Florida Federation of Square Dancers, Inc. Meeting Minutes Courtyard by Marriott 308 N Woodland Blvd. Deland, Fl 32720 Sunday, January 19, 2025

Call to Order (Linda Tester)

The meeting was called to order at 9:03A.M.

Invocation (Linda Reid)

<u>Pledge of Allegiance (Jenny Green)</u>

Roll Call (Annie Minor)

Annie Minor stated there is a quorum at the meeting.

Guests:

- 1. Michele Viera, Bid Chairman for 77th National Square Dance Convention (in Florida)
- 2. Beth & Trent Hubbard (Houston, TX), Proposed General Chairmen of the 77th National Convention in Florida (possibly Daytona Beach 3rd or 4th week of June 2028) & Braness hair ten for Vaco, 7A
- 3. Gary & Claudia Leser, Leneral Chairmen from the 75th National Convention Committee for Wag, Texas. P. Conv. Line Januarthis March.

Minutes of Last Meeting (Annie Minor)

Updated Minutes for the Nov. 3, 2024 meeting were provided at the beginning of this meeting.

Nov. 3, 2024:

Jenny Green suggested a correction to Cal's name removing an extra "l". Terri Little clarified that the bank wants our Meeting Minutes to be very specific pertaining to bank business, names included. The bank wants a full copy of the Minutes. Terri Little made a motion to approve the corrected Minutes. Brian McDonald seconded; motion carried.

Correspondence (Linda Tester)

Thank you note received from Cal and Ann Maki, previous presidents.

Financial Report (Annie Minor)

Annie Minor presented the Treasurer's Report available in these minutes.

Parliamentarian Report (Jenny Green)

National Convention Showcase application received. Shreveport is the last National Convention where each state participates in the Showcase of Ideas.

Sunshine Report (Linda Tester)

Card sent to Jim McConnaha, sympathy card sent to Art Springer's family and Clifton Wing for his caller retirement, Dennis Taylor will be sent a card for the passing of his wife, Nancy, as well as Stephen Bigelow for his broken hip, Whit Brown on his retirement and Cal Maki for his appendectomy.

Florida Callers Association (Penny Green standing in for Keith Stevens)

The FCA Clinic is October 7 – 9, 2025, at the Comfort Suites in the The Villages. Their Clinician will be Mike Sikorsky of Apache Junction, Arizona. The Clinic is free for all FCA members and \$50 for non-members. There will be a dance on Saturday night at The Villages with Mike calling and Susan Wolford cueing. It will be a Plus dance with an Advance tip. \$8 per person.

Round Dance Council of Florida (Susan Snider standing in for Earle & Carol Collins)

Round Dance Council L.d a metin 1/1 (25 melectin Earle Collins as President. The Annual Lound Cancer Counce We kend will be lie weekend before Thanksgiv a (21, 2, 2). The in the notion of the weekend before grant Maryland.

Florida Square Dance Campers (Susan Snider)

We have 3 active clubs in Florida, the Square Wheels, the Strawberry Travelers and the Roadrunners. The Strawberry Travelers recently celebrated their 37th year as a National Square Dance Campers Association member. They camp 4 times a year, mainly the1st full weekend with a Friday in it during April, October and December. Our caller is Mike Gormley and our cuer is Susan Wolford. The April campout will be at Strawberry Squares in Plant City on April 4-6th. The majority of their founding members were residents of Strawberry Squares, so this is somewhat of a "Homecoming Dance." Non-campers are welcome to join any of the camping dances. The cost for non-club members is \$5.

The Square Wheels usually dances the third weekend of the month. The caller is Bill Chesnut and the cuer is Susan Snider. We are very excited about our campout April 24-25 in Stephen Foster State Park in White Springs. The park is wonderful and we are inviting non-campers to join us.

Association Reports

Central (Richard & Carol Douget)

Next 5th Saturday Dance is March 30th. Don't have a location yet or callers or cuers. Waiting for confirmation from the location. Whit Brown, the caller for Space Trackers, retired in December. They are looking to have various callers. Please submit suggested names. Also please suggest anyone willing to call regularly.

Northeast (Shirley Wright)

They have 11 active clubs and getting a new startup they are very proud of. Had a successful Fall Festival thanks to Susan Snider. Had to cancel their first Board meeting due to 2 members falling and 2 being ill. Hope the rest of 2025 goes better.

Northwest (Barbara McDonald)

Northwest's membership is off to a slow start to the year despite having received the information in October at the Roundup. We had a great Roundup. New officers for 2025 are; Brian and Barbara McDonald -Presidents, Tim Tharp-Vice President and Chairman for the Roundup 2025, Laura Davis- Secretary and Alec Schmidt- Treasurer and Insurance chairman. As of this report we have just over 50 members and 2 clubs that have renewed Alec is contacting the 2 other clubs, so we hope they enew app.

Not hwest has a clode and in 024 than a trade work of Tim Tharp. It is the Emerald V eyes, and they meet on Tresuary at Jagon Hall in Jensacola. They have had classe and inted heir students to attend Felday night Sesside Squares. A blast class was held January 11th for class members in the area clubs to help them catch up on what they have missed. The response was good. In March Nick Hartley is having an A1 class for those interested.

Agape Squares started a class in September, and they are doing great. Capital Twirlers are having an open house and will start classes at the end of January. Swinging Squares are starting a class this month also. T-N-T Rounds started a Two Step dance class this month.

Northwest is sponsoring a Sweetheart dance February 15th at Panama City Grand Square Hall. It is 1-4 pm which members seem to like. The Roundup will be October 25-26, 2025, and the flyers are out.

That is all and hope you all have a great New Year!

Southeast (Dawn DeWitt standing in for Cathy Waltz)

The Board is very active. They worked hard to put together a season for the dancers. They reached out to dancers. They were spending \$450 per dance and dancers were not showing up. They made video clips of a discussion putting salient points in front of dancers asking them to consider the situation. They collected all the money up front to pay for all the dances. They don't know what other associations are doing. They thought they were going to have 41 and they received

32 memberships for this year. Are we above or below others? We only have 2 active clubs which are caller run. We get 2 squares on Friday with new dancers. Our area includes Ft. Lauderdale which is Chris Phillips at the Mustangs and the Mavericks. They do not participate because they got a bad taste in their mouth years ago. They dance all levels. The Mustangs are a gay club. Ed Foote is coming in March. Membership is \$55. There is a working weekend in May where the Association Presidents have a committee meeting which the Southeast Association should consider attending. The website also has information about what all areas in Florida are doing.

West Coast Area (Penny Green standing in for Don Wolford)

This time of the year is our peak time of the season. We currently have 24 square dances, six Round Dance classes, and two line dance classes. That's a total of 32 that I try to keep track of, plus all the other special dances I list, and people still get all bent out of shape if their listing isn't right. You wouldn't believe the tone of some of the emails I receive.

Curt Braffet is down here now and has joined the Suncoast Callers and Cuers and joined the Florida Callers. Nick Hartley from Alabama has been scheduled several times in the couthwest. Nick is also scheduled for the Northwest Poundup this year. He has joined the Lorida Caller Association.

There is a some man sew caller cating for the RoadRumers Campers. I say somewhat because he had recred from a lline but when Some was killed, John Sweeney picked it up.

Since the last meeting, I've attended funerals or Celebrations of Life for Flo Byington Ormsbee, wife of Caller Bob Ormsbee; Sam Dunn, and Art Springer. Flo's was at Strawberry Squares. There was a pretty good turnout for that. I attended Art's service at the funeral home in Tampa. He was then taken to the National Cemetery in Bushnell which I didn't attend. Charlie and Leona and Gary and Linda Brown were there. I haven't seen any of them in quite a while. They all looked good. I also attended Sam's service at the National Cemetery in Sarasota. Both of these were the same week just before Christmas. I was a little disappointed by the small number of dancers that attended Sam's and Art's funerals.

The annual GSI Winter Fest will be at Strawberry Square in Plant City on February 7-8 with Tony Oxendine, Jack Pladdys, and Rod Barngrover calling and Earle Collins cueing. Registration is \$50 in person and \$65 at the door. The flyer is at www.strawberrysquaredancing.com and www.dancergram.com.

Strawberry Square has decided they are having their Strawberry Fall Fest. There aren't any flyers yet. It's usually the second weekend in November.

Publication Reports

DANCERgram (Penny Green)

The distribution list is currently at 750. I think it has dropped a little because some northerners aren't coming back due to the hurricanes or the kids decided Mom and Dad need to stay up north or people have quit dancing. I'm still receiving requests to be added to the distribution list. I'm doing some advertising now trying to get more readers. I have a flyer that I take with me when I attend dances. I also had an ad in the program book this weekend. This was the first time I ran an ad. There have been 1,763 views since September 16, 2024, which equates to over 400 a month. Cliff chalks it up to the fact that I send a *Planner* every week so there's no reason for anyone to look something up on the website.

I continuously make improvements to the magazines attempting to make it more appealing to everyone. I also try to educate dancers, callers and cuers through the *This & That* magazine.

I have started including calling, cueing, and travel dates for any callers and cuers in our area. Travel includes square and/or round dance tours and cruises. Scotty Shares, sate Leves, and sed Kenn dy have a cruise every year. Although Ted doesn't live in Florida, he calls he e so your we consider him or e of us!

As a reminded, I send to Planta. The your y Sturday so if you have anything you want in the mage the, I would like to receive the information by Friday. Some weeks, it takes me several hours to get it ready to publish. Believe it or not, square dancing isn't the only thing I'm involved in!

The deadline for the *This & That* is the 25th of the month so I have time to get it ready and published by the first of the month. I accept articles from others, but never receive any.

I, of course, send the *Joys, Concerns, & Sympathies* and the *Directory* as needed. As you know, the *Joys, Concerns, and Sympathies* can be sent several times in a week.

The intended market when I started the *DANCERgram* was the West Coast Association; however, that has gradually changed over the years.

Ailene and I have decided since we are struggling getting dancers, we have started including other types of country dancing – Contra, clogging, and line dancing and maybe we can pull them into square dancing.

Florida Email Tree (Penny Green)

I sent a lengthy email on the 13th to remind everyone that the convention is this weekend. I hope it brought in some more registrations.

I have to report again that there are three associations that aren't forwarding these emails. Since the last meeting, I sent an email to them asking why they won't forward them; no response.

Grapevine (Stephen Bigelow)

The Grapevine is going well. I have about 620 subscriptions covering many people inside and outside of Florida. I endeavor to spread the news of Square Dancing and Northeast Florida.

Bow and Swing (Stephen Bigelow)

The Bow and Swing is still a viable online publication. The reason I have not sent out another issue is that I don't have any new news to reply. Under Bill Boyd a large number of clubs from around the state would send articles and pictures. I am trying to do the same thing. The submission date for the Bow and Swing is the 10th of each month. Right now I am getting an article from The Florida Callers. Judy Barnhill is sending me the round of the month.

What I need is news from each of the different Florida Federations. The round dance council president. An as many as I can get Square and Round dance clubs to send meanews and nietures.

I know in the past Bill charged a feet or putting in your special dance flyer, advertising the club can est, at a club cause. This is an online publication so some of those fees really declot apply. It is only real experies are internet, and the sfbigelow domain. I keep this mainly for ease of use and the ability to use and maintain the databases maybe in the future have a place that I can publish the magazine directly to a website. This would give me the ability to get out news of an immediate nature.

So in conclusion I need everyone to send me news and anything else that would help me make The Bow and Swing the magazine that it used to be.

Keepin' Posted (Ailene Picheco)

I sent out Where to Dance in Central Florida last week.

More types of dancing have been added (Contra, Scottish Country,

English Country, and Clogging)

I also sent out flyers for Dances coming up in the next couple of months that dancers may be interested in. Also news about our State convention and the National convention.

If anyone would like to be put on my email list, please let me know.

Panhandle Press (Barbara McDonald)

Last year after I printed the last volume and the Roundup booklet the Fuse cartridge went out. Our son Bill helped order a new one and put it in for our latest edition. I thank him a bunch because I sure could not have taken the back off and fixed it. The longer I have to work with this machine the more I learn about it. That is all for now.

Website (Cliff Reiss)

I continue to actively maintain the Florida Federation website. Updates for the website are posted the same day they are received or identified. Updates include federation and association officer changes, flyers from the Associations, flyers for state wide events and events with national callers, and of course all Florida State Convention updates. For next year's convention I will be updating the website shortly with the new theme "Survive the Caller's and Cuer's Curse at the 71'st", the convention dates, and will post the new theme logo, convention information and flyers when I receive them.

I recently identified 2 new West Coast clubs; they were added to the Clubs page listing and the Mar page. Talso cracted we pages for the e and several other clubs in Scothwest flore a that of no have a weap presence. The weekly newsletter that Roger Friedmann publishes (in several overabler to April) was one of my information source as a fell as intelling out to the club contact. I also review the publications I receive from Stephen Bigelow and the Association newsletters to try and keep club information up to date. I must stress that it is up to the Associations, and those clubs that I maintain web pages for, to review their information on the website and provide me with the necessary updates.

The current Federation <u>member</u> club listings by Association are: Northwest at 6; Northeast at 12; Central at 17; southeast at 6; and West Coast at 22. The club page also lists a handful of clubs identified as not members of the Federation.

I have no updates at this time on attempts to retrieve the photo galleries from the Federations' Server. It remains on my "to do" list.

The website URL for Suzy Q was cancelled as she did not reimburse me for the renewal back in December 2023. Her website can now only be accessed through the vendor page of the Federation website. If she is no longer in business then it should be removed completely.

I recently discussed with Penny Green how we might feature a "Learn to Square Dance" link on the website – it is still a work in progress. And of course, my usual thanks to Penny for always advising me when she finds website content that needs correcting!

Convention Reports:

2025 (Charles Tharp & Dawn DeWitt)

There were 325 attendees to the 2025 Convention which includes callers and cuers. The benefit dinner Friday night needed 99 to cover costs. Encouraged callers and cuers to attend. It was recommended that we depend on dancers for this dinner. Callers from out of state who call in Florida were invited to join the caller association. 4 callers did so. Many dancers chose to stay at the Hampton Inn who provide breakfast and may have a better rate. It is 12 miles from the Convention Center. Received a lot of positive comments.

2026 (Richard & Carol Douget)

This Convention will be held next year on January 16th and 17th with the trail in dance on January 15th. I received a complaint that the committee members were not introduced because they were not part of the kick-off. The theme of the Convention is Halloween. The tag line is "survive the curse at the 71st." Early bird registrations beat last year's number with 136 registrations. Still need a chairman for 2027 who would be the co-chair of the 2026. The last time the National Convention was held in Florida the timing was very close to the date for a Florida State convention to the sate convention was held. For a 2028 National Convention the pre-Convention and would be in Marka 2021 at the Florida State Convention should be considered to be contained when the sate which will poost attendance. The pre-Convention can be a significant to be contained when the sate which will poost attendance.

Facilities (Charles Tharp & Dawn DeWitt)

Randy resigned this position at the May meeting, but we continued on until a new chairman could be assigned. Dawn DeWitt and Charles Tharp were asked to take this over which they did. The contract was signed for the 2026 convention with the cost remaining the same including water provided for free. We asked about a contract for 2027 but were asked us to wait until after the 2025 convention. They did not want any confusion doing two years at the same time. They also assured that they would not book this weekend to anyone else without checking with us to verify we still wanted this weekend. It is ours until we don't want it. The hotel will only provide double queen rooms and took a while to come up with deal pricing. It was discussed having our Board meeting at the Convention Center at Deltona instead of the hotel if we did not receive a meeting room for the number of hotel rooms taken.

Charles Tharp & Dawn DeWitt are the new facilities chair. They researched a lot of facilities before finding The Center at Deltona. As the current convention chairmen they know what is needed to hold a convention. And they seemed to enjoy the "hunt".

Housing (Charles Tharp & Dawn DeWitt)

We did not come close to using the rooms contracted for. My last visit to the Courtyard they said they would honor our contract price if the dancer would phone the hotel directly but only double queens were available. They are agreeable to giving us another contract for next year. We do know it took them a very long time to come up with our rate. We do need a place to hold this meeting on Sunday morning.

Hall of Fame: (Ailene Picheco and Penny Green)

We have a new awardee for the Hall of Fame, Bill & Mary Chesnut. On my last trip to Strawberry Square to check the Hall of Fame display, I was looking at some plaques we have received from the National Executive Committee (NEC) for our participation in the Showcase of Ideas at the National Convention. For those that are not familiar with NEC, this is a committee of previous National Convention chairpersons who are the "governing body" for the National Conventions.

We received a plaque each year from 1973 – 1991; 18 years and they are all hung on the wall. I know we have participated in the Showcase of Ideas every year so why did we stop receiving them? The last plaque is from 1993.

I first contacted the USD. Show these of the Chairpers in who directed me to the NEC She also stated that at one point "the decision was nade to have a perpetual reque." pe petus plaque that you just add a plate to each year. I contacted the current NEC chairper ons inquiring about this. I sked if we are supposed to have a plaque to add plates to or was the plaque in the possession of the NEC. The response was, "So, you haven't received a bar to add to your plaque since 1991?

The bars were handed out to the person responsible for the organization's display at the convention. However, at the conclusion of the 74th NSDC, Shreveport LA (June 2025) the Showcase of Ideas will no longer be part of the National Convention. The National Executive Committee (NEC) has discontinued this display due to the expense to the National Convention and the quality of the displays being presented.

Marilyn Schmit has been the Vice Chairman for many years and may have some of the past years bars to fill in your plaque. Her email is froggydancer@live.com"

I have asked Jenny, as the new Parliamentarian who is responsible for our Showcase of Ideas" in 2025, to look through those files for a plaque and plates. I don't remember ever hearing about this before now.

If anyone has any information, please let me know. That plaque should be hung at Strawberry Square. Penny Green tries to keep this up-to-date. The Deadline

for submitting an nominee is September. The form for nominations is on the website. There is a committee for Hall of Fame.

History (Penny Green)

For the January 2025 issue of *This* & That, I was reminiscing about the history of square dancing in Florida. So, I decided with it being the start of a new year that I would write about that. Our Federation and several dancers have been a vital part of many things connected to square dancing in Florida.

I discussed the Federation and how we are a charter member of the USDA. For those that don't know, the USDA is the United Square Dancers of America. The Florida Federation was created in 1957; 67 years ago! I don't believe anyone is still around from back then. Florida is a charter member of the USDA. The Florida West Coast and Jacksonville (NE) were involved in the creation. Southeast was created in 1957 and Northwest in 1974 and they joined the Florida Federation. We are missing the date for Central!

One of our dancers, the late Joe Vicari from Northwest, was instrumental in the creation of the USDA Traveler Program. This program is for any dancer and it recognizes the dancers that travel and dance. They receive a form and they have to dance at least once in every state in the continer all US II on the is another level to include Alaska and Hawaii. At each dance was a some one of the bounds sign our form. When you have danced a every rate you somit four to the USDA and you receive a badge.

Caller Art Springer, Mori & Phyllis Sogolow, and Chet and Julia Vetter created the Circle of Service Award. This award is given to dancers who, for three or more years are determined to have made a significant contribution to the square and round dance movement. This presentation is made to dancers only and must be presented by someone who has already received it. This is the medallion the recipients receive to hang on their badge. Art Springer you already know. The Sogolows and Vetters were residents at Strawberry Square. I believe the Vetters were also in the Northeast Association before they moved to Plant City. Would all the Circle of Service recipients please stand?

The Hall of Fame was the idea of again the Springers, Sogolows, Vetters, and Marty and Byrdie Martin, the developers of Strawberry Square. The Martins offered to house the Hall of Fame at Strawberry Square and it has been there ever since. There was a grand opening dance on December 4, 1983, when the Hall of Fame opened. The first inductees were inducted May 5, 1985. As of today, we have 99 inductees into the Hall of Fame. This includes the Chesnuts that were inducted Saturday night. This information is also on the website.

The Hall of Fame is dancers, callers, cuers, vendors, publishers, teachers, organizers, promoters, vendors, and others who have ten years statewide involvement

with the Florida Square and Round Dance activity. You would think with all these qualifiers, some people would be inducted twice. Would all of the Hall of Fame inductees please stand.

USDA (Carol Poole)

This weekend the USDA Executive Committee winter meeting is being held in Arizona at the Tucson Square Dance Festival. So, no new news. Their next meeting will be in Shreveport, LA at the National Convention on June 25, in the Exhibition Hall #2 which Shreveport calls the Auditorium, at 1 PM. At this time, I cannot say we will be there. Hopefully, by our working weekend I can make summer plans.

USDA Insurance (Carol Poole)

Financial report is available at the end of these Minutes.

Last year we received three accident reports. Two were sent to USDA. I no longer hear if a claim was submitted. Probably something to do with HIPPA. The rate per dancer went up fifty cents to six dollars. A large increase. Which may be why the clubs were very late renewing.

ASCAP/BMI/SI SAC (Richard & Carol Daige)

We were likensed for all three Lens 3 for \$8.0 for the 2025 Convention. Carol has been reimbursed for the BMI and SESAC heenses and will be reimbursed for ASCAP as soon as she turns in the invoice.

ARTS (Ailene Picheco for Jerry Reed)

The Alliance of Round Traditional & Square Dance

(ARTS-dance.org) has a multitude of information on their website.

As does United Square Dancers of America (USDA.org). Check them out!

NEXT ARTS BOARD MEETING is Sunday, June 29, 2025 in Shreveport, LA.

For more information, please contact: Jerry Reed, ARTS Executive Director 321.794.9646, Executive Director @ARTS-Dance.org.

Old Business (Jenny Green)

Corrections to By-Laws are still being worked on. No information on the new dancer handbook or the first convention handbook.

Convention Guidelines

Well, this is taking a lot longer than I thought it would! Our committee is tasked with updating the convention guidelines which haven't been updated since May 2012. Back then we had a three-day convention in Lakeland that had entertainment, a Grand March, and a lot more vendors! As you can imagine there have been a lot of changes and there aren't very many of us that were involved in 2012!

Our committee consists of Terri Little, Ailene Picheco, Jenny Green, Carol and Randy Poole, Larry Zukerman, and Keith Stevens. We have since picked up Michele Vieira!

First of all I read through the document once, did a spell check, and made corrections. We actually had two different documents which we have combined into one document.

We first decided to change the word 'Procedures' to 'Guidelines'. We feel that 'Procedures' sounds like you have to follow them word for word and we need to have some leeway to make adjustments due to cost, time, etc.

Then we changed the word 'Chairman' to 'Chairperson'. Back in the day, it was only men that chaired committees and probably 'chairperson' hadn't been thought of.

Then we decided that ϵ en though we halonge have some ϵ the events that had committees that we had taken there in the document and ad 'optional' to them in case we ever go back to a three lay convention. So ne of these committees are Fashion Show, Sewing Cond. March, etc.

There were a lot of places where the wording was just bad, so we fixed them. In some cases we had to add tasks to some of the "job descriptions" We also added some jobs, i.e. assistant treasurer. We decided we needed a back-up for the treasurer in case something happened to that person. That also puts another signature on the checking account.

There is a "formula" for how the expenses are handled and how the profit is distributed. Jenny, my accountant, created a template with formulas where the treasurer just has to plug in the numbers for that year and the calculations are made with the formulas. This is perfect for someone like me that doesn't do numbers!

The vendor responsibilities is a document that we have to ensure matches the Guidelines. There is also a contract involved that has to match.

We are now in the process of removing anything that "dates" the documents i.e. the callers have to be programmed by such and such date; the cuers have to be programmed by such and such date. We are going to change the due date of all tasks to the number of weeks before the convention that they need to be completed.

When Jenny and I were co-chairs of the 2014 convention, we created a timeline. I don't know if it has been used since. We are going to take this document and set it up with this idea of stating how many weeks before the convention that a task needs to be completed. I have also decided to include a column where the General Convention Chairperson can add the actual dates for their convention. By using the number of weeks we shouldn't have to update the documents as often, but when you are planning the convention dates probably work better.

I have taken all these documents, and will include the timeline, and combined them into a booklet. The Federation secretary will be responsible for providing a copy of this booklet to each Convention Chairperson that is appointed. It needs to be given as soon as they are appointed, especially since we seem to be running behind on these conventions lately. When someone is appointed, they are already behind. This should have been done all along, but wasn't. This booklet should be reviewed each year by the Convention Committee at the Working Weekend to ensure it remains current.

After these documents are finalized they will need to be approved by the Federation, the Florida Callers, and the Round Dance Council. Then they will be posted on the Federation website and will need to be updated on a regular basis. Perhaps it could be done by the committee updating our other documents.



Old business cards for the Federation and associations have old information. No new cards will be made.

It was noted that there is no calendar on the website.

New Business

None

Meeting adjourned at 11:25am by Linda Tester.

Next meeting: working weekend May 3-4, 2025, at Strawberry Square.

Respectfully submitted,

Annie Minor,

Secretary