

Volume 5, Issue 2

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PHOENIX CHAPTER #4033

Dance Chatter



April 24th to May 3rd

Everybody has a special “moment” in our society now-a-days. There’s Bosses Day. Administrative Assistant Day. Social Workers Appreciation Month. The list is endless. It’s wonderful to be recognized as “special”.

NATIONAL DANCE WEEK is a time for all dancers to celebrate—not only our mutual love of dance, in all its many forms and styles—but our united desire to expand this great means of expression and interaction.

So do your part! During the week of April 24th—May 3rd, don’t just stick to your regular dance routine. Branch out! Try something new in the dance world. Experiment with a new dance style. Go to a new social dance location. Invite (or drag) along someone who has commented that they’d like to “try dancing” but haven’t dipped their toe in the pool yet. Or my favorite, when you are out dancing, even at the tried and true locations, ask someone you don’t know to dance—that terrified and intimidated beginner. Or be brave yourself and ask that super-slick dancer whose elegant foxtrot or hot chacha you’ve always admired for a tour of the dance floor. Whatever you choose—do SOMETHING to celebrate this special week!

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President's Point of View

by Beth Kahn

I can't believe the first three months of my term as your chapter president have passed. During this time, your chapter has been involved in many activities. I want to use this letter to thank everyone for their participation –and mention a few special people.



We put on two chapter dances, one in January and one in March. Thank you to everyone who attended these dances. Our January dance was on the same night as the Cardinal playoff game. We were able to announce the score several times. Our March dance was also successful and the board was so happy to see so many new faces. Thank you, board members Cheryl Leggett and Sherry Parmon, for bringing us some wonderful munchies to keep us energized on the dance floor.

February 21st was the date of our 4th Annual Phoenix Challenge DanceSport Competition. Your chapter secretary, Felix Ray, spends many days coordinating this event. He is assisted by former chapter president Priscilla Dean, along with board member Sherry Parmon and former board members Walter Parmon and Barbara Michlin. We could not conduct this event without the help of many other volunteers who assist us at the registration desk, gather judges' scoresheets and make sure the dancers are in the "on deck" area when their heats are announced. Thank you all so much!!

Ray Palant, board member at large, takes wonderful photographs at every event.

Led by Barbie Brasch and Sue Eldred, our outreach volunteers are performing at nursing homes and other venues across the valley.

Sue Putzier - thank you for doing such a great job with this newsletter.

Thank you all for helping make our chapter a fun and growing chapter. We couldn't do it without YOU!!

Beth

Next Chapter Dance—Saturday, May 9th

*Let us read and let us dance--two amusements that will never
do any harm to the world.*

--Voltaire

Dance University

Part One—Etiquette



Remember when...

Having been dancing for five years now, I often take myself back to WHY I started in the first place. I didn't set out to be a competitive dancer—Heaven Forbid! You could have bet me money back in the early days of my dancing that you would NEVER see me on a competition floor wearing rhinestones and fake eyelashes! That came later and under serious duress!

What draws the vast majority of us to this hobby is the social aspect of dancing. We desired to try something new. To learn a new skill set. To meet new people. And to strive to look as elegant and at-ease on a social dance floor as Fred and Ginger.

Do you remember how hard it was to make that first move? To walk into that first studio or dance class, and put yourself into foreign territory? To risk embarrassment because the only thing you knew for sure was that you knew nothing? Remember your first outing to a social dance?—all those people who knew more than you did, and knew each other.

Do you remember how excited you were (maybe just inside) when that lightbulb went off and you “got it” - you felt you were really making progress because you could execute a pattern without mistakes. And unfortunately, how quickly that buoyant feeling would dissipate as soon as you realized how much more there still was to learn?

For the most part, we succeed in our primary goals:

1) Learning A New Skill: I have learned vast amounts since I started dancing. With every new dance, technique, or pattern that I learn, I also learn how much I STILL have to learn. It's never-ending....which makes it somewhat frustrating, but at the same time, makes it constantly challenging, ever-fresh, and self-renewing.

2) Meeting New People: I have met scores of people from every walk of life, both locally and when traveling

nationally for competitions. I may only see some of them on the dance floor, but that time is special. I'll admit I have my favorites for chacha; or my regular “meet you in the middle of the floor” for a nightclub two-step; those who put up with my lame attempts to improve my west coast swing; and the tolerant ones who bravely risk a Viennese with me (bless your hearts!). Each and every one is a unique experience of 2-5 minutes whenever we're on the floor together.

As far as dancing like Fred and Ginger, I'm still striving for that one. I may no longer be a wooden novice dancer, dutifully watching my feet while I step within my imaginary “box” on the floor, but I continually seek to emulate those dancers whose easy style or crisp control or unflinchingly centered balance I admire.

Dancers are a unique group. We may have our own little cliques (tango dancers, west coasters, ballroom, lindy-hoppers, etc), within our larger community, but we all share a mutual love of dance—what we can do with it and what we get from it. To keep our community strong and growing in a positive and productive manner, it behooves us all to do our part to “care” for that community. We would do well to remember the “early days”. We all start in the same place—as beginners. The one in the room who knows nothing and no one. The beginning dancers of today are the future social dance partners (and possible competitive dancers) of tomorrow.

We, as members of the dance community, have a responsibility to “share the wealth” of our experience, our knowledge, and our greater education. To share without bias, those things that keep our dance community happy and healthy.

- Respect for each and every dance partner.
- Safe floor craft
- Patronage to all those businesses that provide the dance environments which we so enjoy.



While you may not be able to travel to Baltimore to cheer on our Arizona competitors, you CAN send your good vibes in an easterly direction and wish them well April 3rd, 4th, and 5th, as they test themselves against some of the best dancers in the country.

For those who have never gone to a high level amateur-only competition with some of the top junior, youth and adult competitive couples in the country—it is a wonderful sight to see—and a truly humbling experience when you see the level of dedication these dancers display. A true test of any dancer's skill is to be on the dance floor, alone, no safety net other than yourself, your partner, and the hours of practice you have put in to get to that point. We salute all of you and wish you all the best!!

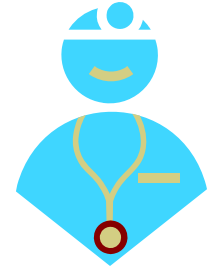
Please lend your silent support (*or not so silent if you choose*) to our Arizona contingent, and wish them well as they bring some Arizona **SIZZLE** to Baltimore!!

*To practice means to perform, in the face of all obstacles, some act of vision,
of faith, of desire. Practice is a means of inviting the perfection desired.*

- Martha Graham

Dance University

Part Two—TRIAGE



Back Pain

If you are like most people, you will have at least one backache in your life. While such pain or discomfort can happen anywhere in your back, the most common area affected is your low back. This is because the low back supports most of your body's weight.

Low back pain is the #2 reason that Americans see their doctor -- second only to colds and flus. Many back-related injuries happen at work or during active hobbies or tasks. There are many things you can do to lower your chances of getting back pain.

Most back problems will get better on their own. The key is to know when you need to seek medical help and when self-care measures alone will allow you to get better.

Low back pain may be acute (short-term), lasting less than one month, or chronic (long-term, continuous, ongoing), lasting longer than three months. While getting acute back pain more than once is common, continuous long-term pain is not.

As dancers, we utilize our bodies for a variety of movements. Some quick. Some slow. Some long and stretching. Others short and sharp. Each of these motions creates different muscle movements, which, if done improperly or without warming up, can cause discomfort to the spine.

Exercise is very important in preventing back injuries. Ways in which a good, well-rounded exercise program can help include:

- Improving your posture
- Strengthening your back and improving flexibility
- Losing weight
- Avoiding falls

A complete exercise program should include aerobic activity (like walking, swimming, or riding a stationary bicycle) as well as stretching and strength training.

Other tips for preventing back injury:

- Avoid standing for long periods of time.
- DO NOT wear high heels. Use cushioned soles when walking (unfortunately, this one is out for most latin/rhythm female dancers!!!)
- When sitting for work, especially if using a computer, make sure that your chair has a straight back with adjustable seat and back, armrests, and a swivel seat.
- Use a stool under your feet while sitting so that your knees are higher than your hips.
- Place a small pillow or rolled towel behind your lower back while sitting or driving for long periods of time. If you drive long distance, stop and walk around every hour. Don't lift heavy objects just after a ride.
- Quit smoking.
- Lose weight



Pearls From the Pros

Guest Professional—Paul Jack

What first inspired you to dance ?

I was dating a girl who bought a special program (4 lessons for \$50) and I agreed (with much complaining) to be her partner. At the end of the lessons, the manager sat down to talk to *her* about buying more lessons. She did not want to continue so everyone got up to leave and I said “what about me?” Everyone sat back down and the rest is history. I had never danced before, but I had played keyboards for 5 years and had been an athlete through high school and college. I thought this should be easy; but I struggled. The challenge of being able to dance soon became a love of dance.....

Never saw the girl again. Just a note: This all took place when every guy wanted a white suit and to be able to dance the hustle. Ouch!

What keeps you on the dance floor through the years?

It is always a learning process. Learning can come in different ways. It is not just learning a new step or technique; but how to motivate people, how to teach people. Everyone learns differently and the contentment I feel when a student gets a certain look on their face when all of a sudden they “get it”, whatever it may be at the time.

What piece of advice or wisdom would you like to share with other dancers, regardless of level?

It does not matter whether you are a beginner, open championship level, amateur or professional—dance is something that should bring joy and fulfillment into your life. Dancing is something you should look forward to, not dread. It is truly a rare art form because it is so “share-able” with others.



Paul Jack - Born in the Territory of Hawaii in 1952 as part of a Navy family. He moved to San Jose, CA in 1954 and lived there until moving to Arizona in 2003 with wife, Judy Nixon. Graduated from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo with a BS in Engineering Technology, with a Mechanical Option in 1975.

Started dancing in 1977, and teaching in 1978. Owned Dance Spectrum in California for 15 years and is co-organizer of Galaxy Dance Festival with wife, Judy Nixon. Teaches competitive and social dancing and currently competes with pro-am students. Is M/C at numerous Ballroom Dance Competitions throughout the United States. Phone: 623/640-9865. email: MCPJ@cox.net

Thank you, Paul, for your wonderful and loyal support of the Phoenix USA Dance chapter!!!!

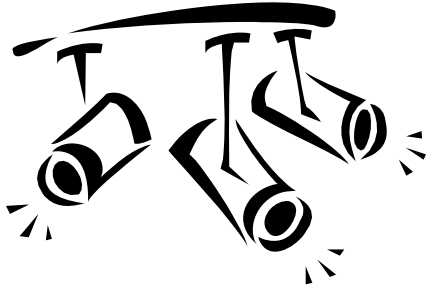
Dancing with the Stars

**Who will be next to go?
And who will remain at the end
when the music stops?**



DANCING WITH THE STARS - CAST:

LIL' KIM, DEREK HOUGH, BELINDA CARLISLE, JONATHAN ROBERTS, LAWRENCE TAYLOR, EDYTA SLIWINSKA, LACEY SCHWIMMER, GILES MARINI, CHERYL BURKE, JULIANNE HOUGH, CHUCK WICKS, HOLLY MADISON, DMITRY CHAPLIN, TOM BERGERON, SAMANTHA HARRIS, CHELSIE HIGHTOWER, TY MURRAY, SHAWN JOHNSON, MARK BALLAS, KARINA SMIRNOFF, STEVE WOZNIAK, KYM JOHNSON, DAVID ALAN GRIER, DENISE RICHARDS, MAKSIM CHMERKOVSKIY, MELISSA RYCROFT, TONY DOVOLANI



Member Spotlight

Zoar and Cheryl Leggett



Cheryl is the new Vice President for the Phoenix USA Dance chapter #4033. It is her hope that in joining the board, and bringing her competitive experience with her to the position, that she can assist the chapter's annual Dancesport Challenge to grow into either a sanctioned or regional event. She also would like to see our USA Dance organization work in conjunction with and alongside the local dance studios and dance instructors to help spread the quality and quantity of ballroom dancing throughout the valley, especially where it may not be currently prevalent. She would especially like to see our chapter reach out and help with more community activities.



What is your favorite dance and why?

Zoar loves Waltz. He enjoys the ebb and flow created in the dance, as well as the majestic music.

Cheryl loves the Tango, with its staccato movements and power.

What first got you interested in dancing?

Zoar was out with a date on a river cruise with a 3 piece band. He watched as other couples danced and wanted to be able to do the same, so he quickly signed up at the local Arthur Murray. That was thirty years ago.

Cheryl received a phone call from a local studio with an offer of lessons, which she instantly jumped at..... it just happened to be the same studio where Zoar was taking lessons. The rest is history.

What is one of your favorite dance moments?

Neither Zoar or Cheryl could pick just one: A favorite was in 1994 when they placed third in the local comp for Adult International Standard over the longtime hometown champions who were also from the same studio. Another favorite was winning the Senior III Amateur International Standard Pre-Championship USA National title last year.

Dance University

Part Three— History

DANCE TRIVIA: Are you “In the Know”?

- Which originated first?
 - Tango
 - Waltz
 - Foxtrot
- From what dance did Cha Cha spring?
 - Mambo
 - Rumba
 - Merengue
- Who was told she was “too fat to be a dancer”, but went on to become a world-acclaimed dancer and choreographer?
 - Martha Graham
 - Agnes de Mille
 - Isadora Duncan
- In what city was foxtrot first introduced by Harry Fox?
 - Hollywood
 - New York
 - Chicago
- What Hollywood musical had Fred and Ginger “dancing” on roller skates?
 - Swingtime
 - The Band Wagon
 - Shall We Dance?
- Who said “dance is a poem of which each movement is a word.”
 - Mata Hari
 - Margot Fonteyn
 - Juliet Prowse
- What dance had so many regional variations that it was not “taught” in any standard form until the late 1940’s? And who “mapped” its steps to create the first syllabus for teaching it?

- What piece of a man’s attire in the middle ages influenced the still existing counter-clockwise “line of dance”?
 - his cape
 - his hat
 - his sword
- How did Gene Kelly get the scar on his cheek, which he never allowed to be covered in movies?
 - childhood bike accident
 - car accident
 - fight



Answers on the bottom of page 11

So You Think You Want to Compete?

DANCESPORT COMPETITION 101

Join us for an informative class, hosted by Zoar and Cheryl Leggett, Sue Putzier and Joe Medina, to answer questions you may have about competing. This informal educational session is geared for first-time or new competitors who have questions about the “ins and outs” of competition. The class will be limited in size, so please contact Cheryl Leggett if you are interested in participating.

The session will take place Sunday, April 19th, at 2 pm. Location details will be given out to those confirming attendance.

Topics to be discussed will include:

- How to pick which competition to attend and what entries to choose
- What supplies should you pack along?
- How to prepare yourself to step on the competition floor—what is needed “beyond practicing”?
- What are the judges looking for? The TOP TEN criteria
- Costuming for men and women
- And much, much more

Please RSVP to Cheryl Leggett at
Cheryl@phoenixusadance.org

TRIVIA ANSWERS:

1. Waltz—1700's
2. Mambo—chacha was known as the “slow mambo”
3. Agnes de Mille
4. New York on the rooftop Jardin de Danse club
5. Shall We Dance
6. Mata Hari
7. Swing—first person to “write it down” in order to teach it was Arthur Murray
8. Sword—which hung on the left - the lady was kept on the right so as not to entangle her skirts, and the man walked on the inside of the circle to avoid hitting those sitting on the outside.
9. Bike accident

HELP WANTED

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

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

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 (ginny@phoenixusadance.org)
or Sherry Parmon (sherry@phoenixusadance.org)
for details on how to volunteer.