



JARDINE BARN PARTY A HUGE SUCCESS!
PROGRAM OF THE YEAR 2005

Wherever you come from and whatever language you speak, you can be sure that line dance is the only easiest and most enjoyable 'language' everybody speaks at the annual Jardine Barn Party!

-----Yihong Zhang



Ah yes, barn party, which sounds interesting but mysterious to most of Jardine residents who come to the United States for the first time of their lives, is undoubtedly the highlight of this year's event! On November 19, 2004, over 50 Jardine residents piled into a school bus at about 6pm heading for a historic barn about 20 minutes away from K-State. On the way, you could hear people talking to each other happily, children laughing contagiously, with each wondering what a barn would look like and what kind of activities we would have at this special event.

As the residents arrived, they were so excited to see a real American-style barn decorated with pumpkins, scarecrows and racks around that they started to take photos immediately. Junrui Zhi, a PHD student in Entomology Department told me that she would have to return to China with her daughter in January next year to teach in Guizhou University. This would be the last Jardine event she could participate before returning. She appreciated this valuable opportunity Jardine office provided for them to explore the American culture and learn about the Kansas history. She tried to take as many photos as possible to keep these in her treasure of memories and to tell her students someday what America is like in her eyes and what the most beautiful country music is in her ears.

One family from Denmark came dressed in plaid shirts and cowboy

hats, and many others dressed in jeans or any costume closest to a cowboy or cowgirl image in their own understandings. When an open fire was lit outside the barn, people started to roast hotdogs and learned to make s'mores, the first ever experience for many of them.



Ali, the lovely boy from Iran in the picture said that he's making a super hotdog. His mom Mehri Dehghan told me that Ali loves dancing by himself at home whenever music is on.

And his dad added in a humorous tone : "Oh, Ali loves hotdog!". ☺ For many of the residents, they grow up in cities and never have had an experience to see the moon and stars on a farm while eating a real hotdog. The moon and stars were so bright and beautiful at the night!

Deborah Kohl, who attended previous years' Barn Party made the following comments:

"The Barn Party is always a wonderful time, but this year the staff at Jardine went above and beyond in their planning and as



a result, the evening went off without a hitch (save one bag of hot dog buns being devoured by a barn cat)”

At about 7pm, the real party was at stage when music was on. As the dancing began, most were hesitant to try out the new moves out on the floor. But as the night went on, everyone learned the basics of the Electric Slide, the Hokey Pokey and Chicken Dance and each was linked arm-n-arm while smiling and dancing around the floor. The dancing appeared to be enjoyed by all participating. Despite being amateurs on the dancing scene, everyone had fun. With our wonderful dance leaders, Rachel and Eric, even the shyest of people would be encouraged to join in and have fun.



“Residents seemed to especially enjoy the dancing, and more participated than in past years, I think due to the enthusiasm displayed by the dance leader”, Deborah said so.

The relaxed atmosphere barn dancing created helped our residents to feel instantly at home and, whether they're used to dancing or just beginners, they joined in from the very first dance. If you've been

to a Barn Dance you'll know what I mean! Few other events can compete with Jardine Barn Party!



If you asked Children what their favorite dance is, they would tell you "Chicken Dance", because "it is very funny", Pryanka from Nepal told me so. If you asked some adults the same question, Long Qiao would tell you that it's the Hokey Pokey because he used to be familiar with the tone of the music, but now he learned to dance it.

Jonna Leth, the one in red shirt in the picture said *"I had a lot of fun socializing, There is nothing like real music and a lively atmosphere to get things going with a swing. I do love American Barn dance!"*



If you ask our staff what a successful program is, Casey Dobbins

would tell you that

" A successful program is one that can take residents out of their element where they can learn new things, have a wonderfully enjoyable time as well as benefit and enrich the overall community. Jardine's Barn Party was able to achieve all of these qualities, making it a huge success. Residents were able to learn so many new things from Western dance steps to learning how to cook hotdogs over an open fire and discovering a truly American tradition: S'mores! This program provided the amazing opportunity for resident from all over the Jardine Complex, who otherwise may have never met, to come together for dancing, food and fun and leave with new-found friendships."

Craig Wanklyn would tell you that

"The barn party was an amazing evening to see all of our residents dance together to songs they never had heard before. Yes, many residents made me laugh, but it wasn't because they couldn't dance. . .it was because of the sheer look of excitement on their faces throughout the whole night. Not only did our residents get in the action, but the bus drivers who drove the bus out to the barn were so impressed that they joined in on the fun.

There aren't too many times when a living community can take residents outside of their normal lives to experience something

new. Most of our residents don't get the opportunity to see a barn everyday, let alone walk inside one. Due to the commitment of our staff, programs such as these do happen and our residents always attend in droves!

Many people would think that dancing in a barn isn't fun. Well. . .you know what? Maybe to them it isn't. But if they would have been there that night with the Jardine crew, I know they would have a different opinion!

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Letter of Recommendation

Well, being as how I have been in charge of setting up and running Barn Party for the past two years, it could be said that I'm a bit biased, but it was AWESOME! I think I would be hard pressed to find a more joyful sight in my daily life than watching 50 men, women, and children line-dancing, doing the hokey pokey, and the chicken dance. It almost makes you feel sorry for everyone who wasn't there who doesn't get to have this view of the way the world should be. Some of the people there, as with most of Jardine's programs, were from countries that were feuding with each other or countries that were feuding with the USA, and it didn't matter. Everyone had a great time dancing, eating hot dogs they cooked over a fire, and learning how to make (and properly eat) a S'More.

I guess one of the other things that got me was the expression of joy from a lot of different people there about just getting outside of Manhattan. One family told me it was the first time they had ever seen the stars from anywhere but inside of a city. Growing up on a farm I know how much more beautiful it is to gaze at the stars from the pitch black surroundings of the outdoors. This program each year allows an opportunity for residents to do things that are part of Kansas history and for most of them it is the only opportunity they will have. Worthy of the award for Program of the year, most definitely, because there is a chance that this is the program of a

lifetime for a lot of the residents who attend it. They didn't want to leave, and in a cheesy love story sort of fashion, there is a part of them that probably never will. That is what makes it worth all the time that was put into it by our staff, and why it deserves recognition.

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