



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.



## ADVERTISING JANUARY START-UPS

- by Claudia Littlefair, Editor

It's difficult to advertise in December for a January start-up because of the Christmas season. Do as much prep work as possible during the weeks ahead of the Christmas week. Have your print ads, posters and signboards ready to go well in advance so that it's just a matter of executing them. Searching for places to post on-line ads can take up a lot of time. Look in advance for online community calendars and newsletters to advertise in, and have your wording/ad ready to post when you find these places.

Timing of your start-up will make a difference too. Consider starting up in mid-January, instead of the beginning. This will give you valuable advertising time free from the overshadowing affects of the Christmas season. People, too, will be better able to fit in a new activity once they've had a chance to "get back to normal".

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## HOW WE ATTRACTED 16 NEW DANCERS IN THE MIDDLE OF A PANDEMIC

- By Eileen Smith, November 26, 2021

In the Edmonton Alberta area, we have suffered the effects of COVID, just like everywhere else. **In September 2021 our provincial health authority rolled out an opportunity for our square dance activity to resume, albeit with certain requirements.** We embraced that opportunity and started our programs for experienced dancers in mid-September, with a requirement of proof of double vaccination, and the wearing of masks at all times. We also encouraged the use of hand sanitizer, and distancing when possible when off the dance floor, and we required the signing of a liability waiver.

**Our 'Square UP!' club was traditionally a new dancer club, although even before COVID we were struggling for numbers.** In mid-September 2021 we resumed Square UP! with a 6 week 'Back to Dance Mainstream Review' program for experienced dancers. We were getting 10 to 12 dancers out, but we really needed more dancers to make it sustainable, and our roots as a new dancer club were reaching out to us. Mid-October we made the all-in decision to promote a new dancer program starting November 1, 2021! We told our participating Mainstream dancers of the plan, and encouraged them to join us as experienced dancer helpers. We also told them that if we did not get a minimum of 8 new dancers, we would not go ahead, and we would remain a Mainstream group.

### HOW DID WE PROMOTE?

It was a multi-faceted approach. **Other than a few 8 ½ X 11" posters printed at home, and a small batch of ¼ page handout flyers printed at Staples, we had no out of pocket expenses.** Our promotion included:



1. **Using our parent association CDCDA (Community Dance Capital District) website and semi-monthly email,** we made sure that our existing dance community knew we were offering a new dancer program.
2. **We spoke to the dancers** in our clubs, including 'Square Up!' and told them it was a perfect opportunity to bring out their friends who might be interested to try square dancing.
3. **We used free on-line classifieds** for local and regional publications. We also used Kijiji, and Craig's List.
4. **We used free on-line events calendars,** including the City of Edmonton, and 'Next Door'.
5. **We researched and posted on Facebook group sites.** In Edmonton our city has many community leagues with Facebook sites. We found those closest to our hall, and posted where we could. Also 'Dance Edmonton' has a Facebook page. We asked CDCDA to post on their Facebook. We posted on our personal Facebook, and our friends 'liked' and some 'shared'.
6. That sounds like a lot of time on the computer, you're thinking. **Our approach was to create a Word document (a 'poster') with all the essential information including contact information and a link to our webpage.** Then we simply

did a lot of copy and paste. I will also add here that I think it is important to take down your postings, in a timely fashion. This way we are not adding to internet litter, which can detract from our messaging.

7. **We visited area fitness centres, and senior recreational centres.** We asked to post a poster, and/or leave some flyers. Some refused, but some allowed it.
8. **We posted a poster, and left flyers at a popular indoor farmers market.** (With permission, and we also offered to do a future demo on their stage, once the COVID situation allows for it.)
9. **We followed up with every possible lead we ever had,** including those who danced with us for a short time pre-COVID. Everyone received a friendly email. Any phone calls we received were handled in a friendly welcoming manner.

### **SO WHERE DID OUR NEW DANCERS COME FROM?**

- 2 – Were referred by other dancers in our dance community.
- 2 – Were friends/family of another dancer in our club.
- 3 – Two were on our prospect list because they had danced with us before, or had expressed interest in dancing with us before, and one of those brought a friend.
- 4 – Had done some square dancing, or had taken a few sessions with other clubs in our community, and wanted to restart with a group of beginners, they knew of our program because of friends and our association communications.
- 5 – ‘Internet’ or ‘website’, or we don’t know exactly.



In numbers, most of the new dancers came to us through traditional methods; however the five who had no prior connections to our dance community came to us because of our online promotions.

### **WHAT FACTORS WORKED IN OUR FAVOR?**

Really, we were the only game in town, and that may have been part of it. We have a webpage with our parent association, and that gives us legitimacy. We advertised as an ‘Intro Program’, only 7 weeks, 1 ¼ hours per session. **The message was ‘come out and give Square Dancing a try, find out if it is an activity you might enjoy’, which really was a minimum commitment.**

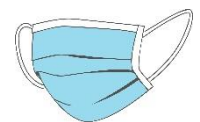
**We welcomed singles and couples,** however for singles I asked them to call first to see if I had other singles. Our pricing was \$60/single, or \$100/couple for the program. (For comparison purposes, in our market dancers pay from \$7 to \$8 for a two hour club evening.)

**I had a number of singles reach out, and I encouraged them to bring a friend, and then I could charge them the couple’s price.** That strategy seemed to work. Two women brought gentleman friends, and one woman brought a girlfriend, and since we had more men at that point, that worked perfectly.

### **OKAY, SO WHAT ABOUT THE MASKS?**

**I honestly believe that in these COVID times, people are desperate for a safe, active, social activity.** We have always emphasized our COVID safety measures. Our dancers feel more comfortable when wearing masks; several have told me that they would not come out unless the masks were a requirement.

**I know there are dancers out there who are adamant about not wearing a mask to dance, and they are waiting for the COVID situation to improve.** I understand that, I don’t like to wear a mask either, however I am mentally and emotionally more comfortable wearing one, and I would rather be dancing than not dancing. I know there are others, with breathing difficulties, who simply cannot be physically active while wearing a mask.



In our experience of dancing with masks, including our programs this fall and two months in September – November 2020, plus several outside ‘dancing in the park’ summer dances in 2021, **the type of mask you wear makes a difference.** We have found that the disposable blue medical or non-medical masks are pretty easy to wear. Others prefer multiple layer cloth masks with an air pocket around the nose and mouth, or those wanting a little more protection wear an N95 mask. A style with an air pocket seems to improve comfort.

I am also planning to try a 'mask lanyard'. The lanyard connects the two ear elastics with an adjustable strap at the back of the head. It keeps the ear elastics off the ears, reducing pressure there, and holds the mask more securely on the face.

### **NOTES ON MASKS FOR CALLERS AND CUERS**

My caller husband *Gary Smith* started his COVID-era calling by wearing a face shield and holding the microphone up under the face shield. Recently Gary has started using the blue disposable masks while calling. For our 'A1 Learning Program' night he can get by with one mask in an evening. When calling for our Plus and New Dancer groups, he is performing a lot of singing calls and must replace his mask at least once during the evening. The mask seems to have minimal effect on sound quality. Distancing from the caller is important, but that is usually easy to do if you have a stage, and/or a decent sized hall.

### **WHAT'S NEXT?**

**At the time of writing, we have three weeks remaining in our seven week new dancer program.** We have 9 dancers who have indicated an interest in continuing with us after the winter break. Two dancers will be heading south for an extended winter holiday and won't be able to come back. Of the 5 others, we don't know for sure, but among that group are some of the most enthusiastic, so we expect at least a few more will stay if they can. We are also planning for another new dancer intake in January.

The COVID situation is in constant flux. A few of our dancers have received their third vaccine dose, others are hoping to receive one soon. As long as COVID case numbers and health restrictions allow for it, and as long as our dancers feel safe, we will continue our dance programs. As for Gary and I, and all of the dancers coming out to dance with us, ***you can see the smiles in their eyes!***

## **WILL SQUARE DANCING SURVIVE THE PANDEMIC?**

**Blog by Author & Square Dancer Larada Horner-Miller**

**To date, the coronavirus has taken 555,296 lives in the United States. Losses continue to mount; loved ones have died. In the wake of this horrible pandemic, will we lose square dancing too?**

In my heart and in conversations over the phone with friends, I've lamented the future of square dancing. I'm a firm believer that square dancing will survive, but in what form is the question. Before the pandemic, we saw pockets of successful growth across the square dance world, but our numbers have fallen off in most places.

Many years ago, CALLERLAB, the international association of square dance callers, created levels of dancing: Basic, Mainstream, Plus, Advanced and C. Each level adds new calls to the level before, enlarging the calls at that level. **The push for years has been to move up to the next level, then the next, then the next, leaving Basic and Mainstream to be introductory stop overs for Plus, Advanced and C.**

I've seen big beginning classes come and go and the retention of the dancers at any level has statistically been sad.

**Now change can happen, a strange opportunity because of this year's interruption.**

In preparing for this post, I canvassed several square dance callers/leaders on the subject, purposing this question to them, "Will square dancing become another casualty of the pandemic?" and this is what they had to say:

**JERRY JUNCK, Nebraska & Arizona:** I do not believe square dancing will be a casualty of the pandemic. It will be different, to be sure, but square dancing is too good an activity to come to an end because of Covid 19.



**There is no doubt it will be smaller, as we resume dancing again.** To be sure, there will be clubs and callers who will leave the activity for other forms of entertainment.

However, there are many dancers anxiously awaiting the opportunity to resume dancing, and renewing old friendships. The need for social interaction is strong, and something we have all missed. The pandemic may actually have given us an opportunity to reflect on what we have been missing during this hiatus. My hope is that we will resume dancing with a kinder and more gentle spirit. That we will be more appreciative of what we had and make a sincere effort to make everyone feel welcome.

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**People of all ages will hunger for any form of social interaction—square dancing fits the bill!**

**JON JONES & DEBORAH CARROLL-JONES, Texas:** I believe the square dance activity will come back real strong in



the Fall of 2021. People have been staying at home for more than a year and will be looking for an activity they can get into that will be fun. Square dancing does just that and it is the very best mind changer for the dancers as they cannot think of anything else while dancing.

Deborah and I both believe the Social Square Dance Program (SSD) is the way to go. It is an easy program to learn and provides good variety in the choreography and it does not take very long for the new dancers to join a club. **We believe this is a golden opportunity for the activity to grow.** If the Associations, Clubs and dancers will advertise with demos and publications, we will see good participation.

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After 2020, we all need a fun activity. To learn more about the Social Square Dance Program (SSD), go to the CALLERLAB website. <https://www.callerlab.org/dance-programs/social-square-dancing/>. Also, visit the Social Square Dancing Facebook page for active back-and-forth conversations about the SSD program and its effect on square dancing's future:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/319491818505954>



**DARYL CLENDENIN, Oregon:** “Will Square Dancing Become Another Casualty of the Pandemic?” I certainly hope not. Will SSD become the activities “cure?” I have serious doubts. Actually, the patient was terminal long before contracting the pandemic. It was on a steady decline that in my recollection, began with the introduction of the Plus Program. That, in essence, not only divided the dancers, but the callers as well.

**The SSD Concept is not just a program, it's a solution.** Many folks think that following the SSD guidelines to the letter, is essential. I don't agree. The concept, as I see it, identifies the problems, and leaves open a variety of ways to apply them.

The SSD concept is not new. The pandemic may have made it, to some folks, more acceptable. That acceptance in itself, is a positive. Square dancing is not a “goner” yet. It can be revived.

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**I totally agree with Daryl that we can revive square dancing!**



**NOAH SIEGMANN, Wisconsin:** **Square dancing (as we knew it pre-2020) will definitely be a casualty of the pandemic.** In order to rebuild and get it started again, there will need to be a shift to a simpler, more easily attained style of dancing that doesn't require 20 or more weeks of lessons. Coming out of the pandemic, many people are looking for something to do to be social again, and I believe square dancing is something that fits the bill perfectly to satisfy their craving for community!

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The social aspect to square dancing needs to be emphasized! Yes, we take lessons, learn to dance, and I've made lifelong friends all over the world through square dancing! In *Just Another Square Dance Caller: Authorized Biography of Marshall Flippo*, “Flippo's statement, ‘We took ten lessons, and we were square dancers’ demonstrated the evolution in square dancing.” We need to return to that mentality.



**TOM MANNING, Iowa:** I don't believe square dancing will be a casualty of the pandemic. **Square dancing has been on the decline for many years, and I believe this is our chance to renew it.** I have said publicly that square dancing would have to die to survive. Many of us in this activity, including myself, have been involved forever, 50 years last month, wanted something bigger and better from the activity. Wanting more of a challenge, more nights a week, more conventions and plus weekends. Now is our chance to get back to the basics of square dancing, fun and friendship. I can see by using the Social Square Dance program, we can bring new people into the activity, show them a good time, and have our drop-out rate diminish. Show the dancers a good time using the SSD program and not rush them to other

levels.

**I have been using this program for the last 3 years. Our group went from maybe having one square every Tuesday night to having four to six.** Along with the program, it does take some promotion, arm twisting and begging to get people in the door. I have kept in contact with all these new dancers over the last year, and it sounds like they are all ready to return to dancing when this thing is over. I think square dancing will survive, but now is the time to make some changes.

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**Sometimes change has to come to make something better.** I love statistics and Tom's movement from one square to four to six using the SSD program is exciting. If your club experienced the same ratio of growth from the SSD program as Tom's, and prior to the pandemic you had four squares, you could have twelve to twenty-four squares! How about that for an increase! Even worst-case scenario, you could increase to double figures.



**MIKE SEASTROM, California:** I'm excited about the future of square dancing after the pandemic. We have all been deprived of social connections during this pandemic, and square dancing is one of the best activities to socially connect.

It's long been known that the key to happiness and to keeping from being depressed is the quality and quantity of our social connections. Square dancing is a perfect activity for being connected to people, fun, and exercise. With our new Social Square Dancing Curriculum and the ability to start our new dancer programs 2-3 times a year, we can open our doors and make it easier for people to join us and bring their friends. **This is a perfect time for our forward-thinking leaders and callers to seize the moment, reboot, and grow our activity!** I'm excited!

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Mike's enthusiasm is contagious. He stresses the social connection of square dancing and how we can increase the frequency of classes because of the SSD program which means more dancers! What a variety of responses I received from these caller/leaders from all over the United States. Social connections, fun and the SSD program weave their way through many of them. I'll leave you with a parting comment: **Are we as dancers more interested in saving our level of dance or saving square dancing? Or can we do both? As a person committed to the activity for years, I pledge my support to the activity, not to the individual levels I enjoy. I want square dancing to continue and flourish for generations to come.**

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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Larada Horner-Miller is a poet, essayist and accomplished multi-genre author who holds a bachelor's degree in English, with a minor in Spanish and a master of education degree in Integrating Technology into the Classroom. She is the accomplished author of six award-winning biographies, historical fiction, memoir, and poetry works plus three self-published cookbooks.

Her fifth book is the authorized memoir and biography of world-renown square dance caller Marshall "Flip" Flippo. Just Another Square Dance Caller, Biography of Marshall Flippo is available now in hardback, paperback and four e-book formats. Recently Just Another Square Dance Caller won two awards: Book Excellence Awards Finalist and Silver award for eLit. Book Awards.



## **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 issue #2015-6 for her complete story under "Chatter Close-up".*

In the last few years I've mentioned the mishaps with my lemons, cherry tomatoes, etc. falling from the fridge and the task of finding all of these items scattered about my floor. **One of the most dreadful of these happened when I decided to make some muffins.** Whenever I do baking, the eggs are put on a dish cloth to avoid them from rolling off the counter and on to the floor. One day I followed this procedure as usual when the phone rang and I was totally oblivious to my actions. I forgot about my eggs so nicely nestled on the counter. Without a second thought, I reached for the dish cloth to wipe down the counter when I heard some eggs circling around. "Oh, here we go again!" I tried to gather them together but to no avail. I managed to grab one when I heard 'plop', and then another 'plop'

- that was the awful sound of two eggs exploding on both sides of me. "Where does one start?" I backed up slowly and reached for the paper towels. As I proceeded to swarm around to find these eggs, it didn't take long to find the first mass of slippery goop and even harder to gather up. Then I carefully flittered around again to find the second one when another mass of goop was up to my elbow. Now it came time to clean up this slimy mess. Some new artistic swimming techniques of mine were devised at this point. Another lesson learned, picking up dry items is much simpler than raw eggs.

Then there's another so called disaster in my kitchen. **Most of the time I broil steak in my toaster oven instead of the more than available barbecue to avoid more chances of calamity** (which has occurred more than I want to remember). When it was time to turn the steaks over, I opened the oven door and for some reason the hook of the door didn't catch. These filet mignon steaks came flying out, bypassed the counter and went sailing onto the floor. What a fiasco and I somehow managed to avoid getting any burns - unbelievable! Something out of a movie like the 'Flying Mignons' from the trapeze artists swinging from bar to bar. So much for that dinner. On the positive side, my next attempt was much more successful.

**Having brunch at the Farmers Market is something I rarely do.** One Saturday morning I was invited to come along to do some shopping and have lunch. Ham and eggs seemed to be the choice of the day and when the tray was picked up, I was informed that it was served on a paper plate and the cutlery was plastic. Have you ever tried cutting a firm slice of ham with a plastic fork and knife on a paper plate with your eyes closed? It was a bit challenging. I was unable to decipher whether I was trying to cut the ham or the paper plate. What a fiasco! The only solution available was to pick up the ham, fold it in half and eat it like a piece of toast. Another new experience. Some days are challenging; I just have to be prepared at all times!

**Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! Hope to see you across the square soon.**

## **NEWS FROM ABROAD**

### **Excerpt from the European Newsletter, December 2021**

*Editor's Note: The European Newsletter provides a glimpse of our dance activity in countries such as England, Denmark, Sweden, Holland, Germany, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Taiwan, China and Australia. The report from Britain could have easily been written about Canada.*

#### **Report from British Association of American Square Dance Clubs 2021/2022 – by Susan Ellis, Public Relations Officer**



The United Kingdom like every other country, continues to suffer the consequences of the Pandemic and never more so than Square and Round Dancing. As a close contact activity with lots of hand holding, twirling and swirling and not forgetting the 'Yellow Rocks' it is taking time for dancers to feel confident about returning to their Clubs. Inevitably some Clubs have had to close, others have lost the use of their venues for a variety of reasons including steep rises in costs and availability. However, gradually some Clubs are starting to re-open.

During the 'Lockdowns' many of our Club Contacts took the trouble to keep in touch with their dancers in a variety of ways. These included Zoom, telephone calls, newsletters and socially distanced social events. Such Clubs have been wonderful as they realized the importance and benefits of the social side of belonging to a Club.

One of the positives that came out of the Pandemic, was the genius idea to encourage Callers and Cuers to carry out their craft on 'Zoom'. Who was this genius? Someone must know including obviously himself/herself? Could someone tell me please? If there is a 'Hall of Fame' for Square and Round dance luminaries, then surely their name should be there for all to see.

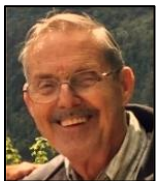
What Zoom did, was to make us appreciate the fact that ours is a truly global activity, when despite cultural and other differences we all speak the same language of Square Dance calls. Dancers from all over the world, in different time zones and countries, came together as a huge global family. They met up regularly and many formed friendships in a way unimaginable before Covid 19.

Another bonus for the Zoomers was that many callers took the opportunity to teach different programmes, giving existing dancers the chance to hone their skills and others to add another level of expertise to their repertoire.

Here in the United Kingdom many dancers are still enjoying the benefits of Zoom dancing. Sadly for some, their Club may have closed or not yet reopened. Others unable to fully participate actively in dancing just sign in to talk to other dancers, just listen to the banter or just enjoy the familiar sound of the Calls and the music. Thank you to all Zoom Callers and Cuers everywhere!

## **53<sup>rd</sup> ALBERTA DANCE CONVENTION - MEET YOUR CREW!**

September 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022 in Lacombe



**CO-CHAIR – Al Moody:** First started dancing in 1964 with Swinging Singles for a few years. Started again in 1984 with Rockyview Ramblers. Served two terms as President of C & D, and Dance Director since 2013. Chaired 3 Conventions: 1993 Strathmore, 2012 & 2016 in High River. President of Dots & Dashers for 8 terms 2010 – 2018. I have danced at many Provincial and National Conventions from Vancouver to Halifax and the USA National in Spokane in 2012.

The best part of Conventions is meeting new friends and spending time with old friends. The music and excitement just add to the great memories. Convention 2022 will be a great opportunity to rekindle those friendships and get back dancing.

Favorite food is veal cutlets or anything Carol cooks. Favorite TV show is *Blue Bloods*, also interested in *Calgary History*.



**CO-CHAIR - Bud Sedman:** I started square dancing in 1984. I was the president of Calgary and District Square and Round Dancers Association in 1988-1989. I danced in the 1988 Olympics opening ceremonies. With a job for which I had to travel a lot, I danced in various clubs in Calgary and Edmonton until the mid 1990s. I returned to square dancing in 2002 with Dots & Dashers Club and then in 2010 danced with Wheatland Whirlers Club in Strathmore. Moving back to Calgary in 2014 gave us the opportunity to learn Plus dancing with Tom Dakers and Lorne Smith and then Advanced dancing with Lorne Smith. We were C&D representatives for Dots & Dashers for several years. I am currently the President of Alberta Square and Round Dance Federation which gives me the opportunity to meet dancers and callers from all over Alberta and to work with them at the provincial level. I was part of the 2018 Alberta Convention committee and helped out with Registration.

I enjoy attending conventions to hear callers from other places and meeting people from all over.

My favorite dessert is my wife's Apple Betty and I always enjoy a tasty steak. My favorite past time is watching sports either live or on TV.

**REGISTRAR – Brent & Nancy Daignault:** We started square dancing in 2010 – Nancy suggested we try either Regency dancing or square dancing and Brent chose square dancing. We have loved it since our first night out. We have enjoyed meeting such nice people! We have been to several conventions before but have never been on a convention committee.

We are looking forward to dancing, meeting new people, and learning new things. At one convention we tried Hexagonal Squares which was pretty interesting.

Brent's favourite food is anything that is hot and spicy – like Indian food. Nancy's favourite food is shellfish – she loves shrimp and lobster and crab! We watch primarily British television and right now our favourite TV shows are ones based on the books by Ann Cleeves – *Vera* and *Shetland*.





**TREASURER – Brenda Ryder:** I started square dancing in 2002 with the Dots & Dashers Club. After a few years of not dancing and moving to Strathmore, I did a “redo” of square dance lessons with Wheatland Whirlers Club. We lived in Strathmore for 4 years and then moved back to Calgary. In Calgary, we took Plus lessons from Tom Dakers and Lorne Smith and then took Advanced lessons from Lorne Smith. My volunteer work for square dancing has been president for Calgary and District Square and Round Dancers Association (C&D), Dots & Dashers C&D representative, and currently Treasurer of Alberta Square and Round Dance Federation. I was part of the 2018 Alberta Convention committee and helped out with Registration. We look forward to conventions every year as we get to dance with friends we might not have seen in the past year. We have met so many great people by dancing in other areas of the province or in other provinces.

I like to try many different foods so hence do not have a favorite except maybe chocolate. We have watched many series on Netflix through Covid with again no favorites.



**SECRETARY – Bonnie McCauley:** How I started square dancing: I am a farmers daughter (raised in the city) my dad was a caller. When we attended weddings, birthdays and anniversaries in the country we square danced and waltzed etc. Since coming to Calgary and discovered the square dancing downtown at Stampede time, I have hardly missed a year doing that. Then I discovered Dots & Dashers at Heritage Park in 2018 and was very pleased to join and began Modern Square Dancing in the fall. I attended convention in Lacombe and was so please to see and meet other dancers from the province and Canada. Shopping for new outfits was the best bit of fun, I love the square dance outfits!

My favourite food of all times is Alberta beef done rare and a side of chicken wings any way at all. My favourite readings tend to be how to make things because I like to think of myself as a maker, whether I am reading a cookbook, a knitting book or a book on how to make wagon wheels, these are my favourites. So I can help you with anyone of those topics!

**SILENT AUCTION – Carol Moody:** I started square dancing when Al and I reconnected in 2007. I had square danced at my church when I was 12 years old and dated Al when I was 17. We reconnected after no contact for 46 years. I was so excited when Al asked me to enroll in beginners at two clubs, Dots and Dashers and Highland Swingers. We became president couple a year later and I was able to assist Al and also help him with conventions in 2012 and 2016. I am enjoying being on the 2022 convention committee and all the exciting things we are planning.



Conventions are exciting, meeting old friends and making new ones. A fun weekend getaway with music and dancing, eating out (no cooking) touring the different towns, and fun entertainment.

My favorite food is Bourbon Street Chicken at the mall and our favorite TV show is *Blue Bloods*.



**FACILITIES & OPERATIONS – Wayne Stretch:** I have always loved dancing and started to square dance with Rocky View Ramblers Airdrie Club in 1980 as a family of three. We were involved in many positions of the club, C&D and Alberta Federation such as Facilities, Operations and Promotions, and demo dancers of jamborees, conventions, and festivals.

I participated in many special events throughout the decades. We enjoy the atmosphere, physical contact, and people that do this activity from all parts of the world.

My favorite foods are Atlantic salmon, couscous, peas, and cucumbers. My favorite dessert is pumpkin pudding. Other favorites include Archie comics digest and military books. My favorite TV shows are *Off the Grid*, *DIY*, action, comedy, and family shows. – All-Aboard-Conductor Wayne, “See everyone across the square, 2022!”



**BADGES – Daryl Caswell & Barbara Schneider**

Daryl and Barbara started square dancing about ten years ago. Daryl served as the President of the Prairie Winds club and as the President of the C&D. They have made the badges for several conventions and look forward to getting on board to design a railroad badge.





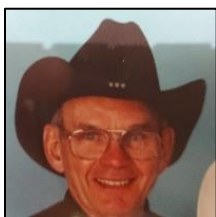
**PROMOTIONS – Claudia Littlefair:** Dave & I started our square dance 'careers' in 1994 with Strathmore's Wheatland Whirlers. I made the decision to cue rounds in 2008 when we became our club's caller/cuer couple. For the last 5 dance years, I've enjoyed teaching 1/2 hour of basic rounds before the start of our square dance evenings. We've attended many conventions and have served on committees and given presentations at several of them. As Promotions Chair, I'm excited to be promoting this special convention - the first after a two-year unexpected hiatus.

What I like best about conventions is sharing the weekend with others who have the same love for our activity as I do. My favorite food is chocolate - especially dark Lindt chocolates. Two of my favorite TV series (and I've seen many over this covid period) are *Heartland* and *McLeod's Daughters*.



**DECORATIONS & TRAIN BUILDER - Marlene Symington:** I started Square Dancing when I was a teen and joined the Singles Club in 1998. I did some cueing to support Dave with his calling until 2005 when I devoted my time to Travis, our son. I've held the following Convention positions: treasurer 2012, facilities coordinator 2016 and decorating committee 2012, 2016 and 2022. I look forward to theme conventions because the costumes, energy, fellowship, and music sets the mood for a great time and I enjoy being able to forget the outside world for a few hours.

If I didn't have to worry about diet or allergies, my favorite foods would be: chocolate covered almonds, dipped soft ice cream cones, pizza, apple fritters, honey cruelLers and Turtles. I currently enjoy watching *The Good Doctor* and *Bob Heart Abishola*. In the past, my favorite programs were: *Bones*, *Columbo*, *CSI (Vegas, Miami and NY)*, *Matlock* and *Murder She Wrote*.



**COMMITTEE MEMBER – John Kelly:** Initiated my square and round dance experience in 1994 with caller Ron Refvic and the Gadabouts, who later joined the Revellers Club and adopted the name Prairie Winds. This club discontinued dancing in 2019. I was actively involved with four provincial conventions and one national convention. Co-chaired the Services Committee at the last Strathmore provincial convention with responsibility for all signage, food procurement and services, safety, and hall arrangements for callers and cuers, meetings and the memorial services. Had minor roles at other conventions. Also was the chairperson responsible for fundraising (raffles and casinos) for the last Calgary National. I've attended the majority of provincial and national conventions. Enjoy meeting new dancers and dancing to different callers and cuers from other parts of Alberta and Canada. Actively participate in most convention programs. Emphatically agreed with and adopted convention dress codes.

Don't really have favorite foods. Enjoy most everything and always prepared to indulge different ethnic offerings. Enjoy good classical and popular music. My favorite TV programs were the old sit-coms such as *Friends*, *the Cosby Show*, *Bonanza*, *Little House on the Prairies*, and especially *Laugh-in*. Also enjoy *Jeopardy*, talent shows, and documentaries regarding history, artists and well know personalities.



**CO-PROGRAMMER – SQUARE DANCING – David Symington:** I've been calling for about 20 years and cueing Phase II Rounds for about 10 years. This will be my 4<sup>th</sup> Convention as Co-Programmer in the last 7 Alberta Conventions. Come out AND join the fun with different Dancers, Callers and Cuers from Alberta and, who knows? - maybe we might have a surprise Caller.

My favorite Food is Chicken and Seafood. My favorite TV show is *CSI Vegas*, *Bones* and *NASCAR*. I even got to ride in a NASCAR Car at Daytona in 2000. It's an experience I'll always treasure.

**CO-PROGRAMMER – SQUARE DANCING CO-CHAIR – Dave Littlefair:** Claudia and I started dancing in 1994 with Wheatland Whirlers, many years after we saw a demo at West Edmonton Mall. That was where we decided that it was what we wanted to do. I started calling in 2005 with Joe Griffith as my mentor, calling one tip per week. I have co programmed the square dance portion of three conventions with Dave Symington and/or Lorne Smith.



What I like best about conventions is the camaraderie of like dancers and the chance to renew acquaintances of past friends. My favorite food is a good hamburger. My favorite TV series are *Game Of Thrones* and *Yellowstone*.



**PROGRAM – ROUND DANCING – Cliff Dunn & Jane McKee:** We began dancing together in 2001 taking classes in social ballroom and western dance in Red Deer. In 2005 we discovered there was a Round Dance club in our hometown of Lacombe. We happened to walk in one evening which was scheduled as a Waltz night – we soon discovered that we knew most of the figures being danced but not their names. And so we began Round Dancing and never looked back. Cliff started cueing in 2008 and we began teaching in 2010.

We now cue and teach at three clubs in Central Alberta and at Cue Steps in Calgary. We have attended ROUNDALAB conventions and training sessions, and dance weekends such as the Western Ontario Workshop in London, Ontario. We are active members of ROUNDALAB and the International Choreographed Ballroom Dance Association.

We have taught dances at 4 provincial conventions and we programmed Rounds at the last Alberta Convention in 2019. Conventions give us a chance to teach and meet new people from different areas and often teach a fun/unusual dance. Also, we get a chance to dance too!

When we're not dancing we like to get out to the Shuswap/Columbia to either our condo or to do some camping and kayaking, or cross-country skiing in the winter. Otherwise we are pretty much homebodies.



**PROGRAM - CLOGGING – Ida Murray:** I started dancing as a teenager. My cousin, an only child, didn't want to stay home with a sitter while her parents went square dancing, so my uncle called Al Deby to ask if it was too late for my cousin to start dancing. Al's response was "too bad she's a girl!" (because girls outnumbered the boys by about 20). My uncle responded that he "knew where he could probably get some more boys" and called my mom to see if my 3 brothers could go square dancing. The next week I went to watch, but Al forgot I was just a spectator. He had a policy that no-one sat out 2 consecutive tips, so he made me get up and dance... and I've been dancing ever since!

I started round dancing 3 years later, and would study the cue sheets to figure out how to read them. I have cued a few rounds, but got "hooked" on clogging after seeing it at the Penticton Jamboree in 1979 and then attending "Intro to Clogging" sessions at the Canadian National Conventions in 1980 & 1984. After a year of clogging lessons, I started teaching easy-intermediate level dances to our club, and took over teaching the beginner class the following year.

I haven't missed many of the Provincial Conventions since 1977, and have previously coordinated the clogging program. I enjoy reconnecting and dancing with friends from around the province at the Provincial Conventions. I am really hoping to see many of them after the hiatus caused by the pandemic.

My favourite dessert is creme brûlée (although flapper pie is a close second!). My favourite books are the "bones series" by Kathy Reichs. I also enjoy watching the NCIS programs.

## 53<sup>rd</sup> ALBERTA DANCE CONVENTION



Back on Track

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