



Fun In the Sun 2012

So we had another great time in Orlando at Fun In The Sun last weekend. Great friends from all over Florida and the world. I love the hotel in Orlando. It's very close to the airport so those people flying in and out have an easy time to catch the shuttle to the hotel. The shuttle also will take you to the area restaurants if you ask. There are some excellent places to eat really close to the hotel so you can just walk and enjoy being outdoors. There are a number of businesses and hotels in the area built around this huge pond with beautiful birds and wildlife sunning on the grassy banks. The hotel itself has the most beautiful pool and one of the first things everyone does is get on their swimsuits and head out to the pool. It's also nice to sit in one of the dining rooms and look out over the pool with tropical landscaping all around the edges, with its own tiki bar. It's not just a little square pool, either. It sprawls a great distance and there is even one section that is indoors. At the end of the dance evening in the wee hours, they go out again to relax and enjoy the Florida weather. It's, in my opinion, THE POOL of all events. LOL.

The staff at this hotel really go the extra mile to keep everyone happy. They are pleased to see us each year and it shows. There was a freeze-up in the air conditioning on Thursday night but they got that fixed by the next day so it solved that problem. They are going to be renovating the front area of the hotel and the ballrooms so it should be even nicer next year. This event, like all of Jen and Jason's, is so well organized, you just feel like you're going to a friend's house for a party. They have lots of very old-and-dear friends helping with registration and just checking on things all weekend, so they just feel like part of the family at all of their events. The floor is, of course, the best there is since they own it and maintain it and it's not some nailed-down affair or something that is connected with metal strips. This is a tongue-and-groove floor that is so nice to dance on. There is a little cafe that serves gourmet coffees and sandwiches and Starbucks type snacks. Next to that is a little gift shop for aspirin and magazines, etc.

Well, enough about the facilities. Now, let's talk about the DANCING!! I took quite a few lessons -- more than I usually do -- because there were lots of good dances that I didn't know and some that I didn't know I wanted to know. There were, of course, reviews each evening of the dances for the next day and Jamie Marshall kept things moving right along with her quirky sense of humor. I'm going to mention the dances I

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either already know and like or ones that I saw and they stood out to me but really there were a LOT of good dances. Look at the schedule and check out some of the beginner dances.

I thought it was so great that every instructor taught in the beginner room (except Guyton who had gone away to a funeral for a family member and didn't have time to get his dance in but he taught in the beginner room last year and I'm sure will in the future.) On Friday (and other days) there were some really good beginner dances. I liked Zac Detweiller's nice Int. called Yellow Diamonds and it looked great on the floor in open dance. I thought Junior's Back in Black was really cute. Jamie's Men was very cute. I liked John Robinson's Lil Yeller Blanket and EZ Body Rock. Lindy Bowers taught EZ Shuffle to the Cowboy Up Music and who doesn't love that music? The main ballroom started off on Friday with Zumba with Jamie. That will wake you up. LOL. Bracken Ellis Potter did her CardioLineDance Session in the Captiva Ballroom. Also on Friday John Robinson taught Love's Kiss, which is a really good dance, and also Slipaway Cha makes you feel like you're on the beach. Craig Bennett's Dancing on the Ceiling was very popular, I loved Amy Spencer's Hit The Spot and I took Guyton's Fairy Tales and Love Songs... Whatever. He also taught Bossa Nova Baby but I didn't take that one. I took Farewell, by Junior, Joey, and Debbie McLaughlin. Lovely dance and I really like the music, too. Rachael taught another popular one at the same time called Boys Will Be Boys and it packed the floor at night. Craig Bennett's Call Me Maybe was very popular. Of course, Back in Time by Rachel and Guyton was a huge hit. I took Drunk in the Morning taught by Sandy Albano. I just love this dance. Scott Blevins taught Nice and Slow and I still need to learn this one. Scott also taught Straight to Memphis by Kate Sala. This contra dance is a must learn for your next event. The floor is absolutely packed. It's fun, it's easy, and it's very, very popular. I took Love Trouble taught by Marilyn McNeal. I had been wanting to learn this one and I was so happy she taught it. The previews were at 5 so we had until 8 to change, relax, and get back for the evening dance party.

Saturday started off with Zumba again by Jamie. Junior taught Dark Side. I already knew this one and like it a lot. I especially like the turning sequence at the end into the beginning and the music is beautiful. One of my top favs of the weekend was Simon's Beautiful In My Eyes. Gorgeous music and great dance. I predict this one is going to be huge. I next took Bound To You taught by Marilyn McNeal and in the class was Maria Maag, the choreographer, and her friends, Charlotte and Jane. What a nice group of people who dance with Niels

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Poulsen when they are home. Bound to You is a wonderful dance and it's one of those that the word gets out that you should learn it. She also danced her new one in the open dance room and it's a super dance, too, so look for that one. I didn't get the name. I think we will be hearing much more about Maria here in the U.S. Craig Bennett taught his new one, Time Bomb. I think this dance, too, is going to be a huge hit for him. John Robinson taught Skreem. Great music and fun, fun dance. Rachael taught Ding Dang Darn It, which is sure to be another hit for her. Bracken taught her nice dance Thank You, Come Again. I just love to watch her dance and I really like standing next to her so I can follow her because she's easy to follow so don't take my space the next time you see her!! LOL. Scott taught the new one by him and Jo Thompson called Through The Fire. I predict this one is going to also be up near the top of the charts. It's not difficult, it has soul, and you are going to love it. How could these two mess up a dance, anyway? Junior's Disaster was getting a lot of buzz when I asked people what they liked. Rachael taught her classic What Love Is. I had seen John Robinson's Samba in the Sun before and liked it then and still like it. Guyton Mundy's I Like How It Feels is his newest dance production number with lots of hands and intricate moves that the advanced dancers will love. He had a big class so we will be seeing this one on the floor in the coming weeks. I can always tell when Guyton does a dance that he's really happy about and this is one of those dances. It looks great on the floor, too. Simon retaught Larger Than Life (that would be a good nickname for him, too). He said he choreographed this in 1999. I wonder if anyone can guess what Simon does for a job when he is ever home. I'll have to make you guess and you never will get the answer without help or unless you know already. LOL. Saturday finished the day with Guyton's Finish What We Started. This is another new one that didn't look very difficult so I might have to learn it. In the beginner room on Saturday was Suntan City taught by Lisa Johns-Grose. It's an easy country dance. Amy Spencer taught a patterned partner dance called Promise Me to very pretty music. Rachael taught Gold Digger, an easy, cute country dance and Wake Up Little Susie. Simon taught Morning Glory. A cha to really nice music. Sandy Albano taught My Chair, a slow-ish country cha and Magic Touch to pop music. Bracken Ellis Potter taught 5-1-5-0. Someone told me this meant something but I forgot what the numbers mean. Duh. She also taught The Voice of Soul to the Soul Man music.

After lessons on Saturday we had the preview of Sunday Dances followed by a huge attendance at the dinner. Jen and Jason always have one instructor sit at each table so it gives people a chance to get to know

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each other better and get to interact with some of the instructors they may not have chatted with before, so it makes for lively dinner conversation. I always attend the banquets because I think they are fun and I've met so many people that way that I wouldn't have really gotten a chance to talk with otherwise. We danced in the ballroom for a little while before the show started. It was not long (thank you) and was very entertaining (thank you again). It started with the team, Wild Roses, doing a performance. They will once again be competing at Worlds and we wish them the best AGAIN this year. They did great last year. Next came Staci's Dream, performed by Staci Precanico with the assistance of Rachael, Scott, John, and Junior. She is dreaming that she is competing in Dancing With the Stars and was being judged by a panel of judges, so she does different numbers with people and then gets judged. It's very cute. Her son who is maybe 9 or 10 was so excited to see his mom dancing. He was leading his own cheering section when she came on the floor and finished. He was so cute. Next came Guyton and Will Craig (Mr. Big Bang!!) LOL. It was a recap of Guyton's life from a little boy through today with a lovely wedding dance with Natalie and with commercial breaks to shamelessly advertise Will's brand new event, The Big Bang, coming up early next year. Last was Simon Ward's performance that was as much of a whirlwind as he is. That boy must be in good shape or he would have collapsed for the rest of the night after that performance. He didn't, though. He stayed up every night and danced everyone out of the room. What a great personality. I have only recently gotten to know Simon a little and he is as nice as he is crazy. Hope you get to meet him if you haven't already. I just love him.

Here are three videos that Liz Smith was nice enough to share of the show:

Simon Ward, <http://youtu.be/NdtJBvSIWIA>

Staci, <http://youtu.be/LRo5TkgyBPY>

Guyton and Will, <http://youtu.be/9ZuR3c1MRqE>

Oh, another highlight for me was I got to meet Rachael's parents and relatives who came to enjoy the evening and I can see where she gets her charm and class. They were so warm and comfortable in that setting. I hope we will be seeing lots more of them now that Rachael has a home in Orlando. I heard she only has a very few openings in the Zumba class that she will be teaching. I'll try to get her to send some details.

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I left early on Sunday because my house had lost power the night before because of a storm and I was worried about my doggies but my son took care of everything so I really didn't need to worry.

Dances taught on Sunday were Outspoken by Amy Spencer; Break Even, by Bracken; Love Repeats and Better and Better taught by Ferrel Mazzato; Without Fire, taught by John Robinson; Ray of Light (I wanted to take this class) by Simon Ward; Jamie taught an all-time fav, Backstreet Attitude and Sho Nuf', both great oldies. Sandy Albano taught Point of No Return; Rachael taught Had A Bad Day (very popular in Florida); Lisa Johns-Grose taught Part of Me; Jamie taught Rumour Has it; Scott Blevins taught Naughty Baby (I still need to learn this); Lindy Bowers taught We Have To Dance; John Robinson taught Scarborough Waltz (heard lots of good reports on this one); Zac taught Hard To Love and Guyton taught his hit, Faithfully. The day ended with open dancing and more poolside visiting, I heard.

Thanks to everyone who made this such a fun weekend, especially Jen and Jason, who really know how to throw a party. The DJs were Louie St. George, Zac Detweiller, and Ferrell Mazzato. There was a 50/50 raffle and Laura Brieg's basket raffle was a huge success and the baskets were beautiful. All of the \$750 raised will go to help buy a milk machine in Honduras (I think that's where it is.) She will be doing another raffle in Tampa so you will get to enjoy picking the things you would like to win and putting them in the little slots in front of the baskets you are interested in. There were passes and gifts and just all kinds of neat stuff to win and I even won something!! I never win things. LOL.

Until next year in Orlando (July 18-21, 2013) and next in Tampa November 1-4, 2012) and next in Boston (March 21-24, 2013), keep on dancing and stay healthy and safe.

BE SURE and look at the PHOTOS, read the REPORTS FROM OTHERS and the dances they recommend, look at the PLAYLIST from the weekend, and check out the VIDEOS that Stacy has spent a lot of time gathering together for you and thanks to the people who post them on Youtube. It's also fun to go back and look at previous reports from previous years to see what dances were popular and which ones have stayed around for awhile. Thanks for reading the report, everyone. I had a great time and can't wait to do it all over again next year.

Carol Craven