

North Houston Swing Dance Club

Wednesday May 26th, 2010

Our club was really hopping last Thursday. We've made a few changes and y'all have adjusted very nicely. Thank you to everyone for testing the water and finding out that the changes turned out to be pretty good after all! Thanks to Michael Stephens for filling in with our Advanced Class.

One of the things y'all have asked for, is getting the class started on time. We've tried to do better at that. How are we doing?

Second, you asked for an alternative to doing the footwork warm-ups for those who choose not to participate. Michael has provided that by starting his class promptly at 8:00PM and beginning his instruction. Is that working better for y'all?

And, we're returning as much as we can back to our dancers by drawing 2 tickets for free admission the following week. That's unheard of!! But you deserve it! Be sure to stick around after the John Paul Jones social mixer and see if you've won!

In addition, Jack and I rotate DJ duties to offer you a variety of music with our own style and your favorites. Give us some feedback on that too. We're trying our best to be sure everyone has the best dance experience we can give. Would you be so kind as to send us a note back telling us what you think?

Class Notes

Our **Beginner** and **Intermediate** Classes teach the 6 and 8 count patterns for West Coast Swing. We'd like to see you spend 1-2 months in Beginner, then move on to Intermediate where you'll learn lots of patterns and variations as well as some hot styling to look good on the dance floor. Normally, students will spend at least 6-9 months at the Intermediate level before moving on to Advanced.

In our **Advanced Class** this week, Michael Stephens worked on alternate footwork and pattern variations which add interest and opportunity to your dance. Michael gave me permission to post the video on YouTube, so check out what this class is working on!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uriHfAxBeUE>

Bryan Spivey is attempting to perform a miracle in his **Advanced Patterns and Footwork** class - and he's being successful! Bryan is doing a masterful job of teaching proper Lead/Follow technique using a variety of methods to get his point across. Our dancers are learning to lead with body movement instead of jerking arms and pulling shoulders out of sockets. Bryan is going over hand connections, arm tensions, being alert towards your partner to see if they are ready for your lead or follow. He's teaching forward and side movements as well as moves that hold in place for a count or two, and moves that turn sideways and sometimes over-rotate...like on the fancy Whip pattern that turns an extra quarter turn on the finish.

Every dancer at every level needs this refresher, and needs to be practiced on it to be a better dancer. This is welcome instruction, Bryan! You get the North Houston Medal of Honor for the work you're doing here (actually ,we don't have a medal...so just give Bryan a big hug the next time you see him)

And as if that wasn't enough already, Bryan also gave us 2 real nice new moves to work on - the left side shoulder drape -one with an 8-count open presentation, and one with a 6-count quick turn back out to starting position.

Swingapalooza

Last week, Donese and Gary, Sherri, Heath, Patty, myself and several other Houston area dancers went to the Baton Rouge, Louisiana area for Swingapalooza, a swing dance competition. Typically this is a smaller, one-day event, but this year, it was a full fledged dance competition weekend. It turned out to be one FUN event, even though Donese and I came away pouting a little bit. We didn't finish in 1st place in the contests we each entered like we thought we should have. Crazy, deranged judges!!!

What we loved though, was meeting so many new dancers from the South, including Louisiana, Alabama, and Mississippi. We danced all day and night, and had some really fun competitions too. Cher Peadon(Dallas) and Bryan Jordan(Baton Rouge) put on a hilarious show in their Pro Jack and Jill. And again, the level of dancer in these Novice level events is just amazing! Its so fun to be able to meet someone new from somewhere you've never been, and be able to get on the dance floor and dance together. We got to hear some new tunes from the wonderful DJ's there too.

The workshops were fun, with Kristen and Sean Moody giving us some fun new moves along with tips on competition that were very enlightening. Finally, there was great Cajun food, as well as some of the best BBQ ribs outside of Texas!

Music

Try a nice version of a great Prince song, When Dove's Cry by Prince. The version I'm talking about is by Genuwine featuring Timbaland. Search it, and give it a listening.

Social Calender

*Up in Dallas over the **Memorial Day Weekend**, plan to go to a brand new event called ProAmJam. That's on the May 28-30 weekend. Our own Brian Spivey and his wife Lisa are doing workshops, and there will be lots of dancing too. Lori Jackson Hayner, one of the event directors, is promising a memorable kick-off weekend. One night is set aside for a dress up night too. For more information check out <http://www.dfwproamjam.com/>

*Then **in June**, Dance America Productions presents "The Houston Swing Classic" will be held Thursday, June 24 at 7:00pm through Sunday morning, June 27 at 2:00am. This too is a brand new event. We've already filled up a table for North Houston! This is a non-competition social dance event featuring workshops by Heavy & Snowflake Grammar, Beata Howe, Damon & Lisa D'Amico, Bryan Jordan, Terry Roseborough, John Lindo, Christopher Hussey, and Phil Dorroll. There will be dance Exhibitions and a Saturday afternoon cookout. Your DJ's for the event are Ray Coker, John Lindo, Rich Kopels, Cara Johnston, and Phil Dorroll. For more information, check this out: <http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=107248135966175>

See you Thursday !

Wayne