

Palmetto Ballroom Dance Club News



Vol. 15, No. 3

Fall 2014

UPCOMING DANCES MARK YOUR CALENDAR!



- **October 10**
- **November 14**
- **December 5 – Holiday Dance! ***

Dance lesson starts at 7:30; brief review of previous month's lesson starts at 7:15; open dancing from 8:30 to 10:45. Bring your favorite finger foods to share, and/or a door prize (value not to exceed \$10-12), and enjoy an evening of fun and fellowship. And don't forget to invite a friend – our monthly dances are a great introduction to ballroom dancing!

Inside This Issue

Editor's Notes	5
From the President	3
From Our Instructors	6
Media Library	4
Membership	4
Photos	8
Dance Calendar	5

Ballroom Dancing: My Personal Journey

by Vence Jelovchan

Over the years, I've been asked several times how I got started in ballroom dancing. To answer that question, I must go back to the beginning. Growing up, I was more of a "sports jock" vs dancer. Going to a school function where the girls lined up along the wall on one side of the dance floor and the guys the other was for me comparable to being in a P.O.W. prison camp. Not knowing anything about dance and not much about girls at the time, I'm sure the few partners I had were counting the seconds until the dance was over.



Fast forward to my teenage years, during which time I met Pauline (blind date!). I absolutely despised anything to do with dancing for, again, I was never taught how to dance and felt like a fool attempting it. Pauline on the other hand was the consummate dancer, having taken ballet, tap, etc., while growing up. She was the natural; I was the toad. Of course, we would "wing it" on the dance floor by doing what I call "The Penguin" during a slow dance. This amounted to holding each other while rocking side to side for the entire 3 minute dance. When it came time for a fast dance, to me, all this amounted to was jumping around on the dance floor for another 3 minutes, all the time looking like a fool. So, anytime I knew we were going somewhere where dancing would occur (wedding, party, etc.) I broke out into a cold sweat and literally counted the minutes until the evening would end. Pure & simple, I HATED dancing or even the thought.

Continuing to fast forward..... Pauline and I are now married and have our daughter, Tammi, and moved quite a bit due to my military & civilian careers. When we lived in Greenville, SC, "Disco" was offered during the evening at the local college. Knowing Pauline was very eager for us to take the lessons, I reluctantly agreed. After hours of lessons, and hours of me clandestinely practicing on my own with an imaginary partner, I actually managed to be able to do a respectable Disco dance without observers at a local club wondering if I was physically challenged.



A transfer to Florence surfaced in 1980. At my company's employee recreation club, Shag classes were being offered each week so we signed up and learned a very nice, basic shag. Now, I could go out on the floor and do more than just jump around. Months passed, then, Pauline read that beginner ballroom dance lessons were being offered at the local adult education center, better known as the Poynor Adult Education Center (sound familiar??). Again, I knew how much Pauline wanted us to take the class so I reluctantly agreed. After many years of Pauline sacrificing for me in my military and civilian careers, and me being gone a great portion of that time leaving her with more than her share of



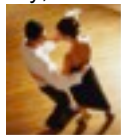


responsibilities, the least I could do was begin to pay her back a little so I dove in. Driving to the 1st lesson, sweat beads were forming on my forehead but as I always say, "never let them see you sweat!" Fortunately, the class was being taught by two excellent ballroom instructors, one of which many of you know – Ellen Simmons. After the first lesson, I had a eureka – I actually began to not hate dancing! I attribute this to ballroom dancing being a series of definitive steps to a certain beat, versus, just randomly jumping up and down or doing the senseless "Penguin." Having a military, structured, mind and being an engineer with an analytical brain, ballroom brought structure to my world, and I liked that. Each dance had very specific steps which were to be done in a very precise way and this appealed to me. We followed the weekly class curriculum and eventually completed basic ballroom dancing in Waltz, Foxtrot, Cha Cha, Rumba, Tango, and East Coast Swing. For sure, my leading and styling left a lot to be desired but at least I was dancing with my wife, and Pauline did a very good job of hiding my mistakes.

Continuing to fast forward.....

Eventually, we joined the local ballroom dance club called the Palmetto Ballroom Dance Club (sound familiar?) and attended the monthly dances. Truth be told, we seldom practiced on our own and only did the various dances when we attended the monthly dances, thus, improvement was painful & slow, especially in my lead. We (mostly I) eventually began to take our ballroom dancing more seriously and began putting in more time practicing. During the monthly PBDC dances, we did our best to improve, and without fail, Ellen would always ask me to dance. Panic set in as I would see her coming across the floor heading in my direction. I did my best to become a "stealth dancer", to no avail. The beads of sweat grew larger on my forehead with each step she took towards me. Ellen was gracious enough to ignore my poor leads and somehow, somehow, I managed to complete the dance – until the next time!

Then, we were asked to perform a showcase Rumba at the PBDC. Doesn't the pressure ever stop?? Again, we (mostly I) reluctantly agreed and we began to work on our steps, styling & routine. As the days progressed towards the night of the showcase, I switched to Right Guard-Extra Strength deodorant, but that didn't help much. I considered spreading it on my brow but after trying it privately, I realized I looked like I was embalmed so I eliminated this thought. The night of the showcase arrived. We were introduced, and moved to the center of the floor, under the spotlight. Pauline's knees were knocking so loud I thought an M-60 machine gun was firing! I had the steps written in the palm of my left hand in case I needed a quick reference! We got into dance position, waiting for the music to begin, and then there was a malfunction with the music. What took a few seconds to correct seemed like hours as we sweated in dance position. We executed the 2 min. 38 second routine, (yes, I counted the seconds!), although I did mess up part of the routine but Pauline covered for me well, as she has done for the past 44 years now. Our audience was gracious and complimentary, which built confidence in my dance capabilities. After many, many hours of practice over the years, we were asked to become assistant



instructors at the PBDC, and eventually assumed the duties of primary instructors.

We worked on our dance proficiency very much at home, and, like most couples, had many "stressful encounters" but none the less, we persevered. Eventually, Pauline "Googled" ballroom dance camps and found one in Vermont that caught her attention. She discussed it with me and I again knew how much she wanted to attend so we signed up. This year will be our 6th year of attending this camp! For me, this week long camp is like taking a final exam every hour of every day for dancing still does not come naturally to me. It takes many, many hours of me practicing in private until I finally store the steps in "muscle memory". Once that occurs, I invite Pauline to practice with me to learn the steps together.

In summary, for me personally, ballroom dancing has opened many doors. It has helped me to become a reasonable dancer, enabled Pauline and I to do something together as we grow older, and introduced us to new friends that share the same passion for ballroom dancing. What I have also learned is that there is no end to learning ballroom dancing; it is an evergreen process. One of my hobbies is furniture making and I compare ballroom dancing to sanding a finished piece – it is never done, you just decide to stop! One must always practice, continue to take lessons no matter what proficiency you are, and realize that it's just a dance. I continue to make errors on the dance floor, and Pauline continues to cover for me, but maybe when I am off to that "ballroom in the sky," I will finally be remembered as a good ballroom dancer.

Dance Lessons Offered In Florence Spread the Word!

Beginner Ballroom Dance Lessons will be offered starting September 25 at Trinity-Byrnes Collegiate School, 5001 Hoffmeyer Rd., Florence. Instructors will be Vence and Pauline Jelovchan. These lessons introduced many club members to the fun of ballroom dancing, and now they will be available again. Classes will meet on on Thursdays from 6:30 to 8 p.m. September 25 through November 6, with the exception of October 28. For registration info, contact Pauline at 667-9322 or email pbjelovchan@yahoo.com.

Playlist suggestions welcome! If you'd like to suggest favorite songs for our monthly dance playlists, email DJ Eddie Collins at eddiecollins@sc.rr.com.



From the President

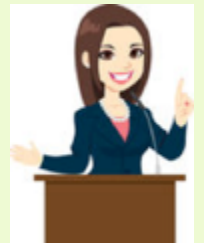


Dear Fellow Dancers:

Every single time before a dance, I get butterflies in my stomach....Will the lesson go all right, will there be enough attendees, will everyone have fun, will there be enough food and door prizes, etc. And, without fail, ALL comes together nicely. On our ride to the dance, Vence always puts out his hand and I put mine in his and he says, "Hope it goes well". I take a deep breath and become calm.

What I know for sure is how much we care about our Club, our members, and our guests. Our goal is to try to accommodate everyone in every way that we can. Lately, the dances have been so much fun. We have great helpers and a great Board. Everyone comes with such a positive attitude and THAT in itself makes the evening a success.

*Our Club will be 17 years young in October. It takes so much work during the month to make those few hours a success, and I want to **THANK YOU** all for what you do. I also know for sure that without helpers, smiles, and constant recruiting, the Club would not survive. I appreciate each and every one who walks through the doors of the Leatherman Center. We are very fortunate to have such a nice location. See you on the dance floor!*



Pauline Jelovchan

Palmetto Ballroom Dance Club Membership Application

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: Home _____ Work _____ Cell _____

Email _____

Annual membership dues are \$20 per person.

Mail to: Palmetto Ballroom Dance Club, 410 Eastburn Ct., Darlington, SC 29532



Club Leadership 2014-15

Officers & Board Members

President: Pauline Jelovchan
Pbjelovchan@yahoo.com

Vice-President: Dorr Depew

Treasurer: Janice Flowers

Secretary: Joann Groover

Jgroover22@yahoo.com

Andrea McKenzie

andreamckenzie@ymail.com

Standing Committees

Dance Theme & Decorations:

Jane Snipes

Music and Band:

Vence & Pauline Jelovchan

Pauline: Pbjelovchan@yahoo.com

Vence: Vjelovchan@aol.com

DJ - Eddie Collins

Dance Instructors: Vence and
Pauline Jelovchan

Assistant Instructors: Rich and
Donna Gerner

Newsletter: Dorr Depew

Door Prize Chairpersons: Rich
and Donna Gerner

Video Librarian: Janice Flowers

Webmaster: Bruce Blumberg
bruceb@uscsumter.edu



Media Library

Big news! We have just added a Salsa DVD to our instructional library! We also have DVDs in: Waltz, Cha Cha, Tango, Rumba, Foxtrot, East Coast Swing, Bolero and Samba. These DVDs are available for loan to members of the PBDC. If interested, please see Janice Flowers who is responsible for maintaining the library. We ask that DVDs be signed out for only one month at a time to allow other members access.

- Vence & Pauline

Bon Voyage Dinner Dance "Cruise" in Sumter October 18!

Cruise on dry land! USC Sumter Steamer! Fundraiser for the USC Sumter Fire Ant Athletics on October 18, sponsored by the Sumter Ballroom Dance Club, dinner, showcase, and music that you can dance to. Dress up and wear those clothes you been waiting to wear to someplace special.

\$15/person, \$25/couple in advance. Call Kay at 438-9356 or Ruth 481-0549, or email Kay at alfredroberson@bellsouth.net. Cost is \$20/person and \$30/couple at the door.

Club Membership

The PBDC tries to make it as easy as possible to experience ballroom dance in the Pee Dee. The PBDC is the only ballroom dance club within 60 miles. We as members must constantly recruit new dancers in hopes that they will join our club. In the past 6 months, many members have moved away, missed attending due to medical issues, etc. Pass the word and let's boost attendance this year.

Please renew your membership promptly when due. Our club depends on your dues to help pay for the hall, DJ and special treats throughout the season. If you have not renewed your membership, we urge you to fill out and send the form in this newsletter, along with your check, to the address shown.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE!

For the very latest info about PBDC activities, including lots more photos and plenty of information, visit the club Web site: <http://www.palmettodanceclub.org>



2014/15 Dance Schedule

Dances are held on the second Friday of each month, unless noted*.

2014

- October 10
- November 14
- December 5 – Holiday Dance (dinner served, black tie optional, reservations required)

2015

- January 9
- February 13
- March 13
- April 10
- May 8
- June 12
- **No July Dance***
- August 14
- September 11
- October 16
- November 13
- December 4*

Dance Lesson from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. (review of previous month's lesson at 7:15).

Open Dancing from 8:30 til 10:45 p.m.

Admission - \$5 for members of the PBDC and \$10 for non-members.
Dinner/Dance - \$10 for members,

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<http://www.palmettodanceclub.org>



Editor's Notes

Dear Friends,

It's hard to believe that Fall is here! Hope you've had a great summer. I know we'll all enjoy the cooler days and increased activities the new season will bring. I hope you'll include our monthly Palmetto Ballroom Dance Club dances in your plans. The Holiday Dance on December 5 is black tie optional and includes a catered dinner...definitely not to be missed!!

The purpose of the PBDC Newsletter is to provide members and friends with news, features and information about ballroom dance in the Pee Dee. In this edition, you'll find a variety of articles about dancing, along with photos from our most recent dances. Your comments, suggestions and articles of interest for the newsletter are welcome and encouraged. Try your hand at writing a brief article about your dance experience.

You can email me at dorrdepew@yahoo.com, send items via regular mail to 400 Church St., Cheraw, SC 29520, or call me at 843-910-2283. The newsletter is published four times a year. We encourage all club members to contribute news and information for the

Dance with us in Camden

Please join your friends for dancing at the Palmetto Coffee Shoppe and Tea Room, 1012 Broad. St. in Camden. Dances are normally scheduled for the 1st Saturday night of each month from 7 to 9 p.m. Come early and enjoy supper at the restaurant! For more information, contact Al and Kay Roberson at (803) 438-9356 or alfredrobertson@bellsouth.net. The restaurant's number is (803) 272-0983.



From Our Instructors - By Vence & Pauline Jelovchan

Focus on Salsa

As you are aware, during the summer dances we try to keep things "light." We relax the dress code (Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!), and focus on one of our more fun dances. While we have taught the Salsa before in our club, we thought it would be good to reflect on some of the basics.

What makes Salsa popular today? Why is it that people who salsa seem to be happier, in better shape and in a better mood compared to others? From these questions we see that there are two major roles dancing salsa plays in people's lives: they are healthier and they have a great social life.

We all come from different walks of life; some better than others, but for the most part the one thing people mutually seek is the feeling of being important, of having a purpose, and belonging somewhere. That is where dancing comes in: the means to a better end, building confidence and a sense of self that will drastically improve your quality of life. So how does salsa dancing help fulfill this ultimate goal?

Salsa dancing inspires in you a positive attitude towards your daily life.

Dancing helps shift and balance your mental state to a positive one. The best way to achieve this is by doing it often. Since dancing and the social contact uplift the spirit, if done regularly, it helps your life to become that way (positive, happier). "Dancing changes attitudes; positive attitudes change lives."

Helps you to meet new friends: Salsa dancing is the perfect social ground for new friendships. You already know you both have something in common, something that you can talk about. You also get to dance face to face, and are able to exchange a small conversation as you dance.

You increase your self-esteem and confidence: If you are shy, this is the safest place to interact with people. Salsa dancing is open and extremely friendly. You will have the boldness and courage to ask anyone to dance. This sense of accomplishment and self-security is something that you will take with you from the salsa dance into your daily life.

For the Leaders: How good are you at leading? Imagine yourself dancing Salsa for the first time: the music is loud, upbeat and with great energy. You may have noticed that despite knowing the basics as well as turns & dips, your lead left a lot to be desired. It was after some time that I truly learned what makes a guy a great dancer: "When you dance salsa, you don't make the girl do the turns, you guide her." This observation alone is very general, but it opens the door to help you understand dancing in a new way. Leading is the

key to being a great dancer.



LEADING VS. MAKING: Lead as if you were showing the way, not as if you were making her play catch up. It's ok to be toned and firm, but not rough. There is a line between those two concepts and, it's not a fine one. There is a big difference when it comes down to making versus leading.

PUT YOURSELF IN HER SHOES: If your partner is struggling after the same turn patterns, or she feels uncomfortable with some of your moves, then don't do them. Try combinations and moves that help your partner feel more comfortable, and are at her level of dancing. Always adapt to her, without expecting her to adapt to you.

BE SPECIFIC: The man places the hand up and somehow, by magic, he expects his partner to turn. Every move has to be specific. If you want to move a chair from point A to B, you have to make it happen, right? So lead as if you were making the turn happen. But remember: guide vs. make. Be assertive in your moves as if she were to close her eyes and still be able to follow you.

IMPROVE YOUR LEAD VS. SHE DOESN'T KNOW HOW TO FOLLOW:

Changing this perspective will help you see opportunities to be better at leading. Often times, I hear guys make comments like: "I don't like dancing with her, she can't follow". Instead why don't you say to yourself: "What can I do to improve my lead in this particular move, so that she can follow it next time?" Thinking this way helps you be the man who can lead everybody. And ladies will enjoy dancing with you because of that.

BE CLOSER TO HER: In other words: be within reach. Dance at a distance that will make it easy for you to lead so you don't have to be running after her. I suggest a one-foot distance between your body and hers as you dance. You will feel more in control and this will help her feel your lead. In addition to this, don't over extend your arms when you dance, especially in your open breaks. This creates extra distance between you and your partner, making it hard to reach or lead the next move.

PAY ATTENTION TO THE MUSIC: Remember that we dance to the music and so does your partner. You will be able to coordinate your moves better, and your dancing will improve dramatically.

LEARN HOW TO BE AN EFFICIENT LEAD, AND THEN

APPLY STYLING: Many men attempt moves and styling but they end up forgetting about leading their partner, or end up

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confusing her. Sometimes styling can interfere with the lady's following, so be aware of it. Assertive leading helps you be in tune with your dance partner.

LEARN HOW TO FOLLOW: This is the best thing you could do, if you are really serious about dancing. Take your dancing to the next level and understand dancing from the follower's perspective. True leaders know how followers feel. What better way to know than by being one?

KEEP LEARNING: Learn other dances. Take some group or private lessons, work on your technique and try learning a new dance. When Pauline and I are traveling to a new city, we always search to see what ballroom dancing is available in the area. Many times, a lesson is offered and we always try to participate regardless how basic it may be. We always come away with a new step or technique that helps us become better dancers.

All these little tips will help you get there as a great leader. And always remember: when it comes down to being a successful dancer, the stronger the foundations, the better you will be able to build upon them.

"About a year ago I took up line dancing. I got so into it I had to join a Self Help group to stop. It's a TWO STEP program."

Plan your summer dance camp vacation now!

By Catherine Blumberg, Sumter Ballroom Dance Club

I'm not usually gung-ho about playing games and exercising during my precious vacation days. Previously, I've often chosen to lounge around with a good book and a movie, but "times are a-changing." This summer I vacationed at dance camp (for grown-ups) where games and exercise were on the menu all day.

During my youth I attended 4-H, Girl Scout and church camps. Camp was a place where I learned codes of conduct, made friends and had lots of fun. My camp memories include early morning risings (who could sleep with the camps' bugles and bells blasting loudly enough to wake hibernating bears?) and eager anticipation of arts and crafts, games, and mealtime gatherings. While we did a little social dancing at summer camp, I never dreamed of spending the better part of a week dancing. It was just an enjoyable aspect of camp activities.

As adults, we often forget that, like children, we need enjoyable activities. That's what I learned, by experience, at dance camp for grown-ups this summer. After all, we don't need to let kids have all the fun! Unlike youth camp, I neither slept in a tent nor awakened by a bugle blast. Instead, I camped-out in a nice hotel room and took full responsibility for getting myself going on time each day. Other than that, there were many similarities.

At adult camp, dance classes were the equivalent of 4-H arts and crafts. We had around 12 dance style choices. For example, we could choose to learn and execute smooth dances such as the Waltz and Foxtrot, or Latin dances like Rumba and Cha-Cha-Cha. Options such as line dancing were available too, as there was something for everyone's interests and abilities. Like contestants on "Dancing with the Stars," the gamut of campers' skills ranged from total beginners to very accomplished dancers. The camp I attended has been offered for seven consecutive years and many of the campers have been every year.

With the dance floor as our venue and a backdrop of music and rhythm, codes of conduct were incorporated into our classes. Appropriate dance etiquette such as the invitation to dance, invitation response, line of dance and dance closure were emphasized. Good posture and positioning were practiced, as ballroom dancing is exercise needing to be done correctly for injury prevention and enjoyment.

Speaking of injury prevention, campers were also encouraged to keep their dancing pace (the number of classes taken) at a comfortable level. Of course there were some campers who did not heed that advice. I met these folks in the foot massage room!

During the morning and afternoon hours, seven classes of differing skill levels were offered daily, as well as opportunities for reasonably priced private dance lessons. My husband and dance partner, Bruce, even won a free one hour dance lesson with Ron Montez. (He was the 7-time undefeated United States Professional Latin Champion. He also placed as high as 4th place in the World's Professional Latin Championship.)

Summer youth camps typically conclude with performances or special events presented by campers. Grown-up camp was no different, as most campers elected to learn group dance routines for performing on the last night. Bruce and I chose to learn Waltz and Salsa routines. Needless to say, we danced all day. As you know, it's hard work to memorize one routine, much less two,

Continued on next page



within a short period of time. Since every camper did not come with a partner, some volunteers and staff danced each routine twice— giving everyone wanting to participate the opportunity. Because all of the routines were so well done, or at least, very entertaining, it was a delight to see a routine two times. I'm never ready to see a one to two minute routine end (unless I'm dancing in it)!

In the evenings campers gathered for dinner followed by fun and games. For instance, on the first night, campers were given dance cards with directions. One of my directions was to find someone with a shared zodiac sign and dance a Foxtrot together. While games were not required, they certainly kept us dancing and made it easy to meet other campers. I even joined a dance team game, requiring my partner (a young college guy) and me to dance across the ballroom while keeping a football between us. My husband did a Cha-Cha-Cha with his team partner without touching or talking. What fun! Playing games is how Bruce won his free dance lesson.

Beyond fun and games, the final night of camp featured outstanding entertainment; the dance pros performed breath-taking routines, full of glitz and glamour. While I never expect to dance like a pro, I have learned that dance camp is a superb avenue for fun, making friends, getting exercise and becoming a better dancer. Dance camp is a treat, one that makes you feel young at heart. Consider giving yourself an opportunity to relive youthful memories. Plan your 2015 summer dance camp experience now!

THRU THE VIEWFINDER



PHOTOS FROM RECENT DANCES
CHECK THE CLUB WEBSITE FOR MORE!

