

The Tucson Swing Dance Club's October 2008

Newsletter

This month

Roger and Dana Belasco are October's volunteer dance instructors.

- Thursday, October 2nd: **Jack & Jill contest.** Tamra Hood is the DJ.
- Thursday, October 9th: Matt Rounseville is the DJ.
- Tuesday, October 14th: Board meeting 7pm at Something Sweet, 5319 E Speedway Blvd
- Thursday, October 16th: Scott Miller is the DJ.
- Saturday, October 18th: Happy Hour at the Maverick, 6622 E Tanque Verde Rd, from 7-9pm.
- Thursday, October 23rd: Jim Davis is the DJ. **Jack & Jill evaluations** for new competitors.
- Thursday, October 30th: **Halloween Party and costume contest!** Joe Erker is the DJ.



Desert City Swing 2008: Pete Green and Heather in the Open J&J

Upcoming events

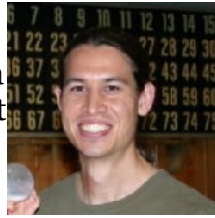
- Saturday, November 8th: Workshops with Wendy Miller and Michael and Amber Cross. See the insert for details.
- Saturday, December 13th: TSDC Christmas Party at the Tucson Convention Center.

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President's message

I was so excited to hear what a great turnout we had at Desert City Swing, and I want to congratulate all of our competitors for making us proud there. It's always wonderful when we do well in competition, but many probably don't realize that even if you do not compete at an event, you are still doing our club a service by just being there to represent Tucson.



As I announced in last month's newsletter, John Wheaton is hosting Halloween Swingthing Oct 30-Nov 2 in Irvine, California. This is a really fun event and I highly encourage you to check it out for yourself. We have flyers at the front desk of the club or you can visit their website for more details:
www.centralcoastswingdance.com.

In previous newsletters, I've talked about how attending conventions can improve your dancing in a short amount of time by allowing you to practice dancing with so many different people. In addition to lots of dancing, the main key to becoming a better dancer is improving your technique. Good technique allows leaders to quickly learn new patterns (sometimes just by seeing the pattern), and allows followers to follow patterns they've never been taught in a group class.

Private lessons and coaching with a qualified instructor is always the best way to quickly identify areas of your dancing technique that could be improved.

However, one of the best and most cost-effective ways to improve technique is by attending a workshop. Workshops are different than regular group classes because not only do you get to learn some cool new patterns, but they primarily focus on the technique that makes those patterns easy to lead or follow.

That's why I'm extremely pleased to announce that our club will be hosting a workshop right here in Tucson on Saturday, November 8! This is the first workshop our club has sponsored in many years, so you're not going to want to miss out on this event. See the special flyer insert in this newsletter for all of the details. I'll see you there!

James

Judging Seminar with Jeannie Tucker in Phoenix

Jeannie Tucker is a champion dancer, prominent instructor, and a judge at the Phoenix 4th of July Convention and other national events.

Anyone interested in improving their competitive skills or becoming a judge is encouraged to attend.

Date: Sunday, October 19th

Time: 1pm - 4pm

Location: VFW Post 720, 4853 E Thomas Rd, Phoenix

Cost: Free to GPSDC and TSDC members; \$15 for non-members

September Jack & Jill results

- Novice: Kevin and Debra Burke were in 1st place, Jeff Brucker and Michele Rappaport were 2nd, and Matt Rounseville and Robin Chlad were 3rd.
- Intermediate: Robert Grace and Tosha Meshell were in 1st place, Tom Grubaugh and Giulianna Donnelly were 2nd, and Chris McLean and Sam Fox were 3rd.
- Advanced: James Hood and Wendy Miller were in 1st place, Roger and Dana Belasco were 2nd, and Jim Davis and Brooke Schilling were 3rd.

On the road

At Desert City Swing in Phoenix, Raquel Montanez was in 1st place in the Novice Jack & Jill, Robert Grace was 2nd, and Jim Davis was 3rd. Cameo Cross was in 1st place in the Intermediate Jack & Jill; Lacey Petterson was 2nd in the Advanced Jack & Jill, and Ro Vaughn and Ellen Colonna were 3rd. Ro Vaughn was in 1st place in the Open Jack & Jill, and Heather McLean was 2nd. And Ro Vaughn and Raquel Montanez were in 1st place in the Strictly Swing 'B' division.



Kevin, Debra, Jeff, Michele, Matt, and Robin



Tosha, Robert, Tom, Giulianna, Chris, and Sam



Wendy, James, Dana, Roger, Brooke, and Jim

Our first convention

Desert City Swing... it seemed as if everyone we talked to from the club was going, and they all thought we would benefit from the convention experience. We went back and forth trying to decide. We'd only been dancing WCS for three months and wondered if the workshops would be over our heads, if we would remember anything, and if we could afford the expense. These doubts (and more) kept whispering to our brains, but thank goodness our hearts spoke louder and we listened!



We decided to drive up early Saturday morning, just pay \$50 each for a day pass and drive back late that night. That way, we'd be able to go to workshops all day, watch some of the competitions and dance 'til late that night (all for an affordable price).

We arrived in Phoenix around 9:30am. When we signed in, the girls at the desk looked bleary-eyed, but had big grins on their faces as they talked about dancing all night until 4:00 or 5:00 in the morning. As we walked into the ballroom for the first workshop, many others stumbled in looking tired...but sounding stoked after dancing all night. We looked at each other and both had the same thought... "I wish we would have been here... sounds like a blast!"

The music started and people were on the dance floor in a flash (all tiredness temporarily forgotten). After a few warm-up songs, the first workshop with Michael and Amber Cross began. We were actually able to do the moves and were feeling pretty snazzy! The next workshop was with Parker Dearborn and Jessica Cox...striking young dancers who showed some hip, sexy moves. Their workshop involved playing with timing. We're only just getting solid on the regular WCS timing, so this one was a little more difficult for us, but still LOADS of fun. Our third workshop was with Sarah Vann Drake and Kyle Redd. They gave so many great tips on partnering and staying connected...like how the leader can give the follower a clue about what's coming next with just a slight turn of his body. By the third workshop, Zo's head was about to explode with information overload (the leaders really DO have a much harder job than the followers). So, we took a break and grabbed a bite to eat. Luis Crespo was next. He was introduced as Luis "the dream" Crespo. He was good-looking no doubt, but when Luis danced he made even basic moves look exquisite... almost dreamlike. Zo was amazed by Luis's feet...it looked like he was gliding on ice. His workshop was cool because he would do a basic move and then show it again with a timing change which allowed you to add a body roll (yeah, right) or a kick ball change at the end. He did that with several different moves of increasing difficulty. Patti Vo did a very different type of workshop on musicality and I realized I'm usually so busy counting that I hardly listen to the music, much less dance to it. Her workshop opened my eyes and helped me realize that one of the things that makes the pros so incredible to watch (besides impeccable technique and unique patterns) is that they truly feel the music, are able to cut loose and always put a bit of their own personality into every move.

There was dancing between workshops, before the evening competitions and between each competition division. We were still too intimidated to ask people to dance, but lots of people asked us to dance and didn't seem to care about our ability level. We began to feel tired as the night wore on, but also so energized...so alive...so caught up in the moment. We both loved watching not only the pros, but all the other regular looking people...regular that is until they stepped on the dance floor, where they suddenly came alive and looked extraordinary...there were just so many amazing dancers! The diversity of the crowd struck us both. Different ethnicities, different styles, different ages...all connected by their love of West Coast Swing. There were kids as young as about 12 out there dancing. One elderly woman (who looked about 70 or 80) was dressed to the nines and not only danced with tons of men of all ages, but entered the pro-am and danced with one of the pros during competition. She was still going strong when we left at about 1:00am.

We had already experienced how friendly, open and nurturing the Tucson Swing Dance Club is to newcomers and beginners. However, at Desert City Swing we saw that the West Coast community as a whole seems just as eager to share their passion for West Coast Swing and is more than willing to help newcomers. In fact, as Zo and I were practicing a workshop move in the hall (and getting frustrated), Michael Cross (one of the workshop instructors) walked by. He stopped, asked us what we were working on and asked us to show him. Although it was a move from another workshop, he immediately identified the problem and showed us how to do the move correctly. While talking to us about West Coast Swing, he encouraged us to keep at it, saying that the difficulty of WCS makes it frustrating to learn, but that same difficulty is what keeps you hooked. Michael said he's been dancing WCS for over thirty years and is still learning new things (and is still completely addicted to West Coast Swing). Wow! We were so impressed that he not only took the time to give us a little coaching, but also shared words of inspiration and encouragement.

Bottom-line (if you haven't figured it out already), we had an **UNFORGETTABLE, ABSOLUTELY-AMAZING** experience at our first convention and have only one regret...we wish we would have gone for all three days instead of just one!!

Zo and Mary Carroll

Desert City Swing, year two

Tucson's own Wendy Miller taught the 10am workshop Sunday morning, and as usual she asked how late people had stayed up dancing the night before. My 4am was quickly trumped by Julie Walton's 4:30am and then by a young girl who'd stayed up to 6:30am. ("Youth," Wendy noted.)



But then Chris Jones, the late night DJ who was lounging in the doorway, beat us all: he'd closed the ballroom at 6:50 and then got up at 7:18. 28 minutes sleep!

The newcomers in the workshop must have been wondering what they'd gotten themselves into. But those who've been to WCS conventions before knew that late night dancing, with that addictive blend of endorphins and sleep deprivation, is what it's all about. It wasn't until later that I realized we could have been comparing times at Phoenix, or Sacramento, or Boogie by the Bay, or any of the established WCS conventions. And that just goes to show that Desert City Swing really has arrived, though it's only in its second year.

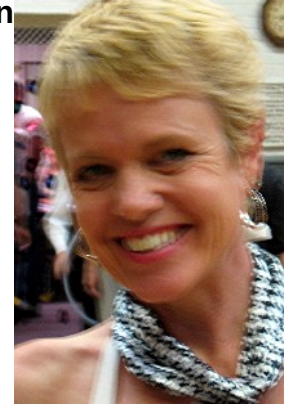
It's still a small event in terms of attendance, compared to those others, though the attendance doubled from last year. And the staff faced some unique challenges--the power went out to the ballroom Sunday morning. No lights, and no air conditioning. But Cheryl Olson, the unflappable event coordinator, worked with the hotel staff to get things sorted out in record time.

The Champions Jack & Jill on Sunday afternoon was amazing. Michael Kielbasa and Alyssa Alden put on a wonderful show. We smaller fish in the Jack & Jills went through the usual competition cycle of nerves, anticipation, suspense--and the occasional mad dash back to a hotel room to retrieve a bib number!

After the last competition finished DJ David Koppleman slumped in a chair nearby and I asked him what his next convention was. "Good question..." He thought for a moment. "Halloween Swingthing." I'm out of vacation time and can't justify the expense, but somehow I think I'll see him there. And at Desert City Swing 2009 too.

JJ, errm, Jim Davis

Interested in going to an out-of-town dance event, but not sure where to start? Debra Burke was recently appointed as our official Event Liaison. She can help you work out things like carpooling and roommates to help you save money and get to know fellow club members. Look for Deb at the Thursday night dances.



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www.desertgardendesign.com



Sierra puckishly observes what fools these mortals be.

New members

Welcome Tatyana Gordievskaya, Jasmine Lane, LuAnn Glock, Harvey John, and Claudette Perier.

Birthdays

Members get in free the week of their birthday!

October 4th: Virginia Parchment, Jordan McGary, and James Sebastian

October 6th: Bri Mergenthaler

October 7th: Janice Shasteen

October 9th: Bob Osborne

October 10th: Don Adamavich and Linda Piper

October 16th: Debbie O'Sullivan and Dona Hogan

October 19th: Bill Wieboldt

October 21st: Shadow! Nightwing

October 26th: Bill Kelly

October 27th: Jane Gurney

October's video link

Check the website at www.tsd.net for a link to the Desert City Swing highlight reel.

Local WCS instructors

- Ellen Colonna: 520-548-6777
- Jesse Dickson: jessedickson.com
- Wendy Miller: 520-318-9236
- Cassey Olson: 602-750-7368
- L Perez: 520-792-2067
- Ro Vaughn: 520-808-9398

TSDC 2008-2009 Board

James Hood is the President, Heather McLean is the Vice President, Don Bennett is the Treasurer, Robin Chlad is the Membership Secretary, and Cathy Schreiber is the Corporate Secretary.

Debbie Burke is the Event Liaison, Kevin Burke is the Sergeant at arms, Ellen Colonna is the Head Judge, Jim Davis is the Newsletter Editor, Bill Garrity is the Contest Coordinator, Tom Grubaugh is the Dance Director, Tamra Hood is the Music Director, Chris McLean is the Club Photographer, Heather McLean is the Website Administrator, and Eleanor Schrandt is the Hospitality Director.

Dance lessons at the club

Each month the club's dance instructors teach the beginning patterns in West Coast Swing. Students may start the sequence on any Thursday.

- First Thursday of the month: Left side pass, underarm turn, underarm turn with a hand change, and the right side pass.
- Second Thursday: 4-beat starter step, throwout, and closed basic.
- Third Thursday: Sugarpush, tuck throwout, and turning basic.
- Fourth Thursday: Basic whip, whip with an inside turn, and whip with an outside turn
- And in months with a fifth Thursday: Basket whip and variations.

We recommend taking the beginning class for three months before going on to the intermediate class. Intermediate classes teach pattern variations, combinations, and syncopations beyond the basics.

About the TSDC

Founded in 1977 by Rose Marie Burrell, the Tucson Swing Dance Club has dances Thursday night at the Tucson Woman's Club, 6245 E Bellevue Street. There are dances every Thursday night except on Thanksgiving or other major holidays.

Club instructors teach a beginning lesson from 7-7:45pm and an intermediate lesson from 8-8:30pm, with dancing until 10:30pm.

Admission is \$3 for members and \$5 otherwise; annual memberships cost \$25 and run from January 1st through December 31st. Members are also eligible to compete in the club Jack & Jill contests and can choose to get a printed copy of the newsletter. Anyone can read the newsletter online at www.tsd.net

We play your music at Dance Party Tucson

Lessons: Beginner 6:30pm.
Intermediate/Advanced 7:15pm. Open Dance -
8pm. Cost: \$15 for the evening. **\$2 discount
on admission for TSDC members.** 5000
square foot wooden dance floor!

Boys and Girls Clubs - 3155 E Grant (east of
Country Country Club). Every 2nd and 4th
Saturday of the month.
www.dancepartytucson.com



Miro's dance studio

Ad rates

Email ads to tsdcnewsletter@gmail.com and send a check payable to the Tucson Swing Dance Club to TSDC, P.O. Box 32226, Tucson, AZ 85751

Issues	1	2	4	6
Business card	\$7	\$13.50	\$25	\$35
Quarter page	\$14	\$27	\$50	\$68.60
Third page	\$19.50	\$37.50	\$65	\$95
Half page	\$25	\$45	\$70	\$100
Full page	\$40			
Single-sided insert	\$50			
Double-sided insert	\$80			

Westcoast Dance Wednesday is back!

Just like it used to be only better!

Where: ABC / Arizona Ballroom Co.
5536 E. Grant near Safeway & Burger
King / cross streets S.E. corner Cray
Croft & Grant.

When: Every Wednesday.

Beginner's lesson 7-8pm.
Open dancing 8-10:30pm.

How much: Only \$5
for both lesson and dancing.

For more information or join our email
list, send an email to:
shadow@nightwing.us or call
520-298-7636.

Join us for the TSDC November Workshop

Saturday, November 8th, 2008

Workshops 5:00 pm- 8:00 pm; Dance 8:00 pm- 10:00 pm

Arizona Ballroom Company
5536 E Grant Rd, Tucson, AZ

Featuring three hours of workshops taught by West Coast Swing Allstar/Champion instructors, a potluck dinner, and a 2-hour dance with DJ Tamra Hood.

Wendy Miller



Body Motion Workshop

Learn essential elements of body movement as it relates to leading and following during this 1-hour workshop with national WCS Allstar/ Champion competitor Wendy Miller.



Michael and Amber Cross



Beyond the Basics

Take your dancing to the next level during this 2-hour workshop. Learn exciting new pattern variations focusing on crucial leading and following technique from WCS Champions Michael and Amber Cross.

***Workshops and Dance: \$25 for members, \$30 for non-members
Dance Only: \$3 for members, \$5 for non-members***