

The



December 2005

Season's Greetings!

Western Star

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

Visit our website: www.westernstardancers.org



Purple Class 2006

(Back row) Gary Hayes, Marilyn Fowler, Joe Casserly, Jan Johnson, David Holloway, Jerry Michaelson, Laurie Bushman

(Front row) Archangel Dave Murphy, Matt Thomson, Grey Todd & Chloe, Tony Attard, Instructor Rich Reel, Leigh Crow

(Absent) Mark Nida, Josef Prochnow, Tacks Feliciano, David Potenti, Greg Gomez



The first ever Western Star Dancers calendar is now available to order. Each month features pictures from the club's past as we look into the future. All Club Nights and Dances, as well as the callers, are listed.

Suggested donation is \$10 (if you wish to have it sent, please add \$3 postage & handling). Proceeds go to the club treasury.

Send your check to:
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SF, CA 94114

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Dan Smith
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Todd Young
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Western Star Dancers Holiday Party 2005

December 21, 2005
7:30-9:30 pm
Mission Playground

Partners
Friends
Starfish
Welcome
NO CRABS!

POTLUCK
Bring your favorite holiday foods to share

White Elephant Gift Exchange!
wrap up something you have lying around the house
Practical is nice. Tacky is okay. Kitch is welcome.
Yellow sponges are appreciated!




EVRC Move Plans On Hold

Due to construction delays, our move back to Eureka Valley Recreation Center is on hold. We will continue to rent space at Studio 204 at 3435 Cesar Chavez until the city opens the Center.

You will be notified as soon as we hear from the Parks officials. Patience is not an easy virtue to practice.

PAUL GONYEA OH PAUL GONYEA

By Dan Smith

D: What is your name?

P: Paul Gonyea.

D: Where were you born?

P: Up state New York in a city called Utica. My Father was a lumberjack and my Mother a roller derby queen. After they married he became an auto mechanic and she stayed at home. I have an older brother and sister. My parents died when I was young so my sister raised me. Her family is pretty much my family. Her son is sort of like my brother even though he's my nephew and her two daughters are like sisters.

D: Where did you go to school?

P: I went to high school in Utica. In collage I majored in Speech Communication. My interest was in directing. I've directed for both Harvard and MIT. I ran my own Improvisational Theatre Company for quit a few years in the Rochester area, also in Boston and here in San Francisco for awhile.

D: Any funny stories to tell about being a Director?

P: Oh god yes! I directed a show at Harvard and we barrowed furniture from Harvard's collection of stage properties. There were pornographic pictures of males having sex inside of one of the drawers. The cast found them and over the next few days there were these sounds of drawers opening and shutting and much murmuring about the pictures. My friend who had designed the costumes and I decided to up the temp, so little by little we removed photos from this drawer. People found out the photos were missing and there was an even bigger hubbub and much to do about that. "Who took the photos? Mumble, mumble."

D: That's an interesting story. So what kind of work do you do?

P: I work in multimedia and help in training films. I help design and implement training programs, mostly for Management Training or Technical Training using online materials.

D: How did you get into square dancing?

P: We have a gay employee's organization and someone at work sent out an E-mail. Some guys in the organization like to Square Dance. When I asked about the introductory class at Foggy City they said I had to decide to be Girl or Boy. I said, "What's the difference?" They said, "Oh, dance girl it is a lot harder and you'll have more fun--And you get to twirl." So I said, "OK I'll dance girl."

D: Do you have favorite dancers you like to dance with?

P: Yes I do. One of the people in Western Star one of the really welcoming people is Steve Scott. He really made me feel comfortable right away and I think Rich is like that too. A lot of people are very open and welcoming. That I would say is a real feature of Western Star; its ability to be very warm and welcoming and very open.

God! Joe and Todd are great fun. I think that whole class was great fun. Blue Class graduation was a hoot because of having us dance blind folded. When I tell that to other people who square dance they go, "WHAT!" They couldn't believe it; they doubted that they could do it.

Another person I like dancing with is Ammon. Ammon is a really good example of someone who really goes out of their way to make new people feel comfortable. I've never seen anybody Weave the Ring with as much energy as Ammon does. I think he jumps four feet into the air.

D: How often do you dance each week?

P: No I bounce back and forth it depends. If I like go dance on a Saturday and I go to Western Star on Monday then its likely I won't go to Foggy City on Tuesday. But if I don't go to a dance on Saturday then I'm likely to go to Foggy City on Tues.

D: Do you ever go out of town to dance?

P: I did Convention this year. Next week I'm going to a fly-in and in January I'm going to Phoenix.

D: Tell me about what happened at Convention.

P: I was apprehensive having just been though Plus. I thought I'd be shaky at it so I shied away from a lot of Plus level dancing. Now in retrospect it probably would have been fine. I hung out a lot with folks from Foggy City and Western Star.

D: You meet anyone there? Because I wonder if anybody ever meets anybody because I never have?



P: Yes briefly but if I was to be with anyone it would be... (Laughs)

D: Do you have a favorite thing that happens while you square dance?

P: For me its fun when a caller tries to make it more interesting and more challenging but by the same token I also like to dance when it s not challenging just so I can be in the moment of dancing. By not trying to figure it out in my head I can be with people and we have more fun.

D: Oh! Tell me about the circus.

P: I thought it was unusual that we were being asked to dance at a circus. It was amusing that I could go to work and tell people, "I'm going to dance in a circus ring tomorrow night."

D: Do you plan to go to higher levels?

P: I'm in no big hurry. I like to dance in the moment and learning boy is a challenge for me. That's enough for me right now. I'm content.

D: Do you have any favorite callers?

P: Rich Reels is one of my favorite callers. He's just fun, outgoing and genuine. I also like the fact that he can make things interesting without being overly challenging. Learning calls from him helps because he works a lot more in sashayed positions and things like that than I had experienced before. I got better exposure and feel more prepared when I go to dances. That's largely because of the way Rich calls.





The Year in Review

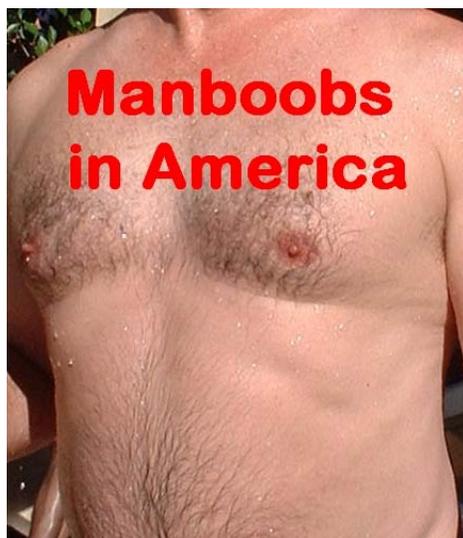
It has been an exciting and busy year. Ammon had a dinner date (by osmosis) with Betsy Gotta at Sizzler...James was overjoyed to dance with a circusboy in the center ring...Daniel danced in the streets wearing one flip-flop. Being a tougher kind of guy, Ammon did it totally barefoot...Admitting to a certain age, Dan had his well-coifed locks tinted a subtle shade of cornflower blue (Marge Simpson has *nothing* on Dan)... Fen proved that gambling pays, when after eight years of trying, he finally won the 50/50...Matt broke the world record for attending fly-ins... Typographic archeologists at the British Museum discovered that the Rosetta Stone could be used to decipher Daryl's fancy-fonts...Daniel scheduled his New Orleans vacation for the week of the hurricane...Although The Mormon Boys dress alike, we learned the way to tell them apart is that Todd has cuffs on his sleeves. Speaking of The Boys, neo-leatherman Todd made a pair of chaps out of a tablecloth—Looked hot with the basketed Chianti bottle in the middle. And, every month, Joe discovered a new and different place to grow face fur...Gary, Randy & David missed the boat to Angel Island...Carole Shorenstein Hayes announced that the revival of *Brigadoon* would bypass San Francisco due to fears that Russ would audition for the part of Bonnie Jean... Merle video-recorded Ammon's announcements



Sitting on the Dock of the Bay— David sans ferry



Silver Belle— Freeman sparkles



Dust Jacket of the sensational new bestseller. (An Oprah selection)— Matt's MBs.

for the sake of future generations...The newbie students of The Purple Class quickly adapted to a hybrid form of flourishes that combine Todd's uber-styling with Daniel's ennui...Daniel attempted to depict "current" during the Pictionary Play-offs. Fat chance...Convention hotel security considered raiding a game of Twister in Grey and Ammon's room. Fireworks followed...After being bewigged and feather-boated by Davida, PrezEmeritus Steve performed a lip-sync version of "I Will Survive" on-stage at Marlena's...Ever trendy, both Mario and Ammon copied the Sinéad O'Connor tressless look...Jim celebrated his 70th; and Freeman celebrated his annual Silver Jubilee...(Three-Dot journalism lives!)

Of course, as you all know by now, it has been an exciting year for Yours Truly as well. After winning the Pulitzer for investigative reporting in recognition of a series on Nekkid Nips, the articles were compiled into a coffee table book just in time for the holiday shopping season. "*Manboobs in America*" is climbing up the non-fiction bestseller lists. And now, in collaboration with Sondheim, the musical stage version is expected to open in time for Tony nominations. Speculative casting includes Hugh Jackman as Ammon, Nathan Lane as Gigi-Lou, Harvey Fierstein as Davida, and Bernadette Peters as Grey.



Bringing new meaning to the phrase "under the big top"— CircusBoy and James



It rhymes with "salmon"— Sinéad



The Fenster— Lucky hat replaces unlucky bandana



Brigadon't— Producers feared that audiences would get a glimpse of Bonnie Jean's dead beaver



Rosetta Stoned— Disguised as Winston Churchill, Daryl infiltrates the British Museum



Lady sings the blues— Dan lets his hair down



The secret language of sleeves— Left: Joe; Right: Todd. Note subtle variation.

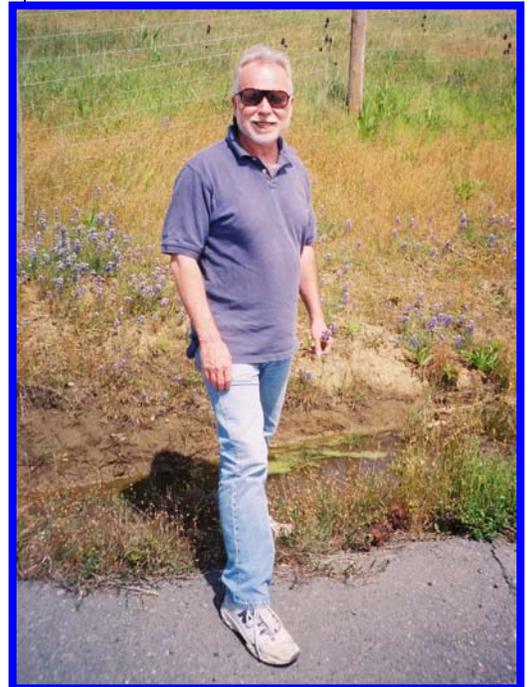
Dr. Joe

JOE ISER ADDRESSES 25 ITEMS MARVEL AT HIS COMPLEXITY

1. Favorite color: Blue
2. Favorite food: Fried chicken-true comfort food from Missouri.
3. If you could be any animal, what would you be? Some sort of sea mammal, maybe a manatee or dolphin.
4. Lucky number: I don't really believe in luck. It's all about hard work and persistence.
5. Favorite movie: Casablanca
6. Favorite song: "Cruel Sister" by Pentangle
7. Your hero/idol: Ann Richards
8. Other hobbies: Sea kayaking, canoeing, skiing, snow shoeing
9. Where born/raised: Kansas City, Kansas and Missouri and NW Missouri
10. WORST subject in high school: History
11. Describe your education: I'm a physician who has spent most of his career with the US Public Health Service, and I have training in internal medicine and a lot of training and experience in--public health!
12. Tell about your boyfriend: He's a lawyer for Sonoma County. He is not a litigator or ambulance chaser. He's sweet, considerate, athletic, energetic.
13. Tell about the FDA: FDA is one of the operating divisions of the Department of Health and Human Services. I'm involved in outbreaks and working with our states and other governmental and nongovernmental organizations to protect the public's health
14. Tell about your involvement with the Society of Friends (Quakers): I've been going to Quaker Meetings since college days and, after many years, finally became a Quaker (which can only be done at a local Meeting, not within a larger grouping as with most religious organizations) about 8 years ago here in San Francisco. I'm very active with my Meeting, including stints as

- treasurer, member of property and finance, and currently of ministry and oversight. I'm drawn to Quakerism because of its Western roots in meditation; I've also been involved years ago in other meditation groups but find this Western tradition more suited to me. I'm also drawn to Quakerism's belief in "continuing revelation," meaning no one spiritual guide (Bible, Koran, Jewish, Hindu, or other texts) either is totally accurate or unchangeable, as well as to our beliefs in the total equality of all men and women, our teachings on conflict resolution and avoidance of violence and war, on the right sharing of the world's resources, absolute belief in civil rights for all, and, as we call it, "speaking truth to power." Yikes, that's probably too much information.
15. How & why did you start square dancing? Like many others, I started in grade school but really started modern square dancing in Dallas, Texas, about five years ago. I started as both exercise and as a social outlet.
 16. Happiest experience square dancing: Dancing pretty good A at the last convention, and maybe even more so at a large (10 squares) dance in South Bay.
 17. Favorite call: Cast A Shadow
 18. Least favorite call: Allemande Left
 19. Favorite callers: Mike Kellogg, Bronc Wise, Rich Reel
 20. Favorite dance partners: Ammon Corl, David Murphy, Don and Larry Queen, and anyone who can Partner Twirl smoothly
 21. I like square dancing because I get to see my friends and meet new ones, and I get exercise to boot.
 22. Tell about being dance coordinator. This function for the club is not very complex, but it's hard. Most callers don't return your

calls quickly (and I've checked with other clubs, this isn't unique to me or to Western Star Dancers). It's good to see dances go well, and it's frightening when something goes almost irretrievably wrong. As for Archangel: I loved it, trying to make sure that each student got the best experience they could, helping to make sure the new students learn something new or do a move a bit better the next time they try it. But the best part about that is that's



what I try to do with all new dancers, in every club, and you don't have to be the dance coordinator to do that.

23. Future square dancing plans: Continue practicing and learning more about A dancing; no plans to go further at this point.
24. Professional plans: Interesting, since I've been thinking about that lately. Maybe working for a state or local department of health; continuing to teach; maybe do some consulting..
25. Advice to new dancers: Keep trying! It'll get easier, smoother, less confusing.

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
Class Night
Tuesdays
Forest Hill Christian Church
250 Laguna Honda Boulevard

MIDNIGHT SQUARES
Class Sunday Afternoons
Jon Sims Center
1519 Mission Street

Oaktown 8s
Class Night
Wednesday 7-9:30 PM
Montclair Women's Cultural Arts Club
1650 Mountain Boulevard
Oakland

Dancing with Local Clubs

December 3
7:30-9:30 pm

Relay the Reindeer Diablo Dancers, Mike DiSisto caller. MS/P/A* \$8/10 Jewish Community Center, 2071 Tice Valley Boulevard, Walnut Creek.

December 10

PACE Caller Appreciation. Diablo Light Opera Co. 1948 Oak Park Boulevard, Pleasant Hill

December 21
7:30-9:30 pm

Christmas Party. Rich Reel caller. Bring holiday foods to share. Guests are welcome. White Elephant gift exchange. Mission Playground

January 7
7:30-10:30 pm

New Year's Dance Co-sponsored with Foggy City Dancers. Dick Henschel caller. Class/MS/P/A* \$8/10 Ebenezer Lutheran Church, 678 Portola Dr., San Francisco.

January 8

Midnight Squares Dance. Kris Jensen caller. Other details TBA

January 13-15

Swing Thru Arizona 2006, Phoenix, AZ. B. Gotta, J. Jestin callers. www.desertvalleysquares.com

January 13-15

Promenade Down Peachtree V, Tucker, GA. E. McAtee, JR St. Jean callers. www.iagsdc.org/hotlanta/peachtree5.html

January 18
7:30-9:30 pm

Club Night Ron Masker, caller. EVRC?

January 28
7-10 pm

Valentine's Dance Foggy City Dancers. Anne Uebelacker caller. Class/MS/P/A* \$8/10 Ebenezer Lutheran Church, 678 Portola Dr. San Francisco.

Birthday Greetings!

| | | |
|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| Fabian Alvarado December 7 | Randy Laroche December 10 | Gary Cohn December 15 |
| Jerry Michaelson December 15 | Lou (Gigi) Troca December 19 | Craig Olson December 27 |
| Todd Youngs December 27 | Nick Carlson December 31 | |
| David Murphy January 5 | Angelo Prospero January 23 | |
| Leon DuBois January 25 | | |

New Year's Dance

San Francisco • CALLER

FOGGY CITY DANCERS

42D

Don't Stop!

San Francisco WESTERN STAR DANCERS

Don't Slow Down!

PRESENT

7:30-10:30 pm

Saturday, January 7, 2006

Ebenezer Lutheran Church

678 Portola Drive

San Francisco

Dick Henschel

caller

Class Level, Mainstream, Plus

Advanced Star Tip

\$8 - FCD & WSD members

\$10 - Guests

Students FREE



Western Star Dancers
584 Castro Street #480
San Francisco, CA 94114