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Monthly Newsletter

July 2016



From the President

Benjamin Soencksen

Two things worth noting were accomplished at the most recent meeting of NASSPDA's Board of Directors in June 2016.

The following officers were elected and/or reaffirmed in their position:

President- Benjamin Soencksen, New York, NY, USA
Vice-President- Pat Hogan, Vancouver, BC, Canada
Secretary - Daphna Locker, New York, NY, USA
Treasurer - Lee Fox, Fort Lauderdale, FL, USA

Also, new language to NASSPDA's Competition Rules was added (to download the new version, please go to <http://nasspda.org/about/>). NASSPDA now refers to a couple previously known as Pro/Am, as defined in its rules, as Student/Teacher and allows organizers to include this category in a titled event that has been authorized by NASSPDA. Aside from the gender defined categories of male-male, female-female and reverse-role couples, an "open-role" category was added, which allows any partner configuration, including the mainstream definition of a couple. It is the Board's hope that these changes will help make any NASSPDA sanctioned event more inclusive and invigorate participation.

Aside from the definition of a couple, what truly sets our dance community apart from the mainstream is that we allow switching lead and follow at any time, either from dance to dance or within one dance (restricted and clearly defined in a reverse-role couple). This is referred to since the 1998 Gay Games in Amsterdam as "equality dancing." This has enticed some "straight" identifying competitors from the mainstream circuit to join our community and has continuously initiated discussions about whether this practice fosters "good" dancing. NASSPDA's rules don't require equality dancing at its sanctioned competitions, nor does its counterpart ESSDA in Europe, but both organizations recognize it as more challenging and instruct its judges to judge it favorably, if executed well.

In my opinion, equality dancing is the true expression of what our community desires in so many aspects of life. Circumstances might often hinder embracing this style of expression, such as being a beginner couple or having an extreme height or experience level difference, but I believe that experiencing both roles, leading and following, makes us ultimately much better dancers. Although it might in the short term inhibit growth in a couple, due to the strain of learning to know both sides and adjusting instantaneously when asked for, in the long run it's worth it. And, if accomplished, it is so beautiful to behold. It truly expands the range of expression and characterization of each dance.

Others feel that the risk doesn't warrant spending the time and effort--that it is more important to build strong leadership or following skills, which can only be brought to such a level of achievement when concentrated on solely. That might be true, just as it was believed decades ago when it was argued that to be a better dancer in the various styles (Latin vs. Standard or Rhythm vs. Smooth) one needs to specialize. However, having experienced that transition, I'm still not convinced. In my mind, a dancer that can embrace and adapt all styles of dancing is ultimately a better dancer.

In any case, it is my personal wish to see more of equality in any shape and form on the dance floor! And, when seen to be applauded by everyone!

Happy Dancing to all of you!

Competition Calendar

Competition Committee

July 23 - ENTRIES STILL BEING ACCEPTED

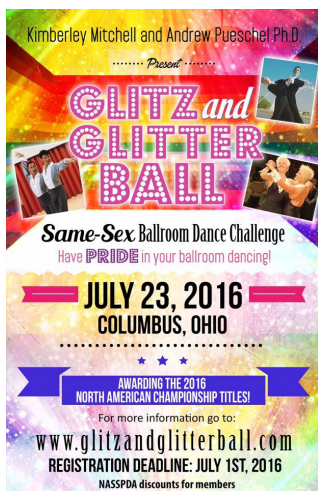
Competition: Glitz and Glitter Ball

Titles: North American Championships

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

Registration deadline is July 1st.

\$25 per person discount for NASSPDA members!



August 21, 2016

Delaware Valley Equality Ball

September 3, 2016

Montreal Rainbow Dance Challenge

Website: <http://studioarcencielt3.wix.com/rainbow>

October 1, 2016

Provincetown Dance Trophy

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



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!](#)

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.

Outreach and Media

Promotions Committee

ACTIVITY GRANT FUNDING PROGRAM

Have an idea for a social event, dance class or any event that brings our dancing community together or introduces others to same-sex dancing? NASSPDA offers organizers up to 4 grants at \$250 per event a year. If you have an outreach program that you would like obtain funding for, please click [HERE](#) for more information.

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