



Stepping Out!



USA Dance, Inc.
Adirondack Chapter #3035

Volume 3 Issue 1

Fall 2006

President's Corner

Hello everyone!

Well...here we are, approaching the end of summer, which is unbelievable! How time flies!

In reflecting back, our summer dance location at the Bend of the River Golf Club was a terrific find for us. With such hot and humid weather, it was a relief to be able to dance in air conditioning. The golf club provided us with a wonderful dance floor as well as a warm and friendly atmosphere where we could dance and/or have a quiet conversation with friends. In fact, our attendance surpassed last

(see **President** pg. 2)

Adirondack Chapter Reaching Out With "Dance For Life"

Community outreach is an important goal shared by USA Dance, Inc. members nationwide. The Adirondack Chapter #3035 is proud to be sponsoring programs designed to reach a wide range of audiences in our region. We believe ballroom dancing can be enjoyed throughout life, at any age. Furthermore, we believe the healthful benefits of ballroom dancing for the heart, mind and soul greatly enhance life!

Youth Programs Committee Co-Chairs, Brent Humphrey and Tony Farar, have coined the slogan, "Dance For Life" to promote our various community outreach programs. Currently, Brent and Tony are working to create op-

portunities for ballroom dance to be taught in a number of area high schools, either as part of a dance residency, with lessons taught during Phys Ed classes, or as part of a pre-prom/special event series of group dance lessons taught to interested students outside the school day. Brent and Tony are hoping to have a pilot program up and running at Glens Falls Senior High School by early 2007.

The Adirondack Chapter is reaching out to the aged in our community, as well. This fall, volunteers are hoping to present Jan Holik's "Dancing Through the Ages" at area nursing homes. Nursing home residents will have an opportunity to dance with the volunteers at the

end of the program. (Look for a more detailed review in our Winter Newsletter!)

There are countless venues for us to share our love of ballroom dance with those around us: at malls, special events, area schools, etc. If you would be willing to play a more active role in our "Dance For Life" outreach programs, as a volunteer dancer or fund raising committee member, please contact our chapter president, Cheryl Humphrey, either by phone at 761-4174 or e-mail at cheryl@usadanceadk.com.

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SAVE THE DATE!!

MARCH 31ST, 2007 - That's the date for our second annual Black Tie Optional Dinner Dance to be held once again at the Adirondack Community College gymnasium. If you heard the buzz about last year's event, then you know that it is an occasion not to be missed. John Dye is again chairing the committee. Bob Fuller is the co-chair. This year the gymnasium will be transformed to match this year's theme "Spring in the Adirondacks." Food provided by the ACC food services group is sure to be delicious!



Sonny Daye & Perley Rousseau

MARCH 31ST, 2007

And boy, do we have a musical surprise for all of you! If you liked last year's "Overtones," you're going to love the five piece band of "**Sonny and Perley.**" They were recently given the distinction of "**Best Jazz Standards Duo**" from Metroland magazine, "and know their way around what is usually called the **Great American Songbook.**" So, **Save the Date!**

Check out their web site at: <http://www.sonnyandperley.com/>

President (cont. from pg.1)

year's numbers. We hope that we will be able to continue our relationship with them next summer.

As far as our fall dance schedule is concerned, we will be back at the Temple Beth El for our "Second Saturday" dance on September 9th, and on September 24th we will be back at the Fun Spot for our "Fourth Sunday" dance. The "Second Saturday" and "Fourth Sunday" schedule will remain in effect until we notify you of a change.

National Ballroom Dance Week is September 15th thru September 24th. That week has been set aside as the week to promote not only the health and recreational benefits, but also the social aspects of ballroom dancing to the community. So, with that in mind, we are hoping to coordinate with the assisted living centers and nursing homes in the area to give a dance performance. And maybe we will even get a group to do a dance demonstration at the mall. If you are interested in participating in this outreach program, please do not hesitate to contact me either by phone at 761-4174 or by e-mail at cheryl@usadanceadk.com.

National Ballroom Dance Week is also a great time to have a membership drive. Originally, in January, 100 members was our goal for 2006. Since then, we have signed up approximately 30 new members, which is 5 members away from our

goal. Do you think that we can surpass that number? I do!

Also, this fall we will be holding elections (more information to follow at a later date). In addition, we will be having a general membership meeting for all our members. At this meeting, we will be reviewing the year's activities as well as passing on planned activities for the ensuing year. Further information will be forwarded regarding the date and time of that meeting.

In addition, USA Dance-National has made some changes to minimize their liability risk. As a chapter, we are now required to have printed at the top of our attendance logs a waiver of risk statement. So when you sign in, you are agreeing to certain conditions before participating in our dance. You will also see a "Notice of Risk" flyer on display at our chapter events. Here is the Risk Statement: *"Dance is a physical activity, and like all physical activities, carries some degree of risk. USA Dance cannot be held liable for injuries sustained by persons attending the event, it being hereby stated that persons attending the event do so at their own risk. USA Dance is not responsible for loss, damage or theft of articles from event facilities. Persons not conforming to acceptable standards of behavior may, at the sole discretion of the chapter, be asked to leave the event venue premises."*

If you have not already checked out our new web site, www.usadanceadk.com, please do so, as Harry Barker, our web master, has done a wonderful job!

Please mark your calendars for next year's black tie event. It will be held on March 31, 2007 at the Adirondack Community College gymnasium.

Our "Dance for Life" youth program is well under way. Our Co-Chairs, Brent Humphrey and Tony Farrar are in the process of setting up a dance program with the Glens Falls Senior High School. For 2-3 weeks in January 2007, approximately 900 students will be taught dance lessons during their Phys. Ed. classes. We also have been invited back to the Corinth High School to teach dance lessons prior to next year's prom and there is some interest on the teachers' part to start taking dance lessons themselves. Brent & Tony are continuing to diligently work toward creating dancing opportunities for other schools in our area.

As you can see, there are many committees and/or activities that you can become involved in. So, please do not hesitate to contact me, if you are interested in playing a more active role in our chapter.

In closing, I would like to take a moment to express my sincere appreciation for all of your support in helping to make our chapter such a success. Your input is most welcome!

Keep dancing! Cheryl



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GOOD TIMES ON SMALL FLOORS! Part 2

By Steve Butler

Great dancing is not always found at large venues, is it? Have you ever gone to an event at a large banquet hall and been squeezed off the dance floor? It happens! Your USA Dance "Road Trip" crew has visited several smaller dance floors in recent months and the results have been very satisfying for all.

Now that all restaurants are smoke free, we go dancing at places we never would have considered before. So, when a case of the "Winter Blah's" spurred us to look for something more "wild and crazy," my partner and I checked out "Big Bobby Brown's Rocking Barbecue," on Route 9P, at the south end of Saratoga Lake, and we're very happy we did. In fact, we liked it so much, we invited two other couples to join us for a return trip, and we all had a ball! The wooden floor is not big by ballroom standards, but the Friday night crowd is not large, so we

were usually the only dancers. The DJ duo, "Skippy and the Pistons," supplies dance and karaoke music (yours truly even took his turn at the mike) along with the ever-popular "Guess the Mystery Artist" contests. The music was mostly popular tunes from the 60's-80's, but besides getting a great Swing workout, we found an occasional Fox Trot, Cha-cha or Rumba too. Looking for something different? Try "Bobby's" on a Friday night. (They also host a live band on Saturdays.)

Rating: 3 ½ Shoes (out of 5)

And don't overlook the occasional small venue benefit dance. Instructor Jan Holik gathered a group of present and former students recently to provide a demo at the "Cabin Fever" dance at St. George's Church in South Glens Falls. Tile floors can lead to sore ankles and knees, so we had to dance carefully, but the opportunity for com-

munity outreach was excellent and everyone had a great time. The church folks went all out, decorating the hall in a "50's" theme, and DJ Lee Pecue, from WCKM, did a great job providing upbeat entertainment without becoming overbearing (my pet peeve #14). Jan organized an excellent array of tunes for our un-rehearsed demo, "Dancing Through the Decades," as we portrayed the ages of ballroom dance from Waltz through Swing, to Hustle and Salsa. Jan's Tango lesson got practically everybody up on the floor, and before the evening was over, two of our gentlemen hosts chose new partners and helped them win both the Twist and Swing contests.

Rating: 4 Shoes (out of 5)

So, look around! Read those newspaper "entertainment" pages and don't overlook the smaller venues. You may find happy results like we did.

Meet Our Members

Tony and Donna Farrar took ballroom dancing lessons many years ago (pre-kids) from Pat Singleton in her basement. Donna's interest in dance goes back even farther. As a child she took ballet and tap after school. As a teenager, she enjoyed square dancing at the local firehouse.

Several years ago, Tony and Donna took line dance lessons. Donna loved it, but Tony definitely did not. When their older daughter got married, they decided to sign up for weekly ballroom dance lessons with some friends. They enjoyed it so much they haven't missed a "session" since they began, except for a hiatus when Donna broke her leg.

The lessons paid off when they went on vacation with Dave and Lorrie Graves to Grand Cayman Island



and had a ball doing the meringue to the "Barefoot Man". And then again this past spring on a cruise with three "dance couples" – Diane and Harry Barker, Jan and Dick Landry, and Dave and Lorrie Graves. They also enjoyed dancing at their younger daughter's wedding this past summer.

Donna & Tony Farrar

Donna worked on the Adirondack Chapter's Black Tie Dinner Dance this past spring. Tony is on the Adirondack Chapter USA Dance, Inc. Board of Directors and is involved in getting a local high school ballroom dance program off the ground for the coming school year.

Both Tony and Donna are Certified Public Accountants and find that dance lessons and the bi-monthly Chapter dances provide a much-needed physical and mental pastime that contributes greatly to their social activity and overall feeling of health and pleasure. They have met some wonderful people through a fun-filled common interest in dance, building friendships they hope will be long-lived.

Ask the Instructor: An Interview With Becky Molloy

by Melissa Ferrie-Healy

What do you love most about ballroom dancing? Lead and Follow.

To lead and follow all the way through a piece of music is to have participated in a miraculous form of communication. When it happens you are one with your partner, the music and the floor. Superb lead and follow requires us to use and discover a wealth of intelligence, intuitive skills and interpersonal sensitivity that every dancer is amazed to find within themselves. I love cultivating that communication in my students, I love seeing it in other dancers, and I love it when my partner and I hit the mark.

The communication between two competent dance partners is amazing, intriguing, and affirms my sense that we as humans are wonderful indeed. It includes things learned on a conscious level, things learned on a subconscious level and things genetically programmed into us. It requires that the follower's brain be extraordinarily alert and agile. The leader has to be planning the next action, but simultaneously evaluating the follower's response and making adjustments.

A good dancer must have the desire to perform well, but fear or control issues can distract us from being sensitive to our partner's needs. How capable of self-control are the dancers? Does the leader get so excited about dancing or fearful of making a mistake that it interferes with his ability to see how he is impacting his partner. The leader must be able to put himself in the follower's shoes and understand what she needs and what is the real world impact of an arm motion that is too strong, too quick, too low, too high, too indefinite, etc. Can the leader see when he is asking the follower to move into a space that he has moved his torso out of but left his head in?



Becky and Dan

And is the follower too eager or too fearful to follow the spin as it was lead? Does she let doubt and fear to control how she responds to the leader? How people respond to being pushed or pulled is the fundamental issue in learning the proper connection and frame for good lead and follow. A good teacher fine-tunes the push/push and pull/pull so that it comes from the center and is in perfect balance. And suddenly it no longer is experienced as pushing or pulling, it is moving as one.

We bring all our strengths and weaknesses out onto the dance floor and somehow everything has to be in balance if we are to lead and follow well. It takes skill, practice, self-discipline and a bit of magic.

What do you think is the most important thing for students to understand when learning to dance? The process of learning.

I think the problem is that most students assume the correct way to teach is to give you all the information about a figure at once and trust that if you are a good student you can digest it all. The analogy that I would give you is eating. We all know that it is

useless and potentially harmful to put more food in the stomach than it can hold. If we overload you, you will forget too many critical elements. A good teacher gives you digestible portions of information, in an order and at a rate tailored to your learning style.

In reality you have to go through the following phases:

1. The teacher puts information into your head by showing you, walking you through, talking you through and explaining why this or that is necessary, etc.
2. Your brain begins to get a rough idea of it.
3. Your brain begins to be able to command your body to do the steps, motions, weight distributions, etc. in the correct order, but not with fluidity and not to the beat.
4. Your brain begins to command your body to do the figure without stopping to think about what is next; and your body begins to obey, but not consistently.
5. With focus, your brain can command your body to do the figure and your body responds with greater consistency. You can do the figure to the beat, but you still aren't dancing.
6. The teacher puts additional information into your head to fine-tune timing, balance shifts and subtleties of lead and follow. Because you now have a greater understanding of the figure and where problem spots are, you are ready for information that would have been premature earlier. Previously the teacher said, "Keep the hand low," and now he or she is saying, "When the hand is low it should be palm down."
7. Your brain teaches your body by commanding it 2000 times.

see **Becky** pg. 5

Becky (cont. from pg. 4)

Leads to Follow: <http://www.dancewearelite.com> <http://www.ballroomdancecamp.com/>

(2000 repetitions are required for the average middle-aged brain to create the appropriate muscle memory!)

8. After your brain has trained your body and created the muscle memory, you can dance the figure with fluidity and grace.

What is your greatest challenge as a teacher? Being a short female. I won't teach a figure until I have mastered leading it. Because I am short and I don't naturally have a lot of upper body strength, I have to work a lot harder at it than a taller female teacher or a man with the same experience and talent. I have to do special exercises and stretches to keep my arms, back, and shoulders strong enough to demonstrate lead and to dance with taller women. I also have to practice with lots of different women with different body types to fully understand and know what works and what the problems are. That's why I always appreciate the women who will dance with me at different events. Over the years they have been my guinea pigs and have helped me become a better teacher.

Because I am short, I've had to be a

lot smarter about analyzing the lead. Early on, I was forced to learn that one lead doesn't fit all sizes of men. And very quickly, I also realized that most men lead as if the woman they are dancing with has the same center of gravity and build as they do. Meeting the challenge of being a short, female dancer has forced me to understand dance more deeply than I think I would have otherwise.

Also, as a short female I have to work harder to win over the respect of some male students. The women are pretty quickly convinced that I know what I'm talking about and that I can lead. But the men are understandably a little skeptical. I can always tell that the first five minutes of watching the 5' 1" teacher lead

their 5'7" wife is more distracting than instructive. Soon enough, with persistence and professionalism, they begin to see that I can understand their male perspective when it comes to dance. Eventually I get extra points for knowing both sides of the coin.

What do you find most rewarding about teaching dance?

When I started teaching, I assumed I would get the greatest reward from working with students who had great potential and were able to become exceptionally good dancers. But the teaching experiences that mean the most to me are working with awkward students who have carried a lifelong secret desire to dance for years but didn't believe they could. There is something very inspiring about people who don't necessarily have a lot of natural ability, but do have the courage to give it a try and are willing to work to be the best that they can.

When I get the call for their first appointment, I hear a bit of anxiety.

see **Becky** pg.7



Welcome New Members:

We would like to welcome these new members who have joined USA Dance, Inc. Adirondack Chapter #3035 since our last issue:

May - Kathleen Orsak, Bonnie Yanklowitz, Ed & Joy Huott

June – Gilles Pouli, Laura Bartels, and Pete Peculis

July – Marvin & Joan Dobert, Jacquelin Devlin, Frank & Mary Anne Westfall

Transferred from Capital District – Steve & Wendy Bodenheimer

USA Dance, Inc.

Adirondack Chapter #3035

Board of Directors

President: Cheryl Humphrey (cheryl@usadanceadk.com)

Vice President: John Dye (john@usadanceadk.com)

Secretary: Melissa Ferrie-Healy (melissa@usadanceadk.com)

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Membership Committee Co-Chairs: Cheryl Humphrey & Joseph De Meo

Membership Drive Committee Chairman: Chandler Atkins

Outreach Committee Chairman: John Dye

Publicity Committee: Diane & Harry Barker

Youth Outreach Committee Co-Chairs: Brent Humphrey & Tony Farrar

Director at Large: Michael Healy

Wanted: Additional Staff Members For *Stepping Out!*

As we begin our third year, *Stepping Out!* publisher, Harry Barker, and editor, Melissa Ferrie-Healy, remain committed to bringing you the very best quarterly newsletter we can possibly create for Adirondack Chapter #3035. Melissa has always loved writing and Harry has done a fantastic job

learning the ins and outs of desktop publishing.

But Melissa is now the mother of a toddler (with another on the way!) and Harry is actively involved in a number of other chapter activities. We need your help!!!!

We know that time is precious for

everyone, so we only meet briefly, once or twice per quarter, and the rest of our communication is done by e-mail. If you think you would like to help design an ad, assist with publishing, write an article, or start your own column, please contact Melissa Ferrie-Healy at 792-4709 or melissa@usadanceadk.com.

Did You Know...

The Adirondack Chapter #3035, USA Dance, Inc. **Board of Directors meets the 4th Monday of every month at 7 PM at the Temple Beth-El** to:

- *Plan our monthly dances
- *Develop programs, such as our "Dance For Life" outreach
- *Plan special events, such as workshops and our Black-Tie-Optional Dance

*Discuss issues and concerns that are relevant to our chapter members

These meetings are open to all active members of the Adirondack Chapter. Any members who wish to address the board directly about a particular issue or concern should contact Cheryl Humphrey (by phone, at 761-4174, or by e-mail, at cheryl@usadanceadk.com) prior to the meeting so she can place them on the

agenda. Time has also been allotted at the conclusion of each meeting for attending members to share their comments outside the agenda.

Why not plan to join us at one of our upcoming meetings on **October 23rd** and/or **November 27th**? We'd love to see and hear from you!

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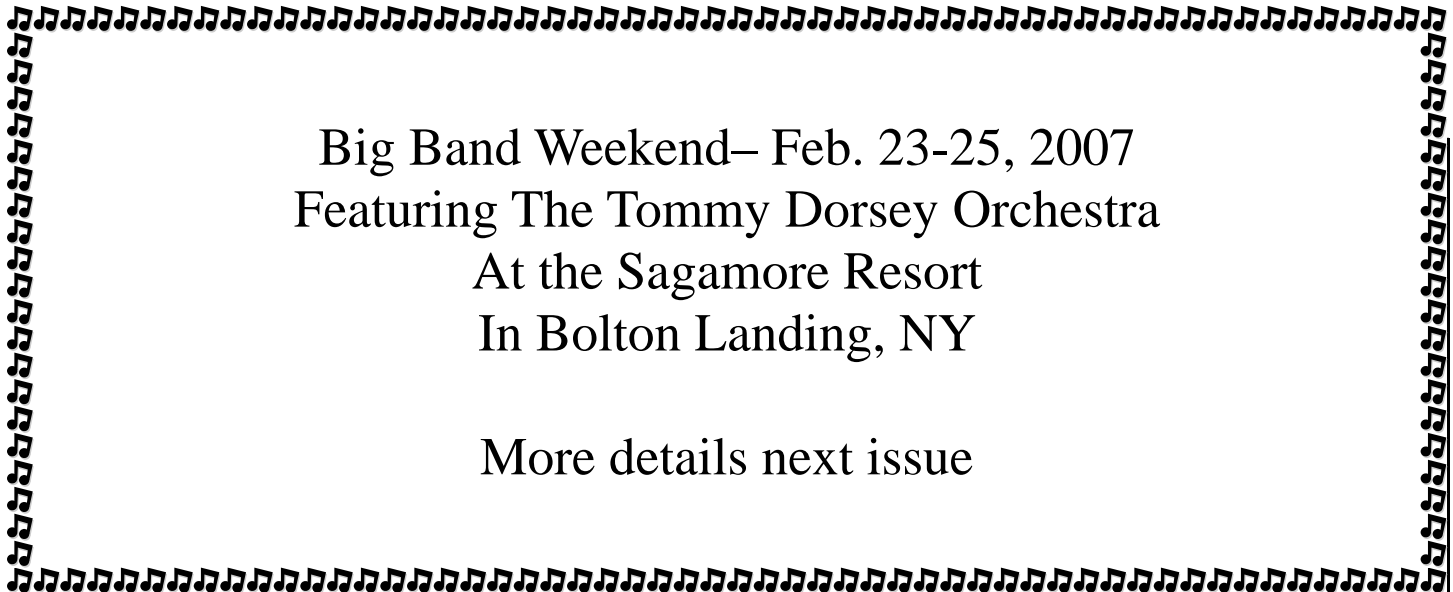
Becky (cont. from pg.5)

They make it a point to tell me they have two left feet. In some cases they truly are awkward. They're not looking to win a competition; they just want to be able to dance together. We all know they will never be Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers and they may never be the best dancers on the floor, but my heart sings when the moment comes that they can do three or four figures and the smiles on their faces show that they are dancing the way they wanted. It is very rewarding when they come in bragging that they impressed the relatives at the latest wedding.

Having said that, the absolute greatest reward for me is that my workday is spent with couples that love each other and enjoy playing, dancing and problem solving together. I find with only a few exceptions, couples that survive dance lessons have fabulous partnerships and marriages. They are kind to each other, supportive, respectful, and in love. When they disagree or get frustrated, they work it out with dignity and respect. When one partner is feeling self-doubt, the other partner knows just the right words and touch and tone of voice to gently encourage. When they finally accomplish something difficult they cele-

brate with huge smiles, looking into each other's eyes, clasping hands or hugging. Every workday, I bear witness to such beautiful moments of tenderness and patience. My husband, Dan, and I are so fortunate to have these couples in our lives and to have the opportunity to develop friendships with them.

Many thanks to Becky Molloy for graciously taking the time to answer my questions with such thoroughness, thoughtfulness and depth.



**Big Band Weekend– Feb. 23-25, 2007
Featuring The Tommy Dorsey Orchestra
At the Sagamore Resort
In Bolton Landing, NY**

More details next issue

Help Your Postman

If you would rather receive our newsletter via email and help us to keep our expenses down, please email cheryl@usadanceadk.com.

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We've got a new web address...
www.usadanceadk.com

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USA Dance, Inc.
Adirondack Chapter #3035



"Let's Dance"

USA Dance, Inc. NYS-Adirondack Chapter #3035

Second Saturday Dance

Temple Beth-El, 3 Marion Ave. Glens Falls, NY
7 PM Lesson/ 8-10:30 Dancing
Music by: "Dancin'Time"

October 14, 2006 Country 2-Step Lesson by "Dancin'David" LeVesque

November 11, 2006 Lesson to be announced

Fourth Sunday Dance

The Fun Spot (Skateland)
1035 State Rt. 9 Queensbury, NY
7-10 PM Dancing

October 22, 2006

November 26, 2006

Dress: Smart Casual \$7 Members \$10 Non-members \$5 Students
In case of inclement weather, please call Harry & Diane Barker at 793-5853

Check our NEW web site: www.usadanceadk.com