

WORLD LINE DANCE NEWSLETTER



Show-Ming

Writing this bio brings me back to so many unforgettable moments in my life: all forty-five babies I delivered in OB internship, the first time I cut the human body in anatomy class, the first surgery in OR, the numerous blood exchanged transfusions I did (on premies) alone in midnight hours, CPR and resuscitations, spinal taps, blood work, the stress of being the only in-hospital pediatrician, medical presentations; then the moment that I watched the loving parents holding their baby with Craniofacial Malformation (nose located above eyes....). It's impossible not to be philosophical.

I did try to live my life forward and just started to understand it backward.

I am the miracle of modern medicine. Every time I stepped on the dance floor, it symbolizes triumph. My divorce turns out to be a life-changing blessing. Cancer experience taught me to get real with myself. This IS the life I live right now. Really, no rehearsals and how beautiful it is. The new rule of my life: Too much fun is not enough.

I was born and grew up in Taiwan, moved to New York in 1978 and live in Orange County, California since 1985. I am a retired Physician and I had practiced Pediatrics in Taiwan, NY and California. I remember not feeling well

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a lot as a little child. I did most of my homework on my bed. I had often been exempted from school chores and physical activities. I was constantly given second chances to pass PE exams. Unaware that I have an autoimmune problem, I struggled physically in silence in all of my adult life, feeling tired just about all the time. I had some vague physical symptoms over the years, yet I always look too healthy to be not well, even to my doctor friends.

After retiring from work, I started to look for fun ways to build physical strength, which lead me to swimming, roller-skating, skiing and eventually dancing. I started line dancing in a Vietnamese church one Sunday in August 1997. I showed up in high heel shoes for class taught by Mel Branham; got a blister right there. But it was so much fun, I danced bare foot right into the next class. I felt like I was playing a game, trying to figure out the step patterns in each dance. I was so busy picking up the step sequences and directional changes that I forgot all my unhappiness. A year later I started attending workshops, not knowing this is the beginning of my new exciting life style. I am so hooked.

Four years ago, out of the blue just as I thought I was getting stronger, my aggressive breast cancer was diagnosed. I knew I want to live and dance, so I embraced the treatment wholeheartedly. With the support from all my caring friends, I was able to continue dancing during treatment. I scheduled my IV chemo sessions a few hours before the socials so I could dance before the sickness stroked me. There was time I found myself dancing, yet I can't even walk straight. Yes, it's true that I danced on the chair during IV drips with all my body parts other than my right arm. I am now cancer free. Three years ago I met a Rheumatologist who was finally able to identify autoimmune activities involving my blood vessels. For that I am taking Lupus medicine now.

In my healthier days during my college years, I played (and was paid) cat-walking on runways as a fashion model for one summer. I have a huge craving for world music and roses. At one point I took care of 75 rose bushes in my yard personally. Before my line dance era, I enjoyed playing (more like tapping) piano, reading Chinese novels and English non-fiction books. I'm so drawn to Wayne W. Dyer, Norman Vincent Peale and Marianne Williamson types of thinking. I knew that I saw the world very differently after reading Freud books as a nerdy junior HS student. A few decades later, I longed to get myself back to the childhood I missed. I finally found my playground on the line dance floor.

My dream life consist of waking up without fatigue or aches, Mahjong game in the day, line dancing at night, reading, writing, music, travel and happy time with family/friends in between. Oh, lots of eating too.

I have two structured homes, Huntington Beach and Taipei. On the broader sense, I felt home when I'm free to be me and/or wherever I'm surrounded by love; so this explains why I'm so happy line dancing. My husband Tom and I live in Huntington Beach, California. Tom retired from Boeing as a senior aerospace engineer manager; he loves to run 4-10 miles a day along the coast, plays golf up to 4+ days a week and skis wherever and whenever the snow is calling. We travel so much (dance, golf, ski, family) that we send out a color coded travel calendar to our family members. .

We have three sweet daughters: Alison studies in SF State and works for Apple as a computer engineer. Annie is an attorney who works for Vintage Capital group. Nicole currently studies in UC Berkeley and works as an SAT tutor. Both Alison and Nicole will graduate next month.

My father is an 80-year young renowned physician who still practices medicine seven days a week in Taipei. My mom manages everything I can think of. She might be the eldest driver in Taipei today. My three sisters live nearby and the fourth lives in Taipei.

Meeting so many line dancers all over the world humbles me; I am very inspired by so many of you,
You taught me it's possible we can still take dance lessons at age 92,
You taught me the courage to show up on the dance floor diligently despite of all the physical challenges we have,
You taught me how to have fun in everything we did together,
You taught me how powerful your kindness can enrich life in all aspects,

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You taught me what support means. Before the breast cancer episode, I thought we were acquaintances on the dance floor. Yet many of you came forward to be my guarding angels, so I was able to heal and continue dancing.

You taught me how to offer love,
You taught me how to receive love,
You even taught me it's cool to be "me".

All of the things I learned from our line dance family have so many positive ripple effects. One of them answers the question I have been frequently asked: "How do I develop my style?"

The idiosyncrasy of my dance expression is not designed or planned. It is I. It is the reflection of my soul. The breast cancer reminds me to respect all my healthy body parts and to honor my body the way it is. I dislike practicing in front of mirrors because the focus is then shifted from having fun to correcting movements. The dance becomes work. When I don't look at myself in the mirror, I am what I believe. I can explore my simple existence wherever the music takes me. When I am having fun, I'm more willing to try new unfamiliar awkward moves. Subsequently I'm delighted to discover surprising abilities within me.

I love to catch the rhythm with any part of my being; I love to make my dances a little more difficult for myself. I love to challenge myself and drive myself nuts a little.

I felt I dance best when I am totally in the zone with only the music in my awareness. I love to dance to get out of the self I know. Somehow there are always little nice surprises for me to get to know myself in a different way. I have absolutely no idea I dance the way I do now and I still feel a lot more inside me waiting to come out. When I dance, I allow myself to be the little girl inside this body to come out and play.

I love line dance parties the most. Different songs are played all night long with loving friends around. I love to dance till all sweaty. I love to dance till I drop. My body feels both tired in a good way yet strangely energized in the same time. I feel that my body is so happy when I dance and it heals just about everything.

I was always told that I danced differently from everyone else. So I danced with my eyes closed in the dark corners thinking no one can see me. I'm free to be me. At first I showed up, smiled, danced and went home. Since I rarely engaged in conversation, I thought few could even remember my name. It did not take long to realize I'm wrong. I'm so grateful for all of your affection, respect, encouragement and advices, which gradually removed my shyness.

The most powerful personal line dance-related experience is my first solo performance in Cool Country 6 dinner show. I don't know how I would feel or behave under the bright light in front of so many eyes. My hair was just budding. (I had been bald from chemo.) I learned that my self-acceptance is real. Looking back, I was so weak and so strong. I was also very inexperienced that I misunderstand what bio (for the performance) means; I gave Doug Miranda a whole page of material to choose what he wanted. The amazing Doug transformed the whole thing into a standing ovation for me. In addition to that exciting experience, I am so honored being nominated for "Dancer Of The Year" in the very first Dancer's Choice Award. Thank you sooo much for your votes and support.