

## **DANCER RECRUITMENT & RETENTION SEMINAR NOTES**

### **Calgary, Convention 2004**

The following points were discussed as Dancer Recruitment & Retention Problems at the seminar.

1. What are the current issues affecting Dancer recruitment? eg. time commitment, dress, cost
  - Competition for entertainment
  - Singles (clubs often not receptive to singles joining)
  - Lack of advertising
    - self promotion
    - coordination of advertising – use “modern”
    - use smaller local publications
  - Commitment lacking
  - “Word of mouth” works well
  - Dress dates square dance
  - Dancing MUST be fun
    - keep encouraging
  - Promotion/draw giveaway (of a free dance)
    - use list as contact sheet info
  - Volunteer to demo dances at community event
  - Determine target market
  - Make an effort to put square dance into the school curriculum – start young.
  - List benefits of square dance for presentation
  - Morning/daytime dances (for seniors)
  - Square angels very helpful
  - Misconception that square dance is for “old” people
  - MEN – target them (important issue)
2. What target markets do you think we should be concentrating our recruiting efforts on? e.g. schools, families, seniors centres
  - church groups
  - call basic calls
  - target music to group (to beginners)
  - look for participants who have extra time, i.e. seniors, retirees
  - personal families – grandchildren, children, family participation
  - target as many groups as possible
  - younger representatives to promote to schools and younger groups
  - children sometimes difficult to teach
  - seniors love the exercise/children?
  - Club members volunteer to help teach
  - Adult education classes would help
  - Clothes help promote.
3. Once dancers have learned to dance, how do we best keep them in the movement?
  - Keep people involved in “off” season - keep group continuity - call 1 night/week in off season
  - Keep encouraging
  - “Sunshine” person calls those who missed dance to let them know they’re missed
  - Do not teach too much at once (overload new dancers)
  - Refer to new members as “Club Members”
  - Make note of newcomers special dates, i.e. birthday, anniversary
  - Weekend lessons & dances
  - Club website
  - 1-800 number for square dancing info across Canada
  - Be aware of small groups forming within the Club
4. What efforts has your area made to recruit & keep dancers, incl. the cost/benefit as you see it?
  - Keep costs down – this keeps your dancer fees low
  - Flyers (inexpensive print materials)
  - Direct Marketing