

BOD 2017
Region 8 Caller Teacher Association Report

Our Association hosts three events each year; the first is a Roundarama having already taken place in February this winter. This was well attended by higher level round dancers but we were disappointed that more square dance level round dancers didn't take part since it was a multi phase event. The next event coming up will be our beginner square dancer gala known as The Freshmen's Frolic. This takes place on March 26 and will feature a panel of Callers who will call to our newest dancers and their supporters at the West Coast level. In June we will have our June Special dance and this time a panel of callers & cuers will put on a Mainstream square & round dance for the more experienced crowd. For our new-to-the-activity dancers (those who started in the second half of the year) dances will be held during the summer with alternating West Coast & Mainstream level tips. These have been well attended in past years and we consider them to be very beneficial for the new dancers.

The clubs in our region have had fairly good success in recruiting for their classes this past year. Retention continues to be the biggest concern and most clubs are falling behind each year in terms of overall membership once you consider those long time members who leave due to poor health... As far as new dancers go— we know that many who try out are dabblers and will not stay. We're finding that our classes on average drop by about 50% by January. The only way to rebuild this thing is with numbers – we need a lot of people to try out in order to find a few who will stay. Bearing this in mind, we as a group support the social media campaign not necessarily as the end all in advertising, but as an important piece of the puzzle. We would also support other forms of advertising such as newspaper, radio, TV, flyers, posters, articles, and demonstrations, especially those which invite outsiders to join in and so on. The point here is that everything we can do to draw attention to our activity in a positive way should be done. The number one way to attract new people into our activity has always been personal contact. Advertising lays the groundwork in that it softens people's attitude toward our product before that contact is made. The more times the message is repeated, the more believable it becomes.

Respectfully,
Gord & Yvette Ruedig

Region 8 Caller / Teacher Delegates