

# MICHIGAN SWING DANCE ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



## POSTURE by Trish Connery

One of the first things I notice about a dancer, or almost anyone for that matter, is posture. I am often amazed at the poor habits we all exhibit in this regard, but I'm most amazed when I see it in dancers (myself included). Constant adjustment to my posture is one of the reasons I frequently critique myself through the use of mirrors, videos, and privates. As a result I am much more aware of the way I stand, walk, and dance than I've ever been before. I am also much more prone to notice posture in others.

Many dancers don't realize that good posture, or lack thereof, can be an instrumental element in their dancing. Putting aside the visual and aesthetic reasons for good posture, let's just look at the technical aspects and how they relate to dancing, specifically to connection.

Think of connection with a partner as an electrical current. I believe my connection begins with my center; therefore I like to think of my center as the starting point for my electrical current. The current travels up from the center through the chest, into the shoulders, down into the arms, elbows and hands, and thereby to my partner. At the same time, the current also travels down from the center through the thighs, knees, and continuing down through the power points in the feet to the floor, giving me connection with the floor as well.

By maintaining good posture I am allowing my body to be the best conduit possible for the current to flow. Likewise, poor posture, slouching, rounded shoulders, forward head, all detract from connection. Am I saying all those with

bad posture are bad dancers? No, of course not! What I am saying is proper posture will contribute to a better connection, thereby making us all better dancers, both visually and in how we feel to our partners.

To achieve good posture, good current flow, and good connection, I try to do the following:

1) **Stand Up Straight!** Yes, our mothers were right! Here's a visualization I've learned which helps me achieve this: I imagine I have a table-top of about 12" wide surrounding my body (yes, that's right, a table-top) just at the level where my center is (right below the breastbone). Round or square is your preference. This table-top not only goes all the way around my body but it also has dishes on it. For some reason my particular table-top always has a fine china tea service on it, go figure; yours of course would be different. Either way, my goal is to keep the table-top level and dishes from sliding off whether I'm moving or standing still. Granted you may feel a little stiff when first trying this exercise, and it may be hard in the beginning to assimilate it as a dance technique, but with practice it does work.

2) **Heads UP!** Standing up straight is a big step in the right direction, but that's not all there is to it. Good body posture can be defeated by a dropped chin or forward neck and/or head. This is a technique some of you may remember from childhood ballet or theatre classes: The body-on-a-string technique. Imagine there is a string running from the base of your spine up through your body and out the top of your head, specifically, out the top of the crown of your head.

....continued on page four

### NEXT MSDA PARTY

NOVEMBER 17

at the AMBER HOUSE

Lesson 3 PM

Dance Party 4PM- 8PM

*Our parties are at the Cabaret  
Ballroom located inside The  
Amber House, 7012 E Nine Mile  
Road, Warren, MI. 586-754-3434*

### DANCE LESSON

Last month, we had a delightful lesson with Albert & Penny Tailleir. They led us through a really cute West Coast Swing pattern...the kind you see in competitions at the Grand Nationals and elsewhere. but they broke it down into manageable parts and made it easy to learn. What fun! Thanks Penny & Albert.



Next month, that dynamic lady of dance, Suzy Brecht, manager of Rhythm -N- Shoes, will be teaching us an intermediate level lesson in Cha Cha. If you've never experienced a lesson with Suzy, your life isn't complete. Join us for fun and very useful material.


*Bio on page 4...*



**NEW MEMBERS**

The MSDA warmly welcomes the following Dancers to the club. Thanks so much for your support!

JOHN AND LIN ARMITAGE  
DANIEL CAPALUNGAN  
ROBERT CHAPMAN  
ROBERT FISCHETTI  
CAROL ORMSBY  
DOUGLAS PERRY  
JOANN QUADE  
NICK & CHRISTINE TSURUI

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO OUR  
NOVEMBER BIRTHDAY  
PEOPLE 

The MSDA has a birthday party every month for those with birthdays during that month. We announce the members' names, have a birthday dance especially for them and serve cake. We also have a gift for those present at the party in their birthday month. Please be sure to open it before leaving the party...it needs to be laminated.

JANET	DEROCHIS	11/4
SUSAN	WARREN	11/4
DON	CORNING	11/8
MATTHEW	TRUPIANO	11/16
BECKY	McGEE	11/17
PETER	DISALVO	11/18
CYNTHIA	BARCLAE	11/21
MAURICE	O'DONNELL	11/22
PAUL	GERSCH	11/22
REBECCA	ENGLISH	11/22
ALICE	STEIN	11/23
CHRISTINE	TSURUI	11/22
EMILIO	TORRES	11/24
REBECCA	DAVID	11/26
LARRY	STAHL	11/26
KAREN	LIM	11/29

**FUTURE PARTIES**

**November 17**

December 8

January 19

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**Please note: Some of the dates are not on the 3rd Sunday due to holidays or convention dates.**  
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The birthday cake for our parties is provided by Dave Michalski. He gives us a great discount and will give any MSDA member a discount too. Dave's shop is located at:


**Gallery of Cakes**  
29457 5 Mile Rd.  
Livonia, MI 48154  
734-427-9202

Hours:

Tues - Fri, 10 to 6

Saturday, 10-2:30

Sunday, Closed

LOCAL AND  
NATIONAL EVENTS 

**KALAMAZOO DANCE GALA**

Nov 16 6-Midnight

Dinner, show and dancing to the Phoenix Big Band, Branson Ballroom, McCamly Hotel, Battle Creek. Black tie optional. \$65.

Rooms: \$85.

**SWMBDC Dance:** Nov 17. 4-7 PM.

Rose Street Market Ballroom, Kalamazoo. \$15.

<http://www.kalamazoodance.org>

**WORKSHOP WEEKEND**

Sat & Sun, Nov. 16 & 17

Diamondback Saloon in Belleville W/C Swing, Two Step, Cha Cha, Hustle, plus video notebooks will be available. Classes: \$10 per class. \$5 discount to MSDA members on a day pass!

734-718-6844/734-718-8847

[apedance@comcast.net](mailto:apedance@comcast.net)

**COUNTRY DANCE**

Sunday, Nov. 24 Amber House Country 2 step lesson with Ken Ptak from 3-4, dance from 4-7:30. \$6 cover. \$1 discount to MSDA members. Cash bar and food. 586-754-3434.

**STARDUST DANCE WEEKEND**

Nov 22-24

Monticello, NY

60 Workshops, showcases and dancing. 800-537-2797

<http://stardustdance.com>

**THANKSGIVING DANCE**

Wed, Nov 27 8 PM Amber House 7012 E 9 Mile, Warren

DJ Jimmy Barrios \$10 Cash Bar

\$1 discount to MSDA members

586-754-3434

**CASH BASH**

Nov 29 - Dec 1

Twinsburg, Ohio

Workshops, competitions and dancing. Weekend pass: \$75

before October 15. \$90 after.

<http://www.cashdanceclub.org/>

**NEW YEARS EVE BASH**

Dec 31 - Jan 19 9 PM to 2 AM.

Amber house. 3 DJ'S!!!!!!!

Jimmy Barrios, Mike Derscha and Bill Scheff. Includes Hors

D'oeuvres, party favors,

champagne toast at midnight. \$40

in advance, \$50 at the door. \$2

discount to MSDA members. Must

show your card. *See attached flyer.*

We are experiencing that problem again!!! Please **DON'T** bring food or drink to the Amber House.

The drink ticket you receive when you enter our parties is to be used for a free soft drink or an alcoholic beverage. If you choose not to drink one, please turn it in at the bar. This is a direct part of the payment process to the Amber House! Remember: we need to help support Bill through food & drink purchases! We want to keep having our parties there.



**DISCOUNTS FOR MEMBERS**



**THE DANCE CLUB's progressive** classes begins every six weeks at the Amber House in Warren. Schedule: <http://amberhouse-danceclub.com/> Private lessons available. Mambo, Hustle, ChaCha - Tango - Waltz - FoxTrot - Swing - West Coast. Huge Dance Floor! Amber House, 7012 E. Nine Mile Road (Just W. of VanDyke) Warren, MI. 586-754-3434  
**AMBER HOUSE's** New Class Starting Thursday, October 24th - 7:30 PM Night Club 2 Step, Basic & Beyond With Ken Ptak. 6 Week Session - \$40.00 / Per Person. Classes Meet 1 Hour Each Week. New classes in Swing, Hustle and Cha Cha starting week of Dec. 2 for 6 weeks.

**STARDUST DANCE STUDIO**  
**Discount to MSDA members for their Friday night parties.** Friday Night Dance Parties 8:00 PM - 11:00 PM. FMI: 248-356-5678. See attached class schedule. <http://stardustballroom.com>

**ROYAL OAK ARTHUR MURRAY**  
 Friday night parties every Friday. Call for dates. 9:15 -10:45 PM. \$5. **Discount of \$1.00 for MSDA members.** 811 North Main Street, Royal Oak. FMI: 248-548-4770

**TROY DANCE STUDIO**  
**\$1.00 discount on every event to MSDA members.** They hold scheduled Theme Parties on Tuesdays. 4963 Rochester Rd. Troy, MI 48098. Elaine Marrero, TDS. 248-689-3393.

**DANCESPORT ACADEMY OF MICHIGAN**  
 23666 Park, Dearborn, MI 48124 313-724-3262. The studio has Friday night open dances, \$8. Sat night dances are \$10. **\$1.00 off to MSDA members.** <http://www.dancesportacademy.com>

**ARGENTINE TANGO DETROIT**  
 7758 Auburn Road, Utica FMI: 810-254-0560  
 An instructor from Deliz DanceSport is teaching Salsa & Swing on Mondays!  
**\$1.00 off all events to MSDA members.** LnBrtn@compserv.net <http://www.argentinatangodetroit.com>

**DANCE ALERT**  
 Want to receive the latest e-mail news on dance related events in Michigan? Want to know where the hottest dance floors are? To subscribe **free** to all the latest dance news, visit her website at: <http://dancemichigan.com>.

Instructors, DJ's, Bands and Event Coordinators may advertise for free. You can print out a huge list of area dance floors or check out the Information Station at the monthly dance for her list.

**RHYTHM -N- SHOES DANCE STUDIO**  
**\$1.00 discount to MSDA members on Thursday night dances.** 9 to 11 PM. Suzie Brecht is the new manager of the studio, as well as a teacher and the DJ. 2172 Franklin Rd, Bloomfield Hills. 284-334-0299. See attached schedule. RhythmNShoes@aol.com.



**DELIZ DANCESPORT**  
 231 Eureka Road, Wyandotte, MI 48192 734-281-1969. M-F, 1pm-10pm, Sat. by appt. 734-281-1969 or delizdance@aol.com

**DANCE ELITE BALLROOM STUDIO**  
 6315 Haggerty, W. Bloom. American and International Ballroom Dancing. Group and private lessons for all ages. Maros Reves, Professional Dance Instructor. Competitive dance coaching. Saturday night dance parties, 9 to midnight, \$10. **\$1.00 off to MSDA members.** 248-926-8522. <http://eliteballroom.com>. See attached schedule.



**PERSONAL TRAINER**  
 Muscle toning, strength & balance training to increase your dance endurance & poise. At your gym. **10% discount per session to MSDA members for first 5 training hours.** Madelyn Kleitch, ACE certified. <http://msda.org/mk/personal.trainer.htm> 313-882-5422.

**COULD I HAVE THIS DANCE?**  
 Contact Meagan Woodbury if you are a male dancer between 40 - 70, & you are interested in becoming a gentleman host on cruise ships. **\$5 discount for MSDA members.** (313) 886 -9394.

**DINNER FOR 8**  
 Now you can join other available, like minded, single people for evenings of fine dining and dinner theater. It's fun, it's affordable and it's without the social pressure of one on one blind dates. **\$20 membership discount to MSDA members.** Type MSDA in the comments form. <http://dinnerfor8.com>

**NEW!!! SWING TIME STUDIO/ DANCE HALL**  
 G-4510 VanSlyke Road- Flint Swing, Ballroom, Latin, Country & Social. Group Classes & Private Instruction available. 2200 sq. ft of Floating dance floor. **\$1.00 off any workshop or Dance party to MSDA members.** Instructors: Terri Sweet-Tim Johnson-Tim Constant-Dave Wolf. Contact Terri at (810) 762-0101. [Jtnnsweet@aol.com](mailto:Jtnnsweet@aol.com)

**REMINDER:** Show your **MSDA** card at GLSDC and MSSHD dances to **get in at their member prices** Just show your card and save. The GLSDC schedule is at: <http://danceaway.com/GLSDC/calendar.html>. They have a club dance every Wednesday in Flint at Buggy's. MSSHD is on the 2nd Sunday of the month : [bbudzyn@comcast.net](mailto:bbudzyn@comcast.net) <http://www.michiganswing.com/>

**HUBER & BREEZE**  
**30% discount** on all Rentals, Sales, Repairs of New & Used Disc Jockey Equipment. 33540 Groesbeck Hwy. Fraser, MI (810) 294-3950

**GUEST INSTRUCTOR  
SUZY BRECHT**

Dancer, Dance Instructor, Event Coordinator,  
DJ, Manager, MC, et al.

This dynamic lady could well have been the inspiration for the origin of the nickname, Blonde Bombshell! Her presence generates high energy, her sense of humor will make you burst out laughing and her dance style will cause you to stop and stare....enviously. She obviously is HAVING A BALL!

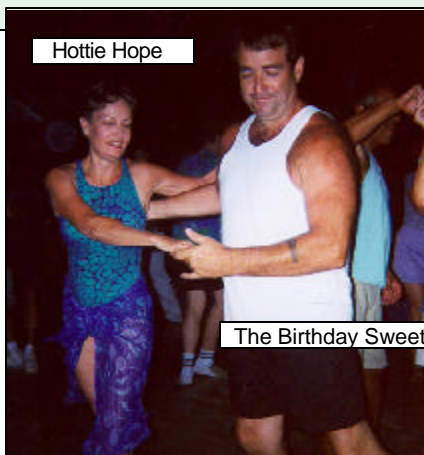
Suzy has been teaching Ballroom and Latin style dances since 1988. She is certified in both the American style and International style dances. Since 1995, she has held the title of Director of Ballroom Dance in Ontario, Canada. Suzy currently manages Rhythm -N- Shoes Ballroom Dance Studio in Bloomfield Hills, MI. In addition, as she is a theatre buff, Suzy teaches at Wayne State University in the theatre and stage department. In her dancing career, Suzy has won many top teacher awards throughout the United States and Canada. Suzy is an excellent choice for anyone who wants to learn American style, International style, Youth Rhythm and Dance Development, Toddler Creative Movement, and free-style/Hip-hop. Suzy also has experience doing Master of Ceremonies and Disc Jockey work for Ballroom functions.  
2172 Franklin Rd, Bloomfield Hills. 284-334-0299.  
Email: [RhythmNShoes@aol.com](mailto:RhythmNShoes@aol.com) **Suzy will be teaching Cha Cha on Sunday, Nov. 17 at 3 PM.**



Ann Palmeri (of Lou and Annie) dislocated her shoulder recently. We all hope you'll be better soon, Annie, and back on the dance floor. We love you!!

Congratulations to MSDA members, Johnny Mac and Lee Rossano, who were married last month on, you guessed it, a sailboat .... with swans flying across the bow. Guess where they met? Right! An MSDA dance.  
Live long and prosper, you two.

Peter DiSalvo's many friends have decided to celebrate his birthday at our next dance at the Amber House on Nov. 17. Better get in line early, girls, for the birthday dance or you might get left out!



Hottie Hope

The Birthday Sweetheart

.....continued from Page 1.

Now pull the string and picture that, by pulling the string, you are pulling the body up into alignment, straightening the lumbar and cervical spine, lifting up through the neck and out the top of the crown. Your neck should feel nicely lifted with a slight, comfortable stretch; the head should rest easily atop the neck. The chin should be in (but not "braced" in) and parallel with the floor.

3) **Shoulders Back And Down!** We all see dancers who roll or collapse their shoulders forward. This in turn can collapse their upper body (and their center) as well, effectively blocking the flow of connection. Try this exercise to determine proper shoulder placement: Stand up straight (we all know how to do that now), and put your arms straight out to the side at shoulder level, palms down. Now rotate the entire arm, including the cap of the shoulder, to the back and down, until your thumbs are pointing straight up. Your palms should now be facing forward. You should feel the rotation from the hand all the way up to the shoulder cap (just turning the hand alone will not do it). Now relax the arms down at your sides, leaving your shoulders in the position you've just placed them.

By now you are probably thinking, "Great, I've got my table-top on, the string through my body is pulled up, and my shoulders are back and down. And now you want me to dance this way?" Of course you will feel strange and awkward at first. And you probably won't be able to do all three at once, at least not in the beginning. I suggest trying one technique at a time, either in a practice or social dance setting. Pick one of the three techniques and tell yourself, "Tonight I'm going to work on Technique # \_\_ for 3 songs." Then just forget about it, relax and have fun for the rest of the evening. The next time you practice or go out, try another technique. You are training your mind to recognize how your body feels when it has good posture; you are instilling these techniques into muscle memory. And, if you continue to practice it, these three individual techniques will eventually merge into one technique and will be like second nature to you.

I've come to the conclusion that most people aren't even aware of their posture, good or bad. And yet it is one of the easiest things to change about ourselves, requiring no partner, and the benefits are many. Good posture is an asset in virtually all social and business situations. If we have to meet new people, go on an interview, throw a party, dance in a contest, teach a class; good posture is an essential element in imparting a sense of confidence, pride, ability and self-worth. If we sometimes feel less than 100% confident; well, good posture gives us the appearance of confidence, which is half the battle. And more often than not, the simple fact of knowing we look confident inspires confidence on it's own.

*Trish Connery has competed successfully on the local, state, and national level with extensive training through the Golden State Dance Teachers Association and currently teaches out of the Skippy Blair Dance Center in Bellflower, CA.*

MICHIGAN SWING DANCE ASSOCIATION  
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<http://msda.org>  
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HEY, YOU GUYS!!!!  
THE PARTY IS SUNDAY,  
NOVEMBER 17, 2002!!

