

Volume 4, Issue 4

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PHOENIX CHAPTER #4033

Dance Chatter

Top Hat, White Tie and Tails!

Okay, okay. You don't have to go that far, guys, but you know we love to see you spiffed up a bit—not that you don't ALWAYS look good!. I mean, after all, we ladies will be putting on the ritz ourselves in October. Trust me, it's not easy finding a formal dress that you don't step on when you dance backwards, or that doesn't fall off or fall apart when you're dancing a hot chacha! And you men think a TIE is confining and troublesome!!!

But whatever the peril of possible wardrobe malfunction or the challenge of finding the perfect outfit that both fits AND looks good, the Phoenix USA Dance Black Tie event is at our doorstep once again. **October 25th is fast approaching.** With a large dance floor, decorated venue, photographer, catered dinner, great dance music, and wonderful entertainment. You can probably ask for more, but why would you?

We look forward to seeing familiar as well as new faces at the tables and on the dance floor this year. We hope this year's event will be the best yet!



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Hello, dancing friends.

As 2008 draws to a close, so too does my final term of office as president of the Phoenix chapter. And believe me when I say these last four + years have been among the most fabulously memorable of my entire life!

Never in my wildest dreams would I have imagined so many *extraordinary* experiences that have come about in such a short time:

- bimonthly social dances bringing together over 200 people at each event
- annual gala Black Ties
- yearly all-amateur competitions
- numerous committees and programs, such as hospitality, dance hosts, outreach, youth-college network and more
- monthly & quarterly newsletters (thanks to the masterful writing skills of editor, **Sue Putzier!**)
- “Chapter of the Year” accolades for the S.W. Region membership of over 300 dancers

Wow, we have been a busy group, haven't we?

But none of this would have been possible had it not been for the efforts of these *extraordinary* people. From our initial Steering Committee formed in 2004...

Sherry Parmon

Walter Parmon

Patricia Koepp

Sharilyn Deerman

Barb Michlin

Ray Palant

Felix Ray

Jim Moule

...most of whom then served on our first 9-member Board of Directors, including: **King Lai**

...to the current Board, including: **Ginny Zeroulis**

...these incredible worker bees have tirelessly worked together through “thick & thin” to bring the joy and beauty of ballroom dancing to all of you. I cannot say enough good things about each and every one of these folks who have helped make this journey for me so extremely special. I will be grateful to them for the rest of my days!!

But now it's time to make room for new energy, new ideas, and new smiling faces as the baton is soon to be handed to the next 7-member Board of Directors. Please join me in extending a very warm welcome to the newest additions to your Board: **Cheryl Leggett, Beth Kahn and Bill Jackson**

I could not be happier about this announcement, as I know the chapter will continue to grow and thrive under the direction of this highly capable and dedicated group!

Plus, I want to thank all of the marvelous volunteers who have devoted their time and efforts in making this chapter a cohesive and fun environment for all dancers. And I humbly ask each of you to consider assisting the new Board in propelling the chapter activities into 2009 and beyond. They will need your help in many ways, especially in the area of the chapter dances. Please consider volunteering in the following aspects: **music, refreshments** (these are reimbursable), **decorating**.

Thank you to all of you for embracing both me and Felix into the heart of the Phoenix dance community. And now it's “time 2 dance,” everyone!

Priscilla

Dance University

Part One—Etiquette



Excerpt from article by Aria Nosratinia

How to get “Chosen”:

If you are a considerate social dancer who always puts his/her partner first, you are well on your way to being a success. However, building a reputation takes time. What makes someone popular at first sight? What is a potential partner looking for as they are scoping the room at the start of each dance?

Good dancers are in demand: This is by far the most effective way of becoming popular in the dancing circles. Regardless of everything else, good dancers are always in demand. This should serve as a powerful incentive to try and improve your dancing. There is no need to know a million patterns; but one needs to have good technique and lead/follow. Practice, practice, practice! Then practice some more.

Dancers seek dancers: Dancers are more likely to seek those they see dancing on the floor. Only as a second choice do they turn to those sitting on the sidelines. Maybe this is due to a feeling of confidence that someone seen on the floor is actually a dancer, or a pleasant dancer, or is less likely to decline a dance. Whatever the reason, if you are seen dancing on the floor, you have a better chance of getting the next dance. Do your best to get the first few dances once you arrive at a dance event; it gets easier afterwards.

Dance shoes: Dancers look for dancers, but how does one spot a dancer (unless you see one dancing)? The answer is: dance shoes! At a dance event where people don't know each other, you will see experienced dancers scan the crowd, not looking at faces, but rather looking at the feet! Making an investment in a pair of dance shoes is a sign of enthusiasm for dancing. Dancers know that, so wearing dance shoes will increase your chances of getting asked to dance.

Dancers seek those who say “yes”: Being turned down for a dance is never fun. Besides, it is a waste of time: with only a few seconds between songs, if one gets turned down once or twice, the next song is a loss. If you decline dances, or if you look stern, or hard to please, your chances of being asked to dance will be reduced.

Eagerness, willingness to dance: Stand close to the edge of the dance floor. Watch the dancers on the floor, tap your foot to the music. Smile. Dancers will be attracted to you if they feel you want to dance. Better yet, don't wait to be asked. Go ask someone to dance! What is the worst that can happen? Even if you are turned down, you have demonstrated your willingness to dance.

Sense of humor, pleasantness: Be nice to your partner. He/She was certainly nice enough to ask you to dance, or agree to dance with you, so return the favor. Remember, you are there to have fun, so have fun! Have, or at least emulate, a pleasant demeanor. Most importantly, smile!

Physical attraction: This is the one factor that is somewhat out of our control, but it is undeniable that in dancing, as everywhere else, good-looking people have an advantage. Men, especially, will gravitate to pretty women. Women, while lamenting the shallowness of men, generally behave no better. That said, for the most of us who are not endowed with movie-star looks, there is good news. Good looks might help in getting the first dance, but in the long run, personality, sense of humor, and most importantly good dancing skills, trumps good looks (at least on the dance floor).

A Journey Is Not A Destination

Guest Author — Jo Erikson

A journey not a destination....

What other hobby or sport can be compared to dancing? It's a combination of physical, social, mental and creative. By physical—it demands a degree of flexibility, coordination, rhythm, strength, endurance and grace. It is social - mingling with fellow dancers. Mental—learning patterns and technique and remembering choreography. It also takes creativity - creating the dance and infusing a degree of improvisation to enhance the musicality of the dance. Dancing also brings tears of joy and, at times, tears of frustration. Learning is never-ending and there is always something more to achieve to reach the next level. Even the professionals at the top would say this.

As an amateur dancer, I dream longingly of someday coming close to looking like the pros. I am in awe of the beautiful lines they create, the power of their steps, the energy and excitement they generate in their dance. How do they do it? Invariably the answer is practice, practice, practice, using correct technique. Easier said than done!!

Everyone has a goal for their dancing. Some learn to dance to enhance their social life and have fun on the dance floor. Others, like me, choose to compete— which keeps one focused on achieving and improving to the next level of dance...a process that never stops!

Competition day starts with hours of preparation, especially for the women. The hair perfect, the makeup, the eyelashes, the tanning and, of course the all important dress. (Oh the dress... spending more on one garment than

one would ever spend in an entire lifetime)! But this is part of the transformation. Then comes the waiting and the jitters. Those jitters!!! Overcoming the nerves (or for me—FEAR) can make or break a competition. So we wait and finally, your number is called. Your pro partner looks you in the eye and says “Relax... enjoy your dancing...pretend it is dancing for friends...and above all look at me.”

You walk onto the floor grateful for the support of friends cheering you on. Grateful for your teacher who has worked with you so hard up to this very minute ...hoping not to disappoint him. You are on your way. No turning back now. You feel the floor for the first time. Is it slow or fast? The bright lights, the judges the other dancers. The music starts. You take your place. You ease into the very important first step. You try to breath. You listen to the music. You connect with your partner. Oh the thrill of dancing!!

No matter how one placed, the most important thing is how you danced. Was it an improvement? You look at the dreaded tape afterwards, trying to conjure up the courage to look at yourself. Asking friends to view it with you over a bottle of wine! Yes, I have cried many times. Other times thinking “no, so bad.... I'm actually learning.” But never satisfied and always more to learn!!

So at the end of the day you say to yourself “Was it worth the hard work, the tears of frustration, and the nerves?” For me, yes. I went out there, overcame my fears and did it! After all is said and done, I enjoy the dance. Good and not so good. It is all a part of the journey for something you love. The journey that never ends.

Pearls from the Pros

Guest Professional: Ron Montez



*“Dance is the hidden language
of the soul.”*
- Martha Graham

What first inspired you to dance?

I started as an instructor in 1964—it was just a job at first, but it turned into much more as time went on. I knew it was something I would do, in some capacity, for a long time because it was, and is, a passion for me.

What keeps you on the dance floor through the years?

How dance fits into my life has been an evolution over time. I started as a teacher and competitor, both with great success. Choreographer followed. As an adjudicator, I continue to view dance with a fresh eye, while keeping my own feet still firmly on the dance floor as an instructor. Just as dance is ever-evolving and changing, so does its role and place in our lives. There’s always something new on the horizon, or the next level of achievement we can strive toward. You never want to stop growing and learning.

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

As with anything you want to do well—practice makes perfect. If you want to be good, you have to put in the time—whether your goal is to be a good social dancer or a good competitive dancer—it won’t happen without putting in the time and effort needed to create a strong foundation on which to build.

Bio:

Ron Montez started dancing and teaching in 1964 at the Arthur Murray Dance Studio in Tucson. He was there for seven years and became a dance director before moving on to Brigham Young University. For two years he was under the direction of the famous Roy Mavor who was then the director of the dance program. During his career, Ron won numerous ballroom and latin titles and especially made a major impact at the British Open. Then in 1979 he met Liz Curtis and became the 7 time undefeated United States Latin American Champion, World Finalist and British Finalist. Ron Montez is one of the most respected personalities in the dance business, as a dancer, coach and judge not only in the United States but internationally. He is a World Renowned coach & choreographer in both American & International Styles including Swing, and is a DVIDA National Examiner. Ron and his wife Karla currently reside in Marana, AZ.

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Rondance@comcast.net



Anthem Autumnfest

[Arts Council of the
North Valley, Inc.](#)

October 24-October 26, 2008

Autumnfest showcases exciting performances at the first annual Anthem Autumnfest. The ACNV is presenting Foot Klan (hip hop and break dancing), Axe Capoeira (Brazilian dance and martial arts), Fiesta Mexicana, Tausala (Somoan fire dance) and Arizona Broadway Theatre, Pete Pancrazi (jazz).

Free Admmission



Arizona Dance Festival

[Desert Dance Theatre, Inc.](#)

October 10—October 11, 2008

The Arizona Dance Festival will showcase individuals, emerging artist groups and professional companies from all genres and styles of dance. Desert Dance Theatre specializes in theme-related programs that focus on cultural diversity and the lives of people who have fought for freedom in America.

Tempe Center for the Arts
700 W. Rio Salado Parkway
Tempe

Tickets: \$15—\$20

Phoenix USA Dance Chapter Event

The next regularly scheduled dance will be November 8th.

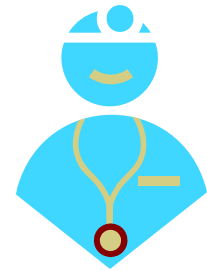
Phoenix Arthur Murray Studio
12th Street and Indian School

Guest instructor—Paul Jack

Come one—Come all

Dance University

Part Two—TRIAGE



Lower Dementia Risk

Medical Studies Confirm Ballroom Dancing Keeps Elderly Fit, Alert and Happy

May 27, 2005 – A medical study of elderly men and women over age 75 concludes what ballroom dance fans have always known - their favorite activity is great for health and happiness. The complexity and moving with the music lower the risk of dementia, the researchers say.

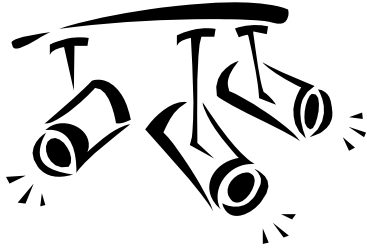
Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York City studied 469 people over age 75 and found that ballroom dancing was associated with a lowered risk of dementia. The mentally challenging aspects of dancing -- following complex dance steps, moving in time and staying with the rhythm of music -- is believed to be responsible. The study was published in the New England Journal of Medicine.

In the last few years, many prominent medical research centers have announced clinical studies highlighting the benefits of a regular program of ballroom dance both for fitness and battling Alzheimer's.

"We see the benefits of ballroom dancing in our studios every day, and we see it whenever our students and teachers gather for dance parties and competitions. Dancers are a lively and social group, excited about what they are doing and enjoying each other's company," says Thomas D. Murdock, Vice President, Marketing for Arthur Murray International. "They are happy and they are having fun. It's a winning combination for everyone."

Studies on the benefits of ballroom dance have also been conducted by California State University at Long Beach, showing that even beginning students can get their heart rates up to near-maximum training rates with a five-minute warm-up and a 20-minute Cha Cha, Polka or Swing. Even moderate ballroom dance burns between 250 - 300 calories per hour, and vigorous dancing can burn as many as 400 calories per hour.

In addition, the Mayo Clinic Health Letter encouraged readers to try ballroom dancing as a great way to burn calories, improve cardiovascular health and help in developing strong social ties, which contributes to self-esteem and a positive outlook.



Member Spotlight

Ann Sin
and
Ernie Liverman

1. What first got you dancing?

A—I always wanted to dance, since childhood, but it wasn't until later in life that I finally decided to dive in and try my dream.

E—I have tried many things in my life—football, chef, Tai Chi, martial arts, along with many other things. A friend invited me to a dance, and I decided very quickly it was something I wanted to do.

2. What is your favorite dance and why?

A—I love all forms of dance, but Tango is my soul.

E—I, too, love many different dance styles, but Waltz is my favorite because the music and the movements are so beautiful.

3. Describe one of your favorite dance moments or memories

A—There are too many to count—the best is that spiritual moment when two dancers become one couple on the floor.

E—It doesn't get much better than dancing with all the beautiful ladies when serving as a dance host at the Phoenix USA dances.



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

A—” Enjoy every single moment of your life. Don't ever forget that dancing is about partnership; be a good partner and you'll be rewarded in kind.”

E—”Enjoy dancing—get out there and dance with many different people. Practice as much as you can to get the benefit of any lesson you take. Dancing is not how many moves you know, but the technique behind it. Keep dancing!”



Phoenix DanceSport Challenge

We are very excited that the 2009 Phoenix DanceSport Challenge is materializing once again. We have selected a new venue, the 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 were able to schedule the comp. on Saturday February 21, 2009, with the deadline for entries to be February 10th. 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. Here’s the link:

http://phoenixusadance.org/dancesport_challenge.html.

The following have already agreed to help us with our next challenge:

Emcee: Paul Jack **Music Director:** Brent Mills **Adjudicators:** Jenell Maranto (Judge Chair)
Scrutineer: Walter Parmon, **Registrar:** Sherry Parmon, **Deck Captain:** Judy Nixon

We had a strong showing last year from our neighboring Chapter Tucson, U of A, ASU, and our wonderful kids from Camp Verde, plus, the local independent studios. We’re looking at having competitors from pre-teens through seniors once again. So please put this on your calendar of events.

Along with ballroom events and our Salsa events, we will be having formation team demonstrations. A Latin exhibition organized and choreographed by Brenda Smith of ASU and one more from ASU Devil DanceSport we may even have one from U of A this year.

I’d like to reiterate, even though we are a local competition, National USA Dance is still watching us closely to be in the rotation for the Southwest Region of the National Qualifying Event (NQE). So we will be adhering to the USA Dance Rulebook. I recommend that you review it or download it from National’s website at www.usadance.org.

Who knows – we still might turn into a championship competition for Phoenix yet.

Again, 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 age and proficiency 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.

Thank you very much. Always feel free to contact me with any questions. If I don’t know, I will find out for you.

Felix Ray, Competition Chairman
623-551-2324 Email: Felix@PhoenixUSADance.org

Dance University

Part Three— History

.The Foxtrot

Named for Harry Fox (born Arthur Carringford in Pomona, CA), the foxtrot was a dance that swept the country after it first debuted at the Jardin de Danse on the rooftop of the New York Theatre. While Harry Fox himself never took credit for originating the actual dance steps, and it is unclear still today exactly who first created it, the foxtrot will forever be linked to him.

On his own since the age of 15, Harry Fox followed a weaving course across the country—with stints in the circus and as a baseball player—he ultimately came to vaudeville because an agent found his voice pleasant and signed him to sing in a show. He soon gained a reputation as a quality dancer, and it was his role as the “between movies entertainment” at the New York Theatre—one of the largest theatres in the world at the time - which ultimately launched his fame. His quick, trotting dance innovation, dubbed “Fox’s Trot” became all the rage, and has continued its reign as one of the most popular, most widely danced, and ultimately, most difficult dances to learn and perfect in the country, if not the world.

Vernon and Irene Castle



*Fred Astaire and
Ginger Rogers*

In 1914, when Harry Fox arrived in New York, many accomplished dancers were attempting to make the shift from vaudeville to movies. From live performance to film. Irene and Vernon Castle were successful at this shift. As, obviously, were Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. The foxtrot, in part, contributed to the success of these dancers, partly because of the variety with which it can be danced without ever looking redundant, and the cross-over appeal it had with the masses who danced it in social clubs, at parties, and modified it to a wide variety of music styles all across the country. The Peabody, the Lindy, the Quickstep, and many other dances owe their roots to the Foxtrot's “slow, slow, quick, quick” foundation.

“Dance is the only art of which we ourselves are the stuff of which it is made.”

--Ted Shawn

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
in the near future for details and bios
on your newly elected board members!

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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