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Westfield Citrus Park Mall Gets Flash Mobbed

A small group of dancers surprised onlookers Saturday evening.

By [Deborah Bostock-Kelley](#) | [Email the author](#) | 5:00 am

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The front of Macy's at [Westfield Citrus Park Mall](#) looked exactly like it always did on a busy Saturday afternoon during the holiday season – shoppers rushing in and out, busily searching for perfect Christmas gifts and a long line of excited kids waiting for pictures with Santa Claus.

But at about 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 17, for exactly 90 seconds, the normal hustle and bustle was interrupted when a seemingly spontaneous crowd gathered and began to dance with Doritos bags to an old-fashioned boom box piping out Black Eyed Peas song, "I Gotta a Feeling."

Westfield Citrus Park Mall had been flash mobbed.

A flash mob, a term coined in 2003, consists of a group of strangers who gather and perform in a public place, for a particular length of time to entertainment onlookers and then break up as quickly as they assembled, as if the activity never occurred.

Nicole Novak, founder of Saturday's mob, decided for her December birthday, instead of a party, she wanted to organize a dance flash mob.

"I wanted to do something different for my birthday," said Nicole, 33. "Anyone who knows me know this is very *me* to do something like this."

And they jumped (*and twirled*) at the opportunity.

"We would do anything for her!" exclaimed Elena Azzarelli. "That's what you do for good friends."

To organize the event, Nicole formed a [Tampa Flash Mob group](#) on MeetUp.com where she invited the public to sign up.

And they did.

Word of mouth and shares on Facebook, specifically the [Tampa Bay Flash Mob Facebook group](#), were also used by Novak to get people involved.

About a dozen people showed up for Saturday's flash mob, including teens, single moms and a couple of people new in town to those just looking for something new and exciting to do.

Participants practiced dance choreography through the YouTube video [link](#) Novak put on MeetUp.com.

Flash mobs can have legal repercussions – mall security has the right to escort mobbers off mall property and potentially charge them with trespassing. Yet a small group of participants thought it was worth the risk.

The flash mob's dance lasted about 90 seconds. Several surprised bystanders pulled out their camera phones and began videotaping the choreographed dance routine.

Mother and daughter team Tracey and Amanda Suits were two dancers who found the event through social media.

"We found the event on a Facebook page. She (*Novak*) created the Meetup page and we tried to recruit people from there," Tracey Suits said. "We definitely had a bigger crowd of observers than I thought we'd have."

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