



North American Same-Sex Partner Dance Association

Embracing and Welcoming All Dance Couples and Dancers

## From the President

SEASON GREETINGS TO ALL!!!

NASSPDA's Board of Directors hopes that you all had a good year and will have an excellent start into 2023! May this coming year bring us all joy and peace!

This year had many challenges, but brought us also hope that this pandemic will end given time and all our efforts. Part of the ongoing effects of the pandemic has been that all organizers of NASSPDA sanctioned events elected postponing any plans from the current to the coming year. The organizers of the 'New England Open' (<http://www.bostonopendancesport.com/competition.html>), Boston Open Dancesport, will have its next event on April 1, 2023, since the Bay Area Same-Sex Dance Association already announced that 'April Follies' (<https://www.aprilfollies.com/grand-event>) will be an afternoon of performances and social dancing on April 29, 2023, not a competitive event, and 'Floorplay LA' (<https://www.floorplayevents.com/>) is now looking at having an event in the Summer of 2023.

Despite the lack of events and/or activities this year, the Board of NASSPDA was still busy all year meeting regularly every 6 to 8 weeks. Focus has been on items such as communicating with the organizing teams of the hosting cities of the 11th Gay Games; realigning NASSPDA's competition Rules with the newly adopted set of rules from IFSSDA; tackling issues with NASSPDA's website; conducting this year's elections to the Board; and of course what to do about dwindling membership.

The 11th Gay Games had been postponed from November 2022 to 2023. These games will be the first test for the new set of competition rules adopted by IFSSDA for the Dancesport event and will be IFSSDA's World Championships. However, due to the effects of the pandemic and the political shifts in Hong Kong, the FGK asked the bidding city that came in second place for these games, Guadalajara, Mexico, to co-host with Hong Kong. The organizers from Hong Kong subsequently dropped Dancesport from its list of sports, deemed too costly to organize, which leaves the organizers from Guadalajara taking on this task. First contact by IFSSDA has been made and assurances that the event will take place have been given (<https://gggd2023.org/en>).

Another new event sanctioned by IFSSDA, the 'World Dancesport Pride Cup' to be held in Orlando (<https://www.kindredpride.org/pride-cup/the-pride-cup-dancesport/the-pride-cup-dancesport-sponsorship-kit/>), has continuously been postponed since 2020 and it is unclear whether there are any plans for 2023.

As every year, the two-year terms of some Board members expired and most of them agreed to stand again for reelection. All were reelected by a majority of NASSPDA's members and subsequently the Board confirmed the positions of officers (President: Benjamin Soencksen; Vice-President: Debbie Esparza; Treasurer: Lee Fox; Secretary: Erik Jaeger; Eddie Alba; Emma DiFrancesco; Kalin Mitov; Susie Hoskins; Jo Popadynetz; Rufi Oswaldo). Because one Board member chose not to run again and other candidates didn't come forward, the number of directors on the Board is reduced again to ten from eleven, which though didn't hamper the Board's activities and which will hopefully be rectified in future elections.

Since IFSSDA's Competition Rules ([https://nasspda.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/IFSSDA-Competition-Rules\\_-\\_Version-July-6-2020.pdf](https://nasspda.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/IFSSDA-Competition-Rules_-_Version-July-6-2020.pdf)) had been adopted by its founding members ESSDA, IAGLCWDC and NASSPDA, the Board of NASSPDA has been working on aligning its set of rules. This process was finally completed in February of this year (<https://nasspda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/NASSPDA-Competition-Rules-220206.pdf>) and focused in particular on the categories of Showdance and Formation Teams, renaming these 'Showdance (Couples)' and 'Showdance Teams/Formation Teams' and adding a different judging system for these categories.

Last year, NASSPDA's Website Committee started overhauling the design and organization of NASSPDA's website ([www.nasspda.org](http://www.nasspda.org)). But due to a change in chairmanship of the committee and unavailability of a subsequently hired consultant this project is currently on hold and the website lacks necessary updates. The integrated membership platform showed in addition hacking attempts, which were averted, but its donation function ended up being misused as a tool to test credit cards (<https://nasspda.org/asp-products/donate-to-nasspda/>). The Board therefore suspended online renewal/registration temporarily (<https://nasspda.org/membership-account/membership-levels/>) and is actively seeking to engage a new consultant as well as continuously monitoring the situation closely.

Along with the overhaul of NASSPDA's website, the Board had also asked the hired consultant to work on a redesign of IFSSDA's website ([www.ifssda.org](http://www.ifssda.org)), which will feature IFSSDA's Constitution, adopted in 2013, and Competition Rules, adopted in 2020, as well as a calendar of events and links to the websites of its founding members, ESSDA, NASSPDA and IAGLCWDC. But naturally that process has been halted as well.

NASSPDA's membership numbers have continuously decreased throughout the pandemic for obvious reasons, which is of great concern, since it reduces the strength of NASSPDA's voice, for example regarding sanctioned events, such as Dancesport at the upcoming Gay Games (see above).

One way that the Board hoped might help increase interest and subsequently again membership for NASSPDA is the Ambassadorship Program developed by the Promotion Committee. This program seeks individuals and/or couples that will spread the word about and impart the values of NASSPDA at events other than sanctioned by NASSPDA. This ambassadorship comes with a stipend to cover some expenses and the provision of promotional material. With competitions coming back in mainstream and showing an increase of participants from our community, the Board is again actively looking for suitable candidates. Should you be interested or know of anyone being interested and qualified, you can find more details on NASSPDA's website along with the application form (<https://nasspda.org/nasspda-ambassador-program/>).

NASSPDA's Activity Grant (<https://nasspda.org/grants/>) is another program that supports growth in our community, which is awarded to proposed events that advance NASSPDA's mission (<https://nasspda.org/mission-statement/>). But no applications have been received this year. Therefore, the Board is currently considering an expansion of the scope of events supported by this grant and an increase in the financial support.

And the Board of Directors continues looking into revamping NASSPDA's Scholarship Program (<https://nasspda.org/scholarships/>), which had no recipients this year, due to the

lack of competitions. Changes considered are the requirement of membership prior to application, different levels of financial support and an expansion to international events that are sanctioned by IFSSDA and therefore also in essence sanctioned by NASSPDA.

All these programs and other services NASSPDA provides, such as website, eNewsletter (newsletter@nasspda.org), marketing, promotion, etc., are financially supported by the annual dues received from members as well as generous donations (<https://nasspda.org/nasspda-donor-wall/>). An excellent reason to join NASSPDA's community, to renew and to maintain your membership with NASSPDA (<https://nasspda.org/membership/>)!

Please stay well, safe and healthy into the coming year!  
HAPPY DANCING!

Benjamin Soencksen  
President of NASSPDA



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## **Ambassador Program**

In need of broader visibility, better promotion in the DanceSport world and advocating for same-sex competitive dancing, NASSPDA is looking to engage Ambassadors.

As many North American DanceSport organizations have changed their definition of a dance couple, we are witnessing interest and participation of newly formed same-sex, reverse role, and gender-neutral couples at their events. Many of those couples haven't been introduced or exposed to NASSPDA as an organization; hence, they also do not know the benefits of being a member of NASSPDA.

[Please use this link to access description and details as well as the application form](#)

*(\* please contact us if you encounter problems with accessing this form. A Gmail account login is required)*



## Online Donations?

*Recently, NASSPDA's membership and payment platforms have been under malware attack and as a preventive measure we have taken down the feature from the website temporarily, while we are working on it, that allows to donate, join or renew membership. Any help from our community with advise and knowledge how to permanently resolve this issue would be greatly appreciated.*

*Thank YOU!*



## Competition Calendar

- **NASSPDA Sanctioned Competitions in 2023**

2023 United States Same-Sex Championship and Boston Open Dancesport - April 1st, Boston- Dedham, Massachusetts

- **IFSSDA Sanctioned Competitions in 2023**

**The XI Gay Games**

DanceSport events are November 5 - 8, 2023, Guadalajara, Mexico

- **NON NASSPDA Competitions in 2023**

Southeastern Dancesport Championships, February 17-19th Atlanta GA

## **Join us at the 2023 United States Same-Sex Ballroom Dance Championship!**

Save the date Saturday, April 1, 2023 in Greater Boston.

This competition is the only all-inclusive ballroom dance contest in New England. It is welcoming everybody and supports the LGBTQ+ dance community, hosting the State and the National Championships.

Registration and schedule are up to come.

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## **April Follies is back for 2023!**

BUT, in lieu of a competition, we are hosting " A Grand Event" to be held:

-- April 29, 2023, 2pm-8pm

-- Just Dance Ballroom in Oakland, CA

This will include:

The opportunity to showcase all the dances you have been working on (and may be preparing for the Gay Games in Guadalajara, Mexico , November 2023).

--All the usual competitive partner dances are welcome:

International Ballroom

International Latin

American Smooth

American Rhythm

Argentine Tango

Country Western

--Just tell us what dances you want to perform, and we will have music to run "heats" for you, (you might share the floor with a few other couples, just like at regular competitions)

--Formation Teams and Showdances

You bring the music and we will give you time and space to show your routine!

Additionally:

--Lots of social dancing

--Several "Luck of the Draw" dances

--Line Dances...stay tuned for details

--Dance Lesson(s)

Dinner will be available for purchase

AND...a Fabulous evening show: Platforms 20-30

Produced by Photis Pishiaras and Ron Jenkins

Price will be \$40 in advance, and \$55 at the door.

**For updated info, please go to [www.AprilFollies.com](http://www.AprilFollies.com)**

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## **Southeastern Dancesport Championships**

The SDC is coming up soon, and we would love to have you there! This year, the competition is a USA Dance National Qualifying event, which means that by attending, you have the opportunity to qualify for the USA Dance National Championships held in March. Like all of the events we organize, the Southeastern Dancesport Championships are completely gender-neutral. All couples of a given level and age division compete against each other. We love to see traditional, same-sex, and reversed-role couples out on the dance floor, and we hope to have more non-traditional partnerships participate this year. In addition to our regular events, this year we are offering fun switch-role events in smooth and rhythm. In these events, we will ask couples to switch who is leading and who is following partway through the song. We think this is a great way to allow ballroom dance to expand beyond the historical paradigm and showcase a unique skill set, and we hope to see many members of NASSPDA participate in this event and in the competition. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to us directly at [tbd.dancesport@gmail.com](mailto:tbd.dancesport@gmail.com).

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## **Membership Information**

### **Membership Directory**

Have you checked out the [NASSPDA Membership Directory](#)?

This is a resource to allow NASSPDA members to connect with others in the community. Please contact Webmaster and their email [webmaster@nasspda.org](mailto:webmaster@nasspda.org) if you'd like to be added to the directory (being added is a privilege available to NASSPDA members only).

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### **Dance Partner Connections**

We understand how hard it can be to find a dance partner. Therefore we'd like to help by offering this connection service where individuals in our community interested in searching for a partner can proactively post an ad and/or passively review ads.

If you'd like to post an ad, [please complete this form](#). It does not cost anything and you can share as much or little information as you want.

Here is the Dance Partner Connections webpage: [nasspda.org/dance-partner-connections](http://nasspda.org/dance-partner-connections)



## Outreach and Media



### **New partnership with The National Academy of Health and Physical Literacy (NAHPL)**

NAHPL is a diverse organization that seeks to advance health and physical literacy in our society, especially in K-12 schools, higher education, and in dance and sport venues. NAHPL seeks to grow and advance professional leaders who will interact and network on regional, national and global levels to expand health and physical literacy opportunities for all children and adults.

As a member and mission centered organization, NAHPL encourages and facilitates active participation by all members, advocating for health and physical literacy. NAHPL leadership and members plan and implement professional learning opportunities and events at the regional and national levels, and advocate for health and physical literacy in Pre-K-higher education and across society.

<https://nahpl.org>

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