

Clogger dances for fun, takes environment seriously

Mary Lee Schnable
Capital Times Staff

One of the "cloggers" who entertained the Penn State Harrisburg community during the recent campus picnic spends a great deal more of her time "unclogging" than "clogging" these days.

Jody Quimby, who teamed up with Dr. Louise Hoffman for the entertaining dance routine, is currently a graduate student working toward a Master's Degree in Environmental Pollution Control. In her "office" in the Science and Technology Building she upholds her ideals with a ceramic mug, cloth napkin and placemat, real silverware and a virtually empty trash can.

"You could probably empty my waste basket once a year," Quimby said, pointing out a drawer full of paper with one side still blank (used for notes), and a round canister of paper with both sides used (ready for the recycling pile).

Recycling is really a three stage process, she said. First, we need to separate our garbage for pickup. Then, a useful product needs to be made from it, and last, we need to purchase and use recycled products.

The latest quest for biodegradable products doesn't really solve the solid waste problem, since today's landfills are lined to prevent leakage of harmful substances and the trash that is dumped



Jody Quimby photo by
Mary Lee Schnable

into them won't decompose for years.

"We are entombing our garbage," Quimby said.

An archaeologist from the University of Arizona recently dug up a 10 year-old carrot, and found it to be as bright orange and carrot-like as the day it was dumped. A newspaper dumped in a landfill will look almost like new in 30 years, and a disposable diaper can be expected to last about 400 years.

Even though she admits to being downright scared when faced with the rate at which Americans are piling up garbage, Quimby confesses that deep down she has hope. "I have this optimism that people are going to change once they realize the

environmental cost of what they are doing," she said.

"There are so few things in the world and the country that we really have the ability to change," she said. "This is something where we can have an impact."

Quimby, stepdaughters Christine and Sarah, and husband John, who also works in the Middletown area, live about 10 miles from the Penn State Harrisburg campus, midway between Elizabethtown and Hershey. The elder Quimby's both bike the 10 miles to Middletown each day.

"It makes you aware of the flowers and the farmers," Quimby said, "and everything that's happening outside the sky." Initially she thought she would feel abandoned without a car, she says, but that hasn't happened.

Quimby's "clogging" days began in 1982, while she was working as a computer consultant for NASA in Washington D.C. An ad in an area university catalog of things to do offered clogging lessons, which she says, "sounded neat." After beginner's lessons, intermediate lessons, and a move to Pennsylvania, she joined a group of cloggers who performed in Elizabethtown.

Then, until she began graduate school here last January, Quimby was a member of "Feet First," a group of cloggers that met at "Cheers Restaurant/Lounge" in Columbia. It had gorgeous wooden floors, she said, and "Feet First" was allowed to make use of them, since the restaurant portion was closed on Mondays.

The combination of wooden floors

experience, plans to teach at the college level.

If she could "wish" a bill passed by the U.S. Congress, it would be to put a symbol on every product that is considered household hazardous waste, and to require that consumers be told how to dispose of the products properly.

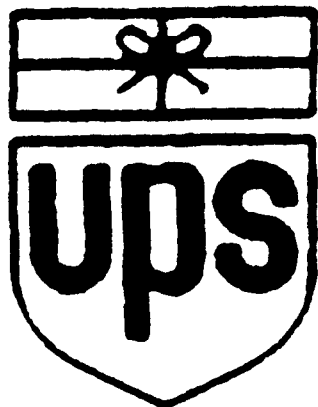
Some people, when faced with the need to bundle newspapers, separate garbage, and sometimes pay higher prices because of environmental improvements say, "what does it matter? I won't be here in 70 or 80 years anyway."

Quimby summed up the reason for the sense of urgency she feels with the quote of an American Indian in a West Virginia University Newsletter: "This land belongs to my people. Some of them are living; some of them are dead; but most of them have not been born." and leather soled shoes result in the unique sound of clogging, which is similar to tap dancing.

Fortunately for the group, the lounge was open, since, Quimby said, "cloggers do get thirsty!"

The Free Style Appalachian Clogging that Quimby and Hoffman performed at the picnic was done after only a few practice sessions. They had never met before, but Quimby said she's willing to do it again next year.

Meanwhile, she will continue working on her Graduate Fellowship, which involves a curbside recycling center for Lower Susquehanna Township. She hopes to be employed by the summer of 1990, with only a few classes to finish part-time for her degree, and after she has gained enough industry



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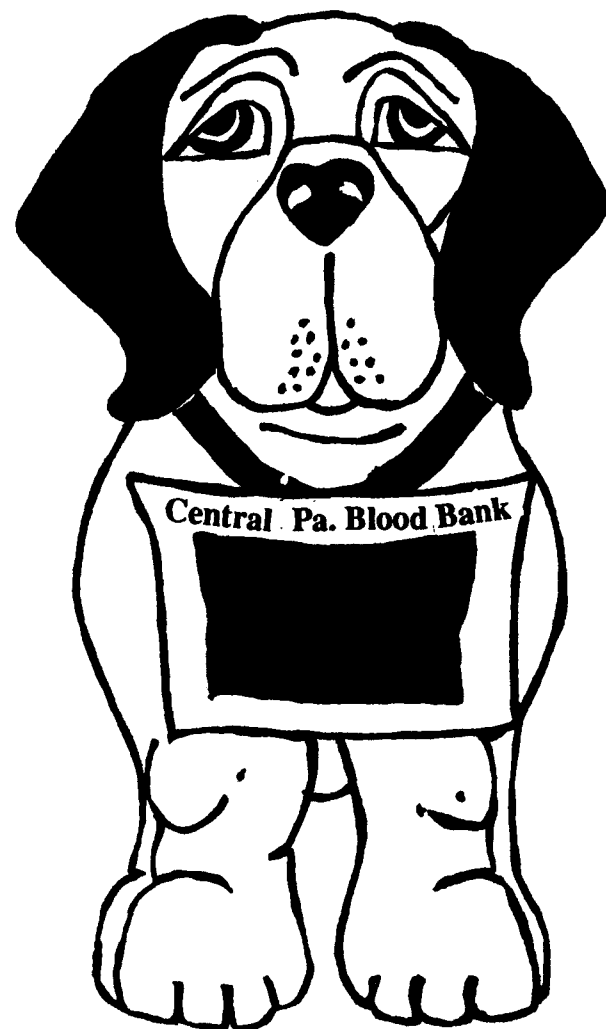
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