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How I Got Roped Into Line Dancing

Tristan Scott, Volunteer Reporter

It was a Thursday evening when I found myself in my dorm putting on my best blue jeans and boots. I made my way to the Bannan building and followed the growing sound of country music to room 353. It was here that I was greeted by the leaders of “(S)U Can’t Touch This,” Seattle University’s very own Line Dancing Club.

“It all started on a nice November day,” Jenia Viles, co-oureach officer said, setting up the room. “It was cool and crisp outside and we heard from a little birdie that they were going to have a talent contest at the new student retreat. Sophia Gamble, our former president, suggested we line dance. We had just been messing around and line dancing to “Can’t Touch This” by MC Hammer, which is actually how that became our namesake.”

This was the first dance that I and over 30 other eager dancers learned that night. Within 15 minutes, even my two left feet could grapevine to the music with ease. Financial Officer Aicha Toure thinks that’s the best part of the club.

“Just seeing people who aren’t very confident, like ‘I’ve never done this before, there’s no way I can do it,’ but their friends drag them along and by the end, they’re doing it!”

“Yeah,” Event Coordinator Ava Lauer chimes in. “Because that’s kind of what happened with us. In our first meeting, none of us knew how to do this, and now we’re teaching other people.”

At this point the room was becoming too crowded to dance comfortably, so we took a short field trip to the Quad. Here we had plenty of space to spread our wings as the leadership team led us in a dance to “Cotton Eye Joe,” a clear crowd favorite. The cool night air and pale lights created a magical atmosphere as we watched our shadows dance with us on the ground.

Even the most reserved among us were opening up, laughing and putting our all into the dance. There was no judgment from anyone.

If you tripped up or missed a step, you’d just shake it off and jump back in. We were all learning something brand new, and that led to



Sasha Volovnikov



a great sense of community.

Even Club President Malaika Nazareth was once in our shoes. "I didn't have any previous experience before that night at the new student retreat," Nazareth said. "Never danced before in my life, never planned to dance before in my life. It will probably be evident, but that's okay. We can just have fun together and be silly at the end of the week."

By the end of the next song, "Wagon Wheel" by Darius Rucker, some of us were starting to get the hang of it. I saw dancers giving each other tips on how to nail moves or moving to spots where more people could see them and follow along. This was especially helpful when we moved on to "Footloose," by far the quickest song of the night. It was quite a workout!



During a break between songs, I talked to a few people who had shown up. Most of them had seen a flyer on campus and decided to give something new a try. Others had seen it online, like first-year Gigi Donaldson who told me she had seen the club on ConnectSU before even applying to the school and couldn't wait to check it out.

The night finally started to come to a close. We sped through two more easy dances to "Candy Man" and "Copperhead Road" (my personal favorite, it was so bouncy!) before it was time to gather our things and head home. I left feeling incredibly happy and fulfilled. In just an hour and a half, I had gotten some fresh air, exercise, and learned a new skill to show off. Everyone was happy to chat on the way back to the dorms, all echoing sentiments of what a nice night it was and how they couldn't wait for the next meeting.

On the way out, Lauer told me that most of the current club officers who had met at the new student retreat last year would be coming back to the retreat this year as student leaders.

"It's a really cool full-circle moment," Lauer said. "You never know what a random joke is going to turn into."

The Line Dancing Club meets every other Thursday in Bannan 353 from 7:30 to 9 p.m. Their next meeting is Oct. 17 and will be Halloween-themed. I'll be there ready to add some spooky dances to my repertoire! They can be found on Instagram at @sulinedancing for updates.