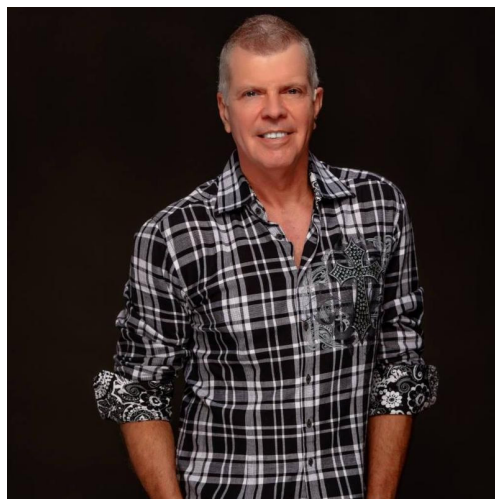




Current events

Presenting the dancers

Lee Fox is originally from Georgia but now calls Ft. Lauderdale, Florida his home. He has been teaching Ballroom, Latin, and Disco since 1978, and Country/Western since 1991. He has his licentiate degrees in the International Standard, International Latin, American Rhythm, and Theater Arts Styles with the Imperial Society of the Teachers of Dance (ISTD) and his master degrees in the American Smooth and American Rhythm Styles with the National Dance Teachers Association (NDTA). He is the Competition Director for the International Association of Gay/Lesbian Country Western Dance Clubs (IAGLCWDC) and the treasurer of the North American Same Sex Partner Dance Association (NASSPDA). He is also president and an examiner of the National Dance Teachers Association of America (NDTA). He is registered to adjudicate with USA Dance and North American Same Sex Partner Dance Association (NASSPDA) and has served as Chair of Judges for several mainstream and same sex competitions in the USA, Canada, and abroad. A former ballroom competitor, he has judged several competitions in the United States including the United States Dancesport Championships (USDC). He and his ballroom partner, Scott, competed in ballroom at the Gay Games in Amsterdam in 1998 and the Gay Games in Australia in 2002 making the class A finals both times. He and his country partner, Chris, were the first Championship winners in the IAGLCWDC Couples Competition in 1998 and have performed at many hoedowns and fundraisers. He has served as the choreographer/instructor for several dance teams including the Southern Country South Florida Dream Team, the SunDancers, Heels On Fire, and Team Scandalous. He is also one of the original members of Crossfire, an all male dance team, winners of the 2005 international country-western dance teams competition.



Q: How has same-sex dancing changed my life?

Actually it was ballroom dancing that helped me to come out. It was in 1979 during the disco era when I started teaching at a Fred Astaire Studio (after a few months of private lessons) that I first got to know other gay people. Imagine my relief upon learning that I was not alone. Nearly all of the male teachers in Atlanta at that time were gay which made it easier for me to come out. After work we would all go out

to the gay bars and dance hustle, cha cha, samba, merengue, and swing leading and following each other.

Years later after moving to Florida I found country/western dancing at a gay bar in Fort Lauderdale. I then became involved with IAGLCWDC (International Association of Gay/Lesbian Country Western Dance Clubs) and a friend who saw country/western dancing at the Gay Games in New York in '94 asked me if I would compete with him in Amsterdam in '98. Alas country/western was not offered but when I learned that Dancesport was offered I asked Scott to compete with me.

From there I met Richard and Benjamin and Barbara and eventually found myself on the board of NASSPDA.

It's been a whirlwind of a ride since.

Q: Which is easier to learn - to lead or to follow?

I don't think there is one simple answer to that. Both parts have their share of responsibilities to the partnership, so I believe it all has to do with the individual.

Some people find it easier to learn the leader's part. The leader has a lot to think about. They have to learn their own patterns, understand the follower's part and ability, keep the timing and the rhythm going, communicate to the follower what is expected of them, watch for other dancers on the floor, and, in the cases of the progressive dances, maneuver the partnership around the floor while choosing the next move they are going to execute based on all of the above. The leader does not have to be the more dominant personality (I've seen and danced with my share of dominant followers) but should be more of a multi-tasker.

Some people find it easier to learn to follow. Following is more about reacting to the leader's silent messages. They don't have to "know" their patterns as the leaders do though I believe they become even better followers if they do (provided they remember to let the leader lead). They need to learn to go where the leaders go and understand the signals given through the leader's hands and frame. Of course in the beginning they should learn the basic patterns, the basic rhythms and the basic characteristics of the individual dances. After that it's about the reacting.

I usually tell people in the beginning to pick one and not to try to learn both parts yet. Get a little bit of experience under their belts (or in their shoes) first. Learn how to move with a partner before trying the other role, and I don't mean next week unless you're dancing 24/7.

I personally enjoy both roles and, with the right partners, switching roles in a dance is fun.

Announcement

North American Scholarships available now

NASSPDA's Board of Directors has awarded April Follies for the second time in its history to host the North American Championships in 2018.

In conjunction with this decision, it was also decided to offer 6 scholarships, which will pay the applicant's 2018 NASSPDA membership dues as well as a \$400

stipend, to those who wish to attend and need financial assistance.

The deadline to apply is January 28, 2018. Application and guidelines can be found here: [2018 North American Scholarship Application Form](#)

New change in the Competition Rules

Rule 2 Sub-Distinctions of Competition Categories (p.19)

Rule 2.3 Distinction by Age

The overall age restriction is 18, and is considered the adult category. A senior level in the "Multi- dance graded" and "Single Dance" categories may also be offered.

The age restriction for this senior level is set at 45. Both partners in a couple shall be 45 or above at the time of the competition. These age categories shall be named 18+ (adult) and 45+ (senior). An additional senior level for dancers above 45 years old (for example, dancers 60 years of age and older) may be offered which should be appropriately named with the designated age and a plus sign (for example, "60+"). Both partners in a couple shall be the designated age or above at the time of the competition (for example, in the 60+, both must be at least 60 years old). If the number of participants is low in any category, it is recommended to run such low-participant categories at the same time, but to judge the categories separately.

Alternatively, all couples may be simultaneously judged against each other, with the resulting placements automatically reflecting the placements of the senior couples against each other (e.g., if there are 7 couples, 5 adult only and 2 senior, and the 2 senior couples placed in 3rd and 6th place, then the 3rd place couple would be automatically 1st place in the senior category, but a 3rd in the adult category). Proof of age is required for all senior categories on the day of the event. If the senior categories are held separately from the adult categories, all couples entered in the senior categories may also compete in the adult categories.

See the complete NASSPDA's Competition Rules here:

[NASSPDA Competition Rules 171104](#)

Board of Directors Election

Election Committee

Board members needed!

Each nominee must have an active NASSPDA membership and submit the following to the Election Committee:

- * a Candidate Statement Form
- * a photo
- * two (2) Supporters' forms

Forms are available on <http://www.nasspda.org/about/> and instructions for submission are included.

Each nominee will be contacted via phone by a member of the Election Committee for a short interview. Once a nominee has been accepted, their name and Candidate Statement will be included in the ballot.

Elections take place in May, and every NASSPDA member will be sent an electronic link to the ballot. (People who have registered to vote via snail - mail will be sent a paper ballot.)

Voting will close on May 15. Results will be announced by or before May 31 , and be posted on the NASSPDA's website: www.nasspda.org.

The Election Committee is in charge of reviewing candidates, supervising and running the election. No one on the Election Committee will be a candidate for election on the Board.

If you have questions, please email: info@nasspda.org

Competition Calendar

Competition Committee

Upcoming North American competitions:

Floorplay in the Desert

Hosting the 2018 USA Same-Sex Championships

January 12-13th, Palm Springs CA

<http://www.floorplaypalmsprings.com>



April Follies

Hosting the 2018 North American Same-Sex Championships

April 28th, Oakland CA

<https://www.aprilfollies.com>



Boston Open DanceSport

Hosting the event in new location

September 28-29th, Providence Rhode Island



Upcoming World competition:

Gay Games X

Hosting the World Same-Sex Championships
DanceSport events August 6-10th, Paris
<https://www.paris2018.com/sports/dancesport/>



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.



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 or to info@nasspda.org

Outreach and Media

Promotions Committee

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.

Up to 4 grants of \$250 each will be awarded per calendar year on a first-come first-served basis to applicants who can demonstrate that the proposed activity will advance NASSPDA's mission of promoting and expanding social and competitive same-sex partner dancing.

The proposed event should also be in alignment with NASSPDA's following goals:

- * Support functions and venues for social same-sex partner dancing.
- * Provide a resource for same-sex partner dancers.
- * Aim to raise the level of same-sex partner dancing

* Encourage the inclusion of dancers from diverse backgrounds with regard to race, ethnicity, gender, age, [dis]ability, gender identity and/or expression.

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, 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 with any questions.



NASSPDA | Lee Fox | 160 NE 58th St. | Ft. Lauderdale | FL | 33334