

# Swing Times

Redwood Empire Swing Dance Club

www.resdc.org

SEPTEMBER 2007

## President's Message

This month I'd like to share with you an article by the late Roger Weiss, from the March/April, 1994 issue of the Boston Swing Dance Society newsletter. We reprint it here with their kind permission.

I've heard a lot of comments from dancers about feeling uncomfortable or intimidated on the dance floor.

Beginning dancers sometimes feel uncomfortable because they

don't know many people and it seems that everybody else at a dance knows each other. Attending the lesson before the dance is a sure way to get to know and warm up to people especially because everyone is usually encouraged to switch partners.

Beginning (or not so beginning), dancers also worry that they can't dance as well as other people in the room. Often, a man is hesitant to ask a woman to dance if he feels she is a better dancer than him. But remember that a lot of the enjoyment of dancing comes more from the feeling you get dancing with your partner than from doing fancy moves.

If, as a leader, you are unsure about your dancing, here are a few suggestions.

Stick to the moves you know. Listen to the music. Talk to your partner. And smile.

Followers should try to relax and connect with their partners. It's your partner's responsibility to make you feel comfortable. A good lead will always dance to the level of your experience, and will never show off. Couple dancing is not about how well you can dance, but how well the two of you can dance together.

Many people hesitate to ask the more experienced dancers to dance because they see them as "dance snobs"—dancers who dance only with other good dancers. Keep in mind that a lot of experienced dancers have been dancing with one another for many years and have become friends.

Experienced dancers, however, could benefit the whole community by making the effort to dance with newcomers to make them feel welcome. If a newcomer has at least one good dance experience, he or she is more likely to come back and perhaps tell friends about the experience. Without a constant influx of new people the dance scene would eventually dry up.

Remember, we're dancing to have fun. Taking it too seriously and feeling intimidated wastes a lot of time. Don't worry about learning every new move. Time will take care of that. Listen to and dance to the music. When you do what you can to make your partner enjoy dancing with you, the pleasure will be returned manifold.

—Michael DiFranco, RESDC President

## Editor's Introduction

Good day to you all! For those of you I've not met, I'm James Gafford, and I have succeeded Dyana Foldvary as editor of the Swing Times newsletter. I'd like to thank Dyana for all her hard work, and for the warm and unselfish way in which she's assisted me during the transition.

I've been a RESDC member for about three years, and in March I took on the role of club photographer. You can see my work on the club web site at [www.resdc.org](http://www.resdc.org).

I rarely manage to shoot everyone, but my goal has been to take at least one or two *good* pictures of each individual who attends a club dance, member or not. I'd like them to be able to visit the web site and say, "Wow! I really look good on the dance floor!" Many of you have gone out of your way to make this easy for me (a camera's proximity seems to bring out the ham in some of us...), but if at any time you'd prefer not to have your photo taken, just tell me, and I will happily respect your wishes.

In this new role as editor, I want the newsletter to carry on as before—lists of new member names and those whose birthdays are in the current issue's month (sorry, gang, but nobody gets out of *that* one...), instructors and upcoming events, articles to give you things to think about and try out in your dancing—all of these are still on tap. I also plan to introduce a new item or two. I'm calling the one in this issue "Follow My Lead" (we *are* all closet comedians, aren't we...?).

Lastly, I'd like to hear from anyone who has suggestions or comments. I've created an email address where you can send "Letters to the Editor," [RESDC\\_Editor@jamesgafford.com](mailto:RESDC_Editor@jamesgafford.com). Please let me know what you like or dislike and what you'd like me to add or discard. This newsletter, like the club itself, exists to serve you, the membership, and your enjoyment of the dance.

So here's to fun on the dance floor!

—James Gafford, Swing Times Editor



## Mario Robau Jr. Swings Through Santa Rosa

by Elyse Lord, RESDC Public Relations  
Manager and Board Member



Mario Robau Jr., who once said he has won every dance competition he wanted to win twice—“once to prove I could do it and once to prove it wasn’t a fluke”—presented a 13-hour West Coast Swing Intensive to about thirty dancers of all levels from July 20–22, 2007 in Santa Rosa and in Oakland.

Robau, who is as logical as he is artistic, organized his training around the premise that dancers who listen to the music and who adhere to the conventions of West Coast Swing have unlimited opportunities to express themselves *within* the dance. In fact, these opportunities follow mathematical formulas, such as the rule of combinations  $[nC_r = n! / (n-r)!r!]$ . [Editor’s note: Elyse’s knowledge of combinatorics is not a prerequisite to learning WCS!]

Robau advised dancers to be able to identify standard 8-bar sets (32 beat phrases) and 12-bar blues (48 beat phrases). He also suggested listening primarily to songs written in 4/4 time, which have natural accents every 16 beats. Becoming acquainted with the accents in music helps us respond to the accents in the music with our dance.

Robau also assigned daily homework that included listening to music and keeping time to it, even when driving. Participants discovered that tapping on the steering wheel/dashboard/seat is an enjoyable way to get from point A to point B. (It is a good idea to have a designated driver, however.) Robau also asked dancers to study his copyrighted rules of pattern selection to choreograph our own dances.

The crucial rule of pattern selection (described by Robau as “paying your mortgage”) was simple, yet difficult to execute. Leaders need to select patterns that naturally emphasize count one of every eight beats. Followers need to accent count one of every eight beats.

Robau had sympathy for both leaders and followers. “You really don’t understand the deadlines that we’re [leaders are] under,” he said. “Every few seconds we need to come up with something different. That’s pretty daunting stuff.” He also speculated that “mastering the dance is infinitely more difficult for a follower because every six beats you’re going into a dark room.”

Besides presenting us with information that

was simple (but not too simple, as Einstein might say), Robau kept us entertained with dance stories. He even suggested we liberate our dancing in bars. Where else but in a bar would we feel free to practice a pushbreak to different counts for an entire evening?

Dancers’ consensus was that Robau provided a “roadmap” for continued progress, regardless of skill level. Kelly Casanova, who coordinated the Intensive, describes Robau as both a champion at the “highest levels of competition” and as one of the “most sought after partners at any dance he attends.”

For more information about Mario Robau Jr.’s Intensives in the Bay Area, contact Kelly Casanova by phone at (707) 838-0388, or e-mail her at [Kellycdancer@aol.com](mailto:Kellycdancer@aol.com). To watch videos of Robau dancing with Casanova’s daughter, Samantha Buckwalter, visit Casanova’s website at [www.kellydance.com](http://www.kellydance.com) and click on the link provided. To learn more about Robau’s Intensives, visit [www.marioswingdaddy.com](http://www.marioswingdaddy.com).



## September Birthdays

*Shelley Pacheco*

### “Follow My Lead”—RESDC Member Interviews

[Editor’s note: I’m thinking that since we’re a social dance club, wouldn’t it be nice to know a bit more about the fellow club members we dance with than just their first names, and whether or not they can lead or follow a whip? If you’d like to be the subject of a future interview, let me know, and I’ll schedule you in. Otherwise, just be aware that I plan to eventually track each of you down!]

Leader: **Tom Arrington** taught the beginner lesson at the July RESDC club dance. He’s a certified arborist, and has been dancing for ten years.

**ST:** Tom, what did you do before dancing took over your life?

**Tom:** I was a jeweler. I was a diamond setter, goldsmith; I did a lot of diamond setting, diamond sales, and custom gold jewelry.

**ST:** What was it that first drew you into dancing?

**Tom:** I was going through a divorce, and walked into a country bar, and noticed a girl sitting at a



table. Guys were asking her to dance, and I did not know how to dance, and...the light went off!

**ST:** Sounds like a good story! So, what would you recommend to new dancers to help them become more comfortable...to help get over those "beginning dancer" jitters?

**Tom:** It's all about having fun, and social. For me, it's about building relationships. I guess it's more about just having fun. But bringing in other dance skills, like Hip-Hop, or Jazz, or any other background of dance helps in West Coast Swing.

**ST:** Thanks, Tom!

Follower: **Edith Politis** is a family law attorney in San Rafael.

**ST:** What do you do when you're not on the dance floor?

**Edith:** Lots of things. I have a day job as an attorney, a general civil practice, mostly family law, and most of that in a negotiation format rather than litigation. I'm active in several other communities, and I have family that is very dear to me. I have lots going on!

**ST:** How long have you been dancing?

**Edith:** About twenty five years.

**ST:** And how much of that West Coast?

**Edith:** On and off over that whole period of time. Not steadily, but...on and off.

**ST:** With that much experience, what suggestions would you have to help get over that sense of self-consciousness we all experience as new dancers?

**Edith:** I think there's two things that I would suggest early on. The first one is take some private lessons. Work on establishing a very good form, because learning patterns without having a good form is not as helpful as having a *great* form and just a few patterns. So, take some private lessons, and then dance *every day* in your kitchen!

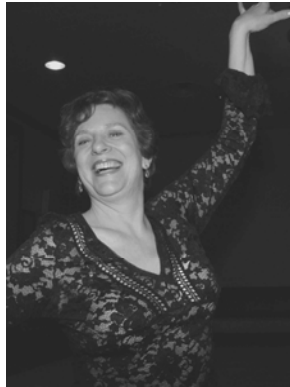
**ST:** Sounds like good advice!

**Edith:** Practice every day—dance a little bit every day. Count—one-two-three-and-four-five-and-six!

**ST:** What would you like folks to know about you that they wouldn't necessarily learn by taking you out on the dance floor?

**Edith:** I guess the first thing that I'd like folks to know is...I'm really pretty happy! Not every moment I live is utter bliss, but I'm really pretty happy, and I like to be around happy people. I am very active. I'm really interested in communication in a variety of forms. So I look at that very carefully, both in my work and in my personal life. And...I'm single!

**ST:** Thank you very much, Edith!



## expect

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**Shirley "Sam" Mallin** CRS LTG RRS

**707-524-3518**

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### RESDC Member West Coast Swing Dance Instructors

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#### California Ballroom

(Formerly Emily's Dance Center)

(707) 576-1318

dancectr@pacbell.net

www.emilysdance.com

#### Stars Ballroom

(415) 897-7976

www.yvonnebdance.com

www.starsballroom.com

**Yvonne Benavidez**

#### Kelly Casanova

(707) 838-0388

Kelly@kellydance.com

www.kellydance.com

#### Susan Conway

(707) 291-5777 (private lessons)

SRJC Instructor

#### Tony & Marina Gutsch

(707) 484-4970 or (707) 484-6966

Gutsch@earthlink.net

#### Edna Lucero & Dick Jensen

(707) 523-4336

ednalucero@sbcglobal.net

#### Kyoko Morrison

www.resdc.org/flamingohotel.html

#### Elizabeth Mustaro

(707) 548-4603

www.baywestballroom.com

#### Dyana Foldvary

private & couple lessons

(707) 887-9480

www.resdc.org/InstDyana2.htm







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**Terriann McGowan**  
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Each Office is Independently Owned & Operated

## RESDC Officers and Directors-At-Large

- President**..... Michael DiFranco .....(707) 481-6114  
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- Vice President**..... Dave Cooper .....(707) 526-0992  
 davidc@zfa.com
- Secretary** ..... **Open**
- Treasurer** ..... Denise Suzuki .....(707) 837-8335  
 2runningbare@comcast.net
- Membership** ..... Denise Suzuki
- Sergeant-at-Arms**... Mindy Winerit  
 most\_beautifulday-dancing@yahoo.com
- Other Directors and Positions*
- Activities** ..... Danny Christian.....(707) 332-0754  
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- Dance** ..... Rodger Magill .....(707) 876-3308  
 reggie@sonic.net
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 shelleyrocket@sbcglobal.net
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- ST Editor**..... James Gafford.....(415) 472-1776  
 RESDC\_Editor@jamesgafford.com
- Webmaster** ..... Ric Barnett.....rbarnett@napanet.net
- Photographer** ..... James Gafford
- Founders Committee:**  
 Vera Harvey, Kelly Casanova, Deborah Rogers,  
 Fred Lobenstein, Robert Casanova

## Membership Benefits

- Discounts on most RESDC dances (\$3 off adult rate)
- Discounts on affiliated club dances (Next Gen, Sacramento, Santa Cruz)
- Receive "Swing Times" monthly newsletter
- Borrow dance tapes from our video library (Contact Shelly at: (707) 579-4364. Check out the list of available videos on the web page!)
- Join other club members for Club Night Out (CNO)
- Become an Exhibition Dance Team member
- Obtain tickets to dance conventions at RESDC tables, with preferred seating—Receive early notice of workshops taught by local and national dance talent
- Can apply to serve on the RESDC Board of Directors
- Receive e-mail updates about dances
- New members receive one free dance pass

## Conventions & Events

### Boogie By The Bay

Sponsored by Next Generation SDC  
 October 4-7, 2007 (Columbus Day weekend)  
 (Early Bird Dance & Workshop Thurs., Oct. 4)  
 Hyatt Regency SFO, Burlingame  
 For ticket information contact Marla Bach  
 Saltzstine (NextGen) at (510) 758-3033, or  
 Danny Christian (RESDC) at (707) 332-0754

For a listing of conventions, and general WCS information go to: [www.wcs-dancer.com](http://www.wcs-dancer.com).

For a full list of World Swing Dance Council (WSDC) registry dance events & location information go to [www.swingdance-council.com](http://www.swingdance-council.com).

## Marina's Hair Studio

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Email: [Gutsch@earthlink.net](mailto:Gutsch@earthlink.net)

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## Advertising Rates

- Business Card..... \$15.00
- Quarter-Page..... \$20.00
- Half-Page ..... \$30.00

Contact Danny Christian

(707) 332-0754

[Danny.Christian@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Danny.Christian@sbcglobal.net)

# RESDC Calendar—September, 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>* Means lesson before or during dance</p> <p>☞ Means RESDC Club Night Out</p>	<p>For instructor contact information please see page 3 of this newsletter</p>					<p><b>1</b> Next Gen Dance/ Emeryville 6:00-12:00*</p> <p>-----</p> <p>South Bay Dance Fling thru 9/3/San Jose, CA</p>
<p><b>2</b> Kelly Casanova's Dance/Ellington Hall/Santa Rosa 5:00-10:00*</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Michelle Kinkaid's Dance/Imperial Dance Club/ Redwood City 6-:00-10:00*</p>	<p><b>3</b> WCS @ Steppin Out/Sunnyvale 7:00-11:45*</p>	<p><b>4</b> Flamingo WCS/ Santa Rosa 7:00-11:00*</p> <p>-----</p> <p>WCS @ Monroe Hall/Santa Rosa 7:15-9:30*</p>	<p><b>5</b> Top of Beardsley's /San Mateo 7:00-11:30*</p>	<p><b>6</b> WCS @ Stars Ballroom/Novato 6:30-11:30*</p> <p>-----</p> <p>WCS@Allegro Ballroom/ Emeryville 7:00-10:00*</p>	<p><b>7</b> Two Left Feet/ Danville 8:00-12:00*</p>	<p><b>8</b> WCS @ Stars/Novato 7:00-12:00*</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Metronome/SF monthly WCS 8:00-12:00*</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Reno Monthly WCS Dance/Reno 7:00-11:00*</p>
<p><b>9</b> Country &amp; WCS @ Monroe Hall/Santa Rosa 5:00-9:30*</p>	<p><b>10</b> WCS @ Steppin Out/Sunnyvale 7:00-11:45*</p>	<p><b>11</b> Flamingo WCS/ Santa Rosa 7:00-11:00* ☞</p> <p>-----</p> <p>WCS @ Monroe Hall/Santa Rosa 7:15-9:30*</p>	<p><b>12</b> Top of Beardsley's /San Mateo 7:00-11:30*</p>	<p><b>13</b> WCS @ Stars Ballroom/Novato 6:30-11:30*</p> <p>-----</p> <p>WCS@Allegro Ballroom/ Emeryville 7:00-10:00*</p>	<p><b>14</b> Two Left Feet/ Danville 8:00-12:00*</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Bridgetown WCS Convention/Portland, OR through 9/13-16</p>	<p><b>15</b> <u>RESDC Invitational</u></p> <p>-----</p> <p>Capital Swing Dancers/Fair Oaks 5:30-10:30*</p>
<p><b>16</b> Bayside Swing/Oakland 5:30-10:00*</p>	<p><b>17</b> WCS @ Steppin Out/Sunnyvale 7:00-11:45*</p>	<p><b>18</b> Flamingo WCS/ Santa Rosa 7:00-11:00*</p> <p>-----</p> <p>WCS @ Monroe Hall/Santa Rosa 7:15-9:30*</p>	<p><b>19</b> Top of Beardsley's /San Mateo 7:00-11:30*</p>	<p><b>20</b> <u>WCS @ Stars</u> Ballroom/Novato w/Robert Royston 6:30-11:30*</p> <p>-----</p> <p>WCS@Allegro Ballroom/ Emeryville 7:00-10:00*</p>	<p><b>21</b> Two Left Feet/ Danville 8:00-12:00*</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Yvonne &amp; Jason @ Bay West / San Rafael 8:00-12:00*</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Stars Ballroom/Novato Robert Royston private lessons</p>	<p><b>22</b> Stars Ballroom /Novato. WCS Workshop &amp; Dance w/Robert Royston 6:00-11:00*</p> <p>-----</p> <p>WCS @ Monroe Hall/Santa Rosa 7:15-11:00 ☞</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Santa Cruz SCD 7:00-11:00*</p>
<p><b>23</b> Bayside Swing/Oakland 5:30-10:00*</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Gutsch's WCS @ Odd Fellows/Santa Rosa ☞</p>	<p><b>24</b> WCS @ Steppin Out/Sunnyvale 7:00-11:45*</p>	<p><b>25</b> Flamingo WCS/ Santa Rosa 7:00-11:00*</p> <p>-----</p> <p>WCS @ Monroe Hall/Santa Rosa 7:15-9:30*</p>	<p><b>26</b> Top of Beardsley's /San Mateo 7:00-11:30*</p>	<p><b>27</b> <u>WCS @ Stars</u> Ballroom/Novato 6:30-11:30*</p> <p>-----</p> <p>WCS@Allegro Ballroom/ Emeryville 7:00-10:00*</p>	<p><b>28</b> Two Left Feet/ Danville 8:00-12:00*</p>	<p><b>29</b> Capitol Swing Dance /Fair Oaks WCS Workshop w/Kyle &amp; Sarah 6:30-10:30</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Two Left Feet/Danville Workshop w/Arjay &amp; Melissa 7:00-12:00*</p>
<p><b>30</b> Bayside Swing/Oakland 5:30-10:00*</p>						



Redwood Empire Swing Dance Club  
Post Office Box 83  
Santa Rosa, California 95402

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## September Club Nights Out

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### **Tuesday, September 11**

Flamingo Hotel  
2777 Fourth Street, Santa Rosa  
Beginning Lesson with Kyoko, 7-8 PM  
Intermed. Lesson with Dick & Edna, 8-9 PM  
Dancing 9-11 PM

### **Saturday, September 22**

Monroe Hall  
400 West College Ave., Santa Rosa  
DJ Steve Luther  
Dancing 7-11 PM  
(\$1.00 off admission with RESDC card)

### **Sunday, September 23**

Odd Fellows Hall  
545 Pacific Avenue, Santa Rosa  
DJs Tony Gutsch & Freddie Marsh Lott  
Intermed. Lesson w/ Tony & Marina, 5-6 PM  
Dancing 6-9 PM

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## SEPTEMBER DANCE—RESDC ANNUAL INVITATIONAL

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Join us on Saturday, September 15 at the Petaluma Veteran's Hall for our annual Invitational Jack & Jill. We've invited top-level dancers from across the Bay Area and the country to compete, and the dance floor will be hot! Details are on the enclosed flyer.



**The Redwood Empire Swing Dance Club** ([www.resdc.org](http://www.resdc.org)) is a social non-profit incorporated club dedicated to the promotion and preservation of Swing Dancing, and in particular the California State Dance, West Coast Swing. For this purpose, we hold monthly dances, special dances, parties and sponsor workshops throughout the year. Membership dues are \$30 per year. Club members receive the RESDC "Swing Times" and receive discounts at RESDC events and events sponsored by other swing dance clubs.

If you are not already a member, join today! Contact Denise Suzuki at (707) 837-8335.