

JUNE 2000

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
4 Two - Step Lessons	5	6	7 Line Dance Lessons
11 Two - Step Lessons	12	13	14 Line Dance Lessons
18 Two - Step Lessons	19	20	21 Line Dance Lessons
25 Two - Step Lessons	26	27	28 Line Dance Lessons

Sunday - Two Step Lessons at 7:00 with Joe Macera
 Wednesday - Line Dance Lessons at 7:00 with Debbie Bliss
 Friday - Line Dance Lessons at 7:00 with Joe Shutt
 Cat Country Dance Party Night Every Friday
 Saturday - Line Dance Lessons at 7:00 with Gail McKenna

Line Dance Lessons
 Cat Country Dance Party

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Side - Bar Comments

Club Hours
 Wednesday 7 PM - 1 AM
 Friday 7 PM - 1 AM
 Saturday 7PM - 1 AM
 Sunday 7 PM - 12 PM

MARDI GRAS

1500 Oaklawn Ave.
 Cranston, RI
 (401) 463-3080

Sundays
 Free Two Step Lessons
 with Joe Macera
 7 - 8 PM

This newsletter can be viewed on line at
www.mikeponte.com/mardigras



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 Co-editor: Joe Macera
 Writer, Columnist: Esther Scittarelli
June 2000

interview links
bioGraphy reviews

HATS OFF!!
 He's a quiet man by most standards as he stands back from the crowd. But for all that he does he stands out! This man goes about his business seemingly unnoticed. He moves within and around the crowd almost anonymously. Yet what he manages to accomplish is so crucial, so vital to this very establishment's nightly success. Night after night, he conscientiously does his job with perfect competence, unwittingly sensing exactly what



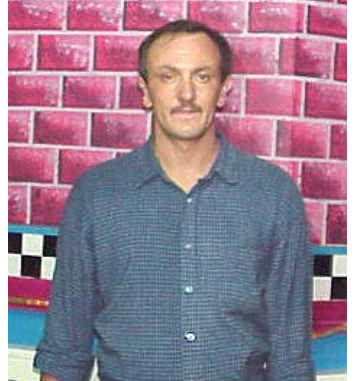
Club Manager Paul Waldrop

has to be tended to and sees to its accomplishment. Thanks to his expertise things run wonderfully smooth on a nightly basis without a hitch. He's interesting to watch, this manager of ours and smoothly qualified. There is a definite something to be

said of his loyalty to the management title he bears, for he serves it well. There's something not often enough said to those who work behind the scenes, take no credit, but deserve an appreciative bit of gratitude just for being who they are and for doing what they do so very well!
 So to Mardi Gras' Manager, Paul Waldrop, (who, incidently, hails from Chicago) a noteworthy compliment to his efforts and dedication to managing this wonderful social establishment.. For without his attention to detail-where would we be?

written by Esther Scittarelli
 I still remember my first time at Diamond Rodeo. I had just gotten back from Nashville where I was too busy working to do much of anything else. Sure, I watched people dance there, and when I got back here to Rhode Island, I continued my voyeurism, sitting at the bar or the rail and watching everyone dance. They were having a great time.
 "I wish I could get up there and dance like that", I thought to myself. I probably said it to myself, too. You see, I had never danced in my life - well maybe a few times just getting up there and trying to move to the music. But nothing like this, all of these people were dancing in unison., well, mostly all of them, some were spinning more than others.
 "If I get up there, everyone will be watching me, and I'll

make a fool out of myself." Then I heard the DJ say there were free line dance lessons on Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday , and two step les-



Harry Pratt

sons on Sunday.
 "That really does look like fun ...maybe if I get here early enough, I can take the lessons and learn to dance like that, too.." So I made it early on a Saturday night. Getting out there for that first lesson was probably the hardest part, but I finally did. I stumbled through that first lesson. I had no idea what a jazz-box or a sailor step or a vine or even a shuffle step was. But the instructor was very helpful and patient and some of the regulars helped me through it to. I was still pretty self conscious about not knowing what I was doing: but the one thing people told me was, "Keep coming back, it gets easier" So I did. The first couple of weeks I was still pretty self conscious, and I still stumbled and fumbled. This was something totally new to me. Not just country dancing, but dancing altogether! But people were

introducing themselves (that's good because I guess I'm kind of shy). I was getting a lot of help with the steps, whether it was from the instructors or people I was beginning to meet. Hey, you know, sometime during those first few weeks I stopped worrying about people watching me and I started having fun. That's when, I think, the dances started getting easier. I get out there on the dance floor as much as I can, and if I miss a stepOh Well! Everyone's not watching me, they're having fun, and so aim I. I wanted to learn to two step, so I began coming on Sunday nights. I've learned the basic steps and some spins and turns, and I can even pick up on a two step song now! Sometimes I even find myself walking quick, quick, slow, slow when I'm not even on the dance floor! Now I try to make it to as many lessons as possible. For not only learning how to dance, I've met and I'm still meeting some really wonderful people. I'm glad I got out there and stumbled through that first lesson, and kept coming back. Now I know what a jazz box is and I can do a sailor step. A vine comes naturally, and a shuffle step is easy. Someone once told me, "if, you're not having fun, don't do it." I'm having fun, so I'm going to keep on doing it.

Wow! Look at the time it's almost seven o'clock, If I hurry, I can still make it in time for tonight's lesson... Hope to see You all there!

Harry Pratt

TEACHER! TEACHER!

Yes! He's jolly! ..And.. we all love him dearly-because endearing he is. Catch him here at Diamond Rodeo most Fri-

day nights like clockwork-to deliver his expertise-teaching country dance-as only he can! And yes, a veritable veteran at it he is! This man delivers his stuff with an ease and style all his own. Not only is he a great dance step informant but this one derives as much pleasure communicating the dance scenarios as readily as we hungrily absorb each and every one of them! There is no ceremony here! Just fun in learning the dance



**Dance Instructor
Joe Shutt**

with a smile-balanced in a definite mutual admiration society-not only for the dance-the country dance, but for our own lovable Joe Shutt. Yes, all of our potential accomplished dancers come to ingest his contagious teaching enthusiasm, his love of the country dance, his trendy weekly instructionals. Regulars and newcomers alike flock to absorb the skill at which he delivers. And yet-he's one of us-making it all that much more appealing! Joe.. "We applaud you with a standing ovation-not only for being who you are.. so approachable, so congenial-but for being our weekly Friday night dance guru.. allowing and sharing with us the pleasure of your teaching talent!"

written by Esther Scittarelli

Mike Camara is a choreographer who lives in our area. He also dances at this club often. A basic internet search with his name will bring up several of the line dances that bare his name. Listed below is one of his dances that has gained world wide recognition. Keep up the good work Mike, we are proud of you!



**Choreographer
Mike Camara**

Mike Ponte



FORWARD, STEP BACK, SHUFFLE BACK ROCK BACK, STEP FORWARD, SHUFFLE FORWARD

- 1-2 Rock Step Forward on Left, Step Back on Right
- 3&4 Step Back on Left & Step Right next to Left, Step Back on Left
- 5-6 Rock Step Back on Right, Step Forward on Left
- 7&8 Step Forward on Right & Step Left Next to Right, Step Forward on Right

STEP, HALF TURN HOOK, SHUFFLE

- 9-10 Step Forward on Left, Pivot 1/2 Turn Right, hooking Right Leg Across Left Shin
- 11&12 Step Forward Right & Step Left Next to Right, Step Forward Right
- 13-16 Repeat counts 9-12
(Note: You have done two 1/2 Pivot turns to return to the original wall)

SYNCOPATED CHASSE' LEFT WITH CLAPS, STEP, BEHIND, SIDE SHUFFLE, 1/4 TURN:

- 17-18 Step Left on Left Foot, Hold and Clap Hands
- &19 Step Right Next to Left, Step Left on Left Foot
- 20 Touch Right Next to Left and Clap Hands
- 21-22 Step Right on Right Foot, Step Behind Right Foot on Left Foot (moving right)
- 23 Step Right on Right Foot
- &24 Step Left Foot next to Right Foot, Step 1/4 Turn Right on Right Foot
(Note: You are now facing your new wall, 90 degrees to the right from your original wall [3 O'clock])

STEP 1/2 TURN, 1/2 TURNING SHUFFLE, ROCK BACK, STEP FORWARD, SHUFFLE

- 25-26 Step Forward on Left Foot, Pivot 1/2 Turn to Right
- 27 Step Forward Left
- & Step Right Next to Left turning 1/4 Turn Right
- 28 Step Back on Left turning 1/4 turn right
- 29-30 Rock Back on Right Foot, Step Forward on Left Foot
- 31&32 Step Forward Right & Step Left next to Right, Step Forward Right
(Note: This sequence does a 1/2 turn right, and two 1/4 turns right, returning you to the "new wall" [3 O'clock])



GOOD BALANCE

FOR THE BEGINNING STUDENT

Teachers be careful with your beginning students. Allow them a few mistakes but try to get across to them that "Rome wasn't built in a day" and it does take a little time and effort to learn even the basic fundamentals of dance.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE BEGINNER

1. Try a little harder. It takes time to learn a new skill.
2. Give yourself a goal to work toward.
3. It will take longer to learn to dance if you have to correct bad habits.
4. Practice! Practice at home 'alone'. You don't need a partner to practice basic patterns. Listen to the music, then put the patterns to the music.
5. Ask for a Line Dance print out. Learn to read it. Go home and study it. You already were introduced to the dance. Use the print out as a cue sheet. Call the teacher if there is something you don't understand.
6. Be on time for the lesson. The teacher cannot make the rest of the class wait while you catch up on what has been covered.
7. Ask questions. Maybe someone else has the same question in mind but is afraid to ask it.
8. Try not to monopolize the teacher's time. You are not the only student in the class.
9. Don't expect the teacher to give you a 'free' lesson after the class. Most teachers keep a few minutes free toward the end of the lesson for questions.
10. If you have difficulty learning, maybe you need some private lessons.

MUSIC INTERPRETATION AND INDIVIDUALITY

Make your styling strong enough so your dancing looks the same no matter who you are dancing with. Step patterns should be exact and precise - in actual dancing they are combined in many different ways so that the beginning of one step may be combined with a beginning of another or with parts of several steps. This is the man's way of interpreting music, since it is up to him to choose which step to use.


A lady can obtain individuality in her dancing through her styling, use of head, hands, arms, feet, and shoulders, while dancing. She can learn to do this by going over step patterns by herself - actually dancing alone. She should try all styling pointers suggested by instructors and experiment with ideas of her own.

Leading and doing the man's part of dance steps was never intended to make the lady a good leader. It is intended to make her adapt herself to the fair and poor dancers she will run into on every dance floor. It also gives her the chance to experiment with music interpretation - what to do when and how.

Music interpretation and individuality in your dancing is what distinguishes the excellent dancer from the crowd. A lady's styling can become strong enough to make the dancing couple look good even if her partner is only fair.

by Jim Banta





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