MINNESOTA

NEING TIMES

A publication of the Minnesota Chapter 2011 of USA Dance





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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

STAR OF THE NORTH DANCESPORT CLASSIC, BBDC'S DINNER FOR SEVEN, AND MORE!

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Upcoming Dances

BECOME A USA DANCE MN MEMBER AT OUR DANCE AND GET IN FREE!

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April

Saturday, April 20th

Spring Formal Dance

7-8 pm Waltz Lesson Instructor: Julie Jacobson

8-11 pm Variety Dance

\$12 Students & USA Dance members \$15 All others

Proceeds from the April dance will be donated to the University of Minnesota Ballroom Dance Club.

North Star Ballroom

St. Paul Student Center, 2nd Floor 2017 Buford Ave St. Paul, MN 55108

May

Saturday, May 18th

7-8 pm Tango Lesson Instructor: Paul Botes

8-11 pm Variety Dance

\$7 USA Dance members \$10 Non-members

American Classic Ballroom

550 Market Street Chanhassen, MN 55317

USA Dance MN HOTLINE (651) 483-5467 www.usadance-mn.org

Call for information on dance events. Leave a message for membership information.

DANCERS' NIGHT OUT

Want to dance? Dancers' Night Out lists social dance events in Minnesota. Want to see your dance listed here? Email the details to newsletter@usadance-mn.org.

- Mon 4/1 Rhythm Junction; Four Seasons Dance Studio, 1637 Hennepin Ave S, Mpls; Swing Dance; 8-11; \$5; call 612 342 0902 or visit www.fourseasonsdance.com
- Wed 4/3 West Coast Swing Dance Party; Dancers Studio, 415 Pascal St. N, St. Paul; 9-10; \$5; call 651 641 0777 or visit www.dancersstudio.com
- Thu 4/4 Variety Dance; Dancers Studio, 415 Pascal St. N, St. Paul; 8-8:50; \$5; call 651 641 0777 or visit www.dancersstudio.
- Fri 4/5 Dance Party; Cheek to Cheek, 11415 Foley Blvd NW, Coon Rapids; Bolero lesson at 7:30, dance 8:30-10:30, \$10, \$8 dance only; call 763 755 3644
- Fri 4/5 Tim Patrick and His Blue Eyes Band; Eagles, 2507 E 25th St, Minneapolis; Lesson at 7; full band 8-11:30; \$12; www. minneapoliseagles34.org, www. timpatrickmusic.com, 612-245-3339
- Sun 4/7 FRÉE Swing Group Class; ERV Studio, 816 Mainstreet, Hopkins; 2-3:30
- Sun 4/7 TC Rebels West Coast Swing Dance; Social Dance Studio, 3742 23rd Ave S, Minneapolis; 7-10:30; \$11, \$7 members; call 952 941 0906, email info@tcrebels. com, or visit www.tcrebels.com
- Mon 4/8 Tim Patrick and His Blue Eyes Band; Cheap Skate, 3075 Coon Rapids Blvd, Coon Rapids; Lesson at 6, full band 7-10; \$20, \$10 dance only; www.cheapskatecr. com, www.timpatrickmusic.com, 763-427-8980
- Mon 4/8 Rhythm Junction; Four Seasons Dance Studio, 1637 Hennepin Ave S, Mpls; Swing Dance; 8-11; \$5; call 612 342 0902 or visit www.fourseasonsdance.com
- Wed 4/10 West Coast Swing Dance Party; Dancers Studio, 415 Pascal St. N, St. Paul; 9-10; \$5; call 651 641 0777 or visit www.dancersstudio.com
- Thu 4/11 Variety Dance; Dancers Studio, 415 Pascal St. N, St. Paul; 8-8:50; \$5; call 651 641 0777 or visit www.dancersstudio.
- Fri 4/12 Dance Party; Cheek to Cheek, 11415 Foley Blvd NW, Coon Rapids; Bolero lesson at 7:30, dance 8:30-10:30, \$10, \$8 dance only; call 763 755 3644
- Fri 4/12 Club Salsa; Blue Moon Ballroom, 2030 Hwy 14 E, Rochester; Salsa, Bachata, Cumbia, Merengue, Cha Cha; salsa lesson at 7:30, dance 8-11; \$8, \$6 youth; call 507 288 0556 or visit www. bluemoonballroom.com
- Sat 4/13 Aqua Gliders Dance Club; Social Hall, St. Richard's Catholic Church, 7540 Penn Ave S, Richfield; Foxtrot lesson at 7, dancing 8:15-10:30; partner required; call 612 869 3062
- Sun 4/14 FREE Swing Group Class; ERV Studio, 816 Mainstreet, Hopkins; 2-3:30

- Mon 4/15 Rhythm Junction; Four Seasons Dance Studio, 1637 Hennepin Ave S, Mpls; Swing Dance; 8-11; \$5; call 612 342 0902 or visit www.fourseasonsdance. com
- Tue 4/16 Tim Patrick and His Blue Eyes Band; Skateville, 201 S River Ridge Circle, Burnsville; Lesson at 6, full band 7-10; \$20, \$10 dance only; www.skateville. com, www.timpatrickmusic.com, 612-245-3339
- Wed 4/17 West Coast Swing Dance Party; Dancers Studio, 415 Pascal St. N, St. Paul; 9-10; \$5; call 651 641 0777 or visit www.dancersstudio.com
- Thu 4/18 Variety Dance; Dancers Studio, 415 Pascal St. N, St. Paul; 8-8:50; \$5; call 651 641 0777 or visit www.dancersstudio. com
- Fri 4/19 Dance Party; Cheek to Cheek, 11415 Foley Blvd NW, Coon Rapids; Bolero lesson at 7:30, dance 8:30-10:30, \$10, \$8 dance only; call 763 755 3644
- Sat 4/20 USA Dance Spring Formal; North Star Ballroom, St. Paul Student Center 2nd Floor, 2017 Buford Ave, St. Paul; Waltz lesson at 7, dance 8-11; \$10, \$7 USA Dance members; proceeds will be donated to the University of Minnesota Ballroom Dance Club
- Sun 4/21 FREE Swing Group Class; ERV Studio, 816 Mainstreet, Hopkins; 2-3:30
- Sun 4/21 TC Rebels West Coast Swing Dance; Social Dance Studio, 3742 23rd Ave S, Minneapolis; 7-10:30; \$11, \$7 members; call 952 941 0906, email info@tcrebels. com, or visit www.tcrebels.com
- Mon 4/22 Rhythm Junction; Four Seasons Dance Studio, 1637 Hennepin Ave S, Mpls; Swing Dance; 8-11; \$5; call 612 342 0902 or visit www.fourseasonsdance.
- Wed 4/24 West Coast Swing Dance Party; Dancers Studio, 415 Pascal St. N, St. Paul; 9-10; \$5; call 651 641 0777 or visit www.dancersstudio.com
- Thu 4/25 Variety Dance; Dancers Studio, 415 Pascal St. N, St. Paul; 8-8:50; \$5; call 651 641 0777 or visit www.dancersstudio. com
- Fri 4/26 Dance Party; Cheek to Cheek, 11415 Foley Blvd NW, Coon Rapids; Bolero lesson at 7:30, dance 8:30-10:30, \$10, \$8 dance only; call 763 755 3644
- Sun 4/28 FREE Swing Group Class; ERV Studio, 816 Mainstreet, Hopkins; 2-3:30
- Sun 4/28 Salsa Dance Party; Dancers Studio, 415 Pascal St. N, St. Paul; 7-7:50; \$5; call 651 641 0777 or visit www.dancersstudio. com
- Mon 4/29 Rhythm Junction; Four Seasons
 Dance Studio, 1637 Hennepin Ave S,
 Mpls; Swing Dance; 8-11; \$5; call 612 342
 0902 or visit www.fourseasonsdance.
 com ■



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USA Dance – MN Chapter #2011 Board Minutes

Tuesday, March 12, 2013

Submitted by: Cathy Dessert

In attendance: Pete Westlake (President), Cathy Dessert (Vice President), Jane Phipps (Treasurer), Leslie Whitney (Secretary), Bonnie Burton, Marty Faeh, Zhuojing Liu, Corissa Ranum with guest Daniel O'Connell

Location: Quixotic Coffee, 769 Cleveland Ave S, St. Paul

Call to Order:

- · Ouorum established
- February minutes approved. Agenda approved.

Organizational Matters:

- Treasurer's report and Star of the North expenditures were reviewed and approved.
- Annual report submitted to National by Jane.

Projects

- The Tea Dance was discussed and budget approved. It will be held May 5th at the Lafayette Country Club. It will include brunch and dance. Donations for student tickets, \$25 each, will be greatly appreciated. No tickets are being used this year, reservations only. More information on the website, www. usadance-mn.org, and in upcoming newsletters. Thank you, Dede Ouren and Sharon Kennedy, for heading up the team this year!
- Project Dance MN II was updated by the chairperson, Corissa Ranum. For March, the lessons are at American Classic Ballroom in Chanhassen. She is going to increase publicity efforts with a target of 500 attendees. Lessons in May will be taught by Rachel Damiani and Shane Haggerty with tango as the dance. April is swing at ERV with Eliecer Ramirez Vargas instructing. A budget for May, including marketing, was approved. Consideration of a wireless microphone purchase was discussed. Kudos to Corissa and her great team!
- Competitors at the USA Dance Nationals in April will be dancing a demonstration at the March Monthly Dance. Go, Minnesota!
- Recap Star of the North. Details, including budget, were discussed. Thanks to all the volunteers, spectators, and dancers who made it a success! Results are posted. Changes for next year were discussed.
- Ownership of major initiatives was discussed. They include Monthly Dances, Competitions Star of the North and Blast, Project Dance Minnesota, Dancing Times Newsletter, Finances, Communications/Marketing/Membership. More discussion needed to firm up assignments. Pete will email board members.
- Storing and tracking belongings of the chapter: tabled to next meeting.

Next meeting:

Tuesday, April 2, 2013 5:30 PM Quixotic Coffee 769 Cleveland Ave S St. Paul ■

USA Dance: Who Are We?

We are a nonprofit organization formed to preserve and promote ballroom dancing, both as an art and a healthful sport. The Minnesota chapter, USA Dance MN, was formed in 1991.

Membership in USA Dance is open to dancers of all levels. There are several categories to choose from: Social, Competitor, Junior (17 and under), Collegiate, and Associate (professional/instructor).

USA Dance MN sponsors monthly dances and other special dance events. Members are entitled to discounts on admission to the monthly dances, as well as access to a great network for meeting other dancers.

As a member, you'll have fun dancing and meeting many new friends. For more information, call the USA Dance MN HOTLINE: 651-483-5467.

The Minnesota Dancing Times is published monthly by the members of the Minnesota Chapter of USA Dance, providing information and news of ballroom dancing to members and friends.

Editor: Mary Beth Beckman (612) 424-2228 Design/Layout: Nic Westlake (612) 412-1112 Advertising Committee:

Suzi Blumberg (612) 869-4416 Bonnie Burton (952) 454-4620 Mailing: Committee member

Contributors: Mary Beth Beckman, Paul Botes, Kate Bratt, Elizabeth Dickinson, Diestler Photography, Donna Edelstein, Marty Faeh, Karin Lynn Photography, Jack Munday, Deborah J. Nelson, Joel Torgeson, Peter Westlake

Contributions: Articles submitted may be edited for length, clarity, and content. Photos should be high-resolution jpg, png, or pdf files. Email submissions to: newsletter@usadance-mn.org.

Subscriptions: \$22/year. Make checks payable to USA Dance MN and send to Theresa Kimler, 7050 49th St. N, St. Paul, MN 55128 ■

Advertising

DISPLAY ADS: To advertise your event or professional service, submit a digital file (300 dpi pdf or jpeg format ONLY) or cameraready artwork to bonnieburton@comcast.net (952.454.4620), along with payment to USA Dance MN. Advertising for charge cards, insurance, or travel cannot be accepted. Payment to accompany ad.

Full page 7.5" wide x 10" high \$130
Half page 7.5" wide x 4.75" high \$80
OR 3.5" wide x 9.5" high
Qtr. page 3.5" wide x 4.75" high \$60
Business Card 3 consecutive months \$50

SWAPLINE ADS: Free 3-line ad in Swaplines available to subscribers (dance merchandise only). Send to: newsletter@usadance-mn.org

DEADLINE FOR ALL MATERIALS: 10th OF EACH MONTH

To solicit Mary Beth's editing services, ask questions about the newsletter, or submit content, contact her at newsletter@usadance-mn.org.

FROM THE EDITOR

By Mary Beth Beckman

nother Star of the North has come and gone. It's March 22nd and I'm still catching up on life, but based on the things I've seen and heard, Star was a glorious success, and it was all worth it. Take a gander at the gorgeous photos that were donated to us for use in this issue and see the smiling faces for yourself.

This year, I was in the awkward situation of wearing the same clothes as last year. I mean, really, the exact same outfits down to the jewelry. My goal for next year is to acquire some new clothing that is both suitably dressy and comfortable enough to sit in for twenty straight hours. I have some other goals, too, but those are super secret. Not really. I'm just trying to inject some mystery into my otherwise totally transparent identity.

I interacted with a whole bunch of people over the weekend, and I left a good impression on some and probably an atrocious impression on others. What I have to say about that: whoops! If you talked to me, you're probably aware that I only slept forty-five minutes the night before, and maybe you know that I was averaging four hours a night the week before. Basically, I was a hot mess of exhaustion and had totally lost my conflict-resolution skills, which are generally top-notch.

Most of the attendees were perfectly lovely and respectful and wonderful. For that 1% of people who weren't: *draco dormiens nunquam titillandus*. (Yes, I am that much of a nerd.) Don't pop an attitude with the people who have put countless hours into making sure this event goes as smoothly as possible. I will remind you that

we are *volunteers*. A little respect goes a long way. No respect earns you a cranky Mary Beth who doesn't feel particularly compelled to meet your unreasonable demands. So do keep that in mind for next year.

If you have any feedback, encouraging or critical, Daniel O'Connell is waiting eagerly on the other end of sotn@usadancemn.org to gather your compliments, suggestions, and perhaps inevitable aspersions from the aforementioned 1%. He's kinder than I am, though, so you should be in the clear.

I really don't want to make it seem like I was miserable, because I wasn't. I mentioned before that I spoke with many lovely people, and I meant it. There were running jokes (or stumbling jokes in the case of Jeremy Anderson). There were a few beautiful people who stopped to ask how I was doing every time they walked by. I had some very enjoyable conversations, received a few meaningful compliments, and generally had a great time just enjoying people. And a few bad apples certainly won't be taking that away from me, but I believe in a good public shaming every now and then.

Have fun with this issue. Look at the pictures, read the articles, and think about what you'd like to say for next month's issue. Then get your content to me by April 10th. If you, like me, are still catching up and meant to write an article on Star of the North but didn't get around to it, send one in for May!

Thanks for reading and for mostly being wonderful.



Peter Westlake is the president of USA Dance Minnesota. He is also an accomplished competitive dancer with his partner, Sehyun Oh.

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Peter Westlake

We did it! From the very first heat to the very last Jack and Jill, Star of the North was a huge success this year. Hundreds of amateur dancers from the Twin Cities and the surrounding region joined us to perform thousands of dances in fierce competition. For many, it was their first experience on the competitive floor, and given the response, I suspect it won't be their last.

One of my favorite moments was the Saturday evening team matches, where collegiate teams of three couples battled for victory in each of three dance styles. The crowd responded with a deafening enthusiasm that I've never seen at a dance competition. This year, Star of the North was really incredible.

Of course, this spectacular competition could not have happened without the tireless efforts of everyone involved. To our organizers, officials, deck captains, hand stampers, and everyone in between, all I can say is a great big thank you! We never could have done it without you.

And a big thank you also to our competitors, who invested countless hours and miles to be a part of this event. We are very pleased that you could spend the weekend with us. I'd also like to offer a special thanks to all the collegiate teams who made the trek to participate in Star of the North and the team matches. Your enthusiasm probably contributed to my hearing loss, and it was totally worth it. Thank you for coming and having such a good time.

I personally feel that Star of the North is one of the the greatest things that we do in Minnesota to promote the quality and quantity of ballroom dancing, and it makes me very proud to be a part of this community. Thank you to everyone for being there and for dancing with us.

We set a date for the annual Tea Dance! Join us for the usual brunch and dancing Sunday, May 5th, at the Lafayette Country Club in Minnetonka. See you there! ■

Dance with the TC Rebels!



Regular Dances **1st & 3rd Sundays** of each month, 7:00-10:30 p.m. Music is West Coast Swing and Variety.

Dances:

April 7 & 21

May 5 & 19

• June 2 & 16

Special Event: Spring Into Swing! Workshops with Joy Davina + Todd Paulus on Saturday, April 13, 2013. More info. at www.tcrebels.com

Dances and events held at Social Dance Studio, 3742-23rd Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55407.



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AND

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CHEAP SKATE ROLLER CENTER

3075 Coon Rapids Blvd., Coon Rapids, MN 55433 763-427-8980...www.cheapskatecr.com

AND

BURNSVILLE

THIRD TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH... Starts April 16

SKATEVILLE

201 River Ridge Cir. So., Burnsville, MN 55337 952-890-0988...www.skateville.com

AND

MAPLEWOOD

FOURTH MONDAY OF EACH MONTH... Starts April 22

(excluding May and August)

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STAR OF THE NORTH

More than an Event: An Adventure!

By Marty Faeh

That an adventure, one that challenged me mentally and physically on the dance floor. As Star of the North was quickly approaching, I started asking around to find an amateur dance partner. Next thing I knew, I had four wonderful dance partners: Cathy Dessert, Erika Gallagher, Zhuojing Liu, and Sam Dahn. Each of these wonderful dancers taught me something I didn't know before. That is the beauty of dance: you will never, ever stop learning about it, or its partnerships, once you have chosen dance as your passion.

When I started piecing together a strategy on practice times and registration, I thought to myself, "Oh, my. How am I going to do all of this within the next three to four weeks?" Somehow it all came together. We worked as a team; USA Dance Minnesota's registrar, Mary Beth, answered all of my challenging registration questions; and we were off to the races.

Registration complete, forty dances entered—no problem, right? Being a relatively new dancer, I never considered this thing called *call backs* ... or should I say *insanity*. Once the dancing started at 8:30 a.m., we did not finish until 7 p.m. after over 115 heats.

In the morning rounds, I did more rhythm than I had in my entire life but said to myself, "Not too bad. I can do this." However, in the afternoon session, I got into the perfect smooth position, and my toes, then my arches, then my calves, then my thighs started cramping, and the music started. Off to the races we went, again and again—laugh, cramp, laugh, cramp. Somehow we survived the day with many wonderful memories. I made the finals and placed with all three of my dance partners this first day. What a great feeling of achievement, and the knowledge I gained along the way will continue to benefit me. I learned more in one day than many will learn in a year of regular dance study.

Day two was a bit more manageable. Cathy Dessert and I performed an international tango. I'm not sure which I like better: a hundred couples on the floor around me or a solo, as Cathy and I were faced with. The floor seemed so big when nobody else was on it. I took a deep breath, and off to the races again. We had a great time wrapping up the day with the fun Jack and Jill event, one of my favorite things to do.

Special thanks to my dance partners, USA Dance Minnesota, my pro instructors (Michelle Haley Hudson, Kathryn Bratt, and Kristina Lee), Gordon Bratt, Dustin Donelan, the Berstens at Dance with Us America, Cinema Ballroom, Dancers Studio, Karin Lynn Photography, Diestler Photography, and my dear friend, international fashion dress designer Zhanna Kens. None of this would have been possible without all of you and all of our great fans cheering us on. See you all at the next Star of the North! ■

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Elizabeth Dickinson is a dancer and life coach in the Twin Cities. She offers complimentary coaching consultations and can be reached at www.pursueyourpath.com.

THE DANCING LIFE

Where Is the Foundation for Your Power?

By Elizabeth Dickinson

thought a lot about my feet, but chiefly in terms of where I was putting them. I didn't actually think about them as a power source. I thought about my legs as my main power source for moving. And when I was asked to compress my ankles, it always felt like my knees were taking the pressure. It took me a long time to feel any power in my ankles and feet. I literally had to think my consciousness into my ankles and feet and out of my knees and legs.

If you feel consistently good in a particular area of life, that's where you naturally want to focus on, spend your time and energy. And there's nothing wrong with that. But just as relying on my quads to power my movement actually started hurting my knees, if you over-rely on the wrong area, it can also lead to injury.

Power simply means the ability to act in a certain way. The lowest load-bearing part of a building is the foundation, just as the feet are the lowest load-bearing foundation of power and movement. In life coaching, your values and vision are the foundation for your ability to act and to move in life. If you're acting from anything else—perhaps the received wisdom of your family or society—if it doesn't align with your personal values, it can

injure your emotional, mental, and psychic health.

Personal values can be identified by thinking about and remembering some of the best times in your life, when you felt in the flow or most alive and juiced, or when you lost track of time because you were so involved with a particular activity you loved.

Personal values are very individual. I have a client whose top three values are connecting, community, and intimacy. I have another client whose top three values are uncovering, initiating, and magic. Just from knowing those three words, you can see that their lives will look quite different from each other, that each of these people will be fulfilled by different activities and relationships.

You don't want to move by overly relying on a part of your body that can't support you for the long haul. You don't want to injure yourself by resting or moving on anything other than other your own deepest values. If your life feels painful or out of balance in any area, it really helps to ask yourself, "What values are being compromised? How can I honor the true foundation for my life?" And may you pursue that path and values from a foundation of purpose, passion, power, and peace.

Learn to Dance with the Rebels!

Classes on Sunday, 5:00-7:00 p.m. at Social Dance Studio



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March 24: WCS Styling specialty class (one session only)
April 7, 14, & 21: West Coast Swing: Hot Moves or 6
Count Variations

April 28: Ladies WCS Syncopations (one session only)
May 5, 12, & 19: West Coast Swing: Beginning or Whips

More info: www.tcrebels.com, call 952.941.0906 or email to: info@tcrebels.com

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BEYOND BALLROOM DANCE COMPANY'S DINNER FOR SEVEN

By Kate Bratt

had the pleasure of seeing Beyond Ballroom Dance Company perform their tenth-year anniversary show at the amazing Cowles Center in Minneapolis. They happened to reprise their original production from year one, Dinner for Seven, which has always been my favorite. With several change-ups to the cast and the remaining original cast being ten years older, I was curious to see what would unfold on stage.

My first reaction was, "Ah, yes, this is pleasant." A charming ensemble of local ballroom professionals glided on stage, introducing their characters in little vignettes as they entered the dinner party thrown by the feuding host couple, Julie Jacobson and Jay Larson. Ladies' man Shane Haggerty popped his collar and swaggered in. Chris Kempainen played the totally hot Good Guy. Deanne Michael stumbled in after having a few drinks beforehand, only to play the part of the hussy/villainess. Christine and Charlie Hardcastle played the bougie lovebirds. The crew danced through some lovely formations and combinations to great music. Nice.

My second reaction was, "I love this effing show!"

Somewhere between the guys' number and the cat fight (Barracuda!), I was pulled into the obvious camaraderie happening onstage. The highly anticipated and hotly debated question, "Is Julie going to do the thing?" which was answered when she proudly dropped dress in the middle of the stage and shook her booty in a sexy west coast swing with the four guys. No one will argue whether that was awesome. Hot.

My third reaction—more hindsight really—was, "What now?" While obviously the show revolved around dance, I was never struck by thoughts like, "Oh, my god. How did they do that?" or "That was super crazy!" The characters stuck out to me more than the dancing did, and I expected it to be the other way around. Harumph.

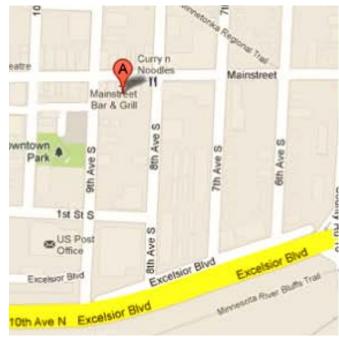
Last year, I was all, "Oh, this was great, but I really liked that other show," but now after seeing the Other Show, I want to go back to last year. Grass is always greener, huh? It's probably unfair for me to compare the tenth anniversary performance to the original. But I'm not the only one who saw the first go-around and wanted ... more on the second trip. More!



Photo from BBDC's Dinner for Seven by Karin Lynn Photography, karinlynnphotography.com

USA Dance Minnesota





816 Mainstreet Hopkins, MN 55343 952.303.3339

FREE American Swing Group Class at ERV Studio with Eliecer Ramirez!

Sunday, April 7th - 2 p.m.

Sunday, April 14th - 2 p.m.

Sunday, April 21st - 2 p.m.

Sunday, April 28th – 2 p.m.





Email: info@usadance-mn.org Website: www.usadance-mn.org Project Dance Minnesota offers free quality ballroom dance instruction. A different professional instructor teaches a new dance at a different location every month.

Deborah J. Nelson is the founder, president, and head designer of Satin Stitches Ltd. See more costuming tips at www.satinstitches.com.

LOOK YOUR BEST

What Makes a Costume a Costume?

By Deborah J. Nelson

What is a dance costume?

I am a fashion designer, schooled in apparel design, with emphasis on high fashion. I have a BFA degree from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design. But I practice costume design, which is not necessarily considered fashion by some. This was pointed out to me many years ago when I auditioned for season three of the reality show *Project Runway*. During my interviews (I made it to the second round), I was told that costume designers weren't welcome. Humph. Oh, well. Home, I went! My ego was bruised, but only slightly. After all, I did make it further than many others who didn't make it past the first round.

The producers eventually changed their tune a few seasons down the road, with at least one bona fide costume designer making the cut for the cast. And I'm sure if you follow the show, you will have noticed that the fashion designers have a heck of a time designing and constructing danceable costume garments. Last season, the Rockettes costume design challenge was an example. The contestant who was a former ballroom dancer knew exactly what he needed to do for the challenge. The others? One contestant muddled through with an interesting New York skyline dress, and he won the challenge, but

the others ... oh, my, what disasters! Hot gluing really has no place in costume design and construction.

The truth? Costume designers sometimes have it easier than fashion designers, as we don't have to come up with the latest looks five times a year or worry about staying in business if we miss the mark a couple of seasons in a row. As Heidi Klum says, "In fashion, you are either in, or you are out."

What we costume designers do need to do is interpret the latest fashion looks into our costume designs so that our clients feel they are following the current fashion trends and not wearing last season's styles. A good costume designer creates timeless designs that are classic enough to look great but not dated for years, which also seamlessly incorporate the current fads in silhouettes, fabrics, colors, and trimmings.

So it is a balancing act. And all the choices for the silhouette, fabric, color, and trim need to work with the dancer's age and body shape and size, whereas fashion designers have a set age and body shape and size that they cater to, season after season, according to the scope of their clothing line.

When you, as a dancer, are dressing in appropriate styles that enable you to move without restrictions, you are

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wearing danceable fashions. If you are dressing in garments that are generally too garish or ostentatious to wear out to dinner or to a formal event, you are probably wearing a dance costume.

Some ballroom dancers cross this imaginary line without knowing it. As mentioned in a previous article, always take a discerning look at your appearance before you go out for a night of social dancing. "Less is more" is a great phrase to take to heart. Look in the mirror and study your appearance, and then remove one accessory

item. This is a good self-editing practice. But this is for social dancing.

When costuming for a performance, these rules don't apply. Dressing the part of a costumed ballroom dancer gives you the liberty to draw attention to yourself. You can go for the wow factor. You don't want to shrink into the background. You should be loud and proud! It is helpful to keep a certain high level of taste, however. You don't want to dress like a clown, unless, of course, your routine is an actual clown performance.

Be flamboyant and decorate yourself—your hair, your makeup, your dress or outfit—and accessorize to embody the style of dance that you are going to perform. Yes, do look in the mirror before you go out on the dance floor stage. You should be hoping to see a bright, confident performer with the wow factor in your dance costume.

With the new sixteenth season of *Dancing with the Stars* airing this spring, of course be sure to check out my critiques of all the dance costuming on each episode.

THANK YOU, SUZI!

The *Minnesota Dancing Times* wants to thank Suzi Blumberg for her work as the publication's advertising coordinator for the past few years. Advertising is extremely important for the continued success of the *Dancing Times*, and Suzi has played a crucial role in communicating with our advertisers.

She has passed the reins to Bonnie Burton, one of USA Dance Minnesota's

board members. To respect and ease Suzi's transition, please remember to contact Bonnie at bonnieburton@comcast.net with your advertising needs.

Thank you, Suzi, for your volunteerism. We wish you all the best in your future endeavors, and know that we always welcome your content submissions.

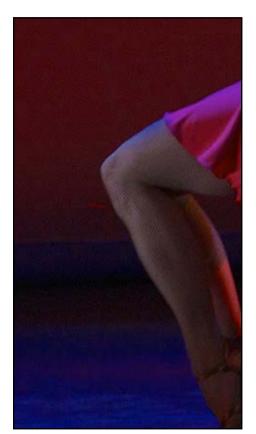






Photo from BBDC's Dinner for Seven by Karin Lynn Photography, karinlynnphotography.com

2013 Tea Dance and Brunch Sunday, May 5, 2013 11:00 am – 4:00 pm

Celebrate spring in a spacious country club ballroom. Dine with friends in an elegant setting overlooking Lake Minnetonka. Then step on the dance floor for an afternoon of dancing to a variety of ballroom music. All dancers, beginner to advanced, USA Dance members or non-members, are encouraged to attend.

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*Purchase brunch reservations early before April 30, 2013. Last year

*Purchase brunch reservations early, before April 30, 2013. Last year we sold out. Brunch served from 11:00 am -12:30 pm

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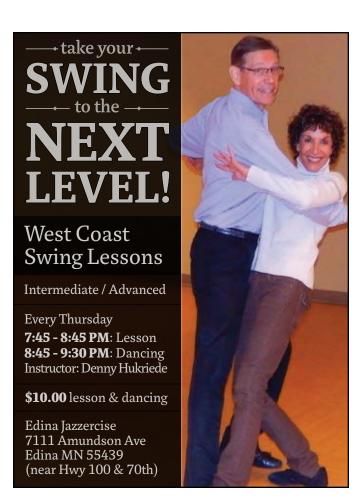


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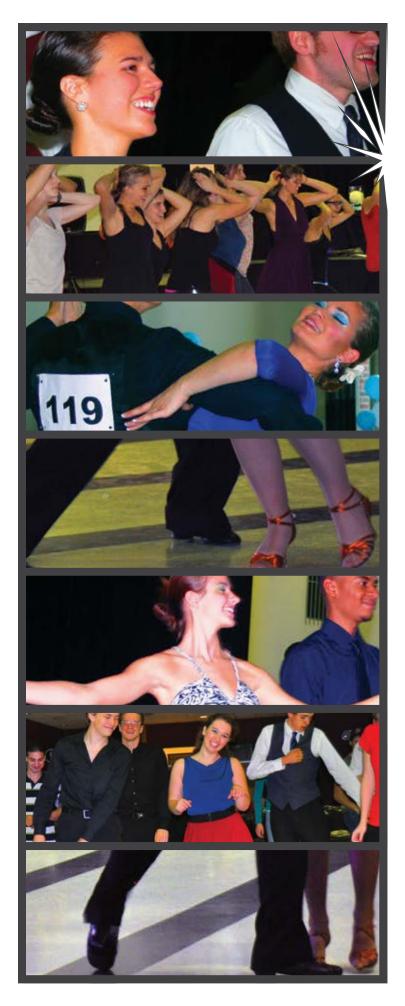
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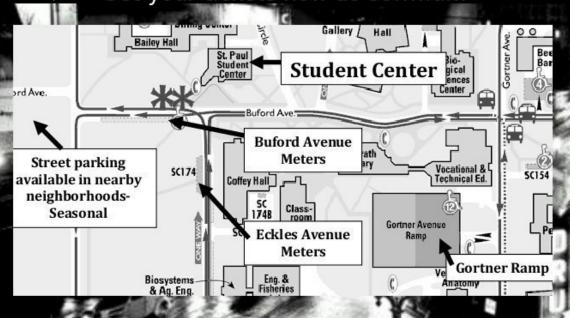
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STAR OF THE NORTH: COMPETITION AND CAMARADERIE

By Joel Torgeson



Photo from Star of the North by Diestler Photography, diestlerphotography.zenfolio.com

ining up for newcomer rhythm cha cha, the butterflies changed from a figureeight pattern to something resembling a mild hurricane. I re-tucked my shirt for the third time in ten minutes and attempted to check my posture in the conveniently placed mirror. Pretty darn straight, I thought. Now if only I could get it to stay that way on the floor. My partner and I went through our normal routine of stretching out our faces by making ridiculous Halloween-mask-esque faces at each other in an effort to appear more awake and alive. We waited in this state of nervous anticipation for another five minutes before our heat was called. A last glance in the mirror, an offering of my hand, and a

brisk walk later, we were on the floor, ready to dance.

Star of the North DanceSport Classic this year was a great experience. From helping set up on Friday night to taking down the tinsel on Sunday, I had a wonderful time throughout the weekend. As a competitor, I didn't necessarily get to see all of the lovely dancing that the spectators did, but I was certainly pleased with what little I caught between preparing for each dance. The Saturday evening show was pretty spectacular, featuring great performers from across the upper Midwest showing us all what hard work and dedication can achieve. Of course, there were also the junior level dancers showing off their incredible skills. I think paso doble has

never been so adorable as when danced by elementary schoolers.

Though the performances are always magical to watch, inevitably, my favorite part of any comp is interacting with my fellow competitors. There is something incredibly alive and invigorating about competing, and I have so far found it to bring out some of the best in people. Standing in line, I love to talk with the other dancers. It's odd, because in minutes and seconds, they will become my direct competition, both of us vying for those precious callbacks. But just before we dance, I always feel a sense of brotherhood with these co-competitors. I love joking with them, hearing how they discovered dance, and just learning what I can in

the few moments before we hit the boards.

As for that first cha cha, we made it to the next round. And the round after that. And even the one after that. You can't really argue with a blue ribbon on your first dance of the competition, and you certainly won't hear me complaining! It seemed that everyone here on the University of Minnesota team did well in their events, culminating with our international team match win on Saturday night.

Overall, there is not a complaint to be made about Star for me. I came, I danced, and I had a great time. And that's what you want from a dance competition, right?

John S. Munday is a writer and lawyer who lives in Isanti County, Minnesota, with his wife, Fran. Together, they found ballroom dancing at Cheek to Cheek Studio, where Jack takes lessons with Monica Mohn. Jack's book, Beauty in Partnership, A Memoir of Ballroom Dancing, is available at www.johnsmunday.com and several dance studios.

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The *Dancing Times* is put together every month by the volunteer efforts of people across the Minnesota dance community. Help us continue to distribute this publication by advertising in the *Dancing Times* or by donating to our printing fund. Email Bonnie Burton at bonnieburton@comcast.net or call (952) 454-4620 to learn more about opportunities for advertising in the *Dancing Times*.

GENTLEMEN LEAD

By Jack Munday

ran and I were driving on a dry road early in March—yes, that was in Minnesota. A song came on the radio that we both remembered with pleasure. The lyrics of the song by Dean Martin included:

The way we danced and hummed our favorite song

The things we did last summer, I'll remember all winter long.

We don't know if Dean Martin ever came to Minnesota in the winter, but his song spoke to us. We laughed and sang along with Dean. And then the memories came flooding back. On April 1, 2007, we went to Cheek to Cheek Studio to watch a showcase. The next day, we had our first lesson, and our first private lesson with Monica followed not two weeks later—Friday the 13th of April, to be precise. These six years have gone fast, and we have mostly enjoyed them, other than when one or the other of us has had health issues.

Fran said, "Early in our dancing life, Harry Benson suggested that I smile. In fact, he insisted that I smile." Harry complimented Fran on her smile, as I do, and of course, now, when Fran dances, she smiles. As we drove along, I wondered why we were nostalgic about the early years of dancing. Fran suggested I had a case of cabin fever from the winter—no deck or gazebo time. I jokingly suggested I park the car, turn the radio up, and dance to a song in the snow. That brought a smile from Fran and a laugh to go with

Later that evening, we went to the Cowles Theater to see Beyond Ballroom. The performance was a reenactment of the dance company's debut production, titled Dinner for Seven, celebrating their tenth anniversary of performances. This performance tells the story of seven friends as they come together for a dinner party, using ballroom, Latin, and swing dance. I should add that the performers had a smile some of the time, and at other times in the performance, their expressions added to the story, suggesting conflict, teasing, anger, and reconciliation, among others. And it was fun. Four gentlemen and three ladies gave the story an interesting tension. Though they danced to familiar songs, the versions were new to us and added to the pleasure.

Fran and I are social dancers, though we both have danced showcases with each other and with professional instructors. I have tried competition and managed not to catch that addiction. Perhaps that is why we liked the performance so much. The program states that the company was formed as an effort to avoid the competitive spirit, hoping that they could "create something fresh and exciting within the genre." They have.

The catalogue also says they are introducing the beauty of ball-room dance "in a way it hasn't been presented since Fred and Ginger swept across the silver screen." Since Fran and I are old enough to remember those wonderful dancers, we clearly agree with that.

COMPETITION CALENDAR

Apr 5 - 7, 2013

2013 National DanceSport Championships

To be held at JW Marriott, Los Angeles at LA Live.

Apr 12 - 13, 2013

USU DanceSport Challenge

Hosted by USU Ballroom Chapter & US Ballroom Foundation in Logan, UT. USA Dance Adult Cabaret National Championships and Formation National Championships.

Apr 13, 2013

Royal Palm Winter Frolic DanceSport Extravaganza

Hosted by Royal Palm USA Dance Chapter #6016 in Coconut Creek, FL.

Jun 15, 2013

River City Ball

Hosted by Portland USA Dance chapter #1006.

Jun 28 - 30, 2013

Gumbo DanceSport Championships - NQE

Hosted by Louisiana Gumbo USA Dance Chapter #5031 in Baton Rouge, LA. Qualifying event for 2014 Nationals. *Jul* 11-13, 2013

Twin Cities Open Ballroom Championships

Hosted by Scott & Amy Anderson at the Minneapolis Marriott City Center. Visit www.twincitiesopen. com or email megamarc@frontiernet. net.

Iul 27, 2013

Southern Star Mid-Summer Classic

Hosted by Southern Star USA Dance Chapter #6038 in Tampa, FL. Will not accrue proficiency points and may not follow all rules in the rulebook.

Aug 10 - 11, 2013

2013 Heartland Classic - NQE

Hosted by Heartland, IN USA Dance Chapter #2022. Qualifying Event for 2014 Nationals.

Sep 7, 2013

Kansas City Dance Classic

Organized by Matt & Ellen Pansing in Overland Park, KS. Will not accrue proficiency points and may not follow all rules in the rulebook.

Sep 28, 2013

New England DanceSport Championships - NQE

Hosted by MASSabda USA Dance Chapter #3002 in Danvers, MA. Qualifying event for 2014 Nationals.

Oct 4 - 6, 2013

Carolina Fall Classic - NQE

Organized by Wayne & Marie Crowder in Charlotte, NC. Qualifying event for 2014 Nationals.

Oct 12 - 13, 2013

Northwest DanceSport Championships - NQE

Hosted by Portland USA Dance Chapter #1006. Qualifying event for 2014 Nationals.

Nov 1 - 3, 2013

Chicago DanceSport Challenge - NQE

Hosted by Chicagoland USA Dance Chapter #2001. Qualifying event for 2014 Nationals.

Mar 28 - 30, 2014

2014 National DanceSport Championships.

To be held in Baltimore, MD.



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ASK DR. DANCE

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When I look at the judges' marks from competitions, sometimes it looks like they don't agree on anything. How can the marks for the exact same event be so wildly different from one judge to another?

Donna Said:

First off, why look at your marks?

In November, I was judging the Ohio Star Ball, and we were in the midst of the professional standard event. In between heats, I was sitting next to Lorraine Barry, former world professional standard champion, and she noticed some competitors studying their marks. Lorraine turned to me and said, "They'd be better off studying a

technique book. There is nothing to be gained from looking at your marks."

Now, to answer your question.

Were you being judged by professional judges? Sanctioned USA Dance events and events recognized by the National Dance Council of America like Twin Cities Open, the Snow Ball, and Minnesota Star Ball hire only certified NDCA judges. Non-sanctioned events like Star of the North are not allowed to hire certified NDCA judges.

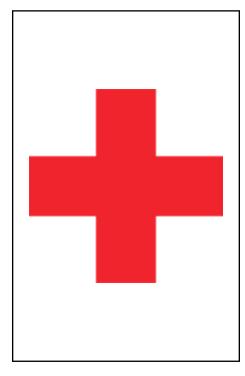
Sometimes judges have different priorities or prefer different styles. That's why there are multiple judges. Most often, when the judges' marks are all over the place, the dancing is, too. For example, very often when judging a collegiate competition, quite a few of the dancers are of a similar skill level. Sometimes one couple has good posture, another has a natural way of moving, and a third has good footwork. Ideally, we'd like all three of these elements in the winner, but



Donna Edelstein is a coach, judge, and organizer of the Snow Ball DanceSport Competition. donnawrites@msn.com 763-557-6006



Paul Botes is a dance instructor, coach, choreographer, and judge. He is an owner of American Classic Ballroom, located in Chanhassen, MN.



The Dance Medic is a member of the Minnesota dance community chosen each month based on his or her unique insight on the question.

sometimes it's not to be. So one judge marks posture, one marks footwork, and one marks ease of movement. Then you look at the marks and say, "These judges just don't know what they are looking at!"

Generally, when the marks are all over the place, it means nobody is good enough to be a clear winner. Or as one of my coaches used to say, "Sometimes winning just means that you are the best of a bad lot." On the other hand, the winner and the entire final might be fabulous, and there are some very tough decisions to be made. Sometimes we wish there could be two winners because two couples are so fantastic.

Your job as a competitive dancer is to dance so well that you jump onto the page and we can't help but to mark you. Study your dancing and not your marks, and you'll be on your way.

Paul Said:

Most judges mark when they observe something that catches their eye. One judge may see you do something better than another couple at a given time, while another judge catches you doing something bothersome at another time. It is always a comparison, and sometimes you compare better. If you happen to dance from, say, a quarter final into a final, chances are that the judges have seen enough to make a call that is more consistent.

Remember also that judging is subjective, and therefore, everybody has an opinion, and sometimes those opinions differ. This is why there are multiple judges judging an event.

You may try this yourself. Next time, get a piece of paper and judge an event, placing the couples first to last or last to first and see how your marks compare to that of the judges. You may then have a better understanding of the difficulties inherent in judging.

The Dance Medic Said:

Judges generally agree. Some judges do have preferences: they look from the top down (frame) or bottom up (footwork) or like a strong guy or mark the best girl. But they all like correct timing, posture, frame, and footwork.

The guestion you should be asking is, "How can my dancing be so wildly different during one dance?" The problem is that most dancers are inconsistent, and the judges do not look at you at the same time. So while on one measure in waltz, you kept your top line high and wide, the next measure, you dropped your side and took a heel lead on three. One judge saw the first measure and called you back to the next round, and the other judges saw the second measure and did not, hence you're sitting out the final. Same thing goes from dance to dance in a multi-dance event. While your cha cha is rhythmic and energetic, your rumba is lacking Latin motion, and your swing is wild in a bad way. Consistency is key.

Keep working hard on all your dances and improving your technique so that it's impossible for judges to mark someone ahead of you. ■





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⊃ Contact Cheri 763.544.6724 artncheri@aol.com

Contact for details and photos.

Size 2-6: American Smooth Gowns \$500-\$700.

○ Contact Janie 763.797.5230 janienordberg@comcast.net

Contact for photos. More gowns available to purchase and rent. Payment plans accepted.

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Size 7 ½ to 8N: Ladies' Smooth Capezio Dance Shoes Closed-toe pumps. Flesh-colored. Worn once. \$50.

○ Contact Theresa Kimler 612.414.3099 theresakimler@yahoo.com

Contact for photos. Most dresses also for rent for \$250-\$300.

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White gown with gold waist accent shaped perfectly to create a slim silhouette. Amazing visual effect. Silk skirt, slit on right leg, mid-height backline, armbands. Made by Doré. \$3000.

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