

Offer Square Dance Lessons All Year Round **by Nasser Shukayr, Shreveport, Louisiana**

New dancers are the lifeblood of this activity. We would like to bring in MORE new dancers, and to KEEP more of the new dancers we bring in. In many areas, beginner lessons start only once a year. This makes it hard to get new people into square dancing. Once we get new people in, if they miss two or three lessons in a row, they have to drop out. Then there are always some students who don't learn as quickly as others. Under the present system, these people either hold the entire class back, or they get frustrated and drop out.

These and other problems are solved by the Eight or Ten week plan for beginner lessons. This plan has recently been publicized a lot. The plan is working quite well in several different parts of the world.

Under this plan, beginner lessons are on a separate night. Brand-new beginners sign up for 8 to 10 weeks of "Beginner-1", perhaps from 7 to 8pm. After Beginner-1, the new dancers are welcome to come back again and again, at no charge, until they feel comfortable enough to move on. They will then take 8 to 10 weeks of Beginner-2 (perhaps from 8 to 9pm). Hopefully they will bring their non-dancing friends to Beginner-1 and be "angels" for them. After Beginner-2, the new dancers are welcome to come back to either Beginner-1 or -2 as often as they want (at no additional charge). Eventually they will want to take 8 to 10 weeks of Beginner-3 (perhaps 9 to 10pm). After Beginner-3, they can attend any of the three beginner segments, at no additional charge, as students or as "angels". The key to the plan is that lessons start every eight to ten weeks, or several times a year.

This plan has several strong points:

- There will be FIVE or SIX opportunities per year to get started in square dancing, compared to only once a year under the present system. It should be easier to get people to commit to two months of lessons, as opposed to eight months. More starts per year and a lower commitment requirement adds up to more new dancers.
- Because beginners are enthusiastic about square dancing, recruitment of new dancers is enhanced. New dancers are your best salesmen. In the existing system, recruitment is done by dancers who have been in the activity an entire year. Under the new plan, dancers with only eight to ten weeks experience are encouraged to bring their friends into square dancing.
- If a student misses two or three lessons in a row, they can simply take the same 8 to 10 week segment again. They stay in the game. This lets you keep more of the new dancers who come in.
- Students can go back through each segment again and again, until they feel comfortable enough to move on to the next segment. In fact, students

- are encouraged to repeat each segment, as "angels". We get to keep people who would have otherwise dropped out.
- Because students can re-take each segment if they want to, the material can be presented at a slightly faster pace. The faster pace may encourage more young people to get into square dancing.
 - Former dancers will find it much easier to get back in. Instead of having to go through eight months of lessons, they may be able to take a refresher course of just the second or third beginner segments.

One question which may arise is what to do with new dancers once they finish the entire set of beginner lessons. Of course, it would be great for these new graduates to join the club sponsoring the lessons. But please remember that it is good for people to get into square dancing, whether they join your club or someone else's club. When graduation time approaches, you would probably want to plan visitations between the student group and the regular club group. Once the new dancers see how much fun the people in the regular club are having, it will be very difficult to KEEP them from joining the regular club.

There is now a decision to be made: Will your square dance club go forward into the future with this new and improved plan for beginner lessons?

Ideas For a 10+10 Program by Nasser Shukayr, Shreveport, Louisiana

The "10+10" plan is alive and well. We've been using this plan in Shreveport LA since September 1995. Our plan teaches all of Mainstream, using three levels of eight weeks each. Keep in mind that "10+10" refers to a generic type of plan for offering beginner lessons all year round. Whether you use a cycle time of 10 weeks, or 12, or 8, all these variations are still referred to as a "10+10" plan.

Many articles have been written praising the benefits of the "10+10" plan. I can't speak for everyone else, but can only tell you "more than you want to know" :-)) about our own "10+10" program. Instead of trying to convince you to try the plan, I'd like to share some things I wish someone had told us BEFORE we started our own plan.

In retrospect, the things we learned about how to run a "10+10" SHOULD have been obvious, but for some unknown reason, they weren't.

SELECTING A CYCLE TIME

We looked at several options:

- A 12-week cycle gives 4 starts per year and 4 non-dancing dates
- A 10-week cycle gives 5 starts per year with 2 dates off
- An 8-week cycle gives 6 starts per year with 4 dates off

We felt that a 10-week cycle would not meet our requirements, because we needed to adjust the schedule (for holidays or whatever) more than two weeks per year. We also felt that always starting lessons on the "First Thursday" of certain months would be easier for people to deal with, compared to having lessons sometimes start on a 1st and sometimes on a 3rd Thursday. So, given the choice between an 8-week or a 12-week cycle, we chose 8 weeks.

SELLING THE IDEA TO THE CLUB

We had a "false start" about a year and a half ago, when we made the mistake of making too big of a deal out of the new lesson plan. To gain acceptance, we found you have to go off on your own and work the program. After several months of the program's success, THEN we went back to the club and said "Looky here what YOU have going for YOU". The club members were then very willing to pitch in and help with a project which already had a successful history.

DON'T LISTEN TO THE NAYSAYERS

Any type of change in routine is usually met by resistance. The resistance to change was especially pronounced in our club, because the old system was working. Our club has grown during each of the last several years. "If it ain't broke, why fix it?"

Sometimes you have to play your "Ace in the Hole". I convinced the club that if they did NOT go along with this plan, I was gonna do it anyway, with or without their sponsorship. In the game of life, the winner is sometimes the one who makes the most outrageous threats. :-)

DO NOT INVITE NEW DANCERS TO YOUR MAIN CLUB

We thought it would be a great idea to invite brand-new dancers (from Thursday) to attend a regular club dance (on Tuesday), as our guest. WRONG!! This was a MAJOR mistake. I can provide more details if anyone wants to know "why?", but let's just say that we no longer try to convince new dancers to visit the sponsoring club.

The short story is: let the beginners know they do NOT have to go somewhere else to finally be able to do "real" square dancing. While you're at it, indoctrinate all your regular club members with the same philosophy. Dancing in lessons IS "real" square dancing. When the beginners finish their lessons and ASK about further dancing opportunities, we are quick to answer their questions. But not until THEY ask.

DON'T ACCEPT NEW DANCERS PAST THE SECOND NIGHT

Because s/d lessons are now available year-round, dancers talk to their friends about square dancing, year-round. EVERY night of our "10+10" program we have had SOMEONE show up who has never square danced before. At first, we were so glad to see 'em that we did quick review tips to bring 'em up to the class

level. MISTAKE!! What we do now is thank 'em profusely for comin' by, and hand 'em a flyer for the next scheduled start of lessons.

These people do indeed come back. If I sense the slightest hesitation about their willingness to come back, I use a little "technique" to make SURE they come back. I personally hand 'em a flyer, and then take the flyer out of their hand and scribble "COMPLIMENTARY ADMISSION, MAY 2, 1996" across it, and then give 'em their flyer back. :-) "Be sure to bring this flyer with you when you come back on May 2nd, because it gets YOU in for FREE!"

KEEP 'EM IN THE DARK :-)

We thought it would be wise to give new dancers, early on, a Basic/Mainstream booklet and/or a complete 34-page handout of everything they'll ever need to know, as we had been doing for our traditional lessons. MISTAKE!! This ended up scaring off many folks. All they (and you) need to worry about is getting through the current 8-week cycle, and talking to everyone you know about joining in on the next 8-week cycle.

SUBSTITUTE CALLERS SHOULD BE INDOCTRINATED TO THE PHILOSOPHY

When our program first started, if I had to be out of town on a Thursday and we used a substitute caller, by the next week the class had all but disappeared! Let's just say that many elements of the Traditional approach do not seem to work well under the "10+10" plan.

We finally solved this problem through the magic of "Mentoring". There is a new caller in town who has made the mistake of choosing me for his mentor. No problem, I'll tell him everything he wants to know. And all I ask in return is for him to be at our beginner lessons each week, so he'll know what's going on and can readily fill in for me when I'm calling out of town. And I'll even give him some of the money. :-)

MAKE A LESSON PLAN

I've broken up the entire list into exactly what will be taught each week of each session. On the surface, you'd think it's hard to cover all the planned material each week. We've found the opposite to be true. Usually we cover everything in the lesson plan, and have time left over for a review during the last tip.

In the Traditional teaching approach, I had been making sure that new dancers received at least four teaches (on four different nights) for every call. In our 8+8 plan, they only get two teaches: the first night it's introduced, and next week when it's reviewed. In addition, they get two more teaches eight weeks from now, during the next cycle.

I almost hesitated to post the above paragraph, because it has the potential to be "dangerous". You'll have to admit it's a different approach. We have NOT had a

lot of dropouts by people who "can't keep up". Each week the new dancers are reminded that they will find the calls much easier to do during the next eight-week cycle, when they are angels for the next group.

WATCH THE CLOCK

Every Thursday night, we provide three tips for each of the three segments. When you're calling nine tips in 2-1/2 hours, you don't have time to take a break. We provide an intense learning experience.

START TEACHING ON THE VERY FIRST TIP

Each segment is only 50 minutes long. The first thing we threw away was the idea of a "warm-up" tip. We start teachin' (or at least reviewing last week's material) during the very first tip. We believe that in a 50-minute session, the new dancers want to learn something during ALL of those 50 minutes.

TEACH BETWEEN TIPS

When the students take a rest break between tips, we get out various teaching objects (flip charts, checkers, dolls, live dancers for demo purposes, skillets, oven mitts, etc) and lecture 'em while they're "resting". Again, they get 50 (or at least 45) full minutes of teachin'.

USE PICTURES IN ADDITION TO WORDS

I draw diagrams of the moves, let the students observe experienced dancers doing the calls, and ask the students to occasionally push checkers thru the moves. We often demonstrate a move using strange objects. When you've seen Slide Thru taught with a Broom and a Mop, you tend to remember it better. A picture is worth a thousand words. Of course, with me, you get BOTH the picture AND the thousand words. Gee, I wish I could send every one of you a picture. :-)

TEACH 'EM JUST ENOUGH TO GET BY

An integral component of this plan is the new dancers will be exposed to the exact same material again, eight weeks from now. We ask the new dancers to bring their friends to the next scheduled start of lessons and to act as "angels" for their friends. Because the material will be repeated eight weeks from now, the students do not have to learn each new call to perfection. They have already seen "pictures" of the call, and may have even pushed checkers thru the call. They'll learn each call again, and much better, eight weeks from now, when they are angels for the subsequent group.

NO STAR TIPS

If experienced dancers are helping out at lessons for the right reasons, they do not require a club-level tip "just for them". We informally refer to our 8+8 plan as the "New Dancer Farm". At our regular club, we invite people to come out "to the farm" and help us grow new dancers.

MAKE SURE EVERYONE HAS SUCCESS DURING THE LAST TIP OF EACH SEGMENT

On the third (final) tip of each segment, we review what they've learned during the evening, then call a singing call they are certain to be successful with. We avoid teaching a lot a brand-new material during the last tip of each segment.

NO FREE LESSONS

We found that having new dancers pay for every lesson, even the very first one, helps us retain them. We think the lure of "the first 'X' lessons are free" actually turns people away, because nowadays folks figure if something is free, then there must be strings attached. When talking one-on-one with someone, if the issue of cost comes up, every club member is authorized to give out a "free pass" for the first night of lessons. So far, this option has yet to be exercised.

ASK FOR AN 8-WEEK COMMITMENT

On each night of lessons, we point out how we are covering different material every night, so it's important to attend every session. It's still difficult to convince people to attend ALL the lessons. We are now considering offering a 25% discount if they pay for all eight lessons in advance. We are hoping this tactic will make them want to attend all eight lessons, since they're already paid for. Still, even if someone misses a lesson or two, we tell 'em not to worry too much about it, because the exact same material will be covered again in eight weeks.

REMIND PEOPLE TO ASK OTHERS TO SQUARE DANCE

Recruitment is an on-going process. We've found it helps tremendously to constantly remind both club and class members to ASK their friends to try square dancing. The campaign we've been running successfully is "ASK TEN PEOPLE". We ask 'em to keep track of how many people they've actually personally ASKED to come to square dance lessons, and to keep askin' people until they've asked ten people.

Further, we get the club and class members to write down the names of the (hopefully ten) people they've asked. Then we make a master list of these names and circulate the list among the class and club members. We've found that oftentimes, several different dancers know the very same prospect. This lets us double and triple-team the prospects. We think if a non-dancer is asked to square dance by several different acquaintances, it improves the likelihood of them showing up for a beginners class.

USE COLOR CODES

When our program first started, we referred to the three segments each night as the "A", "B", and "C" groups. MISTAKE!! We found that many times people did not know which group they were in, and they would often square up in a tip for which they were not yet ready. We solved this problem by using a color-dot sticker on their name badge:

- Red = 1st 8 weeks
- Green = 2nd 8 weeks
- Purple = 3rd 8 weeks

Before "awarding" a green dot, we ask each new dancer if THEY feel ready for a green dot. We encourage them to repeat the Red session if they want to. So far, a few people have wanted to, usually due to having missed several classes. We remind folks that even though they have a green dot, they are still expected to dance in the Red sessions, to complete their learning experience. Besides, it doesn't cost 'em any extra to dance in both. Similarly, the Purple group is reminded that they are expected to dance in the Green tips, and are also welcome to dance in the Red tips.

BE A PIONEER: EXPERIMENT

Since we are not aware of any hard-and-fast rules about how a program of this nature should be conducted, we often take the liberty of trying out new ideas. Sometimes the new ideas actually work. :-)

ADVERTISE

Since classes are available all year round, we have started to buy some low-key advertisements. These are small ads designed to increase general awareness. This type of ad may take months to produce results, but they are very inexpensive. So far, our largest source of new students (other than word-of-mouth) has been from announcements printed in church bulletins.

GETTING YOUR PROJECT STARTED

Creating a brand-new "10+10" beginner plan, when one does not already exist, is not the easiest thing in the world to do. First you need a hall, and a caller with a free night. On the very first cycle, there is only one session, not three. We started by teaching four weeks of "Session A", two hours per week. After four weeks, we started a new session "A" and invited the current "A" people to become "B" people. (If we knew then what we know now, we would NOT have done this: we would have given the "Red-Dot" people a "Green Dot", if they wanted one).

In the 2nd cycle, we taught "A" and "B" for six weeks, an hour and fifteen minutes per session. On the 3rd cycle (after ten total weeks of elapsed time) we were able to finally start teaching three sessions per night.

RESULTS

So far, we have put eleven new dancers into the sponsoring club, and have over 40 dancers in various phases of lessons. Our statistics would have been even better, except that the mistakes we made during our learning process ran off over 30 people. Maybe by learning from our mistakes, YOU can undertake a similar plan, not lose ANY people, and have 70 student dancers within 6 to 8 months!

Our retention figures are not very reliable at present, because three of the new dancers are my own children. They don't have the option of dropping out! In truth, they have brought in a few of their own friends. Children are only a small percentage of our new dancers. Most new dancers are the same age as our experienced dancers: old. But perhaps we are finally starting to reach the younger set. Now all I need is a NEW hobby, where my wife and I can get AWAY from the kidz! :-)

RECOMMENDATION

Our plan has evolved considerably since we first started. It is likely to undergo further changes in the future. We do think we have finally created a stable situation, after a somewhat rocky start. It's possible that some of our success is due to the fact that we already had a healthy and growing club when we started, rather than a club willing to try ANYTHING out of desperation.

The magic of the plan occurs by allowing beginners to start square dancing when THEY are ready, instead of only once per year. So far, our results have exceeded everyone's lofty expectations. We don't think we will EVER go back to the "traditional" approach for beginner lessons.

I earnestly seek any and all input, as we are constantly striving to improve this plan.

128 New Couples in 1 Year! **by Keith Rippetto, Callerlab RPM Committee**

The RPM Committee (Recruit, Promote, Maintain) has been very active the past four months. We (the committee) feel we're making things happen as far as recruiting new dancers is concerned. Our committee has nearly one hundred dedicated callers working for the common good of square dancing. Our committee is open to anyone interested in working for the good of the square dance activity. Using CALLERLAB's Voice-Mail system, we've established communications that we never dreamed possible. We're able to record our ideas and allow others to listen to them in hopes it will help recruiting. I'm very impressed with the results so far and I'd like to share some of the ideas with you. I'm also painfully aware that by the time you read this, our traditional recruiting "window" may be past. Who cares? We can start lessons anytime! Right? Let's do it!

Listed below are several ideas that have been taken from the RPM Committee's Voice-Mail box. If you choose to use them please, let us know the results! I've listed them in no particular order, but the one idea getting the most press is the Ten-Plus-Ten Program, a year 'round learn-to-dance program.

The Ten-Plus-Ten Program

Several professional promoters, advertisers and marketeers have told us that we don't have a product to sell because we only offer lessons once a year! They have also stated that no matter how much advertising money we throw at it, the results will never be worth the amount of money we spend! Plain enough? Why is it that the hardest things to see are right before our eyes?

Several callers are now using a program they refer to as a Ten- Plus-Ten Program. Many more callers plan on using some form of the program this fall. The callers who've tried it, report very positive results. The idea is to start a new class every ten weeks. This will require at least two different levels of classes on the same night. One caller we know of conducts three sets of lessons on the same night. Ten weeks is only a suggestion. You can use as many weeks as it takes. Whatever the number, make sure it's workable for you and don't wait too long between classes. One of the best things about this program is that it makes lessons available year 'round. I assume we'll be able to sell it then. Right! The program works something like this, using ten weeks as an example.

Start your class at 7 o'clock in the evening (Sunday evenings you can start at 6 o'clock if it doesn't interfere with the area church schedules). Let's say you only have four new couples (eight would be great, twelve would be out of sight). Encourage experienced dancers to help you get started. Don't let only four couples get you down because they're going to be the foundation of your new one hundred and twenty eight couple club. Be enthusiastic! When you get things rolling, make sure you continually mention that you're going to start another class in a few weeks so your new students can start talking to their friends. A cookout on about the fourth week would do wonders for your new students. They should be encouraged to bring some of their non-dancing friends. On the eighth night, inform the students that you're starting a new class in three weeks (week eleven) for their friends and anyone else that may be interested. Strongly suggest that each one of them bring at least one couple out for lessons. Make them feel important by telling them they'll still come in at 7 o'clock, but it'll be to "Angel" the new class. It's also a good time to mention that they can use this as a refresher course to brush up on some of the calls they're not sure of. Now you have them dancing with their friends and you're only into week eleven! Make sure your ten-weekers understand they'll be continuing their dancing and education at 8:30 and that the new class is welcome to stay and watch if they like. Are we building a strong group or what? Don't forget to visit with them as much as possible. Become their friend, it's very important!

What happens next is quite exciting. You have students that have had only ten weeks of classes coming in at 7 o'clock to help the new dancers. This creates a win-win situation for you and the "Angels". They feel important and you're building a strong relationship with them!

If you analyze this progressive program, you can see that those in the first class that may have been having problems now have a chance to go back through the first ten weeks without feeling like they're inferior and dropping out never to return. Wow! Where was this program when what's-his-name was taking lessons, but dropped out because he was a little slow, or missed too many nights?

I feel there are many benefits to this plan. It doesn't change the teaching order or the list. It simply splits the pie into more pieces, but you still get the whole pie. It also allows a repeat class without any hassle. It also provides a stopping point for the individual that is satisfied with a program that only requires ten to twenty weeks to learn. Some people simply enjoy the lessons and never want to move any higher. Most of all, our activity becomes available to the public all year long!

One other thing that will happen, or should happen, is the creation of MAINSTREAM clubs in areas where there are none! It's predictable when you look at what's happening when you reach week twenty. You've got another new class coming in at 7 o'clock and the ten week class moving to 8:30 and going till 10:00 p.m. What are you going to do with the ones that have now completed twenty weeks? Unless you can convince them to stay after 10 o'clock, you're going to have to go to another night or send them to a club that dances their level. What a dilemma! We've got too many dancers and we're going to have to start up another night! If you do a little math, and assuming everyone brought out at least one couple for your first three sets of lessons, you now have sixteen couples (four squares) in lessons on your twenty-first week! At the end of one year it's possible that starting with only four couples initially, you can have one hundred and twenty-eight couples using ten weeks as the approach for lessons. Is it legal to pyramid square dance lessons?

Some will say this is too much commitment on the callers part, not to mention the "Angels" commitment. To some extent I must agree. But may I suggest that where possible, callers get together and share the workload by combining classes. They should at least agree to relieve each other when needed. I'll bet a Yellowrock to a Reverse Wrap-A-Round Back Flip The Diamond, that if the program works, most callers won't ask for help! Let's see $128 \times 5 - \text{rent} = \$\$$

Let me reiterate that nothing changes as far as the Basic, Mainstream and Plus lists are concerned... or the time required to teach them. The real change is the dancers will decide what level they want to settle into. Is it possible this could double the activity in one year? YES! One other thing... while I've used only callers as an example here, I see no reason why clubs that really want to work can't do the same. They must commit, however! I have to say that this particular program has "charged me up" and I'm looking forward to getting my own class series started! Hope we don't run out of hall space with all these new students.

Charts

At least four weeks before lessons begin, have each club member write down, on

a chart, the names of at least three couples or singles that might be prospective new dancers. Next, give a copy of the chart to all the club members and have them read it. It's very likely you'll find that several club members know some of the same prospects. Ask all dancers that know each prospect to contact them and ask them to come out and learn to dance. Even better, why not call all the prospects and invite them to a cookout with all the club members. I can't think of a better way to get acquainted or a better time to talk about square dancing. A casual approach beats the almost demanding type approach that most of us use today for recruiting.

Flyers & Sacks

Make up flyers that contain all the required information for a new dance class. Be sure to emphasize the good things; fun, exercise, etc. Leave out any mention of lesson duration! They'll be dancing the first night, so it only takes one night to learn to dance. Right? If each class night is treated like a dance, then they're dancing. Anyway, take the flyers and go to the local supermarkets and ask them if you may stuff a flyer in each customer's grocery bag. Maybe I should say sack? At the same time, have some of your club members man a registration table so you can take the names and phone numbers of prospective new dancers. You'll be surprised what one Saturday will do for your recruiting. You might even "bag" a few yourself. Sack!

Halls & Rent

If hall rent or availability is a problem, go to your local Community Education or Recreation Director and ask them to sponsor lessons. Generally they'll be more than glad to. They'll also provide a free hall and do the advertising in most cases. Great way to get youth involved! Community Colleges are always looking for dance instructors.

Go to your local Public Utility Company and ask them to sponsor your lessons or club dances. I personally know this works! Just this year, we lost a hall that we had danced in for several years. We were unable to find another hall. Desperate, I wrote a letter to the local Public Utility Company, asking them if they would sponsor our club by allowing us to use their auditorium. I made it a point to emphasize the benefits of square dancing and I suggested that lessons could be set up for their employees. I also listed the names of a few club members that were employed by them. For my troubles and proof that I had liability insurance, I got a fifty- five square, air conditioned hall with a large stage, beautiful wooden floor, kitchen facilities, free janitorial service (although we don't need it) and the pleasure of dealing with some of the finest people I've ever had the pleasure of knowing. Large corporations are very public minded and you'll be surprised what they'll do if the right approach is used.

Bribes

One caller association is offering to donate ten dollars to the local school system for every student that enrolls in his classes. Another caller is offering free lessons

to any teacher that enrolls in his class. One caller offers free lessons during the summer (slow time) for anyone enrolling.

Why not hold a free spaghetti dinner or soup, bean and cornbread night for the non-dancing public? Have an impromptu dance during the dinner and get the non-dancers involved. Have everyone register for a door prize (10 weeks of free lessons) so you'll have names and addresses of prospective new dancers.

Offer one year of free dues to the person bringing out the most new dancers.

Advertising

Some inexpensive ideas for advertising are to use the promotional signs in bowling alleys, city buses, cabs and paper place mats in restaurants. I particularly like the place mat idea. It could be designed so that the reader could learn of the many benefits associated with square dancing. Phone numbers should be listed for those interested. They could be paid for by the local dancers and provided free to restaurants that would use them. The local restaurant that dancers patronize after a dance would be a great beginning. Another good idea is to erect "yard signs" on each square dancer's lawn to expose the public to our activity. The sign would say something like "We Square Dance and Love It! Ask Us!" or "Mentally and Physically Fit. Square Dance Is It". A block on the bottom of the sign would provide space for a phone number. I have asked the CALLERLAB Foundation to look into funding this particular project so every square dancer and club has access to them.

Media

Start sending press releases to your local newspaper, radio and TV stations! Anything that puts square dancing before the public eye can only help. An article announcing that "Mr. John Smith a nationally known square dance caller from Hollywood, California, will be featured at the 35th annual Buckwheat Festival at the Happy Valley Conference Center, Anytown, Anywhere USA this coming Saturday, April 21st. Non-dancers are welcome and encouraged to attend. Refreshments will be served. Come out and see America's best kept secret!"

Make sure the media understands what you're doing and make sure it's good news! The point is to start using our media friends as a means of reaching the public. If you meet resistance, start a write-in, call-in campaign like some of our fellow dancers did when a local newspaper refused to put their schedules in the Sunday paper. The dancers won and their schedule still appears in Sunday's paper. I'll bet there's several people in every club that would write an article for you. **START IT NOW!**

The following ad was placed in the Tulsa, Oklahoma newspapers. Shane Greer says he came across it in St. Louis. Thanks for sharing it with us, Shane. I've modified it some and you're encouraged to change it to suit your needs and have it run in your local newspaper!

America's National Dance

HEALTH, TRAVEL and FRIENDSHIP. America's best kept secret! What is it? Western Square Dancing! One and one half hours of square dancing equals 30 minutes of aerobics. When you're square dancing you won't think of those everyday problems, or let the work day brain drain bother you while dancing a figure like "Spin Chain and Exchange The Gears". Square dancing keeps the mind active and the body fit without strenuous workouts. You gain endurance muscle instead of bulk. By combining the mental and physical exercise square dancing offers, it's a win-win situation for you! There's no consumption of alcoholic beverages during Western Square Dances. You can dance any night of the week, anywhere in the WORLD because it's called in the English language only. Learn here and dance anywhere in the world! Square dance festivals and conventions are offered at the local, state, national and international level. If you square dance, you're sure to dance with people from all over the world sooner or later. Dance directories are available for clubs throughout the world. There are over 20 Square Dance clubs in this area alone. Square dance vacations abound at places like the Lake of the Ozarks in Missouri; Gatlinburg, Tennessee; Lolo, Montana; and many more. Ocean cruises and tours to Alaska or Hawaii are very popular with square dancers. You can still leave your valuables unattended at a square dance, a festival or a convention and not fear they'll be stolen. Just ask any of the 21,000 dancers that attended the 43rd National Square Dance convention in Portland, Oregon. As a social mixer it can't be beat! It blends people from all walks of life. You never meet a stranger, you simply make new friends for life. We like to think a smile is a curve that straightens out a square. We hold fund raisers and sponsor charity events, all the while having good fun! That's what it's all about, just relax, laugh, dance, make a mistake, but most of all, HAVE FUN. The SUPERDUCKS SQUARE DANCE Club of Anytown, Anywhere will hold a beginners square dance with a FREE soup, bean and cornbread supper October 3, 1994, 7:00 P.M at the Anytown Community Building, 007 Connley Drive, Anytown. WE CHALLENGE YOU to come out and see if you can learn to square dance (Everyone else does!).

Video

Several people have produced videos to promote square dancing. Most recently a four part series of articles appeared in American Square Dance magazine by Harry L. Gerwin. In his articles Harry guides you through the mechanics of producing a video. Harry even mentions another individual, Carl Fowler, that has produced his own video. They experienced the same problems many of us did when we tried to get the CALLERLAB videos "aired" on our local TV stations. The stations either refused entirely or did not play them often enough to get the desired results. I'm POSITIVE that if we had the videos we could band together in each local area and have a write-in, call-in campaign to persuade the stations to run our videos. I don't know either of these gentlemen's address or phone numbers, but I invite them to get in touch with me and join our committee. We need your help and square dancing needs your videos!

If you're excited (at least fired up) and willing to work, why don't you join me and the RPM committee in making this year the best ever for square dancing. Even if you don't wish to join, but have an idea or have used something that worked, please share it with us.

As mentioned previously I've asked for and received permission from the Executive Board of CALLERLAB to include anyone on our committee that is willing to work for our goals. This includes all non- CALLERLAB callers, cuers, prompters, instructors, dancers and anyone with the square dance activity's interest at heart. If you feel the urge to become a member, simply drop me a note or call me. I'll send you the necessary information. I ask only that you are willing to dedicate one year to our committee, that you'll work for the betterment of our activity and that you'll respond when asked.

We've all said, "if you want it done, do it yourself". It's time!

Introduction:

The Multi-Cycle Program is a method of conducting square dance lessons that start more than once a year. The additional designations of 10 + 10, 13 + 13, and 17 + 17 indicate how many weeks each class is taught before proceeding to the next phase or list of calls. It also indicates how many weeks before a class begins again.

Advantages:

- By starting classes more than once a year, you make square dancing more available to potential dancers.
- Enthusiastic new dancers can recruit their non-dancing friends several times a year and dance with them immediately.
- Your new dancers become your primary recruiters.
- A shorter commitment for new dancers (i.e., 3 to 4 months instead of 8 to 10).
- Having two or three class groups on the same night increases class revenue.
- Shorter class time each night allows brand new dancers time to increase their physical stamina and leaves them wanting more in the first part of the class.
- Those who miss class nights or need additional class time, can repeat a phase and not wait until the following year to join again.
- Fast learners and former dancers can move ahead without being held back by those needing more class time.
- While the more experienced new dancers are "angeling" the brand new dancers, they have an opportunity to review calls and reinforce their skills.

For additional information on the Multicycle Method and the Multi-Cycle Lesson Plan - available through the CALLERLAB Home Office, contact [CALLERLAB](#).

There are some exciting things happening in square dancing these days and many areas are seeing their numbers grow again. It seems that we have a whole

generation of "baby boomers" whose children are beginning to leave the nest. These "boomers" are looking for an activity to share. Some are also thinking about making time for exercise. Many that did a little country western dancing, that was real popular a while ago, have grown tired of smoke filled bars and dance clubs and are looking elsewhere. Square dancing is so "politically correct" right now that we're crazy not to share our activity with more people.

Market researchers have told us for many years that we don't have a product to offer, if we can only make it available once or twice a year. The old way of starting a new dancer program only in September and/or January has not been very successful. If someone wanted to join, and missed the opportunity in the few weeks the program was open, they'd have to wait another year. If a new dancer wanted to bring a friend, they would have to wait until next years new dancer program. We now have the solution!

The Multicycle Method of organizing new dancer dances has been around for many years now. In the last several years since CALLERLAB has been involved in its promotion, we've seen it spread to many areas in the world. These areas are growing. Their new dancer programs are "booming" and adding to the clubs treasury instead of draining it. So, whatever way you chose to use it, this updated method can put renewed life in your new dancer program.

The Multicycle Method has also been called 10 plus 10, among other names, but the concept is still the same. By starting more than once or twice a year, you make our activity more available to potential dancers. Instead of waiting until next year, your enthusiastic new dancers become your best recruiters and can bring their friends several times each year. They can even dance with those they recruit immediately. By having two or three new dancer groups on the same night, you increase your revenue and more people means more fun. Those who miss dance nights or need additional dance time can repeat a cycle as necessary, instead of dropping out and waiting so long to start again.

There are many ways to run the Multicycle Program. You'll want to adapt this plan to fit your group and modify it as you go to make it work best for your situation.

You still need to promote and recruit new dancers with as much effort as before. The LEGACY Promo Pak, available from Stan and Cathie Burdick, P.O. Box 2678, Silver Bay, NY 12874, is a great source of ideas. The cost is only \$5.00. Use as many ideas as you can, and really encourage your new dancers to bring their friends. Personal contact is still the best recruiting tool.

Since every area is a little different, the Multicycle Method is being used in a variety of ways. The 10 week version can have five starts per year and the 12 or 13 week version can start four times a year. Others have had great results starting three times a year or every 17 weeks. It's ideal to run your new dancer

program all year round, but that can be adjusted to fit your hall or seasonal schedule.

Divide your dance night into two or three separate periods. For example, in a three hour night you can either have two groups or cycles, dancing one and a half hours each, or three cycles dancing one hour each. You can alternate tips among the groups throughout the night, or can divide the dance into separate time periods for each cycle.

Let's assume you start a cycle in September and start a new cycle every 17 weeks (three starts per year) and have three hours of dancing each night. For your very first cycle you can hold a new dancer dance from 7:00 - 8:30 and a "club funshop" from 8:30 - 10:00 p.m. We've even heard of clubs holding a line dance program the first half of the evening and a square dance program the second half. You decide how best to run the first cycle for your group. Even if you've planned the "old standard" program of one start per year, you can always switch to the Multicycle Method and start another cycle on the same night to increase your numbers and revenue. The next start is in 17 weeks, or the first part of January. Divide your night in two parts, and teach your new cycle 7:00 - 8:30 and your September group from 8:30 - 10:00. After another 17 weeks, or the first

part of May, you can graduate your September group and start another cycle. This spring start is around daylight savings time and has proven to be an ideal time to recruit new dancers.

The shorter dance time is great for new dancers because it gives them time to build stamina. Instead of them going home tired out, you actually leave them wanting more and excited about coming the following week. When dancers finish the first cycle they are encouraged to bring their friends, and while they are dancing the second cycle, they are also "angeling" their friends in the first cycle and reinforcing what they've previously learned.

If dancers get behind or miss a few weeks, they are encouraged to repeat that cycle and don't have to wait a year for a cycle to start again. We also find that we gain many former dancers, because they have opportunities to join where they feel comfortable many different times each year. Call your former members and encourage them to come back and "help" at your new dancer dances.

It takes several starts to build momentum, so don't give up after one or two cycles. You really need to try this program for more than three starts to fine tune it to fit your situation. Once you get to where your new dancers become your primary recruiters, the momentum you can build is exciting.

Let your new dancers feel like they're part of the club. Consider having refreshments, theme nights, and occasionally, decorations so your new dancer

dances are like a party. Include your new dancers in club picnics, camp-outs, theater nights and other club activities. Create additional dancing opportunities by visiting other groups or attending special dances geared for new dancers. One successful club (on-line website:

http://www.jps.net/dameeti/valley_trailers) alternates club and new dancer tips on their own dance night. They not only get a larger attendance at club dances, but their new dancers get more dance time and feel like they're part of the club.

If you want to increase the numbers in your club, then update your new dancer program. Focus your club's attention on your new dancers. You'll make it easier for people to join square dancing and will be delighted with the results.

For additional information on the Multicycle Method contact [CALLERLAB](#).

Some clubs are really growing. Their classes are bigger and by giving more attention to their new dancer program, more people are starting and staying in square dancing. We have a whole generation of "baby boomers", between the ages of 45 and 55, whose children are beginning to "leave the nest". These "boomers" are looking for an activity to share that can include some exercise. Many of those that did a little country western dancing, when it was real popular a few years back, are looking elsewhere. Square dancing is one of the most "politically correct" activities and we're crazy not to capitalize on it now, and share our activity with more people.

Market researchers have told us for many years that we don't have a product to offer, if we can only make it available once or twice a year. The old way of starting a new dancer program only in September and/or January has not been very successful. If someone wanted to join, and missed the opportunity, in the few weeks the program was open, they'd have to wait another year. If a new dancers wanted to bring a friend, they would have to wait until next year's new dancer program. We now have a solution!

The Multicycle Method of organizing new dancer dances has been around for some time now. Former Chairman of the Board and Producer of Ranch House Records, Darryl McMillan, brought this idea to the Board of Governors attention in the 1980's and Keith Rippetto promoted the idea further while he was chairman of the Recruit, Promote, Maintain (RPM) Committee.

You might notice that we are now using more up to date names for our new dancer programs. Instead of beginners, **new dancers** is much less condescending and instead of **classes**, new dancer dances is much more accurate. New dancers are already a little uneasy when they first attend. By making each new dancer night more like a dance, it not only is less stressful, it's more fun. Think about it.

The Multicycle Method has also been called 10 Plus 10, among other names, but the concept is still the same. By starting more than once a year, you make our activity more available to potential dancers. Instead of waiting until next year, your enthusiastic new dancers become your best recruiters and can bring their friends several times each year. They can even dance with those they recruit immediately. By having two or three new dancer groups on the same night, you increase your revenue and more people means more fun. Those who miss dance nights or need additional dance time can repeat a cycle as necessary, instead of dropping out and waiting so long to start again.

There are many ways to run the Multicycle Program. You'll want to adapt this plan to fit your group and modify it as you go to make it work best for your situation.

You still need to promote and recruit new dancers with as much effort as before. The LEGACY Promo Pak, available from Stan and Cathie Burdick, P.O. Box 2678, Silver Bay, NY 12874, is a great source of ideas. The cost is only \$5.00. Use as many ideas as you can, and really encourage your new dancers to bring their friends. Personal contact is still the best recruiting tool.

I've been teaching for a group using one form of the Multicycle Method for three years now. The club has gone from around 75 members to almost 300. After deciding that they needed to "try something different, because the old way wasn't very successful", this club turned their attention to their new dancer program and really went to work. They include their new dancers in club picnics, camp-outs, theater nights, and other club activities, as soon as they start. They also distribute copies of the club newsletter each month where all names are mentioned for birthdays, anniversaries, and in other special interest articles. After going past the half way point, the new dancers are invited to club dances, where every other tip is called using only the calls they know. It increases the attendance at club dances and is a great way for club members and new dancers to establish friendships.

We start a cycle in September and start a new cycle every 17 weeks (three starts per year) and have three hours of dancing each night. For your very first cycle you can hold a new dancer dance from 7:00 - 8:30 and a "club funshop" from 8:30 - 10:00 p.m. We've even heard of clubs holding a line dance program the first half of the evening and a square dance program the second half. You decide how best to run the first cycle for your group. Even if you've planned the "old standard" program of one start per year, you can always switch to the Multicycle Method and start another cycle on the same night to increase your numbers and revenue. The next start is in 17 weeks, or the first part of January. Divide your night in two parts, and teach your new cycle 7:00 to 8:30 and your September group from 8:30 - 10:00. After another 17 weeks, or the first part of May, you can graduate your September group and start another cycle. This spring start is

around daylight savings time and has proven to be an ideal time to recruit new dancers.

The shorter dance time is great for new dancers because it gives them time to build stamina. Instead of them going home tired out, you actually leave them wanting more and excited about coming the following week. As the dancers finish the first cycle they are encouraged to bring their friends, and while they are dancing the second cycle, they are also "angeling" their friends in the first cycle and reinforcing what they've previously learned.

If dancers get behind or miss a few weeks, they are encouraged to repeat that cycle and don't have to wait a year for a cycle to start again. We also find that we gain many former dancers, because they have opportunities to join where they feel comfortable many different times each year. Call your former members and encourage them to come back and "help" at your new dancer dances.

It takes several starts to build momentum, so don't give up after one or two cycles. You really need to try this program for more than three starts to fine tune it to fit your situation. Once you get to where your new dancers become your primary recruiters, the momentum you can build is exciting.

The only downside is that this program works best if dances are held once a week all year long, going dark only if necessary, for holidays. It keeps the momentum going and your dancers can always count on it. It can be run part of the year, if necessary, but it will take more effort to start it up again each year and this may decrease your numbers in the long run.

If you want to increase the numbers in your club, then update your new dancer program. Focus your club's attention on your new dancers. You'll make it easier for people to join square dancing and will be delighted with the results.

For additional information on the Multicycle Method, contact [CALLERLAB](#).

Some clubs are really growing. Their classes are bigger and by giving more attention to their new dancer program, more people are starting and staying in square dancing. We have a whole generation of "baby boomers", between the ages of 45 and 55, whose children are beginning to "leave the nest". These "boomers" are looking for an activity to share that can include some exercise. Many of those that did a little country western dancing, when it was real popular a few years back, are looking elsewhere. Square dancing is one of the most "politically correct" activities and we're crazy not to capitalize on it now, and share our activity with more people.

Market researchers have told us for many years that we don't have a product to offer, if we can only make it available once or twice a year. The old way of starting a new dancer program only in September and/or January has not been

very successful. If someone wanted to join, and missed the opportunity, in the few weeks the program was open, they'd have to wait another year. If a new dancer wanted to bring a friend, they would have to wait until next year's new dancer program. We now have a solution!

The Multicycle Method of organizing new dancer dances has been around for some time now. Former Chairman of the Board and Producer of Ranch House Records, Darryl McMillan, brought this idea to the Board of Governors attention in the 1980's and Keith Rippetto promoted the idea further while he was chairman of the Recruit, Promote, Maintain (RPM) Committee.

You might notice that we are now using more up to date names for our new dancer programs. Instead of beginners, **new dancers** is much less condescending and instead of **classes**, new dancer dances is much more accurate. New dancers are already a little uneasy when they first attend. By making each new dancer night more like a dance, it not only is less stressful, it's more fun. Think about it.

The Multicycle Method has also been called 10 Plus 10, among other names, but the concept is still the same. By starting more than once a year, you make our activity more available to potential dancers. Instead of waiting until next year, your enthusiastic new dancers become your best recruiters and can bring their friends several times each year. They can even dance with those they recruit immediately. By having two or three new dancer groups on the same night, you increase your revenue and more people means more fun. Those who miss dance nights or need additional dance time can repeat a cycle as necessary, instead of dropping out and waiting so long to start again.

There are many ways to run the Multicycle Program. You'll want to adapt this plan to fit your group and modify it as you go to make it work best for your situation.

You still need to promote and recruit new dancers with as much effort as before. The LEGACY Promo Pak, available from Stan and Cathie Burdick, P.O. Box 2678, Silver Bay, NY 12874, is a great source of ideas. The cost is only \$5.00. Use as many ideas as you can, and really encourage your new dancers to bring their friends. Personal contact is still the best recruiting tool.

I've been teaching for a group using one form of the Multicycle Method for three years now. The club has gone from around 75 members to almost 300. After deciding that they needed to "try something different, because the old way wasn't very successful", this club turned their attention to their new dancer program and really went to work. They include their new dancers in club picnics, camp-outs, theater nights, and other club activities, as soon as they start. They also distribute copies of the club newsletter each month where all names are mentioned for birthdays, anniversaries, and in other special interest articles. After

going past the half way point, the new dancers are invited to club dances, where every other tip is called using only the calls they know. It increases the attendance at club dances and is a great way for club members and new dancers to establish friendships.

We start a cycle in September and start a new cycle every 17 weeks (three starts per year) and have three hours of dancing each night. For your very first cycle you can hold a new dancer dance from 7:00 - 8:30 and a "club funshop" from 8:30 - 10:00 p.m. We've even heard of clubs holding a line dance program the first half of the evening and a square dance program the second half. You decide how best to run the first cycle for your group. Even if you've planned the "old standard" program of one start per year, you can always switch to the Multicycle Method and start another cycle on the same night to increase your numbers and revenue. The next start is in 17 weeks, or the first part of January. Divide your night in two parts, and teach your new cycle 7:00 to 8:30 and your September group from 8:30 - 10:00. After another 17 weeks, or the first part of May, you can graduate your September group and start another cycle. This spring start is around daylight savings time and has proven to be an ideal time to recruit new dancers.

The shorter dance time is great for new dancers because it gives them time to build stamina. Instead of them going home tired out, you actually leave them wanting more and excited about coming the following week. As the dancers finish the first cycle they are encouraged to bring their friends, and while they are dancing the second cycle, they are also "angeling" their friends in the first cycle and reinforcing what they've previously learned.

If dancers get behind or miss a few weeks, they are encouraged to repeat that cycle and don't have to wait a year for a cycle to start again. We also find that we gain many former dancers, because they have opportunities to join where they feel comfortable many different times each year. Call your former members and encourage them to come back and "help" at your new dancer dances.

It takes several starts to build momentum, so don't give up after one or two cycles. You really need to try this program for more than three starts to fine tune it to fit your situation. Once you get to where your new dancers become your primary recruiters, the momentum you can build is exciting.

The only downside is that this program works best if dances are held once a week all year long, going dark only if necessary, for holidays. It keeps the momentum going and your dancers can always count on it. It can be run part of the year, if necessary, but it will take more effort to start it up again each year and this may decrease your numbers in the long run.

If you want to increase the numbers in your club, then update your new dancer program. Focus your club's attention on your new dancers. You'll make it easier for people to join square dancing and will be delighted with the results.

For additional information on the Multicycle Method, contact [CALLERLAB](#).