



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.



HAPPINESS IS . . . - by Claudia Littlefair, Editor

I remember the unexpected feelings of joy that descended upon us each week when Dave & I first started dancing 28 years ago. Learning together with 7 other couples produced so much laughter and often my cheeks hurt from non-stop smiling. Wednesday nights became a treasured evening of fun where the stresses of everyday life were magically put on hold. And over the years, little has changed. It never ceases to amaze me how even when I'm not in the best of moods, or tired out from the day or lack of sleep, I always leave dance feeling uplifted and happy.

The Covid pandemic has produced an unprecedented amount of anger, resentment and discord, powerful enough to divide family and friends. There is just so much unhappiness around that it's hard not to feel it's affects. Except, of course, when dancing! Happiness – it's a powerful gift that needs to be shared now more than ever.

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THEN AND NOW (Why S.S.D. Makes Sense)

- by Buddy Weaver, Caller and Recording Artist. August 2021

Editor's Note: This article compares square dance club numbers in 1970 against those today, and how the new Social Square Dance Program (SSD) promotes club growth.

Recently, I stumbled on the results of a survey conducted by Jim Hilton of Hilton Audio Products in 1970. Hilton Audio has long been considered by many callers, particularly the professional traveling callers, to be the best sound amplification available. Founder, Jim Hilton was a highly respected "sound man" providing his sound engineering service to some of the biggest festivals as well as many National Conventions. The Hilton Audio survey involved mailing thousands of questionnaires and tabulating replies from all of the United States. Published in October of 1970, the results were to be compared with your own club and see if the picture looked familiar.

Survey says:



- The average square dance club was located in a medium-sized city with club meetings held twice a month.
- On the average night, one more couple is needed to make seven squares, but the club is growing.
- **More than three fourths of new members come from the one beginner class** which the club sponsors each year.
- One third of the members have been square dancers for more than five years.

Now let's place this information in historical context. **In 1970, square dance clubs and callers recognized two dance levels. The "Fifty Basics" and the "Extended Basics". Average time in class to learn the fundamentals to gain membership in a square dance club was between ten and sixteen weeks.** Square dancing was no longer in vogue with the movies and magazines. In fact square dance classes were competing for a generation of non-dancers who was more content to sit at home watching TV, but in spite of all this, square dancing was growing. The National Convention held in Louisville, Kentucky attracted 19,452 dancers. The WASCA festival hosted in Washington, DC was sold out one-year in advance along with every single dance week at Kirkwood Lodge in Missouri.

So what can we take away from the 1970 survey?

1. An average club in America had seven squares as an average attendance. Is this true for your club today? We know of many areas in where the average club attendance is ten to thirteen squares, so it is possible to meet those averages.

2. The average club was growing and we know from history, that growth started before 1970 and continued for another six years. Is your club growing? **Again we know of many areas today that work hard on growth, many of those clubs dance the SSD Program where classes are held more than once a year.** The SSD Program has been the major contributor to areas that are experiencing square dance growth.

3. In 1970, three fourths of new club members came from the annual beginner class. This statistic points out the fact that dancer attrition has always been with us, but clubs were sustainable through an influx of new members/new dancers. Just like today's clubs with an average ten to thirteen square attendance, there is a steady flow of new members/new dancers. In my opinion, the average square dance club does not grow new members through their new dancer program on a steady basis. Certainly, not to the level that represents three-quarters of the membership.

Why is that? One reason is the fact that our classes to learn the fundamentals in order to gain membership in our square dance clubs are taking way more than ten to sixteen weeks. Most everywhere classes take almost a year and even then the graduate is ill prepared to be a successful club dancer.

Questions.

- Do we believe that the average non-dancer is willing to spend nine more months in class today versus the same non-dancer of fifty years ago?
- Does today's new dancer crave the ninety additional calls they've never heard of, versus the same new dancer of fifty years ago?
- Said another way, does any non-dancer want Plus instead of SSD? Mainstream instead of SSD?

The final citation from the 1970 survey shows that the dancing enthusiast, one who has been dancing for five or more years, represented a third of the average club membership, whereas today's percentage is more than double that. It is fair to say, the dancing enthusiast has far more years of dance time to master the large number of square dance calls foisted upon the new dancer/graduate.

The expectation of the new dancer/graduate is likely too much. The new dancer/graduate quits and the degree of difficulty to assimilate remains unchanged and in this way, we don't have new dancers representing three-quarters of the membership, we fail to grow, and we don't have seven squares average attendance.



Attributed to Confucius is the quote, *“study the past if you would define the future”*. In closing, our future is bright. We are coming out of a world-wide pandemic with tools like SSD, mentorship of those knowledgeable in SSD, and the desire in many areas of the country **to implement a program that looks very much like the program we used during our period of growth – SSD.**

We know the excuse that people today have too many distractions is no different than it was fifty years ago; **the only thing different today is our entry program is too big, too long, and assumed to be part of our culture. You are invited to be part of change that promotes square dance club growth.**

Get more information about SSD by sending me an email: buddy@buddyweaver.com

About the Author: *Buddy Weaver started calling in 1977 while still in school, living in Honolulu, Hawaii. He is a third generation square dance caller who lives with his family in San Diego, California. Buddy became an accredited member of CALLERLAB in 1981 and is currently on the Board of Governors. He is active in teaching other callers and has called/conducted seminars in the United States, Japan, and Europe. Buddy has been active in the square dance recording industry since 1981, with over 300 vocals released. He has consolidated the major square dance labels of Blue Star, Hi Hat, and Rawhide Music into Buddy Weaver Music, copyright holder of the largest square dance music library in the world. BWM produces a weekly podcast dedicated to the perpetuation of square dancing, offering episodes for free listening (streaming) or download.*

AMERICAN SQUARE DANCE MAGAZINE HAS NEW OWNER & NEW LOOK!

Effective January, 2022 Buddy Weaver became the new owner of the long time *American Square Dance (ASD)* magazine. Buddy took over the magazine because he did not want to see the last remaining national square dance publication fold. It has a new look that creates an easy-to-read experience while at the same time, increasing content. There are new monthly features with more on the way.

Buddy describes the magazine as:

“A publication that reaches into the home of every square dance enthusiast in the world with the sole purpose of growing modern western square dancing. Produced monthly in both print and on-line (digital) format, American Square Dance gives a voice to forward-thinking leaders, advocating for ideas that will see a square dancing tomorrow filled with happy, excited square dancers. Digital subscribers have access to each month’s issue along with previous issues. Digital subscription rates are less than 4 cents a day (\$14 US) making it the easiest investment you can make in square dancing. For folks who prefer printed copies, they are also available (\$36 US/year).”



The complimentary January 1, 2022 edition is 63 pages long, and some of the highlights include:

- “News From Around the World”, the current status of square dancing in various countries. Most are reporting a 40% to 60% decline in dancers.
- “Smooth Dancing” techniques and teaching tips.
- “Mike Hogan on Marketing” – caller Mike, who is a marketer by trade, discusses promotional topics relevant to square dancing from a marketer’s viewpoint.
- “Tony’s Ponderings” by caller Tony Oxedine.
- Helpful ideas on making New Dancer classes successful – by caller Ed Foote.
- How to host a successful intro night for new dancers – by Veronica Lea, Editor/Owner of ‘The Open Squares’ newsletter.
- “Social Square Dance: Why All the Fuss?” – by caller Barry Johnson.
- “Roots & Branches” a regular column about dances outside of modern western square dance, such as traditional square dancing and contras, and a look at our dance history – by caller Tony Parkes.

If you’re interested in reading the January 1, 2022 complimentary issue, or in subscribing, go to:

<https://americansquaredance.com/#>

Perfect Dancer/Caller?

I’m the perfect dancer, never make a mistake.
Always in the right place, never wrong if there’s a break.
Memorized the definitions, so that I’m never wrong.
Just watch my rhythmic movements, to the toughest
caller’s song.
With all of this perfection, square dancing is my game.
Whenever my own square brakes down, why do I
get the blame?

That’s why I became a caller, show ‘em a thing to two.
For all my blameless dancing, perfect calling is what I’ll do.
I called ‘em fast and I called ‘em slow and other
things in between.
My wife stepped up and whispered, “Don’t be so
cold and mean.”

I knew she was mistaken, calling was my game.
But when all the squares broke down at once,
why was I to blame?

I thought about my wife’s complaint, her advice now seemed
worthwhile.

Why bother with perfection if relaxed and smoother
makes ‘em smile?

I started using phrasing, variety and fun to ensure success.
At times the smiles broke into laughter, more times
and never less.

I found it pure enjoyment, perfection a losing game.
Successful, happy dancers, anything less I’ll take the blame.

- Don & Joan Niva, *American Square Dance* magazine, January 2001

BREAKING BREAD AND BUILDING CONNECTIONS

- by Claudia Littlefair, Editor

As square dancers, we know that food unites. Breaking bread together is one of the oldest forms of community interaction. It provides a valuable time and place to socially connect and bond through conversation and laughter.

In 2021 CALLERLAB's Social Connections Committee ran a contest for ideas on how to promote social connections and bonding in our activity. The many responses were categorized and compiled into a document that is available on the CALLERLAB Knowledgebase website for anyone who is interested. The link to this document is:

<https://knowledge.callerlab.org/ideas-from-social-connections-contest-1/>.

REGULAR FRIENDSHIP DINNERS

One of the ideas submitted that has made a significant difference to a club, and that involves food is **Friendship Dinners**.

“Several years ago, our club, Space Trackers of Merritt Island, Florida, came up with an idea that provided a monthly social gathering for club members and visitors with the added side benefit of becoming a means of income for the club.

As you are aware, most square dancers have a difficult time deciding which aspect of Square Dancing they enjoy more...the DANCING part or the EATING part. We decided to combine them and see what we could come up with. And that is how FRIENDSHIP DINNERS came to be.

On the first Thursday of every month (Thursday being the night our club dances), the club provides a full meal for about thirty club members and visitors (anyone who shows up, really, but we average about thirty people each time). The attendees put a donation (usually \$5 per dancer, sometimes more, sometimes less) into the bucket to help defray the Club's expenses.

We have several good cooks in our club, and they prepare the food beforehand and bring it to the club's place of dance to be set up buffet-style. We usually “theme” the food to whatever month it is...Mexican in May for Cinco de Mayo, Brats in October for Oktoberfest, Corned Beef and Cabbage in March for St. Patrick's Day, etc. We have also served Ham with Mac & Cheese, Pulled Pork sandwiches, Ham and Beans with CornBread, and Chicken Pot Pie to name a few.



Our initial thought was to provide an opportunity for our club members (seasoned or brand new) to break bread together and get to know one another. They can come to the dance hall, sit down for a delicious home-cooked meal that is inexpensive (and they didn't have to prepare!) and get to know their fellow dancers.

While our initial purpose was to provide a social opportunity for our club members, it quickly became a source of income for the Club as well. We have found that the donations our dancers happily place in the bucket more than cover the cost of the food...sometimes tripling our investment! Most of our dancers have expressed their wish that we get back to having our Friendship Dinners. We are currently dancing in a location that will not allow us to bring “food to share.” **We will definitely reinstate this beloved tradition as soon as we can.”**

FOOD FIRST, INTRO TO SQUARE DANCING SECOND

In our club we advertise our free intro dances as “Dinner & Dessert” nights, knowing that some, not all, people (mostly male) come for the food which should make up for having to dance. In an excerpt from the article, “Meet Them, Greet Them & Bring Them In” in American Square Dance magazine, January 2022, **Lea Veronica describes how they go one step further by combining a dinner with a free intro dance.**

“At your last monthly club dance and during the last couple of weeks of your current class for your club members and new graduates, provide, on colorful stationary, an invitation to a special dinner and an evening of fun, quoting and highlighting, “Please be our guest for a free dinner and an evening of fun Square Dancing.” Club Board Members personally hand at least three copies – including the mailing envelope for each – to every club member to mail or hand to someone they are inviting as a guest to dinner followed by an evening of fun square dancing.

On that first night of class provide a potluck dinner with members only providing the food. Have the dinner start about one hour before class starts. Be sure your members have been instructed ahead of time to visit with the new guests. Sit with the new guests. Talk with a very positive attitude about your getting into square dancing and how you acquired a whole new circle of friends. And, you are enjoying simple exercise to music, helping to keep your mind and body active and strong.



As the guests arrive, they are greeted by more than two people who are checking them in and thanking them for coming for an evening of fun. Do not complicate the sign-in form with lots of questions about them but be sure to have a line that asks them what their hobbies or other interests are. Hopefully the members who are working on the sign-in table know enough about their club members to be able to introduce the new person that very night to someone in the club who shares the same interest or hobby. This is an instant attachment to someone in the club.”

THE SNACK TABLE

In our own club we made a substantial positive change simply by moving up when our potluck snack table was available. We used to have a lunch after the dance, but many of our dancers left early because of work the next day, or because the new-dancer-portion of the evening finished earlier.



We now set up the snack table and coffee, tea and water at the beginning of the evening so everyone can enjoy it whenever they want. It’s a natural gathering place between tips. It’s so easy for the new and experienced dancers to mix and mingle – an automatic social builder.

In an excerpt from the article, “*Fun & Friendship Is The Name Of the Game*” in American Square Dance magazine, February 2022, Lea Veronica shares her experience with the snack table.

“In the club I belonged to I was class coordinator for several years, refreshments were set up and served from a counter at the roll-up window at the kitchen at a specific time during the evening. **I noticed the long line for refreshments had the new people in front (it was announced our new people go first) then the members followed.** NO! It may look and sound polite, but it segregates them from mixing with the club members.

Then I started what I called to myself, the “watering hole”. **Instead of having a line for refreshments, as soon as the class committee arrived to set up before class started we put up and left up for the entire evening, a ROUND table.** It was out of the way of the dance area but where lots of folks could be around that table all at one time. We continued that socializing opportunity at each and every break between tips for the whole evening. And guess what? Most of them were talking to each other across the table and next to each other. New class members and club members. No pointing out who was which one. **Again, having fun meeting new people and talking to them.”**

So, start the discussion with your club. How can you maximize the social benefits of breaking bread within your group?

Love Is . . .

- Love is when your puppy licks your face even after you left him alone all day. - Mary Ann, age 4
- Love is what’s in the room with you at Christmas if you stop opening presents and just listen. - Bobby, age 7
- If you want to learn to love better, you should start with a friend who you hate. - Nikka, age 6
- Love is when Mommy sees Daddy on the toilet and she doesn't think it's gross. - Mark, age 6
- Love is like a little old woman and a little old man who are still friends even after they know each other so well. - Noelle, age 7

TOP TEN THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT SQUARE DANCING

By Guest Blogger, November 29, 2017, www.birthplaceofcountrymusic.org

Editor's Note: The author makes some really good points that are worth quoting in our own promotional materials.

I'll never forget how I felt the first time I went to a real square dance.

I had been studying Spanish in my apartment with my best friend in college when her phone rang. Our music community in Johnson City, Tennessee, was incredibly strong and connected at that point. Word was traveling down the iPhone telegraph that a caravan of folks would be leaving from Mary Street heading toward Burnsville, North Carolina, for a square dance.

I had been a diligent and dedicated student all through college and the thought of abandoning a homework assignment



was enough to send me into an anxiety attack. Excitement and peer pressure got the best of me, however. It was the only zero I ever received on an assignment, but the experience of the dance was well worth the failing grade. Perhaps it was that the world seemed exceptionally gloomy on that evening (the country was a few days into a government shutdown and public tension was high), but the square dance magically transported us all away from the problems of society for a moment. We were transfixed in do-si-dos, swings, and promenading through a sea of mesmerizing fiddle and banjo tunes.

The next morning, I began wondering just how in the world something so free and happy could have dwindled away from so many of our Appalachian communities. Dances had once been centerpieces of mountain society. They served as social gatherings where news could be swapped, courtships could form, and musicians could test their chops. Today, it is safe to say that square dancing is in a revival of sorts. There are numerous workshops and classes offered throughout the mountains to teach people to dance and to call. There are also young folks who are working to bring square dancing back to into communities.

I've been an advocate of dancing since that first night in Burnsville, and I'm hoping this post will encourage you to get out on the dance floor yourself. I'm sure many of you are reading this and thinking to yourself: "I haven't square danced since elementary school!" or even "I've never square danced in my life!" On that note, I think it's a real shame that school children don't get to experience the Virginia Reel anymore in gym class.

If your interest has been piqued but you're still not sure about swinging and promenading, then today – National Square Dancing Day! – is the perfect time for this "*Top Ten Things You Didn't Know About Square Dancing*" list. Hopefully this blog post will give you that final nudge to find a dance near you. Read the list and then get your dancing shoes on (see #8 below)!



10. It Ain't All Squares

Square dancing developed long ago from a mix of English country dances and African American social dances. The typical formation is four couples in the shape of a square. However, all along the Appalachian Mountains it became popular to run square dance steps in large circle dances using as many couples as can fit on the floor. The Circle Dance often uses moves like the Right and Left Grand to continually have a dancer switch partners. This gives everyone a chance to dance with everyone and often breaks the ice for folks a little nervous about meeting others and asking them to dance.

9. Square Dances are Forgiving (Thankfully!)

There is often a fear by first-time dancers that they will look foolish because they don't know how to dance the moves correctly. This thought should never cross a dancer's mind though. Square dance callers are always used to having beginners on the floor, and the job of the caller is to explain the dance in full until everyone is comfortable. These dances are welcoming spaces where more experienced dancers are always willing to help you learn the ropes, and if you do get all twisted up and turned around, nobody is going to mind. Square dances are not competitive sporting matches; rather, they're a place to have fun. So stop worrying!

8. No Dress Code

The first time I invited a friend to what would be their first square dance, he looked puzzled and disappointed when he said, "I can't. I don't own any cowboy boots." I politely explained that cowboy boots were not a requirement.

Neither are gingham shirts, petticoats, or cowboy hats. Just as squares can be danced to modern music (see #5), the typical dress for dances has evolved as well. Jeans, slacks, and even yoga pants would be just as fitting for a square dance now.

7. Square Dances are for Everyone

Square dances, like most of country, old-time, and bluegrass music traditions, are often portrayed as homogenous scenes that lack any type of social diversity. However, square dancing is forward-thinking. Many dances today are called with gender neutral terms, and there is no scrutiny for dancing with partners of the same sex. There are numerous organizations worldwide working to create welcoming dance scenes such as the [International Association of Gay Square Dance Clubs](#) or the [U.S. Handicapable Square Dance Association](#).

6. Square Dances are Everywhere

Just as you don't have to dress country to dance, you don't even have to live in the country to dance. Square dances are quite literally everywhere. They span the entire country from the historic Carcassonne dance in Kentucky to a thriving scene in Baltimore, Maryland. Though they are called different names, squares live on across the pond as well at Irish Ceilidh Dances or Scottish Country Dances.



5. Tune Up Your Fiddles or Synthesizer!

Square dancing is closely associated with fiddles, banjos, and country music. However, today square dances are performed to numerous types of music including disco, modern pop, and techno.

4. Don't Just Dance, Call!

There has been a resurgence in recent years to teach more people to become square dance callers. As elders of the tradition have passed away, they've left behind a void, and a wealth of folk dancing knowledge needs to be passed on to younger generations before it is lost forever. If you're interested in learning to call, find a [Dare to Be Square!](#) event near you. These weekend-long workshops offer advice and lessons from expert callers hoping to expand the calling world. If you're lucky enough to live near a caller, literally give them a call on the phone. Many callers, particularly older ones, are more than willing to show newbies the ropes.



3. Take It to the Next Level

Square dancing doesn't have to stay in your own backyard. You could take it national. In fact, you could do-si-do all the way to the [National Square Dance Convention](#). The convention was born out of a dance in California in 1952 and is now going into its 67th year. The convention celebrates every aspect of modern square dancing and is even open to Contra dancers as well.

2. Musicians Are Welcome Too

You don't have to be a dancer or a caller to enjoy a square dance. You could add so much to the mix as a musician too. Callers are almost always looking to throw together bands, so if you fancy yourself a good banjoist or guitarist then give your local dance a call. Some dance halls have established bands while others have open bands that anyone can join on any given night.

1. Square Dancing is Fun! (Most importantly!)

Finally, square dancing is just plain fun – and good for you! In a fast-paced world where you're more likely to text than swing your partner, a square dance is a perfect way to connect with other humans without the technological filter. Square dances were originally intended as social gatherings. Even before the Civil War, people of various social and economic positions were intermingling and sharing in their experience at square dances across the country. They serve the same social function today. Square dancing can remind us that when we work hand-in-hand, we can create a harmonious world or at least a harmonious basket (square dance humor – sorry!).



Guest blogger Tyler Hughes is a professional musician and educator from Southwest Virginia. He is dedicated to reviving the square dance scene in the coalfields of Virginia through school programs and community dances in Big Stone Gap, Virginia.

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".

The Winter Solstice, December 21st of every year, is a time I always look forward to. I may not see the difference but the days will definitely get longer as time passes by. Someone asked me one time why of all things, would a blind person be so aware of this when I'm unable to see the change. That's just the way it is - thinking positive I guess. Somehow I can feel it... something to look forward to.

One of the most difficult things to accept is the feeling of helplessness when something happens that is beyond my control. Walking in the beautiful Fish Creek Park one summer day, my friend and I decided to have a rest on one of the benches facing the river. He spotted a log at the edge of the water. It would make a good footstool since the ground below the bench had been washed out earlier that year and we had nothing to rest our feet on. As he approached the log and tried to pull it in closer, it darted away.

He took one more step thinking he was on solid ground but it was only grass floating on top of the water. When he took that step he dropped instantly straight down into abyss! When I heard the splash, I immediately called out to him but there was no response. It seemed like forever when I finally heard the water splashing and deep coughing. I called out to see if he needed help, when I heard this low gasping voice, "I'm alright". Again all was silent. I was getting quite concerned - he'd gone down twice. I got up to start towards the road to get some help when I heard the splashing again. This time he stayed above the water but he had floated out quite a distance towards the center. He swam towards the riverbank and managed to grab on to some strong branches and roots that were in reaching distance and climbed up on to dry land. I couldn't see him but by his description he had green slimy grass hanging all over him. And even though it was a hot summer's day he was cold. We laugh about it today but it sure wasn't humorous at the time.

A hospital stay is a whole new adventure in the world of darkness. A surprising number of staff who are employed in the medical field have never experienced dealing with the blind. Some of the many questions ranged anywhere from "How do you get around in a strange room?", "Do you need to be fed?", and "Close your eyes, I'm turning on the lights."

The same procedure took place with every shift change whenever I asked the kitchen staff to explain to me what and where the food was on my tray. They would say "Your toast is here, your eggs are over there", etc. I reminded them that 'here' and 'there' doesn't mean anything in my case.

When I was interviewed by a doctor in the emergency ward, she asked all the routine questions and when it came to "Have you noticed any internal bleeding?" I replied with "I don't know, I'm blind." She misunderstood my answer and repeated the question again. I looked in her direction and spoke in a very clear voice, "I don't know, I said I'm blind." Her response this time was, "Oh, I'm sorry! I thought you said 'I'm blonde'". I wanted to laugh but I resisted the urge. My family and friends had a good chuckle when I returned home.

On the brighter side, my roommate occupying the bed by the window said she preferred to have the drapes closed to avoid headaches from the brightness of the sun. After a couple days of this, she asked the nurse to open the drapes to allow the sun to shine in for my benefit. When they were opened, she asked me "Can you see the bright sunshine coming in?" With a chuckle I replied "Yes, I can see it in my mind's eye and it's gorgeous as ever, but in my case it's still as dark as midnight!" She felt so bad and apologized profusely, "I can't believe I said that." I assured her it was just fine, it happens all the time and I appreciate what she was trying to do. It was very thoughtful of her.

Life is full of surprises- It sure makes my world go around!

Three doctors were on their way to a convention when their car had a flat. They got out and examined the tire. The first doctor said, "I think it's flat." The second doctor examined it closely and said, "It sure looks flat." The third doctor felt the tire and said, "It feels like it's flat." All three nodded their heads in agreement. "We'd better run some tests."

KELLY'S KORNER - by Kelly Thompson

Kelly started square dancing in 2016 after being coerced by his sister. He admits that he would have never walked into the club on his own. He has since found a whole new way of looking at life, a community of new friends and personal confidence that didn't exist before.

HOOK, LINE AND SINKER

The other day I heard someone going on about addiction treatment and how addictions start by using a substance to help overcome a mental disorder of some kind. I think we all know that to break an addiction, the need does extend to still having to deal with the original problem, otherwise the treatment will, in all likelihood fail.



One disorder he specifically mentioned was social anxiety. I think that is the specific area where square dancing is the answer. (Some of us suffer from a few other disorders such as kitchen-phobia or refrigerator-mania but the potlucks and snack tables help in those as well.) The bottom line is square dancing is good for you. Perhaps most people simply don't know that or are afraid to try it.

Is there such a thing as being addicted to square dancing? As with any addiction you attempt to break, there is first a period of withdrawal. I think we have found in the last couple of years square dancing is much like an addiction - you miss it when it has been taken away.

Square dancing is a package deal. To get really hooked on it you need to swallow the entire bait. That doesn't mean you eat the entire buffet but you sample as much as you can. We square dance for fun, exercise and for our mental and physical health, all of which promotes our addiction to it. Square dancing is done in a friendly atmosphere where we are really only there to have fun, fellowship and when we are allowed again, to have food.

We can get well by being hooked on square dancing but what is the bait to use to hook others? How do we tell people the greatest part of creation is humanity and square dancing is the greatest activity specifically designed for humanity? What is the lure to use without making it look like we are addicted? I guess if we knew that we wouldn't need to have the discussion. And so, the bottom line is to simply enjoy yourself - hook, line and sinker.



A pastor was at the service station, waiting in line for gas. The attendant worked as fast as he could, but there were a lot of cars lined up ahead of him. Finally, it was his turn. "Pastor," said the young guy, "I'm sorry about the delay. Seems like everyone waits until the last minute to get ready for a long trip." To which the pastor replied, "I know what you mean. It's the same in my business."

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I've sure gotten old! I've had two bypass surgeries, a hip replacement, and new knees. Fought prostate cancer and diabetes and I'm half blind. Can't hear anything quieter than a jet engine. Take 40 different medications that make me dizzy, winded, and subject to blackouts. Have bouts with dementia and have poor circulation. Hardly feel my hands and feet anymore. Can't remember if I'm 78 or 87. Have lost all my friends. But, thank God, I still have my driver's license.

53rd ALBERTA DANCE CONVENTION



Back on Track

September 3rd, 4th & 5th

Before JUNE 30: Adult \$65/Youth \$50

Get on Board

For Information & Registration:

www.SquareDanceCalgary.com

Ride the Rails

This Train's For You - Lacombe 2022!





53rd ALBERTA DANCE CONVENTION - SEE YOU ON BOARD!

- A Message from Co-Chairs Al Moody & Bud Sedman

The Train is leaving for Lacombe on September 2nd for some great square and round dancing and, in short, a trainload of FUN! Will you be on it? Or are you using your own transportation? The excitement will start on Friday night with the Trail-In Dance being called by Tom Dakers of Calgary and Steve Edlund of Surrey, B.C. Rounds will be an hour, from 7 to 8 pm, with Squares from 8:00 to 10:00 pm, or whenever you get tired!

The Railway is the theme for this Convention which is hosted by Calgary & District Square & Round Dance Association. Saturday night's theme dance is "The Conductor's Black & White Ball". You are invited to attend the Sunday Night After Party with lunch and other refreshments.

Why Lacombe you ask? It is in central Alberta so it is easy for you to get there from wherever you reside. There are great facilities, reasonable hotel accommodations and convenient RV parking.



The Memorial Centre, downtown Lacombe.



Beautiful air-conditioned halls.



In-house luncheon cafeteria.



Round Dancing is across the street at the Kozy Korner.

It's time to dust off your dancing shoes and get ready for a fun time at the 53rd Convention. We especially extend this invite:

1. To those who have never attended a square and round dance convention. This is THE ONE you won't want to miss!
2. To New Graduates who have a good grasp of the basics - a whole weekend of fun to reinforce what you have worked hard on to learn!
3. To dancers who are looking for a good brisk pace of mainstream or plus that leaves you satisfied, and to advanced dancers - our program includes this level too!
4. To round dancers who enjoy having several levels and cuers to choose from!



So, whether you like to square dance, round dance or do some great clogging – hey, maybe you want to do it all – get your registration forms in early so we know how many to expect.

And let your friends know you are coming, too!

Mark your calendars for the September long weekend in Lacombe for memories to last a lifetime.