

The Star Stepper Tips



Star Steppers
Square Dance
Club, Pine Bluff,
Arkansas

FOOD FOR THOUGHT ON RETAINING DANCERS

Retaining dancers is one of the most important tasks within the square dance movement. It is the responsibility of all dancers, the caller, cuer and officers to exert all effort to retain their dancers. There are many reasons that dancers leave the activity. Some reasons are beyond anyone's control, such as health, moving, change in work schedule, finances, age or a change in family situation. There are other reasons for dancers "dropping out" that the dancing community can do something about, such as unable to maintain the level of dancing, peer pressure, not feeling welcome, and too much responsibility too fast, problems within

the club or other things that make the dancer uncomfortable. It is the responsibility of the caller, officers and members to avoid a situation that contributes to the dropout of any dancers.

THE CLUB

There are three phases when a club can lose dancers -- in beginner lessons, in the transition from lessons to the club, and in the club. In lessons, the new dancer may be a slow learner or very insecure. The club members should help them feel secure by helping them with the figures under the direction of the caller and assure them that they are progressing and will achieve their goals. The club members should meet

the new dancers and establish a relationship prior to their first "club" dance. The new dancers are entering a new magic, mythical world, and without tender loving care, they may decide square dancing is not for them. Some club members may isolate themselves from the new dancers or unintentionally snub the new dancers, which may drive them away from the club. There are many of those who would like to become more active in club functions or club management, but are afraid to volunteer or are unsure of the associated responsibilities. It is imperative that the club be responsive to the needs of new and existing dancers.

Volume 1, Issue 1

August 1, 2011

Special points of interest:

- *There are many reasons that dancers leave the activity.*
- *Classes will begin again on September 19th*
- *Set a good example for other club members to follow.*
- *Here are a few jargons that come to mind.*

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New Square Dance Club Formed

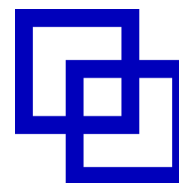
A new Square Dance Club has been formed in Pine Bluff. The first class will graduate on September 12th. The teacher and caller is Elgie Goss. Classes will begin again on September 19th. No dance experience is required. Partners are recommended but not required.

The first two classes will be free to introduce you to the new Star Steppers Square Dance Club.

Everyone can look forward to making new friends, sharing some refreshments and have the joy of learning how to square dance. Dancing is so much fun and you will be

doing it to all kinds of music. Doors open at 5:45 pm, classes starts at 6:00 pm, weekly in the Central Presbyterian Church, 6300 Trinity Dr. Pine Bluff, AR. For information contact: Gary or Bonnie McClure, 575-2444 or 575-2446.

Bring a friend!



CLUB MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Be socially clean, courteous and pleasant.
2. Arrive at the club early and be ready to dance the first tip. This pleases the Caller, Club officers and other dancers.
3. Attend and participate in workshops to learn new calls and to improve your dancing abilities.
4. Know and adhere to your dance level.
5. Accept help from others and be helpful to others.
6. Share dance time do not be exclusive no cliques.
7. Know your leaders and the relationship of your caller to club.
8. Talk to the caller and Club leaders about your dance problems and desires for the club. They need your input.
9. Volunteer to perform Club functions without having to be asked.
10. Serve in positions of responsibility it's your duty to help. It is "your" club and surely you want the "best." Become a Club officer or committee member.
11. Recruit and assist new dancers (Angels) at class lessons.
12. Stay for the entire dance if possible dance the first and last tip this honors your Caller, Club officers and fellow dancers.
13. Be courteous to speakers, leaders and callers. Be a good listener. Listen attentively to Club announcements.
14. Be financially responsible pay Club dues in advance without being asked.
15. Assist the leaders in the set up and cleanup of the dance hall.
16. Participate in all club visitations, exhibitions, charity activities and other functions.
17. Attend seminars, mini legacies and other leadership and club operational training programs.
18. Wear your badge and proper square dance attire at all Club functions.
19. Form your squares promptly, and welcome anyone who joins the set. Introduce yourself before the tip starts.
20. Be tolerant and polite to new dancers and senior dancers.
21. Dance with visitors, singles, callers tag; allow them the pleasure of your expertise.
22. Never walk through a square or leave a square. Join the nearest square that is forming.
23. Honor your caller and Club Officers.
24. Introduce yourself to visitors and guests make them feel welcome and want to visit your Club again.
25. Guide your partner do not shove, push or jerk.
26. End each tip with a flourish, applause and thanks to all in the set and the caller and mean it.
27. Get acquainted with everyone at the dance whom you have never met. An unknown square dancer is a friend you haven't met yet.
28. Contribute toward the enjoyment of the dance by expressing friendliness, good humor, cooperation and a real desire to have fun.
29. No drinking of alcoholic beverages before or during the dance.
30. Thank everyone who made your evening out a pleasant one the Caller, Club leaders, guests, etc. Your "thanks" is their "pay" and their reward.
31. Forget about business, financial, social and family cares and concentrate on enjoying the fun and fellowship at the dance.
32. Be loyal to your Club and Club officers.
33. Set a good example for other Club members to follow.

Officers and Board Members

President	Bill Petrie	247-2698
Vice President	Gary McClure	575-2446
Secretary	Kathy Tankersley	718-0571
Treasurer	Owen Monk	535-1477
Delegate ASSDF	Bill & Gary	N. A.
Sunshine	Eloise Harris	357-2292
Membership	Juanita Tompkins	325-7729
Class Coordinator	Roana Petrie	247-2698
Hospitality	Betty Coles	535-3729
Publicity & Newsletter	Bonnie McClure	575-2444
Historian & Photographer	John & Carol Taylor	247-3533
Club Caller & Taw	Elgie & Doris Goss	357-2292

Beginners Comments *by Bonnie McClure*

I am a “new” square dancer, but, square dancing isn’t new to me. It has been on my “Bucket List” (i.e. “things to do before I kick the bucket”) for quite some time. My first recollection of square dancing would date back to the 1940’s when I was in grammar school. On rainy days, when we couldn’t use the play ground, we sometimes went to the gym and learned folk dances. As I got a bit older, we graduated to square dancing with a partner. When I was in high school, my parents began square dancing in a club at the YMCA. I remember going with them to watch, and sometimes being invited to dance with my daddy. I thought it was fantastic. Mom looked so pretty and



happy in her colorful full skirt with lots of petticoats.

That was a look which was popular for everyday wear too, in the 1950’s, with “poodle” skirts being in vogue.

Square dancing has been around for many ages, maybe even since the beginning of time when men mimicked animals and birds dancing to attract a partner. One source on the internet says that: “Historically, dance seems to have reached its low point during the days of the classical Greek, when it was looked upon as an ignoble activity. Aristotle was supposed to have said, “No citizen should pursue these arts (music and dance) so far that he approaches professional status,” and relegated such activities to slaves, freedmen and foreigners. The great Roman, Cicero, said, “Nobody dances unless he is drunk or unbalanced mentally.” Italy saw the renaissance of the

dance in the 15th century, but France may be said to be the Mother of the modern art. Many of our dance terms show this French connection, including the call dos-a-dos, which means back-to-back.”

Today we know that dancing is the most beneficial exercise of all. All of our senses are required. Not only is aerobic movement involved, which burns calories and improves cardiac output, but, our brain is stimulated to the maximum too. We must listen to the calls and remember what they mean. Our balance and muscle strength are improved by dancing; also, the sense of touch and being touched is a powerful tension reducer. So, for maintaining good health in my senior years, I am glad to be learning to square dance.

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FIRST CLASS
POSTAGE

**We will be
on the web,
soon!**



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Some Square Dance Jargon

by Bill van Melle

Square dancers have almost as many jargon terms as people in a technical field. Here are a few that come to mind, so you do not feel left out. This list does not include the names of the calls themselves, just vocabulary used for talking about calls, formations, or square dancing in general. Do not worry if you don't comprehend them all right now--you will by the end of the class. We recommend you keep this list around for a rereading at a later date.

CALL

1. A set of moves that you do when the caller calls its name. Most are made up of simpler calls.
2. A series of calls {1} that traditionally start and ends with "bow to

your partner, bow to your corner".

SEQUENCE

A series of calls {1} that begins and ends with the dancers at home.

PATTER CALL

A call {2} that is spoken or chanted rather than sung, but is usually done to background music. Also called a hash call. You wind up with your original partner each time you promenade home.

SINGING CALL

A call {2} that consists of a song (any song with a good beat will do, and it depends mostly on the caller's taste) with some of the lyrics replaced by square dance calls. The typical singing call has 7 sequences, in the pattern ABBABBA; at the end of the B sequences, you

usually wind up with your (new) corner for the promenade home.

CUING

Directions the caller sometimes gives after a call that he or she thinks some dancers may have trouble with, giving the definition of the call ("Right and Left Thru--Right Pull By, then a Courtesy Turn") or filling in who does what, given your current formation ("Flutterwheel--Men are in the lead"). A careful caller will mumble, so you don't think this is another call.

More jargon next month.