

Academy Dance News 2004



ALOHA BALLROOM DANCE ACADEMY - A non-profit, charitable organization whose purpose is to educate the Public about Ballroom & Latin dancing through professionally instructed group classes and public performances.
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ACADEMY KICKS OFF THE NEW YEAR IN STYLE WITH FREE PARTY!

By Rita & Brian O'Connor

On Wednesday, January 31, 2003, The Academy sponsored a free New Year's Eve Party at the Kihei Community Center from 8 pm until 12:30 am. Open to the Maui ohana, this alcohol-free event raised monies through donations which will be used to support the Academy's purpose. 2003 Officer, Cheri Ridings (Vice President) collaborated with incoming 2004 Officer, Shelley Ting (Vice President) to create a special festive atmosphere for the New Year which impressed all attendees. Dance DJ, Rita O'Connor created new social dance mixes to dance the night away!

A special Mahalo to Academy Student, Terri Williams for support of & participation in Cheri & Shelley's efforts. The Academy would also like to notice Charlie Ridings for his ever-willingness to offer his time to lead us in blessings over the years and again at our New Year's Eve celebration.

A midnight sparkling-cider toast in "champagne" glasses was shared among dance friends as the countdown began and Brian O'Connor and Dennis Goss turned the banner from "2003" into "2004" before kissing their spouses and ringing in the New Year! Mahalo to Michael Mateja for being the Academy's official time keeper for the New Year's countdown.

The Academy would like to thank all of the students who came in earlier in the day to help set up the dance hall, as well as those who helped as greeters, potluck workers and those who stayed late to take down decorations and help Shelley pack them for storage!

We are fortunate as a community-based non-profit organization to have the air-conditioned Kihei Community Center facility available to us by the County of Maui and thank everyone for helping us maintain our good-standing by keeping the facility clean and in order as in accordance with our privilege.



ACADEMY SPREADS LOVE & DANCE AT VALENTINE'S DANCE SOCIAL

By Diana Baker

Joyful dancers dressed in red arrived and decorated the Kihei Community Center Feb 11th in celebration of Valentines Day. They graciously greeted one another and eagerly exhibited their love of dancing and their gratitude for those with whom they are blessed to dance. The women looked fabulous and followed demurely. The men looked dapper and danced with grace, leading the ladies through a fun-filled night.

If there had been a prize for making hearts smile it would surely have been awarded to Minami Sawada whose strategically-placed, white eyelet-trimmed, red velvet heart adorned the back of her slim red sheath. It delighted onlookers as it swayed and sashayed, dancing about on her delicate derriere.

A bountiful array of delectable food fueled the feet of all who came. Rumor reported that Jennifer Goss's lasagna was a tasty favorite. "It was unclear, however, whether its popularity was a result of the secret sauce or the dancer who served it," remarked floor man, Jim Bailey.

Hans Bonny's presence was missed by many a maiden. His damaged dancing foot, too swollen to squeeze into suede-soled shoes.

Mahalo to Shelley Ting for organizing and overseeing, to DJ ("Dance Jockey") Rita O'Connor who graciously gave up dancing so that the rest of us could.

Mahalo to the decorators who decorated, the greeters who greeted,

the cleaner uppers who cleaned, the dancers who danced and the instructors who have shared their talent and time so that we may all know the joy of a dancing heart and dancing feet.

A dancing good time was had by all who danced and loved and love to dance!

DANCE INSPIRATION

Submitted by Jenifer Goss

Martha Graham to Agnes DeMille once said, "There is a vitality, a life force, a quickening that is translated through you into action, and because there in only one of you in all time, this expression is unique. And if you block it, it will never exist through any other medium and be lost. The world will not have it. It is not your business to determine how good it is; nor how valuable it is; nor how it compares with other expressions. It is your business to keep it yours clearly and directly, to keep the channel open. You do not even have to believe in yourself or your work. You have to keep open and aware directly to the urges that motivate YOU.

Keep the channel open. . .

No artist is pleased . . .

There is no satisfaction whatever at any time. There is only a queer, divine dissatisfaction; a blessed unrest that keeps us marching and makes us more alive than the others."



"M.V.V.P" DANCE EVENT

By Rita O'Connor

On Saturday, March 13, 2004, the Academy honored the efforts of its student volunteers and officers who contributed substantial financial or outstanding volunteer-time to the success of The Academy during the third & fourth quarters of 2003 by hosting a Potluck Ballroom & Latin Dance Party!

It is through the efforts of these students & those who have volunteered in previous dance class quarters, that the Academy's vision is becoming a reality for the ohana of Maui to enjoy!

The Academy wishes to acknowledge the following students for their contributions:



Del Adlawan
Jim Bailey
Wayne Ballard
Kathy Blaser
Hans Bonny
Shel & Mary Braidman
Barbara Cannon
Steve Castagnola
Ernie Cronkite
Kitty Edwards
James Furumizo
Michael Garaganza
Dennis & Jenifer Goss
Les Grimes
Gloria Guico
Eddie Guerrero
Sharon Heritage
Julie Holmes
Ben Howard
Glenn James
Julie Katz
Mike & Nancy Mateja
Beka Merrifield
Teri Mister
Lynn Nicely
Brian & Rita O'Connor
Kachina Palencia
Milam Pender
Charlie & Cheri Ridings
Pat & Robbi Skillings-Keane
Art & Flossie Sumabat
John Tattsuke
Shelly Ting
Perfecta Villanueva
Dale & Jackie Webster
Terri Williams
Al Yniguez
Carol Yamamura
Janet Yokoyama

STUDENT LETTER

"Talk about how dancing has changed our lives. We really have come a long way, from two soldiers (the way we walked when we first started our ballroom dancing a few years back) to two dance partners, who enjoy every dance event, can't wait to make the move every time we hear beautiful music... Life certainly has been different since we started our ballroom dancing. Our lives have become more exciting. We feel like time has gone by so quick with all the dance lessons, dance socials, dance parties and especially Dance Balls organized by the Academy. We have made more friends. Now everywhere we go we can't avoid running into dancers we know and having a nice chat. Thanks to Rita and Brian's instructions our dance technique has moved to a different level."

Academy Students, Charles & Annie Yane

STUDENT LETTER

"We absolutely love the dance classes with Rita and Brian, as I am sure you can tell. Wednesday nights are very special to us and it adds a very meaningful touch to our relationship. Sometimes, even when we are tired or do not feel like going for whatever reason, we both feel this deep commitment to attend regardless of our circumstances and as always, we are so happy that we have made that decision because afterwards there is a true sense of accomplishment and increased closeness. The group of dancers who are in the Academy have become increasingly closer. We are all in this together disciplining ourselves to dance better each week. You two are the greatest teachers we could ever want, and Dennis and Jennifer are an added bonus. How fortunate we are to have you here. We speak of these classes to many people that we meet, even in Sushi bars! I cannot say enough good things about the quality of the instruction and the dedication that both of you have towards developing excellence in the world of social dancing."

Academy Student, Kamala Everett

STUDENT LETTER

"There's no doubt about it. If you're a guy who wants to meet a gal - or many of them - learn how to dance. If you think you don't know how to or ever will, consider meeting women eager to help you do so. They take ballroom dance classes with Rita & Brian O'Connor at the

Kihei Community Center every Wednesday from 6:30 - 9 pm.

"By the way, if you believe you have two left feet, try walking. I you can't, you're right. If you can, you're beginning to dance!"

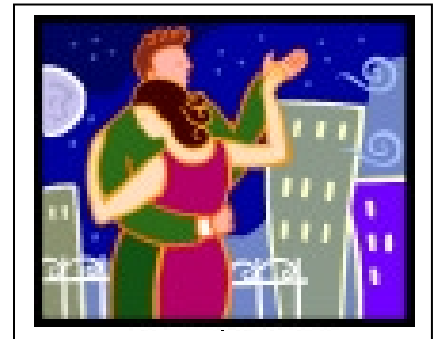
Academy Student, Mary Norton-Braidman

(VERY) BRIEF HISTORY OF RUMBA

The origins of the rumba, as with many latin dances, were born of an African folk dance. The rumba made its way to Cuba and eventually to the United States. In the rumba, the man moves to court & attract the woman, while the woman counters with her feminine charms; there is usually an element of chase and tease. Rumba is considered the classic of all latin dances.

MUSIC TO DANCE BY

There are many songs created and re-fashioned to fit ballroom tempo. Popular artists sometimes have songs that are in appropriate rhythm & speed. Below are only a few suggestions for the upcoming dances in Rumba & Foxtrot, as well as the previous Mambo/Salsa classes:



RUMBA: "I Just Called To Say I Love You" - Stevie Wonder; "Mi Buen Amour" - Gloria Estafan

SOCIAL FOXTROT: "Fly Me To The Moon" - Frank Sinatra; "I Wish You Love" - Nancy Wilson

SLOW FOXTROT: Rod Stewart's "The Great American Songbook - Vol I & II"

MAMBO: "Mambo No. 5" - Lou Bega; "Tequila" - The Champs

SALSA: "Ran Kan Kan" - Tito Puente; "Hablemos El Mismo" - Gloria Estefan

SPECIAL REQUEST from RITA: If you have music that you think might be appropriate for Ballroom & Latin dancing, please share it with Rita O'Connor; she loves to update the music for the Academy classes as often as possible!

Not sure if a particular song is suitable for Ballroom or Latin dance (if any)? Rita would be glad to offer her insight!

DANCE BIRTHDAYS TO CELEBRATE!

JANUARY: Anurag
Michael Garganza
Julie Holmes
Julie Katz
Andreas Laurin
Bill Neumann
Dan Sanchez
Janet Yokoyama

FEBRUARY: Pamela Cendana
Chris Chiesa
Candy Hayes
Carol Pratt
Ramani
Ann Valentine
Francis Yap

MARCH: Wayne Ballard
Linda Bergstrom
Martha Chiesa
Lynann Nicely
Rita Perry
Francis Taomoto

APRIL: James Furumizo
Ben Howard
Zev Levy
Ty Peterson
Daryl Polansky
Minami Sawada
Perfecta Villanueva

MAY: Steve Castagnola
Pat Kean
Marie Minichino
Brian O'Connor
Robbie Skilling-Kean
Lee Wilson

JUNE: Hans Bonny
Carol Dembaert
Rita O'Connor
Jack Spock
Candle Summers



MAHALO!

A special thank you to Academy students, Dennis & Jenifer Goss for leading the Peer-Assisted Review Session (PARS) prior to the Beginner & Intermediate level dance classes! The Goss's enthusiasm for partnership dancing is evident in their eagerness to be involved in helping the Academy sustain it!

Rita & Brian O'Connor would also like to thank Dennis & Jenifer for volunteering to be Demonstration Assistants during the classes.



SHOE VENDORS ON MAUI

We are lucky to have two dance vendors on our island who carry dance shoes lines for ballroom & latin dancers:

"If The Shoe Fits," Wailuku, 249-9710. Owner, Teri Edmonds carries the Diamant Ballroom Dance Shoe Line, a reputable line of affordable European dance shoes made specifically for the Ballroom Dancer! Teri will be discounting her ballroom & latin ladies & men's shoes at the Academy's April 7th Registration event.

"Marnie's Discount Dance Supply," owner (former Academy Student), Marnie Hackett, 875-0603. Offers Capezio shoes for Ballroom & Latin dancing, along with jazz, ballet and other dance shoes and dancewear.

For more dance shoe information and/or catalogs or websites of other dance shoe vendors, please see Rita.



HAWAII STAR BALL

On September 23-25th, Oahu will be host to the 13th Annual Hawai'i Star Ball dance competition. Rita O'Connor's Private Image, Inc. students, Dennis & Jenifer Goss (Academy students, too) danced in the Amateur division to first place awards in all of their competitive heats and this year will be joined by approximately six other Academy students who will also participate in the competition!

Last year, about two dozen Academy student attended the competition to cheer on the competitors and this year, Rita & Brian are hopeful that more Maui dancers will see Hawaii's only nationally recognized dance competition! It's not too early to make plans to support the dancers for one, two or all of the days of competitions by attending!

For more information about competition dancing & attending this year's event, contact Rita O'Connor, 891-2949.

STAYING CURRENT

Check out the Bulletin Board by the water cooler at the Kihei Community Center classes on Wednesday evenings. Events, dance news, notices, etc., pre-approved by the Academy officers are posted.

In addition, Academy student Milam Pender has created "Maui Dance Events" to keep everyone up-to-date on classes & events on Maui:
<http://calendar.yahoo.com/mauidanceevents>



AMERICAN SMOOTH...

POETRY by Rita Dove

Submitted by Sunya Echternach

We were dancing - it must have been a foxtrot or a waltz, something romantic but requiring restraint, rise and fall, precise execution as we moved into the next song without stopping, two chests heaving above a seven-league stride—such perfect agony one learns to smile through, ecstatic mimicry being the sine qua non of American Smooth.

And because I was distracted
By the effort of
Keeping my frame

(the leftward lean, head turned

Just enough to gaze out

Past your ear and always

Smiling, smiling),

I didn't notice

How still you'd become until

We had done it

(for two measures?

Four?) - achieved flight,

that swift and serene

magnificence,

before the earth

remembered who we were

and brought us down.



GUIDELINES FOR DANCE ETIQUETTE

The Academy offers these guidelines and strongly encourages all students to follow them for the maximum comfort & enjoyment of all dancers.

Respect and Communication. Everyone has unique personal boundaries and this should be respected in partnership dancing. Dancers are encouraged to communicate with their partner to establish a comfortable partnership. This communication is especially important when students are rotating or have different partners.

Frame & Dance Hold. In general, it is the ladies choice of how close to stand to her partner. Men set their frame, then, the ladies set their frame and the partnership distance where they are comfortable. We use "social dance position" distance (space in between the couple, connected through the arms and hands only) for Latin dances. Smooth dances can be danced at the "social" distance or body-to-body if *both* people in the partnership choose. If the lady chooses to dance in a more open social frame, we ask the gentlemen to please respect that distance. Of course, if the man is uncomfortable with any frame, he should also communicate this to his partner.

Connection. All connections with a dance partner should be in a "prayer-like" (*very light pressure*) hold. There is *never* any need to squeeze or grip your partner, or pull them in close or use a pushing action to 'lead' them. A tight grip or pulling in of a partner can make many people feel uncomfortable or unsafe and can be harmful. All dance communication should be done with very light action. During demonstrations or instruction of the dance, students do not need to hold onto their partner. It is a good idea to relax and stand apart, while each person

focuses on the instruction given, until it is time to dance together again.

Rotation. Everyone is allowed the option to rotate partners if they wish. There is no need to pull a partner out of rotation. If this should happen to you and you wish to stay in rotation, please let the person know and step back into the line of rotation.

Accepting a Dance. Everyone who is asked to dance has the option to say "yes" or "no, thank you" and their choice should be respected. It is polite to always answer courteously because an offer to dance is a gracious offer.

The Academy wishes to provide a fun and comfortable environment for everyone. We know this can sometimes be tricky in Ballroom and Latin dancing as partnership dancing is a 'contact sport,' so to speak. We hope that no one takes any choice made by another personally because it is simply each person's unique comfort level and acceptable boundaries.

If for any reason, there is a concern that your communication is not working for you or is difficult for you to express, the Academy Officers and Instructors are here to help. Please feel free to talk to any of us. It is the Academy's practice to maintain confidentiality. Many individual and personal issues can arise when we partnership dance and the Academy will try to help so everyone is free to learn, dance and enjoy!

Aloha Ballroom Dance Academy reserves the right to terminate student privileges at any time.

Mahalo for your kokua.

UPCOMING ACADEMY EVENTS

2004 SECOND QUARTER (APRIL-JUNE) REGISTRATION, Social Dance, Potluck, Wednesday, April 7th, Kihei Community Center, 6:30 - 9pm. SECOND REGISTRATION, Wednesday, April 14th, 6- 6:45 pm.

NEW CLASSES will be Beginner Rumba & Intermediate Foxtrot.

LATIN TECHNIQUE CLASS will be April 14th, 6:30 pm!

COMING SOON: ACADEMY WEBSITE

Listen for announcements as to the opening of our website.

A special "MAHALO" to Academy student, Terry Hans for his

donation of talent and time to make the website a reality!

ACADEMY STAR BALL, Saturday, June 26th - Fairmont Kea Lani Maui Resort, Wailea. The formal dinner and dance event starts at 5:30 pm with No-Host Bar Cocktail Hour. Five-Star buffet dinner beginning at 6:30 pm. Latin & Ballroom DJ music throughout the evening, along with special dance performances. A spectacular event unlike any other on Maui! Tickets will be available at The Academy (Wednesday evenings) - Ticket Chairperson: Teri Mister 891-2494. Tickets also available at Topaz Jewelers, 879-0904



LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

If you would like to contribute an article or an idea to the "Academy Dance News," we'd love to hear from you!

We are also looking for students to bring their cameras with them to our Wednesday "Special Nights" (i.e., socials, potlucks, registrations, etc.). We encourage students take photographs of our dance happenings & then submit them to the "Academy Dance News" for publication and/or gift them to the "Aloha Ballroom Dance Academy" for our photo collage!

We'd also like to know how dance classes have affected *your* life! How did you start dancing? What inspires you to keep on dancing? Have you had an amazing "dance moment" you'd like to share with your fellow Academy peers? How has dance changed *your* life? Inquiring minds want to know!

Mahalo for your generous volunteering and support of our vision at the Academy!

- Brian & Rita O'Connor, Co-Founders

For More Information about how YOU can become more active in the hottest, newest, nonprofit educational Ballroom & Latin dance organization on Maui, contact: Rita O'Connor, 891-2949 or hibnb@aol.com

