



Photo by PHIL SKINNER / Staff

Irish step dancers swirl around one another at the School of Irish Dance in Alpharetta. The Northside has four Irish dance schools.



Lisa Cregan-O'Brien leads a group of about 24 Irish step dancers in rehearsals at the Alpharetta school.

# A place to go green all year

## Venues develop Irish dancers, musicians

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It's been said that everyone is Irish on St. Patrick's Day. But on the Northside, being Irish is becoming an everyday thing.

On any given day of the week from Norcross to east Cobb County, you can find young girls prancing from heel to toe as they learn Irish step dancing. Every first and third Sunday at the Harp Irish Pub in Roswell, you can hear the harmonies of uilleann pipes, fiddles, slide whistles and button accordions.

"People would rather find places

"They may not have an Irish bone in their body, but they will say, 'I want to do that.'"

**LISA CREGAN-O'BRIEN**  
Step dance instructor

out here than have to drive to Decatur," said Katherine Irwin Thomas, a fiddler from Alpharetta, who is referring to Eddie's Attic, a venue with a long history of hosting Irish musicians. "That's an hour away."

The Irish community reaches deep into the Northside. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there are more than 30,000 people who claim some degree of Irish heritage living in Alpharetta, Sandy Springs, Roswell,

Dunwoody, Marietta and Cumming. But the green appeal extends

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