

NEW DANCER HANDBOOK

Live Lively -



Square Dance!

Compliments of
The Florida Federation of Square Dancers

Updated by Penny Green
June 2023

This booklet is provided by the Florida Federation of Square Dancers. The target audience is new Square and Round Dancers, but seasoned dancers are encouraged to read it too. In this booklet, you will find information about the various Square and Round Dance organizations in the United States, how Florida is split into regional associations, tips, history, conventions, acronyms, etc.

Now that you have learned to dance, you can dance anywhere in the world i.e. Japan, China, Germany, etc. Learning the language we use in our activity is like learning a whole new language. No matter where you go in the world, we all use the same language, so if you go to a dance in Japan, even if you don't speak Japanese, you know the square dance language. If a Chinese dancer comes to the United States and doesn't speak English, they would still be able to square dance.

So, let's get started!

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GENERAL INFORMATION

FOR “SQUARE AND ROUND DANCERS”

You are part of a great activity, rich in heritage and dedicated to the enjoyment of its participants. This booklet contains information that will help you to get the most from square dancing.

Square dancing is an American folk dance. It was born in the days when our country was young, carried westward by our pioneer forefathers, and is a treasured heritage of our American culture.

In the 1930s, Lloyd “Pappy” Shaw introduced western square dancing to thousands of Americans with exhibitions by his students from the Cheyenne Mountain School in Colorado. Since then, square dancing has become a favorite leisure-time activity for millions of dancers around the world. It has kept pace with many of the styles, types of music, and technological advances of our society while remaining wholesome family fun.

Square Dancers pride themselves on being friendly and courteous to both dancers and non-dancers alike on and off the dance floor. It is good square dance manners to join the nearest square needing a couple. Introduce yourself (A stranger is just a friend that you haven’t met yet). After a tip, applaud the caller and thank your fellow dancers – AND – most important, “HAVE FUN AND SMILE”.

JOIN A CLUB: Clubs are needed to organize dances and establish a means to enjoy the fellowship of square dancing. To survive they need an active membership where everyone helps. **VOLUNTEER, DON’T WAIT TO BE ASKED.**

Be sure to **WEAR YOUR NAME BADGE.** It enables us to be on a first-name basis which furthers friendly fellowship. You, the new dancer, are the lifeblood of our activity. Only with your enthusiasm and ideas can square dancing continue to flourish.

Square and Round dance events do not JUST HAPPEN,
they are caused to happen and
they need your active participation.
JOIN AND SUPPORT A CLUB AND AN ASSOCIATION

Logo



In an effort to change our image of being old-timers, cowboys, farmers, etc., this logo has been replaced with a new one.

Our new image is that square dancing is for everyone (children



included). It's not cowboys and farmers. Our dancers are from all walks of life and professions, from company presidents to department store clerks, teachers, medical personnel, etc. There is no longer a requirement to wear cowboy shirts and hats, big fluffy skirts, bolo ties for the guys; wear what you want. There are some that still enjoy wearing the big fluffy skirts. It's like our uniform for square

dancing. Square dance attire admired but not required.

Finding a Dance

Usually, the problem of where to dance is easily solved when the new dancer is planning to dance locally but can be a difficult problem when away from home. We recommend that you prepare for your out-of-town visits by using the tips below

- **Internet:** Input 'square dancing' and the area you are interested in.
- **Square Dance Shops:** Usually the friendly folks in the square dance shops can put you in contact with someone who has local dance information. Unfortunately, many of the square dance shops have gone out of business.
- **Chamber of Commerce:** Some square dance clubs are members of their local Chamber of Commerce, or they have left dance and class information with them.
- **Local Newspaper:** Many clubs advertise their dances and classes in the local newspaper. Check under Entertainment or Calendar.
- **Local Parks and Recreation Departments:** Many clubs hold their dances and classes in city recreation centers.
- **Western Wear Shops:** If you cannot find a square dance shop, someone at a local western wear shop may be able to help.
- **Bumper Stickers and Square Dance Decals:** on cars, trucks, or campers. The occupants of these vehicles are usually a gold mine of information.
- **Oh! By the way...** When all else fails – ask everyone. When you pay at the checkout line at the grocery store, or pay your check at the restaurant, or hand your credit card for a gas purchase add, Oh! By the way, do you know where they square dance around here? – or – Do you know any square dancers?

REMEMBER – Always be sure to ask for the dance level of the club you plan to visit. Don't embarrass yourself by attending a dance above your capability.

Guidelines for New Dancers

The following text is from Tel-Star, October 1995

1. **Belong to a club.** Clubs are needed to organize and establish a means of enjoying the fellowship of square dancing. To survive, they need an active membership where everyone helps. Volunteer...don't wait to be asked.
2. **Dance to other callers.** During lessons, you tuned into the caller who taught you, and you will always have a special place for him or her. Every caller has a different style...that is part of the fun.
3. **Dance in the front of the hall.** The tendency for the new dancer is to hide in the back of the hall, where he thinks the caller can't see his square break down. A good caller watches the whole floor...including the back squares. Don't be afraid to dance in the front square.
4. **Dance with experienced dancers.** Sometimes an outreached hand from a more experienced dancer is all your square needs to keep going. Everyone dancing today was a new dancer at one time and can remember how it felt.
5. **Touch hands after every move.** Establish your position by touching hands after every move. If you're lost, at least you'll have company. As one caller I heard years ago say..."AT&T" – reach out and touch someone".
6. **Keep Dancing.** To use all the information you have learned, and to make it become second nature, it is important to practice, practice, and practice.
7. **Be aware of your level.** Look for dances advertised at the level you know.
8. **Stay at your level for a while.** The level you dance at has nothing to do with how good a dancer you are. It has to do with how much time you are willing to devote to your hobby. You may never choose to move to another level, and that is fine. Don't let anyone rush you to go to a higher dance level!
9. **Square dance for fun.** The odds are pretty good that someone is going to **make a mistake (even a caller makes one sometimes!). Don't worry about** whose fault it was...it doesn't matter. Regroup, and keep smiling. **Finally...jump right up when the music starts.** Get in the first open square, don't pass one up! Introduce yourself, smile, and have fun! Thank everyone when the tip is over.

Reprint from *American Square Dance* – March 2013

SQUARE DANCING IN THE PROPER SPIRIT

By Caller Chuck Durant, Titusville, Florida

Dr. Lloyd "Pappy" Shaw, the name and the man, is most likely unknown to most new square dancers today. Shaw is generally recognized as the father of modern square dancing. In Colorado, in the early 1900s it was Shaw who revived a sagging interest in square dancing that was on the verge of extinction. His "Cowboy Dances", a 1939 collection of almost 100 calls at that time, emphasized "dancing in the proper spirit".

What is the proper spirit? Is it dancing with the corner of our mouths turned down? No! The spirit means smiling – showing the pleasure received from dancing with good friends. Does it mean being critical about our fellow dancers' imperfections when the square falls apart? No! The spirit means laughing together – accepting the fact that we are human: and being human we will err.

Does it mean ignoring those who we've decided do not dance as well as us? No! The spirit means understanding – to be tolerated and less judgmental of others. After all, all of you came into square dancing for the same reasons – fun, fellowship, and harmony. These three ingredients help square dancing grow into a community of an estimated 7 million dancers. The absence of these ingredients could also destroy the community.

Are you still friends with those who invited you to an open house to promote classes? If the Proper Spirit exists, you are graduated, are dancing regularly, and have become much closer friends. The Proper Spirit is present, if, after having shared a 30-40 week learning experience, you find a special kindred ship among the group.

Square dancing without the Proper Spirit would be a cold experience, indeed. No smiles, no laughter, no handshaking; in fact, no friendly acknowledgments at all. As a new dancer, you have a responsibility to carry on the friendly virtues of square dancing as much as the seasoned dancer does. By your example, you will have many opportunities in square dancing to influence others to dance in the proper spirit.

Show your friendly colors and share your joy in the dance with the other 7 dancers in your square. Get the Spirit! "Pappy" would have wanted it that way.

REPRINTED FROM *"The Square Dance Bulletin"*

SQUARE DANCE CODE OF ETHICS

I. DEFINITION OF ETHICS

Ethics is basically defined as rules or standards for governing the relations between people to benefit all concerned, with mutual respect for the needs and wants of all parties involved.

The essence of ethical behavior is:

- A. To conduct all relations between parties in friendliness, honesty and good faith;
- B. To honor fully, in word and in spirit, all agreements, once made, and
- C. To confine any critical comments to a reasoned and temperate discussion of actions and practices.

II. DANCERS RIGHTS

- A. Dancers should realistically evaluate their own dancing abilities and dance within those abilities.
- B. Dancers should be aware that some of their dancing habits may be uncomfortable or undesirable to other dancers in the square and should make every effort to avoid such actions.
- C. Dancers should treat other members of the club and its visitors and guests with courtesy, friendliness, and helpfulness. They should assist the less experienced dancers.
- D. Dancers should enthusiastically take part in the activities of any club that extends to them the benefits and privileges of membership and should accept all the responsibilities of a club member.
- E. Dancers should be concerned that the relations of their club with callers, other dancers, and other organizations are conducted in an ethical manner.
- F. Dancers should keep within the club any criticism of the conduct of club members, club officers, or club caller or teacher. Any such criticism should be offered in a constructive manner.
- G. Dancers who feel they can no longer accept the rules and practices of the club should resign from the club.
- H. Dancers should not wear the badge of a club if they are not members in good standing of the club.

III. ETHICS FOR CLUBS AND CLUB OFFICERS

- A. Club officers should have as their primary purpose and concern the welfare of the club and the square dance community as a whole.
- B. Club officers should conduct all club business and honor all club contracts in an ethical manner. An honest effort should be made by the club officers to resolve any problems prior to dismissal of a caller or employee of the club.
- C. Upon change of club officers, the new officers should be made fully aware of any outstanding club commitments. The new officers should consider themselves and the club to be legally and morally bound to fulfill any official commitments made by the previous officers on behalf of the club.
- D. In contractual matters, club officers should assure that all expectations and requirements, such as schedules, fees, expenses, etc., are clearly stated in writing and are understood by all contracting parties prior to signature.
- E. Clubs should plan and sponsor beginner classes to promote and perpetuate the square dance activity. Graduating dancers should

be accommodated by the club, or the club should provide information regarding dancing opportunities in the area.

- F. Clubs should assure that visitors and invited guests are informed of club admission policies, such as attire and admission fees, as well as dance levels.
- G. Clubs should discourage “set squares’ and cliques, in order to promote the fun and fellowship of square dancing.
- H. Clubs should use officially defined dance levels and should conform to the official definitions of the level.

DANCER CODE OF CONDUCT

Square Dancers anywhere are encouraged to comply with an appropriate Code of Conduct that will enhance the public image and the pleasure of the movement to all dancers and non-dancers, as well.

Among the unique aspects of this wholesome activity is the attractive attire that is an intrinsic part of the image of the square dance. Accordingly, the wearing of appropriate apparel is as important to the enjoyment of the participants as it is to those watching. Not only should the clothing of the dancers be appealing to the eye, but also functional to the others within the square. It is generally recommended that this includes the wearing of long-sleeved shirts for the men and full or prairie skirts for the ladies as local customs and events may require.

Avoidance of alcoholic beverages both before and during dances is essential to insure the enjoyment of everyone. A single drink can severely diminish the response time required to execute the intricate moves of the dance. Square Dancing in itself has the capability of providing sufficient exhilaration to warrant abstinence from alcohol on dance nights.

Courtesy to others is important at all times. This includes personal cleanliness, as Square Dancing is an energetic recreation that can be offensive should adequate precautions not be taken.

The welcoming of others into the dance and into the squares is an integral part of the social aspect of Square Dancing. Walking out of a square at any time is considered a severe insult. At the end of the dance, no one should leave the square before thanking everyone who contributed to the joy and the fun of dancing together.

Conforming to the accepted and generally taught hand positions and maneuvers for execution of the movements help to eliminate any uncertainty among the other dancers. Proper styling while dancing is as important to the enjoyment of the Square Dance as is the proper execution of the movements themselves.

Adherence to these guidelines should be encouraged from the very early stages of beginners' class. The best means of achieving this is through example of experienced dancers and leaders and by the incorporation of ethics into the educational process during the class.

It is felt that through the reaffirmation of these long recognized rules of conduct, dancers everywhere will be reminded of the importance of courtesy, friendliness and personal hygiene. All of these things are an integral part of the Square Dance activity.

Reprint from "Dancers Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct" brochure – IS-066. This brochure can be printed directly from the USDA web site at www.usda.org.

WHY DO WE ...

Author Unknown

Some things are worth repeating (many times) because we need to be reminded and new people join our activity.

Why do we ...

- Not drink alcoholic beverages at dances? Alcohol inhibits our ability to listen and perform. Alcohol reduces our reaction time making us a poorer dancer. In addition, dancing is a wholesome, family-oriented activity.
- Belong to a club? Clubs are needed to organize dances and establish a means to enjoy the fellowship of square dancing. To survive they need an active membership where everyone helps. Volunteer, don't wait to be asked! (EDITOR'S NOTE: I have been asked several times if you can belong to more than one club. YES! By all means; you can belong to as many clubs as you like. But don't belong to so many clubs that you can't support them with your attendance at the dances and on banner raids and retrievals.
- Stay non-competitive? In square dancing we want everyone to have fun, so without winners and losers, this can be accomplished.
- Overlook mistakes by others? We all make mistakes. Everyone is trying to do it right. Encourage them!
- Wear name badges? Badges enable us to be on a first name basis which furthers friendly fellowship.
- Welcome new dancers? New dancers are the lifeblood of our activity! Only with their enthusiasm and ideas can dancing continue to flourish!

Reprint from *DANCERgram* – January 19, 2009

Acronyms and Definitions

	Explanation	Definition
2 X 2		two squares - two rounds
ACA	American Callers Association	
ADV	Advanced	a Square Dance level
After party		A party after the end of a convention or festival
ARTS-Dance	Alliance of Rounds, Traditional, and Square-Dance	
C-1, 2 or 3		a Square Dance level
CALLERLAB		an international organization of Square Dance callers
ER	Early Rounds	30 - 60 minutes of Rounds before the start of a Square Dance
FCA	Florida Callers Association	
FSDCA	Florida Square Dance Campers Association	
FSSRDC	Florida State Square and Round Dance Convention	
GSI	Grand Square International	
HFC	Health & Fitness Center	a facility in Lake Ashton where square dancing is held
MS	Mainstream	a Square Dance level
NEFSRDA	Northeast Square & Round Dance Association	
NSDC	National Square Dance Convention	
NSDCA	National Square Dance Campers Association	
NWFSRDA	Northwest Square & Round Dance Association	
OBS	Orange Blossom Squares	A Square Dance club in The Villages.
Pre-Rounds		30 – 60 minutes of Rounds before the start of a Square Dance
Plus		a Square Dance level

RDCF	Round Dance Council of Florida	
Ribbons		your ticket into a convention or festival
ROUNDALAB		Platform for the dissemination of information pertinent to the Round Dance activity
SCCA	Suncoast Callers & Cuers Association	A group of Callers and Cuers on the West Coast of Florida
SEA	Southeast Association	
SSD	Social Square Dancing	a Square Dance level
Trail End Dance		a Square and Round Dance the night before the start of the state convention
Trail In Dance		a Square and Round Dance the night before the start of the state convention
Trail Out Dance		a Square and Round Dance after the end of the state convention
Yellowrock		A hug
USDA	United Square Dancers of America	
W/S	Workshop	

TAMINATIONS

Taminations are the Square Dance animations of the Tam Twirlers Square Dance Club. Here you will find animations for calls from Mainstream through C3B. Most calls have several animations from different starting positions. Taminations are written and maintained by Brad Christie, webmaster of the Tam Twirlers Square Dance Club.

<https://www.tamtwirlers.org/tamflash/info/index.html>

WHERE TO DANCE IN FLORIDA

Everything you want to know about Square and Round Dancing in the state of Florida can be found at www.floridasquaredance.com.

DANCER ORGANIZATIONS

FLORIDA FEDERATION OF SQUARE DANCERS



Many people and organizations are at work to enable you to enjoy this fine recreation. You are aware of your local club, and the members of your group will no doubt inform you of your area association.

But you may not hear a great deal about the organization which ties all dancers of Florida together: THE FLORIDA FEDERATION OF SQUARE DANCERS.

What is the Florida Federation of Square Dancers and of what use is it to you as dancers?

The state of Florida is divided into five regional associations – Central, Northeast, Northwest, Southeast, and West Coast¹. There is one representative from each association, except for West Coast, serving on the Board of the Florida Federation of Square Dancers. Each person starts as the treasurer, and each year they progress up one chair to the secretary, vice president, and president.

The purpose of the Federation is to:

- Promote public awareness and interest in square and round dancing as a healthful form of enjoyable recreation. This includes the distribution of funds to organizations that qualify under section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.
- Encourage and assist in the formation of square and round dance clubs.
- Be in contact with dancers in other states through The United Square Dancers of America (USDA).
- Serve as a clearinghouse for information among the unaffiliated dance groups and as a liaison with square dancers elsewhere in the world.
- Bring a spirit of cooperation among the callers, teachers, and dancers elsewhere in the world.
- Sponsor the annual Florida State Square and Round Dance Convention in coordination with the Florida Callers Association and the Round Dance Council of Florida where dancers from all over the state can meet, enjoy dancing to outstanding callers and cuers from every section of the state, make new friends and renew old friendships.

The Federation sponsors a display in the Showcase of Ideas at the annual National Square Dance Convention that publicizes square and round dancing in

¹ The West Coast Association is only a legal entity partnering with the Suncoast Callers and Cuers Association (SCCA) to promote square dancing on the west coast of Florida.

the state of Florida. The Florida exhibit is generally recognized to be one of the best and most popular at the convention. Florida has sponsored a display for 25+ years.

The Federation is a co-sponsor of the Florida State Square and Round Dance Hall of Fame at Strawberry Square Dance Center in Plant City to honor people who have made outstanding state-wide contributions to promoting square and round dancing in the state.

For additional information, click here <http://www.floridasquaredance.com/index.html>.

FLORIDA'S FIVE REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS



CENTRAL FLORIDA SQUARE AND ROUND DANCE ASSOCIATION (CENTRAL) - The purpose of CFSRDA is to promote square and round dancing in Central Florida through dances, publicity, and training programs, and to bring about a spirit of cooperation among dancers, callers, and cuers.

Membership is open to all persons interested in square and round dancing in **Brevard, Indian River, Lake, Marion, Orange, Osceola, Seminole, Sumter, and Volusia** counties. The Board of Directors is elected officers, immediate past president, and area directors with husband and wife serving jointly. Members pay annual dues with a discount at regular dances. Meetings and dances are usually held each fifth Saturday. The Association publishes *Keepin' Posted*, a magazine highlighting square, and round dance activities in the Central Florida area. For additional information on Central, click here <http://www.dancergram.com/aa-FWS/central/index.html>.



NORTHEAST FLORIDA SQUARE AND ROUND DANCERS' ASSOCIATION (NEFSARDA) - NEFSARDA does not accept individual memberships, but any square or round dance club can apply for membership. The Association strives to promote the growth of our hobby and sponsor Association dances such as Fifth Saturday Dances, and the annual Fall Festival. The Association provides information through its monthly publication *The Grapevine*.

It encompasses the counties of **Alachua, Baker, Bradford, Clay, Columbia, Duval, Flagler, Gilchrist, Levy, Nassau, Putnam, St. Johns, Suwannee, and Union**. The Association publishes the *New Dancer Book* to provide useful information for the new dancer and often sponsors benefit dances. For additional information on Northeast, click here <http://www.dancergram.com/aa-FWS/northeast/index.html>.



NORTHWEST FLORIDA SQUARE AND ROUND DANCE ASSOCIATION (NWFSRDA)

The NWFSRDA's purpose is to promote the growth of square, round, contra, and line dancing activities to the people within northwest Florida. The association encompasses twenty-one counties in northwest Florida – **Bay, Calhoun, Dixie, Escambia, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Hamilton, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Lafayette, Leon, Liberty, Madison, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, Taylor, Wakulla, Walton, and Washington.**

Through the United Square Dancers of America (USDA), the association provides accident, medical, and liability insurance to members. In October of each year, the association sponsors the Round-Up – a two-day event for all dancers. Northwest Association also provides local, regional, state, and national information to members in a quarterly publication, the *Panhandle Press*. For additional information on Northwest, click here <http://www.dancergram.com/aa-FWS/northwest/index.html>.



SOUTHEAST FLORIDA SQUARE AND ROUND DANCE ASSOCIATION (SEA)

The SEA is a communications link between dancers and members of the Florida Federation, and provides information to our dancers through United Square Dancers of America. Insurance is provided to the dancers through USDA Insurance. There is a visitation twice a month to all area clubs. The counties SE covers are **Broward, Dade, Hendry, Martin, Monroe, Okeechobee, Palm Beach, and St. Lucie.** For additional information on Southeast, click here <http://www.dancergram.com/aa-FWS/southeast/index.html>.

WEST COAST AREA – this small group of counties were a part of the West Coast Square and Round Dancers' Association. It is no longer a dance association and



is not a member of the Florida Federation of Square and Round Dancers. However, it is still a legal entity incorporated in the state of Florida.

The purpose of the Association is was to promote square and round dancing activities in a fifteen-county area from Highlands County to the west coast and Citrus County to Lee County, through dances, classes, and by direct contact with the dancers. The legal entity has partnered with the Suncoast Callers and Cuers Association (SCCA) to promote dancing on the west coast of Florida.

The publication for this area is the electronic *DANCERgram*, which includes the *Planner* (weekly); *This & That* (once a month); *Joys, Concerns, & Sympathies* (as needed), and the *Directory* (as needed).

The counties in the West Coast area are **Charlotte, Citrus, Collier, DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hernando, Highlands, Hillsborough, Lee, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, and Sarasota**².

For additional information on the West Coast area, click here <http://www.dancergram.com/aa-FWS/westcoast/index.html>. Forward questions about dances in this area to sqdncfan@gmail.com.

Florida Square and Round Dance Hall of Fame

The Hall of Fame was organized to honor dancers, callers, cuers, publishers, teachers, organizers, promoters, and/or vendors for their contributions made to the dance activity statewide. The hall is managed by the Florida Federation. Nominations are made by Florida dancers. For additional information, go to <http://www.dancergram.com/aa-FWS/halloffame/index.html>. The Hall is located at Strawberry Square Dance Center, 4401 Promenade Boulevard, Plant City, Florida. For a pictorial view of the Hall, go to <http://www.dancergram.com/HallofFame/HallofFameMain.html>.

Extra Mile Award

This is a recognition program for those Callers and Cuers that go that Extra Mile without personal gain in giving freely of their time and talents to the square dance committee. Nominations are made by the Florida square and round dancers. For additional information, go to <http://www.dancergram.com/aa-FWS/documents/ExtraMileAwards/extra-mile.html>.

United Square Dancers of America (USDA)



The UNITED SQUARE DANCERS OF AMERICA, INC. (USDA) was formed on June 26, 1981, during the National Square Dance Convention held in Seattle, Washington, and grew in size to represent several thousand dancers throughout the United States. USDA is an organization formed by dancers, for dancers, and is under the operational control of dancers. The purpose of the organization is to:

- Promote and perpetuate the total Square Dance Movement which includes Square, Round, Contra, Clogging, Line, and Folk Dancing.
- Establish a line of communication from the individual dancer to a recognized unified body so that an expression of varied opinions can establish or influence policy for making decisions at the national level.
- Provide for education to further the growth and enjoyment of Square Dancing.

² These counties will eventually be re-assigned to other associations.

- Encourage cooperation between member clubs, state associations, councils, federations; national and international organizations; or other groups involved or interested in the promotion of Square Dancing.
- Provide a forum for implementing the benefits of membership in the UNITED SQUARE DANCERS OF AMERICA and assist members in any way possible.
- Represent Square Dancing to the general public as a wholesome, enjoyable family-type recreation.
- Strive to provide benefits for the entire Square Dance community:
- Economical dancer accident and club liability insurance coverage
- Youth scholarships
- Handicapable Dancer Assistance

For additional information click here www.usda.org.

USDA Insurance Program

Every square dance organization needs General Liability and Accident Medical Expense coverage while conducting and sponsoring dance activities. As closely as safety rules are followed, accidents can and will happen. This insurance program, specially designed for USDA dance groups, the USDA provides Accident Medical insurance, which helps protect club members from financial loss due to a covered accidental bodily injury, and Liability insurance, which protects the club and its members and association officials from financial loss due to unforeseen incidents which may develop into litigation against members and dance organizations. You must be a member of a club participating in the USDA Insurance Program. For additional information, go to www.usda.org.

USDA – Centennial Award Program

Purpose: As the world’s largest square dance association, the Executive Committee of USDA is proud to provide a “Centennial Awards” program for this group of dancers.

The qualified recipients will be given a nice framed “Certificate of Recognition and Appreciation” signed by the president of USDA and the vice-president of their region. They will also receive a “United Square Dancers of America Centennial Award” lapel pin. This award will be presented to them by a member of the Executive Committee at a dance attended by the recipient when possible. Should the recipient not be able to attend the USDA Board of Directors meeting the day before the National Convention, USDA will pay their Convention registration.

Finally, our *USDA NEWS* will honor them in a special “Feature Article” about them. When available, we also include pictures of them receiving their awards from a USDA representative.

Qualifications: We have tried to keep the qualifications for earning the Centennial Award simple. The most difficult part is reaching the age of 100.

That is the number one criterion on the list of qualifications. Once you have met the age requirement, you are well on your way.

Requirement number two is that you are still active in the square dance community. This does not require that you still dance, but you must still attend dances regularly and be involved in the club in some way. This may be sitting at the front table and welcoming dancers as they come in. Requirement number three is that you must have a minimum of five years of membership in your club.

Once you have qualified for the Centennial Award, you must notify USDA by completing the Qualification Form and sending it to the editor of the *USDA News*.

USDA – USA TRAVELER PROGRAM



Purpose: To promote visitation between dancers in all 50 states. To encourage visitations of square dancers to regular club dances, festivals, and state or national square dance conventions across state lines and around the United States.

Goal: To attend a club dance, a state or national convention, or a local festival in all 50 states.

Levels of Achievement: A badge and a bar will be awarded to the participant(s), at no charge to them, after they have visited at least 12 states, and have a form signed and returned to USDA to be verified. Additional different colored bars will be awarded as follows:

12 states	Red bar	48 states	Silver bar
23 states	White bar	50 states	Gold bar
36 states	Blue bar		

No duplication of states is permitted. You must visit each of the 50 states.

The couple this badge belongs to is on their third time around the United States!

Badges and bars will be presented at the annual USDA meeting which is held during the annual National Square Dance Convention.

Any participant who visits 48 or 50 states will also be awarded paid admission(s) to the next National Square Dance Convention.

USDA will maintain records of all participants so you may check to see which states you have or have not visited.

Participants traveling as a couple only need to fill out one form, with both names on it.

Dancers that have received the Gold bar for visiting all 50 States may go for the second time around. After visiting the next 12 states and sending in the form. Dancers will receive a bar SECOND TIME AROUND and the red bar for 12 states to add to your badge.

All dance dates on the Second Time Around must be after the date you received your 50 state bar. *Copied from USDA brochure.*

For information, contact Traveler@usda.org.

FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL SQUARE DANCE CAMPERS (FANSDC)



The Florida Association of National Square Dance Campers is a part of the National Square Dance Campers Association. There are five chapters in Florida that are comprised of square dancers who also enjoy camping. Each chapter has their own Caller and Cuer and they meet once a month at various camping resorts in Florida during the Florida dance season. Even if you aren't a camper, you are welcome to join the dances. They spend the weekend dancing in the evenings and other activities during the weekend. Each event usually starts on Friday and ends Sunday morning. For more information, please click on this link <https://fansdc.net>. You will find a link to each of the Florida chapters and schedules for each one.

CALLER ORGANIZATIONS

CALLERLAB



CALLERLAB is an international organization of square dance callers. Its mission statement is "To foster the art of square dance calling, and improve caller skills". They fulfill this mission by providing guidance and education, certifying caller coaches,

maintaining standardized lists of calls and definitions, and generally promoting the square dance activity. Caller education is a primary focus for CALLERLAB. We offer schools, online resources, caller coaching, and an extensive library of convention sessions.

CALLERLAB is an involved organization with its members taking an active part in committees, convention assignments, and special projects. It accomplishes many tasks that could only be done by a group of professionals working together. Membership is open to all square dance callers worldwide. Our annual convention is held each spring and all are welcome to join us!

One feature the square dancer is most familiar with is their Quarterly Selections for all square dance programs. These are special movements that are provided to the square dance communities throughout the nation and are taught at dances for extra fun. You are not required to memorize these movements for future reference. Any caller using these Quarterlies will teach them whenever used. They are fun and add to the square dance and round dance programs.

Additional information about CALLERLAB can be found at www.callerlab.org.

AMERICAN CALLERS ASSOCIATION (ACA)



The American Callers Association was created to promote square dancing and keep square dance fun. It serves to make caller licensing easier and more inexpensive and provides liability insurance to callers.

For more information on the American Callers Association, please contact the ACA office at American Callers Association, P.O. Box 2406, Muscle Shoals, Alabama 35662, loulet@aol.com, 256-383-7585, www.Americancallers.net.

Florida Callers Association (FCA)



The Florida Callers Association is a state organization that provides education and guidance to people who wish to become callers and receive ongoing education for established callers. In cooperation with the Florida Federation of Square Dancers and the Round Dance Council of Florida, we stage a two-day state convention once a year during the Winter season.

There are five geographical areas in the state, each having its own callers' association. These are Central Florida Callers Association (Central), Gateway Callers Association (NE), Rural Callers Association (Gainesville), Southeast Florida Caller Association (SEA), and Suncoast Callers and Cuers Association (SCCA). For additional information on FCA click here <http://www.flcallersassoc.org/>.

ROUND DANCE ORGANIZATIONS

ROUNDALAB



The International Association of Round Dance Teachers, Inc. is also known as ROUNDALAB. We serve as a platform for the dissemination of information pertinent to the round dance activity. ROUNDALAB focuses on education for dance leaders through a comprehensive educational program. ROUNDALAB works to educate leaders through an annual convention,

MINILABS, and sessions conducted at the National Square Dance Convention. MINILABS are held at requested locations throughout the United States and abroad. Some of the material available for our members includes Teaching Manuals, Guidelines for various aspects of the activity, and descriptions and videos of each of the dance figures in all phases of Round Dancing.

ROUNDALAB also provides a \$1,000,000 comprehensive bodily injury and property damage liability insurance policy for all teaching and cueing activities for its United States members. ROUNDALAB has entered into a music performance licensing agreement with BMI, ASCAP, and SESAC to license its members to use copyrighted music at all Round Dance activities. Each year the organization offers several scholarships for members interested in attending institutes for Round Dance leaders. For additional information, please contact the ROUNDALAB office at roundalab@roundalab.org.

WHAT IS ROUND DANCING?

By Tim Eum

Round Dancing is fun. Round dancers spend time with their partners and friends, enjoying and moving rhythmically to great music. Round dancers participate purely for the fun of it—there are no competitions, no judges, and no dance awards. Round dancers are rewarded with lifelong friendships.

Round Dancing is an exciting social activity. Round dancers form clubs and gather together to dance at places like schools, community centers, church recreation halls, YMCA's, and fraternal organization halls. Most clubs only charge \$4 or \$5 per dancer for the entire evening, and most allow spectators to watch for free. Often clubs combine to put on even larger and longer events. There are clubs and round dance events all over the world. Round dancers can even spend an entire week round dancing at special mountain resorts or romantic ocean cruises.

Round Dancing is choreographed, cued couples dancing. Round dancing is like ballroom dancing and uses ballroom figures, but there are two major differences—

it is choreographed ahead of time and then cued to the dancers like the way square dance callers direct square dancers.

Choreographers choose wonderful music and then choose the different movements and figures to fit the music exactly. If the music swells and pauses briefly, then a dance step that rises and stretches is put into that place. If there is a little syncopation in another part of the song, then a quick little step is inserted. The creation of a piece of choreography is like designing the interior of a home, with every piece of furniture and artwork in just the right place to give the best feel and enjoyment. Dances have been choreographed to a myriad of Rhythms – waltz, two-step, cha-cha, rumba, jive/swing, foxtrot, tango, bolero, mambo, samba, merengue, salsa, west coast swing, paso doble, quickstep, and others.

The “Cuer” or Round Dance Leader stands with a microphone and the sound equipment at one side of a dance hall. As the music plays, and just ahead of when the dancers must respond, the Cuer names each dance figure of the choreography to be done in proper order. Since dances are cued, dancers need not memorize choreography and can thus dance hundreds of different routines. On a two-hour club night, the dancers could typically dance over thirty choreographed dances. Since all the dancers are doing the same figures in the same direction at the same time (or at least are supposed to), the choreography can become quite elaborate. The dancers can move great distances with many changes of direction without fear of running into another couple.

ROUNDALAB, the International Association of Round Dance Teachers, Inc., has defined six phases of dance figures with phase one (I) generally being the easiest in difficulty and phase six (VI) comprising the most difficult figures. Most round dance clubs do not try to do all phase levels and thus as a dancer, you can choose clubs that cater to the level that you are most comfortable at. Couples form up and generally progress counterclockwise in a circle around the dance floor—thus the name “Round Dancing”.

Modern Dancing is part of the Modern Square Dance Movement.

Modern Round Dancing grew along with Modern Square Dancing through the second half of the twentieth century. Although pure round dance clubs exist as do pure square dance clubs, many clubs offer what is called a two by two program. A caller will call square dance patten for about 6 minutes and then sing a singing call for about 4 minutes. Then a Cuer will cue two round dance routines, taking about 8 minutes. Then the caller comes up again. Then the Cuer and so on until the evening has been fulfilled. There are State and National Square and Round Dance Conventions where both activities are conducted. Many local caller associations and round dance teacher associations are combined as one organization. There continues to be a mutual symbiosis between square and round dancing. A great many square dancers first learn of round dancing from the two-by-two clubs and conventions and thus many round dancers were at first

square dancers. Since round dance music is of all types (big bands, rock & roll, easy listening, and many others) it complements what is predominately the country-western square dance sound at square dance events. Square dancers tend to retain the whoop and holler spirit of dancing, while round dancers tend to dance with greater precision and thus help to improve the overall smoothness experienced by all in the intertwining square dance movements. Round dancing really does “ROUND” out the square dance experience.

Round Dancing is a healthy exercise. Round Dancing is an active activity. Most of the time, you will be on the floor dancing. There are short breaks most leaders allow you to rest whenever you want – but the norm is to dance. The more you do it, the more you can do it. Not only does your heart pump, but your mind is also exercised in trying to remember how to do all the figures that the Cues cues.

ROUND DANCE COUNCIL OF FLORIDA (RDCF)



An organization formed to promote and correlate American Round Dance activities in the state of Florida; to act as a clearing center for the receipt and dissemination of current Round Dance news, information, or any item of interest to Round Dance teachers, cuers, and dancers; foster and promulgate a spirit of friendliness, cooperation, and non-competitiveness among leaders and participants in Round Dance activities; encourage and provide motivation and sponsorship for both area and statewide participation in event of interest to dancers; and publicize in every way possible the preceding aims and purposes. Membership is open to anyone actively cueing and/or teaching Round Dancing in the state of Florida. The Council hosts two-weekend clinics a year, which are open to everyone. For additional information, click here <http://www.dancergram.com/aa-FWS/rdc/index.html>.

MISCELLANEOUS ORGANIZATION

ALLIANCE OF ROUNDS, TRADITIONAL AND SQUARE-DANCE (ARTS)



<http://www.arts-dance.org/>.

The Alliance for Round, Traditional and Square-Dance (the ARTS) was formed to bring together the diverse groups making up the ‘greater’ American Folk Dance community. This coalition offers all dance organizations a chance for affiliation on a balanced and representative basis. For additional information, click here <https://www.arts-dance.org/>.

www.ARTS-Dance.org

This is the place to find promotional materials for squares, rounds, and contra. The materials include videos, flyers, etc. This site is hosted by ARTS.

www.ARTS-DanceTravel.com

Another ARTS sponsored program where donations are made to ARTS. Go to this website and make your travel reservations. A portion of the travel commission is automatically donated to ARTS.

CONVENTIONS AND FESTIVALS

NATIONAL SQUARE DANCE CONVENTION® (NSDC)

Once a year, usually the third week in June, a national square and round dance convention is held in a different location each year. Dancers from all over the world attend these conventions. Each year it is hosted by a different state. This is a four-day convention with lots of dancing and workshops, vendors, seminars, tours, and a fashion show. There is always a Caller College just before the convention. There are halls for every level of dancing. You can find more information at <https://www.72nsdc.com/>. This website address basically is the same each year; you have to change the numbers for the year of the convention you are searching for. Seventy two is for the 2023 convention; the next one is 73.

FLORIDA STATE SQUARE AND ROUND DANCE CONVENTION (FSSRDC)

The state of Florida has an annual state convention the third weekend of January. It is co-sponsored by the Florida Federation, Florida Callers Association, and the Round Dance Association of Florida. The convention starts on Thursday night with a Trail In Dance. The actual convention is from Friday to Saturday night. There are separate halls for each level of dance, vendors, and entertainment. For additional information, click here <http://www.dancergram.com/aa-FWS/convention/index.html>.

NORTHEAST FALL FESTIVAL

This is an annual festival hosted by the Northeast Association. It is usually held in November in the Jacksonville area. The weekend starts on Friday night and ends on Saturday night. For additional information, please click here <http://www.dancergram.com/aa-FWS/northeast/dances.html>.

NORTHWEST ROUNDUP

The Northwest Association hosts the Annual Roundup. It is usually held at the end of October and is held in the Panhandle. The weekend starts on Friday night and ends on Saturday night. For additional information, please click here <http://www.dancergram.com/aa-FWS/northwest/flyer1.html>.

FLORIDA SQUARE DANCE CAMPOREE

This is an annual event in Florida that is usually held the final weekend in October. It is four days of dancing, fellowship, games, crafts, and more. Campers come from all over the county. For more information, click here <http://nsdca.org/contacts.php>.

INTERNATIONAL SQUARE DANCE CAMPOREE

This is an annual event for all the campers that is held during the summer. It is seven days of dancing, fellowship, games, crafts, and more. For more information click here, <http://nsdca.org/camporees.php>.