

WORLD LINE DANCE NEWSLETTER



I consider it a great honor to be the first one picked to write a bio for Carol's web page. It is also a little scary and very difficult to write about myself. Instead of writing a bio, I decided to try to answer Carol's suggested questions, so here goes.....

Where do you consider "home"?

Brick, New Jersey. I live in the "shore" area, I love the beach, boardwalk and blue drinks at the Tiki Bar J

Where were you or what did you see that made you say, "I want to do that!!"

I was at a local Armed Forces Show at Fort Monmouth, NJ. I am a civilian electronics engineer for the Army and I had been doing demos all day in hot army vehicles. At the end of the day we headed for the beer tent to cool off and listen to the bands. My co-worker friend, Maria, was a member of the Tim Gillis Band at the time and we wanted to hear her sing. As the band started to play, out came a dance troupe called Leather And Lace. All decked out in hats and boots, the ladies had big skirts with fringe on the bottom that flew out as they twirled

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around, it was really very exciting as they danced down the aisles. They did some line and couple routines and I asked my friend later how I could learn to do that.

How did you get started with dancing, or DJ'g or producing videos or whatever?

Soon after seeing the dance troupe performance I started riding with my friend Maria to the bars where she performed so that I could take line dance lessons. This was in the hey-day of line dancing and the clubs were packed every night of the week. Eventually I joined the Hicks & Company dance troupe and started performing and teaching with them. My partner back then was Randy Stark and we traveled all over. When the troupe broke up I went out on my own with my boyfriend, Jim (DJ Jam).

What made you want to continue?

The music! My mom liked country music and when I was growing up she used to take me to see her friend's band, Darlene Wild and the Wildwood when she sang in the local country bars. I grew up with Darlene's daughter, another Maria, and we used to hang out and sing along. Once in awhile my friend used to sing the Teddy Bear song with her mom. I was in awe of her; she had such a beautiful voice. I left country music for a bit but finding it again later in life with line dancing makes it even more special and brings back great memories. I really enjoy all the music associated with line dancing but I have always been a big country fan and go to as many concerts as I can every year.

What has been a real thrill for you related to dancing?

While dancing with Hicks & Company we performed at big shows all over New York and New Jersey. It was very exciting. I also enjoyed competing at Worlds, I love wearing the big waltz skirt, it makes me feel like a princess.

What type of dancing/teaching do you do?

I teach mostly line dancing and some pattern partner dances. I used to teach two-step, swing (I love Pony Swing), etc., but we really don't have many couples anymore.

What dances have you choreographed that you are most proud of (because I know some of you will have a zillion of them)?

Garbage Man and Badonkadonk are my most well known dances. We like to joke that I'm most famous for garbage and people's butts.....

Who have been mentors in your dance career?

My first instructor was Tom Hicks. He taught me the basics and encouraged me to dance. Once I started going to dance weekends and competitions I was totally hooked. Max Perry was one of the first big name instructors that taught me that there was more to line dancing than just the steps. I took his arms and footwork technique class and decided I needed to know more. My mentor for dance teaching is James Gregory. His unique style of calling dances is mesmerizing and I haven't seen anyone yet that can come close to him. Calling dances is really an art form that requires skill and practice.

What hobbies and interests do you have outside of dancing?

I used to compete in Roller Skating when I was young. Sometimes when I'm two-stepping around I feel like I am skating again. I was also a magician for awhile. I had a friend, Boho The Clown, with a magic shop called The Magic Wand where I would work part time. I was also his assistant when he performed; I was the one under the table loading the bunny in the tube. Uh oh – did I let that secret out of the bag? J I love my pets, Webster the sheep dog, Thumper the neurotic cat and Houdini the love bird that can escape from any cage. I also have a Harley Davidson motorcycle that has been sitting in the garage for way too long, I'm never home to ride it anymore. I just bought a Jeep Liberty and I'm trying to convince Jim to let me take it to some Jeep Jamborees. He says I don't want muddy water blowing out of my air conditioning vents, but we'll see! I love to create web pages for my friends (www.jg2country.com, www.gottalinedance.com, www.juniorwillis.com to name a few) and I have been writing a monthly article for the last five years for the NJ Country Music Association's Country Music Scene magazine.

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What type of job do you do or dream of doing (if you would like to share it)?

I can retire from my engineering job with the Army in 4 years and I look forward to having more time to travel, write and teach dancing. My dream would be to have a little dance studio attached to my house. I would enjoy teaching 4-year olds to tap dance!

Just give us a general overview of you as a person and a dancer.

I think that's enough about me, I don't want to bore you to death! If you want to see my embarrassing photo of me in my little tap dance outfit when I was 4 years old or read my articles you can visit my web page, www.RedHotCountry.com. While you are there please drop me a line and say hi!

Thank you to those that nominated me to be on the who's who web page!
Hugs to all my dancing friends,
Pepper