

August 2009



The Western Star

Newsletter of Western Star Dancers, a contemporary American square dance club primarily serving the San Francisco LGBT community. International Association of Gay Square Dance Clubs member. Contact us at: www.westernstardancers.org OR 584 Castro Street #480 San Francisco, CA 94114

# Circulate SF: On the Waterfront

**You don't know the waterfront until you've danced it!** (Someone remarked that the Waterfront was "too familiar".) We plan on leaving them pleasantly surprised. Here's the itinerary for "On The Waterfront" Circulate SF 2009:

1. On the Cove We start at McCovey Cove, at China Basin, with beautiful sweeping views of the Bay and the ball park. There is free parking nearby where we can leave the cars behind. Afterwards we walk to the next stop.
2. At the Ball Park We'll dance the next tip under the palms at the front entrance to the Ball Park
3. By the Marina A short walk takes us to the Marina and a huge sculpture resembling a lighthouse by the artist Suvero, which we can dance underneath.

4. Under the Bay Bridge After a short MUNI ride (\$2), we'll dance in the shadow of the Bay Bridge near the sculpture of a jumbo bow and arrow. This is also the location of our picnic lunch
5. On the Pier We walk out onto Pier 14, out over the water, and dance with water all around us.
6. At the Ferry Building We finish by dancing on the Embarcadero in a really wonderful space with a great view of the historic Ferry Building.

People can then visit the new SF Historic Streetcar Museum nearby, and take the N Judah back to the ball park and their cars.

Pot luck picnic lunch is at Rincon Park by the Bay Bridge. Drop off the food at McCovey Cove, our starting point, and I

will arrange for it to be delivered to us to avoid schlepping lots of things along the Embarcadero.

The waterfront is loaded with historic markers, smaller pieces of art, and interesting things. I'm sponsoring a scavenger hunt contest with prizes for the highest number of correctly found items. People can work on the contest as they move from location to location. First prize is a wonderful Bergino handmade San Francisco city map baseball and Joseph Schmidt chocolates.

Waterfront costumes from any time period encouraged: sailors, longshoremen, baseball players, pirates, rogues, ladies-of-the-night, and waterfront denizens.

I think our members will absolutely love this years' Circulate SF! (By Paul G)

## WSD Faces New Challenges

Planning for the Green Mainstream Class of 2010 is a formidable challenge. Not only is recruitment a key concern, but also, for the first time in many, many, many years the Board of Directors needs to determine a budget in addition to finding an affordable space for our regular use. During the twenty-some years at EVRC, for the most part, budget wasn't a big issue because there was no rental fee. Certainly, over the last several years there has been no need to make a budget because the club has a significant nest egg that we have been adding to when possible.

John Dobson, Rick Collins, and Steve Scott have been spearheading the search for affordable dance space. Unless we get a sweetheart deal from the city, it seems we will rent space in a church (Noe Valley Ministry and Forest Hill Christian Church are among those being considered) or make arrangements with a school in the Castro area.

The Board has set as priorities staying near the Castro or near public transit/parking and maintaining our current Monday class schedule, or, if necessary, shifting to a Thursday schedule. The Board's penultimate priority is retaining Rich Reel as our caller/instructor, and he is available only Monday or Thursday.

Wherever we decide to pitch our tent, so to speak, the club will have to find ways to enhance income and limit expenses to cover the rental. Club membership fees will surely be up for discussion at the September Annual Membership Meeting. The board has broached the subject of raising class fees. However, the best way to minimize the need for fee increases is to maximize enrollment for the Fall Class. It's not too early to start recruiting your friends--word-of-mouth has always been our most effective form of advertising, and it's more important now than ever before!

"It behooves us to reestablish Club Nights," according to Co-Administrator Daryl Daniels. "Gary Cohn, Dan Smith, Tomas Todd, Paul G, and others produced Club Nights that are not only social, festive and fun, but also make a little money for the club."

When faced with a budget problem, there are two extremes: The Schwarzenegger Effect which cuts expenses ruthlessly or the Mao Approach which is spend like there is no limit, damn the expense. The Board will try to find a happy medium that will cover the new expense while maintaining our healthy reserves.

Suggestions and constructive comments from club members are welcome. Ideas concerning a dance space, fund raising, budgeting, or recruiting would be especially appreciated.



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Board of  
Directors  
2009

# Left Feet by Brenda Line

## Backstage with Eloise

Tosca had just leaped from the parapets of the Castel' Sant' Angelo and the opera had ended; but the visit to the Opera House had not yet concluded. **Eloise** was about to lead a tour through the backstage labyrinth of the building.

**RIGHT:** Eloise in the pit at the Opera House among the illuminated music stands.



**Gary** enjoyed the chance to pop into the prompter's box and also to go up into the giant chandelier and realize what Eloise has to go through just to change a light bulb when on the job at the Opera House.

For **Russ**, it was a different sort of experience. "Being so high above the audience and stage, not to mention looking down into the chandelier was of interest, but also a bit intimidating because of my vertigo--my hands were covered with dust from clinging to the railings when we walked across that narrow bridge about half a mile above the stage."



**LEFT:** Gary, Russ and Davida pose before wigs and make-up kits in a dressing room.

**BELOW:** As usual, Steve fell flat on his back as soon as he encountered a mattress.

"It was particularly interesting," reports Russ, "to see the huge white X dead-center in the black mattress that Tosca lands on when she takes her leap off the parapet. Given that the lighting for that scene isn't particularly bright, it makes sense to mark it that way."

Daredevil **Steve** was proud of his aim. "I also landed on the X of the mattress (minus the Tosca death leap)!"

**Davida** enjoyed the chance to sing a "La la la" on the Opera House stage, and will add that to her theatrical resume.





June 27, 2009



**Western Star Dancers, Inc.** is a non-profit, member-run voluntary organization. The Board is basically a group of members who've decided to take their turn helping us all enjoy square dancing for another year, and it wouldn't happen without them. The Board doesn't do everything, but it has responsibility for making sure it gets all done, everything from setting up before class to hiring our callers, scheduling events, booking the dance spaces, you name it.

The Board takes care of the day-to-day business of the club. The Administrator, Secretary, and Treasurer responsibilities are defined in the Bylaws, but other jobs are assigned by interest and willingness. The Board consists of at least five and up to seven members; any Club member is eligible to run. Years of experience is not a requirement; in fact, we like to mix experience with fresh perspectives, and we encourage newer members who have a little extra time and enthusiasm to consider throwing their hats in the ring—that includes everyone, whether gay, straight, man, woman, whatever—as you may have noticed, we're a very eclectic group. Board members are also responsible for setting up and taking down equipment. Someone from the Board needs to be at class starts to set up, and someone needs to put everything away at the end. Board members generally attend one meeting of about one hour per month on whatever day and time works best for everyone. Special events require extra effort, usually by Board members.

Primarily, Board members are the front line in promoting Western Star Dancers. No doubt, we all have our own motives, but I'm sure they all center on the idea that Western Star Dancers is a dynamic group and we want to spread the word and keep gay square dancing vibrant, exciting, and active.

From time to time, the Board needs to make decisions regarding scheduling, fees, callers, problems on the floor, etc., so again, regular attendance is important. While you're on the Board, you should be here frequently enough to form your own independent opinion about whatever issues come up for discussion. Nuts and bolts issues will come up too—when there's a Club activity, the Board needs to figure out who will be in charge, how much help will be needed, who might be interested in volunteering, etc, etc. It's not glamorous, but it's what keeps us in business. Probably nobody really wants to be on the board when they are first asked. It seems like a lot of responsibility and work. However, we have a smooth running organization, and for the most part can repeat and build upon past performances, with some added flourishes if the fancy strikes us. Fresh ideas are always welcome.

This year, the Election Committee consists of former WSD Board Member and Administrator Steve Scott and volunteers. They will be glad to answer whatever additional questions you might have. You can nominate yourself or a friend, but please don't nominate anyone else without first getting their consent. Nominations must be received by August 15, 2009.

## Meeting Minutes

The Board of Directors meeting minutes are published in order to keep club members informed of the affairs of the club. Oral or written comments may be directed to any board member. Members are welcome to attend board meetings.

### Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors May 18, 2009

The meeting was called to order at 6:25pm. Minutes of April 20 and May 4 (Emergency meeting), 2009 were reviewed and approved as presented. PRIDE FLOAT – Plans continue as previously agreed, with a practice session scheduled for Thursday June 4 at the Sanchez School and a party at Good Vibrations Gallery on Thursday June 18. No new action. PRIDE BOOTH – Kathy presented Steve Huggins' proposal for a shared square dance booth at this year's San Francisco Pride Festival on June 27 and June 28. It was unanimously agreed that Western Star will participate in the booth and share in the booth fee. Daryl will look into the possibility of reimbursement through the Petersen Fund. PARTY AT LORENZO'S – Kathy presented Lorenzo Taylor's proposal to host a post-Parade party at his condominium complex. In light of our participation in the Pride Booth and other logistical difficulties, it was decided to decline the proposal, but inquire about rescheduling at a later date, such as the Folsom Street Fair. SITE UPDATE – Neither Karla nor Bevan Dufty has gotten back to Kathy with updated information about the final decision for the Monday night closing time at EVRC, or the possibility of a waiver/reduction of fees for use of the Auditorium. Kathy will make fresh inquiries. We can continue on Monday nights at Forest Hill through June 8, and resume Mondays beginning July 20. Some Thursdays are available at Forest Hill in the interim, and other possibilities, including an outdoor class on June 22, were also discussed. Final action was deferred until we have received updated information from EVRC. POSITION ASSIGNMENTS – New Board Member John Dobson agreed to take on the job of Class Coordinator' Russ King will continue with his new position as Secretary. PRIDE DANCE – Kathy confirmed that the Board will coordinate decorations and the 50/50 raffle. She will meet with Todd and Joe to pick up the usable materials, including the gay flag, banners, and the Square Dance Guy, who will get a new disco shirt courtesy of Daryl. Tomas will also be providing decorations. The possibility of delaying the decorating to allow for an afternoon dance at Ebenezer, to be hosted by Midnight Squares, was also

discussed. Because this might cut significantly into evening attendance as well as increase the difficulty of decorating, the idea was dropped by general consensus. FUTURE DANCES – It was decided to drop our June Club Night because of the ongoing uncertainty about our venues. Kathy announced that she has a verbal agreement with Paul Waters to host next year's Pride Dance, on the same terms as this year's Anniversary Dance. There was a brief discussion of decorations for future dances, and a general consensus that Todd and Joe do the Leather/Lace and Anniversary Dances on their usual terms; this will need to be formally confirmed at the June Board meeting. The possibility that the Board do the Pride Dance again next year was kept open. PROVISIONS FOR BOARD DECISIONS OUT OF SESSION – Procedures for vetting and voting via email on time-sensitive issues between Board meetings were discussed and agreed to. Kathy will identify such emails in bold lettering and give a specific cut-off date and time for responses. A simple majority will be sufficient to decide an issue. FUTURE PLANNING – The importance of nurturing potential new Board talent within the club was discussed, with no specific action taken. TREASURER – Bob's report was presented and accepted. He stressed the need for increased fiscal conservatism at this time, in case our venue expenses continue to rise. CLASS COORDINATOR – John Dobson has agreed to take over the position. CLUB NIGHT COORDINATOR – Gary reported on progress for the joint WSD/FCD Fiesta night on Thursday May 21. Issues of sound equipment are being resolved, and it appears that enough people will attend to at least break even. Harlan Kerr will be the caller, due to the unavailability of Rich Reel on the rescheduled date. OUTREACH COORDINATOR – Mark would like to consolidate our emailings on the Yahoo list, but will find a way to accommodate our anti-Yahoo members, who would otherwise need to be contacted non-electronically. The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm. The next meeting will be held on Monday June 22, location TBD.

### Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors June 22, 2009

The meeting was called to order at 6:15pm. Minutes of May 18, 2009 were reviewed and approved as presented. PRIDE FLOAT – Float is #90 in Parade; assembly time is 9:45am. PRIDE BOOTH – Daryl has prepared postcard-sized cards with basic WSD contact/class info for distribution at booth; John will take cards on Saturday, Russ on Sunday. SITE UPDATE – We have booked Noe Valley Ministry for July 6 and 13, and Forest Hill from July 20 to August 31. We need to move our storage lockers from EVRC on Friday June 26; Kathy will coordinate. CIRCULATE SF – Some logistical considerations were raised about where to eat and how to get food to the picnic area for "On the Waterfront." These issues will be discussed with Paul. A possible second event in the fall was approved in principle. LEATHER & LACE DANCE – Todd and Joe were given approval to proceed with theme and decorations. FUND RAISING/COST-CUTTING – Deferred to July meeting. TREASURER – Bob's report was presented and accepted. The balance as of June 22, 2009 is \$5,050.60. Income in the last month has been from collected class fees, donations from class nights, the joint club night (FCD) and the Peterson Fund. Expenses in the last month included seed money for the 2013 convention (\$500) our share of the Pride booth (\$95.72); printing and postage (\$212.58) class night rentals through August 31st (\$578) and booth rental for the Castro Street Fair (\$506.25). CLUB NIGHT COORDINATOR – (Gary) Club nights continue on hiatus. OUTREACH COORDINATOR – Mark communicated via email that Rich will do a demo tip at Sundance Saloon on September 20, and that he has additional marketing plans for the Green Class, such as the SF Weekly online calendar. DANCE COORDINATOR – Pride Dance decorating will begin at 4:00 pm on Saturday June 27; Kathy will pick up materials from Todd and Joe earlier in the week. Additional items will be retrieved from the locker on Friday. Kathy has ordered a cake and will donate sandwiches. CO-ADMINISTRATOR -- Daryl announced that he will not run for re-election to the Board this fall. The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 pm. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday July 14, at the home of Russ King, beginning at 6:30pm.

# Dance Calendar



*The Western Star* will no longer publish a dance calendar.

For the latest dance information, check [NorCalDanceCalendar.org](http://NorCalDanceCalendar.org) National & International events can be found at [www.iagsdc.com](http://www.iagsdc.com) Click on Events

Check our website for the latest information:  
[www.westernstardancers.org](http://www.westernstardancers.org)



[www.diablo-dancers.org](http://www.diablo-dancers.org)

**Class Night–Tuesdays**  
1700 Oak Park Boulevard  
Pleasant Hill



**El Camino Reelers**

[www.reelers.org](http://www.reelers.org)

**Class Night–Wednesday**  
St. Andrew's Methodist  
4111 Alma Street  
Palo Alto



[www.foggycity.org](http://www.foggycity.org)

See Website for info  
Sanchez School  
325 Sanchez Street  
San Francisco



[www.iagsdc.org/midnightsquares/](http://www.iagsdc.org/midnightsquares/)

**A & C Programs**  
See website for  
classes & locations  
San Francisco



[www.oaktown8s.org](http://www.oaktown8s.org)

**Class Night–Wednesday**  
Montclair Women's  
Cultural Arts Club  
1650 Mountain Boulevard  
Oakland



[www.redwoodrainbows.org](http://www.redwoodrainbows.org)

**Wischemann Hall**  
465 Morris Street  
Sebastopol, CA 95472

Other Bay Area  
Square Dance Clubs

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

## August Birthdays

- 1 – Tomas Todd
- 6 – John Conley
- 8 – Josef Prochnow
- 27 – Felix Fornino
- 29 – Ammon Corl
- 29 – Steve Scott

## September Birthdays

- 16 – Jeff Kavinta
- 17 – Michael Albert
- 25 – Elise Everett
- 30 – Rick Collins
- 30 – Tim Wicker

**WSD SF**  
Western Star Dancers  
www.westernstardancers.org

**SAN FRANCISCO DAY**  
**Circulate SF**

**On the Waterfront**

P = Parking, side of street S, Pier 48  
 1 = McCovey Cove, China Basin  
 2 = AT&T Ballpark  
 3 = Marina  
 4 = Rincon Park (Picnic stop)  
 5 = Pier 14  
 6 = Embarcadero, Ferry Bldg., near start of Market Street

**Saturday**  
**August 15, 2009**



Included is a fun Scavenger Hunt based on waterfront art and historical markers. We'll have some great prizes like a handmade baseball printed with a map of San Francisco and Joseph Schmidt chocolates. Waterfront costumes from any time period encouraged: sailors, longshoremen, baseball players, pirates, rogues, ladies-of-the-night, and waterfront denizens.



**Earn  
a  
Dangle**

**Donations  
Accepted**



**Rich  
Reel  
caller**

**Produced by  
Paul G**



**Leather & Lace 2009**  
**Rilts & Crinoline**  
September 26, 2009  
7:30 - 10:30 PM  
Ebenezer Lutheran Church  
678 Portola Drive  
Vic Ceder caller