



Whirl girl: When you're dancing, says a recent convert, you're free.

Money Well Spent Happy Feet

WHO Jane Marcus, 51, executive recruiter, Long Grove, Illinois

WHAT Ballroom dance classes

HOW MUCH More than \$25,000 in about a year, on lessons, outfits, and shoes

WHY "I was always one of the first ones dancing at parties," Marcus says.

When a Fred Astaire Studio opened near her, she was "the kid whose nose was pushed up against the glass." Soon after she got divorced and turned 50, Marcus signed up for her first lessons, solo, starting with the waltz and fox-trot and moving on to fancier steps, like those in the paso doble. Now she takes two hours of private lessons twice a week and comes back to work with a cha-cha in her step. She's competed several times and has the awards to show for it. Now, Marcus jokes, "I just have to figure out how to use my kids' 529 college savings to pay for my dancing." All the legwork keeps her in shape: "My thighs are rock solid." But that's not what sends her waltzing back for more. "When I'm on the dance floor, I'm focused only on what my partner and I are doing in that moment," she says. "I don't have to spin all the plates I normally spin. The only thing spinning is me."

—KATE ASHFORD

How To Primp Your Online Profile

Go ahead, ego-surf. And watch your life's accomplishments fill the screen. Now think: When your next client or a headhunter with a hot job Googles for your name, will they see the person you want them to see? Nearly nine out of 10 employers polled by recruiting firm ExecuNet said they do online searches on job applicants, and almost half of those said they've eliminated a candidate based on what they found.

William Arruda of Reach Personal Branding found that searches on female execs (ages 36 to 65) kicked up fewer hits than searches on their male counterparts, but that the women's results were more in sync with their professional personae. Here's how to enhance your virtual image.

+ CLAIM YOUR SPACE Create a (free) profile on networking site LinkedIn (linkedin.com) or Spoke (spoke.com). Those links usually appear on the first page when you're Googled. Then post a bio with links to other material by or about you on ClaimID (claimid.com).

+ PRIVACY, PLEASE The yoga blog you waxed so spiritual on? Your cruise photos? Not the right tone. Keep your personal life on a password-protected site, gratis on photo sites flickr (flickr.com) and Multiply (multiply.com).

+ DIGITAL DIRT If you see something inaccurate or offensive about you online, ask the Webmaster (usually identified at the bottom of the page) to remove it. Or divert attention from that material by adding positive search results (see above).

+ STAY POSTED A Google Alert (google.com/alerts) e-mails you if you pop up in the news. Or monitor the blogosphere by joining technorati.com/watchlist.

—SARAH KLIFF