

The



June, 2005

Western Star

Newsletter of Western Star Dancers, a contemporary American square dance club primarily serving the San Francisco LGBT community. International Association of Gay Square Dance Clubs member. Address: 584 Castro Street #480 San Francisco, CA 94114

Visit our website: www.westernstardancers.org

READY FOR BLAST OFF TO

STAR THRU THE SILICON GALAXY

We're in the final countdown. All systems are go for launch into the Silicon Galaxy for the 22nd Annual convention of the International Association of Gay Square Dance Clubs (IAGSDC) in Santa Clara July 1-4. It is not too late to register for the convention or to book a hotel room, but don't delay because time is running short. Due to warps in the time/space continuum, there won't be any more IAGSDC conventions in this corner of the universe for quite some time. It would be a shame to miss this one.

An assortment of merchandise and food options, as well as every conceivable bit of intergalactic data pertaining the convention, awaits you at the convention website: www.silicongalaxy.org. Ten outstanding callers will keep you weaving, chaining, exchanging, spreading, and swinging throughout the weekend. Paramount's Great America amusement park, next door to the convention in the Santa Clara Marriott, will have gigantic fireworks blow-outs on both Saturday and Sunday evenings, July 2 and 3. Half price tickets are available for dancers who want to play hooky for a while and mingle with the Great American hoi polloi.

There is some exciting news about Friday night. All Join Hands Foundation is once again sponsoring our Trail-In Dance, so even if you can't make a full trip to the galaxy, please teleport in for a free night of dancing to some of your favorite callers. We'll also be having a contra dance that night with a live band, and after-hours country-western dancing.



But there is so much to do before the convention!

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Kris Jensen from Albuquerque will call for our Pride Dance on **Pink Saturday** (see the back page for particulars). We are expecting visitors coming early for the convention, so plan to host a festive occasion. Members are requested to contribute food to share. Volunteers will be needed to help decorate, collect admission, and sell 50-50 tickets. Contact Joe Iser to volunteer.

Diablo Dancers will celebrate their 13th Anniversary on June 4, and Foggy City Dancers will host their Pre-Pride Dance on June 18. See **Dance Calendar** in this newsletter for specifics.

Foggy City Dancers is sponsoring a contingent in the Pride Parade, and Kris Jensen will be calling. They hope for a large contingent, representing many clubs of the IAGSDC, as a prelude to the convention. In addition, they will need several people to complete the mandatory monitor training in order to participate in the parade. At press time, details are scarce. Tom Maher (tmaher@watson.org) of Foggy City is responsible for the organizing, and will pass on information when it becomes available. Check www.foggycity.org for more information, and watch your email for updates.

WSD HERITAGE

TIDBITS GLEANED FROM THE ARCHIVES OF WSD TODAY
& THE WESTERN STAR

Ask Mr. Squizard

ASK MR. SQUIZARD

If you could ask a square dance wizard anything about square dancing because you know he/she/it knows everything, what would you ask MR. SQU!ZARD?

Nick Carlson: *What level of square dancing do you enjoy the most and why?*

Mr. Squizard: There you go again using that word "level." What do I have to do to permanently fix the notion that square dancing has programs, not levels. *Levels* suggests that something is bigger, better, greater, harder than something else. *Programs* suggest a set of criteria needed to accomplish that program. The program I enjoy the most is the program being offered that I voluntarily choose to dance. If I choose to dance the Mainstream program now, that is my choice. If I choose the Plus program, so be it. Knowing more calls doesn't mean I have more fun. Knowing more calls is simply that; it doesn't mean I can dance the calls at all--much less with enjoyment. Square dancing is not just a series of calls; it is friendship, a deep, caressing, compassionate hug when I feel down. Square dancing is sharing my accomplishments and knowing my partner and my corner are truly happy for me. Square dancing is communicating with a smile to someone when they forget how to execute the call that you still love them and enjoy their company. Square dancing is dancing for yourself and someone else so that all eight of you can succeed. I enjoy the program I am dancing because I know that I, we, you, they have a choice to be at this dance, and I'm happy that we chose each other.

Chuck Yeo: *Where do they get the funny names of calls, like Dixie Style to a Wave?*

Mr. Squizard: Well, this one has a long history behind it. Since you didn't ask the origin of the name *wave*, I'll assume you know that. You must think of the starting and ending formation of the call. Dixie Style requires that you be in some formation of facing couples. This is representative of the struggle between the North and the South, the establishment of the Mason-Dixon Line, and the unrelenting fight to not surrender the flag of Dixie. When one begins the call, the dancer on the right, representing the attacking foot soldiers, is propelled across the set like a bullet from a rifle dodging each other in an attempt to get beyond the enemy line. At the same time, the left-hand dancer, representing the commanding forces, begins the charge of the remaining forces towards the enemy line. When the commanding officers of the opposing forces meet in the middle of the battlefield, there is recognition of the futility of war. They join hands and say, "H-e-e-re's Dixie!" The resulting formation is an ocean wave. Comprendo?

(Originally published in WSD Quarterly Selections, Winter 1994)

!TODDJOE!

aka The Mormon Boys

Interview by dan smith

[Ed. Note: When Todd and Joe, very smartly dressed in the WSD uniform, stepped onto the dance floor at the Oaktown 8s Coming Out Dance, Caller Darren Gallina announced their entrance, "The Mormon Boys are here!" The appellation stuck.]

D: What are your names?

T: Todd Young.

J: Joe Casserly.

D: Where were you born Joe?

J: I was born in New Jersey just across the river from Philly. Grew up there, but went to Connecticut and Philadelphia for school. Then I went to New Orleans to learn how to drink, decided the silt was too hard to swim out of, so I left there and came to San Francisco. I've been here since the late 70's.

T: I was born in Manhattan, Kansas and grew up in Grandview, Missouri, a suburb of Kansas City. Dad's family was one of the three founding families of that town; they were all big farming families. When I was in kindergarten or first grade Father bought the Crest Drive-in Theater so I grew up in the drive-in. For more than five years I saw EVERY movie that came out and I saw them all 7 times. After high school I went to college for psychology in this little bitty college town. When college wasn't in session the town had a population of about eight.

D: Why did you go for psychology?

T: In high school they asked me what I wanted and I had no clue so I flipped to the very, very back of the book to see what made the most and it was a

psychologist. I really like psychology so it was OK. One day in college I realized that all the students in my Psych class were crazy. I thought, "I don't want to be in a study group with any of these people." Then I realized that all the teachers were crazy too. I thought, "You know I really don't want to surround myself with these types of people for the rest of my life." So, I switched over to art.

D: Joe, what do you do for a living?

J: Right now I'm a Mister Computer fix-it guy. I got a job doing desktop support with an international urban renewal company. They design the groundwork for the Olympics. The Beijing Olympics is one of our projects. We also did the Atlanta Olympics. I also developed a secondary position within the company titled, The Global Software Licensing Management. Basically I keep track of all the licenses of all the software in all of our thirty so offices in the world. So when anybody wants to know how many disks they have or they want to buy new licenses they call me and I make it happen.

D: Besides square dancing is there anything you do together?

J: We're pretty scary boyfriends in that we do everything



together. We breed guppies. That's one of our big hobbies. We have about a dozen tanks. They are very pretty, hearty and easy to manage. We have fun decorating the tanks. For Christmas, Todd put one of those little porcelain snow villages in a tank. It had the old time things like street signs, trains, a snowman and a candy store. The fish would swim in and out of them and have a good time.

T: We also bird watch and fly kites.

D: How long have you been together?

T: Going on two years now. We met on the Internet for sex.

J: We lived a half a block away from each other for six years and we'd never seen each other. I wouldn't recommend the Internet for sex leading into a boyfriend, but we were just lucky because we had a lot in common and hit it off. The relationship quickly developed into something more than just a sexual intrigue.

D: How did you hear about square dancing?

T: We saw a demonstration tip at the Castro Street Fair. It looked like they were having the most

fun. It was fascinating because like a Rubric's cube you get knotted up and then it all comes out. Joe was amazed also. He's a lot more mathematical so I think he got interested in not only the social aspect of it but also the real intricacies of...

J: But I'm also a dancer! I've done professional dancing; Pop, Go-Go, choreography. I danced with a group called Oblong Rhonda. For about twenty years it was the counterpart to *Voice Farm*, a San Francisco Performance Art band. After my first lover died back in the late 80's I connected up with Oblong Rhonda and said, "Hey, I want to dance." We did shows at the I-Beam, the Edge in Palo Alto, etc. We did stuff all over the place.

Every dance was choreographed with mild improvisation but it would work. We had rehearsals 3 or 4 times a week. I always liked movement; I was a theater major for a while. I never really liked any particular kind of dance. I'd taken mime, jazz...but ultimately I'm a good barroom dancer. He is too. It's been really nice being with a guy who can dance because we can really have a good time together. And that's what I consider good dancing, to be able to let loose.

D: Why square dancing?

J: Well, he had square danced in school a little bit when he was a kid and so had I.

T: I was horrified that we were actually going to do it, but it looked like they were having so much fun and he really wanted

to do it. So I think, "You know I didn't die in school doing it so, ok I'll go." And it's just so different from what we'd learned in school.

J: In school you learn to do the set moves on a record. That's not what we're doing now. We have a Caller spontaneously calling moves. That is what makes it so exciting. Also I like what are called structured socials where a group of people get together and do some kind of activity and build a community. You're making friends and through this structure you're able to build relationships.

I've been hosting a poker game for fifteen years now. I rotate different people through but for me it's a structured social. There's a pace to the evening. Square dancing is like that.

D: Have you told your friends that you square dance?

J: People are surprised. They don't know how to take it. The 'hokey' quotient is one of the things that I like about it. That presses people's button but not in a bad way. That's why I like bird watching too, because there's a certain hokey quotient to it. I love challenging people in ways that open them up. Usually they're very enthused about square dancing. I think people who resist it have a chip on their shoulder. Ultimately it's just having fun. We have a hoot the whole time. We have a guaranteed laugh for two hours. If you go to a play downtown you're not going to be guaranteed that.

T: Nor will you make any friends.

D: At most activities you don't laugh and have a good time when you make a mistake.

T: Exactly but that's the best part. I was telling him when we went to the dance last Saturday [Anniversary Dance] that there were times when things got all messed up and I just started laughing and I just could not stop. For the next five calls I'm trying to listen to the next call but still just laughing and having so much fun,

J: That was our first dance.

D: Well is there anything else you'd like to add.

J: Over all, I feel we got a real deal here, definitely bang for the buck. Now that we've covered pretty much all of the calls I'd like to take the last few weeks of class and really solidify what I've learned. There are a number of calls that take me a while to get because there are so many names. It just becomes really daunting. I'm excited about going on to the Plus class. We bought tickets to go to the Oaktown 8s dance.

T: Also we went to the Bear dance. We are not intimidated by the bear boys. The bear dance was great. That's the thing I like about Joe. I'm always open for anything. "Oh, I'll try it, what the heck." And he is too. I think that's how we ended up square dancing.

dance calendar



DIABLO DANCERS
Class/Club Night
Tuesdays
TGIF Dance/Potluck
3rd Friday
1700 Oak Park Boulevard
Pleasant Hill



El Carnino Reelers
Class Night
Wednesday
6:30-9:30 PM
St. Andrew's Methodist
4111 Alma Street
Palo Alto



FOGGY CITY DANCERS
SAN FRANCISCO • CALIFORNIA
Class Night
Tuesdays
Club Night
2nd & 4th Thursday
Friends School
117 Diamond Street




MIDNIGHT SQUARES
SAN FRANCISCO



Oaktown 8s
Class Sunday Afternoons
Friends School
117 Diamond Street
Club Night
A - 2nd & 4th Wednesday
Mission Playground
C - 1st & 3rd Thursday
Friends School
Class Night
Wednesday 7-9:30 PM
Montclair Women's Cultural Arts Club
1650 Mountain Boulevard
Oakland

Dancing with Local Clubs

- June 3-5 **Dynamite Weekend (Anniversary) TNTS Sacramento.** Vic Ceder caller. Plus/C1/C2/C3A See www.bayareadancecalendar.org for details.
- June 4
7:30-10:30 pm **13th Anniversary Dance Diablo Dancers.** Todd Fellegly caller. MS/Plus/A* \$10 La Cheim School (aka Oak Park Center), 1700 Oak Park Boulevard, Pleasant Hill
- June 5
1-5:30 pm **A2/C1/C3A Graduation Dance Midnight Squares.** Todd Fellegly caller. \$8/10/Class free. Friends School, 117 Diamond Street, San Francisco
- June 10-12 **PACE, TBA.** Oak Park Center, 1700 Oak Park Boulevard, Pleasant Hill.
- June 15
7:30-9:30 **Club Night** Allan Hurst caller. Mission Playground
- June 15-18 **Academy of Advanced & Challenge Enthusiasts V.** Louisville, KY. Straight. Multiple callers. See www.iagsdc.org for details.
- June 18
7-10 pm **Pre-Pride/Convention Dance Foggy City Dancers.** Bill Eyer caller. MS/Plus/A* \$8/10 Ebenezer Lutheran Church, 678 Portola Drive, San Francisco.
- June 22-25 **54th National Square Dance Convention Oregon Federation, Square/Round Dance Clubs.** Portland, OR. Straight. Multiple callers. See www.iagsdc.org for details.
- June 25
7:30-10:30 pm **Pride Dance Kris Jensen caller.** MS/Plus/A* \$8/10 Ebenezer Lutheran Church, 678 Portola Drive, San Francisco.
- June 28-30 **17th GCA Caller School El Camino Reelers.** Santa Clara, CA. M. Jacobs, B. Wise callers. **PACE, TBA.** Oak park Center, 1700 Oak Park Boulevard, Pleasant Hill.
- July 1-4  **22nd Annual IAGSDC Convention Star Thru the Silicon Galaxy.** Sandra Bryant, Vic Ceder, Andy Finch, Rob French, Neil Heather, Mike Jacobs, Michael Kellogg, Kiyoshi Kikuchi, Andy Shore, Anne Uebelacker, Dave Wilson, Bronc Wise callers. MS-C4, Santa Clara Marriott, Santa Clara, CA
- July 8-10 **PACE, TBA.** Oak Park Center, 1700 Oak Park Boulevard, Pleasant Hill.
- July 20
7:30-9:30 pm **Club Night** Shimon caller. Mission Playground
- July 29-31 **Follow Your Neighbor X Cadillac Squares** Redford, MI. K. Burke, B. Eyer callers. See www.iagsdc.org for details.
- July 30
4-8 pm **Picnic & Promenade Oaktown 8s** Caller TBA. MS/Plus/A* \$8/10 Skyline Community Church, 12540 Skyline Boulevard, Oakland

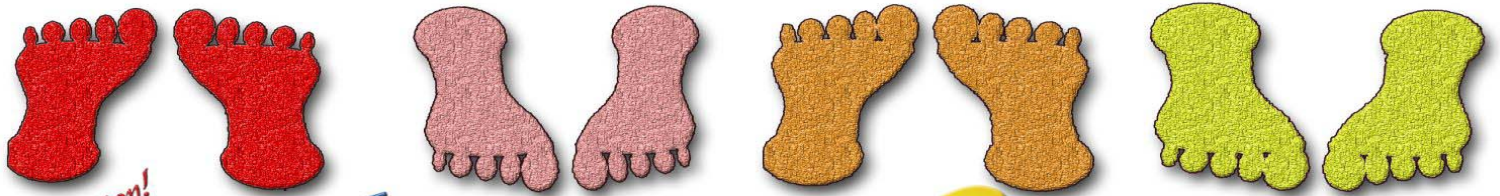
June 10 **Freddy Papapietro** June 21 **Grey Todd** June 21 **Scott Carey** July 1 **Freeman Stamper** July 1 **Daryl Daniels** July 11 **Anna Damiani**

June 15 **Erik Hsieh**

HAPPY

BirthDay

July 20 **Tony Attard**

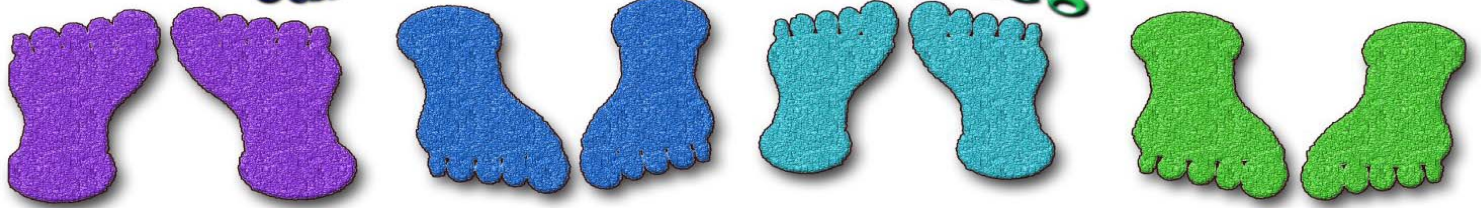


**KRIS
JENSEN**
caller

**2005
Pride Dance**
JUNE 25, 2005 7:30-10:30 PM
EBENEZER LUTHERAN CHURCH
678 PORTOLA DRIVE
San Francisco

MS
Plus
A

WSD \$8
Guests \$10



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584 Castro Street #480
San Francisco, CA 94114