

Dancers compete at yearly showcase

By Adena Schwartz

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The cha cha, samba, rumba, waltz, pasa doble and jive inspired intense gazes, swirling skirts and seamless footwork as dancers competed in the second annual Keystone Classic dance competition.

Hosted by Penn State's Ballroom Dance Club, Saturday's competition began at 9 a.m. in HUB Alumni Hall and did not end until nearly midnight. A range of participants attended, including collegiate competitors from Georgetown University, the University of Virginia and the University of Maryland.

A highly anticipated midnight showcase with a performance by the seventh-ranked World Latin Professional dancers Matthew Cutler and Charlotte Egstrand concluded the competition.

Cutler, of England, and Egstrand, of Denmark, danced a highly aerobic routine amid cheers and whistles from an excited crowd.

"We get to travel around the world," Cutler said in between breaths while waiting for his partner to change into her next costume.

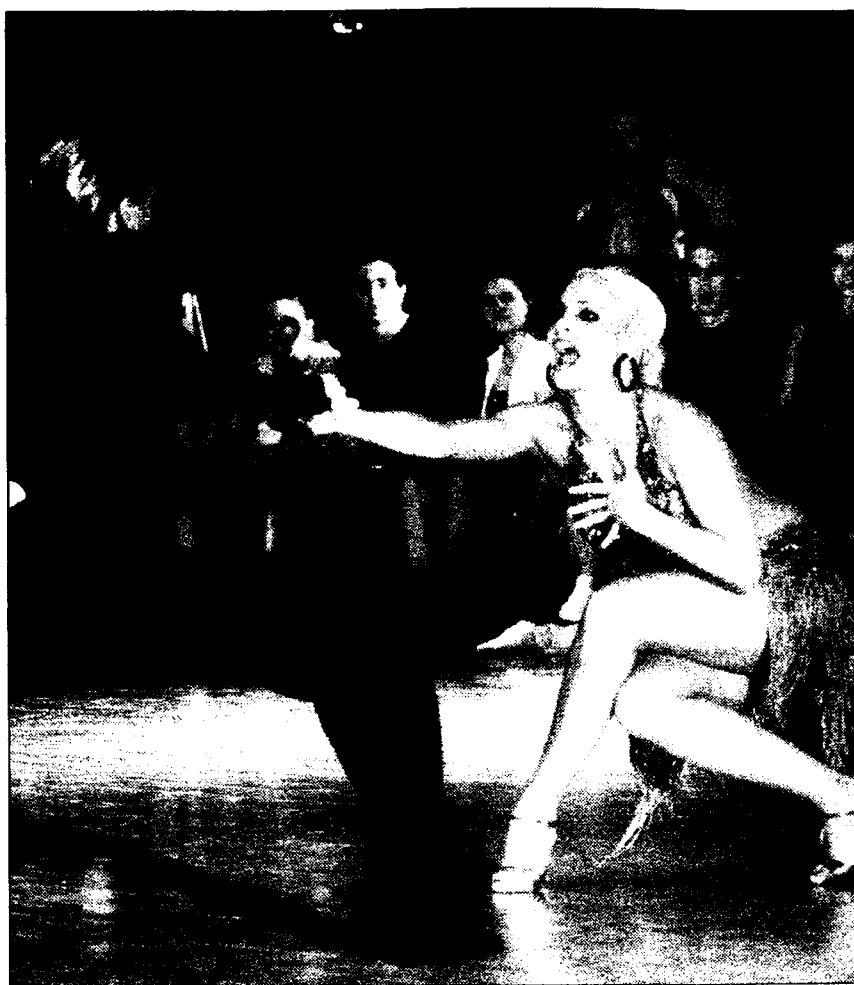
"It's good to come to universities — everyone is so enthusiastic, which is really refreshing," he added.

Anna Pronczak (senior-geography), a member of Penn State's Ballroom Dance team, said Cutler and Egstrand were inspiring from a dancer's point of view.

"It was really great how they added their own flavor and style to it," she said. "They were just incredible — they make me want to keep dancing."

Penn State ballroom dance competition team member Blake Torbert (senior-telecommunications) said the midnight showcase topped off a successful yet demanding day, especially for the Penn State dancers who organized and competed in the event.

"Ballroom dance competitions are primarily sleepless," Torbert said.



Courtney Hughes/Collegian

Professional Latin dancers Matthew Cutler and Charlotte Egstrand perform during the Keystone Classic Ballroom Dancing Competition at the HUB-Robeson Center Saturday night.

"Everyone here has been going for so long. [My partner and I] did a lot today. We got to the finals in most of what we competed in."

The day yielded winners in several categories. Torbert said he competed in the bronze competitive level, where each dance style had four syllabus levels based on experience and level of skill: newcomer, bronze, silver and gold.

There were also three open levels: novice, pre-championship and championship. Torbert and his partner Alyssia Church (senior-geography) came home with first, fourth and fifth ribbons in the cha cha, rumba, waltz and tango.

Claudia DeVuono (senior-landscape contracting), also a member of the Penn State competition team, won first place in one of her events, the team match, in which competitors switch partners throughout a song and are awarded individually.

"It's a lot of pressure and hard work, but it's really rewarding to get through

"In terms of quality, the facility and judging, there aren't many schools that are able to do what we do here."

John Sustersic

Penn State Ballroom Dance Club president

something so physically demanding and do something you love to do," she said.

John Sustersic, Penn State Ballroom Dance Club president, said to host a competition of such a high level required some "grinding of the millstone," but was a success in the end.

"[Penn State's Keystone Classic] is one of the best competitions on the East Coast," he said. "In terms of quality, the facility and judging, there aren't many schools that are able to do what we do here."

Business owners spring into season

By Stephanie Liberatore

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Yesterday's first day of spring has students and local business owners gearing up for the change in season.

Hal McCullough, owner of Café 210 West, 210 W. College Ave., said the nicer weather draws more business to the restaurant because of the available outside seating.

"I think everybody has cabin fever from being kind of cooped up during the wintertime," he said. "They just want to come out and sit outside and relax and enjoy a little food and beverage."

McCullough said that although outdoor seating is more popular when the weather is warmer, the seating is available throughout the year.

"We open the outdoor café when anyone wants to sit outside, so there's no starting date and no closing date," he said.

Ed Hess, head cook at the Gingerbread Man, 130 Hiester St., said the outdoor seating the restaurant offers gives people the chance to enjoy the warm weather.

"Once the weather gets warmer, people just want to be outside anyway," he said. "Having that option makes it more appealing to more people."

Hess added that having outdoor seating draws more business during the warmer months.

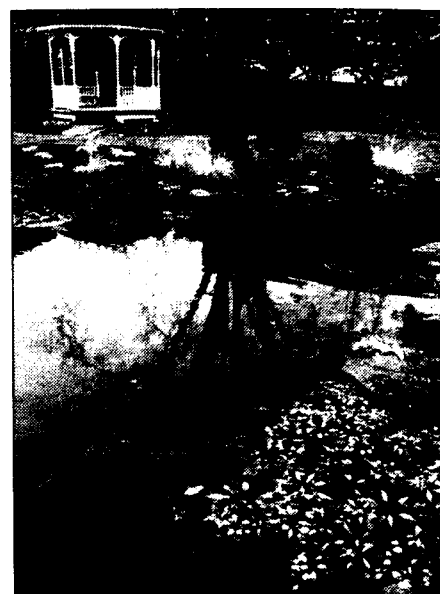
"I think a lot of people just like the idea of eating outside," he said. "It's like a picnic without all the problems. You're outside in the sunshine, but you don't have to worry about being on the ground or whatever."

Lauren DiNardo (senior-communication sciences and disorders) said she thinks people come downtown more often in the spring than any other time of year.

"I think they're maybe a little stir crazy after the winter," she said. "It gives you a nice reason to get outside."

Bret Sarlouis, manager at Metro, 324 E. College Ave., said that since the weather has been nicer, more people have been coming into the store.

"After they got a taste of spring break, and where they went with a warmer climate going on, they're just ready for no coats, tank tops, T-shirts, just more fun, bright colors," he said.



Adam Piorowski/Collegian

A tree is reflected in the still water of a pond outside the Hintz Family Alumni Center yesterday afternoon.

Sarlouis said the store sells more light fabrics and light colors, like yellows, greens, and pinks during spring.

"We do bright-colored window displays because that's traditionally what spring and summer colors are," he said. "We have a café in the store here, so we have the Philadelphia Water Ice out. We have ice cream. It gets people in the mood. We open the doors and just let 'em loose."

Amanda Zapcic (sophomore-nursing) said she does more shopping downtown in the spring because of the change in weather.

"It's cold all winter, and you just want to get out and get new clothes," she said. Zapcic said she has noticed a lot more people downtown lately.

"I think people are just so sick of winter," she said. "They just want some bright colors."

Rob Monzillo, owner of Access, 224 E. College Ave., said the store carries more colors and pastels in the spring than in the winter.

Monzillo added that he wants customers to be able to feel the current season when they come into the store.

"When the customer walks in, you want them to feel the season that you're trying to promote to them," he said.

Persian New Year celebrated at HUB

By Megan Rundle

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Farzad Sharif remembers celebrating Noe-Rooz, the Persian New Year, when he was a Penn State student 15 years ago.

This year Sharif returned to Penn State with his family and joined more than 150 people in celebrating the holiday Saturday night in HUB Heritage Hall.

"This is definitely a bigger event than it was when I went here," said Sharif, a 1990 graduate. "It's funny because I look around and see faces I haven't seen in 15 years."

The event, sponsored by the Iranian Student Association, allowed community members, staff and students to dress up and enjoy an evening of food, dancing and education about the country of Iran.

"I came back for good music and good food," Sharif said, laughing. "There's nothing better than Persian food."

Samira Khalili (graduate-chemical engineering) said the New Year focuses on celebrating rebirth and is celebrated on the first day of spring.

"It's an event that's been celebrated for more than 3,000 years," she said. "It's a big time for families to get together and take place in various traditions and events."

One of these traditions was found at the front of the hall, where various items, all symbolizing different values, sat on a table.

For example, goldfish could be found swimming in a bowl to represent life. A flowerpot filled with sprouts represent-

ed rebirth and a jar of dried lotus fruit represented love.

A table like this is found at every Persian New Year, even in family homes.

Bob Kalantari (senior-mechanical engineering) and Reza Saleh (senior-mechanical engineering) grew up celebrating the holiday in their hometown of Pittsburgh, but they decided this year to stay here and attend Penn State's celebration.

"I came because I was curious to see what was going on," Kalantari said. "It's a pretty big event in Pittsburgh that we grow up with, and lots of families get together to celebrate."

Saleh said the holiday revolves around symbolism. "Throughout the night, people will go up to the table in the front filled with objects to reflect on the New Year," he said.

During the celebration, many guests took family pictures behind the table filled with symbols. Some mothers were seen teaching their children about the meaning of each object, and others could be seen trying to keep little hands from poking the goldfish.

"I haven't been able to come in the past three years because of this little guy," Sharif said, pointing to his 3-year-old son. "Now we've brought him to celebrate with everyone and teach him our traditions."

As the festivities continued well into the night, the sounds of laughter and traditional Iranian music echoed through Heritage Hall.

"Tonight we came together to learn about our culture, celebrate our New Year and enjoy food and fun," Khalili said.

A JAZZY AFFAIR



Daniel Free/Collegian

Dan Yoder of the Dan Yoder Quartet plays 1920s-style jazz music at the Palmer Museum of Art. The event was held Saturday night to promote a new exhibit featuring 1920's and 1930's artwork.

Crimes down on St. Patrick's Day

Police said increased patrolling led to a smaller number of arrests last Thursday and Friday compared to years past.

By Drew Curley

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This year, alcohol-related arrests declined on St. Patrick's Day compared to last year's numbers, possibly because of increased police enforcement.

The State College Police Department said they responded to 66 calls between 4 p.m. Thursday and 6 a.m. Friday. About 70 percent of the incidents were alcohol related.

Crimes this year included five charges of public drunkenness, three charges of driving under the influence, three assaults and three citations for underage drinking.

During the same period last year, there were nine charges of public drunkenness, five charges of driving under the influence, seven assaults and eight citations for underage drinking.

Sgt. Dana Leonard said State College Police worked with Pennsylvania State Police and the Centre County Alcohol Task Force to "keep a lid" on alcohol-fueled crimes.

Eight Pennsylvania State Police troopers were present downtown and nine additional State College Police officers were on duty, Leonard said.

In one incident, Michael Gingrich, 25, was charged with aggravated assault, simple assault and harassment for a Thursday night assault, State College Police Sgt. Keith Robb said.

Gingrich allegedly punched and kicked a victim, who was transported to Mount Nittany Medical Center for treatment and received 14 stitches for a head laceration, State College Police Sgt. John Gardner said.

The incident appeared to be alcohol related, police said.

Ferguson Township Police Depart-

ment Detective John Conti said plainclothes officers from the Centre County Alcohol Task Force were in place Thursday night around the Centre region in bars and state stores.

"[The goal is] to combat excessive and dangerous habits of indulging in alcoholic beverages," Conti said.

"The excessive alcohol also leads to other crimes such as assaults," he added.

Penn State University Police Officer Ben Hess said St. Patrick's Day was a busy night for university police as well.

"It was comparable to your average Friday or Saturday. It was busier than a usual Thursday," Hess said. "Most of the incidents were alcohol related."

The number of incidents, which included two DUIs and seven citations for underage drinking, was typical for past St. Patrick's Day celebrations, Hess said.

"Our incidents go up a little because of the nature of the holiday," he said. "About 70 to 80 percent of our [incidents] were alcohol related."



Laura Sarowitz/Collegian

A group dances to the music from Iranian musician Hoshmand Aghili at the Iranian Student Association and the Robeson Cultural Center's Persian New Year Bash on Saturday night in HUB Heritage Hall.