

Dolores Gesumaria

Dolores Gesumaria is a teacher. After graduating from Hackensack High School and Montclair State College (now University), Dolores taught while she and her husband raised five children. She taught it all – elementary, middle school, high school, substituting, and home instruction. Her official career ended in Oakland, when she retired in 1996 after teaching for 40 years.



But teaching is an integral part of who Dolores is, and many dancers know her as a line dance instructor at Spinning Wheels. She also teaches lines at the Wayne Big Band, and had taught in other venues as well before cutting back to care for her mother. The line dancing fits in very well with square dancing, filling those minutes between tips that callers use for a voice break.

Dolores first learned about square dancing after her husband passed away, through a demo at Tice’s Farm in Woodcliff Lake. In 1985, she signed up for lessons at the Wayne Adult School, sponsored by Spinning Wheels, and has been with the club ever since.

“The year after I graduated, my partner, Tom Elm, and I became presidents of the club. A few years later, Tom decided he no longer wanted to be president, so I took it over myself.” For more than 20 years, Dolores has guided the club, including its move from Wayne to Oakland.

“Spinning Wheels has been a great part of my life, but it is now becoming a bit difficult to manage as we have fewer members because of illness, death, and less mobility, and fewer guests coming to dances,” said Dolores. She is hoping that other dancers will take over running the club, even if it means another move to a new location.

Dolores’ memorable square dance experiences are related to the many dear friends she has made. “Maybe a few enemies, too,” she said with a twinkle.

Recently, Dolores, her sister, and one of her daughters all sold their homes in Oakland and moved together to a large house in Kinnelon. They share the house with two dogs, a mellow Maltese and a yappie Yorkshire terrier.

“I have five very accomplished children and nine just as accomplished grandchildren,” Dolores reports with pride. When her 20-year-old grandson, Nolan Kasper, skied in the Olympics in February, the whole family went to Vancouver to cheer him on.

In her free time, Dolores likes to ballroom dance, walk, read, and have lunch with friends. She has taught religion classes for many years, been a “red hat lady,” and waitressed at the Valley Hospital lunchroom.

“I’m game for almost any adventure,” she declared. “But I can’t think of any one best thing I have ever done. Even with many ups and downs, I have enjoyed a very full, loving, eventful life and I wouldn’t change it if I had the chance. My one wish is that all of my family and friends know how much they mean to me and how much I love them.”

Lise Greene