



## From the President

Benjamin Soencksen

In contrast to the organizations BASSDA (Bay Area Same-Sex Dance Association), ESSDA (European Same-Sex Dance Association) and IFSSDA (International Federation of Same-Sex Dance Associations), NASSPDA (North American Same-Sex Partner Dance Association) has the additional distinction of "Partner" in its name. Choosing to add this word not only still causes difficulties for some pronouncing the acronym (sorry about that!), but also was the subject of long and detailed discussions by the original elected Board of Directors, along with the geographical distinction and "Same-Sex" versus "Same-Gender" or "Equality."

The founding members of NASSPDA's Board ultimately felt that "Partnering" is such an important distinction versus any other form of dancing that it should be stated in the name of its organization. It is indeed an element that is strongly considered in judging a couple's skills (even though in a Student/Teacher couple only the student should be considered in judging all skill levels). This skill is comprised of many aspects and sets "Partner Dancing," often also summarily referred to as "Ballroom Dancing," clearly apart from any other dance forms. When discussing the inclusion of "Partner" in NASSPDA's organizational name, the term "Ballroom Dancing" was also on the table, but ultimately rejected, since it often is also used to only describe what is known as "Smooth Dances" and would therefore exclude for example "Latin Dancing" and "Country Western Dancing."

In a previous eNewsletter, I had brought up the issue of NASSPDA exploring changing its name, reflecting the inclusion of all types of gender configuration in a couple. This came up when NASSPDA considered adding in its rules next to same-sex (female/female couples and male/male couples) and reverse-role (female leading a male at least 75% of the dance) events an "open" category, which would allow any configuration of a couple, in order for its sanctioned events being more inclusive. After further discussion and some responses from our constituency, it was decided that "Same-Sex" for many reasons still describes and represents for what our organization stands adequately. Though the option of an open category has been officially added to NASSPDA's Competition Rules.

Some mainstream organizations, such as USA Dance (amateur organization in the USA), NDCA (National Dance Council of America), WDC (World Dance Council, formerly International Council of Ballroom Dancing), also do not include any distinction in the name of their organization as to what form of dance it represents, and some, such as WDSF (World DanceSport Federation) or DTV (Deutscher Tanzsportverband), indicate this by including the distinction of "Dancesport," referring by definition to the competitive aspect of partner dancing. The German counterpart of NASSPDA combines in its name, DTEV (Deutscher Verband für Equalitytanzsport), the distinction of "Equality Dancing," referring to that choice of gender and lead/follow configuration in a couple isn't preconceived (set in most rules of mainstream organizations to be male leader and female follower), and the distinction of competitive partner dancing with the compound "Dancesport."

In any event, partnering and equality are without a doubt important distinctions for NASSPDA, and it will be NASSPDA's continued mission to strive for inclusion and celebration of both. Comparative judging, the norm at partner dance competitions, makes

some of this challenging, ensuring that judges keep in mind enforcing these values. NASSPDA's rules specify that "Changes of lead added to a couple's routine are considered to represent a higher degree of difficulty. If executed well, they should be reflected in a higher score and not considered a break in the continuum of the dance." That's why adjudicators invited to judge at any NASSPDA sanctioned competition are required to be approved and are asked to attend a meeting prior to the event at which the head judge reiterates these and other values important to our constituency. As with many other issues though, only time, consistent reinforcement and reexamination will ensure the full application of these important distinctions within our community.

As always, Happy Dancing to you ALL!

All the best,  
Benjamin

## Competition Calendar

Competition Committee

Please note that ALL of NASSPDA's Competition Rules can be found by going to the NASSPDA website or clicking [HERE](#). Any questions or input are welcomed and can be sent directly to [rules@nasspda.org](mailto:rules@nasspda.org).

### APRIL FOLLIES RECAP:

April Follies is proud to announce the results of this year's competition. This year's event was the 15th anniversary of the largest and longest running same-sex dance competition in North American and was held at the fabulous Just Dance Ballroom in Oakland, CA, on April 29, 2017. Several hundred spectators had the pleasure of watching 80 dancers compete in many rounds over the course of a very full day of competition that began at 10 AM and ran well into the evening. The evening's Showcase of Champions featured the "A" level finals in all graded events. The evening finals were followed by a fabulous and fun customized version of "Cabaret" created by and featuring the Bay Area's own Michael Babineaux. The show cast included many of the day's top level competitors as well as several of the judges - see the photo below.

NASSPDA congratulates all competitors! Below is the list of dancers and groups who earned the title of 2017 California State Champions.

<b>Event</b>	<b>2017 California State Champions</b>
9-Dance	Nicole Wooding and Ashley Quibilian
10-Dance	Joan Conroy and Maria Wiemers (Australia)
Women's International Standard	Emily Coles and Citabria Ozzuna
Men's International Standard	Chris Nunes and Bill Graner
Open International Standard	Emily Coles and Citabria Ozzuna
Women's Argentine Tango	Michele Richards and Pamela Shreeve
Women's American Rhythm	Nicole Wooding and Ashley Quibilian
Women's International Latin	Sunny Brockett-Williams and Krysta Walsh
Men's International Latin	Rafael Dominguez and Chris Phan
Formation Team Couples	Vima Vice Squad, coach Photis Pishiaras
Formation Team Non-couples	Fierce Femmes, coach Jamie Cooper
Show Dance	Jessica Herrick and Jamie Cooper
Student/Teacher Show Dance	Tracey Payne and Alexis Massey
Student/Teacher Women's 9-Dance	Tracey Payne and Alexis Massey

In total, the competition included the following amateur couples:

International Standard: 10 couples

American Smooth: 6 couples

Argentine Tango: 9 couples

American Rhythm: 3 couples dancing

International Latin: 8 couples

International 10-dance: 2 couples

American 9-dance: 2 couples

Detailed results of these and all other events, including Pro-Am competitions, can be found on the website by clicking [HERE](#) and can also be found on NASSPDA's website by clicking [HERE](#).

April Follies wishes to acknowledge the following score corrections:

1) Corrected ranking of couples formation teams:

1st: Vima Vice Squad

2nd: Knockin'

3rd: Q It Up

2) Winners of the American 9-dance event: Nicole Wooding and Ashley Quibilian.

The competition organizers and judges offer their sincere apology for these errors.



**May 29- June 2, 2017**

World Outgames

Website: <http://www.outgames.org/sports/dance-sport>

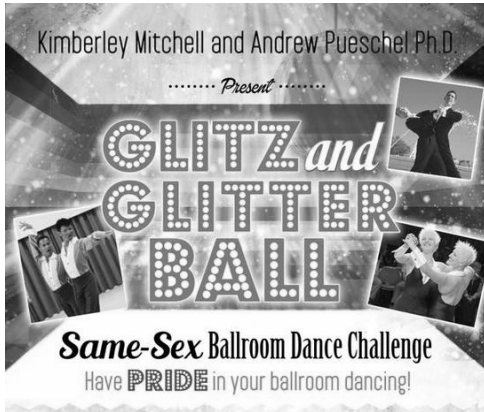
Title: IFSSDA's World Championships



**July 22, 2017**

Glitz and Glitter Ball

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



**August 30, 2017**

Delaware Valley Equality Ball

**September 2, 2017**

Montreal Rainbow Dance Challenge

Website: <http://studioarcencielmt3.wix.com/rainbow>

**September 30, 2017**

Provincetown Dance Trophy

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



## Membership Information

Membership Committee

Join NASSPDA TODAY! Payments will now be taken by credit card instead of through PayPal. The new system has special encryption to keep your data safer than before. The new site URL is the same as before: [nasspda.org](http://nasspda.org).



If you have problems, or want to help us improve the website-parts are still under construction-please write to Kathy Wildman, our website administrator, at

[wildmankathy@gmail.com](mailto:wildmankathy@gmail.com) or to [web@nasspda.org](mailto:web@nasspda.org).

## Outreach and Media

Promotions Committee

### **EQUALITY DANCING -THE (LIMITED) LIBERTY OF DANCING OUT OF LINE**

"At my first tournament, I was enchanted by the variety: the diversity of the couples and their clothes, the large age-span, the various interpretations of leader and follower roles. I saw indefinite possibilities that were entirely independent of sex or gender, but that rather were about the expression of different personalities." Read more by going [HERE](#).

### **IS SAME-SEX DANCING FINALLY COMING TO TV?**

The politician managed to win over the nation during his time on the hit BBC show, despite not having the best dancing ability. Dressed in a bright blue suit, the former Government minister performed a snippet from his now legendary performance. See the complete story [HERE](#).

### **ACTIVITY GRANT FUNDING PROGRAM**

NASSPDA would like to encourage its members and our community at large to engage in various fun activities that promote same-sex dancing. We recognize that many of our members may have a creative idea and NASSPDA would like to contribute in a small financial way.

Some ideas for events and organizers to receive grant support:

- Same-sex dance classes
- A social dance mixer with actively inviting and encouraging same-sex dancing or "alternative lead and follow"
- An excursion to a local competition, introducing dancers to the concept
- A welcome party before one of NASSPDA's sanctioned competition
- Setting up a booth at a local street fair promoting same-sex dancing
- A neighborhood or community event promoting partner dancing and the inclusion of same-sex dancing
- Involving studios to promote same-sex dancing
- An event in conjunction with a city's Pride activities

These are just a few suggestions. To apply for financial support from NASSPDA's \$250 Grant Program, please visit our website at [NASSPDA.org](http://NASSPDA.org), click on the 'Scholarships and Grants' bar and then 'Grants' to read more for more information. You can also email us at [promotions@NASSPDA.org](mailto:promotions@NASSPDA.org) with any questions.



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