

# MINNESOTA *DANCER*



An official publication of the Minnesota Chapter 2011 of USA Dance

February 2014



Pro Am couple Scott Anderson & Tracy Anderson at The SnowBall DanceSport Competition, photo by Karin Lynn Photography

Join us for USA Dance Minnesota's

## UPCOMING DANCES

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

Web: [www.usadance-minnesota.org](http://www.usadance-minnesota.org)

### FEBRUARY

**Saturday, February 15th**

**7-8 pm lesson: Am Tango**

**8-11 pm Variety dance music**

**\$7 USA Dance members**

**\$10 non-members**

#### CINEMA BALLROOM

1650 St Clair Ave, St. Paul

### MARCH

**Saturday, March 15th**

**7-8 pm lesson: Cha Cha**

**Instructor: Eliecer Ramirez Vargas**

**8-11 pm Variety dance music**

**\$7 USA Dance members**

**\$10 non-members**

#### COSTA RICA BALLROOM DANCE STUDIOS

816 Mainstreet, Hopkins

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# DANCER'S NIGHT OUT

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

Sat 2/1 DanceLife Ballroom Dance Party, 7-10, Bolero/  
Hustle Lesson, 6015 Lyndale Ave S, Mpls,  
612-345-4219, [www.dancelifeballroom.com](http://www.dancelifeballroom.com)

Social Dance Studio First Saturday Swing Dance, 7:30  
-12:30, 3742 23rd Ave S, Minneapolis, 612-353-4445,  
[www.socialdancestudio.com](http://www.socialdancestudio.com)

Sun 2/2 **USA Dance Minnesota Beginner Rumba Class with  
Nadine Messenger, 2:30 pm; Free! 1560 St. Clair  
Ave, St Paul, MN, [www.cinemaballroom.com](http://www.cinemaballroom.com)**

First Sunday Dance at Tapestry, 6-9:30, \$7-\$10,  
foxtrot lesson, Kate & Gordon Bratt, 3748 Minnehaha  
Ave S, Mpls, 612-722-2914,  
[www.tapestryfolkdance.org](http://www.tapestryfolkdance.org)

Social Dance Studio TC Rebels Swing Dance,  
7-10:30, 3742 23rd Ave S, Minneapolis, 612-353-  
4445, [www.socialdancestudio.com](http://www.socialdancestudio.com)

Wed 2/5 Cinema Ballroom Practice Party, 8-9, 1650 St Clair  
Ave, St Paul, 651-699-5910,  
[www.cinemaballroom.com](http://www.cinemaballroom.com)

Thu 2/6 Dancers Studio Dance Party 8pm, 415 Pascal St N,  
St Paul, 651-641-0777, [www.dancersstudio.com](http://www.dancersstudio.com)

Social Dance Studio Late Night Swing 10pm-2am,  
3742 23rd Ave S, Minneapolis, 612-353-4445,  
[www.socialdancestudio.com](http://www.socialdancestudio.com)

Fri 2/7 Cinema Ballroom Variety Dance, 7-11, 1650 St Clair  
Ave, St Paul, 651-699-5910,  
[www.cinemaballroom.com](http://www.cinemaballroom.com)

DanceLife Ballroom Dance Party, 7-9:30, \$10, Tango/  
Chacha lesson, 6015 Lyndale Ave S, Mpls,  
612-345-4219, [www.dancelifeballroom.com](http://www.dancelifeballroom.com)

The Blue Moon Ballroom Club Salsa Dance, 7:30-11,  
\$6-\$8, 2030 Hwy 14 East, Rochester, 507-288-0556,  
[www.bluemoonballroom.com](http://www.bluemoonballroom.com)

Sat 2/8 Café Bailar Dance Party, 7:30-11:30, \$10, Tango  
lesson with Jeff Nehrbass, Balance Pointe Studio, 5808  
R W. 36th Street, St. Louis Park, 952.922.8612.  
[www.balancepointestudios.com](http://www.balancepointestudios.com)

Sun 2/9 **USA Dance Minnesota Beginner Rumba Class with  
Nadine Messenger, 2:30 pm; Free! 1560 St. Clair  
Ave, St Paul, MN, [www.cinemaballroom.com](http://www.cinemaballroom.com)**

Mon 2/10 Social Dance Studio West Coast Swing Social,  
9:30-11, 3742 23rd Ave S, Minneapolis, 612-353-  
4445, [www.socialdancestudio.com](http://www.socialdancestudio.com)

Wed 2/12 Cinema Ballroom Practice Party, 8-9, 1650 St  
Clair Ave, St Paul, 651-699-5910,  
[www.cinemaballroom.com](http://www.cinemaballroom.com)

Thu 2/13 Dancers Studio Dance Party 8pm, 415 Pascal St N,  
St Paul, 651-641-0777, [www.dancersstudio.com](http://www.dancersstudio.com)

Social Dance Studio Late Night Swing 10pm-2am,  
3742 23rd Ave S, Minneapolis, 612-353-4445,  
[www.socialdancestudio.com](http://www.socialdancestudio.com)

Fri 2/14 Valentine Dance, 7:30-11, \$10-\$12, 2030 Hwy 14  
East, Rochester, 507-288-0556,  
[www.bluemoonballroom.com](http://www.bluemoonballroom.com)

Valentine's Day Dance, DanceLife Ballroom, 7-9:30,  
\$10, Foxtrot/Hustle lesson, 6015 Lyndale Ave S,  
Minneapolis, 612-345-4219,  
[www.dancelifeballroom.com](http://www.dancelifeballroom.com)

Sat 2/15 **USA Dance Minnesota, 7-11; \$7-\$10; 1560 St.  
Clair Ave, St Paul, MN, [www.cinemaballroom.com](http://www.cinemaballroom.com)**

Sun 2/16 **USA Dance Minnesota Beginner Rumba Class with  
Nadine Messenger, 2:30 pm; Free! 1560 St. Clair  
Ave, St Paul, MN, [www.cinemaballroom.com](http://www.cinemaballroom.com)**

Social Dance Studio TC Rebels Swing Dance,  
7-10:30, 3742 23rd Ave S, Minneapolis, 612-353-  
4445, [www.socialdancestudio.com](http://www.socialdancestudio.com)

Mon 2/17 Social Dance Studio West Coast Swing Social,  
9:30-11, 3742 23rd Ave S, Minneapolis, 612-353-  
4445, [www.socialdancestudio.com](http://www.socialdancestudio.com)

Wed 2/19 Cinema Ballroom Practice Party, 8-9, 1650 St  
Clair Ave, St Paul, 651-699-5910,  
[www.cinemaballroom.com](http://www.cinemaballroom.com)

Thu 2/20 Dancers Studio Dance Party 8pm, 415 Pascal St N,  
St Paul, 651-641-0777, [www.dancersstudio.com](http://www.dancersstudio.com)

Social Dance Studio Late Night Swing 10pm-2am,  
3742 23rd Ave S, Minneapolis, 612-353-4445,  
[www.socialdancestudio.com](http://www.socialdancestudio.com)

Fri 2/21 Cinema Ballroom Variety Dance, 7-11, 1650 St Clair  
Ave, St Paul, 651-699-5910,  
[www.cinemaballroom.com](http://www.cinemaballroom.com)

DanceLife Ballroom Dance Party, 7-9:30, \$10, Waltz/  
Swing lesson, 6015 Lyndale Ave S, Mpls,  
612-345-4219, [www.dancelifeballroom.com](http://www.dancelifeballroom.com)

Sat 2/22 Café Bailar Dance Party, 7:30-11:30, \$10, argentine  
Tango lesson with Lois Donnay, Costa Rica Ballroom  
Dance Studio, 816 Mainstreet, Hopkins, 952-303-3339,  
[www.costaricaballroom.com](http://www.costaricaballroom.com)

Sun 2/23 **USA Dance Minnesota Beginner Rumba Class with  
Nadine Messenger, 2:30 pm; Free! 1560 St. Clair  
Ave, St Paul, MN, [www.cinemaballroom.com](http://www.cinemaballroom.com)**

Wed 2/26 Cinema Ballroom Practice Party, 8-9, 1650 St  
Clair Ave, St Paul, 651-699-5910,  
[www.cinemaballroom.com](http://www.cinemaballroom.com)

Thu 2/27 Dancers Studio Dance Party 8pm, 415 Pascal St N,  
St Paul, 651-641-0777, [www.dancersstudio.com](http://www.dancersstudio.com)

Social Dance Studio Late Night Swing 10pm-2am,  
3742 23rd Ave S, Minneapolis, 612-353-4445,  
[www.socialdancestudio.com](http://www.socialdancestudio.com)

Fri 2/28 DanceLife Ballroom Dance Party, 7-9:30, \$10,  
Tango/Chacha lesson, 6015 Lyndale Ave S, Mpls,  
612-345-4219, [www.dancelifeballroom.com](http://www.dancelifeballroom.com)

*On the cover:*

*Photo of Tracy Anderson dancing with  
her instructor Scott Anderson at the  
Snowball Dancesport Competition. Tracy  
won the 'Top Gold Student' award at the  
Snowball, and also won the Open 9-  
Dance, and Open Rhythm, Smooth, and  
Standard scholarships. Scott was award-  
ed the Top Teacher Award and Top Small  
Studio award and says "thanks to the  
dedication of all of my students".*

*Tracy's beautiful dress by Marsha Wiest-  
Hines.*

*Photo by Karin Lynn Photography*



# USA Dance-MN Chapter #2011 Board Minutes

Tuesday, January 7, 2014

Submitted by Leslie Whitney

**In attendance:** Lee Whitney (President), Bonnie Burton (Vice President), Jane Phipps (Treasurer), Leslie Whitney (Secretary), Marty Faeh, Tracy Frazee, Donna Francisco, Bob Anholt, Amy Anderson, Gary Stroick

**Location:** DanceLife Ballroom Studio, 6015 Lyndale Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55419

**Call to Order Open Session:**

**1 Introductions**

**2 Quorum established. Agenda of the open meeting agenda approved**

**3 Guest statements:**

- Tapestry/USA Dance Partnership Initiative – Donna Francisco, a representative of the Tapestry Programming Committee, proposed a partnership with Chapter #2011 to schedule a monthly dance on the first Sunday of each month. She presented a handout outlining details. Discussion followed with a recommendation to table this until the February meeting, when dance coordinator Zhuojing Liu would be present to comment.
- Professional Advisor - Amy Anderson – Amy voiced her perspective which is to help focus the chapter's initiatives to capitalize on a cooperative effort to serve the entire dance community.
- Star of the North - Nels Peterson was invited, but did not attend.

**4 Adjourn and move to closed session**

**Call to order closed session:**

**ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS**

**5 Agenda for the closed meeting approved. Quorum established. Minutes from the December Board Meeting approved.**

**6 Treasurer's Report**

Jane submitted a financial report as of December 31, 2013. Report was reviewed and approved.

## 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](mailto:bonnieburton@comcast.net) (952-454-4620), along with payment to USA Dance Minnesota Chapter 2011. 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 OR 3.5" wide x 9.5" high	\$80
Qtr. Page	3.5" wide x 4.75" high	\$60
Business Card	3 consecutive months	\$50

**DEADLINE FOR ALL MATERIALS:**  
**10TH OF EACH MONTH**

## 7 Schedule Board Meetings for 2014

A motion was made, seconded and approved to move the meeting to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month.

The annual meeting will be on November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

## 8 "Chapter Annual Report"

A motion was made, seconded and approved for Jane to prepare and submit this report.

## 9 Schedule General Election 2014

This will take place on November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

**10 Directors-At-Large** – Discussion and action taken resulted in the following appointments:

- **Communications Coordinator** - Bonnie Burton
- **Membership Coordinator** – Marty Faeh
- **Social Dance Coordinator** – Zhuojing Liu
- **Special Events Coordinator** – Tracy Frazee, Karen Maldonado
- **Volunteer Coordinator** – Leslie Whitney

## 11 Board Member Replacement Appointment

Two candidates submitted biographies. We discussed their candidacy and will vote in the February meeting.

## DISCUSSION ITEMS AND PROJECTS

### 12 Committees – Reports and Action

Note item #10.

**Website and Facebook page:** Bonnie Burton, Ed Soltis.

- The Chapter's new website address is: [www.usadance-minnesota.org](http://www.usadance-minnesota.org)
- **Facebook/usadancemn**

**Minnesota Dancer:** Bonnie, Leland, Jane

### Star of the North DanceSport Competition 2014:

The board agreed by motion and resolution that Star of the North will not be held and the contract with the hosting hotel be cancelled.

### 13 Tea Dance

Zhuojing will co-chair this event with a person to be decided.

### 14 Tapestry Monthly Dance Partnership Opportunity

Decision will be made at the next board meeting.

### 15 Reelection Petition, Discussion and Action

The board reviewed the election petition. The Board discussed and established new chapter policies regarding board membership eligibility and reelection timing.

A motion was made, seconded and the following policies were approved:

- A person who is removed from the board may not be a board member candidate for a period of 5 years.
- A person who resigns from the board may not be a board member candidate for a period of 3 years.
- A person must be a member of Chapter 2011 for 2 years immediately preceding their nomination to be a board member candidate.
- The nominating committee shall consider docu-

mented unethical behavior and adherence to Dancesport by-laws, rules and policies when considering an applicant's request for a board position.

Set election date: TBD

Call for nominations to Nominations and Election (N&E) Committee

A motion was made, seconded and approved to invite Gary Stroick, Mike Jones, and Yen Chou if they would be willing to serve on the N & E Committee.

Call for initial meeting of N&E Committee – TBD

Next Meeting:

Tuesday, February 11, 2014  
DanceLife Ballroom Studio  
6015 Lyndale Avenue South  
Mpls, MN 55419

## 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 Minnesota Chapter 2011, 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 Minnesota Chapter 2011 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 Minnesota Chapter 2011 HOTLINE: 651-483-5467.

The Minnesota DANCER is published monthly by the members of the Minnesota Chapter 2011 of USA Dance, providing information and news of ballroom dancing to members and friends.

Editor/Design/Layout: Leland Whitney, Bonnie Burton

Advertising/Editing: Bonnie Burton 952-454-4620

Mailing: Committee member

Contributors: Paul Botes, Elizabeth Dickinson, Donna Edelstein, Jack Munday, Deborah J. Nelson, Christine Trask, Taylor Wall, Yen Chou, Leland Whitney

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

Subscriptions: \$22/year. Make checks payable to USA Dance Minnesota Chapter 2011 and send to Jane Phipps, 9650 Waterstone Pl., #402, Minnetonka, MN 55305

Leland Whitney, Chapter President, 651-690-9367, [lrwhitney@msn.com](mailto:lrwhitney@msn.com)

Bonnie Burton, Chapter Vice-President, 652-454-4620, [bonnieburton@comcast.net](mailto:bonnieburton@comcast.net)

Jane Phipps, Chapter Treasurer, 612-859-5245, [janepl951@gmail.com](mailto:janepl951@gmail.com)

Leslie Whitney, Chapter Secretary, 651-690-9367, [lrwhitney@msn.com](mailto:lrwhitney@msn.com)

**USA DANCE MINNESOTA  
HOTLINE**

**651-483-5467**

**[www.usadance-minnesota.org](http://www.usadance-minnesota.org)**

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



# PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Leland Whitney, Chapter President USA Dance Minnesota Chapter 2011

Last month I discussed our vision to Strengthen the Foundation of our USA Dance Minnesota Chapter.

Project Dance is an important building block in our Vision. Project Dance had a great month in January. It was held every Sunday at 2pm at Dance With Us America, team taught by Gene and Elena Bersten. Attendance was high.

Videos were posted on Facebook/USADanceMN and received over 300 viewings. We are excited about Project Dance in February to be held every Sunday at Cinema Ballroom where Nadine Messenger will be teaching beginning Rumba.

Stability in the USA Dance Minnesota environment is a major goal in our Vision. As noted last month, it was possible that a special election of the board would be necessary to be held prior to Feb 14, 2014. It is good news that the National USA Dance Executive Council ruled that the next board election to be held for USA Dance Minnesota would be the normal general election to be held Nov 2014. Please see the letter from the Executive Council reprinted on the next page of this newsletter.

We are grateful for the cooperation and guidance we received from the National Board.

Leslie, my wife, and I in January competed at:

- The Snow Ball
- The Manhattan Amateur Classic (NQ)

We were happy with our Smooth and Standard results, but we had lots of trouble with Rhythm. In performance we both forgot pieces of our choreography! We'll have fun preparing to do better next time.



## Stardust Dance

PRODUCTIONS

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**2014**



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## USA DANCE, INC.®

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January 21, 2014

Mr. Lee Whitney  
USA Dance Chapter #2011

Dear Lee,

This letter is in response to the request of your Chapter Board for an interpretation of Article XII Section F.7. of the Bylaws of USA Dance. Under Article V. F. 5., "The EC shall interpret and enforce the existing enabling documents, bylaws and rules of USA Dance."

**Background:**

As the EC understands the situation 20+ members of Chapter 2011 petitioned for an election and are insisting that the election be scheduled within two months of your chapter's receipt of said petition. We have been informed that the last general election of Chapter 2011 occurred in November 2012.

**EC Interpretation:**

Article XII, Section F1 requires Board members to be elected every two years. Article VXII, Section F.7. is intended to give the members of the chapter a mechanism to require the Board to hold such general election. It is NOT intended to require special elections within the 2-year term of elected Board members.

Chapter 2011 held its last general election in November 2012. Therefore, the next general election shall be held no later than November 2014 following the procedures contained in Section F of Chapter XII and the USA Dance policy, "Election Procedures for USA Dance Chapters" as found on the USA Dance web site.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Sincerely,

Gregory J Warner  
National Secretary  
USA Dance, Inc.

# THE SNOW BALL TENTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

By Donna Edelstein

2014 marked the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of The Snow Ball--and we celebrated with the largest number of competitors we've ever had, at a new, bigger venue, The Minneapolis/St. Paul Airport Mall of America Hilton. This year's competition featured a huge ballroom more elegantly decorated than ever before, staging with a tiered entrance for finalists, a larger floor, and more vendor space for a wonderful shopping experience.

We also introduced new events, which were extremely popular, including "C" Scholarships in all four styles, plus Open Professional Rhythm and Smooth divisions.

The Snow Ball is famous for our Top Grand Slam Teacher and Top Grand Slam Student Awards, which recognize those teachers and students that place the best across scholarship and multi-dance events. This year our Top Grand Slam teacher was Scott Anderson, who also won Top Teacher for the overall event. Many of the nine talented ladies that Scott danced with over the weekend achieved top honors in their divisions. The Top Grand Slam Student was Ed Kadletz, dancing with teacher Julie Jacobson. Ed moved up from third position in the Grand Slam last year. It is impressive to win a division that requires diversity of styles.

This year the competition attracted competitors from across the United States -- from California to Washington, D.C. Every one that I talked to from out of town remarked on the high dance standard that we have here in Minnesota, the friendliness of our competitors, and the warm, personal attention that they received from all the staff working at the Snow Ball.

In addition to making everyone feel welcome and organizing a well run competition, it's also our goal to entertain. This year we had two nights of solid celebration. Saturday night featured top pro-am and amateur scholarship events, formation team competition, followed by Rising Star Professional Events, a Latin demonstration by Gene and Elena Bersten, and a special premiere performance of a new work by the Beyond Ballroom Dance Company.

Sunday night boasted more pro-am and amateur scholarships, The Open Professional Showdance, Smooth and Rhythm divisions, and a remarkable show with the Salsa Sirens. A fabulous five dance show by World Rhythm Finalists Nazar Norov and Irina Kudryashova. Both Nazar and Irina are from Siberia where they learned to heat up the floor. They've danced since they were four years old,

and have danced together since they were seven -- and it showed in the precision and artistry of their dancing.

The weekend concluded with a surprise performance by the Snow Ball Dancing Judges. Ron Montez choreographed a chacha formation that was danced by judges JT Thomas, Martin Cawston, Nathan Daniels, Stephan Krauel, Tony Meredith and, of course, Ron Montez. It was a huge hit. The audience screamed and clapped, and many competitors remarked later how much they loved seeing the judge's dance.

We hope you can join us next year, Saturday January 10 and Sunday January 11, for another exceptional experience. New events will include the World Pro Am DanceSport Closed Bronze and Silver Series. We congratulate everyone who challenged themselves by dancing their best at The Snow Ball!

Marks from Snow Ball 2014 and updates for Snow Ball 2015 can be found on the web at

[www.thesnowballcomp.com](http://www.thesnowballcomp.com)

## **Top Snow Ball Winners follow:**

### **Amateur Winners**

Amateur Junior/Youth International Latin – Jacob Borg & Sijia Wei

Adult Open Smooth & Ballroom Scholarship – Greg & Sue Prash

Adult Open Smooth Multi-Dance – Nels Peterson & Theresa Kimler

Masters Open Smooth & Ballroom - Leland & Leslie Whitney

### **Closed Bronze Scholarship Winners**

Smooth A – Amy Anderson with Charlie Hardcastle

Smooth C- Cindi Andren with Jay Larson

Latin B – Renee Anderson with Scott Anderson

Latin C – Cathy Casey & Scott Anderson

Ballroom B – Renee Anderson with Scott Anderson

Ballroom C – Kim Miller with Scott Anderson

Rhythm A – Heather Polivka with Gordon Bratt

Rhythm B – Cindi Andren with Jay Larson

Rhythm C – Cindi Andren with Jay Larson

### **Closed Silver Scholarship Winners**

Smooth A – Erika Gallagher with Gordon Bratt

Smooth B- Cathy Casey with Scott Anderson

Smooth C – Susan Iverson with Jay Larson

Latin A – Echo Huang with Gene Bersten

Latin B – Zhoujing Liu with Gene Bersten

Latin C – David Zaleske with Kristina Lee

Ballroom A – Tracy Wang with Jay Larson

Ballroom C – Dee Iannone with Markus Cannon

Rhythm A - Oncu Er with Julie Jacobson

Rhythm B - Ed Kadletz with Julie Jacobson

Rhythm C – Susan Iverson with Jay Larson

### **Open Scholarship Winners**

Smooth A – Tracy Anderson with Scott Anderson

Smooth B – Ken Kendle with Julie Jacobson

Smooth C – Kim Miller with Scott Anderson

Latin A – Emilia Kokoszka with Gene Bersten

Latin B - Shannon Yee with Gene Bersten

Rhythm A – Tracy Anderson with Scott Anderson

Rhythm B – Anna Gilberston with Tom Neterval

Rhythm C – Dee Iannone with Markus Cannon

Ballroom B – Tracy Anderson with Scott Anderson

### **Professional Winners**

Rising Star Rhythm & Open Rhythm – Irwin & Ivona Rybczynski

Rising Star Smooth – Sergey Smolin & Anna Tomosini

Rising Star International Ballroom – Trent Quinn & Nandina Snow

Open Professional Smooth – Adrian & Hannah Dydzinski

Open Professional Showdance – Darren Franco & Andrea Kuzel

### **Top Teachers**

1. Scott Anderson
2. Markus Cannon
3. Gordon Bratt
4. Gary Dahl
5. Darren Franco - tie
5. Tom Neterval – tie
7. Nick Babberl
8. Curtis Haremza
9. Jeff Nehrbass – tie
9. Charlie Hardcastle – tie
11. Jay Larson
12. Eliecer Ramirez Vargas
13. Julie Jacobson
14. Deborah Gillitzer
15. Rebecca Gentry –tie
15. Mike Barris – tie

### **Top Studio**

Small – Scott Anderson

Large – Get Out & Dance





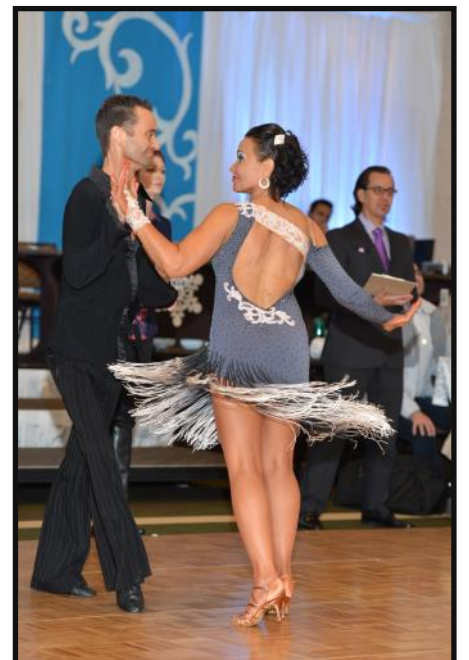
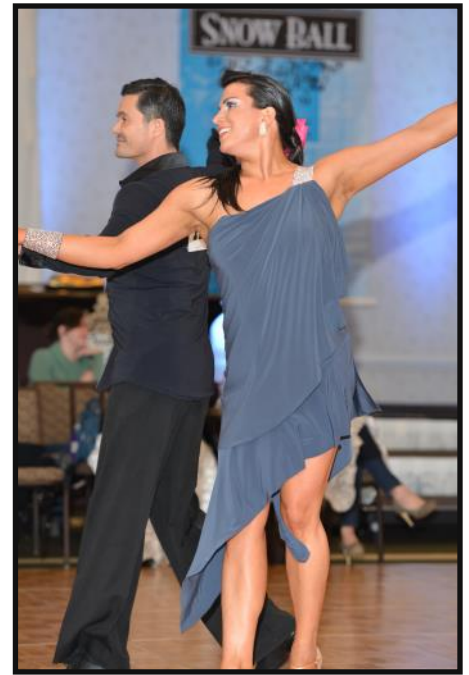
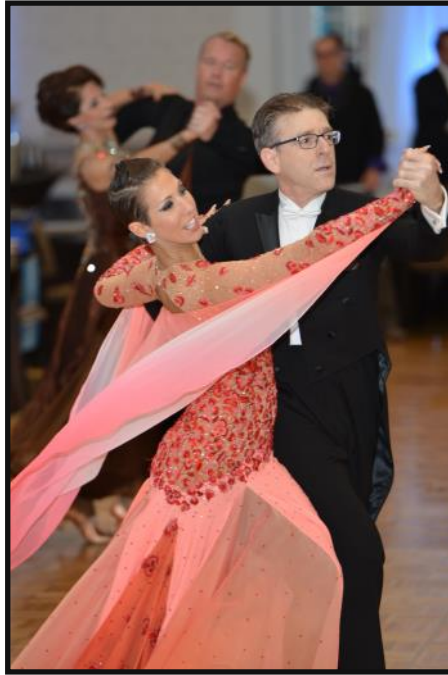
# THE SNOW BALL PHOTOS

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*World Rhythm Finalists Naz-  
ar Norov and Irina  
Kudryashova. Photos on this  
page and the next by Karin  
Lynn Photography.*







# THE SNOW BALL PHOTOS

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*Photo by Karin Lynn Photography*



*Photo by Karin Lynn Photography*



*Photo by Karin Lynn Photography*

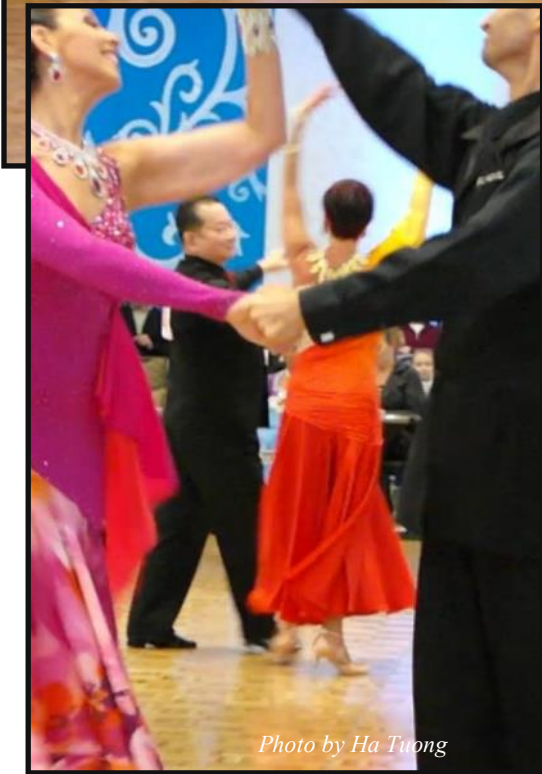


*Photo by Ha Tuong*





*Photo by Ha Tuong*



*Photo by Ha Tuong*



*Photo by Ha Tuong*



*Photo by Ha Tuong*

# THE SNOW BALL PHOTOS

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*Photos by Ha Tuong*







***SAVE  
THE  
DATE!***

## **2014 Tea Dance & Brunch**

**Sunday, May 4, 2014 11 am — 4 pm**

**Lafayette Country Club, Wayzata, MN**



**Sponsored by USA Dance Minnesota Chapter #2011**

# BOARD'S CORNER

## The 'Star of the North' Goes Dark for 2014

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What if you wanted to have a party, but then you weren't allowed to participate? That's what happened to the USA Dance Minnesota Board with this year's 'Star of the North' DanceSport Competition, an annual event hosted by USA Dance Minnesota each February.

The volunteer group who ran the competition these past few years apparently went on strike via complete communication blackout. They refused to communicate with the board, despite multiple information requests, emails, and invitations to appear at the board meetings to provide updates. Dancers reported to us that when they tried to register for the competition, there was no website on-line registration link and no response to their emails.

These *Star of the North* volunteers inexplicably stopped preparation on organizing this year's competition, completely dropping the ball, and thereby failing our local dance community. The Board was not permitted to manage and have oversight of the *Star of the North* competition starting with then-president Daniel O'Connell signing a facility contract without Board approval, and deflecting and ignoring board efforts to appoint an appropriate chairperson to direct the volunteers.

**Therefore, it is with extreme regret, the USA Dance Minnesota Chapter #2011 Board must withdraw as host of this year's competition and is hereby cancelling the competition for 2014.**

Dancers, we are as disappointed as you are. Here is the notice the Board sent to the renegade 'volunteer' group:

*To Star of the North 2014 Committee,*

***It is with sincere regret that the USA Dance Minnesota Chapter #2011 Board of Directors is announcing that it is withdrawing as host of the 2014 Star of the North DanceSport Competition and is hereby cancelling the competition. The Chapter will accept no financial liability incurred for this competition.***

*The reasons for this decision are as follows:*

*The volunteer group who had verbally committed to organizing the competition has gone into a complete communications blackout; all Board of Directors' emails, communication requests, and invitations to chapter board meetings to discuss said competition were completely ignored by this volunteer group.*

*The Board was therefore not allowed to have any oversight or due diligence in managing the event, as a result of this communications black-out.*

*The Board was notified verbally by Nels Petersen that the volunteer base responsible for organizing the competition has defected.*

*The Board learned an unauthorized, unapproved, and unviewed contract with the Hotel had been signed last July by the then-president Daniel O'Connell, who has since been removed from the board. In retrospect, the board would not have approved this contract if given the chance to do so, and disavows any financial obligation in connection with this contract.*

*The Board has notified the hotel that the contract is void because it was signed without appropriate review, authorization, and approval of the full board. Again, the Board never saw the contract.*

*Be advised that without Chapter Board ownership and management, liability insurance for the event is not provided by National USA Dance organization. [Our liability policy applies for events that are hosted, owned, and managed by USA Dance Chapter #0000" (Ref: USA Dance Guidelines - Keeping it Legal)]*

*Sincerely,*  
*USA Dance Chapter #2011 Board of Directors*







# KARIN *lynn*

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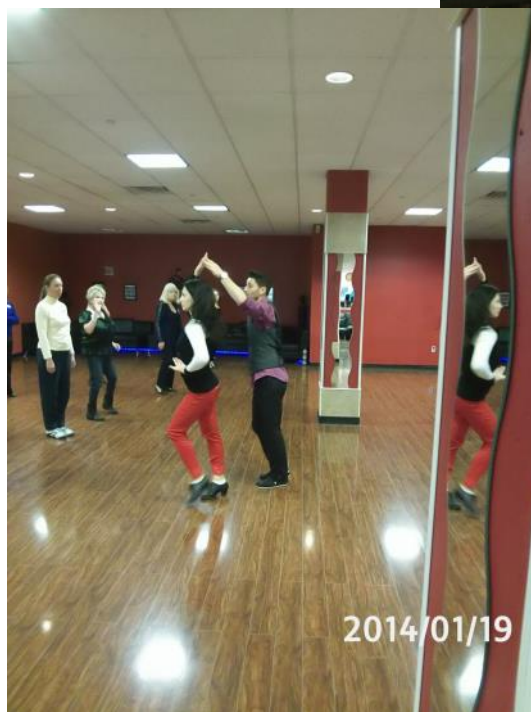
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# PROJECT DANCE: FREE JIVE LESSONS BY GENE & ELENA BERSTEN

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Photos by Marty Faeh

# GENERATIONS OF DANCE

By Christine Trask



My parent's gift to family members for the holiday season was to get us all together in one place to eat, and thank our higher power for our blessings and ask for guidance for the New Year. The family gathering was on my mother's birthday, December 26, 2013. It was held at a Wisconsin rustic restaurant that was clearly a gem due to its ultimate serene setting surrounded by a forest of snow-covered pine trees. Stepping inside I sighed, gazing at the tongue-grooved pine from floor to cathedral ceiling and the blazing orange-yellow flame of a huge field stone fireplace that used up most of one wall. The real Christmas tree stood proudly at fifteen feet decorated with huge red and gold shiny ornaments topped off with a white owl. I caught my brother's eye and winked and started embracing each one of my thirty-two family members and ended up sitting next to my parents for dinner.

I started talking about my favorite subject - dance - and discovered that my parents started a generation of dance lovers.

At fifteen years old, a slender figured woman, midnight black curly hair, emerald green eyes, my mother was accompanied by two of her brothers to the Nightingale Ballroom in the small town of Kaukauna, Wisconsin. The ballroom featured big bands like Tommy Dorsey, Harry James, Lawrence Welk, Guy Lombardo, and many others. My mother smiled and said, "When your father was 14 he drove the family's 1938 International pickup truck from his dad's implement business. When he was 16, he received his driver's license, about which the police commented, 'it's about time.' He picked me up in the truck which had no heater. We sat close. He wore a black leather jacket, and a wave set hair cream which he greased back to perfection Fonzie-style, and gazed at me with his mysterious dark brown eyes." She continued, "Television was not invented yet so dancing was the best means of entertainment. We had a lot of fun dancing the jitterbug, polka, waltz, and two-step square dance. In those days, your father could kick his leg above my head. Our favorite dance

song was the 'Tennessee Waltz'."

The same year my parents were married, 1952, my father was drafted and fought two years in the Korean War, which meant that he could not come home during the holidays during that time. When the war ended, my father returned home and my parents spent holidays together again. After a few children, my parents joined a square dancing club. My mother, a talented seamstress, created a mid-length swing skirt with layered petticoats along with a matching shirt for my father. Square dancing provided a fun, social outing for my parents. When the twins were born they took some time off from dancing. They soon realized that they needed dance in their life so within a year's time they found themselves getting back into dancing. More children were born, but they still kept dance in their life and ours.



On Sunday evenings our family would watch the Lawrence Welk show and at age three and up we all danced to the program. My sisters and I also danced to Dick Clark's 'American Band Stand' program as well.

When my father and mother retired, they danced on Sunday afternoons at the Cecil Ballroom to a 12-piece orchestra that played songs such as 'In the Mood', 'Don't Sit under the Apple Tree with Anyone Else but Me,' 'Glow Worm,' and many more. They liked the Eddie Larsen Orchestra so much that they hired them for their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. We all danced until we dropped.

I asked the rest of my family about their dance experiences and surprisingly learned the following:

My niece Kate, danced with the Appleton ballet and danced as the mouse in the Nutcracker. I encouraged my nephew Thomas to take private dance lessons last year with me as his partner in order to prepare him for a wedding he was attending with a girl friend who was a ballroom dancer. My sister Becky was part of the modern dance

club in high school.

My brother Larry and wife Brenda took ballroom dance lessons. Larry was always performing dance steps on his skate board. Their daughter Natalie has been with the Manitowoc Ballet four years and has performed in the 'Nutcracker' each year. Their son Bret, and daughters Britney and Natalie, performed a dance routine they choreographed for our family one holiday. They were awesome!

My brother David was in a high school talent show 'White Christmas'. He dressed and danced and lip sang with his friend Darin as one of the Hayne sisters in 'Sister Act'. My mother and father had no idea that their son David was going to participate in the show nor did they recognize him. When my mother commented to my sister, "They are fantastic!" his twin sister Diane laughed and replied, "Mom, one of those dressed up Haynes sisters is my twin brother."

My sister Linda and husband Rich took ballroom dancing when they started dating. I won't be surprised if they

take it up again after retirement. My sister Linda was on the pom and dance team throughout her high school years.

My niece Elizabeth and mother of the new great grandbaby Lucy, did ballet and tap five years and was a member of Kaukauna dance team in high school 2002-2006. She competed in pom, jazz, kick, and funk. Bets are on that Lucy, the great-granddaughter, might be the champion ballroom dancer of the family. My sister Diane was a high school dance cheerleader.

My daughter Joanna took tap dance when she was five and six. On a family vacation with my children two years ago in Spain, my son surprised us and danced Flamenco with a professional Flamenco dancer. I started taking ballroom dance lessons three and 1/2 years ago and have done various performances and some competitions.

Since my father's knee replacements and my mother's knee problems, my parents have stopped their dancing. Now they enjoy attending their granddaughters' and grandsons' dance performances, along with sharing with them their own fond memories of dancing.



Interview your own family and share with the 'Minnesota Dancer' magazine what you discover. Create your own generation of dance lovers and memories of dance. Invite your family to join you in a dance class, performance, social dance event, or competition.



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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 send an email to [elizabeth@pursueyourpath.com](mailto:elizabeth@pursueyourpath.com).*

# THE DANCING LIFE

## Holding On Too Tightly and Letting Go

*By Elizabeth Dickinson*

In the effort to engage my core muscles when dancing I've been compressing my entire mid-section. Unconsciously, I was also sucking in my diaphragm. I found myself getting more and more anxious without knowing why.

I finally caught myself literally holding my breath both on and off the dance floor. A lack of oxygen to the brain, heart and muscles raises blood pressure. Additionally, research conducted at the National Institute of Health found breath-holding contributes significantly to stress-related diseases. The body becomes acidic, the kidneys begin to re-absorb sodium, and as the oxygen (O<sub>2</sub>), carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), and nitric oxide (NO) balance is undermined, our biochemistry is thrown off. Simply put, our body and mind needs regular doses of oxygen to operate optimally.

In a larger sense, in an effort to get something right, we can overdo it, hold on too tightly and work too hard. When I learned to teach yoga, my teacher always said that the foundation for a good inhalation of breath lay in the exhalation. The metaphor of letting go lies in the breath.

Holding on too tightly to your own breathing muscles, is a sure way to create anxiety. Similarly, holding on too tightly to expectations, assumptions, judgments

and beliefs (even the 'good' ones) can also promote anxiety.

As I've grown older, it's become more important to me to 'take it easy' and let certain things go. I was brought up with a strong sense of right and wrong behavior. Sorting out whether it's a good idea to live with all of those beliefs, expectations, judgments, and assumptions can take a long time.

Someone once shared a way to decide whether or not to repeat something (like gossip). I find it can also help in sorting through beliefs, expectations and assumptions. Ask yourself:

- Is this a truth I want to live by (for myself and/or others)?
- Is this useful (for myself and others)?
- Is this kind (to myself and others)?

If you get a solid 'yes' from yourself on all three questions, you're probably on solid ground of your own truth.

Like breathing, our life needs a sense of flow in and out. Are there any beliefs, expectations, judgments or assumptions you need to 'let out' (exhale) in order to 'let in' (inhale) an easier approach to life?



# SUPERCALAFRAGILOUS HOLIDAY EVENT AT DANCELIFE BALLROOM

By Christine Trask, Photos by Karin Lynn Photography

“Supercalafragilous” is how I describe Shinya McHenry’s holiday ballroom event held recently at his new DanceLife Ballroom studio located on Lyndale Avenue South in Minneapolis. It was a Disney-esque extravaganza of brilliant fashion dance attire adorned with glittering sequins, pink and white baby roses, jungle print, orange and red fringe, disco head bands, hoop or pearl earrings, short hot red sassy salsa outfits and long flowing, angel white evening ball gowns laced with pearls. Students of Shinya danced and dressed the part of the character of their choice; your chance to be a disco queen from the ‘70s, a Cinderella dancing the Viennese waltz, a hot sassy Salsa dancer from Latin America, a 50’s hip hop dancer, or a young couple dancing a romantic Cuban Rumba.

Shinya’s new dance studio was adorned with brilliant Christmas lights from top to bottom, reflecting off the mirrors to accentuate a feeling of warmth and holiday cheer. The many windows dressed with red and green wreaths, allowed a view of the white snow outside, which looked like a scene from the movie ‘White Christmas’. The acoustics in his new ballroom were so exceptional that you felt like the actual musicians were in the room with you. The hardwood floor is flawless, making it an ideal surface for all dancers. Shinya treated his guests to a decadent array of appetizers including chocolate, Christmas cookies, assortment of cheeses, crackers, breads, hot coffee, juice, hot cider.

Every dancer that participated in the performance was great. Two of my

favorite acts were the Spanish-flared solo that Shinya choreographed for him and Anna Reed, and the cute holiday waltz story that Nick Westlake and his beautiful partner Neli Petkova danced together.

I started dancing about three years ago and have worked with various teachers throughout, learning something valuable from each. I feel that Shinya’s 25 years of ballroom dance and event industry background, along with his with his personal intuition about a student’s mindfulness level, has greatly helped me. He has taught me to be in the moment. In working with him, I learned that my mind often wandered as I reverted back to old patterns. Sometimes I even tried to lead him. “Leave whatever you are thinking about, Chris, outside the dance room and open your mind to new patterns”,

“Are you breathing, Chris? Don’t forget to breathe”, he says, smiling. No matter what new dances I struggle to learn, I leave my dance class feeling upbeat and happy.

Sitting next to my dear friend Jeannie Hill, she mentioned that my red feathers on the bottom of my red sequined ballroom dress were shedding. I explained to her that I was blessing Shinya’s dance floor for a successful year ahead and the red feathers symbolized holiday angel feathers.

My next adventure is to go on my first dance party vacation that Shinya is hosting through DanceLife Adventure from March 1-8, 2014, in Mazatlan. I think I might bring my fringe disco outfit that I wore for the disco solo. What do you think? Wishing you many new fun dance adventures this 2014 year.









*Deborah J. Nelson is the founder, president, and head designer of Satin Stitches Ltd. See more costuming tips at [www.satinstitches.com](http://www.satinstitches.com)*

# CONSIDERING PROPORTIONS IN GROUP COSTUMES

*By Deborah J. Nelson*

With group costuming, you want everyone to look the same. What is ‘the same’? It is when even though you have a variety of sizes, you want to make sure that everyone’s costumes look proportionally the same. Specific design details, such as an applique or maybe placement of something, such as a wide banding on a bodice, or even the lengths of a skirt can be problematic, if you get them wrong. When no attention is paid to proportions, someone might stick out like a sore thumb.

make any proportional changes for these types of style accents.

But, if we are needing to add sizes up to a 4-X or so, we might consider enlarging the detail, as it may look ‘lost’ on a much larger size. And especially if we are working with our Child Sizes, which run as small as XXS (chest size of 22”) generally, something drastic must be done, or the smaller sized dancers will be overwhelmed with a proportionally large design detail.

At Satin Stitches, we are continually working to try to create perfectly proportioned costumes. In addition to working with our standard adult women’s sizes, we also work with very small children’s sizes and very large adult sizes. We determine what size design detail (such as a pocket or collar lapel) will work best for our Sample Size (women’s M-Medium, which is a sort of a standard ‘high school dancer’ size with a bust measurement of 34”, waist of 26” and hips of 36”). When working with a limited range of high school dance team members, we generally don’t change the dimensions of small-sized design details. What works well for Medium, will generally work well for Small, Extra-Small, Medium-Large, Large and Extra-Large. We also work with Short, Medium and Long torso lengths, and we rarely need to

‘Grading’ is the technical term for creating proportional sizes, based on a Sample Size. All companies work with their own ‘Grade Rules’ for making the mathematical changes to pattern pieces to create all sizes needed for group orders. If you wish to see more of this, just go to [www.satinstitches.com](http://www.satinstitches.com) and find our size charts. You will see all the measurements that we have decided upon, for our full size run of Child XXS through XXL, Adult Women from XS through 6X and then our Men’s sizes from 34 through 52.

The key for having all different sizes in a group looking uniform, is to have costumes that are correctly proportioned for all of the sizes. Additionally, they need to fit properly and not look boxy or too tight. Lengths of skirts need to be proportional with the locations



on the leg. If it is a really short skirt – then consider how the skirt covers the butt and where it hits on the thighs. If the skirt should finish, ideally around the knees – either slightly above or below, then the length from the waist to the knee is really important. If a skirt is ‘tea length’ then everyone’s skirt should be hitting the same location on their lower calves and above the ankle (we generally reference the ankle, or specific distance from the floor). And course if skirts are to finish ‘floor length’ or similar, the measurements should reference the heights of each dancer, down to the floor, with the dancer in their heeled dance shoes that they will be wearing.

If pants are worn, then the same parameters should be considered for pant lengths, as for the skirts. One of my pet peeves is when I see short ladies wearing a cropped or Capri pant that was cut to hit the area of the leg of a taller lady. How can you tell? Look in the mirror – does it look ‘right’ or would it look better, shortening a couple of inches. Your eye should tell you. I’ve seen many a Capri pant on ladies that creates a ‘high water pant’ look because it looks too short to be a long length, and too long to be a

proper cropped length. Many times it is also a matter of how wide the Capri pant is. If it is too wide – this also creates a wrong proportion.

Yes, I realize that altering clothing can get expensive. But it can also make your clothes fit you better, and they will look more expensive and pleasing, rather than looking like you are wearing hand-me-downs from your taller sister!

The same can be said for those of us with long arms. We need to watch for long sleeves that look like a  $\frac{3}{4}$  length sleeve, when they aren’t. My personal, inexpensive fix? I roll up any sleeves that are too short. Since I am a warm person by nature, so it seems an excellent option. There is no good option for lengthening sleeves on an ‘off the rack’ garment, as most don’t have hems that can be let down, so you must always check to see if sleeve lengths work for your long arms. (Conversely, too-long sleeves look sloppy.)

Other areas to be concerned with proportion besides skirt, pant and sleeve lengths, would be the natural waistline (at the smallest circumference or indentation) or empire (under the bustline) or dropped

waistline (set at the high-hip or hipline), if there are actual seam-lines or accents at these horizontal dividing lines.

One thing that can be a big problem, is with working with a variety of bust (cup) sizes. At Satin Stitches, our ‘Sample Size’ fits a B/C cup well. Ladies with smaller bustlines generally employ Victoria’s secrets for a great fit, but those with larger bustlines need their costumes to be adjusted to fit, especially with an empire seamline.

There is nothing as distracting as seeing an empire seamline hit way too high on ample-bosomed ladies. I personally haven’t had that problem, but I have a sister, a cousin and a daughter that struggle with getting a good fit, in this area. At Satin Stitches, we alter our CAD patterns to accommodate D, DD and even larger bustlines, when needed. We also have the expertise for working with all different types of shapes that may not fit into the ‘norm’.

Vertical detailing, such as princess seam lines or other design details also need to get narrower or wider with sizes, for that perfectly proportional look. ■

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# ASK DR. DANCE

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

Q • •

“I love dancing and am trying to convert a non-dancing friend into a dancing friend. We are both busy professionals, so it’s very difficult to find any time to go to dance classes. We do have time to practice on our own, though. My friend does not know much beyond the basics, and we would both like her to know a little more. What are your thoughts if I would teach her some basic dance steps and help her correct many details? I am an experienced dancer.”

---

## Donna says:

It's wonderful that you are inspiring a friend to dance. It sounds like she already knows some basics which is a great start. If you have time to practice, why not book a lesson with an experienced professional during your practice time? A knowledgeable teacher can help you improve your leading and technique while teaching your friend at her own level. That way you both benefit, and you don't change the dynamic of your relationship from friends to student/teacher.

## Paul says:

I think that if you have time to practice, you have time to do a lesson with a professional.

Teaching a friend or significant other to do anything is an accident waiting to happen in my humble opinion. Teaching is a skill acquired over many hours and years of experience and should not be confused with the ability to dance. For example, when was the last time you danced the lady's part? You may know the gentleman's part very well, but unless you've been trained, you probably don't know what her steps as a follow should be. In my opinion it would be fine to introduce her to some basic actions, but you would be doing her a disservice to try and teach her. ■



*Donna Edelstein is a coach, judge, and organizer of the Snow Ball DanceSport Competition.  
www.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.*





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# GENTLEMEN LEAD

By Jack Munday



*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](http://www.Johnsmunday.com) and several dance studios.*

Last month I wrote about paintings we saw in the Musée d'Orsay in Paris. We came upon two delightful paintings by Pierre Auguste Renoir—of couples dancing! The photo of me standing between them was the principle story of the column. Now you can see more of what I was writing about, especially the differences between dancing in the country and in the city.

Art is very important to me. In the August 2011 issue, I wrote about a painting we commissioned Kristi Sullivan to paint. The painting depicts Fran and me dancing on a beach. It is hung in the center of our fireplace, above the mantel. In addition to being a beautiful painting, it is a memory of our dancing on a beach. This painting preserves a precious moment.

We have two delightful statues on the mantel, one on each side of the painting. One is very modern, with sweeping lines and delightful curves. The other is an antique, showing the lady with a hat and flowing gown, with the gentlemen also in a suit from probably the late 1800s.

On the left side of the fireplace and chimney we have three prints of dancing. One shows about half a dozen couples dancing near the orchestra. Another print shows the same dancers by the edge of water. The third print has a single couple dancing, with the lady's dress flowing like the water next to them.

And of course, the wall next to these prints has a painting we pur-

chased at an art auction on a Mediterranean cruise of a guitar player standing next to a flamenco dancer. The painting is by Misha Lenn and titled *Tarantella*. I described this painting in detail in my July 2012 column. And we went dancing on the cruise ship to honor the painting.

It is important to know that Fran and I enjoyed a dance in our living room after hanging each piece of art. We have a special tune for each of them. No, we did not try to dance the tarantella, though we did dance the salsa to tarantella music when we were in Sorrento, Italy.

We do appreciate art for itself, including a print of *Mona Lisa* we bought in Paris. What this art, of dancers in total communication with each other, does for us is remind us of good dancing events, and frequently prompts us to dance to a song that relates to a specific picture. Sometimes twice or more.

At one point in my learning to ballroom dance, Fran thought that I was becoming obsessed with needing to be on the dance floor like instructors and serious competitors. There are rewards for instructors, like how Monica clapped when Fran and I danced our foxtrot at the Cheek To Cheek showcase, and how the audience claps for competitors at lovely dances at a competition or showcase. We dance at home more now but also enjoy dancing at dance parties. I now have a balanced obsession.





Jack Munday and the Renoir dance paintings at Musée d'Orsay in Paris, France

## 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 [newletter@usadance-minnesota.org](mailto:newletter@usadance-minnesota.org). Please include area code with any phone number.

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

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

► **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

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# LETTERS

## To the Editor:

I am confused and concerned by some of the statements made in the January issue of the Minnesota Dancer regarding the intentions of the University of Minnesota Ballroom Dance Club. In the article "Board Election: Power Play?" the newsletter questions our input by writing, "They've been members for about 2 months, yet they're calling for an election!" Perhaps I can shed some light on this. Collegiate dancers must be members of USA Dance in order to compete at the National Collegiate DanceSport Championships, to which the University of Minnesota Ballroom Dance Club travels every year. These championships are held annually during the fourth weekend of November, meaning that all 39 members of my team

obtained their USA Dance memberships in September (2 months ago) upon joining the team. It is the individual dancers' choice if they wish to renew their USA Dance memberships in January, September or any time in between, but we have found that because of the transitory nature of collegiate life and collegiate budgets, many students wait to renew their memberships until they know they need them: in September. I can without a doubt guarantee that no member of the University of Minnesota Ballroom Dance Club became a USA Dance member for the purpose of calling a special election and I resent the implication that, as a leader, I would ever allow my team to be so muddled in politics that our opinions and actions become unfounded and relegated to mere puppetry.

I certainly hope that the USA Dance Minnesota Chapter 2011 Board can recognize the importance of the collegiate market in the future and growth of ballroom dance in Minnesota and nationally. I feel that recent actions by the Board have disrupted the community that I know and love, and feel that this special election can begin to piece back together the dance community instead of continuing to waste precious human and financial assets on pettiness and egoism.

Taylor Wall

President of the University of Minnesota Ballroom Dance Club ■



Snowball photos by Ha Tuong ■



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## To the Editor:

I was stunned and saddened when I read about the recent petition to replace current board members in Minnesota Dancer. Based on my experience as a USA Dance member for many years, including serving on the board, we have one of the best, most active, and harmonious chapters within the USA Dance organization. When I was a board member, we spent much time and effort focusing on two main goals: to promote partner dancing to the local community, especially to students; and to focus on the integrity of our organization. We worked hard to conduct chapter sponsored activities fairly, without favoritism, including professional dance instructors and dance studios.

To accomplish the first goal, we initiated weekly free group dance classes by rotating at different dance studios. To support the collegiate dancers, we gave the proceeds from the April dance to the U of Minnesota ballroom team; provided grants to them for outside dance competitions; donated free tickets to students for the Tea Dance; and helped fundraise for them with dollar dances. Also, by promoting our annual

Star of the North competition to college students in the Midwest region, it was transformed into a mostly college event.

We are a volunteer organization. People who serve on the board, and other volunteers, do this work to provide enjoyable dance events to the local dance community without personal benefit in mind. I recall two board members who stayed over night at a hotel paid for with their own money to make sure things were in order during the 2011 Star of the North dance competition. I hope the student members realize the board is not only on their side, but also, all the benefits the board has provided to them.

I had mostly positive experiences within the organization, until the 2012 election, when I found out that college student members appeared to vote as a block to oust a long time devoted board member. I believe most students don't really know the people who run for the board, and it looked suspiciously like they were coached to vote as a block. This kind of action creates problems and damages the organization's integrity. I suggested to both our president and vice president that

the board should explain to the students that this behavior is not beneficial to our organization, and especially not beneficial to them. Unfortunately, the recent petition for a special election by student members has made my fears come true. This petition for a special election has jeopardized the 2014 Star of the North event, it wastes our resources, and divides our local dance community. It doesn't benefit anyone, especially not student members.

Everyone involved should assess their purpose to see what the best way is to serve the organization. Members may contact any board member to express their opinion, suggestions, or criticisms. I sincerely believe the changes in the recent board were based on good intentions to make our organization better. Inside fighting is the worst thing that can happen to an organization and will never resolve conflicts. Let's put aside our trivial differences and unite together again to make our chapter the best within the USA Dance community.

Yeun Chou,

USA Dance member and  
former board-member



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# COMPETITION CALENDAR

*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 28–30, 2014*

## **2014 National DanceSport Championships**

To be held in Baltimore, MD.

*May 18, 2014*

## **Minnesota Star Ball DanceSport Competition**

Hosted at the Medina Ballroom in Medina, MN.  
[www.MNstarball.com](http://www.MNstarball.com)

*Jun 7–8, 2014*

## **NJ DanceSport Classic – Summer Sizzler – NQE**

Organized by Mario Battista & Wendi Davies at Rogers DanceSport Center in Hackensack, NJ. Qualifying event for 2015 Nationals.

*Jun 27–29, 2014*

## **Gumbo DanceSport Championships – NQE**

Hosted by Louisiana Gumbo USA Dance Chapter #5031 in Baton Rouge, LA. Qualifying event for 2015 Nationals.

*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.

*Set 6, 2014*

## **Kansas City Dance Classic**

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

*Sep 15, 2014*

## **New England DanceSport Championships – NQE**

Date is tentative. Hosted by MASSabda USA Dance Chapter #3002 in Danvers, MA. Qualifying event for 2015 Nationals.

*Sep 15, 2014*

## **Northwest DanceSport Championships – NQE**

Date is tentative. Hosted by Portland, OR, USA Dance Chapter #1006. Qualifying event for 2015 Nationals.

*Oct 3–5, 2014*

## **Carolina Fall Classic – NQE**

Organized by Wayne & Marie Crowder in Charlotte, NC. Qualifying event for 2015 Nationals.

The Snow Ball, photo by Ha Tuong



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# 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 [newletter@usadance-minnesota.org](mailto:newletter@usadance-minnesota.org).*

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*Contacts:*  
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