

Volume 8, Issue 1

January 2012



PHOENIX CHAPTER #4033

Dance Chatter

Dancing in a Winter Wonderland!

Okay, so it's not quite the correct lyrics, and we don't exactly have a ton of snow here in Phoenix, but we can still appreciate the winter season.

Whether it's summer, fall, winter or spring in the valley, dancers find something to do and some place to go to satisfy their passion.

We hope you enjoy the winter months, both on and off the dance floor.

As always, I challenge all of us to try some new things this year—social dance with a new face—venture to a new location—set a “play date” with a friend or co-worker who is always saying they would love to “check it out” and host them for a night of dancing somewhere you love to go.



“Be the change you wish to see in the world.”

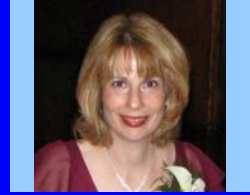
Mahatma Gandhi



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President's Point of View



By Sherry Parmon

I would like to wish everyone farewell. As a founding member of Phoenix USA Dance and 7 ½ years of being either Vice-President or President, I feel it's time to let other people take the helm of this fabulous organization and move on to other endeavors. I'm not going far; I'm just stepping down from the board.

It has been a rewarding 8 years for me. I've gotten to work with and know many wonderful people in the dance community. I have gotten to work on events that I truly enjoyed and accomplished many personal goals. Since I have always been more of a behind the scenes person, I took on the role of President with some apprehension. It was good for me to learn how to leave my comfort zone and speak in front of everyone. I appreciated the support of the dance community and the times you got to laugh "with" me. Even when you laughed "at" me, such as when I got on the mic to announce that someone left their car lights on in the parking lot and then proceeded to say that we don't want a dead body instead of a dead battery, it was done with humor and good fun.

I'm proud of all the dances, the black tie events, the mom and pop competitions and our big NQE competition. I'm proud of our wonderful outreach program. I'm proud of our Dancin' Newz and Dance Chatter newsletters. I'm proud of our being a resource to the dance community. With all the studios that hold social dances around the valley, I'm most proud of seeing dancers and instructors from around the valley come together at our events. We've done our best to live our motto "dancing in harmony".

This is certainly not the end for me. I still strongly support our organization, our Board-of-Directors, and our incoming President, Beth Kahn, as I hope you will too. Please give Beth and the board your help and involvement. It's the only way to keep our events going. Consider joining the board, or even volunteer for some small task. Remember, USA Dance is a volunteer, non-profit organization that relies on the dance community for their success. Please help to continue this valuable resource to our community.

I would also like to thank all the wonderful people I have had the pleasure of working with over the years. Many of you continue to be my special friends and for that I am grateful.

I wish everyone a happy, healthy and hopefully stress free New Year. Keep dancing and hope to see you all at the January 14th dance.

With warm regards,
Sherry

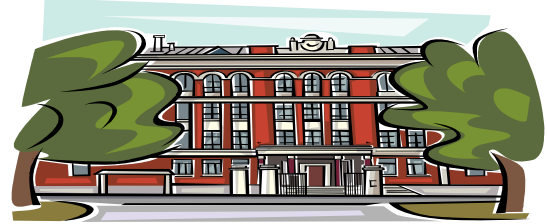
A warm welcome once again, to Beth Kahn, who will be taking over the position of president on the chapter board. Beth has been a long-time chapter member and will take over the President's Point of View column starting in the April issue.



The first step toward change is awareness. The second step is acceptance.
- Nathaniel Branden

Dance University

Part One—Etiquette



“**Dance Etiquette**” are the conventional rules which govern the social behavior of its participants. Such rules include the way in which the participants should look and the way in which they approach, dance with, and leave their partner.

The Bare Basics

- The dancers move counter-clockwise around the floor
 - hence—if you are “swimming upstream like a salmon”, you might want to check your direction and “go with the flow”
- When things go wrong on the dance floor—always apologize. Generally it does not matter who is at fault
 - *Bumps and nudges will happen. That’s part of the sport. If you accidentally run into someone, simply apologize, ensure they are not injured and continue—keeping a more watchful eye. If you make a bad lead, or miss a lead and screw up a step—smile and move on. We all have different skills and preferences. Don’t get so caught up in “perfection” that you forget to have fun.*
- If you are moving more slowly than other dancers - keep to the center of the floor.
 - *this may sound contrary to common sense—most people think if they are beginners, they should stick to the outside “where it’s safe”, but in reality, the better dancers use the outside (in smooth/standard dances) to allow them to gain more speed and take larger strides. If you are doing a basic or have not yet mastered the flow of a dance, stick to the center where things go at a more leisurely pace.*
- If you are engaged in conversation—move OFF the dance floor.
 - *this one shouldn’t take any explanation. If you’re not dancing, get off the dance floor and leave the space open to those who are.*
- To cross the room, either dance across the floor or walk around the perimeter. Carry food and beverages around the perimeter and wipe up your own spills.
 - *again, no explanation should be necessary. Your mother should have taught you how to clean up after yourself and be polite of others.*



Dance first. Think later. It's the natural order.
--Samuel Beckett

!!Prepare Yourself!!

For the return of the Phoenix Dancesport Challenge

The competition committee of the Phoenix USA Dance chapter is kicking in the afterburners in hopes of putting on a competition in April 2012.

This will NOT be a National Qualifying Event.

It **WILL** be open to all amateur competitors—USA Dance members or not.

More details will be forthcoming, but we wanted to spark your interest and start recruiting your support.

This competition will return to the “mom and pop” style with which the Phoenix chapter first tested the waters of competing here in the valley, but with some new twists:

- * Social dance competitive categories
(hustle, nightclub two-step, salsa, west coast swing)
- * Ballroom Jack’n’Jill categories
- * A social dance in the evening, open to the public

We hope you will join us in supporting this endeavor

- As a competitor
- As a spectator
- As a social dance participant
- As a volunteer
- As a scholarship fund donor

Keep your eyes posted for updates in the Dancin’ Newz, the Dance Chatter newsletter, and on the chapter website as this event takes shape.

We hope to see you in April!!!!!!

Pearls from the Pros

Inna Berlizyeva and Artem Plakhotnyi

What first inspired you to dance?

Inna – My whole family was always very athletic. I did every sport growing up, plus theatre and even singing. When I was 8 years old, I saw ballroom dancing on TV and fell in love with it. My mother took me to class and I knew right away I wanted to be a professional. I was very lucky to get the best coach in the Ukraine who helped me become a National and International champion.

Artem – My mother took me to ballroom classes at age 4. I was reluctant at first, but as I got better, I started to enjoy it. I did my first competition at 6 yrs old and won my first national championship at age 14.

What keeps you on the dance floor through the years?

Having a set goal to achieve. Growing up, we always had our parents, coaches, etc... to help us set goals, whether it be to master a specific technique, routine, or win a championship. As pros, we continue to set goals and we are always working hard to achieve them.

After each accomplishment comes another goal we aspire to. We have high standards for our performance, competition, and practice. As instructors, we are always inspired by our students and to see them achieve their goals motivates us even further.

Of course, we never forget to have a lot of fun!



What “Pearl of Wisdom” would you like to share with other dancers?

The key to success of any kind is to make a commitment and follow through. Setting goals with the right instructor is important, but most important is the satisfaction of your own accomplishments.

Bio:

Artem and Inna Berlizyeva are world class professional dancers and instructors. Both originally from the Ukraine, they started dancing at an early age. In 2005 Inna and Artem moved separately to sunny Arizona where they have become top instructors in the valley. They have been dancing together since May 2009. Currently Inna and Artem are one of the top ranked professional couples in the US, winning many competitions, and placing as the USA Open Professional International Standard finalist and North American Championship finalist at the Ohio Star Ball. In the last six years, Inna's and Artem's students have been showing great results on the National and International level in Pro-Am divisions, winning competitions around the US as well.

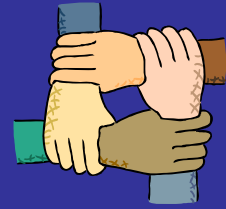
Contact :

Imperial Ballroom Dance Centre
7111 E Tierra Buena Ln Ste 100
Scottsdale, AZ 85254
480.201.5726

www.imperialballroomdance.com

REACHING OUT

Outreach Team Update



Since the last newsletter in October, the outreach team has been keeping busy.

October 30th - 18 of our volunteer dancers travelled to the Arizona State Fair for the second year in a row to perform on one of the community stages. The audience was enthusiastic in their appreciation and participated in a group merengue with the dancers. We even got invited to Nevada by one visiting attendee should we decide to take our demos "on the road".

November 4th - 7 dancers participated in the Mask-querade Ball to benefit the Foothills Caring Corps, a non-profit organization that provides services to handicapped individuals in order to help sustain their independent living. We provided dance host services to the attendees, and hopefully embellished their enjoyment of the Sonoran Serenade Big Band who provided wonderful music for the event.

December 3rd - Glendale Glitters runs every weekend from the day after Thanksgiving until Christmas. We had the pleasure of participating last year, and were again invited to perform at their winter festival. 17 dancers filled the outdoor amphitheatre stage, providing entertainment, dance trivia, audience participation, and hopefully a little ballroom education along the way.



On the Near Horizon:

January 28th - the outreach team has been invited to provide pre-show entertainment at the Chandler Center for the Arts one-night-only show—*Ballroom With A Twist*. Choreographed by Louie Van Amstel and others, this show features Edyta Slovinska and Alec Mazo, along with other dancers from the touring troupes of "Dancing With the Stars". The outreach team will be dancing on the exterior veranda entrance to the theatre, setting the mood for a night of great entertainment.

ANTICIPATED UPCOMING EVENTS

These events are not yet "set in stone". Applications or inquiries have been made, and the outreach team's participation is still being determined.

Arizona Scorpions halftime show—February

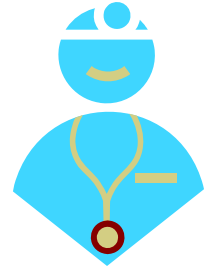
Ostrich Festival—March

National Dance Week—April

Nursing Homes—Locations TBD—February, March

Dance University

Part Two—TRIAGE



Excerpts drawn from an article on www.sportsmed.org

Dancers, from those who social dance to professionals in all genres of this sport and art form, are at risk for injury just like any other athlete.

The most common causes:

- Type of dance
- Frequency or rehearsals, practices, and performances
- Duration of training
- Environmental factors, such as floor surface, room temperature
- Equipment involved—especially footwear
- Individual dancer's body alignment or pre-existing conditions
- Prior history of injury
- Nutritional deficiencies

How can injury be prevented? What can you do to help yourself avoid getting hurt?

- Wear properly fitting clothing and footwear to the dance in which you will be participating
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Resist the urge to dance through pain—get things checked out to avoid permanent damage
- Pay attention to correct technique
- Be aware of any limitations your body may impose—don't go too hard, too fast, or too soon for your ability
- Do a proper warm-up and cool-down each and every time

We want our dancers ON the dance floor—not in urgent care or recovery from surgery.

*Stifling an urge to dance is bad for your health - it rusts your spirit and your hips.
~Adabella Radici*

Dancers Swap Meet



Several people have mentioned the desire to sell or trade items they are no longer utilizing in their dancing. I have provided space in the newsletter on several occasions for people to advertise if they wish to do so.

Another idea has arisen and we are looking to test the waters and see if there is interest. We are assessing the notion of organizing a “Dancers Swap Meet”. The purpose of the swap meet would be for dancers (amateurs and social dancers) to either unload or find dance-related items they may be looking—look at it as our own form of recycling.

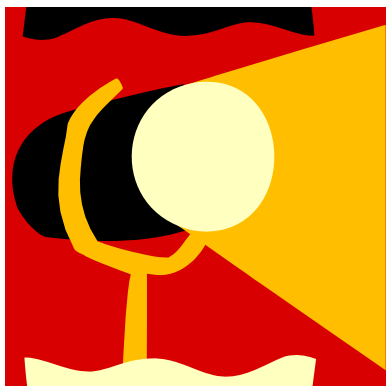


- A date (likely February) and location would be determined.
- Each individual would be responsible for bringing, marking and negotiating your own sale or trade of items. This could include gently used competitive costumes or dance wear, shoes, jewelry, video/dvd's, etc.
- A nominal “entry fee” would be requested from all attending (either as sellers or buyers) to cover the potential cost of renting space, and anything beyond would be donated to the Phoenix USA Dancesport Challenge event in April.

Please respond to seputzier@gmail.com if you are interested or have items you would like to bring to a ‘Dancers Swap Meet’. If enough interest is generated, further information will be forthcoming as to date, time, Location and participation details. We look forward to hearing from you.

*No vendors or professionals, please.
This is strictly for the general dancing public.*





Member Spotlight

Sue Eldred and Peter Greenslade

1. What first got you interested in dancing?

S—I always liked the “idea” of dancing, but never participated in any school functions. After experiencing a personal tragedy, I realized life is “too short” and decided to follow my dream. I was instantly hooked.

P—I danced years ago in school and remember it being fun and a good stress reliever. I knew when Sue and I got together that it would be lifelong activity.



2. What is your favorite dance and why?

S—it's the song or the music that moves me and makes for something special versus the dance itself.

P—Foxtrot—American style lets us play and be sassy.

3. What is one of your favorite dance moments / memories?

S—#1 would be winning the 2001 Pro-Am championships in American Smooth against a field of 40+ couples. A very close second was winning the Am/Am championship title with Peter (sorry, Peter!)

P—I did a showcase in my first dance competition and my instructor actually started shaking. Another would be winning the Am/Am Senior II Smooth championship title in 2007 at USA Dance Nationals.

Sue Eldred is also one of the co-chairs for the Phoenix USA Dance Chapter's Outreach Team. Along with Sue Putzier, she helps coordinate activities and provide volunteer dancers for various events around the valley, such as nursing homes and care facilities; community events like Glendale Glitters, the Arizona State Fair and the Ostrich Festival; and fundraising events such as Kaitly's Way Celebrities Step event and the Foothills Caring Corps Mask-querade Ball.

If you are interested in joining the Outreach Team, please see the information on pages 5 and 13 of this newsletter or check out the “volunteer” button on the chapter website—www.phoenixusadance.org

“Dance is your pulse, your heartbeat, your breathing. It's the rhythm of your life. It's the expression in time and movement, in happiness, joy, sadness and envy.”

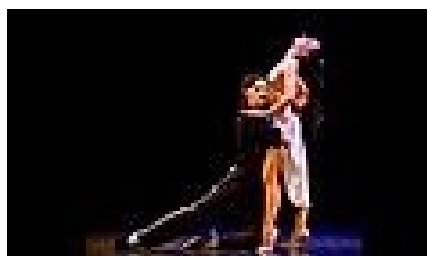
~Jacques D'ambroise

Upcoming Events

Batsheva Dance Troupe
Mesa Art Center
March 22nd



Forever Tango
With Anna Trebunskaya
(replacing Cheryl Burke)
January 25th
Mesa Art Center



Alvin Alley Dance Troupe
Scottsdale Center
for the Arts
March 24, 25

World Hoop Dance Championships
Heard Museum
February 11 and 12



Ballet Folklorica de Antioquai
February 3rd
Scottsdale Center for the Arts



Phoenix USA Events

January Dance—14th
March Dance—10th

Guest Author— Michael Kiehm

Michael is a long time swing instructor and operator of the Starlight Dance Studio in San Diego, CA

Excerpts from an article by Michael earlier this month—"Overbearing Leads & Follows"

Enough is enough already! For the past 30+ years on a much too common basis, I've had both leaders and followers in my classes that should be in MMA (Mixed Martial Arts) instead of dancing!

Guys, it's not necessary to use so much force to lead any movement. And Followers, it's not a contest on who's got the strongest connection or who can use the most leverage without toppling their leader!

BACK OFF PLEASE!!! If you are leading a pattern that takes more than using the correct movement from your body, then you probably shouldn't be leading that pattern. Granted, there are patterns that require some use of the arms, but they are 99% of the time initiated by a directional movement from your body first.

Lately I've been doing a lot of following in my classes so I can help the guys become better leaders. No wonder the ladies are rubbing their shoulders! I felt like I was getting my arms ripped off! Leaders - you have to remember that the lady assists in her movement, including her spins, so you don't have to crank her through them. Followers - make sure you understand this as well.

As an example....Leaders, when you spin your followers, don't pull the arms down so fast at the end of their spin. Let the arms come down smoothly and naturally after she faces you. I have had several leaders yank my arm down before I had completed the turn, which can throw the follower off balance, as well as being painful.

YOUR JOB:

Leaders—To clearly indicate the direction of the movement from beginning to end; establish the tempo in which it is to be danced; and to make sure the follower is completely comfortable throughout the movement.

Followers—To maintain the established tempo; to wait for your leads, then move yourself through the movement with a light but consistent connection. Your ability to follow should inspire the leader's creativity, by adding angles, syncopations, stretches, and other embellishments that will help create a great conversation through your connection. However, don't overdo it—pay attention to the lead and don't go overboard.

It is very important for both partners to find a neutral level when dancing together. Too often I see leaders over-dancing their partners, making them harder to lead because they are nervous about screwing up.

There have also been many times when I have danced with followers that are trying so hard to show me every syncopation and body movement they know, that I feel like I should just sit on the sideline and watch, since they are not really listening to what I am leading anyway.

Remember—there's a reason it's a dance "partnership".

Dance University

Part Three— History

Photographers have been infatuated, intrigued, inspired, and incentivized by the body in motion since the origin of the camera. Enjoy these varying styles of dance captured on film by many of the best in the business.



Hal Eastman



Lois Greenfield



Louis Guillaume



Jordan Matter



Bruce Monk



Richard Finkelstein

"Excellence can be obtained if you:
- care more than others think is wise;
- risk more than others think is safe;
- dream more than others think is practical;
- expect more than others think is possible."
-Anonymous

!WE WANT YOU!



The [Phoenix USA Dance Outreach Team](#) is always looking for dancers who would like to share their time, talent and smiles with the community. You do not have to be a “high level” dancer in order to participate. The more dances you know, the more opportunities you will have to be utilized, but we welcome all who are interested in being ambassadors for our chapter and for ballroom dance in general.

The outreach program of the Phoenix USA Dance chapter provides dance demonstrations, performance, education, and/or dance hosts at different venues around the valley, both by our own design (we seek them out) and by request (others request our participation).

These demonstrations typically fall into two categories:

1. Nursing homes, assisted living facilities, schools, etc — this portion of the outreach program is spearheaded by co-chair Sue Eldred.
2. Community events such as the Arizona State Fair, Glendale Glitters, etc — this portion of the outreach program is spearheaded by co-chair Sue Putzier.

If you choose to become a member of the outreach program, your name and information will be placed in our database from which we draw performers for specific events. Depending on the requirements for each event, and the dancers’ indicated abilities or preferences, you will be notified of upcoming events and given the opportunity to sign on to perform. Venues and dance surfaces vary (carpet, wood floor, cement, tile, indoor or outdoor) and we will provide as much detail as possible to help our dancers make informed decisions about their participation and to prepare accordingly.

Our primary goals with outreach are:

- To share the joy of ballroom dancing with the community
- To provide entertainment to varying populations throughout the valley
- To promote the positive educational, health, and social benefits of ballroom dance

**We hope you will join us.
Simply fill out the questionnaire on the chapter website
(www.phoenixusadance.org)
or talk with either of the Sue’s for information.**

HELP WANTED

Keep your eyes open in this section for future opportunities to put your membership into action within the Phoenix USA Dance chapter.

Check out the website for resources to local dance spots, instructors and other useful information.

Volunteers:

We are always in need of volunteers for a variety of tasks related to our regular dances. This is not a long term commitment. Even if you volunteer one time, you will have helped us out immensely.

Volunteer opportunities include:

- Dance hosts (primarily male, but we are considering including a few female dance hosts as well). This role interacts with all event attendees and invites single and newcomer dancers onto the floor. This role is time-limited to the first half the dance.
- Front table (accept admission and act as greeters)
- Refreshment hosts (furnish and replenish supplies periodically during the evening)
- Set-up and/or Wrap-up crew (set-up includes: prep event locale, decorate as needed, prep refreshments. Tear-down includes: quick trash clean up, reset studio furnishings, pack up pertinent items)

Please contact Cindy Warford (cindy@phoenixusadance.org)
or Beth Kahn (beth@phoenixusadance.org)