

North Houston Swing Dance Club

Friday February 15, 2008

Club News

Man oh man!! Y'all are awesome! Jack sends out the message to come out on Valentine's Day - and everyone came out! Way to go! Every one who makes it out on Thursdays helps make our club the success that it is! It's fun to see so many happy faces. High-5's to everybody!!

Be sure to read the social activities at the end of this newsletter. There's lots of stuff going on around town.

Classes

Bobby started out the night with the classes combined to demonstrate a ladies sliding side pass. And although Bobby can do it real good, Rhonda looks a whole lot better when she shows how its done. Its *one, two, SLIDE and four, then anchor five and six.*

The Beginner class worked heavily on technique. We used the Basic, left and right side passes, and left spinning side pass to work on connection and proper footwork. This class is learning solid technique before moving up to the next level. Pappy, the word is - you were a big help last night. Thanks!

Our Intermediate class worked on connection and lead/follow techniques. The men changed their hand connection to give the ladies advanced notice that something different was about to happen. Then they led a ONE, TWO, tap-step(left), tap-step (right), tap-step (FORWARD), then an anchor triple step. This is hard stuff, but its the foundation for advanced moves later on. Connection, changing up basic patterns, and being alert for your partner's interpretation of the music is what makes great dancers stand out from the pack. The class also worked on spinning side passes.

The Advanced class had a whole smorgasbord of moves to work on. Syncopated side passes, stretching an anchor step by dragging your toe across the slot, and basic variations if you choose to use them. Bobby then taught two fine moves that'll take some practice to master.

The first is the Whip with a Shoulder Pick. It's a regular whip up to count *four*, where the man then reaches through the frame with his left hand, and picks the lady's hand off his shoulder, opening up with a lady's outside/right spin. Pick up the lady's other hand by sliding your right hand across her back as she turns, ending in open presentation, side by side.

We had two variations after this. One was leading left into a shoulder drape (neck wrap) then a soft lead out to cross handed grip on an anchor.

The second was the doozy. Let's call it a Tandem turn or maybe the Open Carrousel. The guy leads left on count *one* with a 180 degree pivot, followed by a straight arm held high and another 180 degree pivot on count *two*, circling above the ladies head. Then give her a free spin on 3 and 4, followed by an anchor step.

Practice that one and see how good you get! Bobby emphasized that the leaders have to pivot, switch weight, then pivot again with a step down the line to lead the lady into her line down the slot.

Thanks to all our great instructors!

Music News

Great music last night, don't you agree? Jack has been taking requests and playing a couple new contemporary songs you may not have heard played at the club before. This is a result of your feedback during our recent survey. Let us know what you think of the music!

We got requests for more of everything. Some folks wanted more blues, some more contemporary music, some more R&B, and some like exactly what they'd been hearing. Although we did receive several requests for a Country Western song occasionally, your Board did not agree at this time to do that. While many of us do enjoy C&W dancing, we wanted to keep the music going for swing dancers to practice what they'd learned in class.

Upcoming Events

Donese announced that there are still a few seats left at the Novice Invitational table that the club purchased. Seats are \$60.00 for the weekend of March 28th. We've also purchased a very nice table for America's Classic held in January 2009. Since there were several comments on the survey about our club reserving seats at various events, I thought we needed to discuss what might be confusing to some of our members.

When a table is bought at an event, the seats at that table are purchased for the weekend by the ticket holder. That means they've bought a reserved seat at that table. And while many people stop by your table to visit and rest, the seat really belongs to the person who bought the seat. So when the competition begins and everyone scrambles back to their tables to watch the show, they'd like to find their seat available again. Please be courteous and move to another area, which often is standing room only at many events. So, to be sure that YOU have a seat with the club, please see Donese or Helen and get your self a guaranteed spot. Seats do go fast so don't wait too long!

Social Calendar

Lots going on in the next two weeks. Bobby announced a great opportunity for anyone who can make it down to Dance Royale at Dairy-Ashford and Memorial Blvd next week. David Appel is hosting a weekend dance and he's been advertising for workshops led by Michael Kielbasa and Jennifer Deluca. Three workshops on Saturday, a party Saturday night, and three workshops on Sunday. Price for the weekend is \$90.00, or you could pay for individual workshops or the party separately. This will be a fabulous weekend with great dancers from all around Texas. Check out David's webpage for more info:

<http://www.appeldance.com/parties.html>

Every Friday night, Melody Club Ballroom has West Coast Swing dancing, as well as some Hustle and Country Western dancing too. Check it out: www.melodyclub.net

And don't forget to check out the local clubs and bars for live music. Houston has some incredible bands playing music that is perfect to dance West Coast swing to.

See you next week!

Wayne