

MINNESOTA

DANCING TIMES

A publication of the Minnesota Chapter 2011 of USA Dance

October 2013



Photo from the U of M's Fall into Dance event by Kevin Viratyosin



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

STUDIO OPENINGS AND CLOSINGS, U OF M BALLROOM DANCE CLUB, DANCING TO FIGHT MS, & MORE!

Join us for USA Dance MN's
Upcoming Dances

**BECOME A USA DANCE MN MEMBER
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Email: info@usadance-mn.org
 Web: www.usadance-mn.org

October

Saturday, October 19th

7-8 pm Viennese Waltz Lesson
Instructor: Eliecer Ramirez Vargas

8-11 pm Variety Dance
Music DJ: Eliecer Ramirez Vargas

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

E.R.V. Dance Studios

816 Mainstreet
 Hopkins, MN 55343

November

Saturday, November 16th

7-8 pm Bolero Lesson
8-11 pm Variety Dance

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

Cinema Ballroom

1560 St. Clair Avenue
 St. Paul, MN 55105

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.

Wed 10/2 - West Coast Swing Dance Party;
 Dancers Studio, 415 Pascal St.
 N, St. Paul; 9-10; 651 641 0777 or
www.dancersstudio.com

Thu 10/3 - Variety Dance; Dancers Studio,
 415 Pascal St. N, St. Paul; 9-10; 651
 641 0777 or www.dancersstudio.com

**Sun 10/6 - FREE Beginner American
 Cha Cha Class; Balance**
Pointe Studios, 508 W 36th St,
Minneapolis; 2:00-3:30; instructor
Jeff Nehrbass; 952 922 8612

Sun 10/6 - Ballroom Dance Party; Tapestry
 Folkdance Center, 3748 Minnehaha
 Ave, Mpls; Cha cha lesson with
 Shinya McHenry at 6, variety
 dance 7-10; \$10, \$8 Tapestry
 members; 612 722 2914 or www.tapestryfolkdance.org

Mon 10/7 - Rhythm Junction; Four Seasons
 Dance Studio, 1637 Hennepin
 Ave S, Mpls; Swing Dance;
 8-11; \$5; 612 342 0902 or www.fourseasonsdance.com

Wed 10/9 - West Coast Swing Dance Party;
 Dancers Studio, 415 Pascal St.
 N, St. Paul; 9-10; 651 641 0777 or
www.dancersstudio.com

Thu 10/10 - Variety Dance; Dancers Studio,
 415 Pascal St. N, St. Paul; 9-10; 651
 641 0777 or www.dancersstudio.com

Sat 10/12 - Aqua Gliders Dance Club;
 Social Hall, St. Richard's Catholic
 Church, 7540 Penn Ave S,
 Richfield; Quickstep lesson at 7:30,
 dancing 8:45-11; partner required;
 612 869 3062

Sat 10/12 - Tango Society of Minnesota
 Milonga; Four Seasons Dance
 Studio, 1637 Hennepin Ave S,
 Mpls; Live music sets by La
 Vuature Tango Orchestra from
 Buenos Aires; lesson at 8:30, dance
 9:30-1; \$14, \$10 members; 612 224
 2905 or www.mntango.org

Sun 10/13 - Minnesota Ballroom Blast;
Coffman Memorial Union, 300
Washington Ave SE, Minneapolis;
www.mnballroomblast.com

Mon 10/14 - Rhythm Junction; Four
 Seasons Dance Studio, 1637
 Hennepin Ave S, Mpls; Swing
 Dance; 8-11; \$5; 612 342 0902 or
www.fourseasonsdance.com

Wed 10/16 - West Coast Swing Dance
 Party; Dancers Studio, 415 Pascal
 St. N, St. Paul; 9-10; 651 641 0777 or
www.dancersstudio.com

Thu 10/17 - Variety Dance; Dancers Studio,
 415 Pascal St. N, St. Paul; 9-10; 651
 641 0777 or www.dancersstudio.com

Fri 10/18 - Grand Opening Party;
 DanceLife Ballroom, 6015 Lyndale
 Ave S, Mpls; Free general dancing,
 lesson, and performances for
 DanceLife Ballroom's grand
 opening

Sat 10/19 - USA Dance; ERV Dance
Studios, 816 Mainstreet, Hopkins;
Viennese waltz lesson at 7, dance
8-11; \$10, \$7 USA Dance members

Sun 10/20 - FREE Beginner American
Cha Cha Class; Balance
Pointe Studios, 508 W 36th St,
Minneapolis; 2:00-3:30; instructor
Jeff Nehrbass; 952 922 8612

Mon 10/21 - Rhythm Junction; Four
 Seasons Dance Studio, 1637
 Hennepin Ave S, Mpls; Swing
 Dance; 8-11; \$5; 612 342 0902 or
www.fourseasonsdance.com

Wed 10/23 - West Coast Swing Dance
 Party; Dancers Studio, 415 Pascal
 St. N, St. Paul; 9-10; 651 641 0777 or
www.dancersstudio.com

Thu 10/24 - Variety Dance; Dancers Studio,
 415 Pascal St. N, St. Paul; 9-10; 651
 641 0777 or www.dancersstudio.com

Sun 10/27 - FREE Beginner American
Cha Cha Class; Balance
Pointe Studios, 508 W 36th St,
Minneapolis; 2:00-3:30; instructor
Jeff Nehrbass; 952 922 8612

Mon 10/28 - Dance Demo; Mall of
America Rotunda; 7:30-8:30 p.m.;
couples and formation teams
welcome to participate in smooth
and/or rhythm; contact Yvonne
Viehman at (763) 553-1202 or
danvman@aol.com to participate

Mon 10/28 - Rhythm Junction; Four
 Seasons Dance Studio, 1637
 Hennepin Ave S, Mpls; Swing
 Dance; 8-11; \$5; 612 342 0902 or
www.fourseasonsdance.com

Wed 10/30 - West Coast Swing Dance
 Party; Dancers Studio, 415 Pascal
 St. N, St. Paul; 9-10; 651 641 0777 or
www.dancersstudio.com

Thu 10/31 - Variety Dance; Dancers Studio,
 415 Pascal St. N, St. Paul; 9-10; 651
 641 0777 or www.dancersstudio.com ■

USA Dance – MN Chapter #2011 Board Minutes

Tuesday, September 3rd, 2013

Submitted by Leslie Whitney

In attendance: Daniel O'Connell (President), Cathy Dessert (Vice President), Leslie Whitney (Secretary), Zhuojing Liu, Bonnie Burton, Karen Maldonado, Marty Faeh, Tracy Frazee

Location: Quixotic Coffee, 769 Cleveland Ave South, St. Paul, MN

Call to Order: Quorum established. Agenda approved. August minutes approved.

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Treasurer's Report

- Jane was unable to attend but submitted a current report as of August 31, 2013.
- The treasurer's report was approved.

Minutes for Board Meetings

- The newsletter minutes will be accepted as the official minutes.

Star of the North Chairperson

- The board discussed the present and future status of the chair position.
- A kick-off meeting of SotN volunteers was held on September 7th.

Brief Area Reports

- Tracy – Competition and Performance Liaison Tracy continues to work as liaison between competitions, performances, and volunteer demonstrations.

- Bonnie – Dancing Times Liaison The board discussed ways in which the publication and dance community interact.

- Cathy – Marketing (Emails, Printing) Monthly, Cathy emails from Constant Contact to update the membership about the monthly dances, free lesson information, election issues, demonstrations, etc. This information is also posted on Facebook.

- Karen – Project Dance Minnesota Karen will report at October's meeting.

PROJECTS

Review of August

- Hunting and Storing Our Stuff
- Tracy will email board members with storage information.
- USA Dance Minnesota Hotline Marty will take on the job of restoring the hotline.
- Board Meeting Location Daniel will continue to research.

Odds and Ends

- Minnesota Ballroom Blast Planning for the event is progressing smoothly.
- Beyond Ballroom Dance Company Silent Auction Chapter #2011 is donating event tickets for the BBDC event.
- Approval for Design Work for a Star of the North Flyer A motion was made and approved to budget for this project.

Star of the North

- Daniel reported with an update on space, a review of the vision and goals, and the next step in planning for this event.

Review of Action Items for August

- Briefly discussed.

Next Meeting:

Tuesday, October 1st, 2013 5:30 p.m.
Quixotic Coffee 769 Cleveland Avenue South ■

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.

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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 ■

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Photo from the U of M's Fall into Dance event by Kevin Viratyosin

Advertising

DISPLAY ADS: To advertise your event or professional service, submit a digital file (300 dpi pdf or jpeg format ONLY) or camera-ready 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

FROM THE EDITOR

By Mary Beth Beckman



So I went to the September USA Dance, and there is a hilarious phenomenon I'd like to draw attention to. My friend Talia from Eau Claire is consistently asked if she's me, or will notice people pointing at her and saying, "That's Mary Beth." I've known about this for a while now, and a couple months ago even included her in my editor photo so people could see that we are not, in fact, the same person. Usually this happens when I'm not at the event, but last night, it happened more than once—while I was in the room! (For the record, no one approached me asking if I'm Mary Beth, so that makes this doubly hilarious to me.) The moral of the story is, the next time you see someone you think is me, odds are, it's probably Talia (who's worlds nicer than I am, so you probably want to talk to her anyway). If this were Twitter, I'd add the hashtag #themoreyouknow.

Anyway, the turnout at the dance was fantastic, but the thing that impressed me was how many beginners were

there. There were at least a dozen college students in their socks, glancing down at their feet and blushing at their partners when they weren't sure how a move worked. Matching them were a host of friendly dancers with more experience, showing them the basic steps and helping the newcomers feel more comfortable on the floor.

That was really wonderful to see. It's uniquely encouraging to watch beginning dancers overcoming self-consciousness to ask someone to rumba, to ask someone if they'd be willing to teach them a basic hustle, to start a conversation with someone they haven't met before. And every time that courage is met with a smile and a helping hand, we've succeeded as a community.

The only style I ever got any kind of structured instruction on was international standard. (I still can't do a standard foxtrot in any convincing way, because that dance is difficult, and I am apparently not coordinated enough to figure out heel turns.)

Everything else I learned when some fellow asked me to dance at a social event and I said, "I don't know this one, but I'm happy to learn." I'm still not very good, and I rarely make it out to dance events these days, but I know much more than I would have if those gentlemen had responded to my lack of skill with a "never mind, then" instead of an "I'll teach you."

That leads me to discuss a bit of a fallacy when it comes to the etiquette of social dancing. They say you shouldn't teach on the social dance floor, but I never would have learned anything if folks hadn't taught me. More aptly, it seems you shouldn't critique someone's dancing in a social setting, but that also doesn't account for some pretty important circumstances.

I once hurt a guy's feelings when I had to stop dancing with him because his leads were hurting me. At first I asked if he could be a bit more gentle, since I was experiencing some shoulder pain, and when he didn't

amend his technique, I thanked him for the dance and said I had to stop. He reacted very negatively to that, and it actually soured me on social dancing for a long time. I felt like I was being told implicitly that another person's confidence in their dancing was more important than my safety. I've also had to stop dancing with gentlemen who were touching me in ways that made me very uncomfortable, and again, it resulted in feeling I was being told that someone else's feelings were more important than my boundaries.

I think we need to make a cultural shift in social dancing that tells people it's okay and in fact very important to stop dancing with someone if it's causing injury or discomfort. I've seen more than one social dance etiquette guide encourage people to simply make do with their discomfort for the duration of the dance, but I propose that waiting that long is waiting *too* long. And frankly, if someone gets handsy with me, I am going to turn him down the rest of the night and accept an offer from someone else

immediately after. And I'm not going to view that as impolite, no matter what the etiquette guides say about sitting out a dance after you've turned someone down. If someone disrespects my boundaries, I will tell them, and if their behavior doesn't change, I will not engage in future interactions.

I think that piece about communication is very important, though, because you don't want to punish someone for something they don't know they've done. If someone invites you into a full hip connection and that makes you uncomfortable, you should say so. Then they can decide whether they're going to respect that boundary and allow you to dictate the amount of space between you when you dance or disrespect your wishes and force you into something that makes you uncomfortable. If they do the latter, bail out immediately. That behavior is completely unacceptable. There aren't many people who disregard another person's boundaries like this, but unfortunately, there are some, and they need to know that that's not okay. If they continue to give you

trouble, report it to whoever's hosting the dance. Ballroom dancing should be safe and fun, and anyone behaving disrespectfully is hurting the whole community.

This is all particularly important because of how many people have psychological triggers activated by unwanted touching and unwelcome advances. You do not owe anyone access to your body, and if at any point you want to stop dancing, then stop. Safely exit the floor. You do not owe anyone an explanation for doing what feels safest to you, whether it's physically or psychologically.

Everyone, stay safe, stay happy, stay respectful, and get me your submissions for the November issue by October 15th. I expect you all to report on how much fun you had at Minnesota Ballroom Blast on October 13th. Stop by registration and say hello!

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

UPCOMING DANCE DEMOS

If you're looking for a non-competitive opportunity to showcase your talent, how about joining a dance demo sponsored by USA Dance? We're always looking for silver- to open-level dancers to entertain the crowds at local malls. Grab a dance partner or your formation team and dance your hearts out!

If you'd like to participate, please contact Yvonne Viehman at (763) 553-1202 or danvman@aol.com for more information. All formation team routines will be previewed. Appropriate costuming is always appreciated, as we put on family-friendly shows. Join the fun!

SAVE THE DATE!

Monday, October 28 — 7:30-8:30 p.m.

Mall of America Rotunda. Couples and formation teams welcome to participate in smooth and/or rhythm.

Sunday, November 24 — 1-1:30, 2-2:30 p.m.

Rosedale Mall

Sunday, December 1st — 1-1:30, 2-2:30 p.m.

Rosedale Mall



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Daniel O'Connell is the president of USA Dance Minnesota and competes nationwide with his amateur partner, Rosemary O'Connell. To continue with the wildlife-related taglines, the human eye has three kinds of color receptors—red, green, and blue. The mantis shrimp has sixteen. Makes you wonder what reality looks like to the mantis shrimp.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Daniel O'Connell

Happy fall, everyone!

The hotline is back this month. It had a temporary leave of absence while we found a volunteer to help answer the messages that are left on the hotline.

Minnesota Ballroom Blast is this month on October 13th in the Great Hall of Coffman Memorial Union. I'm pretty excited to attend, myself—I get a lot of valuable feedback from participating, and it's a low-stress environment where I can see how my partnership's choreography and costuming are coming along for our fall competitions. Even if you aren't competing, you should stop by to check out the event. If you've never considered competing before, it's a great way to see what the buzz is about.

USA Dance is holding its national-level elections this month. If you're a USA Dance member, check out the information in *American Dancer* and vote!

Did you know that approximately 50% of the chapter's membership is comprised of college students? Probably not—the majority of our attendees at the monthly dances and at the free Sunday Project Dance lessons are adults over thirty. So who are these mysterious college students? How come we never see them? Why are they involved with USA Dance?

The college students that are part of our chapter are regular college students. Some are tall, some are short, but they are all *awesome* because they dance. In general, the college students keep to themselves and their clubs primarily for one reason: transportation off campus is difficult. In the last few months, a contingent of University of Minnesota college students have been attending the monthly dances, and that has only been made possible by the regular arrangement of carpools. If it's that difficult for college students who live *in* the Twin Cities to attend

the monthly dances, imagine how difficult it is for students from Eau Claire, Northfield, Rochester, or Decorah to make it to events in the Twin Cities.

The main reason I decided to talk about college students this month is because, while the adult market is important, I don't think it has ever been clearly explained to the community at large why outreach to the college students can be beneficial to the growth of the community.

At social dances, the attendance of college students can do more than just add dancers to the party. College students can bring a different set of experiences, energy, and life to the dances. One of our goals for the upcoming year is to take the success we've had at bringing college students up for competitions and translate that to increased participation from college students at the monthly dances.

This different perspective can also be valuable for the *Dancing Times*. Joel Torgeson of the University of Minnesota has been contributing while school is in session, and this month is no exception. I've personally found his articles to be different from the usual fare and particularly entertaining, and I hope you all feel the same way.

On the competitive circuit, college competitors make the heats at Star of the North some of the most competitive in the country. Last year's attendees included quite a few couples who would go on to final at Nationals. This is true in multiple styles, bronze through open.

At the end of the day, college students represent the newest generation of ballroom dancers. Someday, they'll be the ones spending their free time at studios, winning national titles, and showing new dancers the way. Why not get them started early? ■

BALLROOM DANCE FIELD TRIP

Dance Outreach to Lamberton on November 14th

By Paul Stachour

Some places, you might hear the complaint: "I'm bored." "There is nothing to do in this town." "This town is an arts wasteland." With the destabilizing effect of radio, TV, and now the internet, many Minnesota small towns have lost their local activities. While once, nearly every town had an opera house, where the touring music and theater groups came, and its dance hall, where community dances were held several nights per week, most of those are now gone.

But that's not true everywhere. Here and there, one can still find such venues, hidden away on the second floor of some office building, or even sitting on a prominent street in the town. In most cases, they are shuttered, dusty remnants of a past era. However, in a few towns, they are still open and in use. One such town is Lamberton, located on US-14 in southwest Minnesota, about two and a half hours from the Twin Cities. Here we find a community dance hall, built in 1939, with a nice, clean, original, wood dance floor, 40x55 feet. There is a stage for a band, and in the basement, there

is also a brand-new laminate 30x60-foot dance floor. On the top floor, there is a nice 15x25-foot floor for practicing swing, rumba, or ballet.

This is the home of Anita's Conservatory of Dance, which now offers ballet, tap, jazz, tumbling, and pointe. This year's enrollment is over two hundred students. Like many such dance studios, the main focus of the studio is teaching children to dance. There is no place near for adults to learn any of the partner dances, and so the majestic old dance hall does not get used to its full potential.

Because I travel all across Minnesota as part of the walking clubs that I belong to, I have had the opportunity to discover a number of such potential dance venues outside of the Twin Cities. There is a tremendous potential for outreach to venues such as this one in Lamberton. So on Thursday, November 14th, at 7:15 p.m., I will provide a one-hour introduction to partner dancing lesson (foxtrot and waltz) at that dance studio, located at 110 Second Avenue West in

Lamberton. This will be followed by a variety dance featuring foxtrot and waltz but including other dances until 9:30 p.m. Departure from the Twin Cities will be around 4:00 p.m.

I invite you to join us for this outreach, thus helping new people learn to dance. In a class group where very few people know the material, progress can be slow. Having a few dancers with some experience as part of the rotation accelerates the learning rate significantly. No matter what your level of experience, your presence would be very helpful. If you can join us, email me at PStachour@acm.org or call (952) 884-5977 so that we can arrange for you to ride with us or organize a carpool, depending upon the size of the response.

This will also be an opportunity to meet (and dance with) some members of another USA Dance chapter, USA Dance South Dakota. Some of them will be coming from the Sioux Falls area and joining us in Lamberton. There will be a small \$5 cover charge for the entire evening of partner dancing. ■



Photo from the September USA Dance by Kevin Viratyosin

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SAYING “SO LONG” TO HARRY BENSON

An Ending and a Beginning

By Cathy Dessert

Harry and his wife, Kris, are closing the doors at Cheek to Cheek Ballroom. It may seem like an end to some, but for Harry and Kris, it's a new and exciting beginning again.

They will be heading for the state of Washington to reside in the Columbia River Valley. While you may wonder why, Harry says they are tired of Minnesota winters that stretch on an eternity and summers that seem too short and become populated with mosquitoes too soon. This place they are headed, they think, is Minnesota without the extremes.

Harry and ballroom dancing have a long history here in Minnesota. When I spoke to him about this article, I really had no idea the extent of his

involvement. I also said I wouldn't include years, but perhaps you can guess about the approximate timing of these events.

Harry was drawn to music and theater in his high school years. He took some dance classes then but not in the fine art of partner dancing. In college theater and music, again, held the forefront. However, after graduating from college and starting a job, Harry received a cold call about taking some ballroom dancing lessons. The first lesson was a bargain at \$25. He went and was given the sales pitch to purchase more lessons. He said he most definitely couldn't afford lessons, so he was asked if he was interested in a job as a dance instructor. Harry said he was, but he'd have to see about his

other job. As you may have surmised, that was the beginning of Harry's dance career.

He taught both group and private lessons at studios, a health club, and in St. Cloud before finding Heidi Smith-Miranda and Cheek to Cheek. He was looking for floor space to rent and ended up with a ballroom! Harry has taught and danced at Cheek to Cheek these last years as well as dancing with his partner, Jennelle Marie Donnay. He also went back to school for audio engineering and music production.

The Minnesota ballroom community wishes Harry and Kris all the best in their new endeavors in the apple-shipping capital of the country! ■



Photo from the September USA Dance by Nic Westlake

BALLROOM IS ALIVE AND WELL IN THE SOUTH METRO

By Suzi Blumberg

The Twin Cities dance community continues to grow in the southern part of the Twin Cities, and I'm excited! When I started ballroom dancing in 2004, there was only one ballroom in the south suburban area, and that was Harmonies. It was such a great place to dance, and every weekend, there was something wonderful going on.

Harmonies closed in 2007, and there hasn't been a ballroom dance studio in the south suburbs for many years. But things are changing. A few years ago, Dance with Us America moved into the Southdale Shopping Center, then Michael Bang began North Star Dance Studio in Bloomington, and last year, the Bratts taught at Twin Cities Project 52 Studio in Bloomington. And this week, Shinya McHenry opens his new dance studio in south Minneapolis.

Shinya started dancing in nightclubs in the late '70s and early '80s during the disco era—a special time for many of us. He went to places like the Left Guard and Eddie Webster's. Remember those? In the early '80s, a friend of his who worked at Arthur Murray in St. Paul talked him into taking ballroom lessons. The owner was Barb Nielson, and she mentored and trained Shinya in the business.

Shinya met and married Marcy, and they started competing together with

coaches Corky and Shirley Ballas. They broke off from Arthur Murray in 1986 and started Dancers Studio, the first St. Paul ballroom dance studio that wasn't a franchise. They had a 900-square-foot studio they rented with an aerobics instructor. Their business grew and grew, and they added a teachers program that most current Twin Cities dance instructors have trained in.

Shinya and Marcy moved into the 1,200-square-foot fire station on Snelling Avenue, then grew into the building next door that was 5,000 square feet. They stayed there for fifteen years and had the great fortune of bringing in Scott Draper and Lynn Mariner, world standard finalists from England. They had wonderful amateur standard dancers like Hub Nelson and Nels Petersen, who were able to train with top trainers of the world.

They later found the current location in St. Paul on Pascal Avenue near Snelling and University, a 12,000-square-foot event center and dance studio that is successfully run by Marcy at this time.

Shinya and Marcy went their separate ways a few years ago, and this month, Shinya is opening DanceLife Ballroom. His philosophy and desire is to have an environment where all Twin Cities dancers congregate, because for all

of us, dance is life. He will create a friendly, happy environment where people can gather to enjoy the art of dancing. Ballroom, salsa, belly—any form of dance is welcome. Time Out Fitness Studio is right next door, and it provides high-quality Pilates and fitness classes and is owned by friends David and Jeanne Schmidt, who are long-time ballroom dance competitors. These two neighbors and ballroom dance friends have created a community of dance and fitness!

DanceLife Ballroom will have nightly group classes, and a Friday night group class at 8 p.m. followed by a variety dance from 9:00 to 10:30. Shinya plans to have showcases and competitions and is excited about his great staff. He is also planning a destination trip to Mazatlán on March 1-7, 2014, during Marti Gras. Shinya also MCs and DJs for different venues around town at corporate and private events.

DanceLife Ballroom is planning a grand opening party October 18th from 7:00 to 10:00, and it's free for everyone. The address is 6015 Lyndale Avenue South in Minneapolis. He plans to have general dancing, instruction, and shows during the evening. Be sure to mark your calendars! Whether you live in the South Metro or not, I'll see you there! ■



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FALLING BACK INTO DANCE

By Joel Torgeson

Hello again, dancers of the Twin Cities! I don't know about you, but I've had a long summer away from MSP, and I'm very glad to be back. If you'll spare me a minute of your time and a moment of your patience, I'll relate some of the more interesting parts of my recent past in a way that (hopefully) won't bore you.

When last I wrote four months ago, I had just returned from the debacle that was the OSU DanceSport Classic in April. I'm happy to say I moved past the terrible mood it left me in and promptly got on with my life. As I'm sure we all remember, winter kept its chilly grip on Minnesota right up until the second week of May, finals week for me. I knocked all my tests and classes out of the park, packed up

most of my dorm room (I swear I lost a toothbrush in there somehow), and moved back to the homestead down in Pine Island, Minnesota. Haven't heard of it? I don't blame you. It's about an hour or so south of the Cities as you head towards Rochester. Blink and you'll miss it.

After a week or two of R&R with the family, it was upward and onward to my next adventure: summer camp counseling. I'd worked down at YMCA Camp Pepin for the previous three summers, so this marked my fourth and final year down on the shores of the lake. I will, for your sake, refrain from waxing poetic about camp counseling and all its joys and issues, but I will say I enjoyed myself immensely and will be sad to see my time there come to a close. One camp

anecdote you may find entertaining is that, at the beginning of each week, we play name games to get to know our campers better. Many of these games involve giving out an interesting fact or two to break the ice with our campers. Mine invariably involved ballroom dance, and many of the campers I worked with were shocked to some degree that the big rock-climbing guy (another of my pastimes) was also a dancer. I like challenging stereotypes and assumptions like that.

"But, Joel," you ask, "what about dancing? This isn't your personal blog, you know." Well, yes, I do know. But that is precisely the sad, unfortunate point! I didn't dance at all this summer. I was *dance deprived*. From mid-May to early August, I danced maybe two west coasts. Total. I went from



Photos from the U of M's Fall into Dance event by Kevin Viratyosin

dancing a minimum of twelve hours a week to occasionally doing a rumba basic while waiting in line for the hand-washing sink. Muscles and ligaments, once ready for hours of dancing, now complained for lack of use. I didn't know when the dance drought would end.

A wedding finally wetted the parched soil of my dance life. Since Niko Salgado and Mary Hill happen to be lovely west coast swing dancers, their wedding in early August was followed promptly by several hours of dancing. It was a nice cool shower after a long, hot summer. Except in this shower you get all kinds of sweaty while interacting with people of the opposite gender. So not like a shower at all, actually!

Moving past the shower metaphor, this event kicked off a slowly building string of dance events and opportunities that I took advantage of in the next three weeks. I attended the monthly USA Dance in August, which was a blast! I brought along my friend Kevin Viratyosin and my camera, and between Kevin, Libby Ryan, and myself, we took the photos that were all credited to me in last month's edition. Of course, more importantly, we also danced a whole lot and had a great time! I also went down and danced with the University of Minnesota - Rochester team for a lesson and got to know some of the people who dance there. It was really great to make some connections down there, and I certainly hope to get them up here for a monthly dance sometime!

Now, as you're probably unaware, I was elected the publicity manager for the University of Minnesota Ballroom Dance Club this year. This means that I was hard at work long before our semester started here at the U trying to ensure that we got our name out and around campus to all our potential new members. This year, we are helped greatly by our change of location to the rec center. Our previous location was in the Bierman athletic facility, an out-of-the-way building in Dinkytown that didn't very well suit our needs. Now it's much easier for people, especially freshmen, to grab a bus, ride a bike, or walk their way over to our facilities.

With our awesome new space, we've put a lot of effort into attracting new members this year with much



success. Our biggest intro event, Fall into Dance, drew over 150 brand-new people! Fall into Dance is a really special event because it is many people's first exposure to the world of ballroom (and, more generally, partner) dancing. Libby and I performed a cha cha demo, Jack O'Leary and Natalie McMann did a waltz, Savanna Moen and Tyler Bridges performed tango, Mike Kasinkas and Taylor Wall demoed swing, and Dan and Rosemary O'Connell threw down a rumba, all for the enjoyment of the audience. After every two demos, we taught mini lessons, including of rumba, swing, and waltz. Everyone seemed to have a great time, and it really started our year off right!

After such a good start, our club meetings have consistently drawn more than eighty people. We're excited to see how things shake out in the next few weeks, but with such an impressive start, we're dreaming big! Of interest to you, dance community,

we plan to have a larger presence of collegiate dancers at the monthly USA Dances, so you may get to meet some of our eager young recruits sometime soon!

Last but not least, I'll report on the state of my own dancing. I have made leaps and bounds from where I was last year at this time. Back then, I had only just learned the basic of a few dances and was going through my first competition team lesson with wide eyes and open ears. I was somewhat terrified by the thought of performing at Minnesota Ballroom Blast, our local critique event.

But looking back, I could safely say I'd come a long way. I felt comfortable at the bronze level and was ready to refine it and compete it at collegiate nationals. It would be a year of dance without the frantic preparation and intense practice that characterized last year. Don't get me wrong—I love every minute of it, but it was a lot. With that and a heavier class load in mind,

I thought I'd just coast on through this year.

Well, not so much. As many of you can probably relate, ballroom, once in possession of your time, does not give it back. I've found myself carving out parts of my free time to go to the fantastic new rec facility on campus to practice. I'm doing rumba basics while I'm in the elevator and practicing rolling through my feet on the way to class. I'm working with Dan and Rosemary, trying to learn as much as I can as quickly as I can. I'm not yet sure who my partners will be or what events I'll be competing, but I can say for certain that I have an interesting, dance-packed year ahead of me.

Well, if you've made it this far, give yourself a pat on the back for surviving another 1,500 words from yours truly. I'm excited to see what this year has to bring, and I hope to see all of you on October 19th for the monthly dance. Until then, may your moves be fresh and your shoes well worn! ■



Photos from the U of M's Fall into Dance event by Kevin Viratyosin



COME TO BLAST!

By Daniel O'Connell

October 13th marks the second annual Minnesota Ballroom Blast, held in the Great Hall of Coffman Memorial Union. It's a feedback-based event, which means that instead of receiving a ranking when you dance, you'll receive feedback from some of the region's top professionals. There will also be an evening show from 6:30 to 10:00 p.m. featuring performances from the region's top dancers, general dancing, and games.

This format ensures that Blast will be a fun and valuable event to attend for many of our community, from social dancers to the most avid competitors.

Never danced before or have a friend you'd like to get hooked?

Great! Come as a spectator and see some beautiful dancing. In addition,

there will be general dancing and fun ballroom games throughout the day. The evening session should make for a great date night.

Just like to social dance?

Ever been curious about the world of competitive ballroom dancing? Consider registering to receive feedback, or come as a spectator. From a bang-for-your-buck perspective, you'd be hard-pressed to find a better way to receive feedback on your dancing. It is also a great, low-stress introduction to the competitive format. The event is intended to be a low-stress, low-chaos event, so you can see how things work from a spectator's chair or by going through the experience firsthand.

Like to compete?

Speaking from personal experience, this event is a great warmup or

check-in to work into your competitive calendar. I love that I get serious-but-not-hurtful feedback from not one but *four* professionals for each dance, and I've found it to be a great opportunity to try out new costuming and choreography without worrying about if it's hurting my marks.

I highly recommend you check out this great event. If you would like to register, head on over to our website, www.mnballroomblast.com. You can also preorder spectator tickets (\$5 for day session, \$5 for evening session) at that web address or just pay at the door. If you have any questions, please contact blast@usadance-mn.org.

I hope to see you there! ■



Photo from the U of M Ballroom Dance Club by Libby Ryan

Photo by Diestler Photography



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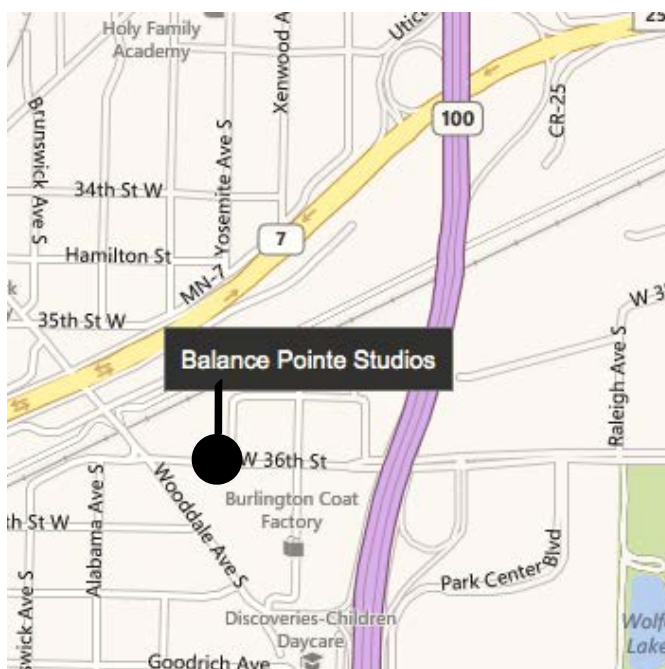
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BALLROOM DANCING TO FIGHT EFFECTS OF MS

By Joni Moths Mueller

Since when is waltzing used in scientific research? Since there has been evidence that dancing helps people who suffer with neurological conditions, including Parkinson's disease and stroke. Now a study at Marquette is testing whether ballroom dancing can help people who have MS fight fatigue, improve balance, and build confidence.

Assisted by the Wisconsin Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society and funded by the Marquette University Committee on Research, Dr. Alexander Ng recruited seven people who have MS to participate in the eight-week study that measures the effects of dancing on their physical and psychological health.

"We expect that social ballroom dance will represent an adequate exercise stimulus for cardiovascular conditioning," says the associate professor of exercise science in the College of Health Sciences. "We are also testing to see if ballroom dance improves balance, gait, depression, fatigue, and self-reported quality of life."

Already, Ng spots some "dance data" or, in science parlance, early results: "A little bit of normal frustration with lots of smiles, laughter, and improvement."

It's true. The laughter is contagious when the dancing couples take the floor for the weekly class taught by research associate Pamela Landin, who holds a master's degree in sports medicine and was a competitive ballroom dancer at one time.

She gets the participants moving—and not to music by Johann Strauss. No, this class waltzes, rumbas, and fox-trots to Beyoncé's "Single Ladies" and music by Nikki Minaj, Celtic Women, Shawn Kingston, Maroon Five, and more.

"I play music I competed to," says Landin.

She demonstrates a step, and then it's the newbies' turn. "Just dance and don't think," Landin says. "Your mind will get in the way."

That's easier said than done, but the dancers are game. They execute steps that are a little foreign, moving slowly at first. Pretty soon, their pace quickens. Jeffrey and Terri Gingold circle Cramer Hall 050, their steps becoming a tad smoother with each progressive turn.

Jeffrey was diagnosed with MS in 1996. It affected his vision first and then progressed to numb his left leg and left hand. He and Terri say this class is a way for both to stay in shape.

"Dancing gives me confidence that I haven't felt in a while," says Jeffrey. "People with disabilities often feel they have to go into the shadows. Dancing is different. You have to get on the floor; you can't dance in a closet."

"We've attended every session. It was a little intimidating at first," admits Terri.

There is ample evidence that ballroom dancing or partner dancing is beneficial for people with neurological disorders, according to Ng, but its benefits haven't been tested with MS.

"Exercise is recommended for persons with MS," he says. "However, people with MS tend to be relatively inactive. Ballroom dance could be a fun, lower-impact alternative to traditional exercise."

Vicki Raddant was diagnosed with MS when she was thirty-three years old. She says it affects her balance and causes fatigue. Although she didn't want to get out of bed for today's dance class, she also didn't want to miss the fun—and she says the exercise helps relieve stress.

"Each class helps repair the damage that's going on here," she says, pointing at her head.

So Raddant and the entire class rock step and march. They practice the cuddle, the underarm turn, and the man's turn. They learn to synch their arms and legs, and circle the floor without bumping into other couples. They do all of this while Landin calls out to remind them that dancing is challenging but also a lot of fun.

The class will test Landin's claim when they celebrate their newfound skills at a ballroom dance with friends and family in August.

Lightly edited and reprinted with permission from Marquette Magazine ■



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, please go to www.pursueyourpath.com and sign up.

THE DANCING LIFE

Does Dancing Recreate You?

By Elizabeth Dickinson

I recently returned from a vacation back east to visit friends and family. It was sorely needed and overdue.

Sometimes recreation is devalued in our work-obsessed culture. So I reviewed the word's variations. To create means to bring something into existence. Creation is sometimes regarded as the work of God. Creativity is a process when "something new and valuable" is created.

At its best, a recreation is repeating the process of creation. If you recreate yourself, you're either bringing something valuable back to your existence (relaxation or activities you enjoy) or you're creating something new (exposure to new activities, places, people). And it can be holy work, as it can make you whole with yourself.

Dancing is recreation for most of us, at both superficial and deeper levels.

While I was away, I was recreating in a different way and didn't dance. I wondered if I would lose some of my technique or ability. But when I returned, my teacher said my legs felt great when he danced with me. A talented social dancer remarked that I must've been having some good lessons recently since I was "really moving" when I danced with him. I told him I'd been away, and he said, "Well, maybe it all had time to gel when you weren't consciously working on it."

As our lives speed up with back to school, back to work, and the cooler fall temperatures, remember to recreate yourself in the smaller moments and in larger ways. And may we all recreate ourselves through dance. ■



Photo from Project Dance Minnesota at Balance Pointe Studios by Cathy Dessert



Twin Cities Rebels Masquerade Ball & Workshop Weekend Featuring Melissa Rutz! Saturday – Sunday October 19-20, 2013

More info.: www.tcrebels.com or 952.941.0906

Sat., October 19	Workshops and Masquerade Ball: Wear your best costume!
1:00-2:00 p.m.	Shine Up Your Basics – Simple and memorable styling to embellish basic West Coast Swing patterns.
2:15-3:15 p.m.	Let's Connect! – Tools and patterns to improve your dance as an individual and with your partner.
3:30-4:30 p.m.	Play It! – Getting playful within lead and follow social patterns.*
8:00-Midnight	The Masquerade Ball with demo by Melissa, “darned good” door prizes (really!), 50/50, costume contest, and refreshments
Sun., October 20	Workshops: (an asterisk* means the workshop is more challenging)
1:00-2:00 p.m.	Move It, Don't Lose It! – Learn to accent the music in just the right places.*
2:15-3:15 p.m.	Feet First – Learn how to enhance your dance with great integrated footwork and timing.
3:30-4:30	Give It a Whirl – Dancers' secrets to great spins and turns.
4:45-5:45 p.m.	Fun for Dick and Jane – How to make you and your partner shine on the dance floor.*

The Masquerade Ball : Saturday, October 19, 2013, 8:00 p.m. – Midnight at Social Dance Studio with DJ Gail Zimmerman playing predominantly West Coast Swing and some Variety tunes. Cost: \$10 for Rebels members & students w/ ID, \$15 for guests. Annual memberships are \$25 and can be purchased at the door. Payment can be made with cash, check (made payable to *Twin Cities Rebels*) or with credit card.

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Melissa teaches, competes, and judges all over the world. She is ranked among the top West Coast Swing dancers in the world and has won numerous champion level competitions. Melissa is known for her versatility as a dancer. She has performed in a variety of solo works on stage as well. Melissa had the pleasure of working as Christina Aguilera's dance double in her music video, *Candyman* and on the big screen in the movie, *Love N' Dancing*.





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

A Stitch in Time Saves Nine (and a safety pin is not a stitch)

By Deborah J. Nelson

The old saying is absolutely true: a stitch in time saves nine. Ballroom costumes, as well as our regular, every-day clothing, is sometimes in need of fixing. It is always best to do preventative maintenance on clothing, just like on your house or car. There are many temporary emergency fixes, but you may be sadly surprised if you don't change these temporary fixes into proper, permanent fixes.

Safety pins are designed for temporary, emergency fixes. We have all used them at some time or another, but don't allow them to become part of your clothing, ballroom or otherwise. Last week, I had to use a pliers to remove a couple of rusted safety pins that were cinching in a waistband to a tighter fit.

Safety pins can pop open from stress and cause bodily harm by sticking you. You don't want this to happen during an intense choreographed move; it could be very dangerous! If you can't permanently sew your alteration or adjustment, find someone who can.

Check your seams. With seams that look like they may come undone, reinforce them by machine stitching. Don't pull on the threads or cut them off, as this might start the unraveling sooner. In a pinch, you can use a safety pin to secure buttons or seams that look loose.

If you need to employ a safety pin on a temporary basis, here are some guidelines:

- Make sure your safety pin is long and large enough for your task. Safety pins that are too small might pop open.
- Make sure your safety pin isn't rusted so it won't stain your fabrics.

- Make sure your safety pin is sharp and doesn't have a barb on it that will snag fabrics.
- If you poke your safety pin in and out twice instead of once when inserting the pin, there will be less stress on this one point of your costume fabric. This helps to avoid making holes.
- Position the safety pin so that you can easily reach it to open, if necessary.
- When pinning, make sure that you achieve a smooth, not bumpy, look so no one will notice the safety pin.
- Be careful to not prick the skin if you need to safety pin a costume when someone is in it.

Hems can come undone, and you can use tape or spray glue as a temporary fix. But you don't want to accidentally launder them (forgetting they were there), as this could damage your costumes by baking in the glue, making it visible on the outside.

Hand-tacking (sewing) can help keep undergarments and costume pieces such as collars or belts in place, but the hand-stitching might not last, so things can come undone when you least expect it.

Tucking your shirt in or tucking your bra straps in place—these are foolhardy plans. If it *can* become untucked, it *will* become untucked. Permanently secure a tucked-in shirt with an elastic or strap so it cannot physically sneak out of your trousers. If you aren't handy with your sewing machine or hand-sewing, contract with someone who is to create loops to funnel your bra strap through to keep these straps anchored in place. (This is a bridal alteration trick, and if you don't know about it, give me a call.)

Old elastic can lose its stretch at any moment. If it is what's keeping your costume in place around your waist or around your wrists, be proactive and monitor the stretch in any costume that might be more than five years old.

If you have stressed out your zipper in your costume because your costume is tight (or because of an old or bad zipper), monitor this zipper closely to be able to have it replaced *before* it splits open.

How and when to fix a zipper:

Many times, a broken zipper can be fixed. Examine the problem area on the zipper to make your determination. Most regular clothing zippers are made with plastic coils. Heavy-duty zippers have teeth made of molded plastic or metal. The teeth or coil are always attached to a fabric strip called zipper tape.

Stuck zippers:

For metal zippers, and sometimes with plastic zippers, if the teeth are crooked, causing the zipper to pull apart at this location, sometimes you can forcibly straighten out these teeth, and your zipper could be back in business.

Missing zipper pulls:

If the zipper pull has come off, see if you can use a pliers and put it back on, or in a pinch, use something else as a pseudo zipper pull, such as a paper clip or a safety pin. If this offends your sensibilities, check with your talented alterations person to see if they happen to stock any zipper pulls.

Split zippers:

Sometimes, zippers will just simply split where teeth have separated, perhaps because of the garment being too

tight or because something traumatic happened to the zipper. These can sometimes be worked back together by a trained professional, but it isn't easy.

Frayed zipper tape:

These zippers need to be replaced, as there is no easy fix to this problem.

If you or your talented alterations person is not successful at fixing a zipper, then you will need to have it replaced. This can be much more costly than getting it fixed, as it involves ripping out the zipper and replacing it, so do try and fix a broken zipper first!

I hope no one is left on the dance floor with an embarrassing costume issue because of relying on safety pins to hold it all together. Take the time in advance to maintain your ballroom costumes. ■

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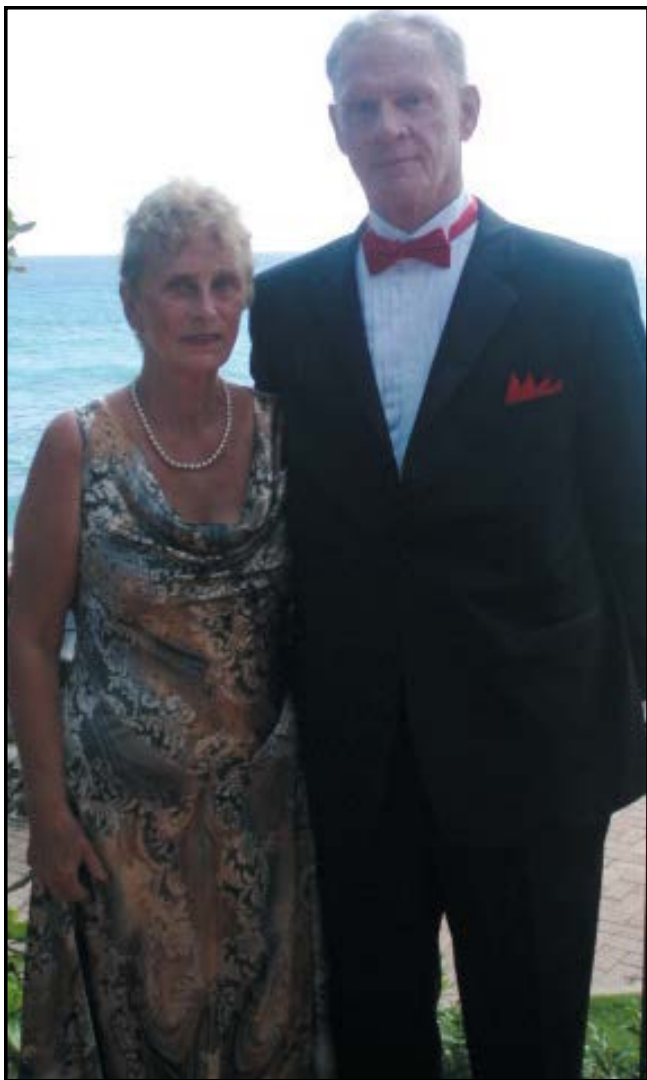
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*John S. Munday is a writer who lives in Isanti County, Minnesota, with his wife, Fran. Together, they found ballroom dancing at Cheek to Cheek Studio. Jack is a student of Monica Mohn, and his book, *Beauty in Partnership, A Memoir of Ballroom Dancing*,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

GENTLEMEN LEAD

By Jack Munday

As it says in my blurb, Fran and I found ballroom dancing at Cheek to Cheek Dance Studio. In various columns, I have written about how we attended a showcase at that studio and took a group lesson the very next night. I've also written about performing on the Cheek to Cheek smooth formation team, coached by Monica Mohn, that I was invited to join after just over a year of dancing, which I genuinely enjoyed. I admit I used some private lessons with Monica to learn the routines. Other team members did that also.

Not long ago, we learned that Cheek to Cheek Studio would be closing and that the showcase on September 15th is now titled the Farewell Showcase. This will be our last opportunity to perform at this studio. Fran and I were already planning to dance, and I would also perform in the smooth formation team. Then I learned that several members had health issues in addition to mine that would prevent us from performing. Several other members made new plans and would not be available after the showcase. As a result, I mulled over what I would do at the September 15th showcase.

Fran and I will dance a foxtrot to a tune titled "Nickels and Dimes" by Nana Mouskarsi. In the routine, Fran walks over to the coffee pot with a cup in her hands, and I follow and ask her what it would take to dance with her. She answers, "Nickels and dimes," and

holds out the cup, and I pour in a handful of both coins. She puts the cup down, and then we begin to dance when the music starts. Nana is a strong singer, and others who have heard the song like it. We are excited to perform this dance.

What will I do about no longer being part of the formation team? I talked to Fran and Monica, and more than one of us had an idea. Monica and I will dance in the showcase, though not the Viennese waltz because my feet aren't currently up to that fast a dance. The two of us chose a waltz and will offer this dance as a tribute to a fun formation team where we have found many friends. Hopefully other smooth formation team retirees will be there too.

Fran and I had lessons with Monica to rehearse both dances, and we also practiced the salsa. Fran and I are going to Sorrento, Italy, soon after the showcase. We understand that the salsa is suitable for Sorrento bands and their music. Salsa on a dance floor overlooking the Mediterranean Sea is something we are both looking forward to. And perhaps some Sorrento wine.

By the time you read this, Harry and Kris will be on their way to a new adventure. While we will miss them, we also affirm what they are doing, pursuing a dream they share. Both of them have given us great fun, many lovely events, and very helpful instruction. We wish them a wonderful future. ■

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Oct 12 - 13, 2013

Northwest DanceSport Championships - NOE

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

Nov 1 - 3, 2013

Chicago DanceSport Challenge - NOE

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

Nov 9, 2013

California State DanceSport Competition - NOE

Hosted by NorCal USA Dance Chapter #4004 in Emeryville, CA. Qualifying event for 2014 Nationals.

Jan 11 - 12, 2014

The Snow Ball

Hosted by Donna Edelstein at the Hilton Minneapolis/ St. Paul Mall of America. Contact Donna at 612 910-2690. www.thesnowballcomp.com

Jan 17 - 19, 2014

Manhattan Amateur Classic - MAC - NOE

Hosted by Greater New York USA Dance Chapter #3004 at Manhattan Center. Qualifying event for 2014 Nationals.

Feb 15 - 16, 2014

Mid-Atlantic Championships - NOE

Hosted by Mid-Eastern USA Dance Chapter #6001 in Bethesda, MD. Qualifying event for 2014 Nationals.

Mar 1 - 2, 2014

Star of the North DanceSport Classic

Hosted by USA Dance Minnesota Chapter #2011 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in St. Paul, MN. www.sotncomp.com

Mar 28 - 30, 2014

2014 National DanceSport Championships.

To be held in Baltimore, MD.

Aug 1 - 3, 2014

Derby City DanceSport Championships - NOE

Sponsored by Greater Louisville USA Dance Chapter #2021 in Louisville, KY. Qualifying event for 2015 Nationals.

Oct 31 - Nov 2, 2014

Chicago DanceSport Challenge - NOE

Hosted by Chicagoland USA Dance Chapter #2001. Qualifying event for 2015 Nationals.

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ASK DR. DANCE

Submit your questions to Dr. Dance: newsletter@usadance-mn.org.

Q: I'm thinking of putting together a ballroom dance formation team, but I'm not sure how to find performance opportunities. Any advice?

Donna Said:

Formation teams are a great idea for people to gain dance experience, perform as part of a group, and develop rapport with other dancers, and we have excellent teams in the Twin Cities that can give you helpful information.

In August, I started getting calls from formation teams planning to compete at The Snow Ball in January, and I know that teams also perform at Twin Cities Open, Minnesota Madness, Minnesota Star Ball, and studio showcases. Additionally, many teams dance at schools, eldercare facilities, and special events.

For more ideas, you might wish to speak to the coaches or members of popular formation teams such as those at E.R.V. and Dance with Us America, Scott Anderson and Deanne Michael, and James and Tricia Wood.

Paul Said:

Performance or formation teams can be a lot of fun. It is also a lot of work,

not only to coordinate everyone's schedules, but to manage the pitfalls of the team itself. There are some local competitions that would provide opportunities, as well as USA Dance, which does dance demos all over the city. Before you start, though, make sure everyone is truly committed. If not, you may find yourself with only part of a team most of the time. Good luck!

The Dance Medic Said:

I imagine Donna and Paul will give you lots of information about the many opportunities to perform, and they would be right. The local dance community actually provides a lot of options for formation team performances. Likely your bigger challenge will be getting your team's schedules aligned to be able to attend the events.

There are two prestigious pro/am events that would provide large, local crowds to dance for. The Snow Ball Dance Competition, hosted by Donna Edelstein, is held in January, and the Twin Cities Open, hosted by Amy

and Scott Anderson, is held in July. The spacing is optimal, allowing for potential new routines to be debuted at each event. At TCO there is actually a competition for formations with a winner, versus everyone just getting a ribbon. In addition, the Wisconsin State Dancesport Competition is held in April, which is just a drive away. It also has a huge floor and enthusiastic crowds.

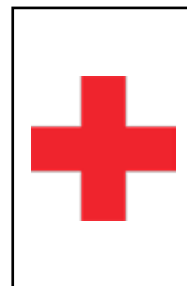
In addition to these two large pro/am events in the Twin Cities, there are many opportunities hosted by the local chapter of USA Dance. These will tend to be less expensive and still allow for a good size crowd and floor. These events include Minnesota Ballroom Blast and Star of the North DanceSport Classic, both hosted by USA Dance Minnesota. Minnesota Ballroom Blast, which is co-hosted by the University of Minnesota Ballroom Dance Club, is a unique event which provides dancers with feedback rather than a score or ranking. The event will be in October. Star of the North is our local chapter's huge am/am



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.

competitive event which also allows for formations to perform. The event will be held on March 1-2, 2014. Again, typically a lower-cost option for the team. In the fall, there is traditionally a huge demo hosted by the chapter at the Mall of America, which would be a good fit for a formation team. Other free dance demo events occur throughout the year and may have a big enough space for formations, especially around the holidays. Dan and Yvonne Viehman are great folks to chat with about demo opportunities.

And if that weren't enough, most of the studios in town host showcase events which allow formations and have the size floor likely needed. Both Cinema Ballroom and Dancers Studios are good options to reach out to. Networking with local dance professionals and other dancers may

net you some fun opportunities, such as fundraisers or corporate events. Let others know that you are looking for options.

In reality, there are more events than a team ends up being able to attend. I would suggest that you have a discussion with prospective members before forming your team. Ensure that they have similar goals and desires. One couple may think twice a year is a good performance schedule, while others would like to perform monthly. Put all the options onto a calendar and plan out your year. If you don't, you'll find people will suddenly not be able to attend, leaving you with an incomplete team. Something I would suggest is having one more couple than needed so that someone can be missing without affecting the team's ability to perform. Nothing is more

frustrating than spending months practicing only to find out the team doesn't have enough members to be able to dance.

Cost is also a consideration for some, so make sure to understand the costs involved in all the performance options, including costumes. This will allow you to select options that best fit the team. Having a team captain is also recommended. This individual is the contact person in the community for the group, reaches out to the various opportunities, and makes inquiries on behalf of the team. You'll find that when the community knows about the team, has seen you dance well, and knows a single point of contact, people will reach out to you.

Good luck and have fun! ■



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➤ **Contact Camille 651-402-1116** camille4156@gmail.com

Size 9: Men's Supadance Shoe

Black. Very good condition. \$50.

➤ **Contact Ginny 952 926 2985** ggross323@gmail.com

Email for photos.

Size 8 1/2M: Black Ladies' Bloch Shoes

1-1/2" heel. Split flex T-strap. Worn once. \$84 new. \$49.

➤ **Contact Anne 612.280.7818**

Contact for photos.

Size 6-10: White Smooth Gown with Gold and Turquoise Accents

Designed to accentuate your figure with ruching and sleek lines. Great flared skirt at the bottom for maximum impact. Gorgeous belt and arm bands. Made by Marsha Wiest-Hines.

➤ **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.

Size 2-8: Gorgeous Peach Championship Gown

One of a kind! Beautiful open back, stretch satin skirt with godets add fullness to movement. Fully stoned bodice and elegant gloves to match! Like new! Made by Marsha Wiest-Hines. \$1200.

Size 2-8: Beautiful Pink/Metallic Gold Smooth Gown

Very feminine look with lace trim on neckline, bodice, long sleeves and hems. Full coverage in AB multicolor stones! Like new—worn only twice! \$1100.

Size 2-8: Elegant Black Championship Gown

Luxurious maribu boa on hem and neckline. Beautifully designed with open back and long sleeves. Shows off curves. Covered in AB multicolor stones. \$1100 OBO.

Size 2-8: Black Gown with Hot Orange & Yellow Accents

Stunning gown has fiery orange and yellow accents, drapes on long sleeves, bodice, and chiffon layers of skirt. Sexy slit shows off legs. Beautiful color rhinestones. \$800 OBO.

Size 2-8: Sexy Pink & White Rhythm Dress

This stunning dress has tons of stones, beautiful pearl beading, and flirty skirt! Bracelets, necklace, and accessories included. A showstopper! \$700.

➤ **Contact Bernice 952.936.2185 or 952.545.2989**

Size 7 1/2 to 8N: Ladies' Smooth Capezio Dance Shoes

Closed-toe pumps. Flesh-colored. Worn once. \$50.

➤ **Contact Theresa Kimler 612.414.3099** theresakimler@yahoo.com

Most dresses also for rent for \$250-\$300. Photos and more information: www.narrowc couture.com/#!/users/tkm/items

Size 2-8: Marilyn Monroe-Inspired Ballgown

White gown with gold waist accent shaped perfectly to create a slim silhouette. Silk skirt, slit on right leg, mid-height backline. Made by Doré. \$2800.

Size 2-6: Trendy Gold Ballgown

Super-shiny with rhinestone accent design to complement any figure. Best on someone who wants to stand out in a crowd. Classic design meets the latest trend in fabrics! Includes super-sparkly armbands. \$2800.

Size 2-8: White & Black Couture Ballgown

Designed by Chanel, brought to life by Jordy. Look for the signature crossing-C design. Black sheer over nude top with full rhinestones, long sleeves, white skirt. Mid-height backline. Great for standard or smooth. \$2400.

Size 2-8: 2 Elegant Smooth Gowns with Long Sleeves and Fox-Fur Cuff

1) Black mesh peeks through an intricate velvet pattern overlay. Cobalt blue rhinestones. Made by Doré. \$2000.

2) Gorgeous sheer navy blue with rhinestones from top to bottom.

Made by Randall Designs. \$2000.

Size 2-8: The Ultimate White Designs to Shine Gown

Multiple blue-shaded stone pattern. 3-layer skirt, armbands, amazing necklace, hair accessory. Must-see. Worn twice. \$4000.

Size 2-8: Latin/Rhythm Dress - Black with Red Scarves

Jet stones, silk chiffon skirt, 3/4-length sleeves, sweetheart neckline, bracelet, earrings, hair decoration. Made by Doré. \$1000.

Size 2-8: Latin/Rhythm Gown

Black stretch velvet bodice. Multi-layered silk skirt that ends at knees when still. A great dress for the classic, movie-star type dancer.

Effortless wear. Made by Doré. \$1000.

Size 35.5 (US 6.5): Dance Naturals Tan Satin Latin/Rhythm Shoes

2-1/2" heel. Brand-new. \$75.

Size 5EU (US 7 to 7.5): Supadance 1026 Beige Leather Practice Shoe

Worn once. \$75.

➤ **Contact Gail 651.387.0885** gailmulcahey@yahoo.com

Size 5: Elegance Shoe Company Ladies Open-Toe Shoes

2 1/2 inch heel. Flesh-colored. Great quality; no longer fit due to pregnancy. \$45.

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Looking for a practice partner? Compose an ad letting potential partners know what you're looking for and how to contact you. Submit ads of a maximum of three lines to newsletter@usadance-mn.org. Please include area code with any phone number.

➤ **Vee Hammond 651.206.9890** vee.hammond@comcast.net

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.

➤ **Jane Phipps 612.859.5245**

janep1951@gmail.com

Follow, 5' 5", seeks practice partner for bronze/silver competition-level smooth and rhythm. 3 years' dance experience. Takes lessons regularly. Any practice location okay.

➤ **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.

DANCE CONTACTS

A collection of businesses and clubs of interest to Minnesota dancers. If you'd like to be listed on this page, send your contact information to newsletter@usadance-mn.org.

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www.dahldance.com

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www.dancersstudio.com

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