



**SIDE-BAR  
COMMENTS**

*Club Hours*

Wednesday 7 PM - 1 AM  
Thursday 7 PM - 1 AM  
Friday 7 PM - 1 AM  
Saturday 7PM - 1 AM

**MARDI  
GRAS**

**1500 Oaklawn Ave.  
Cranston, RI  
(401) 463-3080**

Wednesday, Thursday,  
Friday & Saturday  
Free Line Dance Lessons

Thu - Fri - Gail McKenna  
7:30 - 8 PM & 7 - 8 PM  
Wed - Sat - Wayne Learned  
7 - 8 PM

Thursday  
Two Step Lessons 7:00 -  
7:30 with Joe Macera  
Line Dance Lessons with  
Wayne Learned 7:30 - 9:00

This newsletter can be  
viewed on line at  
[www.mikeponte.com](http://www.mikeponte.com)



Quick Quick... Slow Slow



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Facilitator: Joe Macera - Contributors: Al Foster, Bill O'Brien

**November  
2007**

## That's America

My friend Joyce and I were talking about vacations a few weeks ago. She is planning a trip to the South West. We ended up talking about how sometimes the unplanned events during a trip are the best; the things that have nothing to do with where you are visiting. It is just about people.



**Ernie Levesque**

It made me think about a story my brother Chuck had told me. My brothers Chuck, George and I were returning from Ireland in October of 2001. We waited in line for customs and Chuck told me about a young Irish father and his son. The boy and his father were seated in the row ahead of my brother. The boy was in the window seat and was watching the ocean and the clouds. As the first glimpse of land came into view, the father put his hands on the boys shoulders and leaned in and said: "That's America". The father said it

with such reverence that it almost sounded like a prayer or maybe an answer to a prayer. That's America. The boy turns to his father with that wide-eyed look that kids get when they think they've heard something important but they don't know what or why. His father's expression tells him what he needs to know. He turns back to the window with a new sense of wonder and awe... That's America!

I might have told that story to Joyce but she told me a better one instead. Her story was about a family trip. They are returning by car from Disney World. Her daughter, Amy, is in the back seat. She is entertaining herself with a "write and wipe" board. Somewhere in Georgia, they approach an army caravan of troop carriers. As they pass the caravan, Amy cleans the "write and wipe" board. She writes two words on the board and holds it up against the window. In a second, troops are screaming and laughing, pointing and waving. Two words; a simple message from a little girl.

For some of them, that message might be the thing that gets them through some of the toughest times of their lives. For some, it will be a story they tell their own daughters and grand daughters. But for all of them it is proof positive, that their sacrifice, big or small, has value. Not because of a proclamation, from the President or Congress, not because of ribbon or medal from a general or captain; just ,out of the

blue, on a highway in Georgia, a little girl says: "thank you"... That's America

Ernie Levesque

## Leslie and Kevin's Wedding

Leslie and Kevin were married on Sunday, October 21, 2007. I was lucky enough to be there as a guest.

I have to admit that I was a bit surprised when Marie had me take the Providence Place Mall exit, into the city. I am really just a guest, and I didn't know where the wedding was to be held. Again, to my surprise, we end up at Citizens Plaza.



**Leslie and Kevin**

Marie wants to wait for Joe to arrive so that we can all sit together. We are waiting just outside of a great semi-circular atrium that looks south through three story windows. You can see some of downtown and a bit of Federal Hill, but mostly you can see the bridges along the Providence river all the way to the new route 195 bridge. I'm old enough to know that most of what I'm looking at was once covered in asphalt and held the dubious title of the "worlds widest bridge". Today, however, in the waning sun of autumn afternoon, it is nothing

short of spectacular. I don't know what you do to get something, like a wedding, exactly right: Holding it here can't hurt.

Joe, it turns out, has been in the bar all the time we were waiting for him! He and Linda show up, and we find a set of seats. I'm still marveling at the view. The ceremony will be right in front of those great windows. Eventually, I notice Kevin and I'm stuck by how calm he seems. I nudge Marie and whisper: "Kevin seems incredibly calm.". Marie whispers back: "I think I'm more nervous than he looks.". As she turns back to look at the emerging event, I see her in profile and can't help but think what a great life I have. The minister is a woman and I like that. I'm not sure why; but I do. The music is a flute and a harp. I'm not really all that keen on Harps and I'm not paying too much attention until they play "When you wish upon a star". This tune takes me back to hundreds of other Sunday evenings, watching the Walt Disney's "Wonderful World of Color". I'm still reveling in the past, when the Bride enters. I've seen Leslie at the club more than a few times, she is a very pretty girl, and I have to admit that I've watched her dance on more than one occasion. Today, I can hardly look away. I know that people always talk about how great the bride looks but it's not always true. Today, it isn't just true: Today, it is the picture that should accompany the definition of "bride".

The wedding ceremony is a beautiful combination of the rite and the celebration. I like the minister more and more. She conveys the need to realize this is a promise not to be taken lightly, but she also conveys that sense of joy. Joy, that this promise between two people is also the promise of

better world. I'm hoping I get a chance to speak with her but that never happens.

The reception is held at CAFE' NUOVO, adjoining the atrium. This is really nice. Instead of getting back in the car and heading to a new location, we are sitting out on the restaurant's deck along the Providence River. The early evening is still warm enough that you can really enjoy a drink, the view, and some great conversation. I can't get over how beautiful it is. It is also really quiet. We can see the traffic on the roads and bridges but you can hardly notice the sound. Eventually, we are asked to return to our assigned table for the entrance of the bride and groom.

Things are pretty normal for a while. The dinner is superb including a chocolate mousse desert that is decadent. The music starts.... Again, things are normal for a while, then Marie tells me that we're going dance "Dance Time Rhythm"! Normal is now suspended. I don't think I've ever seen anything as spectacular as watching Leslie in her bridal gown (and heels) dancing "Dance Time Rhythm". I could hardly remember the steps. From there we did other line dances and some couples dance. In the middle of the "El Paso Cha-Cha", I notice that there is a genuine sense of awe among the guests who are seated around the dance floor. I've been to more than a few weddings and this is special even for me.

All the way home and most of the next day, I just couldn't get over what a great time this was. So thanks, Marie, for thinking to ask me along. And thanks to you Leslie and Kevin; may you have a long and happy life together.... It certainly seemed like a great start.

Ernie Levesque

## The Anniversary

October 25th marked my one year anniversary at the Diamond Rodeo. Silly as it may sound, I made a night of it. I dressed up. I traded my water bottle for a glass of wine. I two-stepped with my favorite partner. I requested "Diamond City", the line dance I learned exactly one year ago at my first lesson. I stayed out past my bedtime on a "school night". I celebrated, and I had a wonderful time!



Marie Céspedes

Sitting in my usual spot next to Papa Joe Macera, I looked out across the hardwood dance floor and saw a year's worth of memories dance before my eyes. My first few weeks, struggling in running shoes...plates of sugar cookies on the bar at Christmas time... my first (and second, and third) pair of boots... my grandmother's passing in March, followed by forty days in black... the grand opening of Johnny Bahamas in June, and the bubbles in the wall... spending long summer Saturdays on the beach and evenings afterwards on the dance floor... my new autumn crush... and the Cardarelli wedding just last Sunday... All of it has been infused with dancing and country music. When I walked through the doors of the Diamond Rodeo last year, I never imagined that dancing would become such a big part of my life. But it

has, and I'm so glad. It almost feels like a victory for me. I'm looking forward to another year of dancing, friends, and country music. And, hey, who couldn't use a little more "polish", anyway? Anyone care to two-step?

- Marie Céspedes



### A Salute to Gail McKenna

#### "The Diamond Rodeo's Professional Line Dance Instructor"

It's 6:45 P.M. on a Friday night and most of the regulars are waiting for the P.M. doors to open, as we are waiting, I see in the distance a lady carrying a backpack and a huge CD case, I yell "hey, my favorite instructor" and that she is to so many who participate in her Country line dance lessons on Friday and Saturday nights. As many of you know, Gail works at Kent Hospital in the Trauma unit, at times, when I worked at Kent in the Information Services Dept, I would get a call from the Help Desk to service a computer or printer and whenever I saw Gail in the hallways she always had something nice to say to me or others with a smile. Anyone I saw walking next to Gail had a smile on their face, this is how Gail is. She is full of sunshine with a caring personality.

But this is only the beginning, when Gail is getting ready in the DJ booth, it's customary for me to go over and see what is being taught so I can put it on her web site [www.w1pro.com/dancgal](http://www.w1pro.com/dancgal) She starts warming us up on the dance floor for lessons. She likes to test us to see what we remember and most of the time we do remember

continued on page 4



**HELLO TO ALL,**  
 Many people have come up to me commenting how much they miss Joe the DJ on a Fri-



**Bill O'Brien**

day Night, let's face it, he entertained us and the dance floor was always full because he knew what we liked. Tad is missed as well, on a Friday night, he always got the Friday night dance party going by running from the DJ booth to the center of the dance floor with the words "PARTY PEOPLE". Now the only one left with that much energy is Chris. Yes, the club has changed in a lot of ways, but the things that will never change are the friends we gain and the fun dances we learn.

"END of DANCE"



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and it's only because of her way of teaching. As we are warming up, people visit her, and then the times come for lessons. She walks on the dance floor and people are clapping, always happy to see her.

Gail has more than 10 years of professional experience in line and couples dance instruction. Her experience is effective to those who come to the club to learn line dancing, be it a beginner or beginner/intermediate, Gail makes everyone comfortable no matter what skill level. The pace is always comfortable and tailored with a relaxed setting to suit everyone on the floor. The lessons with Gail are always full of energy, lots of fun and excitement, full of laughter, smiles and lots of clapping.

Gail teaches a variety of line dances from beginner/intermediate on Friday nights to beginner on Saturday nights. She is also accommodating to requests So, there you have it.....2008 will be my 10th year taking lessons from Gail.....and many more to come.....

Thanks Gail

I asked a couple people from the club to contribute to this Salute to Gail with poems.....enjoy!

Bill O'Brien



If we didn't have Gail  
What would we do?  
We would knock each other over  
And feel like fools

We'd have no one to follow  
No one to guide  
And no one to help us through  
This dance lesson ride

We listen to her count  
We watch her feet  
Without her  
Our new dance wouldn't be complete

We pride ourselves  
With how well we do  
We owe it all to Gail  
To teach us the new

The moral of the story  
Rings so very true  
Without Gail  
We wouldn't have a clue



Why do we dance?

To feel good  
Moving and flowing with inner peace

To be free  
More tranquil with each step

A sense of soaring  
As if flying through the air

To let our hair down  
Feeling the days stresses melt away

To have a night out  
And meet friends for life

To laugh so hard you cry  
As you stumble through a lesson

A lesson that we know  
Gail will get us through

It's for the feeling  
That we get no where else

No one really gets it  
Except fellow dancers

That's okay  
We have each other



The bombshel down front is ready to stomp.  
Gettin' the crowd rockin' to the beats for her shuffles and twists.  
She's the twisted sister that leads us all.  
Us cowboys and cowgirls at heart to the core.  
Come bring your cowboy boots and attitudes...  
and join in the fun...  
You'll be addicted for the long haul.



**Diamond Rodeo**

**Annual Christmas Party**

Saturday, December 15, 2007

7:00 PM to 1:00 AM

Please RSVP by giving slip with food you are bringing to Peter or Tina, or email [Jo-Ann straitctrydncr@hotmail.com](mailto:Jo-Ann.straitctrydncr@hotmail.com), by December 11, 2007

Please remember we need more food items and less dessert items.

*People*



<p>Line Dance Lessons Wednesday &amp; Saturday 7:00 - 8:00</p>		<p><b>Wayne Learned</b></p>
<p>Two Step Lessons Thursdays 7:00 - 7:30</p>		<p><b>Joe Macera</b></p>
<p>Thursday Line Dance Lessons at 7:30 Friday at 7:00 with Gail McKenna Cat Country Dance Party Night Every Friday</p>		<p><b>Gail McKenna</b></p>