

Square Dancing 2021 and beyond!

By: Pat Gorman, IT Chairman & Webmaster

There seems to be a lot of “talking” and “sharing of ideas” going on in our Square Dance World these days. Facebook is full of it and chat rooms are bustling. Maybe that is because we have so much free time to ponder and wonder what the future will hold. I guess it depends partially on whether you are a glass *half full* or *half empty* person.

Some say, “There’s light at the end of the tunnel” especially with the roll out of virus shots and “we’ll be back again to *normal* before you know it.”

Some of our leaders openly wonder if lots of dancers and callers are through with the activity. . . Who knows! That remains to be seen!

2021 is the EASY part. As vaccinations grow and our “population” is safer to maneuver in, there will be a desire for dancers to get back dancing. Clubs will open back up and callers will figure out what kind of reintroduction we need and slowly but surely review and encourage us back up to some sort of speed.

The one crucial element to all of this is **FUN** – both the dancers and the callers bear equal responsibility in this issue. And “oh my Goodness” – for the places and clubs that have danced I have heard a recurring theme, which is: we don’t need tables full of food to have **FUN!**

Beyond is the HARDER part. Once we get going, and we will, we will again be faced with all the problems associated with maintaining a club and growing new members. Maintaining a club will have its ups and downs from facilities to callers to lack of Club officers etc – but, we seem to plow through that pretty much business as usual.

What we don’t see are five or six squares on the floor having FUN. Many clubs are lucky to have one or two squares (if you have a few guests).

I have looked at a lot of TV since I am recovering from my knee replacement surgery and one Liberty Mutual Commercial caught my attention. In it Doug was trying to make a plan on the volleyball court with LiMu Emu. Doug drew a detailed plan in the sand and when he looked up – LiMu Emu had his **head in the sand.**

I'm afraid that is the response I get when I try to open up a discussion about the future of SC Square Dancing. If you were at the last Federation Meeting you may or may not remember my showing a display noting how at one point in our SC Square Dance history that we had 66 clubs and now we have 20. How many of YOU are like LiMu Emu and have your head in the sand?

Hidden Potential. Well, I for one absolutely think we have an enormous untapped potential just sitting at home waiting to be tapped by something. I sincerely believe we have a tremendous opportunity with people soon willing to venture out and have some **FUN!** And who has the answer to that question (having fun)– **well Square Dancing of course silly!** We know that the “Hay-Day” of Square Dancing was when we just danced and had fun! What ruined Square Dancing was adding Mainstream, Plus, DBD, A1 etc. etc. this is well documented.

There is a movement in the Square Dance Community toward less teaching and more dancing. This is entitled “Social Square Dancing or SSD”. *“We really are, in essence, going back in time to when things were simpler and just plain more Fun!”* Noah Siegmann

We can offer short 10-12 week training/dancing sessions that will teach new dancers how to have fun Square Dancing in about 50 or so moves. Through this method we can have multiple sessions (3 or 4) a year.

There are lots of “issues” dancers are quick to bring up including: “What about Mainstream and Plus or higher?” What about angels? What about costs? And the list goes on and on. What has been found out, through research, is that people are so locked in on **their personal preferences** that they are quick to do an LiMu Emu (head in the sand) when the subject is brought up instead of being open minded to consider how things **could be in the future.**

For information sake there are several Facebook Chat Sites on Square Dancing. One good one is the group **“Social Square Dancing”**. Just ask to join the group.

Well, hopefully I have given you some things to think about concerning our great and fun activity.

I believe we hold the future in our hands – **glass half-full or glass half-empty?**