



CHIEF OF CHATTER

Claudia Littlefair



One of the best things about our fall advertising is that people are reading the word "square dance". It says we exist! That alone is successful marketing.

Look for a new column called "Sewing Corner". I received an email and article from Calgarian dancer, Marie Brothers, on crinoline care, advising me that she is "going to write a 'Sewing Corner' note for future Newsletters." Whoa! If you know me at all, you know that I am not a promoter of the crinoline. Evidence (surveys, extensive promotional articles, and even my own family and friends) suggests that our outfits are one of the big reasons non-dancers avoid square dancing. Reluctance to accept this truth has helped for years with our decline in numbers.

Thankfully, the tide has changed from "Square Dance Attire Only" to "Wear What You're Comfortable In". Finally, we're current – let's market that! So enjoy Marie's article on crinolines, and know that she has assured me that future articles will also include prairie skirts and western wear.

LETTER TO SQUARE ANGELS

- by Caller Tim Marriner, South Carolina

Editor's Note: Tim started calling in 1973 and made the decision to call full-time in 1987. In addition to calling at his home club in Bluffton, South Carolina, his calling career takes him all over the world. He shared his knowledge and expertise, together with Calgary caller Lorne Smith at the Alberta Caller's school in July. Those who went to his dance at the end of that week in Calgary were treated to an exceptional mainstream dance.



His 'Letter to Square Angels' was written to be presented to members of the clubs he works for in his area. It's message is relevant and valuable to all of us in the square dance community.

First of all, I would like to thank you for your support.

The area needs dancers like you taking an active role in recruiting new members. The local dancing community must have new members for it to grow. The activity

thrives off the new energy beginner's manifest. They remind all of us that we too were once beginners.

Next, I would like to remind you of your responsibilities. This session is for new people to learn the basics of square

dancing and not a work shop for you to attend to brush up on fundamentals. If you have not been dancing on a regular basis and are going back through to review, you really are not an angel.

Having sponsored someone to attend does not guarantee or reserve floor space for you. Angels are utilized to fill the odd numbers of dancers in order to complete a square. If square number cards or a computer rotation system is being utilized, you will be added as needed and should follow the number indicated on the card or screen. From time to time you still may be moved from square to square or may be asked to sit out to accommodate a late arriving new dancer. If numbers are not in use please allow the new dancers to square up first and then fill in where needed or as directed.

Lastly, this is a new dancer session, and they deserve the right to learn properly. Please, no extra flourishes, short cuts, or excessive talking while teaching. The goal is to provide the best possible learning environment.

If a dancer has a question about a call, let the caller teaching know, but do not try to teach from the floor as it disrupts others.

Proper hands and positioning are essential! We can still have fun and dance proper at the same time.

One of our main goals for the new dancer is fun! With your help, we can provide family entertainment and promote community fellowship, through the folk art of Square Dancing. We can harness new dancer's enthusiasm to attract more people for our next new dancer session to perpetuate this beautiful dance heritage.

Thank you again for your understanding and assistance.

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WHO IS 'ARTS'?

ARTS stands for the **Alliance of Round, Traditional and Square Dance**. This coalition was formed by a group of people, passionate about dance, to promote:

- Contemporary (Modern Western) Square Dance
- Round Dance
- Contra and Traditional Dance

Why might you care? The ARTS website contains downloadable **promotional material and information**.



Future plans include an email tree to publicize ARTS and distribute information to every square dance club in the U.S. and Canada!

The current project, **Re-Image Square Dancing**, has:

- Adopted a modernized Square Dance logo, available on the BC website that can be filled in with colors of your choice. Go to: http://www.squaredance.bc.ca/Clip_Art/logos.shtml.
- Adopted a new slogan: "Live Lively – Square Dance". It is encouraged to use the logo and slogan (slogo) on all promotional and other material so that they become recognizable. Note: You can also develop your own slogan, or just use the logo without a slogan.
- A "Live Lively" website, Facebook page, and short video clips titled "What Is Square Dancing" have been created.
- Work is being done on creating videos for TV commercials, which show active people (eg. jogging, canoeing, hiking) and at the end of the clip the person(s) will say "And I square dance."



WONDERFUL DEFINITIONS

CIGARETTE: A pinch of tobacco rolled in paper with fire at one end and a fool at the other!

MARRIAGE: It's an agreement wherein a man loses his bachelors degree and a woman gains her master.

POLITICIAN: One who shakes your hand before elections and your confidence later.

COMPROMISE: The art of dividing a cake in such a way that everybody believes he got the biggest piece.

OUR SQUARE DANCE IMAGE

Editor's Note: The boy scout images and wording is part of a presentation "Discussing Square & Round Dance Clip Art" given by Mary Anne Turner to the BCS&RDF Board of Directors, Nanaimo 2008. For the complete (and excellent!) presentation go to: http://www.squaredance.bc.ca/articals/clip_art_presentation1.pdf



(1) "The Boy Scouts organization has a rich heritage and many traditions that it wishes to maintain."

(2) "Modernizing and changing with the times does not mean turning your back on the historic values of your organization."



Research shows that today 90% of the general public think Square Dancing is done in a barn with fiddle music, with the ladies in puffy dresses and men in matching scarves and shirts. This photo is pre-1950.



This picture was taken at the 2014 Alberta Convention. Most people do not know the difference between *Traditional* and *Modern Western Square Dance*. It all **looks the same** to a non-dancer.

Our goal is to attract more members, so projecting an appealing, current image is to OUR benefit.

CHATTER CLOSE-UP

Editor's Note: Our Dance Community is an interesting mix of people, each with a story to tell. If you know of someone you would like to see featured in this section, email me and I would be happy to contact them.

LARRY & LINDA PETERSON, Rocky Mountain House

For over 40 years we lived in the shadow of Turtle Mountain in Blairmore, Alberta (Crowsnest Pass) where we raised two daughters and one son, and have five grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren. Larry operated his custom sawmill and logging operation out of Cowley. He volunteered many hours as Auxillary RCMP over a 35 year period. I worked as RN for Home Care, managed business accounts, volunteered with Victim Services Unit and enjoyed crocheting and sewing.



Larry always wanted to own a muskeg so we purchased our 7.5 acre camping spot near Rocky Mountain House in 1993. By 2007 we had both retired and sold the sawmill, continuing to commute between Blairmore and Rocky. In 2012 we decided to move permanently out of the shadow and into the sun of Rocky. Larry got busy designing and planning our Rocky hideaway while I packed and reduced. We began moving in the new year of 2013 with shop completed and house to move-in stage in three months.

Larry has always carved and continues to make sawdust, build and refinish furniture and create unique pieces of art from wood, stone and jade.



These are displayed throughout our home. Our summer projects included rock steps and a 60 foot long rock creek with waterfalls. In the fall of 2013, while walking our



shiatzu dog, "Bear", I met Donna and Dave Watson who invited us to attend Rocky's Christmas square dance party. We started lessons and haven't looked back. That



summer we attended Jerry Jestin's caller school as extra dancers, which helped to reinforce the calls we were introduced to that winter. We continue to enjoy weekly dances and summer campouts. Hosting guest callers gives us the opportunity to get to know them as well.

In between dancing, I work occasional shifts for Commissionaires, and frequent shifts as yard assistant. Hiking and geocaching keep us busy. In July of 2015 we celebrated our 50 year anniversary with a picnic and tour of the Nordegg area.

DEE JACKINS, Calgary

Dancing has been a part of my life since Junior High. Born and raised in Radville, Saskatchewan, we took every opportunity to go dancing, whether it was a school dance, wedding or just a community affair. What better way to learn than a good old country dance?

When I moved to Calgary in 1961, one of the first things on my agenda was to find the dance halls. Does anyone remember Penley's, The Gardens, Isle Of Capri and even The Lone Pine? I married in 1965 and raised two children. Now I have three grandchildren and two great grandsons. My husband was not a dancer, but I convinced him to try and away we went.



We joined the Queens and Jacks in 1969 and danced with them for three years. We took in all the activities possible and collected badges for all the silly things that we could pull off. I'm still in contact with some of the friends we made and look forward to our visits whenever possible. As time went by we got busy in

other activities including ballroom dance lessons and square dancing was put on the back burner.

My eye problems had already started and were getting more severe. Eyes are sympathetic - it started with iritis and graduated to retinitis, uveitis and optic neuritis along with glaucoma. My eyes were getting inflamed every year on a regular basis and when the optic nerve is inflamed it takes its toll. The sight in my left eye was gone by 1975 and four years later I had to quit working and quit driving (that was hard, my independence was gone). The doctor referred me to the University Hospital in San Francisco to be examined by eight specialists. The results were the same and nothing further could be done. I kept busy doing oil painting, volunteering at the Grandparent Program and of course social dancing whenever possible. By December of 1988 my sight had deteriorated to 20/400. I was heavily medicated with prednisone to try and save the little sight I had but now it was affecting the bone marrow. There was no choice but to taper off and pray, but it wasn't in God's plan. By the end of January, 1989 my vision was gone.

The next few years were years of adjustment in more ways than one. While coping with my blindness and trying to reorganize my life, my husband was diagnosed with cancer and after fighting this disease for ten months he succumbed in October of 1991. I continued volunteering at the Grandparent Program and played crib at the CNIB. I joined ASRAB (Alberta Sports and Recreation Association For The Blind). I was determined to get out and do things and that I did. With this group we toured Southern Alberta and visited points of interest, lawn bowling, house boating in the Shuswap, para-sailing, horseback riding, white water rafting at Kicking Horse Pass (Actually I'm glad I couldn't see what was going on!)

One of the best highlights for me after going blind was in 1992, when my sisters and I took our Mother on her 80th birthday down to see her brother in Minnesota. We stopped at Eatons in Regina, Saskatchewan to buy a gift for her. The clerk told us that Red Skelton was just down this aisle. Well, he's my favorite comedian and away we went. When he spotted my cane, he grinned from ear to ear and pushed the power button on his scooter and headed straight for us. He stopped right in front of me and said, "I'm Red Skelton. I used to be the

Vice President of the Braille Institute Of America. Do you have time for a joke?" With stogie in one hand he shook my hand with the other and commenced his joke. I managed to get an autograph on the back of my cheque. By this time a crowd of people had gathered and his agent was not very happy but everyone else was. He made my day.

Then one day while volunteering at the Grandparent Program a long-time friend, Marilyn Dawes was visiting. She mentioned she had gone back square dancing with the Swinging Singles and would I be interested in coming back. I couldn't believe my ears, can you square dance when you're blind? Sam Stead was the caller back then and after approaching him on this matter he had no problem with it. This I was looking forward to and could hardly wait for the fall to begin. That was in 1995 and I have never looked back. The members were accepting and helpful, it was time to dance again.



As the weeks went by, it was all coming back. I had to adjust for certain moves but I was visualizing this in my mind's eye. When Sam taught us the Weave, I knew

skirt work was part of it so for now I would just keep my hands down so nobody would get hit. "WRONG!" As I was weaving I heard this "UMPH". My fears had been realized. I apologized profusely and laughter took over. I thought to myself that this had to be just an accident, so I continued to keep my hands down. "WRONG!" It happened again! "UMPH" --poor Charlie. That was it. From there on and to this day, that is why my hands are up on the weave. If everyone would just "touch" my hands as I go by, it makes it easier for everyone. I've learned to dance by definition, so whenever someone pulls, pushes or grabs me I lose concentration and will more than likely break down the square.

In the years following I attended most of the dances involving visiting clubs, beginner Jamboree's, CD Specials, Conventions and not to forget the Kirby Center in the summer time. It was good practice and dancing to other callers was a welcome challenge. It didn't take

long before Round Dancing, Plus and Advance 1 and 2 came into the picture and I started venturing out to other cities and provinces to take in their special dances. Visiting a few states across the border allowed me to take in a lot of lessons during the day and dance to my heart's content in the evening. I have met the most wonderful people in this world of Square Dancing, friendships made and a lot of enjoyment over the years.

The question I asked so many years ago, "Can a blind person Square Dance?" Yes, most of the square dancers are understanding, helpful and forgiving. Forgiving? Yes, when I'm in a square there could be somebody checking, tripping, clipping from behind or hooking. H-m-m-m, just about sounds like a hockey game.

To sum it all up - "Faith, Optimism, Determination" and let's not forget Humor are the words of the day. "SEE" you across the square!

***New * SEWING CORNER** - by Marie Brothers

About Marie: *I started dancing at age 12, almost 54 years ago!!! I brought my 6 year old to dances and am now dragging my 5 year old grandson along with me occasionally! I have danced in BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, and Costa Rica! I am now learning to be a caller! I've started a handicapped square dance club that had 12*



handicapped dancers in one night! I am thinking of starting a youth group/dance club with square dancing and, maybe, line dancing between tips. I am currently a member of the Red Deer Club and dance with Calgary clubs Prairie Winds on Mondays, my club Tuesdays, Acey Pluses with Lorne Smith on Thursdays, Tom's Plus on Fridays and Red Deer every other Saturday.

CRINOLINE CARE

You should wash your crinolines occasionally. I did not know that and my first crinoline and I danced together for almost 10 years before it started getting wilted and I was told wash it. However, the more it is washed, the more the strength of the tulle breaks down and you'll need to 'reset' it.

WASH

For a crinoline in good shape, I simply put it in my washing machine by placing the crinoline over the center spinner so the spinner gizmo is sticking up through the waist of the crinoline. Only allow it to spin for a few minutes. Be careful when removing the crinoline. You can simply place the crinoline on the floor or carpet or in the bathtub or shower stall to dry. If you need it right away, you can use the air/fluff setting on your dryer.

"RESET"

Run 3 or 4 inches (7.5-10 cm.) of water into the bath tub. Add 3 envelopes of Knox unflavoured gelatin into 2 cups (500 ml) warm water and, when dissolved, stir into bath water. Place crinoline over upside down umbrella and allow crinoline to dry.



FESTIVAL 2016
July 28, 29 & 30



Hosted by

**Saskatchewan Square and Round
Dance Federation Inc.**

Saskatchewan Trade and Convention Centre

Delta Regina

Register online at

www.saskfestival2016.com



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JAMBOREE WRAP-UP

- Rudy & Sue Neufeld, President Couple

Jamboree 2015 - what a spectacular weekend it was! Our callers, Gary Winter, Jerry Jestin, and Steve Edlund; and cuers, Ron and Donna Baba,



provided more than two hundred

dancers with a most entertaining weekend. Thank you to them and to all the dancers who helped to make our Jamboree in Fort Saskatchewan the success it was. We were delighted to

have dancers from Ontario to Vancouver Island and many places in between. 176 dancers registered for the full weekend and many more came for a day or a dance so we had two hundred plus dancers somewhere on the dance floor all weekend.

Thanks also to everyone on the organizing committee for all their efforts. Members come from Fort Saskatchewan, Edmonton, Rocky Mountain House and Red Deer. Our group consists of the following: Bill and Marlene Framington, past president; Rudy and Susan Neufeld, president; Eugene and Eileen Styba, vice president; Dennis and Evelyn Wyllie, treasurer; Ken and Lynda French, secretary; and members Max and Mary Anderson, John and Deb Belik, Jim and Sylvia Colleton, Ken Crighton, Rudy and Judy Jackle, Ruth King and Tom Whitnack, Norm and Hazel Paradis, Henry and Pat Smith, Fern Willis, and Gary and Trish Winter. We wish to extend a very special thanks to Edmonton caller, Gary Winter, whose vision and hard work helped to make Jamboree a reality.



The Dow Centennial Center proved to be a great facility, providing space for all of the dancing under one roof. Just over sixty RVs were parked around the Dow Centre, taking advantage of the free dry camping, with a number of others opting for the services at the local campground. It was great to have two hotels within easy walking distance so that everyone who traveled a distance had the opportunity to be just minutes from the dance venue.

Besides hotels in close proximity, the RCMP head-quarters are adjacent to the Dow Center and that brought some curious uniformed friends to eyeball

one of our dances. It wasn't long before all three were in a square and with a bit of guidance, executing a plus tip! And we didn't even need handcuffs to get them there! One comment was, "How do you remember all that?" They were good sports and left with smiles on their faces.



We had some concerns with changing the date of our event but are glad we did. Dancers can now have two great dance weekends in Alberta before their fall club dances begin.

We anticipate using the same facility for another Jamboree in August, 2017. We should have another dance floor then which was not made available to us this time. This will give the round dancers and the mainstream dancers more space. We hope that those who attended will share the great time they had with their dancing friends and join us again. As more information regarding this weekend is available, we will post it on our website, www.albertajamboree.com.

On a side note, we had dancers from Regina, Saskatchewan who were promoting the **Canadian National Square Dance Festival to be held July 28th, 29th, and 30th, 2016**. Both Gary Winter and Steve Edlund are registered so if you enjoyed their calling at Jamboree, you can enjoy them again in Regina! For information and registration forms, check out their website, www.saskfestival2016.ca. Their registrations are very slow coming in, so if you are planning to attend, a speedy registration is encouraged.



ALBERTA CONVENTION WRAP-UP

- Margaret & Ron Faas, Publicity Directors

47th Annual Alberta Square and Round Dance Federation Convention was a great success. People just kept coming and having tons of fun. The compliments just poured in on what a wonderful time they were having. There were people from all over Canada with the Directors from Society who came and were impressed



by the way things were run. The committee would like to thank everyone for making the effort to be there and for everyone who donated to the silent

auction. All those who brought banners and joined in the Banner parade. It is always nice to see which clubs are represented from the Different Zones. Even the ones from other provinces joined us to make it a great parade.

All the Callers and Cuers each had their turn to make interesting calls for the dancers to learn more and enjoy the weekend.



Everyone enjoyed the After Party. The After Party entertainment was a hit although the performers decided not to take their act on tour, they had a ball doing their thing. Thanks ladies.

See you all at High River 2016!



MORE CONVENTION NEWS

- Tom Gray, Editor, S.R.D.I.A.A. Newsletter

"I think it was a wonderful convention," said director Norman Demeule. "Everyone had a good time and we had no negative comment from anyone." There were 248 registered with 36 walk-ins for a total of 284 dancers, coming from nine provinces. A total of 26 leaders lent their talents - 21 from Alberta and five from out of Province (BC 3, SK 1, MN 1). The Trail in Dance (not officially part of Convention) had 191 in attendance, and the Monday Trail out Dance also had very good attendance (possibly equal to trail in).



The Silent Auction brought in \$1,170, all from donated items. A big thank you to dancers and others who

contributed and purchased. One thing that made this Alberta Convention unique was that it was held in conjunction with the Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Square and Round Dance Society. It was Society representatives that gave us the nine-province total (a couple from Newfoundland was ill and didn't make it, or all 10 would have been included).



The collection from the Sunday non-denominational service totaled \$523.31, which was given to Ronald



McDonald House in Red Deer. A great relaxed After Party on Sunday evening after the Closing Ceremonies featured free food and refreshments, and surprise entertainment from a group of yodeling "Old Ladies". Callers & Cuers were introduced to the crowd and received Appreciation

Certifications, and thanks from everyone present. "A good time was had by all," concluded Norm Demeule.

CONFERENCE ROOM: A place where everybody talks, nobody listens, and everybody disagrees later on.

CHATTER KUDOS

Congratulations to **Norman & Loretta Demeule**, deserving recipients of the **Canadian Award of**



Award of Excellence recipients Norman & Loretta Demeule, with Canadian Society President, Eric & Dianne McCormack.

Excellence! This award recognizes exceptional service on a national level, as explained in the application form under "Criteria". It reads: "*The standards for this award are very high and therefore a nomination must be fully substantiated with details of the results of the accomplishment to*

be recognized. This might include news items, copies of publications, or copies of samples of the result of the candidate's work. Accomplishments to be recognized are only those which are above and beyond the normal activity. For example, positions on committees, boards, etc. would not be considered, unless the work in that position resulted in an outstanding contribution to the movement which far exceeds that normally expected by an incumbent in that position."

The award was presented at the Lacombe Convention by the Canadian Society president, Eric and Dianne McCormack. Norman & Loretta began dancing in 1975 and calling almost as long. They joined and continue to serve on the Alberta Federation board since 1985, and were recipients of the Alberta Rose Award in 1999. They became Alberta Reps to the Canadian Society in 2002. Among several significant achievements, Norman and Loretta spent many months of long hours to develop new Terms of Reference, Letters of Agreement, and overall Contracts for all future National Conventions.

LECTURE: An art of transmitting information from the notes of the lecturer to the notes of students without passing through the minds of either.

MISER: A person who lives poor so he can die rich.

BOSS: Someone who is early when you are late and late when you are early.

LONG-TIME RED DEER CALLER ON THE MEND

On the way home from the Lacombe Dance Convention, dancers David & Margaret Gilchrist dropped in to visit Neil McKnight, who is recovering from a stroke. David shares this message.

For the first time in many years, Neil and May McKnight were absent from the Round Dance Presentation at our Annual Provincial Convention in Lacombe this Labour Day Weekend. Many people were asking how Neil was doing; and most often we heard: "He's still in the hospital in Red Deer". But Wayne and Helen Lowther knew better; so we were able to visit them on our way home on Monday morning.



Neil is now in **Extendicare Michener Hill** - 12 Michener Boulevard, **Red Deer, Alberta**, T4P 0M1. He is receiving great care and therapy, and has improved greatly. He walks only with help at this point, but looks forward to being independent once again.



May drives in to visit him every day, and has been working with him on his speech. His voice is still quite soft; but his diction is amazingly clear. Although I am having difficulty hearing many people these days, even with these new hearing aids, I was able to understand virtually every word he said.

To visit Neil (and most likely May as well), go East on Ross (50 St.), North on Michener Ave., and West on Michener Blvd till you see the EXTENDICARE sign. Just go in through the main doors, and ask at the desk. If you want to phone first, or get lost in the maze of new buildings, call (403)348-0340.

EXPERIENCE: The name we give to our mistakes.

DIPLOMAT: A person who tells you to go to hell in such a way that you actually look forward to the trip.

DOCTOR: A person who kills your ills by pills, and kills you by his bills.