

PROM NIGHT IN HOUSTON MIX GLAMOUR, GLITZ *and* DANCING

By Dr. Linda Runyon

It was Prom Night in June......and Houston Channel 39 (KIAH) was on hand to film the Houston Chapter 5003 event for the Houston Subculture NewsFix segment. Amid interviews and camera shots, candle lights flickered on table tops, music swelled, and dancers waltzed, quick-stepped, and foxtrotted their way around the dance floor. Swing, jive, and rumba rounded out an evening of dancing.

A photo booth was available for dancers to crown themselves Prom King or Queen and capture the special moment. After the cheers and applause for professional dancers Cristiano Callegari and Katia Kuznetsova, who demonstrated an elegant tango, the night's Prom Court selected the King and Queen. The video can be seen at <http://newsfixnow.com/2014/06/25/this-subculture-loves-to-dance-the-night-away/>

The Chapter Board of Directors choose themes for the monthly dances. Invitations are emailed to members and guests. And dancers are encouraged to dress the part. From ugly Christmas sweaters in December to 1940s fashion for the Hangar Dance at the Hobby Airport airplane museum, costumes liven up the evening.

Getting people out on the dance floor is not a problem in Houston. A Meet Up group attends most monthly dances. Tables labeled "Shall We Dance" which are reserved for Dancers without Partners buzz with activity as both men and women ask others to dance. The evenings begin with an hour dance class that affords even the newest dancers the opportunity to learn a few steps.

Prom Night was no exception, beginning with instruction in Rumba, which appealed to the large number of new dancers. A large group of college students from The University of Houston, Rice University and St. Thomas University also enjoyed reminiscing about their proms with members whose proms were decades ago.

Diversity is the key to Houston's success. Dancers come from a variety of cultures, ethnicities, and ages. Exhibitions have ranged from elegant tangos performed by professionals, to playful sambas performed by pro-am teams, to formation swing performed by students from a local school.

