

FUN IN THE SUN REPORT 2021

BY CAROL CRAVEN

Well, I am finally a little rested and ready to tell you about my GREAT weekend in Orlando at FITS. I think everyone was so happy to be back together dancing that they just were on happy overload this whole weekend. I remember before the pandemic feeling that “been there/done that” emotion when trying to get excited about going to an event (if you can believe that) but I was feeling that way. Well, that certainly disappeared the minute I walked in the door and realized how many people I had missed and just the feeling of excitement at being there. I don’t think I will ever take for granted what we had before. There were clouds and tornado warnings outside but that all disappeared the minute I arrived. I guess I can’t take credit for that but I can try; right? LOL.

There was a very large crowd here this year and I met so many people from all over and a lot of people from Florida I had never met before. Thanks to those of you who took the time to introduce yourselves and just say hi. I like putting a face with an email so it feels like I know you when I hear from you. One thing that I always notice at the Florida events is the number of young people who just bring a whole new energy to the room. It is so much fun to watch some of the young people who obviously have never taken a high intermediate/advanced class before just walk into the most difficult class and learn the dance instantly and then I see them dancing it later at night. Oh, to be young again! I think line dancing is alive and well for the future -- at least in Florida. I think the clubs and their instructors in the area play a big part in encouraging these kids to come to events and for the instructors of all ages who encourage their students to attend just one event because, as we all know, you can’t do just one.

I won’t go into a long thing about the hotel except to say it is a great place to have an event. The pool is the star of the hotel and people really use it all weekend. The view is very nice over the lake or the pool and people are always there visiting, eating at the little tiki restaurant, and just enjoying the scenery. The restaurants have very good food in the bar and the regular restaurant and the prices are reasonable. There are also lots of places to eat close to the hotel. You can walk to some of them or take the shuttle or get a ride with all the people who live in Florida and drive to the event. I also saw many people ordering in from other restaurants outside. You can usually ask for a list of restaurants in the area at the desk when you check in and most hotels have a list like that. The airport is also very close to the hotel so that getting there is very easy. The dinner that was paid for as part of the all-inclusive pass was EXCELLENT on Saturday night. They had prime rib, chicken, two salads, veggies, and nice desserts. The good thing about doing the dinner at events is that you get preferred seating and it’s also a good way to meet and talk with people you probably don’t have time to talk with during the rest of the weekend because you are dancing. We had a little instructor trivia game to see which tables got to go in first. I prefer a regular trivia game so there is a definite answer but I guess it’s not all about meeeeeeee.

Here is the schedule of dances taught during the weekend. I will comment on the ones I took or wanted to take and other people will be commenting on the other ones because there were a LOT of good dances taught and there is only one of me. I’m sure they will be reflected in the charts in the next few weeks.

<http://www.jcdanceproductions.com/fun-in-the-sun/>

On Thursday night Trevor Thornton taught an easy dance to everyone to kick off the evening called I Was On A Boat. It is a cute beginner dance.

Here is the list of instructors for this year. We are lucky to have so many U.S. instructors who did such a great job of teaching and giving us a chance to meet them. I had never taken a class from Dustin Betts before and he really was excellent and fun. He is also very tall so he's easy to see and knows every dance so it was nice having him out on the floor every night. I also had never met or taken a class from Chris Jacques who was the runner up of last year's USLDCC Competition. He did a great job teaching his very popular phrased advance dance WAIT FOR IT. I loved it. It was nice having Joey Warren there because he hasn't been at an event where I was for a little while and his classes and dances are always hits. I didn't get a chance to take his new one but will be learning it soon. Christopher Gonzalez was teaching and dancing his feetsies off. I think he has parts that move that didn't come with my original package. LOL. Rob Holley taught some of his new dances, which were very popular. I have taken lots of classes from everyone else and that's because they are all wonderful instructors and choreographers.

Rachael McEnaney White (FL)

Darren Bailey (AZ)

Scott Blevins (NM)

Amy Bailey (AZ)

Joey Warren (WV)

John Robinson (IN)

Dustin Betts (VA)

Christopher Gonzalez (CA)

Rob Holley (DE)

Jamie Marshall (KY)

Rosie Multari (NY)

Trevor Thornton (FL)

Cody Flowers (FL)

& USLDCC Runner Up from 2020, Chris Jacques (MA)

The DJs for the weekend were:

JP Potter (CA) (He did a great job of playing old and new music)

Mary Kaye Johnson (VA) (Everyone loves being in her room.)

You can access the entire weekend schedule of dances taught at this link:

<http://www.jcdanceproductions.com/fun-in-the-sun/>

You can open and print the schedule and you will see everything for the day and evening is posted so you will know where the classes are and what time each thing is starting. I know many of you have not attended an event before so I'm really writing to you so you can see what the day and evening would be like.

One of the very special things about this event is that they have kids' classes. I was totally amazed at how well they performed for the evening show. WOW is all I can say. They were so prepared and did such a great job. There was a standing ovation for them and they should all be very proud to have been a part of this. If you have a young person you should bring them next year to participate. The instructors make it fun for them and they actually get a true exposure to how much fun line dancing can be and make new friends in the process. I think it is such a great idea to have this every year.

Another special thing is the Corn Hole Tournament. People really get into this and Jamie Marshall and Jason Cameron were the winners this year. Everyone has fun whether they win or not, so congratulations, Jamie and Jason.

One of the highlights for me is the USLDCC (United States Line Dance Choreographer Competition) that is held at a number of events during the year culminating at the finals at the Line Dance Marathon in North Carolina each year. This was a qualifying event at this event and a great opportunity for those of you who would like to try to choreograph a dance and get it noticed. I never miss watching the competition at each event and this year there were 40 dances entered. Select your song, create your dance with some of your favorite steps, ask friends to join you as you dance it in the competition, and give it a try! Winners take home some really great prizes, including an invitation to teach at the World

Dance Masters in England! Be sure and read about what else the grand prize winner gets! It is totally worth the effort. Jamie Marshall kept things moving along with her trivia questions and funny comments.

Here are the rules if you would like to find out more about it:

<https://usldcc.com/>

Congratulations to everyone who competed this year. There were some excellent dances and I give you credit for the effort you put into doing this.

HERE ARE THE USLDCC QUALIFIER RESULTS:

Newcomer/Novice:

1 st	Laura Lopez	We Got All Night
2 nd	Wendy Smith	Lori's Walk

Intermediate/Advanced:

1 st	Mark Polino	Rude Dude
2 nd	Laura Lopez & Jason Turner	Salt

Phrased:

1 st	Laura Lopez	So Electric
2 nd	Wendy Smith	Little Big Mouth

Congratulations to the winner and to everyone who competed. There were some really good dances done!

Saturday Night is THE SHOW! The Wild Roses Cabaret Team opened the show and WOW, they were great! I hadn't seen them perform in quite some time and it was very impressive. This year's show was wonderful entertainment with a beach theme choreographed and directed by John Robinson. All of the dances were upbeat and fun and the instructors did a great job with each of their dance routines. The kids were coached by Rachael McEnaney-White and Amy and Darren Bailey and they did a fabulous job. I hope you get to see one of the videos of the show. I really enjoyed it. The kids are featured with their own performance in the show and they were such a hit! You can order the official videos of the demos, the show, the competition and other things from 7 Arrow Media.

Here are some of the classes I took or knew:

FRIDAY:

Everybody Get Nuts by Cody Flowers and Roy & Fiona. This is a fun, fast dance that I already knew but I'm sure everyone enjoyed it and I saw it being danced in the evening by lots of people.

Wait For It, advanced dance by Chris Jacques. This is a really nice dance to beautiful music and the class was full.

Do My Thing by Scott Blevins & Jo Thompson-Szymanski. This is an intermediate dance that is very popular. I need another teach of this one.

Thy Will, by Joey Warren. Beautiful dance and music.

It's Go Time by Fred Whitehouse & Shane McKeever. This dance was danced multiple times this weekend and although I didn't take the lesson I watched it and Dustin did an excellent job of teaching it. It was very popular this weekend.

Madelyn by Darren Bailey. I was eager to take this class because I really like this dance. It's not easy but a nice west coast dance that I will practice!

After Taste, by Rachael McEnaney-White. This is 96-count dance in the real Rachael style and it was not a one-teach for me but that night the floor was full when it was played. She just posted it on her Vimeo Site so if you want to learn it, I would suggest you take the lesson from her. I will.

Would Have Loved Her by Darren Bailey. One of my favorite dances and it has been in first place on my survey for a few weeks. It is an easier intermediate dance that almost everyone would love to great music.

SATURDAY:

Call My Bluff by Dustin Betts. I really liked this one.

Gotta Have It by Joey Warren. I didn't take this class but I heard a lot about the dance and I will be learning it soon. Fast like Joey likes them!

Good To Go, Scott Blevins. This is an upbeat, fun, easier dance by Scott. I really like it.

No Expectations by Jason Takahashi (taught by Dustin Betts). Another of my favorite dances. Love the music and the dance.

SUNDAY:

I left early so I didn't take any classes but there were some good dances taught on Sunday and I'm sure others will be writing about them.

Here is the link to 7 Arrow Media. He has lots of videos posted on his Youtube page of open dancing and other things going on over the weekend and, like I said before, you can order the official dance videos from him. Be sure and subscribe to his site or like his page on Facebook and you will be notified when he is posting from other events, also. Thank you, Kelly and Kellie, for sharing all of your videos and photography with all of us!

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=7+arrow+media

Here is a spread sheet of all the dances taught done by Stacy Garcia and it is always posted on the World Line Dance Newsletter site under "Events." If you are interested in seeing dances taught at a lot of events she keeps a cumulative total of the times dances have been done at the events she gets the totals from after each event. It's a good way to see what you might want to go over before your next event. Thanks for doing this, Stacy!

<http://worldlinedancenewsletter.com/event-playlists.html>

I'm sure I missed talking about lots of people and dances but, needless to say, it was a great weekend and more and more dances and reports, videos, and photos are getting posted on my Facebook Page, THE WORLD LINE DANCE NEWSLETTER, Carol C Craven, if you haven't joined yet and also check out Jennifer Cameron's Page for more posts about the event.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR NEXT YEAR: July 14 – 17, 2022. Hope to see you there.

Thank you Jen and Jason Cameron and all the staff for making everything seem effortless and fun for all of us. We know how to party on the dance floor in Florida so you will always have a good time with us!