

Dancing at Six Feet Apart?

By Jean Stene

I can't imagine how you would learn to dance at six feet apart.

The first I remember trying to learn to dance was standing on my father's feet. How would you do that at six feet apart?

When we moved to the little town of Yampa, most of the families would go out dancing on Saturday night. When I said families, it was the whole family. No one used a babysitter. They brought their babies in their bassinets, and the little older children would crawl up on a bench to go to sleep if they got tired. Their folks would use their coats to keep them warm. The music just lulled them to sleep.

I remember going dancing when a friend of the family came to visit. Oscar was about 6'2" tall. I think I would have been maybe ten at the time. Later I was teased because I couldn't reach his back so I just grabbed the seat of his trousers. I was pretty young when I decided I really enjoyed dancing.

When I was a freshman in high school, we all had to go to the gym on Friday for dance classes. If you were a girl and knew how to dance you had to teach a boy. If you were a boy and knew how to dance, you had to teach a girl. I can't remember how many Fridays this lasted but I do know most of our class danced by the time we stopped.

I grew up dancing with a lot of partners, but you were expected to dance the first dance, the last dance, and the dance before and after supper with your date. Otherwise both of you would dance with friends, family, and family acquaintances.

When I went on my first date at the University of Denver, no one danced with anyone else in the party. What a shock! Particularly if your date was a really poor dancer.

Then I transferred to Colorado University. I found if you dated and went with a group, they changed partners. I also danced with the "Haylofters," a square dance group. They always changed partners.

The group that could dance now with the six foot rule is the Line Dancers. Perhaps some of the native Indians, and the Hawaii hula dancers.

I am glad I learned to dance when there was no six foot rule and will be happy when we get back to normal—I wonder what that will be like and how soon it will be, if you went with a date.