
Subject: 2014 Thanksgiving Missive from Paul Stewart

From: Paul Stewart <pas@pascoventures.com>

Greetings! For over 10 years now, I have sent an annual Thanksgiving missive. This year, I'm sending you this missive that I hope you will find interesting, maybe a bit humorous and perhaps even inspirational.

For most of our 39 years of marriage, my dear wife Susan has asked me to take ballroom dance lessons. When we were raising kids, I was working long work hours during my 25-year career at Eli Lilly and frequently traveling on extensive business travel, so I didn't have the time or energy to devote to such an endeavor.

Now that our two adult sons are established 1,000 miles away from us in Denver and we don't (yet!) have any grandchildren, Susan and I finally have more discretionary time to spend together. For the past 18 months, we've been taking ballroom dance lessons, and I must tell you that I have been having more fun than should be legal! Full disclaimer here – even though Susan and I had the special privilege of being in the **audience** at the season finale of the U.S. television show "Dancing With the Stars" a few years ago, I can **assure** you that we will not **ever** be appearing as dancers on that show! We often feel more like sixth graders at our first cotillion.

For one hour each week, Susan and I take a private lesson with Brigette, our extremely talented and **supremely patient** instructor. Given the positive feedback about Susan's "Top 10" list in last year's Thanksgiving Missive (see the PASCO Ventures website if you missed it), I've chosen to share with you our top 10 reasons why we plan to continue taking dance lessons for the foreseeable future. Here goes:

1. **Somebody has to lead.** In dancing, it is customary for the man to lead. That means he has to think ahead and give the right signal at the right time for the woman to know what to do. That may **sound** simple, but on more than one occasion, I've known **exactly** what the next step should be, but I have failed to signal that move to Susan. Without that subtle signal, we end up going in opposite directions – and we all know communication is key!
2. **Somebody has to follow.** In our world where everyone wants to be a leader (and everyone who knows her well knows that Susan is no pushover), no matter what the dynamics are in the relationship, while dancing, the woman still has to follow, and learning this is important for both of us. That means she has to remain flexible and light-footed enough to move in whatever direction I lead, even if she knows I'm executing what Brigette, our marvelous dance instructor, humorously calls an "illegal maneuver."
3. **We focus on laughing together through the sometimes-difficult process of learning a new step.** Sometimes we bump into each other, sometimes we step on each other's toes, and sometimes we lose our focus. Through it all, we remember this is supposed to be **fun**, so we laugh with each other as we struggle together.
4. **We work together toward a common goal.** During our 40 years together, Susan and I have pursued parallel careers and hobbies. Even while raising John and Daniel together, we still had delineated roles. (I went on all of the Boy Scout campouts and backpacking trips, and Susan handled all of the school stuff) Now we work together to perfect a routine for the twice-a-year Showcase at the studio where we take our dance lessons.
5. **Dancing is good exercise.** Particularly when we are working on dances like the swing, I find myself sweating after a while, and although it may not be as good as working out at the gym, I'm sure that it is better than sitting on the couch, watching TV and eating bon-bons. Susan's *Fitbit* monitoring device that she wears daily reports that she takes thousands of steps at each dance lesson, so there **is** an exercise element to dancing.
6. **Dancing helps your memory.** Although the ultimate goal in dancing is that any woman would be able to follow any man's lead, in the beginning, it makes sense to learn routines. At this stage, we are still trying to perfect steps, so we have a set order of steps to learn. Not only do we have to know what to do with our feet, we have to **remember** what each of the steps are called. Peekaboo, double-neck-slide, wrap-up, behind-the-back hand change, etc., etc. The list never ends, and I'm sure that helps improve our memory!

7. **Dancing improves your balance.** I've been delighted to see an 87-year-old man taking dance lessons and participating in Showcases (think dance recitals) at the same studio where we take our lessons. I've already realized how much surer-footed I am than before we took dance lessons, and with my own Dad now 95, I think that dance lessons will help me with steadiness as I get older.
8. **Dancing with the right partner can be downright sensual!** Thus far, although the Swing is fun, my favorite dance step is the Nightclub Foxtrot step to Society tempo – the right music, the right dance partner, bodies closely moving together ... very nice! (Enough said.)
9. **Going to weddings is much more fun when you know how to dance.** We've attended several weddings since we started taking dance lessons, and as my dancing confidence has grown, so too has my enjoyment on the dance floor when we attend these weddings.
10. **It is impossible to dance together while being mad at each other.** One hour of dance lessons is almost as good as (and perhaps better than) an hour of marriage counseling! We find ourselves always coming out of our dance lessons with a brightened perspective on life.

As our Thanksgiving in the U.S. approaches this Thursday, we are healthy and happy, and PASCO Ventures continues to prosper. For all of this and so much more, I am most thankful. My hope is that this message finds you also healthy and happy, and I wish you a 2015 of Peace and Prosperity – perhaps you may also consider taking dance lessons in 2015!

All the best.

PAS.

PS – if for any reason you would prefer not to receive my Thanksgiving e-mail missives (the **only** uninvited communication that you will receive from me each year), please reply to me with the word REMOVE in the subject line of your reply and I will remove you from all such future communications. I understand the desire to reduce e-mail clutter and will graciously accept your wishes.

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Doing Deals That Help Make Our World a Better Place to Live™

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About PASCO Ventures (see www.pascoventures.com for more information):

- > **We help some of the world's best inventors find, negotiate and consummate business deals with collaboration partners that develop and commercialize the novel technologies from these inventors.**
- > **We are a trusted board member and advisor to senior executives around the world.**
- > **We are an expert witness and mediator involving complex global licensing matters.**

If you'll be attending one or more of these upcoming events, or in that city during that time, let me know so we can connect ...

- > **December 15-19, 2014 / Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam:** Successful Technology Licensing (instructor in this training program sponsored by the World Intellectual Property Organization / WIPO).
- > **Sunday, Feb. 22, 2015 / New Orleans, LA:** speaker at "The Conversation: A Dialogue for Leaders in the Field" — AUTM Leadership Forum.
- > **February 22-25, 2015 / New Orleans, LA:** AUTM 2015 Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA.
