

Ballroom dance in Chesterville

With the help of one man's enthusiasm and energy, ballroom dance comes to Small Town, Ontario.

The Valentine's Ballroom dance in Chesterville on February 13 was a heart-warming success. With over fifteen couples present, the atmosphere was lively, as most of the party-goers danced frequently throughout the evening. The event attracted dancers from the township-run classes, area residents, and from as far away as Cornwall and Ottawa.

One dancer from Ottawa said that he loves the large dance floor, and that it's not too crowded. Beginners to advanced all felt comfortable and welcome. The evening featured good ballroom and Latin dancing to all sorts of music, from traditional foxtrots and waltzes, to sexy salsas and sambas.

Organized by local dance instructor, Dennis Taylor, the dance parties have been running every second Saturday, for about two years now. "Attendance is improving quickly now. Two weeks ago, we had even more people here," commented Taylor, who puts a lot of imagination and energy into the dances. He already has a great track record, with experience from his Cannamore Orchard's Spooky Wagon Ride™.

Taylor is doing an excellent job, coming up with ideas to make the evenings interesting and fun for all. He offers a bi-weekly email newsletter, and encourages feedback from the participants. This particular evening was one of the mini-potlucks, where dancers were encouraged to bring easily prepared finger foods. Newly introduced this week, were spot dances.

The evening was also punctuated



Among other couples, Tony Glen and Gabriele Thomas practice steps they learned while taking the Township-run ballroom dance lessons.

by some fun and easy line dances. The regulars enjoyed some of the old favorites, while the Cornwall group introduced a few new ones. Participants expressed their pleasure, with cheerful remarks and applause. Many of the participants wore shades of red, which created a warm Valentine's feel while they were up for the line dances.

Also in the works, is a series of dance workshops, to take place before each dance party. Refresher classes will likely be up first, which would offer a review of steps learned in regular classes. Other possibilities include dances that are not offered in the regular syllabus, such as Quickstep and Bachata.

The Township of North Dundas has been offering Ballroom and Latin dance classes in Chesterville for almost three years now, and many of the students have stayed with the programme, enabling Taylor to teach

two nights a week in Chesterville, now up to Level Six of the Bronze syllabus.

Chesterville residents, Tony Glen and Gabriele Thomas have been enrolled in classes for over a year now, and they find it to be a great way to spend time together while socializing. Asked if he would recommend the classes, Glen responded, "Dennis is really down to earth and patient in the way he teaches. He shows that anyone can learn to dance."

The next session begins in April. If you are interested in learning ballroom dance, or attending the dance parties, please contact Dennis Taylor at 613-448-3633 or Meaghan Elder at the Township office, 613-774-2105 or visit www.northdundas.com. A regular ballroom dance will be held this Saturday, February 27 at 7:00, and a St. Patrick's mini-potluck will take place on March 13.