

This newsletter provides promotion and marketing ideas, shines a light on people in our dance community, provides history and general information about our much loved activity, and highlights provincial and national events. If you wish to contribute an article, or see an event, topic, person, or club featured, contact the editor.



CHIEF'S CHATTER - CREATING AWARENESS

- by Claudia Littlefair

"The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place" – George Bernard Shaw

Creating awareness that our activity exists is the first step in marketing. On such tight budgets, ways to continually advertise our presence is limited. A sandwich board sign advertising that dancing is taking place can be reused every



Local high school rents advertising space on their school fence, for a one year term.

week. Put a website address on it, and anyone whose interest is tweaked can find out more. Tie a dance in with a community cause. The Leduc club is doing this in September with the "Hoedown for the Hungry" - all proceeds going to the

local food bank. Car decals are a low cost item (under \$6) and can be placed in a car window indefinitely. Participation in trade fairs, farmer's markets, parades and demos throughout the year are important to show we exist – even if the outcome doesn't bring in new dancers! **Unlike recruiting that**

happens prior to the start of the dance season, promoting and creating awareness is a year-round job. If every club did some year-round promotion, we can make a difference.

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THE 50TH ALBERTA DANCE CONVENTION - LABOUR DAY WEEKEND



★ **Friday's Trail-In Dance, August 31, 7:30 pm Pre-Rounds; 8-10 pm Mainstream Dance, is being hosted by SRDIAA** (Square & Round Dance Instructors Association of Alberta). Plan to attend – it shows your support for our callers and cuers. Note: all callers and cuers who attend Convention pay the same registration fees as dancers, even if they never dance. In other words, they pay to call for you!

★ **There's a big difference between "Intros" and "Workshops". Dancers attending a Workshop already know that dance level** (eg. Mainstream, Plus, Advance). The workshop will feature a specific call within that level and work it from different angles. See next page for the weekend's program-at-a-glance.

★ **Dancers attending a Square Dance "Intro" do not need to know that level of program,** although they must know the preceding level. (eg. a Mainstream dancer can attend a Plus Intro, but not an Advance Intro.)

★ **Dancers do not need to know how to Round Dance, to attend a Round Dance Intro.**

★ **Starlight Fashions** will be there with square dance attire and footwear – at reduced prices. (For more information see their article on page 8 of this newsletter.)

★ **Other features of the Convention** include a Silent Auction, a historical display, Banner Parade (remember to pack your club banner), our Provincial AGM (if you're a dancer or leader, you're a member), Special Church & Memorial Service, the 50th Anniversary Dance Sunday Night (wear black and gold!) followed by an After-Party!

For the Convention Registration Form, Newsletters and Accommodation Information

GO TO www.squaredance.ab.ca.

50TH ALBERTA DANCE CONVENTION PROGRAM AT-A-GLANCE

TIME	MAINSTREAM HALL	PLUS HALL	FLEX HALL	ROUND HALL
FRIDAY				
7:30 - 8 PM	TRAIL IN DANCE: Pre-ROUNDS			
8 - 10 PM	MAINSTREAM DANCE			
SATURDAY				
9:15 - 9:50 AM	BANNER PARADE OPENING CEREMONIES			
10 - 11:30 AM	MAINSTREAM Dance with ROUNDS	PLUS Dance with ROUNDS	ADVANCE Dance	All Round Dances Demo'd before Teaches: TWO-STEP - Ph.II JIVE - Ph.III+1
11:30 - 1 PM	LUNCH BREAK			
1 - 2:20 PM	ALBERTA FEDERATION Annual General Meeting			
2:30-5 PM	Wksp - RECYCLE Wksp - SPIN CHAIN THRU Wksp - DIXIE STYLE/LEFT SWING THRU Intro To PLUS MAINSTREAM Dance	Wksp - DIAMONDS Wksp - ACEY DUECEY Wksp - FAN & PEEL TOP Intro to ADVANCE PLUS Dance	ADVANCE DANCE (2:30-3:30 PM) Intro To WALTZ (3:30-4:30 PM)	TWO STEP - Ph.II+2 FOXTROT - Ph.IV+2 CHA - Ph. III+1
5 - 7:30 PM	SUPPER BREAK			
Saturday Night "BLACK & GOLD 50th ANNIVERSARY DANCE"				
7:30-10 PM	MAINSTREAM Dance with ROUNDS	PLUS Dance with ROUNDS	ADVANCE Dance (To 8:30 PM)	ROUND Dance
SUNDAY				
9 AM	CHURCH & MEMORIAL SERVICE			
10:30-NOON	MAINSTREAM Dance with ROUNDS	PLUS Dance with ROUNDS	ADVANCE Dance (10:30-11:30)	Intro to CHA TWO-STEP - Ph.II+1
12-1:30 PM	LUNCH BREAK			
1:30-4:30 PM	Intro to HEXAGON Wksp - WALK & DODGE Wksp - TAG THE LINE Wksp - SPLIT CIRCULATE Wksp - CAST OFF MAINSTREAM Dance	Wksp - SPIN CHAIN & EXC. Wksp - COORDINATE Wksp - EXPLODE & ANY Wksp - PEEL OFF Wksp - TEA/BEER CHAIN PLUS Dance	ADVANCE Dance 6-COUPLE Dance Intro to JIVE	SLOW TS - Ph.IV+1+1 MERENQUE - Ph. III WALTZ - Ph. III CHA/RUMBA - Ph. III+2 (To 5pm)
4:30 - 7 PM	SUPPER BREAK			
Sunday Night				
7 - 9:15 PM	MAINSTREAM Dance with ROUNDS	PLUS Dance with ROUNDS to 9:15 PM	ADVANCE Dance (To 8:30 PM)	ROUND Dance - To 9:30 PM
9:15 - 9:30 PM	FINAL SQUARE DANCE PARTY - One Hall			
9:30-10:00 PM	CLOSING CEREMONIES			
10 PM	AFTER PARTY			
MONDAY				
10 - Noon	Mainstream Trail Out			

WHAT THE FUTURE LOOKS LIKE
- by Eric Henerlau

Editor's Note: *The following is an excerpt from the June, 2017 keynote address by caller Eric Henerlau at the 66th National Square Dance Convention, entitled "What's Right With Square Dancing". This excerpt talks about what the future of square dancing looks like. **For many clubs, the future is already here. How does your club fit in?***

Here are some examples of what the future of the activity could look like:

- **A new group of callers step up.** They may not have all the skills of seasoned callers, but new and existing dancers connect with them and support them in their efforts.
- **Groups get creative about where they dance.** Beyond the customary church halls and schools, groups find they can dance in vacant stores, people's garages or living rooms, or on patios and decks when weather permits. In exchange for advertising, groups get local businesses to sponsor them or provide dance venues.
- **More Basic and Mainstream groups are created, giving dancers more options for dancing.** Instead of pushing dancers through the programs, callers find more ways to use the Basic and Mainstream calls creatively, and dancers go to the dances because they are fun!
- **Square dance clubs partner with line dance, contra dance, and other dance groups, or square dance evenings are shared with other non-dance activities.** People will come to square dance and do other things, so less emphasis is placed exclusively on square dancing. Square dancing is just part of an evening's entertainment. People create clubs that hold a variety of social activities, with perhaps only some members square dancing.
- **Callers make more use of technology to reach remote dancers.** Callers use Skype or social media to call to groups too remote to have a caller. Recordings of teaching modules or mini-dances are sent to remote groups for practice.
- **The music and sound systems become more contemporary.** The speakers and amplifiers are on par with what is used by professional DJs. Spectators recognize the music as current songs from the radio.

How will these changes occur? There two possible paths. **The first is that forward-thinking clubs will see the future and embrace the coming changes.** They will realize they must adapt to today's society to keep square dancing relevant. They will modify their club policies about everything from dress code to lesson requirements to callers' participation. They will expand their idea of what a square dance club is to include other activities.

The other possibility is that the existing clubs will continue as they are and eventually fold. The callers and dancers will be content with stasis, and eventually the clubs will shrink and cease operations. In their place, new groups will be formed with new callers and dancers who don't have the historical context. These groups will bring a new paradigm for square dancing without having the institutional thinking of the legacy groups. Culture and style will be newly created, and a new art form will arise. Either of these paths will involve getting new dancers.

About The Author - Eric Henerlau



When Eric calls a dance, his positive energy fills the hall. He has devoted himself to teaching and calling square dancing since 1980, and his passion for the activity continues to draw people in. Eric combines music, choreography, and a personal connection with the dancers to create a party atmosphere. He has called in several states, as well as Japan, Belgium, and Germany. As an accomplished caller at all levels from beginners through C2, Eric knows how to entertain dancers regardless of their experience, and because squares and rounds complement each other, he will occasionally cue a Phase III or Phase IV Round Dance. He has recorded on Gold Wing/Fine Tune Records and currently records on Blue Star. Eric serves on the Board of Governors of CALLERLAB and currently chairs the Plus Committee and is on several other CALLERLAB committees, all with the focus on attracting and retaining dancers.

ON-LINE MARKETING TIPS

- by Eric Henerlau

Editor's Note: *The following is an excerpt from the June, 2017 keynote address by caller Eric Hanerlau at the 66th National Square Dance Convention, entitled "What's Right With Square Dancing". This excerpt talks about using on-line tools and social media to grow your club.*

Technology is available in multiple forms to help you grow square dancing. If you are uncomfortable or unfamiliar with the variety of technologies in use, find someone in your group who can step in and do some of the work. Often the caller can help out as he or she may be using the various tools.



- **Website.** If your club's website is out of date, have someone volunteer to keep it updated. It's a bad sign to visit a club's homepage to find out about all the dances coming up in 2006. If you don't have a website, get one! They cost from \$0 to \$1000, depending on how robust you want it. Several companies offer free websites and website tools in exchange for advertising on the side. **The club's homepage should be designed for the non-dancing public. When a visitor lands on the homepage, the site should communicate the social and fun aspects of the club, along with when the next class will start.** All other club information and business can be on other parts of the site. The homepage is the most critical for a new prospect.
- **Facebook.** Keep your Facebook page up to date with current and relevant club activities. **Facebook and your club's website are the public's perception of who you are.** Anyone considering joining your class or club will visit the website and Facebook page first – make sure they are attractive and inviting.
- **Email Distribution Lists.** Use email group lists for communications within your club. Be clear, and concise with club communications so that everyone is fully informed. These emails strengthen social bonding. Your web hosting service may provide email groups; if not, Yahoo and Google both provide this service for free.
- **Google Phone Number.** Get a unique phone number for your club that you can give out to people. Google offers phone numbers for free, and you can have any incoming call to that number redirected to a person who is designated to receive it. This allows the leadership in a club to change while still keeping the same club phone number. It also keeps personal phone numbers private.
- **Twitter/Snapchat/Instagram.** You can use these to send out news and pictures about the club, club events, and recent activities.
- **Free or Near-Free Online Services.** Use Craigslist, local "patch" news sites, Meetup.com, etc.
- **Groupon, Living Social and Other Web-Based Coupons.** Some clubs have had success in using promotional coupons through the Internet. Explore this avenue to see if it may work for your club.
- **Prospects Database.** Once you get a person who is interested in learning to square dance, capture that person's name/email/city and phone number and put it in a database (spreadsheet or document). Use an email processing tool to send out email invitations to your prospects for upcoming classes.
- **Ads and Keywords.** Both Google and Facebook have abilities to promote your classes when people use certain keywords to search. Look for keywords that someone might enter that would make that person a square dance prospect. Bid on and buy those keywords, so that when a person enters them, your ad is displayed on the sidebar.

- Nurse: "Doctor, there's an invisible man in the waiting room." Doctor: "Tell him I can't see him."
- What did the ocean say to the beach? Nothing, it just waved.
- Why did the orange stop? Because it ran out of juice. What do you do with a dead chemist? You barium.

THE LIGHTER SIDE OF DARKNESS - by Dee Jackins

Dee is an avid square and round dancer, and enjoys writing. She shares the lighter side of some of her experiences, challenges and near disasters as a sight impaired person. See past issue #2015-6 for her complete story under "Chatter-Closeup".



Dee and her husband squared danced from 1969 to 1971. In 1975, she lost sight in her left eye, and by 1989 her vision was completely gone. While trying to cope with her blindness, Dee's husband was diagnosed with cancer. He died 10 months later in October, 1991. A friend suggested that she try square dancing again, and in 1995 she joined Calgary's singles club. Dee has been dancing ever since. She dances by visualizing the calls and positions, and with the gentle guidance of dancers' hands for no-hand calls such as weave the ring.

Without too many details I'll share a few experiences I've had over the past years that seem to occur when it is least expected. Sometimes I have to shake my head, wondering how these crazy things can keep happening.

I had gotten into a cab and seated myself comfortably in the vehicle and clicked the seat belt without realizing that I was in the front seat when I heard this deep voice saying, "So, are you driving today?" At the same time I realized where I was and sure enough I felt the steering wheel. I quickly scooted out and commented, "I'd love to but I think I'll let you take over. No doubt you'll do a better job than I would!"

Another time the driver guided me to the side of a van with the sliding door. I tried to get in but I was facing the wrong way - my leg was up in the air and no place to put it. Is this what they call the "stance"? The back seat was nowhere in sight. Oops! Must have lost my sense of direction. When these courteous drivers open all these different doors, it's hard to judge whether it's sliding to the left or to the right. After so many incidents I'm paying more attention, but to no avail when they park the wrong way on a street and forget to inform you as to which way they are headed. No complaints though as 95% are on top of it and no major disasters have taken place. It's a great service!

Back when my vision was 20/400 (what a person with normal vision can see 400 feet away, I have to be no further than 20 feet away to see the same thing). It's the last of the numbers until you are blind. All I had was tunnel vision with very limited distance. I had gone to church with my husband and when it came time to go up for communion I suggested he go ahead of me and when he turns to return to the pew, I asked him to go slow so I could just follow his steps. Everything was going just fine until he turned to go down the aisle. I thought I'd take one more step in case someone was at the end of the pew and that way I wouldn't hit him or her. What a mistake that was! My shoulder bumped the instrument of one of the choir members, making a weird noise - sounded like it just about went down his throat. Without any hesitation I quickly apologized and hurried down the aisle to catch up to my husband. Needless to say, that never occurred again - Plan B was in order.

My sister was visiting one time when we decided to go shopping at a department store. We were browsing around in the jewelry section when somehow I managed to knock down a full circular rack of earrings onto the floor. Sure didn't see that one coming! There were earrings everywhere, so I tried to get down to start picking them up when my sister suggested I back away and let her pick it up since I was more of a hindrance than anything else. So I did just that and 'watched', it at least prevented the earrings from sticking to the soles of my shoes. I'm sure I could have done a neat little tap dance with all that metal under my feet. No clerks or managers from the store even came out to investigate the commotion so she just put it back on the shelf 'kind of' neat and tidy. What a mess! Has anyone ever felt like a bull in a china shop? I've experienced it a few times, always hoping it would never happen again but one can only hope for the best. Nice to have such a patient and understanding sister!

Actually when I think about all these awkward situations which were embarrassing at the time are now rather a bit on the lighter side of darkness. One never knows what is lurking around the corner. The best motto now is to be alert - and be aware! Till next time - enjoy the rest of summer.

- The family of large Alaskan bears posing for their family portrait experienced a true Kodiak moment.
- Mischievous lambs post their videos on EweTube.
- Obituaries of those hanged in the old west used to be posted in the noose paper.

A CALLER'S BRAIN AT WORK

"You Have Never Thought About This" -by Ed Foote

Editor's Note: This was recently re-published in a caller's newsletter from Australia "Behind The Mike" by caller Barry Wonson. In Barry's words, "This is a very cleverly written piece that boggles the mind!"

Q: What job requires more decisions to be made in a shorter period of time than any other job in the world?

A: Square Dance Caller.

When people first hear this, they think it is a joke. But then they realize it is not a joke - it is true. **A caller must make 8 to 10 decisions every 2 to 3 seconds. These include but are not limited to:**

- Knowing how long it will take the dancers to do a call, so as to know when to give the next call.
- Knowing what formation the named call will give.
- Knowing if this call will flow smoothly after the preceding call.
- Knowing what the next call should be from a variety of options.
- Knowing if that next call will flow smoothly from the preceding call.
- Deciding the correct timing for this particular call, based on whether the floor is weak, average, or strong.
- Knowing if the next call is "on the list" for the advertised program for the dance.
- Giving the calls on the beat with the music.
- Knowing who the partners and corners are in multiple squares.
- Knowing how to resolve to a Left Allemande and remembering which resolves have been used before so as to avoid repetition.
- Knowing where "Home" is if the caller wishes to use an "At Home" resolve.



Remember, all of the above is not happening two or three times a tip. This is all happening every 2 to 3 seconds in every tip. Having read the above, you are now trying to think of other jobs that require multiple decisions this fast. Let me help you. What about a fighter pilot in a dogfight with another plane? Yes, we concede that a large number of decisions are made here in a short period of time. But a dogfight is over fairly quickly. It may last a minute or two, but that's it. A caller is doing this rapid-fire thinking tip after tip for the entire dance. What about a surgeon in a complicated operation? The decisions are crucial, but they tend to be mapped out ahead of time, with a pause between each decision for implementation. In an emergency, there may be one minute of numerous decisions, but then there is a wait to see what happens.

I have presented this idea to many people, and so far no one has identified a job requiring the number of decisions a caller has to make in such a short period of time. If you can identify such a job, let me know. Note: I am not saying that square dance calling is the most important job in the world. On the contrary, I can name hundreds of jobs that are more important for the advancement of humanity than that of square dance calling. All I am discussing here is the number of decisions in a short space of time.

A final thought. A number of years ago a psychologist was treating a caller for mental stress and drug addiction (no, it wasn't me). He told the caller that the human brain is not designed to make the number of decisions in such a short period of time that a caller is required to make. Remember this the next time your caller misses the corner.

About The Author - Ed Foote



Ed Foote is well-known throughout the country to dancers at Mainstream thru Challenge. He has called for 53 years and currently calls throughout the U.S. from coast to coast. In his career, he has called in all 50 states, throughout Canada, and has made 18 calling trips to Europe calling in 10 countries. He has also made two calling trips to Australia and one to New Zealand. A member of CALLERLAB's Board of Governors. He is an Accredited CALLERLAB Caller Coach, and has conducted clinics and schools in 38 states, Canada, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand. In 2008 he received the CALLERLAB Milestone Award for significant contribution to the field of square dancing. Ed is a well-known square dance author. He has written and edited several instructional books on square dancing, has had hundreds of articles published in the U.S. and other countries, and for 11 years wrote a monthly note service

for callers. He has written a monthly column for American Square Dance magazine for 31 years, and has written a bi-monthly column for The Northeast Square Dancer Magazine (serves New England) for 27 years.

A GLIMPSE OF THE PAST

This column features excerpts from the book “As I See Saw It –Bob Osgood”, reprinted with permission from the author and square dance caller, Paul Moore. Jim Mayo, First Chairman of CALLERLAB, provided the following review comments: “This is truly the only book about the whole of MWSD and it is certainly the most complete (and accurate) book that will ever be written about this huge activity.” Paul had access to all of the material that crossed Bob Osgood’s desk at Sets in Order / American Square Dance Society. For additional information, contact Paul Moore at paulmoore@wildblue.net or look for this 600+ page book on Amazon.ca (\$26).

SQUARE DANCE MUSIC MEETS THE RECORD INDUSTRY

“Say there, Sonny, you may call that thar stuf you’re doing square dancing, but it shor ain’t the way we used to do it back in the good old days.”

The little man who has sidled up beside you at the Square Dance looks as though he knows what he’s talking about. The “Old Days” probably take us back to the time when our grandmother and grandfather were a courtin’ before movies, television, radio, and the automobile when the biggest entertainment was square dancing.

No, sir. Square dancing isn’t just like it used to be. Gone for the most part are the leather-lunged, blood and thunder yellers of yesteryear who, sans microphone and public address systems, hollered in sometimes unintelligible screams to be heard over the roar of the crowd. The dance figures were different too. The advent of modern travel has inter-mixed the dance styles from different portions of the country until western calls are just as common in Vermont and Maine as some of the eastern “singing calls” which in turn, have left their influential mark of the dances of the west.

Early in the game during the big boom period of square dancing in the late 1940s and early 1950s, it soon became apparent that we were running out of live musicians who could accompany our dances. A solution came in the form of square dancers making their own records. A number of record companies sprouted up overnight; C.P. MacGregor, Windsor, Imperial and Sets in Order, were among the several that jumped on the train.

Like many another birth, that of Windsor Records was wholly accidental and not at all planned. Early in 1950, Doc Alumbaugh felt the need of supplemental learning material for home use by members of his huge square dance classes in Arcadia and Monrovia, California. The demand for classes was so great at that time, and time and facilities so inadequate, that it was necessary for him to break up beginner and intermediate classes into two and three groups. Meetings were held every second week and dancers forgot material during that time. Doc thought that recordings which had elementary and secondary steps and figures called on them would serve a useful purpose for home practice. Accordingly, he made the Beginner and Intermediate Square Dance Practice records and offered them to class members. They were immediately popular and very soon other callers, teachers, and schools wanted them for like use.



Along about this time several singing calls came into popularity such as Alabama Jubilee, McNamara’s Band, etc. Records were available for these tunes so Doc decided to record them, more for his personal use than for general release, but, again, other callers and many dancers wanted the records. The first thing he knew, Doc was head over allemande in the record business.

Several months before starting Windsor Co. Doc had “retired” from a busy career in the business management field and looked forward to a more relaxed way of living by calling just a few times a week. In retrospect, he says now that he’s never worked so hard in his life as he has since he “retired” and constantly threatens to go back to work again so he can get some rest.

The name “Windsor” was selected as it was a family name and Doc started the business in his garage, doing all the production, shipping, and selling himself. The firm eventually occupied a rather large building and owned its own pressing, printing, processing, and warehousing facilities. Some 35 distributors serviced hundreds of record dealers in all parts of the United States and Canada. From an extremely humble start, Windsor gained top position in the square and round



dance recording field, and Doc told me that the responsibility of the position has made him lose a lot of hair.

The caller today has an almost unlimited supply of recorded instrumental accompaniment at his fingertips. The advantage of recorded music was that there must have been a couple of dozen different bands playing on the records, so that there was no lack of variety when it came to the sound. While the early recordings were a bit amateurish, over a period of years, they became very professional featuring some of the pop bands' top musicians. There must be hundreds, no – thousands or tens of thousands of records recorded especially as background/accompaniment music for square dances.

STARLITE SQUARE & ROUND DANCE FASHIONS OPEN FOR BUSINESS!

P: 403-698-3205 E: squaredanceshop@shaw.ca 274 Carragana Crescent NW, Calgary, AB T2L 1B1

After 23 years of business, Starlite Fashions is closing down. We will be at the Alberta Convention in Lacombe September 1 and 2, 2018. **Items will be discounted by 70% from the original price; unless marked otherwise.** We still have a fairly good selection of ladies apparel and shoes. Ladies wear includes: skirts, blouses, sets and belts. Sizes range from small to extra-large. There are a few other accessories. Ladies dance shoes are available in sizes from 6 to 11. Come and try them on to be sure of a comfortable fit. Men's wear is limited to scarf ties, a few collar points & belt buckles and a few shoes.

All sales will be final. We no longer accept payment by credit card. We are pleased to accept cash or cheque.

We have greatly enjoyed our years' operating Starlite Fashions and meeting so many square and round dancers. We look forward to seeing you across the square if no longer across the clothing rack. - Beverley & Charles Moore

IDEA-INSPIRING RESOURCES

1 C.S.R.D.S. (Canadian Square & Round Dance Society) PINTEREST ACCOUNT

A pin is usually a picture that links to a page on the web. These pins are grouped into boards, so the effect is like a bulletin board with pictures on it. In order to have access to this account, become a member of Pinterest: go to www.pinterest.com and set up an account. This is free. Next step is to link to the C.S.R.D.S. Board: <https://www.pinterest.com/canadiansquarea/>. Now you're in and ready to go. For example, if you see an image you'd like to use on a poster, click on it, click "copy image" and "paste" it on your poster.

Of the 38 different boards (topics) there are 4 that deal directly with promotion:

- Promo: The Best Ideas – 215 pins (items)
- Promo: Square Dance Imagery – 176 pins
- Promo: Great Websites – 9 pins
- Promo: The Best Videos – 60 pins

2 CALLERLAB Knowledge Base

Looking for new recruiting ideas? Ways to advertise? Go to the CALLERLAB Knowledge Database <http://callerlabknowledge.org>. If you're trying to **recruit new dancers or promote our activity**, you will find valuable information here. Articles are gleaned from a wide array of sources and the database is continually updated.



There are two categories that offer information on promotion and advertising:

- **"Promoting Square Dancing"** category contains articles pertaining to the promotion of the square dance activity in general, as opposed to promotion of a specific event or club.
- The **"Winning Ways Stories"** category collects stories shared by callers and dancers who have tried something out and are willing to share their experience for the benefit of others. When a story contains an especially outstanding idea, we highlight it separately as an "idea" article, but reading the complete story gives you the context in which the idea was tried.



THE CANADIAN NATIONAL SQUARE & ROUND DANCE CONVENTION WRAP-UP - OUR PERSPECTIVE - by Austin & Avril Hayward, Publicity Chair Couple

Wow!! And then it was over!

Having written several articles for the "Alberta Chatter" over the last year pertaining to the 2018 National Convention, I thought it only fitting that we add closing remarks. Seems like only yesterday that we were asked to join the team organizing and planning the 2018 National convention. It was back in June of 2015, over two and a half years ago, this whole wonderful idea of again hosting the National Convention came into being. (SWOSDA previously hosted in 2008). What a privilege to work with such a talented team of people from all walks of life but with one thing in common. Dancing.

Avril and I were publicity chair for this convention and this is a brief look at how we thought the convention unfolded. We are obviously a bit "bias" and you may well understand why, but if you were there, you probably had a wonderful time and will agree with our assumptions.

Our venue, The London Convention Centre in beautiful London Ontario welcomed over 830 dancers to the 2018 Canadian Square and Round Dance Convention. All dance rooms were tastefully decorated by various volunteers from area clubs.

All welcome packages contained the items a registered dancer had requested such as a souvenir book, convention pin, maple leaf pin or a syllabus. Everyone received a name badge, full schedule of events (dances, room numbers, times, callers/cuers, etc.) a City of London guide, an Ontario map, a list of restaurants in the area, emergency aid directions and numbers, a list of seminars (times and room numbers) and other items such as discount coupons. Registration went very smoothly and was manned by volunteers from various SWOSDA clubs.

Opening ceremonies began with a Town Crier dressed in old English top hat and long coat (typical for a City with the name of London) "Oh Yay" "Oh Yay" "Oh Yay" - bells ringing - announcing a welcome to our guests and followed up with some comical indications of what we were to expect during the week. This was followed by a few introductions (Convention Committee members and SWOSDA executive members as well as Federation and Society representatives), a few thank you's to volunteers and clubs that had made significant contributions to the success of the convention, and then we were off dancing.

One of the best highlights of this event was the co-ordination and timing of a caller's school held in the four days preceding the convention. This was held at Fanshawe College in London where students from as far away as Sweden, California, Alberta, New Jersey, Michigan, Ottawa and local talent studied and practiced under the guidance of organizers and teachers Jeff Priest and Barry Clasper. New callers were scheduled into the square dance convention program and suddenly for the very first time, found themselves standing in front of up to eleven squares and wow, they did not disappoint. Just to be there and witness the tears of happiness and joy when the applause erupted when they completed their singing call was worth the cost of admission. We wish all of them continued success and a life time of the best it has to offer.



*New Caller Luke Periard, Ottawa
with Caller Instructor Barry Clasper*

Those of you who know Avril and I know our love of round dancing closely mirrors our love of square dancing and again, this convention did not disappoint. Jerry and Bonnie Callen were the round dance program directors for the convention and their expertise was very visible in both dance halls throughout the week. Many, many cuers from all over, taught and provided demonstrations on all levels of dance in both the Phase II-III hall and the IV-VI hall. What a pleasure to watch these dancers and then participate in their teaches. From what we have seen, round dancing is indeed alive and well and growing in popularity.

Obviously, square dancing was the focus of the convention and Jeff and Andrea Priest put together a program for all levels that kept everyone on the dance floor. A considerable number of callers from all over the U.S. and Canada volunteered their time and talents to ensure the success of the convention.



*Caitlyn Brendzy, Jonathan Weiner,
Erica Corsi, Nicholas Brendzy*

Young talented callers like Jonathan Weiner from New York City and our own Nicholas and Caitlyn Brendzy from B.C. were favourites and drew crowds of dancers whenever they were scheduled to call. Square Dancing highlights included having over thirty-five squares in the plus hall for the trail in dance on the Wednesday night preceding the convention. Seeing so many friends in one place at one time was amazing and heartwarming. Wish we could have been in a square with everyone, but there is always 2020 in B.C.

Our local newspaper, The London Free Press, sent out a young lady reporter who had never square danced before and she promptly jumped into a square with us for the first time ever and guess what? We never broke down! The dancers in the square all ushered her through the moves in a timely fashion and a great memory was made. What fun. The Heritage Dancers from California were a privilege to

watch as they put on demonstrations throughout the convention. How wonderful is it that a group of dancers can travel all the way from California at their own expense to entertain us at a Canadian Convention. They are a special group of talented people that obviously love what they do. Following the trail in dance on Wednesday evening, dancing commenced at 9:30 on all three mornings (Thursday, Friday and Saturday) and concluded at 10:00 PM. each day. A lot of wobbly legs, sore feet and tired bodies were evident on Sunday morning as we all departed in different directions on our way home. Contra dancers had a wonderful time and the designated hall was always loud and busy. Organizers and callers should be congratulated on a wonderful program set up for these dancers. Many sat in to watch and they did not disappoint.

We were also very fortunate to have several well attended and educational seminars scheduled throughout the convention.

- Facebook & Pinterest Networking & Social Media - Rachele Cournoyer
- Pitching Our Product – Claudia Littlefair
- Sight & Module Resolution Systems – Dottie Welsh
- How to Grow Your Club – Tom & Jo Kahnert
- A Dancers Guide to Happy Feet – Dr. Colin Dombroski
- Fraud Awareness – Brock Godfrey & Jennifer George
- Teaching Methods (Square Dancing) – Betsy Gotta
- Sustainable Square Dancing – Barry Clasper

Many vendors were stabled in a large room off the main lobby and all did a brisk successful business. There were travel vendors, insole vendors, clothing and shoe vendors, jewellery vendors (who have I missed?). All I know is that I bought a beautiful shirt, a pair of dance shoes and Avril purchased jewellery, insoles and a crinoline for our granddaughter (can I borrow a dollar or two - kidding).



*Dan & Rhetha Roy receive the
CSRDS Award of Excellence*

Closing ceremonies were highlighted with the presentation of the Society Award of Excellence to Roy Church and to Dan and Rhetha Roy. In conclusion, a parade of B.C. dancers circled the room followed by a wonderful jive danced by Caitlyn and Nicholas Brendzy. The convention chair's chain of office was then transferred from Dan and Rhetha Roy (2018 Convention chair couple) to representatives of the 2020 Convention Committee from British Columbia.



*Roy Church receives the
CSRDS Award of Excellence*

All we have left to do is to submit our convention wrap-up committee reports to the convention chair. That should be good for a week or two of sifting through two and a half years of work. Oh well - worth every minute. It has been a pleasure writing a few articles and keeping you updated with this convention during this past year. Avril and I wish all your readers all the very best. Please keep dancing and we will see you in B.C. in 2020.