

DANCERgram

September 2023



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

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Florida Caller Celebrating 50 Years of Calling

Save the date – October 17, 2023! There will be a celebration for Lon Ligon’s 50 years of calling. More info to follow! On is a caller in the Gainesville (Florida) area.

Inspirational Quotes from Ed Foote

“Tolerance of intolerance is cowardice.” ...Ayaan Hirsi Ali, Dutch-American activist

“It never hurts to keep looking for sunshine.” ...Winnie the Pooh, cartoon character

“To teach is to learn twice.” ...Joseph Joubert, French essayist

“My journey is largely about learning to love.” ...Ben Stein, author and political commentator

“The test of courage comes when we are in the minority, and the test of tolerance comes when we are in the majority.” ...Ralph W. Stockman, pastor

73rd NSDC MOBILITY SCOOTER RENTALS

Mobility scooter rentals will be available at the 73rd NSDC. The 73rd NSDC serves as the middleman on scooter rental, and we will provide the information on the company to contact. The individual dancer is responsible for contacting the company to rent the scooter, providing payment, and making arrangements for where and when the scooter is to be delivered and picked up. Scooters will not be available for rental reservations before April or May of 2024. Watch the E-Magazine for further details.

73rd NSDC HEARING ASSISTANCE DEVICES INFORMATION

What is a hearing assist device?? Where do I get one? How much do they cost? How do they work? What happens when the batteries go dead? How do I change channels?

HELP! HELP! HELP! These are a few of the questions and comments that we received in the past from first encounters when people talk to us about a hearing device. It's kind of like going to the Doctor's Office, you know that you're not hearing all of the words that people are speaking to you, and so you try to guess what they just said. The vanity in all of us says "I can hear just fine; I don't need hearing aids or a hearing assist unit for me to hear clearly." Well... that being said...my response is, "this hearing device is much better than hearing aids so you can enjoy all dance activities."

First of all, there are 3 components that are used. A transmitter will be positioned on the caller/cuer stage in each dance hall, a FM receiver that you will wear on your body that has the capability of changing channel frequencies, and an earpiece that plugs into the receiver you are wearing. It is kind of like listening to your iPod or MP3 player, (sometimes people think you are listening to a ballgame!). You control how much volume you receive in your ear.

These devices will be available for rent at a very nominal fee for the 4 days of the convention. Here's the good part...when you wear one, there is NO BACKGROUND NOISE coming through the receiver that you will be wearing. Only the voice from the caller or cuer will be coming into your ear. The clarity

of these units is phenomenal. They are easy to wear, and the best part is...they will be available at the 73rd National Square Dance Convention® held in Milwaukee, WI, in June 2024!

This would be a really good time to try one out to see how they work for you. Look for us at a table in the Main lobby of the Baird Center “Ways and Means” area. There will be signage there directing you to where we are located.

We still have a few details to get worked out yet, so future news on this will be reported later. Just know that WE WILL BE THERE FOR YOU during our convention.

Comparison of Convention Registration Statistics

End of Month	2019 Atlanta	2020 Spokane	2021 Jackson	2022 Evansville	2023 Mobile	2024 Wisconsin
June	2502	1126	1130	821	1285	1297
July	2563	1168	1140	903	1315	1373
August	2779	1284	1177	971	1417	
September	2853	1409	119	1040	1463	
October	2913	1569	1219	1100	1535	
November	3005	1741	1221	1159	1584	
December	3050	1847	1243	1232	1632	
January	3203	1904	1306	1350	1700	
February	3339	2113	1320	1453	1801	
March	3458	0	1497	1579	1902	
April	3679	0	1680	1771	1999	
May	3798	0	1792	1893	2075	
Final Total	4068	0	1835	2034	2312	

IMPORTANT CAMPING INFORMATION



73rd National Square Dance Convention®
June 26 - 29, 2024
Milwaukee Wisconsin
73nsdc.com

Thank you for registering for the 73rd National Square Dance Convention® being held in Milwaukee, WI. June 26-29, 2024.

Our published rates for camping were based on a verbal agreement with the Wisconsin State Fairgrounds RV Park. As we proceeded towards signing a formal contract, the park unexpectedly raised the rates by a significant amount resulting in a cost to our campers of more than \$100 per night. This is about 30 percent higher than the rates already published for those same dates in 2024 on their website, and for which they are actively accepting reservations. They refused to consider any lower nightly pricing for our group.

This was incredibly disappointing to us and was a dramatic change in their position from our earlier discussions. We do not believe our campers should have to pay that marked-up price. We also do not believe you would be satisfied with such a premium over their already-premium nightly rates.

After lengthy discussions with our camping staff, our convention leaders, and the National Executive Committee, we feel it is in everyone's best interest for the 73rd National Square Dance Convention® to *not* offer a group rate for RV camping. Instead, we will provide you with a list of campgrounds in the general vicinity and ask you to select your preferred location and make your own private reservations. We will also be unable to offer bus transportation to and from the original camping site.

We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused. Any camping deposit you have already made through our convention registration process will be refunded to you within the next few weeks.

As an alternative to camping, we have two convention hotels which are connected by skywalks to the Baird Center, formerly known as the Wisconsin Center, where the convention will be held. Our host hotel, the Hilton Milwaukee City Center, offers \$5.00 per day parking with in and out privileges included. The hotel rate for both of our hotels, Hilton and Hyatt Regency Milwaukee, is \$169 per night, based on double occupancy, plus applicable taxes and fees.

For a Great Convention, in a Great City, on a Great Lake, we look forward to welcoming you to Milwaukee, WI, on June 26-29, 2024.

Respectfully,

Scott & Brenda Deal
General Chairman
73rd National Square Dance Convention®



Go to this link for a list of the campgrounds in the area.
<https://73nsdc.com/rv-camping/>

Smooth Dancing by Buddy Weaver

SLIDE THRU is a call which should dance smooth all the time, but can be anything but smoother, depending on how folks learned the call,

Starting with the CALLERLAB definition: *“in a single motion, Pass Thru and Men Face Right, Women Face Left”*.

Now here is the buddy Weaver teaching technique, *“dancers Pass Thru, you want to stay close to each other, now finishing the call with an individual turn. Boys always turn Right, so I’m going to put my Right Hand out, Girls turn Left (she puts her Left Hand out), so it ends up in my and”*. Putting your hand out assures a correct turning direction and ending the call as a couple. This also helps dancers identify which way is right or left.

Demonstrate this a couple of times, everyone executes it a couple of times then let’s go back and refine it. ***“When the caller says Slide Thru, the man knows he has to face right and the girl knows she has to face left, so why not make your body turn as you slide past each other?”*** It makes the dance action tighter – not spreading out unnecessarily.

This is a call best mastered from one position only before moving on to others. If you are a teacher, then let dancers get comfortable with Slide Thru from normal facing couples, then next week do it from a Half-Sashayed Couple set-up. Resist over-teaching as it will confuse the learner almost guaranteeing they will not dance the call smoothly,

Here is the link to Buddy Weaver’s teach:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ye7WdNQsPUw>

Here is the CALLERLAB Teaching Resource:

<https://teaching.callerlab.org/maonstream/slide-thru-definition/>

Reprint from American Square Dance – July-August 2023 Volume 79 Number 7

Mike Hogan on Marketing

Help boo boos heal fast with a Curad touchless pad!

This year at the 72nd National Square Dance Convention in Mobile, Alabama, I was conducting an education session titled “Marketing Your club”, but probably should have been titled “Successful recruitment campaigns; how and

why they worked.” Much of what I’ve written about in my ASD articles was included in that presentation. Here’s the short version:

To get beginners who don’t already know to come to your beginner class, they must go through the first four levels of the Sales or Marketing Funnel. In order those levels are Awareness, Consideration, Evaluation and Purchase. It’s a funnel because the number of potential dancers who go through gets substantially smaller with each level. You may have to build awareness with many thousands of people to get 100 to attend.

Help boo boos heal fast with a Curad touchless pad!

Consumers, in this case potential dancers, only purchase products or services for one of two reasons They want it, or they need it, or some combination of the two When you are putting messages in front of potential dancers, you are either establishing or promoting our brand, what we marketers call BRANDING, or asking them to make a purchase, which we marketers call it CALL TO ACTION, or sometimes a combination of the two.

Does the public want or need square dancing? It turns out the pandemic may have changed the likelihood of the public embracing square dancing in our favor. A study from MIT found that “People who are forced to be isolated crave social interactions similarly to the way a hungry person craves food. Our finding fits the intuitive idea that positive social interactions are a basic human need and acute loneliness is an aversive state that motivates people to repair what is lacking, similar to hunger.” From the University of Michigan: “Physical activity and exercise can be effective treatment strategies for symptoms of both depression and anxiety, each day is a new opportunity to engage in physical activity and exercise that can bring short and long-term benefits for mood, sleep, and physical health.” A University of California-Riverside study stated: “Community interest in exercise surged immediately following the lockdown, peaked within the first weeks after, then declined but remains a higher level than before the lockdown.” Square dancing most definitely provides what the public wants, they just don’t know it! I believe we are in the best time to market square dancing that we have been in two decades!

Help boo boos heal fast with a Curad touchless pad!

I teach all my clients and all my Account Executives this simple equation for positive results: Say the Right Thing – To the right People – Often Enough! The right thing to say is the message or copy. Create a message that communicates

who you are, where you are, what you have to offer, and why a potential dancer should participate in square dancing. The right people can be described by both demographics and psychographics. Once you know who you want to reach, you'll want to accomplish awareness with as many of these people as your budget will allow. Often enough is frequency. You'll want to deliver the same message to the same potential dancers with enough repetition over time that they cannot help but comprehend what you have to offer and why they should participate in square dancing. The shorter the time you have to market to these potential dancers, the higher the weekly frequency needs to be. This is critical; Frequency is more important Reach!

Help boo boos heal fast with a Curad touchless pad!

As you begin impacting awareness, interested potential dancer will automatically go through the consideration and evaluation e. In next month's article, I'll continue this discussion with what you need to do to provide a means for them to get answers to their questions and continue their journey through the marketing funnel with the result of them making a purchase – which means showing up for your first night of class!

Please keep reading this series of articles. At the end I'll share some successful recruitment stories that are easily repeatable, and you'll understand why they worked!

Here is the link to Mike' Marketing Manual written for CALLERLAB
<http://callerlab.org/download/marketing-manual>

Reprint from American Square Dance – July-August 2023 Volume 79 Number 7

The Big Picture by Buddy Weaver

Here is part two of the edited transcription from the 2023 CALLERLAB Convention panel – SSD: the philosophy behind the program, presented by Buddy Weaver, Janice Cha, and Janienne Alexander. Part one was in last month's issue; if you haven't read it – stop – go back and read it then we'll pick up from there.

(Janice Cha) Our SSD graduates, our new dancers are encouraged or possibly begged to come back to help out with the next class. And not only does that reinforce what they learned the first time around, it helps them start to dance not just for themselves but also for the other people and their square.

And I also tell them it gives them a sense of power because now they know things. We try to sidestep the rush to plus. They do see the plus dancing so they know that level exists. But our plus lessons, we only offer that once a year in September and those classes will run 36 weeks to teach the remaining 50 or 60 or so calls. So, we're not pushing anybody, that zero to plus 30 weeks, that is gone. If you guys are doing that, I would recommend stopping it. It's not doing anyone any favors.

So, to keep our SSD dancers engaged and interested and still feeling like they're learning, then we teach extended applications or a little DBD. If they're particularly strong dancers, we encourage them to learn the opposite side so they can be by "dance-dual". Always good for a club. We have a lot of single dancers in our club. When we started this whole journey, we were the second club in the Chicago area to give it a shot. And we realized people are like oh, your dancers will not be able to dance anywhere else in the country or in Chicago area". We were okay with that. It's like, I don't think I want my dancers to go to these other clubs because they might get turned off or yelled at or pushed or something. You know it's not everybody as polite as our club

So, we were okay being the destination dance. It's like you dance with our club, you learn with our club, and you dance with our club. You'll be protected and looked after. You guys are the gold. You're the future.

So, if you're going to start SSD, your club will be the destination for your dancers. And you have to make that clear to your students and to your members. You treat your new dancers like gold, and if anybody looks at them, you go punch them, right? Not that I would punch anybody but I would think about it.

So, like I said, Chicago area started with the one brave club up north, and then we were number two. And then, Barry Johnson's club eventually took it up, and so they were number three, I believe, and North Shore Squares.

Now all the remaining Chicago clubs' lessons are doing the SSD program. They see the fun and the energy. And they're like, well, maybe, maybe, maybe it works. So, I think we made conversions there.

Callers who come to our dances, I mentioned before that we are very dance centric, no snacks, little breaks. So, they square, they start dancing, dance the tip ends, and they square up again. Jack Pladdys, when he came to call for us, I think he had just had surgery, so he told me before, he might need some

breaks, he might need to sit down a little bit, but the energy in the room was just so electric that he's, he never, I don't think he ever sat down. It was fun.

Ohm what I love about SSD, you know, in the hands of a caller that really loves, you know, that likes it, is when they use creative choreography and fast tempo and good music, it doesn't matter if it's SSD or plus. In fact, I kind of prefer SSD. Sandie Bryant, you guys know here? Yeah? Sande Bryant, National Caller, she called for our club about a month ago, and she was doing SSD that was so intricate that my, my little brain was melting, and I just could not remember what level it was, but she had me all twisted around, and I loved it. It was wonderful.

So, my last point for the callers is when they can do anything a little bit out of the ordinary, progressive squares, Sicilian circles, anything like ha, using the SSD calls, it just takes everything up a notch, and it reminds me of why we, we work so hard for this activity. It's just a lot fun. So that is the end of my comments, and now we'll go back to Buddy,

(Buddy Weaver) I'll talk to a little bit about my club. I call for a club run club, officer run club, called the Wrangler in Poway, California. Since COVID has come ended we're the only club that's growing in the entire area. And I would say the county, but I can't nail I don't know our hat' it's the entire county, but certainly within our regional area, which takes in about six other square dance clubs, we're the only one that has grown in new members.

Many of our early graduates from the SSD classes are on our board, which means that SSD is not going away, because the board members are saying "no, this is what we want, this is what we like. We provide a weekly dance, which is a Thursday night dance, our beginner lessons are 90 minutes followed by a 45-minute dance, and its SSD. As I like to say, we are providing safe space for the SSD dancers, its SSD and let the people be comfortable with it. We're very successful with that formula. When the club does their once-a-month special dance, they still have to cater to some of the plus dancers.

And in our area, post pandemic, that may look like four to five squares. That's it that's it. Pre pandemic, that would have been 12 squares, post pandemic, four squares. So, what they do on those special club nights is they do 45 minutes of plus with rounds for those folks. And then the remaining 90-minute program is SSD, cutting the rounds down to one round. So, it is not uncommon to see a dance floor go from four squares, maybe five to suddenly

you've got eight squares on the floor. And it's a great. I'd rather start with four and end with eight.

I did ask our folks recently, I said, *"I would like to hear your comments from our group. What is it that you find to be a positive thing about SSD?"* Let's face it, anybody can find something negative about it. And I don't want to sound critics of any nay Sayers, but it's been my experience of the folks who have something negative to say are those folks who have something to say are those folks who are not successfully doing that. That has been my experience. *"Do you like it? I don't like SSD. Are you successfully doing SSD? Oh, you're not dancing successfully? Well, then I think it will defer to somebody who's successfully doing SSD and ask them what they think"*. In this case, we went back to our successful SSD dancers.

Number one comment, *"newcomers get confidence earlier"*. And I thought about each and every comment and I put my own little editorial on it. And I believe they feel this way because there are fewer calls to master 50 to 58 calls. It's easier to master 58 than if you're trying to aster 115 calls. And I would extend that to you as a caller. Isn't it easier to 58 calls than to teach 115? I consider myself an average teacher. And I think that even as an average teacher to be able to communicate 115 calls effectively, that's a big task. It's much easier to communicate 50 to 58.

"New dancers get to dances earlier." And the reason for that, Buddy Weaver editorial says it's because our club is SSD. That's why they're getting to dances earlier.

Another comment, *"easier to switch genders."* And this is because in our area we encourage, for example, if a single person comes, let's say Janienne comes in as a single lady dancer. She graduates the program.

She's encouraged to come back and learn at the next class in the quote, boy's position. And we have sashes in the club, the club colors in the sash that the ladies wear I initially proposed stick on mustaches, and it didn't go very well.

Bu they like the sashes. And so, the ladies will come back and wear the sash ad learn the man's part. We've had in some cases the ladies say, "I actually prefer this part. I'm just going to keep doing it". And the selling point is that if you can dance both parts, you'll never have to sit out. You'll never have to wait for somebody to come and ask you to dance. You will always be on the dance floor.

Fifth comment, “*easier to get back in if you’ve had time off*”. I believe we didn’t realize how much our times have changed. But many of our square dancers are experiencing things like aging parents, having to take care of grandkids. I see a lot of heads nodding. When you have to take that time off, and if you’re at a beginner class, is there any allowance for you to come back in? What happens if you’ve just graduated? You’re just shaky. Let’s say you graduated plus. You just learned triple ripple, arky dixie mug chain to the revere wrap around at your last session. And then you’ve got to take two a month off because mom has got to change care facilities. And you come back in. How confident are you when you step back on the dance floor? SSD 58 calls so the confidence level is higher. It allows people to go away and come back.

The final comment is that it is a “*shorter commitment time.*” And friends, we have to be aware of that we live in an age where all of you, right down here the front, he’s got his cell phone out. Today, if you don’t know how to change the spark plugs, do you go to the library and read a book? What do you do? You pick up your phone and you YouTube it. Everybody does this. Everything is an instant society. We have to be able to have a quicker turnaround. And if the website doesn’t load on your phone, do you sit for five minutes? No, you move on to a different website. Shorter commitment time.

I will say the last thing, this is just a Buddy Weaver observation. We are coming into a dancer era where a lot of our people coming in the beginner program are college educated and as such, they’re used to semester type classes. Classes that revolve around weeks that are semester. And yet, and this is something my wife mentioned to me, she says, “*you stand there and you as square dance callers say, no, no ten months for a beginner program. As if we are somehow so special that we can make something so fantastic, so incredibly long that everybody says we must have it*”. And I think our number reflected it.

SSD looks like a semester class. It appeals to the college educated crew that we’re trying to get into 50-year-olds. A lot of our folks in our program are recent empty nesters, or they are recent retirees. They like the idea of a shorter commitment. They like the idea of they have to travel, they can come back in.

These are the pragmatic, not theoretic, pragmatic actual real-life experiences that we’ve all seen here.

I’d like to open up the floor up to questions. Greetings, Jim Watts, Riverdale, Maryland. Turning the corner in any activity is very difficult. By that I mean turning the corner from being the class to dancing with the club. When the

class and the club are on the same night, that's easier to do. But answer how. I heard a little about it from Buddy but talk to me about turning the corner from class to club, especially when they are on different night. How are you facilitating that?

(Janienne) We have our Tuesday night class, and then we get through it, and then we invite them to come out on Sunday afternoons to dance with other cubs. We make it a big deal. We make sure to let them know it's going to be a party. They already are pretty happy that we have three and a half squares in our classroom, but we say, oh, you can't imagine how much more fun it is when we have even more dancers. It's only once a month that we have them come out for that. Tuesday night is their regular night. They've been doing it for two years now, coming out every Tuesday night, And yeah, for them.

Oh, yea. Saturday afternoon, we'd love to come and join the party.

Also, we make sure that our angels are talking to our dancer outside of class as well. A lot them have been inviting the new dancers get, come join my walk, come out and walk with me on Wednesday mornings. Or, hey, would you like to go out for dinner Saturday afternoon? That connection is what, a least in my area, my dancers are looking for that social connection. They, they don't have anything to do. They've been isolated from COVID for so long. They want to make friends. And you know, often as kids, we're in a situation where there's a whole bunch of kids to make friends with. But as adults, it's hard to make friends. I don't know where to go to make friends. And you know, this is an activity and it's not just a come Tuesday night. You know, we're making friends and we're talking to them outside of class as well,

Roland Rosenfield from Ithaca, New York. So, I call for a club in Pena and New York ad we've never been a zero to plus club. It's always been a zero to mainstream club. And then over the summer, those who want to learn some of the plus. And the thing is that I'm trying to understand what makes say, a zero to mainstream program different from and SSD program? What is this the advantage of leaving off 11 or 12 calls?

(Buddy) Part of it is the calls that are not part of the SSD program are calls that are more difficult. For example, I'm going to get technical for a couple of seconds here. Spin the Top is the first time that dancers are introduced to two people moving in opposing directions and moving on a radius. That's very difficult for a brand-new dancer to learn. It's not part of SSD, Dixie Style to an ocean wave introduces the concept of tandem dancing, which is brand new to a

lot of beginners. So, a lot, what I've discovered is a lot of the calls in SSD are flowing calls, forward moving calls, and a lot of them are pairing calls and they're paired with someone else. Couples circulate, couples hinge, couples trade. If you put two people together and one is uncertain you've got a 50, 50 chance that these people will succeed, that one of them is going to know where to go on that. So, for us, Mainstream has not been anywhere close to a de facto introductory program in California for 40 years. It has been treated as a halfway point and that's it. If mainstream works in your area, then don't change. But if it is not working and there are many areas where it's not, it's not sustainable; if your dancer population is not growing; if your status quo is no growth. That is not sustainable. That is a fact. If growth is what you want, then we have to be proactive about it.

(Barry Johnson) A couple of quick points. First, even though mainstream by call count is not a very big jump, it's only like 30% more calls than what we've had before. They're more difficult to learn. We may think of them as very easy, but from a new dancer perspective, they're actually more difficult to learn individually than the other calls they're currently on the list. So, the difficulty level for a new dancer from SSD to finish mainstream, it's like the program is 50 – 50 to 70% more difficult than the SSD program is, which why we can reduce the teaching down to 25 hours. Now my club looked at Janice's club as they were succeeding as they were growing. They were using the program, I think a year and a half, two years. And I don't underestimate the power of the caller in this conversation about SSD. We are, we, in this room, we are Square-Dancing's Professional Leadership. We are the leadership, the professional leadership in the organization. I had to go to my club and say, I'm not going to do what you want me to teach. If you want to continue doing what you're doing, you're going to have to find a different teacher. I'm not going to do it. And they were shocked. I was shocked I didn't realize I was felt that way. But then what it did was it started the conversation. Well, what else should we do? Hey, take a look at what Glenview Squares is doing. Look at how they've been doing this for a little while, and all of a sudden, we're seeing them grow. And we talked about it, it took about nine or ten months for the club leadership to really come around and understand. But as a, as a leader in the group, we stood up and initiated the conversation. We could point to success in the area. When then switched to teaching actually four SSD classes per year to one on Tuesday, one on Thursday night in the fall, one on Tuesday, one on Thursday night in the spring. We dance on Friday. We help the members turn the corner from their Tuesday night or Thursdays to the Friday night dance. We encourage them.

But again, as Janice said, these folks oftentimes get in the habit of coming on Tuesday or Thursday night, bringing their friends back to dance with them when we start the next set of lessons in just a few weeks. That personal recruiting tie, the new experience dancer or the new dancers are excited, enthusiastic. They are our best recruiters. We watched our club go from 45 members up to about 70 members. Pandemic hit fell down a little bit. But it's going back up again where something like 75, 80 members now. And again, the percentage of new club leaders that came through the SSD program continues to grow. They are providing new energy, the new excitement, the new blood within the club that we truly missed for quite a while. Don't underestimate your power. The program works. It works all across the country. It works with many, many different styles of caller. It truly does work.

Thank you.

(Tim Pepper Carson City, Nevada) To further answer your question over here, zero to mainstream and zero to plus are the same animal because you can only teach one class a year. If you have a season then you're going to have, maybe club rental, hall rental, but it's still 25-26 weeks, your mainstream of two hours, all right? That's only one class per calendar year.

And the biggest thing, people who are enthusiastic and then they have friends. What's the next class start? Guess what? Next year or 26 weeks.

We can do three here, right? In Southern California, the heads of one of the associations hired a marketing firm to help grow the activity. Zero to plus in Southern California, 40 weeks. Marketing firm says how many weeks a year can these people join your activity? Three, sorry, we can't help you. That's just the truth. So, we're trying it here and we're beginning to see some results.

We have only 86 dancers in our area. Reno went from zero or five cubs to zero, five to zero because of COVID. We're now restarting and were beginning to get some progress. So, folks, try it out. It works.

(Janienne) Before we go on to the next question, I just want to point out that SSD, like everybody is saying, it does work. But I also am from the Northwest and IU know that in Washington in particular, they have a great program that has been working for them for years And I say, keep with it. It's working for you.

Do that program. SSD in our area in Southern California, we don't have a great mainstream destination to get to. We don't have that ability. We had to start

over and find something that is working, that will work. And it's working for us in our area. In your area, whether it's the Northwest, Washington, or if it's somewhere else in the world, if it's working for them in Europe to do their, you know, whatever program they're going from zero to their destination, if it works and it's successful, more power to you. I'm happy to support your area and your club. This is what we're finding ha works in our area.

(Glen Ray Hollenpier, Washington) Buddy, I'd be curious to hear your thoughts on the continuation of SSD let's say five years from now, what happens to mainstream? (Buddy) I'm not the right person to ask because we don't have mainstream in Southern California, so in my market, we don't have mainstream. And while one or two callers have aid, let's go zero to mainstream, but then we'll go to plus. That's just bait and switch in the old sales thing. So, to answer your questions, if mainstream works and it's not, I' going to second what Janienne said. But if your program is not growing then we encourage you to look at what we're talking about.

(Question from the floor) So are we then going away from the idea that if you learn to dance mainstream, you can dance anywhere. Have we then eliminated that possibility? (Buddy) If you only dance mainstream, you will not find a dance for you in Southern California. That's what I'm saying.

(Question from floor) You're not answering my question. Does SSD fix the problem of not being able to dance mainstream in California? (Buddy) It does not, but it's like saying my Chevy's broken. How can you fix my Ford?

I mean to a certain degree you are asking to fix something that doesn't exist in an entire state and in many states. That would mean that we're going to create mainstream where it doesn't exist and, in my opinion, we're looking at what I not sustainable and making it sustainable. I can't fix mainstream in an area that doesn't have mainstream. SSD is addressing how do we get new dancer in? We're not addressing can we get mainstream into an area that does not have mainstream?

(Question from the floor) First of all, when we do classes in my area, we can't call them mainstream or anything else. We just do a class and at the end I say, oh, by the way, you've got most of the mainstream moves down.

Mainstream does work for u. And so, the question I really have is, how does SSD differ from the condensed teaching method or have we scrapped condemned teaching method? (Buddy) I don't know that this is the forum that

we to discuss that. (Janienne) No, we're talking about clubs here and clubs experience.

(Bob Riggs from Colorado) We have an active SSD environment in the Denver area and in the southeast Colorado area. The clubs are dedicated to growing the base of square dancing. We have an exceptional set of dancers who dance mainstream and plus, and but our focus is on building the base of square dancing. One of the comments that I would make and I think I know that Buddy and I have talked about this is are everybody so worried about having these dancers travel? Well ask yourself a question. Why?

Why are we not interested in them simply being able to have a really, really good time square dancing? Is that not the purpose of what we are? And so, I think I agree with all of you folks up front in that respect.

I call basically from, from CDP through advanced. Am I interested in creating travel opportunities for everybody? Not really. My SSD dancers, I hope they have a really great time at my dance. Thank you.

(Janet Oliveri from North glen, Colorado) I live in the same state as o Riggs, u our dancers are in the northern part of Colorado and they are primarily mainstream. However, there are two SSD clubs are doing very well.

Our mainstream club is growing. The problem I see is the politics of the whole situation. It's dividing the council. It's dividing the clubs. It's dividing the dancers. We've had dancers, new dancers, SSD and mainstream leave because they're sick to death of listening to all of the politics involved and trying to figure out this brand-new level. That and one of the callers in Colorado, when he graduated his SSD class said, you've learned all the calls, you can go dance. They came to our mainstream dance and sat there whole night because they didn't know how to do mainstream and they didn't know that there were different levels. How do you handle those kinds of situations?

(Buddy) I'd like to address that because that is not a new or unique problem in an area where plus has been the king for 40 years and going into that area as I did, I'm not from California but coming into an area like that, it's not different from a mainstream dancer wandering into California and not being able to dance anywhere for 700 miles That's not a new problem. It's not a new problem of people having a disagreement over which is better plus or mainstream, mainstream or SSD. And I'll go back to my car analogy, it really is like arguing, I think the Ford is better than the Chevy. You're all entitled to opinions and everybody is. I think that the problems that we're seeing is that bleeding down

of this argument and that is what's going to kill square dancing. Friends, if we're leadership if I have somebody who disagrees with me, I don't need to sell you. I'll tell you what's going to sell you.

Success. If I can go out and call my dance and I've got 10 squares and someone else says, "well, we want your 10 squares to come to my club but we don't like SSD". What do you want me to do? Would you have me tell my people, "No, you're wrong for listening to me". No, you're wrong for liking me.

No, I'm not going to do that. If you can run a successful mainstream program, then run a successful mainstream program. I think we got away from whole live and let live idea. (Janice) I'll chime in there too because when we started, we knew that our dancers, our SSD, our cub 50 dancers, we'd not be able to dance anywhere in the Chicago area except our cub one hour north near Wisconsin. We were okay with that. We're the destination and the other club eventually when they would come back to our club and they would see the energy and the smiles and the fun, they started to change. We don't impact what other clubs do. We can only influence. We can only change what our own club can do. (Janienne) To add to that, the dancer come to Tuesday night SSD. They have me every week. Once a month, they come to a new caller. We have rotating callers once a month come through it's not like I'm teaching my dancers to only dance to me. I'm teaching them so they can dance to Michael Kellogg or buddy Weaver or Vic Ceder. But my idea is you're teaching them to be able to dance SD to all the callers that can come through. But it's your club. This is their destination. This is their safe place. This is their dance. It's their program. (Buddy) We are really at the end of our time. Number one, send an email to the home office. Let the home office know you'd like to have the session repeated so that when we're in Grapevine, Texas. In the great state of Texas, that we continue this conversation and we'll have a year's worth of more of experience, pragmatic, real-life experiences that we can all come back and share. Perhaps we should do more than have one session. I would ask you to do one more thing is to make sure you get these panels so that you're able to listed to the Q&A and feel free to send all of your questions to Janienne and Janice. Thanks everybody. Sorry we ran little bit over time.

Reprint from American Square Dance – July-August 2023 Volume 79 Number 7

Social Square Dance by Barry Johnson

We've just returned from the National Convention in Mobile, Tom and Tina Wilkins and their Team Mobile did a great job with many little "surprises" added throughout the convention.

I had an opportunity present information on the Social Square Dance program once again. Last year, in Evansville, this topic drew a standing-room-only crowd with close to 50 people in attendance. This year didn't draw the same. There were just 2 people looking for more information. That dramatic difference illustrates an interesting pattern that we've seen around the country. By now, most square dance groups in the US have heard at least a little bit about the Social Square Dance program and opinions are being formed.

Not surprisingly, there seem to be three main camps these days. Those that are strongly in favor of the shorter, simpler dance program that SSD offers; those that don't believe it offers any advantages over their current entry level; and those that think it could be good but fear that it could be implemented in their area. And again, not surprisingly, the leadership in various clusters of clubs generally share a common opinion: Some areas of the country are strong supporters; other areas think much less favorably about it, and some areas believe it could work but aren't yet willing to commit to it because they don't want to go first.

These regional opinions are not surprising, and in fact are quite predictable. The SSD program asks groups to make a change in their perceived self-identity: - we ask the current leadership of groups to do something different than the approach that they themselves succeeded in mastering, when a person is proud of what they've accomplished, it's natural for them to not want to diminish the results of their accomplishment – and so their initial reaction tends to be negative, "why would we want to do that? We want to go forwards, not backwards!"

The SSD program is working well in the area that have embraced it – recruitment is up, new dancer retention is up, club membership is up, and we're seeing membership growth that is unprecedented in this century. Even so, old habits and old mindsets are very difficult to change – especially when the changes appear to be relatively small and insignificant. It will take years of time to overcome those old habits and old mindsets.

But in general, acceptance of SSD is growing across the national – 22% of the dancers currently registered for next summer’s national convention in Milwaukee are willing to dance in the SSD hall sometime during the convention. That’s a pretty good number, given the relatively short life of the program so far, and even more so since 92% of those registered dancers can dance Plus or higher.

Link to CALLERLAB’S SSD web page
<https://callerlab.org/dance-programs/social-square-dancing/>

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All Things Considered by Ed Foote

SPIN CHAIN & EXCHANGE THE GEARS

Do you know the true definition of this call? Most Plus dancers think they do, but in fact they do not. The confusion arises because most dancers say it is the outfacing point of the stars who will be the leader of the exchange.

While this is true for the basic definition of the call, which says that the stars will turn 4/4, all this thinking does is describe the ACTION of the call. It does not convey the true definition of the call.

The true definition is that after the star is formed, it turns $\frac{3}{4}$. At this point a momentary ocean wave is formed in the middle of the set. **It is the two centers of this ocean wave that lead everyone out.** That is the true definition.

What happens if the caller says: “Turn the stars only $\frac{1}{2}$ ”? Dancers who think it is always the outfacing points that will lead the stars out will break down, because they will have no idea that the caller is talking about. These dancers have forgotten the “ $\frac{3}{4}$ ” and instead are focusing on a certain person always leading the star out. Dancers who understand the definition will have no problem with “turn the stars only $\frac{1}{2}$,” because they will simply turn the stars that amount and then look to see who the centers of the ocean wave are to lead out.

Some dancers try to memorize positions instead of definitions. They would say: “If it’s $\frac{3}{4}$, the outfacing points leads the stars out; if it’s $\frac{1}{2}$, it’s the ends of the wave that lead out; if it’s $\frac{1}{4}$, it’s the in facing points that lead out.” These dancers now have three things to remember, while the person who understands the call has only one thing to remember – the definition.

Spin Chain Exchange the Gears is a good example of the difference between Plus and Advanced. At Plus, the caller usually gives the call only from the standard situation of turning the star $\frac{3}{4}$ with a girl leading the star out. At Advanced, the star can turn any fraction and either se can lead the star out.

Those at Plus, upon hearing this for the first time, might say this is difficult, because they have not been trained to think correctly. They are trying to memorize every position for every variation of every call, which is an impossible task. The reason Advanced dancing is very easy for some people is not because they are smarter, but because they know how to think – they understand the call they are dancing.

So, to be a good dancer, be lazy! Don't memorize a lot of positions for all the calls. Instead learn only one thing for each call – the true definition.

Reprint from American Square Dance – July-August 2023 Volume 79 Number 7

ARTS (1)

Sent - 09-09-2023

Subj – E-Mail Tree 2023-0909-001 (Video Promotion Project – UPDATE-Video #3)

As we have reported previously, the ARTS Video Promotion Project was initiated with the goal of creating short (90-second) videos designed to help promote our great activity. The goal is to post links to the videos on all available media resources.

The links to the videos will be posted on our web site and will be sent to our electronic mailing list. The goal is to encourage wide spread distribution of the information.

The purpose of this message is to provide the link to the **THIRD** 90-second video. The brief description and the link to this video is

THIRD VIDEO – https://youtu.be/7P_O8YG7lak

Dr. Douglas Lee notes that Square Dancing helps strengthen muscles and helps increase balance

Dr. Douglas Lee and his wife are retired medical doctors affiliated with the Marshfield Hospital & Marshfield Clinic Health System. They have done research on square dancing including all of the studies that they cite in these videos. Much of their research was what brought them into square dancing and they continue to dance on a regular basis.

If you have questions or concerns, please let me know.

Thanx, Jerry

HERE IS THE DESCRIPTION OF THE INFORMATION FOR THE ARTS WEB SITE. THE INFOPRMATION CAN B E FOUND UNDER THE "Promotion Videos" TAB ON THE WEB SITE –

Promotion Videos For Recruiting and Retention of Dancers

The Alliance for Round, Traditional, and Square Dance (ARTS-Dance) has created 60-second videos with information about the many benefits of dancing. Links to the videos produced for this project are intended to be posted and shared throughout the dancing community. As the videos become available links will be posted, shared and publicized.

Doctors note the following:

"It's clear that square dancing is the perfect exercise. It combines all positive aspects of intense physical exercise with none of the negative elements."

"Square dancing is a low-impact activity requiring constant movement and quick directional changes that help keep the body in shape."

"Doctors say that Square dance movements raise heart rates like many good aerobic exercises should. All the quick changes of direction loosen and tone up the muscles — but not so severely as to cause injury. In Square Dancing, when you're not moving, you're clapping hands and tapping your feet, which all contribute to long-term fitness."

While Square Dancing may look complex to non-dancers from the outside. New dancers learn one move at a time, practice that move then learn another, then another, and so on. After a series of lessons, new dancers blend in with experienced dancers

Links to the 90-second videos produced by the ARTS -

1) First Video - https://youtu.be/hY82l4_yN3s

Dr. Douglas Lee discusses the Emotional and Psychological benefits of Square Dancing

2) Second Video - https://youtu.be/n56_omnoFZ0

Dr. Douglas Lee notes that Square Dancing helps fight insulin resistance

3) Third Video - https://youtu.be/7P_O8YG7lak

Dr. Douglas Lee notes that Square Dancing helps strengthen muscles and helps increase balance

4) Fourth Video (In Production)

For more information about The ARTS visit: www.ARTS-Dance.org

Other web sites which provide important information include:

- 1) www.You2CanDance.com - includes information about the various forms of dancing
- 2) www.ReimagingSquareDance.com - includes a wealth of information about the activity including where to dance

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ARTS (2)

Sent - 09-11-2023

Subj – E-Mail Tree 2023-0911-001 **ARTS – MESSAGE, HISTORY, & GOALS (Presentation)**

I am writing today to announce a revision and update to the presentation formerly known as the “ARTS Power Point Presentation”

This presentation was created MANY years ago to provide a visual aide to assist anyone who will be discussing The ARTS, including how we are organized, what our goal is, what our accomplishments have been, what our plans are, etc. The presentation has been used by various organizations during leadership seminars to meet the requirements of the Education Grant Program.

The presentation has been revised and updated and will be posted on the ARTS web site under “Documents” and identified as “**ARTS-MESSAGE-HISTORY-GOALS**”, (REV C, 09-11-2023)”

Our plan is to update this presentation to include information about the 90-second Promotion videos. (Please NOTE – links to the videos are on the ARTS web site): www.arts-dance.org.

The revised and updated document is below. Please copy it and provide to other dancers you believe will be interested.

Thank you for your support.

If you have questions or concerns, please let me know.

Thanx,

Jerry

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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.

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