

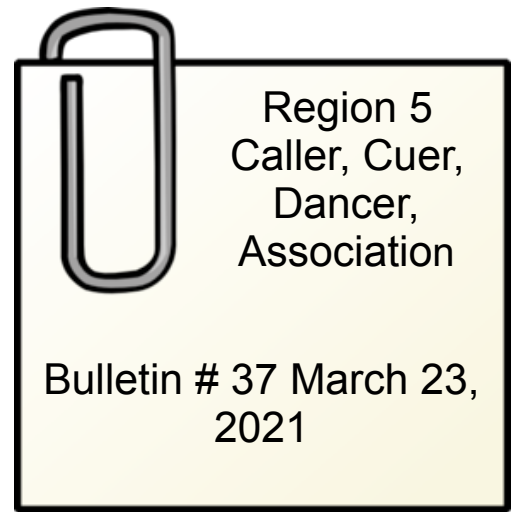
R5CCDA Executive 2021/2022

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KEEPING YOU INFORMED

Mary Anne Turner, R5CCDA President

Hello again to all the dancers and leaders in Region 5.

My it has been a long year without our dancing fun! The Covid virus is still with us but at least the vaccination program has started. Hopefully things will be better by the fall. Fingers crossed.

Meanwhile, Nick and I have been keeping a close eye on what has been going on in the dance world, particularly in USA and Canada. We have been in contact with many dance leaders and have attended or viewed Zoom seminars.

The common knowledge is that, prior to the Covid situation, square dancing has been rapidly declining in most areas. In fact, many clubs no longer exist at all. (Region 5 is a good example of this - there are only 3 active clubs left and they are struggling.)

The common opinion is, that now is a good time to focus on rebuilding the square dance program because people will be craving social connections after so long a time without any.

It is known that new dancers come to try square dancing because they hope to take just a few lessons and then be able to dance. They want to be entertained and they want to be able to quickly have fun with other like-minded people.

However, they soon find out that they are expected to take 20 weeks or more of lessons and have to learn 67 calls from a multitude of positions and applications, before they can quit learning and just dance.

For most clubs, this system is no longer working. New dancers do not arrive in great quantities anymore and many drop out before completing the lessons or do not come back the following year.

So, the square dance leaders, primarily those of Callerlab, have created a program that is called SOCIAL SQUARE DANCING (SSD). Basically, it is a program of fewer moves that can get people dancing and having fun in a shorter length of time. It has been piloted by several clubs and the results have been encouraging. The SSD committee has created lesson plans to help the callers and has created choreography that will allow the fewer moves to be used in many ways with interesting variety for all who dance it. It is not just dancing with circles and stars.

I know that some of you will automatically turn your nose up at this idea. If your club is thriving and you are graduating 2 or more squares of new dancers each year, then you can probably ignore the rest of this bulletin. But if square dance nights are getting rather listless due to the lack of numbers and enthusiastic new people, please try and read the following information with an open mind.

Here are links to valuable information about the SOCIAL SQUARE DANCE program. Keep in mind that this is a destination program, not a step on the ladder to Mainstream. It is a level at which dancers can continue to dance each week without needing to move on and learn more.

1. **SOCIAL SQUARE DANCE Video** - This talk was given by Barry Johnson when he was a guest of the Northwest Callers Association in November of 2020.

He presents an overview of what the SSD Program (Social Square Dance) is, what its benefits are, how it has been implemented in the Chicago area, and how it has started to revitalize the modern square dance activity in his area.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C_cc3u9eSEA

2. **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS** About the SSD program and how to start it.

<https://secureservercdn.net/45.40.148.147/s77.f8e.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/2020-09-16-SSDFAQVersion5.pdf>

3. **SOCIAL SQUARE DANCING TEACHING GUIDE** -Lesson Plans and Choreo.

<https://www.callerlab.org/download/social-square-dancing-teaching-guide/>

At the same time as we were learning about the SSD program, Nick and I attended a Zoom meeting that was presented for us on the topic of **Marketing Square Dancing**.

For those who did not attend the Zoom meeting, the BC Square and Round Dance Federation has posted a link to this presentation so that you can watch it on YouTube instead of having to Zoom. The link to this video is at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8DofjAaNG98>

The marketing documents related to this video can be found at

http://www.usda.org/WEbinar/2021/02-February/Promoting_Square_Dancing.pdf

And finally, the BC Square and Round Dance Federation is hosting Zoom Meetings for all dancers and leaders **on Thursdays at 1:00 PM Pacific time.**

Email me if you would like the Zoom link that is used for every Thursday meeting. nmtturner392@gmail.com

This Thursday, March 25, 2021, the topic will be “The Public Image of our Dance Forms”. The following Thursday, the topic will be “ Using Social Media”

You are all encouraged to drop in and listen if you are familiar with Zoom. If not, the meetings will be posted on the BCS&RDF YouTube channel at

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCK7iAGys3NKCbC8YNV1svPQ>

That’s it for now. I hope you find this bulletin interesting and will give you lots to think about.

Keep an open mind and remember, as said by square dance caller Stephen Cole, “If the existing method works for you and your club, keep doing it. However, if it is **not** working as you would like it, strongly consider adapting and evolving. The dance you save may be your own.”

Mary Anne Turner
President R5CCDA

