



USA Dance—Southern Wisconsin



Chapter 2030

March 1, 2012

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Welcome and Introduction

When I took over as President at the beginning of year I thought it was important to try and do a better job of communicating with our members and the many nonmembers that attend our events. One of my goals was to start a newsletter and this is the first edition so I hope you enjoy it and find it informative. I am hoping that we can put one of these together at least twice a year to keep members up to date.

I was fortunate to inherit an organization that has been well run and had a long history of success and stability. I can assure you that we continue to be financially sound. However, even though we are stable, our chapter has not been immune to the current economic conditions. From 2007 through 2010 we saw slow but steady growth in

attendance. In 2011 however our attendance plateaued while our costs have continued to slowly increase. In addition the National USA Dance organization chose to make some changes which have a significant impact on our chapter. Finally we face some unique challenges because we work on a pay as you go basis. This makes us susceptible to unplanned events such as weather and conflicting events. For example, our January dance drew 46 people and lost approximately \$600 because we were against the Packer Playoff game (and they didn't even win!)

None of these issues are insurmountable and our new board has spent a considerable amount of time addressing these and other items. As you

read through this newsletter you will see that we have adapted a multi prong approach and are addressing both the financial issues as well as looking at ways of improving promotion.

Our goal is to ensure that we continue to provide high quality social Ballroom Dance opportunities to the Greater Milwaukee area

Roger Clauer
President, USA Dance
Chapter 2030

Discount Admission for First Time Dance Attendees

To stimulate dance attendance, starting with our March Dance, we are giving a 50% discount to first time attendees. The first time someone comes to one of our dances they will get in for \$6 instead of the usual \$12. There are only two restrictions.

1) The attendee must not have

previously attended one of our dances, and

2) The attendee needs to provide their name and email address so we can contact them

That's it. So if you know of someone (and most of us do) who has been

taking lessons for awhile and is ready to try social dancing, invite them to one of our dances and they can see if they like it for only \$6. Note: the discount does not apply to the Dinner Dance.

What's in a name?

For quite while our Chapter has been the "Southern Wisconsin" Chapter. Recently the board voted to change the name to the "Greater Milwaukee" Chapter. The obvious question is why bother and does anyone care? The answer may not be obvious, USA Dance events are open to the public and we want people who are looking for ballroom dance opportunities to find us. A name like USA Dance South-

ern Wisconsin doesn't help people to know what market we serve. If you do a Google search for "Ballroom Dances near Milwaukee" we don't even show up until about the 3rd or 4th page. My wife Eileen and I attended a USA Dance at the Madison Chapter and when I introduced myself as from the "Southern Wisconsin" Chapter, they said "Where is that"? Clearly it was time for a change. For the rest of the

year, you will see both names as we will gradually migrate to the Greater Milwaukee chapter name. Nothing will change in our dances other than hopefully more people will find us.

"Effective with the March 2012 dance, the Admission prices for members will be raised to \$10."

Member Admission Increases from \$8 to \$10

As members of USA Dance you know that you pay \$25 (or possibly more depending on our membership category) to the National USA Dance organization. What most of you probably do not know is that we (the local Chapter) received only \$5 of every renewal. The rest of the money was retained by the National Organization. While \$5 doesn't sound like a lot, for our chapter, this amounted to \$810 that we received from National in 2011. Effective at the beginning of 2012 National has cut the rebate program and we no longer receive anything from the money that you pay to USA Dance. The loss of the \$810 coupled with the other challenges mentioned on page 1, forced the board to take action. Therefore, effective with the March 2012 dance, the Admission prices for members will be raised to \$10.

This was a difficult decision but we had no choice if we are to remain viable in the long run. We will continue to give a \$10 discount for the dinner

dance (plus priority registration) so if you attend the dinner dance and 8 dances per year it still is financially advantageous to be a member. We also surveyed a number of other USA Dance chapter and found that while some had a \$4 differential a \$2 differential was more common.

Also remember that USA Dance is a National organization and if you travel you can often find a local chapter which has dances and usually at a discount. Eileen and I had a wonderful time dancing at a USA Dance a few years ago right off Times Square in New York. Plus membership includes a subscription to "American Dancer"

Finally, inquiring minds might wonder what we do get from USA Dance. The answer is actually quite a bit. USA Dance provides a \$2 million insurance policy which covers both members and guests. They provide the 501-(3) (c) nonprofit status which keeps us legal and prevents us from getting

into tax problems. They provide us with a central registration and renewal system. And lastly they provide the licensing (BMI and ASCAP is coming) so our DJs can legally play virtually any music. It may not sound like a lot but it relieves quite a bit of work and personal risk to the board members.

We hope that members continue their membership but we understand that some may chose not to do so. We will continue to be open to the public and we hope you choose USA Dance Greater Milwaukee as one of your dance destinations regardless of whether you are a member or not.

Post Card reminders to be retired

USA Dance has sent out Postcard reminders for many years. Thad Groszczyk has done a great job over the last year creating eye catching cards. Unfortunately, over the years, the cost of this has grown to a point where in 2012 it will cost us over \$1,200 to send out postcards. The board decided this was too expensive and we decided to go to email only reminders.

We did some analysis and found that we currently have good email addresses for about 77% of our members. If we do not have a good email address for you, there will be card

enclosed with this mailing requesting a current email. Please note that we do not sell, rent or share our email list with anyone. We only send USA Dance announcements and selected Dance oriented mailings such as Charity Dance events and other special events.

If you do not have an email, we have new business card sized schedules (one is enclosed with this mailing) that you can use as a reminder. In addition we will continue to post our schedule in Dancer's Dateline and it is posted on our Web site. Finally, almost all of

our dances are on the 3rd Sunday of the month (the December dance is the one exception) so it is relatively easy to remember our schedule.

You will still receive one or two mailings a year as we will always mail the Dinner dance invitation and we plan to annually mail yearly schedule cards.

If for any reason you are not getting our emails, we will gladly add you if you send an email to

USADanceSouthernWi@wi.rr.com

Thank You

I want to formally thank our retiring board members. We had 4 members retire from the board—**Jim Rosewicz** (President), **Al Schuh** (Vice President) and **Ron and Ann Kobiske**. Combined these individuals have total of 50 years of service to our Chapter!. Each has made significant contributions and will be greatly missed. We sincerely appreciate all that they have done.

In addition to our board members, I would also like to recognize and thank

the instructors who generously donated their time to teach lessons for our Chapter in 2011. They were **Alex Gonzales, Cathy Binko-DeRaimo, Jack Ryan, Una Lisa Cichacki, and Kelly Robbins**. The lessons they provided added to the enjoyment of our dances and would not have been possible if we had to pay instructors. As I talk to other chapters I have found that we are quite fortunate to have instructors that are willing to donate their time to benefit the ballroom dance

community and we are very grateful.

As an footnote, we are always looking for good instructors who are interested in teaching at our dances. If you know of anyone, have them contact any board member. While we do not endorse specific instructors or studios we do allow them to promote their studio and/or special events if they teach a lesson.

Combined, Jim Rosewicz, Al Schuh, Ron and Ann Kobiske have over 50 years of service to USA Dance.

Dinner Dance Highlights



Enclosed with this newsletter is the invitation for the 2012 Dinner Dance. This

is one of the highlights of our year and is limited to 130 people. This will ensure that everyone has adequate room for dancing.

The major change this year is we decided to add hot and cold Hors d'oeuvres in the middle of the dance as we felt that 4 hours was a long time to go without food. This was based upon feedback from attendees at last year's dance. Let us know what you think as we are always looking for ways to improve our events. We plan to continue to make this our signature

event.

The Wisconsin Club is an outstanding facility and Ron Felsing always does a great job on the music. This is one of the few public dance events at Wisconsin Club so don't miss out. This is our 4th year and every year the event has grown. We hope that you will join us.



Promoting the joy of Ballroom
Dance in Greater Milwaukee

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Visit us on the web at <http://usadance-southernwi.zoomshare.com/>

New Schedule Cards

If you have been at one of our dances in the last 2 months you may have noticed that we now have a new business card sized card containing the entire 2011 schedule. On the other side we have all of our contact information. For those that haven't seen these, we have enclosed one with this newsletter.

The idea is that you can put these in your wallet, put one on your refrigerator, etc. and they will serve as a convenient reminder of our dances.

We will continue to have them available at our dances until we run out. With the removal of the postcards we will also be creating a new card once

our 2013 schedule has been finalized.

Feel free to take a few extras for friends that might be interested in getting into ballroom dancing. As we talk to some of the newer dancers one of the themes that we hear is "how do you find out about dances". This is a great way to help them find a monthly quality dance. Remember, first time attendees can get in for 1/2 price

March Dance Reminder

Our next dance will be at the Richfield Chalet on Sunday **March 18, 2012**. Dance from 5 - 9 p.m. to Music by **DJ Rey**.

Admission:

Members \$10

Nonmembers \$12

We hope to see you there.