

October 2023



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

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Inspirational Quotes from Ed Foote

"A true lover always feels in debt to the one he loves." ... Ralph W. Sockman, pastor

"Let us always meet each other with a smile, for the smile is the beginning of love." ... Mother Teresa, Albanian-Indian Catholic nun

"If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything"... Mark Twain, writer, humorist, publisher, and lecturer

"The aim of argument, or of discussions, should not be victory, but progress." ... Joseph Joubert, French essayist

"What we have once loved, we can never lose. All that we love deeply becomes a part of us." ...Helen Keller, author and disability rights activist

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Bow & Swing Makes a Comeback!

Earlier in 2023, the Bow & Swing magazine folded. Stephen Bigelow. Editor of the Northeast Association's newsletter – *The Grapevine* – is pleased to announce he has assumed production of the Bow & Swing.

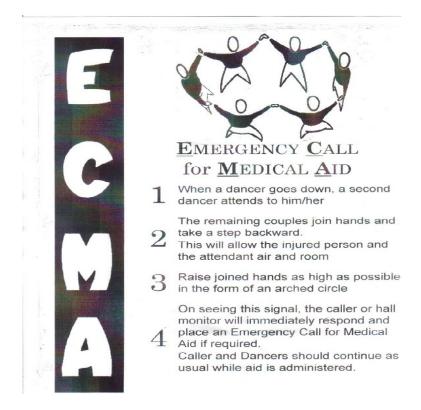
He is the process of learning the layout, format, etc. The magazine will start as a publication for the Florida Callers Association (FCA). It will be distributed by email, and starting out, will be a free subscription. The start date of the first issue will be announced at a later date when he has worked out all the details.

It will be great to have a Florida state magazine again!

Emergency Call for Medical Aid

Please familiarize yourself with the instructions below for getting emergency medical aid.

If you are ever in a square and one of the dancers falls, trips, passes out, etc. you need to know this procedure. All dancers should be made aware of this procedure.



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Medical Mobility Scooter Square Dancing

Are you a former square dancer who is no longer able to dance due to mobility issues? Would you be interested in participating in square dancing using your mobility scooter?

This kind of dancing was tried at the last National Square Dance Convention[®] and was well received. A few dancers in Florida would like to have this kind of dancing added to the Florida State Square and Round Dance Convention. Click on this link to see a video of the square at the last Convention <u>https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=928511018452501</u>.

Our next Florida convention is January 19 – 20, 2024, and the FCA will be scheduling their members to call at the convention on October 22^{nd} . If you are interested in participating in Scooter Square Dancing at the Convention, please contact Caller Dianne Hicks at <u>dydy77@aol.com</u> and let her know of your interest.

73rd National Square Dance Convention[®] CAMPGROUNDS UPDATE

After lengthy discussions with our camping staff, our convention leaders and the National Executive Committee, we feel it is in everyone's best interest for the 73rd National Square Dance Convention® to not offer a group rate for RV camping. Instead, we will provide you with a list of campgrounds in the general vicinity and ask you to select your preferred location and make your own private reservations. We will also be unable to offer bus transportation to and from the original camping site. We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused. Any camping deposit you have already made through our convention registration process will be refunded to you.

Campgrounds in the Milwaukee area:

- Wisconsin State Fair RV Park Reservations (866)-876-6731 <u>https://wistatefair.com/wsfp/rv-park/</u>
 - ✓ 601 S. 76th Street, West Allis, WI 53214
 - ✓ 5.3 mi. from the Baird Center (formerly Wisconsin Center) Convention Hall
 - ✓ A RV Park with full & partial hookups including water, sewer, 20 & 30 amps.

> Jellystone Park Caledonia (262) 835-2565

https://www.jellystone -caledonia.com/

- ✓ 8425 Highway 38, Caledonia, Wisconsin 53108
- ✓ 18 mi. from the Baird Center (formerly Wisconsin Center) Convention Hall
- ✓ This is a Camping Resort and has a Water Park, so great for families.

> Cliffside County Campground (262) 884-6400

- https://www.racinecounty.com/departments/public-worksanddevelopment-services/parks-department/camping/cliffsidecampground
- ✓ 7320 Michna Road, Racine, Wisconsin 53402
- ✓ 22 mi. from the Baird Center (formerly Wisconsin Center) Convention Hall
- ✓ A small Campground and has no full hookups.

> Country View Campground (262) 662-3654

https://countryviewcampground.wordpress.com/

- ✓ South 110 West 26400 Craig Avenue, Mukwonago, Wisconsin 53149
- ✓ 29 mi. from the Baird Center (formerly Wisconsin Center) Convention Hall 12
- ✓ A small Campground with full & partial hookups including water, sewer, 20 & 30 amps electric.

✓ The Jefferson County Fair Park 920-674-7148 -

https://www.jcfairpark.com/

- ✓ 503 N. Jackson Avenue, Jefferson, Wisconsin 53549
- ✓ 50 mi. from the Baird Center (formerly Wisconsin Center) Convention Hall
- ✓ A Fair Grounds campground with full & partial hookups including water, sewer, 20 & 30 amp

https://73nsdc.com/rv-camping/

Smooth Dancing by Buddy Weaver

What To Do When Your Square Breaks Down

It happens sometimes that your square may break down, if it does, here are some tips from Buddy Weaver to help you get back dancing.

If your square breaks down during the Singing Call

Simply, keep moving and get back to your original home position as quickly as you can and wait for the next routine to begin. Singing call routines usually run about thirty seconds xo he quicker you get back home and get ready to dance, the quicker you'll be back in the dance.

If your square breaks down during the Patter (non-singing call) part.

Two things:

- 1. Keep moving and start to form lines of four dancers facing the side walls. The lines should be the standard, boy-girl-boy-girl lines
- 2. Wait and watch for other squares to be in lines of four dancers, like yours or wait for the call to say "lines u to the middle and back", then start dancing again.

In every case above, it is important to get your square up and running quietly. With so many people in the room, we all need to be able to hear what the caller says. Also it is important to note that good dancers are in squares that break down all the time, it is the better dancer who <u>recovers and their square back</u> <u>dancing again</u>. We'd rather be square dancing than square standing.

NOTE: There are some documents which say to go back home then make lines at the side wall, but I find the action of "going home first is too time consuming. By practicing the art of breaking down – making lies like this from anywhere in the square – actually improves your (the dancer's) awareness of the square, where they are in the square, and where others are in the square. This is all applicable for SSD Mainstream, Plus, and Advanced.

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Mike Hogan On Marketing

I've promised to share some success stories I this article I have collected ten of them, some a little old, and some brand new. I'm always looking for successes I can share, so I ask you now, I your club or local association started a class recently that was bigger than you've experienced lately, please, send me an email with as much or little information as you have. I'll reach out to you for more details and will share your success and what we learned from it with everyone! My email is <u>mike.hogan@cox.net</u>.

The most recent success and the one that captured everyone's attention when I shared it at the National Square Dance Convention in Alabama was that of the Northeast Oklahoma Square Dance Association. My primary source for this story was Shane Greer.

The association was made of five remaining clubs in and around Tulsa. None had had a successful beginner class in a long while. The association was on the verge of disbanding as were the clubs. Faced with this they decided to make one last effort to get a class stated they placed a display ad in the local newspaper, listed their class on Craig's List and on neighborhood websites, like Next Door.

Newspaper and Craig's List are both marketing tactic that give dates, times, cost, etc. but are very limited in the ability tell the story and build a positive brand. Neither gives you space to communicate what square dancing has to offer or why the readers should participate. These are both call-to-action tactics but rely on the reader to be familiar with the activity. Next Door gives you the chance to post a bit more information so you can create some awareness while also driving call-to-action, but Next Door has limited reach and isn't intended to be an advertising tactic. None of these tactics accomplish both reach (the number of people who receive the message) and frequency (the number of time they receive the message)

They decided to take a shot and invest \$3,000 in a radio broadcast campaign to recruit beginners to participate in a combined class for the association. That was a substantial portion of the remaining money they had in their treasury. They purchased a two-week commercial campaign on a Top 40 Country station and a Classic Country station. By Classic Country, I mean one that plays Hank Williams, Sr. so very classic! The schedule was this: six 30 second commercials per day, Wednesday through Sunday, for two weeks with the commercials playing between 6 am and 7 pm each day. A total of 60 commercials played on each station.

They created a very simple Facebook page called "Friday Night Square Dance Lessons" where they posted basic information about their event, date, time, location, etc., and then referenced that page as a place to find out more in the copy of their commercials

It worked! Shane told me the story of being called out front of their venue to see first-hand the line of cars that extended out of the parking lot and down street for a few blocks. 136 people showed up for the first night. It was a 15-week class, and at the end they graduated 80 beginners. That's ten squares of new dancers!

It also worked from a financial point of view, Shane didn't share their P&L on the class, only that they charged \$5 per night per person, but I'm a math freak, so here's what I think it looked like: 80 graduates x 15 weeks x \$5 = \$6,000. They started with 136 so income was somewhat higher than that. The association owns the building they danced in so if I figure \$100 per night for rent/caller fees and \$3,000 for the radio campaign, they made a net profit on the class of \$1,500. When was the last time your club made a \$1,500 profit on a class and put ten squares of new dancers on the floor?

Before you jump in with oh feet and all your money, next month I'l share with you e story of a club that tried a radio campaign patterned after the Oklahoma plan, but it failed. I'll give you a 32-year marketing professional's opinion on why one worked, and one didn't.

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

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Putting On A Demo Without A "Live" Caller by Robert Gross

The Wranglers Square Dance Club was invited to participate in a local Rotary fundraiser. In exchange for a square dance demonstration Wranglers would be able to have a booth and put our banner and information flyers. The opportunity came with several challenges including a noisy outdoor environment a small concrete pad for dancing, no electrical power and a major obstacle was that we had no caller available. Here is what I did to make a great day in the sun doing a square dance demonstration,

I used my laptop to download SSSD episodes form the Buddy Weaver Music Podcast. I decided to download the episodes to my phone rather than count on internet access at the demonstration. I put the downloaded mp3 files on my cloud drive to give my phone to the files and then sored the files locally on my phone. I wanted to use my music player app to play the podcast rather than the podcast app. This was a matter of convenience and made the control of the music easier.

I did a little preparation on the podcasts to be ready for dancing. After downloading I noted the start time of each of the singing calls we wanted to dance. This allowed me to scroll to the start of the singing call when we were ready to dance. An easy alternative e to scrolling to the start of the dance would be to use audio editing software and club the desired tip.

I connected my phone containing the downloaded episodes to a Bluetooth speaker to play the dance podcasts. We call the combination of recorded dance tips and the speaker (Buddy in a Box). It was a great way to dance when caller was available.

When the square was ready, I tapped play on my phone and with a bow to the partner and the corner one too we were dancing. The podcasts had an excellent balance between the caller and background music. This was essential to our enjoyment and success.

During the three hours of dancing, we typically did three sons and then took a small break and brought in substitutions. We selected singing calls because we thought these would be musically interest to our audience. We danced SSD to allow all our club members to participate. We had volunteers who had planned to dance for the demonstration. We also had drop-ins; other club members found us in the park and decided to dance a tip.

What could be better? It turned out to be a beautiful day square dancing in the park.

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Dance Attire Opinion by James Caton

Most of us, currently square dancing, were I elementary school in the 40's to the early 70's and may remember the May Day celebrations during lunch time. We would laugh and giggle as our teachers had us dancing the Virginia Reel, May Pole dace and other square dance moves. With the execution of the Virginia reel, I can't recall the other music we danced to. I do recall the beautiful square dance/Spanish style attire worn by some of the teachers as well as by some of the students. However, my introduction to square dancing didn't occur until 1992 when I visited the African-American founded town of Allensworth for their annual Rededication Festival.

There I saw men and women sporting eye opening unusual but beautiful square dancing attire. The men wore black cowboy boots, white jeans, yellow western shirts and a few wore white cowboy hats. The ladies were adorned in white skirts, white cowboy boots, yellow blouses, yellow petticoats and a couple sported white western hats. Up to that point I had only seen women and men dressed in similar attire on Dolly Parton's TV show, Hee Haw and a few TV variety shows featuring country and western singers, after their performance, the audience and I exhibited our approval with rousing applause.

I traveled to Allensworth the following year for its Rededication Festival and the same square dance group performed. However, on this occasion I approached the gentleman who appeared to be the group coordinator, after their performance and asked him where and how they learned to square dance. He gave me the times and locations of his classes, but upon learning where I resided at the time, he gave me the location and time of a class taught by a different instructor much closer to where I lived. By the way, the gentleman who provided the information regarding square dancing class was the late Robert (Bob) Nelson and his group that performed at Allensworth was the Yellowrockers, founded in 984 but sadly has since folded.

Two weeks after the Northridge quake, I took my first square dance lessons with the Inglewood guys and Dolls under the instructions of caller Sylvester Nealon. All the new students, sixteen to eighteen of us, wore casual attire but many of the experienced dancers (angels) wore long-sleeved western shirts, bolo ties, skirts, petticoats, cowboy boots as well as other special dancing shoes. It was other unique attire and the unique moves which first attracted e to square dancing I Allensworth and it's a big part of what's kept me attracted and interested in this activity for nearly thirty years.

In my personal opinion, casual attire is fine while taking classes it's always attractive to see the beautiful skirts dresses and blouses worn by the ladies and long-sleeved western shirts worn by the men when attending an actual square dance. While the petticoats are a compliment to the ladies attire (and I will never discourage ladies from wearing them) I'm with the new school of thought that ladies still look very nice wearing a western skirt or dress with a petticoat.

I share Tim Pepper's sentiments from his article (ASD February 2022) when he states "the styling of the dance is missing without a dress or skirt" and he also penned, "have you ever seen Argentine Tango dancers, Brazilian Samba dancers or Mariachi dancers attend their functions and/or perform exhibitions without adorning attire connected to their activity?" Club members, unaffiliated dancers and instructors would encourage new dancers to add at least one of two articles of square dance attire to their wardrobe to wear when square dancing. While some individuals may indeed be turned off by square dance attire, I'm neither certain nor convinced that he attire is the only and/or main reason our activity has suffered such a decline in the last fifteen or so years.

One last plug for our unique attire. I love seeing the stares and heads turn when a few of us or a bunch of us walk into a restaurant after a dance adorned in full square dance attire. That's it folks. See you on the dance floor and love to my square dance family.

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All Things Considered by Ed Foote

ANNOUNCEMENTS AT DANCES

Most clubs have announcements during the food break in the middle of the dance. This works fine, because people can relax, eat, and listen to announcements at the same time. Unfortunately, some people talk among themselves while the announcements are being made, which can interfere with hearing the announcements.

To counteract this talking, some clubs have announcements between the patter call and singing call immediately before the food break. This is a *bad idea*, for several reasons:

- 1) Dancers are standing instead of sitting. If the announcements are longer than three minutes, people get tired, so they do no listen as well. Announcements seem to average about seven minutes, so people really get tired standing.
- 2) Combining the time for the announcements with the dance time for the full tip, people are on the floor for a very long time. They really can get tired.
- 3) Announcements between the patter and singing call destroy the continuity of the tip established by the caller. The caller attempts to make each tip one continuous unit, and to interrupt this in the middle with announcements kills the mood the caller is trying to establish. Most callers hate announcements between the patter and singing call but seem afraid to suggest having announcements made at another time.

So, we come back to announcements when all are sitting as the best time. But, what do we do if people are talking during the announcements? Simple: the speaker goes quiet. Invariably the floor will become quiet.

If the speaker does not say anything and just looks at the audience, the people will get the message and quiet down. I have used the silence method for a long time with good results.

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Social Square Dance by Barry Johnson

A caller on Facebook posted a good question about SSD not long ago. His post reminded me that we often lose sight of the underlying conditions that led to the creation of the SSD program in the first place.

Forget about the details of the program for a moment: Let's look at the square dance activity in general. For literally decades, we've known that the way Modern Western Square Dance has been presented to the public doesn't align very well with the expectations of people outside his hobby. For literally decades, we've known that we have fewer new dancers entering the activity than we have dancers leaving it. And over the course of those decades, we've seen active participation in our hobby drop precipitously: By nearly every measure, the count of active dancers has fallen by 80 to 90% over the last 40 years.

Square Dancing isn't the only activity to have dropped in participation in this manner – there are many other examples of recreational activities and social groups showing similar declines. But that doesn't change the underlying facts: **We need to change how we present our activity to the public, or accept that we're going to remain on a downward course**. We can't change a multi-generational shift in public attitudes – it is incumbent on us to change our ways to match the new preferences.

A shift towards shorter and simpler entries (lessons) and to allow newcomers to quickly share the joy of the dance with their friends is exactly what is needed...and exactly what the SSD program provides. The cost of the activity isn't our biggest barrier. The biggest issue directly within our control is the time required before new dancer believes they are truly part of the activity – together with the length of time before they can have their friends join them at a dance.

It's up to us to change. And those that *have* changed are seeing the benefits in membership growth from it.

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NOTE: Are you calling for an SSD club? Do you know of a caller who is calling for an SSD club? Please take a moment to send an email to chairofssd@gmail.com.

USDA CENTRAL REGION REPORT

Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Mississippi, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, and West Virginia

As I write this, Sandy and I are right in the middle of the busiest time for state conventions in the Central Region. In August we attended state conventions in Tennessee, Michigan, and Alabama. September will take us to Kentucky and Georgia. That is five state conventions in the span of 7 weeks! The last Central Region state convention this year is Indiana's (03-05 Nov).

Next year starts off with Florida (19-20 Jan), Mississippi (01-02 Mar), South Carolina (26-27 Apr), and Ohio (09- 11 May). Do not forget the National Square Dance Convention in June, then the August flurry of state conventions starts over again.

It is my hope that we all try to attend as many state conventions as possible. In doing so, we support each other and make more conventions possible. The Tennessee and Alabama conventions were great examples of how we support each other. Both conventions had skits for entertainment and it occurred to me that most of the "actors" were not from the home state! There were multiple states represented on stage; Awesome!

More importantly, it is a great way to enhance recruiting efforts. People notice us dancers at restaurants, hotels, etc., when we visit conventions. They pick up on our camaraderie and zest for life. They can tell how much fun we have! I cannot tell you how many non-dancers I have met at lunch or dinner and invited to just stop by the convention and watch the fun.

From a recruiting perspective there is a particular importance to these August and September conventions because these are just before the traditional class starts. As more clubs adopt the SSD format with its multiple starts per year, conventions will become a great impact as a recruiting tool ANY time of the year, instead of just August and September.

My challenge to everyone is to attend at least 5 state or national conventions every year. Help square dancing by BEING THERE. Make it a phenomenon that news reporters want to talk about! Show a level of friendship and fun that make non-dancers want to become dancers. If you decide to take my challenge, make sure you download the USDA Traveler form, use it to track your states and earn a little extra reward for your efforts!

IHS, Scott and Sandy Ebright USDA Central Region Vice Presidents CentralVP@usda.org

USDA INSURANCE COORDINATORS NOTES

Elizabeth Sanders

Greetings Everyone,

Did you miss the insurance session at the 72nd NSDC? Not a problem, I will be hosting a Webinar on Saturday, November 11, 2023. The login information for the webinar will be posted on the USDA website (usda.org).

Let's address some problems that have occurred this year.

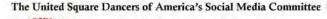
- 1. **Handwritten Checks** Please make sure that all the numbers are legible. Apparently, my bank has a problem determining some "4's" from "9's" based on the way some people write them. The closed part of the "4" sometimes looks like a square "9". Not a big deal except when the bank takes \$90 from your account instead of \$40. Some "2's" look like "7's". If you have trouble with penmanship consider on-line banking and have the bank send me a check.
- 2. **Insurance portal** There is one time during the year when you can delete a facility or a name from the roster and that is the ONLY time that you can delete names and facilities. That time is when you are registering your club for the upcoming year and you are on the portal for the upcoming year. For the 2024 roster you can delete any name that you know will not be a member or anyone that is not sure if they will be dancing in 2024. After you have paid for your club, you cannot delete any names or facilities. That includes any members that passed during the year, left your club for another club or who just stopped dancing.
- 3. **Accidents** The new rule for 2022 is a dancer is not covered by the USDA insurance before they enter the facility or after they have left the facility. Parking lot accidents are not insured. Tripping over a broken piece of concert in the parking lot should be handled by the facility.
- 4. **New or Replacement Certificates** You can go into the portal and add new facilities at any time during the year. However, you will have to send me an email letting me know that you need a new certificate. If you have misplaced

your certificate DO NOT go into the portal and enter the information again. Send me an email letting me know that you need a replacement certificate.

5. No, I don't have the rate yet. Hopefully by the time of the November USDA Webinar I will know the new rate for 2024. What you can do now is get your clubs to update their rosters and facilities ON PAPER in the portal. As soon as the insurance company releases the 2024 portal, I will let you know. I expect that to be in November. At that time, I will also be sending all the insurance coordinators new instructions for 2024.

Elizabeth Sanders, USDA Insurance Coordinator

Reprint from USDA NEWS Volume XXXV Issue 4 Oct-Dec





Proudly Presents Our Webinar Series Beyond the Dance Floor

Dancing — We all miss dancing! The great news is, as a community we've been adapting to "the new normal". It's been wonderful to see callers and cuers ser up virtual dance events. Online groups have been set up to discuss returning to dancing and what precautions need to be taken. IAGSDC even transitioned their International Convention into a "home edition" with virtual dancing and live online activities. Happily, in some areas of the country, clubs are cautiously and carefully beginning to dance again, but there is still more to do.

The United Square Dancers of America — USDA — your National dancers' organization, is proud to present a monthly series of web-based programs via Zoom to support clubs on the business and marketing end of our activity. The programs will be used to introduce more dancers across the country to who/what USDA is, the programs and services we provide, and a way to keep square and round dancing in the forefront of people's thoughts even if they aren't able to get together on the dance floor.



Beyond The Dance Floor – It takes a lot of effort and organizational skills to keep our favorite activity alive and USDA is here to help. From bylaws to event planning, elub officer dutics, promotion, communications, newsletters, youth and handicapable programs – this series is designed to help groups across the country build and grow your clubs.

Workshops are scheduled to last 90-minutes to allow plenty of time for questions & answers, plus we will welcome input from participants. Our complete schedule is listed on the subsequent pages.

Watch your email, our website and Facebook for links to the actual, FREE workshops.



For more information or to check on scheduling updates, please contact us at: USDA Online Education: Bonnie Abramson, Chair — OnlineEducation@usda.org Or visit our Facebook page and join our Facebook group https://www.facebook.com/groups/314405916817 (United Square Dancers of America—USDA)

Upcoming Workshops:

October 14, 2023 – Like a Phoenix Rising From the Ashes: Square Dancing Post-Covid; Eric Henerlau, Member of CALLERLAB's Board of Governors & Keynote Speaker at the 2023 CALLERLAB Annual Convention
November 11, 2023 – USDA Insurance: Making Sure Your Clubs and Dances Are Covered; Elizabeth & Eddie Sanders, USDA Insurance Chairmen
January 20, 2024 – CALLERLAB's Marketing Manual: New Updates & Insights; Mike Hogan.

For more information or to check on scheduling updates please contact us at: <u>OnlineEducation@usda.org</u> or check the web page: <u>https://www.usda.org</u>.



SQUARE DANCE

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ADD YEARS TO LIFE AMERICAN FOLK DANCE BASIC BEGINNER CLASSES CHOREOGRAPHY CIRCLE LEFT CLOVERLEAF CONTROLS STRESS DO SA DO EASY TO LEARN EIGHT DANCERS ENTERTAINING FAMILY FUN FITNESS FOUR COUPLES FRIENDSHIP FUN FUN NIGHT GRAND SQUARE HOEDOWNS MAINSTREAM OPPOSITES PARTNERS PATTER PLUS POPULAR MUSIC RECREATIONAL RELAXING RIGHT HAND LADY RIGHT HAND STAR ROCK AND ROLL SINGING CALLS SOCIAL DANCING

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

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DANCERgram Magazines

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