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Council of Dancers Meeting

1:30 Sunday 19 April 2026

Via Zoom

1. **Call to Order** ~ Dave Western

   1.1. The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm

   1.2. Confirmation of Quorum

   Bylaw 9.04 (a) sets the quorum for the transaction of business at Council of Dancers meetings at 25 percent of the members entitled to vote at the meeting.
   With 17 registered clubs and 1 registered association, the quorum for this meeting would be 5 voting members.
   13 voting members were in attendance, constituting a quorum. ~ Appendix A

   1.3. Opening Remarks Appendix B ~ Dave Western

   1.4. Acceptance of agenda ~ Dave Western

   The agenda was accepted as presented.

2. **Record of 14 December 2025 meeting** ~ Arlo Speer

   MOTION: Speer/ Brown that the record of the 14 December 2025 Council of Dancers meeting be accepted as circulated. **CARRIED**

3. **Reports**

   3.1. Executive Committee

   3.1.1. Year-to-date Financial Report Appendix C ~ Mary Thurston

   3.1.2. Registrar's Report Appendix D ~ Barb Englehart

   3.2. Dance Committee Appendix E ~ Dave Western

   3.3. Publicity Committee Appendix F ~ Lamar Mason

   3.4. Club Liaison Appendix G ~ Shirley Brown

   3.5. Technology Appendix H ~ Arlo Speer

   3.6. Ottawa Area Callers Association Appendix I ~ Brian Crawford

   3.7. **MOTION:** Mason/Peters that the reports be accepted as presented. **CARRIED**

4. **Old Business**

   4.1. Website Renewal Project Appendix J ~ Arlo Speer

   Item 3.5 from 14 December 2025

   4.2. CANVA software for creating promotional material ~ Lamar Mason

   Item 5.2 from 14 December 2025

   4.2.1. Significant efforts were made to apply for a CANVA non-profit membership that would allow all clubs free access to the "Pro" version of the CANVA software. The application was rejected. Further efforts determined that despite the language on the CANVA website, only "charitable" organizations, not "non-profit" organizations qualify for this free corporate membership.

4.2.2. Jean-Marc offered to assist in the application process to determine whether our not-for-profit status is sufficient to qualify us for the free Canva for non-profits subscription.

4.2.3. Individuals, on behalf of their clubs, can still use the free software package that provides extensive design capabilities, templates, photos and editing tools.

4.2.4. We looked into other paid options, but nothing would appear to allow multiple individuals to use a single membership (Business plan is higher per person cost: $260). The cost for an individual to purchase a Pro plan, giving access to more tools, would be $142 annually.

4.2.5. Lamar offered to hold an online session to help users get started working with Canva. Several participants indicated an interest in such a session. Some members reported success using ChatGPT to design flyers for dances, so it was suggested that the online session could be expanded to include successes other members have had with AI and other tools to create promotional materials.

4.3. Possible additional subsidies -- Item 5.2.1 from 14 December 2025 ~ Shirley Brown
At the December meeting, members were invited to suggest additional subsidies that would be helpful to clubs. No suggestion has been submitted to date.

5. New Business

5.1. Ribbons vs. Dangles Appendix K ~ Shirley Brown
EOSARDA has located a supplier for thin, metal dangles at a rate less than the previous $12 cost. Dangles are now available at 90¢ from:

Mementos Signs•Awards•Promotions & Stittsville Rubber Stamp
1027 Carp Rd.
Stittsville Ontario
K2S 1B9
tel: 613-836-6494 x 1
fax: 613-836-1413
www.mementos.com
www.stittsvillerubberstamp.com

5.2. Draft 2026-2027 Budget Appendix L ~ Mary Thurston
MOTION: Rystenbil/Brown that the draft 2026/2027 budget be accepted. **CARRIED**

5.3. Revised Square Dance Syllabus
Q&A with the Callers Association. Appendix M ~ Brian Crawford

5.4. Appointment of person to conduct a "review engagement" ~ Mary Thurston
i.e., a review of our financial statements
Shannon O'Rourke is currently the Treasurer of Quinte Twirlers.

MOTION: Thurston/Cruse that Shannon O'Rourke be appointed to conduct a review engagement on our financial statement. **CARRIED**

As a result of information received during the meeting, the Board is looking into the qualifications required of someone acting as a reviewer and is also considering other options.

5.5. Election of Directors for 2026-2027 ~ Dave Western

The following slate of nominees was presented:

Shirley Brown	Barbara Englehart	Ron Gardner
David Hutchinson	Gerry Johnson	Bob Pitruniak
Arlo Speer	Mary Thurston	Dave Western

There were no further nominations from the floor.

MOTION: Mason/Cruse that the above 9 nominees be elected as EOSARDA directors for the 2026/2027 year. **CARRIED**

6. **Next Meeting**

1:30 15 November 2026 -- the 3rd Sunday of November

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:42.

Appendix A: Attendance Record

Club	Surname	First name	Club	Surname	First name
Voting Delegates					
Capital Carousels	Speer	Arlo	Napanee Pioneers	Wilson	Karen
Grenville Gremlins	Cruse	Mary	Ottawa Area Callers Assoc.	Crawford	Brian
Limestone Dancers	Peters	Noreen	Ottawa Date Squares	Robichaud	Jean-Marc
Lockits	Clarke	Geoff	Quinte Twirlers	Dunham	Valerie
Meri Squares	Mason	Lamar	Square Dance Ottawa	McEwan	Colleen
Mississippi Squares	Grant	Marian	Swinging Swallows	Bateman	Gloria
Russell Squares	Rystenbil	Kees			
Non-voting Delegates					
			EOSARDA	Brown	Shirley
				Englehart	Barb
Quinte Twirlers	Dunham	David		Hutchinson	David
				Johnson	Gerry
				Penny	Debbie
				Pitruniak	Bob
				Thurston	Mary
				Western	Dave
Clubs Absent from the Meeting					
Crazy A's		Glengarry Tartans		Rideau Canal Cloggers	
Riverside Gypsy Squares		Swinging B's			

Appendix B: Opening Remarks

Good afternoon and welcome to EOSARDA's Council of Dancers and Annual General Meeting for 2026. We are expecting 25 people to attend Council today. More to the point, 14 of our 18 Member Clubs have said they will be joining today's meeting. Thank you for taking the time to join us this afternoon.

According to our By-laws, a quorum for the transaction of business at a meeting of the membership is 25 percent of our Member Clubs and Associations. EOSARDA currently has 18 Members, so a quorum of the membership is 5. Given today's attendance, I think I can safely say that we have a quorum and the meeting may proceed as scheduled.

By now I think we all know how Zoom works, so I will just remind you to mute your mic when you are not addressing Council and please make sure that your name as displayed on your screen includes a "V" if you are a Voting Delegate, your name and your club afiliation..

Board members will help me watch for hands indicating that someone wishes to address the meeting. We will do our best to make sure that all who wish to speak have the opportunity to do so, please be patient. We will take a 15-minute break around 3:00. You will have to get your own drinks and snacks.

A brief reminder about the rules of engagement this afternoon.

Under EOSARDA's By-laws:

- $ Any dancer registered with EOSARDA may attend Council and speak at the meeting
- $ Each Member Club or Association may designate one Voting Delegate who may vote on any issue before Council.
- $ Only designated Voting Delegates have a vote
- $ No delegate may vote more than once on any issue (you don't get two votes if you represent more than one club)
- $ Members of EOSARDA's Board of Directors cannot vote unless they are also designated as Voting Delegates for a Member Organization
- $ The Board is bound by any decision or direction issued by this Council.

Along with the usual reports from the Chairs of our Standing Committees, this afternoon our Treasurer will provide us with an up-date on the Association's financial situation. Later this afternoon, Mary will also present Council with a draft budget for next year.

One of the highlights of today's meeting will be a Q and A session with the Callers' Association about the new Square Dance Teaching syllabus.

As always at our AGM, one of the most important tasks is the election of a new Board of Directors to steer the Association through Dance Year 2026/27. Three of our current Directors, Lamar Mason, Michelle Gravelle and Debbie Pennie will be leaving the BOARD at the end of their current terms of office. On behalf of the Board and all our Members I thank them for their service. They will be missed.

If the Board is to continue to meet the needs of you, our Member Clubs, additional Board members are needed now while experienced Directors are available to pass on their knowledge and experience. The work, while important, is not difficult and Board meetings usually take place on Zoom, so no travel is required. The only requirement, besides a passion for dancing, is that a Director must sit on at least one of the five standing Committees (Executive, Dance, Publicity, Club Liaison or Technology).

If being a Director is not your thing, then we also need a number of non-Board Volunteers to help with the day-to-day work of the Standing Committees. Interested? You can volunteer at today's meeting, send me a text or e-mail or give me a call. No experience is required and no reasonable offer will be refused.

Appendix C: Year-to-date Financial Report

Some material removed for posting online. Contact Secretary@EOSARDA.ca for further information.

Appendix D: Registrar's Report

	As of Mar 21,2025	As of Nov 24,2025	As of Mar 11, 2026	Difference from Mar.2025 to March, 2026		Total Members Registered by Club					New Dancers by Club (new to the activity)				
							SQ	RD	LINE/ CLOGGING		SQ	RD	LINE/ CLOGGING		
NEW SQUARE DANCERS	149	134	168	19		Capital Carousels		14							
new to activity 147 as of Mar11, 2026						Glengarry Tartans	22				7				SSD
RETURNING SQUARE DANCERS	375	384	392	17		Grenville Gremlins	49				15				
NEW ROUND DANCERS	0	0	0	0											
						Limestone Dancers	38				12				
RETURNING ROUND DANCERS	17	14	14	-3		Lockits	31								
						Meri Squares	80				22				SSD
						Mississippi Squares	86				18				
NEW LINE DANCERS/CLOGGERS	0	20	21	20		Napanee Pioneers	31				5				SSD
new to the activity 21						Ottawa Date Squares	67				24				SSD
RETURNING LINE DANCERS/CLOGGERS	15	8	8	-7		Quinte Twirlers	71				22				
TOTAL TO DATE	556	560	603	47		Swinging B 's	44				12				
						Swinging Swallows	18				1				SSD
						Square Dance Ottawa	8				7				SSD
CUERS, CALLERS, LEADERS AND PARTNERS	12	12	12	0		Crazy A's	2								
						Riverside Gypsy Squares	6								
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP TO DATE	568	572	615			Russell Squares	17				2				SSD
						Rideau Canal Cloggers			31				21		
TOTAL CLUBS TO DATE	18	17	17	0		TOTAL	570	14	31		147		21	168	
TOTAL ASSOCIATIONS TO DATE	2	2	2	0											
Note: Numbers are based on registration information received as of the issuance date of this report. Any new members that join after the issuancee date of this report will be added.															
Updated March 11, 2026															

Appendix E: Dance Committee Report

This year's Dance Committee included: Michelle Gravelle, David Hutchinson, Pat McLachlan, Barbara McLellan, and Debbie Penney. Carole Lauzon was a committee member for several months but resigned partly through the year for personal reasons.

For Dance Year 2025/26, Dance Committee set out to plan, organize and run three Regional Dances:

- The Welcome Back Dance on Saturday, September 13
- The Christmas Dance Party on Saturday, December 6 and
- Frosty Fling '26 - The Beach Party on Saturday, February 7

It was anticipated that each of the three dances would be a bigger event than either of the two Regional Dances held in 2024/25.

Due primarily to its central location in the region, Prescott was chosen as the site for all three dances. Another important consideration was that the Upper Canada School Board does not charge not-for profit corporations such as EOSARDA for the use of its facilities.

Based on the committee's works plan, the Board increased the budget allocation for the three regional dances from $1,100 to $2,700. It was anticipated that the increased costs would be offset by increased revenues, which proved to be the case.

The Welcome Back Dance

This dance was intended to give experienced dancers an opportunity to refresh their skills in a fun atmosphere before welcoming and assisting this year's new dancers.

The event was divided into a morning and afternoon session and featured a large hall for SSD/Basic through Plus and a smaller hall for A1-A2. Callers were Dave Hutchinson and Brian Crawford. There was also a Callers' showcase which included Geoff Clarke, Laird Green, Jean-Marc Robichaud, Leo MacIntyre and Mary Thurston

The Dance attracted 87 attendees from 14 clubs. It generated revenues of $1,599.00. Expenses totalled $890.00, giving EOSARDA a profit of $709.00.

The Christmas Dance Party

When is a dance more than just a dance?..... When it's a Dance Party! And a Dance Party is just what took place at the South Grenville District High School in Prescott on the afternoon of December 6 when 69 square dancers gathered to celebrate the Christmas season.

The afternoon included square dancing at all levels from full Basic/SSD through A2 in two halls. Dancing was led by veteran Callers John Charman and Wendy VanderMeulen and featured selections of seasonal music, old favourites and some new favourites too.

Dancing was interspersed with a series of fun-filled Reindeer games including:

- a Jingle Mingle Bingo
- a Snowball Launch
- a TP unrolling contest
- multiple door prizes and
- a four-part ugly sweater contest that saw prizes awarded for the most original, tacky, sparkly and retro sweaters

Revenues from the Dance Party totalled $1,336.00. Expenses came to $844.00 giving EOSARDA a profit of $492.00

Frosty Fling '26 - The Beach Party
Despite high winds, blowing snow and bone-chilling temperatures, the dance was a great success, attracting 84 dancers from all corners of our region along with a few from Montreal. Frosty Fling dangles were presented to 38 people who identified themselves as first time Frosty Fling attendees. This included 10 people who identified themselves as new dancers.

As if coping with the weather wasn't challenge enough, early on dance day morning, one of our featured Callers, Brian Crawford, called in sick, leaving us with one Caller, Ron Gardner, for two rooms. Without hesitation, Geoff Clarke, Laird Green, Dave Hutchinson, Bob Summers and Mary Thurston stepped forward to fill the gap and save the day.

The original plan, based on attendance at past-Frosty Flings was to have a Basic/SSD/Mainstream hall in the foyer and a Plus/Advance hall in the gym. However, it quickly became apparent that an overwhelming majority of dancers preferred to dance in the Basic/SSD/Mainstream hall which was moved to the gym while the Plus/Advanced hall moved to the foyer.

Revenues from the Beach Party totalled $1,432.00, expenses came to $551.00 giving EOSARDA a profit of $881.00.

Frosty Fling was the last Regional Dance on this year's Dance Calendar. It capped off a year that went from "***very good***" with the Welcome Back Dance to "***even better***" with the Christmas Dance Party to "***best yet***" with Frosty Fling.

Overall, this year the Regional Dance Program had revenues of $4,357.00, and expenses of $2,285.00, resulting in a profit of $2,082.00.

Dave Western
Chair
EOSARDA Dance Committee

Appendix F: Publicity Report

At the December Council of Dancers, we outlined the plan for 2025-2026 to assist clubs and raise the visibility of square dancing. I must take responsibility for the fact that little progress has been made on the elements of that plan. The Committee has not met to pursue most of the considered items.

1. Zoom meeting with clubs

   We had discussed holding a Zoom meeting with clubs in late February or early March. Based on the discussion at December's CoD, it was apparent that members were interested in such a meeting to get insight into the use of electronic tools to develop promotional materials (flyers, brochures, social media). The plan was to obtain the CANVA corporate non-profit membership and then assist clubs in learning how to use it. We also wanted to have some brainstorming on promotional ideas that would assist clubs based on their own experience. This meeting is still possible with adjusted goals and can be arranged in perhaps May.

2. Direct clubs to available resources on EOSARDA website

   Publicity will be reminding clubs of the resources already available on the EOSARDA website to assist with promotional materials. This can be done through an e-bulletin, direct email or as part of the proposed Zoom meeting.

3. CANVA software

   Further to the direction from the Board and the discussion at the December CoD, we began the process of applying for a corporate membership. The process required significant documentation related to EOSARDA's designation as a non-profit organization and registration. Arlo Speer stepped in to assist and provide the necessary documentation. After considerable efforts, we were advised that EOSARDA does not qualify for a non-profit membership that would allow clubs to use the enhanced software at no cost. Apparently, we must be registered as a charity rather than a non-profit despite the information on the CANVA website.

   As can be seen on the CANVA website, there are numerous options available for free use of CANVA products or for the purchase of a package by an individual to access the full "professional" software.

   If clubs believe that they could benefit from such a product, and even the "free" package is beneficial, but they do not think they have the skill to use it, Publicity can still try to offer a Zoom tutorial to help members learn the ins and outs. We will see what interest there is.

4. Look into a major EOSARDA visibility event with involvement from all clubs (i.e., similar to Byward Market event/Kingston Market event): address image, raise visibility

   To date no event or location has been identified. Consideration was given to trying to get a half-time demonstration at an Ottawa football game, but the logistics were not considered favourable to dancer volunteers.

5. Consider identifying a member who could write an article for various media to raise awareness of square dancing, for use by all clubs
   No action to date.

I would like to thank the members of the Publicity Committee -- Gloria, Dave and Val Dunham and David Western -- for their time, ideas, and efforts this past year. They are all passionate about supporting and growing square dancing in particular but also round and line dancing and now clogging. In particular, I must thank Gloria who for many years now has written articles for Square Time and sent out e-bulletins to clubs to inform them and direct them to resources identified and developed by Publicity over the years. She is constantly working in support of all clubs.

Publicity is always happy to receive any ideas you may have. We can be reached at publicity@eosarda.ca

Lamar Mason
Chair, EOSARDA Publicity Committee
(on behalf of Gloria Bateman, David Dunham, Valerie Dunham and David Western)

Appendix G: Club Liaison Report

Visitation Dangles- Michelle Gravelle

The 2025-26 dance season is well underway with lots of dances scheduled in the coming months, so plenty of opportunities to earn Gold! A review of the process:
To obtain your dance dangle, complete the required number of visits during a single dance year. No signatures are required. Submit completed application form application form) to submit completed form on or before September 30 2026.
Silver Level
To earn a Silver Club Visit Dangle, a dancer must, during a single dance year, undertake 5 "visits"

Gold Level
To earn a Gold Club Visit Dangle, a dancer must, during the course of a single dance year, undertake 8 "visits"

Recruitment Subsidies - Shirley Brown

Ten clubs submitted applications to both EOSARDA and OSRDF as well as supporting documents with a request for reimbursement. All were approved for the $300 EOSARDA subsidy and up to $200 for OSRDA.

Recruitment Subsidy vs New Graduates - 2025-26

Club Name	Primary location	Contact	Total Expenses Submitted	Approved EOSARDA	OSRDF Approved		# Graduates
Glengarry Tartans	Alexandra	Carole Lauzon	$335.92	$300.00	$35.92		6
Grenville Gremlins	Kemptville	Harold Tompkins	$214.30	$214.30	N/A		11
Limestone	Kingston	Noreen Peters	$100.00	$100.00	N/A		12
Meri Squares	Nepean	Gerry Lelievre	$559.61	$300.00	$200.00	$59.61	12
Mississippi Squares	Carleton Place	Muriel Hanneson	$296.74	$296.74	N/A		7
Napanee Pioneers	Napanee	Muriel Brough	$668.82	$300.00	$200.00	$168.82	6
Ottawa Date Squares	Ottawa	Jean-Marc Robichaud	$0.00		$0.00		
Quinte Twirlers	Belleville	Shannon O'Rourke	$551.56	$300.00	$200.00	$51.56	14
Russell Squares	Ottawa	Wendy VanderMeulen	$0.00		$0.00		
Russell Squares	Russell	Wendy VanderMeulen	$147.31	$147.31	N/A		0
Swinging B's	Cornwall	Donald Hogan	$480.00	$300.00	$180.00		11
Swinging Swallows	Pembroke	Gloria Bateman	$402.25	$300.00	$102.25		1
Date Squares	Ottawa		$0.00	$0.00	$0.00		8
			$3,756.51	**$2,558.35**	**$918.17**		88

Bursaries - Caller/Cuers & Leaders - Shirley Brown

No requests received to date.

Dancer Celebrations - Michelle Gravelle

Celebrations Spring 2026

Club Name	No. of Dancers	Date of Celebration	EOSARDA Rep	Club Contact
1. Glengarry Tartans (Alexandria)	6	summer workshop	n/a	Carole Lauzon
2. Grenville Gremlins (Kemptville)	11	Monday, May 4	Lamar	Mary Cruse / Colleen Sampson
3. Limestone Dancers (Kingston)	12	Thursday, May 28	Shirley	Noreen Peters
4. Meri Squares	12	Thursday, April 30	Shirley	Lamar Mason
5. Mississippi Squares	7	Tuesday, April 14	Dave W	Betty Goodwin
6. Napanee Pioneers	6	Friday, May 8	Shirley	Karen Wilson
7. Ottawa Date Squares	8	Wednesday, April 22	Michelle	Jean-Marc Robichaud
8. Quinte Twirlers (Belleville)	14	Wednesday, April 29	Debbie	Dave Dunham
9. Russell Squares	0	not this spring	n/a	Wendy VanderMeulen
10. Swinging B's (Cornwall)	11	Friday, April 10	Lamar	Iris Swerdgeger
11. Swinging Swallows (Pembroke)	1	Tuesday, May 7	Ron Gardner	Jeannie Mastine
12. Rideau Canal Cloggers		Wed. June 24	Shirley or Michelle TBC	Sharon Neufel/Anna May Kerr
	88			

SQUARE TIME - GERRY JOHNSON

The winter issue was compiled and distributed via E-bulletins on March 6. As stated before, Gerry is looking for articles to be submitted that highlight a dancer who has contributed either to a club specifically or to square dancing generally.

SPECIAL EVENTS - SHIRLEY BROWN

In March EOSARDA recognize 2 significant Club anniversary celebrations: March 8 – Singing B's 50th Anniversary and March 28 – Mississippi Squares – 40th Anniversary. Below are the certificates that were presented at their anniversary dances. Congratulations to both Clubs for reaching these significant milestones.

Looking further into the future, on May 2nd there is dance to honour Don Moger on his 50 years of calling and a congratulatory certificate will be presented.

My thanks **to Michelle Gravelle** and **Gerry Johnson** for their commitment and excellent work in the areas for which they are responsible





Submitted on behalf of the Club Liaison Committee
Shirley Brown, Chair

Appendix H: Technology Report

Committee Members: -

- Arlo Speer – Chair; EOSARDA Bulletin Manager
- Bob Summers – EOSARDA Webmaster, Sound Equipment
- Geoff Clarke – Sound Equipment
- John Charman – Sound Equipment

1. *EOSARDA Bulletins*

- We currently have 147 subscribers to our system (down 3 from fall 2025). Approximately 67% of the messages are opened and approximately 5% of recipients click on links in the messages. By the end of March 2026, we have distributed 33 bulletins – just over 10 per month, a consistent average from past years.
- If you do not receive EOSARDA Bulletins directly but would like to, Click here to add yourself to the direct mailing list.
- If you receive EOSARDA Bulletins but would like to stop receiving them, you can unsubscribe by using the link at the bottom of any EOSARDA Bulletin you receive.
- If you haven't received an EOSARDA Bulletin for some time, you can click here to see the last 20 messages online and learn if you've missed any messages.
- If you forward EOSARDA bulletins to others in your club (***and we certainly hope you do!!***), please remember to delete the "Unsubscribe" link from the bottom of the message to avoid having any of your club members inadvertently cause **you** to be unsubscribed.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can update your preferences or unsubscribe from this list.



2. *Sound Systems (2)*

- EOSARDA has available on loan 2 Hilton 205 sound systems with Yak Stak speakers and tripod stands. These systems are both in working order, despite being over 30 years old.
- One system is stored southwest of Ottawa in Kemptville; the other east of Ottawa in St-Albert
- Leaders and clubs wishing to borrow a sound system should contact: Equipment@EOSARDA.ca
- Over the past years, the systems have served as spares for some events such as Swing into Spring. Recently, only one club has used the systems – for a major event it hosted.

3. *EOSARDA Website*

- We continue managing website hosting & domain registrations and complete normal operation & maintenance for the site.
- We have incorporated improvements and updates as suggested by directors.
- At the December 2025 Council of Dancers meeting, the Chair referred the question of updates to the EOSARDA website to the Technology Committee.
- The Technology Committee has added a Website Renewal Project to its workplan, to be discussed under Item, 4.1 of the agenda.

Appendix I: Ottawa Area Callers Association Report

For the 2025/2026 season, we have 12 callers in good standing, including three new ones.

The OACA schedules six meetings per dance season, each consisting of a business session and a workshop. Unfortunately, we missed our April meeting due to Easter and couldn't find a suitable alternate date, leading to the cancellation of the season's final meeting.

One of the key topics this year was the new CALLERLAB programs. We had several discussions about implementing the program and will cover it in more detail during this council meeting (see appendix M).

In November, we held an OACA dance at the Alexander Community Centre, in conjunction with our regularly scheduled meeting. We danced four squares, allowing dancers to dance to all OACA member callers present.

We've had some excellent workshop presentations from both experienced and newer callers.

Our next meeting is scheduled for October 4, 2026. Brian Crawford has agreed to chair the OACA for the 26/27 season.

Brian Crawford OACA Chairperson

Appendix J: Website Renewal

Origin of the Project

- At the 14 December 2025 Council of Dancers meeting, some members reported outdated information on the website. Since December, members have reported desired updates to the webmaster. Those updates, and others, have been incorporated into the website.
- The December meeting charged the Technology committee with creating a costed proposal for updating the website. A proposal was presented to the Board of Directors at its 15 February meeting and included starting with a needs assessment to clearly name problems with the current site. Directors were invited to send suggestions about the functioning of the website to the Chair, Technology Committee – as yet, none has been received.
- At the 15 March board meeting, to support problem identification, Lamar Mason offered to collect what directors see as problems along with concrete upgrading suggestions and solutions.

The Technology Committee has started a **Website Renewal Project**. As a first step in that process, the committee (with help from Lamar Mason) has begun a problem analysis process intended to identify problems with the current website. That project will address:

- **NEEDS** – Consulting EOSARDA members (dancers, leaders, clubs, and directors) to find problems with the current website and discover what users want the website to offer.

To allow us to go ahead, we need to understand what EOSARDA members (clubs, dancers, dance leaders) see as problems with the current website and what they want the website to offer.

Your input is needed! Please send your thoughts to Secretary@EOSARDA.ca by 01 May 2026.

- **OBJECTIVES** – Based on consensus about user needs, we will describe a desired end-state for the website, naming the functionality and content needed, and listing options (including keeping or changing the current format and platform).
- **PLAN** – Based on consensus about our objectives, we will create an action plan to include a list of changes needed and ways to produce those changes. The plan will also include a timeline and estimated costing.

As a preview of timing and costing:

- If the website were to remain on the current platform, there would be little, if any, financial cost – only a time commitment from our volunteer to make the required changes.
- If we were to transition our site to a commercially available content management system, cost for a basic or small business site could range from $1,500 to $2,000, based on $25 to $50 hourly rates listed in advertisements from various local service providers.
  - Of course, these estimates could increase as our chosen provider digs into our needs – a precise cost estimate would be available only after our specific goals have been decided. (The listed prices could well be a means of attracting clients, leaving actual prices higher.) It is also possible that we could find (as at least one club has) a volunteer who would complete the work for less.
  - The plan will also address the possible need for training one or more EOSARDA volunteers if the decision is to move to a content management system.
  - Advertisements from various local service providers estimate between 1 and 2 months to modify and transition our existing site to a commercially available content management system.

Issues identified to date:

1. Succession Planning: Our website is currently managed by the person who developed the site. While not an immediate need, when that site developer no longer wishes to serve as our webmaster, we will probably need to transition the site to a commercially available content management system.
2. Menu of contents should be more expanded - and run down the side of screen. If you are savvy, you can scroll across the top of the screen and click to see the contents of each but it might be easier if each page was listed then has the contents of each page listed.
3. People find it hard to locate specific items. Maybe instead of "Associations" for instance, the menu items should be EOSARDA policy, procedures, fees. People are often looking to submit bulletins: maybe a main menu item should be Bulletins. Or maybe a menu item that says, "How to…" which opens to "…submit an ebulletin", "…submit and event for the calendar", "…find a club", … contact EOSARDA" or "… create a flyer" with links to the appropriate page/resource?
4. Move to new colours of green, blue, and white. Past discussions with the webmaster indicate this is extremely difficult to do with the current software. A good reason to move to a new platform.
5. Remove outdated material on Highlights page: set schedule for items to be removed on a scheduled basis. Maybe anything more than 3 months old is automatically deleted.
6. Concern has been expressed that there is outdated material on the website. This has been recently addressed to some degree by pointing out that members need to provide newer information for webmaster to post. It is not always the webmaster's job to update material.
7. Home page: Use more updated article instead of article from 2014 on square dancing and stress. Recent Square Time had such an article. Reference to 2014 makes us look outdated.
8. Home page is cluttered compared to more modern websites. Focus should make information to attract new dancers and upcoming events for current dancers easily findable. Impression is that people visit the website to find out what square dancing is or to find the calendar/list of clubs because they already dance. Or to figure out how to submit a bulletin….
9. Must address the fact that the platform for the current website is outdated and not sustainable. A new platform is essential to ensure continuity of availability and more flexibility in updating (i.e., more people with skill set to add/update/change should the primary webmaster be unavailable).

Appendix K: Ribbons vs. Dangles

A common practice to advertise a Club's special event/dance is to print ribbons with the date, time, location and theme and then distribute these ribbons to area Clubs for pre-sale. The rational for this is:

1. Ribbons are a form of advertising - they are easily and quickly attachable to a name badge and those who purchase them are requested to wear them, usually months in advance of the event. As a result, other dancers will become aware of the event - or remind them of it.
2. Generally, the cost of purchasing a ribbon is discounted to door admission to encourage attendance
3. Ribbons are sent out to the clubs well in advance of the event/dance and then the issuing club will often check to see how many have been sold so that they have some idea of attendance.
4. At the door, wearing a ribbon is a quick way to identify the dancers that have already paid.

In recent years there has been a renewed interest in attaching dangles to name badges and EOSARDA has responded this year by issuing the following dangles

- for the square dancing in a pool event at the last Swing Into Spring or in a restaurant
- to first time dancers/attendees at Frosty Fling 2026
- and this year for the first time to every graduate.

EOSARDA has issued Visitation dangles for many years to encourage dancers to attend other club's dances.

Dangles are cheaper and would address some of the advantages of the ribbons but would be harder to be noticed by others and would not have details of the event. However, dangles a more permanent memento of an event/dance. Due to the diligent efforts of Michelle Gravelle, she sourced a vendor that provides the product at a cost that is significantly lower then experienced in the past.

Ribbons Cost - $1.50 plus initial artwork charge of up to $35.0, therefore 100 ribbons would cost 150 + 35.00 + tax 24.05 = 209.05. Members of the club would then have attach the double-sided tape to facilitate wearing them o name badges.

Dangles Cost - $0.90 plus initial artwork charge of up to $15.00, therefore 100 dangles would cost $90.00 + 15.00 + 16.25 =118.65 plus a nominal cost to purchase the rings. Further orders would not include an artwork charge so costs would be less

Pricing estimates only- final cost is dependent on the supplier's price list

Our purpose for this discussion is to inform you, our dancers, of alternatives and costs.

Special Location/Special Event Graduations Visitation







Submitted by:
Shirley Brown Chair, Club Liaison & Michelle Gravelle, Committee Member

Appendix L: Draft 2026-2027 Budget

Some material removed for posting online. Contact Secretary@EOSARDA.ca for further information.

Appendix M: Revised Square Dance Syllabus

Overview Changes to the CALLERLAB Programs

Let's Talk Programs

The current Basic Program is divided into two sections: Basic 1 and Basic 2. Most dancers are unaware of this division, as it pertains mainly to how callers program their teaching. For many years, the Basic Hall at the Halfway Dance was at Basic 1; the OACA used this level to plan for that specific dance. Currently, the Basic Program consists of 48 calls, while SSD (Social Square Dancing) is 52 calls.
The Mainstream level currently adds 19 calls. Therefore, under the current system, a dancer must complete a total of 67 calls before entering the Plus program.



Updated CALLERLAB Programs

The new Mainstream program will be 50 Calls as will the Plus program.

The new Mainstream level will be introduced in the fall of 2026. This program is designed to be taught within a single season. While some clubs may offer two sessions per season, this will be decided by the individual club and caller.

In the next teaching cycle, clubs will start the new Mainstream dance program for new dancers.

Dancers who have completed the previous session will dance the program in its entirety, likely using a split evening or an alternating program format.

How Will This Work?

The new structure aims to streamline the process in several ways:

- Eliminates Overlap: It removes the need to teach the "old" Mainstream program as a separate, subsequent step.
- Easier Transitions: It makes the transition from SSD to Plus much easier for clubs, as the Plus club will no longer have to teach a full Mainstream program before starting Plus lessons.
- Plus Level Adjustments: The Plus level will increase from 29 calls to 50, an addition of 21 calls. These 21 calls will be a mix of current Mainstream calls and a few brought down from the Advanced list.
- Balanced Teaching: While the Plus program will take longer to teach, it will be balanced

Dance Syllabus FAQ

Why change now?

The levels we use now were put into practice in the 70s by the newly formed CALLERLAB. The levels were set up to standardize the calls used. By doing this, callers had a guild to teach, and it would allow dancers to feel confident they could go to an open dance and be assured that they would be prepared for the level advertised.

The dancing levels have been tweaked over the years but essentially remained as they have been for 40+ years. Due to declining dancer numbers, many pointed their fingers at the programs, blaming how the programs were set up for poor dancer retention. Alternative programs like the ABC program that used modules to build a simple program that wasn't overwhelming. Some American callers developed Club 50, which was what CALLERLAB based SSD.

SSD (Social Square Dance) was designed as a program that can be taught in 12 to 14 weeks.

The SSD program gained traction and has had success. With the program's success, we were presented with new issues, which I will come back to.

We as callers have often discussed how to strengthen Mainstream as a level. This has been challenging as most clubs welcome new members that have no experience and are taught Basic / SSD. Traditionally, this meant that the new dancers would learn Basic in one season, and in the next season, after a review of the calls that were taught in the previous season, they would begin learning Mainstream. This would mean a split evening, and during this time, the existing Mainstream would not dance the full program until the Mainstream program was fully taught.

This has worked sort of, but the Mainstream dancers were not given as much of an opportunity to fully dance the program.

With the new lists, the "new Mainstream" will have 50 calls, down from the combined number of 67 for Basic / SSD and Mainstream. The new list has some of the old Mainstream lists' calls to add variety. Some old "Mainstream's" calls that were moved up to Plus."

Going back to the success of SSD:

As it had been adopted by some EOSARDA clubs, provisions had to be made to add SSD as a level at open dances. As not all clubs had switched to SSD, open dances began offering SSD this to make sure all were included.

This added a layer of confusion for the dancers as well as the callers. As callers, we can adapt, but sometimes at the expense of the dancers, as some of the calls that are unique to each level might be omitted to ensure the best success but at the cost of not giving the best experience to either program.

Another difficulty that arose from multi-level being taught is that at open dances where new dancers that had not finished the level a mid-season dance like the Frosty Fling finding a common ground where the students were at within the programs is more challenging.

A solution for some problems:
In the past, when Basic was the only program, the OACA could discuss a point in the Basic program and have a point of reference of what calls could be used a specific open dance that was offering the Basic level.

Assuming that all clubs and callers are in agreement to use the New Mainstream program, we will have a more unified approach to open dances and inter club visits starting next season.

There has been a question about getting existing dancers up to speed in the new program. Here the number of calls that need to be taught and/ or omitted from the existing programs so that our dancers will be comfortable going to other clubs and open dances.

For existing Basic Dancers: 7 calls added, 3 calls dropped.

For existing SSD Dancers: 3 calls added, 1 dropped.

For Mainstream: 1 call to be added.

For existing Plus dancers: 21 calls have been added to the Plus program to take it up to 50, thus equaling the number of calls of New Mainstream and Plus.

Of these calls, 13 move from Basic / Mainstream, 7 calls from Advanced.

Implementation Guidelines: 2026 CALLERLAB Programs Implementation Date: September 1, 2026

Subject: Transition to “New” Mainstream & Plus Programs
Author: Brian Crawford, OACA Chairperson

1. Mainstream Program Transition The 2026 CALLERLAB updates replace the previous Basic, SSD, and older Mainstream programs.
- **For New Dancers:** Implement the new 2026 Mainstream program as your primary teaching syllabus.
- **For Existing Basic/SSD Dancers:** Workshop any recently added calls to the program.
- **Utilize the new Mainstream program as your club’s designated destination level.**

• **Club Status:** By the end of the first teaching cycle, your club will be considered a “Mainstream” club.

2. Plus Program Transition
The Plus program has been updated to include additional calls.
- **Existing Plus Dancers:** Most newly added calls are derived from the previous Basic, SSD, and Mainstream lists, so they likely won’t require significant workshopping.
- **Eight calls have been added from the Advanced list and must be workshopped to ensure club proficiency.**

Implementation Timeline:
- **September 1 – December 31, 2026:** Continue using the current Plus program at “Open Dances”

- **January 1, 2027:** The “new” Plus program officially begins for all open dances. This interim period allows callers sufficient time to prepare the added material.

- **New Plus Dancers (Post-September 1, 2026):** Callers must ensure all calls on the new list are thoroughly workshopped to ensure dancers are comfortable with the full program, regardless of prior familiarity with added calls.