



A Message from the President



A warm season's greetings to you all!

Can you believe it? A year has passed since my first "Message from the President" Fine Lines article. Yeah, yeah. I hear it now. Of course you can't believe it. You are all saying to yourselves, it's only been a year? Only a year of all of those endless, babbling [although quite frequently entertaining] emails? The answer is yes, JUST a year. That said, most of the feedback that I've heard has been positive regarding what the current FINEST CITY SQUARES administration has managed to accomplish. And, I guess you, the constituents, must be reasonably satisfied because you decided to keep us all in for another year!

On that note, I do want to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their support, but also to get you all to start thinking (a year in advance even!) about whether it might not be time for you to take a turn serving on the Finest City Squares board. This is a volunteer, non-profit organization, and it only continues its existence because people are willing to share the burden of making it run. The board meetings themselves are generally pretty painless and usually are done in an hour. They could be shorter, but given the nature of the group, it's hard to avoid dishing a little (we do try to keep that to the pre or post meeting part, so it is optional). You can check out the minutes from the meetings online at <http://www.iagsdc.org/finestcity/BoardMinutes/>. The good news is you have a year to think about it.

If you haven't noticed, take a look at our banner stand on your way in to the next dance. It is FULL! I think we are going to have to build another as an extension, or add ARMS or something. We managed to get our banner back from Circulators and get one of theirs. I suspect our next "victim" club may well be Lighthouse Squares. They dance at the War Memorial Building on Monday nights. They are an Advanced club, so for some groups it might be a bit trickier to get a full square there, but I definitely think our club is up to it, especially since we already have several dancers who go there regularly :-)

As a final note, I want to thank all of our new students for making square dancing part of your lives. We all recognize that in San Diego there are jillions of entertainment and leisure options. We like to believe that dancing with Finest City Squares is among the most fun (brain exercise, physical exercise, social contact), but sometimes it is a hard sell with all the competition. I also want to thank all of the angels who are sticking around and making the class run so much more smoothly (well most of the time, except when I,

Richard, forget I am dancing girl and break the whole square down with a Ladies In, Men Sashay). And lastly a HUGE THAAAANK - YOOOUUUU to our caller/instructor Andy Allemao for having so much patience and energy, and for playing fantastic, upbeat music and for entertaining us with his beautiful singing voice. He does it all!

Here's wishing you a great holiday season and a fantastic new year!

Richard Bass
FCS President

Getting to Know Andy Allemao

Andy Allemao has been calling for Finest City Squares for 5 months now. Regular attendees on Wednesday nights are familiar with Andy's high-energy calling style and his warm friendly personality. We thought you'd like to know a little bit more about our caller.

Andy is fairly new to the calling community. He's only in his fourth year as a caller, but has honed his skills with lightening speed. Andy learned to square dance from Pat Carnathan. Pat recognized talent in Andy and encouraged him to do a singing call at Ruffles & Beaus which was very well received. Andy had such fun that he took a calling class from John Marus, and his career took off from there. Andy now calls for four clubs: Finest City, Sundown Squares, Lighthouse Squares, and Alpine Squares. Andy has also recorded a square dance record with Charlie Robertson. The song is called "Follow Me" and is available on Shakedown Records. Andy enjoyed recording very much and would love to do more in the future should the opportunity arise.



Andy is a local boy. He was raised in Chula Vista and went to Castle Park High School. He attended college at San Diego State University where he earned his bachelor's degree in Finance and his master's degree in Information Systems. Andy works at a software company that specializes in medical management. The company has about 75 employees and lets Andy do a little bit of everything which is why he's stayed there for the past 13 years.

Andy has been married to his lovely bride Tami for 18 years. They live in Chula Vista and share their home with three cats. They also feed two feral cats that know a soft touch when they see one. Square dancing and calling take up most of his free time, but occasionally Andy finds time to pick out an old folk or rock & roll song on his guitar.

Next time you see Andy, be sure to let him know how much we appreciate all the time, effort, and talent he puts into calling for our club.

FCS 18th Anniversary Dance

Join us for a night of dancing with the stars at our 18th Annual Anniversary Dance at the Balboa Park Club in Balboa Park! Rick Gittelman will be the emcee and caller, and there will be prizes galore on this award-winning night. Come and cast your votes for best costuming, female and male in a leading role, musical score, and of course, choreography. The dance will be held on Saturday, January 12th from 6:30 to 9:30, and is being expertly arranged by Bob Swee and Paul Casey. Brave the paparazzi and join us in walking the red carpet!



Class of 2007 Graduation

At our July Monthly Dance, Finest City graduated its class of 2007. Under the tutelage of Pat Carnathan, seven brave souls made it all the way through Plus level and received their diplomas. Pictured above from left to right are John, Raymond, Karl, Jennifer, Patrick, Melvin, and JP. Several of these new members are helping to angel the 2008 class and John is going through the class again as the “girl” having learned the “boy” part the first time around.

Class of 2008 Update

The class of 2008 started in September. We currently have 11 students in the new class. Under the guidance of Andy Allemao, the class has already made it through all the calls in the Basic level. The class was tasked with electing a class representative and the lucky lad is Jason McCallister. If class members do not feel comfortable bringing questions or concerns directly to the caller or board members, they can talk to Jason and he will act as a liaison to the board. Please come out and angel for the new class and welcome them to the club.



Jason McCallister

Cuesta Squares 10th Anniversary Mini Fly-In



Cuesta Squares in San Luis Obispo held their 10th Mini Fly-In the week-end of October 13th. Several Finest City members decided to trek up to check out the fun. Everyone that went reported having a great time. Be sure to mark your calendar for next year's event. Pictured clockwise above are Tim & Bob, Jim & David, and Ed & Kay. For more photos of the event, go to the link below:

<http://picasaweb.google.com/TCMDang/200710CuestaSquaresMiniFlyIn>

2008 Convention – Touch A Quarter Century

The 2008 IAGSDC convention will be held in Cleveland, Ohio July 3rd – 6th. This will be the 25th IAGSDC convention, so the hosts, The Cleveland City Country Dancers, are sure to put on a fabulous event. It's not too early to register or to start that vacation fund. Check out the link below for more details.



<http://www.taqc.org/>

December Monthly Dance a Bust

Many thanks to all of the members and guests who came out for the monthly dance in December. Due to an unfortunate scheduling conflict at the church, our normal room was double-booked with us and a holiday concert and reception. We were all looking forward to spending an evening of dancing with Ray Holmes, but we were unable to find an alternate location large enough to host the dance. Nevertheless, FCS made the best of the situation and we all ended up having a great potluck in one of the upstairs rooms before calling it a night.

FCS Finally Gets a Locker

Our club president has never been happier. After much scheming and planning, FCS has finally secured a locker in the hallway of the War Memorial Building where we dance each week. The locker was originally unused because the Parks Dept thought it had no key, but with some coaxing, one was finally located. Richard then scoured San Diego to find a key shop that had a template for the ancient hardware key, and he made copies. Voila!



FCS had a locker. We can now store our essential club supplies on site (instead of our garages), including all of the banners we have stolen during visitations. This is obviously an early picture as the locker is jam-packed these days. You'll have no trouble finding it thanks to Paul's rainbow graphics of the FCS sails on the label.

New Member Gallery

If you haven't already taken a look, the new member gallery is up on the FCS website. Here's the URL:

<http://www.iagsdc.org/finestcity/Gallery0407/gallery.htm>

If you aren't there and want to be, contact Richard Bass. Alternatively, if somehow you are in the gallery and have changed your mind, don't hesitate to tell Richard and he'll remove your picture ASAP.

A/C Weekend in Phoenix

Several FCS members drove to Phoenix last August for **Trip the Sunset – West Coast A/C Weekend**. Among the group were Ed & Kay, Jerry, Richard B., Linda, Rick, and Jim & David. They all had a great time dancing A and C levels to callers Sandie Bryant, Vic Ceder, Anne Uebelacker, Randy Dougherty, and Michael Kellogg. The only disappointment was that Anne Uebelacker only called one tip before she stepped on a huge cactus thorn and ended up in the emergency room. Think about joining the group next year when it will be held in San Francisco – you'll have a ball!



Member Spotlight

By Diana Barrows

This issue the Member Spotlight shines upon **Lee Bowman**. Lee is a Pisces who was born in Michigan in 1947. He has a BA in English from Wayne State University, which is located in Detroit, Michigan. Lee taught elementary school (4th grade) for ten years in Michigan.

Lee chose to move to Colorado in 1980, where he lived for 18 years. He gave up teaching and became the administrator of the MCC church there. Nine years ago, Reverend Tony recruited Lee from Denver to be the Minister of Administration for MCC San Diego, the job he still holds.

Lee started square dancing with us in 2004. He signed up at our booth at the gay pride festival that year. Lee dances at the PLUS level; his favorite call is Relay the Deucey. He had actually square danced with a gay group in Denver 18 years ago, but didn't stay with it. Lee says he is content with the Plus level, and is not interested in learning Advanced--at least not now. He loves square dancing with FCS and rarely misses a dance.

Lee is very involved with MCC, both professionally and personally. He also enjoys writing, domestic and Canadian travel (he's been to every state except Delaware and Florida), hiking, and the outdoors. You will often find him with his digital camera taking pictures, mostly of nature.

Lee is single. He lives in Hillcrest. He collects penguins--anything penguin. It is the first thing you notice when you enter his apartment!



His favorite season is Fall; favorite holiday is Christmas; favorite colors are blue and green.

Finally, Lee wants to share his favorite quote by American author Ursula LeGuin with you: "Life is a journey, not a destination..." It is a quiet reminder to savor each moment and continue the journey.

Community Square Dance Events

By Diana Barrows

For those of you looking for more square dance opportunities, here are some upcoming events sponsored by the straight community:

1. SDSDA San Diego Square Dance Association - we are the only gay member club. They hold "Round-Up" on the 3rd Saturday of every month in Balboa Park. April Round-Up may be cancelled in favor of the California Square Dance Convention. All member clubs share duties of refreshments, door greeters/coffee, and decorations/security on a rotational basis.
2. Palomar Square Dance Association is having their 59th Annual Jamboree by the Sea Feb 1-2-3, 2008, at the Del Mar Fairgrounds. 3d/\$32
3. California Square Dance Convention is having their 49th annual square dance April 18-19-20, 2008 in Sacramento. 3d/\$32 Daily rates and RV parking available.
4. 57th Annual National Square Dance Convention will be June 25-28 in Wichita, KS. 4d/\$50
5. 58th Annual National Square Dance Convention will be June 24-27, 2009 in Long Beach, CA. 4d/\$40. Contact www.58nsdc.org for info.

Fiesta de la Cuadrilla Brunch

The 57th Annual Fiesta de la Cuadrilla, sponsored by the SDSDA, was held November 2, 3, & 4 in Balboa Park. Our club hosted a very successful brunch on Saturday. Dancers from the extended square dance community enjoyed a meal of European Egg Delight, fruit salad, and muffins. We received many words of praise regarding the delicious meal that was served, so much so that we were asked to host the brunch next year, and we accepted. Our vice presidents, Jim and David, organized an evening the night before to prepare the meal. Special thanks to members Michael K. and James O. for helping the board members with this duty.

Calendar of Events

Ever been to a flyin? Why not plan your next vacation around one of these fun get-togethers? It's a great way to see a new city, make new friends, and do a lot of square dancing. Check out the link below to see what's coming up.

<http://www.iagsdc.org/main/event/page/eventindex.php>



Finest City Squares Board of Directors

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Club CallerAndy Allemao

Finest City Squares Web Site:
<http://www.iagsdc.org/finestcity>

Have an idea for a newsletter article?
Want to write one yourself? Contact
Bill and Dave at gsq@cox.net