

Local dancers having a ball

Ballroom dancing fans organizing local chapter of USA Dance

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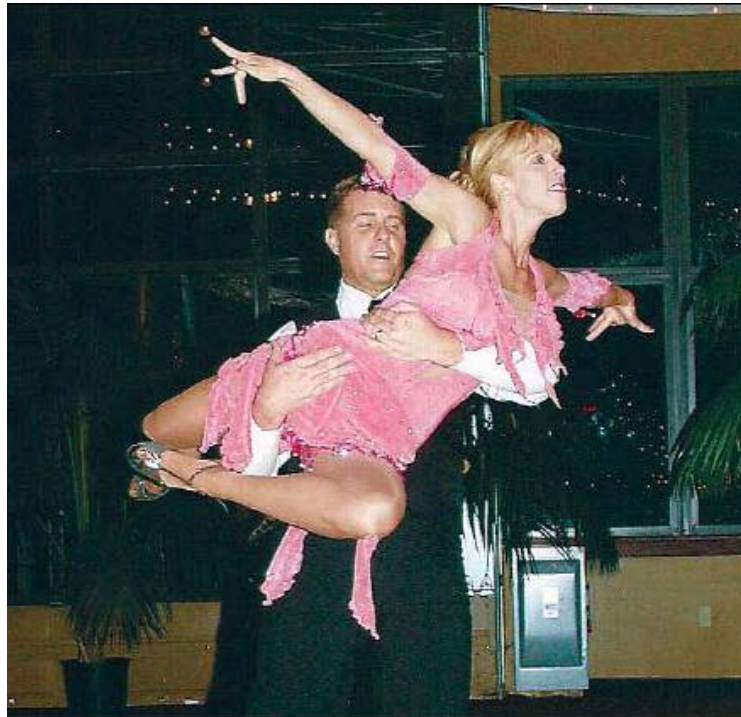
SANDUSKY

Erie County residents who like ballroom dancing are putting their best feet forward.

They are organizing a local chapter of USA Dance, the national governing body for DanceSport, or competitive ballroom dancing.

Two members of the steering committee for the new chapter, Cari Enderle, 34, and Brian Stuckey, 37, have been ballroom dancing for about two years. They are both bronze-level dancers.

"We're not beginners, but we're not 'Dancing with the Stars,'" Enderle explained.



LEFT: Cari Enderle is lifted by instructor Timothy Nyman.



Provided photos

RIGHT: Cari Enderle dances with partner Brian Stuckey.

Enderle and Stuckey are two members of the steering committee that is organizing a local chapter of USA Dance, which is the national governing body for competitive ballroom dancing.

The new chapter plans to host monthly dances. Novices who show up an hour early will be offered beginning dance lessons. The first dance will be Feb. 14 at a location to be announced soon.

The chapter plans to host a black tie event every year. Chapters are expected to reach out to young people, encouraging students in high school and middle school to try it.

Examples of rhythm ballroom dances include swing dancing (East Coast and West Coast schools), the cha-cha, the rumba, the mambo and the salsa. Smooth dances include the waltz,

Want to join?

Anyone interested in joining the new chapter of USA Dance may e-mail Cari Enderle at love2ballroom@aol.com. Or they may contact Bob and Carla Davis at 419-684-9074 or e-mail ctdavis@lrbcg.com. (Mention "USA Dance" in the subject line.)

foxtrot and tango, Enderle said.

And ballroom dancing is a competitive sport.

"It's a full-blown Olympic event," Stuckey said.

Enderle grew up doing gymnastics and was a cheerleader at Huron High School but didn't do a lot of dancing.

After being diagnosed with VHL, a disease that generates tumors, she took up ballroom dancing as an outlet.

"I just felt that I needed something to take my mind off the disease," she said.

Stuckey was the best man at a wedding, and he knew one of the bridesmaids would need a dance partner at the celebration afterward. He enrolled in a few lessons so he could surprise her by dancing with her.

"I ended up falling in love with ballroom dancing," he said.

Once the group succeeds in recruiting 25 members, it can elect officers and be well on its way to becoming a full-fledged Dance USA chapter. Other members of the steering committee for the new chapter are Carla and Bob Davis and Russell Sweitzer.