

projects, giving back to the community, as well as helping surrounding towns. You are all welcome to check out our website at www.foxborojaycees.org.

When I am not busy with the Jaycees, I also enjoy camping, hiking, canoeing, sailing, and a lot of other outdoor activities. Although I live 30 minutes away in Massachusetts, I thoroughly enjoy spending my Friday and Saturday nights dancing with all my great friends. Not only is it fun, but it serves as an excellent stress reliever, as well as a fun exercise program. I hope to see you all on the dance floor!

Andrea



Cynthia Sebetes

It's New Year's Eve. Joe just asked me to write an article for the Mardi Gras newsletter. It got me thinking. The first time I ever set foot in Mardi Gras (then Mustang Sally's) was 9 years ago, on New Year's Eve. My sister had talked me into coming to Mardi Gras. I never liked clubs. I couldn't just get out there and dance like so many others. Despite two years of tap dancing lessons and seven years

of jazz lessons, I felt awkward doing my own thing. When we walked into the Diamond Rodeo room and I saw everybody doing the same thing, I knew I had to come back. The marquee said, "Free Country Line Dance Lessons with Joe Schutt". I was psyched! I went out and bought some cowboy boots and the lessons began. I've learned so many dances that I've forgotten so many of them! There was a time when I knew every single dance they were doing. I came three nights a week and took all the lessons. Besides dancing, the Diamond Rodeo is a great place to relax and socialize. There are so many nice people there. So many of them have taken the time to show me how to do certain dances, now that I can't get out 3 nights a week anymore. I go alone most of the time, but I'm never alone once I'm there. Gail, Peter, Sherri, Sandra, Sarah, "older" Joe, "the mailman" Joe, Chris and Wendy are just some of the great people at Mardi Gras. Thanks for being there guys.

Cynthia Sebetes



New Years Eve 2002



Rita Polce

There was no doubt in our minds as to where we wanted to spend our New Year's Eve. For the past few years we have been going to the Mardi Gras Complex, specifically the Diamond Rodeo where country music prevails and dancing is top priority. Everyone is your friend and ready to celebrate with you.

As we entered the front door you could just feel the great vibes and also smell the food from the buffet, which we were anxious to taste. After a few hugs and kisses with some close friends it was time to get in line for the food. Everything was planned well and the buffet was very appetizing.

Many of the girls were dressed formal, in gowns and very dressy outfits. I also saw a few tuxedos, which made the men look very handsome. Our favorite DJ, Joe DeSio, added class to the occasion by looking so well dressed in his tuxedo. I couldn't help but feel glad to see many men with cowboy hats, which basically is what the Diamond Rodeo is about-COUNTRY.

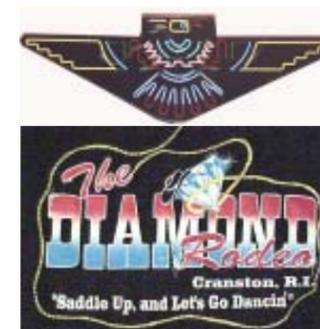
As we danced the night

away we were reminded from time to time how long it would be to the bewitching hour of 12 midnight. I've always had a tendency to feel sad with the old year and all it's memories leaving us and the new year coming upon us with all it's uncertainties. This year I felt differently. What happened on Sept. 11, 2001 will never be forgotten and it taught us we needed to be more prepared as a country against those who are jealous of our freedom and the American way of life. 2002 is a year that will never be forgotten.

As we counted down the seconds to midnight everyone just felt the excitement of the moment and happy sounds echoed through the club. Balloons covered the dance floor but not for long, the crowd was determined to break everyone of them no matter how they accomplished this. Our champagne toast made the night even more special as we rang in the year 2003.

Dancing resumed and our favorite "Hat Dancers" did a great job going through their routine. The crowd really loves watching them. I must say it was another great New Years Eve party at the Diamond Rodeo with friends, dancing to our favorite country music and good food. I do wish everyone a very happy new year with many more wonderful times at our favorite club the "Diamond Rodeo".

Rita Polce 1/2/03



Side - Bar
Comments

Club Hours

Wednesday 7 PM - 1 AM
Friday 7 PM - 1 AM
Saturday 7PM - 1 AM



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

Wednesdays
Fridays
Saturdays
Free Line Dance Lessons
with Gail McKenna
7 - 8 PM

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



Quick Quick... Slow Slow



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February 2003

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The Never Ending Argument



Chris Whitten

Since the dawn of time there have been many questions that just haven't been answered. But for the most part, we just accept them as they are and get on with our lives. Yet, there is one argument that I personally will never let die... and for good reason. I think it's mostly because my point of view makes too much sense. At this point you're probably thinking... What's the never-ending question you're talking about?

What came first... the chicken or the egg? Nope! Boxers or briefs? Nope! Is the cup half full or half empty? Nope... wrong again! If you said: The Toilet Seat... Up or Down - you'd be absolutely correct! It is, without a

doubt, the number one argument that will get anyone's blood to boil. As a guy, I guess I just don't get it. We tend to think logically. Just leave it as is when you're finished. That way there in the long run it will all work out evenly. Men walk in, put the lid up and then leave it up when we're done. That way when the lady takes her turn, she puts the lid down and then she leaves it down when she's done. It seems pretty simple, 50/50. But for some reason, that's not what the ladies think. I think it's because they've been humiliated one too many times in the past by sitting down without looking and they end up taking a dip. I call this S.B.S. (soggy bottom syndrome). That's when it turns into the guy's problem. For some reason, that's our fault. Not the ladies' fault for not checking before she sat down. Once again, we think logical. If you were going to cross the road, wouldn't you look both ways before you do so? Of course you would. You wouldn't just assume that the cars are going to stop just because you want to cross. The same logic applies here. If you're going to sit down in the bathroom, you want to look before you do so.

If you're a guy, at this point you're probably grinning from ear to ear because you know exactly what I'm talking about. Yet if you're a woman, I bet you probably think I'm a pigheaded idiot, which is not the case. I guess you could say that my lady has got me

trained just like a little puppy. I always put the lid down when I leave the bathroom. Not because I think it should be, but just to be a nice guy. Yet every once in a while I'll hear a splash, followed by a shriek and that's when the never-ending argument starts up... yet again!

Chris Whitten



Two step or not two step?



Bubba

Some like it, some don't. I can't think of any other way to dance.

Don't get me wrong, I love to watch the ladies doing their line dancing, everyone seems to enjoy it. But there is no romance, no contact, physical, eye, or any other kind. I really enjoy the idea of dancing with fifty other women, but not all at once.

One at a time will do, thank you very much. I learned how to 2 step in 1980, dead drunk in a bar called San Antonio Rose, exact location still unknown. An older woman dragged me on the floor, and off we went. I've never been the same since.

The biggest difference from

Wednesday-Line Dance Lessons at 7:00 with Gail McKenna
Friday - Line Dance Lessons at 7:00 with Gail McKenna
Cat Country Dance Party Night Every Friday
Saturday - Line Dance Lessons at 7:00 with Gail McKenna



**Wednesdays, Fridays & Saturdays
Gail McKenna**

Texas 2 step and up here is the women. The women down there love to 2 step. I think they're taught in the womb, not to say they are all good, but most of them will do quite nicely.

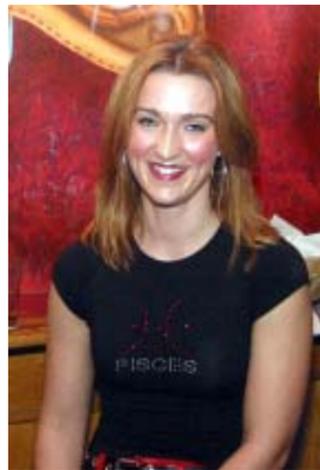
Some of the ladies up here line dance for the aerobics, for others, it just feels good. It may be a novelty, or they're with a group of friends and thought it would be a hoot. Well ladies, once you get past that, there is only one way to dance with a man, 2-step.

I think the biggest difficulty you'll have is figuring out the man gets to lead.

For some of the more assertive women this maybe a real problem. But kick back and let the men do the work. In some cases ladies, it's the only time you'll get to enjoy the feeling. So get out there and do it.

Gentleman, I haven't even started on you yet. I can't begin to tell you how good it feels to lead a beautiful woman around the floor. If you haven't tried it you'd better start. Like I said, for some of you it will be your only chance to get your way, even if it is fully clothed on a dance floor in front of a couple hundred people. You have to start somewhere. So why not now. The last thing I should say about it is you are out there to have fun. If you screw up, so what! Nobody is keeping score. Relax have a few drinks and go Bubba go!

Bubba



Melanie

HELP me! I've been trapped at The Diamond Rodeo for about five years, but for the past two years, I've been held hostage every Friday night! I've started camping out till 1 a.m. on Saturday's now too, can't stay away! My obsession began in 1993, when I was at Rhode Island College for Special Education Program. A classmate named Donna Macera "Tush-Pushed" her way on the gymnasium floor as part of her Phys. Ed. lesson. I love all kinds of dancing so I was instantly hooked on the energy of it all as she shouted "You can keep it clean girls or you can SHAKE THAT THING!" (Shaking it was easy, though quarter turning in the right direction at the right time was challenging at first!) Donna was the first one to teach me that it was all about kickin' up a good time and feeling energized (and of course trying desperately not to look ridiculous while doing it!)

Then I met Jimmy Harvey through Donna and he became my new mentor. He was patient enough to coach me through more line dances like "Walk the Line", "The Earthquake", "The Hitchhiker", "Slappin' Leather", as well as couples dances like "The Lambada", "The Sway", and "The North Carolina Stroll".

He then offered to take dance lessons with me so that I could learn Two-Step, East & West Coast Swing from Debbie and Jack. Soon after all of my whining and stepping on his feet, people were soon complimenting us on how well we danced together. (The secret: It is all in a good leader! Be sure to remind the guys that). We continued to go dancing sometimes 3-4 times a week and met Joe Shutt and taught us more line dances. We were then encouraged (thanks Joe Macera) to enter the Marlboro Competition in 1995 at "Mustang Sally's," which was my first great memory at Diamond Rodeo. Practicing nightly we lived at the Diamond Rodeo for awhile, got to know people like Brian (former DJ) real well. Before we knew it, we were on a plane to Fla. with cash in our pockets to compete in the finals. (Thank You!) Since then, a lot of things have changed over the years. The dance floor became a little bigger, the bull was taken out and in went two statues of horses. The crowd used to mingle to the "Barn Dance" and now they "Renegade". Jimmy and I stopped dancing together and Joe DiTusa and I started Two-Step and West Coast every weekend. Stan used to "snake" on the floor during "Flat Foot Clog" but now others do. Brian moved out of state.

However, lots of things still remain the same: the "Hitchhiker" and the "Tush Push" never left. Some of the same people that went 5 years ago still show. I continue to build new friendships (like Natalie, Joe, Noelle, and Jeff :) and meet great people from other states as well like Montana, Colorado, and Texas, who pass through searching for a reminder of their home while visiting RI. Every now and then I catch a blast from the past

with ol' faces from 10 years ago when I first learned to "heel toe".

The Diamond Rodeo is not just a country bar. For me, it continues to be a safe, fun place where I feel comfortable to go alone, especially since I don't even drink. Those "closet country" listeners that I bring all agree the atmosphere is not what they expect and they come back wanting to learn more.

What I love most about the people at The Diamond Rodeo is that they never take themselves too seriously. No one is competitive and they are all there on a mission to let a week's worth of stress out by stomping around to some great country music and goofing off.

I think the most popular questions I get asked when I am at Mardi Gras is "What is that called?" "How did you learn to do that?" "Can you teach me?" I usually direct people to the nights Mardi Gras has lessons, but occasionally some are able to learn on the spot.

Years ago, Jim taught me the most important lesson: It doesn't matter how many times you make a mistake or if you show off and fall on your face, dancing is supposed to be fun. Get up, dust yourself off, and try again.

Now, when I am able to learn a new dance just by watching, I am reminded of how grateful I am that someone took the time to teach me the basic steps to many of the dances. It is addictive! Once you learn, you can't stop! And what a good time!

You can usually find me dancing with Joe DiTusa---out of breath (that is when I can steal him away from everyone else!)

Happy New Year! (What a great 2003 party!)



Al Foster

I won the Race with Trace contest that Cat Country held. We left for Nashville on December 14th. The first day we met Trace Atkins and Daryl Waltrip at a Nascar Simulator store and raced in full size race cars, I came in second place. After the race we went to a restaurant and had lunch with Trace and met his wife and two children. He played a few songs and we shared some good times. Later that evening, we were his guest at the Grand Ole Opry. He performed and was followed by Toby Keith, it was a great night. The next day we toured the Country Music Hall of Fame and were able to be participants in the TV audience on CMT with Jody Messina and Keith Urban. Of course we danced at the Wildhorse and toured all the watering holes where everybody is Cowboy hats and boots. If any one has the chance, a trip to Nashville is a must, we had three great days in Music City.

Albert Foster



I've noticed that there are almost as many Two-Step styles here at the Diamond Rodeo as there are couples who dance it. I got curious about that, and did some research. Here's what I came up with, it's pretty interesting so I'd like to share it with you.

Two Step originated around 1890 and has undergone a series of changes since then. At that time, it was more like what we now call Polka with three steps to two beats of music. If someone learned to Two Step in a Honky Tonk years ago, what they learned was the ballroom version which came from the Foxtrot footwork of SSQQ (Slow, Slow, Quick, Quick) or four steps to six beats of music. In the 1980's, SSQQ was replaced with QQSS because professionals eventually reasoned that it better fit the music throughout contemporary country songs.



Gloria Tetu

Texas seems to be where the two forms split. They have a footwork pattern of QQSS (three steps to two beats). It used four steps to three beats of music. I have been invited to dance with guys from Texas and was totally confused by this strange way of Two-Stepping, but I'm sure it's lots of fun once you get used to it.

Since the music we use to Two-Step, has four beats per measure, it's not very comfortable to dance in beats of three as the Texas dancers do. It is this uncomfortable feeling that the professionals were trying to avoid when they preferred the Two-Step pattern of QQSS. I don't know who can be credited with

changing the footwork, but it's obvious that someone had the insight to recognize the advantage of synchronizing with the music by inserting another step and counting it differently. If you dance with anyone from Texas you never know which way they'll do it because Texans do it both ways.

Other than switching from SSQQ to QQSS the two other main changes were in hand positions. For fear of losing their drinks while dancing, men began to carry their drinks over their partner's left shoulder while dancing. This changed the Close position from the man's right hand being on the woman's back to being on her left shoulder. The only other hand change was in styling. The country-dancing types kept their hands at the waist even while free spinning, ballroom styling puts the hands out for balance. These differences, while slight, have brought much dissension with them.

But whatever your style of Two-Stepping, the important thing is for you to be comfortable, enjoy the sights and sounds at the Diamond Rodeo, and most importantly, ENJOY.



Andrea

When I was approached to writing a column for this newsletter, I didn't know what to say. So I decided I would tell you a little bit about myself. I have been dancing on and off at Mardi Gras for five years. A group of my friends had been going for awhile and kept talking about how much fun they were having learning how to line dance. They kept asking me to come along with them and, I finally did one October night. I haven't stopped since. Now I have dragged my friend, who didn't want any part of country music or line dancing. One year later you all can say "hi" to Monica who is still out there, dancing the night away.

Outside of dancing, I spend much of my free time participating in a not for profit organization called the Foxboro Jaycees. The Jaycees devote their time and energy raising money through various

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