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Monthly Newsletter

April 2016



## From the President

Benjamin Soencksen

"The 4th North America Outgames to be held in St. Louis from May 28th through June 4th, 2016, with the Dancesport Event to be held on June 2nd and June 3rd, has been cancelled. No statement has been made as to the reasons for this cancellation. But it is widely assumed that a lack of promotion has resulted in a combination of low registration and sponsorship, which wouldn't yield enough financial support for holding this event.

NASSPDA had awarded the Dancesport event at the 2016 North America Outgames with hosting the NASSPDA's North American Championships, which also meant that NASSPDA would have its Annual Membership Meeting in conjunction with this event, in accordance to NASSPDA's By-Laws. The Board immediately considered its other options and decided to award the "Glitz & Glitter Ball," to be held in Columbus, OH, on July 23rd, 2016, NASSPDA's 2016 North American Championships. NASSPDA's 2016 USA Championships have now been awarded to "April Follies," to be held in Oakland, CA, on April 23rd, 2016.

Our small, but growing community, whether we are socially and/or competitively engaged, needs and deserves the commitment of all of us at every level, if we indeed desire growth and more opportunities. Many involved socially in our same-sex dance communities are hesitant or even flat out refuse to consider competing. One of the main reasons often given focuses around winning. For me that was actually never the impetus to join couples on the competitive dance floor, though once I did, it was, of course, an added goal.

When I was in my teens, I was asked to join the very first youth competition in my area. It was clear to me that I wouldn't have a winning chance, but it also occurred to me that by participating I would help build momentum for bringing Dancesport to more young people and lend greater importance to any win of any couple participating. So, my dance partner and I borrowed outfits, persuaded our parents to pay our dues as well as entry fees and drive us to the event. We had a blast! There were kids as young as 5 years old as well as the maximum age 18 (sometimes, the younger disappeared below the petticoats of the older couples). We had no idea that so many kids enjoyed this sport/activity as much as we did. We did our best, slipped and fell in the Quickstep, got entangled with and bumped into other couples, made a mess of some dances (3 Latin and 3 Standard dances

in the same outfits), and excelled in others, and made the first cut out of over 40 couples. We didn't win, but we had an unforgettable experience and the knowledge that we contributed to the meaning of the first place of that event and the formation of a youth movement, which resulted into a multitude of opportunities for young dancers.

In my opinion therefore, the impetus for competing in any kind of sport should always be foremost about participation, not about winning any glorious titles or shiny medals. And in my experience, every participant in a same-sex dance competitions gets everywhere and at any event, whether it be the Gay Games in Sydney, April Follies in Oakland or the Pink Jukebox Trophy in London, a very warm and appreciative welcome by all in attendance. Of course, one can spend a lot of financial resources on this sport to make it as much as possible a winning prospect, but one doesn't have to and it will still be a very satisfying and exhilarating experience, helping with one's growth in one's own dancing. Even though I'm no longer competing myself, I'm still trying to stay involved, because I believe that it is vital for us all to have opportunities for expression and enjoyment. It is my hope that you all enjoy being part of the social and/or competitive same-sex dance scene in your area and help to spread the word or, even better, get further involved in whichever way you can."

## Competition Calendar

Competition Committee

2016 SAME-SEX DANCESPORT CALENDAR - The first 1/2 of the year:

April 23

Competition: April Follies in Oakland, CA

Title: **California Championship and US Championships**

Website: <http://www.aprilfollies.com>

Registration opened in February.

Check website for details.

Exciting Announcement: NASSPDA will be raffling off 10 scholarship vouchers at April Follies, each worth \$250 towards expenses for participation at the North American Championships in Columbus, OH.

July 23

Competition: Glitz and Glitter Ball in Columbus , OH

Title: **North American Championships**

Website: <http://www.glitzandglitterball.com>

Registration deadline is July 1st.

Check website for details.

## Membership Information

Membership Committee

Now is the time to renew your memberships!

In order to renew, sign into your online account and you will find a button in the upper right hand corner next to "logout" for renewing your membership.



Not a member yet? [JOIN TODAY!](#)

## Board Elections

### Elections Committee

We are now looking to fill four positions via nominations for the 2016/2017 election to the Board of Directors, which will take place around MAY 2016 (members will be receiving ballots via Survey Monkey.).

Important dates are as follows:

- **April 15th candidate applications and forms are due.**
- **Elections will be held from May 8-22**

Candidates need to be prepared to join a monthly phone meeting as well as travel once per year to an in-person Board meeting and/or for the annual membership meeting. If you are looking to get more involved in a wonderful and growing organization, please email this year's Election Committee Chair, Garrett Gerritsen at [ggerritsen@nasspda.org](mailto:ggerritsen@nasspda.org) and find related material under "About Us" and "Organizational" ( <http://nasspda.org/about/>), such as an explanation of the process and required submissions.

## Outreach and Media

### Promotions Committee

#### ACTIVITY GRANT FUNDING PROGRAM

If you have an outreach program that you would like obtain funding for, please click [HERE](#) for more information.

#### SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

NASSPDA will be raffling off 10 scholarships vouchers at April Follies, each worth \$250 towards expenses for participation at the North American Championships in Columbus, OH, on July 23, 2016.

### **PARDON OUR DUST**

The current NASSPDA website is under a complete overhaul and we look forward to sharing our new site with you soon! You can still visit the existing site until the replacement site is up and running.

NASSPDA, 10352 Royal Oak Rd, Oakland, CA 94606

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