

# *The Star Stepper Tips*

## Congratulations Graduates

Last Monday night we graduated our first new students since re-forming the chapter. Elgie Goss instructed Betty Coles, Bonnie McClure, and Juanita Thompkins for 22 weeks in the basic and mainstream movements. With his experience and expertise, the three ladies mastered the calls and were further assisted by all the chapter "angels" who guided their steps along the way.

All three wish to thank the members for their help, support and patience at every dance.

The evening was a festive affair. Many of the members were at the church in the early afternoon, decorating tables with colorful cloths and graduation themed serving platters. Roana Petrie went all out to set the stage with a life size couple of square dancers she had drawn and hand painted. In addition, there were posters and fall flower arrangements to adorn all the tables and corners of the huge room. Photos were taken of all the members in front of our banner, which Roana had made a month earlier.

The graduates were warmly welcomed when they arrived, and pinned with a red "#1" ribbon and a special name tag. Throughout the evening, graduates had to prove their competence. First was a written test of the square dance calls which consisted of visual clues that even some of the long time and plus dancers didn't recognize. Then there were several tests for dancing skill which included: the shoe-box shuffle, broomstick agility, two-girls-for-one partner pair, a phantom dance, and a balloon blow to test respiratory ability. Elgie called the skills test dances and members joined the graduates in these squares.

Once the members and instructor were sure that the graduates had passed all the challenges, Betty, Bonnie and Juanita were officially granted membership in the Star Steppers Club. During the ceremony, each officer and Elgie gave a list of pointers and policies relating to the letters spelling SQUARE as the graduates were moved from corner to corner around a decorated table.

The climax came when the three received their long awaited official chapter pins. Each graduate also received a lovely sack filled completely up with useful items for their square dancing needs which included: a handbook on Square Dancing, visors in assorted colors, butterflies and flowers for the hair, pendant necklace, hand-sanitizer, tissue, calendar, note cards, post-it stickers, and even a beverage can holder.

A feast of food came after the ceremony. Everyone in the club had contributed something and there was an abundance of good things to eat; sandwiches of various types, meatballs, chicken salad, Mexican chili-cheese and spinach dips with chips, cupcakes, candy, cookies, and soft drinks.

We were honored to have quite a few guests for the evening including several officers from the ASSDF, president – Brenda Griffin, historian – Erma Jean Carter, and parliamentarians- Larry & Fay Echlin.



**Star Steppers  
Square Dance  
Club, Pine Bluff,  
Arkansas**

Volume 1, Issue 2

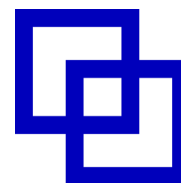
October 1, 2011

### **Special points of interest:**

- *The evening was a festive affair.*
- *Classes will begin again on October 3rd*
- *Modern Square Dancing is performed to a wide variety of music*
- *Here are a few jargons that come to mind.*

### **Inside this issue:**

<i>Star Steppers Angels</i>	<b>2</b>
<i>Masquerade Dance</i>	<b>3</b>
<i>Free Square Dance Lessons</i>	<b>4</b>
<i>Graduation Pictures</i>	<b>5-7</b>
<i>Square Dance Jargon</i>	<b>8</b>



## Guidelines for Star Steppers Square Dance Angels

**IN ORDER TO BE AN ANGEL** you must be a **proficient** dancer and either

1. An **active** member of the **Star Steppers** members include:

- Those who have belonged to the club for more than six months and have frequently attended club dances, or
- Recent graduates (from the last class) who have frequently attended club dances.

2. An **active** member of another club within the Arkansas Federation who is **accompanying a student**.

- Those not qualifying to be angels are welcome to attend lessons.
- Dancers returning to square dancing that signs up as students will maintain that status throughout the class.
- Any exceptions to the above are strictly up to the discretion of the Caller, the Star Steppers President, and the Star Steppers board.

### **WHEN YOU ANGEL AT THE STAR STEPPERS LESSONS THERE ARE SOME SIMPLE RULES TO REMEMBER.**

**A. BE ON TIME:** You may be the cause of three other couples sitting out during a teaching tip.

**B. BE OBSERVANT:** Make sure that every student is in a square during the teaching tip. BUT do not wait for them to square up. Invite them into your square. Students are given priority and angels may be taken out of a square in order for a student to dance.

**C. LET THE CALLER RUN THE CLASS:** Do not take it upon yourself to start splitting couples or determine who needs to be dancing. When it is time to break up a group or separate a couple, the caller will indicate this by his or her teaching methods.

**D. DO NOT TALK IN THE SQUARE WHEN THE CALLER IS GIVING INSTRUCTIONS.** Learning to listen to the caller's commands requires concentration. No person can listen to two persons at a time. All should be listening to the caller. Also when sitting on the sidelines please keep your voices at a low tone while visiting. It is difficult to hear the caller when others are talking in a loud voice around the room.

**E. DANCING STYLES:** Some dancing styles that dancers have adopted are out of place in class. Basics should be kept in pure form. The proper Do Sa Do, hand and arm holds, a quick touch to acknowledge position, and no short cuts will ensure new dancers of the proper position for the next call.

**F. ANGELS ARE HELPERS AND NOT PUSHERS:** Students must learn to react to each command. To gently guide someone is fine, but we accomplish nothing for the student if he or she has been pushed through an action and does not know what was supposed to be done. Angel's actions should be firm but gentle. Some persons prefer not to be touched. The use of the "pointing technique" to the appropriate location is much better.

**G. LET THE CALLER KNOW** if a dancer has not grasped the concept of a call after a reasonable time and in a discretionary manner. The caller can review the call during the next tip. It is not a good idea to "teach" a call during a break. The student needs the time to relax and clear the mind. What if you teach it wrong? **Continued on page 3**

Continued from page 2

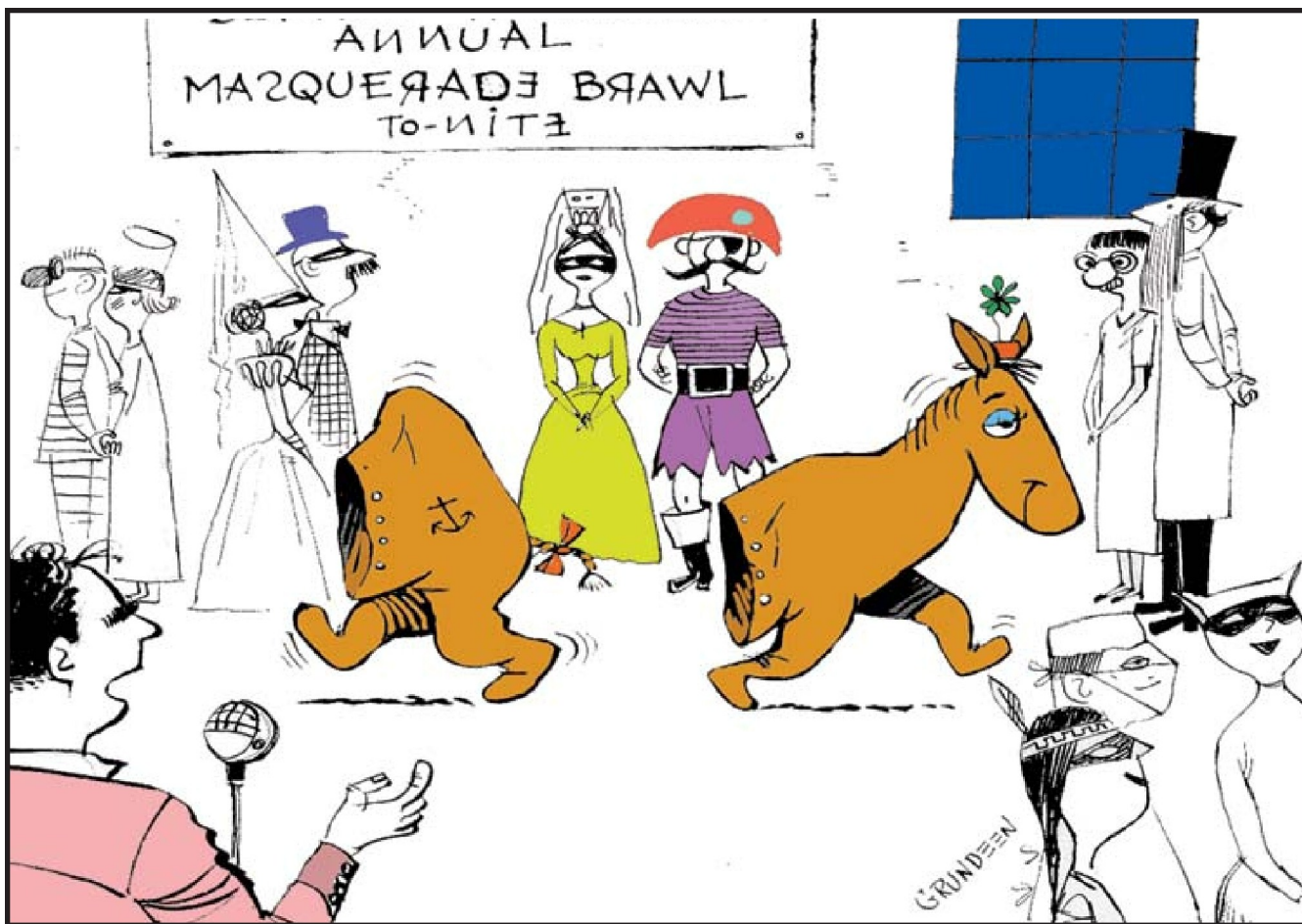
**H. DRESS FOR STUDENTS:** Do not encourage students to “go right out” and buy square dance clothing. We encourage all angels not to wear square dance clothing to the class because it intimidates the new dancers. They have plenty of time to purchase their clothing later.

**I. DO NOT TAKE NEW DANCERS TO DANCES THAT ARE ABOVE THEIR DANCING EXPERIENCE:** You will be surprised how many times angels tell students “Come on, we will pull you through”. This will discourage many new dancers. The caller will let you know when there is a dance at their experience level and when they are ready to attend a dance. That will be your chance to join them where both of you can have fun together.

**J. FRIGHTENED:** Square dancing is a frightening experience to the new dancer. Keep this in mind, at all times with new students, even after they “graduate”. Every mistake made, they think they caused it.

**K. DANCE WITH THEM:** Do you want to keep them dancing? Then you must dance with them, talk with them during breaks and encourage them.

### Star Steppers Annual Masquerade Dance, Monday October 31, 2011



***"First couple separate... Go half around the ring."***

## Free Square Dance Lessons

Elgie Goss, square dance caller, and the Star Stepper's Square Dance Club will begin free square dancing lessons Monday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. at the Central Presbyterian Church fellowship hall. The church is located at the corner of Trinity Drive and Ridgeway just west of Hazel Street.

No prior experience is necessary, and a partner is optional – there will be someone to dance with you as you learn. If you danced in the past and would like to have a refresher course, you should come also. Many of our club members were active dancers some years ago, and are just now getting back on the square dance floor.

Dancing is one of the healthiest activities you can do. It stimulates body, mind and spirit. In square dancing, all the steps are “called”, so you just follow the caller. It is easy and fun for dancers of all ages from mature teens to the young at heart; a great social and recreational activity for all. Bring your friends, family, co-workers or church members. Even have a Square from your own organization.

Modern Square Dancing is performed to a wide variety of music and provides an aerobic workout suitable for all ages. Our caller, Elgie Goss, will have you up and dancing in no time. Families, teens, twenty something and active seniors will find this activity a great way to have fun. Once you have mastered the moves you will be invited to join our club and discover the wide variety of places you can square dance in Central Arkansas.

Last Monday night, three new dancers graduated from the basic/mainstream dance class. They are Bonnie McClure, Betty Coles, and Juanita Tompkins. The club hosted a graduation party with games, prizes and refreshments. Several Arkansas Square Dance Federation couples visited and joined in the fun. Special graduation themed decorations and fall floral arrangements were provided by Roana Petrie and club members assisted in creating a fantastic setting for the night.

The Star Steppers Club dances every Monday evening from 6 to 8 p.m. at Central Presbyterian church. Guests are always welcome. So we hope to see new dancers, experienced dancers and curious on-lookers every Monday night.

For more information, call Bill Petrie (club president) – 540-6773, Gary McClure (vice president) – 575-2446, or Elgie Goss (caller/instructor) – 879-1675.



## 2011 GRADUATION PICTURES FOLLOWS





Eloise & George Harris



Dan Chambliss



Rae Hobbs



Owen Monk



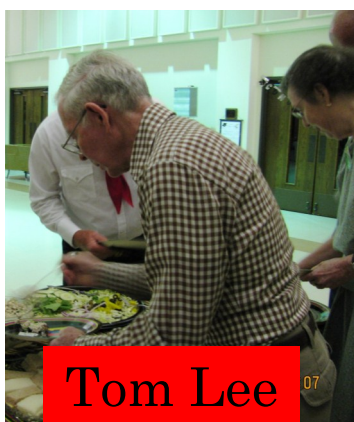
Joann & Bert



Graduates 2011

Bonnie McClure, Betty Coles & Juanita Tompkins









Kathy Tankersley



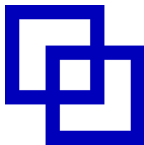
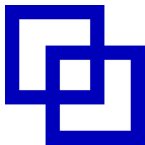
Emily & Jack Cockrum



Betty Coles



Elgie and Doris Goss



Star Steppers Square Dance Clubs  
12 Stone Ridge Drive  
Pine Bluff, AR 71603

Phone: 870-575-2446  
Fax: 870-879-3751  
Editor Gary McClure  
E-mail: gary@bgmccclure.com

**[www.bgmccclure.com](http://www.bgmccclure.com/starhome.html)  
[/starhome.html](http://www.bgmccclure.com/starhome.html)**



Dunvegan Press

FIRST CLASS  
POSTAGE

Type address here or use  
Mail Merge to automatically  
address this publication to  
multiple recipients.

## 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 do not 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.

### **SIGHT CALLING**

Calling ad lib and then trying to untangle the square on the fly, rather like unscrambling a Rubik's cube.

### **SIGHT SQUARE**

The square a sight caller watches to see the effect of the calls. Also called pilot square.

### **BREAK DOWN**

What a square has done when so few dancers know where they're supposed to be that everyone is hopelessly lost.

### **TIP**

The time you spend dancing in one square without a break. Typically this consists of a patter call and a singing call. Origin obscure.

### **LEVEL OR PROGRAM**

A list of calls, including all the levels below it. The levels are: Basic, Mainstream, Plus, Advanced (A1-A2), and Challenge (C1-C4). The Quads club level is Plus.

### **FLOOR LEVEL**

The level at which most or all of the tips of a dance are called.

### **STAR TIP**

A tip that is at a more advanced level than the floor level. The name comes from the fact that these tips are marked with an asterisk at dances where there is a written list of tips.

### **HOEDOWN**

A large gathering held to square dance.

### **ONE-NIGHT STAND**

A party where people who are assumed to know nothing about square dancing learn just enough calls to dance for one night.

**More jargon next month.**