

NWCA News

Message from our President

Greetings NWCA Members!

I hope you are all doing well. I know many of you are getting ready for summer demos and performances – it's exciting to have year-round opportunities to show off our love of clogging! Also, many great workshops are coming up. Each one means a chance to learn fun new routines, dance with fellow cloggers, and make new friends, all while supporting organizers and instructors who put time and effort into these exciting events!

Planning is now underway for our Sasquatch Stomp Workshop and Annual General Meeting on September 25 & 26 in Vancouver, WA. Mark your calendars now! Remember, you can register online for Sasquatch Stomp today. Lots of fun in store! We're fortunate to have such talented NWCA instructors to teach us great routines and have us kicking up our heels during the fun dances.

Please do try to attend our short General Meeting on Saturday right after lunch! It's a welcome time to visit with fellow NWCA members. It's also your chance to let the board know what is working well and give us ideas on what we can do better.

Important note: Our current board members have served their two-year limit, leaving ALL positions open. Start thinking now about possibly running for a board position. Being on the NWCA board is rewarding and enjoyable!



NWCA is here for you! Please let us know if there is anything we can do to assist you. Have a great summer out there dancing.

Happy Clogging!

Tracy Turner

In this
newsletter:

In Memoriam

March
Madness

Instructor
Profile

Canadiana

Club News

Upcoming
Events

In Memoriam

NWCA is sad to announce the loss of two beloved friends and clogging instructors in March of this year: John Musser and Jenny Pensiero.

John Musser



I met John before he started clogging when **Ginny Bartes** brought him to a workshop in Port Townsend. He was an accomplished square dancer and had even dabbled in calling. The next year he joined an Olympic Mountain Cloggers beginning class. During one class I invited anyone to teach a dance if they wanted. John accepted and started choreographing and teaching his own routines. He brought us such wonderful dances as “Who the *** is Alice?” and “Sarah in the Summer.” John was always a great sport, as most of us were women and he was the designated driver for the many workshops we attended together, putting up with all of our talk. He and Ginny served on the board as our Publicity Chairs. They really got into it, and we all enjoyed the pig and cow suits they wore. Later John served as Vice President. He continued clogging with us until Covid hit and the club folded. I will miss his sense of humor and his smile. Dance on in heaven, John! – **Alberta Stamp**

Jenny Pensiero



I met Jenny in the spring of 2021, at the Salem NWCA workshop. At her invitation, **Charlene Lakey** and I joined her group. She dubbed us the Cobber Bear Cloggers after her dog Cobber Bear. We enjoyed learning new dances and marveled at her studio. At first there were only three of us in our class, but we soon began arriving early to dance with the beginners to make those connections. Our first Christmas performance was at a nursing home with six of us dancing to Jenny’s choreography of “Bring Home a Christmas Tree.” Jenny had great faith in herself and in all of us. She knew in her heart that we were advanced dancers and worked hard to help us believe we could do it! Charlene and I were so proud to be there in November 2023 when Jenny completed her Certified Clogging Instructor test. Jenny was one tough lady. After her diagnosis, she powered through classes wearing a fannypack with her chemo infusions. Sometimes we quit early, other times we kept going, and we celebrated all the successes. When the cancer returned last fall, she faced the situation with grace and faith, and she encouraged us to keep on dancing. I miss my friend every time I put on my clogging shoes. – **Pat Moore**

Jenny Pensiero’s Celebration of Life will be held in Walla Walla, WA on August 30 at 4:00pm. Please email nwcloggers@gmail.com for more information regarding the service as time gets closer.

'We're all mad here!'

March Madness 2026



It's mad, I tell you, just mad to think I can recall what happened in March. If you knew time the way I do, you would know not to waste it by looking back.

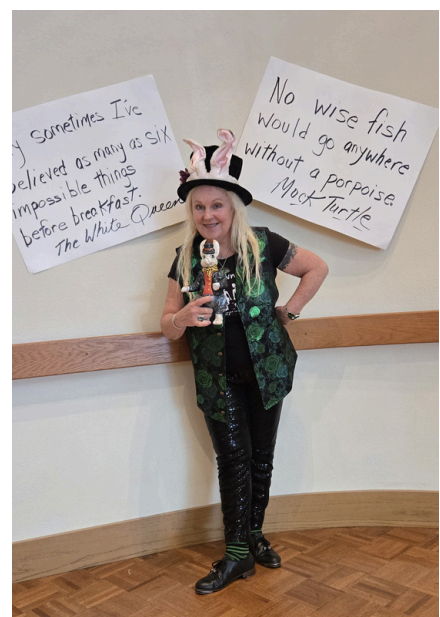
I do remember the White Rabbit was at the March Madness Workshop, and he must have wound his watch because he was on time! The Cheshire Cat was there for sure, and the Caterpillar made a brief appearance before slithering behind the piano. And then Goofy showed up. Poor Alice was so confused. (We love Goofy!)

Everybody danced – except the Caterpillar, of course. As always, the instructors were fantastic, and all the routines we learned pleased the Red Queen (and you know how she is). A grand time was had by all. I think we agreed we should meet again next March in this Magical Clogging Wonderland.

Karen Miller, Mill Town Cloggers



Clockwise from above: Diane Jacobson getting ready to begin her teach; the whole mad gang; Lis Ivec as another White Rabbit; the amazing instructors. (Wait...wait...is that yet another White Rabbit?)



Instructor Profile

Lois Elling



Note: San Francisco Bay Area clogging teacher Lois Elling is often called the “Godmother of California clogging.” This profile will help you understand why!

I started clogging in January, 1974, after I saw **Violet Marsh** do a quick demonstration at our square dance club. I knew right away it was something I had to learn as I’d always wanted to tap dance but never did. Violet had just moved to Walnut Creek, CA a few months before, having taught in Georgia for several years. I struggled through that first class like most beginners and considered quitting, but my then boyfriend (later husband), **Bob**, persuaded me to continue. And like most cloggers, I’m happy I did.

From that first class, we formed a club and called it Diablo Mountain Cloggers after our local mountain. In the summer of 1976, Violet’s company transferred her to Texas. Since I had substituted for her a few times, I was the logical choice to take over teaching the group. I have been Diablo Mountain’s instructor ever since; this July, I’ll have been teaching for fifty years.

When Blossom Hill Cloggers in San Jose began in April 1977, I started teaching there, too. In 1998, my daughter, **Jenn**, and I formed Clogging Express, a precision performance team that would memorize routines and perform with members of either of the clubs. Each group danced at local county fairs and other events, with some memorized routines and patterns added for interest.

In the early years, many people wanted to try clogging because it was quite novel in Northern California. Two groups I taught later continued under other instructors in the Central Valley and Sonoma County. I’ve taught clogging at 19 state and national square dance conventions, plus once at the C.L.O.G National Clogging Convention and once in Canada. It’s always a treat to see dancers, instructors, and dances from other areas.

As a new clogging teacher, I really didn’t know how to go about it. Some things didn’t work, others did – but we all have to start somewhere! In 1986 I self-published an instruction book on how to teach clogging that sold all over the US and even overseas. In 2017 I published a second edition. By then, there were many resources for new teachers, both online and through C.L.O.G.

And then there were workshops. In 1981, Blossom Hill Cloggers hosted the Blossom Hill Festival, the first open clogging workshop in the Bay Area. We had five instructors, including myself and **Janice Hanzel**, who is also still teaching.

Instructor Profile: Lois Elling cont'd

The morning of that workshop, I had invited several teachers to meet and discuss a possible clogging association in Northern California. We finalized the details later, and in early 1982 we officially became the Northern California Cloggers Association (N.C.C.A.). I have held every board position in N.C.C.A. over the years and am currently the Vice President in charge of membership.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, each of my three groups lost about half their membership. For 60 weeks during and after the shutdown, I recorded and posted 87 videos with instruction and cued dances. Those helped keep me – and a few cloggers! – dancing. Diablo eventually returned to the Grange Hall in Danville, but with half the members. Blossom Hill members started having informal dances and get-togethers outdoors in good weather, or they'd meet for a brunch just to catch up. And after one more performance, Clogging Express disbanded. Not only were we down to five dancers, but there were very few performance venues. Many of my dancers have been with me for decades, and it's hard not to be able to see each other regularly. I have cut Danville classes to twice a month to give me more time for travel. Although I'm no longer teaching as often, I haven't completely retired...and I hope not to for a while yet!

The experiences I've had and the friends I've made over the years have been invaluable. I continue to learn, experience new things, and meet more wonderful folks through clogging.

Lois Elling, Diablo Mountain Cloggers



Did you know there was a San Francisco Bay Area version of March Madness? It started in 1986 as the "Newer Dancer Workshop" and became March Madness a few years later. The last one in 2023 garnered a huge attendance of loyal dancers who came together for a farewell celebration. Photos, counterclockwise from top left: Lois in action; with Janice Hanzel; a small sample of her fans; with fellow Californians at the 2026 Sasquatch Stomp.



Saskatchewan Fun Day – 2026

After watching the weather forecasts for two weeks, **Larry** and I decided the snow had finally finished falling on the Canadian prairies, and we were safe to drive to Saskatchewan for the annual Fun Day workshop. After three days of driving – one of which was quite boring – we arrived in the province’s capital city, Regina. (Just to show you how boring it was, a highway sign as we were leaving Regina read, “Caution – road curves! Slow to 95!” That explains a lot to anyone who has ever followed a Saskatchewan driver on our B.C. roads! We arrived Thursday night, just in time to go for dinner with some of



of the Saskatchewan cloggers and their guest instructor, **Kay Hyde** from Alabama. Of course, where do you take visitors to Regina but to the Great Canadian Brew House! Our Alabama visitors had their first taste of poutine. They must have liked it, because they ordered it again the next day. (*Ed note: They weren't wrong. Poutine is yummy!*)

Regina is the main training hub for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), so on Friday we headed for the RCMP museum...what an interesting place it was! We saw different modes of transportation used in the snow-filled northern areas, right down to replicas and originals of their cars. There was even a real stuffed horse! The walls are covered with historical photos and articles about the RCMP.

Lunch was at the Coney Island Cafe, and yes, there is one in the middle of the Prairies! Great food. In addition to a second round of poutine, our Alabama guests enjoyed a burger with peanut butter.

The workshop started Friday with an evening of “cue and do” routines from Kay, from the Saskatchewan instructors, and from the three visiting instructors (Alberta cloggers **Ida Murray** and **Janice Jestin**, and me).

Saturday was a full day of workshops with Kay doing all the teaching...she made things fun for all the new dancers in attendance. There were quite a few of them, and they stayed on the floor all day! Routines included “I Was Made for Dancing,” “I Got a Song,” “I Got a Feeling,” “Lots of Leaving to Do,” and “Levels.” A full day!

Because some dancers head home after the workshop, there’s typically no fun dance Saturday evening. Instead, those who stayed enjoyed an evening of food, fellowship and laughter in a private room set up for us.

Canadiana cont'd

While the rest of us danced at the workshop, Larry had a good time...shopping! He joined two other husbands, one of whom came armed with a shopping list. The three of them spent the day visiting different stores (including lots of Dollar Stores) trying to find everything on the list.

Sunday, we headed back to Calgary, stopping at Moose Jaw SK for a tour called the "Tunnels of Moose Jaw." We arrived just in time for the Chicago version of the tour that was all about Al Capone and his underground rum runners. During US Prohibition (1920–1933), Moose Jaw became a famous hub for bootlegging and rum-running. While there is no written proof, local lore strongly connects Chicago mobster Al Capone to the town's underground tunnels, where gangs allegedly warehoused illegal alcohol and ran speakeasies. According to legend, Al Capone had an office and an arsenal there. The railroad line runs straight from Chicago to Moose Jaw, so it would have been a perfect location! For anyone traveling this route, I highly recommend a stop in Moose Jaw for the tour.

As for the Saskatchewan Fun Day, if you've never been to one, you should go! These ladies really know how to show you a good time, and there's always a surprise instructor. Next year, the location will be back in Saskatoon with local cloggers hosting. Many of you know these ladies from their attendance at our workshops, wearing their Saskatchewan green!

Barb Guenette, Bastion City Cloggers

*Alabama instructor **Kay Hyde**, left, with a large and enthusiastic contingent of cloggers from all over western Canada as well as the US. You can tell by all those smiling faces that everyone had a great time at Saskatchewan Fun Day!*



NWCA at NCCA

The Northern California Cloggers Association (N.C.C.A.) annual convention is a “must attend” for me, but as a former Northern California clogger, I may be biased. Even so, there is always a respectable NWCA showing at this event! This year, NWCA was front and center because our very own Todd Harry was invited as special guest instructor. The photo at left shows the full NWCA contingent. Back row, L-R: **Mary Dart** (Tanglefoot Cloggers), **Carla Lantz** (Clippity-Clop Cloggers), **Nomi Hershman** (Mill Town Cloggers), **Todd Harry** (Puget Sound Rhythm), **Taj Alex** (Clippity-Clop Cloggers), **Liz Wickham** (Carousel Cloggers). Front row: **Kelsey Fairbanks** (Puget Sound Rhythm), **Diane Jacobsen** (Puget Sound Rhythm).



This year, with less than a month to go, the NCCA board encountered an issue that required finding a new venue. The new location was the Lions Gate Hotel on what was the site of the McLellan Air Force Base in Sacramento, CA. The workshop was staged in the former Officers’ Club, a building with a distinctly dignified and historic feel. The Friday night fun dance took place on a shaded outdoor patio, while there were two sizeable halls for workshop dances all day Saturday. The experience overall was such that NCCA immediately booked the facility for its 2027 workshop.

The workshop itself was as amazing as ever with an array of top notch instructors from all over the state - and of course there was Todd! Over the course of the workshop, he taught “Grazing in the Grass,” “Life in the Tropics,” “Dust in a Baggie,” and “Running,” bringing the inimitable style, personality, tappi-ness and Todd-ness that has endeared him to cloggers everywhere.

NCCA, is well worth a trip south. You’ll see the familiar faces of fellow northwest cloggers as well as California instructors and cloggers who’ve attended NWCA workshops. See you there next year!

Liz Wickham, Carousel Cloggers

*Photo at right: instructors at the 2026 NCCA Convention in Sacramento. Front row, second from left: featured instructor **Todd Harry**.*



For these dancers, the summer fun has just begun!

Puget Sound Rhythm kicks it up

The last weekend in May, **Puget Sound Rhythm** performed at Seattle's Northwest Folklife Festival with 13 dancers total take part in it that weekend. This new group is making a name for itself far and wide...four members performed during the showcase at the May NCCA Convention in Sacramento.



*Above: **Kelsey Fairbanks**. Left: **Todd Harry** with Puget Sound Rhythm and a few of their fans!*

Carousel at the Rose Festival

Carousel Cloggers have performed at Portland's Rose Festival almost every year for the past xx years. The group was back again this year with new teacher **Devon Roxbury**. The weather was perfect, the crowd cheered loudly, and dancers had a darn good time. Congratulations on your first rollicking season, Devon! We're glad to have you on board!



*Group photo: **Vanessa Cahill, Leslie Hoffman, Meredith Albert, Linda Woodbury, Jennifer Adams, Devon Roxbury, Linda Maestes, Aenea R., Morgan J., Liz Wickham**.*



Put these events in your calendar!

This issue's abbreviated "upcoming event" section will be expanded to its full length in the future. In the meantime, there are two key events to sign up for, pronto.

The Donut Dance, June 13 (organized by **Todd Harry**) takes place at the Carl Gipson Center in Everett, WA, home of the Mill Town Cloggers. See event information on the next page.

The 37th annual NWCA Workshop and General Meeting, September 25 & 26, Washington Grange, Vancouver, WA. See event information below.

As always, you'll find a complete list of upcoming clogging events in the Pacific Northwest and Canada at our website, <https://nwcloggers.com/upcoming-events/>



Northwest Clogging Association

37th Annual NWCA Workshop
& General Meeting



Sasquatch Stomp

featuring our own awesome instructors

September 25 & 26, 2026
Washington Grange -- Vancouver, WA



Sasquatch Stomp Online Registration

Visit nwcloggers.com/sasquatch-stomp for more information and to register on-line

June 13th Donut Dance!

A bite sized workshop with

local instructors

... AND donuts!

**9:30-4:30 Saturday June 13th at:
3025 Lombard Avenue,
Everett, WA 98201**

Presented by
Karen Miller & Todd Harry

Made possible by:



CARL
GIPSON
CENTER

For info email or text Todd
206-947-8633 Todd2harry@gmail.com

A newsletter is only as robust as its content.

Our newsletter's content comes largely from you, our amazing cloggers. Please flood us with tidbits and photos from your classes and special events. And let us know what you think of the new format. Email us at NWCloggers@gmail.com. We can't wait to hear from you!

Cheers,
Liz Wickham, Newsletter Editor

Thank you for reading!