

Off the Clock: Winstead Attorney Moves to Her Own Rhythm

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By **Jessica Huseman**

Staff Writer

jessica.huseman@texaslawbook.net

Who said finance attorneys were boring? Clearly, those folks haven't met Norene Napper.

A second year associate in Winstead's Finance & Banking Practice Group by day, Napper is a professional folk singer and clog dancer by night.

As one half of the musical duo "The Napper Sisters," Napper plays the fiddle, guitar and mandolin in shows all across the south. The University of Texas at Dallas graduate has graced stages alongside country greats such as Leanne Rhymes and the Dixie Chicks. And, yes, she clogs.

If you don't know what clogging is, you're not alone. It's a distinctive form of dance that originated in the Appalachian Mountains, said Napper, who received her law degree from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville in 2010. Similar to tap dancing, clogging incorporates the styles of dance of the cultural groups that called the mountains home. It has become a blend of Irish, Native American and African dance styles, making it uniquely American.



Napper, who is 28, and her sister, Lillian (who, by the way, is also an attorney), were introduced to the art form as children after seeing their cousins perform at a festival in Tennessee.

"After that, we were hooked. We began taking lessons when we were 5 and 6 years old," she said. "It wasn't until we were in the fourth grade that we realized that we could play the music we danced to."

Using the fiddle skills



Norene (left) and Lillian Napper, "The Napper Sisters," clog dance and play their own style of Americana and bluegrass music.

they'd learned in their school orchestra, they supplemented their training with private lessons and picked up tricks of the trade from fellow performers.

Soon, they added more instruments to their repertoire, including the guitar and the mandolin, which they incorporated into their shows. Recently, they added a six-string banjo to the mix. Now, the instruments and singing have become the biggest part of their shows, and clogging is thrown in as an added feature.

While the tuneful pair generally performs the work of other artists from various genres, they find the time to write their own pieces, which Napper said are inspired by their two-decades of performing and their observations and life experiences.

Their style has garnered

attention, and the sisters are in high demand. They'll be performing at Cleburne's General Cleburne's Birthday Celebration at the end of this month, Mayfest at Trinity Park in Fort Worth at the beginning of May, Taste of Addison in mid-May, and at the Friday After Five Concert Series in Kilgore at the beginning of June.

Amazingly, Napper does all of this in addition to her busy role as an attorney, but she says it's not hard to fit it all in.

"As we are both attorneys, we have busy schedules," she said. "Because we perform at multiple festivals, we perform primarily on the weekends. We often fit in practice at night and on weekends when we are not performing."

And while many people might dread spending so much time with their sibling, Napper

said it's all part of the fun. She said they have grown together both personally and professionally, and it's fun to perform with someone you know and trust. And that's a good thing, because the pair has been performing together for over 20 years and they have no plans of stopping.

"We have always had a strong connection to music and we love being a part of the music world and being able to share the music grew up with and love with audiences and other musicians," she said. "Music has taken us to places where we would never have been and has given us the opportunity to meet people we would never have met."

To get a glimpse of the Napper Sisters in action and to hear their music, visit their site here.

Are you a business lawyer with a unique hobby or talent? Does one of your colleagues have a little-known pastime that would make for fun reading? Contact Jessica at jessica.huseman@texaslawbook.net.