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SALEM PEOPLE AND PLACES

Marion Polk County Medical Society cures "two left feet" at Dancing Date Night

Medical professionals took a break after a busy year to learn merengue and enjoy an evening at Willamette Heritage Center.

By Mary Louise VanNatta - Special to Salem Reporter
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Guests dance at Willamette Heritage Center (Courtesy/Bruce Irvin)

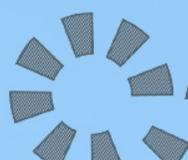
After an exhausting year of work, it was time for a bit of fun. On Aug. 5, medical professionals from the Marion Polk County Medical Society and guests took to the outdoor dance floor at the Willamette Heritage Center for Dancing Date Night. Member **Tanie Hotan, MD**, led the dance instruction with **Mark Baker from Utah Ballroom Dance Company**. Baker said he was the Dance Doctor with a cure for their “two left feet.”

Guests arrived at 6:30 p.m. mingled on the lawn while Taproot Mill Café served charcuterie boards and drinks. Dr. Hotan and Baker taught attendees the basic moves of merengue (a dance originating from the Dominican Republic). They continued adding new moves as the crowd got more comfortable. This included spinning their partner around and lifting their arms in a formation Baker called the “octopus.”

Physicians and their guests came from many member clinics and hospitals. Dr. Hotan invited friends like **Jeff and Trish Davis** and work colleagues from Santiam Hospital, where she works in family medicine.

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Chris Grinstead, MPH at Santiam Hospital, and his wife Rusha said it had been a very long time since they had been able to get out of the house and go to an event together. **Erin Hurley, MD**, a physician at Liberty House Child Abuse Assessment Center, and **Nancy Boutin, MD**, from Willamette Valley Hospice and their husbands quickly picked up on the moves.

Attendees took a break to have drinks and food and enjoy the historic homes located at the Mill. These include The Jason Lee House (1841), one of the oldest standing frame houses in the Northwest, and the Pleasant Grove Church (1858).

Dr. Hotan invited everyone to learn the Cha-cha slide and encouraged guests to join her on the stage.

Towards the end of the night, attendees watched Dr. Hotan and Baker dance a passionate rumba. Dancing date night ended after guests enjoyed a piece of strawberry shortcake and slow danced with their loved ones and friends.

*About MPCMS: MPCMS is a non-profit membership organization for active and retired physicians, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants that has supported medical professionals for over 150 years. They promote wellness, ethics, education, and clinical standards for the medical professional. You can find out more about them and how to become a member through their website [**here**](#).*

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Mary Louise VanNatta is a Salem public relations professional, writing regularly about events for Salem Reporter.

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South Salem graduate Annie Flood initially was named an alternate for the U.S. women's sitting volleyball team, but she was called up to Tokyo just a few days before the Paralympic games began. The team plays for a gold medal on Saturday.

SALEM AREA NONPROFITS Sep. 3

Salem wildlife rehabilitation center loses state permit over taking in black bear

Turtle Ridge Wildlife Center is seeking to have its wildlife rehabilitation permit restored after an April incident where director Jessy Gill took in a sick yearling black bear in the evening and didn't notify state wildlife officials until the following day.

FREE COVID VACCINATION Sep. 3

Salem nurses protest Covid vaccination mandate

About three-quarters of Salem Health employees have been vaccinated against Covid, with rates highest among doctors and other advanced practitioners. But as a state vaccination for health care workers is set to take effect Oct. 18, some hospital nurses say they'd rather lose their job than be forced to get a vaccine.

FREE COVID IN SALEM Sep. 2

"This is devastating": Salem Hospital prepares refrigerated truck for bodies as Covid deaths climb

Cheryl Wolfe, Salem Health's CEO, gave a grim update on the state of Salem Hospital during a Thursday morning meeting with business leaders, saying the average age of patients hospitalized with Covid has fallen to 52.

Salem nonprofit serving houseless veterans looks to expand with VA grant

VETcare offers veterans experiencing homelessness transitional housing while they find a more permanent place to live. With a new grant, it's hoping to find a new facility where each person can have their own room.

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