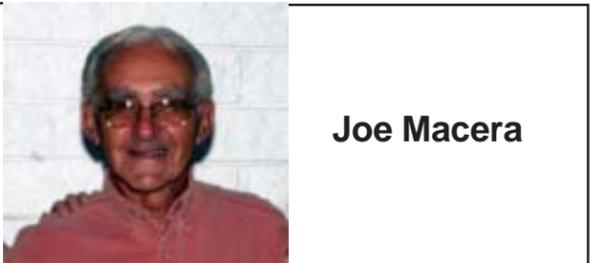




Two Step Lessons
Thursdays
7:00 - 7:30



Joe Macera

Line Dance Lessons
Thursdays
7:30 - 9:00

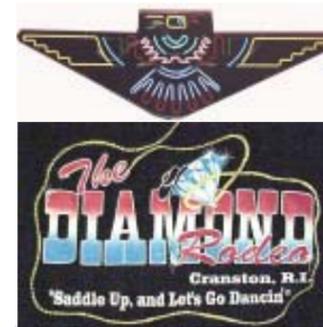


Mike Camra

Wednesday-Line Dance Lessons at 7:00 with Gail McKenna
Thursday-Line Dance Lessons 7:00 - 9:00 with Mike Camra
Karaoke from 9:00 - 11:00
Friday - Line Dance Lessons at 7:00 with Gail McKenna
Cat Country Dance Party Night Every Friday
Saturday - Line Dance Lessons at 7:00 with Gail McKenna



**Wednesdays, Fridays
& Saturdays
Gail McKenna**



**SIDE-BAR
COMMENTS**

Club Hours

Wednesday 7 PM - 1 AM
Thursday 7 PM - 1 AM
Friday 7 PM - 1 AM
Saturday 7PM - 1 AM

**MARDI
GRAS**

1500 Oaklawn Ave.
Cranston, RI
(401) 463-3080

Wednesdays
Fridays
Saturdays
Free Line Dance Lessons
with Gail McKenna
7 - 8 PM

Thursday
Two Step Lessons 7:00 -
9:00 with Joe Macera
Karaoke from 9:00 - 11:00

This newsletter can be
viewed on line at
www.mikeponte.com



Quick Quick... Slow Slow



Diamond Rodeo Newsletter - Editor, Layout & Photos: Michael Ponte
Co-editor: Joe Macera

**September
2004**

**interview | links
biography | reviews**

**Having a good time at
the Diamond Rodeo**

My father was the drummer for the late Eddie Zack and Cousin Richie, a local country band that included Merrill Albro, Danny Albro's mother. Growing up, my father insisted that my sister and I learn to appreciate all types of music. We listened to everything from opera and big bands, to old time blues to Caribbean and Latin Rhythms, the variations of rock and roll as it evolved through the decades, rockabilly and of course, country.



Doreen Tucker

Like many young girls I was trained in ballet, tap, and...ings of freedom and completeness that dance would elicit. For a while I taught pivot turns, triple steps, and grapevines, until parenthood forced me to trade my tap shoes for soccer cleats. But, if there is one thing I've learned over the years, it's

that you can take the dancer away from the music, but you will never take the music away from the dancer. Since then I've studied Middle Eastern dance, hip/hop, salsa, and flamenco, so it comes as no surprise to anyone who knows me that my latest challenge is to learn how to dance to country music too.

One night, my friend and I came to dance at Mardi Gras but the only room with any people in it was the Diamond Rodeo. We entered, sat down near the rearing stallions and watched. I was itchin' to join them. It was hard to stay still while others whirled, stomped, and were having a great time performing the line dances – and what a work out some of them were! But neither of us had a clue as to what all those dancing feet were doing.

In the other rooms at Mardi Gras dancing alone can be a bit intimidating, but here at the Diamond Rodeo, you never have to feel alone! We decided to invite some other friends and take the lessons on Thursday nights. I'm having such a good time, that I spread the word whenever the opportunity arises. Unlike traditional dance classes where other dancers can be a bit chilly, the dancers here are warm, friendly, supportive and enthusiastic.

There is one thing I've noticed about Thursday nights though, the ratio of women to men is rather high making it difficult for those ladies who want to learn and practice

partner dances. So guys, please join us for Joe's two-step class at 7pm. Your skill and talent will be appreciated.

Doreen Tucker



TGIF

It all starts with Gail saying, "hey everybody, say Hi to Joe" the crowd yells Hi Joe, and then it starts, the Friday Night Dance Party. About an hour prior to the 8pm start, we line up at the door to be the first one in and grab "our seat", God forbid anyone that is not a regular take "our stool". Within a few minutes we have all said hello to Richard, told Paulie its too cold, scooped up the popcorn and rearranged a few tables and the ashtrays.



Albert Foster

The ritual soon begins, Hi Bill, gonna take my picture tonight? Is Mike here tonight? Hey Joe, how many girls here for two-step?

My favorite question is, who is the DJ tonight? All I know is that when I leave, I have danced all the same songs

that I like, just in a different order. Check out the bartenders, wave at Russ, shake hands with Walter, smile at all the women then sit with Glen and watch the door, I mean TV.

What has always intrigued me, is the Magical atmosphere of that club, its when you first walk in, whatever happened during your week, troubled relationships, fight with boss, it's all left outside and fun begins.

Somehow a good ole Slappin' Leather, Walk the Line or a couples set makes things better. Watching Peter escort a female out to the floor for her first dance and his modified line dancing is always enjoyable. Recently I was dancing with a young woman who told me she had just turned 21 and loved country dancing, she looked rather puzzled when I told her she was 10 yrs. old when I started at the club. Yes, the club is contagious, once you have been bit by the bug, you are part of the family. Many come and go thru out the years only to find that you come back, some of us never seem to go away, just vanish for a while. The bottom line is that JR and his staff have created a club that is part of our lives, many relationships have begun here and ended here (you know what I mean).

Repeat it, all again Saturday night till its time to leave, walk out to the car only to go back to reality, patiently waiting for the weekend to come again. All of us and Toby Keith have something in common, we both "Love This Bar" its my kind of place.

Al Foster

Western Style Clothing

I've noticed that there seems to be a lot of new people on the dance floor. I don't usually get here for the lessons on Saturday nights, but on occasion when I do make it, there has been quite a crowd taking the beginner lessons with Gail. For this reason, I decided to make my article about the different places where you can find western style clothing.

The two that come to mind first are Snake Hill Trading Post in Smithfield, RI, and The Mane Place, in Uxbridge, MA. Snake Hill has a variety of different boots and hats to choose from. They also carry men's and women's clothing, but in my opinion, nowhere near enough women's! Belt buckles and decorative jewelry can also be found there, and if you can't find what you're looking for, Scott and his wife are always willing to help you out in any way they can.

The Mane Place is a good sized store. The best part of it is the clearance room that they have. I bought an Aztec-design shirt from there and it only cost me \$15.00! I don't recall what the original price was, but you can bet it was a heck of a lot more than \$15.00! Sometimes you just get lucky and end up in the right place at the right time. They also carry little gifts just to let someone know you're thinking of them. I just received a key chain with a cowboy boot on it, and it made my day, just because it was so unexpected! (Thanks, Lin!)

I've also found a few places online that I shop quite a bit. Sheplers.com, Westernwarehouse.com, and my favorite, Cavenders.com., just to name a few.

Stop by and visit the places I've written about. I don't think you'll be sorry.
Snake Hill Trading Post



Wendy

375 Putnam Pike
Smithfield RI
401-232-7338

The Mane Place
19 Depot Street
Uxbridg,MA
508-278-7563



Too Much Fun

Almost eleven years ago, I began coming to Mardi Gras. It was Mustang Sally's then. But the name is the only thing that's changed for me. There's always been the Diamond Rodeo Room, where lots of friendly, some a little crazy (you know who you are!) people have a blast country line dancing, two-stepping and doing couples dances.

It was about eight years ago that I first learned how to two-step. Thanks, Joe Macera! I was so self-conscious! The first time I really enjoyed two-stepping was with Manny (a.k.a. Gumby, one of those crazy people I mentioned). He makes up moves as he goes along, and it doesn't matter how many times I mess up, we just laugh. Sometimes I must remind him that my arm doesn't go that way, unless I WANT my shoulder dislocated! After learning the basics from Joe and learning to losing my self-consciousness from Manny,

Stop by and visit the places I've written about. I don't think you'll be sorry.
Snake Hill Trading Post



Cynthia Sebetes

"mailman" Joe taught me some great moves. He's such a great two-stepper that he makes me look good when I dance with him!

Mardi Gras has changed my life. Not only do I have an awesome place to dance and socialize, but I got an adorable five-year old out of it, too. If there were no Mardi Gras, I wouldn't have met Manny and had Jonathan. So, you see, Mardi Gras really has changed my life.

If you're new, you're in for a treat! The people here are so helpful when you want to learn a new dance. But I have to warn you, country line dancing here is addictive! Manny and I can't afford a babysitter because we bought a house last summer. Do you think we sit at home together on the weekends? No way! We take turns coming to Mardi Gras's Diamond Rodeo Room! It's just too much fun to miss!

Cynthia Sebetes



"You really should get that window crack fixed."

A Great Concert

A couple of months ago a few girls from the Diamond Rodeo decided we would like to attend the Alan Jackson and Martina McBride concert at the Mohegan. Even though the tickets were pricey we all really liked the both country entertainers and purchased tickets to the show. Martina opened the show with her many hit recordings. I always liked her singing but hearing and seeing her in person really impressed us all. She's a little thing but she can really belt out a song. Her renditions of "My Baby Loves Me", "Happy Girl", "Wild Angels", "Independence Day" to name a few brought down the house. "In My Daughters Eyes" which she sang with such emotion and with her daughters' pictures on the screens in the background was very touching. I had never heard her sing "Somewhere Over The Rainbow" and even though it wasn't a country song she really won the audience over with that one.

Now for the BIG GUY!!! Alan Jackson is truly a down to earth country boy. He was very humble and really appreciated the applause from his many fans. He received seven CMA nominations including entertainer of the year and male vocalist of the year. His song "Remember

When" was nominated for song of the year. What a great talent. He was a guest on Jay Leno's show and also Dave Letterman's. He sang his latest hit "Too Much Of A Good Thing" on Letterman's show and also at the concert. It was great to hear the remake of a famous Hank Williams song "Hey Good Lookin". "Here In The Real World" has always been one of my favorites along with "Lot About Livin & A Little Bout Lovin" that we hear often at the club. Whenever did I think he would team up with Jimmy Buffett but "It's Five O'clock Somewhere" turned out to be a really big hit. We got to view pictures of tender moments with his wife and children as he sang and this showed he is a real family man. I am just so glad I had the opportunity to see and hear two great entertainers. It was a great evening. We also did a little gambling after the concert but I'm not going to talk about that.



Rita Polce

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Bill's Corner

Hello to All:
Just to let you know, you are at the best damn honky tonk in New England. It was mentioned to me shortly after CMT's Fan Fair that the Diamond Rodeo is far better than the clubs in Nashville. We are talking people friendly, line dancing, couples dancing, 2 step dancing and music wise. our hats are off to you JR. As most of you know when you see a flash it's either Mike Ponte or myself taking pictures. It's often that Mike and I get the question "where can we see these pictures"? all pictures can be seen by going to www.mikeponte.com and click on the club photos icon. When we take your picture, you are being seen by



William H. O'Brien III

people as far away as Australia. Thats right...DOWN UNDER. So the next time you see a flash, SMILE.....it's a kodak moment. (Actually, Mike uses a Canon and i use an Olympus camera).

Bill O'Brien
"End of Dance"



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