

## DANCING WITH THREE FEET

*by Fred Hobbs*

For humans, the phenomenon is anatomically impossible to record. Dancing with three feet. Most folks have only one on the left and another on the right. Some poor souls, myself included, however, are cursed with two of those “lefty” extremities when it comes to twirling and gliding across the ballroom floor.

Two left and one right makes three.

Anatomy aside, to put it succinctly: I can’t dance!

Now, I love music, most all forms of it, although heavy metal and rap remain foreign to my ears. I can hum, love to sing in the shower and can tap the toes on both my feet in reasonably acceptable time to stirring rhythms. In the United States Army’s challenging pursuit called “basic training,” I learned to place one foot before the other, marching to a repetitive cadence bellowed out by the field first sergeant. “Hut two, three four.”

But, despite the warm feeling of a girl in my arms back in my formative days, the feet just couldn’t move gracefully. The movements always felt awkward and certainly looked that way. Fortunately my wife was not wild and crazy about dancing as many females are. She seemed content to participate occasionally with me in a couple of slow dances in which we sort of “walked” around so as not to appear as “wall flowers” in the company of neighbors or friends at someone’s wedding or anniversary party.

The most embarrassing aspect of my “terpsichorean deficiency” is that I worked as a disc jockey in the late 1940s through the early 60s and played popular music on the radio every day, including on such shows as “Big Band Bash” and “Saturday Night Dance Date.” Of course, I was all alone in the radio station control room at the time and nobody could know my “dirty, little secret.”

Except, that is, the sexy blonde instructor at Denver’s franchise of the nationwide Fred Astaire Dancing Studio. You see, at one time the Astaire school was a sponsor on my all-night broadcast. Many of the radio commercials at the time involved personal endorsements from the announcer.

To be honest with the listeners, the announcer had to actually drive the sports car whose virtues he was extolling. Newly married at time, my wife and I bought our first living and dining room furniture from a sponsor on my show. On the air, I could attest truthfully how much we liked the sofa and the stylish dining table.

For Fred Astaire, I had to take real life lessons. The aforementioned dance teacher, at first, was very patient with me. But, after the two-step introduction and in the middle of the waltz curriculum, I think she realized I was a hopeless candidate for any of the dance contests the

studio hosted.

Mercifully, the advertising contract with Astaire was for only a three-week trial period.

“Blondie,” the studio manager and I all agreed teaching me how to dance was not a promising venture. My boss, the famed Denver media legend Gene Amole, never mentioned the incident knowing that radio sponsors come and go with remarkable rapidity. And, my listeners never knew about my “three” dancing feet. I’ve retained a little twinge of guilt all these years, but after all, a person doesn’t have to be a brain surgeon or astronaut to appreciate and honor the virtues of those talents and capabilities.