

**E.O.S.A.R.D.A. Council of Dancers Meeting Minutes
April 19 2015
St. Andrews Presbyterian Church Hall
425 Center St. at Dibble, Prescott, ON**

Represented Clubs and Representatives at COD

Adams Aces	Bruce Warner	
Bay Waves	Ron Gardener	Charlene Gardner
Capital Carousels	Gavin Currie	Ziggy Segstro
Charmin Promenaders	Wendy VanderMeulen	
Got Lines	Dave Western	
Harbour Lites	Regina Gerhard	
Kanata Squares	Marie Currie	
Limestone Dancers	Colin Brown	Shirley Brown
Limestone Dancers	Bob Summers	
Lockits	Geoff Clarke	Teena Clarke
Meri Squares	Martha Summers	Linn Davelaar Ann Davelaar
Mississippi Squares	Jim Trach	Jane Trach
OSRDF	Peter Courdin	Karen Remy
Ottawa Date Squares	Richard Sharman	Robert Dunlop
Round Tuit Dancers	Jim Sawtell	Gerry Sawtell
Seaway Squares	Harold Moore	Marion Moore
Sunshine Squares	Jim Kearns	
Swinging Bees	Roger Frappier	
Swinging Swallows	Eleanor Patterson	Renton Patterson
Take a step Rounds	Arlo Speer	
Trackers	Pierre Reinhard	Mary Anne Reinhard
Village Squares	Bob Forsyth	

1. Call to Order - Dave Western
2. Confirmation of a quorum - Barbara Englehart
3. Opening remarks - Dave Western - **See Attached #1**
4. Approval of the draft agenda - Dave Western
5. Approval of Minutes of the November 2014 Council of Dancers
- 6. Reports**
 - 6.1) Operations Committee
 - 6.1.1) Financial Report - Bruce Warner/Charlene Gardner - **See Attached #2**
 - 6.1.2) Registrar's Report - Barbara Englehart - **See Attached #3**
 - 6.2) Publicity, Promotions and Publishing Committee - Dave Western - **See Attached #4**
 - 6.3) Dance Committee - Pierre Reinhard - **See Attached #5**
 - 6.4) Information Technology Committee - Bob Summers - **See Attached #6**
 - 6.5) Club Liaison, Recognition and Awards Committee - Richard Sharman - **See Attached #7**
 - 6.6) Ottawa Area Callers Association (OACA) - Bob Summers - **See Attached #8**
 - 6.7) Round Dance Teachers Association (RDTA) - Jim Sawtell - **See Attached #9**
 - 6.9) SVSRDA - ?? - **Nill Report**
 - 6.10) Ontario Square and Round Dance Federation - Peter Courdin - **Nill Report**
- 7. Business Arising from the Minutes**
 - 7.1) Publicity Working Group (6c & 8f Nov. Minutes) - Dave Western

- 7.2) Application Form for Federation Bursary (6d Nov. Minutes) - Richard Sharman
- 7.3) Club Visit Dangle - Revised Chapter 24 (8c Nov. Minutes) - Dave Western - **See Attached #10**
- 7.4) Club Contacts - Revised Form (8e Nov. Minutes) - Bob Summers

8. New Business

- 8.1) Dancer registration directly with Federation - Dave Western
 - 8.1.1) Federation Policy
 - 8.1.2) EOSARDA Policy
- 8.2) Young Dancer Initiative - Dave Western - - **See Attached #11**
- 8.3) Scheduling Conflicts - Geoff Clarke - **See Attached #12**
- 8.4) EOSARDA 60th Anniversary - Pierre Reinhard - **See Attached #13**
- 8.5) Election of Directors for 2015/16 - Dave Western - **See Attached #14**
- 8.6) Election of Federation Representatives - Dave Western - **See Attached #15**
- 8.7) Club Round Table and announcements
- 8.8) Square Time Subscriptions - Jane Trach

9. Other business

- a) Date and location of next Council of Dancers

Reports:

Attachment #1 - Submitted by Dave Western

Opening Remarks - Council of Dancers April 19, 2015

Good afternoon and welcome to the April 2015 Council of Dancers and our 2015 Annual General Meeting.

If any of you have not yet signed in, would you please do so now and if you are representing a club, please make sure that the name of the club is clearly indicated. (PRINT legibly please, Ron has to try and read it later.)

If you don't have one, a few copies of the agenda are available on the back table.

We will take a fifteen minute break around 2:45 at which time we will have tea/coffee and snacks. Please resume your seats promptly at the end of the break.

Under EOSARDA's Constitution and By-laws:

- Any registered dancer may attend and speak at the meeting,
- But only Club Representatives have a vote.
- Each registered club may have up to 2 representatives both of whom may vote on any issue before the Council.
- However, no individual Club Rep may vote more than once on any issue (you don't get two votes if you are the only rep from your club)
- Directors cannot vote unless they are also Club Reps.
- The Board is bound by any decision or direction issued by this Council.

When addressing Council, please keep in mind that, no matter how notorious you may think you are, you are not necessarily known to everyone in the hall. The Secretary in particular needs to know who you are and what club you represent. That way he will know who to blame when making up the Minutes and also who to contact if there are any questions about what was said. When addressing the meeting for the first time, please clearly state your name and club affiliation before contributing to the discussion.

Those of you with prepared texts are asked to submit them to the Secretary electronically as soon as possible after the meeting.

To enable this Council to make decisions and to elect a new Board, a quorum of 25% of Member Clubs is required. We currently have 32 clubs registered as Members of EOSARDA, so a quorum is 8 clubs. Madame Registrar, can you confirm that we have enough Member clubs present to allow us to continue?

This afternoon your Board of Directors will be reporting to you on the Board's activities over the course of the past year. We will also be sharing with you our plans and hopes for the next dance year. The twin themes of dancer retention and recruitment remain our guiding lights. To that end, Geoff Clarke has asked to speak to Council about an issue which he believes negatively impacts both themes.

Are there any other items that anyone would like to add to the agenda?

Also this afternoon you will be electing a new Board of Directors to lead your Association through the 2015/16 Dance Year. I am very pleased to advise Council that most of the current Directors are prepared to serve on the Board for another year, if that is Council's wish. But in order for this Board is going to continue its work in an efficient and effective manner, we need a few more members to share the work.

Your Board of Directors is neither a regulatory nor a governing body. Our task is to promote square and round dancing across Eastern Ontario and Western Quebec and to provide assistance to clubs as needed. Please help us to help you by volunteering to join the Board.

Reports:

Attachment #2 – Submitted by Bruce Warner

As of this date the bank balance is	\$ 9,022.01
With O/S cheques of	50.00
 This results in a book balance of	 <u>\$ 8,972.01</u>
 O/S cheque 1461 St. Andrew's (COD)	 50.00
	=====

CICs purchased Oct 28, 2014 \$10,000.00

Respectfully submitted

Bruce Warner
Treasurer

Reports:

Attachment #3 - Submitted by Dave Western - Publicity Working Group

Apr 15, 2015

The focus of activity for P&P since last November has been on setting up a Publicity Working Group with representatives from every club in the region.

As Council was advised in November, the Working Group was to be tasked with helping the Board to develop a comprehensive, effective, consistent and affordable publicity program for the whole region that would complement the recruiting activities of our member clubs.

Although a request was made at Council for each club to name a representative to the Working Group, no action was taken on this by any club until I contacted each club president with a direct request to name a representative. There was a great deal of surprise among the club presidents when my request was received and not a little resistance despite the fact that no objections had been raised when this idea was presented to Council in November. This raises some concern about the way in which Council issues are being shared with club executives and the degree of attention that is given to issues discussed at Council.

Anyway, at the present time all clubs are represented on the Working Group (some rather reluctantly) with the exception of the Cornwall Carousels.

Since many members of the working group had no experience at the regional level and we're not be aware of what we have done in the past, I developed a Background paper to bring them up to speed. A copy of this discussion paper can be found on the discussion board on eodance.ca

The working group made extensive use of electronic media, including the new discussion group facility

on evidence that Bob Summers developed. There have been no face-to-face meetings, nor are any anticipated.

In late February, after Bob and I had extensively tested the Discussion Board, I sent out log-in instructions to all members of the Working Group and also invited them to begin discussing ways in which EOSARDA can help clubs with their annual recruiting drives.

I had no sooner done that than the server went down and access to the Discussion Forum was cut off. It took about 48 hours to get things up and running again.

Since then there have been 367 views of the Discussion Forum and 18 replies have been posted.

So what's the bottom line? Did we get a consensus and do we have a new approach to recommend to Council?

Unfortunately, No, we do not. There was certainly a lot of interest in the Discussion Board, but no clear consensus arose. Instead we ended up with 25 recommendations as follows:

Maintain current financial support for clubs	- 2
Feature article in press	- 1
Arrange for local TV coverage	- 1
Consider a January start-up	- 1
Booth at the Zoomers Show - May 9-10	- 1
Offer free memberships to new dancers	- 1
Place an ad in the Ottawa Citizen	- 1
Flash mob	- 1
Sponsor a Family Day	- 1
Dance Demos w/audience participation	- 2
Do a survey of the general public	- 1
Compress the learning time	- 1
Have a central learning point	- 1
Professional PR/Marketing campaign	- 1
Regional Advertising blitz	- 1
Posters in waiting rooms	- 1
You tube video	- 1
Co-sponsor (drug store) posters	- 1
EOSARDA Facebook Page	- 1
Target single dancers w/ad	- 1
Media at large dances	- 1
Pay for Callers at demos	- 1
Give Callers money to purchase new music	- 1
Re-engineer learning process to appeal to younger dancers (shorter learning cycle)	- 3
Fund new initiatives	- 1

There are also 2 replies and 119 views under “Colourful Brochure/Bookmark” but these seem to be aimed more at clubs than the regional association.

So for the Fall it will be status quo with EOASRDA’s contribution being limited to providing recruiting subsidies to those clubs who qualify, unless this Council wishes to direct the Board to proceed otherwise.

Reports:

Attachment #4 - Submitted by Pierre Reinhard

Para 6.3 - Dance Committee Report

1. On Saturday, February 7th, EOSARDA held Frosty Fling at St Patrick High School. This year, the dance was held in the afternoon and by number of dancers who signed in, I would say that it was a success. The final sign-in numbers were 160 including the callers and cuers. Thirteen dancers identified themselves as new basic dancers. This number may not be accurate and the number of new Mainstream or Round Dancers were not taken into consideration.

Because of the change of venue, there were some complaints from the round dancers about the music crossing over at the back of the gym making difficult to hear the cues. This was resolved by reducing the volume in the

square dance gym and reducing round dance area in the round dancing gym.

The overall dance was a success both monetarily and by the number of dancer's attending both the round and square dancers. I think that EOSARDA should look at having the Frosty Fling 2016 in the afternoon as well.

2. Fall Fest 2015: Just a reminder that at the CoD last November, the council voted not to have this fall. It will be discussed again at the CoD November 2015 for fall 2016.
3. Later we will be talking about EOSARDA 60th Anniversary Dance.

Reports:

Attachment #5 - Submitted by

Reports:

Attachment #6 - Submitted by Bob Summers

IT Report to Council of Dancers Mtg – Apr 19, 2015

Since the last COD meeting, more work has been done on the Discussion Group linked to the eoDance website. Initially, the security measures had a "CAPTCHA" system -- a graphic display of letters and numbers where you had to type the same letters and numbers to match. This is to make it hard for "bots" to post garbage on the Discussion Group. That failed miserably, apparently "bots" have become very sophisticated at handling "CAPTCHA" displays and we had many bogus posts as well as many bogus user registrations. The security system was changed to a simple "Question & Answer" challenge ("What's the next number in the sequence: 2,3,4,5") and this seems to have stopped the "bots" from posting and registering. Go figure...

A dedicated "Forum" was set up for the Publicity Working Group to brainstorm and discuss ideas of for publicizing square and round dancing in our area instead of just using emails. It seems to have been successful in sharing comments from clubs and continues to be a repository for others to read.

To encourage dancers to post information to the Discussion Group, the latest News Highlight about the recent new-caller showcases and the April B/MS dance gives a brief intro on the website but then links to a full post of the information on the Discussion Group.

Please note that this Discussion Group is meant for posting by members, not the webmaster. Also webmasters are not generally expected to provide content for a website but rather to mechanically put content from others on the site -- so feel free to suggest any information that you feel the website needs.

Reports:

Attachment #7 - Submitted by Richard Sharman

Club Liaison

32 Broadcast Messages have been sent to our contact list. This list should include one member from each club who is responsible for forwarding the messages to their members.

We have received and paid bursaries for recruitment from 5 clubs.

The Trillium Merit Award was awarded to Rusty Sauders by David Western at the Halfway Dance.

We have received nominations for a Long Service award and two merit awards, approved and forwarded them to the Ontario Federation.

Bob Summers initiated the Visiting Dancer program designed to encourage new dancers visit other clubs. New dancers are often very hesitant to visit other clubs, yet this is an excellent way of improving dancer skills and

confidence. When visiting clubs that participate in the program Basic Dancers are admitted free and they can bring an angel who gets it for half price. (It is recognized that it is almost impossible to get Beginning Dancers to visit other clubs without someone else going along.)

The Club Visitation Dangle program has been revitalized. Only one couple applied for the dangle. (Marguerite and Jim Evens were given their dangle at the Frosty Fling dance.) The new program has two levels and several people are known to be actively chasing it!

Reports:

Attachment #8 - Submitted by Bob Summers

OACA Report to Council of Dancers Mtg – Apr 19, 2015

OACA meets 6 times a year (the first Sunday in Oct, Nov, Dec, Feb, Mar, and Apr) for 2 hours. April's meeting was cancelled this year because it fell on Easter Sunday.

The first half of the meeting focuses on Business Items: things that affect or are of interest to callers, our dancers, our clubs and square dancing in general. Since the Chair of the OACA is also on the EOSARDA Board, part of the business section includes a report of items discussed at the previous EOSARDA board meeting.

The second half of the meeting is spent on workshops and presentations to the callers by members of the OACA.

This season, the OACA has 19 members consisting of club callers, past callers and new callers. We had one new member join our association this year. 2 members are retired or on medical hiatus.

Three callers are on the EOSARDA board –

- Bob Summers as Chair of the OACA, and Chair of the IT Committee,
- Richard Sharman, as the Chair of the Club Liaison Committee, and
- Andy Himberg-Larsen as a Director and Equipment Manager.

Recent Discussions at OACA since the last Council of Dancers meeting

Barry Clasper, Chair of CALLERLAB, an international organization that fosters the art of square dance calling and improving caller skills, gave a great presentation on competition in square dancing. This presentation was the bulk of our Feb meeting.

From Barry's talk ...

Until recently CALLERLAB actually had a policy stating competition should not be a part of square dancing. Over the past few years that attitude dissipated enough for the policy to be revoked.

Recently the CALLERLAB Board Of Governors did some research to get a feeling for how many competitive square dance events might actually be out there. This research identified a dozen or so competitions that are still active. This research turned up some interesting facts:

- Most are aimed at young people
- Most are based on Traditional square dancing (i.e. entire dances are known and may be practiced in advance of the competition).
- Most are judged more heavily on presentation factors (e.g. appearance, synchronicity, styling, etc.) than accuracy (e.g. dancing what is being called, reacting to unusual situations, puzzle solving).

One thing that the investigation demonstrated clearly is that competitive formats attract younger people. If we are trying to attract younger people to our activity, some element of competition would seem to offer appeal.

Barry showed videos of young dancers at the Pennsylvania Farm Show and teens taking part in the Pacific North West Competitions where Barry was the “mystery caller” recently for those competitions, and called some fairly complex and unusual choreography,

Suppose we were to work at increasing the presence of competition in square dancing. Barry mentioned some of the results we might expect. The major ones are:

- We would increase our appeal to younger people; competitions seem to help counter the “square dancing isn't cool” attitude.
- Competitions can provide an appealing public demonstration of what square dancing is like and how it can be fun.

So the conundrum appears to be: we need younger dancers to have competitions and we need competitions to attract younger dancers.

Now, to contrast this exciting world of youth and competitive dancing, at our next month's meeting, Wendy Vandermeulen made a great presentation on the reality that we face each day with our current dancers who's age and commitment are not the same as in the past. Today's dancers are older, they have other interests take away from dance nights, they take off for weeks at a time for vacation, etc. The sad truth is that our dancers are not as committed and as a result are weaker. By keeping our same approach to teaching, such dancers get frustrated with the “lessons”, don't do well and perhaps get discouraged and leave.

In effect, the “Rush to Plus” in the USA is just a more extreme version of our “Rush to Mainstream”. Effectively there is no place for Basic dancers just to dance. The typical statement: Everyone complains about how “weak” our dancers are and yet no one does anything about it.

So rather than just agree that something needs to be done – and continue to do nothing – the callers agreed experiment with changes to the Basic program next fall to help strengthen new dancers.

The approach will be to teach only the first 40 Basic calls in the first year, with remaining 13 Basic calls and the 16 Mainstream calls taught in the second dance year.

By reducing the number of moves taught in the first year, it's hoped that new dancers will have more time to practice those moves and strengthen their dancing skills.

As an example of their continued commitment to strengthening new dancers and giving them a place to “just dance”, Wendy, John and Brian had a very successful dance night last week at Sir Robert Bordon HS aimed squarely at our Basic and Mainstream dancers.

Most of this information has already been on the eoDance website for months now.

David Western was at the Barry Clasper presentation about youth competitive dancing and wanted to “take the next step”. He presented a youth initiative that is based on the success that some individual callers have had some in various local schools. Much of the current school dance program is just exposing the youth to square dancing for 5 days and then nothing more is/can be/has been done. David said that he'd like to see some expansion of this into more regular dancing (teen clubs, after school dancing, etc).

Basic Summer Dancing is on again this summer at the Tom Brown arena. Schedules have been prepared and are being distributed.

For next year, the OACA has a new executive. John Charman agreed to stay on OACA Treasurer. and Dave Currie will be the OACA Chair for the next season.

Reports:

Attachment #9 - Submitted by Jim Sawtell

ROUND DANCE ASSOCIATION REPORT

April 19, 2015

The Round Dance Teachers have been busy planning for the Cowan Tribute/Cancer Benefit Dance. We are getting down to the final details and hope that the other dance which is scheduled for the same evening will not deter too many dancers. This is our only Open Dance this year. If you wish to lend a hand, let me know.

Jean and Don Clingin announced that in September, they will not continue with "Take-a-Step Rounds" in Nepean/Ottawa. Their last class will be on April 30th. Gerry and Jim Sawtell have agreed to fill the void and continue with the dancers at the same venue, on the same night, and at the same time beginning next September.

We hope to see all of you at the dance on Saturday night April 25th. For more information visit the EODance website.

Submitted by Jim Sawtell

Reports:
Attachment #10 - Submitted by Dave Western
EOSARDA Procedures Manual

Chapter 24

EOSARDA - Club Visit Dangle

Overview

The EOSARDA Club Visit Dangle is intended to encourage visits to EOSARDA Member Dance Clubs and attendance at Open Dances. It is awarded, upon application, to any registered dancer who completes the specified number of visits during the course of a single dance year (September 1 through August 30).

For the purposes of qualifying for this dangle the term “*visit*” includes:

- a visit to any EOSARDA Member club of which you are not a member, on its regular club night
- attendance at any Open Dance sponsored by an EOSARDA Member Club/Association
- attendance at any Open Dance sponsored by EOSARDA

To obtain your dance dangle:

- complete the required number of visits during a single dance year (only one club night visit per club per year per applicant please)
- have the application form signed and dated as proof of your visit
- - submit the completed application form to Mary Anne Reinhard, Club Liaison Committee by no later than September 30 of the following year.

Achievement Levels

Silver Level

To earn a Silver Club Visit Dangle, a dancer must, during the course of a single dance year, undertake 5 “*visits*”.

Gold Level

To earn a Gold Dance Dangle, a dancer must, during the course of a single dance year, undertake 8 “*visits*”.

NOTE

Some clubs in Upper New York State are members in good standing of the Seaway Valley Square and Round Dance Association which is a member of EOSARDA. A visit to one of these clubs qualifies as a “*visit*” under this program and any dancer registered with one of these clubs may qualify to receive a Club Visit Dangle.¹

¹Revised April 12, 2015

EOSARDA Club Visit Dangle - Application Form

Please Print

Name:

Club:

Mailing Address:

Phone Number:

Club Visits

	Name of Club Visited	Date of Visit	Signature of Caller or Club Executive
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			

EOSARDA-Sponsored Dances

Signature of member of dance committee or EOSARDA Executive

Frosty Fling

Swing into Spring

Note all visits must be completed between September 1 and August 30 of a single dance year.

Submit completed form to Mary Anne Reinhard of the Club Liaison Committee on or before September 30 of the next dance year.

Reports:

Attachment #11 - Submitted by Dave Western

Direct Dancer Registration with Federation (Amended)

April 19, 2015

For some time now, I have been aware that all of the Clogging Clubs in Eastern Ontario have chosen to register their clubs and their dancers directly with Federation. The origins of this arrangement have been lost in the mists of time, but it apparently stems from Clogging Clubs feeling that EOSARDA was not paying sufficient attention to their wants and needs.

I have never been very comfortable with this practice, but given that we had other more pressing matters to deal with, I chose to let sleeping dogs lie.

However, during the course of a recent exchange of e-mails with one of our clubs a situation of which I was unaware, has come to my attention.

As you know, some of our Member Clubs choose to belong to more than one regional Association due to their geographical location, eg Border Boosters. This has resulted in some Member clubs registering both their club and their dancers with EOSARDA, while others have only registered their club with us, choosing to register their dancers through another regional association. We have previously discussed how this complicates matters when it comes to Recruitment Subsidies, but seem to have found an acceptable way to deal with the issue.

But now I have learned of yet another wrinkle in the registration process. In at least one case, one of our Member clubs has chosen to register its dancers directly with Federation. In doing so, they pay \$4 per dancer to Federation, thus saving the club \$2 per dancer over what they would have paid to register their dancers with EOSARDA.

The first problem with this process is that it deprives EOSARDA of needed operating funds. If more clubs decided to follow this route, our association would incur a financial loss sufficient to put its continued existence in doubt.

And there is another potential problem.

Among other things, EOSARDA Members Clubs are entitled to receive subsidies for recruitment and for Dance Leader training; reduced costs for advertising in Square Time; and to have EOSARDA reps attend their annual graduation ceremonies. So for an annual payment of only \$8 - the price of a club registration - a club could receive \$200 or more in direct financial benefits.

I believe that this is unacceptable.

I am therefore proposing that we attack this issue on two levels.

a) Ontario Square and Round Dance Federation

I propose that EOSARDA formally petition Federation to:

- cease allowing clubs located in any area where a regional association is active, to register the club and/or its dancers directly with Federation.

b) EOSARDA Member Clubs

I propose that we ask Council to approve amendments to our Operating Procedures that would preclude any club which has chosen to register its dancers directly with Federation from receiving any financial benefits from its membership in EOSARDA including but not limited to:

- reduced advertising costs for Square Time
- eligibility for Recruiting Subsidies
- eligibility for subsidies for Dance Leader training
- free attendance of EOSARDA representatives at any club event such as Annual New Dancer Graduation ceremonies.
- use of EOSARDA's not-for-profit number
- free receipt of certificates recognizing major club events

Reports:

Attachment #12 - Submitted by Geoff Clarke

Address to: The Council of Dancers Meeting of April 19, 2015

I first raised this 'issue' quite a number of years ago at a COD meeting, in Kemptville as I recall, but was politely 'shot down' by daring to suggest that we (EOSARDA) should really "do anything" concrete about it, after-all I was told, you really can't tell the clubs what to do. And so I said to myself at the time, "*oh well, I guess it will work itself out in time*" and said nothing further. That was quite some time prior to 2012, and I've not been able to find any 'record' (ie: minutes) of the points I raised at that particular COD meeting. Yes, the 'dance date conflict issue' has been raised a couple of times at COD meetings in April 2012 & Nov 2013, but nothing has been done to correct the ongoing problem. So this is why I'm here now addressing this Council so there will be a formal record of the specifics & response or plan of action (if any) to deal with this issue head on.

So, referring to an October 21, 2012 email that I wrote to the EOSARDA President which included in part, the following"*looking at the EOSARDA "Calendar of Events" for the month of November, one can't help but notice that there are no less than 3 Dances scheduled for the same weekend day – Saturday, November 10th. 2 WITHIN EOSARDA & one just outside.*"

For the two dances WITHIN EOSARDA, we have a "contest" between Square Dancers & Round Dancers as to which event they'll chose to support. It puzzles me, given the current 'state of affairs' of our dance community as to WHY do we continue to do this – forcing dancers to make these kinds of choices? If we had a huge surplus of dancers, fine, but that's not the reality we face right now! I don't know 'who was first' when scheduling that date, and probably neither looked at any possible conflicts of dates, but surely some sort of 'checkpoint' can be put in place to avoid this kind of 'competition' for dancers as BOTH events will likely lose out (whether you're dancing Basic or A2; or Phase 2 or 6). Some of the 'old timers' will tell you that once-upon-at-time, there was a 'general rule/agreement' (within EOSARDA) to prevent this from happening – perhaps it's time to bring that back?

Dancers do have to make choices when faced with 'alternatives' – but to create that situation within our own area is foolish! Just my opinion..... side note: we've chosen to go to the Harbour Lights Food Bank dance.

And the 'conflicts' that I was referring to at that time was only the 'tip of the iceberg', for, in the response I received from the EOSARDA President it contained other examples of similar conflicts including club date events conflicting with the Swing Into Spring event that year. So what happened? Well, SiS lost money that year, because, IMHO, the dancers had to choose which event they would attend. (*see COD minutes of April 2012 for specific details*)

BUT, NOTHING CHANGED!

Roll forward to 2013 and I noted in the fall of that year that we had....

- Sat - OCTOBER 5th - "Annual Dance for Knowledge" versus "A2 Blast Weekend"
- Sun - OCTOBER 20th - "Special A1/A2 Dance" versus "Regular A2 Club Dance" - same time of the day!!
- Sat - NOVEMBER 9th - "Capital Capers" (Rounds) versus "ANNUAL FOOD BANK DANCE"

YES, again in 2013, as a Square & Round dancer, I personally had to 'choose' again, this time I had THREE choices. And yes I chose the Food Bank Dance again! Again there was a brief mention in the COD minutes of November 2013, but again, no decisions were forthcoming, other than "Please try to schedule taking other clubs into account". That 'approach' hasn't help much!

Onwards through 2014 and, as a website coordinator, I continued to watch the flyers go by & the events being posted on the EOSARDA & SVSRDA websites, and saw that the dancing conflicts continued unabated (eg: March & April), but being Festival 2014 year, there was already enough going on for us all to deal with first.

So here we are in 2015 and guess what, nothing's changed and it's early in the year and we have "dancing conflicts" posted already and it's only April !!.....

- Saturday, April 25th - Tribute to Don Cowan Round dance versus A2 Training Days and....
- Sat & Sun, August 28/29 - Summer Caper Round dance versus RGS Summer Weekend

I 'understand' that there was a serious attempt to resolve the April 25th conflict, but to no avail, and so the conflict remains intact & dancers will now have to choose which event they wish to attend. Wonderful!

You know it's tough enough to fill our halls as it is without creating conflicts for ourselves by making Dancers chose between one event or the other on the SAME DATES!!

Questions that come to my mind include Are these decisions being made for the benefit of the ACTIVITY, or (dare I say) are there selfish personal reasons for it? Does nobody really care any more about the 'overall' well-being of Square (& Round) dancing in EOSARDA such that all decisions are made for the benefit of the DANCERS, nothing more, nothing less - the DANCERS must win & to force them to have to choose is NOT a winning scenario!

This has been going on for far too long time, and it's been 'talked about' but really nothing has been done, nor has anything changed and I personally think it's about time that something "concrete" should be done about it, with decisions made and recorded, to create a positive direction going forward!..... or, do we continue to just ignore it and watch the eventual self-destruction of our activity as clubs, dancers, leaders, & organizers end up with a 'dog eat dog' stance for "their piece of turf"!?

I remember Keith Watters telling me that 'years ago' there was an unwritten agreement amongst clubs, callers, cuers & organizers which prevented this kind of thing happening. So what happened to that?

As I said in my email to the EOSARDA President back in 2012.... ***"I brought this up some years ago at a COD meeting and was promptly 'shot down in flames' for even suggesting the 'bizarre idea' of an "EOSARDA Coordinator" who's role would be to 'manage' the local dance scheduling so that conflicts would be avoided. I recall the 'issue' surrounding that suggestion was that of "Club Autonomy", in other words..... having 'anyone' with the power to possibly say 'no' to a Club that wanted to hold a dance on a particular date.... well, that just wouldn't happen! So unless the 'landscape' has changed and the clubs might now be willing to consider such, AND the EOSARDA Board is prepared to take on the 'central scheduling' task, then I doubt that it will fly today?"***

And what I'm referring to here is CONFLICTS between any 'single event' DANCING (not meetings etc.) that would occur on WEEKENDS whereby the organizer(s) are trying to achieve at least a 'break even' result. Even EOSARDA's own 'Dance Manual' (chapter 20.2[b]) makes the note "... in order to ensure participation by as many dancers from as many areas as possible...." Note the use of the word "DANCERS", without any distinction as to whether we're talking about Rounds or Squares, or levels or phases... JUST dancers..... period!

As I hear that the registration for SiS 2015 is currently around the 175 dancer mark, I believe that's much higher than in the past? Could that be due to the fact that there's NO CONFLICT with T&D (or equivalent event) this time around? Granted that we're talking two events set far apart in the past, but you can quickly see how "conflicting"

dates cause dancers to have to choose! So if the events are even closer together (ie: within EOSARDA), then the impact is much more severe!

The question then I put to the members of this Council Meeting is simply this -"ARE THE EOSARDA CLUBS, CALLERS, CUERS, AND ORGANIZERS WILLING to put into place a procedure to "manage" the scheduling of dates of 'weekend' dancing events going forward with the expressed intent of removing dancing conflicts & maximizing the attendance at those events?" Note: This would HAVE to be a UNANIMOUS decision in order for it to work.

MOTION:

Moved by Geoff Clarke (Lockits)

Seconded by Gerry Sawtell (Round Tuits)

..... **"that EOSARDA, within its current structure, establish the position of a "Dancing Date Scheduler/Coordinator" for the expressed & singular intent of eliminating dance date conflicts within the boundaries of EOSARDA"**

Reports:

Attachment #13 - Submitted by Pierre Reinhard

Para 8.4 – EOSARDA 60th Anniversary

The dance Committee is in the process of planning for the EOSARDA 60th Anniversary.

- a. Local callers and cuers
- b. Date: either Oct 3rd or 4th 2015 (depending on availability of venues) in the afternoon
- c. since it will be a celebration party it will be in one hall square and rounds.
- d. it will be catered
- e. we are still in planning stage.

Reports:

Attachment #14 - Submitted by Dave Western - Elections

Slate of Nominees for Board of Directors 2015/16

- Currie, Gavin
- Englehart, Barbara
- Gardner, Charlene
- Gardner, Ron
- Himberg-Larsen, Andy
- Langtry, Billi
- Langtry, Chuck
- Reinhard, Mary Anne
- Reinhard, Pierre
- Sharman, Richard
- Summers, Bob
- Tripp, June
- Warner, Bruce
- Western, Dave

RDTA Rep - Sawtell, Jim

OACA Rep - Currie, David

Reports:

Attachment #15 - Submitted by Dave Western

Report - Young Dancer Initiative

April 15, 2015

As you all know only too well, we are losing about 10% of our square dancers every year. This loss is not sustainable in the long run. If it continues square dancing in our part of the country is going to go the way of the dodo bird - and in my opinion, that is not a good thing.

Over the past 5 years, across the region we have been working very hard on the twin themes of Recruitment and Retention, and have been doing quite well on the former. As I pointed out in the last edition of Square Time, over 20% of our current dancers were not dancing with us three years ago. So we are definitely bringing in new recruits, lots of them.

We have even succeeded in bringing in a few younger (30-40 year old) new dancers.

But overall, our new recruits tend to be in the 50+ bracket.

Unfortunately, we are losing older dancers at a rate that is greater than our intake rate.

Because of our demographic profile, square dancing continues to be identified in the public mind as a “Seniors Activity”.

There is nothing wrong with this per se, we certainly need to maintain our successful efforts to attract the 50+ crowd.

But as clubs age:

- it becomes harder to find volunteers to run things;
- more and more dancers disappear during the winter months, leaving clubs struggling to pay the bills and keep things going and
- the pool of potential Callers is significantly reduced since older dancers are less likely to want to take on the challenge of learning a new craft.

And of course, the dance-life span of older dancers is shorter than that of younger ones.

I think that we can all agree that significantly increasing the intake of younger dancers would be a good thing. But how do we do this?

Last month Barry Clasper gave the OACA a very interesting talk about the benefits of competitive square dancing and the proven attraction that it has for younger dancers. But while he supplied the “Why”, he did not provide the “How” and in talking to him afterwards, he had no more ideas for that than we do.

The conundrum is that while Competitive Square Dancing attracts young dancers, we need young dancers to do competitive dancing and we don't have them.

We know from experience that when people like Paul Adams and Graham Ingrham go into schools to teach square dancing the kids respond very favourably. But those same kids are remarkably resistant to the idea of dancing with our regular clubs. They just don't want to dance with their grandparents, and frankly, who can blame them?

To my mind we need to find a way to get some youth clubs up and running, and that is easier said than done.

But, suppose that we were to take a flexible approach and allow youth clubs to exist as:

- lunch time clubs in schools or
- as after-school extra-curricular activities or
- church-affiliated clubs, or
- city sponsored youth groups or
- club-sponsored youth sections or

- even stand alone youth clubs with no one way of doing things?

And, suppose that we could provide the program at no cost to either the dancers or the sponsoring bodies?

Suppose we were able to offer youth a 20-week Basic/Mainstream teaching program at no charge with the option of continuing on to Plus and above at a minimal cost?

The initial goal would be to set up 2-3 clubs exclusively for youth and teach the full Basic and Mainstream program.

We would promote inter-club competition by having a well-publicized dance-off among the clubs at the end of the 20-week session.

We would also choose the best dancers for demo teams to promote square dancing among youth.

To do this I propose to seek seed money from the Association, Federation and Society.

Our goal would be to obtain an initial \$10K

This would permit us to:

- Pay Callers \$2,000 for 20 hours of instruction
- Pay for hall rentals where necessary and
- do a targeted advertising blitz advertising in selected areas

We would aim at starting the program in late Fall (October?) with the aim of graduating new dancers in the spring.

This would let them attend both the Halfway Dance and Frosty Fling and perhaps even Swing-into-Spring.

Come the next Fall we would repeat the initial program for new dancers and

Offer partially subsidized Plus lessons for returning dancers with the aim of making them self-funding within a reasonable period of time.

Last Sunday I met with the OACA to pitch this concept to them and they were supportive of the concept.

I then spoke with Peter Piazza from the Ontario Federation who not only offered to try and obtain funding for the project from Federation, but also to present the concept to Society with a view to getting additional funding. You have already heard from Peter Courdin as to Federation's response to our request. Contacts with Society have been less positive, but we continue to seek their assistance with this project.

Even if we get funding from both senior levels, this project, if it is to succeed will require a multi-year financial commitment from EOSARDA. What are your thoughts on this idea?