

THE NEAREST THING TO HEAVEN (Is a Child)

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MUSIC: MCA-52145 – Thank God for Kids by Oak Ridge Boys (flip: Christmas Is Paintin' the Town). Also available on CD or as a download from Amazon.com. (See Note)

SPEED: Slow 11% to 40 RPM or 32 MPM

RHYTHM: Phase V, Slow Two-Step

FOOTWORK: Described for M – W opposite except where noted

SEQUENCE: INTRO, A, B, A, B, BRIDGE, A(1-8), ENDING

RELEASED: JUNE 2015, Version 1.2

INTRO

- 1-4** **WAIT; WAIT; TWISTY BASIC (w/CARESS)::**
- 1-2 In a loose CUDDLE pos M fcg ptr & WALL M's hnds on W's hips & W's hnds on M's shldr blades ld ft free: wait 2 meas;;
- 3 Leaving L hnd on W's R hip sd LOD L,-, extending R arm to side trng slightly RF XRib of L, rec L to fc WALL (Sd LOD R,-, extending R arm to side trng slightly RF XLif of R while caressing R sd of M's face w/L hnd, rec R to fc COH);
- 4 Releasing W's R hip & placing R hnd on W's L hip sd RLOD R,-, extending L arm to side trng slightly LF XLib of R, rec R to fc WALL (Sd RLOD L,-, extending L arm to side trng slightly LF XRif of L while caressing L sd of M's face w/R hnd, rec L to fc COH) joining ld hnds at end of meas;
- 5-8** **UNDERARM TRN; BASIC ENDING; SIDE TO SLOW AROUND THE WORLD; , -, , RECOVER;**
- 5 Sd L raising jnd ld hnds,-, XRib of L, rec L (Sd R comm trng RF undr jnd ld hnds,-, XLif of R cont trng RF ½, recg fwd R comp RF trn to fc ptr) to CP Wall;
- 6 Sd R,-, XLib of R (XRib of L), rec R;
- S-- 7 Sd L to CUDDLE pos w/M's hnds on W's shldr blades, soften L knee rotating LF w/left-side stretch allowing R ft to extend fwd (Sd R to CUDDLE pos lookg at ptr, w/M's lead soften R knee rotating LF w/right-side stretch), shifting weight to both ft & supporting W with hnds still on her shldr blades slowly lower fcg DLW rolling her CW while straightening from sway (shifting weight to both ft w/ hnds on M's shldr w/M's lead lower into lay back pos slowly rolling body CW),-;
- Q 8 Cont leading W in CW layback roll, rise to fc (sharply straighten), hold looking at ptr, shift weight to R (L) blend to CP/WALL;

PART A

- 1-4** **SIDE BASIC TO A HANDSHAKE; OPEN BREAK TO STACK HANDS; PASSING ALTERNATING UNDERARM TURNS::**
- 1 Sd L,-, XRib of L, rec L;
- 2 Joining R hnds sd R,-, apart L joining L hnds under R hnds, sd & fwd R (rec L) to offset w/ptr W to M's L;
- 3 Fwd L twd WALL raising R hnds,-, fwd & sd R twd WALL trng LF raising L hnds & lowering R hnds, rec L cont LF trn under jnd L hnds (Fwd R twd COH comm trng RF under jnd R hnds,-, fwd & sd L twd COH trng RF under jnd L hnds, rec R cont RF tm);
- 4 Bk & sd R twd COH taking R hnds over head,-, apart L, rec R (Bk & sd L twd WALL,-, apart R, rec L) to end back where you started at end of meas 2 to repeat the action;
- 5-8** **TWICE:: CROSS HAND UNDERARM TURN; BASIC ENDING w/ DOUBLE HEAD LOOP TO FACE;**
- 5-6 Repeat meas 3 & 4 to face ptr & WALL with no offset R hnds still high & L hnds low;;
- 7 Sd L keeping R hnds high,-, XRib lead W to trn RF under jnd hnds, rec L lowering R arm and taking L arm over W's head (Sd R,-, fwd & across L trng RF first under jnd R hnds, then L hnds recg fwd R cont RF trn);
- 8 Sd R taking raised L hnds over M's head & release (W's hnd dropping to M's shldr), -, XLib of R (XRib of L) taking R hnds over W's head & release, allowing M's R arm to lightly fall atop W's L arm rec R to fc;
- 9-12** **SHOULDER TUCK & SPIN; THREE TRAVELING CROSS CHASSES [M CATCH UP] TO ½ OP LOD:::**
- 9 Presenting M's chest DLW to W sd & bk L leading W's slight LF trn in front,-, trng LF to LOD rec bk R, fwd L (Quickly draw L arm dwn & bk to disengage shldr then place R hnd on M's chest fwd & across R trng slightly LF in front of M,-, fwd L LOD free spin ½ RF, bk R—option to spin additional full trn by ovtrng spin on L ft & compg trn w/ fwd R LOD trng ½ RF—to fc RLOD) to end LOW BFLY/LOD;
- 10 Fwd & sd R trng RF DLW blend to left shldr lead w/ both hnds jnd at hip level,-, sd DLC L, XRif of L (Bk & sd L blend to right shldr lead, -, sd DLC R, XLif of R);

- 11 Trng LF fwd LOD L blend to right shldr lead, -, sd DLW R, XLif of R (Trng LF bk LOD R blend to left shldr lead, -, sd DLW L, XRif of L);
- 12 Trng RF fwd R LOD blend to left shldr lead, -, trng RF fwd & sd L, XRif of L (Trng RF bk LOD L blend to right shldr lead, -, trng RF sd R, XLif of R) blend to ½OP FCG LOD;
- 13-16** **M SWITCH & LUNGE BASIC;; [TO RLOD] M SWITCH & OPEN BASIC [w/ PU];;**
- 13 Fwd L DLW changing sides & sharply trng RF scooping ptr up w/L arm,-, fwd & sd R, fwd & across L (Fwd R,-, fwd & sd L, thru R) to end in V-SHAPE L½OP/LOD;
- 14 Sd R with slight lunge action, -, rec L, XRif of L (XLif of R) to end in V-SHAPE ½OP/RLOD—M on the outside W in the center;
- 15 Fwd L DRC changing sides & sharply trng RF scooping ptr up w/L arm,-, fwd & sd R, fwd & across L (fwd R,-, fwd & sd L, fwd & across R) to end in V-SHAPE L½OP/RLOD;
- 16 Trng LF (RF) sd & bk R scoop ptr up w/R arm,-, XLib of R, rec R comm trng LF (rec L moving LF in front of M to CP);

PART B

- 1-4** **START TRIPLE TRAVELER;; SLOW OPEN FRONT VINE 4; ;**
- 1 Trng LF sd & fwd L LOD raise jnd ld hnds & release ptr from trailing arm,-, fwd & sd R, fwd & across L (Trng LF sd & bk R,-, cont LF trn fwd & sd L under jnd ld hnds, fwd R cont trng LF to shape twd M);
- 2 Fwd & sd R, spiral 7/8 LF under jnd ld hnds, fwd L lowering jnd ld hnds to shldr height, fwd R (Trng LF fwd & sd L shaping to M,-, fwd & across R, fwd & sd L) ending in LOP LOD shaped twd ptr—M on the outside W in the center—w/jnd ld hnds extended in front;
- SS SS 3-4 Thru L to LOP LOD sweeping ld arms dwn & back,-, trng LF sd R (trng RF sd L) to momentary BFLY-; Releasing ld hnds trng LF bk L (trng RF bk R) to OP RLOD,-, trng RF sd R (trng LF sd L) to LOP LOD shaped twd ptr jnd ld hnds in front at head-level,-;
- 5-8** **FINISH TRIPLE TRAVELER; TUNNEL EXIT; TO RLOD SLOW OPEN FRONT VINE 4; ;**
- 5 Thru L to LOD sweeping jnd ld hnds dwn & back,-, fwd R, fwd L bringing hnds up and around leading W to roll RF (Thru R to LOD comm RF trn,-, sd & bk L trng RF under jnd hnds, cont RF trn fwd R);
- 6 Fwd & sd R trng ¼ LF leading W to lariat around in front,-, rec L trng LF to fc RLOD allowing jnd hnds to pass over M's head, rec R (Fwd L around M,-, fwd R, fwd L to fc RLOD) end keeping jnd hnds high in mod LOP fc RLOD;
- SS SS 7-8 Fwd L (R) bringing hnds down & bk,-,trng LF to momentary BFLY sd R (trng RF sd L) -; Releasing ld hnds trng LF bk L (trng RF bk R) to OP LOD,-,trng RF sd R (trng LF sd L),- end BFY/WALL;
- 9-12** **CROSS CHASSE; R LUNGE & HOLD; W UNDERARM TURN TO TAMARA; WHEEL 3;**
- 9 XLif,-, sd R, XLif to CP/WALL;
- S-- 10 Sd R lowering into knee and extending L leg,-,-,-;
- 11 Sd L rising to low BFLY, keeping trail hnds loosely jnd low at W's L hip & raising ld hnds high-, XRif of L leading W to trn RF undr jnd ld hnds, rec L fcg WALL (Sd R,-, allowing trail hnds to wrap around W's back XLif of R trng ½ RF undr jnd ld hnds, rec fwd on R cont trn to fc RLOD with M's L & W's R hnds jnd above and between ptrs' heads their arms forming a window) in TAMARA pos;
- 12 Moving CW in TAMARA pos fwd R,-, L, R (fwd L,-, R, L) to fc COH (W fc LOD);
- 13-16** **WHEEL & WRAP; WHEEL 3 LOD; RELEASE TO EXPLODE APART; HOLD,-,-, REC BFLY;**
- 13 Cont CW fwd L tugging gently on trail hnds to unwrap W LF, -, fwd R, bringing jnd ld hnds over W's head & down to her waist fwd L (Fwd & sd R comm LF trn, -, fwd L cont LF trn, fwd R comp LF trn wrapping into M's R arm) to WRAP pos RLOD;
- 14 Cont CW fwd R,-, L, R (bk L,-, R, L) to WRAP pos LOD;
- S-- 15 Releasing all jnd hnds w/M sliding R hnd across W's back & dwn arm to jn trail hnds sd L twd COH (Opening L arm to jn trail hnds w/M sd R twd WALL), slowly sweeping ld hnds up in front of face,-,-,-;
- Q 16 Hold contg arm mvt to open ld hnds out to the side,-,-, rec R trng ¼ RF (rec L trng ¼ LF) to BFLY/WALL;

REPEAT PART A & PART B

BRIDGE

- 1-2** **LUNGE BASIC; TWICE;**
- 1-2 Sd L with slight lunge action, -, rec R, XLif of R; Sd R with slight lunge action, -, rec L, XRif of L;

REPEAT PART A(1-8)

ENDING

- 1-4** **TWISTY BASIC (w/CARESS); UNDERARM TRN; BASIC ENDING;**
 1-4 Quickly draw M's R arm dwn & bk to disengage shldr while allowing W's L arm to remain at or above
 shldr height & place M's L hnd on W's R hip then repeat meas 3-6 of Intro.
- 5-6** **SIDE TO SLOW AROUND THE WORLD; , -, , & CARESS;**
 S-- 5 Repeat meas 7 of Intro.
 ---- 6 Cont leading W in CW layback roll, rise to fc (sharply straighten), hold looking at ptr, - (caress M's cheek w/
 W's R hnd & slowly lay head on M's R shldr);

Note: Versions of the song available on the CDs: "The Oak Ridge Boys Collection" (1992), "The Oak Ridge Boys Gold" (2007), and "The Oak Ridge Boys Definitive Collection" (2006) appear to be of similar length and tempo to the 45 RPM record. The Oak Ridge Boys' 2014 CD, "Boys Night Out" is a much slower live performance of the song. The choreographers have not verified that the sequences of any of these are equivalent to this choreography.