

# Chassé

The Newsletter of Friends of Ala Wai Ballroom Dance Academy

Summer 2008

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## Friends and Acquaintances *By Warren Mitsunaga*

*A Word from your Prez'*

Who are Friends? What are we all about?

Welcome to our inaugural newsletter, *Chassé*. For all of you who have been with us for a while as well as newcomers, those are the questions we hope to answer in this newsletter.

We'll be getting our newsletter out every quarter to keep you informed about our organization, our calendar of events, and even dance tips from our own Dance Director, Michael Yap.

"Friends" is a non-profit organization, whose instructors, officers and directors are all volunteers. Our goal is not only to give you the best International style of

ballroom dance instruction, but also to help the City's Parks and Recreation maintain the Ala Wai Golf Course Multi-Purpose Facility (Palladium).

In our short four-year history, we have donated goods and services to the facility totaling more than \$14,000. Most recently, we purchased new bulletin boards for the Palladium. The monies raised actually come from you, our students and members.

Thank you for supporting us through the years. We look forward to your continued support, and tell all your "Friends" to keep on dancing!

Aloha,

Warren

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## Syllabus *By Michael Yap* *The Dance Director's Corner*

The dance hold in the standard dances, such as waltz and foxtrot, is unnatural. When properly executed, it is uncomfortable to the individual dancer, but beautiful to observe when combined with the characteristic movements of the standard dances.

As dancers we all know just how difficult it is to achieve the perfect frame and hold this frame for a mere two minutes of dancing. Most dancers take years to develop a consistently correct dance frame that they can successfully maintain through a two minute dance. One method that has helped me personally in the development of my dance frame is to practice dance steps while holding a cardboard box.

The box needs to be rectangular in shape with the longest side being

approximately the width between your elbows while you are extending your elbows parallel to the floor and slightly in front of you.

With the fingers relaxed and together, place the palm of your hands on either side of the box. Make sure that the long side of the box is facing your body. Pick up the box with the palms of your hands using just enough pressure to hold the box between your hands. Do not put your hands under the box. Extend your elbows until they are parallel to the floor and hold the box with just enough pressure to prevent the box from falling.

Now practice your dance steps placing the box as you would place your partner. Do not drop your elbows and keep the box away from your body. Keep your shoulders down as you extend your arms parallel to the floor. Sorry ladies, this practice method only works for the gentlemen.

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