



MAY I HAVE YOUR AUTOGRAPH?

By: Brooke Rumble

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Age: 12

Parents: Dan and Kari Rumble



It was an easy decision on who I would want an autograph of for dancing. I chose not just a single person but a couple who dance together. Their love for dance is what inspired me to want to be a dancer too.

The first time I saw this couple dance I was about three years old. We went to a ball room dinner where this couple was competing. The lady walked onto the dance floor looking so elegant in her gown. The music started and she began to dance. I noticed while she started to dance she was looking all around, like she had lost or forgotten something. Then, all of a sudden the gentleman enters the dance floor. Only to everyone's amusement he had toilet paper stuck to the bottom of his shoe. Throughout the dance he is trying to remove the toilet paper from his shoe while not letting his lady partner know what is going on. I remember this being very funny. Mom later told me that it was done on purpose and was part of their dance routine. I do remember how they seemed to dance with such ease and almost float on the dance floor. Their foot work looked so effortless, it was amazing. And the way they captivated their audiences attention was wonderful. The routine was not only graceful but captivating as well. I think of this performance as one to admire for its originality and entertainment value.

After the dinner and competition was over they had an open dance floor. The gentlemen of that dance came over and asked me to dance with him. I remember like it was yesterday because he let me stand on his feet and whirled me around the dance floor. I felt like a princess in her ballroom. Mom said my smile reached from one ear to the other.

I have learned that this couple had never taken dance lessons when they were children. Back in those days boys didn't dance, it was looked upon as being sissy. The lady said her family had no extra money to do those types of things. But she remembers dancing wherever

she could on her own. This makes me appreciate the sacrifice that my parents make so I can take lessons and how much better I can become because of the instructional dance that I am getting so early in life.

I wondered how they got started in ballroom dancing. It apparently started out as a bet from the gentlemen to show his wife, and to prove to her, that he couldn't dance. She had asked him for many years to do this with her. He was certain he had two left feet. He signed them up for a community dance education class. He had no idea at the time that ballroom had just picked them! Their teacher at that class got them more involved and put them in touch with a studio that taught ballroom dancing. They have now been dancing together for 20 years. I think about this and how we never know where life's little roads will lead. It makes me wonder where I might be with my dance in say 10 years down the road. Will I still be enjoying dance the way I do now? Will I be performing somewhere in Chicago? Maybe I will be a dance instructor at the dance school. Where ever I am in ten years I hope that dance is always a part of my life too.

Their passion for dancing is what keeps them active. They say they enjoy not only the performance side of it but how they get to meet new friends and dance with old friends almost every weekend. If their not working on a competition piece they are still taking lessons to improve on other aspects of their technique. They say that the challenge of getting better is what keeps it fun too. When they perform they want their audience to fall in love with the dance. They want the audience to feel what they feel while dancing. The passion, the drama, the connection of dancer and partner and music. Of course, they want it to look flawless and to appear effortless too. This I know is an area of my dance that I would like to improve upon. It takes, I feel, an inner strength to let yourself go and be someone else in a dance. Maybe, it's confidence in yourself and your abilities that make that possible.

Which ever it is I know it is the one thing I need to work on the most.

Not only do they dance for fun they do compete as well. They have competed at many competitions at a Silver 1 level. They dance in the amateur class and have always placed either first or second. Their most memorable competition was when they did an open class competition. The age range was from 35 years and up. As they giggle while telling me this, they of course point at that they are in the “up” part of that age group. They danced with pro’s /student combo’s , and other amateurs. They had a three way tie that was between them and two other pro’s/student dancers. “It was quite an honor to dance and place at that level against such talent”, said the couple.

They have used dance to also help out in their community. They have performed at many different fundraising events to help raise money for seniors, and other community services. They have danced for entertainment at some nursing homes for the elderly. They were asked to dance at a birthday party for a young lady who was turning 85 years old. As well, they have danced for the last 5 years to help the Council on Aging by doing dances for their events. I would have never of thought of using my dance to help so many people. I can’t usually think past high school and what I will do with my dance. I never thought of the fact that I could go to the nursing homes to dance. What joy that would bring to those people who are stuck indoors all winter long. I love that this couple do so much volunteering with their gift.

While blushing they tell me that the Bolero is their favorite of all ballroom dances. I asked them to explain why and understood then why they blushed. “It is a very sexy and sensual dance,” they told me. It makes sense that it would be their favorite since they’re married. I find myself being drawn to this couple and their love for dance and each other.

I look up to their level of performance and see where I have room to grow as a dancer. They have a commitment to practice every week just like I have to with my dance classes. When they perform they need to sell their performances just like I need to when I dance at recital.

I also realize by watching them that age has no standing on your love for dancing. This couple is in my opinion “old” and yet they are still enjoying dance and doing so much with it. It shows me that I can do what I love for the rest of my life and possibly do it with my husband. I love the joy that they show and how I can relate to that. I feel so at ease and calm while I dance. Like it takes me to another place and time. I love how you can get lost in the music and lose yourself in it too. All of these things they too said they loved.

I asked them for any last words of advice that they would give someone who says they can't dance or is afraid to try and they said, “Remember that dancing is just walking in rhythm”. I love that advice but mine is, “Dancing is like dreaming with your feet”. In fact, I have that very saying on my mirror at home.

My couple may never be on “Dancing with the Stars” but they are certainly stars to me! My grandparents are who I have asked an autograph of. They love me and support me in all the thing that I do. They have always been there for me and our entire family. My grandparents, as busy as they are, have always put family first. Time with us is important to them and I love them more each day for being such a role model in that aspect of my life. They are amazing individuals but even more great as a couple. I will always look up to them. Not only because they are my family but because they are excellent dancers too.