

# *Happy Soles Square and Round Dance Club*

## *Member Handbook*



(616) 281-0067

<http://Flutterbyes.SquareDance MI.com>

(Note: no "www" in address!)

(waiting for website approval)

Dear Members,

Welcome to one of the best all-around social activities available. Square dancing is a good low-impact, semi-aerobic exercise for people of all ages. Studies have shown that square dancing can add years to your life expectancy and reduce the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

This handbook will help explain some of the advantages of square dancing and the Happy Soles Square and Round Dance Club.

### **Club History, Activities and Purpose**

Happy Soles is a non-profit teaching club originally founded by Jim and Toni Unger in 1990 as the Flutterbyes Square Dance Club. With the retirement of Jim and Toni from Flutterbyes on May 31, 2018, the club transitioned from a caller-run club to a member-run club. The structure of the club was reorganized and the members chose a new name.

The purpose of the club is to promote a public awareness of square and round dancing and to provide dancing opportunities for members and classes for new dancers. Since teaching is a very important function of the club, square and round dance lessons are held throughout the year. Club dances utilize both mainstream and plus calls. Guest callers provide dances once a month from April through November and at other special times.

Happy Soles is a member of the West Michigan Square and Round Dance Association and the Michigan Council of Square and Round Dance Clubs.

### **Club Officers and Committees**

Our club is governed by a Board of Directors consisting of:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Immediate Past President

All the above, except Immediate Past President, are elected annually by club members.

Standing committees are:

- Newsletter Editor
- Public Relations
- Social Media and Webmaster
- Club Apparel and Accessories

If you would like to serve on any of these committees, please see a board member. Board meetings will be announced and members are welcome to attend. At least once a year, a membership meeting will be held. Members are strongly encouraged to attend and provide input.

## **Club Membership**

Dues are payable prior to the first dance in April. Our fiscal year is January 1 through December 31. The benefits of Club membership include:

- Reduced admission to Club dances
- Monthly newsletter listing area dances and special events
- Voting in club elections
- Participating in club social events - travel dances, parties, fundraisers, etc.
- Insurance coverage while at club functions
- Free dues if you sponsor a new dancer who graduates and attends at least two club dances

## **Membership Functions and Responsibilities**

To operate a square dance club requires sharing of responsibilities. Below are some of the duties that members are asked to participate in:

### **Dance Functions**

- Admission table
  - Members take an annual rotation at the admission table and selling 50-50 tickets. This requires early arrival and sitting out the first tip.
- Greeter
  - Members take an annual rotation welcoming dancers as they enter which requires early arrival.
- Refreshments
  - Members attending club dance functions are asked to provide snacks.
- Clean up
  - Members attending club dance functions are expected to assist in clean up.

## **Angel Responsibilities**

Club members are asked to assist new dancers during lessons. New dancer instruction requires many experienced dancers to help the students. New graduates are encouraged to angel the next class of new dancers. This not only helps the new dancers but also helps the new graduates reinforce what they have learned. Here are some highlights angels should keep in mind:

- Make new dancers feel welcome.
- Keep the class FUN.
- Club members are asked to not do any “Fluff” during class that has not been taught.
- Help ensure all new dancers are included in every tip at their level.
- Include new dancers in other club activities - parties, picnics, outings, etc.
- Don’t get upset when new dancers make a mistake.

## Square Dance Etiquette

To ensure that everyone at a square dance has an enjoyable time, please observe the following rules of etiquette:

1. Arrive on time whenever possible and wear a badge. It puts a name with a face.
2. Form a circle or set up squares promptly when the music starts or at the caller's request. Bear in mind that one can be prompt without running.
3. Join the nearest square that is forming. If all nearby squares are filled, hold your hand up high so the caller can either guide you to a square where you are needed or get other dancers to join you.
4. It is considered very bad manners to walk through the middle of one square to get to another. It is equally bad to pass a square in need of dancers. Never leave a square once you have joined it.
5. If time permits, introduce yourself to others in the square.
6. Listen quietly during all instructions from the caller.
7. BE GENTLE! There is no acceptable excuse for rough handling of fellow dancers! A light touch is all that's necessary to establish position. Many people suffer from arthritis in their hands so please take care to "touch", not "grab" hands.
8. At the end of every tip be sure to thank the others in your square.
9. Be friendly; consider yourself a host to other dancers.
10. Do not drink alcoholic beverages or eat garlic just before attending. Think about your breath and personal hygiene.
11. If a medical emergency occurs, members of the square should surround the person in question with uplifted arms to notify the caller that assistance is needed.
12. Be a well-informed dancer; review the rules of etiquette often.
13. Plan to stay for the entire dance. It is considered impolite (to the caller) to leave early. Be sure to thank the caller/cuer after the last tip.
14. Wear a smile – it helps your feet work better!

## **Square Dance Myths**

Like many other activities, there are several myths about square dancing. Here are a few:

1. *Square Dancing is only for old people.* Square dancing is for all ages.
2. *Square Dancing is only fun but offers nothing else.* Square dancing is a low-impact, semi-aerobic exercise that strengthens your muscles and mind. There are many physical and mental benefits to square dancing.
3. *Square Dancing uses only country music.* Many different types of music are used including pop, rock, easy listening, polka, Broadway, country-western and even rap.
4. *You have to learn higher levels of square dancing to be good/have fun.* Callers can make even Mainstream challenging.

## **Square Dance Terms & Definitions**

Listed below is information that is often hard to find in square dance manuals.

- Wherever you square dance in the world, all calls are in English.
- All square dance definitions can be found at [www.callerlab.org](http://www.callerlab.org).
- Illustrated dance definitions can be viewed at <http://www.tamtwirlers.org/tamination/info/index.html>.
- For video lessons with actual dancers for Basic/Mainstream through Plus, go to <http://videosquaredancelessons.com/lessons/> or <http://www.kssquaredancing.com/joomla/square-dance-lesson-videos.html>

### **50/50's**

A method of fundraising at square and/or round dances. Rather than raise the dance entry fee, an optional separate purchase enters the dancer into a drawing where the prize is a portion of the money. One or more winners are selected randomly, and the total of the money returned to the participants is half (50%) of the total money used to purchase tickets for this activity, hence the term, 50/50.

### **Afterparty**

A planned activity for square dancers after a dance, usually at a Festival or Convention.

### **Angel**

Experienced dancers who assist new dancers learn the basics of square dancing.

### **APD**

**All Position Dancing.** Dancing either the man's or woman's position from standard formations of square dance calls, regardless of the person's true gender.

With APD, a couple may have the lady on the man's left, or may consist of two men or two ladies; any arrangement of genders is a legal starting position for a call (except for a few gender-specific calls).

APD is a sub-set of DBD.

## **Attire**

The type of clothes worn at square dance functions. There are basically two types:

- Traditional (sometimes called “Square Dance attire”): Western (usually long sleeve) shirts and dress pants or jeans for men and square dance blouses and skirts or dresses for women (plus the applicable square dance undergarments)
- Casual: Street clothing for both men and women

## **Banner**

Usually a square or rectangular piece of cloth, with the club's logo.

## **Breakdown**

When the square is no longer able to continue dancing because too few dancers know where they're supposed to be. This is considered to be a "broken" square, and is commonly referred to as "breaking down".

If the current song is a singing call, the couples should all return to their original home positions and wait for the rest of the floor to return as well; if it's a patter call, they should form two facing lines and wait for a call that brings all the lines "up to the middle and back", their signal to join in and resume dancing.

## **CALLERLAB**

An international organization responsible for the consistent definition of square dance calls and programs throughout the world.

## **Dance Programs (unofficially called “levels”)**

A defined program of square dancing, used to refer to a collective set of standard square dance calls taught to dancers. The seven programs defined by Callerlab, in order, are:

- Mainstream (about 70 calls)
- Plus (about 30 calls)
- Advanced (not all areas of the country split them) (about 60 calls)
  - A-1
  - A-2
- Challenge (hundreds of calls)
  - C-1 ["Challenge Basic"]
  - C-2 ["Extended Challenge"]
  - C3A
  - C3B (non-Callerlab)
  - C4 (non-Callerlab)

The most common program danced is Mainstream, while Plus is very prevalent in many of the major urban areas of the U.S.

## **Dangle**

A small plastic or metal object which attaches to a badge. This can symbolize a variety of things, including various activities, visitations, callers, special events, etc. Also called a fun badge.

## **DBD**

**Dancing By Definition.** Dancing such that the individual calls can be broken into their component parts, so that a call can be danced from any position on the floor, including dancing a call from a different starting position (non-standard positions) than was originally taught.

This requires that dancers remember how each call is defined (as a group of linked Basic calls) rather than just from standard positions. APD is a sub-set of DBD, but most people incorrectly use the terms interchangeably.

## **Frill or Fluff**

A fancy move that is added to, or substituted for, the standard way of doing a call that has the same effect but can be more fun than the standard, traditional movements. Frills that involve other dancers usually have some built-in signal so that you only do it if involved dancers are ready and know the particular frill.

Some dancers are distracted/upset by actions other than what is called, so care must be taken to use only those frills that are acceptable to those in your square.

## **Patter Call**

A single song, used by a caller as background for a series of calls, very often with only call-related lyrics accompanying the music. One aspect of a patter call is that both partners of a couple will be moved in a variety of formations and arrangements, but each time be brought back to their home position before the next set of calls. This may occur several times during the patter call. This is in contrast to a singing call.

## **Gender-Specific Call**

A call that is performed differently by men and ladies, regardless of position. Examples: Star Thru, Slide Thru, Box the Gnat, etc.

## **Square**

A set of four couples, in a four-sided formation, each couple facing one of the four walls of the room. Each square is comprised of two head couples and two side couples.

## **Stacking Calls**

Several calls, called in quick succession, requiring the dancers to remember several calls in a row. Remember to finish each call before executing the next.

## **Styling**

Anything about the way you do a call that is not mentioned in the definition. Usually the definition tells you how to get there, while styling tells you how to do it smoothly. Most calls have standard styling that everyone should know and is always correct, plus alternate styling, or frills, that you can add for fun.

## **Trail-End Dance**

A dance held immediately prior to a festival or convention, at the location of the main event, usually sponsored and organized by the same people organizing the festival or convention.

## **Trail-In Dance**

A dance held prior to a festival or convention, at the city or area, but not necessarily related to the festival or convention. Commonly sponsored by a local club or organization.

**Trail-Out Dance**

A dance held immediately after a festival or convention, usually sponsored and organized by the same people organizing the festival or convention, but not necessarily included as part of the event. For example, an event running from Thursday evening to Saturday night, might have a trail-out dance on Sunday morning.

**Trail-Thru Dance**

A dance held somewhere along a route to a major festival or convention. Many times, a series of dances will be scheduled along the way to a convention, providing a number of dances for the dancers to attend, thereby extending the dance time available and making a long land-based trip that much more enjoyable.

**Travel Dance**

A club-organized event where the club "travels" to another club. In many clubs, a banner is given to the visiting club(s).

**Workshop**

A class designed for reviewing calls that have already been taught to dancers. The instructor may be reviewing calls in their standard positions or teaching them in non-standard formations.

**Yellow Rock**

A hug directed to your corner.



If you have questions not answered in this handbook, please contact us.

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