

Crescent City Elks Lodge livens it up these days

November 21, 2019



Crescent City Elks Lodge No. 1689 has incorporated two lively community events into its itinerary over the past few months – dance lessons and the occasional Flamingo Fridays.

With her husband as the Elks' exalted ruler, Cathy Woodward was eager to bring some festive events to the lodge. So, she created an informal events committee with a few other ladies involved with the lodge to implement a handful of new activities.

The Elks Lodge is a fraternal order and many of its events are for the members only. But not these. The community's participation is welcomed.

For more than three months, they have hosted dance lessons twice a month. They will host their second West Coast swing dance lesson - the final lesson of 2019 - this Sunday at 359 H St. "It's fun, it's funny and it's really good exercise, I'll tell you," said Woodward. "It keeps you moving."

With holiday events filling December's calendar, Woodward decided to postpone the next dance lessons until Jan. 12. That upcoming program? Line dancing.

Each lesson costs \$7 per person, with all proceeds going to the Elks Lodge.

The sponsors recommend that participants wear shoes that can slide. A dance partner is not required; partners rotate throughout the evening.

Each month, the dancers focus on a different style. So far, they've dabbled in salsa, cha-cha and West Coast swing.

The lessons begin with the participants learning new steps in sections, then putting those steps together and practicing. Once they've learned the moves, they review their progress.

Initially, half a dozen people showed up for the lessons. Then, 18. It's growing and growing in popularity, according to Woodward. "We're getting rave reviews. Everyone's having so much fun and they keep coming back, so it must be working."

As an alternative, Flamingo Fridays test people's personal styles, rather than their dance capabilities. Every third Friday of the month, the cocktail hour from 4:30-6 p.m. becomes tropical-themed. Attendees are urged to sport their best tropical and flamingo-themed attire to get half-off their first drink of the evening.

"It's pretty good price, and then it's really funny to watch everyone and see what they're wearing," Woodward said.

The lodge's bar features a signature tropical drink that varies from month to month. The events committee brings the appetizers. Afterward, there's a dinner at 6 p.m. for \$10, although the cocktail hour participants aren't required to attend.

This week's Flamingo Friday, on Nov. 15, will feature a baked potato bar for dinner. Flamingo Friday will fall a week earlier in December, on the 13th, so as not to intrude on Christmas festivities, said Woodward.