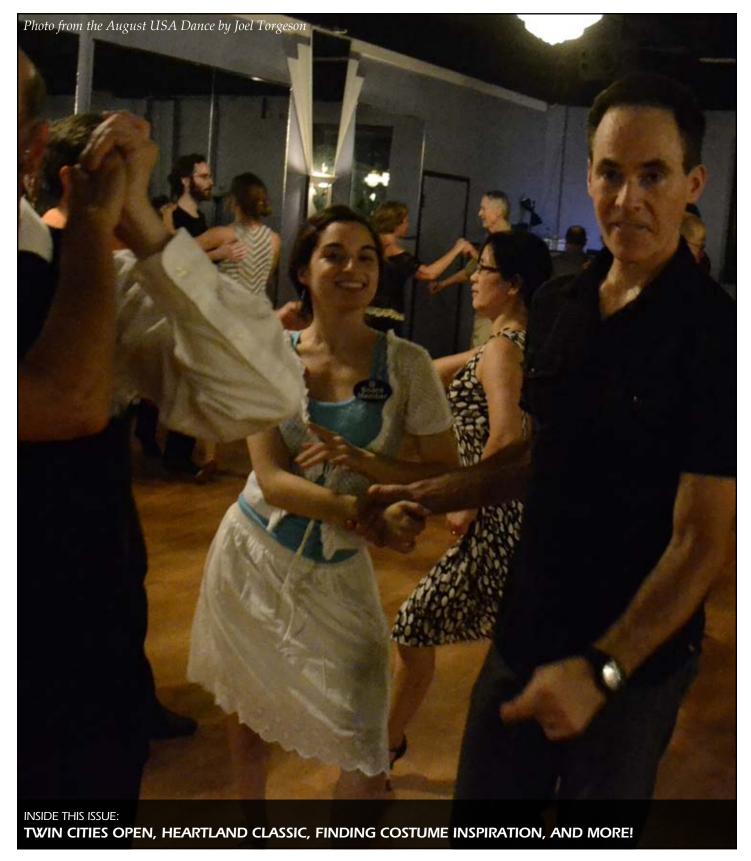
MINNESOTA

ICING TIMES

A publication of the Minnesota Chapter 2011 of USA Dance





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Upcoming Dances

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September

Saturday, September 21st

7-8 pm Samba Lesson Instructor: Gene Bersten

8-11 pm Variety Dance Music DJ: Gene Bersten

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

Dance with Us America 10 Southdale Center Edina, MN 55435

October

Saturday, October 19th

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

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

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E.R.V. Dance Studios 816 Mainstreet Hopkins, MN 55343

DANCERS' NIGHT OUT

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

- Mon 9/2 Rhythm Junction; Four Seasons Dance Studio, 1637 Hennepin Ave S, Mpls; Swing Dance; 8-11; \$5; 612 342 0902 or www.fourseasonsdance.com
- Wed 9/4 West Coast Swing Dance Party; Dancers Studio, 415 Pascal St. N, St. Paul; 9-10; \$5; 651 641 0777 or www. dancersstudio.com
- Fri 9/6 Tim Patrick and His Blue Eyes Band; Eagles, 2507 E 25th St, Minneapolis; Lesson at 7; full band 8-11:30; \$12; 612 724 9714, www.minneapoliseagles34.org
- Sun 9/8 FREE Beginner Hustle Class; Balance Pointe Studios, 508 W 36th St, Minneapolis; 2:00-3:30; instructor Jeff Nehrbass; 952 922 8612
- Mon 9/9 Rhythm Junction; Four Seasons Dance Studio, 1637 Hennepin Ave S, Mpls; Swing Dance; 8-11; \$5; 612 342 0902 or www.fourseasonsdance.com
- Wed 9/11 West Coast Swing Dance Party; Dancers Studio, 415 Pascal St. N, St. Paul; 9-10; \$5; 651 641 0777 or www. dancersstudio.com
- Sat 9/14 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 9/14 Tango Society Milonga; Porter and Frye (in Hotel Ivy), 1115 Second Ave S, Mpls; Lesson at 8:30, dance 9:30-1; \$14 (\$10 members); 612 224 2905 or www.mntango.org
- Sun 9/15 FREE Beginner Hustle Class; Balance Pointe Studios, 508 W 36th St, Minneapolis; 2:00-3:30; instructor Jeff Nehrbass; 952 922 8612

- Mon 9/16 Rhythm Junction; Four Seasons Dance Studio, 1637 Hennepin Ave S, Mpls; Swing Dance; 8-11; \$5; 612 342 0902 or www.fourseasonsdance.com
- Tue 9/17 Tim Patrick and His Blue Eyes Band; Skateville, 201 S River Ridge Circle, Burnsville; Lesson at 6, full band 7-10; \$12; 952 890 0988, www.skateville. com
- Wed 9/18 West Coast Swing Dance Party; Dancers Studio, 415 Pascal St. N, St. Paul; 9-10; \$5; 651 641 0777 or www. dancersstudio.com
- Sat 9/21 USA Dance; Dance with Us America, 10 Southdale Center, Edina; Samba lesson at 7, dance 8-11; \$10, \$7 USA Dance members
- Sun 9/22 FREE Beginner Hustle Class; Balance Pointe Studios, 508 W 36th St, Minneapolis; 2:00-3:30; instructor Jeff Nehrbass; 952 922 8612
- Mon 9/23 Rhythm Junction; Four Seasons Dance Studio, 1637 Hennepin Ave S, Mpls; Swing Dance; 8-11; \$5; 612 342 0902 or www.fourseasonsdance.com
- Wed 9/25 West Coast Swing Dance Party; Dancers Studio, 415 Pascal St. N, St. Paul; 9-10; \$5; 651 641 0777 or www. dancersstudio.com
- Sat 9/28 Tim Patrick and His Blue Eyes Band; Patrick's Cabaret, 3010 Minnehaha Ave, Mpls; Lesson at 7, full band 8-11:30; \$12; 612-724-6273, www. patrickscabaret.org
- Sun 9/29 FREE Beginner Hustle Class; Balance Pointe Studios, 508 W 36th St, Minneapolis; 2:00-3:30; instructor Jeff Nehrbass; 952 922 8612
- Mon 9/30 Rhythm Junction; Four Seasons Dance Studio, 1637 Hennepin Ave S, Mpls; Swing Dance; 8-11; \$5; 612 342 0902 or www.fourseasonsdance.com

USA Dance – MN Chapter #2011 Board Minutes

Tuesday, August 6th, 2013

Submitted by Leslie Whitney

In attendance: Daniel O'Connell (President), Cathy Dessert (Vice President), Jane Phipps (Treasurer), Leslie Whitney (Secretary), Zhuojing Liu, Bonnie Burton, Karen Maldonado

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

Call to Order: Quorum established. Agenda approved. June minutes amended and approved.

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Treasurer's Report

- Jane submitted a current report as of July 31, 2013.
- The treasurer's report approved.

Brief Area Reports

Tracy - Competitions and Performances Liaison

Tracy wasn't able to attend. Report in September.

Zhuojing – Dances (Monthly Dances, Tea Dance, etc.)

 Zhuojing ensures that the monthly dances run smoothly by arranging for the location, teacher, and DJ for our dances. She also coordinates special event dances.

Daniel - Volunteers

 USA Dance Minnesota relies on volunteers to handle a significant portion of the workload

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for our initiatives. Typically these volunteers operate off the radar, meaning their tasks are not fully known to the board and membership. Daniel's report highlighted the work done by a core group of volunteers whose work significantly supports the chapter's mission. We are grateful for their expertise and donated time and energy.

PROJECTS

Review of June/July

- Storage of chapter property Tracy and Marty will update next month.
- June and July monthly dances were very well attended. Thank you, dancers!
- Daniel is working on a music library while honoring the licensing requirements.
- Business cards advertising and promoting the chapter have been printed. Thank you, Marty and Nic.

Odds and Ends

- Sunset Sparkle Dance A motion was made and approved to not hold this fall event.
- Chapter Hotline A motion was made and approved to discontinue the Chapter Hotline.
- MN Ballroom Blast Sunday, October 13th. Registration for this event is available online at www.mnballroomblast.com.
- The board is considering a new location for our monthly meetings.

Discussion of Goals/Vision for our Chapter

· Tabled until next month

Star of the North

 Dan reviewed his report which outlined the history of SotN, a comparison of this event to National Qualifying Events held around the US, current steps underway for this year's Star of the North, and finally, future goals and possibilities for SotN.

Next Meeting:

Tuesday, September 3rd, 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.

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

Editor: Mary Beth Beckman (612) 424-2228 Design/Layout: Nic Westlake (612) 412-1112 Advertising: Bonnie Burton (952) 454-4620 Mailing: Committee member

Contributors: Mary Beth Beckman, Paul Botes, Bonnie Burton, Cathy Dessert, Elizabeth Dickinson, Donna Edelstein, Marty Faeh, Julie Jacobson Kendle, Karen Maldonado, Jack Munday, Deborah J. Nelson, Daniel O'Connell, Joel Torgeson

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

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

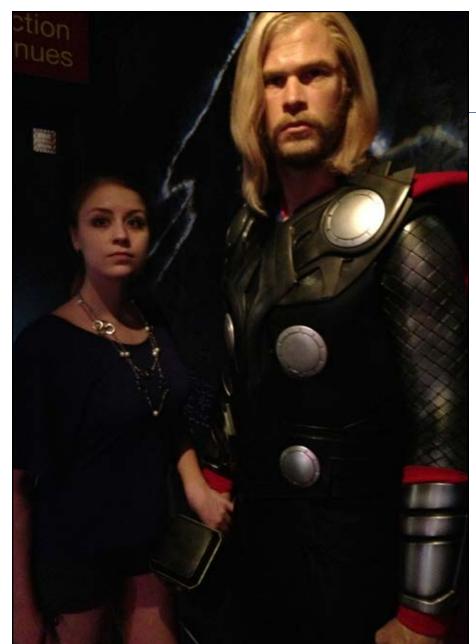
Advertising

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

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

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

DEADLINE FOR ALL MATERIALS: 10th OF EACH MONTH



FROM THE EDITOR

By Mary Beth Beckman

I'm writing a short one this month because September 2nd is my birthday, and I figure now is as good a time as any to relax. Plus, my last few editorials have been ridiculously long and you're probably sick of my incessant yapping. Instead, enjoy this photo of me and Thor being menacing.

This month's issue is all about competitions. We've got three articles about Twin Cities Open and one about the Heartland Classic in Indianapolis. Add to that more thoughtful content from our monthly feature writers, and you've got yet another great issue of the *Dancing Times*, brought to you by volunteers in your community.

This month you should be thinking about Minnesota Ballroom Blast. Find your partners and select your dances, and then scoot on over to www.mnballroomblast. com to register. Or if you'd rather sit this one out, go reserve your tickets to watch everyone else dance. The action happens on October 13th, so don't let it get away from you.

If you've got something to say or photos to share, submit your content to me at newsletter@usadance-mn.org by September 10th to secure your slot in the October issue.

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''m pleased to announce that registration for Minnesota Ballroom Blast is now available at www. mnballroomblast.com. For those that aren't aware, our very own Nic Westlake has designed the competition registration system we'll be utilizing for Blast. If you have any feedback, please pass it along to blast@usadance-mn.org so that we can help him make his system the best it can be. I'm also happy to answer any questions you might have about the event if you reach out to that email. As a reminder, Minnesota Ballroom Blast will be held at Coffman Memorial Union in the Great Hall on October 13th.

Additionally, Star of the North DanceSport Classic will be held March 1st and 2nd at the Crowne Plaza - St. Paul Riverfront. We're really thrilled to be able to hold Star of the North in this space. With over 10,000 square feet in the main ballroom, this represents a significant increase in the space available to us in past competition locations. Registration should be open sometime in November, but the website is now up to date at www. sotncomp.com. Any questions about Star of the North can be directed to sotn@usadance-mn.org.

I also wanted to note that the USA Dance Minnesota hotline will be

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Daniel O'Connell

Daniel O'Connell is the president of USA Dance Minnesota and competes nationwide with his amateur partner, Rosemary O'Connell. Did you know the platypus is venomous?

temporarily out of service. We hope to have it back soon. For those that don't know, Dorthy Jones has been running the hotline for many years (and will continue to do so when it returns), so if you see her, please thank her for taking the time to provide this valuable service to our community.

With my shameless plugs out of the way, I wanted to spend some time this month talking about the monthly dances. The monthly dances are an important part of our mission—what's the point of learning to dance if not to dance? They provide another consistent event that allows members of our community to dance and socialize with each other.

Over the last few months, the board for the chapter has been working hard to evaluate how we can improve the dances for our members and provide the best experience we can. I wanted to share with you what we have come up with as our objectives so you can see the direction we aim to take.

To supplement the great work our DJs do for us, we intend to build a library of music to utilize at our dances. Our goal in this area is to update the sound of the songs played at our dances, as well as to ensure that the dance quality of what is played is top notch.

Updating the sound of the songs played at our dances is a tricky thing. Our community is diverse, and so are our tastes in music. Some prefer the old classics, while others prefer the latest hits. Ideally, we'll find a nice balance where everyone feels that the dance doesn't go too long without hearing the sound they prefer, but it will take a few months (and some feedback) to find where that sweet spot lies.

Building a library of high-quality, danceable music is actually harder than it sounds. For legal reasons, the music at the variety dances must be licensed by BMI, one of the two major music license holders. In addition, the music has to be appropriate for the dance: Is it the right tempo? Does it have an easy-to-follow beat? Are there periods where the beat is missing or the song becomes too loud or too soft? Many times a song must be edited from the original to be made fit for dancing. Lastly, deciding how long the song should be before it is truncated is a very important decision. In my experience, shorter songs allow for more mixing and a more homogenous experience at the dances. I have yet to meet the individual who enjoys a sixminute Viennese waltz. Since finding and editing songs is a time-consuming process, the fruits of our labors in this area will be integrated gradually over the upcoming months.

Additionally, we have been attempting to bring in fresh faces to our dances. The board has been actively advertising the variety dances to Project Dance Minnesota participants as well as the college student community. You may have noticed an increase in attendance, in particular of younger dancers at the monthly events. It is our hope that by getting the ball rolling we can help drive positive growth at the dances and continue to foster active participation in the community.

If you have any feedback or ideas about how we can improve the dances, you should let us know. Feel free to talk to a board member at any of the dances or email us at info@usadance-mn.org. Enjoy your September, and I'll see you on the dance floor!



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

Inspirations for Your New Dance Costume

By Deborah J. Nelson

There are so many options for becoming inspired with new ideas for your new ballroom dance costume. Besides being aware of Broadway musicals, television reality shows, and fashion magazines, the obvious source of inspiration, of course, is to attend your local ballroom competitions and see what everyone is wearing. If you like anyone's outfit in particular, snap a quick photo of it for future reference. Or watch non-local competitions via YouTube, other Internet video services, or television. Maybe your ballroom friends and associates have videos of other ballroom competitions or showcases that they have attended.

Please do not copy anyone's costume or gown, as it is bad form. But you may be *inspired* by others' designs. Remember that even though it is perfect for a particular dancer, it probably will not be perfect for you. You need to adapt all design features to your own body shape, coloring, sense of style, and level and style of dance.

While watching competitions, see how costumes dance and how well they flatter the dancer's body shape and age. Watch how certain fabrics and design features move and dance. See how particular styles of trim look close up and from a distance. Tiny details that may look exquisite up close may not have the impact you want from the judge's or audience's viewpoint.

Certain cuts of a dress may be perfect for a particular dance routine but not out of context. Watch and notice what similar-level dancers are wearing for their routines. No, you don't need to emulate these other dancers, but just keep it in mind. Then ask yourself: do you want to stand out from the group or blend in? If you stand out from the crowd, you automatically receive more attention. Just make sure the attention is for good reasons.

Many times your dance instructor will make suggestions or even demands on

what you should wear for your competition routines or for showcases. They are trying to help and may have a clear vision of what will work best. Remember that if they are paying for your costume or gown, they may have a right to make specific demands.

If you are paying for your own costume or gown, you need to take their suggestions into account (in respect for their years of experience), but the final decision of what you come up with for the design of your costume or gown should be your own.

You need to feel beautiful and flattered. You need to feel comfortable in your own skin. If you are custom-creating a design, it may often be difficult to determine this until you are working with fittings. Sometimes you may change your mind on your design, as you may not feel as flattered or comfortable as you expected.

If you are working with a professional costume designer, they will also have suggestions for how to make the most of your new costume design. If you aren't happy with a feature, listen to them and their suggestions on how to improve it. Be sure and be honest with your costume designer. They need to know how you like or dislike what you're seeing. If they don't know you're having second thoughts, they won't know that something needs to be adjusted or changed. All professionals should have experience with all types of body shapes and performance costuming and be able to help you create your perfect design.

Seek the opinions of other dance associates (friends and teachers) if you need other perspectives to help create your perfect costume. Always remember that the more comfortable you feel with your costume and how you look in it, the better you are going to perform your dance routine, because you won't be worried about your costume.



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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!

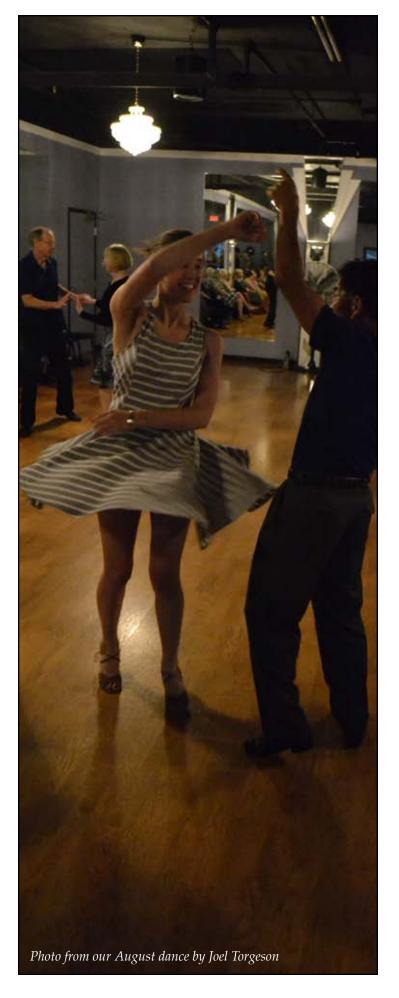
If you'd like to participate, please contact Yvonne Viehman at (763) 553-1202 or danvman@aol.com for more information. All formation team routines will be previewed. Appropriate costuming is always appreciated, as we put on family-friendly shows. Join the fun!

SAVE THE DATE!

Monday, October 28 — 7:30-8:30 PM 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 PM Rosedale Mall

Sunday, December 1st — 1-1:30, 2-2:30 PM Rosedale Mall

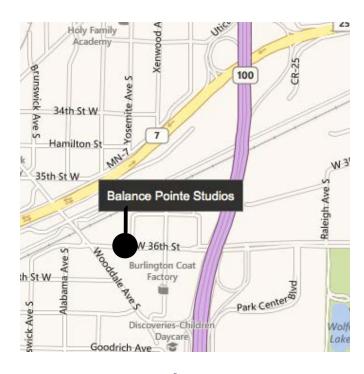




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THE HEARTLAND CLASSIC

By Bonnie Burton





ave any of you ever impulsively decided to enter a dance Lcompetition with ten days to prepare? Most of us usually plan and prepare for these things months in advance. Husband Ed and I decided, literally at the last minute, to compete at the Heartland Classic DanceSport Championships, held August 10th and 11th in Indianapolis. I'm just six months out of back surgery, and Ed is scheduled for knee surgery next week, but we tried not to let silly health issues deter us. In addition, our gold choreography was fewer than thirty days old, and we were still rusty from having been sidelined during much of the winter. Nonetheless, we were eager to get back into competition. It obviously didn't matter to us that we weren't as prepared as we'd like. Life is short; do it now. In any case, when is anyone ever completely ready to compete?

Off we went on a road trip. Our estimated nine-hour drive took twelve hours, thanks to road construction, toll roads, and Chicago's rush hour. Then there was the little mix-up about not having my USA Dance membership card. However, we managed to overcome all hurdles, and we were happy and excited to be there.

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Heartland Classic is a national qualifying event (NQE), which means that amateur competitors who participate and place highly enough will qualify to dance at the 2014 USA Dance Nationals in Baltimore next spring. Ed and I had qualified for this past year's 2013 Nationals but were unable to dance due to my back issues, and we were disappointed. This was a chance to get back in the game.

We quickly learned that even though it was an NQE, which tend to have lots of participants, this was just a baby competition in terms of size. The Heartland program showed 89 couples (178 competitors total) dancing a total of 111 heats. By comparison, the 2013 Star of the North DanceSport Classic was much larger, with 354 participants dancing 176 heats this past winter. The Minnesota contingent included Nels Petersen and Theresa Kimler, Nic Westlake and Neli Petkova, and myself and husband Ed Soltis. The six of us represented more than 3% of the competitors.

It seemed Indy was drawing participants primarily from the senior-division competitors (age 35+), and there were very few college students participating. We met a young man from Michigan State who said he regularly

attended the collegiate competitions in the area and told us this was his first grown-up competition. There was a concentration of competitors in the senior II and III divisions. For example, the senior II silver categories (age 45+) had quarter-final heats of twelve to fifteen couples, whereas the adult silver division (age 18-35), which is usually very full, had only four to five couples in its heats.

Although small, the competition was fierce. These were serious competitors and very good dancers, but we gave it our best, and our results ranged from first to sixth in the various categories we competed in. In general, the Minnesota contingent all finaled in their dances, usually ranking first, second, or third. The best part is that we also all qualified to dance at the 2014 Nationals in Baltimore next spring! It was fun to cheer each other on and video each other's dances.

The things I liked about the Heartland Classic included: a convenient food vendor located right next to the ballroom selling coffee, sweets, salads, and sandwiches, because although I don't want to eat before dancing, afterward, I'm hungry enough to eat my arm; the clothing vendor who sold Ed a shirt an hour before we were due

to dance our international standard heats and who took a moment to stitch the neck button to a more comfortable location so Ed could wear the shirt right away; a huge practice area, which unfortunately had a sticky floor but was spacious enough to work on a stretch of carpet; lots of raised seating on the long wall of the ballroom floor; serious competitors; nice pacing; and an efficiently run competition that was often up to half an hour ahead of the posted times. I especially liked that the audience was allowed to video dancers and take photos, unlike some competitions, where only the official videographer is permitted to do so.

We'll now work with our coaches (and our video!) to prepare for our next competition, the Carolina Fall Classic, October 4th and 5th, in Charlotte, North Carolina. It feels great to be back!



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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

Whole Body Dancing

By Elizabeth Dickinson

I've been challenged to get my ankle and knee in a 45-degree angle to the floor when I dance smooth and standard, which is apparently the ideal. (Who knew?) My teacher complains I only reach 60 degrees and there's much more in me. I complain that my ankles are as flexed as possible without me falling over and that it hurts my knees to go any further.

Turns out we were both leaving something out. My teacher has also (separately) challenged me to adopt an athletic stance when I dance. That's when you create a crease where your hips and legs come together. Think of the way a good tennis player stands. It feels like you're sticking your butt out to dance, which is definitely at odds with the pulled-up, stretched-up feeling I used to get when ballet dancing.

But when I flex my ankles and knees *and* add the athletic stance, suddenly the angle of my knee to the floor is right where he wants it to be. And if I slide my hips forward when I'm passing my feet (it feels to me like my hips are leading the movement), I get a whole new

smoothness and cover much more ground.

My teacher says it's like using your body like an accordion. All the parts of your leg squeeze in different directions to create the movement. It's also a much more coordinated, whole movement.

I go through periods in life that feel like this process. I try as hard as I can, but it doesn't feel as if things are coming together fluidly. Then I discover (or rediscover) something I've been leaving out—a piece of information, a way of being in the world, an attitude, or a part of me that didn't feel connected to what I want. And when I connect that missing piece, everything comes together.

Whole means healthy and complete. Living with your whole self is like dancing with your whole body; it feels whole and complete. And when you find it, it's so easy and effortless that you don't want to live or dance any other way.

May we all find our own ways of living and dancing with our whole selves. ■



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

	Sat., October 19	Workshops and Masquerade Ball: Wear your best costume!
or 952.941.0906	1:00-2:00 p.m.	Shine Up Your Basics – Simple and memorable styling to embellish basic West Coast Swing patterns.
52.94	2:15-3:15 p.m.	Let's Connect! – Tools and patterns to improve your dance as an individual and with your partner.
n or 9	3:30-4:30 p.m.	Play It! – Getting playful within lead and follow social patterns.*
www.tcrebels.com	8:00-Midnight	The Masquerade Ball with demo by Melissa, "darned good" door prizes (really!), 50/50, costume contest, and refreshments
tcrek	Sun., October 20	Workshops: (an asterisk* means the workshop is more challenging)
www.	1:00-2:00 p.m.	Move It, Don't Lose It! – Learn to accent the music in just the right places.*
More info.:	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.
2	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 Workshops & Dance held

Workshop pricing: \$12 each for Rebels members & students w/ID; \$17 each for guests

at Social Dance Studio, 3742 23rd Ave. S., Mpls.

Weekend Pricing:

Rutz-O-Rama Saturday: 3 workshops plus the dance: \$40 member/\$60 guest Puttin' On the Rutz Sunday: 4 workshops: \$40 member/\$60 guest

made with cash, check (made payable to Twin Cities Rebels) or with credit card.

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.



BEYOND SPECTATING

Twin Cities Open 2013

By Cathy Dessert

This year, being unable to compete and refusing to not support the competition, I chose to spectate my fellow dancers at TCO. I had many friends dancing, both from the studio I was taking lessons at and also some with other pros. I checked the heat sheets, made my plans, and then I thought I was ready.

Soon, another friend queried about dinner before the Saturday evening show. That sounded like a good idea. She suggested that we eat in the hotel so that parking wasn't an issue. It was a plan.

I attended the Thursday evening session and ran into some younger people I knew. They were dressed to the nines, looking fabulous, and were there to watch the evening show. While we were waiting for the show to start, the girls decided to try on some dresses. What fun! I watched while they modeled, snapped a few shots, gave some opinions, and generally had a grand time. Soon it was time for the spectating to begin!

Friday I caught up with a former dance pro here in the city. She was selling dresses. We chatted. She said she is happy in her new place of residence, engaged to a wonderful man, and has a pro partner that she is finding success with. As long as she was selling dresses, I had to peek! I did a bit of spectating and met up with another friend. We met a few others,

had some lunch, and then went back to watching the dancing.

There was a shoe vendor there, and before I left, I ran into one of the Bersten brothers. He was looking at shoes, too. Well, you know there was talk of *So You Think You Can Dance*. The other brother, on a break from the show, would be supporting the pro brother while he danced the next day. He asked me if I would be there, and I said I would. A new pair of shoes later, I was headed for home.

Back the next day to watch my favorite style, standard. A local amateur couple would be dancing as well as some pro/am dancers. Jewelry was my next stop. I am amazed at how those lights make the stones sparkle. Not currently competing meant I had no need for a purchase, but it was oh so tempting.

Barbara Condon, a massage therapist, travels to many dance competitions. She saved me when I hurt my neck at Ohio Star Ball a few years back. If you have never had the pleasure, try her sometime. She is amazing.

Another miss for me was the seminars Amy and Scott organized. I was told by friends who attended that they had some great takeaways. They are taught by the judges at the competition.

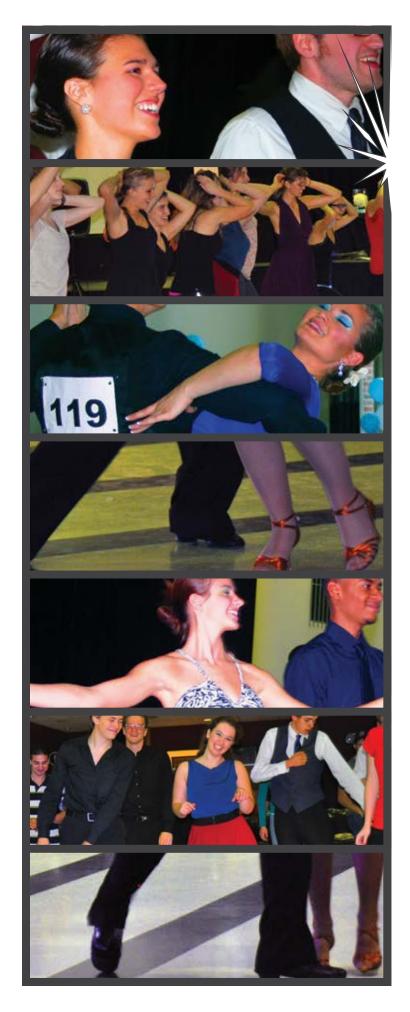
It was lunch break after standard when the dress siren call became too

strong to resist. Trying on ready-made dresses is always a good idea, because you can see what the latest styles are, what looks best on you, and I always pick up business cards from the places that I try dresses on. I had a good time with my friend T. We had some oohs and ahhs and a few good laughs at my expense. Funny how bodies change.

My Saturday evening dinner was the best. Thank you, my friend, and what turned out to be many friends, for the pleasure of your company.

Oh, yes, the spectating was the best! Everyone working so hard to put forward the best of their dancing in technique, costuming, and performance to wow the judges and crowd—bravo! A job well done! Each dancer, whatever the level, strives to bring their best to the competition floor, and I saw it in each person I watched.

Amy and Scott Anderson do a fabulous job with their team. I did not get photos from the photographer, but I did look at them, and they captured the best of each competitor. The photo booth for candid shots was a hit. Amy and Scott kept a handle on all the things that were happening, running without a blip. Congratulations to a great team again for showing Minnesota dance hospitality. Can't wait to see what is in store for next year!



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MORE INFORMATION AT MNBALLROOMBLAST.COM

Photos from Project Dance Minnesota at the Tapestry Folkdance Center







THANKS, GUYS!

Twin Cities Open 2013

By Julie Jacobson Kendle

heard this *a lot* at TCO: "Your guys look awesome!" and "You have some very talented gentlemen!"

At one point, two judges told me (after giving one of my students second place in an event against a highly talented young lady), "That was the hardest event we've had to judge all day. You [the student] danced really well!" What a compliment! To all of this, I replied, "Thank you! I'm a very lucky lady to dance with *all* of these wonderful men!"

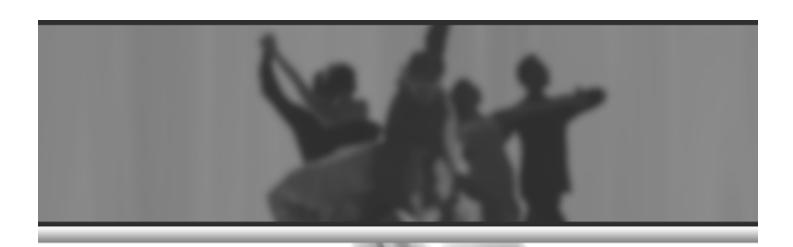
So I want to give a huge shout-out of praise to Oncu Er, Ed Kadletz, Ken Kendle, Tom Tinkham, and Ha Tuong for their fabulous dancing and continued hard work. It's a joy to swing and sway every week with these dedicated dancers, and what's more, they are exceptional human beings. Two of these men shone even brighter when their lovely partners graced their frames: Ed Kadletz dancing standard with Cathy Casey and Tom Tinkham dancing rhythm with Jacquelyn Hauser. As an entire group we earned Third Place

Top Studio, which was a surprise and total thrill.

Thanks to all of you for your hard work and keeping me on my toes. I truly am a lucky lady to dance with such a fine bunch. And special thanks for not giving me too hard of a time about my less-than-elegant footwear. I'm so happy that a foot injury did not keep me from getting out on the dance floor and having a ball with y'all! Cheers!









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WHAT'S ALL THE NOISE?

Twin Cities Open 2013

By Marty Faeh



If there's one thing that's for certain, it's that Scott and Amy Anderson will create, promote, and host a wonderful midwestern ballroom championship competition. This year was no exception. The Twin Cities Open Ballroom Championships was held from July 11-13, 2013. What a wonderful event and great time for spectators and participants alike. The downtown Minneapolis Marriott, surrounded by restaurants, clubs, and a variety of businesses, provides a bustling, energetic vibe that sets the tone for a fun weekend.

This, my fourth competition in 2013, was so much fun. As with many things in life, we must find a healthy and sustainable balance in the activities we pursue. For me, it is ballroom dance. If I could, I would dance and compete each and every week, but the reality is, most of us have to choose how we allocate our personal resources and time for our leisure activities. As a competitive amateur, I am always striving to find a sustainable balance of lessons, practice time, showcases, competitions, and how to infuse this passion into my everyday life. So where am I going with this, you may be wondering. I will get to that in a minute, I promise. If I had to rank where my passion is with the three out of four dance styles I have competed in thus far, I would have to rank international standard as number one. American smooth as number two. American rhythm as number three, and international Latin as someday. From there, I balance and rebalance what I can do and when. In this particular case. I decided it was best to

only compete in international standard with pro Michelle Haley Hudson. So what's the next best thing for a passionate dancer to do when they are not actually on the dance floor? Well, spectate, observe, and learn from others who are dancing.

Most sane competitors not dancing would sleep in and show up around 10:00 a.m. or so, but not me. Dancing and watching are both exciting and feed my passion. Thursday and Friday morning, rise and shine was 5:00 a.m. I caught my bus to Minneapolis and arrived at 7:00 a.m. sharp, just in time for bronze rhythm and smooth. Of course I got to see many familiar faces, pros and amateurs alike.

Other than the dancers, it is pretty quiet in the ballroom—well, except for me at this hour. I have been known to make some noise, and I don't at all mind cheering on the dancers I see. The judges in front of me—well, they smiled a lot, probably thinking, "Can someone find a cork for this guy? It is 7:00 a.m." Just kidding. Most ballroom folks appreciate cheering and shout-outs to the dancers. As a dancer myself, it always feels good to hear your name or number being cheered for when you're on the floor dancing your heart out. If I see a dancer I like, even if I don't know them, I will look up their name and give them a cheer. Oftentimes you'll see that dancer respond by stepping it up another notch: the smile gets just a little bigger, and their dance gets just a little bit better, and each time they pass by, I cheer even louder. This is as much fun as dancing for me.

As the day goes on, you can only imagine the roar generated by my fellow fans and dancers from Cinema Ballroom. One becomes thirty-plus cheerleaders supporting one another and sharing our passion for dance. The energy created by this group is mind-blowing, for we are a family sharing a common passion with one another and everyone else who loves dance as we do. After two days of cheerleading and learning from past experience, I called it a night early, even though the Rising Star dancers would be going until about midnight. I train hard all year, and it was to be my turn at 7:00 the next morning, so homeward bound I went. I got everything ready and was in bed by 10:00

Saturday morning came early. I was wide awake at 4:00 a.m. but feeling really good and refreshed. I zoomed down to the ballroom around 5:30 a.m., grabbed a light bite of breakfast, and had the ballroom to myself to run through all of my international standard routines a couple times. It was cold, but I was warmed up and ready to go.

One by one, other dancers started appearing, each checking out the others, wondering if they would be competing against each other, what age group, what level, a million things perhaps going through their minds. For me, it was just another day of dancing with my instructor, Michelle Haley Hudson. She prepared me well. My confidence was at its peak. I was calm, relaxed, and just ready to dance like we always do, having a ton of fun along the way.

Michelle and I danced throughout the morning, tweaking and cleaning up those little things that tend to sneak into your dancing as you're thinking about a million other little things to do and not do. We got stronger each dance and did very well in the competition. The highlight of the weekend for me was when Michelle and I were walking off of the dance floor after our final waltz in the championship round. She turned to me and said, "Marty, that was the best waltz you and I have ever danced!" I never stopped grinning the rest of the day. What a compliment from teacher to student. You see, I compete against myself when it's all said and done, and that compliment was music to my ears.

I can't just end my story here. There is, of course, the Twin Cities Open After Party. What a blast. It is an opportunity to visit, dance, bond, connect, have a drink, celebrate, strategize, relax, enjoy the company of other dancers from around the world. Great food, great music, and I enjoyed the scotch along with a cigar or two. Such a fun evening. 3:00 a.m. came rolling around, so I headed towards home, reflecting on what a wonderful weekend it was. I took a moment to be kind to myself for all of the commitment I put into my dance and all of the benefits it provides me in return.

What's next? After a year break in American smooth, starting Monday, Michelle and I will add all new smooth routines to our arsenal of dances to compete in. I'm so excited. Is it Monday yet? You got to love it to understand it.

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

GENTLEMEN LEAD

By Jack Munday

rewry so often, we hear a news broadcast where the reporter shows a crowd and says, "They were so happy, they were dancing in the street." Well, that happened to us recently. We were dancing in the streets in Isanti, the town nearest to our home. And they were happy—because they had a place to dance.

On Saturday, July 27th, we ventured onto Main Street in Isanti. It is the older part of town, with a post office, meat market, barber shop, and what used to be a pharmacy. We were going to dance to a band known as Killer Hayseeds. They are loud, and the rhythm is easy to find.

The mayor of Isanti, George Wimmer, said that this dance and others to come were designed to help the historic part of downtown have a renewal of business. And the Isanti Lions Club sold beer.

The band has been active for twenty years. I could picture the bandstand, which we could hear long before we got there. We walked from our car to the sound. Good thing we brought chairs so we could catch our breath before dancing. The bandstand closed off Second Street, standing between the meat market and the Creamery Restaurant.

When we danced, it was not hard to catch the rhythm of the songs. The drummer was good. So were the guitar and bass player, and all of them sang at one time or another. Thank goodness for the night-club two-step, which let us

stay dancing through most of the songs. A salsa or two and always some swing. I jokingly asked Fran what they would do if I asked for a tango.

The band got their name during a session where they were just tossing names around and had settled on Hayseeds as the band name, but they wanted an adjective for that name. Someone said that *killer* was a buzzword, like *killer golfer* or *killer bartender*, because it means you are good at what you do. Nice to know that the adjective had nothing to do with violence.

Dancing in the street is not the same as on a ballroom floor. True, some places have a cement dance floor outside, like at a park, but this was asphalt. What shoes should we wear? When I asked Monica, she suggested we dance in our oldest pair of dance shoes. My oldest pair is very comfortable and I do wear them outside the dance studios. That day, I had on leather-soled shoes, and Fran had on sandals she felt comfortable with, having practiced in our driveway before we left home. We were okay with what we selected, actually doing a bit of a foxtrot on our driveway.

We were pleased to be there, for several reasons. We were thrilled to dance only seven miles from home. We saw neighbors who also saw us dance actual patterns. One other couple danced the triple-step swing. Everyone had great fun.

COMPETITION CALENDAR

Sep 7, 2013

Kansas City Dance Classic

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

Sep 28, 2013

New England DanceSport Championships - NOE

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

Oct 4 - 6, 2013

Carolina Fall Classic - NQE

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

Oct 12 - 13, 2013

Northwest DanceSport Championships - NQE

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

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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 - NQE

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 - NQE

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 - NQE

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

Oct 31 - Nov 2, 2014

Chicago DanceSport Challenge - NQE

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



This might be a stupid question, but what are people talking about when they say something is a bronze pattern or a gold pattern or an open pattern? Is that something I need to worry about if I'm just social dancing?

Donna Said:

It's always great to ask a question rather than just wondering.

Bronze, silver, and gold refer to syllabus levels in ballroom and Latin dancing. Regardless of if we are teaching social or competitive dancers, we begin with the bronze syllabus, which is a series of logically progressing steps in each dance. The steps are designed to help teach an increasing level of mastery of the principles of dancing. For social dancing, we may not get into as much technique as we would with competitive dancers, but certain basic elements are important for comfort and clarity of leading and following.

Through years of study and practice, students progress from bronze through silver and gold. Open level means that a dancer is using elements of steps from the syllabus that can be combined or enhanced according to a choreographer's vision.

Paul Said:

Dance patterns are organized in levels, starting at bronze for beginners and ending in gold for advanced dancers. Open patterns are above gold and are not tied to any syllabus. As a social dancer, these levels serve as a yardstick for your own development as a dancer. If as a beginner you try some gold or open figures, you might find them very difficult, as the technique enabling you to dance them successfully is addressed in the earlier levels. As in everything, we need to crawl before walking and walk before running. So even as a social dancer, you would benefit from lessons preparing you for more advanced figures.

The Dance Medic Said:

First of all, don't worry! If you are having fun and dancing a lot at any function, that's important. Originally, the dance levels were put into place to create structure, goals, and to track our progress in our dancing. But learning them should not be based on being step-happy.

Rather, it is the opposite. There are a million combinations of steps out there, so one should concentrate on learning the elements of dance that are in all dance patterns and introduced throughout the different levels of dance. They help to give you the feeling and the characteristic of a dance and help you learn true partnership from day one.

Dance is not intuitive for all of us, and the patterns can challenge us to become better dancers, but only if the basic elements of dance are continually applied. Some of the elements are really simple to understand in concept; take, for example, a forward walk. But it is the technique and styling that can take us longer to master, and the dance levels tend to represent a difference in the mastery of those techniques rather than merely pattern difficulty.

As you go, I recommend learning how to dance in your space and how to relate that to your partner. That is what true partnership dancing is. Dance on!



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.



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SWAPLINES

Swaplines offers members and subscribers the chance to sell their dancewear. Submit ads of a maximum of three lines to newsletter@usadance-mn.org. Please include area code with any phone number.

⇒ 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

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⊃ Contact Cheri 763.544.6724 artncheri@aol.com

Contact for details and photos.

Size 2-6: American Smooth Gowns

\$500-\$700.

⊃ Contact Janie 763.797.5230 janienordberg@comcast.net

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

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 ½ to 8N: Ladies' Smooth Capezio Dance Shoes

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

⊃ Contact Theresa Kimler 612.414.3099 theresakimler@yahoo.com

Most dresses also for rent for \$250-\$300. Photos and more information: www.narrowcouture.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.

DANCE PARTNER WANTED ADS

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

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.

STUDIOS

AMERICAN CLASSIC BALLROOM 550 Market Street, Chanhassen

952.934.0900 www.acballroom.com

Instructors:

Natalie Palmer Botes, Paul Botes, Modie Chehouri, Whitney Irene, Benjamin D. Wagner

ARTHUR MURRAY DANCE STUDIO 534 Selby Avenue, St. Paul

651.227.3200

BALANCE POINTE STUDIOS 5808R W 36th Street, St. Louis Park

952.922.8612

www.balancepointestudios.com

Instructors:

Cindy Nehrbass, Jeff Nehrbass

BALLROOM & WEDDING DANCE STUDIO

2717 42nd St E, Minneapolis

612.371.0300

www.myballroomdancestudio.com

Instructor:

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BLUE MOON BALLROOM 2030 Hwy 14 E, Rochester

507.288.0556 www.BlueMoonBallroom.com

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763.755.3644

cheektocheekdancestudio.com

Instructor:

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CINEMA BALLROOM 1560 St. Clair Ave, St. Paul

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