

MINNESOTA

DANCER

November 2014

Amateur couple Sue and Greg Prasch danced
at the Carolina Fall Classic (NQE) in October

Official publication of USA Dance Minnesota Chapter #2011



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NOVEMBER

Saturday, November 15 ANNUAL MEETING

Attend the Annual Meeting and get
into the dance for free!

6:30 Meeting
7–8 pm lesson: Swing
Instructor:
8–11 pm Variety dance music

\$7 USA Dance members
\$5 Students under 25 with ID
\$10 Non-members

Cinema Ballroom
1560 St. Clair Ave., St. Paul, MN

DECEMBER

Saturday, December 20

7–8 pm lesson:
Instructor: Jeff Nehrbass
8–11 pm Variety dance music

\$7 USA Dance members
\$5 Students under 25 with ID
\$10 Non-members

Balance Pointe Studio
5808 W. 36th St, St Louis Pk, MN

DANCER'S NIGHT OUT

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

Sat 11/1 DanceLife Ballroom 1st Saturday
Variety Dance, 7–9:30, 6015 Lyndale S,
Mpls, 612-345-4219,
www.dancelifeballroom.com

First Saturday Swing Dance, Social
Dance Studio, 7:30–12:30, 3742 23rd
Ave S, Mpls,
www.socialdancestudio.com

**Sun 11/2 USA Dance Minnesota Salsa
Lesson with instructor Keri Simon;
2:30 PM; \$5 or FREE to USA Dance
MN Members! Social Dance Studio,
3742 23rd Ave S, Mpls, www.usadance-minnesota.org**

Pizza Practice Party; Pizza, music, danc-
ing; American Classic Ballroom, 7-9, \$8 /
\$6 for USA Dance members and ACB
private students, 550 Market St., Chanhassen,
www.acballroom.com

TC Rebels Swing Dance, Social Dance
Studio, 7–10:30, 3742-23rd Ave S, Mpls,
www.socialdancestudio.com

First Sunday Dance at Tapestry, 6–9:30,
\$7–\$10, Caroline Olson, WCS, 3748
Minnehaha Ave S, Mpls,
www.tapestryfolkdance.org

Mon 11/3 Social Dance Studio West
Coast Swing Social, 9:30–11, 3742 23rd
Ave S, Mpls,
www.socialdancestudio.com

Wed 11/5 Cinema Ballroom Practice Party,
8–9, 1560 St Clair Ave, St Paul, 651-
699-5910, www.cinemaballroom.com

Dancers Studio WCS Party 9-10, 415
Pascal St N, St Paul, 651-641-0777,
www.dancersstudio.com

Thu 11/6 Dancers Studio Dance Party 8–9,
415 Pascal St N, St Paul, 651-641-0777,
www.dancersstudio.com

Social Dance Studio Late Night Swing
10pm-2am, 3742 23rd Ave S, Mpls,
www.socialdancestudio.com

Fri 11/7 DanceLife Ballroom Variety
Dance, 7–9:30, 6015 Lyndale S, Mpls,
612-345-4219,
www.dancelifeballroom.com

Mill City Ballroom Dance Party, 8-10,

2382 Hampden Ave, St Paul, MN,
www.millcityballroom.com

Cinema Ballroom Variety Dance, 7–11,
1560 St Clair Ave, St Paul, 651-699-
5910, www.cinemaballroom.com

Sat 11/8 Café Bailar Dance Party, 7:30-
11:30, Balance Pointe Studio, 5808 W 36th
St, St. Louis Pk, www.cafebailar.com

Tango Society/UMinn UTango Joint Mi-
longa featuring Cuarteto Tanguero quartet,
8:30p-1am, \$20/\$25, Sokol Hall, 383 Mich-
igan Street, St. Paul, 612-224-2905,
www.mntango.org

**Sun 11/9 USA Dance Minnesota Salsa
Lesson with instructor Keri Simon; 2:30
PM; \$5 or FREE to USA Dance MN Mem-
bers! Social Dance Studio, 3742 23rd
Ave S, Mpls, www.usadance-minnesota.org**

Jerry O'Hagen Orchestra, Cinema Ball-
room, lesson 6:15, dance 7-10, 1560 St.
Clair Ave, St Paul, MN 651-699-5910

Mon 11/10 Social Dance Studio West
Coast Swing Social, 9:30–11, 3742 23rd
Ave S, Mpls, www.socialdancestudio.com

Wed 11/12 Cinema Ballroom Practice Par-
ty, 8–9, 1560 St Clair Ave, St Paul, 651-
699-5910, www.cinemaballroom.com

Dancers Studio WCS Party 9-10, 415 Pas-
cal St N, St Paul, 651-641-0777,
www.dancersstudio.com

Thu 11/13 Dancers Studio Dance Party 8–
9, 415 Pascal St N, St Paul, 651-641-0777,
www.dancersstudio.com

Social Dance Studio Late Night Swing
10pm-2am, 3742 23rd Ave S, Mpls,
www.socialdancestudio.com

Fri 11/14 DanceLife Ballroom Variety
Dance, 7–9:30, 6015 Lyndale S, Mpls, 612
-345-4219, www.dancelifeballroom.com

Mill City Ballroom Dance Party, 8-10, 2382
Hampden Ave, St Paul, MN,
www.millcityballroom.com

Social Dance Studio Club Salsero, 7-11,
3721-23rd Ave S, Mpls,
www.socialdancestudio.com

Sat 11/15 Monthly USA Dance Minnesota.
Annual Meeting 6:30; Dance 7–11; \$5–\$7–\$10; Cinema Ballroom, 1560 St Clair Ave, St Paul, 651-699-5910, www.usadance-minnesota.org

Linden Hills Dancing Club, for dancing couples. DanceLife Ballroom, 6015 Lyndale S, Mpls, 7-10:30p. Lesson, dancing with Shinya McHenry. Dessert, coffee. 1st visit \$10/ couple. Reserve: 651-636-9747 or www.LindenHillsDancingClub.org

Sun 11/16 USA Dance Minnesota Salsa Lesson with instructor Keri Simon; 2:30 PM; \$5 or FREE to USA Dance MN Members! Social Dance Studio, 3742 23rd Ave S, Mpls, www.usadance-minnesota.org

Pizza Practice Party; Pizza, music, dancing; American Classic Ballroom, 7-9, \$8 / **\$6 for USA Dance members** and ACB private students, 550 Market St., Chanhassen, www.acballroom.com

TC Rebels Swing Dance, Social Dance Studio, 7–10:30, 3742-23rd Ave S, Mpls, www.socialdancestudio.com

Third Sunday Dance at Tapestry, 6–9:30, \$7–\$10, Janelle Donnay, WCS II, Café Accordion Orch. 3748 Minnehaha Ave S, Mpls, www.tapestryfolkdance.org

Mon 11/17 Social Dance Studio West Coast Swing Social, 9:30–11, 3742 23rd Ave S, Mpls, www.socialdancestudio.com

Wed 11/19 Cinema Ballroom Practice Party, 8–9, 1560 St Clair Ave, St Paul, 651-699-5910, www.cinemaballroom.com

Dancers Studio WCS Party 9-10, 415 Pascal St N, St Paul, 651-641-0777, www.dancersstudio.com

Thu 11/20 Dancers Studio Dance Party 8–9, 415 Pascal St N, St Paul, 651-641-0777, www.dancersstudio.com

Social Dance Studio Late Night Swing 10pm–2am, 3742 23rd Ave S, Mpls, www.socialdancestudio.com

Fri 11/21 DanceLife Ballroom Variety Dance, 7–9:30, 6015 Lyndale S, Mpls, 612-345-4219, www.dancelifeballroom.com

Cinema Ballroom Variety Dance, 7–11, 1560 St Clair Ave, St Paul, 651-699-5910, www.cinemaballroom.com

Mill City Ballroom Dance Party, 8-10, 2382 Hampden Ave, St Paul, MN, www.millcityballroom.com

Sat 11/22 Café Bailar Dance Party, 7:30–

11:30, Costa Rica Ballroom, 816 Main St, Hopkins, cafebailar.com

Sun 11/23 USA Dance Minnesota Salsa Lesson with instructor Keri Simon; 2:30 PM; \$5 or FREE to USA Dance MN Members! Social Dance Studio, 3742 23rd Ave S, Mpls, www.usadance-minnesota.org

Jerry O'Hagen Orchestra, Cinema Ballroom, lesson 6:15, dance 7-10, 1560 St. Clair Ave, St Paul, MN 651-699-5910

Mon 11/24 Social Dance Studio West Coast Swing Social, 9:30–11, 3742 23rd Ave S, Mpls, www.socialdancestudio.com

Wed 11/26 Cinema Ballroom Practice Party, 8–9, 1560 St Clair Ave, St Paul, 651-699-5910, www.cinemaballroom.com

Dancers Studio WCS Party 9-10, 415 Pascal St N, St Paul, 651-641-0777, www.dancersstudio.com

Thu 11/27 - Thanksgiving Holiday

Fri 11/28 DanceLife Ballroom Variety Dance, 7–9:30, 6015 Lyndale S, Mpls, 612-345-4219, www.dancelifeballroom.com

Cinema Ballroom Salsa Fusion, 7–11, Cinema Ballroom, 651-699-5910, www.cinemaballroom.com

Mill City Ballroom Dance Party, 8-10, 2382 Hampden Ave, St Paul, MN, www.millcityballroom.com

USA Dance: Who Are We?

We are a nonprofit organization that promotes ballroom dancing. The Minnesota chapter, USA Dance Minnesota Chapter #2011, was formed in 1991. Membership in USA Dance is open to dancers of all levels.

USA Dance Minnesota Chapter #2011 sponsors monthly dances and other special dance events. Members receive discounts on admission to monthly dances, as well as other benefits including access to a network to meet other dancers.

The *Minnesota Dancer* is published monthly by the USA Dance Minnesota Chapter #2011, providing information and news about ballroom dancing.

Editors/Layout: Bonnie Burton, Leland Whitney
 Advertising/Editing: Bonnie Burton 952-454-4620
 Mailing: Committee member

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-minnesota.org.

Contributors: Bob Anholt, Paul Botes, Kate Bratt, Bonnie Burton, Elizabeth Dickinson, Donna Edelstein, Jack Munday, Deborah J. Nelson, Carol Post, Sue Prasch, Jeff Ringer, Miriam Star, Gary Stroick, Leland Whitney.

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LYNNE'S DANCE NEWS

*A list of dance events for every day of the week—
 updated daily*

[http://www.organizonduty.com/
 testimonials.html](http://www.organizonduty.com/testimonials.html)

Dance address book is also on this website



Leland and Leslie Whitney competed October 3-5 at the Carolina Fall Classic in Charlotte, NC (NQE).

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Leland Whitney, President, USA Dance Minnesota Chapter #2011

News Flash!! The USA Dance Minnesota Chapter 2011 Board of Directors 2014 Elections are underway.

Be a high-information voter:

- Read the self-submitted candidate descriptions carefully (in the October newsletter).
- Review the Nominations & Election Committee recommendations (in this issue).
- Ask: Are these faces familiar? Have I seen them at this year's USA Dance Sponsored events?

- Ask: Does this candidate appear to represent the entire community or do they represent only a special interest group?

- Ask: Can you sense the sincerity of each candidate from their individual candidate descriptions?

Be an active in our dance community:

- Vote!
- The ballots must be mailed and post-marked between November 2 and November 15, 2014.

USA Dance-MN Chapter #2011 Board Minutes

Tuesday, September 2, 2014
Submitted by Leslie Whitney

In attendance: Lee Whitney (President), Bonnie Burton (Vice President), Jane Phipps (Treasurer), Leslie Whitney (Secretary), Zhuojing Liu, Dan Fitzgerald, Daniel O'Connell, Karen Maldonado, Tracy Frazee, Gary Stroick, Cathy Dessert

Location: DanceLife Ballroom Studio, 6015 Lyndale Avenue S., Mpls., MN 55419

1. Agenda - unanimously approved to accept the agenda.
2. Minutes - unanimously approved to accept the minutes of the online board meeting of August 15, 2014.
3. Treasurer's Report - unanimously approved to accept the treasurer's report.
4. 2014 Elections - The election committee is

accepting application forms. It will begin interviewing candidates on September 15th.

5. Project Dance:
 - October: Swing, Tapestry, Donna Edelstein
 - November: Salsa, Social Dance Studio, Keri Simon
 - December: We will request Dancers Studio.
6. Monthly Dances - These have been scheduled through December. Karen will ask the U of MN students if the chapter can facilitate transportation.
 - We discussed what we can do to increase attendance at the monthly dances.
 - We discussed Joyce's offer to make available her music library to Chapter #2011.
 - The consensus is that the chapter purchase a computer to receive this music from Joyce. A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to spend up to \$500.00 for this purchase. Dan O'Connell and Gary will facilitate the purchase.

7. Minnesota Dancer - Thank you to all who work on this publication.

8. Website (USADance-Minnesota.org) - Ed and Bonnie are managing this website.
9. Volunteers - We will continue discussion at the next board meeting.

Next Meeting: Tues, Oct. 14th, 2014
DanceLife Ballroom
6015 Lyndale Ave. South
Minneapolis, MN 55419

**USA DANCE MINNESOTA
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651-483-5467**

www.usadance-minnesota.org

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



Bonnie Burton is Vice-President of USA Dance Minnesota #2011 and editor of Minnesota Dancer Magazine. She and her husband Ed Soltis will compete next at the Chicago DanceSport Challenge (NQE), Chicago, IL, on Halloween weekend.

EDITOR'S COLUMN

By Bonnie Burton

A long time ago, I thought I wanted to be a psychologist. It didn't turn out that way, but the residual effect is that I have a strong curiosity about people, their personality traits, and what motivates them to do what they do. This is coupled with a tendency to analyze obsessively.

So, of course, I found it interesting to see that 12 of the 14 candidates running for election for the USA Dance Board are competition ballroom dancers. That is to say, fully 85% of the candidates running for office currently compete in either Pro/Am, or Am/Am ballroom dance competitions!

There is no judgment here – we are a ballroom dance club, after all – but where did all the social dancers go? There are a lot of different types of partner dancers in our membership community: social ballroom dancers; west coast swing specialists; Argentine tangueros; club dancers; performance ballroom dancers who like showcases and demos, but who don't compete; and finally, the competition ballroom dancers, who actually represent only 20% of our USA Dance Minnesota membership base. In the past, representatives from all the various groups have served on the USA Dance Minnesota Board.

Frankly, the USA Dance board work has been challenging this year. And people who enjoy competition, also usually enjoy challenges. So perhaps it's no surprise that it's the competitive individuals who have decided to come forth and run for office at this time. Competitive personalities also love to be the best; and are often highly motivated, energetic people. They tend to be more dominant and tend to be leaders. Basically, they get things done.

This is good news for the USA Dance Minnesota chapter. This election has the potential to produce some of the best leadership our dance community has seen in a long time. Hopefully, it will produce a group of leaders who focus on many good things the chapter can accomplish. Leaders who are willing to work together to achieve much for the benefit of the whole chapter; without deteriorating into the negative aspects of the competitive personality. (Which may include anger; impatience; and one-upping each other, instead of focusing on positive group achievements.)

But! To get these leaders elected, our membership has to take the first step and vote! So it's up to you, my friends, to get 'er done! A lot of detail is published throughout this issue about the election, ethics, and voting. Pay attention and make thoughtful decisions.

But, there's more in this issue than just election talk! I'm thrilled with the articles people took the time to write. Everyone had something to share and we love to learn all about it! Kate Bratt offers The Man's Chart to costuming; Jeff Ringer shares his story about how *Minnesota Dancer* Dance Partner Wanted ads brought him not one, but TWO dance partners! Sue Prash describes what it's like to move up to competing at the Novice and Pre-Champ level; Jack Munday danced in Italy; Gene and Elena Bersten Dance With Love; and there's so much more!

Enjoy. Happy dancing!



TIPS FOR THE MAN

By Kate Bratt

Boys. Men. Gentlemen.

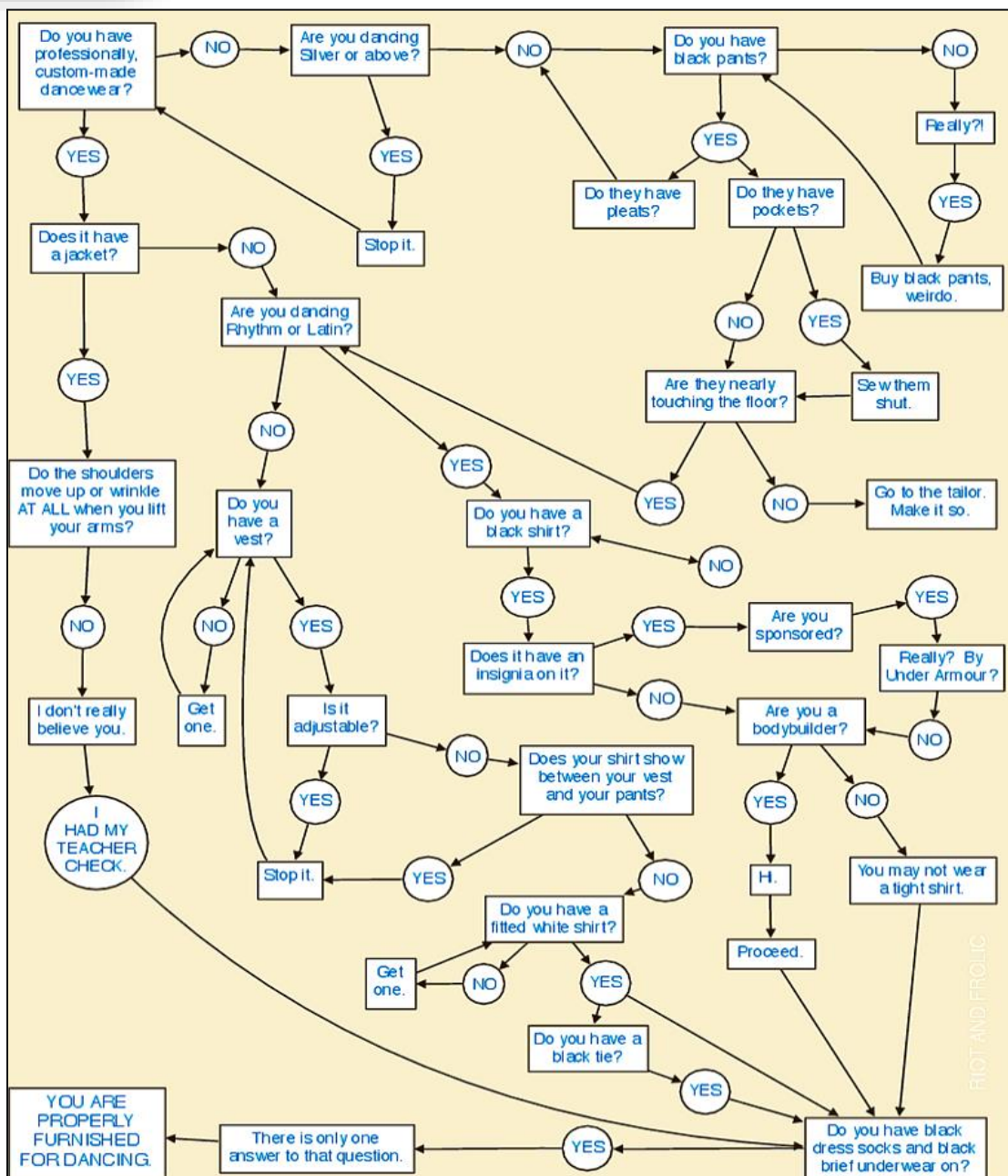
You have a very practical job while you're on the floor. You lead, you steer, you counter-balance. No matter how artistically you do these things, you are not wearing a brightly colored, highly rhinestoned, swirly dress.

You are The Man in Black.

You are THE MAN. IN BLACK.

Be the man and suit up properly.

Kate Bratt is co-owner of Mill City Ballroom in the Twin Cities, a professional ballroom dancer and instructor, and writer at:





MOVING ON UP

By Sue Prasch

develop new, complicated choreography.

Our new routines started with learning the foot work and timing; then we began adding layers of technique. After technique was added, most of the moves felt totally different. We're discovering that technique is more important than continually changing the choreography.

Greg and I have always considered ourselves to be International Standard dancers but we continue to work on American smooth because the two styles complement each other and use the same technique. We had been focusing a lot on learning good technique in our Smooth dances; and have been working with our coach Lisa Vogel who has won many professional partnership American smooth titles.

We recently competed at the Carolina Fall Classic, dancing our new routines. We were

surprised and thrilled to place 1st and 2nd in the Senior 1 and II Novice and Pre-Champ American Smooth categories!

Now, we need to incorporate this technique into our International Standard dances to see if we can bring those placements higher as well. Lisa is helping us to be patient with the process, and is encouraging us to push forward slowly and steadily.

Our next competition will be the Chicago DanceSport Challenge (NQE) at the end of October where we will try to qualify for Nationals in two of our Standard categories. However, we will dance all of our categories in Chicago because the competition floor time is so valuable and of course, because we love to dance! Moving up to the amateur novice level from the syllabus levels was intimidating, but we are realizing with the correct technique, hard work, and patience, we can be successful!

Sue & Greg Prasch will compete next at the Chicago DanceSport Challenge (NQE), Chicago, IL, on Halloween weekend.

My husband Greg and I have been dancing and competing for many years; we moved up to the amateur novice level two years ago. We have only 3-4 days per week to devote to lessons and practice, so we felt comfortable taking a few years to

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N- Notable
C- Classy
E- Enjoyable

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- ♦ Minnesota Dancer magazine: Value \$22
- ♦ Attend the dance in your birthday month free: Value \$10
- ♦ Join at a USA monthly dance and get free admission to that dance: Value \$10
- ♦ No chapter dues

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www.usadance-minnesota.org or info@usadance-minnesota.org



Jeff Ringer is a professor of Communication Studies at St. Cloud State University, a ballroom dance instructor, and owner of StudioJeff School of Ballroom Dance in St. Cloud, MN. For more info: www.studiojeff.com

DANCE PARTNER WANTED: MINNESOTA DANCER DELIVERS

By Jeff Ringer

Finding a dance partner can be as hard as finding a life partner—maybe harder. You have to have the same dance interests, be available to practice at the same times, and have compatible personalities. Skill levels and heights might also come into play. And of course there is location.

I had been looking for a same-sex dance partner for several years. I tried a dance partner web site and Facebook. I found someone in Missouri but he was too far away. Finally, I placed an ad in *Minnesota Dancer* and within a few months I found not one but two dance partners. Rebecca Abas from Four Seasons Dance Studio saw my ad and wanted to learn more about same-sex partner dancing for her students. She told her student Dennis Yelkin about it and he agreed to be my new dance partner. We plan to enter our first competition in 2015.

My interests are in entering same-sex (aka same-gender) dance competitions and in performing with a same-sex partner. I first learned about these competitions when I attended the Gay Games in Chicago in 2006. The ballroom dancing was held in the Hilton Hotel. It has one of the most beautiful ballrooms in the country and it was packed full of male couples and female couples whirling around the floor. The audience was huge too. I was hooked and started looking for a same sex dance partner so I could enter these competitions, too.

The oldest and largest same-sex dance competition in the US is the April Follies which is held in Oakland, California every April. This competition provides a space for those couples who are not permitted to enter most other dance competitions. (USA Dance voted to allow same-sex couples in its competitions starting in 2015. NDCA voted down a similar resolution.) This includes male/male couples, female/female couples, and reverse role couples.

In addition to April Follies, there is the Boston Open in October, the Liberty Dance Challenge in Philadelphia in March, and the Freedom Sports Fest DanceSport Congress in Washington, DC in July. The Gay Games and the Out Games are held every four years. Same-sex and reverse role couples can enter all of these events.

A reverse role couple is one in which the female leads and the male follows. Transgender individuals are allowed to enter in the role that fits their self-identified gender. Same-sex couples may choose to have one person lead and the other follow in all dances, to switch roles in the middle of each dance, or to follow one role in one dance but another in others.

When Rebecca responded to my ad I told her about same-sex as well as reverse role dancing. She was intrigued by the reverse role category and has agreed to compete with me in waltz and tango in reverse role. Dennis, Rebecca, and I are now rehearsing weekly to prepare for the April Follies. I am very grateful to *Minnesota Dancer*. Without that ad I wouldn't have these two new dance partners!



Dance partners Rebecca, Jeff, and Dennis

ELECTION ANNOUNCEMENT

USA Dance Minnesota Board of Directors Positions

By Gary Stroick, Nominations and Election Committee Chair

Elections for nine board member positions for USA Dance Minnesota Chapter #2011 Board of Directors are being conducted by mail. Ballots were mailed to eligible USA Dance Minnesota #2011 members in good standing, on **October 15, 2014**. You may vote for a minimum of one (1) candidate to a maximum of nine (9) candidates. If you vote for more than nine candidates, your ballot will be invalid. Your completed ballots should be mailed and postmarked between November 2 and November 15. The deadline for receipt of your completed ballots by the election committee is **noon on November 15, 2014**. This year's Nomination & Election Committee includes Bonnie Burton, Gary Stroick, and Karen Kettler Tepley.

Election Committee

Bonnie Burton	bonnieburton@comcast.net	952.454.4620
Gary Stroick	gstroick@comcast.net	952.926.7648
Karen Kettler Tepley	kktepley@comcast.com	952.926.2866



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OPINIONS

Board Member Transparency is Critical

I have had the privilege of serving on the USA dance board at the local level (Charter Member USA Dance Minnesota Chapter, Membership Chair, three terms); national level (DanceSport Council Athlete Representative, three terms); and I remain active at the international level. As a dancer, my eight year amateur competition experience resulted in 15 USA Dance National titles prior to retirement. The challenge and duty of any board position is to remain fair, truthful, and impartial in all actions despite internal and external influences.

The October 2014 issue of Minnesota Dancer reported on applicants seeking a position on the USA Dance Minnesota Chapter. Seven of the submitted statements were identical in content. This raised concerns for me about trust, transparency, ownership, accountability and impartiality with these seven applicants.

My experience is that a board member is one who can be trusted by honest word and action. Seven applicant statements all written identically...really? No one ever agrees 100% with each other. Individual opinion offers diversity and is expressed and debated free of "group think" influence. Transparency is critical. Hiding behind anonymity and failing to own and be accountable for one's words or actions is unacceptable. The board needs individuals that can serve with the best interests of our USA Dance Minnesota Chapter #2011 members.

Sincerely,

Carol Post,
St. Louis Park, MN



The TC Rebels want to say **"Thank You!"** to everyone who packed Social Dance Studio on October 18, 2014, at the Masquerade Ball.

In addition to in-state dancers (Minnesota Represent!), there were attendees from Arizona, California, Colorado, Iowa, Nebraska, New York, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Washington and Canada! Thanks also to the huge group of college students who added incredible energy to this event. Everyone, please join us again!

Rebels WCS Classes are held on Sundays, 5:00-7:00 p.m.

November 2, 9, & 16:

Beginning West Coast Swing series or Tuck Turns series.

December 7, 14, & 21:

6-Count Pattern's series or Intermediate West Coast Swing.

Series classes are \$45 for members and students with current ID and \$60 for guests. Classes are held at Social Dance Studio, 3742 23rd Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN.

If you want to receive notices of Rebels classes, dances, and special events, please sign up on the Rebels home page (scroll to the bottom of the page) to sign up.

www.tcrebels.com

Dances are held on 1st and 3rd Sundays, 7:00-10:30 p.m.

November 2: Food Shelf Dance; \$2 discount with donation

November 16: Regular Dance

December 7: Toys for Tots dance; \$2 discount with donation

December 21: Holiday Ball

See website for more info.

For more information, please check the TC Rebels website at www.tcrebels.com, call the Hotline at 952.941.0906, or email at info@tcrebels.com.



OPINIONS

Let's Work Together to Ensure Ethical Election Behaviors

By Gary Stroick

Integrity – Ethics – Morals: these words are rarely used these days, especially when we talk about our leaders whether they're local, national, or international. Yet we all want our leaders to exhibit and live by these qualities. Furthermore, we all expect our leaders to act and behave based on values such as respect for others, fairness, and accountability.

I truly believe in such values and it is my expectation that other leaders in our USA Dance community believe and follow them as well. This is supported not only by the USA Dance Bylaws but also established policies outlining a Code of Ethics; Harassment and Abuse Policies; Neutrality Policies; Conflict of Interest Policies; and so on.

Unscrupulous Actions

Unscrupulous actions thrive when individuals are intimidated or fear reprisals. By living in the shadows they gain strength and eventually may appear to be unbeatable. However, by shining a light on such actions and submitting a call to action, unethical behaviors can be minimized or eliminated.

Membership Numbers

An examination of recent membership numbers suggests there is an attempt to manipulate the results of the upcoming election. One may ask how I could make such a provocative statement, so here are the facts.

1. Since December, 2013 the Chapter membership has grown from 98 to 336.
2. Our Chapter now consists of approximately 50 members that do not reside in Minnesota. Almost all of these individuals have joined the Chapter since July 2014. These members live in Delaware, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Missouri, New York, South Dakota, Texas, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. A large percentage of this group is comprised of

individuals from various educational institutions.

3. Our Chapter also has also been joined by about 10 members, since July 2014, who do not reside in the metro area but in other parts of Minnesota that have their own local USA Dance Chapter (e.g., Rochester).
4. Our Chapter has had an influx of over 70 members from the University of Minnesota since July 2014; approximately 50 of these in the past four weeks. It should be noted that such an influx did not occur last year but interestingly enough, did occur just prior to the last election in 2012.

What Chapter Do I Join?

All members should be aware that in accordance with USA Dance Bylaws, Chapters are organized to support a specific *geographic service area*. Since the service area of our Chapter is the Twin City metro and surrounding area, it should be abundantly clear to everyone reading this that the members identified in items two and three are outside of our Chapter service area.

Historically, members were assigned to a Chapter based on their address; subsequently a second address field was added to the application form in order to allow individuals with two residences to select which Chapter they could join. In recent years USA Dance procedures have allowed members to join a Chapter of their choice. Unless, the member is active in their selected Chapter this is inappropriate behavior in my view. Why? Inactive members have no vested interest in the representation or management of the Chapter.

If a member lives outside of a Chapter's geographic service area he/she should seriously consider whether joining that Chapter is the action of a responsible, ethical mem-

ber of the USA Dance organization.

Since we, as a chapter, cannot support the dance needs of members outside of our geographic service area, you should ask yourself why such a large group joined our Chapter just prior to an election? Although a few of these members are active regular participants in local chapter functions, most are not. For those that are not active Chapter participants, consider the list of reasonable explanations for these individuals joining our chapter. Balance that against the timing of their membership, followed by the sheer numbers involved. Now decide for your self the most plausible explanation for their Chapter membership. If you decide that these members are joining our chapter to affect the outcome of the election, then you have one more reason to take action and vote.

Although the Chapter wants and encourages all local dancers to be members we also want them to have a balanced view of what a Chapter does, as well as an understanding of USA Dance, including its mission and functions. It should be obvious to the reader that such actions are simply part of being a responsible organizational citizen. A large influx of new local members (almost all within the last few weeks) hardly gives these new members time to obtain such a perspective particularly if they have not had the opportunity to participate in USA Dance Chapter activities, to talk with a diverse set of members to assess differing views, or are unduly influenced by any subset of individuals.

Any election manipulation deprives the Chapter membership of choosing their leadership. Not only would any election manipulation be contrary to the USA Dance Bylaws but it would demonstrate a clear lack of respect for the membership as well as fairness to the Chapter as a whole.

(Continued next page.)

But What Can I Do?

What can you as a USA Dance member do? If you are in the group identified in items two and three above, and you do not regularly participate in Chapter #2011 activities, you should act ethically and responsibly by immediately transferring your membership to the nearest local Chapter that can support your dance needs. You can do this locating your nearest Chapter at <http://usadance.org/chapters/find-a-local-chapter/> and then either login at: <https://dance.site-ym.com/Login.aspx> or contact the Central Office at (800) 447-9047 with your notification of Chapter reassignment.

If you are in the group identified by item four above, act as a responsible organizational citizen and take the time to find out about the USA Dance Chapter through a diverse set of sources: go to a USA Dance function, attend a board meeting, and talk to the candidates, prior to voting.

The direction of our Chapter is up to you, the members. You need to determine who you want to run your Chapter for the next two years based on your understanding of their qualifications and vision for your Chapter. You need to find out what they stand for and whether they are going to fight for these beliefs or succumb to pressure from outside influencers. You also need to ensure that they are going to make decisions that are in the best interests of the Chapter membership.

Vote!

Most of all, you need to vote. The Chapter Board will be our representatives and we want our leaders to stand for what is morally right and what is holistically best for our Chapter. They need to represent the membership in our entirety, not some unseen special interests.

What is the National USA Dance leadership doing with respect to this issue? The answer is

that they have been informed and are beginning to address the situation. The Election and Nominations Committee will be conducting an investigation, so if you are aware of any unethical activity, please contact me at:

Gary Stroick, 3600 France Ave. S., St Louis Park, MN 55416. gstroick@comcast.net 952.201.3002

Sincerely,
Gary Stroick

- USA Dance Chapter #2011 Member since 1993
- Current USA Dance Foreign Agent for Minnesota
- Current USA Dance Chapter #2011 Board Member
- Former USA Dance Governing Council Member (1997-2006)
- Former USA Dance VP for DanceSport & Executive Committee Member (1999-2006)
- Former USA Dance Chapter #2011 VP (1996-1999)

USA Dance Minnesota Chapter 2011 Board of Directors 2014 Elections

DanceLife Ballroom and Shinya McHenry endorses the following candidates:



Tom Crable
Dan Fitzgerald
Karen Maldonado
Ed Soltis
Joyce Thompson
Leslie Whitney
Leland Whitney

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ELECTION & NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

The USA Dance-Minnesota Chapter #2011 Elections and Nomination Committee consists of Bonnie Burton, Gary Stroick, and Karen Kettler Tepley. The Committee's responsibility is to ensure the election is conducted in a timely, orderly, fair, and unbiased manner. To that end, the Committee strived to meet all requirements as specified in the USA Dance Election Procedures document. None of the Committee members are running for the Chapter Board in the upcoming election; and the Committee has met all required timelines specified in the election procedures document.

There are two procedures available to members who wish to run for the Chapter Board. One is to complete an application

form and the other is to submit a petition. If a member chooses the petition option, according to USA Dance procedures, they must be placed on the ballot regardless of the Committee's recommendation as to their suitability for the Board.

Seventeen (17) members expressed interest in running for Chapter Board this year. Of these members, one chose not to pursue office while two were unable to meet the application deadline with appropriate materials. Of the remaining fourteen members, six chose to go through the standard nomination process while eight petitioned to run.

All of the members were asked to participate in an interview process where the Committee assessed their experience with the USA Dance

organization, volunteerism, and skills relevant to the operation of the organization. All but one member participated in the process.

The committee's assessment of the fourteen (14) candidates is summarized below; either the candidates meet requirements, or they do **NOT** meet requirements.

All of these candidates will be on the ballot even though the Committee cannot recommend each candidate. Those that cannot be recommended will appear on the ballot as required by USA Dance Election Procedures for Chapters because they chose to exercise the nomination by petition procedure mentioned above.

TOM CRABLE

Recommendation: Meets requirements.

Justification: Mr. Crable is interested in volunteering at the monthly dances and at special events; and facilitating practice space for members. He wants to develop a collaborative relationship between different groups (competition, social, collegiate, senior dancers), encouraging a cohesive dance community.



DAN FITZGERALD (Incumbent)

Recommendation: Meets requirements.

Justification: Mr. Fitzgerald is a current USA Dance-Minnesota Board Member. He co-chairs the Project Dance initiative (Sunday dance lessons) sponsored by USA Dance Minnesota. He has been a member of USA Dance since 2012.



THERESA KIMLER

Recommendation: Meets requirements.

Justification: Ms. Kimler is a 16 year Chapter volunteer and sponsor of Star of the North dance competition. She would like to work to restore the board to harmonious functioning; to develop an extensive network of volunteers; and to develop a sustainable plan to keep current members active and to attract new members.



CATHY DESSERT (Incumbent)

Recommendation: Does **NOT** meet requirements.

Justification: Ms. Dessert has been a long time chapter and board member who wants to promote ballroom dance in K-12 and collegiate programs; however, since her reinstatement to the Board in May, Ms. Dessert has missed three of the four monthly USA Dance board meetings. The Board cannot function without a quorum, therefore, regular attendance is a minimum requirement for the Committee's recommendation.



MICHAEL KASINKAS

Recommendation: Meets requirements.

Justification: Mr. Kasinkas is a DanceSport competitor, has managed a number of local collegiate and Chapter dance competitions and been a member of USA Dance for five years. He desires to work towards developing a collaborative relationship between disparate groups and turn our dance population into a community.



KAREN MALDONADO (Incumbent)

Recommendation: Meets requirements.

Justification: Ms. Maldonado has been a USA Dance-Minnesota Board Member since 2012. She is current Vice-President of the U of MN Ballroom Dance Club and also co-chairs the Project Dance initiative (Sunday dance lessons) sponsored by USA Dance Minnesota.



ELECTION & NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

ANDREW NORDBERG

Recommendation: Does NOT meet requirements

Justification: Mr. Nordberg was the only candidate who did not participate in the Committee interview process and the only candidate who did not specify any volunteer interests on his application. Given his lack of participation in the election process and lack of interest in assisting with Chapter activities he has not received the Committee's recommendation.



ED SOLTIS

Recommendation: Meets requirements.

Justification: Mr. Soltis currently serves the Chapter as volunteer website administrator for USA Dance Minnesota Chapter #2011. He is a DanceSport competitor and regularly attends monthly dances, often filling in at the front desk as needed. He has been a member of USA Dance Minnesota since 2008.



LELAND WHITNEY (Incumbent)

Recommendation: Meets requirements.

Justification: Mr. Whitney currently serves as the President of USA Dance Minnesota Chapter #2011. He is very active in all aspects of chapter activities; he attends all meetings and dances. He is a DanceSport competitor and has been a member of USA Dance for over 10 years.



DANIEL O'CONNELL (Incumbent)

Recommendation: Does NOT meet requirements.

Justification: Mr. O'Connell wants to work on collegiate marketing, special event logistics, and improving Chapter dances. However, he made substantial financial contractual commitments without official Board authorization when he served as Chapter president. Management authority of the Chapter lies with the Chapter Board; recognition of this is a minimum requirement for the Committee's recommendation.



JOYCE THOMPSON

Recommendation: Meets requirements.

Justification: Ms. Thompson has been a USA Dance member since the early 1990's, and has volunteered with numerous activities, including the Tea Dance, as well as providing music to Chapter dances and competitions for over 14 years. She recently donated CD's and dance music to be used at future USA monthly dances.



LESLIE WHITNEY (Incumbent)

Recommendation: Meets requirements.

Justification: Ms. Whitney currently serves as the Secretary of the USA Dance Minnesota Chapter #2011. She has volunteered with numerous USA Dance activities, including special events, monthly dances, and newsletter committee. She is a DanceSport competitor and has been a member of USA Dance for over 10 years.



ROSEMARY O'CONNELL

Recommendation: Meets requirements.

Justification: Ms. O'Connell desires to promote and integrate different dance activities at each dance event. She is Secretary for the U of MN Ballroom Dance Club and wants to improve communications between that club and the USA Dance Chapter, as well as dividing work between the two groups. She has been a member of USA Dance for seven years.



TAYLOR WALL

Recommendation: Meets requirements.

Justification: Ms. Wall desires to bring her skills as an administrator and DanceSport competitor to facilitate Chapter operations. She was the president of the U of MN Ballroom Dance club during the last school year. Feels that people need to be utilized based on their strengths and desires along with clearly defined roles. She has been a member of USA Dance for five years.





Private dance lessons can be expensive. How can I get the most out of a private dance lesson or coaching? What makes a good private lesson?

Donna says: There is no single answer to what makes a good private lesson or coaching because people have varying reasons why they study dance. When I was competing, I considered a good lesson to be one in which at least one of the following occurred:

- Gaining a greater understanding of what I was trying to do.
- Developing a feeling for a particular action or actions.
- Being able to identify when I was doing it 'right' versus doing it 'wrong'.
- Understand key 'themes' for improvement.
- Connecting with my partner and feeling that we were in sync with our direction, touch points, movements, and musicality.
- Putting the pieces together and dancing a good round.
- Discovering how to portray the character of the dance and bring meaning to the choreography.
- Helpful post-competition analysis and direction.

As a coach and instructor, my job is to ensure that the professionals, pro/ams, and amateurs that I teach see a vision of what they can become, and can follow a tangible progression to achieve their goals. Helping couples make dancing look and feel easy is also one of my hot buttons as a coach. With that said, I sometimes coach at big studios around the country that bring in so many coaches, with so many divergent points of view, that the dancers are just overwhelmed.

It's good to try a variety of coaches, and then see who resonates for you. When you've had a good overview, pick just a few that you can work with regularly, rather than having a lesson here and there with people that you will never see again. Coaching involves repetition and developing a relationship where the coach gets to know you, your personality, and what you are capable of. The best coaching experiences will help you identify your strengths and learn how to overcome your weaknesses.

Sometimes I'll walk onto a coaching lesson with someone new and they will tell me exactly what they want to work on. While it's helpful to know what's on your mind, it's a much better use of your money and my time if you ask me to look at your dancing and then ask me what I see as priorities for your dancing. Sometimes you can inadvertently tie a coach's hands by being overly directive or non-receptive to new ideas.

Sometimes the element that you don't think you need to work on is what you need most.

If you have a teacher and not a coach, talking regular private lessons - at least weekly - will ensure that you progress. Some people do best with two lessons back to back, others with lessons twice a week. Some dancers take multiple lessons daily. What you can do depends on your finances and schedule.

It doesn't cost anything to practice. Practicing what you work on during your lessons is the key to progressing. If you are a competitor, daily practice is a good idea. Videotape the elements that you want to focus on at the end of your lesson. That way you have a record of what you are trying to do. Break down the elements that you are working on; for example, first practice footwork, then movement, then topline, then musicality, and so on. Come to your next lesson with a list of questions from your practice session.

It's ideal to be engaged, be receptive and be consistent with your lessons. Good luck with your dancing!

Paul says: That is a good question! It really depends on whether you are a competitor or not. A social dancer has completely different needs than a competitive dancer.
(Continued next page)



*Donna Edelstein is a coach, judge, and organizer of the Snow Ball DanceSport Competition.
www.donnawrites@msn.com or
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. www.acballroom.com



Elizabeth Dickinson is a life/executive coach and amateur ballroom dancer. If you enjoy her writing and would like to receive her weekly emailed coaching newsletter, contact her at: elizabeth@pursueyourpath.com.

THE DANCING LIFE: YOUR MOTHER WAS RIGHT

By Elizabeth Dickinson

Remember when your mother told you to stop slouching? Remember when your dance instructor told you to stand up straight?

Turns out, when you adopt a more powerful pose, you have a greater chance of success (and not just on the dance floor).

According to social psychologist and Harvard Business School professor Ann Cuddy, standing in a posture of confidence—even if you don't feel confident — can increase testosterone (a power hormone) and decrease cortisol (a stress hormone). It can also affect your chances for success, especially when you're being evaluated socially, like a job interview.

Standing tall improves both how you feel as well as how people feel about you.

In the animal kingdom animals show dominance by making themselves bigger (ever seen a cat fluff up in front of a rival?) It's about opening up yourself and your sphere

of influence. People in positions of power sometimes have a chronic lift of the chin. (Think Mick Jagger or Oprah Winfrey on stage.)

Lab participants who spent two minutes in a room alone doing high-power poses increased testosterone levels by about 20 percent and lowered the stress hormone cortisol by about 25 percent.

As you read this, notice how you're sitting or standing. What do you feel when you sit or stand straighter?

Before entering a stressful situation, Ann Cuddy recommends adopting a two-minute power pose in private (think Wonder Woman in a bathroom stall). You won't just be faking it until you make it. You'll be changing your brain chemistry, and maybe the outcome of the situation.

And your mother and your dance teacher will be happy.

Ask Dr. Dance, continued.

As such, a lesson given on the same subject or dance can differ greatly in terms of content. A good way to approach a lesson or coaching session is to determine exactly what you want to address or achieve and then stick to it until you are satisfied that you understand a concept or idea even if you are not able to fully achieve it. Do not be afraid to ask questions. Good teachers and coaches love questions; it sometimes illuminates a misunderstanding and helps to clarify something that may seem contradictory to what you have heard before.

Social dancers often just want to have fun and learn some steps. However, learning just steps without the benefit of some technique is not the best way to go about it. Social dancers need just enough technique to balance their need for fun and steps to enable them to negotiate around the dance floor with enough confidence. Another thing to consider is that steps are a dime a dozen and are easily forgotten if not used often enough. Learn how to move to the music and you will have a gift that lasts a lifetime.

Lastly, what makes a good lesson is a more complex issue. Often the student does not want to work on something because they

feel uncomfortable with it or don't like it.

Often "I don't like it" and "I can't do it" means the same thing. A teacher may then decide to work on that and may come to the conclusion that it was a productive lesson, even though the student may have a different perspective. If as a student you can come away from a lesson with even just one clear idea of something, whether that is a step or a method of doing something that helps, you may deem that lesson a success. Remember that learning is a journey, not a destination. Stop often along this journey and dwell on the enjoyment of the process and hope you never reach the destination.



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Submit ads to newsletter@usadance-minnesota.org. Please include area code with any phone number.

► **Vee Hammond 651-206-9890** vee.hammond@comcast.net

Follow, 5' 2", seeks practice partner for bronze/some silver-level Latin and smooth styles. Takes private lessons periodically. Loves to perform. Possible lesson sharing, showcases, or competitions.

► **Luz Taaca 952-232-8958**, luztaaca@yahoo.com

Follow, 5' 4", seeks practice partner for bronze/some silver-level smooth and rhythm. Takes private lessons. Loves to perform. Available for try-out. Possible lesson sharing, showcases, or competitions.

► **Justin Sundberg 612-964-1741**, justin@jdsundberg.com

Lead, 5' 10", 28, seeks practice partner for smooth, rhythm, and WCS. Open to all styles and possible lessons or competition. 3 years' experience. Will provide floor time at a major studio.



*John S. Munday is a writer who lives in Isanti County, Minnesota, with his wife Fran. Jack is a student of Monica Mohn. Jack's book, *Beauty in Partnership, A Memoir of Ballroom Dancing*, is available at dance studios or from Jack at www.johnsmunday.com.*

We went on a tour of Italy again this fall, like we did last year. This year we didn't stop in Rome for a day. Remember the two paintings of Renoir in my column last fall? This year we went with a tour group to Tuscany, in northern Italy. While we didn't find a dance floor, we did talk a lot about dancing. I told several of our tourist friends about Fran's and my dancing. Does dancing come up in your conversations?

GENTLEMEN LEAD

By Jack Munday

The last evening of the tour, we had a farewell dinner at a restaurant named Ristorante Molino il Moro. First we went to the roof (photo #1) for group conversations and receiving completion certificates from the tour leader. Then we went down two flights of stairs to a room with a long table (photo #2) with just enough seats for all twenty of us. The food was a delight, as every meal in Tuscany has been. Then it was time for Fran and me to dance. Several people asked us to dance to see what ballroom dancing is like. Others already knew. We found room to dance (photo #3) and had to imagine the music.

As you can see from the photos, the building is made of stone. The restaurant and lights are new, but the structure is over 1,100 years old. At one time it was the home of a powerful and wealthy family, then it was a hospital. Now people are fed quite good meals. How many of you have danced in a building that old? For us it was a delight. The cobblestone floor was smooth enough so we didn't have to worry.

We did a waltz first, doing the basic several times followed by a natural and a reverse pattern. We had just enough room. Later,

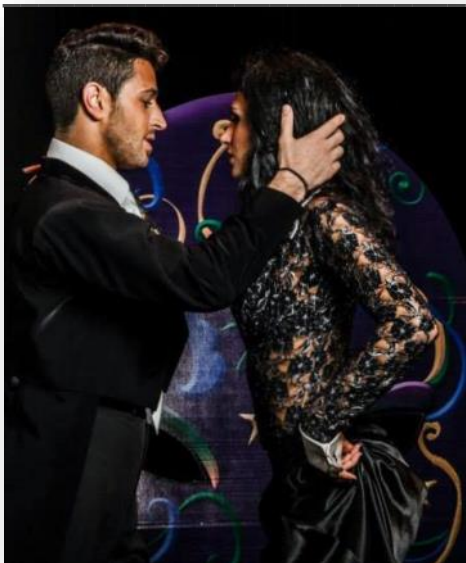
when we finished dancing, I explained that the patterns were named that way to indicate that clockwise was natural and reverse was just that.

But a waltz was not enough for these friends. We then did the foxtrot, also finding just enough room for the grapevine pattern, among others. Our friends applauded, and some took photographs. I have attached one with this column.

Some of you know that I am tall, now six foot four inches, down from six foot seven inches as I age. One lady in the tour was no more than an inch shorter than me. She is seen in photo #1 standing just behind Fran. I asked for her hand to dance, we formed our frame, and I led her in a rhumba. More applause and lots of smiles. But that was all the dancing we did on this tour. We went to our hotel to rest up for the transatlantic flight the next day.

I suppose that the moral of this story, if there is one, is that once dancing is part of our life, it remains an important part with which we give ourselves pleasure. And we also give pleasure to others.





Gene and Elena Bersten are champion Latin and ballroom dancers, and owners of Dance With Us America Ballroom, located in Edina, MN. For more info: www.dancewithusamerica.com

DANCE WITH LOVE

By Miriam Star

The Manship Theater was sold out, the lights were enchanting, the dancing was remarkable, and the food was delicious! In Baton Rouge, LA, the heart of the south, *Dance With Love* was participating in one of the most rewarding and exciting events they'd ever been part of. Dance With Us America Ballroom has a performance company called *Dance With Love*. This performance company, featuring the DWUA ballroom dancers, performed a show called 'Behind the Mask'.

The event was part of the *Dance Speaks* series, raising awareness and funding for HIV and Aids. The dancers felt it was a great experience to support a wonderful cause. After watching the performance and loving it, the Mayor of Baton Rouge, LA, proclaimed October 2nd a special day where the dancers were Mayor for the day!

Dance With Love performances are choreographed by Elena Bersten who is the co-owner of Dance With Us America Ballroom. They perform in shows all over Minnesota and at many events all over the country. Most recently, they performed their show 'Behind the Mask' in May at the Music Box Theater, in Minneapolis.

Each show features dancers who are excellent professional performers. The dancers and dances vary slightly. This time Fik-Shun, the winner of the television show 'So You Think You Can Dance', joined them. Fik-Shun's dance style, animation [a type of hip-hop dance], was breathtaking. The other dancers included Caitlin Foster, Brooke Geyen, Jacob Borg, and of course, Gene Bersten, the owner of Dance With Us America. DWUA has a Facebook page where you can learn more about 'Behind the Mask' and when it will be performing again in Minnesota.



From the show



Mayors for the Day!



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

If you read my “Dancing with the Stars” blogs, then you know that I have issues with the over-use of “nude” elastic straps on dance costumes.

Why do I dislike them? Because, to be frank, they are a lazy way to deal with the physics of creating wearable women’s dance costumes. It shows a lack of well thought out, strategic designs and, often, they aren’t as ‘nude’ as they should be. Just as mismatching or poorly crafted straps can destroy a costume, straps made of thin elastic strips that supposedly “match” the dancer’s skin can have the same negative effect.

I’ll admit, science class was never my favorite, but physics definitely plays a major role in costuming. Gravity, inertia, and tension all factor in to creating a well-designed garment. Did you know that mathematics and physics were actually huge factors in developing the modern brassiere? Howard Hughes designed the underwire push-up bra Jane Russell wore in the 1943 film, “The Outlaw”. Hughes, an industrial designer, adopted modern technologies to raise the contour of the bosom.

Modern bras, in a way, resemble a 1930’s suspension bridge design. A suspension bridge is all about balancing tensions with

SKIMPY DANCE COSTUMES AND ELASTIC STRAPS

© Deborah J. Nelson/Satin Stitches Ltd.

cables, (i.e. straps) to give an aesthetically pleasing design profile while supporting the weight of the structure.

A bra needs to provide sufficient vertical tension to comfortably support gravitational forces of the bosom’s weight with shoulder straps, and transverse (sideways) tension (side straps) to support lateral forces (a side-to-side twisting motion). Additionally, in some cases, a cantilevered structure may be used to lift (push up) the bosom.

Construction is key when creating costumes for an adult woman’s body. The bodice must cover the bust area, show just a hint of cleavage (but not so much that it will create a distraction if the costume shifts too much), and remain secure throughout the performance.

Securing a minimally covered costume typically allows for two options: sheer (or presumed sheer) mesh fabric or genuinely uncovered skin with straps. If you’d like to use a mesh fabric instead of flesh, you’re in luck! Mesh is very in vogue on the red carpet and it’s a great alternative for giving the illusion of bare skin in dance costumes.

If your desire is to have uncovered skin, just like our bridge example, there are certain anchor points that need to be secured by a strap of some sort. Those points are generally in line with the top, middle, and bottom of an actual brassiere as well as the point where a strap holds up the cup area of a bra, on the front. A neck-strap can then either attach at the back of the bra, or as a ‘halter-strap’ going around the back of the neck.

If straps are needed to keep a costume up, they can match the garment and become an integral part of the design. Adding rhinestones, beads, studs or chains to straps can easily enhance the costume; if designed well, these decorative straps can greatly add to the visual flow of a costume.

Aside from the distraction that ‘nude’ elastic straps can cause, the elastic that attaches one part of a costume to another part of a costume

can also create an unwanted focal point. The pulling of the costume causes a peak or point and, when viewed from a distance, all you will see is the straining of the fabric. How does our brain process this? It causes a distraction from the lines of a costume.

The worst distraction is when a bra-top ends mysteriously at the side of the body near the underarm, defying all laws of physics. So why do costume makers keep doing this?

I assume that it continues to be done for one of three reasons, either (1) “it has always been done”, (2) dancers continue to request it for the ‘open back’ look or (3) designers cannot create a decorative strap that would be visually attractive in its place.

I don’t typically mind the elastic straps that anchor one bra-cup to the other or the strategically placed elastic straps that hold a costume together at the back waist to keep a nice deep ‘V’ line. Wide set sleeves also require a little reinforcing so that they don’t fall off the shoulder. In this case, an elastic strap across the top of the shoulders is also useful and not distracting. Without these strategically placed straps, the costume would not work and, usually, if you squint your eyes these costumes look fine.

I’ll conclude by leaving you with one piece of advice, dancers: challenge yourselves (or the designers of your costumes) to creatively incorporate your straps into the design of your dance costume. Don’t settle for ‘nude’ straps and don’t just tack on random fabric so your costume doesn’t fall off! Use your straps as an opportunity to add to the design and lines of your already gorgeous costume.

Maybe you, too, will now be more attuned to good strap design. Perhaps you will think about suspension bridges the next time you marvel at how those skimpy costumes actually stay up on your favorite “Dancing with the Stars” dancer!

BALLROOM DANCE AT TAPESTRY

By Bob Anholt

A hot new venue for variety ballroom dance on first and third Sundays of each month is the Tapestry Folkdance Center on Minnehaha Avenue, in south Minneapolis. Over 100 dancers attended the October 5 dance which began with a Bolero lesson by Shinya McHenry. We started the 'First Sunday' series one year ago, and we have been fortunate to be able to hire excellent teachers such as Shinya, Scott Anderson, Kate and Gordon Bratt, Caroline Olson, Tricia and James Woods, and many others who not only taught a class but were the DJs for the dance following the lesson. By next February, the classes will have provided instruction in every ballroom dance form.

This September we added a 'Third Sunday' series which features live bands. The schedule will include appearances by Café Accordion Orchestra, which is one of the best variety bands in the Twin Cities for Latin, French bal-musette, and swing; and the Tim Patrick Blue Eyes band, which has broadened its repertoire from a foxtrot/swing big band sound into greater variety. The one-hour dance lesson offered on third Sundays will be an intermediate version of the lesson taught on the first Sunday. All classes are taught by professional dance instructors.

The Tapestry folkdance building is unique in that it is owned by the dancers. The nonprofit organization incorporated in 1983 was founded by international folkdancers and contra dancers. For the first 15 years of existence, dances were held at various locations such as Marshall High School, Sabathani Community Center, Peoples Center, and other places in Minneapolis.

The organization bought the current location in 1999. It was previously an automobile repair shop, so a lot of rehab was required and for several months, over 200 volunteers contributed time and talent to make the place

what it is today. The work was spearheaded by three contractors, an architect, and a licensed electrician, all of whom were dancers at Tapestry. Volunteers did much of the renovation work, including: the demolition, mudding, painting, and floor installation. Tapestry's floor is sprung: rubber pads sit on leveling blocks, on top of which are two layers of plywood and a real maple surface. And the ceiling is supported by no poles in the center!

As a result of the sweat equity and grants from agencies such as the McKnight Foundation, while Tapestry still has a mortgage, the equity is several times larger than it might have otherwise been.

But owning a building and operating as a nonprofit also requires a board who serve as unpaid volunteers, and a paid, part-time staff. Annual expenses are supported by dance admissions, memberships in the organization, and annual tax-deductible fund drives.

The principle activities at Tapestry are international folkdance on Friday nights, contra dance with live bands on Saturday nights, English country dance in the small space on Sunday nights, and Bollywood dance on Thursday nights. Contra and English country dances are like square dances in that they are called dance forms, with walking footwork; easy to learn and fun to do.

The Bollywood program is a relatively new addition: the Indian dance form is as aerobic, or more so, than zumba and quickstep. USA dance rents space for Project Dance on some Sunday afternoons. In addition, other dance organizations such as Scottish country dance, Morris dance, ballet, some modern dance performance organizations, and others, rent space not otherwise used by Tapestry's regularly events.



The Sunday ballroom event was organized by Donna Francisco and myself when Jerry O'Hagan reduced his regularly scheduled dance at Cinema Ballroom to the second and fourth Sundays of each month. This means you can dance nearly every Sunday night of the year! For more information, visit www.tapestryfolkdance.org.

DANCER'S SPOTLIGHT: DANCE FLOOR ETIQUETTE

By Bonnie Burton

Everyone is entitled to space on the dance floor, but in an acceptable location. Dance traffic travels in a counter-clockwise direction in concentric tracks on the dance floor. This is called the "line of dance."

Faster-traveling dancers use the fast (or outside) lane. Such dances include: waltz, fox-trot, quickstep, tango, polka, Viennese waltz, samba, county two-step, and so forth. They generally have the right of way, but should not cut through floor center. Do not go back

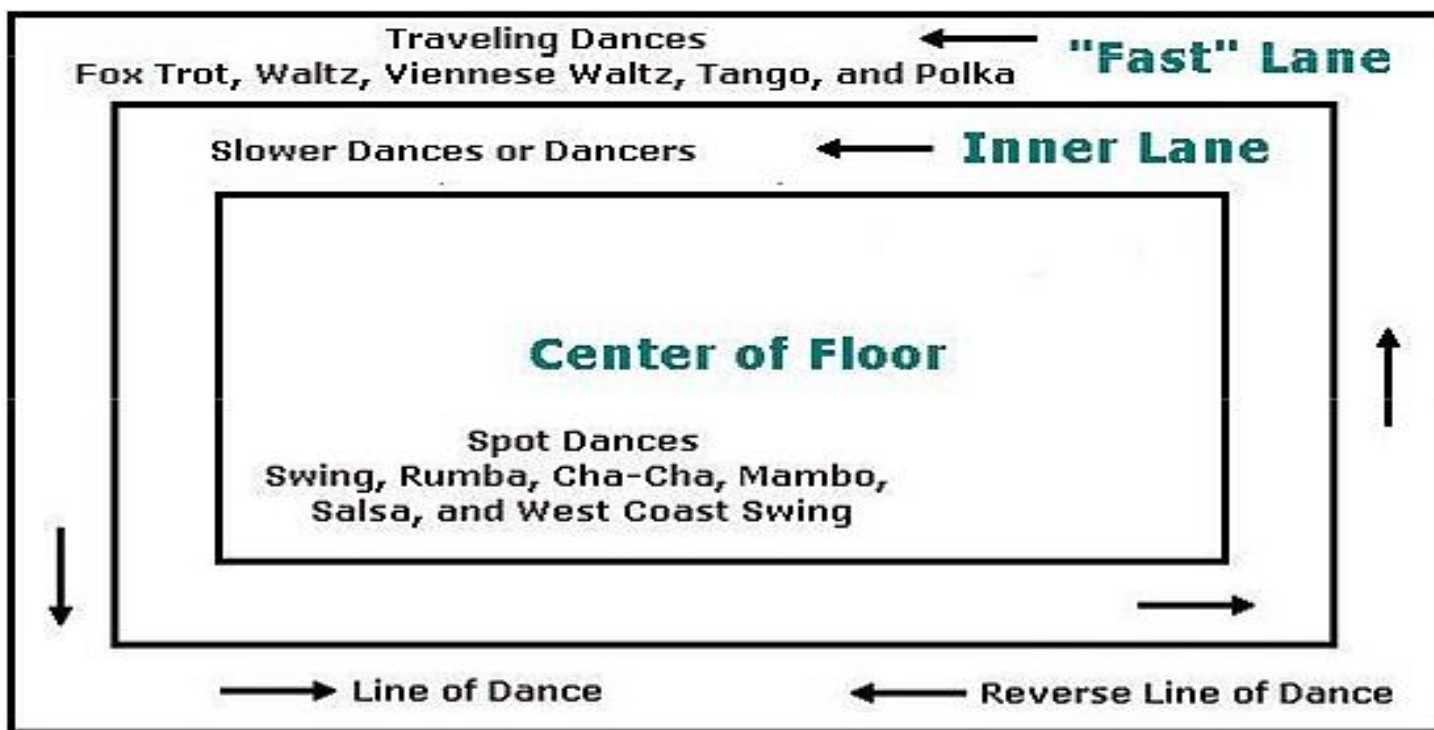
line of dance without looking to make sure you're clear.

Slower (and beginner) dancers use the slow (or inner) lane, as well as country partner dancing.

Floor center is for spot (or position) dancers (jive, rumba, west coast swing, meringue, night-club two-step, cha-cha, mambo, bolero) and line dancers. Do not dance in the outside lanes unless everyone else is doing the same dance at the same time.

Following dance floor etiquette is a way to fully use the dance floor and avoid accidental collisions. If a collision occurs, it's common practice to apologize, even if it wasn't your fault. Avoid standing and socializing on the floor. Be sure to yield to oncoming dancers as you enter the dance space. Do not cut across the floor if a dance is in progress. The floor diagram below shows dance positioning.

Happy Dancing!



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COMPETITION RESULTS

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Hosted by Chicagoland USA Dance Chapter #2001, Chicago, IL.

Nov 15, 2014

California State DanceSport Championships – NQE

Hosted by NorCal USA Dance Chapter #4004, San Jose, CA.

Nov 22–23, 2014

National Collegiate DanceSport Championships

Hosted by USA Dance National, Columbus, OH

Jan 10–11, 2015

The Snow Ball DanceSport Competition

Hosted by Donna Edelstein, Minneapolis/St Paul, MN

Jan 16–18, 2015

Manhattan Amateur Classic (MAC) – NQE

USA Dance Chapter #3004 at Manhattan Center in Manhattan NY

Jan 24, 2015

PDX Ballroom Classic—NQE

Hosted by USA Dance Chapter #1006 in Portland, OR

Jan 31, 2015

Winter Frolic

Royal Palm USA Dance Chapter 6016 in Coconut Creek FL

Feb 14–15, 2015

Mid–Atlantic Championships – NQE

Hosted by Mid-Eastern USA Dance Chapter #6001, Bethesda, MD.

Mar 27–29, 2015

2015 National DanceSport Championships

To be held in Baltimore, MD.

July 9–11, 2015

Twin Cities Open Ballroom Championships

Hosted by Scott and Amy Anderson in Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN

Oct 30–Nov 1, 2015

Chicago DanceSport Challenge – NQE

Hosted by Chicagoland USA Dance Chapter #2001, Chicago, IL.

CAROLINA FALL CLASSIC (NQE)

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Minnesota Competitors

Greg Prasch & Sue Prasch

1st (of 2) Senior I Novice Smooth
1st (of 4) Senior I Pre-Champ Smooth
1st (of 6) Senior II Novice Smooth
2nd (of 14) Senior II Pre-Champ Smooth
8th (of 9) Senior I Novice Standard
6th (of 11) Senior I Pre-Champ Standard
10th (of 13) Senior II Novice Standard
7th (of 11) Senior II Pre-Champ Standard
6th (of 16) Open International Viennese Waltz

Leland Whitney & Leslie Whitney

5th (of 14) Senior II Pre-Champ Smooth
6th (of 10) Senior II Championship Smooth
1st (of 7) Senior III Championship Smooth
7th (of 13) Senior II Novice Standard
4th (of 11) Senior II Pre-Champ Standard
1st (of 5) Senior III Pre-Champ Standard
2nd (of 4) Senior II Championship Rhythm
2nd (of 7) Senior III Championship Rhythm
5th (of 6) Open Nine-Dance



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Photos By Bonnie Burton



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