



The Patriot-News

HIGHSPIRE

Dancers step up for domestic violence shelter

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BY MARY KLAUS
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When Marsha Hertweck was a little girl watching Shirley Temple tap dancing in "The Little Colonel" and "The Good Ship Lollipop," she vowed that "someday, I'll do that too."

More than 45 years later, the Grantham woman kept that vow yesterday as she and other members of Vicki's Tap Pups tap danced to tunes such as "In the Mood" and "We're Having A Party" before about 200 people at Champions in Highspire.

The performance, part of Vicki's Tap Pups' annual spring show, helped raise \$1,778 for the YWCA of Greater Harrisburg's Violence Intervention and Prevention Program. The money will go toward refurbishing the YWCA's 16-bed shelter serving Dauphin County women and children fleeing violent relationships, said Judy Walter, a YWCA medical advocate.

"Tap dancing makes you feel good about yourself," said Hertweck, who was 6 when she watched Shirley Temple movies. She signed up for tap dancing classes last year at 54. "It feels right."

Tap dancers keep rhythmic patterns with their feet, use their hands and arms for punctuation and twirl about to complete the expressive dance. They also have fun.

Andrea Catlin of Fairview Twp. called it "happy dancing."

"The basics aren't hard to learn, but the advanced classes are more intricate," Catlin said. "It's the only exercise I get. I happily sweat and turn purple dancing."

LuAnn Bird of Lower Paxton Twp., who has asthma, started dancing when her doctor said she should do aerobic exercise to help increase her lung capacity.

"I hate exercise," she said. "But I like tap dancing. It's a way to sneak in some exercise. It's helped my asthma."

Jim Fisher of Harrisburg learned to tap dance while acting in "Tommy" and "Crazy for You" in high school.

"Everyone should tap dance," he said. "It's the only exercise I do."

Vicki's Tap Pups, which founder Vicki Grubic Riordan calls "America's largest adult tap group," has dancers ranging from 24 to 86 years old, with an average age of 54. Riordan, who teaches classes in Derry Twp., Swatara Twp., Mechanicsburg and Carlisle, said anyone can learn.

"Tap dance has made a comeback in the last five years," she said. "It's the best exercise. Would you rather do 100 sit-ups or tap dance?"

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HOW YOU CAN HELP

Donations can be sent to the YWCA of Greater Harrisburg, 1101 Market St., Harrisburg, PA 17103.

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