Welcome to the 2014-2015 Dance Year!
Thank you for registering for Irish dance class! This newsletter has valuable information about the classes, Irish dance shoes, and costumes. It also includes information about additional performance opportunities for the Irish classes that are in addition to the recitals.
North Star Irish Dance is a part of two high-quality dance studios: Deanne’s Dance Studio (Minnetonka area) and Division Street Dance (downtown Northfield). Please note that some information may be different depending on which location your dancer is at; the information will be noted by ‘DDS’ for Deanne’s or ‘DST’ for Division Street.

About Miss Beth
Beth started Irish dancing at the ripe young age of 24 after returning to the United States from living in Scotland. Yes: Scotland. Upon her return, she was looking for opportunities to learn Scottish dancing but stumbled upon Irish dance. Initially learning the traditional céilí dances, she soon began step dancing with the Drake School of Irish Dance (Atlanta, GA) and competing in the Southern region.

Beth moved from Athens, Georgia, to the Twin Cities in 2006 where she eventually joined O’Shea Irish Dance where she continues to learn, improve, and compete.

Over her dancing career she has danced for many live bands including Gaelic Storm, The Prodigals, and The Border Collies. Always choosing to engage the audience to join in the dance, Beth quickly became associated with inclusiveness and good “craic.”

While every evening is filled with dance, by day Beth works as a social coach and mental health therapist for individuals with autism spectrum disorders.

Class Descriptions

DEANNE’S DANCE STUDIO (DDS)

All Irish classes are on Friday.
4:30-5:15: Advanced class. The dancers in this class have more than 5 years of Irish dance experience. Soft shoe, hard shoe, and figure dances are learned. Dancers are encouraged to have input into dance presentations and work as a team.

5:15-6:00: Beginner’s class. Typical age range is 5-7 years old, but anyone can be a beginner! The basics of Irish dance are taught and the dancers learn a light jig and an easy reel.

6:00-6:45: Novice class. This class consists of experienced beginners and advanced beginners on the cusp of moving up to the Intermediate level. Age ranges from 8 years old to 12. Dancers learn hard shoe and light shoe in the class as well as céilí dances. Dancers are expected to hone the Irish dance form and work as a team.

6:45-7:00: Intermediate class. The age range in this class widely varies. To be in this class, the dancer has to show that they understand and can exhibit proper Irish dance form and are dedicated to the work needed for the more complex steps taught at this level. Hard shoe, light shoe, and figures (céilí) are taught at this level.

DIVISION STREET DANCE (DST)

All Irish classes are on Thursday.
4:00-5:00: Irish I. This is the entry-level Irish dance class. The basics of Irish dance form are taught and the dancers learn a light jig and an easy reel. Dancers may also learn groups dances called ‘figures’ or ‘céilí’ dance.

5:00-6:00: Irish II. This is the class for dancers who have less than 4 years of Irish dance, but more than one year. The continue working on dance form, light shoe, and start working on hard shoe dances.

6:00-7:00: Irish III. This is the advanced class. Dancers in this class have more than 4 years of Irish dance experience. They work on more complex light shoe dances, hard shoe dances, and team choreography. Dancers are expected to work as a team and contribute to dance presentation.
All Irish dance shoes and socks can be purchased at Irish on Grand (1124 Grand Ave, St. Paul). Please tell them that you dance with North Star Irish Dance as they know how Miss Beth prefers to have the shoes fit.

Note that Irish dance shoes use Irish sizes. This typically means that your Irish dance shoe size will be two sizes lower from your American size. The shoes will feel tight and feel uncomfortable. All of the shoes are leather and will stretch over time. It is crucial that your dancers’ shoes fit properly as an improperly fitted shoe increases chance for injury.

Hard shoes: dancers new to hard shoe SHOULD NOT get “super flexi” soles. Please get hard shoes ($159) that have the leather sole. While these shoes are harder to break in, they are safer for entry level hard shoe. Advanced dancers may get the super flexi or whichever hard shoe style they prefer. Hard shoes are the same for male and female dancers.

All female dancers will need to also purchase a pair of poodle socks ($7.95-$9.95) for performances. Please do not get the knee length, champion length, or diamante socks. Just regular ol’ poodle socks. The ones with arch support are acceptable too. Sock glue ($12.95) is an optional purchase as someone typically has some you can borrow.

Boys’ Reel Shoes ($79.95): For boys who are just beginning Irish dance, black jazz shoes are acceptable until they’re sure they want to stick with Irish dance. Once they become dedicated to the class, they will need boys reel shoes. They have a heel like the hard shoes, but no toe piece.

Ghillies range in price from $49.95 up to $80. There is no need to purchase the most expensive ghillies for newer dancers. If your dancer has sensitive feet, the ghillies with no seam on the toe are recommended.

Hard shoes and boys reel shoes are fine to buy used. If you’re interested in purchasing used shoes, please contact Beth so she can help guide you on what to look for and where to look.

What to Wear to Class

It is critical to wear appropriate attire to dance class so as to prevent injury and to ensure your dancer is getting the most out of time spent in class. Beth must be able to see your dancers’ feet and ankles. No long pants! No jeans! If a dancer decides to wear a skirt or dress to class, please ensure that they are wearing a leotard or kick pants underneath - there are a lot of high leg lifts in Irish! Preferred dance attire would be shorts and a tshirt. In the winter, dress in layers with appropriate attire at the bottom. Socks are required with Irish dance shoes.

If your dancer has specific needs or a specific learning style, please talk to Beth. Classroom differentiation is a part of what makes NSID unique.
Each Irish dance school is recognizable by their school costume and often even just by the colors they wear. NSID identifies with green, gold, and pink and our costumes feature a loon design or the north star logo. Each year we are complimented on the simple, but classy, look. No NSID dancers wear large wigs. In fact, only the advanced levels wear wigs, and those are small bun wigs that help the dancers look consistent and well put-together. Below are the costumes, their cost, YOUR COST, and specifics about each costume.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COSTUME</th>
<th>DDS BEGINNERS’ COSTUME</th>
<th>DSD BEGINNERS’ COSTUME</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost to make:</td>
<td>Cost to make: over $150</td>
<td>Cost to make: over $100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your rental cost:</td>
<td>Your rental cost: $60</td>
<td>Your rental cost: $60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes:</td>
<td>jumper, cape, button down shirt</td>
<td>wrap skirt, cape</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purchase the following</td>
<td>Purchase the following items:</td>
<td>Purchase the following items:</td>
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<tr>
<td>items:</td>
<td>• Poodlesocks</td>
<td>• Green leotard $25</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ghillies (Irish On Grand)</td>
<td>Emily orders these in bulk</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Black kick pants (Step’N’Stretch)</td>
<td>• Poodlesocks, ghillies &amp; hardshoes</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Sparkly applique</td>
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• The mill that made the fabric is closed and so these costumes are IRREPLACEABLE!
• Very few of these costumes are available, so they are used exclusively at Deanne’s Dance Studio.

ADVANCED BEGINNERS’ COSTUME (DDS & DSD)

Cost to make: over $100
Your rental cost: $60
Includes: wrap skirt, cape
Purchase the following items:
• Green leotard $25
  Beth or Emily orders these in bulk
• Poodle socks, ghillies & hardshoes
• Sparkly applique

• The costumes for the dancers at Division Street are lined in gold satin with matching capes. Capes go from the left shoulder to the right hip.
• The costumes for the dancers at Deanne’s are lined in pink satin with matching capes. Capes go from the left shoulder to the right hip.

INTERMEDIATE COSTUME (DDS & DSD)

Cost to make: over $100
Your rental cost: $60
Includes: wrap skirt, cape
Purchase the following items:
• Green leotard $25
  Beth or Emily orders these in bulk
• Poodle socks, ghillies & hardshoes
• Sparkly applique (different from the other classes)

• The costumes for the dancers at Division Street are lined in gold satin with matching capes. Capes go from the left shoulder to the right hip.
• The costumes for the dancers at Deanne’s dancers have pink lining and pink capes.
• Capes go from the left shoulder to the right shoulder, further setting this class apart from the previous level.
ADVANCED COSTUME (DDS & DSD)

Cost to make: over $250
Your rental cost: $60
Includes: stiffened skirt, cape

Purchase the following items:
• Green leotard $25
  Beth or Emily orders these in bulk
• Poodle socks, ghillies & hardshoes
• Sparkly applique
• Wig $35 (Beth orders for you)

BOYS’ COSTUME (DDS & DSD)

Cost to make: over $75
Your rental cost: $40
Includes: vest & tie

Purchase the following items:
• For non-advanced level dancers: white button down shirt
• For advanced level dancers: black button down shirt
• Black dress pants
• Black socks

NOTE THAT THE ADVANCED LEVEL VEST IS SATIN AND THE OTHER LEVELS ARE THE SAME FABRIC AS THE GIRLS’ SKIRTS

COSTUME CARE

As you can see, a lot of work and love go into the North Star look. Our costumes are made locally by a talented and dedicated Irish Dance dress maker. The embroidery is done in Eden Prairie. The costumes are rental pieces due to their high cost and also to preserve NSID’s costumes for the next generations.

Please do not allow your dancer to eat or drink anything other than water while in costume. For the dancers with the stiffened skirt, please be aware that even water can ruin the satin. YOU WILL BE CHARGED THE COST TO REPLACE THE COSTUME IF THE COSTUME IS DAMAGED.
FUNDRAISING

There will be fundraising opportunities that are optional to participate in. Funds raised go to the cost of new costumes, more dance panels and dance panel repair*, and potentially to paying our way in to go watch the regional championships this year! This year the Oireachtas (regional championships) are in Minneapolis; next year the NATIONAL championships will be in Minneapolis.

We need help with fundraising! If you have ideas for fundraising, please talk to Beth. We will need help managing any fundraising we do.

*When we perform at retirement homes, we always bring along the Jubilee Dance Tiles. These were designed by an Irish dancer and provide a portable, safe dance floor.

PERFORMANCES

In addition to the end-of-year recitals, Irish dancers have opportunity to participate in additional performances:

3/16/14 - Sunday
Irish Music & Dance Associations Day of Irish Dance (The Landmark Center, St. Paul)

We usually do a 30 minute performance at this amazing event that IMDA hosts each year. All of the Irish dance schools, teams, and performance groups are at this event that is widely loved by the Irish community.

3/17/14 - Monday; St. Patrick’s Day
The big day itself! In the past we’ve participated in the St. Paul parade. This year’s festivities have yet to be decided.

Winter Walk - Northfield
TBD

If the Winter Walk falls on a Thursday again, Division Street Dancers exhibit their steps and ceili dances in the front of the studio. Sometimes Frosty the Snowman joins in!

YEAR ROUND

Various regional Retirement Homes

Most of these performances have been in the St. Louis Park area but we have gone as far as Chanhassan.

8/7/15 – 8/9/15
Irish Fair of Minnesota
(Harriet island, St. Paul)

The largest free Irish festival in the world! Last year we had two opportunities: we danced on Saturday and on Sunday. Beth’s personal favorite out of all the performances we do!
There are a few ways to show your NSID spirit. One is through purchasing logowear via Beth’s Zazzle site:
http://www.zazzle.com/seedstar

And we will most likely put together an order for hoodies and other wearables in late October.