

The Banneker Grapevine



Newsletter of the Banneker Ballroom Dance Club

April 2014

President's Message

By Cecelia Dade-Winfield



This blistery cold and snowy winter will soon come to an end and crocuses budding from the ground will soon signal spring! One season ends and a new one begins. And so it is with Banneker Ballroom Dance Club!

This dance season has been filled with exciting activities both on and off the dance floor. September, 2013, kicked off the year with Salsa and with the month-end social theme: "Caribbean Carnival". Members and friends showed up in some of the most creative costumes. Every month, thereafter, our gifted, highly accomplished instructor, Stan Kelly, introduced new moves to familiar dances such as Tango, Cha Cha, Rhumba, to name a few.

Word spread and each week new members and visitors were warmly welcomed! Evidence that Banneker is growing in popularity became more apparent with monthly invitations to perform dance routines, choreographed by Stan—most recently at the Mid-Atlantic Jazz Festival. New members adapted quickly and signed up to perform with the seasoned dancers. They sailed beautifully across the dance floor and received a standing ovation!

The Club's growth required developing new policies for more effective operations. Our deepest appreciation goes to the members who volunteered their time and expertise to develop these documents.

During my tenure, the bylaws were amended to extend the terms of officers from one year to two consecutive terms. The Executive Board took advantage of the extended time to ensure the accuracy of the club's financial records by carefully monitoring income and expenditures.

Our books are updated with accurate minutes. The membership roster is reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

To whom much is given, much is expected. You, members and friends, put your trust in us and we did our best to live up to that trust. Thank you!

2012-2014 EXECUTIVE BOARD

Cecelia Dade-Winfield - President
Pauline Hazel - Vice President
Glenca Kande - Treasurer
Inger Hogan - Assistant Treasurer
Brenda Manley - Secretary
Harry Townsend - Assistant Secretary
Margaret Green - Member at Large

Banneker Ballroom Dance Club, Inc.
Presents
Summer Brilliance
Annual June Gala

Sunday, June 22, 2014
7:00 - 11:00 p.m.
Martin's Crosswinds
7400 Greenway Center Drive
Greenbelt, MD 20770
Tickets: \$60.00 per person
Attire: Black Tie
Contact:
• Joe Jackson 202-262-9563
• Brenda Manley 202-256-7218
• Cecelia Dade-Winfield 301-589-0051

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Memories of 32 Years with Banneker

Submitted by Harry Townsend



In the summer of 1982, after ballroom dance at an Arthur Murray Ballroom Franchise in Silver Spring, I learned that ballroom dance classes were also being held at

the Banneker Recreation Center on Georgia Avenue in Washington, D.C. I decided to take classes there.

My first dance instructor was Joe Brooks assisted by Ruth Taylor also a talented dance teacher in her own right. There I learned the art of holding my dance partner in the proper manner, points on posture and the line-of-dance. Joe urged us to practice the dance steps at home. I had no partner at home with whom to practice so I used a broom as a partner. In the class there were talented dance students such as the late Thelma Winchester and Ce Ce and her late husband Sinclair Careathers.

Banneker held its first banquet at Waters' Catering Service in Rockville, MD. About 29 elegantly attired attendees brightened the evening. This event started a tradition of galas that continues to this day.

Soon the old 8- or 12-inch boards that made up the floor of the center developed wide cracks causing the dancers to trip, and the class was forced to find a new home. The class was relocated to the Fort Lincoln Senior Center located off Bladensburg Road. Here the seniors enjoyed watching us dance and some of us would engage them in our practice by holding the ladies with canes and guiding them with slow movements to the music. We would also push the wheelchairs around the floor to the beat of

the music. Eventually, the DC Department of Recreation canceled its dance program and the class group was forced to look for a new facility.

A member of the class, Marian McGill through a family member assisted the class in securing space at The National Association of Letter Carriers' second floor facility. Joe Brooks continued teaching.

As the number of students increased and their experience levels varied, the class was separated into beginner and intermediate dancers. Joe taught the intermediate dancers and Ruth Taylor taught the beginners. Joe Brook's health began to wane and Ruth Taylor took over as instructor.

Ruth was followed by Joe Petrisko who emphasized posture and line-of-dance. He would put a line of chairs in the center of the dance floor and if a couple hit the chairs he would fine them fifty cents. After teaching the class for several years, Joe decided to make Argentina his new home and a search began for a new instructor.

A search committee was formed and Stan Kelly became our new instructor. He brought a wealth of experience to the club. Among other things, he trained the class to integrate the dance steps into routines. These routines have been performed at the club's galas and throughout the Washington Metropolitan area. Over time, the club has incorporated and became more formally organized.

I want to thank all of the gracious people that I have met in these many years of dance instruction. Truly you have blessed my life with encouraging words, patient Indulgence of my two left feet and the comforting social atmosphere of THE DANCE.

Cruisin'

Submitted by Lakshmi Someswaran



Lakshmi (center)
and fellow dancers

I was part of a dance cruise, Dancing at Sea, in February. We sailed on a newer ship called the Royal Princess. Of the 2000 guests onboard, there were 80 of us who love dancing. We had classes for two hours in the morning, and then a social and dancing every evening to a band. The cruise director was the DJ after hours.

With a glamorous sit-down dinner at 6 o'clock each evening and dancing until dawn, who would complain? It was my first cruise ever and what an awesome experience. I am saving for next year already!

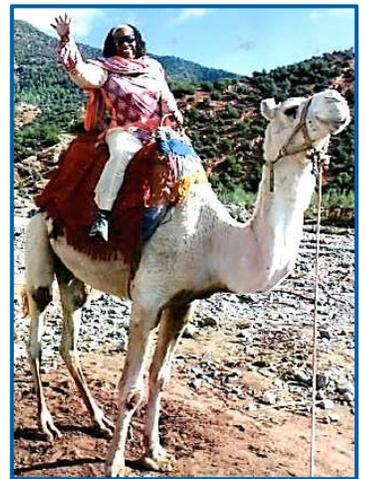
A Dream Come True

Submitted by Yvonne John

Aspirations sometimes come true if (1) one is resilient and self-confident and (2) believes that anything is possible. As a child, I was always fascinated with the big horse which I later learned was a "camel". When playing cowboys and Indians or horse and buggy, I always pretended I was riding the "big horse".

I saw a camel for the first time in 1974 while on a trip to Niger in West Africa. Not only did I see and touch it but also had the opportunity to ride it. I was too afraid to do so because of its enormous size and the hump on its back. Fear kept me from achieving my desires and wishes. From 1974 until my retirement in 1998, I had plenty of opportunities to make a childhood dream come reality. Fear continued to hold me back.

In 2012, my anxiety was finally defeated while vacationing in Marrakech, Morocco. If you look carefully, you can see that it is actually me riding a camel; my body tense and holding on for dear life while waving and pretending to be brave. Nevertheless, I did overcome my fear, and I shall never forget that a childhood dream had finally come true.



Yvonne waving bravely

Closer to a Dream

Submitted by Vincent Parker



Performing with Banneker Dance Club has been very rewarding experience. In my opinion, this year's performance at the 2014 NBC4 Health and Fitness expo has put the Banneker Ballroom dance team on the "dance map" and will continue to bring joy to the hearts of audiences throughout the city. Dancing with the team has also put me one step closer to a dream.

Just after performing the Merengue at the fitness expo, a member of the audience commented on how well the team performed and presented me with tickets to the Harley Davidson motorcycle show held on the upper level at the Conventions Center. I have always been thrilled by the sight of the

Harley Davidson "Fat Boy" motorcycle. I have often envisioned myself taking a leisurely ride up the Baltimore-Washington parkway to visit Baltimore's dance venues. The show was awesome, and now the Fat Boy is definitely on my bucket list.



Members in the Spotlight



Talent Within

Submitted by Ron Crockett

Sometimes when you are dancing with someone at the Banneker dance classes, you don't really know just who you are dancing with. For example, take Sherrill Chase. Sherrill, a Washington, DC native, has lived in Bowie, Maryland for the past 10 years. She is an extremely gifted and talented artist who has blossomed after retirement. She studied painting and drawing under the Prince George's Community College continuing education program for seniors (SAGE) and at the Montpelier Arts Center in Laurel, Maryland.

Sherrill is primarily an abstract artist who occasionally creates realistic works. Her medium is acrylics; however, she has experimented with inks and water color. She plans to work with mixed media as well. She derives inspiration from nature, geometry, established artists, and her imagination.

Sherrill approaches art from an experimental point of view, incorporating her interpretations of modern and post-modern art concepts.

Sherrill has exercised her creative muscles in many ways. Prior to discovering painting, she took piano lessons, crocheted, sewed, danced and choreographed in her church's liturgical dance ministry. She also painted a backdrop for a children's theater production of "Annie" the musical.

The satisfaction and pleasure Sherrill gets from painting is enhanced when her paintings hang where viewers can react to them. Her works have been shown at many Maryland locations, including: the Prince George's Arts &



Sherrill with 4 of 10 of her artworks on display at her solo art exhibit at the Bowie, MD library in February 2014.

Humanities "Our Roots" Exhibition; New Carrollton Municipal Center; Bowie Town Hall; Maryland Federation of Art Holiday Gallery in Annapolis; the Montpelier Art Center in Laurel; and the Studio Fine Arts Class Exhibit at the Bowie Senior Center. Her Washington, DC showings include the North Capitol Main Street Art & Music Walk, the Sumner School Museum, and the Children's Hospital,

And, mind you, all this after retirement!

Luck Becomes Him

Submitted by Brenda Manley

We at Banneker thought Felix was just lucky winning the 50/50 almost every week. Well actually, Felix E. Theodore's luck began long ago. When he was a teen he won his first \$10,000 on horseracing. "I have extra sensory perception", he states as a matter of fact. "When I look at it, I know", he says. Felix dreams about Pick-4. And although he did not want to say exactly how much he has won, he admitted that he has been winning Pick-4 for



years. "If I enter and watch a number, I can tell if that number will come out", he explains.

Felix is an accountant by profession. He was introduced to the field by his father when he was very young. Later, Felix earned a degree in Accounting and now works as a consultant.

Felix believes that it is a gift that numbers come to him so easily. "I can tell when something is wrong or

right” he says. “I visualize the lottery balls and I can see the balls that will fall. My wife thinks I’m weird.

So what is the secret to his luck? Felix memorizes numbers. He says his brain is at work all the time. One has to understand numbers and retain and recall numbers he explained. Then train your mind to remember numbers. Felix remembers license plates on cars—at least ten tags a day. And if he sees them again he can recall the plate numbers and when he first saw them. He went on to

say that numbers allow one’s mind to expand. His is an expanded mind.

Explanations regarding luck vary widely. Most cultures consider some numbers to be lucky or unlucky—the lucky 7 or 11, Research by Richard Wiseman reveals that ‘lucky people’, among other things, possess positive expectations and create their luck by listening to their intuition.

What Felix seems to know for sure is that, for him, numbers turn into money. After that, he said, “Money is to be challenged”.

The Proposal

Submitted by Betty Wilkins

If you’ve been to any of the recent Banneker summer galas, then you’ve seen Bonnie McCoy and Carl Carlton performing with the Banneker Ballroom Dance Team. They’ve been club members since 2010. And if you were at our 2013 winter gala, then you witnessed a truly heartwarming event—a marriage proposal.

After the music died down and dancers headed back to their seats, Carl held onto Bonnie’s hand and knelt down on one knee before her. He remembers saying, “Bonnie. When you first put your hand in mine and led you to the dance floor, I knew you were the one for me. It was magic then; and I feel that same magic each time I look in your eyes.” The rest is history.

Carl had been planning to ask Bonnie to marry him since summer of 2012, but he had to find the right time and place. Certain circumstances and obstacles prevented him from proposing sooner than December 2013.

Fearing that the gala would be canceled because of the weather, Carl was concerned that all of his planning and preparation would be ruined. He even had Bonnie’s childhood girlfriend fly in from Chicago only to get stuck in a hotel in DC because of ice.

Totally surprised, Bonnie said, “There were absolutely no clues and I absolutely did not think it was going to happen that night. I didn’t think that we were even going to the dance because the weather was so bad.”

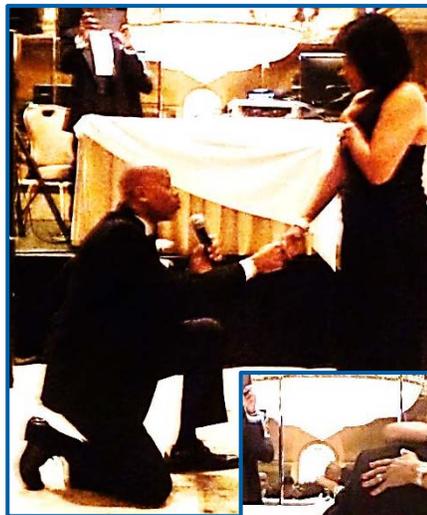
Bonnie and Carl met at a dance in Baltimore—the Lee Session’s Annual Appreciation Gala. Carl remembers, “I saw Bonnie come through the door and was immediately attracted to her. She was simply lovely. When I saw her I knew that I had to dance with her.”

Bonnie recalls, “When I first saw Carl the night we met, I remember thinking

that I had never seen him before and so I was wondering in my mind what kind of dancer he was. After the first five steps into the dance I was hooked. I remember after the dance was over and I went back to my seat, I told my girlfriend what a great dance I had with him and I was hoping he would ask me again. Well, he did!!!”

Bonnie and Carl are finalizing details for a fantastic destination wedding on the beautiful island of St. Lucia. It will take place in July 2015.

Best Wishes!



Dance for Your Brain’s Health

Submitted by Stan Kelly



Stan and Cecelia perform the Tango

Much has been written on the effects of physical activity and its benefits to continuing good health. In her recent article, “Dancing Prevents Dementia, Say Researchers”, Sylvia Booth Hubbard cites several studies and some very interesting statistics about the benefits of dance.

Pulling from a study performed at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Ms. Hubbard writes that, “...one of the

best ways to protect your brain from the ravages of Alzheimer’s is by dancing.” The study found that “ballroom dancers reduced their risk of dementia by 67 percent.”

This same study noted that activities such as reading, writing, and doing puzzles, “lowered risk by 47 percent—substantially less protective than dancing.”

Einstein College’s Dr. Joe Verghese notes, “Dancing is a complex activity.” Among the things to accomplish while dancing are:

- Remembering the steps
- Performing the steps
- Staying in time with the music
- Adjusting to your partner’s movements.

Ms. Hubbard also cites fitness expert Pamela Peek, M.D., who notes, “Dance increases blood flow to the brain. The key is engaging in an activity that combines bursts of intense exercise with periods of moderate exercise.

“Exercise causes our bodies to produce more of a hormone called norepinphrine, which can improve memory and cognitive performance.”

All this physical activity is helping you build a bigger, better brain with more brain cells, more neurons, and new circuitry. So, keep dancing!!



Club Calendar



April	May	June
1, 8, 15, 22 Class: Waltz 29 Theme Social: Days of Wine and Roses	6 Class: Peabody 13 Class: Rhumba 20 Class: Line of Dance and Dance Etiquette 27 Theme Social: Roaring Twenties	3, 10, Class: Swing 17 Class: Review 22 June Gala (@Martin’s Crosswinds)

Class Times
 7:00 pm – Introduction | 8:00 pm – Intermediate

Class Location
 6310 Chillum Place NW Washington, DC 20011
 National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) Union Hall – Second Floor
 (Check our online calendar for updates at www.bannekerballroomdance.com)

Birthdays!

January	February	March
Cindy Brewer Carl Carlton Nobuko Contee Lori Dendy Robert Jones Bonnie McCoy Bruce Romano Betty Smalls Eleanor Stewart Reggie Wingfield Eddie Witten	Fran Alves Robert Bowles Claude Correll Elaine Gunter Glenca Kande Roland Kave Yvonne Rogers Timothy Smith Sharon Walton Jerry Whitfield John Wolf	Drexel Agee Valerie Brooks Lovie Carolina Constance Creasey Eve Dickey Margaret Green Michael Gunn David Nelson William L Woods
April	May	June
Diane Blount Reginald Boone Constance Hinds Angela O'Davies Shern Stewart	William Banks Joyce Bowles Deryck Chase Ronald Crockett Anthony Curtis Lawrence Lanier Cindy Price Gumbs Roma Candace Thomas	Gwellnar Banks Albert Lee Brock Frances Brock Stewart Fitzgerald Judith Fykes James Jackson Mary Terrell Felix Theodore Loren Walker Betty Wilkins Marilyn Williams

Newsletter committee: Betty Wilkins, Eddie Witten, Michael Gunn

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