



GETTING TO KNOW YOU.....Phyllis Tillapaugh

My name is Phyllis Tillapaugh. I'm a Native Kentuckian. I moved to Michigan in 1991, moved to New Jersey in 1993, back to Michigan in 1997, and have been in Plymouth since then. My earliest memory of music in my life was standing on a church pew between my parents, singing hymns. I have one brother. He and his wife are both Army retirees, and live in Louisville, Kentucky.

My first introduction to music was singing in the children's choir at church. I started playing the violin at age 8 in elementary school (Louisville, Kentucky). My 6th grade teacher taught me to play the recorder and autoharp. In junior high school, I taught myself some guitar chords and some tunes, and played/sang with two folk music groups. I also tried my hand at the mountain dulcimer about 30 years ago, but as I did not know anyone in the area to teach me more, my MD became a fireplace/hearth decoration – and met its end not long afterward.

I was introduced to SSDS by Marsha Kozlowski. I knew of the existence of Hammered Dulcimers, but had never heard one until Marsha played during a church retreat (February 2012). Marsha invited me to a SSDS jam, and put me in touch with Bob Hlavacek, who became my mentor and helped me find my first Hammered Dulcimer, an RL Tack 15/15 Pro, (which now is for sale, since I purchased a new Master Works 16/15 cbw at the Evart Dulcimer Funfest).

I attended Kentucky Music Week in June of this year. I really enjoyed the way that event was set up and how you had some continuity with the instructors. We had the same class & instructor every day for 5 days, but were limited to a maximum of 5 classes per day. However, for the money, and the ability to attend more workshops with more instructors, I think Evart is the overwhelming winner.

I loved Evart! It was a little overwhelming, and had it not been for Marsha and Terry Kozlowski taking me in tow, I'm not sure I would have lasted the weekend. I was really impressed that so many people volunteered their time to make the event possible -- even the instructors! I learned a lot. One of the instructors told the class that it was ok if "you didn't get it during the class" but not to give up. That's very true. I couldn't keep up in class, and it was very frustrating. But I watched, got the music, took it home, and worked on it until it all came together for me. I'd like to see 1st timers get hooked-up with Evart veterans who can show them the ropes, make recommendations about what classes to take (and logistics getting around the grounds), and to encourage them.

I'm still a bit overwhelmed trying to learn to play my Dulcimer, learn the club tunes, and trying to learn who's who at the jams. But I've been having a ton of fun at the jams, variety nights, and the Evart Funfest workshops. I currently play Violin, recorder, guitar, autoharp, and am learning to play Hammered Dulcimer, Bowed Psaltery, and the Pennywhistle

I was divorced (in 2000). I have an 18-year-old daughter. I've worked for Nissan Technical Center, North America in Farmington Hills for 12 years, as the assistant to the president. I worked for Ford Motor Company in Louisville, Kentucky, for 18 years.

I enjoyed a trip to China in 1997. My daughter, who was about 4 years old at the time, had just watched Disney's Beauty and the Beast, and thought the Great Wall was part of the Beast's castle. Other interesting places I've been to are Germany, France, Mexico and of course, Canada. My "Bucket list" includes the Grand Canyon and National Parks out West. I love to go camping and hiking. I'm a member of Hiking Michigan and former member of Sierra Club. My daughter and I used to like to go "geocaching", but that has fallen by the wayside since she's gotten older.