

# WORLD LINE DANCE NEWSLETTER



## **How did you get started with dancing, or DJ-ing or producing videos or whatever?**

When we retired in 1992, we wanted to do something besides sitting at home with no hobbies. We were always interested in dancing and this is one of the reasons, Mas and I bonded so soon. We started out with ballroom dancing and shortly after we were married, we took lessons. It wasn't until a year after we retired that one of our friends asked us to go to a line dancing class in one of the suburbs here in the Chicago area. We had so much fun and the dancers were so very nice, we were "hooked". The most difficult dance for us at the time was learning "Achy Breaky Heart".

## **What made you continue?**

We continued, because we were having so much fun dancing. The dancers and the music was invigorating and they were very nice and friendly folks and very helpful. We were all there for one purpose and that was to have fun!

## **What dances have you choreographed that you are most proud of (because I know you have zillions of them)?**

No, we have not choreographed any dances. But we do have zillions of photographs of the Chicago Cubs and the dancers, event directors, instructors and DJ's from the events we have attended. Photography has been a hobby of mine since back in the 50's when we had season tickets to the Chicago Cub's game at Wrigley Field. It started out taking photographs of the players and having them autograph for my 2 nephews. Since they were too shy to get the photos signed, I ended up going to the ball park early (before going to work at the hospital). I had 4 photos and if they signed 3 and I gave them one. Originally, I was taking mostly portrait shots, but my husband said they would like more action shots and photos with another player, (preferably a potential Hall of Fame), which I did. Before you knew it, the players knew what the deal was so they signed without any arguments since they wanted photos of them in action. In those days, the players were not charging for their autographs, which was great! I was able to continue this for many years since Mas has been very cooperative with my expensive hobby, which I have always been thankful for. The most challenging was getting action photos of the players and getting a field pass to the different Major league clubs.

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## **What made you want to continue?**

In the beginning, we were dancing locally. Then one year we drove to Fort Wayne, Indiana, which is only a 3-4 hour drive. There were line dancing lessons, team competition, choreography competition, couples lessons and open dancing. It really opened our eyes to what was offered to us as a dancer. It wasn't until we flew to Raleigh, NC for the JG2 Marathon that the desire to travel to the different events was the way to go.. We saw how much fun everyone was having and the caliber of dancers and instructors were excellent. We loved the competition, the lessons and the show. It also was a challenge for me since the dancers are one of the most difficult groups to take photos of.

## **What has been a real thrill for you related to dancing?**

The music, the shows and getting candid photos of everyone, smiling and having fun. Also dancing with the instructors during open dance. Mas loves the lessons and mingling with all the dancers.

## **What hobbies and interest do you have outside of dancing?**

As you well know, my hobby is photography and dancing. Mas loves to golf and to dance. He dances more than I do among all the young ladies.

## **Where do you consider home?**

Home is when we are together. But, we were both born in California and were uprooted during WWII with over 120,000 other Japanese to different camps in the United States. Mas and his family were evacuated to Heart Mountain, Wyoming and my family and I were sent to Poston, Arizona. Those of you who are old enough will recall that the Japanese were under the supervision of the Federal Government for the duration of the World War II. After peace was declared, we both settled in Illinois and now, we call Skokie, IL.,our home.

## **Just give us a general view of you as a person and a dancer.**

We love to dance and have fun. We are not great dancers but the level of beginner/intermediate, and an attempt at the advance level. Important thing is to have fun! As seniors, we try to encourage other seniors and beginners to attend classes and to attend the many events available to us. We feel that dancing is great exercise for the mind and body. The dancers keep us motivated when we go to these events. I have a severe stenosis of the lower back, and I have to keep working on my back and abs to be able to dance. The sciatic pain comes and goes.

## **Summary:**

Mas and I have had a wonderful life together and we wish all our friends and dancers the same. We don't know why we were selected as one of the Who's Who, but we do appreciate the honor. We are just dancers who love to dance. Keep Smiling and have fun dancing. You may be one of the dancers smiling for us.

Mas and Kaz Ozaki (Mas is M for male)