



Jeanette Frame, owner of the Musical Feet School of Dance in Eugene, says the 1990 photo of her dancing with Charles Honi Coles is one of her most prized possessions.

Treasured memory on tap

By **Linda J. Sellers**
Photo by **Collin Andrew**
SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS

A performer's greatest pride is being on stage with the best in the business.

For local tap dancer and studio owner Jeanette Frame, that once-in-a-life opportunity came in 1990 when she performed at the Boston Opera House with the late Charles Honi Coles, who was widely considered one of the world's best tap dancers.

Coles had invited Frame, a nationally known teacher and choreographer, to study with him and participate in his final tap-dance residency at the Dance Umbrella Tap Festival. The workshop culminated in the Opera House perfor-

mance. Coles also once visited Frame's studio, the Musical Feet School of Dance at 420 W. 12th Ave. in Eugene, where he conducted a class and spent time "hoofing it" with the owner.

A photographer snapped a picture of the two, and the black-and-white photo, which hangs on Frame's studio wall, is one of her most cherished possessions of all time.

"I always say it's life-sized," Frame says with a laugh. "It's clearly not, but that's how it feels to me."

The opportunity to meet Coles and dance with him is all the more special because it almost didn't happen.

As a teenager, Frame's tap career was sidelined.

Her mother had grown tired of

driving the aspiring young dancer to practice sessions, where she was an understudy and next in line to join the performers.

"That was the end of my career," Frame says. "I missed it terribly, but I never complained."

Years later, in her 30s, the desire to tap again became overwhelming. Frame bought new tap shoes, studied performing arts at Lane Community College, then started teaching tap dancing at her home.

Frame also taught at various venues, including the WOW Hall, before opening her own studio, where for 30 years she has taught all levels of tap to dancers of all ages. More recently her young instructors on staff have been teaching

hip-hop, ballet, jazz, salsa, ballroom and belly dance.

Frame continues to learn as well, attending tap conferences and dance workshops regularly to stay current and have new curriculum to offer her students. Dancing is so much a part of her life that in the summer — her slow season — she can't wait to slip back into her tap shoes. On Sunday afternoons, she jams with musicians at the Jazz Station.

"I'd love to slow down on the business end of the studio," Frame says. "But I love dancing and don't plan to stop anytime soon."

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