

THE POST

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Raina Wensell and Rob Heist, a couple from Dallas, practice their steps during a ballroom dancing lesson.

In step with the times

Packed ballroom dancing class a sign of its popularity

By JENNA PREKEL
For The Post

DALLAS — Ned Hartman was on leave from military duties in Korea when he met Lois Miller in January 1953. The couple had a great time dancing the night away in Plymouth. Nine months later, Hartman was discharged. Four months after that, the couple was married.

And they're still dancing together. The Dallas couple gave ballroom dancing lessons to 25 people at Apple Tree Terrace in Newberry Estate earlier this week. Hartman and his wife Lois recently started Ballroom Barn, which offers group ballroom dance lessons every Tuesday night.

"We used to dance in the basement of St. Therese's Church," said the 77-year-old Hartman, a retired insurance agent. "We went from square dancing to round dancing to ballroom dancing. We love to dance. We kept getting better and better."

Hartman yelled simple commands over the ballroom music "quick, slow, quick, quick, slow" and "forward, together, recover" as he taught beginners how to dance. He says the exposure of ballroom dancing on tele-

"I think the number of movies and television shows that have come out about ballroom dancing have opened people's eyes. The popularity is mushrooming. People are jumping on the bandwagon."

Ned Hartman
Ballroom dance instructor

vision and the big screen has led to its increased popularity.

"I think the number of movies and television shows that have come out about ballroom dancing have opened people's eyes," he said. "The popularity is

mushrooming. People are jumping on the bandwagon."

Lois Hartman described the crowd as a "nice young group that seems to be having fun."

"It's a great form of exercise and it's a great social activity," she said.

John and Jean Moses enjoyed themselves and are looking forward to next week's dance class. Jean stated she would wear short sleeves because dancing is like exercise. The Hartmans believe this healthy

Instructors Lois and Ned Hartman perform one of the moves during the ballroom dancing class.



PHOTOS FOR THE POST/
JONATHAN J. JUKA

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STAPLES GUEST SPEAKER AT AUTHOR LUNCHEON

Northeastern Pennsylvania resident Suzanne Fisher Staples was the special guest speaker at the 18th annual Luncheon with a Special Author at Apple Tree Terrace, Newberry Estate in Dallas. The event was sponsored by The Friends of the Back Mountain Memorial Library. More than 160 people attended the luncheon. Staples is a former news reporter, editor and author of six award-winning books. She was born in Philadelphia and grew up at Chapman Lake. She has worked for United Press International and The Washington Post. Her books include "The Green Dog," "Under the Persimmon Tree," "Shabanu Daughter of the Wind," "Haveli," "Dangerous Skies," and "Shiva's Fire." At right, Staples discusses a book with Iris Levy and Sally Kishbaugh.



FOR THE POST/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

Lehman teacher has doggone good time

By M.B. GILLIGAN
Post Correspondent

It's probably safe to say that few people from Northeastern Pennsylvania are terribly excited about a dogsled race that takes place in Alaska every year. That is not the case, however, with one local resident who recently fulfilled a lifetime dream by attending the famous Iditarod.

"It was fantastic," said Judson Holdredge, a teacher at Lehman-Jackson Elementary School. "I had special passes from the Cabelas tour group to be close to the trail. I was able to stand right alongside it."

The Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race — known as "The Last Great Race" — takes mushers and their team of dogs along 1,151 miles of trail from Anchorage to Nome. This year's race featured 83 mushers, each with a team of 16 dogs. The race began March 4 and winner Jeff King crossed under the "burled arch" on March 15 to earn his fourth career victory. He finished the course in nine days, 11 hours, 11 minutes and 36 seconds to win \$69,000 and a new truck.

Holdredge has been interested

in the Iditarod for years and in 1990, started to get his students involved.

"Every year we collect toys from McDonald's and we send them (to Alaska)," said Holdredge. "The mushers put them out on the trail wherever they stop and the Eskimo children come and get them. They really appreciate it."

Each toy has a postcard attached and many of the recipients have returned the cards, usually with some information about their lives in Alaska.

Holdredge has collected a lot of memorabilia about the race, the dogs, and the mushers. He even has a dogsled and in past winters when there was enough snow, treated his students to a local dogsled race.

This year, he finally made the trip to Anchorage with his wife Ellen. He enjoyed it so much that he's already making plans to return.

"I was so impressed with the whole thing, but especially with the dogs," said Holdredge. "You would think with 58 teams there would be a lot of barking but they were really quiet. It was un-

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FOR THE POST/JONATHAN J. JUKA

Local historian Charles Petrillo talks about amusement parks in the Back Mountain during a recent meeting of the Back Mountain Historical Association.

Learning about local history

An overflow crowd of more than 200 people packed the Banks Student Center's Kennedy Lounge at College Misericordia last week to hear local historian Charles Petrillo talk about former amusement parks in the Back Mountain.

The presentation "Amusements of the Back Mountain" took place during the bi-annual meeting of the Back Mountain Historical Association. Petrillo discussed the attractions at the state's largest natural lake — such as Hanson's Amusement Park. The author of the book "Harveys Lake" also discussed former Fernbrook Park.

The Back Mountain Historical Association collects history of the Back Mountain and works in

conjunction with College Misericordia and the Luzerne County Historical Society to collect photographs and oral history interviews.

To review the photograph database, log on to www.backmountain.org. If anyone is interested in donating photographs to the database, contact Harrison Wick, College Misericordia archivist, at 674-6420.

The association holds meetings twice a year, usually in April and October. The next meeting will be held Oct. 25 in Kennedy Lounge. The topics will be Hillside Farms and the former Himmler Theater. For more information about the Back Mountain Historical Association, call Marion Rogers at 674-3341.

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