

WORLD LINE DANCE NEWSLETTER



LINE DANCE SHOWDOWN - DANVERS, MASS., FEB 17-20, 2005

Wow!!! I had a fantastic time at this event. I don't know why, but it brought back memories of when I lived on the beach in Pensacola, Florida with seven other girls when I was in my early twenties!!! It was just like one great big giant party. We were greeted Thursday by Jeannifer and Jason and Trish and Jennifer was so relaxed and already having fun I thought she either had to be Superwoman or this was going to be a mess. Trust Me -- they are all superwomen and one really cute man (that I hadn't met before). Everything was organized and in place and they all just enjoyed the party along with the rest of us. The floor was INCREDIBLE. I think whoever put down that floor and made that floor gets the dance floor of my lifetime award. It was really fabulous. No trips, no sticking, no skidding. It was PERFECT!!!

Louie was at his ultimate best and Louie is always a terrific DJ so he kept the momentum going from the first to last, very, very late song and I didn't meet the co-DJ but he did a great job too.

We had tons of open dancing (my favorite thing at any event) and we got to have open dancing in the BIG ballroom every day and way into the early morning hours. Everyone was there that I see at all of "the" events and we were doing all the new, new dances as well as some of the old great ones and everyone would remember them with the help of their neighbors. I really appreciated everyone who caught me before I was dancing again or shut me up long enough to introduce themselves. I met so many people who get the newsletter that I hadn't met before as well as remet some that I had met a long time before. I even saw friends from Vermont and events in the Northeast that I had met when we first started dancing. There were lots of vendors and lots of water and it was neat that the main ballroom was on the end of the hotel where the rooms weren't so we could party as late as Louie could stay up. I never found out how late that was because I went to bed at 3:00 on Thursday and Friday and then no one told me (or Jim Harvey) how late it was on Saturday (we told him it was "about 12" and I got to bed at 3:45 and wanted to take a 9:00 class from Rachel but....

I'm not going to list all the dances taught and I didn't get to take as many classes as I would like because when there's open dancing I just can't help myself unless someone says, "You HAVE to take this class!!!" and drags me away. I did learn a lot of the good ones I saw on the floor though and a couple that I really regret not taking the class and I will learn them. You can get the entire schedule of dances taught at www.linedanceshowdown.com. I'm just going to mention the ones that I saw being done or people told me about and you know we'll get a lot of writeups about the dances taught so you'll know about all of them by the end of the week, I'm sure. Oh, and did I mention it was cold outside!!! I'm talking teens here but since I didn't leave the entire weekend -- I JUST DIDN'T CARE. LOL. Besides, that, after living in Vermont for as long as we did, I knew it was going to be cold. What was neat about that, though, is that they didn't crank the heat up so it was just perfect for dancing, in my opinion, at least.

The show on Friday featured Rachel and Paul but since Rob was supposed to be there to lift Rachel up and he wasn't going to be there, I overheard Rachel worrying about, "Who is going to pick me up!!!!?????" I heard a lot of guys there that wanted to pick her up. LOL. Bryan B. filled in like he had been doing the routine forever and no one even knew that he learned the routine so quickly. It was perfect and the show was excellent. I think the Swing Team that did a really cute routine and I don't have their names. I'm sure it will in the report on the event at linedanceshowdown.com. Saturday night Johanna Barnes sang the National Anthem and she has a beautiful voice. I had always heard that but had never heard her sing.

I'm just going to go down the list I kept from the demos and then I'll mention a few dances that I saw being done and really liked. Oh, and there were three young choreographers there that were really impressive. I asked them to send me their dances and I'll get their names and remind you at that time. They are all going to be stars in the near future, I predict. Their dances were original, fun and doable: Amanda Delisle, Michelle Jackson (her Holla dance was one of my picks of the weekend) and a really cute blonde girl that I will get her name. All of their dances were REALLY excellent!!! Can't wait to see what they come up with next. I have to say that the quality of dances right now is so high that even the ones that don't get noticed are really excellent dances. I think it's true

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in any endeavor that when there are so many people doing something and trying to get their dances taught that the quality has to rise equally and I really see that happening. There are a LOT of excellent dances out there right now so I would suggest that you really pay attention to the dances on my survey and other surveys that are getting maybe not the top votes but in the top half because some of them are getting missed that deserve not to be missed. I'm also seeing a trend toward interesting dances rather than just difficult dances which really makes me happy. The music choices are varied and people EXPECT the dances to flow well and phrase to the music and the ones that are doing that really well are starting to get the recognition they deserve.

These are the dances that kind of jumped out at me or that other people told me about and I watched them later being danced:

Masters in Line (Rob Fowler had to stay home in the hospital so we didn't get him for the weekend but Rachel and Paul (wow, he has certainly grown up into quite the eye candy -- or am I not supposed to say that?) started with STREET SOUL. I absolutely love this dance and it was done over and over and I never got tired of doing it. It's an intermediate dance but to a great track and it filled the floor over and over again and it just is one of those dances that look so great when everyone is doing it together. It has no tags or restarts and should be a huge hit here as it already is in the UK.

Max Perry taught DANCIN' WITH KEYS and this was a class I wish I had taken. Beautiful dance to a beautiful track. I will learn this one.

Rachel taught Speechless and did an excellent job. She's a wonderful teacher and just kind of throws in technique hints so effortlessly that you don't even realize it. For example, when you do the first one-and-one-half turn, she said to kind of throw your right arm up at an angle from about your hip level as you start the turn and it kind of just pulls you around and it works!!! That's the kind of stuff I mean. She taught the dance, as Barry Durand had done in Florida, with and without the turns so really anyone can do this dance and the music is so beautiful that I know it's going to be a huge dance.

Scott Blevins taught Envious at the same time Rachel taught Cheetah and I had to finish learning CHEETAH but ENVIOUS is a really big dance and I'm learning this one, too. It was done a lot and doesn't look that difficult but I wish I had learned it.

MIL taught CHEETAH and you know I've been talking about this dance for awhile now and I can REALLY do this dance now (thanks, Louie) and I just love it. It is just great with the music and I just love doing this dance. It's one of those that you run to the floor when you hear the music and it's also one that isn't too difficult but you do have to do it a few times before it's easy to do but I promise you will like it.

Oh, and did I mention that on Friday there was OPEN DANCING from 2:00 to 6:00!!! Awesome!!!

I heard good things about Cody Stevens' dance WATCHA' WANT (I) but I didn't get to see this one.

Scott Blevins taught his new dance THE RIGHT TO BE WRONG. One of his easiest dances NOT!!!! The really smart got to do it later. I wasn't one of them. It is a really nice nightclub two-step to a beautiful track. I'm sure the advanced dancers will love this one.

Another of my picks of the weekend was ATLANTIS by Jamie Marshall and I think John Robinson. This is a really good dance. It's an easy Int and fits perfectly to the music and I love the squishy steps. I picked this one up just by doing it and it was another one I wanted to do every time it was played. I think your classes will really like this dance.

Forty Arroyo was doing a dance at one of the night dances to a really fast Latin-type song but I didn't write down

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the name of it and I asked if she would send it to me. It was a cool dance and everyone was wanting to know what it was. I think it was D.A.R.E TO MAMBO.

MIL taught BEAT IT UP. This is another Int dance that I really had fun doing. It looks harder than it is and I think it could be done to lots of different music so you can practice it even if you go to a club that plays only country. It has moves in it that just are fun to do and I had been wanting to learn it for quite awhile.

Guyton Mundy taught FAST WOMEN and I was so happy he did. This is one of the easiest of his dances and has been around for awhile but it just kind of got skipped. It's country music and just fun to do so and it should have been a much bigger dance. This one could be done in any level class and the late-night crowds will be able to pick it up on the floor and they will love it.

Barry & Dari-Anne Amato's dance HILLBILLIES IN THE HAY is a REALLY fun and cute dance that filled the floor every time it was played. I learned this one on the floor and it was just fun to do and, of course, fit the music perfectly.

I heard a lot of people say they liked ZEST APPEAL (Michele Perron) taught by Dancin' Dean. We had done this dance in Florida awhile back so I didn't take the class but it was a favorite with a lot of people I talked with.

Michelle Jackson's dance HOLLA is a show stopper. Everyone wanted to be in that class. It was packed and all from seeing her doing it in the choreography competition. Of course, it doesn't hurt that she is a really good dancer and super duper cute to boot but this is MUST LEARN dance. If you have classes with young people they will absolutely flip for this dance and it really wasn't difficult to learn even though I think it was listed as an advanced dance. Louie was going to teach this dance in Florida weekend before last but he didn't have time to teach it there.

Christopher Petre taught two easy, cute dances to country music called ALCOHOL and ROLLIN IN DIRT. They were both easy and to country music and it was nice meeting him and his wife (who had on these neat pants all weekend). You know I have to pay attention to the fashions. LOL

Bryan McWherter taught GET ON THAT and this is a really good dance. I missed it when he taught it in Tampa and was so happy to get to take the class. It is just fun and like all of Bryan's dances, is just perfect with the music. This was another one that filled the floor when it was played and I think will be a big dance judging from the size of the class and the numbers on the floor when it was played.

Guyton taught CADILLAC RIDE and you can do the on-the-floor or the stand-up version. It was easy to learn and everyone who took the class loved it. Another one that filled the floor when it was played.

John Robinson taught 16 TONS (Jo Kinser) and I've been telling you about this dance for weeks now. It is just a darling little dance that should be much bigger than it is. I KNOW you would like it!!! John also did a demo of his new one called THE LAST DAYS OF DISCO. I'm not sure about the name but it is so John Robinson and so much fun to do that I'm sure you'll be seeing it soon on a dance floor near you.

Barry and Dari-Anne taught HOT TUB DANCE and this is another that everyone hopped on the floor for and I learned it by following along. A really, really fun dance. I think this will be a big dance too!!! (See? it was hard to pick and I'm not even covering anywhere near all the dances that were taught!!!)

I saw Max Perry demo DANA'S DREAM (done to Monday, Monday) and this is another beautiful track with a dance that matches. It was done a lot this weekend and I want to learn it.

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I really wanted to take STAY FOREVER, MIL but it was at 9 on Sunday morning and since I did STAY up

FOREVER the night before, I kind of missed this one. I loved the music and tried to follow it the night before but Rachel did it a little better than meeeeeeeeeeeeeee. LOL

Max Perry taught JUMP IN and I had heard about this dance from friends in the UK and it's just a cute dance that everyone jumped up to do.

Guyton taught SUM'M SUM'M and it was fun to do it enough to really be able to do it. I had learned it awhile ago but hadn't done it and there's a reason it gets votes -- it's a really good dance to music I love.

Oh, and did I mention Saturday there was OPEN DANCING from 2:00 until 6:00?

Guyton also taught his new one called THE KING done to a song called My Dog Thinks I'm Elvis. It starts off slow, kind of like a west coast, and then goes into an east coast-type beat and this was another one that filled the floor. It's easy and he taught it at the beginning of open dance so everyone was there when he taught it. Everyone hopped on the floor every time it was played. It even had a lot of normal moves in it like shuffle steps. LOL

Johanna Barnes taught her new dance THAT'S LIFE. I REALLY wanted to take this class but did I? She promised to teach it to me though and I know this will be a hit for her. I loved the music and the dance.

Oh, one of the young choreographers did PARTY IN PINK and this is another hot little dance.

One of Amanda Delisle's dances was called STAYING OUT. Both of hers were funky little dances. She also did NO MORE and everyone loved this one and was watching her and her friends do it during the night open dance. I think this is the one that had the shimmy/hip/whatever you call that in it and they did it so perfectly. The problem with my doing this is that everything in between moves too!!! LOL.

Another one I gave a bunch of stars to was LOVE ROLLER COASTER and I can't remember who did it or whose it is so help me out here.

I already knew MARS ATTACK and GOING ALL THE WAY but they filled the floor and lots of people learned them for the first time this weekend.

The highlight of the weekend, of course, was THE SHOWDOWN. I was thinking when I watched all these wonderful cabaret-type routines, why someone doesn't take them on the road so people could see what line dancing is all about and what it could be. They were all wonderfully prepared and executed and it was just amazing to watch. I hope I can remember the themes of the dances but I'm going to try and I'm sure others will fill it in in more detail:

Cody Stevens did a routine mimicking fellow dancers (I loved to see him doing Brian B.) It was so hysterical and he did it so well. The last song was a tribute to his mom and of course he had to make me cry but it was truly moving.

Barry Durand did a timeline of dance from his parents' perspective and it was really fun and charming at the same time as he changed into things (including a skirt that he can whip around with the best of them) as he waltzed around the floor along with all styles of dances he watched his parents do as he grew up.

Guyton Mundy did a history of his timeline of dancing and it was so funny to watch him dance through each stage of his history -- especially when they started to play waltz music and the track said, "I don't THINK so!!!" LOL.

Jillian (from Orlando) did an Elvis routine with a great Elvis costume and tracked his career through her dance. It was really good.

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Christopher Petre did a whole line dance medley of dances to all kinds of different music. Hypno did a routine about trying to pick up a girl. The guy is made of rubber, I think.

I saw a new dance by Kathy Hunyadi called Shake Yourself Loose. It is REALLY a cute dance. People were asking me to get a copy of Barry Durand's, Adrenaline. I didn't see it on the schedule but maybe he did.

Barry Amato did a really wonderful medley of dance which represented New York/Hollywood/and Nashville -- not only dancing with wonderful props but also singing. He is so super talented and so professional and so well-prepared that it just made me proud to know him. It was a really wonderful routine done to perfection.

Bob Grundy did a routine around the main theme When I Was Seventeen, dancing through the years to the present day but always going back to the theme song, with his walker and hospital gown with his backside hanging out. It was hysterical and I enjoyed meeting him and his wife because I can just tell they want to have fun all the time and he's got such a happy face. I loved him.

Brian B. did what he does best and danced his heart out. He amazes me at how much better he gets every time I see him. It was a perfect routine done perfectly. Brian was once again the winner of the event and received \$1500 and Guyton got 2nd Place and won money but I can't remember how much and Barry Amato won 3rd Place but it was a tough decision and could have gone any way. The judges get to judge 50 percent and the audience also gets a 50 percent vote and everyone votes so it's an interesting competition done in fun but done extremely well. I thoroughly enjoyed it and can't wait to see next year's performances.

Well, I have rambled on and there are more things I could say but to top it off. It was one of the best parties I've ever attended and I really commend Jason and Jennifer and all the people who helped them pull together one of the best line dance events I've ever attended. I can see why it just keeps getting bigger and bigger and I would love to see more of the RULES? WHAT RULES? type of competition because it is truly a showcase for the giant talents we have out there and gives them the opportunity to show what great imaginations they have and is so entertaining for the audience. It is what I dreamed line dancing would be some day and I actually got to see it for myself. If other venues like ice skating and gymnastics can take their shows on the road, I don't see why we can't do the same!!! Thanks so much for making us feel welcome (and Bucky would like to thank Jen and Trish for all the Beyonce sandwich hugs all weekend) and we can't wait for Ft. Lauderdale in July!!!!



Carol Craven

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PHOTOS



Michele's dog being cool



We're the welcoming committee.



Louie King of his domain



We had tons of open dancing!



Maurice posing for me



Jen, Nigel & Trish



No, let me give you my seat



Jason Silva with girlfriend Jen Manfra and John Robinson---Stay back, John!

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Jim Harvey in a sitting position -- you won't see this often!!



What???



The Last Days of Disco



There were dances that kind of jumped out at me



I told you I could do other things than dance!



Lots of open dancing!!!



Nigel and Shelly
(from UK)
Cheers!!!



and MORE open dancing!



Donna, Bryan McWherter,
Dancin Dean & Diane Poole



Nigel, Bucky & Carol



Stacy and Bucky



Sounds like a good idea to me!