



Photos & Features

Message from Merry Hinkle

Many Rochester Area round dancers have enjoyed Merry Hinkle's cueing. She has cued at many of our dances over the years, and has been a regular at Dance-O-Rama. So, with Merry's permission, we are sharing her message to dancers at the Hinkle Round Dance Club (established in 1995 with her husband, Dick), on Wednesday, Jul 15, 2020, announcing closure of the club.

Note that Merry is not retiring. She will continue to dance and cue as opportunities arise.

Here is Merry's message:

Dear Dancers,

Dancing has been in my life since 1982. It has taken Dick and me to meet so many wonderful people from all over and taken us all over the world ... dancing.

Some of my best memories all came thru dance ... As Square Dance presidents we put on a Christmas Party for 22 squares at a venue with no kitchen. Put on Happy Holly Daze Round Dance parties for many years with attendance up to 75 couples. When you have the numbers, you can do anything. PLUS, you must have good venues.

Probably a great accomplishment was as Chairmen of Roundalab's Advertising, we were instrumental in designing the bumper stickers and getting that 1-877-Y-I- Dance phone number. Thousands of those bumper stickers were printed and handed out at the 2000 T&D and Roundalab Conventions. When we are young and infallible we can do anything.

The most difficult time was when Dick fell ill and still wanted me to keep the club going. In the beginning, I had Ted & Ella to help me set up. Grace ran the kitchen ... hmmmmm, I could do this! Then as we age, the numbers get smaller, the load gets heavier. Thanks to Bob & Don helping put equipment away and all my little helpers in the kitchen to help clean up.

But being a one-man show was becoming a challenge, making the correct decision to cancel due to weather, raising fees due to rent increase or equipment breaking down. Not to mention attendance was waning. We're aging! NOW one more hurdle ...

COVID 19! Whoever thought in March we were facing a major pandemic all over the world!!! Masks, sterilization, social distancing ... no hugging ... no handshakes. Socialization is what our dancing is about.

It has been an honor and privilege to cue for you, we've had a great 26-year run with this dance club, but sadly after much consideration, time has come to put it to bed. I'm not giving up cueing or dancing, we still have to dance. It's just that time has come to give up the club, less work and responsibility. Lots of thought has gone into this very difficult decision.

I would like to thank each and every one of you for being a part of this journey, your loyal support and for sharing the love of dance with me. I will truly miss each and every one of you and I HOPE and PRAY we keep in touch. See you on the dance floor somewhere soon.

Love to all of you, and long-distance hugs,

Merry



Dick and Merry Hinkle



Merry at DOR 2018 — the 60th Anniversary

Dancing versus COVID-19

The COVID-19 virus has “paused” nearly all in-person dancing worldwide and pushed callers and dancers to new ways of gathering to dance. In our area, the Belles & Beaus, Silver Squares, Shirts & Skirts, and Village Squares have all been using Zoom to get together for weekly chats from their own homes. Shamrock Squares are dancing one square weekly in Mike Callahan’s basement, and The Enovators are doing about the same. Cayuga Cut-Ups have been dancing in the outdoor patio area at Bailiwick Market & Cafe, in Elbridge NY. Others have organized group walks and “distanced” picnics. Anne Granger (Silver Squares) even scheduled a family square dance in her back yard, with Mike Callahan calling. (See the “Photos & Features” section for photos)

Some callers — local, national and international — are dancing in their homes, connected via Zoom and other group video platforms. Locally, Gil Porter is calling a “two-couple” Zoom dance for the Pandemic Squares every Wednesday from 8 to 9pm. Contact Brenda Bixby or Peter Emmel for a Zoom invitation.

The big question is “When will we get back to normal dancing?” Well, it’s complicated. First of all, right now

most normal dancing venues are not allowing gatherings as large as a typical square dance. Secondly, most dancers are planning to be very careful about their return to dancing. We’ll get back to that in a moment. Thirdly, it’s not clear exactly what “normal” will look like whenever dancing becomes practical and fun once again.

We’ll discuss possibilities for what the “new normal” might look like in a separate article, but here we’ll focus on dancer attitudes related to their personal decision to return.

SURVEY RESULTS

Some weeks ago, the RAF asked members of all area clubs to answer a series of questions. The goal was to gauge directly what conditions would have to be met for dancers to be comfortable returning to the dance floor. The accompanying graphics ([HERE](#)) show the distribution of results.

The results showed that of the approximately 250 respondents, more than half indicated the following safety concerns under COVID-19 Pandemic:

- Are not sure when they will return to dancing
- Want masks worn by everyone for dancing and socializing
- Want social distancing required at the venue
- Are concerned about the cleanliness and sanitation of the facilities
- Want hand sanitizers and wipes available
- Commented on the availability of hand-washing
- Want minimized personal contact among dancers

(more than 1/3 of dancers want non-contact dancing and calls that minimize contact)

- Want dancers to bring their own water & snacks or provide prepackaged water & snacks
- When dancing returns, want dances formatted as refreshers or workshop sessions

One dancer in four (25%) said they will not return to dancing until they have been vaccinated. At the other end of the scale, one dancer in eight (12.5%) said “none of the above” which we are not sure how to interpret this, but we believe it indicates indifference to COVID-19 safety precautions.

Additional feedback came in the form of comments, with the most common being “Dancers should dance in same square all evening to minimize the number of contacts.” This can be accomplished by self-selecting or by random drawing before the first tip.

The USDA News (July–Sept Issue), gives additional suggestions, many of which are also found in RAF survey comments:

- One person to sign dancers in (instead of two plus greeters)
- Consider paying by check versus cash (less “public” handling)
- Log contact information for dancers and visitors in case someone becomes sick
- Take dancers temperatures prior to entering the facility? (wand or temple thermometer) (Anyone with temp over 100.4 would not be allowed inside)
- Anyone who becomes ill after the dance would be requested to contact club presidents

With so much diversity of opinion, and so much uncertainty in availability of venues, it seems that even in an area like ours where the virus seems well contained, it will be many months before most of us

will be dancing again.

I know in my case, I don’t want any chance that an event that I promote will end up making any of my friends sick — or worse.

SILVER LINING?

However, there is one big potential positive that could come out of this distressing time. If we put our minds to it, we should be able to find ways to re-build square dancing into a more sustainable activity. We could use this time to identify and correct some of the things that have led to low or negative growth for most clubs in the past 20–30 years.

In August, Jeff and Debbie Blood convened the annual meeting of RAF club presidents. One outcome, supported by club leaders and callers, was the decision to form a task force of dancers, club leaders and callers to study options and recommend a path for our “Return to Dancing.”

Getting dancers back on the floor at our various clubs after COVID is basically a club responsibility, but as with the national COVID response, it will be helpful to have guidelines and best practices outlined by the RAF. They would serve as a focus for discussion and default option for club leaders.

Other identified concerns of the task force will likely include:

- Outline an on-ramp back into dancing, probably with a “Refresher/tuneup” format and an intensive “call-back” campaign to re-connect with recent grads.
- Work out when and how to restart classes: What teaching program (SSD [Sustainable Square Dance 50 call system] or other)? What promotional pitch (social rebound, “class” or “fun” etc.)? When to restart classes?
- Look ahead to the future of square & round dancing (back too normal? back to the heydays? new paradigm?)

We’ll be discussing these points in other articles and in future issues of the Promenader.

Submitted by Peter Emmel

Copy Cats Present Club’s Annual Rathke Award

At an outdoor gathering on August 11, 2020, the Copy Cats presented their annual service award to David and Mary Jo Webster. Following is the citation read by Rick and Donna LaDonna in making the presentation.

RICK: The Rathke Award was first presented by the

Copy Cats in 1982. The first recipients were Jim and Pearl Rathke who were recognized for their outstanding support of the Club. Jim was a fun-loving person who with Pearl supported the club in many ways and they are also remembered as people who raised the spirit of the club doing whatever was necessary. The Rathke Award has continued to be

awarded to individuals or couples who have been significant contributors to the club. With few exceptions, this award is presented annually.

DONNA: Our 2020 Rathke Recipients have been active in square dancing for the past 8 years. They've danced locally and nationally. They are always willing to participate in our Kitten Classes, picnics and dances. In addition, they have hosted square dances in their garage and also willingly participate in square dance demonstrations at local nursing homes and other venues.

They are both active in the community — volunteering at their local food pantry, driving individuals to doctor's appointments and volunteering at their local hospice. He participated in our first-ever Copy Cats Fashion Show, helped distribute food to the Penfield Ecumenical Food Shelf after our annual Thanksgiving food collections and entertained us with his jokes and dance routines. She was Copy Cats Treasurer for two years, organized several of our holiday dinner dances, and currently serves on the DOR Refreshments Committee and is the Copy Cats Sunshine Chair. Volunteering is this couples' middle name.

RICK AND DONNA: With great pleasure we introduce you to our dear friends, partners in crime and the 2020 Rathke Award Recipients — David and Mary Jo Webster!

Submitted by Donna LaDonna (photo credit: Bob Indovina)



Silver Squares host Picnic on August 3

On August 3, 2020, the Silver Squares hosted an outdoor picnic gathering in the pavilion adjacent to their dance venue, Greece United Methodist Church. It was a beautiful day and about 30 people attended, from several clubs.

Submitted by Carl Webster







Shamrock Squares — Dancing One Square at a Time

Adapting to COVID-19 times, Mike and Wanda Callahan are hosting Mike’s weekly ‘A’ level dancing group, the Shamrock Squares, at their home.

They began hosting five couples at their home when limited gatherings were permitted within NYS Phase 3. Their space holds one square, so the Shamrock group has sorted into two squares, dancing on alternate weeks with Dale Nientimp coordinating the five couples who attend each week. Jim Gotta has also called for the group.

Submitted by Carl Webster





Mike Sikorsky Benefit Dance Hosted by Tom & Joan Powers


On Saturday, August 15, the “remote dancing” group known as ONE Square International hosted two live on-line video sessions for the benefit of their colleague, Mike Sikorsky. The event brought (virtually) together marquee national callers: Ken Bower, Wade Driver, Tony Oxendine, Johnny Preston, Gary Shoemake and Mike Seastrom.

Anyone with an internet connection could tap in and watch or listen ... or dance. Tom and Joan Powers, and probably others in our area, gathered a square of dancing friends in their driveway to dance for the hour-long event. A little rain near the end moved them to plan B — the garage.

Donations were collected to help defray the cost of Mike Sikorsky’s medical treatment for an extremely serious condition that overcame him in the past few months. Accompanying this article is a thank you message from Mike. Many Rochester area dancers will remember him from the annual summer RAF dance he has been calling, and from his guest appearances at local clubs.

Submitted by Peter Emmel (photo credit: Angela Frantz)





Mike Sikorsky
1d

Thank you all for your love and your prayers. I finally seem to have enough brain and energy at the same time so I'm going to attempt to tell you my story in a brief way.

My good friend named Mark met me at karaoke and we both said we weren't going to stay long. After a few minutes he said he wasn't feeling too well. I said I'm not either. So we both departed. He went home and stayed home for 2 and a 1/2 days. I went home, then went to the hospital and 9 weeks later I'm still here at the hospital. 5th one.

1st day they told me I had pneumonia. 2nd day they told me I actually had double pneumonia. 4th day they told me I had MRES in every organ in my body. They started me on massive doses of antibiotics. I promptly went septic and was absolutely dead until the 17th day.

Ask your medical industry friends about Sepsis. Most people do not survive. I was also on a ventilator for over 21 days and a lot of people do not survive that, either.

My daughter Monica was face timing me every night and talking to me. Finally, on night 17, I rolled over smiled at her and went back to sleep. It was the 21st before I actually spoke to her or anyone else.

It's been slow and go since then, like standing up with helpers walking 3 steps and then collapsing and sleeping 4 hours.

I am had a very good facility now and we are going to work the next 4 days after having worked to day and then the following week. Every day.

I told them that the louder I groan and holler the harder you push. She smiled and said she liked that.

I was looking forward to getting out Monday or Tuesday next week, but a few nights ago I closed my eyes briefly and When I reopened them I had lost 80% of my vision in my left eye.

I believe it's a torn I see the specialist a Monday guess I won't be wearing the left lenses Monica. She did not send me right contact lenses because I said I had two. Actually i had brought two right ones from Phoenix into the hospital. The 2 right ones have now been ruined. Is this becoming a train wreck?



**Remote
Dancing!**
One Square
at a Time.

Follow Your Local
Safety Rules

A benefit online dance for our friend
and colleague Mike Sikorsky.

2020 Riverside Jamboree Staff

ALTERNATING MS AND PLUS TIPS

Ken Bower - Wade Driver - Tony Oxendine
Johnny Preston - Gary Shoemake and Mike Seastrom
There will be guest Callers as well

Saturday August 15, 2020
10am PDT AND 7pm PDT

Time Zones!

Pacific - 7pm - 10am	Mountain - 8pm - 11am
Central - 9pm - Noon	Eastern - 10pm - 1pm
London - 3am - 6pm	Europe - 4am - 7pm
Japan - 11am - 2am	Sydney - Noon - 2am
Perth - 10am - 1am	

SEND YOUR DONATIONS BY PAYPAL TO:
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onesquareinternational@yahoo.com
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ONE Square International on Facebook

Village Squares Gather in Webster Park

On July 22, in lieu of their traditional summer picnic, a group of Village Squares gathered in and around the Valley View Shelter, near the tennis courts at Webster Park. The weather looked 'iffy' for most of the day, but it cleared up just in time. Social distances were maintained and for many it was the first time speaking to one another in person since March. Weekly Zoom chats are fun, but nothing beats an in-person gathering.

Other clubs are arranging group walks and other outdoor events. I hope they will send photos so we can share them with the rest of the square dance community.

Submitted by Peter Emmel



Cayuga Cut-Ups Dancing in Outdoor Patio

The Cayuga Cut-Ups have found a restaurant, Bailiwick's, with an open-air patio where they can dance through August in relative safety, with Ron Brown calling. The accompanying photos were taken at their June 25 dance.

Submitted by Linda English





Social Square Dancing

The forced gap in our dancing activities brings an unexpected opportunity. Many established dancers are chafing to get back to the dance floor. Others are more cautious, as evidenced in their responses to the RAF questionnaire reported in another article. All of us, who already know and love square dancing and the friends it has brought us, are motivated to get back to it as soon as COVID-19 reaches our personal safety threshold.

However, the rest of the world — including the next generation of dancers — surely do not see it that way. Right now, those future friends and dancers will be looking at our beloved activity as the last thing they want to start in on until COVID-19 is in the rear-view mirror. For the next year or two, promoting square dance classes to the public looks like an even harder challenge than usual. But, when the COVID-19 cloud is lifted, I think it's reasonable to expect people to be looking for new social activities.

So, what better time than now to review our thinking about how the learning process for square dancing is organized and promoted?

This will be one of the questions addressed by the RAF's newly-formed "Return to Dance" task force, described in another Promenader article in this issue.

The callers present at the RAF "Presidents meeting" re-introduced the so-called SSD program, standing for "Social Square Dancing." It is a program of teaching that represents a return to a more limited list of calls. New dancers can learn this call set in significantly less time than the current Mainstream program, and it could form the basis of a more "accessible" dance community, with less emphasis on skill levels. It has been tried in various parts of the country for several years with mixed success. The "mixed" results come from areas where it was adopted by too few clubs and was therefore not supported by enough established dancers for it to take hold. In areas where Mainstream/Plus dancing had completely died, it has led to rapid growth and filled dance halls.

One possibility for taking advantage of the COVID-induced temporary "death" of square dancing is to consider switching to a program like this — when dancing comes back to life. With that possibility in mind, and taking no particular position on whether it should or should not be adopted, we present here a reasonably thorough description of the SSD program by one of its avid fans. The reason for publishing this is to give dancers an introduction to the program before they hear of it via the grapevine, and to provide a reference for those who want to look into it.

(For a "deeper dive" into SSD, you can watch this [video presentation](#) to hear caller Noah Siegmann

explain it to callers and answer questions. A complete 47-page description including caller teaching materials is posted at Callerlab's website. The following article contains a link to "Experimental Sustainable Square Dancing Teaching Document" by scrolling to nearly the bottom of the Callerlab page. It's a PDF that the complete SSD teaching program.)

(Submitted by Peter Emmel)

What follows is an article by Gene Turner, an American now residing and calling square dances (for the Harmony Squares) in Yorkshire, UK. He wrote the article early in the COVID-19 shutdown. Since then, it has become widely distributed and was included by Jeff and Debbie Blood as a hand-out for the RAF meeting of club presidents in mid-August. We are reproducing it here with Gene's permission, so that our readers can get a full picture of this program, which is bound to be discussed among callers and club leaders in the coming months.

A Possible Plan to Restart and Sustain Square Dancing?

By Gene Turner

"Learn to Square Dance! Classes start once a year! Sign up now for weekly classes! Learn everything that you need to know about Square Dancing in only forty-eight weeks!" What's wrong with those promotional statements? Why would anyone want to do that? I would say, "No Way" to anyone who suggested that to me. Why do we continue to think that our activity as it was (and has been advertised in the past), would be attractive to the non-dancing population?

The dancers in the clubs of today (pre-pandemic) need to be the seed for the callers to form the clubs of tomorrow (post 2020) to grow and continue this great activity. Yes, there will still be dancers wanting callers to call M/S, Plus and Advanced (Puzzle-solving). Don't abandon them, but you need to be realistic and realize that the dancers in these clubs have been decreasing in numbers long before the pandemic. Realistically speaking, what has been tried for the past thirty years wasn't increasing the size of those clubs. The way forward for our activity is to provide a simple, quick/easy to learn, social, sustainable, Fun activity that could flourish if it were properly supported by Callers and dancers. The existing format of our activity is not simple, requires a commitment of nearly a year to learn, it's marginally social, and has been proven to not be sustainable. The only thing that it had going for it was that after investing years having fun learning, it was still mostly fun.

All callers need to educate themselves particularly in the art of entertaining new dancers with the emphasis on having fun with simple calls that new dancers can be introduced to early on. We need to forget about puzzle-solving for our own sakes and let the dancers move smoothly to the music and not have to concentrate so much on solving puzzles. Yes, they need variety and some complexity in dancing so that it's not all done on autopilot, but not at the expense of Fun. Primary to them having fun is the dancers having

success during their dancing experience.

*We callers need to step up our game and make every night a party dance and not a 'class' or 'close order drill'. Every dance **MUST** be fun! If new dancers learn something while they are busy laughing and having fun, that's even better. We have to realize that if at the end of the evening, they haven't been having fun, that you probably won't see them again. It has to be fun every evening ... more fun than staying home, playing games on the computer, going to the pub, going clubbing, watching TV ... How difficult can that be? **Entertaining** new dancers and giving them a fun evening is much more important than teaching them. The Social Square Dance (SSD) system might just be the answer. Refer to the [Social Square Dance \(SSD\) teaching document](#) (click to download the document) for a proposed twelve lesson system of 'New Dancer Dances'.*

I encourage all clubs/callers to advertise their classes in future as 'New Dancer Dances'. Then advertise 'Welcome to our New Dancer Dance #1; #2; #3; etc. Use the SSD system. Once they've danced all twelve sessions, start again at #1 and the previous 'New Dancers' move on to either become 'Experienced SSD Dancers' and/or 'Angels'.

Remember the 60's & 70's ... Square Dancing grew because it was social and because it was fun and not too complex. It also grew because new dancers could bring their friends and their friends could start learning to dance too. If after starting the system you find that your New Dancers want to bring their friends along you don't have to tell them "Sorry, not until next year." Plan now to start another New Dancer Group six weeks after the first group, on a different night. The 'original' New Dancers can go to the second group as 'Angels' as well as dance with their original group. They can dance with their friends without having everyone have to start from scratch. You can have two (or more) 'clubs/groups' going at the same time. Start groups in different locations convenient to the new friends/dancers. Make it easy on yourself. Keep the venues within thirty miles of your home.

If a few of your new dancers seem to struggle due to missing sessions, once you have a second group going, encourage the struggling dancers to join that second group to act as 'angels' and at the same time they become familiar with the calls that they may be having difficulty with.

*Where does this leave the first batch of 'New Dancers' when they have completed the SSD system? **Please, NO GRADUATION!** Graduation is basically 'Hazing' and embarrassing and demeaning to our newest assets, new friends who have been dancing with us for three months. Graduation happens after classes finish and usually means no more sessions. Psychologically once you graduate, you don't need to go back any more. In your mind you are finished ... it's over ... School is out ... We don't have to go back! We don't have classes. No classes = No Graduation. We have new dancer dances. Forget all the antiquated customs (IE: four corners, four candles routines), just welcome your new friends with genuine warmth every time you*

see them.

You could continue that first group, let them be social! Give those dancers variety. You might have to set aside yet another evening for 'experienced SSD dancers', from this first (and second) group to meet every week to continue to dance and have fun. If you wanted to you could use the remaining twelve calls from the Basic & M/S program (that were not presented during the SSD system) as 'special' floor levelers, use them one night only without expecting dancers to remember them. Mostly just let them Dance! Let them have FUN!

Please don't refer to our teaching sessions as 'Classes'. Club leaders/callers and even dancers need to refer to our teaching sessions as 'New Dancer Dances', not just once, but from the first 'New Dancer' dance until all of our 'New dancers' are comfortable enough to dance with our 'Experienced Dancers' every week. Whatever you do, remember to keep it light, fun and social ... Maybe even have some food/cake /pie/BBQ to make it more special.

- **Where do we get these new dancers from?**
- **Where do we find them?**
- **How do we get them through the door?**

During our enforced shutdown start a club newsletter (a couple of paragraphs at minimum) to be sent out by email or social media to your friends in your local community. It doesn't need to contain anything about square dancing (since we're not currently dancing). Ideally it would contain little tidbits about your friends (club members Birthdays or Anniversaries), short quizzes, wordsearch, sudoku, gardening/craft tips or anything that ties you all together. Ask your friends to distribute it to their friends. The object would be to reach everyone in your community who might be capable of dancing. This would be your 'New' social circle. I venture to guess that your pre-pandemic social circle only had square dancers (or people who had declined an interest in square dancing) in it. Now is the time to re-build your social circle with non-dancing people (prospective new dancers).

Once the pandemic is over and we can get together again, schedule a casual '**Social Celebration**' (Not a Dance) to include all of your new social circle (and your existing club members, new social circle) of prospective friends. After maybe an hour of social interaction with a little background music, let them see a demo of what Square Dancing is and perhaps even try it for themselves by including some very simple 'New Dancer' (SSD#1) Tips (chances are that our experienced dancers will enjoy these as a good way to refresh their memories and skills in moving to the calls). If anyone in this new social circle of friends show any interest, let them know that there will be another '**Social Celebration**' the following week (or two) where they can try it again. Let them know that they can bring their partners, family, friends and they can all try it together. At the second 'Social Celebration' use a similar format, social interaction for the first fifteen or twenty minutes before a simple demo dance and just add more simple 'New Dancer' (SSD#1) tips to fill out the evening, but keep a high

ratio of social interaction to 'New Dancer' tips. When you seem to have enough interest from these new friends you can suggest that you put on an entire evening of socializing and 'New Dancer' Dances. Voilà! You have the capability to schedule your first 'New Dancer Dance' within a week or two of the two casual 'Social Celebrations'.

NOW is the time to make plans for this to happen; to get everyone in your (currently inactive) club onboard with the plan. All dancers, Club leaders and Callers need to embrace this and make it happen. If we don't do it, our beloved activity may be in even more of a decline than it was prior to the pandemic. We can't let that happen. We need to have special monthly interclub dances for our 'New Dancers' (in addition to the weekly New Dancer Dances) and forget the past Mainstream, Plus, Advanced and Challenge weekends ... This will be the way to sustain recruitment, to sustain Square Dancing. This will be the square dancing activity of the future!

Callers, if you were just the 'hired help' in the past, it's time to step up and be **leaders**. This is a time when we need to be in control of our future and the future of the activity! It's time for caller-run 'New Dancer Dances' to step to the front line. The pre-pandemic committee-run clubs will still exist and there will still be a market for callers to be employed as 'hired help'. You are not abandoning those clubs, but you have to realize that those clubs are not going to be the future of the activity. You and your circle of new friends who you bring into the activity are the future! Your New Dancer SSD groups could stand alone as clubs or if individual new dancers wish to move occasionally into our Mainstream clubs that would be up to them. Obviously, any Mainstream or Plus dancer could dance (and dare I say, enjoy dancing) with an SSD group.

I propose that callers/leaders run SSD groups independent of existing Mainstream Clubs, providing frequent SSD events beyond the weekly SSD dances. To be effective SSD groups need to run the full evening. That is the only way they will be able to get through the SSD program in twelve sessions. Callers cannot expect new dancers to learn the material in just the first hour of each club night. SSD groups could even be 'farm clubs' feeding enthusiastic dancers into the old clubs at an experience level where the Mainstream club members wouldn't even notice a few missing calls. Or ... SSD could stand alone on the frontier of the new Social Square Dance activity.

These are just my disjointed, unoriginal thoughts and my humble opinion. I'd be very interested in your opinions and ideas. Anything that can bring the activity back to its former glory would be worthwhile discussing and exploring.

Stay Safe!

Gene Turner

Dancing and Calling in Yorkshire, England

FGeneTurner@Gmail.com

Promenader Editor’s Note: The earliest version of this article appeared in the newsletter of the Harmony

Squares, in Yorkshire, UK, where Gene Turner is the caller. His newsletter is a lot of fun to browse for square dance wisdom and great jokes. [Take a look](#).

RAF Forms “Return to Dance” Task Force

During the RAF’s Club Presidents and Callers Zoom meeting on August 10, it was agreed the RAF, in conjunction with Club Presidents, Callers, Cuers and dancers would create a Return to Dance (RTD) Task Force.

The goal of the Return to Dance Task Force is to safely return dancers back to the dance floor. We need our dancers to feel comfortable and safe dancing together again, whenever dancing begins.

The scope of RTD would include “return to dance” guidelines and safety protocols for dancers, callers, facilities, etc. In addition, RTD would assist clubs with promotions to bring recent graduates back to dancing and encourage consistent teaching and dancing programs.

The task force is made up of volunteers consisting of club presidents, callers, new dancers and RAF leadership. This team is dedicated to helping dancers and clubs return to the dance floor safely.

List of members to the RTD Task Force:

Debbie & Jeff Blood — RAF Presidents, RAF Promotions Committee Members, Copy Cats class of 2016

Mike Callahan — Caller

Dave Eno — Caller

Jim Gotta — Caller, RAF Past President

Anne Granger & Don Naulin — Silver Squares Co-Presidents, RAF Co-Vice Presidents

Donna & Bob Indovina — new dancers, Copy Cats class of 2019

Rick LaDonna — RAF Treasurer, Past President of Copy Cats

Mary Martin & Phil LaRussa — current Presidents Copy Cats, Copy Cats class of 2016

Gil Porter — Caller

Eileen Webster — Cuer, RAF representative, RAF Promotions Committee Member

We also have dancers who will contribute to the RTD Task Force, though not as active members. These RTD contributors are:

Amy & Kris Aeckerle — Coordinators RAF Promotions Committee

Henry Capon — President Cloverleafs

Peter Emmel — President Village Squares, Promenader Editor

We thank everyone for volunteering and in advance for your participation. We look forward to working together to resume dancing safely.

Submitted by Jeff & Debbie Blood

John Edward McNeill

John Edward McNeill, son of William G. Sr. and Dorothy (nee Petzold), died peacefully in his sleep on August 7, 2020. Born on Christmas day 1937 in Darby, PA, he is survived by his wife of almost 60 years and high school sweetheart Sally (nee Barnes), brothers Bill of Fairport, Brian (Denise) of Newtown Square, PA, sisters Kathy Nolan of Bohemia, NY, and Regina Rourke (Chris) of New Milford, CT, sons Bill (Sandy) of Raleigh, NC, Ken (Chan) of Houston, TX, and Paul (Traci) of Port Orchard, WA, grandsons Peter (fiancee Melissa) of Garner, NC and Joe of Port Orchard, WA, granddaughters, Larenda Brinkerhoff and Leaember

Romack both of Port Orchard, WA, Lareydo of Soap Lake, WA, Dr. Rachel of Columbia, SC, Kennady and Callee both of Houston, TX, great-grandchildren Kraven Romack and Remington Romack both of Port Orchard, WA and Trey Thompson of Soap Lake, WA, and numerous nieces and nephews. He is predeceased by his parents and brother Kevin (Cindy) of New Milford, CT. John worked 25 years for Eastman Kodak, retiring as a data manager. In retirement he worked 12 years as the activities bus driver for St. John’s Meadows Senior Community. He graduated from Vernon-Verona-Sherrill High School in 1955 and attended the class reunions regularly. He graduated

from Niagara University in 1960. His loves were traveling, camping (later RVing), square dancing and family. He was a member of the Tecumseh Squares square dancing group, a long-time member and volunteer at St. Theodore's Catholic Church, and the DS&W camping club. In lieu of flowers, donations to the Wilmot Cancer Institute are welcome. Due to the pandemic, the funeral will be held at a later date.

To Plant Memorial Trees in John's memory, please visit our Sympathy Store.

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Note from Anne Granger about John's square dance connection:

Some of you might have danced with John and remember him fondly. He was very active in the square dance community for many years. He started dancing, along with his wife, Sally, in 1980 at Ekco Squares. During this time, he was President of the club and danced there until it dissolved. They then danced at Tecumseh Squares until it dissolved. John and his friend, Don Naulin, teased that they were getting to be experts at closing down clubs! For many years John danced at various clubs until he was no longer able to dance.

His wife and beloved square dance friends danced at national and international conventions at places such as Indiana, Charlotte, Portland, and Toronto. He also helped organize the amazing Fantastic Fling Weekends.

John had a great sense of humor and was fun to be around. Right up until the first weekend of June 2020, he camped with his square dance group of 35 years. John was loved by all who met him.

