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Active Member Newsletter

November 2015



From the President

Benjamin Soencksen

Partner dancing, as we all know, is such a great activity that isn't only healthy for the body and mind, but also a great way to connect to people and build a social network.

To reap all of the benefits of this very rewarding activity in one's life, one would want to partake in all of its mutations. Enjoy the learning process by engaging someone's scrutinizing and knowledgeable eye, whether that is through a private lesson or the more social experience of a group class. Mingle at a social dance with others, make new friends, find a dance partner or just simply practice.

Though, if you truly want to practice, find a dance partner and a space to do so in your own pace and on your own terms. Body memory and changing physical habits can only be effected through repetition, which can't be effectively done at a social dance. Another great social experience is to join a formation team, which works for weeks or months on a set choreography that may involve the combination of different dances and pieces of music.

And, of course, there is the dance competition, which can be inspiring in so many different ways, whether you go to watch and support other dancers or whether you participate yourself. It is the ultimate test of your dancing skills, but also yet another place to connect to others that enjoy this activity for so many different reasons. Many believe that you are only ready to compete when your skills have reached a certain level of expertise that guarantees placing well. But that, in my opinion, is ultimately the least important goal.

As a social dancer, competitor or official on the sidelines, I always feel that my participation contributes to the enjoyment of the community as well as myself - a social communion, as you will. Even if I know, as a competitor, that I won't win an event I entered, I am rewarded by the knowledge that my participation enriches the experience of fellow competitors and increases the validation of their placement. In summary, partner dancing in all its forms and formed circles is a wonderful tool to connect with one's community at large when one engages in all its mutations.

Happy Dancing!

Competition Calendar

Competition Committee

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

January 15-17

Competition: Floorplay in Palm Springs, CA

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

April 23

Competition: April Follies in Oakland, CA

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

Title: California Championship - registration open in February. Check website for details.

May 27-June 4

Competition: North American Out Games in St. Louis, MO

Website: <http://teamsaintlouis.org>

Title: North American Championships

July 23

Competition: Glitz and Glitter Ball in Columbus , OH

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

Title: U.S. Championships

Membership Information

Membership Committee

2016 is going to be an AMAZING year for same-sex dancing!

We will be offering a number of new levels of membership so you can customize the way in which you support same-sex dancing in North America. More details will be coming soon!



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 March 2016.

Candidates need to be prepared joining 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, at [ggerritsen@nasspda.org](mailto:gerritsen@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.

Media and Outreach

Promotions Committee

HOMOPHOBIA & SALSA: SAME-SEX COUPLES ON THE DANCE FLOOR

"Let's dance!" These phrases are universal in the dance scene, yet the answer differs from person to person: from an enthusiastic "yes!" and smile, to lack of eye contact and a head shaking 'no.' And the reasons for these answers are various: fatigue, thirst, I-really-need-to-pee-and-I've-been-holding-it-for-three-dances, and so on. [Click the HERE to read the story in full.](#)

ACTIVITY GRANT FUNDING PROGRAM

Two new grants have been approved by NASSPDA. If you have a outreach program that you would like obtain funding for, please click [HERE](#) for more information.

CALL FOR DANCERS

A new dance competition show for a major TV network. The show is a traditional competition show where the winner will ultimately win a huge cash prize, but the interesting slant of the show is that we are looking for couples of any dance style - ballroom, swing, modern, ballet, country/western, hip-hop -- who also happen to be romantically involved. This series hopes to go behind the sense and explore the ups and downs of the dancers life while the are competing. It will show the complexities, challenges, and great joy of balancing a romantic relationship while maintaining a competitive edge.

Specifically, the network is looking for an outgoing same-sex couple who country western dance together for the show. They do not have to be professionals, just good dancers with a passion for dance.

Please feel free to contact Steve directly at 323-297-7120 if you have questions about the project or need additional information.

PARDON OUR DUST

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

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