

## The Tucson Swing Dance Club's March 2013

# Newsletter

### This Month

**Ellen Colonna and Hondo Velasco** are the volunteer dance instructors for March.

- Thursday, March 7<sup>th</sup>: Jack & Jill Contest. **Jim Davis** is the DJ.
- Wednesday, March 13<sup>th</sup>: **Board Meeting** 7 pm at IHOP, 1500 W. Grant Road. All members are welcome.
- Thursday, March 14<sup>th</sup>: St. Patrick's Day Party. Wear Green. **Alex Diekmann** is the DJ.
- Thursday, March 21<sup>st</sup>: **Scott Miller** is the DJ.
- Thursday, March 28<sup>th</sup>: Evaluations for TSDC Jack & Jills. **Ron Gonzalez** is the DJ.



*Hondo and Ellen, our amazing February instructors, weren't the only ones joining in the fun at our Valentine's Day party. It was a sea of red when you looked out across the room. Thanks to all our members who showed up in red! Check out our classes in March...we're in for another treat with **Hondo and Ellen** teaching again this month!*



***Melissa Rutz**, National WCS Champion, treated us to a dance demo with our own **Scott Miller**. What fun to watch these two tear up the floor! For pictures of Melissa's recent workshop, check inside the newsletter.*

### Upcoming Events

- Thursday, April 4<sup>th</sup>: TSDC Board Elections.
- Thursday, April 18<sup>th</sup>: Laurie Schwimmer, WCS national judge, choreographer and instructor, will be here for 2 workshops.

# President's Message

It's often been said that art imitates life. I find this to be particularly true in the art of WCS. In trying to learn this exhilarating, and oftentimes frustrating, dance WCS is proving itself to be a valuable guide in learning more about myself and the power of my



interactions with others. The life lessons which can be learned from this dance make WCS more than just a matter of strapping on some well-worn dance shoes and moving around a dance floor.

A couple of things I ran across recently made me think about WCS in relationship to life. I was listening to a radio interview on NPR with writer George Saunders, who was recently awarded the MacArthur "Genius Grant." He was asked the question, "What do you do when you get writers' block?" As a songwriter, I could relate to this question. His advice was to stop thinking about what you're writing and just let your mind "flow." He said that ideas would invariably come and get you back on track. I remember Wendy Miller and Matthew Loukopoulos both giving me the same advice during privates. I was told that when out on the dance floor, it's time to leave lessons behind and let your mind and body flow with the music. Instead of thinking while dancing, dance and your body will think of something to do. "Going with the flow" becomes a matter of letting go and "being in the moment." We all know just how difficult this can be to actually do. I know that when I am able to let go of my fears and inhibitions, I feel more alive and more authentic. On the dance floor, this equates to a better dance experience.

Choreographer and dancer, Alonzo King, of the Alonzo King LINES Ballet Company says, "Dance is thought made visible, just as music is sound made audible." Since dance can be

thought made visible, be careful what kind of thoughts you're projecting on the dance floor. Just as a face can be an open book, what you're thinking can be seen in how you dance and relate (or not) to your partner. Put on a happy face even if it's the worse dance of your life. After all, your little hell will only last about 3 minutes!

King also said, "There is a point after you acquire skills as a dancer, and you do acquire skills, that naturally you have conceit. Then humility has to enter. It's a liberating place to be." Powerful stuff. Right?! Personally, I am drawn to people who have accomplished big things, yet who remain humble. WCS will afford you many opportunities to experience humility. You'll probably never get as good at this dance as you'd like to and there will always be dancers better than you are. You won't always make finals in competitions nor place in them. Even if you are talented and lucky enough to reach the Champion level in WCS, there will be lessons in humility that you will probably experience. Even high up the totem pole, there's room for humility.

Each of the champions we have had here for workshops (including Melissa) exemplified a high level of accomplishment and confidence, yet were down to earth and approachable. Their objectives were not only to give us the skills we need to become good dancers, but also to show us what is possible in WCS. Seeing how they can make dance come alive is well worth the price of admission to our workshops. Make sure you're at the next one.

I didn't want to sign off without saying how much fun I had at Melissa Rutz's workshops. Did you? Thanks to all who came out to pack the house. She had a wonderful time in Tucson and you guys are the ones to thank for that. Once again, TSDC's gratitude goes out to Randy Malak and Karen Ward for opening their home to Melissa and for providing her with transportation. You guys rock!

*See you on the dance floor...*

*Zo Carroll*

*The Tucson Swing Dance Club Welcomes*

# **Laurie Schwimmer**



Laurie Schwimmer is a professional dancer, judge, choreographer and instructor. Benji Schwimmer, her son, is a National WCS Champion and Season 2 winner of "So You Think You Can Dance" in 2006. Her daughter Lacey is also a WCS Champion and one of the pros on "Dancing With the Stars". In 2010, Laurie was honored at the US Open Swing Dance Champions for her contributions to West Coast Swing. There was a compilation video played in her honor as she was inducted into the "Walk of Legends". The video showcased her West Coast Swing legacy.

**Workshops held at:**

**Sonoran Ballroom Academy  
5536 E. Grant Road (Grant and Craycroft)  
Tucson, AZ**

**Laurie is only available for privates  
on Thursday, April 18<sup>th</sup> (before the workshops)  
Slots will fill fast, so book your private today!  
Call Karen Ward at (520) 260-2963 to schedule.**

**Thursday, April 18<sup>th</sup>**

**Two Amazing Workshops!**

**7:00-8:00 p.m & 8:00-9:00 p.m.**

**Dance 9:00-11:00 p.m.**

**One Incredible Price!**

**\$10 for Members**

**\$15 for Guests**

*Price includes both workshops, plus dance! Price remains the same all night, so come early and enjoy both workshops, as well as social dancing.*



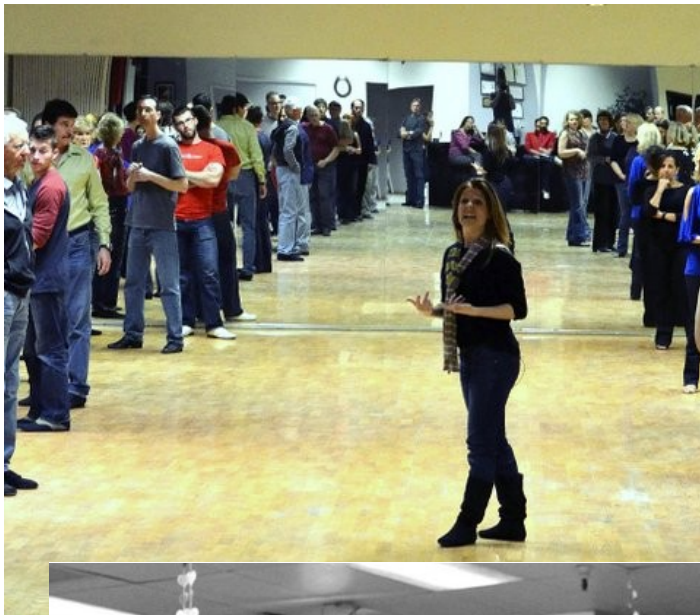
***The Legendary Schwimmer Dance Family***

***Buddy, Benji, Laurie and Lacey***

# Melissa Rutz's Workshops are a Roaring Success!

*Melissa Rutz, National West Coast Swing Champion, taught two packed workshops here at TSDC on January 31<sup>st</sup>. Her first workshop focused heavily on technique for both the leader and the follower, while her second workshop introduced new moves. Melissa delighted fans by dancing a spotlight dance with TSDC's own Music Director, **Scott Miller**. What a treat it was to see them dance together! Melissa was energetic, fun and kept her classes moving with wit and humor. She stayed on after the workshops and danced all night with both leaders and followers. Thank you to all of our members, and our friends from Phoenix, who supported this event. A special thanks to **Karen Ward**, our Workshop Coordinator, for organizing such a special night for our club. We are also especially grateful to **Matt Rounseville**, our Club Photographer, for capturing it all with such incredible photos!*





# Beyond Patterns

by Matthew Loukopoulos



## Part 2: Rolling Count

Hopefully these last few articles have got you to listen to music more. A lot more. By now you should know what down-beat and up-beat are, as well as phrases. Last month was all about Straight Count.

I'm hoping that you are now able to hear songs that have a straight, evenly spaced boom-tic and the ones that feel like the boom-tic kind of shuffles like an Irishman on St. Patrick's Day. That 'shuffle' feeling/sounding boom tic is where we are going to start this month as I attempt the impossible. I'm going to describe Rolling Count using words on a page without physically being there to show you the movement. This will require participation from you on your end. You can all get this, so don't wuss out and lose me now.

Using the same exercise from last month with the clapping of your hands while counting out loud, here is your second count. Take it nice and slow. 1-&-ah-2-&-ah-,3-&-ah-4-&-ah-,5-&-ah-6-&-ah-,7-&-ah-8-&-ah-.,

Again, commas are there to show the separation of the two beat increments. Clap on the numbers, but count it out. All of it. Say each number, & and ah. Watch what your arms are doing. It looks different doesn't it? Your hands are still clapping on the numbers. But what are your arms doing between the numbers and during the &? They are moving! This is the key element to this concept.

The spaces between the numbers are still evenly spaced, but are separated into thirds. Thirds, not halves. 1-&-ah. That's one beat split into three parts. Go up and notice how each beat is split into three equal parts. It's important to see that. That is why your hands are not at their widest point and changing direction on the & like they were in the exercise last month. Now they are moving through & and through ah. Try it again. Ah-Ha!

Let's take that rolling count from above (yes, that's how we spell it in Canada) and put it into a 6 count rhythm pattern that we would recognize in WCS. Here's your map and it's legend. 1-\_\_-2-\_\_-3-\_\_-ah-4-\_\_-5-\_\_-ah-6-\_\_-.,. Numbers are beats. Commas are there to show separation into 2 beat increments.

This is where it gets hard to explain without demonstrating motion. The 1,2, that's your walk, walk. Same as always. The 3 ah 4, 5 ah 6, are your triple steps. Your weight shifts on the numbers and the 'ah-s'. The difference now is that the & is still there, but in a basic rhythm pattern we count it in our head but don't shift our weight onto it. Are you still with me? Try clapping it out. Say 1-&-ah-2 but clap on the '1', the 'ah', and the '2'. It should sound like 'clap, clap-clap'. 'Slow, quick-quick' if you prefer. The & is still there. You are using that time for your hands to get ready for the clap. This time, do it with your feet. If you feel like your triple step kind of shuffles, you got it.

Ok. Do you need to know this? YES! In my opinion there are several reasons why you should know and be able to do this. Let's just focus on the two obvious ones.

First, the music. As we have discussed, some songs are kind of even-stein, others kind of shuffle. When you dance your triples with straight count to a song that shuffles it just won't feel right. It's like wearing your left shoe on your right foot. They are still your shoes, in your size, but they don't feel or look right.

Second, and just as important, maybe even more so. As you should have noticed, during Rolling Count, your hands are moving during the & and getting ready for the clap. When you do this with your feet, your body is moving and preparing for the weight shift during the &. You land on the numbers but you get ready for that weight shift during the '&-ah' in the case of the walk, walk, or the '&' in the case of a triple. Your triples, your rhythm changes, your body movements all start to 'swing'.

What this also does is totally smooth out your dance. WCS is a dance that is elastic. It should look and feel nice and stretchy. During that '&' there is a lot of time. When you are able to smooth out your movements by using all that time you have available your dance now takes on that nice continuously elastic look and feel.

Try it out to slow music and see what you can do with it. By slow, I mean painfully slow. Once you get it slow, fast is easy. Rolling count will make your triple steps feel like they shuffle or swing, as the music does. That's what we do. And that's part of why I always start you off with 5,6,7,8, &-ah-1, etc. We are swing dancers. We don't sway 'back-and-forth'. We swing. '&-I'm-Done.'



**Rochelle Browne**

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**TSDC**  
**is celebrating**  
**St. Patrick's Day**  
**on Thursday,**  
**March 14<sup>th</sup>!**



**WEAR GREEN**  
**& Get Lucky!**

# Tucson Swing Dance Club 2013 Election Ballot

Mark an X next to the candidate of your choice, or write in a name on the line provided:

## President

Zo Carroll \_\_\_\_\_

Write-in Candidate \_\_\_\_\_

## Vice President

Ellen Colonna \_\_\_\_\_

Write-in Candidate \_\_\_\_\_

## Treasurer

Don Bennett \_\_\_\_\_

Write-in Candidate \_\_\_\_\_

## Membership Secretary

Eleanor Schrandt \_\_\_\_\_

Write-in Candidate \_\_\_\_\_

## Corporate Secretary

Vera Tucker \_\_\_\_\_

Write-in Candidate \_\_\_\_\_

To vote by mail, please send your ballot to:

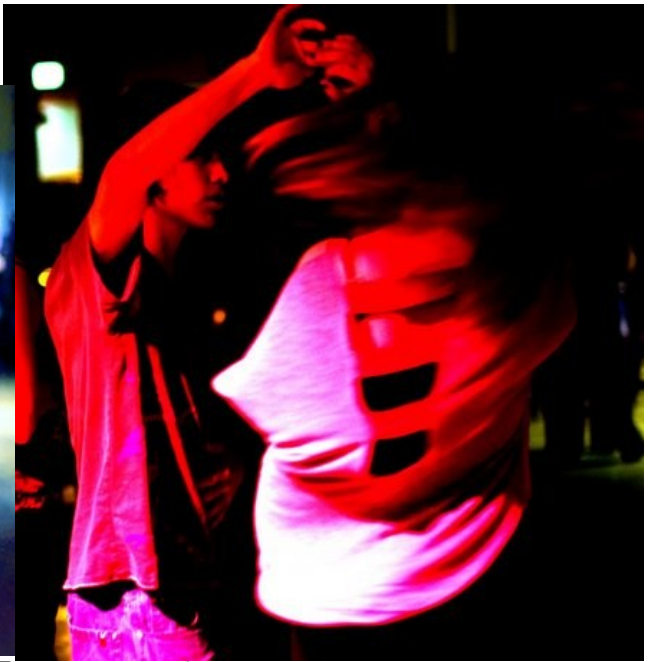
TSDC

PO Box 32226

Tucson, AZ 85751

Write your membership number on the envelope, **NOT** on the ballot itself.  
Mailed ballots must be received before April 4, 2013.





## March Birthdays

Members get in **FREE** the week of their birthday!

3/5 Matt Rounseville

3/6 Ellen Colonna

3/11 Svetlana Temyanko

3/21 Betty Bourquin

3/26 Norma Lazur

## New Members

Michelle Edwards

Eric Mendenhall

Lora Temyanko

Val Temyanko

Jordan Brown

**Welcome...**

**Ask a new member to dance!**

## 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 every Thursday night at the Sonoran Ballroom Academy, 5536 E. Grant (the SE corner of Grant and Craycroft). 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 \$4 for members and \$6 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.tsdc.net](http://www.tsdc.net).

**TSDC Memberships Have EXPIRED!**



**Please help West Coast Swing grow and thrive in our community. Remember to renew your membership!**

## 2012-2013 TSDC Board

President: **Zo Carroll**  
[President@TSDC.net](mailto:President@TSDC.net)

Vice President: **Ellen Colonna**  
[VP@TSDC.net](mailto:VP@TSDC.net)

Treasurer: **Don Bennett**  
[Treasurer@TSDC.net](mailto:Treasurer@TSDC.net)

Membership Secretary: **Eleanor Schrandt**  
[Members@TSDC.net](mailto:Members@TSDC.net)

Corporate Secretary: **Vera Tucker**  
[Secretary@TSDC.net](mailto:Secretary@TSDC.net)

Sergeant at Arms: **Eric Wade**  
[Sergeant@TSDC.net](mailto:Sergeant@TSDC.net)

Head Judge: **Ellen Colonna**  
[Judge@TSDC.net](mailto:Judge@TSDC.net)

Newsletter Editor: **Mary Carroll**  
[Newsletter@TSDC.net](mailto:Newsletter@TSDC.net)

Contest Coordinator: **Hondo Velasco**  
[Contests@TSDC.net](mailto:Contests@TSDC.net)

Dance Director: **Tom Grubaugh**  
[Dance@TSDC.net](mailto:Dance@TSDC.net)

Music Director: **Scott Miller**  
[Music@TSDC.net](mailto:Music@TSDC.net)

Club Photographer: **Matt Rounseville**  
[Photo@TSDC.net](mailto:Photo@TSDC.net)

Website Administrator: **Julie Wilmer**  
[WebAdmin@TSDC.net](mailto:WebAdmin@TSDC.net)

Publicity Director: **Mindy Diamond**  
[Publicity@TSDC.net](mailto:Publicity@TSDC.net)

Hospitality Director: **Julie Wilmer**  
[Hospitality@TSDC.net](mailto:Hospitality@TSDC.net)

Workshop Coordinator: **Karen Ward**  
[Workshops@TSDC.net](mailto:Workshops@TSDC.net)

Mailing Address: **Tucson Swing Dance Club**  
**PO Box 32226**  
**Tucson, AZ 85751**

## Ad Rates

Email ads to [newsletter@tsdc.net](mailto:newsletter@tsdc.net) and send a check payable to the Tucson Swing Dance Club to TSDC, PO Box 32226, Tucson, AZ 85751. Deadline for submission is the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.

Issues	1	2	4	6
Business Card	\$7.00	\$13.50	\$25.00	\$35.00
Quarter Page	\$14.00	\$27.00	\$50.00	\$68.60
Third Page	\$19.50	\$37.50	\$65.00	\$95.00
Half Page	\$25.00	\$45.00	\$70.00	\$100.00
Full Page	\$40.00			
Single-Sided Insert	\$50.00			
Double-sided Insert	\$80.00			

## Local WCS Instructors

If you're a current TSDC member and you'd like to be listed here, send your contact information to [newsletter@tsdc.net](mailto:newsletter@tsdc.net).

- Laurence Bonfoey:  
[dontdelaydancetoday.com](http://dontdelaydancetoday.com)
- Ellen Colonna: 520-548-6777
- Wendy Miller: 520-907-0945  
[wendymillerdance.com](http://wendymillerdance.com)
- Lacey Petterson: 520-339-4643
- Jeannie Tucker: 520-325-4100  
[jeannietucker.com](http://jeannietucker.com)
- Colleen Concannon: 520-309-0735



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