

North Houston Swing Dance Club

Friday November 14, 2008

(See the Survey question towards the bottom)

Club News

The Ying and the Yang were working last night! Perfect balance and a sense of harmony. Our club has four levels of instruction again and all four levels are dancing in perfect sync to the rhythm of YOU! (that was almost poetic, eh?) Y'all knew exactly what you needed and filled the classrooms nicely. We've had so many new people joining us lately, that we needed more elbow room, and now we've got it. This class structure also allows you more individual time with each instructor, so you're gonna get the attention you deserve. Keep coming back to North Houston and be a part of this phenomenal growth of West Coast Swing! We're making history - and you're a part of it!



Class Notes

We had a couple of beginners start out this week with the basics of our dance. The Right and Left Side Pass as well as the 6-count Basic. Good to see you!

Our Intermediate Class, taught by Ann Dahn, worked on what she calls The Promenade. I refer to it as the Cha-Cha step. I'm sure someone has an official name for it, and will let us know. Whatever its called, its a slick move that dancers just love. The fella steps back on ONE with a normal handhold, then leads the lady to his right (her left) by taking his left hand and leading it across the slot to his right. Fella's, turn your body, facing right by TWO. Then shuffle away from the slot to the right with a triple step, taking the lady with you, side by side. As you complete step FOUR, pivot, turn, and return back on the same path, changing hands to the fella's right hand now holding the lady's left hand, and shuffle back to the slot on FIVE AND SIX. Now anchor facing each other again on SEVEN AND EIGHT.

Next, Ann kicked it up a notch, by having first the lady's do a free spin on FIVE AND SIX. Then, added the same free spin for the guys, so that both did a free spin at the same time. This move can be done either way - either the guy or the gal can free spin, or both can do it. You choose.



Ben taught the Advanced Class and introduced the method of *counting by 8's*. Mastering this technique is the key to dancing well and lining your dance moves up with distinctive phrases in the music. It'll help you start on main parts of the song, and it will set you up for the 'breaks' that Ben also taught. With that understanding and Ben counting for you in 8's, Ben put together a series of moves that allowed you to hit an accent in the music on ONE and hold that in place for a cool way to play with a song. I've uploaded the video of Ben and Sara so you can watch it. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5E18Xs5S1DA>

What Ben wants all of his class to start doing, is count in 8's and in this case, hit the accent on ONE. Hold it, then keep dancing. Folks LOVED this class and the overwhelming response from the class was, " We'll be back - We want more!!!"



Bobby's class focused on Body Styling which he covered in his advanced patterns. Start out with a basic that circles to the right. Then, instead of squaring up for your anchor step, Bobby had the men keep an angle, or turn sideways in the slot.

Doing a Right Side Pass, finish facing 90 degrees to the slot. Then do an 'rock and go' to the right, stepping right with the right foot first, then crossing the right foot in front of the left, and contour your body to prep for the next move. Get some distance between you and your lady to keep a good connection.

Next came one of Bobby's famous moves, where you lead the lady down the right side of the slot, step under your own right arm as you catch the back of her left 'armpit' (sorry lady's, I

don't know how else to describe that area), and prep her for a counter rotation back down the line. Instead of letting her spin away, SLOW IT DOWN and let her STEP, TURN, STEP, TURN, and anchor. Again, this adds variety, and contrast in your dance. This isn't easy and it takes a delicate touch to let the lady know you're not spinning her, you're allowing her some freedom to dance what the music may invite her to do, which is to drag the move out a bit and accent the beats of the music.

Bobby's class also did a flirt-y little move that drapes hands behind the lady's head and lets you slide back at your own speed. Oh yeah!!

Check it out: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nH9ZzTz5mjo>

Next week, Bobby's going to add on to this sequence by putting some styling in for the ladies. Gals, wear your best shoes - this is gonna be good!!





Around Town

Survey Question: I'm trying to find a place for our club to go out and social dance every once in a while on a weekend. I'd like to keep it up here on the north side of town - like Humble/Kingwood area, or Spring/ The Woodlands area. This will be a great chance to try social dancing out 'in the wild' and it will also let people know who we are as well as advertise for the club to keep it growing. Would you please send back any ideas you've got on where we might gather for a fun night out? I'll post the suggestions in upcoming newsletters.

It seems as though a lot of folks are heading out of town this weekend. There's a big Country Western event in Dallas. There's also a big Swing Event in Tampa, Florida. Lots of Houston dancers will be attending so I'm not quite sure who's going to be at Melody Club Friday night, but what the heck....give it a try.

Here's something new: The Dance Place is having a West Coast Swing night. I can't give you much more info but here's the announcement if you'd like to try it out. If you go, let us know how it went.

Title: The Dance Place-West Coast Night

Date: Saturday November 15, 2008

Time: 8:00 pm - 12:00 am

Location: The Dance Place, 3300 Chimney Rock Suite 500 (Corner of Chimney Rock & Beverly Hill)

Notes: 8pm-Midnight. Cover \$8.00 Students \$4.00. BYOB (Set ups available) DJ to be announced. West Coast music only. Don't miss this one, all your friends will be there!

And finally, for those of you that read all the way to the bottom of the letter, In December we're having **elections for Club Officers and Board Members**. You might consider serving so be there and cast your vote!

See you next week,

Wayne