



Northern Virginia
Country-Western Dance Association
NEWSLETTER



Vol. XXVIII, No. 4

Official Publication

Second Quarter 2014

President's Report

by Rick Humbert
Email: president@nvcwda.org

Greetings once again. I will say that the winter of 2013-2014 has made up for the previous two winters as far as snow and cold go. One of this winter's snowstorms nearly cancelled our dance on February 15. A special thank you goes out to those who plowed the AUUC parking lot in time for the dance to take place as scheduled. Springtime is here now, and we will be seeing the cherry blossoms and other flowers that warmer temperatures bring.

Two significant events highlight the spring season at NVCWDA. On April 5, we will hold our annual Benefit Dance. All proceeds from the dance will go to the Fisher House Foundation, a non-profit organization that provides temporary housing to families of patients receiving care at military hospitals. Ann Marlin and Beth Di Silvio once again have come through with hand-made quilts that will be raffled off at the dance. We also will have a silent auction consisting of numerous items donated by Association members and friends. The dance also features a demonstration by the Country Steppers, NVCWDA's demonstration dance team, as well as a special performance by world dance champions Mal and Linda Zerden, whose dance routines are always entertaining. Tickets will be \$20 at the door. Please do not miss this special night.

The terms of the Board of Directors will expire on the first Saturday in June. In May, we will elect a new Board. The outgoing Board members are: Eileen Scott (Vice President), Irshad Ali (Secretary), Eric Vondra (Membership), Kerie Hitt (Communications), Kathy Fanelli (Dance), and Paula Ali (Special Events). While I have previously announced that I would not seek another term as President, I am open

**Northern Virginia Country-Western Dance Association
Benefit Dance for Fisher House**

**April 5, 2014
6:30 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.**

**Please bring a potluck dish to share.
Be ready to participate in the Silent Auction.**

Lincolnia Senior Center
4710 North Chambliss Street • Alexandria, VA

Tickets will be \$15 in advance; \$20 at the door.
Make checks for admission tickets payable to NVCWDA.

All proceeds will go to the **Fisher House Foundation**, which is a not-for-profit organization providing temporary housing to families of patients receiving care at military hospitals.

POTLUCK! *QUILT RAFFLE!* *SILENT AUCTION!* *DANCE DEMOS!*

to continuing my service as President for one more year. As of this writing, I believe Bill will continue as Treasurer if needed. Luella Montgomery's Stepper Representative position will be elected by the Country Steppers. The Planning Director and Member-at-Large positions were unfilled this year.

A special thank you goes out to all of the current Board members for their service this past year. The Board had to do extra duty to make up for the vacant positions. We are looking for a few non-Board members to serve on a Nominating Committee to establish the Board election slate. We'd like to introduce the candidates before the election in May. Please bear in mind as a corporation, we need to have a President, Vice President, Secretary,

and Treasurer in order to hold dances. We need some new people to come forward. Please consider running for one of the positions.

That is all I have for this issue. I hope everyone has a happy Spring season of fun and dance.

In this issue . . .

<i>Communications Report</i>	2
<i>Steppers Report</i>	2
<i>Newsletter Deadline</i>	2
<i>Recent Lessons at NVCWDA</i>	2
<i>Plea for New Board Members</i>	3
<i>Photos of Raffle Quilts</i>	3
<i>Membership Report</i>	4
<i>Treasurer's Report</i>	4
<i>Evolution of Country Music and Dancing</i>	5
<i>Birthdays</i>	5
<i>Summary of Board Meetings</i>	6
<i>Membership Application</i>	6

2013-2014 NVCWDA Board of Directors

OFFICERS

President	Rick Humbert
Vice President	Eileen Scott
Secretary	Irshad Ali
Treasurer	Bill Wong

DIRECTORS

Dance	Kathy Fanelli
Communications	Kerie Hitt
Membership	Eric Vondra
Planning	Vacant
Special Events	Paula Ali
At Large	Vacant
Steppers	Luella Montgomery
Past President	Bo Marlin

The NVCWDA is a non-profit organization dedicated to teaching and promoting CW dancing for the enjoyment of our members and friends.

The NVCWDA Newsletter is published quarterly by the Northern Virginia Country-Western Dance Association, Inc.; P.O. Box 384; Merrifield, VA 22116-0384. Initial memberships and annual renewals are \$18 per year or \$36 for two years payable to NVCWDA at the address above. Advertising deadline is the 15th of the month preceding publication. Advertising rates: camera ready full page display ads, \$160; 1/2 page, \$80; 1/4 page, \$40; business-card ads, \$20. Email prepaid advertising material (high resolution pdf if available) to communications@nvcwda.org. Mail check to NVCWDA, P.O. Box 384, Merrifield, VA 22116-0384.

Communications Report

by Kerie Hitt

Email: communications@nvcwda.org

I believe we have had a successful year as far as the Communications team goes. The NVCWDA website contains a wealth of helpful resources for our dancers; our Facebook page, hotline, and email offer ways for dancers to interact with NVCWDA; and our newsletter provides articles of interest to our members. One of the accomplishments during 2013 was the Primer for New Dancers that I added to the website.

I thank Eric Vondra for compiling the January-March 2014 newsletter for me while I was in the hospital in December for major surgery. I also thank Lydia Vitale and Diane Foster, the other

members of the Communications team, for their faithful service to NVCWDA.

In June, I will be stepping down from my position as Communications Director due to health reasons. I will continue to maintain the NVCWDA website and serve as NVCWDA's Facebook administrator. Someone assuming the role of Communications Director would be responsible for compiling and proofreading the articles for the NVCWDA newsletters and then working with Lydia on laying out the publication. Lydia is very experienced and practically can do the newsletter in her sleep! The Director's position also involves overseeing the hotline, but that is easy because the hotline hums along thanks to Diane.

Steppers Report

by Luella Montgomery

Email: steppers@nvcwda.org

The Country Steppers continue to enjoy performing at various events. We have three events planned for April. We'll see you at the NVCWDA Benefit Dance on April 5. The team is looking forward to having the Bull Run Cloggers join us for a performance at the Armed Forces Retirement Home on April 12. We'll be downtown at Our Lady of Perpetual Help on April 27. Later on in June we'll be at the Celebrate Fairfax Fair. For all of you who enjoy dancing, come out and join your demonstration team! We always need new dancers. We practice every Saturday morning across from NVCC in Annandale, and we usually do two performances each month.



*Thank you
Paula!*



We would like to thank Paula Ali for organizing the 2013 New Year's Eve Dance.

Newsletter Deadline

**June 15 for articles, reports, ads
and news items**

Email to:

communications@nvcwda.org

Send Microsoft Word or Text Files. Ads may also be sent as press-ready pdf files (if able, make them high resolution with fonts embedded)

Send photos separately as tif, eps, jpeg, or bitmap files (high resolution)

COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Newsletter Coordinator	Kerie Hitt communications@nvcwda.org
Newsletter Design	Lydia Vitale
Webmaster/Facebook	Kerie Hitt webmaster@nvcwda.org
Hotline Mistress	Diane Foster

Recent Lessons at NVCWDA Dances -

Step sheets for most of these dances are available on our [website](http://www.nvcwda.org), under the "DANCE INFO" tab.

01/18/2014	Metamorphosized LD, Butterfly Waltz Couples
02/01/2014	Four Star Boogie LD, Annie's Cha Cha Couples
02/15/2014	DHSS LD, East Coast Swing Couples
03/01/2014	Showstopper LD, Schottische Couples
03/15/2014	Got to be Funky LD, Irish Stew LD, Forever Green LD
04/05/2014	Wagon Wheel Rock LD

Annual Plea for New Board Members

The end of the current term of the Board of Directors is quickly approaching at the end of May, and Board positions will be available. We must fill the open positions to continue to have dances. Please take a moment to read the brief position descriptions below. We hope that you will consider volunteering for one of the jobs. NVCWDA cannot continue to host dances without volunteers. We need your help!

President—Responsible for the overall supervision of NVCWDA. The President calls and presides at meetings, appoints committees, and reports to the membership. The President sees that we follow the NVCWDA Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules of Order and serves as the primary contact for other country-western dance groups and associations.

Vice President—Fills in for the President when necessary and compiles the desk duty schedule.

Secretary—Primary duty is to record the minutes of all meetings and to maintain the official records of NVCWDA. The Secretary is third in line of succession after the President and VP.

Treasurer—Responsible for paying NVCWDA bills, maintaining bookkeeping records, submitting required forms when due, updating liability insurance, and informing the Board about the Association's financial activities and status. The Treasurer also picks up NVCWDA mail at the Merrifield Post Office once a week and directs it to the appropriate Board member.

Planning Director—Main duty is to secure dance venues for NVCWDA events. This includes compiling possible locations and visiting the sites, preparing agreements with the venues, and acting as the point of contact with their representatives.

Membership Director—Maintains the NVCWDA membership database, which includes entering new members and

renewals and sending renewal/expiration notices. The Membership Director keeps the Board informed about trends in member numbers.

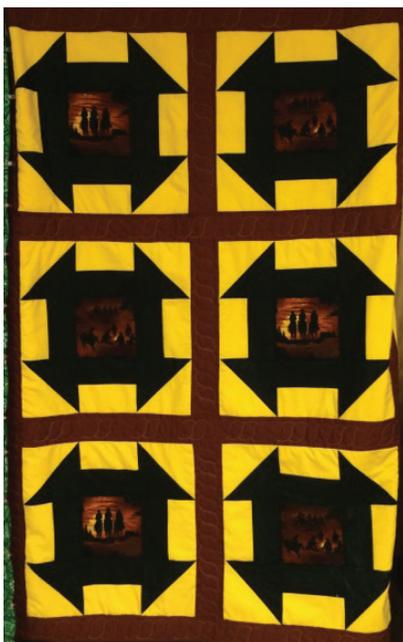
Communications Director—Oversees the production of the NVCWDA quarterly newsletter and coordinates with the NVCWDA hotline mistress, webmaster, and Facebook administrator. The Communications Director also submits notices about dances to local news outlets.

Dance Director—Manages the DJ contracts and schedules, arranges instructors for dance lessons, fields questions and problems at dances, monitors dance floor etiquette, and acts as liaison between dancers and DJs.

Director-at-Large—Coordinates with volunteers to provide refreshments and decorations for dances.

Special Events—Coordinates with volunteers to provide refreshments and decorations for special event dances. (These refreshments and decorations are in addition to the regular decorations and refreshments coordinated by the Director-at-Large.) We have several special event dances during the year. The biggest is the New Year's Eve Dance. Others are the Anniversary Dance and the Benefit Dance.

All Board members get free admission to our regular dances. They are expected to attend six Board meetings, which are held every other month and last about an hour and a half. Once a quarter, Board members submit material for the NVCWDA newsletter. Board members, except for the Director-at-Large who is busy monitoring refreshments, are also expected to do door duty at the dances on a rotational basis. If you would like further information or have any comments or suggestions, please email us at info@nvcwda.org or speak to any of the current Board members at one of the dances. Your involvement in any capacity will be greatly appreciated.



Raffle tickets for two quilts are available at the NVCWDA Benefit Dance for Fisher House.

The quilt on the left was made by Beth Di Silvio. The quilt on the right was made by Ann Marlin.



Membership Report

by Eric Vondra

Email: membership@nvcwda.org

This will be my last report as a Board member, this being my fifth consecutive year on the Board. I would like to thank the others who have served with me on the Board, as well as all the members who have helped to keep NVCWDA going. Having people willing to step up and share some of the responsibilities necessary to keep things running is essential. Please consider taking a position on the Board or helping out in some way in the coming year.

The membership of NVCWDA has been slowly shrinking to the point where we are now about 10 percent the size we were about 20 years ago. At the moment, we have 136 members, 12 of them Life members and 18 of them past expiration. I am confident most of them will renew. Even so, we're looking at about 120 active members at best. What's more disturbing is that we did not have a single new member join this past quarter, even though we had numerous first-time attendees.

A full Board consists of 12 people, including the Past President and Stepper's Rep, so 10 percent of the current membership is required to fill all the Board positions. We managed with several positions vacant this past year, and although we can do that again, we may need to review the structure of the Association to bring it in line with reality. Either that or figure out some way to dramatically increase membership.

I think the key to attracting members, or even just attendees for the dances, is to hold good dances at good locations with good DJs. I think all of these elements are there, but maybe you disagree with my assessment. In my opinion, we are not doing anything seriously wrong. I think we are simply seeing the effects of declining interest in country-western dancing. We need a phenomenon like the Urban Cowboy movie and a renaissance in country music such as what took place in the 1980s and 90s to reinvigorate country dancing.

Lacking a country music renaissance, we need to be thinking how to adapt to the changing scene. One way is to offer dance instruction and music that none of us would ever describe as "country." Our DJ contracts allow for a certain percentage of "non-country" music, so that helps, even though we do get some complaints about it. (See Ali's related article.) We should continue this policy. Another way is to seek out others who we think would enjoy the dancing and exercise, but who may never have done any of these dances before.

We can emphasize the health and emotional benefits of dancing, which seem to be what attract people to many activities these days. Maybe a focus on the health benefits is more important than what kind of dancing we do. Maybe we need to teach and re-teach simple, easy-to-learn dances. Sure, we can add the more complex ones, but if a new person at one of our dances can't stumble through at least half a dozen easy dances or manage a few simple progressive dance moves, that person probably won't come back.

There's also the question of how to attract young people to the dances. I've thought about how having dances at a "senior center" is probably not very conducive to bringing in young people. How do we get around that? Maybe we need an image makeover that will make us more attractive to young people. Maybe it's just a question of where we place our emphasis.

If you have some good ideas, you should serve on the Board for a year and help us build on your ideas. Let's look at who we are, what we do, and how we can encourage others to join in.

Treasurer's Report

by Bill Wong

For this fiscal year, the Association's funds increased from \$8,045.12 on May 31, 2013 to \$10,135.96 as of March 18, 2014. Below is the current quarterly report:

Category	June	Sept	Dec	Total
INCOME				
Admissions	2,967.00	2,575.00	3,624.00	9,166.00
Donations Received	623.00	317.00	385.54	1,325.54
Interest Inc	0.22	0.21	0.20	0.63
Membership Dues	846.00	324.00	432.00	1,602.00
TOTAL INCOME	4,436.22	3,216.21	4,441.74	12,094.17
EXPENSES				
Bank charge	25.90	176.41	34.90	237.21
DJ (1099 payee)	1,550.00	1,800.00	1,900.00	5,250.00
Donations to Others	300.00	300.00	300.00	900.00
Dues, Fees, Licenses	25.00	10.00	766.95	801.95
Insurance	-	496.06	-	496.06
Phone	89.18	137.58	137.82	364.58
Space Rental	483.00	765.00	1,042.50	2,290.50
Mtg Space Rental	-	10.00	-	10.00
Supplies	-	-	350.29	350.29
Website	-	179.64	-	179.64
TOTAL EXPENSES	2,473.08	3,874.69	4,532.46	10,880.23
OVERALL TOTAL	1,963.14	(658.48)	(90.72)	1,213.94

NVCWDA HOTLINE

703-860-4941

NVCWDA WEBSITE ADDRESS

www.nvcwda.org

NVCWDA EMAIL ADDRESS

info@nvcwda.org

 Visit us on
Facebook



Scan this code with your smartphone to open our website.

Evolution of Country Music and Country Dancing

by Irshad Ali

Anytime I hear someone complain and demand that the DJs at our dances play only “country” music, I try to understand that person’s definition of country music. Does this individual define the song “Footloose” by Blake Shelton as a country song? If the answer is no...why isn’t it? The song is by a vocalist who has won a host of awards from the Academy of Country Music and Country Music Association. If the answer to the afore-asked question is that “Footloose” is a country song, then when did it become a country song? Was it a country song when Kenny Loggins, the original singer, made it popular in 1984 or did it transform into a country song 27 years later when Blake Shelton recorded it?

I am sure you can see where I am going with this. What constitutes country music today is not as cut and dried as one might try to make it. Quite a few country songs were originally sung by individuals who consider their genre to be something other than country. For example, the country song “I Don’t Want to Miss a Thing” by Mark Chesnutt was originally crooned by Aerosmith—a far cry from anything even closely resembling a country artist. Ever heard of a group called the GrooveGrass Boyz whose genre is a blend of hip bluegrass and country music? Their version of the song “Macarena” made the Hot Country Charts. The original “Macarena” was made popular by a non-country group called Los Del Rio. And what about the song “Who Says You Can’t Go Home” originally sung by Bon Jovi and then as a duet with Jennifer Nettles of Sugarland. This song made it all the way to #1 on country charts. Was it a non-country song before it became a country song?

One could argue that as long as singers call themselves country artists, no matter what they sing, the songs should be classified as country music. In that case, what about Sheryl Crow? In recent years she has cast herself as a country artist—so which of her songs are to be considered as being the country genre? Only the ones she recorded since she switched sides? Or now that she is part of the country crowd, are all of her pop songs from the pre-switch era to be considered country music as well? I am sure that many of you have heard the song “Wagon Wheel” by Darius Rucker. But how many know that Darius Rucker’s background is as lead singer of the rock band Hootie and the Blowfish?

Another argument could be made that country songs have a particular beat and rhythm. In that case, let’s not forget that some country artists have recorded songs with a rap-like rhythmic beat to them. Here are a couple of examples: “Hillbilly Rap” by Neal McCoy, “Cricket on a Line” by Colt Ford and Rhett Akins. Would these songs be classified as country songs?

Is the beef really about the DJs playing what the complainer considers non-country music or is it a lack of understanding as to how country music and country dancing have evolved—and accepting the fact that times have changed? Many noteworthy choreographers who have won numerous country dance championships have embraced

these changes and now choreograph dances to songs that traditional country music lovers would loathe. Even the United Country Western Dance Council, which promotes country western dance competitions in 20 countries around the globe, allows non-traditional country songs in their competitions.

We are fortunate that we have a Dance Director who is well versed in the current country music dance scene. Otherwise, had the DJs been forced to play only “country” music, then we couldn’t do many of our popular dances to the designated songs. For example, Bossa Nova, 5-6-7-8, Blue Night Cha, Got To Be Funky, Bicycle Waltz, Kalimba De Luna, Blurred Lines, and Cry-Cry-Cry would be omitted because the artists and groups who sang the songs—Jane McDonald, The Steps, Michael Learns to Rock, Maurice John Vaughn, Engelbert Humperdinck, Tony Esposito, Robin Thicke, and Precious Wilson—are not considered country singers. Also, we could not do line dances Swamp Thang, Funky Cha-Cha, and Ghost Train because the accompanying instrumental music is by non-country performers The Grid, Kenny G, and LCD, respectively. Even Hooked on Country line dance that was taught by the Steppers at the last Anniversary Dance would be construed as non-country because music for that dance is performed by Atlanta Pops Symphony Orchestra.

Remember that our DJs must try to cater to everyone’s tastes, not to those of one individual. If the DJ plays a song that someone doesn’t like, that person can simply sit out the song while others who do like the song enjoy dancing to it. Given that the DJs play about 30 songs during the evening, everyone should find some tunes that they can appreciate. Each person has the option to put requests on the DJ’s list. No one can demand only the songs they like. Bottom line: All dance patrons pay to attend our dances, and they all would like to hear songs they’ve requested regardless of any narrow definitions of “country” music.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

April Birthdays

04/02 Sue Maillet
04/03 Diane Foster
04/04 Mike Houchins
04/05 Charles McGuire
04/11 Sandra Graves
04/14 Anthony Gallo
04/16 Linda Harrison-Hall
04/19 Karen Barger

May Birthdays

05/01 Armand Maillet
05/06 Linda Cerisano
05/11 Ron Grendysz
05/13 Gary Campbell
05/19 Jack Wallace

June Birthdays

06/02 Larry Hall
06/13 Linda Wallace
06/14 Bruce Wright
06/22 Charlotte Pierce
06/30 Daniel Pierce



Summary of February 9, 2014 Board Meeting

by Irshad Ali

The Treasurer reported that the combined bank balance of the NVCWDA and Steppers accounts is \$9,186. He also provided updated financial reports to the Board members that showed total income, expenditures, and net increase since June 1, 2013.

The Dance Director informed the Board that all of the current DJs have signed their contracts to play at NVCWDA dances in 2014. However, the Dance Director discussed a problem: certain individuals have been giving the DJs a difficult time regarding their music. In one case, someone went so far as to delete a song that another patron requested from the DJ's song request list. We reiterated that these types of interactions need to be addressed through the Dance Director, not directly with the DJs. Interfering with the DJs' ability to perform their duties or interjecting oneself in another patron's request is not conducive to the NVCWDA dance environment. The Treasurer asked that the DJs play common line dances such as Electric Slide that most people know to encourage new people to get up and dance.

Another item the Dance Director brought up is to emphasize dance floor courtesy. She has observed some couples dancers cutting through the middle of the dance floor where the line dancers are dancing. The Dance Director requested that all attendees adhere to dance floor etiquette, i.e., line dancers stay in the middle and progressive dancers dance on the outside edges encircling the line dancers.

The Communications Director conveyed that the two

The Minutes for the November 16, 2013 General membership meeting are posted on the NVCWDA website.

NVCWDA domain names were up for renewal at a cost of about \$10 each per year. The Board unanimously approved the motion to retain these domains for next year.

The Membership Director stated that current membership stands at 146 members; 16 members have renewed their membership in the past two months. Overall the current membership numbers have remained the same. We have 25 members whose memberships have elapsed within the past six months and are up for renewal.

We still are looking for an additional alternate location to hold NVCWDA dances besides Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church (AUUC). While the primary location for the dances remains Lincolnia Senior Center (LSC), sometimes it is not available. By having an additional alternate site, NVCWDA will be able to hold dances even when both LSC and AUUC are unavailable.

The Board is continuing to make progress on updating NVCWDA governing documents. During this meeting the Board reviewed and approved changes to General Guidelines and Rules of Order.

Newsletter Sections on Website

- [NVCWDA Dance Schedule](#)
- [Dance Event Calendar](#)
- [Upcoming Steppers Performances](#)
- [Looking for Lessons?](#)
- [How Do I Get There?](#)



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL/CHANGE FORM

Northern Virginia Country-Western Dance Association



06/2012

P.O. Box 384
Merrifield, VA 22116-0384

Individual Members Only

Name _____ NEW ADDRESS
check here

Address _____ Apt. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Birthday: Month _____ Day _____ (Must be 18 years of age)

Phone: 1st _____ 2nd _____

Email _____

Membership Category

New _____ Renewal _____

_____ 1 year . . . \$18.00

_____ 2 years . . \$36.00

Membership # _____

Make check payable to NVCWDA

Cash Check # _____

Your email address will be used only for official NVCWDA notifications, including membership renewals and announcements.

Please check your preferences on the following questions:

Would you be willing to help with some of our activities during the year? Yes ___ No ___

Would you like your birthday listed in our newsletter on your birthday month? Yes ___ No ___

Today's date _____