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PHOENIX CHAPTER #4033

Dance Chatter

It's Time to Burn the Floor!!



It's that time of year again... the temperatures are rising...the AC will fight to keep the heat outside....and local dancers will add to the fire with their own hot moves on the dance floors across the valley.

While we may suffer during the summer months with record highs, we also have some of the "coolest" places in the state to dance. Dancers in the Phoenix metro area need to consider themselves very fortunate. No matter what area of the valley you live in, there's some place nearby that will provide the "fix" every dancer needs. Whether you're into ballroom, swing, hustle, country, salsa or even contradancing—there's somewhere to go.

The valley has a plethora of studios, clubs and special venues that cater to dancers, and we need to be sure we cater back to them with our patronage. If we want to have places to dance... if we want the variety of choice....then we need to be sure we keep these places open and operating by showing up and sharing the "wealth" - both of our time and our business.

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Olympic Quest

With the recent conclusion of the Olympic trials and anticipation of the summer games beginning August 8, 2008, the question once again comes to the forefront for many ballroom dance enthusiasts: "Will DanceSport ever be included in the Olympics?"

According to Suzette Laboy of The Associated Press, in her article entitled "Ballroom Dancing Dreams of Olympics" (see USA Dance.org for article), DanceSport could be added in 2016" but will not be included in the 2012 Olympic Games after all.

The IOC (International Olympic Committee) includes a number of factors when considering the addition of a new sport, such as its history & tradition as well as its spectatorship. When the IOC asked DanceSport to increase its television viewership as a viable source for spectators, the dance community did just that. Ballroom dancing (with DanceSport being the competitive aspect of ballroom), is by far one of the most popular viewed sports on television.

Another consideration is gender parity. "DanceSport is one of a few sports in which men and women compete against each other in the same playing field, which is a big deal for the IOC," said Peter Pover, President of USA Dance.

So it appears that the ballroom dancing community remains optimistic about its inclusion into the Olympics – and its patience, since the inception of USA Dance's vision in 1965, remains intact.

Our Chapter's Quest

Even while Olympic DanceSport hopefuls continue their journey to achieve a dream, Phoenix USA Dance will continue its pursuit of providing affordable ballroom dancing excellence, despite naturally occurring changes.

This dream - started by a few, joined by many, and enjoyed by all – is an endeavor well-worth the efforts involved. But its continuance will directly depend upon the cooperation of its members, as the "baton" is now passed along.

My 4+ years as your chapter president will conclude at the end of this year, thereby allowing the new ideas and innovative actions of others to emerge. So I strongly encourage you to consider running for an open board position, possibly as an officer, as some of us who began this project in Sept. of 2004 are ready to move on to other opportunities and adventures that life has to offer.

Though it is true that the time and energy donated as a volunteer in a non-profit organization involves a commitment of caring and responsibility, it is also quite true that the feeling of giving back to the community in the form of dance is a remarkable and unique gift. It creates positive experiences and memories that you may never have thought would manifest. And it touches people's lives in a way that can be described as "embracing the heart" like no other activity I know.

Give it some thought, reach out to your fellow dancers, and consider serving on your chapter's board, so that the initial dream began by a few can continue for the many. Believe me, you will be a better person for it.

Until next time, happy dancing to everyone.



Priscilla

"Learning to walk sets you free. Learning to dance gives you the greatest freedom of all: to express with your whole self the person you are."

- Melissa Hayden

Dance University

Part One—Etiquette



Article authored by Jean Kim

Dance Faux Pas to be avoided by Women:

1. The Claw—when a woman clutches the man's right arm in an iron grip. This can be painful, especially with long nails.
2. The Coat Hanger or Draper—when the woman does not support the weight of her own frame, especially the arms, and “hangs” on the man. This is tiring, and makes it very difficult to lead.
3. Role Reverser—Other than lack of rhythm, this is the most common complaint by men. When a woman “takes over” on the dance floor and does not follow anything the man attempts to lead. This is not the same as “hijacking”, which is allowed and can be quite fun and mutually entertaining in certain dances such as West Coast Swing and others.
4. Spaghetti Arms—when a woman has no frame or connection. Again, this can be extremely tiring for the man as he has to expend twice the effort to lead the woman.
5. Miss Sourpuss—when a woman frowns, eye-rolls, shakes her head, looks bored or even angry with how her partner dances. This behavior is likely to cost you future dances and gain you a reputation of not being an enjoyable partner.

Dance Faux Pas to be avoided by Men:

1. The Non-Existent Leader or “Ghost”—when a man is ambiguous or late with his leads. This is one of the most common complaints by women. It is not the job of the woman to anticipate what the man wishes her to do on the dance floor. A firm, decisive lead is always preferred to one that is tentative, since it is the woman who usually ends up looking incompetent because she can't finish what the man started; or the lead is so ambiguous, she has no idea what he would like her to do.
2. The Egoist—the man who “outdances” - whether in ability or just attitude—his partner. This can include showboating, or attempting to lead a partner through moves they are not familiar with nor have the experience to do yet. This can make for a very uncomfortable, and even embarrassing, turn on the floor.
3. Spaghetti Arms—yes, men do this, too. Lack of frame on either side of the dance partner equation makes for a difficult situation. In the man, however, it is an even greater faux pas.
4. The Dictator—when a man leads by either snapping verbal commands or arm-wrenching his partner. No one likes to be bulldozed or dragged around the floor. Remember—you “invited” your partner to dance. This behavior should continue as your lead “invites” the lady to follow each move you initiate rather than forcing it.
5. The Pervert—sorry, guys, but they're out there. While not large in number, there are those male dancers who have wandering hands, give indiscreet looks, make unwanted advances, and even stalk partners. We won't leave the ladies out of this category, as there are those of the female persuasion who can be just as aggressive or socially boundary-less, but it is more rare.

Nothing to Fear but Fear Itself

Alias: Ellen Sinclair

I wasn't even a glimmer in my parents' eyes when Franklin D. Roosevelt uttered those famous words. Granted, he had a much different and grander purpose in mind when he used them in his inaugural address, but they still ring as true today as when he first spoke them. And they are applicable to so many situations....dancing included.

Everyone can remember the first time they considered ballroom dancing, especially if you came to the activity after you had reached adulthood, particularly "mature" adulthood....need I say more? You may have seen dancing on TV, or knew other friends who participated, or you had noticed dancers through those big picture windows of a neighborhood studio—and you wanted to be a part of it. But you were afraid. Were you coordinated enough? Could you learn fast enough? Were you too old? Could you physically keep up? Would you look stupid? Would anyone actually dance with you? All realistic and rational fears.

But something inside you said "yes", you can do it. So you walked into your first studio or dance class and put yourself on the floor. It was scary, but exhilarating at the same time. You connected to the music, to the instructor, and to other dancers as friends, all sharing a common passion for dance. And a new world opened. New places to go. New faces to see. New adventures to explore. Each new dance learned, each new pattern, brought with it a challenge and that recurring fear of failure, the cyclical and never-

ending reminder of how much you DON'T know, no matter how much you learn. But you don't quit. You're in it now, for the long haul.

Then you possibly face the next level of fear.... Performance. Whether in a showcase or on the competition floor, the fear that goes with putting yourself out there in the spotlight, with everyone watching, and judges critiquing every move, every gesture, every facial expression—it's enough to make you want to crawl into a hole. But you don't. You cringe when you see the videos—all those pictures in your head of elegant lines, sassy syncopations, and grandiose arm stylings—all fade when you see how small and stiff those moves look. (heavy sigh) What should you do next? Quit? Or work even harder, practice even more, listen to your coaches and instructors and step out of that comfort zone and "sell it"?

The answer's not that hard to figure out—of course, you go for it. You're beyond letting fear stop you now. If anything, it drives you on—becoming just one more obstacle to overcome and master—like that ultimate featherstep, or that perfect allemande. Learning to use fear as a tool is the ultimate lesson. Fear is nullified when replaced with knowledge, resolve, and self-empowerment.

"You gain strength, courage and confidence by every in which you stop to look fear in the face; You must do the thing you think you cannot do."

- Eleanor Roosevelt

Pearls from the Pros

Guest Professional: Tommy Newby



1. What first inspired you to dance?

I've always wanted to dance, since I was very young. I enjoyed watching variety shows and other entertainment forms growing up, and it was an easy step from observer to performer.

2. What keeps you on the dance floor through the years?

The sheer joy of dancing, and the constant challenge of something new to learn. Every day. Dance is always changing, always evolving, and always fresh.

3. What “gem of dance wisdom” would you like to share with other dancers?

Good technique is not limited to competitive dancers or pros. Social dancers will find their dances much more enjoyable, both for themselves and for their partners, if they know how to execute and DO execute good technique. Labeling one's self as a social dancer is no reason to be “sloppy” or do the steps without finesse and skill.

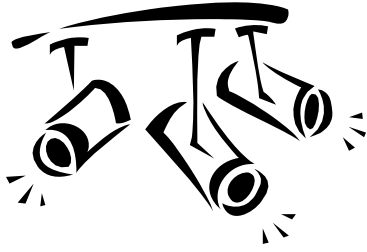
Bio:

- Ballet Major at the University of Oklahoma
- Danced for two seasons with the Houston Ballet
- Operated several studios (ballet and ballroom)
- Professional ballroom competitor for over 20 years
- Certified Terpsichore Association instructor

Contact Info:

Tommy Newby

Phone: (480) 280-4652



Member Spotlight

Sharilyn Deerman

Phx USA Dance Board Member

1. What first got you dancing?

I watched ballroom dancing on public television with the thought “some day I’d like to learn to dance.” Several years ago when my “mom duties” became minimal, I started taking ballroom dance instruction. Never would I have guessed the impact of that decision. I had no idea how much fun it would be, the exercise benefits and the many new friends I would meet.

2. What is your favorite dance and why?

In the beginning waltz was my favorite dance, but after dancing bolero, waltz had to take second place. I enjoy the flow and elegance of the waltz with the rise and fall of movements along with the turns and sways. Bolero speaks to the person within with its romantic, sweeping, sensual movements. It also allows the flirty side of my personality that surfaced after I started dancing.

3. Describe one of your favorite dance moments or memories

Just one, now that’s impossible. One of my best dance memories is from my first showcase. My instructor felt that I should do a routine outside my comfort zone. With only six months of dance instruction there was a lot outside my comfort zone! It was a fun experience that set the stage for many more great memories. The group formations were a lot of work but provided numerous good times. Laughing at our mistakes, teasing the instructors and making new friends is a formula for fun. Other fond memories are from dancing in nursing and retirement homes. It is heartwarming to see faces in the audience light up with recognition as they relive happier times sparked by the music and dancers.



4. What advice would you like to share with other dancers?

My advice to dancers is to try various locations, instructors and partners taking from each experience what “fits” for you. If you take private instruction, practice between sessions to keep your momentum. If you have a regular partner, you are indeed a lucky dancer! Most of all - let it be FUN.

It is a joy to experience the explosion of ballroom dance in the Phoenix area the last few years. When I first started dancing, the previous USA Dance chapter had disbanded, and there was no central place for dance information. Dance studios were few and literally far between. My family thought I was crazy driving from North Phoenix to Central Phoenix, Tempe and Chandler to dance! Serving on the steering committee to reactivate the Phoenix chapter, the Board of Directors, prior Outreach Chairperson, and currently as Treasurer, has allowed me to witness first-hand the phenomenal growth of our chapter. For me, this is a dream fulfilled, and I look forward to participating in the years ahead.



Ballet de Martin Gaxiola will rattle the floorboards of Cezar's Restaurant in the Hotel Scottsdale each Wednesday! This scaled-down production takes audiences back to the roots of flamenco in a 'tablao' setting. Performing through August 31st.



**THE ARIZONA
LINDY HOP
SOCIETY**

Third Friday Swing Night

Third Friday Swing Night will introduce dances from the Big Band Era - learn to swing! Dances such as the Lindy Hop (Jitterbug), East Coast Swing, Charleston, Shag, and Balboa will be taught, followed by a dance. You'll hear tunes from Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, and more.

So You Think You Can Dance?

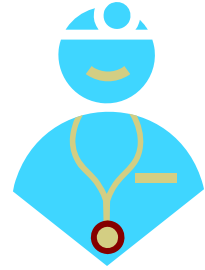
It's B-A-A-CK!!!

For its fourth season, **So You Think You Can Dance** is bringing the varying flavors of diverse dance styles to television audiences across the country.

On FOX network at 8 pm on Wednesdays and Thursdays, this show is sure to please as the viewers vote weekly for their favorite dancers, and the field narrows little by little..... until only one remains.

Dance University

Part Two—TRIAGE



Article pulled from AARP newsletter

Let's Dance to Health!

Dancing can be magical and transforming. It can breathe new life into a tired soul; make a spirit soar; unleash locked-away creativity; unite generations and cultures; inspire new romances or rekindle old ones; trigger long-forgotten memories; and turn sadness into joy, if only during the dance.

On a more physical level, dancing can give you a great mind-body workout. Researchers are learning that regular physical activity in general can help keep your body, including your brain, healthy as you age. Exercise increases the level of brain chemicals that encourage nerve cells to grow. And dancing that requires you to remember dance steps and sequences boosts brain power by improving memory skills.

There has been some promising research in this area, according to Rita Beckford, M.D., a family doctor and spokesperson for the American Council on Exercise. For instance, a 2003 study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* found that ballroom dancing at least twice a week made people less likely to develop dementia. Research also has shown that some people with Alzheimer's disease are able to recall forgotten memories when they dance to music they used to know.

Whether it's ballet or ballroom, clogging or jazz, dance is great for helping people of all ages and physical abilities get and stay in shape. There's even chair dancing for people with physical limitations. A 150-pound adult can burn about 150 calories doing 30 minutes of moderate social dancing.

Benefits Abound

Like other moderate, low-impact, weight bearing activities, such as brisk walking, cycling or aerobics, dancing can help:

- strengthen bones and muscles without hurting your joints
- tone your entire body
- improve your posture and balance, which can prevent falls
- increase your stamina and flexibility
- reduce stress and tension
- build confidence
- provide opportunities to meet people, and
- ward off illnesses like diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, osteoporosis, and depression

So if you're tired of the treadmill and looking for a fun way to stay fit and healthy,
it might be time to kick up your heels!

The Competition Committee Has Decided

As you know, we were all trying to figure out whether “To sanction or not to sanction” – that was the question.

But, since gas has gone up considerably, air travel is more expensive, and the economy is unstable, we have decided not to add to it by having to raise prices for our competitors. That being said, the committee decision was made not to sanction, at least for the 2009 Phoenix DanceSport Challenge.

The good news is that we have selected a new venue: El Zaribah Shrine Auditorium, 552 N. 40th St., Phoenix, 85008, which is much more centrally located and near to the airport and hotels. This location also vastly improves the parking situation from our previous competitions.

And as per many of your requests, we have chosen the third Saturday of February for two reasons. 1) The obvious: it’s on a Saturday, and travelers have Sunday to return home. Plus, it helps those who have Sunday commitments. 2) Since it’s later in the month than last year, competitors will now have a couple more weeks to prepare.

So, we are “business as usual.” Tentatively the times will be 11am to 7pm, depending on entries. The entry fees will be the same as last year - \$25 for adult & senior competitors, \$20 for students, and \$15 for our youth and pre-teens.

One Major Change

In accordance with the new USA Dance DanceSport rulebook effective Jan. 2008, You may dance in only two consecutive events in the same category. For example, if you are in smooth, you may dance Bronze/Silver, Silver/Gold, Gold/Novice, Novice/Pre-Champ, or Pre-Champ/Champ. You cannot jump over a level; they must be consecutive.

This doesn’t mean this is all you can dance. You may dance in all 4 categories (smooth, rhythm, standard, Latin) in two consecutive levels with no additional entry fees required.

If you have further questions, please contact me at Felix@PhoenixUSADance.org. And don’t forget: GET YOUR APPLICATIONS IN ON TIME! Deadline will be **Feb. 7, 2009** with no late fees.

Thank you very much.

Felix Ray, Competition Chair
623-551-2324

Dance University

Part Three— History

As with many things — our views of dance have changed over time. Throughout history, dancing has been honored—

- as an expression of emotions such as joy or sorrow or rage
- as a way to communicate by acting out current or historical events
- as a way to unite a group of people

Tribes celebrated good harvests and successful hunts with music and dance, thanking the gods who provided for them so bountifully. Early man bolstered his courage and surged his adrenalin with war chants and dance in preparation for battle. Are we so dissimilar today? Do we not stomp our feet and sing “We Will Rock You!” when sitting in the stands at a ballgame? Do we not still have anthems around the world that instantly bring feelings of unity to us as nations when we hear them? Do we not gather together to share the joy of movement, either as spectators or participants?

But dance has also been reviled—

- as an act of demonic possession
- as a sign of insanity,
- as a sin or crime against religion

One might think that such “negative press” for dancing is something from the ancient past, back in the times of witch hunts and exorcisms. Such attitudes make us think of primitive and superstitious times in a dark and distant past. In reality, we don’t have to look all that far back to see how this skewed

perspective could impact people’s lives. An example: A woman in Texas died in 2005 at the age of 85 of natural causes. When researching for her obituary, it was discovered that she had been incarcerated in a mental institution for 51 years, from the age of 16, because she defied her parents’ strict religious beliefs that viewed dancing as a sin. It was not until the 1980’s, when other family members took her case to court, that her diagnosis was overturned and she was released.

Dance has the power to move us—to tears of sorrow and release, or to leaps of joy and ecstasy. Dance can tell a story without words, often with more clarity and eloquence than any narrative. Dance is something that is universal. Dance is timeless and ageless. The youngest child finds expression in dance before they ever know how to count the beats of music which moves them—they dance even without music, listening to the beat of their own heart and hearing the music in their souls.

While every era has considered itself more enlightened than the one that preceded it, let us all hope that we will never lose the “light” of dance in our world....for it will truly be a darker place without it.

“There is a bit of insanity in dancing that does everybody a great deal of good.”

- Edwin Denby

HELP WANTED

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

- Coming This Fall -

Your Phoenix USA Dance Board Elections!!!!

Watch for details on how you can participate.

Keep your eyes open in this section for future “ads” where you can put your membership into action within the Phoenix USA Dance chapter.

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 just volunteer once, you will have helped us out immensely. Positions open 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 Ginny Zeroulis or Sherry Parmon for details.

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