

Practice key to learning to dance

By Michael Yap
Dance Director

“Practice, practice, practice” is a piece of advice that has stayed with me over the years as a way to improve my dancing. But practice can be productive or counter productive. The key to productive practice is to do so with the correct steps and technique from the start. Practicing incorrect steps and technique is not only a waste of time and energy, but it leads to bad habits that must also be unlearned. And for most of us, time is a valuable commodity that we would prefer not to waste.

So how can you have a productive practice?

Take notes – I am not saying that you need to come to class with pen and paper, but you can always go home and write down what you learned.

Don't wait too long – Statistics have shown that we can lose at least 25% of what we learned as quickly as one to two hours after the initial learning process. It only gets worse as more time passes. This is why teachers give students homework to reinforce what they just learned.

Use a mirror or video camera – Mirrors and video help you recreate the mental picture you have of your instructor. From posture to arm styling,



mirrors help you see if you are doing what you've been instructed to do. All too often, what you think you are doing and what you are actually doing are two surprisingly different things. The mirror doesn't lie.

Finally, I would modify the old adage “Practice makes perfect” to “Proper practice makes perfect.” It certainly seems to better describe the learning process where dancing is concerned.

Stepping Out

Highlights of Upcoming Events

September 29, Potluck, 6:30 p.m., Palladium. Members and guests only. Free for members who bring a dish. \$3 each for members and guests without a dish.

October 6, Rueda workshop with Michael Yap and Cece Paulmino, 7 p.m. registration, 7:45-9:15 p.m. workshop. Members \$3, non-members \$10. Palladium.

October 13, Start of Fourth-quarter classes. Beginning Samba, 7-7:40 p.m.; Beginning/Intermediate Waltz, 7:45-8:25 p.m.; and Intermediate Jive, 8:30-9:10 p.m. Classes held Wednesdays, Palladium.*

October 30, Friends of Ala Wai Halloween Dance, 6:30-9:30 p.m., Palladium. Details to follow.

*Instructors: Michael Yap & Cece Paulmino; Keoki Galas & Kim Suenaga

Dis and Dat

Boo again! For the second time in as many years, Friends of Ala Wai will be hosting a Halloween Dance on Saturday, October 30 at the Palladium. So start looking for that scary or not-so-scary costume you've been thinking about... **Back by popular demand**, Friends Dance Director **Michael Yap** and **Cece Paulmino** will be teaching the basic Rueda during the Wednesday, October 6 dance workshop. The Rueda is essentially danced to a mambo or salsa in a circle with dancers exchanging partners. Lots of fun... Fourth-quarter classes begin Wednesday, October 13 with beginning Samba, Waltz and Intermediate Jive (See Calendar)... Mahalos to **USA Dance** for replacing the ceiling lights in the Palladium. It's nice to be able to see who you're dancing with again... Congrats to Friends of Ala Wai Board members **Charlotte** and **Edwin Bugarin**, who recently took part in USA Dance's mock competition. Also performing in the mock competition were Friends members **Ceci Chang** and **Ed Rulloda**, **Clary Mitchell-Smith** and **Gordon Wong**, and **Candy** and **Ed Matsuda**...

Condolences. We were saddened to hear of the passing of long-time HBDA dance instructor **Richard Nieto**. Richard and his wife, Cora, were also most recently with Dance Hawaii (formerly Dance Aliamanu). Our thoughts and prayers go out to Cora and her family.

Become a Friend Membership Information

To become a member of Friends, contact us at www.friendsofalawai.com or Michael Yap at 286-0328 or Warren Mitsunaga at 754-3980. Annual membership fee is \$5. Members may enroll in our 10-week dance sessions for \$5 per dance (That's only 50 cents per class). Classes are held Wednesdays, 7 to 9:10 p.m., 2nd floor of the Ala Wai Golf Course Multi-Purpose Facility (Palladium). Members can also attend quarterly workshops with guest professional instructors for \$3 (\$10, non-members). Friends-sponsored dances at the Palladium are free for members (except for themed or ticketed functions). For more information, log onto our Website at www.friendsofalawai.com