

Sol Price Prize for Responsible Journalism  
Honorable Mention: Joanns Smiley  
"Dancing Outside the Box"

This award goes to a journalist whose work not only meets ethical standards but also shows uncommon sensitivity to issues. He or she pursued truth in the face of such obstacles as unpopularity, economic or physical harm. Entrants must submit an essay of up to 500 words explaining the ethical dilemma they faced in pursuit of the story and how the dilemma was resolved.

# Dancing Outside the box

## Gays embrace an American tradition: square dancing

By Joanns Smiley/joannsm@csdnet.com

Mike Nishelard stood in the Anaheim Convention Center, a vast expanse of a ballroom, and embraced with a rainbow-colored flag. A mix of people, ages and ethnicities, were dancing in the center of a ballroom with a large American flag in the background. Nishelard was one of nearly 1,000 people who gathered July 1 at the hotel for the 2007 National Square Dance Convention of Gay Square Dancers Club (NSDSC).

The event, which has grown significantly since its founding in 1977, NSDSC, drew about 1,000 members of clubs from across the United States, Canada and Japan. For the past several years, the convention has been held in Anaheim, Calif., but this year it was held in the heart of downtown Los Angeles at the Grand Hyatt Hotel.

"I'm glad to pick these venues. Anytime we operate as singles clubs, we're operating as singles clubs, so it's a great social activity," Nishelard said. "There's also a lot of social networking and there is an added element of excitement with gay square dancing. We take up on it."

NSDSC is a small square dance club that was founded in 1977. Nishelard, a member of the club, has been a member since 1985. He is a member of the club in Canada and Japan. For the past several years, the convention has been held in Anaheim, Calif., but this year it was held in the heart of downtown Los Angeles at the Grand Hyatt Hotel.

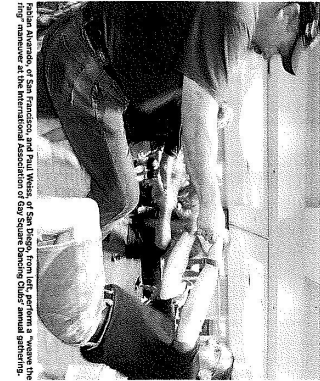
**Gay squares**  
• No special attire  
• Calves seats and cross jobs  
• A square has eight people in four couples; men and women can lead (so who you're going to lead with next)

**Single squares**  
• Prefer traditional square dance attire, such as prairie skirts and hoop skirts  
• Men in Western-style shirts  
• Women in Western-style dresses  
• Eight couples form a square of four male-female couples  
• Partners are encouraged to arrive with partners.

## Dance

> From B1

In his early 30s, Nishelard had been a member of the club since 1985. He is a member of the club in Canada and Japan. For the past several years, the convention has been held in Anaheim, Calif., but this year it was held in the heart of downtown Los Angeles at the Grand Hyatt Hotel.



Mike Nishelard (left) and Bill Nishelard (right) are members of the National Association of Gay Square Dancers Club. Nishelard is the president of the club. They are shown here at the 2007 National Square Dance Convention of Gay Square Dancers Club (NSDSC) in Los Angeles.

**Gay acceptance**  
Others, like Nishelard, a square dancer, said the club can help build and be a part of the community. "It's a great place to meet people and have fun," Nishelard said. "It's a great place to meet people and have fun."

**Square dancing the common denominator**  
The club's focus is on square dancing. "It's a great place to meet people and have fun," Nishelard said. "It's a great place to meet people and have fun."

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