

## SQUAREUPB.C. Report

to the Board of Directors Meeting

of the B.C. Square & Round Dance Federation, Abbotsford -- April 2, 2016

For those who are unaware, SQUAREUPB.C. is a marketing initiative of the Federation, established in 1991 and chaired by Brian Elmer of West Kelowna, who serves in an appointed position.

Now retired, Brian's career was in commercial television at Kelowna during which he served for 40 years in many capacities, including tv news director, promotion director and public relations. He holds a Diploma of Technology in Broadcast Communications (BCIT) and certificate-level status in Professional Fundraising Management (Okanagan College).

### *Marketing, Not Just Promotion*

Note that our dance community tends to solely address promotion whereas the SQUAREUPB.C. initiative stresses a proper marketing approach.

A marketing approach requires that attention be given to designing an attractive product or service that fulfills the needs and wants of a defined population demographic, presenting it at a desirable place or location (and date/time) for a representative value-based but competitive price before launching the promotion or advertising.

### *The Dance Connection – Our Cyberspace Home*

Firstly, a huge vote of thanks goes out to our Courtenay volunteer Marianne Hall and her daughter, Tammi Hall—owner of Hallographix Design in Vancouver—for what must have been a huge effort in the major overhaul of our Dance Connection web site. Although it's still something of a work in progress, it's an attractive, renewed online home for our Federation.

Deserving of mention at this point is the recognition given our former webmaster, Phil Douziech and his wife, Ingrid, of Kelowna. On October 10, 2015, at a dance in West Kelowna, they were presented with a long-term service award from the Canadian Society. Beth McGifford, our representative to the Society, made the presentation.



Oct. 10/15 Presentation in West Kelowna of Long Term Service Award to Ingrid & Phil Douziech of Kelowna by Beth McGifford (right), Federation rep. on the Canadian Society

As B.C.'s webmaster, Phil dedicated about 20 years to the design and management of the Dance Connection web site and has now retired from that volunteer position. Thanks to Frank McNeil of Surrey for taking on that task. Establishment of an online presence for the B.C. Federation was one of the early goals of the SQUAREUPB.C. initiative.

### *Marketing Activity Proclamation*

Congratulations go out to those clubs that gained publicity in the Fall based upon the B.C. Federation's continued effort to acquire Proclamations every Summer from the B.C. Government in promotion of Square and Round Dance Awareness Week (3<sup>rd</sup> week in Sept.).

Among those clubs was the Westsyde Squares of the Central Okanagan. The submission of a press release to all the media outlets resulted in exposure on Kelowna's news and information web site "Kelowna Now dot Com." The article includes a photo of the new dancers, a shot of the new dancer caller/teacher and a reproduction of the provincial proclamation. At the time of preparing this report, the article is still posted and available for viewing at:

[https://www.kelownanow.com/watercooler/news/news/West\\_Kelowna/15/09/12/Square\\_and\\_Round\\_Dance\\_Awareness\\_Week\\_Kicks\\_Off\\_in\\_West\\_Kelowna/](https://www.kelownanow.com/watercooler/news/news/West_Kelowna/15/09/12/Square_and_Round_Dance_Awareness_Week_Kicks_Off_in_West_Kelowna/)

The Stampede Whirlways in Williams Lake also accomplished a print and online article (Sept. 10/15) in the Williams Lake Tribune:

<http://www.wltribune.com/community/326505041.html>

Penticton Squares' September 2015 promotion was boosted by an online story seen Sept. 17/15 in the Penticton Western News newspaper:

<http://www.pentictonwesternnews.com/entertainment/328125591.html>

See the proclamation as posted on the government web site at:

[http://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/oic/OIC\\_CUR/SqRndDncAwareWeek2015](http://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/oic/OIC_CUR/SqRndDncAwareWeek2015)

### *Marketing Activity Paid Facebook & Internet Advertising*

The paid advertising undertaken by SQUAREUPB.C. was conducted in two distinct campaigns, one in the Fall of 2015 and the other in January of 2016. The \$6,000 budget was split in half to serve each campaign equally and each ran 4 to 6 weeks.

It should be noted that the ads specifically promoted “today’s style of square and round dancing,” so people knew it was our dance form before they clicked for more information.

Our advertising via the internet also serves to “re-position” our dance forms, relative to public image, in the absence of any other broad media attempt to do so. We know from the expensive, professional research commissioned years ago by Callerlab that we face an image problem, particularly with square dancing, that was identified as worse than anticipated.

It’s been observed in the March 2016 edition of “The Valley Circle” dance magazine (page 19), serving the Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley, that a brief survey took place at a recent meeting of the Dance Association (FVS&RDA). In 27 responses from attendees to a question regarding what changes were desired about square and round dancing, the suggestions, among other things, included:

- More advertising/exposure to the public
- More opportunities for new dancers to become involved
- Find a way to make our activity more interesting to younger people
- Lack of new dancers, particularly men
- New dancer classes for families

*(Information credit: Blair Wallace, Managing Editor, Valley Circle)*

#### *Fall, 2015*

The Fall campaign started on August 23 and was completed on Oct. 8. The ads appeared on Facebook pages and Google searches only within cities and the surrounding region where it was known that new dancer sessions were scheduled. The detailed lesson information to which persons were sent when they clicked on our ad, known as the “landing page,” is posted at: [www.TakeMeDancing.squaredance.bc.ca](http://www.TakeMeDancing.squaredance.bc.ca).

Several B.C. clubs reported good attendance at new dancer sessions in the Fall of 2015. The Thompson Valley Stars in Kamloops got 26 newcomers. The Stampede Whirlaways in Williams Lake experienced 15 new dancers on their first night and several of those were young people. The Rhythm Reelers club of Chilliwack had about 24 new dancers. The Mavericks in Victoria had 35 newcomers.

In the Okanagan, both the Westsyde Squares in West Kelowna and the Star Country Squares in Vernon had about 16 newcomers each. Among the numbers in the West Kelowna group were a couple of accomplished female square dancers wanting to learn the traditional man's part.

Four different promotional angles were used in the text-style paid ads running on Google Search. Of notable interest is that one of the four ads achieved greater "clicks" than the others. It promoted "together time" as a benefit available through our activity. It's apparent that those persons with partners or spouses are seeking opportunities to share time as a couple.

Regarding the specific "analytics" from the Fall campaign, the Facebook ads produced the following results:

- 67,000 (almost) computer screens showed our ad
- 3,109 people sought more information by clicking on the ad

The Google campaign produced the following results:

- 350,000 (almost) computer screens showed the ads
- 1,857 people province-wide were motivated to click & be sent to the landing page

Numbers combined from the two Fall, 2015, advertising efforts resulted as follows:

- 417,000 computer screens province-wide showed the ad
- 4,966 persons clicked on the ad for more information.

In late August, the Federation undertook a change to a new internet service provider (Aplonis Corporation, Portland, Oregon). During the transition, many difficulties were encountered with the paid internet and social media campaign that was underway.

Some of the web addresses to which new dancer prospects were being sent were disabled, including the referral address for the key landing page ([www.TakeMeDancing.squaredance.bc.ca](http://www.TakeMeDancing.squaredance.bc.ca)). Some club web pages became dysfunctional, such as in Penticton and the whole of Region 9--the Thompson-Shuswap region.

Quick action was taken to remedy the situation and all the advertising had to be stopped but only for one day. Most of the attempts to salvage the impact on the paid ads were made from a laptop at a hotel in Reno, Nevada, while on vacation. The disconnect of referral e-mail addresses also aggravated communication efforts.

### *January, 2016*

There were about 12 dance clubs around the province offering new dancer sessions in January, 2016.

In the January/16 campaign, the Facebook ad results were as follows:

59,766 computer screens province-wide showed the ad  
3,136 persons clicked on the ads to learn more.

Additional advertising on Google AdWords resulted in the following:

64,125 computer screens province-wide showed the ad  
668 persons clicked on the ad for more information.

Numbers combined from the two January advertising efforts results as follows:

123,891 computer screens province-wide showed the ad  
3,804 persons clicked on the ad for more information.

### *Fall, 2015 and January, 2016 results combined*

A combination of both the Fall, 2015, and the January, 2016, Facebook and Google AdWords advertising efforts results as follows:

540,891 computer screens province-wide showed the ad  
8,770 persons clicked on the ad for more information.

## *Marketing Activity Challenges to the Facebook & Internet paid Advertising*

The biggest challenge for these campaigns is trying to stretch the allotted budget to cover all applicable cities in B.C. Basically, it's underfunded for such a substantial endeavour.

Another challenge is that the larger population centres consume the budget before many "clicks" can register on ads appearing in the smaller regions. There's a limited daily budget and once that's reached the ads cease to run until the next day.

Furthermore, the new dancer session start-ups generally span a period of about 6 weeks. That causes the impact of the advertising to be "watered down" as we try to benefit all clubs and their unique start dates. Ideally, our clubs should co-ordinate through the Federation a common start-up period to allow better concentration of the advertising effort.

There continues to be a lack of up-front co-operation from the regions with regard to furnishing information in advance about new dancer sessions for each of their member clubs. That information is mostly acquired by research or queries into plans for such sessions. Much time is committed and many e-mails continue to go back and forth.

Preferably, the regional Delegates and Alternates should take ownership of the Federation's paid advertising efforts, co-ordinating and furnishing the new dancer information for their clubs to SQUAREUPB.C.

While the funding of programs and projects for any non-profit agency should come from fundraising efforts in their support; if the recent \$6000 investment in advertising were to be compared to the value of membership dues, it represents the full \$5 each in annual dues for 1,200 Federation members. (We only have 1,863 dancers and 95 leaders.) That's an investment in which taking ownership is worthy.

*Marketing Activity*  
*Federation's Facebook page*  
[www.Facebook.com/BCSquareAndRoundDanceFederation](http://www.Facebook.com/BCSquareAndRoundDanceFederation)

The paid advertising on Facebook creates interest in our Facebook page because when people click on one of our Facebook ads, it shows as coming from our Facebook account.

Many people leave comments and some identify that they "like" the page to the degree that they want to follow postings. The number of "likes" currently stands at 290.

The page is updated to reflect activity in the B.C. dance community. In recent months, articles posted included:

- January new dancer start-ups province-wide
- the coming of Festival 2017 to Surrey
- the arrival of clog dance lessons in the Central Okanagan

*Marketing Activity*  
*Free "Tweets" about New Dancer Sessions*

When Twitter users like a particular account, they "follow" that account. At that point, postings made by the account owner will appear in the timeline or "Tweetstream" of the user. If the user really likes a particular posting, they can "re-tweet" it to their own followers and that is sometimes a substantial number.

During each of the paid campaigns, an exceptional number of “tweets” were sent out by SQUAREUPB.C. in support and promotion of clubs through the province that were holding new dancer sessions.

Primarily utilizing our Federation Twitter account “@bcfedlive,” the messages included “hashtags” specific to the cities where the lessons applied and web links to more information either on club pages or our promotional landing page. A promotional photo generally accompanied every tweet.

In one particular instance, the City of Colwood, near Victoria, viewed our tweet about square dance lessons in that city and “re-tweeted” it to their over 1,500 “followers.”

In another series of tweets in promotion of the new square dancer sessions in Dawson Creek, Tourism Dawson Creek re-tweeted some of our messages via their Twitter account “@myAlaskaHiWay.” They currently have 1,683 followers.

We currently enjoy 68 followers for our Federation’s @bcfedlive account and 70 followers for our @bcfeddancenews account, which is primarily used in events calendar style.

At the very least, the use of Twitter, as a modern social media tool, helps to build awareness of our recreation.

### *Dedicated Pages on Club Web Sites Promoting to New Dancers*

When new dancer prospects become interested in our activity via the internet, it’s paramount that they be directed to information specifically addressing their needs, wants and possible questions. SQUAREUPB.C.’S Fall and Winter paid advertising directs them to the promotional landing page which provides details about our recreation with a comprehensive indexed “clickable” list of regions and cities.

Every club that conducts new dancer sessions should have among their web pages a dedicated page for new dancers. It can tell about that club’s plans, show dates, times and locations (including a map) and could have a picture of the caller-teacher or cuer-teacher.

Since the majority of internet “views” are now done on mobile devices, that information should be easily displayed in the ratios for the various devices, from laptops to tablets and smartphones. It is best that the page be constructed using “responsive design” technology or, at least, show all the page content centered on the page.

Furthermore, club pages for new dancers can be given an alias or referral address (u.r.l.) that is more promotional for publicity and advertising purposes. In print it can be particularly

advantageous because it's generally shorter. Basically, the address refers or forwards to the actual web page upon which the information can be found. The biggest advantage is that the referral title can be easily memorized by new dancer prospects.

Three Southern Interior clubs were assisted by SQUAREUPB.C. in acquiring such referral addresses this dance season. (Note that, when using a referral address, the actual location doesn't necessarily show in the address line at the top of the page.)

The Rhythm Rounds round dance club of Vernon can promote itself as:

[www.VernonRoundDanceFun.info](http://www.VernonRoundDanceFun.info)

whereas the actual page to which it forwards is:

<http://www.rhythmrounds.squaredance.bc.ca/>

The Got 2 B Cloggin clog dance club of the Central Okanagan can promote itself as:

[www.KelownaClogDanceFun.info](http://www.KelownaClogDanceFun.info)

whereas the actual page to which it forwards is:

<http://www.got2bcloggin.squaredance.bc.ca/>

The Westsyde Squares square and round dance club in the Central Okanagan can promote itself as:

[www.WestsideDanceFun.info](http://www.WestsideDanceFun.info)

whereas the actual page to which it forwards is:

<http://www.westsyde.squaredance.bc.ca/newdancers.html>

Such aliases or referrals can be arranged for other member clubs in the B.C. Federation. The intent, though, is that it re-direct to a web page that's promotional for new dancers, at least in the initial information displayed.

Note that our Federation embraces clog dancing in its Constitution and there are several clog dance groups in the province, many on Vancouver Island. We should be considering a section on The Dance Connection dedicated to clog dancing, defining and promoting the dance form and listing the various clubs with contact information and links to their web pages, where available.

### *Marketing Activity Fall 2015 New Dancer Survey*

Co-operation in completion of the new dancer survey from SQUAREUPB.C. has been appreciated. Many clubs around the province participated and the results are being presented in a separate report to the B.O.D. in Abbotsford. The intent of it was to learn what promotional elements influenced a new dancer to attend. It was important to survey the newcomers at their first session in the event they didn't return.

One problem encountered was that some forms were completed by a couple whereas it read thereon that it was to be one form per person. Also, the results have been tallied using the relational database known as “Access” as opposed to a flat-file database. The reason was to have the option of relating certain elements to certain results, such as the number of persons aged 51 to 69 (Baby Boomers) who attended solo. Instead of submitting the original survey forms, some clubs did their own tally of the results which prevented a number of calculations that would otherwise have been helpful. The original forms should have been mailed.

### *Examples of Publicity Success via Media Releases & Community Event Listings*

In the SQUAREUPB.C. report to the Federation’s August 2015 Annual General Meeting, it was suggested that local or regional press or “media releases” be considered to tell our message broadly.

Furthermore, the submission of free community event calendar submissions to your local media outlets can bring some great publicity.

Since then, some good examples of success gained through those processes are available, as Region 3 (Okanagan Valley) found out.

Here’s an online example of a community calendar announcement (CCA) that’s still posted on the online news and information internet service “Kelowna Now dot com:”

[https://www.kelownanow.com/events/events/Courses\\_Workshops/16/01/13/25294/Intro to West Coast Square Dancing](https://www.kelownanow.com/events/events/Courses_Workshops/16/01/13/25294/Intro%20to%20West%20Coast%20Square%20Dancing)

In regard to how media releases can motivate the media to report on your dance event, Region 3 had wonderful success attracting commercial and cable tv.

On January 6/16, Global Okanagan Television news sent a camera to explore a free lesson in the “New, West Coast Square Dance Program” at West Kelowna. They were made aware of it through a media release that was e-mailed to their newsroom. The finished report aired 4 times including their high audience suppertime newscasts. Here’s a link to the television station’s web page where the 1 minute, 53 second report can be reviewed (be sure to read the article below the video window):

<http://globalnews.ca/news/2452995/square-dancing-moves-to-a-new-rhythm-younger-voice/>

In addition, Shaw community cable sent a camera to do a story for their “Go! Okanagan” program that repeats on their community cable channel over 7 days. Simply entitled "Square

Dancing," the 2 minute, 23 second report can be seen on the YouTube channel for Shaw which is "ShawTVOkanagan." The following web link will take you directly to the report:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ThmPh5gIp9g>

A round dance club in Region 3's North Okanagan gained a substantial newspaper article with photo as a result of a release sent to the media about their new round dancer sessions. The Rhythm Rounds club of Vernon was profiled in the Sunday Jan. 3/16 edition of the Morning News. The club reported having several non-square dancers attend who were absolutely new to round dancing.

Region 3 also has in its membership two clog dance clubs. One of them held January new clog dancer sessions and benefitted from a media release. It prompted CBC Radio for the Southern Interior to have the instructor for Got 2 B Cloggin do an interview on the morning of Friday January 8/16 in their downtown Kelowna studio. It was broadcast widely throughout the southern interior. The club reported getting some newcomers as a result of that exposure.

Later in March, the regional Okanagan Square & Round Dance Association held "An Intro to Clog Dancing" as a special Saturday morning event during their annual "Spring Fling" dance celebration. A still photographer from a weekend newspaper attended the event. The paid newspaper distributes widely from Lake Country in the north to Penticton in the south.

The photographer came because he saw a community calendar event listing online. Although the paper was sent a media release, he didn't get a copy. The "CCA" delivered.

The result was a wonderful full-colour spread of 4 large photos with captions on page 3 in the next day edition of Okanagan Sunday.

Appearing online in the paper's "gallery" section as well as in print, the web article includes a write-up and 13 photos from the event. (Select each photo from a thumbnail image along the bottom of the first picture.) That can be found at:

[http://www.kelownadailycourier.ca/gallery/collection\\_d15b96d0-e8b4-11e5-8704-d7729e4eca8d.html](http://www.kelownadailycourier.ca/gallery/collection_d15b96d0-e8b4-11e5-8704-d7729e4eca8d.html)

### ***SQUAREUPB.C. Services & Assistance***

Do remember that a couple of our most basic communications tools are the toll-free INFOLINE at 1-800-335-9433 and e-mail through [info@squaredance.bc.ca](mailto:info@squaredance.bc.ca) The province-wide number was re-directed in mid-July to the home of volunteer receptionists Brian Elmer and his wife, Rosalyn Garnett.

In your promotions, remember to tell of the 10-minute promotional video, aimed at Baby Boomers, called “Dancing Keeps You Young.” Send people to it online at:

[www.DancingKeepsYouYoung.ca](http://www.DancingKeepsYouYoung.ca) OR [www.DancingKeepsYouYoung.com](http://www.DancingKeepsYouYoung.com)

At the time of this report, our video has been viewed no less than 9,965 times—almost 10 thousand.

Also consider showing in your advertising/promotion/publicity our promotional “landing pages,” particularly [www.TakeMeDancing.squaredance.bc.ca](http://www.TakeMeDancing.squaredance.bc.ca), detailing the many benefits of square dancing and listing square, round and clog dance clubs throughout the province that hold new dancer sessions.

The Federation now has two brochures available to its membership for promotion of square and round dancing. Each is a double-sided tri-fold.

One was designed a few years ago and has a medically-oriented theme, entitled “Your Prescription for Better Health.” It presents the many holistic health benefits of our recreation and is intended to target the health-conscious Baby Boomer generation. It has yet to be re-posted on the Dance Connection web site which recently underwent major re-design. It had been available online at the following referral link which is now inactive:

[www.BetterHealth.squaredance.bc.ca](http://www.BetterHealth.squaredance.bc.ca)

Developed by our Revitalization Committee, the newest brochure entitled “Today’s Square Dancing, You’ll Be Surprised” is more generic, including photos of children, reiterating the many benefits of our activity and quite colourful in eye-appeal.

Produced in tandem with that brochure was a “rack card” that is intended to be placed in promotional racks such as those seen in doctors’ offices. In the same theme as the brochure, it’s on a stiffer card stock, two-sided in colour.

Order the brochure and/or the rack card from Dennis Sutton in Sidney. Phone: 250-652-9271, e-mail: [dsutton9@telus.net](mailto:dsutton9@telus.net)

Furthermore, our Dance Connection web site provides two different posters that tie into the theme of the brochure and rack card. You can edit the lower portion to reflect your club lessons and contact information. One version is entitled “Group Hug – You’ll be Surprised” and the other “Today’s Square Dancing – Leg Silhouettes.” Web link:

<http://www.squaredance.bc.ca/posters-2>

Many travelling dancers are turning to [www.WheresTheDance.com](http://www.WheresTheDance.com) to find dance events. Consider submitting your events to this free listings service.

Remember our social media pages and get involved at:

[www.Facebook.com/BCSquareAndRoundDanceFederation](http://www.Facebook.com/BCSquareAndRoundDanceFederation)

and

[www.Twitter.com/BCFedDanceNews](http://www.Twitter.com/BCFedDanceNews) and [www.Twitter.com/BCFedLive](http://www.Twitter.com/BCFedLive)

SQUAREUPB.C. is available to assist regional promotion committees or club promotion/marketing persons.

Contact Brian Elmer by phone at 250-768-2694 (toll-free: 1-800-335-9433) or e-mail [brian@squaredance.bc.ca](mailto:brian@squaredance.bc.ca)

This concludes the SQUAREUPB.C. report to the Board of Directors Meeting.

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