we say we need new blood. So if you love our clogging in the great northwest, think about stepping up and just starting small. We normally have our meetins when we are at a workshop and if we need to have more, we have a conference call. Other things are decided through emails. So think about it and I'm sure Mike will be talking to you all.

So for now, Happy Dancing and hope to see you on the dance floor soon.

Mary Dart

#### State Festival

Hi all. I am the clogging chair for State Festival 2018 in Kennewick, Washington. We are going to have local (and some not so local) instructors teaching for us this year. Please look at your calendars, and then come and join us June 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>.

You can find the flyer on our website at [www.nwcloggers.com](http://www.nwcloggers.com) on the Workshop page.

Let's show the square dancers that the Cloggers always have a lot of fun.

If you have questions, please let me know.

Alberta

#### Historian Report

We now have 4 large binders from our workshops full of all kinds of things. Thirty years and now our Oldies one-day workshop. I have done it from the start and am looking for someone to take it over. So if you are looking for something easy to do and be on the Board with no vote, this is it! I think I work on it twice a year to add pictures and whatever might have to do the each workshop.

Let me know if this is something you might like doing. You don't have to store the binders as we leave them in the storage unit at the Grange. If interested let me know at [madclgr@comcast.net](mailto:madclgr@comcast.net)

Mary

Olympic Mountain Cloggers performance group had a chance to be the first “dance troupe” at the Sequim Variety show on January 15<sup>th</sup>. The Sequim variety show is a new venue where local performers come to “show their stuff”. We were delighted that once done, we were asked right on the spot to come back again!

Classes are small, but we are having a lot of fun. We hope you are as well.

**Alberta**

## Emerald City Cloggers

It's hard to believe we're well into the new year seems like it was just a couple of days ago we midst of the holiday season. We had quite the of months.

The Emerald City Cloggers performed again in Figgy Pudding Caroling Competition, raising Pike Market Senior Center and Food Bank. In years that we've performed, it has never this year...and boy, did it rain! We all got were grateful for the huge number of people out to watch and participate in this event, those in need of food and assistance in the

We dressed as elves this year and performed non-stop, for over an hour to an ever-changing We all held our breath that no one would slip rain-soaked dance floor. The breath holding worked since the performance went on without a hitch with all cloggers remaining in the upright position.

Two weeks later, a small group of us performed at the Mt Si Senior Center in North Bend, WA for their annual holiday luncheon. The line dancing class from the senior center performed first and then we followed. It was fun showcasing our unique form of dance. Many had not seen clogging before and were quite impressed and intrigued.

In addition to preparing and rehearsing for the above events, we started a new beginner session which we normally start in January. We are thrilled to have had our largest beginner session ever. Ten started the class with seven graduating and moving on to the easy intermediate level. It's always a pleasure seeing new dancers on the floor with smiles on their faces as they experience the thrill of clogging!

## TANGLEFOOT CLOGGERS

Our Christmas party was small but fun. We met at my house for dinner potluck and then for the first time we did a sock exchange and it was interesting to see what we all came up with to stuff our socks with. It was nice to have some of the husbands join us this year. Thanks for coming.

Classes are going good. Our beginner (yes, just 1) was going to graduate but hurt her back, so we'll have to wait until April now. I will be gone the month of March traveling.

We continue to go to workshops and learn dances and meet new dancers. At ClogDown, we met Kristen from Ohio and she now is coming to our classes. What a joy! Also our own Helen always gets up and does the clogdown dance and this year she was the last one standing! Congratulations Helen for a job well done.



when it were in the busy couple

the Great funds for the the several rained...until soaked but that came which helps Seattle area.

four songs audience. on the very must have

Lots of workshops coming up so check out the list and come join us at the Oldies Workshop in Seattle April 21.

Until next time,  
Mary



### Nationals in San Antonio

San Antonio? Sure, why not? My first trip to Nationals started a year ago at ClogDown. Mary won a free registration and asked a few of us from the club if we wanted to go. After asking family & getting time off from work approved, it was a go! Mary, Colleen & I got flights and our registration in & headed to San Antonio! It was quite an experience. Although I have been to a few clogging workshops in the NW & one Texas workshop, Nationals had a bit more of a flare. Partaking in the Parade of States & helping to decorate our state sign was fun & exciting. Washington State made the top 5 finalists in the state sign competition. I was

told this was a first! I felt proud to be a part of that.

Deciding which hall to be in during the 3 days was sometimes mind boggling. Seeing National Cloggers that I had heard about was fun as well as meeting some new people from different areas of the US, Canada, Australia. I also enjoyed having the time to visit with fellow cloggers that I see at local workshops. It was nice having the down time to visit & get to know each other more.

We took a couple side trips into town as well. Got to see the River Walk Christmas parade with a large group from the convention, and spent the day seeing some sights with Bev & Debra from Oregon. Remember the Alamo! Wish we had a little more time for more sightseeing in town, but we were there to clog! Also watching the Saturday Production Show was a great experience. All the participants and cloggers did a great job. It was entertaining for sure.

As always it came to an end too soon. We headed home with lots of memories, dances, new friends & tired feet. If you've never gone to Nationals, I would recommend going once at least if you get the chance.

Helen Buda, Tanglefoot Cloggers



Saying good bye to a dear friend, Vernie Colt

Vernie Colt loved a good party and she packed the room on January 6, 2018. Cloggers gathered with five generations of Vernie's family, her dearest childhood friends and many long-time Port Townsend community members to honor and celebrate her life and memory.

Vernie passed away suddenly November 29, 2017 after suffering a massive stroke. She was 79 years old.

Vernie was a dear friend to many of us. Some of us knew her when she served several years as Secretary and membership chair for NWCA. Even after her service as Secretary ended, she continued as membership chair. You may have received her electronic receipt with the clogging taps. Just one example of her creativity.

Most of us, however, simply came to know her through clogging. She loved to dance! Vernie danced with Roseann Kramnicz, Alberta Stamp, Mike Williams, Anne Mills, Kay Velmire and Kathy O'Brien. She was a fine dancer and could always be counted on to find the rhythm, perfect a step and help other dancers on the floor.

Vernie loved clogging so much she would drive an hour and a half to dance five minutes with Eileen Prefrement in the Shelton High School talent show.

Vernie loved to travel. She attended many clogging workshops in California, Washington and Canada. When she was able to stay in hotels with hot tubs and pools, you would find her relaxing there after a hard day of clogging. When visiting her home, a hot tubbing always finished the visit. There was always music and dancing!

NWCA workshops were always a favorite for Vernie. For Centralia, the theme was the 50s. Sue Jensen not only put cloggers up overnight but provided great costumes for all. Vernie had a wicked sense of humor and loved a good joke. She laughed so hard at Eileen, particularly when she was holding a candy cigarette incorrectly (think "joint").

At another NWCA workshop in Vancouver, she stayed in Eileen Prefrement's motor home behind the hall. They were enjoying the warm weather outside when they heard a loud bang and dust flew everywhere. Eileen's tire had blown. They laughed so hard!

A few things you may not know about Vernie. She was a great singer and musician. She performed in a band as a young girl. Sang acapella with an all-woman group in Pt. Townsend. Was a member of the "Ukeladies" playing her uke and singing. She played the accordion and the saxophone too! A good waltz would bring tears to her eyes.

Vernie ran in marathons in Hawaii and Canada. She loved to fish for salmon in Alaska, but also trout in local lakes and crab in local waters near Pt. Townsend. She loved to travel with fellow clogger Sheri Evearts. She also loved to give gifts she made, knitting, crocheting, sewing and Scandinavian embroidery. She shared so many wonderful gifts.

After health issues prevented Vernie from clogging, she continued to be a good friend. She is someone that seemed would be with us always. She was fiercely independent, devoted to her family and a loyal friend. She was a lovely woman to the core and we will miss her.

Dance on Vernie Colt!

Paula McNees & Eileen Perferment

## Upcoming Events

# 2018

### **Possum Trot**

Bobbi Cooley  
possumtrotca@yahoo.com

March 23rd & 24th, 2018  
Courtyard By Marriott  
Oxnard, CA

### **NWCA 7h Annual Blast From The Past**

9 AM till 5 PM  
Mary Dart/  
(360) 412-8142/

April 21st, 2018  
1217 Sixth Ave  
Seattle, WA

### **NCCA Convention**

Sarah Dwight-Gilroy  
(650) 906-0994  
loudfeetdancer@gmail

April 27th & 28, 2018  
Crowne Plaza Hotel  
5321 Date Ave  
Sacramento, CA

### **Kootany Spring Stomp**

Susan Woods  
rmclogger9856@gmail.com  
(250) 829-0726

May 4th - 6th, 2018  
Creston & District Recreational Complex  
313D 19th Avenue North  
Creston, BC

### **OSCA**

Megan Weidenhaft  
(541) 747-7780  
meganweidenhaft28@gmail.com

May 18th & 19th, 2018  
Emerald Square Dance Center  
Springfield, OR

### **Cloggin With The Stars**

Circle 8 Ranch  
Ann Mills

May 25th - 28th, 2018  
Cle Elem, WA  
(360) 710-1260

### **Washington State Folk Festival**

Alberta Stamp  
(360) 477-9764 astamp@olympen.com

June 15th - 16th, 2018  
Kennewick, WA

### **Clogover Vine Workshop**

Barbara Bizovie  
(250) 768-8557  
Okanagancloggin@hotmail.com

June 15th - 17th, 2018  
Parkinson Recreation Centre  
1800 Parkinson Way  
Kelowna, BC

### **Blossom Hill Festiva**

July 7th, 2018

Lois Elling  
(510) 278-8621

Belmont, CA

**SCCA**

JoAnna Deason McCully  
(562) 430-8089

August 24th - 26th, 2018  
Holiday Inn  
La Mirada CA

**NWCA**

Mary Dart  
(360) 412-8142 madclgr@comcast.net

September, 21st - 22nd, 2018  
Hazel Dell Grange  
Vancouver, WA

**Tommyknockers Cloggers Jamboree**

Carol Smith  
(530) 477-5129

September 15th, 2018  
Grass Valley, CA

**Late Harvest Stomp**

Michele Hill  
(707) 523-2564

Oct. 27th, 2018  
Santa Rosa, CA

**Sealion Stomp**

Barb Guenette  
(250) 722-2953 bguenette@shaw.ca

November 2nd - 4th, 2018  
Nanoose Hall  
Nanoose, BC

**Clogging National**

www.clog.org

November 21st - 24th, 2018  
Atlanta, GA

**2019**

**Southern Arizona Clogging Festival**

Shirley Young  
(520) 298-2056

**Dates TBD**

Old Pueblo Dance Center  
Tucson, AZ

**Oregon Mid-Winter Festiva**

Lauri Weidenhaft  
(541) 747-7780

January 25th & 26th, 2019  
Linn County Fairgrounds  
Albany, OR  
Featuring Josh King

**BC Festival**

Lynda Colauitti  
(250) 718-3088

July 11th & 13th, 2019  
Salmon Arm, BC

Please support our workshops! Without your support, they will die off.

## Dance Schedule

Friday Dance - 7 - 10pm  
Ice Cream Social - 10pm - ??  
Saturday am Session - 9am - 12pm  
General Meeting - 12 - 2pm  
Saturday pm Session - 2 - 5pm  
Saturday Dance - 7pm - ??  
*Schedule subject to change*

*Please Check Taps At Door*

Additional info:

[www.nwcloggers.com/nwca.htm](http://www.nwcloggers.com/nwca.htm)

Mary Dart - 360-412-8142 / madclgr@comcast.net  
Alberta Stamp - 360-683-7487 / astamp@olypen.com  
Barb Guenette - 250-722-2953 / bguenette@shaw.ca  
Mike McDow - 503-620-8032 / mike\_mcdow@yahoo.com

## Host Hotel

### Quality Inn

7001 N.E. Highway 99 / Vancouver, WA 98665  
\$65 Single / \$75 Double (2 people) / \$10 each extra person  
Mention Group number 326254  
360-696-0516 / qualityinn.com

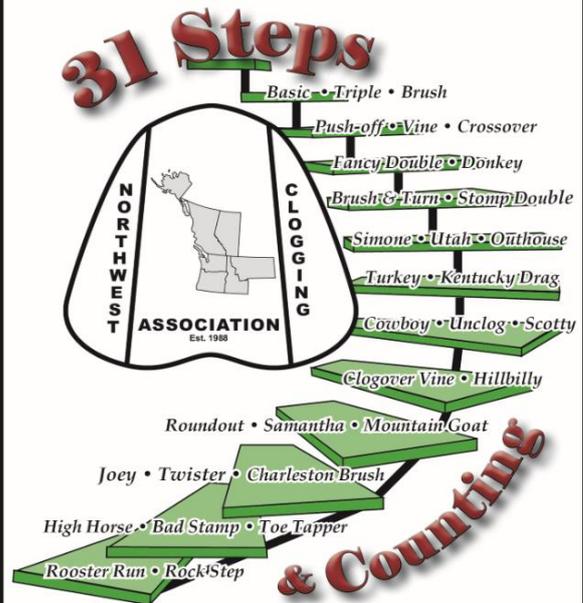
### Dance Hall Directions

From I-5 (north or south) take Exit #4 (78th Street)  
go west on 78th to the second stop light,  
turn left on Hazel Dell Ave., go about 1 block and  
Hazel Dell Grange is on the left.

Hazel Dell Grange  
7509 NE Hazel Dell Ave  
Vancouver, WA 98665

*SEE YA THERE!!*

## 31ST ANNUAL NWCA WORKSHOP & GENERAL MEETING



**September 21 & 22, 2018**

*With our own NWCA Instructors*

Hazel Dell Grange, Vancouver, WA

## NWCA MEMBERS ONLY

*One person per registration, excluding family packages*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Canada: \_\_\_\_\_ Prov: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## NON MEMBERS

*One person per registration, excluding family packages*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Canada: \_\_\_\_\_ Prov: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Must be registered by 9/1/2018 -**  
Workshop registration includes ice cream social, lunch & shirt

### TOTAL

Full Weekend (adult) Pre-Reg. / At Door \$20 / \$30 \_\_\_\_\_

1st NWCA Workshop (\$5 off) \$15 / \$25 \_\_\_\_\_

13yrs & Under 1/2 price: Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Family (3+ per house) \$35 / \$45 \_\_\_\_\_

Names of family members dancing \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### PRE-SALE ONLY

Syllabus \$5 \_\_\_\_\_

Lunch: Free \_\_\_\_\_

Polo Shirt: Free \_\_\_\_\_

**(Pre-registered only by 9/1/18)**

Men:  S  M  L  XL

Women:  S  M  L  XL

**Must be registered by 9/1/2018 -**  
Workshop registration includes ice cream social, lunch & shirt

### TOTAL

Full Weekend (adult) Pre-Reg. / At Door \$40 / \$50 \_\_\_\_\_

1st NWCA Workshop (\$5 off) \$35 / \$45 \_\_\_\_\_

13yrs & Under 1/2 price: Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Family (3+ per house) \$70 / \$80 \_\_\_\_\_

Names of family members dancing \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### PRE-SALE ONLY

Syllabus \$5 \_\_\_\_\_

Lunch: Free \_\_\_\_\_

Polo Shirt: Free \_\_\_\_\_

**(Pre-registered only by 9/1/18)**

Men:  S  M  L  XL

Women:  S  M  L  XL

Please make checks out to NWCA

Mail to: NWCA c/o Donna LaVergne

17347 Heather Ln. SE • Yelm, WA 98597 / Email: webfootin@comcast.net

••• ALL FUNDS IN U.S. DOLLARS PLEASE •••

## A Basic Step to Free the Soul: Meet Susan Woods

By Carly Trinder

The internet is flooding with inspirational quotes regarding one of the world's most elegant sports: dance. Voltaire saw dance as an "amusement" that "will never do any harm to the world." This is a difficult point to argue, as dance is generally associated with unity, self-expression, balance, enjoyment and freedom. For Susan Woods, many forms of dance, clogging, in particular, have touched her soul throughout the course of her life. Not only do members of her family practice clogging, but she provides an opportunity for residents of Cranbrook and the surrounding towns and cities to take part in a non-competitive class geared to accommodating all levels of difficulty and bringing passionate people together.

In Victoria, British Columbia, back in 1988, Susan first learned how to clog. Back then, when she practiced square dance and round dance, a friend introduced her to a folk dance with a rhythmic flare. It was only a year later that she began her journey as an instructor. Three years later, she moved back home to Cranbrook to form a dance group that is actively stepping, stamping and stomping to this day. What quality did clogging have that influenced Susan to commit to it? "I like the rhythms, the social aspect and the relaxed atmosphere about it." She went on to distinguish clogging from tap dance, as the two are rendered similar in regards to steps and shoe design. They differ in the way that tap is more stage-oriented, whereas clogging focuses on dancing to compliment the music. Regardless of contrasts, as Susan put it, each form of dance is as valuable to practice and learn as another.

When people hear the word, "clogging," their first thought often leads to an image of an all-wooden shoe. Contrary to popular belief, this new method of clogging is neither English nor Dutch, and the shoes have progressed from work boots with wooden soles to the more contemporary oxford or dance runner of today. Back in the early 1700s, European settlers made their way inland toward the Appalachian Mountains in Canada and the United States. In the wintertime, the settlers' best means of entertainment came from their

shared adoration for dancing. Varying between countries of origin, the settlers had unique steps and routines to share. Blending their individual styles of dance led to what is called Appalachian clogging. As it progressed, it acquired influence from today's Canadian step, flat-footing, Aboriginal dance, jazz, tap etc. Spin it all together, and modern clogging comes to life.

Every clogger starts somewhere. In Susan's studio, students start with *Beginner Level* clogging and progressively ascend through to *Easy*, *Intermediate* and, finally, *Advanced*. Beginning with the basics, she appropriately introduces a step of the same name, along with others to build on throughout her classes. A "basic" is the backbone to most advancing steps, an absolute necessity in every clogger's arsenal. Basically, achieving this step is one of the first and most rewarding of all. It is a guarantee that new dancers have a clear understanding of the footwork. If new dancers respond by rolling basics onto every fragment of floor space in their homes, clogging is probably the dance best suited for them.

When Susan wanted to become a clogging instructor, there were not many educational opportunities available for her to learn how to teach. Her method began with attending dance workshops to observe the routine of another teacher's style, and then work to mirror or emulate it. In 1998, when the Certified Clogging Instructor program began in the United States, she worked hard to earn her title. Taking up to two years to complete, she started by attending a week of classes in Atlanta, Georgia, and then had to earn "points" by filming herself choreographing, writing essays and attending workshops. Once she had earned enough points, she was eligible to take her final tests. Once she passed them all in Las Vegas, she had the added expertise to choreograph and teach dances at workshops, along with manage sound and her own class of students.

To Susan and many other dancers across the world, clogging is not just a way to describe a plumbing problem. In particular, to her, clogging is about having fun. From performing her high energy routine to "Space Jam" or challenging her male students to dress up as women and improvise a routine to "Barbie Girl" on the spot, being so heavily involved in dance has filled her with enjoyment. Susan shines some light on what makes being an instructor so rewarding. "I like watching people when 'the light comes on.' Sometimes, they struggle at first, but it's that moment when they get it that it becomes a huge confidence boost for them." She went on recalling past students writing her letters while they were in high school, informing her of how much clogging improved their self-esteem. She also credits her involvement in clogging for the amount of networking she has done. She now has friends all over the world to unite because of one common interest.

It's basic knowledge that every individual deserves to feel confident in his or herself. As for the Rocky Mountain Cloggers, Susan sets up an atmosphere free of intimidation and stress, and welcomes any and all interested in building self-esteem, whether having previous experience in dance or not. There is a spot for anyone who applies and is prepared to apply themselves. I can vouch, as the moment the "light went on" for me, I knew I had found a sport that allowed me to express the person I was and free myself from the shell I once wore. My advice: learn the basic steps and the reward will follow.



Way to go Susan Woods! Great article by one of your own dancers!

In the words of Bugs Bunny.....That's all folks!

See you next quarter. Thank you to all who submitted articles & photos.



Does your group have a banner they'd like to show off in the next newsletter?



ClogDown 2018 winner Helen Budda

