

Jim's Perspective...

Dancing During the Christmas Holidays

The winter solstice arrives December 21. The long, dark shadows of winter are upon us. When winter darkness envelopes us, and not a creature is stirring, not even a mouse, the outdoors can be very quiet. However, back in the days of high school and college, Janie and I always found a way, on the weekend, to be surrounded and engulfed in loud noise. Yes, during the Christmas holiday season, there was always a formal dance that we attended. Sometimes it included a rock band, but other times it was a disc jockey. In high school, the holiday formal dance was called the Crystal Ball. It was held downtown at either the Lincoln Hotel, or the Cornhusker Hotel. We would usually “double-date” with another couple for this formal dance. The dance and dinner were held in the big auditorium of the hotel. The tables for dinner were in the back of the room, and the band or DJ were on a stage with the dance floor below the stage.

In college, my fraternity, Beta Theta Pi, usually had some type of Christmas dance at the fraternity house which was located on the Lincoln campus near downtown. Some of us might go to the nearby Diamond Bar & Grill or Der Loaf und Stein restaurant for a quick bite to eat before the party started at the house. We set up the stereo system in the basement and held the dance down there. It worked well having this party in the basement because most of the men just stayed at the house and very few had to drive anywhere after the party was over. The girls simply walked back to a dorm or a sorority house.

Inevitably, at all of these Christmas holiday parties, a few party-goers showed up as Santa Claus or perhaps arrived in an elf costume. There might also be some red-light “Rudolph the red nosed reindeer” noses strapped around some dancers’ heads or some might just wear a Santa hat or reindeer antlers. All very festive!

As the music played at these holiday parties, we danced the Twist, the Mashed Potato, the Locomotion or the Watusi. I specifically remember one song that always involved dancing a form of the Cha Cha Cha, and I remember it always being connected with Christmas holiday dances for some reason. As a couple, doing this dance, the boy and girl can stand next to each other and do the dance or they can stand opposite of each other, looking at each other, and moving forward and backward.

The song is *Rinky Dink*, performed by Dave “Baby” Cortez. Here it is!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IXrI4CYQnkQ>

OK, come-on now! You too, can do the Cha Cha Cha to *Rinky Dink*! Nothing more fun than dancing to this song during the Christmas season! The way to do it is to follow the steady beat of the organ. As it makes it’s same beat, you take two steps forward, then three quick light steps on the balls of your feet at the same spot, then two steps backward and then three light steps on the same spot. Then just keep doing this to the organ’s base noise. Another way to visualize this is to think – step step (forward) – cha cha cha – step step (backward) – cha cha cha. Then, when

this basic organ noise isn't going, you stay in one spot and just move or sway a little side to side. Try it! You won't be able to stop!

Another fun way to do the Cha Cha Cha to this song is to all line up side by side and make the moves together as a group going forward and backward. Usually someone gets a little out of line and everyone laughs at their lack of coordination. This is particularly funny after a few beers!

Yes, during the Christmas holiday season there are many social gatherings which makes this time of year very festive. So let's enjoy time with family and friends, and maybe you can show them how to dance to *Rinky Dink!*

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