



PSDC Newsletter

Portland Swing Dance Club

January - February 2012 issue



Nick Jay and Joanna Meinl

Swing Blizzard Workshop Weekend January 27, 28, & 29

Swing Blizzard is in full "swing" this winter with guest professional dancers and instructors from California, Nick Jay and Joanna Meinl.

Nick & Joanna are both full time dance instructors and performers based in Northern California. Together they have over 40 years of dance experience and a passion for both teaching and performing. Their website says "they have a unique, graceful and powerful style and are known for their exceptional social dance skills and as Jack & Jill competitors. They have many titles between them and are both US Open Jack & Jill Finalists."

While all of that is true, what I can tell you personally is that they are also down to earth and very generous. They are always nice and willing to take time to help you out or simply to spend a moment to talk with you. I had the chance to meet Nick for the first time at Seattle Easter swing in April of 2011. He took the time to talk with me and tell me about his classes in the bay area.

And their teaching style and workshops are also great to experience. At the recent

Mountain Magic dance convention in Lake Tahoe, Nov of 2011, I had the opportunity to attend one of their workshops in West Coast Swing. The movement they taught the class helped give a nice solid feel of stretch along with a rock and go movement, which flowed nicely into the next move. It was great for social dancing but could also have applied to competitive dancing as well.

The great news is they are coming to town to teach you ! That's right. This year's Swing Blizzard workshop will be taught by Nick and Joanna.

- Schedule is:
- Friday 27th, - Kick off dance at Paradise Studio with Performance by Nick and Joanna.
 - Saturday 28th—workshops at Paradise Studio Open to All Levels.
 - Saturday night dance at Norse Hall
 - Sunday 29th—workshops at Paradise Studio Intermediate and Advanced Level.

For more information [go to our website](#) or check it out on our [Facebook site](#). Also you can contact:

Jennie Beyerl at events@portlandswing.org

We're Back !!!

That's right ! After two years of being without a newsletter, the Portland Swing Dance Club (PSDC) newsletter is finally back with a new look and new articles to hopefully tantalize your appetite for the press, and wet your whistle for news-you-can-use from the West Coast Dancing scene.

We will have some familiar articles, such as our member profile, and we will have some new features, such as our competition corner, and WCS tips and tricks.

The tentative schedule for newsletters this year is six issues, and published as follows:

2012 NEWSLETTER SCHEDULE:

January/February, March/April, May/June, August/September, October, & December

In closing I want to point out that this newsletter is for you. If you would like to see something that's not listed, or have a great idea for an article or even if you would like to submit an article, please feel free to contact me. I'm always willing to take in new ideas and see what exciting things people submit.

Sincerely,

Steve Klein

Director / Newsletter
newsletter@PortlandSwing.org

Board of Directors:

President	Chris Jones
Vice President	Melena Bronson
Secretary	Rhonda Shotts
Treasurer	Carla Titus
Membership	Michael Terry
Events	Jennie Beyerl
Dances	Nick De Vore
Facilities	Peter Bailey
Promotions	Rick Davis
Newsletter	Steve Klein

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WWW.PortlandSwing.Org

It's a New Year ! It's a New Board !

With the ushering in of the new year, many people make their new years resolutions. For the PSDC board the same is true. We have many new faces to the board ready to serve you, volunteering their own time to make sure West Coast Swing dancing stays alive, fresh, and fun.

For example, Nick De Vore new Director of Dances would like to see the club do more Jack and Jill competitions, yet do them later in the evening as not to disrupt the social dancing. He wants to encourage competition as a fun activity that even those who don't often compete could try.

Our new President, Chris Jones, has a theme for this year, and that's to de-centralize power so that there would be no need for individual director positions anymore, rather there would be extra voting board members who would form committees and those committees would be in charge of those tasks.

Our new Vice President this year is Melena Bronson. She would like to create a

welcoming environment for new dancers, and contribute to the club's continued success, keeping WCS alive and strong.

Also new to the board this year is Peter Bailey as Director of Facilities, and Carla Titus as Treasurer. One of Carla's top things she wants to do is a complete audit of the most recent financials of the club, and get proper hand off from Bob Smith, who has been our previous Treasurer.

These are but a few ideas from our new board of directors. Many details still need to be worked out and I'm sure modified from their original intent. But that's the great thing about a board who works together.

Remaining on the board this year is Michael Terry who will continue membership, Jennie Beyerl continuing as Events Director, Rhonda Shotts continuing the Secretary role, Rick Davis will continue Promotions, and Steve Klein previously Dance Director will now fill the Newsletter Director position.

PSDC Dance Calendar

Jan 14

PSDC Second Saturday Swing Dance. Kathy Carter teaches the intermediate lesson at 7:30, Beginners lesson at 7:30pm downstairs. Open dancing from 8:30 to 12:00 midnight.

Location: [Sunnyside Grange](#)

Jan 28

PSDC Fourth Saturday Swing Dance. Special Guest Pros Nick Jay and Joanna Meinel teaches the intermediate lesson at 7:30, Beginners lesson by Rick Davis at 7:30pm backstage. Open dancing from 8:30 to 12:00 midnight.

Location: [Norse Hall](#)

Feb 11

PSDC Second Saturday Swing Dance. Jennifer Robinson Miller teaches the intermediate lesson at 7:30, Beginners Lesson by Trudy Thatcher at 7:30pm downstairs. Open dancing from 8:30 to 12:00 midnight.

Location: [Sunnyside Grange](#)

Feb 25

PSDC Fourth Saturday Swing Dance. Jimmy Ho teaches the intermediate lesson at 7:30, Beginners Lesson by Arthur Lahm at 7:30pm backstage. Open dancing from 8:30 to 12:00 midnight.

Location: [Norse Hall](#)

For other weekly dances, be sure to check out our [online calendar](#).

Meet The Board !



Chris Jones
President



Melena Bronson
Vice-President



Carla Titus
Treasurer



Rhonda Shotts
Secretary



Steve Klein
Newsletter Editor/
Historian



Nick De Vore
Director: Dances



Rick Davis
Director: Marketing
and Promotions



Michael Terry
Director: Membership



Jennie Beyerl
Director: Events



Peter Bailey
Director: Facilities

Competition Corner

For those of you interested in WCS competitions, here is a list of up-coming dance conventions.

Monterey Swingfest
Monterey, California
1/12-1/16, 2012

www.centralcoastswingdance.com

SwingCouver
Vancouver, B.C. Canada
1/20—1/22, 2012

www.swingcouver.com

Capital Swing Dancers
Sacramento, California
2/16-2/19, 2012

www.capitalswingdancers.org/convention

Member Profile Ron Hodges

Our member profile for this issue is PSDC member Ron Hodges. Ron has been dancing west coast swing off and on since graduating college in 1997. He is a 2nd time PSDC member after taking a break when he moved to the Olympic peninsula in Washington state.

On top of being a West Coast Swing dancer and Enthusiast he is also an avid hiker, mountain biker and has recently taken up cross country skiing. But before skiing he used to snowshoe.

“I started snowshoeing when I lived up in the Olympic Peninsula”, Ron says describing how he *crossed* over to cross-country skiing.

“When I moved back and was snowshoeing up at Mt. Hood, I was little miffed because I was passed by someone on cross-country skis. And I immediately went down to the ski shop and bought myself a pair of cross-country skis.” Ron says he still goes snowshoeing quite a bit and its great on fresh powder. But it does take more energy than cross-country skis.

Predefined tracks are created for skiers at local mountain ski resorts and designed for different styles of skiing. “There are many types of skiing.” Ron points out. “There is the skating style and traditional styles. Some people like to make their own tracks and go elsewhere as well.”

When asked if there are any skills transferable to dancing from his out-door activities.

Ron said. “This is just my assessment, I don’t think there are any transference skills. Except for the strength in your legs, and maybe help with balance. And cross-country skiing, mountain biking, and snowshoeing really



requires a lot of strength, and cardiovascular endurance.”

Ron also points out that while this is a great sport, there are still safety precautions one should take while undertaking any outdoor activity. “For the most part it’s safe and there are plenty of people around the normal trails to help out if needed. But I have my own handheld GPS that has the topographical maps.” Ron also said he carries a headlamp, maps, and food because you can easily forget about the time and get back when it’s dark.

He points out during his first few years of doing outdoor activities he has met a lot of people and some were unprepared. He even gave one of his maps to a person who desperately needed it.

What’s next for Ron? Well he tells me he has been taking up Alaskan fishing and is fishing out of the local lakes. Sounds to me like a fish fry coming our way soon...



Would you like share your outside experiences with fellow PSDC members? Or know someone who has an interesting hobby they would like to share?

Email us at:

newsletter@portlandswing.org

Bridge Town Swing !

The 2011 Bridgetown Swing dance convention was another huge success. Next Bridgetown WCS dance convention is set for Sept. 2012. Here are a few photos of the fun we all had.



PSDC Dances

Sunnyside Grange

Norse Hall



Swing Blizzard



Jack & Jill Competitions



Lessons with every dance



Past Board Accomplishments

This past year we had some interesting changes, and challenges. The year 2011 was met with some challenges from our membership including the request to bring in a variety of Deejays and Instructors to our dances. Previously some members felt there was limits to the variety of different instructors and Deejays being brought in. The board responded by setting a 2 instructor per year max for veteran instructors, and a variety of new instructors for beginning level WCS classes.

Also our secretary put together a great conflict of interest policy and last year's Dance Director setup a new 3 page instructor hiring policy (viewable by any member who requests). The Deejay policy is soon to follow and do much of the same.

It should not go without mention that we had some great people leave the board this year. Bob Smith as Treasurer, Robin Wells as acting Vice President, Dan Murawski on newsletter, Tony Becker as Facilities Director, and Kristy Brehm as President. You all help shape the board and give meaningful context to the club as well as carried it forward to the new board members. **Thanks You !!!**

How to become a member...

We would like to invite you into a family of dancers who share your passion to dance. The Portland Swing Dance Club is born out of a desire for people to thrive with West Coast Swing.

We are a non-profit organization. The membership dues, dance income, and donations go back into the dance community. The Board of Directors operate as a volunteer service. By becoming a member, you will be a part of our mission to foster the growth of West Coast Swing in the Northwest.

Come to any of our dances and sign up as a PSDC Member at the front desk. We take checks or cash for the membership fee of \$30. You may also pay with a Visa credit card with a service fee.

You can also [download the electronic application online](#), fill it out, and mail it with your check to:

The Portland Swing Dance Club
P.O. Box 6761, Portland, OR 97228-6761

Photos provided by: Jim Long, Steve Klein, David Lim, Joanna Meinl, and PSDC Board Staff for profile photos...