

## The History of Westview Dance Club

In 2020, Westview Dance Club will be celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Westview Dance Club is the oldest dance club in Winnipeg and one of the longest running clubs in Western Canada. It The first class was held at a local St. James-Assiniboia Church in the spring of 1970, with 13 couples, with four more couples joining in the fall.

From that humble beginning, Westview Dance Club has since had more than 1,000 members join its ranks in order to make new friends, while learning their way around the dance floor. Some stayed for only a year or two, some much longer. Many members have been in the club for 20 years and more.

The first social dance was held in 1970 at the Royal Canadian Legion on Portage Avenue and the First Anniversary Dance was held at the same location. Over Westview Dance Club's 50 years, we have learned Modern and Latin dances, and our members and guests have enjoyed an inventive array of theme social dances and dinner dances. The aim of the club has always been to teach the standard Smooth and Rhythm dances in a friendly, non-competitive environment.

Westview Dance Club has employed a number of instructors over the last half-century. Bob and Muriel Sprague, both accomplished Arthur Murray dancers, were the first instructors and taught for almost 10 years. Eric Brennan and Brian Yurkiw taught until the club hired Bill Daum in 1982. Bill was born and raised in Austria, where he trained and competed in International Ballroom Dancing. Although he loved the thrill of competition, his heart was always in teaching and he proved to be an excellent instructor. Allan Nelson was hired in September 2001 and was our instructor until spring 2010.

Monique Perreault became our primary instructor in the fall of 2010. She has been involved with Ballroom and Latin dancing for more than 20 years. She entered into competitions in the Bronze, Full Bronze and Silver levels, winning top honours in each case. In 1997 she enrolled in an instructor's course at Dance Class Saskatoon and graduated as a certified dance instructor for Bronze and Silver Levels. Monique became a full time dance instructor in 1998 and taught dancing until she left Saskatoon and moved to Winnipeg in 2001. After a short break, she started teaching at a Winnipeg studio in 2005 and worked there until 2008. Since becoming our instructor, Monique has served Westview, both as a solo instructor, and as part of a team.

Anthony Funari worked along with Monique from 2011 to 2015, by helping create lesson plans and by teaching the Monday and Tuesday evening classes. He also acted as our instructional resource at Tuesday evening practices. Anthony completed his Bronze Level study and was pursuing Silver Level certification with the DVIDA (Dance Vision International Dance Association). He had been dancing for a number of years and participated in dance competitions

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and workshops across Canada and the United States. Anthony instructed at Westview Dance Club while pursuing his Human Nutritional Sciences degree at the University of Manitoba.

Louise Dureault received her DVIDA Bronze Level certification under Allan Nelson in 2007 - 2008, and did some instructing alongside Allan. In the latter part of the 2018-2019 season, Louise took over teaching Monday night lessons. She also helps out by providing the benefit of her knowledge at Tuesday night practices.

Over the past 50 years, Westview Dance Club has promoted lifelong learning and an active lifestyle through ballroom dancing in a friendly, non-competitive environment. The legacy left by our founding members is to take our love of ballroom dance and pass it forward. With our support, future generations can reap the benefits of friendships and the physical and mental activity that comes with the enjoyment of dance. That way, we can keep the love of dance alive in Winnipeg, so future generations of dancers will someday celebrate Westview Dance Club's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

## **Meet the Members**

### **Evelyn and Ron**

by

Brian Campbell

The 2018-2019 season marks Evelyn Nickel's and Ron Grouchy's second year, both with Westview Dance Club and on the ballroom dance floor in general. Ev was looking for something to do after she retired. She always had an interest in learning ballroom dancing, which she mentioned to a friend of hers. Her friend introduced her to Westview member, Marg Martin, who invited her to check Westview out. Some friends of theirs decided to join with them, and she and Ron haven't looked back since.



One of the high points for both Ev and Ron is the social aspect of Westview Dance Club.

Says Ev, "We love the comradery. Ron and I are both social people and we have met some very nice people; some we just see on the dance floor, others have become good friends."

Ev and Ron find Westview to be quite a hidden gem in the St. James area, which provides not only the chance to meet people and make new friendships, but also the opportunity to get out and try out the dance skills learned at the club's weekly dance lessons at Westview's monthly social or dinner dances.

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“The ability to actually learn to dance is a very nice thing,” Ron says. “The whole package is very good.”

They point out how economical Westview Dance Club is when compared to other dance studios. For casual, non-competitive dancers, who just want to learn how to move comfortably around the dance floor, while making new friendships, Westview simply can't be beaten.

Ev points out that Westview Dance Club is a member driven, member organized, member run, not-for-profit organization. All money coming into the club is used to make the club run and run better. When a member has a comment or concern, the door to the Executive is always open to listen. If you have enough good ideas, you may be asked to join the Executive and help put your ideas into practice.

Ron and Ev think it is important to recognize the fact that Westview Dance Club will be turning 50 next year, making it Winnipeg's longest running ballroom dance club.

“The fact that a volunteer organization of people whose only shared interest is the love of ballroom dance is incredible and should be recognized,” Ev says. “I would like to see it continue to maintain the integrity of Westview Dance Club, but brought into pace with modern times. Then we can help a whole new generation find the same joy in ballroom dance that we do. That will give it the added life to continue for another 50 years.”



**Westview Dance Club  
Registration Dance,  
Wednesday, September 4, 2019**

Don't miss your *Golden* opportunity to join Westview Dance Club and help us celebrate 50 years as a Winnipeg dance club.

Registration for our 2019-2020 season is on Wednesday, September 4<sup>th</sup> at Oak Bluff Recreation Centre, from 7:00 to 9:00 pm. We will be hosting a casual dance and meet-and-greet, so you can get in a bit of a warm up, connect with old friends, and meet our members.

We look forward to seeing you there.



# *Westview's Golden Gala*

CELEBRATING BALLROOM DANCING IN WINNIPEG

**Calling all Dancers**

*and those who would like to be*

**Westview Dance Club** will be presenting

*Westview's Golden Gala*  
CELEBRATING BALLROOM DANCING IN WINNIPEG

On, **Saturday May 9, 2020**

At the **RBC Convention Centre**

Featuring: **The Big City All Star Band**

For more information, go to

**<https://westviewdance.ca/gala/>**



50TH ANNIVERSARY