

A History of *The Wolf Pack*

January 1, 1998, Larry Dupray officially began his career as a square dance caller. In order to gain calling experience as well as to help bring new dancers into the square dance community, Larry decided to offer a class for new dancers. The class began February 14, 1998 and is the officially recognized birthday of the Wolf Pack as a club. When he rented Hall B of the Emerald Square Dance Center in Springfield to hold the class, Larry was asked the name of his group when making out the lease agreement. Having had a long association with wolves, and being known at times as “the wolf guy” or the “Lone Wolf,” he thought it would be fun to call them “The Wolf Pack”.

The first class was a huge success and a second class started the following September. At this time the Wolf Pack was considered a loosely organized, caller run club. Larry was assisted by Christine Gagnon who helped with administrative duties while Larry was calling and instructing the class.

At some point, someone suggested that the new dancers be known individually as “wolf pups” and collectively each class be known as a “litter”. This tradition has continued with two new litters of pups every year.

To show some identity when attending dances with other clubs, it was decided we needed club badges. Larry Hampton created the design and Bambi’s Engraving made the badges. Our big parade banner was made by Sign Pro of Eugene. JoDean Wooton sewed the black fringe around the border and Larry made the pole and carrying case out of PVC pipe. Our smaller traveling banners, T shirts and jackets were silk screened by Triangle Graphics. The quilted banner that hangs in Hall A of the Emerald Square Dance Center was made by Lois Pleger. The original sign board for the front window of the Emerald Square Dance Center was made by Jennifer Chamberlain and Ilana Widders. In 2008, it was decided that this board needed to be replaced. Larry Hampton, who drew our original wolf design, put his creative talents to work and painted the beautiful piece of original art that now hangs in the window of the Emerald Square Dance Center.

In November, 1998 the Wolf Pack, in order to get more recognition around the square dance community, voted to incorporate and join Emerald Empire Area Council of the Oregon State Federation of Square and Round Dance Clubs. This involved a lot of time consuming administrative work such as drawing up a constitution and bylaws, filing for corporation status with the State of Oregon, applying for non profit organization status with the Internal Revenue Service, etc. Larry Dupray did the necessary work, in close consultation with Don Reed, a long time square dancer and an expert in the administrative matters of club operations. With every thing administratively in place, and with approval of the Emerald Empire Area Council, the Wolf Pack applied for membership in the Oregon State Federation. In January 1999, at the state meeting held at the Mid Winter Festival in Eugene, the Oregon State Federation of Square and Round Dance Clubs voted to accept Wolf Pack as member club. Larry served as the first president of the Wolf Pack with Beverly Hills as Vice President, Christine Gagnon as Secretary, and Rita King as Treasurer.

When we first started, we had lessons, every Saturday morning, in Hall B of the Emerald Square Dance Center, but we did not hold club dances because we felt we were too few in numbers to support a dance. We went as a group to visit other clubs at their dances on a regular basis. Gradually with each new litter, the Wolf Pack grew in size we and decided it was time to start holding dances of our own. We felt that perhaps using Hall B where we had been holding our classes, might be too informal and we needed to find another place to hold our dances. After looking at all kinds of options, Bill and Hilary Loud, who regularly came to our classes as angels, and were also members of the Boots and Sandals in Cottage Grove, suggested that we dance in the Boots and Sandals Barn. Arrangements were made to rent the barn one night a month and we held our first Wolf Pack club dance July 17, 1999. At that time we had no round dance cuer and Larry called all evening to five squares of wolves and guests who came out to support us at our very first dance.

Sharon Greenman was hired to cue rounds

for us beginning in September, 1999. We continued dancing one night a month at the Boots and Sandals Barn until June 17, 2000 with the exception of February, when we went dark to support the Fern Ridge Twirlers' Chinese New Year Dance.

After a year of dancing at the Boots and Sandals Barn, the club felt that driving all the way to Cottage Grove to hold our dances once a month was too inconvenient since most all of us lived in the Eugene/Springfield area. So once again we started looking for a place to dance that was closer to home. We finally settled on our own Hall B at the Emerald Square Dance Center. We moved the stage to the end of the hall and rearranged the seating and tables on dance night to create a more formal atmosphere than the casual Saturday morning classes. We had our first dance in Hall B on November 17, 2000, and have been dancing there ever since with the exception of a few dances which we have held in the larger Hall A when that hall has been available for use.

An activity we enjoyed as a club during those first couple years was going to the Senor Frog's Restaurant in Eugene for dinner and square dancing afterwards on their dance floor. This was usually in conjunction with the graduation of one of our litters.

August 6, 2000, we had our first Annual Club Picnic at Dexter Lake. The following year we tried a new location, the fish hatchery park at Leaburg Dam. Then starting in 2002, we began having our picnic at Island Park in Springfield every year. This location proved to be more convenient. We had better turnouts, we could dance, and we also attracted some interest from folks passing by who would stop and inquire about square dancing.

The club felt it would be fun to adopt a wolf since we were becoming more and more wolf oriented around the name of the club. We decided to sponsor Matsi, one of the original members of the Sawtooth Pack, Wolves of the Nez Pierce at the Wolf Education and Research Center in Winchester, Idaho, January 2001. This was the pack made famous by Jim Dutcher and his wife who lived with and photographed them for several years and was featured on a TV special called "Wolves at Our Door". We sponsored Matsi until he passed away in November of 2003. We then began looking for another wolf to sponsor and selected Angel who lives at Wolf Haven International in Tenino, Washington

in February of 2005.

As a club, we felt it would be nice to hold a benefit dance each year to support some worthwhile non profit organization. We decided that, being an animal oriented group, and in view of the fact that other clubs always raise money for human charities, we should focus our effort on agencies involved with helping animals. Our first selection was the Cascades Raptor Center in Eugene who rescues injured birds of prey, rehabilitates them and releases them back into the wild. Our 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2009 dances we raised money for them. We always made a tour of their facility and presented them with our check the afternoon following our dance. In 2004 we selected SARA (Shelter Animal Resource Alliance). In 2005 we raised money for our adopted wolf, Angel and her friends at Wolf Haven International. In 2007 we wandered from our normal course of raising money for animals and gave to the Oregon Youth Fund of the Oregon State Federation of Square and Round Dancers. In 2008 we again raised money to help support Wolf Haven International. We plan to make Pro-Bone-O of Eugene who provides veterinary service for homeless and low income people our 2010 beneficiary.

In our twelve years of existence, Wolf Pack members have stepped forward to assume leadership roles at both the area and state levels and have taken an active role in organizing the Oregon Mid Winter Festival each year. We also played an active role in organizing the 54th National Convention in Portland. On December 31, 2005 we undertook our largest effort as a club to date, hosting the annual New Years Eve party at the Emerald Square Dance Center.

We are a family oriented club and welcome families, couples and singles, youth and adult of all ages as members of the Wolf Pack. We have a strong sense of camaraderie and think of each other as family. Like our namesake the wolf, we live by the "All for one, one for all" code of the pack and are always ready to assist and support each other in our endeavors.