

# C.L.O.G. Today™

*Official Newsletter of the National Clogging Leaders Organization*

## Clogging: North Carolina's official dance comes alive in Charlotte

REPRINTED FROM JULY 1, 2016 BY CAROLINAWEEKLY



Carolina Classic Cloggers

By Mike Riegel

In western North Carolina, the rhythm-oriented foot tapping dance styles of the Irish, English and Pennsylvania-Dutch melded with some of the rituals of the Cherokee and Catawba Indians to form the foundational movements of “clogging” – the official dance of North Carolina.

The dancing style is very similar to tap dancing; however, cloggers use rocking sole and heel taps that add additional audible depth not present in tap dancing.

In the last 25 years, dance studios across the Carolinas have expanded the appeal of clogging by fusing together a number of different styles, including flat foot, buck, Appalachian, hip-hop and square dancing. It's also popular to adopt costumes to add greater stage appeal.

What began as foot and shoe movement primarily for individuals has morphed into structured group arrangements, such as precision stationary lines, moving lines, circles and squares.

In Charlotte, very few clogging groups were able to combine talent, style and success like the Firehouse Cloggers, directed by Jack Knighten – a retired Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools teacher and principal – and the Skyline Cloggers under the direction of Allen Cooke. These award-winning groups were most active in the late 1970s and 80s. Prior to their formation, there were no organized clogging groups in Charlotte. The only cloggers seen in those days were individuals or couples who would commonly dance during a live bluegrass performance.

Knighten started the Firehouse Cloggers as the Skyline Cloggers also were forming, which adopted a high kick stepping style in many ways reminiscent of the spirited Green Grass Cloggers in Greenville and Asheville.

Clogging was also influenced by the use of meeting places large enough to accommodate the number of cloggers who would gather from different states to perform, share, teach and exchange techniques. A favorite location among area cloggers – “Stompin’ Grounds” – was built by Kyle Edwards in the 1980s in Maggie Valley. Its stage and hardwood floors have become a legendary favorite. Other destinations include Carowinds and the Charlotte Convention Center, which several years ago was the venue for a weekend clogging competition that drew participants and spectators from the entire Southeast.

Scores of active clogging groups and teams exist throughout North Carolina, and though clogging is the official dance of the state, the only active groups in Charlotte today are the Carolina Classic Cloggers, the Saint Luke’s Cloggers and the Charlotte-Mint Hill-Matthews Kickers (CMM Kickers), the newest of the groups having about 12 dancers.

Farther away in Mooresville and Kannapolis are Clog Carolina and the Southern Style Cloggers, respectively.

Charlotte is geographically adjacent to the incubation hotbed of Southern Appalachian clogging; and yet, clogging participation and interest within the city appears to be stable or declining, particularly when compared to the popularity of shag, line dancing, contra and ballroom dancing.

Over the past two decades, a number of groups have disappeared or disbanded, including the Firehouse Cloggers, the Wareham Branch Cloggers, the Skyline Cloggers, the Queen City Cloggers and the Piedmont Travelers.

Despite the decline, the Carolina Classic Cloggers, the Saint Luke’s Cloggers and the CMM Kickers are going strong and actively looking for new cloggers to keep the Carolinas’ clogging history alive.

Contact Terry Zellers at [tdzsdz@hotmail.com](mailto:tdzsdz@hotmail.com) for more information on the CMM Kickers; contact Cathey Franklin at [clognut@hotmail.com](mailto:clognut@hotmail.com) for more information on the Carolina Classic; contact Billie Wiley at [clogbillie@yahoo.com](mailto:clogbillie@yahoo.com) for more information on Saint Luke

**CLOG Today**

CLOG Today is published bi-monthly by  
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**CLOG Today** (formerly known as the *Flop-Eared Mule*) is the official newsletter for the National Clogging Leaders Organization, Inc., published by cloggers, for cloggers, in an effort to share clogging news and to promote and preserve the Clogging dance form.

CLOG members receive a copy of the *CLOG Today* newsletter as a benefit of CLOG membership. CLOG offers two membership classes: Gold (\$30.00 per year) and Silver (\$25.00 per year), US funds only.

**CLOG Today Staff**

CLOG encourages all cloggers and clogging

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enthusiasts to contribute to the content of the newsletter. Please send news items, advertising, comments, and/or suggestions to the editor.

High-quality images and documents in Microsoft Word (attached to e-mail) are preferred. Original photos and documents sent via postal mail are also accepted (please send SASE for materials you wish to be returned).

Advertising rates are available online or by

Issue:	Deadline:
January-February	December 15
March-April	February 15
May-June	April 15
July-August	June 15
September-October	August 15
November-December	October 15

contacting the editor.

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**CCI in Nashville!**



*"Many can teach,  
 but only a precious few can reach"*

Enroll today to experience the education of the Certified Clogging Instructor Program and the teaching tips from more than 50 established clogging instructors.

When you apply for CCI you'll be on your way to improving your instructional skills. You'll join a select group of men and women who have made the ultimate commitment to excellence in clogging instruction, career advancement and the on-going pursuit of knowledge.

**FAQs**

**Do I have to be a clogging instructor to participate in the seminars and become a certified instructor?**

- No

**I have been a clogging instructor for many years, how will becoming certified help me?**

- The benefits of networking with other instructors who have completed their certification and those you meet during and after you have completed the program
- Information obtained from the CCI staff and other instructors are priceless for continued success in teaching

**What does the CCI program consist of?**

- Class Work – 3 Day Seminar.
  - ◊ A Certificate of Education is given after completion of seminars
- Course Work – Completion of mandatory and elective points
  - ◊ Course work is only mandatory to become certified

**What do I do first?**

- Register for, pay associated fees, and complete the CCI Seminars.
  - ◊ These are held yearly at the National Clogging Convention and some other state clogging organizations also host CCI Seminars. Check the CLOG website and local organizations for Seminar locations
- Candidates must be 16 years or older
- Once Seminars are completed, a mentor will be assigned to help the CCI candidates through the completion of the program
- Candidates will have three years in which to complete certification
  - ◊ Completion consists of gathering a total of 1000 points

**What do I do when I have completed my points and my mentor signs off for me to test?**

- Fill out and pay fee for Intent to test and test out
  - ◊ The test consists of:
    - Written Exam
    - Practical Exam
  - ◊ Once tests are passed, candidates are awarded their certification

## On the beat.....

### Cripple Creek Clogger perform in French Tour

By Chelsey Zhu for the Murfreesboro Post (reprinted)

Cripple Creek Cloggers, a local clogging and square dancing troupe, began performing in multiple cities across France on June 30 as guests of several international folk festivals.

Sharing stages with dance troupes from Senegal, Portugal, Mexico, Argentina, Ukraine and many other places, the Appalachian clogging group spread Southern heritage in a variety of venues, including in street parades, churches and colleges.

The group's final festival of the tour will take place in Alençon, France, where it will participate in a number of parades, indoor concerts and special visits to local villages. Cripple Creek Cloggers is also scheduled to conduct workshops to teach its style of dancing and explain the significance of its costuming.

The tour will conclude on Saturday, July 16, when the group will return to the United States.

Here are the Cripple Creek Cloggers performing in a parade in Saint Malo, France. SUBMITTED / The Murfreesboro Post



Show Biz Dance Studio's six-member clog group known as "I Like To Move It Move It" competed recently at Stage One Dance Competition at the Cox Business Center in Tulsa. At that competition, the group was honored with the following awards; A High Point Double Platinum Trophy in the 9- to 11-year old Junior Clog Category and 2nd Place "Overall" High Points Award in the Junior Division.

Group members: Rayce Duncan, Kaitilyn Vest, Breonna Hurd, Makenzie Bolding, Ella Ross, Kiley Windrex.

The group also attended Talent On Parade Dance Competition in Fort Smith, Ark. At that competition, the group won a 1st place Diamond Trophy in the 9- to 11-year-old Clog Category, and 9th Place "Overall" High Points Award in the Junior Division.

Information: (918) 682-6569.



**On the beat....****Competition Winners!**

Reprinted from www.greenfieldreporter.com 8/23/2016 By Rorye Hatcher



## Dancing Champs

A dedicated group of competitive cloggers from Hancock County earned the grand champion title at the recent Indiana State Fair talent show.

Five dancers from the Hearts Ablaze Cloggers, directed by Cristy Corwin-Howard, performed a dance choreographed to the song "Rather Be," by Clean Bandit, and the state fair talent show judges deemed their performance not only the best of the dance entrants, which included tap, jazz, modern and hip-hop performances, but the best performance overall.

The performers from Hearts Ablaze who competed in the state fair talent contest were Cassie Wilhelm, a senior at New Palestine High School, Carlie Dalquist, a senior at Greenfield-Central High School, Sarah Wheeler of Fairland, Ellie Roudebush, a junior at New Palestine, and Emma Wigginton, a senior at New Palestine.

Seeing the group perform brought emotions to the surface for several reasons, Corwin-Howard said.

"That group of five has been together for the last six years of our studio," she said. "They really have grown up together. This was probably their last time to ever compete at the state level. This time next year, several of them will be moving into their first dorm room at college." Each of the dancers and Corwin-Howard recorded short voice-over messages for the beginning of the performance, in which they talked about how important the hobby and bond they share has become over the years.

It felt really special to win at the state fair level, Dalquist said, because her group has been working really hard, and the dancers were able to compete against other types of performance, not just other cloggers.

The Hearts Ablaze Cloggers have earned the grand champion award at the Hancock County 4-H Fair three times since the studio opened in 2008, but they have never nabbed the top title at the state fair before, Corwin-Howard said.

Judges typically are trained dancers who rate performances based on technique, form and poise. But clogging's unique history makes it hard to compare to other dance types, Corwin-Howard said. Clogging evolved from its origins as a Dutch dance form, borrowing from Canadian step dance, Irish step dance and buck dancing, a form that originated among African-Americans during the era of slavery, she said.

"I think that's where some of the struggle is because it's not a perfect fit between the clogging world and the rest of the dance world," Corwin-Howard said. "It's definitely one of the most melting-pot type of dances."

The Hearts Ablaze cloggers will next perform during the Riley Festival on Oct. 8 at the H.J. Ricks Centre for the Arts, 122 W. Main St., Greenfield.

Rorye Hatcher is a reporter at the Greenfield Daily Reporter. She can be reached at 317-477-3211 or rhatcher@greenfieldreporter.com.

## On the beat.....

## Competition Winners!



Reprinted from chewelahindependant.com 8/10/2016

### Cloggers place at regionals

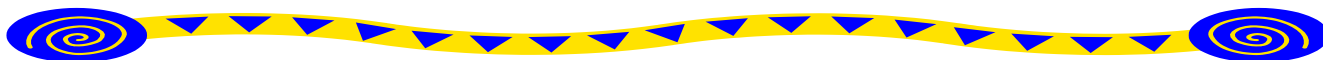
By Brandon Hansen

The Stevens County Stompers, under the direction of Melissa Johnson, recently attended a regional clogging competition in Scottsdale, Arizona. The Stompers' own Hannah Johnson, a two-time National clogging champion, competed in the MASTERS division and placed second overall in traditional, and third (out of 7) in her age division in Contemporary. Marilyn Hawkins, 13-years-old at her first clogging competition, competed in the BEGINNER division placing second overall in Acappella and third overall in Contemporary. Marilyn also medaled in both categories in her age division.

Kathy Olsen, one of our adult cloggers, competed in the AMATEUR division and did very well, placing second overall in Acappella and also medaling in her age division. Also medaling in Solos – Lori Londagin in Acappella and Donna Jo Smith in Contemporary.

In addition to the solo events, the Stompers brought two team dances which both earned trophies and really got the audience on their feet.

In September we will be starting new classes in Chewelah and Colville. If interested, please call Melissa Johnson at 509-675-1786.



Reprinted from www.johnstoniannews.com

### 3 Dancing Sisters cloggers place third in competition

The clogging duet team of Caroline Leegins, 14, and Chassidy Hodge, 15, representing 3 Dancing Sisters & Co. dance studio in Kenly placed third overall in the teen duo division in the Southeast Showdown Nationals competition at Carolina Theater in Greensboro on June 24-25.

Hundreds of dancers representing a variety of dance schools from across the southeastern region (N.C., S.C. Va., Ga. Tenn.) attended the event.

"I felt like my stomach was in my throat before I went onstage," said Caroline Leegins. "It was magical and was the most fun I've ever had. I'm ready to compete again next year."

"It was a great accomplishment for us to place third," said Chassidy Hodge. "We're very lucky to be able to do the things we do."

"It was a rewarding experience and our girls did a great job of representing the town in this fashion," said 3 Dancing Sisters & Co. owner and instructor Victoria Leegins. "I'm very proud of them."

Both girls will be entering the freshman class at North Johnston High School later this month.



Caroline Leegins, left and Chassidy Hodge, both rising freshmen at North Johnston High School, placed third in recent competition. The girls are members of a clogging duet team.

## On the beat.....

Reprinted from Casper Journal



## The melting pot of dance

Updated May 2, 2016

[Elysia Conner 307-266-0509, Elysia.Conner@casperjournal.com](mailto:Elysia.Conner@casperjournal.com)

Clattering beats drummed across the wood floor to the rhythm of “Girls Just Want to Have Fun.” Dancers moved their tapping feet in unison to the Cyndi Lauper song blaring from the stereo at the Casper Recreation Center.

The intermediate and advanced class practiced the number for the recital showcasing the Rec’s clogging classes May 6 in the Kelly Walsh High School cafeteria. Classes start again in June for an eight-week summer session.

Candace Conley spotted a clogging class at the Rec and decided to try it four years ago. She’s been clogging since, she said.

“I love making the noise,” Conley said. The way feet are used as percussion in clogging is what hooks many on the dance form, clogging teacher Amy Grussendorf said.

The distinctive sound comes from lever taps on the dancer’s shoes — one each on the heel and toe, which the dancers strike on the floor. Clogging began with folk dances 17th-century settlers brought to Appalachia from Northern Europe and the British Isles. The dances evolved with Native American and African influences, along with other cultures through the decades, according to Doubletoe Times magazine.

“We call America the melting pot, and this is our melting pot form of dance,” Grussendorf said. “We took all these things and put it together.”

Clogging is still evolving today, she said. Cloggers at the Rec dance to music spanning genres and centuries, for example. Anything with a good fast rhythm goes — whether it’s country, pop, old musical numbers or Celtic tunes, Grussendorf said.

“It’s fun to try it with different styles and see what you come up with,” she said.

Grussendorf started clogging as a child and remained intrigued by the newer, less well-known dance form, she said. She’s been teaching at the Rec for almost 14 years, she said.

The shoes are like those used for tap dancing, but with double sets of taps that clap together and make more noise, Grussendorf said. Dancers can buy specially-made clogging shoes, or glue taps to old sneakers — like the pair Conley used for class last week, Conley said.

Sally Lindhal sported red shoes during a recent senior class. The exercise and socializing has kept her clogging at the Rec for the last 15 years, she said.

“It’s fun and it gets the blood moving,” Lindhal said.

Ages 7 through seniors can sign up for clogging at the Rec. The summer classes are popular for beginners who want to try it, because they run for just two months, clogging teacher Lori Spearman said.

Many dancers with a tap background often enjoy clogging more because there’s less focus on precision, she said. “We just dance,” Spearman said. “We dance to the music and learn it that way.”

Many of the Rec’s clogging participants compete in competitions and perform at community events, as well as the recitals twice a year, Grussendorf said.

She and her students’ feet moved in constant rhythm last week as they played mock hop-scotch games, circled around a ballet soloist and linked arms in twirling pairs.

At one point, a few dancers found themselves out of step in a line dance to the country song “Stuck like Glue” and broke into laughter.

“It’s all right,” Grussendorf said.

The dancers regained their footing, and their tapping feet again blended with the sound. Follow reporter Elysia Conner on Twitter @ink\_pix





## Upcoming Events

### October 15, 2016

Harvest Stomp Faith  
Discovery Church  
Washington, NJ  
Elizabeth Manner

[elizabethmanner@gmail.com](mailto:elizabethmanner@gmail.com)  
[lehighvalleycloggers.com](http://lehighvalleycloggers.com)

### October 22, 2016

OktoberCLOGfest  
Donner Center  
Columbus, IN

Naomi Pyle 812-343-3285  
[naomi\\_p@sbcglobal.net](mailto:naomi_p@sbcglobal.net)  
[oktoberclogfest.com](http://oktoberclogfest.com)

### November 5, 2016

Appalachian Stomp  
Carver Community Center  
Purcellville, VA

[info@BRTC.us](mailto:info@BRTC.us)  
[appalachianstomp.com](http://appalachianstomp.com)

### November 18-20, 2016

Hickory Hoedown Clogging Festival  
Hickory, NC

AJ & Jill Kirby 828-612-0766  
[simscountrycloggers@yahoo.com](mailto:simscountrycloggers@yahoo.com)  
[www.hickoryhoedown.com](http://www.hickoryhoedown.com)

### November 23-26, 2016

30th Annual C.L.O.G. National Clogging  
Convention

Gaylord Opryland Hotel  
Nashville, TN

Thanksgiving Weekend  
David & Susan Phillips 678-889-4355  
[clog@clog.org](mailto:clog@clog.org)  
[clog.org](http://clog.org)

### January 13-14, 2017

5th Annual Southern Arizona Clogging  
Dance Festival

Old Pueblo Dance Center  
Tucson, AZ

Shirley Young (520) 298-2056  
[sardasa.com/](http://sardasa.com/)

### January 27-29, 2017

Oregon Mid-Winter Festival  
Albany, Oregon

Dances and Saturday Workshop Chairs  
Connie Seamans 541-206-3950

[connieseamans@comcast.net](mailto:connieseamans@comcast.net)  
Paul Gates 541-868-6931

### March 9-11, 2017

Smoky Mountain Encore  
Gatlinburg Convention Center  
Gatlinburg, TN

Lynne Ogle 865-675-1185  
[ccalynne@aol.com](mailto:ccalynne@aol.com)  
[smokymountainencore.com](http://smokymountainencore.com)

### March 10-11, 2017

37th Annual TCC Rally  
Waco Convention Center  
Waco, TX

[texas-clogging.com](http://texas-clogging.com)

### March 31-April 1, 2017

Northeast Clogging Convention  
Cape Cod, MA

Beth Kendall 802-439-3349  
[bkendall@tops-tele.com](mailto:bkendall@tops-tele.com)  
[www.freewebs.com/necc](http://www.freewebs.com/necc)

### March 31-April 1, 2017

City Slicker Stomp  
Independence, MO  
Missy Shinoski 816-443-3030

[kloghop@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kloghop@sbcglobal.net)  
[www.CitySlickerStomp.info](http://www.CitySlickerStomp.info)

## Competitions

### October 21-23, 2016

ACHF Annual World Championships  
(ACHF)

Jimmy Loveless 301-884-5830  
Ellis Perry 919-484-0623

Dianne Loftin 864-277-0553  
Henry Jones 864-245-6648  
[achfclog.com](http://achfclog.com)

### October 22, 2016

Las Vegas Invitational (CCA)  
Cashman Center  
Las Vegas, NV

Lynne Ogle 865-805-7025  
[ccalynne@aol.com](mailto:ccalynne@aol.com)

### November 5, 2016

Fall Classic Clogging Championships  
(CCA)

Lexington, KY  
Jeff Driggs 304-776-9571

[ccajeff@aol.com](mailto:ccajeff@aol.com)  
[cloggingcontest.com](http://cloggingcontest.com)

### November 12, 2016

CCA Mountain Classic (CCA)  
Polk County High School  
Columbus, NC

Lynne Ogle 865-675-1185  
[ccalynne@aol.com](mailto:ccalynne@aol.com)  
[www.ccaclog.com](http://www.ccaclog.com)

### November 18-20, 2016

Hickory Hoedown Clogging  
Championships (NCHC)  
Hickory, NC

AJ & Jill Kirby 828-612-0766  
[simscountrycloggers@yahoo.com](mailto:simscountrycloggers@yahoo.com)  
[www.hickoryhoedown.com](http://www.hickoryhoedown.com)

### February 11, 2017

Florida Clogging Festival (NCHC)  
Osceola County Fair

Kissimmee, FL  
Andy Howard 352-494-0104  
[americanracket@gmail.com](mailto:americanracket@gmail.com)  
[www.floridaclogging.com](http://www.floridaclogging.com)

### March 31-April 1, 2017

Northeast Clogging Competition  
(NCHC)

Cape Cod, MA

Beth Kendall 802-439-3349  
[bkendall@tops-tele.com](mailto:bkendall@tops-tele.com)  
[www.freewebs.com/necc](http://www.freewebs.com/necc)

### March 31-April 1, 2017

City Slicker Stomp  
Independence, MO

Missy Shinoski 816-443-3030  
[kloghop@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kloghop@sbcglobal.net)

**Check with event coordinators to confirm event details!**

## CLOG Welcomes New Members

John-Paul Simkus, Valparaiso, IN  
Frances Grace Keller, Pensacola, FL

JC Goodnow, Corsicana, TX

Andrew Pronko, Florence, AZ  
Cori Seawell, Climax, NCTeresa Wilaby,  
Pensacola, FL

Cynthia Lohr, Orange, VA

Susan Snider, Jacksonville, FL

Alisha Flaherty, Maineville, OHLisa  
Crow, Oakwood, GA  
Cheryl Manley, Canby, OR

For information on joining CLOG visit  
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us at 678-889-4355



[www.clog.org](http://www.clog.org)

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List membership in area, state, and/  
or national clogging associations

To: **CLOG, Inc.**  
**2986 Mill Park Court**  
**Dacula, GA 30019**



David and Susan Phillips, Executive Directors  
2986 Mill Park Court  
Dacula, GA USA 30019

## 33rd Annual CLOG National Convention ~ Nashville, TN ~

**November 24-26, 2016**  
**Make Your Plans Now!**

### Auxiliary Events:

Certified Clogging Instructor Training Session  
~ Monday ~ Wednesday  
Judges Training ~ Thursday  
CCI Testing ~ Thursday

### Pre-Convention Events:

Evening Dance ~ Wednesday  
Open Teach Halls ~ Wednesday & Thursday  
Dance Expose' ~ Thursday

### Convention Events:

Parade of Colors ~ Thursday Evening  
Evening Dancing ~ Thursday - Saturday  
Workshops ~ Friday & Saturday  
Seminars ~ Friday & Saturday  
Exhibitions ~ Friday Evening  
Showcase ~ Saturday Evening

### Featuring:

Premier Clogging Instructors  
Early Registration & Member Discounts

**Schedule tentative and subject to Change**



### Hotel Info:

#### **Gaylord Opryland Hotel**

2800 Opryland Drive • Nashville, TN 37214-1297

**Reservation Number:**

1-866-972-6779

Register online - <https://aws.passkey.com/q/54603954>

### **GROUP ROOM RATES**

Rate: \$118 1-4 ppl per room + tax

In addition \$15 per day per room Resort Fee is charged

**Guaranteed Rate until 10/17/2016**

**Rooms will Sell Out—Reserve Yours Today!!**

**Register Online** at [www.clog.org/convention](http://www.clog.org/convention)

INFO: [www.Clog.org](http://www.Clog.org)

678-889-4355

[convention@clog.org](mailto:convention@clog.org)

