

WORLD LINE DANCE NEWSLETTER



Midnight Rodeo Winter Workshop 2010

Well, it might have been called the Winter Workshop but the seminar and event were HOT!!! Wow, what a turnout for Jo Thompson-Szymanski. I first saw Jo at the Marathon in Raleigh sometime in the early 1990s or around that time, and I swear she still looks and acts the same. Her classes were so huge you couldn't get in the class back then and she's still doing it even today because this event was sold out very early. She really worked hard but made it look so easy. I have a tremendous amount of respect for her as a teacher/choreographer/personality but I have even more respect to see her come back from a very difficult medical challenge and I mean COME BACK!! She was accessible to everyone, was very friendly, and even had a photo session because there were so many people who wanted their picture taken with her. Be sure and look at the pictures. It was fun to see people who had never seen her before realize what a true star she is in our community. I still miss her TV show on the country channel. I think every line dancer in the world would tune in to that show every afternoon. She brings years of dance experience and media experience to every class she teaches and it's just a special treat. She also must have the most wonderful husband in the world. I remember reading month after month about her experiences with aplastic anemia on the blog that her husband wrote so lovingly on their blog, www.jothompson.blogspot.com. Take a moment to read it and you will be amazed, too. Jo shared a little bit about her illness and kind of breezed over the things she had to experience but you will see that it was a real ordeal and to see her there with my own eyes, even though people have been telling me for months that she is truly back to her old self, was just a special thing.

I also have to talk about what a wonderful job Marilyn and Ray and their WONDERFUL staff do to pull off these seminars. They are just amazing to me. You are greeted in the morning by the staff who greet you with a smile and efficiently check you off the list and give you these neat little bracelets that you slip on your hand that were so cute. After finding a seat (and there were seats for everyone, amazingly enough because there were over 200 people at this event), you can grab a donut and coffee and chat a few minutes before starting the day. "The Twins," who are the granddaughters of Marilyn and Ray, are now 13 and we've watched them grow up over the years while helping with the events and it's fun to see them growing into such beautiful young ladies.

Stacy kept a list of all the dances taught -- some old and some new -- but even the old ones seemed new to me because I hadn't done them in awhile. Some, like JUKEBOX, are done all over the world and this dance has been done since it was introduced long ago. I particularly liked HAVE I TOLD YOU LATELY, a feel-good NC 2 and, of course, her other new one, SHOES OF ANOTHER MAN. This one has jumped to the top of the charts and

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will keep growing as more people learn it. Jo is one of those choreographers that brings an understanding of couples dance to line dancing and it is what sets those choreographers apart who understand that when there is a certain rhythm, like West Coast Swing or Samba or Cha-Cha, and you write a line dance with the appropriate steps, they are so easy to remember even if you don't do them for a long time, and they are so easy to learn because the instructor can explain what the beat of a Night Club 2 is, for instance, like Jo did before she even began to teach HAVE I TOLD YOU LATELY. It makes every dance make sense when choreographers can bring that experience to line dancing.

After a morning of dancing, we then were served a wonderful lunch prepared by Ray and his helpers. There was baked beans, pulled pork with an amazing array of sauces to choose from, buns to make a sandwich, cole slaw, a big salad bar with green salad and pasta salad, and lots of desserts, including cakes and brownies and everything was delicious!! I was talking when the line started and didn't realize everyone was lining up for lunch so I got way at the end and was thinking I was going to be there awhile but they arranged it so that line zoomed through. It's not often you get a full meal with a seminar and it was a great chance to just sit and relax and enjoy the lunch break.

I was also impressed that the dancers who attended were so thoughtful and shared the dance floor so nicely. There were a lot of people there but everyone just kind of kept their lines together and shared a space when someone would get on the floor. Oh, and the bathrooms were really nice!! When's the last time you could say that for a club? In fact, the entire club looked so nice and fresh and it was just a good place to spend the day. I didn't stay for the evening but I know Jo was teaching more dances in the evening and then Marilyn and Ray did their Sunday morning breakfast at their home in "the barn," that doesn't look like any barn you've had breakfast in before. It has a wonderful dance floor and lots of equipment and furniture for big parties and it's just a perfect ending to the weekend. I'm sure you all enjoyed it. There was a WHOLE BUNCH of raffle prizes given away as well as a 50/50 drawing so there were lots of happy people winning passes to events and other fun things and money. I'm sure Marilyn will thank everyone who donated things in her report when it's posted on her site and I'll send you the link.

The dances are listed below (thanks for keeping track, Stacy) and I know there will be many reports about the event and I'll ask Stacy to add them to this report so you can read more about it. I just want to thank Marilyn and Ray for another great seminar and to all the people who help make this work so beautifully, you are special people who do a great job. I can't wait to do it all over again when Rachael McEnaney comes in March, so get your registrations in early because I'm sure this will be another big seminar there and I'm sure it will be excellent, as all of them are. I always have a note at the bottom of every newsletter

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saying that I don't endorse or recommend things that are posted in the newsletter. Well, I'll make an exception with the seminars at Midnight Rodeo hosted by Marilyn and Ray and promise you that you will have a great time and you should go. Thanks to everyone who introduced yourselves that I hadn't met before and I hope to see you all there in March!! You're going to love Rachael, too!!

DANCES TAUGHT:

Just For Grins
It Had To Be You
Have I Told You Lately
Splish Splash
Jukebox (quickie teach)
Dancing In The Dark
Shoes Of Another Man
Sing A New Song - Dance A New Dance
Years From Now Waltz
Louisiana Hot Sauce

OPEN DANCES (NOT IN ORDER):

Playing With Fire - Craig Bennett
Stuff You Gotta Watch - Michele Perron
Rain Against My Window - Michael Barr
Hands Up - Craig Bennett
Toes - Rachael McEnaney
Cumbia Semana - Ira Weisburd
Tennessee Waltz Surprise - Andy Chumbley
Come Dance With Me - Jo Thompson
Tango Cha - Jo Thompson Szymanski & Deborah Szekely
Feel - Scott Blevins
Jo & Jo Tango - Jo Thompson Szymanski & Rita Jo Thompson
Cinco De Mayo - Alan "Renegade" Livett & Jo thompson
Angie - Roy Verdonk, Wil Bos & Raymond Sarlemijn

SCHEDULED SATURDAY NIGHT TEACHES:

Funkafied Blues
Enchanted
MJ Moves