

WORLD LINE DANCE NEWSLETTER



Tampa Bay Line Dance Classic 2009

Sorry it's taken so long to do the report. I caught a REALLY BAD cold at the event and have felt sick all week. I think if anyone is not feeling well at any event you should have a shirt that says DO NOT HUG ME!!! LOL. Thanks, Stacy, for helping me do the report this year. She did a lot of work on the pictures and gathering the videos so you could check out the recommended dances for yourself. And she checked everything for me because I'm just not functioning!! Neville and Julie left yesterday so I got up early this morning to finish the report. Oh, and thanks to everyone who came to the party after the event at the dance studio in Clearwater. We had a great turnout and it was fun!!

The theme this year was COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD and there were some great costumes, especially on Saturday night. The decorations carried out the theme and people went all out to participate in representing their countries/states. Francien and Nico dressed in their native garb from Holland with yellow shoes to finish it off. It was adorable. I tried to take pictures of everyone in their costumes so take a second to look at them. The decorations set a festive scene, as Arline and her wonderful decorating crew always do. Even the weather cooperated, for the most part. I hope some of you remembered to offer to help dismantle the decorations at the end of the day. There is a tremendous amount of things to be done to get out of the hotel at this event and every event and I'm sure any offers to help are always appreciated. The hotel was finally finished remodeling this year. The lobby area and the new bar area were very nice. I took pictures so you can see. The food was good in both the bar area and also the restaurant and I thought the prices were very reasonable. There are lots of places to eat nearby at this event and many people would go to one of the close by malls or to one of the restaurants for lunch or dinner. The shuttle is nice about dropping people off and picking them up if you just ask. We were once again greeted with yummy, warm chocolate chip cookies, and you know how I love cookies!!! They hand them out when you check in and it starts the weekend off making me happy. The rooms at this hotel are spacious and they have wonderfully soft beds with lots of pillows. They also have shelving in the bathroom to put stuff so it's not all over the top of the vanity. I like that. Arline had food set up in the hallway so you could grab a quick sandwich, salad, fruit, bagel, pastry, drink, coffee, and some other things -- oh, yeah -- and those chocolate chip cookies!!!

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There was an open dance room in the area as you approached the lesson rooms. That was manned by Big Dave and Zac where all requests were played. In this area were also large round tables where you could sit and eat or just visit with friends. I liked this because it gave us the opportunity to meet our friends "in the open dance room." I think every event needs this little meeting place, rest place. Arline added this feature last year and it has been very popular. There was also another room manned by Olivia where requests were played and beginners were encouraged to request things. It was also doing very well all weekend. I met a lot of people who were attending their first event. I hope we hear from some of you so you can tell us about your experience and what you liked or didn't like.

For people who want to be a tourist before/after/or during the event, this is a wonderful place to visit. We have everything!!! Gulf Beaches, golf courses, Busch Gardens, wonderful shopping and restaurants, professional sports teams, many attractions and so many things to do you would never get it finished in one trip. I keep a list of things to do in the area so if you're planning a visit, just let me know and I'll send it along. When someone tells me about a new place they found and liked, I add it to the list.

I like the way Arline does the dinner on Saturday night. The food is YUMMY!!! The desserts were especially YUMMY!!! They had salmon, chicken and pasta and salad, bread, veggies and other things to choose from. There are two times to eat and there are lots of tables. People who are doing dinner go in the ballroom early and then go to the dining area. If you choose late seating, you dance until you are called and if you choose early seating, you eat first and dance after. Sometimes dinners drag on too long and this is the perfect solution to that problem. When you are finished, you get back to your seat and dancing and when you're waiting, you just dance. I like that you get to sit down, eat, visit your friends, and leave to go dancing without having to jump through hoops to get a seat.

There were a lot of vendors there this year and I like the way that they are all set up in the hallway so you can shop between classes. The shoe vendor seemed to be very busy this year and there was some beautiful jewelry and clothing.

The party on Thursday night is FREEEEEEEEEEE. It was also very well attended. That is always my favorite night of the weekend because we just dance and get to greet old and new friends and it just starts the weekend

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off with a party atmosphere. We are so lucky to have this "extra" night. I remember when there was no Thursday night party -- in fact, I remember when there were very few events of any kind. LOL. I thought all the DJs did a great job this weekend playing a wide variety of music from old to new. Louie was in the big ballroom and Big Dave was in the Review room and open dance room and Olivia was in the beginner-request room. The review times were posted on a board so people could see what dances they wanted to review and just hop in, do a quick review, dance it with the choreographer/teacher and go back to open dancing.

Previews of the next day's dances were held each night. I prefer them at night but I also know when they are done in the mornings, that people get up and get moving but the bad thing about doing them in the mornings is that people have to get up and get moving!! LOL. I know it must make the instructors nervous to have to do this -- I know I would be nervous -- but it's an important part of the weekend because people really do choose the classes they are going to take, for the most part, because of the reviews. Besides that, it's a fun thing at every event and there are always a few laughs.

There were two-to-four lessons each hour running during the day with open dance slots worked in throughout the day. You can view the entire schedule at the schedule link.

As always, Arline makes sure that there are all levels of dances taught and she tries to stagger the schedule so there is something for everyone during each hour. It's nice to see some of the easier dances and more difficult dances being done by everyone. I have noticed that dancers are just able to handle more material each year than they did the year before. I look at some of the dances at the top of the survey, like Coochie Bang Bang and Jesse James. Those dances would have never been at the top of the charts even three years ago and now people see a dance and no matter what level it is, they just get up and learn it. I think that's exciting. I've also noticed that, at least here in the US, we are not just picking dances because they are long and difficult and a challenge but picking them because we like the music and they are fun to do. I think of dances like TOES and the one this weekend that I think is going to be huge hit for Craig Bennett, HANDS UP. What a cute, easy dance to uplifting music and it's going to fill floors everywhere. It wasn't even on the schedule but he had time to teach it at the end of a couple of his classes and by the end of the weekend, more and more people kept joining in to do the dance. Watch for it at your next event.

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INSTRUCTORS AT THIS YEAR'S EVENT WERE:

Sandy Albano, Michael Barr, Amy Christian-Sohn, Craig Bennett, Scott Blevins, Mark Cosenza, Bracken Ellis-Potter, Neville Fitzgerald, Patrick Fleming, Kathy "G", Maggie Gallagher (this was her first time at an event in the US in many years and what a treat it was to meet her), Rob Glover, Ferrel Mazzatto, Marilyn McNeal, Rosie Multari, Glen Pospiesny, John Robinson, Maurice Rowe, Vivienne Scott, Francien Sittop (this was a first invite for Francien to a US event and she absolutely loved it and we loved having her and Nico), Junior Willis.

SATURDAY NIGHT is the banquet and show. This year we were entertained by Maggie, Jill and John Robinson doing IRISH SPIRIT. That Jill can give Maggie a run for her money. LOL. Maggie then did a wonderful Irish Dance presentation that everyone enjoyed and was amazed that she didn't collapse on the floor sooner than she did. John did a wonderful presentation of Human Dancer as only John can do. Arline looked wonderful in her native dress from Panama and got everyone up dancing to Cumbia Semana with Ira Weisburg. Junior did a Junior Clogging routine that always is a hit with everyone and then Bracken came out looking HOT to dance with him. Great show!!! Christine Bass and Trish both were on separate teams (I'm sorry I don't know the names of the teams but there are pictures) and they both were polished, in very nice costumes, and did a great job. Amy Christian-Sohn looked beautiful doing a native Indian dance in her costume. Ed Barbarian was wonderful as the Young-Old man.

After the show it was reviews for the next day and dancing until you couldn't dance any longer. I have to say that having three rooms going at night is good and bad. The good part is that people get to request more dances. The bad part is that it hurts the momentum of the "party" and people tend to stop dancing earlier. I would like to see a beginner room at night, a review room, and an open room with all requests played so that everyone would stay more in one area but that's just my opinion. I think when things are too spread out it just ruins the momentum of the weekend. I know this is a trend everywhere and I assume people like it this way. I'd be interested to see how everyone else feels about it. It would probably actually save money instead of wanting you to spend more!! LOL

There was a good turnout for the pro-am competition. You should really think about doing this next year. You only compete against yourself and you are judged according to the job YOU do. I think every teacher

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should encourage their students to do this. It's such a good experience for people who want to compete but don't want to take the giant step of doing it alone. You just ask your teacher to dance with you and you can pick the dance or dances you want to do and put either a little or a lot into your costume since there are really relaxed rules. You dance the dances for four judges and they give you a gold, silver or bronze rating based on how YOU do the dance without comparing you to anyone else, so it's a very positive experience and the room is always full watching the competition. If you don't have a teacher to do it with, just ask Arline and she'll either do it with you or find someone who will. I don't know how Arline can do this with so many people and not collapse but she does and has a great time doing it.

THANK YOU Arline, for hosting the event and Jen Cameron for doing the registration and thanks to the people who work so hard to put the floors down and make sure it's safe and to everyone who put up the wonderful decorations. All of you did a wonderful job. The hotel staff was efficient and had water out at all times and kept things clean and picked up. It's so great to have this event in our home town area and I love showing off our area to visitors from everywhere. I love that all the teachers in this state support this event and make it stronger every year. I know next year is the last year that Arline is going to do the event BUT someone is going to keep it going. We don't know yet who but if you find out, let me know because I'm nosey. I just hope it is someone who will do as great a job as Arline and Jen and her staff has done. They are going to be hard shoes to fill. I know there are people interested in buying the event and hopefully we will find out sometime this year who that is going to be and I hope everyone will be just as supportive of whomever that may be.

HERE IS THE LIST OF THE MOST-PLAYED DANCES THAT LOUIE SAID WERE REQUESTED THE MOST FOR THE WEEKEND:

PLAYING WITH FIRE, POKERFACE, EVACULATE THE DANCEFLOOR, HANDS UP, Craig Bennett

RACHAEL'S JESSE JAMES AND TOES

SCOTT'S COOCHIE BANG BANK AND HEY MAMA

ROB FOWLER, MOJO RHYTHM

GUYTON'S ROOMBA

MAGGIE'S JIG IT UP AND IRISH SPIRIT

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He said all those dances filled the floor to the max

BE SURE AND LOOK AT THE PICTURES SO YOU GET A REAL FEEL FOR WHAT THE WEEKEND WAS LIKE. If you would like to copy a picture or order one, you can do it through the picture service we used. Just click on the BUY below the picture. We don't make any money on this but it's just the picture service we use. There will also be videos that can be ordered of each instructor doing a walk-through of their dances. You can order them here: Bob Bahrs bbahrs@aol.com

THERE ARE DANCES TAUGHT AND THE YOUTUBE VIDEOS TO GO WITH THEM (THAT WERE AVAILABLE AND WE COULD FIND). Thanks, Stacy, for gathering these up!! If you have others that aren't on here, yet, let me know and Stacy will add them. This way, when someone mentions a dance they liked you can go and check it out for yourself. BE SURE AND ORDER THE OFFICIAL VIDEOS.