



## **Meet CPA Polka Ambassador Teresa Zienka**

**That's Teresa and her husband Steve!!**

1. We always want to know how someone was first introduced to Polka music and culture. What was your experience?

My parents are from Poland and my mom was a stay home. She did clean houses in the neighborhood and took care of an elderly family until we were old enough to go to school. One thing that was important to her is that the kids knew how to speak, read, write Polish and pray. The second thing was ... know how to dance. Music was playing nonstop at our house. She always danced with us to learn the rhythm. We then had to take music lessons. I took accordion lessons and listened to music. The genre did not matter; however, there was something special about polka music. It had energy and soul. I took a liking to it and entered a polka dance contest with my brother Mike when we were about 10 years old. The judges were Arthur Murray dance teachers. We won second place and were asked to become ballroom dancers. We accepted but never shied away from polka music.

2. You and your husband Steve host two very fun Internet Polka podcasts; Off the Hook and Hooked on Polkas, how did you get involved in broadcasting.

When my father in law Ernie died, Steve wanted to do something in Ernie's memory. We were sitting one night and he said to me, 'I have to do something in polkas in dad's memory. I think dad would love it if we hosted a polka radio show.' Steve contacted Robert Mazur from New Castle Polka radio. We had a great time starting there. Then that program folded and without hesitation, Steve contacted Brian Chenkus from [POLKARADIO.org](http://POLKARADIO.org) and that is where we are today.

3. What promising developments do you see in Polka music.

Our polka field is small compared to other genres of music like country and rock. The developments that I am seeing and thrill I have is watching youngsters get on stage and perform like the boys from Polka Family and Zander from Wisconsin. This gives me hope that even though there are less musicians, there is hope in the youngsters that are performing to keep polka music alive. There are great leaders of different polka organizations that have visions and that 'beat' in their hearts to preserve polka music. I want to be able to keep promoting and attending polka functions to keep this spirit alive.

4. You always seem so enthusiastic and upbeat, as the CPA's 'national' Ambassador, how do you see your positive attitude benefiting the popularity of our club.

Many people have asked me 'where do you get your energy from?' I can honestly say that I am ADDICTED to polka music. Something happens to me when I hear the sound and beat that gets me going. With this energy, I would like to draw more people to this club and expose them to the polka fun and camaraderie this club offers. We truly are a POLKA FAMILY and what better way to grow that in your heart... by becoming a CPA member and meeting polka loving people!