



REVIEW ON OCALA, FLORIDA WORKSHOP, January 22, 2005

Well, what can I say? It was a great party. It was one of the largest workshops I've attended in Florida and there were so many teachers represented at this workshop as well as many dancers and I'm sure for some it was their first workshop and I hope to hear from them about their experience. Everything was so well organized from the beginning to the end that the day just seemed to work perfectly -- from the greetings at the door by the club and registration desk to the coffee and donuts to give us a welcoming greeting when we got there. It was even fun driving into the Ocala area and seeing all those rolling hills and horse farms. What a beautiful area of Florida. I felt like I was in Kentucky. Everyone helping with the event was friendly and efficient and added to the "party" feel of this event. I think the McNeals and all their staff and volunteers do a really spectacular job, especially since this was the first time they had done a seminar like this. If I hadn't known, I would have thought they were old pros. I think the fact that Marilyn and Ray try to attend every seminar and event they can added to their experience in knowing what works and what needs improvement and they incorporated it all into a fun event. There was a free hot lunch with delicious food prepared by Ray (I want Ray to come live at my house!!!). He's a great cook!!! There were free sheets for all the dances taught and Marilyn made sure that all the choreographers there were able to see the floor filled with their dances. They were even doing a free breakfast Sunday morning for those people who decided to stay over (and there were a lot of them who stayed over). I couldn't believe Bucky and me both won a prize!!! I promise I didn't pay Marilyn off to draw our names. LOL. It just made me happy to look around and see so many people having so much fun and to appreciate how lucky we are to live in Florida and have the opportunity to have so many events that couldn't take place unless they were supported by so many dedicated dancers.

Now for the dances taught:

Darling Angel, Bill McGee and Larry Bass. This was a cute, intermediate dance that flows well to the music, "Angel" by Shaggy.

Do It All, Junior Willis. This was a beginner dance to I Wanna Do It All by Teri Clark. You would like this dance for your classes and clubs. As with all of Junior's dances, it has an energy all its own. Dancing with Junior is like turning on the electricity when you come into your house. It just lights up my day!!! He is just the nicest, most energetic and fun instructor and we're lucky to have him as a fairly new part of the dance scene. If you're thinking about having an instructor for a seminar or event, you cannot go wrong with Junior!!!

If I Can't Dance (I'll Go Crazy), Mike and Betty Weeks. I had learned this dance awhile ago but hadn't done it to the Music "If I Don't Dance" by Kelly Hunt. Wow!!! What a difference this music makes to the feel of the dance.

Junkie, Junior Willis. We've been doing this dance for awhile in Tampa and I never get tired of doing it (and I get tired of dances quickly). It goes to R&B Junkie by Janet Jackson and it's one of those dances that may seem a little difficult when you learn it but when you do it, the dance fits so perfectly to the music that you just do it. I just love this dance.

Keep Up, Junior Willis to "Lose My Breath" by Destiny's Child. Wow, this is a good dance and I love the music. It's fast, easy and funky. I think this dance would be good in an int class or int night at any club. There's a fast syncopated grapevine at the end but you can do a regular grapevine there and it really makes it even easier (or in my case made my feet not hurt as bad.) It was one of my favorites of the day.

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Shooga, Kelli Haugen. The music is Sugar-Sugar (In My Life) by John Fogerty. I liked this dance more each time I did it and it's one of those dances that could be done to so many different songs. Bill did a really good job of teaching it and it was one of my top three picks of the day.

Syncopated Love, Dan Albro. I loved, loved, loved this dance. The music is When You Talk About Love by Patti Labelle. If you know who Fantasia is who won American Idol, the style of this music kind of reminds me of her. It's an easy intermediate and starts with a turn similar to the turn in X-Cuse Me by Kate Sala (a dance I always have loved). It has some gentle turns in it and flows so well with the music. I thought it was a great pick by Bill McGee to teach and he has a real gift for picking good dances.

Speaking of Bill picking good dances. I've told you this before but you are missing the boat not teaching That Girl choreographed by Bill McGee. I've been saying this for months (but you're not listening. LOL.). This is a dance that your students (of any age) would absolutely love. Every single time I've done it and seen it I ask myself the question: WHY ISN'T THIS A HUGE DANCE? It should be. It is not hard to do and the music is fabulous and it's just one of those dances that make you feel uplifted doing it. For all of you who didn't listen to me when I told you about Under Your Spell, look at all the time you wasted not doing this dance!!! That Girl is another of those dances that you are going to ask yourself why you didn't teach it earlier.

I got to do Trust Me for the first time (because I missed the teaches at Roundup for the last two weeks) and this is going to be a big dance. Forget that you say you don't like the music. You will like the music after hearing it about three times and the dance is easy with no tags or restarts. I learned it in five minutes and was able to do it the first time to the music so I know everyone can do this dance. Another one I simply must learn before Boston is Street Soul by MIL. Dancin Dean told me about this dance months and months ago and I just haven't learned it. It's one of those dances that look so beautiful on the floor (wish you could see Natalie Mundy doing it). You can just see she loves this dance. Guyton and Natalie came later in the day and Guyton. Everyone was happy to see them and I'm glad they came. It was funny watching Guyton try to remember Long Road to Richmond but fortunately Natalie remembered it. LOL. I have a lot of reviewing of dances to do and learn before Boston but I'll get there!!!

Anyway, as you can see, we had a fun-filled and busy day and I wish I could do it all over again. Thanks, Marilyn and Ray, for doing such a fabulous job to keep so many dancers in dancing heaven for one more day!!

Carol (and Bucky) Craven