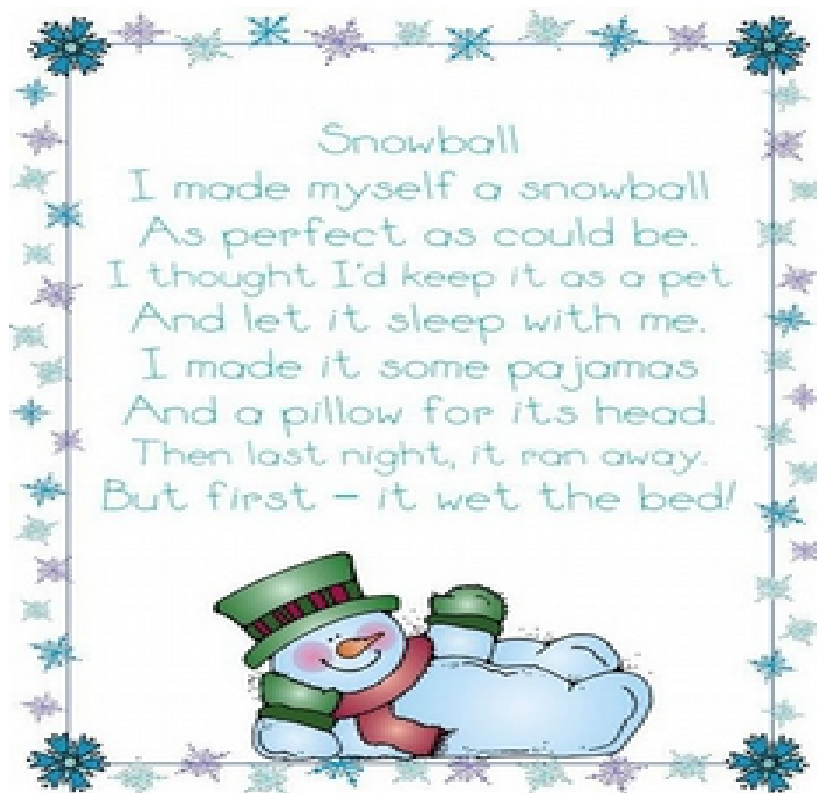


THE SQUARE & ROUND DANCE INSTRUCTORS ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA



JANUARY 2017



The SRDIAA Newsletter

January, 2017

Editor: Tom Gray

Cover image: <http://www.classroomfreebies.com/2012/01/snowball-poem.html>

Cover quote: "Snowball" from Falling Up by Shel Silverstein

The reason typos get through isn't because we're stupid or careless, it's because what we're doing is actually very smart, explains psychologist Tom Stafford, who studies typos of the University of Sheffield in the UK. ~ wired.com



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S.R.D.I.A.A. MEMBERSHIP LIST

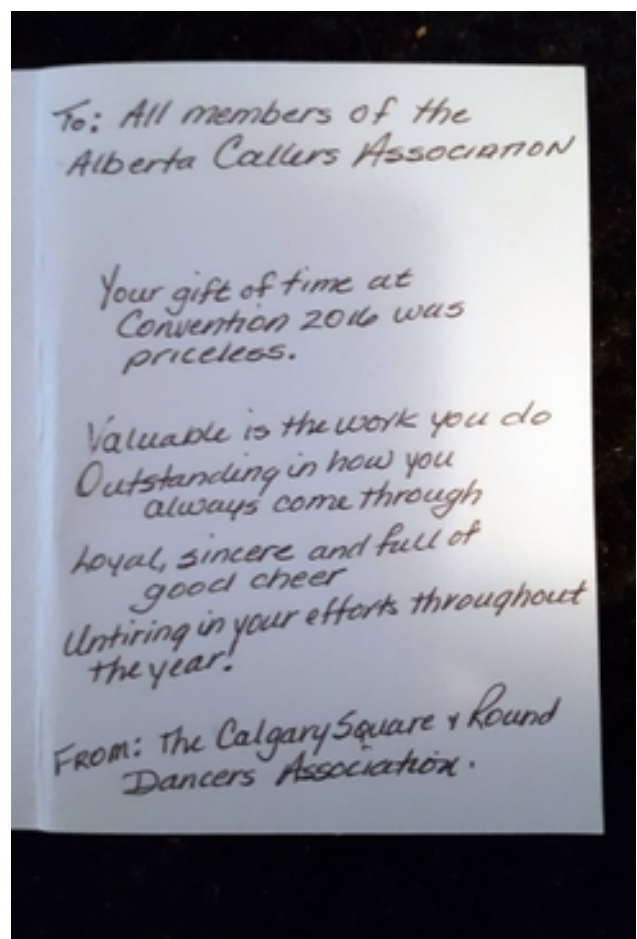
Members for 2016/17 as of OCTOBER 9, 2016, with updates from members

NAME & ADDRESS	PHONE, FAX & EMAIL	CATEGORIES	DATE PAID
Aram, Colin & Joy 221 3090 15th. Ave. S.E. Medicine Hat, AB. T1B 3Z3	403-487-2538 cojosqd@teksavvy.com	Basic Mainstream Plus	9/16/2004
Baudias, Ken & Janet 322, 11620 Elbow Drive SW Calgary, AB T2W 3L6	403-969-5982 Ken.baudais@gmail.com www.kenbaudais.ca	Mainstream	
Boyd, Joan & Terry 114 Township Rd. 484 E. Round Hill, AB T0B 3Z0	780-679-0152 pjboyd@shaw.ca	Mainstream Phase II	5/16/2029
De Groot, Bill & Karen Box 323 Fort Assiniboine, AB T0G 1A0	780-584-2604 fittobesquared@aol.com	Mainstream	1/16/2024
Demeule, Norm & Loretta RR#1, #46479 Rge Road 183 Ohaton, AB T0B 3P0	780-672-7247 Noretta@shaw.ca	Mainstream Plus Phase II	6/16/2020
Dunn, Cliff & McKee, Jane 5424-58A St. Crescent Lacombe, AB T4L 1L7	403-782-4094 Cjdancinglacombe@yahoo.ca	Phase II Phase III	5/16/2029
Edwards, Ron & Rosemary Box 557 Veteran, AB. T0C 2S0	403-575-3751 edwagn@veterancable.net	Mainstream	6/16/2016
Eliasson, Glen & Audrey 12132-135A Avenue NW Edmonton. AB T5L 373	780-454-6357 gee4@telus.net	Mainstream Phase III	6/16/2026
Ellis, Alan & Carola 54 Aspenglen Crescent Spruce Grove, AB T7X 3J2	780-962-3012 areservices@telus.net	Mainstream	9/16/2006
Few, Murray & Barbara 6230 - 112A Street NW Edmonton. AB T6H 3K3	780-434-2000 mbfew@planet.eon.net	Mainstream to A2 Phase II	9/16/2024
Fieldberg, Betty Ann & Melvin Box 565 Etzlkorn, AB T0K 0W0	403-666-3929 bettodd@hotmail.com	Mainstream	
Gray, Tom & Dawn 3 Camelot Avenue Leduc AB T9E 4M5	780-718-2733 TomGrayCaller@shaw.ca	Mainstream	6/16/2016

Gilchrist, Linda & Lloyd Box 1274 Swan River, MB. R0L 1Z0	204-734-3950 jlglfg@mts.net	Mainstream	6/16/2004
Hilchie, William & Quinn, Vicki 86 Baxter Crescent Whitecourt, AB T7S 1E5	780-778-4669 skydiver@persona.ca	Mainstream	9/16/2018
Hughes, Henry Box 16 Buck Creek, AB T0C 0S0	780-621-6238 HenryHughes66@gmail.com	Mainstream	5/16/2029
Jeske, Larry 44 Kendall Crescent Red Deer, AB T4P 3S5	403-346-7148 403-505-5044 (cell) jeskelarry@gmail.com	Mainstream	5/16/2015
Lake, Norman 40 Caledonia Drive Leduc AB T9E 6A7	780-986-5716 enlake@shaw.ca	Mainstream	5/16/2010
Lees, Robert & Marian Box 1424 Estevan, SK S4A 2K9	306-634-8403 rlees@sasktel.net	Mainstream Phase II	5/16/2013
Littlefair, David & Claudia 322 Mapletree Way Strathmore, AB T1P 1H9	403-934-5966 dlittlefair@jkoverweel.com	Mainstream Phase II	5/16/2029
Mahoney, Patricia 136 Valencia Road NW Calgary, AB T3A 2B8	403-288-0116 patriciamsm46@gmail.com	Phase V	5/16/2013
McCombs, Barrie & Cormier, Carole 3111 Utah Drive NW Calgary, AB T2N 3Z9	403-289-4227 bmccombs@ucalgary.ca	Mainstream	8/16/2029
Murray, Ida & Alex 23 Howlett Avenue Red Deer, AB T4N 6K2	403-3478098 aimurray@telusplanet.net	Clogging	5/16/2029
Nelson, Mary & Bruce 15 Gale Avenue Sherwood Park AB. T8A 2K7	780-467-1141 mbnelson@shaw.ca	Phase IV to Phase VI	5/16/2015
Smith, Gary & Eileen 11 Park Drive Whitecourt, AB T7S 1H8	780-778-3214 eileen.smith@persona.ca	Mainstream Plus	1/16/2024
Smith, Kendall & Kathy 4715 - 40 Street Lloydminster, SK S9V 0C1	306-825-3770 (cell) 780-522-4896 thewoolyway@gmail.com thewoolyway@shaw.ca	Mainstream	9/16/2018

Smith, Lorne & Barb 3111 - 107 Avenue SW Calgary, AB T2w 2X6	403-251-5390 l.b.smith@shaw.ca	Mainstream - C1 Phase II - III	5/16/2029
Struik, Renziena 259 - 2 Avenue NE Swift Current, SK S9H 2C9	306-778-2197 Renzienas135@gmail.com	Mainstream Phase II + Social Dance	8/16/2029
Symington, David & Mariene 7622 Fairmount Drve SE Calgary, AB T2H 0X7	403-276-5706 dmsymington@shaw.ca	Mainstream	5/16/2029
Tharme, Joan & Byers John 4235-87 Street NW Edmonton, AB T6K 1C3	780-463-9381 tharme@shaw.ca	Clogging Phase II - III	5/16/2029
Zwierschke, Allan & Olive Box 114 Holden, AB T0B 2C0	780-688-2380 zwierchke@mcsnet.ca	Mainstream Plus	4/16/2029

A Card from Calgary Dancers



MINUTES

S.R.D.I.A.A.

Square & Round Dance Instructors Association of Alberta

September 18, 2016 GENERAL MEETING at Kerrywood Nature Centre, Red Deer, Alberta

1. Call to Order

Dave Littlefair called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm, with 23 members present:

Boyd, Terry & Joan	Baudais, Ken	DeGroot, Bill
Eliasson, Glen & Audrey	Gray, Tom & Dawn	Hilchie, Bill & Quinn, Vicki
Hughes, Henry	Jeske, Larry	Littlefair, Dave & Claudia
Mahoney, Patricia	McCombs, Barrie & Cormier, Carole	
Smith, Kendall & Kathy	Smith, Lorne	Symington, David
Tharme, Joan		

- Regrets received from Gary & Eileen Smith, Ida Murray, Cliff Dunn, Betty Ann & Melvin Fieldberg.
- Email message from Betty Ann Fieldberg: *"We will not be attending this meeting. Mel was back in emerg last Wed and we are waiting for another test to be run. Don't know when we will hear."*
- Dave Littlefair expressed thanks to the cuers and callers who put on last night's dance, which went very well. Thank you, also, to everyone for today's potluck lunch.

2. Welcome to New Members

New member: Colin & Joy Aram from Medicine Hat. They are unable to regularly attend meetings but wished to join our Association. Many of us met the Arams at the Convention in High River. They were active in calling in Ontario before moving to Medicine Hat a year ago to be closer to family.

3. Additions to/Approval of Agenda

Additions:

12.A. Membership Fee – Glen Eliasson

MOTION: Moved by Barrie McCombs; seconded by Glen Eliasson; that the agenda be adopted as amended. Carried.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting, May

MOTION: Moved by Claudia Littlefair; seconded by Lorne Smith ; that the minutes of the May 29 AGM be adopted as distributed in the September SRDIAA Newsletter. Carried.

5. Business Arising from the Minutes - none.

6. Correspondence - none.

7. Treasurer's Report (See Attachment #1)

MOTION: Moved by Joan Boyd; seconded by Dawn Gray; that the Treasurer's Report be adopted as presented. Carried.

- On July 31 our balance was \$902.38. Less expenses to date we have a projected balance of \$708.38.
- The Autumn Dance, Saturday, September 17 brought in \$448. Less hall expenses, and pending refund of our damage deposit, our profit will be \$288. This amount should cover the workshop and meeting facility rental this weekend.
- The Dance was attended by 24 Associate members; and 32 dancers, mostly from Red Deer and area.
- On behalf of Alberta Federation, Glen Eliasson presented a cheque to our Association for \$3000. This cheque reflected the motion that was passed at the Federation AGM at High River's Convention, September 3, 2016.

8. Area Reports

A. Edmonton - Glen & Audrey Eliasson (see Attachment #2)

- Tom Gray added that Alan Ellis is starting a new club in Spruce Grove called "Spruce Grove Square Dance Club".

B. Central - Henry Hughes/Cliff Dunn/Larry Jeske

- Henry reported that there are ten clubs in the area – this includes square and round dance clubs and two senior square dance clubs – Golden Circle and Evergreen.
- Cliff Dunn gave the following information on rounds in Central, via email.
- Lacombe regulars starts Monday, 26th Sept.
- Lacombe Jive classes for beginners start on Thursday, 29th Sept. Already 7 couples (5 new) signed up for Jive. Plus hopefully some return dancers for Cha Cha, and novice Two-step and Waltz for the later session on Thursdays.
- Rocky starts on Tues 4th October, and Doreen tells me she has 16 Round Dance couples so far.
- Innisfail starts on Friday 14th October.
- As a recruiting and publicity exercise we are doing a one-hour Jive mini-workshop at the Lacombe Culture and Harvest Festival on the 25th Sept., and then a week later both Jive and Cha Cha mini-workshops at a Celebration of Dance Festival in Red Deer organized by Country Pride Dance Club to celebrate their 25 years.

C. Calgary - David Symington

- Square Dance Week in Calgary is being held from September 19 to 23. Participating clubs will hold free dance parties for prospective dancers.
- Calgary Callers are holding a mini-weekend workshop and dance. Participants to call and cue at the dance.
- New Dancer Party on Sunday, February 5, 2017.
- The summer dances in June, July and August were attended by 5 to 6 squares.
- Cue Steps start their classes Sunday, Sept. 18, and Ron & Donna Baba start classes Monday, Sept. 19.
- Mary & Ron Milton are hosting monthly dances in Calgary, and they are also holding a workshop on jive.
- A new square dance club in High River with caller Ken Baudais. Lessons to be held two nights a week.

C. South - Betty Ann Fieldberg (note: retrieved report sent by email after the meeting)

- Prairie Wind Dancers will resume dancing on October 4, 2016. We have several who have expressed

interest in square dancing. We do have another caller in our city and we will be sharing calling duties. Colin and Joy Aram are a big plus to our area.

- Baba's Rounds have booked the school for Wednesday nights, but are not dancing at present, as there are not enough round dancers. Call ahead for information.

9. Area Reports

A. ASRDF - Ida Murray (no report)

- Note: Federation is revising their website. We should check to see that our Association's information is up to date and accurate.

B. SRDIAA Newsletter - Tom Gray

- The newsletter went out on schedule - eight days prior to the meeting.
- "Jump back" links have been added to the newsletter, so that a person can click back and forth through the pages.
- External news links have been added for items such as dance posters, email addresses and registration forms.
- The 2015 and 2016 newsletters have been archived on Central Alberta's website by webmaster, Dave Bartlett. To find them look under the SRDIAA tab. Eventually, eight years' worth of newsletters will be archived. This is a valuable resource available to everyone. There are many interesting and informative articles.
- Any submissions to the newsletter must be received two weeks before a meeting. Files should be sent in .doc .docx, .rtf, .txt or spreadsheet format.
- Barrie McCombs (bmccombs@ucalgary.ca) volunteered to change any .pdf files into a compatible file for Tom.

C. Callerlab & RoundALab - Tom Gray

- Anything that has been received from these organizations is emailed out to the membership.
- Tom will look into whether there is a password or not required to access Callerlab's "members only" website section.

D. Alberta Convention - High River 2016

- Federation AGMs may require more than the scheduled one hour. Dave Littlefair will let Gary Smith know for 2017 planning purposes.
- One way to save meeting time would be to have zone reports submitted ahead of time, and distribute copies instead of presenting them.
- To save meeting time, our Association could also be doing this, and it was agreed to try this out for the January 22, 2017 meeting. The reports need to be submitted by the area representatives to Tom Gray for the SRDIAA newsletter two weeks prior to publishing (ie. January 6, 2017).

10. Old Business

A. SRDIAA Sustainability (see Attachment #3 - Proposal presented at Convention)

- Our proposal was presented at the AGM at Convention. There was not enough time to deal with both requests, and so only the first one was addressed. After brief discussion, a motion that Federation grant us \$3000 was passed.
- We will continue to take steps to ensure our sustainability.
- The next Federation meeting is on Sunday, November 20. We will forward our proposal in advance to the executive, so that the executive have an opportunity to review the proposal and request further information if needed.

- Our presentation will include our past financial reports and our current activities. For example, the list of the weekend workshop attendees, the workshop program, our 2017 dance plans, and caller school information.
- Dave Littlefair will ask our SRDIAA representative, Ida Murray, to present our proposal.

MOTION: Moved by Joan Boyd, seconded by Bill DeGroot; that we present a proposal to Federation requesting that a surcharge be added to 2018 convention registrations, and that this amount be forwarded to SRDIAA. Carried.

B. Fall Seminar, 2016 - Lorne Smith

- Thank you to the leaders that participated as presenters and/or moderators.
- A larger meeting room is needed for this type of workshop.
- Saturday dance format featuring three callers and three cuers, one of each from Calgary, Edmonton and Red Deer areas, worked well.
- Most of the 32 dancers came from the Red Deer area and 24 were our own leaders, who paid the admittance fee even if they were on the program.
- It was noted that having a variety of workshop presenters gave our members opportunity to share their knowledge and area of expertise.

MOTION: Moved by Bill Hilchie, seconded by Tom Gray; that we hold three dances next fall, 2017 - one each in Edmonton, Red Deer and Calgary, using a panel of SRDIAA callers and cuers. Carried.

- The area representatives are responsible for booking the halls, ie. Dave Symington, Calgary; Glen Eliasson, Edmonton, and Henry Hughes, Red Deer. Halls should be booked as soon as possible.
- Note: Red Deer: The Golden Circle has already been booked for 2017. Claudia Littlefair will confirm the booking, as they also require a certificate of liability insurance.

C. SRDIAA Caller School, 2017 - Lorne Smith

MOTION: Moved by Glen Eliasson, seconded by Barrie McCombs; that SRDIAA Caller School go with two callers, Lorne Smith and Steve Edlund. Carried.

- Lorne Smith will put together the school information so that it can be distributed to callers in Alberta and area, within the next two months. Projected date of school: third week of July, 2017.

11. New Business

A. Fall Seminar 2017

- In-house workshop with evening dances on Thursday, September 14 in Edmonton; Friday, September 15 in Calgary; and Saturday, September 16 in Red Deer.
- Workshop format to be similar to this weekend. Need feedback for topics. If you would like to be a presenter let Lorne Smith know.
- Panel of cuers and callers for the Autumn Dances are selected on a rotation basis.
- Bill DeGroot volunteered to select and confirm the leaders for the three Autumn Dances.

MOTION: Audrey Eliasson moved; seconded by Lorne Smith; that the meeting weekend be changed to September 21, 22, 23 & 24, 2017. Carried.

12. Additions to the Agenda

A. Membership Fee - Glen Eliasson

- \$40/leader unit used to include dance admittance.
- Would rather increase the membership fee instead of paying for the dances, because only the leaders attending the dances are paying this extra amount, and the increase in fees should be equal to all members.

MOTION: Moved by Lorne Smith, seconded by Tom Gray; that the 2017-18 membership fee be tabled to the January 22, 2017 meeting. Carried.

B. Saskatchewan Square & Round Dance Federation Dance Weekend - Kendall Smith

- Lloydminster Chain 'n Circle Square Dance club are hosting the Sask. Fed. weekend on November 4, 5 & 6, 2016. Activities include square, round and clogging – all in the same building.
- Note: Registration form attached separately with this email.

13. Next Meeting & Workshop: 10am - 3pm, Sunday, January 22, 2017
Kerrywood Nature Centre, Red Deer

14. Adjournment

MOTION: Moved by Tom Gray that the meeting be adjourned. Meeting adjourned at 3:15 pm



EVENTS

It's no longer necessary to include posters or festival application forms in the newsletter because you can access them directly from the links below.

May 26-28, 2017 - Cyprus Funstitute, Cyprus Hills, SK. [Click for poster.](#)

Jun 17-21, 2017 - Roundalab Convention - Cincinnati, OH. [Registration Form](#), or register [online](#).

Jul 6-8, 2017 - Region 2 Festival, Cloverdale, B.C. Check their [web site](#) for details.

Apr 10-12, 2017 - Callerlab Convention, Mesa AZ. Click [Convention Registration](#) to register.

Jun 15-17, 2017 - Danceland, Watrous, SK - Poster is [here](#).

Jul 16-21, 2017 - SRDIAA Caller School, Lone Ridge Hall, AB. [Registration Form](#).

Aug 25-28, 2017 - 2017 Alberta Jamboree, Ft. Saskatchewan AB. Information at the [Jamboree web site](#)

Sep 2-4, 2017 - 49th Alberta Convention, Edmonton, Alberta. [Info and registration](#)

Jul 19-21, 2018 - 20th Canadian National Convention, London ON. [Registrations](#) now open.

Remember, you can click on any "hot link" (underlined blue text) to send email to that address, or to open that web site.

Qualities of Good Square Dancers

Opinion by Tom Gray

I recently heard someone say of another couple, "They're really good dancers!" I happened to agree, but started to wonder exactly why we thought that. What makes someone a "good square dancer"?

Here are my thoughts.

1. Knowledge - good dancers know the moves for their dance level, and can dance them from a variety of formations with minimal hesitation or confusion.
2. Left and Right - good dancers know the difference. At least most of the time. :)
3. Silence - good dancers listen to the caller and pay attention rather than chatting.
4. Awareness - a "good" dancer has a grasp of the square as a whole and is aware not only of her own position but also where partner and corner are.
5. Helpfulness - a good dancer will help other members of the square, not by pushing or pulling or criticizing or being bossy, but by a quick word or touch, by a "come here" gesture or a finger to point a direction.
6. Timing - good dancers get where they're supposed to be in the proper number of steps, or are able to otherwise get there on time.
7. Demeanor - good dancers look like they're having fun and enjoying the activity.
8. Mistakes - I suppose we'd all agree that if dancer A makes fewer mistakes than dancer B, then A is the better dancer. But if A keeps making the same old mistakes and B learns and improves...
9. Tolerance - a good dancer understands that all dancers make mistakes, and accepts these errors as part of the fun of the activity.
10. Sociability - good dancers are fun to be with and make the square fun for others

This is not an exhaustive list. What qualities do *you* appreciate in a good square dancer? Send your ideas to TomGrayCaller@shaw.ca



We worked hard to get Square Dance listed as one of Participation's 150 Activities in "Canada's Play List". But in the end, we got lumped in with ethnic and folk dance. *"Examples include: Irish dancing, Polish, Czech, Ukrainian, South Asian, highland, Scottish, clogging, Polynesian, Indigenous, line and square dancing."*

Ten Ballroom & Latin American Dancing Qualities

By: Robin Chee, ANATD (Ballroom & Latin; HC),
© RpMerleon Studios; 31 May 2005. Adapted with permission.

<http://www.rpmerleon.com>

To improve your Ballroom and Latin dancing there are various stages and things you need to take care of. Listed below are some things to help you in the development of your dancing.

1. **Timing** - This is about moving to music, following the correct beat. This is a fundamental that must be achieved by all dancers. To be able to dance to timing, one must first be able to identify the various beats in the music. For those who have difficulty, the best way to improve this aspect is to listen to more music and consciously count the beats in your mind. A very important point to note is the timing occurs when the foot touches the ground, e.g. on hearing count 1, a part of the foot must have touched the ground; if you wait till you hear count 1 and then start to move your feet to the final destination, you will be late.
2. **Footwork** - The proper heel or toe action must be achieved. Initially, just memorize it. Later as you get more familiar, try to understand why it is so. At a slightly higher level, you will notice that correct movement results in correct footwork, but correct foot work may not necessarily lead to correct movement. But incorrect footwork is definitely the result of incorrect movement or lack of knowledge.
3. **Posture** - is what gives the initial impression and is essential to improve the look of one's dancing. Common problems include slouching,... being too close together, chicken wings, losing the right side position (for ballroom). A common fallacy for ballroom is that ladies need to bend from their waist to get the big shape look. This is not only incorrect but may lead to injuries.
4. **Movement**. For the swing ballroom dances, good movement is about having good swing action and correct rise and fall. For the tango, it's about moving sharply from foot to foot and having that characteristic staccato action. For Latin dances like rumba and cha cha, it's about getting the hip action. For samba, it's having the bounce and pelvic action.
5. **Lead and follow** - *Of lesser importance in round dance*, Leading provides 3 elements: Direction, timing and speed. Direction means to tell the follower where to go. Timing means to tell the follower when to do the movement. Speed tells the follower how fast to do the movement (sharp or gradual action). The leader has to deliver clear indication to the follower and the follower needs to be sensitive and reactive to the indication.
6. **Floor craft** - *Of lesser concern in round dance, but you still don't want to run into somebody*. This is about good traffic navigation.... The leader has to be aware of the surroundings and constantly plan pre-emptive actions.... Floor craft is probably more important in the moving dances (waltz, tango, foxtrot, quickstep, samba, Paso Doble) as there would be a need to avoid other couples on the floor while they are moving around.



7. **Rhythm** --Timing is about being on time to the beats. Having rhythm is about musical interpretation. This is achieved by good movement and controlled actions according to different rhythms of music. One must be able to feel the music, rather than just listening to beats in a straight manner. Certain movements may be delayed while some may be speeded up.
8. **Character** - Each of the dances in ballroom and Latin has different characteristics. It's important to understand the differences so that each dance looks like what it is and not all look alike.
9. **Choreography** - *The cuer handles this for you, but you still need to know fundamentals.* However, it's more important to be able to execute your choreography well than to have fantastic choreography that is not danced well.... With good fundamentals, routines can easily be picked up, but the reverse is not true
10. **Performance.** *No exams or competitions in round dance, but your instructors will show good technique and performance.* ...Facial expression is also crucial. Performance is about...the chemistry between the man and lady on the floor.

Happy dancing!

Congratulations - The EDCIA celebrates 50 years (incorporated Feb 6, 1967)

Heard Around the Hall

Notes from here and there

Bill and Maxine Ross of Nanaimo, BC have been teaching round dance since 1980. Check out the sequential list of teaching dances at [their web site](#). They note that *“We have been trying to find music for the teaching dances that can be downloaded from internet sites such as I Tunes and Casa Musica.... We have finished this work and you should be able to download all the music you will need for all of the rhythms.”*

“Please [encourage] the older callers to get and use more modern songs. After 4 years,... the same style of music gets boring. Does anyone keep listening to Michael Jackson or the Beatles over and over? Music moves on, so should we.” - dancer Liz Schick, Edmonton

The Capital District Community Dance Association (CDCDA, formerly EDSDA) at their Dec. 4 joint meeting with the EDCIA struck a Youth Recruitment Committee. The committee will consider ways to bring square dance and related dance disciplines to youth (age 14 and up), develop youth leaders, and encourage continued youth involvement. Early initiatives will be to find/create youth-appropriate photos and videos to use in promos and to locate and focus on specific areas for program development.

“I bought the mainstream and plus teaching DVD's They are very good, if you're interested. If there is any one else you know who might make use, please pass the information on. Thanks. Bill De Groot”

Have you ever noticed that if you google “ballroom dancers picture” you get shots showing stylish and glamorous young couples in dramatic poses? Now google “square dancers picture” and see what turns up. Are we working to change that image?

Warming Up

by Harold & Meredith Sears, Boulder, CO

<http://www.rounddancing.net/dance/articles/warmingup.html>

Almost any ballroom dance manual will urge the dancer to warm up before a performance. Round dancers don't often think in terms of "performance," but a few minutes of stretch and warm-up can loosen and lubricate joints and tendons and reduce the risk of pulls, twists, and strains. Warm-up feels good, too.

Can anyone doubt the importance of our **feet** and the need to take good care of them? Before we dance, let's do 5–10 ballet relevés, just to stretch and loosen up. Put your feet together, knees straight, roll onto the balls of your feet, and put pressure into the toes, heels up off the floor. Hold onto a chair back or doorjamb for balance. Lower and repeat. Next, stand on one foot and extend the other in front, foot just off the floor, and point the toes. Stretch out that **ankle** joint. Now bring the toes back and push the heel forward. Feel the pull in the **calf**. Repeat and then do the other leg.

The demi- and the grand plié are two ballet movements that work on the **knees** and **thighs**. Put your heels together, toes pointed out. Keep your heels down, your knees over your toes, bend, and lower about halfway to the floor. Rise and then spring to an upright position. Do just a few and then repeat, rising onto your toes and lowering all the way to the floor. Again, rise and then spring upright. Just a few — don't strain.

Let's try a hip tuck — put your feet together and push your hips and pelvis forward, stretching the calves and the backs of your thighs. Tighten your **buttocks** and your lower abs. Push into your lower **abdomen** and exhale. For a contra-body pull, stand with feet apart and arms loose at your sides. Slowly turn your upper body 1/4 to the right. Stretch abdominal and **back** muscles. Repeat and then stretch the other side.

Work the **shoulder** joint with a big arm circle. Stand with your feet apart. Hold an arm straight out in front of you with the elbow locked and your hand in a fist. Raise your arm straight up, over, straight back behind you, down, and back up to its original position. Do some shoulder rolls. Push both shoulders forward until your back is tight and your chest is relaxed. Lift your shoulders, roll them back, down, and forward again. Roll them the other way — forward, down, back, and up. Your **hands** are probably least at risk, but we're trying to loosen up the whole body and get it thinking about smooth and fluid movement. Hold your arms straight out to the side. Stretch your fingers out and apart. Reach. Relax and repeat.

Finally, tilt your head to the left as though you would lay that ear down onto your shoulder. Stretch those **neck** muscles. Lift your head and nod forward. Put your chin on your chest. Recover and tilt toward your right shoulder. Now up and tilt your head back. Don't roll your head around — you might grind off some little points or corners in there. Instead, come up and then tilt. Do the diagonals — up and tilt your head side and forward; up and then side and back.

In dancing, we move almost every body part we have, sometimes in highly controlled and stressful ways. Warm-up tries to anticipate those moves so they don't hit our parts with quite such a shock. Try to find other ways to move and stretch — it feels so good.

*"Football isn't a contact sport, it's a collision sport. Dancing is a contact sport."
- Duffy Daugherty*

UNDERSTANDING THE SINGING CALL

Singing Calls – they used to call it the frosting on the cake

From a caller workshop by Mel Wilkerson, Australia

Today, while singing calls are still considered the “relaxer” part of an evening of square dancing, they play a more dominant role in the program, sometimes being as unpredictable as patter calls. The ability to present an effective singing call is an important skill.

Key Differences

PATTER CALLS	SINGING CALLS
May begin and end at the whim of the caller	Structured musical phrasing constrains when and where choreography is used
Seldom able to predict musical choreographic arrangement	Limited specific phrasing restricts choreography
Re-usable for a variety of styles and dances	Melody line is carried through the song as a base for choreography
Generally free form and seemingly unstructured	Highly structured formations (0 - F1 - F2 - B - F3 - F4 - C)
Dancer's concentration is more focused on the choreography than on the music	Dancers tend to focus more on the music and comfort in the dance
The music is generally not remembered by the dancers	Dancers remember the song, often humming or singing along with you

The primary purpose of all square dance music is to provide the basic rhythm and melodic background that makes it possible for:

- The dancers to dance; and
- The caller to call.
-

Both singing calls and patter calls meet these requirements. Which leads to the question...

Why Singing Calls?

Singing calls add colour and personality to an evening's program. Hoedown melodies are generally repetitive to the point of becoming boring, thus dancers will not usually remember the music. Their focus remains primarily, then, on the choreography and their dancing.

Singing calls are extremely varied and diverse, providing flavour and style to the dance and giving essential ingredients to the caller's program by:

- Giving a variety of music, melodies and rhythms;
- Providing contrast for musical balance;
- Providing a showmanship platform for the caller; and
- Acting as a "mood" meter and repair kit when required.

***Thank you to Mel for sharing his workshop notes.
For a copy of the entire workshop, please contact the editor***

Scenarios for Success

The January 13, 2017 issue of Alberta Chatter had an interesting article wherein author John Fogg details four scenarios (line dance, contra dance, traditional club square dance, and clubs with an introductory half hour).

In her comments, editor Claudia Littlefair introduces a fifth scenario, The Nest, which uses Narrators, or teachers working in subgroups. She challenges our customary teaching methods:

Using square angels (narrators) to help in the teaching process is a hard concept for callers to consider. Most believe that they must be the only ones teaching "their dancers" and so The Nest program is given little consideration. However, changing the way we do things is what will keep our activity alive.

I'd like to offer a sixth scenario:

You walk into a square dance hall. *You've never square danced before and you don't have a partner. Someone welcomes you and invites you into a square as part of couple #4. You learn some basic moves, like circle left and dosado that you all do together. Then the caller walks through the figure with couple #1 leading. It doesn't look that hard. The music starts. You dance the introduction you just learned. Couple #1 dances the figure, then couple #2, then couple #3. By the time it's your turn, you've got it figured out. The ending is the same as the opening so it's familiar too.*

Recognize that scenario? It's Old Time Square Dance--those old figures are the very reason we have numbered couples!--and maybe we need to bring it back for new dancers (experienced dancers might enjoy it too)

I think the single most important thing to attract people to square dancing is to play music they know and like. I've heard there's a caller who plays music that is less than 40 years old....

The first step in recruiting young people should be to mix some music that people under 40 have heard of; that should interest people and make it more enjoyable, encouraging them to come back. Just my two cents.

Edmonton dancer (name withheld by request)