

# North Houston Swing Dance Club

**Sunday February 1, 2009**

## **Club News**

We had another packed house this week. Its so fun to see everybody coming out for the best night of the week - dancing, visiting, and burning calories! Not that any of us need that, right?

The studio has installed a video camera security system that covers the parking lot. In addition, the local law enforcement folks have increased their presence by patrolling more than usual. But the bottom line is, safety is something we all need to practice. Be vigilant. Look around as you come in and out of the studio. The best deterrent is noticing who is around and making eye contact. While class is going on, many of us take a stroll out on the sidewalk just to keep an eye on things. Please don't leave valuables in your car or truck. Bring them inside with you. Lets work together to make Thursday's safe and fun for everyone.

I hope everyone got a chance to meet Christopher Hussey and Katrina Branson last week while they were here in Houston. They were in town from the Chicago area, giving workshops. They'll be in Austin and San Antonio in the following weeks. Christopher and Katrina competed at the America's Classic a few weeks ago and brought the crowd to their feet with their exciting Pro routine. Take an internet trip over to their website when you can. They've posted several West Coast Swing lessons that are dang good.

Here's the site: <http://www.christopherandkatrina.com/>

## **Class Notes**

Donese's **Beginner Class** is having just a little too much fun! What's happening is...y'all are getting the hang of this crazy dance we do! And you're smiling, and practicing, and dancing!! Y'all did the Basic Step, the Left and Right Side Pass, the Spinning Left Side Pass, and the Sugar Tuck, focusing on nailing the steps and technique of 'Lead/Follow'. Guys, you gotta work so hard on thinking ahead, planning on which step you're gonna do, so here's a tip to help: Your first step and lead, is always to step **back** with your left foot on count ONE. Always. Ladies, *wait* for the man to step back and lead you forward on your first step - stepping on your right foot as you move. This allows your connection to stay firm. Ladies, try not to step forward until the fella leads you - he may ask for you to stay in place and hold a few beats. That's part of the fun later on. But first, get these basics burned into your muscle memory. Keep up the nice smiles!

Ann and Charles taught the **Intermediate Class**, working on a Whip with a double outside spin for the ladies. In addition, y'all learned the in's and out's of the J-Hook lead that is used in many advanced moves. Y'all applied it on the Whip step, but also used it on the Turn-In move. Give a good J-Hook lead on ONE, then fellas, lead that left hand strong by continuing the circular motion to the left and pressing and compressing the lady's hand so she turns her back to you on count TWO. This isn't easy at first, but soon, you'll have the technique down. Use your right hand, guys, on the lady's back to help stop her in place and re-direct her motion. Using your left hand, lead her forward by extending that hand and arm back to where the lady started, and over her head on THREE AND FOUR. Now anchor step in place facing each other again on FIVE AND SIX.

I think I saw an Inside Whip being led by Ben too. Cool beans!

Our **Advanced Class** started in closed position, opening up with a right side pass to a basic position. Now a Left Side Pass. a Whip Step, with a lady exit under the guys right arm, ending in a right to left connection. Next 'Ben's move: Take the lady down the right side, under the guys right arm and behind his back. Release the handhold, turn to face the lady and lead her to do a spin in place. Now do an Underarm/Right Side Pass followed up with a Basket. Now a Dishrag. Finally, "Get Sexy" ! What a blast!

Ben plays some great music in his classes too. I see a lot of folks really emphasizing their musicology, counting in 8's and.....having FUN!! Ben played a 'funked' up version of 'When Things Go Wrong, It Hurts Me Too' by B.B. King and Eric Clapton ( I think?!)



Bobby's Advanced Patterns and Footwork Class started with a Basic, then the Two Handed Barrel Roll. This one just takes practice. Its a great move with great visual impact, so it was nice to have Bobby nail down the parts of this super-advanced move. Next came a Right Side Pass, with the man tracing the lady's back and pickup up her left hand, ending in a two handed grip. Next came the 'Flying Elbow' move that kinda worried the ladies, but done properly, there's no problems. Bobby broke it down by starting with the man's right hand going UP into a pizza delivery position on count ONE. Lead the lady towards you, getting YOUR elbow UP HIGH and aiming for her left elbow to loop over and outside, bringing her into a closed position. Send her back on THREE, bring her back on AND FOUR, so she's in front of you by FOUR. Now anchor it on FIVE AND SIX.

Some of the tricky points on this is that the lady does a rock-and-go on THREE AND FOUR, stepping back with her right on THREE, replacing weight on her left foot on AND, then stepping back to face the man in the slot on FOUR with her right foot. Men, you gotta lead that! Guys, another fine point here is that as you send the lady back on THREE, your weight goes to the LEFT foot and hip so you counter balance as you stretch this open position. Its a great move! Practice lots!



Long time members Sandie and Del.

Our Anniversary Party is gonna be a lot of fun. Saturday March 7th here at the studio, we're going to celebrate 5 years at this location, even though we've been a club for a LONG time. Damon and Lisa D'Amico will be doing a workshop for us. Damon's teaching methods, and Lisa's sexy style is what makes their workshops so popular. There will be something for the guys as well as the ladies to work on - along with learning to add lots of style to your moves. Saturday March 7th! What an exciting time that'll be!

Keep dancing gang! See you next week.

Wayne