



NYS-Adirondack Chapter
#3035 USA Dance Inc.

Stepping Out!



Volume 2 Issue 3

Spring 2006

President's Corner

Hello everyone and Happy New Year! By the time you read this, we will have celebrated our 4th Anniversary at our dance on February 11, 2006. Congratulations to all of you for your support!

At this time, I would like to take a moment to recap 2005. During the past year, our chapter has experienced a tremendous growth in new membership from 42 to 68 people. This coupled with a brighter financial picture has allowed us the opportunity to add a 2nd dance in the month and the realization of our first annual black tie optional charity ball.

As far as 2006 is concerned, we will continue to provide both our 2nd Saturday and our 4th Sunday dances. However, the 4th Sunday dance may have to take a brief respite (May, June, July,

(see President on page 2)

It All Began With Jan

We are fortunate to have a number of very talented dance instructors available for lessons here in the northeast, but the majority of Adirondack Chapter members got their first taste of ballroom dancing with our hometown honey, Jan Holik. She currently teaches privately and offers group lessons in Latham, Saratoga and at the Glens Falls Ballet and Dance Center in Queensbury. She comes to class in her "hip" jeans with stories to share of her harrowing trip up the Northway, her darling "grown up" children, and numerous "close encounters of the third kind." But this is a woman who takes ballroom dancing seriously and recognizes its unique value. It was Jan Holik who first encouraged our founding members to start a chapter of USA Dance, Inc. (formerly USABDA) and it's Jan who keeps us coming back for more. We laugh and learn and grow with her, but few of us take the time to stop and wonder where this gem of a teacher got her start.

A Lansingburgh, NY native, Jan Holik's earliest memories of dancing revolve around watching her parents having fun out on the dance floor. Little Jan wanted to be included,

by Melissa-Ferrie Healy

so she would run out to join them. Though her parents weren't professional dancers, they were more than competent. In fact, Jan's mother won a Jitterbug contest while her father was off fighting in the war.

As far as formal dance training is concerned, Jan considers herself an "older beginner." She started tap lessons when she was 14 years old, and studied ballet, jazz and modern dance as a college student in Binghamton, NY. While there, she entered a radio contest and won a free dance lesson at a local Arthur Murray studio. When the studio found out Jan was only a college student, they turned her away. However when she won the same contest twice in a row, they finally relented and gave Jan her first Tango lesson. She loved it and when she saw an ad for Arthur Murray training, she immediately signed up.

The Arthur Murray program brought Jan to Indianapolis, IN. where she taught Ballroom dance for a number of years until she married and moved to El Paso, TX. Caring for her four young children there left her little time for either dancing or teaching, so she gave up

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Hats Off To Spring

On Saturday March 11th, our Adirondack Chapter #3035 USA Dance, Inc. will host its FIRST-EVER black-tie-optional dinner-dance. The event will be held at the Adirondack Community College gymnasium from 6:30-11 PM. Hats off to John Dye and his committee members for making this dream a reality. Everyone has worked very hard to ensure a fun-filled evening for all who attend. Live dance music will be performed by The Overtones, a 4-piece combo from Kinderhook, NY. Our own "Dancin'Time" DJ's, David and Dawn Levesque, will provide music during the combo's breaks. Bill Steele and his team of Culinary Arts students at ACC will prepare a feast beyond compare, to be served at carving,

by Melissa Ferrie-Healy

poultry, pasta, seafood, dessert and beverage stations. In addition to continuous dancing and dining, there will be a Silent Auction offering a wide variety of fabulous items destined to go home with the highest bidders. And to help create a festive springtime atmosphere, tables will feature hats designed and donated by local florists. Who could ask for anything more? A limited number of tickets are still available for purchase. For more information, contact John Dye at 792-1603 or Cheryl Humphrey at 761-4174.



Reminder! Our Hats Off to Spring Formal Dance is March 11, 2006

President (cont. from page 1)

and August) as the Fun Spot has committed to other venues during the tourist season. In September, we plan to pick back up again where we left off (at the Fun Spot). Throughout the year, we will continue to plan for a dance "workshop", possibly a New Year's Eve dance, and of course, our 2nd annual black tie optional affair. I should also mention that we will be working toward actively promoting dance in our local school systems.

On another note, I am sad to report that Steve Butler is leaving our board. He has been with us from the onset. He has served as our Vice President and a director

at large. Steve will not completely disappear, as he will continue to periodically submit articles to our quarterly newsletter, *Stepping Out!* And I am sure that you will see him on the dance floor. Thanks Steve for all your efforts!

I also want to extend a special thanks to Diane Barker as she has graciously volunteered to take Steve's job of booking our dance instructors and dance lessons for our 2nd Saturday dances.

Our first annual black tie optional charity ball, "Hats Off To Spring" is fast approaching, March 11, 2006. If you have not secured your tickets, please do so as soon as possible as we have a limited

number of seats available (200 people). It should be a splendid evening of dining and dancing that you will not forget!

I would be remiss not to mention the fact that we always need volunteers to help with our various committees. If you are interested, please do not hesitate to contact me at cherylh095@adelphia.net or by phone at 761-4174.

In closing, I would again 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

Jan (cont. from page 1)

Arthur Murray for a while. Eventually, she divorced her husband and returned to the Northeast. Jan's parents were thrilled to have her "home" and when they came to her Arthur Murray open house and saw her dance, they couldn't believe how far their little girl had come.

Jan is a teacher at heart. She is a natural "people person," who clearly loves what she's doing. Although she has students at all levels, Jan says, "Anyone can teach people who have ability, but you have to be a real teacher to reach someone who's hopelessly struggling." She takes great pleasure in watching couples progress from two individuals with terror-stricken faces and a "deer in the headlights" stare to a smiling couple gliding confidently around the dance floor with a sparkle in their eyes, realizing they can learn and have fun with ballroom dancing.

It may be rewarding, but teaching ballroom dance is not for the faint of heart. Jan is constantly evaluating her students. Are they dancing with "style" or quirky habits? "Do I leave it, or do I fix it?" she asks. One of her greatest challenges as a teacher has been trying to make learning fun while maintaining enough content from the syllabus. It's tough to find a balance that works for everyone. Most couples want to focus on patterns because it makes them feel like they're getting somewhere. As a result, technique, which is equally important, but hardly as exciting, is often neglected. Couples have to be ready and able to understand the importance of technique, otherwise they will quickly become bored with it. In a class with 10-20 couples, people are bound to peak at different times. And then there's the issue of applying technique to patterns already learned and combining patterns in

new and interesting ways... Over the years, Jan has come to realize she can't please everyone, so she doesn't even try any more; she does what feels right to her. How does she know when her teaching is successful? When she sees people making little changes in their dancing, sometimes gradually over time, and sometimes with a major breakthrough. And that's what makes it all worthwhile.

One common mistake Jan finds couples falling into when they dance is the woman trying to be so "helpful" she's not helping at all. "Women are so happy to have a partner to dance with, they're sometimes overcooperative and 'helpful.' They overcompensate to create a successful dance experience for their partner. The result: the man never learns to lead." And if there's one thing Jan does well, it's encouraging men to be strong, capable leaders on the dance

(see Jan on page 5)

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Jan Holik

(518) 272-2980

jandancer1098@aol.com

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The Adirondack Chapter #3035 of
USA Dance Inc.
and
The Adirondack Community
College Foundation

cordially invite you to their
1st Annual Charity Ball

HATS OFF TO SPRING!

Saturday, March 11, 2006

Adirondack Community College Gymnasium
Bay Road, Queensbury, New York

To establish a Scholarship Fund to benefit the Culinary Arts Program.

6:30 P.M. - 11:00 P.M.

Dinner Buffet and Dancing
(Cash Bar)

Silent Auction

Music Provided by The Overtones

\$50 per person

Black Tie Optional

Tables of 8 Available

Amount Deductible \$20



For more info, call John Dye at 792-1603 or Cheryl Humphrey at 761-4174

Congratulations!

**Adirondack Chapter #3035
USA Dance, Inc.**

Four Years and Growing!

- TWO Monthly Dances
- Expanded Quarterly Newsletter
- First-Ever Formal Dinner Dance
- Spring Dance Workshop
- 50% Increase In Chapter Membership
- Fabulous and User-Friendly Web Site
- Community Partnerships With Temple Beth-El, Glens Falls Printing and Adirondack Community College



***Thanks to our Board of Directors
for their outstanding leadership and dedication!***

***Thanks to the Dance Community of the Northeast
for your continued support!***

Our Mission:

- **To promote Ballroom Dancing so as to bring the joy of dancing to the citizens of our community.**
- **To create opportunities to meet and enjoy the friendship of other ballroom dancers.**
- **To help unite all who share our enthusiasm and interest in ballroom dancing.**
- **To create a friendly and happy atmosphere for those who enjoy social dancing.**
- **To provide regularly scheduled dances for the benefit of all who are interested.**

Jan (cont. from page 2)
floor.

Jan thinks the current ballroom dance craze is wonderful. "Ballroom dancers have been a quiet sub-culture for years and they're suddenly part of the 'in' crowd," she says. "I'm glad to see support out there for us." However, she is a little concerned that popular shows, such as *Dancing With the Stars*, may be a little too showy, with women kicking their legs way up high and couples straying from basic dance patterns. It presents an image that's not necessarily true of ballroom dancing in the "real" world. She'd also like to see more male athletes appear on the show - football, basketball and baseball stars - to get more men to watch the program and feel confident about attempting ballroom dance themselves.

As one of our biggest advocates, Jan is amazed at how far the Adirondack Chapter #3035 has come, particularly in the last couple of years. (See our *President's Corner*, on pg. 1, for details!) We're a friendly, welcoming chapter and our enthusiasm is way up. How could we be any different with a teacher like Jan leading the way? Where do we go from here? Jan would like to see us become more involved in outreach so word gets out about who we are and what we're about. She'd also like to see our members attend more workshops/dance weekends outside the area - Montreal, perhaps? "Remember, there's always something new to learn!" she says. Well, no matter how many new things we learn, hopefully we'll always remember to be grateful for the lady who got us started off on the right foot.

Members (cont. from page 5)

an excellent opportunity for them to practice patience, trust and self-control with fun, measurable results.

Their advice to up-and-coming ballroom dancers: join your local chapter of USA Dance, Inc., come to their monthly dances, sign up for lessons and be prepared to grit your teeth, laugh and grow closer with every step!

Next Issue: Good Times on Small Floors! Steve Butler and friends have gone on the road again, this time visiting local venues with small dance floors. Look for his reviews in our Summer Issue, coming June 2006.

Snow, Eicher, Farrar & Co., LLP *Certified Public Accountants*

16 Pine Street
Glens Falls, NY 12801-3444

Phone: 518-793-7763

Leads to Follow: <http://www.ballroom-r-us.com>
<http://www.nesd.net/>

Meet Our Members- Melissa and Michael Healy

Melissa and Michael Healy started dancing together in the fall of 1998, six months after they met on a blind date. Melissa had enjoyed ice dancing with the Glens Falls Figure Skating Club during junior high and high school. Since ice time was expensive and dance partners were virtually non-existent, she thought ballroom dancing might be a more practical pursuit. (And signing up for a session of ballroom dance lessons seemed a great way to test Michael's commitment to the relationship!) Michael was simply trying to win Melissa's heart by being a good sport and going along with her whim. He was secretly hoping the weekly ballroom dance lessons with Jan Holik at the Glens Falls Ballet and Dance Center would eventually come to a quiet end. Eight years later, Melissa and Michael are still dancing! They were married in October 2003 and danced an American Tango for their first dance at the wedding.

Ballroom dancing has afforded Melissa and Michael the opportunity to grow as a couple and meet new people. They have enjoyed using their skills at chapter dances,



special events and weddings, as well as on cruises. Proud new parents of 9-month-old Ryan Allan Healy, the couple has finally taken a break from their weekly dance lessons, but they still try to maintain their skills by attending at least one of the local chapter dances each month.

Melissa and Michael are also active members of USA Dance, Inc. They both serve on the Adirondack Chapter's Board of Directors, where Melissa recently began her 2nd year as secretary. In addition, Melissa is the editor of the chapter's quar-

terly newsletter, *Stepping Out!*

It has been interesting for Melissa and Michael to watch their relationship grow as their dancing has improved. Patience has been their greatest challenge. In the beginning, it was particularly difficult for Melissa, a professional musician and elementary music teacher, to resist the urge to correct Michael's every move. (He lovingly refers to her as "The Human Metronome!") It was frustrating for Michael, a financial advisor by trade, with no formal training in music or dance, to try to learn his own steps as well as lead his know-it-all partner through her steps. Thanks to Jan Holik's saintly perseverance and good sense of humor, the couple has finally learned to entrust each other to their appropriate "leader" and "follower" roles. (And life is so much easier that way!) In light of all they learned, Melissa and Michael would like to strongly recommend ballroom dancing as an alternative form of marriage counseling! It's a healthy, active, engaging way for couples to learn to relate to one another. It's also

(see **Members** on page 4)

Welcome New Members:

We would like to welcome these new members that have joined since our last issue:

Michael LeClair * Cher & Mark Hoffman * Pam & Bill Loeb * Cody Phillips * Corey Redmond * Shira Hoffman
 Molly Joyce * Yeshewanah Beyene & Haimanot Kelbessa * Linda & Frank Cappabianca * Johanna & Ron Farra
 Betty & Paul Gancher * Bonnie Garvey * Daniel Herlihy * Abigail McGuirk

THANK YOU!

Thanks to your generosity, we have been able to donate \$120 towards a Culinary Arts Scholarship at ACC.

If you have a business or just want to place a "Happy Ad" to help cover our mailing costs and help raise money for this worthy cause, please contact Melissa Ferrie-Healy or Harry Barker or any board member with your information.

USA Dance #3035 Board of Directors

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**NYS-Adirondack Chapter
#3035 USA Dance Inc.**

P.O. Box 699
Glens Falls, NY 12801
Phone: 518-793-0227

Stepping Out! is published quarterly by
NYS-Adirondack Chapter #3035 USA Dance, Inc.
P.O. Box 699, Glens Falls, NY 12801.

USA Dance, Inc. is a non-profit, educational organization and is the official sanctioning body for amateur ballroom dancing in the United States.

Advertising Rates:
\$90 full page, \$60 half page,
\$30 quarter page, \$15 business card.

Deadline for the Summer Issue is May 8

Stepping Out! Staff:
Melissa Ferrie-Healy, Editor
Harry Barker, Production

We're on the web...
[www.geocities.com/
adkusabda/index.html](http://www.geocities.com/adkusabda/index.html)



"Let's Dance"

NYS-Adirondack Chapter #3035 USA Dance, Inc.

Second Saturday Dance

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

April 8, 2006

Salsa Lesson with Kiera Lemonis and David Wolfe

May 13, 2006

Merengue Lesson with Jerry Durovic

Fourth Sunday Dance

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

March 26, 2006

April 23, 2006

***** SPECIAL EVENT *****

March 11, 2006-Black Tie Event

A.C.C. Gymnasium

Music by The Overtones

And Dancin'Time

Dress: Smart Casual \$7 Members \$10 Non-members \$5 Students
In case of inclement weather, please call Joseph DeMeo @ 793-0227

Check our web site: www.geocities.com/adkusabda/index.html