

SQUAREUPB.C. Report

to the Annual General Meeting

of the B.C. Square & Round Dance Federation, Penticton -- August 6, 2010

Since the object of this report is to explain the various tasks performed by SQUAREUPB.C. since August of 2009, it will include a brief review of some of the information presented at the Board of Directors Meeting in March.

Firstly, for newcomers to the B.C. Federation, SQUAREUPB.C. is a marketing initiative of the Federation. It has been a Federation component since August of 1991. The primary function is to assist the various areas of the province with marketing advice and resources and to conduct programs and projects on a province-wide level.

Turning to actions undertaken during the year:

An objectionable radio ad promoting Auto Club Medical Insurance prompted the B.C. Federation's Secretary, Ken Crisp, to send a letter of complaint, following some consultation. The ad depicted our recreation in a poor light. The letter diplomatically welcomed the sponsor to discover the true nature of our activity.

Many e-mail inquiries throughout the year were received and responses sent. Couples visiting from Germany and England were looking for places to dance. A woman planning to teach dance to seniors inquired how to get a copy of "Learn Social Dancing." A school teacher in B.C. was looking for more modern music to use in teaching square dancing at her school. A woman who was moving to Ladner in 2010 wanted to learn about clogging, square dancing and round dancing. A teacher at Vancouver Christian School was looking for a caller to introduce square dancing to 110 students over one hour. A couple of inquiries were received about clog dance instruction in B.C.

A new clogging group in Kelowna with an accent on youth and families was given assistance in promoting their startup by advertising on commercial tv.

It is encouraging that several square dance teams will participate in the 2010 B.C. Seniors Games taking place September 15th to 18th on Vancouver

Island at Campbell River and the Comox Valley. This will be only the second year that square dancing has been included as a competitive category. The regional co-ordinators who assembled those teams are to be commended for what was surely a difficult job. The Federation sought association with the Games because Games participants are an ideal demographic of persons most likely to become interested in our activity. They're perfect candidates to become involved in square and round dancing. They're already showing an interest in active living.

In order to further reach out to those potential new dancers, the Federation is purchasing a 1/4 page ad in the Games Souvenir Program Book at a cost of \$200.

For your information, the competitive element for square dancers at the Games is rather a brief amount of time within the overall experience. There's also dancing just for the fun of it and a chance to demo dance for participants from all the other sports.

Our new communications initiative on the internet is active at www.twitter.com/bcfeeddancenews. There, you'll see instantly-posted short updates about many happenings in the dance community. For instance, an announcement of this meeting can be seen, along with links to Festival 2011 in Prince George, details on the Seniors Games and where to view the video feature "Dancing Keeps You Young." Our Twitter page presents a new and immediate source of information, especially useful where dance publications have ceased operation, such as in the Okanagan and Thompson regions.

There is a DVD handout for each region of the province today in the form of unedited raw video footage of square, round and clog dancing at Festival 2009 in Vernon. The images were captured on the Friday night of the Festival. It's about 50 minutes of material. The Okanagan Square and Round Dance Association engaged a professional television videographer to take the video footage and the Association is making it available to the Federation's members, with our thanks. We very much needed fresh video of the various dance forms we represent. The DVD shows all the video footage that's available and it can be used in any promotions involving tv news, tv features or community cable television productions. You might even want to have a tv commercial made from it for broadcast. Furthermore,

if those television facilities require professional video formats of the material, rather than from DVD, just ask and we can supply it on Betacam SP, DVC Pro or as an "avi" computer file.

Also being undertaken at this time is the acquisition of shorter, edited versions of each dance form, ready-to-go on the air. If you identify a need for that, let me know and I can get it to you. For now, the DVD will show what we have to work with.

One of the most exciting elements of this report is to announce that our new health-orientated brochure is now ready for an implementation stage. The brochure has been the project of a committee consisting of Nick and Mary Anne Turner, Roy and Janet Ballam, Robert Ascroft and me. I extend a sincere thank you to these people for their dedication toward developing this useful tool and seeing it to completion.

The intent of the document is to place it strictly in health-related locations, such as doctors' offices, labs, clinics, recreation fitness centres, etc. The reason for the approach is inspired by the research of Jim Hensley for Callerlab that revealed the Baby Boomer generation is particularly health conscious. That gives us a "hot button" to the Boomers, who we very much want to get into square dancing. It's a marketing segmentation technique that we hope will see some good results.

A couple of side-projects came out of the brochure development. It was felt that a good quality photograph of a couple dancing, outfitted in dressy-casual clothing with expressions on their faces of real enjoyment, should be featured on the brochure. The Federation purchased such a photo from a "Web Photo" service for \$350.

Also, we wanted to direct brochure readers to the power and influence of the video "Dancing Keeps You Young" as displayed on the internet. Furthermore, we wanted the health brochure to show an internet address to view the video that was easy to remember. Your Federation has now acquired the web address www.DancingKeepsYouYoung.ca for that purpose. When you go to that address, it actually forwards you to the video as posted recently by us on You Tube. A nice feature about it is that the video and music start up right away and draw you into the feature. You are

encouraged to use this address in all of your promotional materials. The contact information at the close of the video provides the Federation's toll-free INFOLINE number and the Dance Connection web site address.

Our posting of Dancing Keeps You Young on You Tube has already attracted the attention of "The Committee to Promote Square Dancing," a registered charity based in San Jose, California. They feature a link to our video on their home page at www.c-p-s-d.org. The on-screen text reads: "Please check out the video below to see what the square dance community has to offer." Also, they recommend it on their Twitter page at www.twitter.com/CPSD. The fact is, there is probably nothing like our video available anywhere else. It's a feature that is influential and demographically targeted, for the purpose of introducing people to square dancing. We, the B.C. Federation, can be proud that we commissioned the production of Dancing Keeps You Young.

As mentioned, there is an implementation plan for the brochure where we'll basically test the market and the way in which the brochure is distributed and supplies maintained. That will be addressed later on today's meeting agenda.

Square Dance Awareness week will take place in B.C. from September 11th to 19th. Remember to accent the health benefits of our recreation as you promote yourselves. Those volunteering in promotional capacities for regional associations or at the local club level should have plans in place now as to what you'll be doing to make our activity stand out in that particular week.

As we look ahead to the coming year, new projects might include the acquisition of a professionally-made backdrop to be used in promotional endeavours by clubs and associations around the province. A Canadian company makes such backdrops and we have an idea of their prices and designs. A professional look such as that would give us a competitive edge when we try to promote our recreation in exhibitor's fashion against a myriad of other leisure time pursuits. Also, the backdrop would have high intensity lights that would help the display stand out in locations that have poor lighting.

All regions are encouraged to have their dancers, callers and cuers attend Festival 2011 in Prince George. Your Federation will do its part to promote the event.

A big part of this report is to ask what you want in the year ahead? We have a list of possible marketing initiatives that the Executive can discuss here with you. This will have to be done during our meeting under the category "Business Arising from Reports."

Finally, the Joint Promotion Committee of the Fraser Valley Square and Round Dance Association and the Vancouver and District Caller-Teachers Association are to be commended for the presentation of "Recruiting New Dancers" seminars at Abbotsford and Surrey on May 29th and 30th. Presenter, Lea Veronica from California, explained the success of new dancer recruitment in her area and what they found works very well for them.

SQUAREUPB.C. is available to assist regional promotion committees or even club promotion persons. Also, for purposes of general competitive positioning of our recreation against other leisure time pursuits, it is recognized that regional committees and their member clubs could benefit by learning to produce media kits, issue press releases and enhance their understanding of good public relations.

This concludes the SQUAREUPB.C. report to the Annual General Meeting.

Respectfully submitted, Brian Elmer, West Kelowna -- SQUAREUPB.C.
Chairperson