

DANCERgram

August 2024



... for the latest news in the square and round dance community.

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FCA President's Message

Hey all Fellow Callers, Cuers and Square Dancers,

Well can you believe how fast this year is flying by as we start the last month for the Summer of 2024. First it is with a heavy heart that I have to report the sad news that we lost one of the FCA callers this summer with the passing of Ted Hughes on June 17th, 2024. Ted Hughes was a caller in the St. Petersburg area of Florida and he will be missed by his family, friends and area square dancers. Please continue to keep his family in your thoughts and prayers.

With August 1st now here we are getting even closer to the Florida Callers Association Caller Clinic with 77 days before the exciting weekend arrives. Are you getting excited yet! This year's clinic runs from October 17, 18 and 19, 2024 and will be held at The Villages with Kip Garvey a caller from California being the clinician for the weekend. The weekend closes out the FCA Callers Clinic with the Plus Dance with Rounds from 7pm to 9pm on October 19 at The Villages, Seabreeze Recreation with Kip Garvey as the caller and Ruth & Lloyd McKenrick are the cuers for the evening. So I hope all the callers are marking their calendars

to attend the clinic and dancers are preparing to square up for a great dance. (For more details contact Keith Stevens at keithuns@yahoo.com or Keith Stevens 863-660-8839).

The Florida Square Dance Federation has been very busy with the planning of the 70th FSSRDC Convention “Spin The Big Top” on January 17 and 18, 2025 which is now 169 days away! So all you dancers out there who have not purchased your tickets yet just step right up and get those tickets for a great convention that will be spinning under the Big Top with all of the dancing that is being planned and I am sure there will be lots of fun with the clowns and maybe even a mime or two! I have gotten word that there will be another Convention Benefit Dance that will be on November 9, 2024 from 4:00 to 8:00 pm at the Wildwood Community Center, 6500 Powell Rd., Wildwood, Florida. More details to come. So in the meantime mark the date on your calendars!

The month of August is actually pretty quiet for special days but it is known for being HOT and boy has it been hot in most areas this year but that is what we expect in August which is why we call it summer. So in that line of thought the callers could have the dancers “Fan the Top” to try to keep cool. We can “Dive Thru” the nearest body of cool water. We can “Trade the Wave” and “Explode the Wave” with all of those square dancing campers near the lakes and rivers this summer. I can picture sitting around the campfire in the evening with those camping dancers and enjoying the tales of their travels and mishaps when they suddenly hear that familiar buzz ... the dreaded mosquitos and Florida also has biting no-see gnats so we could practice “Box the Gnat” to exterminate some of them. As the month closes out I have to get some kind of food in so all those who are roasting marshmallows by the campfire we might as well practice “Cross-Fire”.

Well until next time be safe out there as we continue to “Zoom” thru the summer. As always wherever you are dancing smile and make more new friends for a lifetime of dancing. Until next time.

Rod Barngrover, FCA President August 2024.

Equipment for Sale

Complete set of equipment for calling including

- Turn table
- Speakers
- Mic
- Records
- books of dances

Complete set: \$250

Contact:

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Program Related Subjects for New Mainstream Dancers

(Rev D – Approved – December 19, 2007)

(Reformatted only December 2007)

This teaching checklist contains information that will benefit the new dancer. It is recommended by the CALLERLAB Mainstream Committee that this information be covered during the course of mainstream lessons

There is nothing magic about the timing of this information. Often, the topic will be spontaneous as an opportunity arises. The objective is to weave this information into a set of lessons. Caller instructors are encouraged to avoid “long lectures”, instead presenting a bit of information at every lesson.

Caller instructors are encouraged to provide the newest version of “The Illustrated Mainstream Movements of Square Dancing” handbook to new dancers. This handbook provides definitions of the calls and illustrations of the maneuvers, the information can be very helpful to both new and experienced dancers. The first ten items are the 10 “Ground Rules” which are taken from this handbook. This

handbook has been endorsed by CALLERLAB. Ten Ground Rules are reprinted with permission from Palomino Records.

1. Be a good listener.			
2. Get into squares quickly.			
3. Be a courteous dancer.			
4. Be on time for class and club.			
5. Be a thoughtful dancer.			
6. Be a cooperative dancer.			
7. Take it easy.			
8. Be a friendly dancer.			
9. You're never through learning.			
10. Enjoy yourself – have fun.			
<p>Emergency Call for Medical Aid – ECMA</p> <p>If a medical emergency arrives in your square, one person should go to the aid of the stricken dancer while the other six link hands and form a stretched-out circle around the fallen dancer, their upraised hands are a signal to the caller to seek help for that square. Other dancers in the area should step away from the ring and help clear a path to the door.</p>			
<p>Lost Squares</p> <p>If a square breaks down, the fastest way to resume dancing is to form normal (he/she/he/she) facing lines and watch for the rest of the floor to reach this formation. The caller will recognize when the broken square is in lines, and will assist them by taking the rest of the floor to lines and then calling “Everybody Go Forward and Back” before the next call. Dancers must learn that this movement allows them to resume dancing, but they may not end up with their own partner at the end of the sequence. They should be instructed to finish the sequence with their “new” partner and corner and “fix” partners & corners as they return to home.</p> <p>Dancers form lines by the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Return to home position as soon as possible 2. Then the head ladies will take their corner’s hand and head couples will back out to form lines at the sides of the squares. 3. On the caller’s command, “EVERYBODY go forward and back”, they enter into the dance pattern. 			
<p>Styling</p> <p>Every sport has recognized positions that protect the arms, shoulders, knees, hips and other joints. In square dancing we call this styling. An emphasis on styling will lead to smoother dancing and timing. It will also protect the dancers from injury.</p> <p>Dancers should be taught to dance upright and independently, They should not jerk, pull or push the other dancers, but move in a free & easy motion around each other, with handholds used only for balance. Encourage a palm-to-palm touch.</p> <p>The CALLERLAB Mainstream definitions and “The Illustrated Mainstream Movements of Square Dancing” handbook, endorsed by CALLERLAB, has styling & timing notations for all of the calls. It is important to focus on the recommended hand and arm positions to protect dancers from injury.</p>			

<p>Club Dance Customs Explain the basics of club dancing in your area. This might include admission fees, split the pot or raffles, banner customs, banner raids, participation awards (travel badges, friendship badges, etc), dance program levels, round or line dancing, and other topics.</p>			
<p>Club Organization Explain the organization of your area – the local federation of clubs, state organization, major dances sponsored by these groups, and national conventions and other dancing events.</p>			

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The 10 Ground Rules of Square Dancing

(from “The Illustrated Mainstream Movements of Square Dancing”)

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| <p>1. Be a good listener. Think of the caller as the <i>quarterback</i> in this game of square dancing. He calls the plays by giving you the dance signals for the movements he wants you to dance. Two beats later you do what he has called. You can't be talking or thinking of something else and count on reacting correctly. Not only does talking during a square dance distract you but it also makes it difficult for other in the square to “catch” then instructions and to hear the music. Remember, too, that there is room for only one teacher at a time. You can help others <i>best</i> by being in the correct place at the correct time.</p> |
| <p>2. Get into squares quickly. When the caller announces “sets in order” for the next tip, join the squares nearest to you that needs a couple. If you're looking for a square let the caller know where you are by raising your hand as you move across the floor. If you need a couple to fill out a square, raise your hand with one finger indicated, two fingers for two couples. etc.</p> |
| <p>3. Be a courteous dancer. Good standard rules of courtesy are always appreciated. Asking a partner for a dance and then saying “thank you” to all those in the set at the end of a tip is a natural, courteous reaction. In squares dancing there are a few <i>specials</i> to look out for. It's considered bad manners to pass square needing dancers in order to fill another. And, even more important, beware of the unpardonable sin: Never leave a square once you have joined it until the tip is over. (If you must leave in an emergency, find a substitute to fill your spot.)</p> |
| <p>4. Be on time for class and club. Tardiness may be stylish in some activities but in square dancing one late couple may mean that three couples must sit out. In planning an evening's program the caller leans heavily on the first and last tips to pace his dance. If you're late, or if you leave early, you are not taking full advantage of the evening the caller has prepared.</p> |
| <p>5. Be a thoughtful dancer. Personal cleanliness is important I any activity where folks exercise vigorously in close contact with each other. For that reason, a good deodorant and an effective mouthwash are among square dancers' best friends. Because the enjoyment of the other people in a square depends upon your and your coordination, don't drink before or during a square dance. Be at your absolute dancing and thinking best!</p> |
| <p>6. Be a cooperative dancer. It might be said that square dancing is an activity where everyone is responsible for everyone else's happiness. A square is not made up of eight individuals working independently but rather is one unit with an individual “star”. The real pleasure comes when each person does his share in making the square run smoothly.</p> |
| <p>7. Take it easy. Don't overdo. Square dancing can be a strenuous exercise, particularly when you're getting started. If you get tired, sit down. Don't let anyone talk you into dancing if you should stop and breathe a little bit. You can still learn a great deal by watching and listening.</p> |
| <p>8. Be a friendly dancer. “Friendship is Square dancing's Greatest Reward.” You are the host in square dancing. As a matter of fact, everyone is. Take the opportunity to get acquainted with</p> |

others in the square and make it a point each evening to dance with as many different dancers as possible. It has been wisely said that “Square dancing is Friendship Set to Music.”

9. You’re never through learning. You’ll find there is always something new you can learn or some part of your dancing which can be improved upon. Mistakes are a normal part of dancing. The important thing is to find out what you did that was wrong and then try to get it straight in your mind before the movement is called again. When the opportunity presents itself, don’t hesitate to ask your caller questions if there’s something you don’t understand. You may be the only one to ask but chances are a number of the others, too shy to raise their hands, will be grateful to you.

10. Enjoy yourself – have fun. Pleasure is contagious. You’ll be surprised how much your smile will pep up the entire square. Come to a square dance *expecting* a good time and you’ll have it. If having a good time to you means making noise, be sure to time your vocal enthusiasm when it won’t distract the others in the square from hearing the calls. The end of each dance is a good time to let off steam. Just remember that when you clap at the end of a square you have enjoyed, you’re applauding the caller certainly, and you’re saying “thank you” to the others in the square, that’s true. But, you’re also applauding you, for it is *you* who did the job and it is *you* who experienced that wonderful sense of accomplishment that comes with being a square dancer.

Ten Ground Rules list is reprinted with permission from Palomino Records.

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The Editor is not responsible for errors in reprinted articles.

Inspirational Quotes from Ed Foote

“Only a mediocre person is always at his best.” ...W. Somerset Maugham, author

“Weak people revenge, strong people forgive, intelligent people ignore.” ...Albert Einstein, physicist

“If you want to see the true measure of a man, watch how he treats his inferiors, not his equals.” ...J. K. Rowling, author

“A contented mind is the greatest blessing a person can enjoy in this world.” ... Joseph Addison, English essayist and poet

“People who know the least always seem to know it the loudest.” ...Al Capp, American cartoonist and humorist

Reprint from *American Square Dance* - Volume 80 Number 70 July 2024

Flourishes

There is a remote chance that you haven't already seen some individual fancywork that appeals to you. The extra twirls, the spinning, the crossed hands, all those dancer created movements, that when done properly, blend right into the dance patterns created by the caller. It adds to the fun of dancing and is terrific as long as it doesn't mess up other dancers in the square. Here are some thoughts about that:

- Be careful not to use so much floor space that you get in the way of other dancers. An extra twirl or spin on a crowded floor usually creates a problem in your own set or the one next to you.
- Watch out that your flourishes don't cause others in the square to wait. The “bumps” on calls like Grand Right & Left or Weave The Ring, will ruin the timing of the call for the entire square. As a rule of thumb, if other dancers in your square are putting their hand out and waiting for you, then your timing is a problem.
- A good caller will create combinations of calls that create momentum in a particular direction. For the comfort of everyone in the square (yourself included) avoid flourishes that leave with a different momentum from what you would have, if you did the calls without extras. A good example is how some folks replace the Do Sa Do with an arm around the waist fling. While both actions rotate in a clockwise direction, one finishes static face-to-face but the other generates a momentum that is anything but static. You are converting a smooth sequence of motions into an awkward one.

Doing “your own thing” in matters of flourishes is great when you are mindful of these factors, but when you are dancing in a public demonstration, it will probably look odd. The spectators, who are mostly non-dancers, are aware of the symmetry and uniformity of the patterns, not the individual square dancers themselves. Also, the other dancers in your square will be a bit anxious that they don't “mess up” in front of the public, so they will not appreciate how clever your flourishes are, especially when it causes them to lose their concentration.

Flourishes are best practiced off the dance floor. If you are not sure if your extra movements are causing a problem, ask your caller.

Reprint from *American Square Dance* - Volume 80 Number 70 July 2024

Mike Hogan on Marketing

CONGRATULATIONS! The producer has agreed to have you make an appearance on their midday news broadcast. Now what? If this happens, you'll likely already know what the interview will be about. You should send a fact sheet to the producer with information that they may need and information that may be of interest to them, or more specifically to their audience. For example, let's say the reporter is doing a cover story on the new Memorial Day Weekend hosted by the Omaha Area Square Dance Council. Here are the kinds of facts that need to be shared in advance.

Dates: May 24 and May 25, 20??

Times: Saturday: 10:00 a.m. – Noon, 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.,
7:30 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Sunday: 10:00 a.m. – Noon, 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.,
7:30 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

*The largest crowds will be at the evening dances – great photo opportunity!

Callers: Tom Miller – Pennsylvania.

Tom Miller is recognized as one of the most talented callers in the world. He has called all over the United States, Canada, and Europe. His choreographic presentation along with his outstanding singing make him a favorite worldwide. He is also an accomplished teacher and is a CALLERLAB Accredited CallerCoach.

Jerry Junck – Nebraska.

Jerry Junck is a native Nebraskan from Wayne. Jerry is also one of the most talented callers in the world. He makes his living calling, traveling all over the country from April through September, and calling in Mesa, Arizona during the winter months. Jerry is known as the “Country Gentleman” of square dance callers. His laid-back style and amazing vocal skills make him a favorite everywhere he goes. Jerry is also a CALLERLAB Accredited Caller-Coach.

Expected Attendance: 250 dancers from seven states.

Square dance facts:

- Square dancing has modernized with new music and new dress codes.

- Square dancing is a fun social activity with many added benefits.
- Square dancing offers great low impact physical exercise. Dancers will walk 5,000 to 7,000 steps in a single evening of dance, burning over 300 calories, all of which is lost on them because they are having too much fun.
- Square dancing strengthens mental skills and reduces stress. Dancers must listen and react to the commands given by the caller, which keeps them focused and unable to worry about their daily lives. Again, all of this is lost on them because they are having too much fun.
- The Omaha Area Square Dance Council is made up of seven square dance clubs and two round dance clubs.

When you arrive for the interview, the on-air personality or the producer usually has a predetermined list of questions they plan to ask you. They will go over these with you before your appearance. By providing the information above ahead of time you will have automatically steered their questions in a positive direction.

Be aware of how you or the interviewee looks for the interview. A picture is worth a thousand words. This is show business now. This is supposed to be a fun, healthy activity for folks of all ages. If you put a 78-year-old, overweight, frowning, woman with white hair in a checkered square dance dress with a full petticoat on screen, you'll never sell the idea that we've modernized, that this is fun, or that this is for folks of all ages.

Whether the interview is live or for an article to be produced later, keep in mind that you do not have control over what is asked or what is written. Control what you can control! You can introduce the interviewer to dancers who are possibly younger or have a great story like marrying someone they met at a square dance. You can provide photos to the interviewer ahead of time. Work ahead of time with the caller to be sure they are using a good mix of music at the event.

CONGRATULATIONS: A local newspaper reporter just showed up at your dance unexpectedly. Now what?

Since you didn't have a chance to ask them ahead of time what they want to report on or to feed them information about the activity ahead of time, do it now! Position yourself as someone who can help them get the information they want to write about. Introduce them to the caller. Introduce them to a club member who would be a good spokesperson for the club and the activity – in other words, someone who visually represents what we want to portray, and who knows the benefits of the activity that they could then provide to the interviewer, even if they don't ask.

Generally, here are some ideas about what to say:

- Always start and end with FUN. The single most desired benefit of square dancing is the fun and joy that dancers experience. Smile! Be enthusiastic! Reporters notice this.
- Share stories about the lifelong friendships you've developed or share a story of dancers who married someone they met square dancing.
- Share stories about your travels and square dancing where you travel. Travel is fun. Square dancing is fun. A story that mixes both is a great story.
- Talk about the members in your club and what they do for a living if it's appropriate. Is there someone in your club who does something unique, like a military officer, or a doctor, or an engineer? These are professions that buck the image of dancers only being pig farmers. (Nothing wrong with pig farmers by the way.)
- Talk about the modernization of square dancing; that music is now played from laptops and the music is from all genres of music. Give examples. Talk about the underlying health benefits of square dancing.
- If you're asked how long it takes to learn, here's a great answer stolen from Lanny Weakland: Three lessons. After three lessons it's either not for you, or you'll love it so much I can't keep you away."
- Talk about the changing dress code. Tell them the traditional square dance dress is still the standard, but today many dancers come in jeans, and we welcome that.

Some reporters just have to have the dirt! If it bleeds it leads. So, you'll get questions that are fishing for negative stories, like "Isn't square dancing a dying art?" or, "Why aren't there any young people at your dances?" Clearly these are tough questions to answer, and issues we are dealing with, so answer these types of questions truthfully then follow up with information on how we're improving on these issues.

Here are a few topics to avoid:

- Do not refer to the declining population of square dancers.
- Do not refer to the increasing average age of square dancers.
- Do not refer to the health benefits helping seniors.
- Do not make any comments that infer that square dancing is for seniors.
- Do not mention alcohol.

Gaining media coverage of square dancing is a very valuable tool we can use to enhance the public's opinion of our activity. The more we can get this kind of positive exposure, the more open to the idea of participating in the public will be. That in turn will make recruiting efforts 45 more effective. Always be prepared to

handle an interview if one happens. Better yet why not proactively seek media coverage?

Reprint from *American Square Dance* - Volume 80 Number 70 July 2024

The Big Picture by Buddy Weaver

At the National Convention 2024 held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, I presented a panel on building a successful square dance club. Well attended by both callers and dancers (only a few seats open), this was bullet-point presentation covering every aspect of a successful club, from growth to sustainability. Here now is a brief recap of my talk.

Building successful square dance clubs is based on forty-seven years of experience as a square dance caller. Ideas shared are from real-life experiences; pragmatic and not hypothetical.

Successful clubs exist at multiple levels, from SSD to Advanced. They exist in multiple forms with some being club/officer run and others being professional or caller run. Some of these clubs have been successful for many years.

There are common characteristics of every successful club that I have seen or been involved with.

- They are a club in name. There are badges that readily identify the club and wearer by name. They have a membership which exists in the form of a roster. They have a stated level of dance, whether SSD or Advanced. These are labels and we have learned that labels mean a lot to people. Many people identify themselves with a label. This takes the form of “my club is the Weaver Believers and we are Advanced” or “I belong to the Wranglers Club in San Diego”.
- Every club has a feeder program. This is a beginner class for entry-level like SSD or a class to learn A-1 and A-2 for the Advanced club. I have never seen a club that sustained success without a feeder program.
- Every club had a club caller. The value of a good club caller cannot be overlooked.
- A good club caller builds the dancer's confidence. They realized that anyone can break a square down, it doesn't take any talent at all, but to keep a square going even where challenges are present, now that takes talent.
- A good club caller is in a constant good mood. My first club caller was a big man who worked as plant manager long hours, but when he came to

call the dance, he was friendly, happy, always ready to laugh. He made everyone feel good about being there.

- A good club caller is a touchstone to a knowledge base. He or she can listen to a dancer's question and give an explanation that is concise. They know the history of square dancing, the history of dancing in the area, and the history of the club.
- A good club caller builds social connections. Remembering my first club caller again, he was always approachable. Friendly and ready to introduce you to other club or class members. With so much of my presentation dedicated to the club caller, you know this must be **one of the most important aspects of success**.
- Every successful club was electronically connected. (A poll was taken at this time of everyone in the room) All but one person here has a cell phone and he didn't bring it because his wife has hers. Most everyone today is using a smart phone to receive texts, emails, and updates. The majority of our new dancers use their phones to check social media like Facebook, many times throughout the day. The successful clubs today are sending out one or more emails every week. These communications recap what was done at the previous dance, announce upcoming dances, and remind folks of something special coming soon. Additionally, every successful club has an up-to-date website. As mentioned, most folks have smart phones and they use it to locate where you are dancing, using a navigation app to get there, and reading notes about where to find a hidden entrance to your parking lot. The absolute worst thing that any club or caller can do today is have stale or incorrect information on their website. If your club doesn't have someone to keep your web presence up dated, then **take it down**. It is better to have no information than wrong information.
- Every club did not tolerate roughness. Whether rough dancing or rough language or generally rough behavior, it was addressed. Offenders were asked to stop their behavior and if they didn't, they were asked not to return. No bad behavior and no excuses.

It is often easier to build a successful club from scratch. Why? In a club that is struggling, there may be solid reasons for the decline and there may be negative perceptions among other dancers, clubs, or the non-dancing public. This means redirecting a failing idea into a successful one, which is a lot more work and is covered later in my talk.

When building a club, be clear in your purpose. Going into an area that doesn't have any square dancing is the first good idea. What are you looking to build? Clubs that are built for an age group of 55-70 is one model, clubs built for youngsters would be a great physical education program for home schoolers, while a club built for age group 70 and up is a completely different model. Each of these models are separate. I have never seen a successful club that serves all

of these groups. That is not to say, it hasn't been done, but it wasn't sustainable and that element is key to being successful.

Next, be clear on your expectations. How you expect dancers to dress? Will it be a modern dress model that includes long skirts and jeans for the ladies with men going with simple long sleeved shirts or will it be traditional dress? Understand how this expectation will affect people coming in and people staying along with your appeal to potential dancers. How often do you expect dancers to attend? Weekly dances have proven to be the best, but remember that many folks today have time constraints like jobs, caring for grandkids, caring for parents, other activities. This means that our dancers will miss a dance or class every now and then. Classes that run ten months like Mainstream are a very hard sell for new dancers. The groups that have embraced SSD – Social Square Dancing – are growing rapidly. The SSD program offers shorter class time which means more than one class per calendar year and it also means less material to have to remember so the graduated dancer that has to miss a week or two, can still come right back in to dancing. Clubs and callers who are successful with SSD are a great resource.

When building from scratch keep in mind that the most important choice you will make is your location. A commissioned study by CALLERLAB a few years ago, showed that the location of your dances, especially classes, must be woman friendly. If the woman was comfortable with going to the location, then she would bring her significant other; if she wasn't then it is a non-starter. Also, if your target is an age group in the 55-70 year old range, then putting your classes in a senior center is a mistake. (I asked the audience how many of them went to a senior center for lunches or any daytime activities and the response was zero) Locations that work are schools, churches, community centers. They must be in neighborhoods that women feel comfortable visiting. They should have well-lit and plentiful parking.

By contrast, building a successful club on an existing frame is a different challenge that will require you to look at the following:

- Perception of the club. Make no mistake, very few existing clubs are open to hearing any negative perception of their group, which is an added degree of difficulty. How do other clubs view your group when it comes to sociability? I have seen many clubs that had a core group of officers and workers. They were very close and often socialized outside of the dances, but the problem was at the club dances, they wouldn't readily join in with visitors. The times that they were “forced” to dance with someone other than their pals, their faces were like subtitles in displaying how unhappy and put out they were feeling. Those clubs had to shed that clique or the club would fail. What is the average age of the membership? If the club is mostly dancers better than 75 years old, then embrace it. There is a place for clubs that conduct classes and welcome new members of the same age

range. Dance tempos that are relaxed, dance level of SSD or a subset thereof are both great for a club like this.

- Expectations versus reality. Is everyone willing to accept the perception of their group? If it is negative or otherwise contrary to sustainable growth, are the members open and willing to change? An example is the group that was perceived as being unfriendly, under a new officer group (all recent graduates), the chairs around the room went away and were replaced with round tables that encouraged folks to visit with each other. Then the officers put together visitation to other clubs and incentivized it with free club dances given by drawing for those member who went on the visitation. The initial push back was some of the “old timers” put their chairs along a back wall and sat with crossed arms, away from everyone else during the breaks. In spite of this behavior the club attendance grew ten more squares at their monthly dances. It remains successful for two years, when the officers were voted out by the “old timers” who promptly put things back to how they used to be. The club folded ten months after that. This points out both the willingness and unwillingness to change that is present in every existing group.

In closing, you can build a successful club while ignoring everything spoken about here. I've seen those groups and they last two years or less then fail. To be truly successful, you must be sustainable. Status quo is not sustainable; only growth is. I recommend searching for online resources through the CALLERLAB knowledge base and of course, American Square Dance, which offers monthly articles on growing a sustainable square dance future. Visit americansquaredance.com for a sample issue – become a subscriber and encourage your dance friends to become one as well.

Reprint from *American Square Dance* - Volume 80 Number 70 July 2024

Are you a square dancer?

By Ed Foote

You may be a square dancer if:

1. When shopping for a new home you tell the realtor you need a family room or a basement large enough for two squares.
2. When the handyman recommends you oil the lock, you ask him if that's a new call.
3. The only cruise you will consider taking is a square dance cruise. When your purse or briefcase is stolen, you are not too concerned about your money or credit cards as long as you get back your list of square dance definitions.
4. Your children have to celebrate their birthdays so as not to interfere with square dances or square dance weekends. If you tell the kids you will not

be available for family functions until you master Challenge, you may miss your own funeral.

5. When passing someone in the hallway at work, you refuse to pass left shoulders, even though the other person indicates this is his or her preference. If you also scream, "Right Shoulders," it may be time for professional help.
6. Your co-workers are concerned about your sanity, because you spend your lunch hour moving little dolls or plastic pieces around on your desk.
7. You sue your mate for divorce on grounds of mental cruelty, because he or she demands that you skip the square dance workshop group on your 25th wedding anniversary.
8. If you are in a church recreation room, you mentally estimate how many squares it will hold.
9. If it is a choice between dinner and being late for a square dance, you suggest skipping dinner.
10. The first things marked on your pocket or phone calendar for the next year are square dances and square dance weekends
11. You only consider a vacation site if there is square dancing nearby.
12. **If you want to be a Snowbird and go south for the winter, you will only go to Florida, Texas, Arizona or California, because they each have many square dance workshops and dances.**
13. If your town wants you to recycle, you think it is organizing a square dance class.

(The first eight items were adapted from an article published in the Trailblazer newsletter many years ago.)

Reprint from *American Square Dance* - Volume 80 Number 70 July 2024



Fri. Dinner Show \$45pp

Dry camping on site

Two full days of Dancing

Phase 2-5 Rounds

MS, PLUS, A2 SQUARES

Trail End Dance Thursday nite

SPIN THE BIG TOP

70 TH FSSRDC
Jan. 17-18, 2025

The Center at Deltona
1640 Dr. MLK Blvd.
Deltona, Florida 32725

TO REGISTER
SCAN ME

Make check payable to:
70th FSDC
Mail to: Jenny Green
108 Mound St.
Longwood, FL 32750
Service Charge for NSF or returned check : \$35

FALL 2024 CONVENTION BENEFIT DANCE



**Alternating
MS & PLUS
5:15-7:15 pm
Adv. Tip
7:20 pm**

**BILL
CHESNUT,
CALLER CHAIRMAN
DAVE
VIEIRA,
CO-CHAIRMAN**

**CONVENTION
REGISTRATION,
DANCE SOCKS
and RAFFLE
TICKETS
AVAILABLE AT
THE DANCE**

**EARLY
ROUNDS
4:30-5:15
pm**

**SANDY
STURGIS,
CUER CHAIRMAN
SUSAN
SNIDER,
CO-CHAIRMAN**

**ADMISSION
PRICE:
DONATION
AT
THE
DOOR**

70 TH FSSRDC

SPIN THE BIG TOP

**50/50
Raffle to
benefit
the
cause**

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2024

Convention Chairman
Dawn DeWitt & Charles Tharp
561-252-7729 & 561-252-6236
ddewitt03@bellsouth.net

Wildwood Community Center
Washington & Jefferson Room
6500 Powell Road
Wildwood, FL 34785



NEWS RELEASE

Oxendine, Pladdys headline 2024 Indiana State Convention

FRENCH LICK — National callers Tony Oxendine and Jack Pladdys will be the callers for the 34th Indiana State Square and Round Dance Convention at French Lick Springs Hotel in French Lick, Indiana November 8, 9, and 10. It will be a royal gala with three days of dancing, fun, and friendship dancers won't soon forget.

Oxendine has been calling for 50 years and has performed across the country and the world. He and Jerry Story founded Royal Records in 1986, which has become a powerhouse in the square dance recording industry.

Pladdys has been calling for more than 40 years and records on the Royal Records Label founded by Oxendine. He has also called across the United States. Both Pladdys and Oxendine serve on CALLERLAB's Executive Committee.

These callers will headline the President's Gala on Nov. 8 from 8 to 11 p.m. and will also conduct a caller seminar Saturday morning. Dancing will take place from 10 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Sunday with a gospel finale featuring local and regional callers. Last year more than 30 callers and cuers participated.

Dancing levels include mainstream, SSD, plus, and advanced as well as phase II-VI rounds. Special events will include a singles meet and greet from 5 to 6 p.m. Friday, and an intro to hex workshop and a (friendly) squares competition focused on mainstream calls on Saturday. Vendors will also be there selling square dancing clothes and accessories.

Now's your chance to join our noble square dance kings for a magnificent time. For more information see insquaredanceconvention.com.

Ten Commandments of Square Dancing

1. Thou shalt Square Dance only for the fun which thee will find in it.
2. Thou shalt not be a snob, considering thyself too good to dance with any and all, and sitting out the mixers, or leaving a square lest though be required to dance with those whom thou deemest unworthy of thy talents, for the Gods of Retribution are zealous Gods, and will visit their mischief upon thee, and thou wilt be the one to goof the square.
3. Thou shalt be exuberant, thou shalt act thy age. Thou shalt not offend others by thy high flung legs and out-flared skirts.
4. Thou shalt go abroad and dance with other callers so that thy opinions expressed as to the merit of this one and that one are bases on fact.
5. Tho shalt not let the stranger in thy midst sit on the sidelines and cool his heels, nor fail to speak to him.
6. Thou shalt bathe diligently that the sweet aroma of soap and shaving lotion may assail the nostrils of thy associates.
7. Thou shalt take care that the words of thy mouth are not scented with garlic or beer.
8. Thou shalt honor thy club and give thy loyalty, for if thou canst not do this, it were better to separate thyself from it and join thyself to another whose methods, members and callers are more to thy liking.

9. **Thou shalt not kill thy club with bickering and fault finding.**

10. **Thou shalt not forget that thou wert once a beginner,**

Reprint from USDA News Volume XXXV Issue 2 Apr-Jun
The Editor is not responsible for errors in reprinted articles.

Social Square Dancing by Barry Johnson

It has been a month of challenges at the Johnson household, but we were glad to get away to the US National Square Dance Convention in Milwaukee last week.

The use of SSD with the live band was fairly well accepted. While on stage, I counted about 70 squares dancing at once. Not surprisingly, the number of dancers in SSD Hall varied quite a bit depending on who was calling. Given that 85% of the dancers attending the convention tell us they can dance at the Plus level or higher, there is always going to be a large influx of dancers when a world-famous caller is performing.

I presented two sessions entitled “SSD: The Path to Growth”. While attendance wasn’t anywhere near as high as I would have wished, it was interesting to hear testimonials from some of the people attending the talks. One club reported, “We just finished our fourth round of SSD lessons, and our club has tripled in size from less than 20 to more than 60 members.”

Another testimonial was even more telling. “We ran the SSD program and it worked — we added a bunch of new dancers to the club. Then our club leadership decided they should all learn Plus, and every one of the new dancers quit.”

Club leaders are often the people most committed to the activity in a group, and are generally passionate about sharing their good feelings about the activity. Unfortunately, that attempt to share their joy badly backfires when new dancers are pushed beyond their comfort zone.

Just say no. Let the new dancers win at *their* level; don’t pressure them to move further.

Reprint from USDA News Volume XXXV Issue 2 Apr-Jun
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Inspirational Quotes from Ed Foote

“Only a mediocre person is always at his best.” ...W. Somerset Maugham, author

“Weak people revenge, strong people forgive, intelligent people ignore.” ...Albert Einstein, physicist

“If you want to see the true measure of a man, watch how he treats his inferiors, not his equals.” ...J. K. Rowling, author

“A contented mind is the greatest blessing a person can enjoy in this world.” ... Joseph Addison, English essayist and poet

“People who know the least always seem to know it the loudest.” ...Al Capp, American cartoonist and humorist

Reprint from USDA News Volume XXXV Issue 2 Apr-Jun



The poster is for the 74th National Square Dance Convention in Shreveport, Louisiana, held on Wednesday, June 25th, 2025, from 6:00 PM to 6:00 PM at the Shreveport Convention Center, 400 Caddo St., Shreveport, LA 71101. It features a portrait of Ed Foote, a man with glasses and a goatee, and a silhouette of a square dance. The text includes the event title, date, time, location, and website (www.74NSDC.com). A QR code is provided for more information.

74TH NATIONAL SQUARE DANCE CONVENTION
SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25TH, 2025 6:00PM | SHREVEPORT CONVENTION CENTER | 400 CADDO ST. SHREVEPORT, LA 71101

SWANBERG MINISTRIES
“America’s Minister of Encouragement”
Comedian • TV Host • Motivational Speaker

Tickets: Show only, \$30 pp, with catered Cajun Dinner, \$60 pp
Dinner is served at 4:30 p.m.
followed by Dennis Swanberg from 6-7 p.m.
Order tickets using Registration Long Form: www.74thNSDC.com
Event is open to the public

Scan me for a video clip and information

Looking for Callers and Cuers who want to Call on the Wild Side!



DECEMBER 31, 2024

is the deadline for Dance Leaders to register and submit a caller profile,

1. Sign up online today at www.74thNSDC.com

to receive your registration number for the 74th NSDC,

2. Then you can go to <https://sdconvention.com>

to complete your Dance Leader Profile to

Call on the Wild Side!



74th NSDC

June 25-28, 2025

Shreveport Convention Ctr.

Join our 74th National Square Dance
Convention® Facebook Group



WE NEED YOUR HELP

PLEASE VOLUNTEER!

We need YOU to help us to have the best 74th National Square Dance Convention® ever and to ensure that operations run efficiently and smoothly June 25-28, 2025 at the Shreveport Convention Center.

REGISTRATION

We will need people willing to work at the registration desk at the 74th NSDC. We are looking for people to give an hour or two of their time to help others check in to the convention. Please contact Assistant Registration and Housing Chairman Cheryl Rush at (251) 222-4495 or email peppercatt2@gmail.com if interested.

INFORMATION DESK

For many dancers, this will be their first big dance and we need to be sure they are able to enjoy all the activities. We need friendly volunteers to provide guidance concerning dance locations at the convention, to hand out pamphlets, etc. as well as other information about Shreveport/Bossier City and the region.

DANCE CLINICS

Clinics are an educational activity primarily involving demonstrations and exhibitions and are presented in either classroom settings or in dance hall. Volunteers may be needed to serve as Dance Directors who will engage in demonstration, exhibition and a brief discussion of their topics, followed by audience participation. Clinics may be held for square dancing, round dancing, country and western and line dancing, contra and clogging. Clinic leaders will ensure the room is properly prepared, all materials are available, collect statistics (the number of participants, number of people observing, etc.), close the session, etc. If you are interested in volunteering or need more information, contact Nelda Eaton at EatonSDCaller@gmail.com or call (903) 278-8068.

EDUCATION PROGRAM

Volunteers are needed to assist in the Education Coordination Room to help greet presenters, distribute presenter packets, coordinate Leadership Certification Program participants, collect statistics, serve as Education and Sewing Session Room hosts, monitor the NEC Archives Room, assist with the Showcase of Ideas, and support sewing activities such as Make and Take, Pattern Tracing, Mending, Raffles, etc. For details, contact Education Chairman Bonnie Abramson at bjsquaredance@gmail.com.

VOLUNTEER TODAY

Many of the volunteer positions can be accomplished sitting, so while you are taking a break from dancing to rest those tired feet, please consider donating an hour or two of time. You can message one of the 74th NSDC Chairman listed above and they can help you find the right position to fit your interest or need.

The DANCERgram magazines are written and published by a square and round dancer concerned about preserving our dance activity. The magazines include *Planner* (weekly), *This & That* (monthly), *Joys, Concerns, & Sympathies* (as needed), and *Directory* (as needed). All of the magazines are under the DANCERgram banner. In the event of new information between publication dates, notification is sent via the *Flash*. The Editor reserves the right to edit, condense, or rewrite any submission to the DANCERgram magazines. Opinions expressed in any DANCERgram magazine or on this website are not necessarily that of the Editor. All new information (since the previous issue) in these magazines is highlighted in yellow. Distribution of the DANCERgram magazines is encouraged via forwarding or hard copies. All of the Magazines, as well as additional content, can be found at www.dancergram.com. If you would like to receive the DANCERgram Magazines via email or you would like to submit information to any of the magazines, please contact the Editor at sqdnxfan@gmail.com or 863-224-3393.

DANCERgram Magazines

Planner (weekly)

Joys, Concerns, & Sympathies (as needed)

Directory (as needed) • WC Key Contacts • WC Dances • SCCA • Links

This and That (monthly) • Reprint of articles • New Articles

DANCERgram Staff

Editor: Penny T. Green Webmaster: Cliff Reiss