

The Guide To IAGSDC® Conventions (Version 4.0b)

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Boldface indicates chapters containing material added or updated for the 2009 edition.

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All images used in this document were sent in by the photographers/subjects or found on public websites via Google Image Search.

The inclusion of an individual in a photograph in this article does not imply that the individual is LGBTQ and/or a square dancer. If you find yourself in any of the photographs in this article, and wish to have the photograph removed or your face in the image electronically blurred, please email Allan at allanhurst@gmail.com immediately.

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Introduction: What is the IAGSDC® and What is “Convention”?

Each year, the **International Association of Gay Square Dance Clubs (A Lesbian & Gay Organization)** holds a **square dance convention**. This is often referred to simply as “Convention”. In addition, many IAGSDC® member clubs hold square dance weekends, called “fly-ins.” These are so called because out-of-towners often fly in for the weekend.

Going to Conventions or fly-ins can seem like a pretty complicated process to first-timers – but it’s not that bad. Really.

Most first-timers report that the *only* thing they *didn’t* like about their first Convention was in not knowing what to expect.

If you’re a new dancer, take heart -- this article was written by experienced dancers, with the goal of making Convention and fly-ins as fun as possible for you! We’ll take you through the entire Convention experience from start to finish.

Remember, every experienced square dancer – and caller! – started off as a new dancer.

While all of this guide – such as what to pack, taking care of yourself, and travel arrangements – applies to the annual IAGSDC® Convention, some of it also pertains to local fly-ins.



Group photo from the 2005 Convention, taken just after the Grand March. That’s why everyone is in their club uniform. Not all of the attendees chose to be in this photo; some people went off for a nice long hot soak . Yes, those are knockoff Jedi Light Saber toys from the Grand March that you see some people waving.

“Hey, there’s a lot of information stuffed into this guide!”

Well, there’s a lot happening in and around each Convention!

- Take your time, and read through the Guide at your leisure.
- Some people have reported it’s easier for them to print off a copy of the Guide to read. The printed version can also be highlighted with a marker.

Although one person (Allan Hurst) wrote the Guide, a lot of the information here originated in a simple list of hints he compiled from many different people in many different IAGSDC® clubs years ago. It started off as a half-page, then grew to one page, then grew to two pages, and then people started asking for more details, and eventually grew to become this nearly *fifty*-page-long document. Allan revises the Guide annually.

Some of the clubs whose members have contributed to this document over the years include: El Camino Reelers, Foggy City Dancers, Santa Cruz Squares, Squares Across The Border, Triangle Squares, Desert Valley Squares, Tinseltown Squares, Rosetown Ramblers, Heads to the Center, Chi-Town Squares, Raleighwood Squares, Stanford Quads, Anywhere Squares, DC Lambda Squares ... and many, many others.

My apologies to contributors from any clubs I’ve left out by mistake ... if I missed you or your club, please let me know, and I’ll add it in the next revision.

In the Guide, you may see some suggestions attributed to specific people. That’s why the Guide often uses the pronoun “we” instead of “I” ... rather than being an indication of schizophrenia, this is our way of indicating that compiling this guide was a *community* effort to make things easy for our newer dancers.

So read on, and join us in the fun of the dance ... and the annual convention!



Laying down the dance floor for the 2005 Convention in Santa Clara

“Me? Go to Convention?”

Most IAGSDC® clubs go into a frenzy as Convention time nears each year. This generally happens just about the time that the latest class is preparing for graduation. Sometimes, this excitement makes new dancers a bit nervous.

It's common for new dancers to have concerns such as: “What if I mess up in a square?” “If I break down my square, will I bring shame down upon the heads of my club?”

You'll soon discover such fears are groundless. You stand a far better chance of bringing ridicule upon yourself for wearing white shoes after Labor Day, than of embarrassing your club by making a few dance mistakes at Convention.

Often, new dancers who are approaching graduation are reluctant to make plans for Convention. Our advice: if you're planning on graduating, make plans to attend Convention to “lock in” your newly developed dance skills.

Contrary to what many students believe, *newly-graduated dancers attending Convention or fly-ins become stronger dancers than those who stay home.*



Santa Clara, 2005: Leather Tip.

Who's in charge of this thing, anyway?

The first IAGSDC® convention was held in Seattle in 1984. Since then, host cities have included Denver, San Francisco, Portland OR, Phoenix, New York, Miami, Vancouver BC, Albuquerque, Seattle (again), Washington DC, Chicago, San Francisco (again), Las Vegas, Portland (again), Los Angeles, Baltimore, Vancouver (again), Toronto, San Diego, and Phoenix (again).

Each Convention has a year, a city, and an official name. For example, as of this writing, some recent and upcoming Conventions include:

- 2005: "Star Thru The Silicon Galaxy" in Santa Clara, California
- 2006: "When You Wish Upon a Thar" in Anaheim, California
- 2007: "Red Rocks and Purple Mountains" in Denver, Colorado
- 2008: "Touch A Quarter Century" in Cleveland, Ohio
- 2009: "DC Diamond Circulate" in Washington, D.C.
- 2010: "Chi-Town Shakedown" in Chicago, Illinois
- 2011: "Gone With The Windmill" in Atlanta, Georgia
- 2012: [name not yet announced] in Vancouver, British Columbia
- 2013: "Weave Your Heart in San Francisco" in San Francisco, California
- 2014: [in bid process, only bidder thus far is Salt Lake City]

Convention attendance runs anywhere from 800 to 1,200 dancers, friends, family members, and partners.

IAGSDC® Conventions are staged by individual square dance clubs, or by groups of clubs, in a given geographic area.

In general, Convention is held over a holiday weekend such as 4th of July or Memorial Day. This is a tradition rather than a hard-and-fast rule. Some years, Convention has been held on a totally different date, such as Easter weekend. This is usually done to minimize hotel costs. (For example, downtown hotels in some cities cost more during 4th of July weekend due to heavy bookings for local events.)

Each year, the IAGSDC® allows clubs to "bid" for conventions to be held in their local cities. A convention committee reviews each year's bids. After a few years of bidding and presentations, the IAGSDC® Convention Committee accepts one of the bids presented. Generally speaking, the IAGSDC® approves bids four years in advance.

For a complete list of upcoming conventions (and potential bids), see the IAGSDC® website at <http://www.iagsdc.org>



Sometimes, convention committees encourage the participation of both IAGSDC and non-IAGSDC clubs. This is a picture of the Santa Clara Valley Square Dance Association "Buckskin", an artifact which is stolen from club to club to promote interclub attendance. The rightmost logo on the bottom row is that of the El Camino Reelers, who stole the rawhide in July of 2004, and proudly displayed it at the 2005 IAGSDC Convention in Santa Clara.

Women & Convention

In 2006, it was suggested that a section would be welcome on what women attending convention could expect. The IAGSDC® is an all-inclusive organization: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Trans ... and their friends who aren't any of those things. Despite this, generally around 70%+ of Convention attendees are male.

It's not uncommon for women to want to get away from the testosterone for a while.

Women's Hospitality Lounge. Most IAGSDC® convention committees provide a separate, women-only space. Sometimes it's stocked with drinks and snacks. Generally it contains comfortable seating and a space for women to socialize with other women.

Childcare. Admittedly, this isn't necessarily a women-only topic. However, we feel it's germane to this chapter because some conventions place a childcare area in or near the Women's Hospitality Lounge. Some years, it's in a separate area.

Each convention's policy and placement of the women's and childcare lounges is different from year to year.

Fun Badge Tours. Official or not, usually one (or more!) of the Fun Badge Tour buses ends up populated entirely by women. Don't be afraid to ask other women if an unofficial bus has been "named" yet as "The Women's Bus".

Occasionally, you can figure out which one is the Women's Bus just by looking at the titles given to each vehicle.

If not, feel free to ask, or look for a bus where most of the first names are women's names.

Banquet Seating. When it's time for banquet seating sign-ups, there are often a couple of tables of only women, also unofficially. Like the Fun Badge Tour, this generally happens informally, because people choose to do it this way. If this appeals to you, feel free to initiate or participate in such a table, especially if you'd feel more comfortable

Women's Tip. There's a special energy created in a room full of dancing women. As a result, there's usually a specialty tip called by women, just for women. Check the "Specialty Tips" schedule to find out when it happens.



Notes for non-LGBT Dancers at an IAGSDC® Convention

There are a few significant differences between straight & LGBT square dance conventions. In 2006, Gloria Krusemeyer suggested that this would be a good topic to add to the Guide. This addition proved so popular that in 2007, it spurred the *straight* square dance community to ask me for permission to adapt the Guide to a straight audience attending non-IAGSDC conventions!

Straight dancers are welcome at IAGSDC Conventions. However, some of the IAGSDC® customs may seem a little weird to straight dancers at first.

LGBT dances are called at a faster pace. Don't be surprised to hear familiar callers using new or untraditional music you've never heard before. LGBT audiences generally prefer contemporary music with a faster beat. *Callers will call much faster to an LGBT floor* than to a straight floor.

APD/DBD is the norm for LGBT dancing. Since genders usually aren't balanced at LGBT square dance clubs, LGBT dancers don't pay any attention to physical gender vs. dance gender. Many LGBT clubs practice All Positions Dancing ("APD") and Dance By Definition ("DBD"). This means that *callers may choose to use more sashayed or non-standard positions for familiar calls* than you're used to.

Single dancers of either gender are *always* welcome at LGBT square dance functions. A surprising number of IAGSDC® attendees are straight dancers who no longer have a dance partner, but who have been made to feel welcome in LGBT square dance venues. At LGBT square dance functions, *single dancers are the norm, not the exception.*

LGBT dancers dress very casually. Unlike most straight square dance functions, LGBT dancers don't have special costumes or dresses for dancing. Most *LGBT dancers usually wear comfortable clothing*, which could be anything from sweatpants or shorts to jeans or slacks. Shoes are usually whatever's most comfortable to walk in.

Because LGBT square dancing is often higher-energy than straight square dancing, short sleeved shirts are very common, as are T-shirts. Collared long-sleeve shirts for men and full crinolines for women are usually too warm to dance in for the faster and more intense pace of an LGBT floor.

Squaring up is a little different at IAGSDC® Conventions. People can square up as individuals as well as partners.

There are no "computer" (pre-assigned) squares. Each tip is what the straight community calls "open squares".

To square up as a single, walk out onto the floor (preferably up front where the caller can see you, and will help you form a square if necessary), and hold up one or both of your hands as follows:

- If you want to dance the boy's part, stand in the boy's spot and hold up your *right* hand (because you're looking for a "girl" to take that hand).
- If you want to dance the girl's part, stand in the girl's spot hold up your *left* hand (because you're looking for a "boy" to take that hand).
- If you're bidansual (can dance either boy or girl), stand in the center on one side of a forming square and hold up *both* hands.

There are a number of dance fluff differences between the straight and LGBT dance communities. Just as LGBT dancers are instructed to use straight fluff at straight dances, it's considered polite to use LGBT fluff at LGBT dances.

If you'd like to be shown how to do any of the fluff, such as "Weave The Ring", don't be afraid to ask the people in your square right after the tip is over. (Or the caller.)

LGBT dancers often hug each other after a tip. *If you don't want to be hugged, hold out your hand to shake hands.*

What really happens at Convention?

The idea of spending four days square dancing doesn't sound terribly exciting at first. However, the same thing could be said for other LGBT community events, such as choral conferences, leather conventions, or imperial courts, all of which are similarly popular and entertaining.

Like those events, there are many different types of activities at any given IAGSDC® Convention. Some examples:

- Special “challenging” dance tips (these are labeled “WFH” or “TNP”)
- Hexagon squares (Six couples dancing per square.)
- [Gay Callers Association Caller School](#) (Usually held just before Convention.)
 - Progressive squares
- “Variety” dance tips
 - Honky Tonk Queen contest (More on this – some would say, “regretfully” – later on.)
 - Dance workshops
 - Vendor booths
 - Women’s hospitality lounge
 - Moonshine tips (Nude square dancing.) (Yes, really.) (We’ll talk more about this later on, honest.)
 - Bar tours
 - Pre- and post-convention tours
 - Nightly cabarets (sometimes with “open mike” nights)

Mostly, Convention is about meeting old and new friends, and dancing with them, and realizing that you're part of a global community of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender dancers ... and their friends and family.



GCA Caller School, Santa Clara 2005

When to start planning your trip.

Some dancers plan to attend Convention many months in advance, while others go at the last minute. As you'll see shortly, planning ahead can save you quite a bit of money.

For most Conventions, you'll need to make three sets of arrangements:

1. Convention Registration
2. Travel Arrangements
3. Hotel/Housing Arrangements

Most Conventions allow hotel room reservations to be made one or two years in advance. The rules change frequently, since Convention is held in a different city and hotel every year.

Convention registration generally can take place as much as three years in advance, depending upon the committee staging each particular Convention.



In an uncharacteristically friendly fashion, Rick Hawes welcomes Paul Perrotta to the 2005 host hotel in Santa Clara, California.

Convention Registration: The early bird gets the discount.

It's a simple equation: the earlier you register for Convention, the less you pay. Since planning a Convention is a long-term project (four to six years), each future Convention committee needs "up front" money to place deposits on suitable hotel and convention space. That "seed money" is raised largely through advance Convention registrations at discounted prices.

Here's an example gleaned by averaging rates from several past conventions:

- Register 3 months before Convention (or at the door) **\$200** (Also known as "full price".)
- Register 6 months before Convention.....\$180
- Register 12 months before Convention.....\$165
- Register 13+ months before Convention.....\$150
- "Early Bird" Registrations..... **\$125**
(That's a \$75 savings for planning ahead!)

Note those "early bird" registrations: they're a special deal. It's now common for most Convention committees to offer "early bird" registrations at a substantial discount. "Early Bird" registrations are usually only sold at the current Convention, for events being held *two or three years* in the future. A limited number of these registrations are sold through either a lottery or on a "first-come, first-serve" basis. Often, early bird registrations are sold early on a Saturday or Sunday morning, so remember - losing a little sleep can now save you a *lot* of money later.

Your first year as a dancer, you won't have known about any of the advance registrations. However, once you attend your first Convention, you can start purchasing discounted advance registrations. Over time, the savings really add up!

As of 2007, some conventions began offering discounted admissions to first-time dancers! These discounts are sometimes underwritten by All Join Hands, and sometimes offered directly by the convention committee. Check to see if your first convention is offering discounts for first-time attendees.



Toronto, 2002: Fun Badge Tour dancing at the base of the CN Tower.

Travel Arrangements: Getting there is half the fun.

Most Conventions start on a Thursday or Friday evening, and proceed through the following Sunday or Monday evening. The major dancing usually starts Friday or Saturday morning.

If you want to take in all of Convention, plan to arrive on the afternoon of the first day (usually a Thursday/Friday) and leave late on the last day (usually a Sunday/Monday) or the morning after.

Examine the convention's tentative schedule to get an idea of *when* things start and stop on the first and last day, and to check pre- and post-convention activity schedules. Moria Merriweather suggests a little sleuthing on pre/post-convention tours will help you adjust your final travel plans (airline, train, or bus tickets, etc.).

You may want to arrive early or depart late to take advantage of some of the activities...or just plan for a few days of sightseeing in the area. Many dancers find Convention is a wonderful excuse to explore a new city!

Flying? Each Convention usually has an "official" travel agent that will be delighted to book your airline tickets for you. If you prefer booking your own tickets, check for a special discount code for the Convention's official airline.

If the Convention airline discount code gets you the same or a lower price on your fare, we suggest using the code, as the airline usually applies part of your purchase as a credit back to the Convention committee. That credit can then be used to subsidize travel arrangements for the Convention's staff callers.

If you're flying to Convention and know that other dancers are on your flight ... consider transferring between the hotel and airport as a group, and share the cost of a taxi (or limo!) at one or both ends.

Enjoy traveling in style? Many airports offer fixed-price or hourly-rate limousine service; one stretch limo can easily seat 4 to 6 people, which brings a group's per-person cost down to around the same (or lower) amount as an airport bus ticket, but with a great deal more comfort. This is a lot of fun when you're travelling as part of a group.

Driving or renting a car? Check to see if the host hotel charges for parking. If so, be aware that convention guests staying in the hotel often get a discounted daily rate with in-and-out privileges. If you're going to use a car and stay offsite, you may not have in-and-out privileges, which can be costly if you drive back and forth a lot.



A light-hearted photo-op from the Toronto 2002 Fun Badge Tour.

Hotel/Housing Arrangements

Each Convention has unique housing arrangements. Some Conventions and fly-ins have taken place at universities or academic conference centers during summer break, providing dancers with low-cost housing in dorms. Some Conventions have been held at luxury hotels. Some have been held at standalone convention halls.

If your Convention is being held at a chain hotel ... consider enrolling in that chain's "frequent guest" club before making your hotel reservations. Most hotel chains provide special check-in lines, upgrades or perks for frequent travelers. When you make your hotel reservation, be sure to include your frequent-guest program account number.

Moria Merriweather points out that some dancers may not have stayed in large hotels recently, and may be unfamiliar with some of the resources offered in such an establishment. Some things to think about when making your hotel reservation:

- What kind of bed do you want? King size? Queen? A pair of double beds?
- Do you want a nonsmoking room?
- Do you want a room that's located especially high or low? Some people are nervous about elevators or high places.
- Is there a "club floor"? For an extra charge, these floors usually offer some form of free breakfast and/or evening hors d'oeuvres and soft drinks. In Canada, some of the hotels serve afternoon tea on the club floors.
- If you just can't leave work behind while traveling ... do any of the rooms have high-speed Internet access?

Want to share a room to lower the cost of convention? Andy Chong suggests posting a message to the LGCWSD mailing list (or if the current convention provides an online bulletin board, use that) to find a roommate.

Once you've checked in, check out the lobby to see if there's a concierge desk. *A good concierge is a guest's best friend*, and should be able to make restaurant recommendations and reservations, locate and book show tickets, and find everything from emergency sewing kits to the nearest 24-hour photocopy shop.

Don't scoff at using a concierge to make reservations. Many hotels charge dearly for local phone calls, and it's usually cheaper to let the concierge handle it ... unless using your own cell phone won't invoke major roaming charges. It's not unusual for guests who booked dinner reservations via a concierge to receive little surprise extras, such as free desserts.



At the Fantasy Ball event held during Anaheim, 2006: That's Dick Burdon on the left, but many people never figured out who that was on the right.

What to pack? (a/k/a, “Dancers’ Wear Daily”)

Packing for Convention isn’t *quite* as simple as many first-timers think. Dressing up for a day of dancing is different than attending a regular club or class night.

- **Pack more socks and shirts than you think you need** It’s not uncommon at Convention to change socks and/or shirts several times daily. **Ditto underwear.**
- You may want to **pack a “casual dressy” outfit for the banquet**, if you like getting dressed up.
- **Don’t forget your swimsuit!** Even if you don’t plan on swimming, you may want that swimsuit for taking a dip in the hotel’s hot tub after dancing all day. Daniel Howell from Tinseltown Squares suggests some may also want to bring a tacky women’s bathing suit, to participate in the “Bathing Beauties” parade and tip. More info on that later.
- **Your club uniform is needed for the Grand March and your club photograph.** Some clubs have very formal uniforms, while others are informal. Ask one of your club’s officers if you’re not sure. Some dancers don’t bother wearing a uniform at all.
- **Bring comfortable shoes, boots, and clothing for dancing.** Even at a gay Convention, style isn’t as important as comfort. Tight jeans may look great, but if they chafe in the wrong places, you’ll be truly sorry later.
- **Bring your checkbook!** Gary Young points out that you’ll want to write checks for registrations, vendor merchandise, and the like.
- **Two pair of shoes is *not* excessive.** Gloria Krusemeyer points out that many people are shocked to find that their shoes are *soaked* after a couple of hours of dancing. Also, wet shoes promote chafing. (Ouch!)
- **Another reason for two pair of shoes for dancing:** Cameron Robb always took both a pair of boots *and* a pair of tennis shoes, so he could dance on both carpeted or wood floors. Dancing on carpet in sneakers can lead to a turned ankle at Mainstream or Plus levels. Leather soles are best for carpeting ... or plastic flooring. (See below.)
- **Some conventions now use a plastic dance floor, which works better with slipperier soles.** Richard Bass likes using bowling shoes, George Chow prefers “dance sneakers”, available at most dance supply stores, and Seth Levine prefers western-style boots, which have a leather sole for twirling, and a rubber heel for control.
- **If you only brought “grippy” shoes but wish you had slipperier shoes,** Scott Philips suggests picking up a roll of clear plastic packing tape. He reports that the tape even seems to work well with waffle-soled sneakers.
- **Insoles are “in.”** Gloria Krusemeyer loves wearing gel-filled insoles for dancing. If you want to dance in tighter shoes that won’t accommodate a full gel insole (though we can’t figure out why you’d want to, other than for style issues), consider using a gel “heel” insert, which is much smaller.
- **“Style Over Comfort,” Part II:** Moria Merriweather suggests wearing shorts (or skirts or kilts) and similar light clothing, which will let you dance comfortably in large, crowded halls.
- **A dance towel.** “A towel, a towel, my kingdom for a towel!” If you’re a “schvitzer,” (sweaty person) bring one or two absorbent sports towels you can carry around with you to dry off between (or during) tips. Many square dance clothing or accessories vendors often sell belt clips for dance towels.
- **Don’t try to break in new shoes or boots at Convention.** Instead, break in new dancing footwear for several weeks before convention, during class nights or club nights.
- **Bring and always wear your club badge (or some kind of name badge) when dancing.** People like to know with whom they’re dancing! Rather than remembering to bring a badge, some people wear club shirts or personal shirts embroidered with their name.
- **If you don’t have your club badge to wear for some reason** (lost, broken, etc.), the Fial family (long time friends to the IAGSDC community) are usually present at each Convention, with a wonderful while-you-wait badge booth. They make generic badges, and provide badge dangles and additional information “hanger bars” for your club badge. They also have magnetic badge holders that prevent your badge from making holes in your clothing.
- **Don’t stuff your magnetic badge into the same pocket as your hotel room key or credit cards.** No, we’re not putting you on. Tim Learmont from El Camino Reelers points out that many hotels now use magnetic cardkeys, which can easily be erased by the strong magnets used on the back of dance badges. Keep your room key, ATM card, and credit cards somewhere completely separate from your badge.
- **An insulated sports bottle or covered mug** that you can carry with you is an excellent investment.

Taking care of yourself.

Dancing at Conventions and fly-ins usually runs all day, and it's easy to forget to take care of yourself.

If you're not used to dancing for several hours at a time ... be aware that square dancing is a low-impact, highly aerobic activity, burning *400 calories per hour of constant motion*. That means you need to treat yourself a little more carefully than usual, unless you're already accustomed to extended periods of (vertical) aerobic activity.

- **Consider carrying along a bottle of "sport drink"** (e.g., Gatorade, PowerAde, etc.). Even if you don't feel thirsty between tips, it's important to keep yourself hydrated! At the very least, keep a refillable bottle of water handy.
- **Remember to take a drink after each tip**; it's very easy to get dehydrated on a dance floor.
- **Some people find that taking an over-the-counter anti-inflammatory or pain medication helps prevent muscle soreness later.** For example: aspirin, ibuprofen (Advil), or naproxen sodium (Aleve). Take such medication before starting to dance or before finishing up a long dance session. Cameron Robb used to take Advil before dancing to avoid swollen feet at end of a long session. Mark Ambrose (a self-described son of a pharmacist) points out that if you have problems with painful or swollen feet or legs after dancing, and over-the-counter meds don't work for you ... consult your physician. There's a long list (which Mark quoted to me, but which I won't repeat here) of prescription-only anti-inflammatory drugs.
- Kate Yule reminds us that **gentle stretching** between tips can help prevent soreness or stiffness.
- **Take a long, hot soak** in the hotel hot tub or in your room after you've finished dancing for the day ... it's a great way to prevent muscle soreness at night or in the morning.
- **If you have physical conditions that preclude actions such as twirling or swinging**, consider investing in a "Please don't twirl me" or "Please don't swing me" badge. You can purchase such badges ready- or custom-made at most Conventions, from the Fial family's badge booth. Even with the badge, make sure you inform the other dancers in your square of any requests before dancing starts.
- **Some dancers wear a red kerchief on a sore wrist or arm, or use a faux sling** to indicate a weak arm.

If your feet tend to blister during long/intense periods of activity ... go to an outdoor clothing store and try a pair of "sock liners". These are thin white socks worn under regular socks. Sock liners wick perspiration away from the skin, and substantially reduce friction to prevent blisters or chafing. Try these before going to Convention – perhaps at a local club night or class night. Daniel Howell from Tinseltown Squares likes investing each year in a new pair of comfortable shoe liners/foam pads/sport insoles that he can slip into his dancing shoes.

Personal grooming is extra-important when you're dancing eight to ten hours a day. You may need to shower more than once a day. Breath mints are handy on the dance floor. *A good antiperspirant or deodorant is essential and polite.*

If you sweat a lot, bring a towel. Yes, we know we said this earlier. Many dancers don't like hugging other dancers who are soaking wet. If you know you get sweaty ... sweatbands for your head or wrists wouldn't hurt, either.

What should you carry around with you? Some people prefer to "travel light" when running around dance halls. Andy Chong from Toronto likes carrying around little more than his dance schedule and a hand-held fan. Others like bringing a bag or backpack containing items such as: spare badges or badge magnets; breath mints; sports bars or energy snacks; adhesive bandages; spare shirt; a towel.

Just like at summer camp when you were a kid ... put your name on your stuff.

Daniel Howell points out that you're going to be one of over a thousand dancers; make sure that your backpack, gym bag, fanny pack, or camera case has your name in it, or a luggage tag attached somewhere.

This especially applies if you're carrying around one of a thousand identical backpacks or fanny packs from a current or previous IAGSDC® convention.



Paul Asente, demonstrating the importance of taking care of your feet.

Things to do when you arrive at the hotel...

Check in and/or dump your bags first, and THEN find Convention Registration. Once you've dumped your luggage in your room (or checked your baggage with the bell stand until your room is ready), seek out the Convention's registration desk, and see if it's open yet.

Many dancers have suggested putting on your club badge before heading down to seek out registration. Doing so makes it easy for other dancers to identify you, and can substantially speed things up for everyone at Convention Registration.

Before dancing starts, walk through the hotel or dance site, and familiarize yourself with the venue. Andy Chong suggests finding out: Where are all of the rooms that you may want to dance in? Where's the information/registration/help desk? Where's the vendor room? Where are the line-up sites for the Fun Badge Tour or Grand March?

Use your dance schedule. Your registration packet will include a dance schedule; you may want to bring either a brightly colored pen or highlighter with you, to mark off the dance sessions or events in which you want to participate for each day. For example, some dancers like to stay in a single room and dance at a single level, while others enjoy following favorite callers from room to room.

Pace yourself on the first full day by NOT planning intense after-dance activities. Steven from Chi-Town Squares has seen this happen oh, so many times. A common mistake made by first-time Convention attendees is to plan on hitting the bars or baths at the end of the first full day of dancing.

Trust us when we say ... *after your first full day of dancing, you won't be in any condition to paint the town red.* The only thing you're probably going to want to do at that point is take a shower followed by a long soak in a hot tub. You may also find that you need a bit more sleep than usual for the first couple of days at Convention. Plan accordingly.



Baltimore, 2000: The convention committee for "Crack The Crab" wanted to make sure that attendees felt right at home; hence, this lobby display of the LGBT Pride Flag over the IAGSDC banner.

Registration & Related Activities

When you check in at Convention Registration, you'll receive a packet containing a number of useful and essential items. Here's a list of things you may (or may not) find in your registration packet from year to year.

Name Badge: You may be asked to wear convention-provided name badge at all times, to show that you're a registered dancer. Often, a conference pin serves this function instead. The registration volunteer will tell you what's up for this year.

Conference Pin: Most conferences provide you with a small metal cloisienné pin – generally, in the shape of the logo of the convention – which you're asked to wear at all times to show that you're a registered attendee. This pin is a keepsake, and many people collect them to pin to their 10-Year Medallion ribbons or to baseball caps for future conferences.

Meal Tickets: These are used for the dinner/banquet on Saturday night, and the luncheon/meeting on Sunday. Ed Zeigler suggests that these tickets are best stored in your wallet, so you won't lose them.

Special Event Tickets: This depends upon how the conference committee decides to run things each year. Some years, registration for optional events (such as the Fun Badge Tour or Bar Tour) is handled by giving dancers a ticket for each event. Other years, there's a sticker on your convention-provided name badge. If you've signed up for such events, ask the Registration Desk to make sure you have everything you need to gain admission to what you've paid for.

As with the meal tickets, if there's a bus or table assignment involved, write it down on the back of the ticket. These tickets should also be kept with you at all times, such as in your wallet.



Sample Tickets from the 2005 Convention in Santa Clara, California.

[continued on next page]

[Registration and Related Activities, continued from previous page.]

Schedule: There's usually a big dance schedule (or several sheets of dance schedules), and often you'll find either a perforated card or several smaller cards containing pocket-sized daily dance schedules. Remember we suggested packing a highlighter pen earlier? Use it to mark the sessions and activities you're interested in attending.

Program: A nifty program is included, which may show everything from a listing and maps of all IAGSDC® clubs and locations to copies of special square dance proclamations and letters of welcome issued by local government officials to ... well, it's a little different every year. Wait and see for yourself.

Photo Schedule: When is your club's group photo scheduled? Make a special note of it, if you want to be in the club picture!

Auxiliary Information: Most years, there's an information sheet -- separate from the formal program -- which gives dates, times, and locations for special services and events such as (but not limited to): Women's Hospitality Lounge, GCA Caller Dance, 12-Step Meetings, Child Care, Religious Services, Bar Tours ... you get the idea. We're a diverse community (*the more you read this, diverse it gets*), and our Conventions' auxiliary services and events reflect this.



The Traffic Cone Sisters made their debut at the 2000 Fun Badge Tour in Baltimore ("That's Bawlmer, Hon!"), Maryland. They later went on to fame and fortune as two members of a tripartite Honky Tonk Queen contest winner, "Mary Gold & The Big Boned Gals."

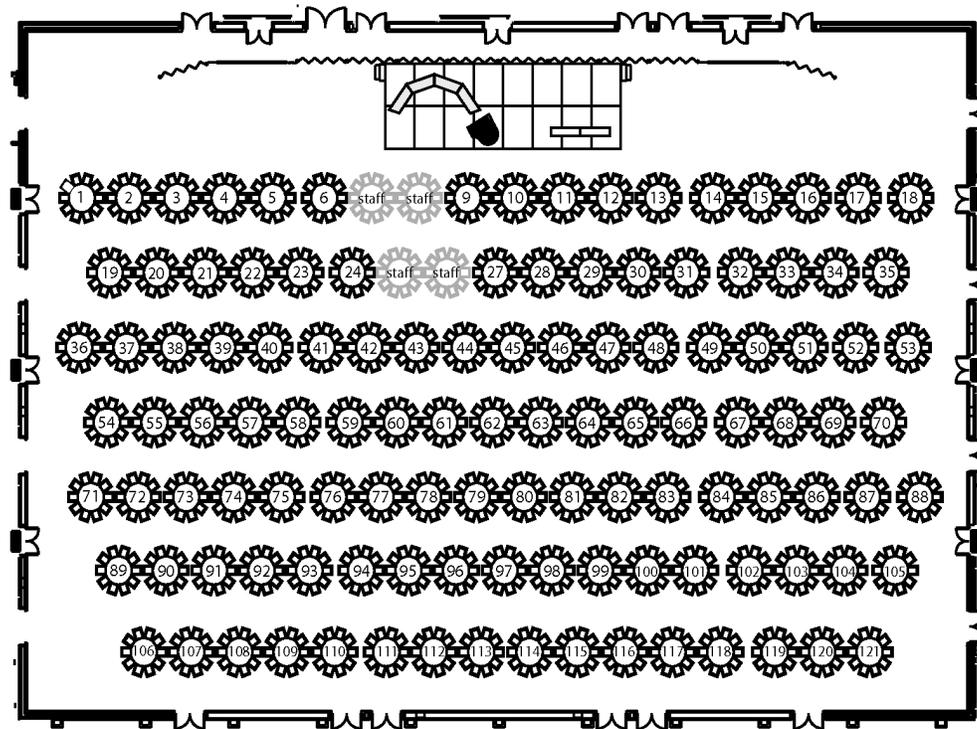
Meal & Bus Seating

There are generally three events at each Convention featuring reserved seating: (1) a Saturday night Banquet; (2) a Sunday lunch / brunch / IAGSDC® General Meeting; and (3) the Fun Badge Tour.

When you check in at Registration, ask where to sign up for banquet, lunch, and fun badge tour seating. You'll generally be directed to a series of large boards, each with a seating chart. *Some conventions may use a different method of seating selection; be sure to ask when you check in.*

Banquet & Lunch seating is usually reserved by table, and you're usually expected to locate your name on a sticker, and move the sticker to a specific table. This allows you to sit with specific friends or get a table at a specific location in advance.

Fun Badge Tour seating is usually arranged by bus. Usually, the fun badge tour has a theme, and each bus has a name, number, color, and/or specific assigned hosts or hostesses. If you're not able to sit with friends, don't worry –



Seating chart from the Phoenix 2004 Convention. Each attendee found their name printed on a tiny sticker, and affixed the sticker to the table of their choice on the chart. (After you affix your sticker, be sure to write down your table number on the back of your ticket!)

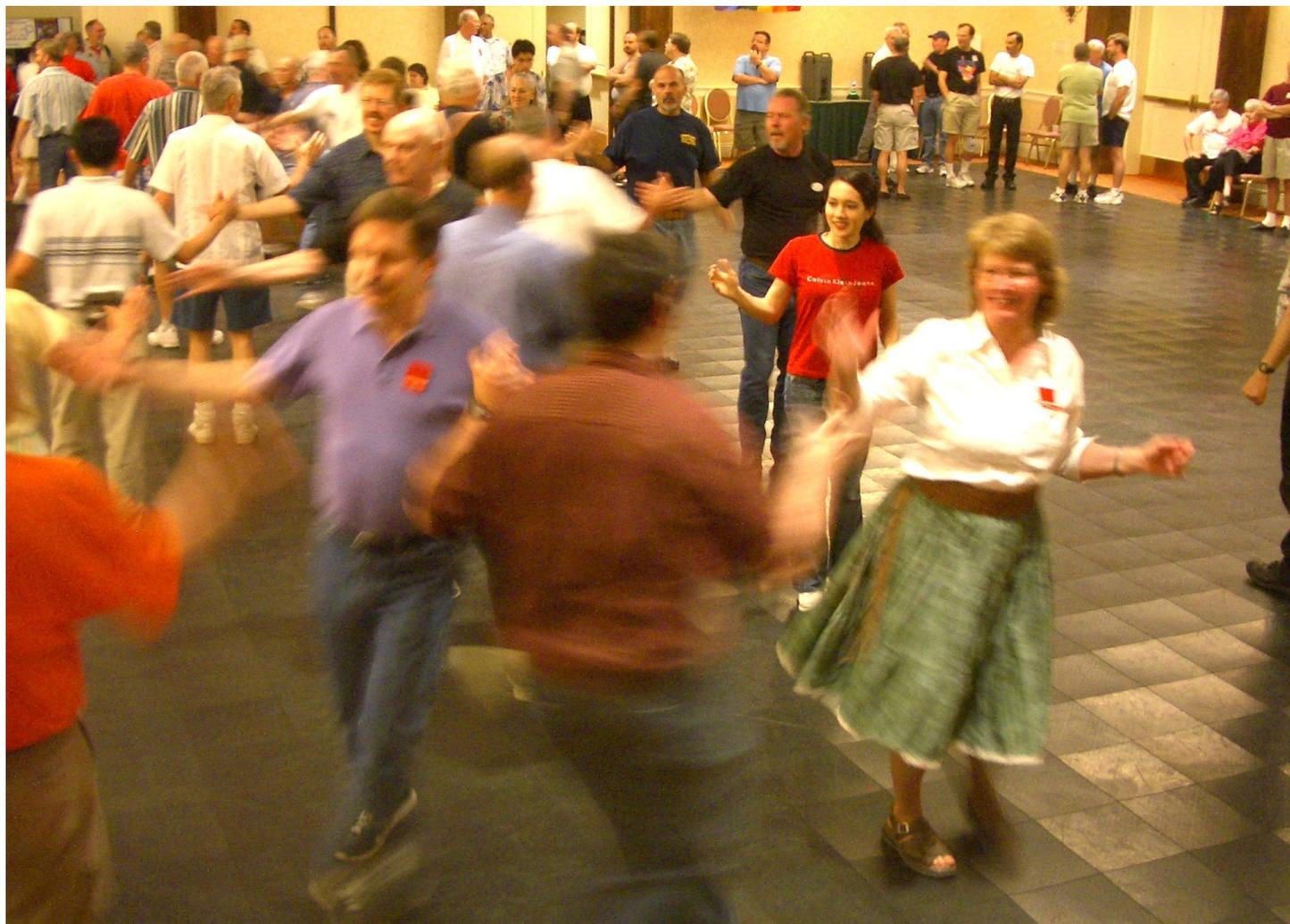
everyone dances together on a fun badge tour. The seating reservations are just for which bus you'll travel on (and usually which hosts or hostesses provide your travelogue.)

Although seating for these events is reserved, making the actual arrangements is strictly on a first-come, first-served basis. If you're going to be checking in late, and want to sit with friends at any of the special events, you may want to ask them to pick and post your name sticker along with theirs.

Yeah, but when do we start *dancing*?

Most conventions (and some fly-ins) start off with something called a “trail’s end” (sometimes called “trail-in”) dance on the evening prior to the first full day of the event. This is usually held on a Thursday night.

This first dance marks “the end of the dusty trail” to Convention, and provides a chance for everyone to warm up before the main event starts the next day. (Thanks to Karl Jaeckel of Rocky Mountain Rainbeaus in Denver for pointing out the origins of the term “trail’s end”!)



2005 Trail-In/Trail's End Dance. This picture also shows the plastic dance floor in which several IAGSDC conventions jointly invested, to give dancers a more consistent and pleasant dance experience from year to year.

The “trail’s end” dance and/or first few tips at a convention or fly-in can be frustrating if you’re not prepared. Be aware that it’s quite common for squares at a trail-in dance to break down.

If your “trail’s end” square breaks down more than you’re used to, don’t panic. We promise that you haven’t suddenly forgotten how to dance, though it may feel like it for a while. No, we’re not laughing at you. Really. This is something every new dancer goes through.

Be aware when dancing at a trail-in dance that:

- ...many of the people attending conventions or fly-ins haven’t danced in a while, and are rusty;
- ...it’s a new hall and new sound system for everyone (including the callers!), with different acoustics than people are used to;
- ...no matter who’s calling, it’s probably going to be someone different than most people’s club caller.

These conditions create breakdowns for many people in many squares. Don’t get discouraged. The dancing *will* get better as the event proceeds. Honest. We promise.

Things to know about dancing at Convention...

Dancing at an IAGSDC® Convention or fly-in can be an exhilarating experience.

Imagine meeting a group of 7 other people for the very first time on a dance floor, and feeling like you've instantly developed 8-way telepathy.

That's what a great square can feel like!

To maximize your chances of dancing in great squares, here are some things to keep in mind.

- **Square up as close to the caller as possible.** This is one of the most critical pieces of advice for newer dancers ... *if you trust only one piece of advice in this article, please trust this one.* Uncertain dancers who usually square up in the back of the hall rarely improve their skills over time.
- **Another reason to square up right in front of the caller:** If you have problems, the caller can more easily see you, and adjust the choreography speed or difficulty accordingly. *This goes double for callers you haven't ever heard before.*
- **Don't be afraid of squaring up with strangers.** That's half the fun of attending Conventions and fly-ins! If you usually dance at home with the same people, you'll improve your dance skills by dancing with strangers. After all, you can still dance with the people you know at home for 51 other weeks a year!
- **If you're a newer dancer, and are shy about squaring up with more experienced dancers ...** don't worry about it. Many people you'll meet at Convention are also newer dancers. Dancing with more experienced dancers at Conventions and fly-ins is one of the best ways to sharpen your dance skills. They'll be happy to help!
- **If you have a problem with something** (e.g., perhaps you don't like being twirled), tell the people in your square *before* the tip begins. They should be happy to accommodate you.
- **It's OK to ask questions** about calls, flourishes, sound effects, or fluff that you don't know or didn't understand.
- **If you can't hear the caller clearly from your square,** don't be afraid to shout, "Louder, please!" or "More voice, please!" until you can hear them clearly. Don't suffer through half (or more!) of a tip before speaking up!
- **Wear your club name badge at all times.** People like to know who they're dancing with, and it's considered rude in many parts of the world to dance without a name badge.
- **Always thank your square.** It's considered rude to leave a square without thanking each dancer. Some people hug, some shake hands; it's a matter of personal taste. If you like hugging, consider asking each person you don't know "do you hug?" before having at. Even if they don't hug, they'll be pleased that you asked first.
- **Try new callers.** If this is your first convention, Michael Pemberton of Chi-Town Squares and DC Lambda Squares suggests dancing at least twice to each caller you don't know. This lets you pick out new favorites for future events. Even if you've been to Convention before ... don't be afraid of dancing to callers you may not have heard previously. (This especially applies when the convention venue bounces between the East Coast, West Coast, and Midwest, each of which has regional favorite callers.)



Los Angeles, 1999: "Oscar" walks a contestant down the runway during the HTQ Contest.

If you graduate at one level, should you dance in the hall of your graduating level, or hang out in a lower-level hall? Seth Levine of Desert Valley Squares in Phoenix, observes that the level of dance difficulty at conventions and fly-ins often increases slowly over the course of a weekend, as dancers and callers become more confident with each other and their surroundings.

This means **it's to your advantage to start dancing at your highest level on the first day, when choreography will probably be easiest.** On the second or third day, if you find yourself needing a break, you can always move down to a lower dance level for a session, then go back to your highest dance level when you've had a mental break.



“Oh my gosh, my square just broke down!”

If you break down the square, you won't “bring shame down upon your home club.” Laugh about it now, but one of the most frequent confessions of newer dancers is being scared to death of making a mistake, because then “everyone will think that their club has bad dancers.”

Breaking down is a normal part of square dancing, even for experienced dancers and callers. If you think you broke down a square, don't make a big deal about it. Just apologize, re-square-up, and see if you can figure out what happened AFTER the tip is over. (Ask your partner or corner if they know what may have happened.)

- **If your square breaks down during a patter call**, form normal (boy-girl-boy-girl) facing lines of four, and wait for the caller to pick up your square on the next sequence. The official CALLERLAB procedure is:
 1. Return to home position as soon as possible.
 2. Head ladies take their corner's hand and head couples back out to form lines at the sides of the square.
 3. On the caller's command "EVERYBODY go forward and back", enter into the dance pattern.

Kate Yule points out this event is sometimes also signaled by the magic words “...up to the middle and back”.

- **If your square breaks down during a singing call**, Danny Lee from The Wilde Bunch in Albuquerque suggests that you quickly re-square-up, and have the girls “rotate” to the next boy in sequence. (Most modern singing calls take each girl to “visit” with each boy in turn.)
- **Want a second chance?** If your square breaks down during a patter tip, and you're feeling especially feisty, it's OK to yell “Over!” (or “Again?!”) at the caller, to ask them to try a specific sequence again. Many callers will be happy to honor “over” requests, especially if multiple squares had problems. Callers are usually just as curious as the dancers to figure out where a sequence “went bad”. (Note: “Overs” are strictly at the caller's discretion. Sometimes, some choreography just doesn't work, and isn't worth trying again.)



Bill Eyler giving us the shirt off his back to call. (Actually, he's calling the Bear Tip at the 2005 Convention in Santa Clara, California.)

What's a "Grand March"?

One of the IAGSDC® Convention traditions is a presentation of all of the member clubs. This takes the form of a march, club-by-club, into a ballroom or similar large dance space, as a roster of IAGSDC® clubs is read off. Dancers generally wear their formal club uniforms for the Grand March, although it's not a requirement.

The exact format of the march varies from year to year. Some years, the clubs are presented in alphabetical order, and sometimes in order of founding. The host club for the current convention may be the first or last dancers into the room. In either case, the other IAGSDC® clubs always give the local club(s) a rousing cheer to thank them for hosting.

At the conclusion of the Grand March, the national anthems of all countries hosting IAGSDC® clubs are played and/or sung, speeches are read, announcements are made, and there's an all-together-now dance (generally at Mainstream level).

I've heard some people refer to the Grand March as a bit corny, *but ...* when you're marching with your club, and there are a thousand other dancers on the floor, all marching with their clubs, and people are cheering each other's clubs as they make entrances ... the Grand March feels pretty darn wonderful. It can be a real thrill to realize that you're part of a much larger group, all of whom share a common interest. (No, not sex. Square dancing.)



Line-up for the Grand March in Santa Clara, 2005

What does “WFH” or “TNP” Mean?

JP Slater from Vancouver suggested that some people may not understand these terms. These stand for “Way F***ing Hard” or “Take No Prisoners”. These are special, extra-hard tips called for people who enjoy a challenge!

One of the best ways to decide if you’re ready to move up to the next dance level is to try dancing a WFH/TNP tip at your current dance level. If you have relatively few problems ... you’re probably ready to move up. If you’re feeling shaky at a given level, you may not want to dance the WFH/TNP tip for that level.

Some dancers enjoy dancing the WFH/TNP tip for the level *below* their current dance level. So Plus dancers frequently will dance the WFH Mainstream tip, A2 dancers will dance the TNP Plus tip, etcetera. You’d be surprised how challenging some lower dance levels can be!

From a caller’s perspective ... WFH/TNP tips are an opportunity to show dancers that any given dance level can be interesting and fun.

A variation is called “Survivor Tips”, where each square that breaks down during a WFH sequence stops dancing, until only one square is left standing (well, dancing).



10 Year Medallion Recipients at the 2006 Anaheim Convention. (Photo by Scott Farrar)

What is the “GCA”, and what’s a “GCA Tip”?

“GCA” stands for “Gay Callers Association.” This is an association of square dance callers who are either LGBT and/or who call to LGBT groups. Many GCA members are also **CALLERLAB** members. Many straight callers are GCA members. (CALLERLAB is an international association of square dance callers, in case you were going to ask.)

The GCA also runs a popular caller school prior to each convention. Everyone from first-time beginner to seasoned pro is eligible to take the school. **Note: early arrivals at Convention who are willing to dance for the calling students are very welcome and appreciated!**

To provide rest breaks (and walking time between rooms) for featured staff callers, most conventions provide short calling spots (usually around 10 minutes) for GCA members to “strut their stuff” and call a warm-up/cool-down tip. This is called a “GCA Tip”.

Many people make the mistake of assuming that GCA tips are called only by beginners. Not so! GCA tips are called by members with every level of experience you can imagine ... including some professional callers who simply may not have made it onto staff at a given Convention.

For more information on the GCA, see <http://www.gaycallers.org>



2005 GCA Caller School students.

Fun Badge Tours

Why are badges considered “fun”, and why is there a tour for them? No, it’s not the badges that are fun – it’s what you have to do to get them. A Fun Badge Tour is an optional event at each Convention, in which you are shuttled around the local area (by bus, on foot, by boat, or other local transit method) to dance at various unusual locations. You sign up for fun badge tours when you register for convention. Space is usually limited to a few hundred people.

Each dance location can fall into one or more categories: scenic, entertaining, historical, practical, and just-because-we-can. (See if you can figure out which category applies to each of the examples below.)

At the end of the fun badge tour, you receive a packet of special badge dangles, containing one dangle for each dance stop. These are typically referred to as “fun badges”, because you get them just for having fun. Hence the name, “Fun Badge Tour”.

Fun badge tour itineraries are carefully held secrets! Often, the drivers and bus guides don’t know where they’re going until the start of the tour. (Occasionally, the drivers or guides get lost – but that’s one of the occasional surprises.) You won’t be told where you’re going until you’ve started your journey – and even then, you’ll only find out what’s planned one stop at a time.

A sampling of Fun Badge Tour stops from previous conventions:

- At the historical site of a former brickworks in Toronto, ON.
- In front of the Public Library in Vancouver, BC.
- The entrance plaza of the Baltimore Zoo.
- A studio back lot in Hollywood where the movie “Wild, Wild West” was filmed.
- Around the computer-controlled fountain in front of Portland’s Rose Garden stadium. (And a wet dance for some in the middle.)
- In the desert garden of the Ethel M Chocolates factory in Las Vegas.
- In the middle of Castro Street in San Francisco.
- In front of a baseball stadium in Phoenix.

Fun Badge stops are (usually) scheduled in advance, with suitable permits obtained from the local authorities. There are rumors that every so often, a fun badge tour makes a “guerrilla” stop at a tourist venue that’s not expecting us. We’ve never been able to either substantiate or eliminate this rumor.

Unsurprisingly, several hundred gay square dancers have a tendency to attract onlookers. To minimize traffic problems, fun badge tours are usually held early on Sunday mornings. It’s not unusual to start at 7:30 AM. (During the 1999 Fun Badge Tour in Hollywood, Paul Waters, on-mic between calling tips, solemnly assured throngs of astonished tourists in front of the Chinese Theatre that “we do this EVERY Sunday morning”.)

Sometimes there’s a local police or law enforcement escort that follows the buses from site to site, clearing traffic ahead, and tantalizing the dancers in the buses. (Talk about Officer Friendly!)

What about Fun Badge food? Sometimes, the first or second stop on a fun badge tour doubles as a continental breakfast break. Sometimes you’re handed a boxed or paper-bagged breakfast as you get onto the bus. Water or juice is usually available on each bus.

Experienced fun badge tour attendees usually bring a bottle of water with them, just in case. Don’t forget to bring sunscreen. You may also want to bring a camera, since you never know where you’ll be dancing until you get there...and it could be some place pretty special!



2005 Fun Badge Tour: Dancing in front of the Rosicrucian Museum in San Jose, California.

What's a "Moonshine" tip?

A moonshine tip is a square dance tip danced in the nude.

(Yes, really.)

Both the caller(s) and dancers are nude.

(No, we're not kidding.)

Most conventions (and some fly-ins) have moonshine tips. These are occasionally referred to as "Moonlight Dances," "Moonlight Promenades," or "Midnight tips", *especially* when speaking in the presence of non-dancers (or hotel staff).

Moonshine tips are nude but *non*-sexual. They're slippery, encourage much laughter, and can be both fun and addictive.

There are some basic community rules about moonshine tips:

- No pointing and laughing (that's just plain rude).
- No cameras. (No kidding.)
- Once the doors are closed and sealed (to prevent outsiders from peeking in), *everyone* takes off *all* of their clothes.
- You can keep your socks on, go barefoot, or wear shoes. If you wear shoes, it's polite to use soft-soled footwear in case you step on someone else's feet by mistake.
- We'll say it again, to make sure it's understood: *everyone* takes off *all* of their clothes. Everyone. Period.
- Some years, everyone is required to dance. Some years, it's OK for people (who are also nude) to sit and watch. Ask the organizers of each year's tip what the current rule is.
- Especially for the first tip ... it's generally considered rude to just sit and watch from the sideline unless you have an injury that prevents you from dancing (or calling).
- No sexual touching or sexplay. That's what you have a room for. This is about dancing.
- The doors will only be reopened once everyone has clothing back on.
- Don't discuss moonshine tips with hotel or catering staff members; most hotels are strongly squeamish about nudity, and will cancel the tip if they find out about it.

Daniel Howell suggests finding a partner and squaring up immediately once your clothes are off, to reduce or eliminate feelings of awkwardness on everyone's part. If you're a bit shy or nervous, we also suggest making arrangements in advance to attend the moonshine tip with a friend.

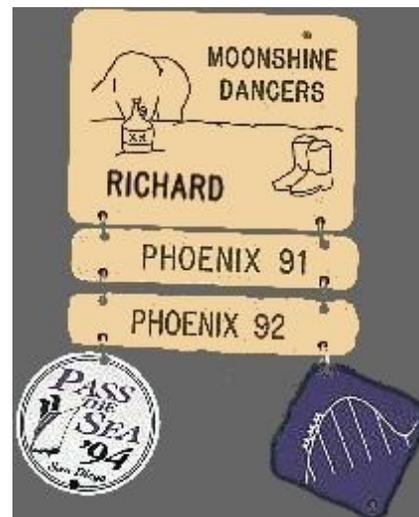
Andy Chong points out that light clothing is best for a moonshine tip. T-shirts, shorts, skirts, and wide-legged pants are types of clothes which are quickly and easily removed and replaced.

After your first moonshine tip, if you decide you'd like to do it again, someone usually has order forms for lightweight "bolo tie" name badges and event/year danglers. (I've also seen some moonshiners use water-based markers to draw "name badges" on each others' chests.)

Jim from Finest City Squares hosts a web page on moonshine tips, which is available at:

<http://www.phdtop.com/dancing/moonshine.html>

Warning: The above web page contains some (non-sexual) male nudity.



Weird stuff you're really going to want to know.

Like any community, lesbian/gay square dancing has its own traditions, institutions, and weird stuff that doesn't seem to make sense at first. Here's a FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) about "Weird Stuff at Convention".

What's a "club photo"? It's traditional for each club at Convention to have a professional photograph taken of all members in attendance. Generally, dancers are expected to wear their club's formal uniform, if possible. (Check with your club for specifics.) At registration, you'll find out what day and time your club's photo is being taken. **If you want to be in the picture, arrive at the photo location 15 minutes early, already dressed in your club uniform.** Never "assume" that photo sessions will run late ... unless you *really* want to miss being in the picture.

What are "badge magnets"? If you don't want to put holes in your clothing to wear your badge, pick up a badge magnet adapter at the Fial's booth. It's a pair of strong magnets, one of which slips over the pin on your badge. You can also have your badge modified, with a magnet glued directly to the badge.

Who are "the Fials"? Robert & JoAnne Fial owned and ran R&J Fial Enterprises for many years. R&J Fial Enterprises is a square dance badge making company. The Fials travel all over the USA, from event to event, making badges for both the gay and straight square dance communities. They make both club and individual badges, along with generic and custom badge dangles, hanger bars, and similar accoutrements.



In the Fials' 2005 Badge Store

In 2005, Robert & JoAnne's son Gary and his partner Kent Carter took over the reins of the business. Kent is now the main marketing contact person for the business:

R&J Fial International, Inc.
Attn: Kent Carter, V.P. Sales
5760 Camino Real
Riverside, CA 92509-5327
 Tel: (909) 727-0620
 Fax: (909) 727-0652
 email: mjfial@thegraphicworks.com



Baltimore, 2000: Swimming pool tip.

What are "specialty tips"? These are dance sessions aimed at a very specific subset of dancers. Some examples: Bears, Women, Leather (wear your best/sexiest/most pleasing leather items and accoutrements), Munchkins (shorter dancers), Redwoods (taller dancers), Drag Tip, Medallion Tip (for those who have attended at least 10 conventions), LJ'ers (people who blog on LiveJournal.com).

What are "workshops"? These are mini-classes, usually falling into a category such as:

- **"Intro"** workshops are used to introduce dancers at one level to calls and concepts from the next level up, to give them a taste of dancing at that higher level. This is a great way to see if you'd like to move on to the next level!
- **"Review"** workshops are often held early in the convention, for both new graduates and (rusty) experienced dancers. **During a review, don't be shy about asking the caller to review any call you're uncertain about,** because that's what the time is for!
- **"At level"** workshops are for people who already dance a given level, and who wish to improve their dancing skills at that level.

If a workshop isn't specifically designated as one of these levels, it's probably an "at level" session. It's better to ask and be certain than find yourself mistakenly taking an at-level workshop for a level you don't dance yet!

Workshops are a terrific way to round out your dance vocabulary at a given level. Callers are often more "playful" with the floor during a workshop than regular dancing, resulting in a more relaxed and fun atmosphere than a regular tip.

It is OK to approach a caller after a tip is over, to thank them if you had a good time, and/or ask questions about something they called. They'll appreciate the feedback, and are usually happy to give you pointers if you had a problem.

[continued on next page]

[Weird Stuff... continued from previous page.]

If you approach a caller at the very end of a dance session ... be aware that convention callers sometimes have tight schedules, and may need to change rooms quickly once a dance session is over. If this is the case, consider approaching the caller later. (Frank Yellin suggests that offering to carry their bag to the next room is an effective strategy for getting a couple of minutes of conversation with a caller.)

What's a "Golden Boot Award"? This is an award presented to an individual (or group of individuals) who have made outstanding contributions to LGBT square dancing over the past year. Each year's winner gets to select the following year's winner. The recipient is generally not told in advance that they've won the award, which makes for some emotional (but fun) reactions during the announcement. The Golden Boot is usually awarded during the Saturday night banquet.

Is that a square dancers' memorial quilt panel that I just saw in the corner? Yes. See the section entitled "Remembering People Who Aren't Here Anymore" for more information.

Waaah! That hot guy/gal in the corner can't remember my name! Gloria Krusemeyer suggests that you shouldn't expect people to remember your name, club, or location until they get to know you really well. Convention can be a bit overwhelming at times, and lots of people get "name-face association overload". Others just have bad memories. Don't take it personally, and wear your badge at all times in the hotel so people won't have to strain to remember your name.



To work around the problem of how to quickly shift the main ballroom from dancing to dining to dancing again, 2005's meals were served in an air-conditioned tent in the hotel parking lot.

Honky Tonk Queens

Each year, the LGBT square dance community (*not, it should be noted, as an official activity of the IAGSDC®*) holds a contest at Convention to pick a “Honky Tonk Queen.”

Yes, it’s a drag contest. Although using the terms “drag” and “Honky Tonk Queen” in the same sentence might be stretching the truth just a little.

You will frequently see “Honky Tonk Queen” abbreviated in printed convention materials as “HTQ”.

Honky Tonk Queen contests usually start late on Saturday night.

Actually, they usually start late no matter what night they’re held, due to DST (Drag Standard Time).

The requirements for entry and participation vary from year to year, and are set up by the reigning Honky Tonk Queen.



A contestant kicks it at the 2005 Honky Tonk Queen Contest.

Nothing says that contest requirements or format have to be fair, tasteful, or consistent. (And they usually aren’t.)

The “winner” of the HTQ Contest at Convention “reigns” over lesbian and gay square dancing until the next Convention. (Conventions aren’t always held twelve months apart.)

A spectacularly hideous crown made from a spray-painted, Christmas-tree-lighted, western boot is bestowed upon the lucky winner, who is expected to swan and vogue around the hotel for hours. (Kids, I couldn’t make this stuff up if I *tried*.)

Some HTQs don’t stop swanning and voguing for a full year...or even after they give up their crown.

Anyone in GLBT square dancing may be a HTQ contestant. Some HTQ contestants are men. Some are women. Some just plain aren't sure (and neither is the audience).

Many contestants bring escorts. Many audience members bring restraining orders.

The HTQ Contest is, at best, an anarchistic event, with a suitable lack of selection criteria:

- There are years where judges selected an **escort** as the new HTQ instead of a contestant.
- There are years where **emcees** and/or other (comparatively) **innocent bystanders** were elected HTQ.
- Instead of selecting a single person, there are years when **groups of people** were elected HTQ.
- In one (truly memorable) year, **a hunky "volunteer" was stripped down to skivvies, spray-painted gold, and dragooned into service** as a live version of the Academy Awards statuette.

That last bullet point has nothing whatsoever to do with selection criteria – we just threw it in 'cause it was fun to remember...and every so often, some people still refer to him as "Oscar", which makes him wince.

The only consistent rule about HTQ contests seems to be that a new HTQ may not be selected from the same club as the previous year's HTQ.

For example, contestants from the same club could win in 1999 and 2001, but not in 1999 and 2000.

Given the long memories (and grudges) associated with such events, it usually takes several years for a club to "recapture" the Crown.

At IAGSDC® events, you may hear people crying "Old Queen! Old Queen!" at random times. This signifies that a Former HTQ has just entered the room. (Occasionally, people will cry "New Queen!" when the current HTQ walks in, just because they can.) It is not necessarily in poor taste to join in the chorus, especially if you happen to know the Old Queen personally.

It should be noted that "Good Taste," "Talent," "Beauty," and "Honky Tonk Queen" don't necessarily belong in the same sentence.



2005 Honky Tonk Queen: The Fabulous Cow Patty

What's a "Bathing Beauty"?

Depending upon who you ask, the Bathing Beauties are either an offshoot of or a related activity to the Honky Tonk Queen.

Unlike the HTQ Contest, anyone (generally, but not necessarily, male) can be a Bathing Beauty.

Becoming a Bathing Beauty consists of dressing up in a women's swimsuit – the louder and tackier, the better – bathing cap, sunglasses, flip-flops, and parading throughout the Convention at random times.

This could include anything from the Saturday night banquet to the hotel swimming pool to a random dance floor.

Bathing Beauties have been known to show up on Fun Badge Tours, at late-night hotel piano bars, and occasionally on "America's Most Wanted."

Occasionally they walk up to callers (Mike DeSisto is a favorite target) and start distracting them in the middle of a tip.



Two Faaaabulous Bathing Beauties from Chi-Town. Larry Burke (in gold and orange) passed away February 8th, 2005, but his beauty lives on here. Larry & Rob Sierzega (in blue) were together for 16 years, and started dancing in 1993.



Medallions.

What's a "medallion"? The IAGSDC® Medallion Project was created by Freeman Stamper to provide dancers with a straightforward, attainable goal to provide a sense of achievement in square dancing.

When you've attended 10 IAGSDC® Conventions (total, not consecutively), you are awarded a "Ten Year Medallion" in recognition of your support of and commitment to GLBT square dancing.

Similarly, when you've attended 20 conventions, you're awarded a "Twenty Year Medallion".

Each time you go to Convention, ask where the Medallion Project table is. At the Medallion Project table, you'll find a book with all of the attendee names. Find your name, and verify that the information about you is correct. (Especially your contact information!) Make any needed changes using an ink pen. Do this *every year* that you attend.

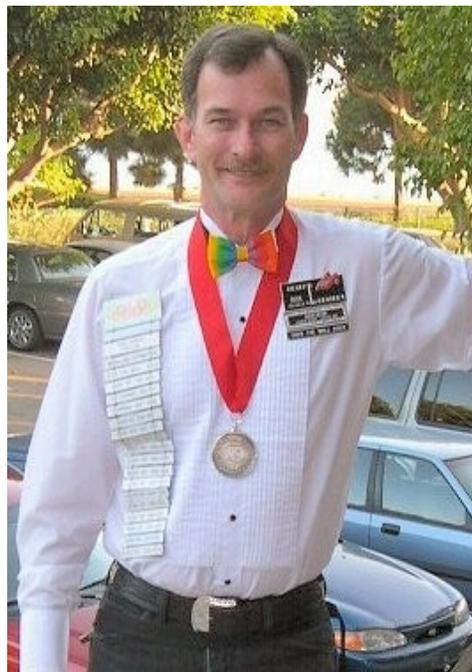
When you've attended ten conventions, you'll be notified by "Stepmother Medallion" - a position currently occupied by Rick Hawes - that you are eligible to receive your own medallion. (Hence the importance of updating your contact information.)

Medallions are awarded publicly at Convention, during opening ceremonies (20 Year Medallions) and following the Saturday night banquet (10 Year Medallions). There is usually a special dance tip for all medallion holders after the banquet.

According to Stepmother Medallion ... prior to the 2007 Convention, a total of 553 Ten Year and 49 Twenty Year Medallions have been handed out so far.



Anne Uebelacker modeling her medallion at Baltimore in 2000.



Rick Hawes, "Stepmother Medallion".

(This is a rare picture; Rick doesn't normally smile.)

Who is the "Square Dance Guru"?

Many new dancers often hear experienced dancers refer to **The Square Dance Guru** in conversation, especially when it involves an argument over how a call should be danced or called.

The Square Dance Guru is the advice-columnist persona of **Stewart Kramer**, who was originally published in the newsletter of PACE Nor-Cal, with occasional appearances later on internet mailing lists. *Unsure? Confused? Square-broken? Ask the Square Dance Guru!*

Stewart has been square dancing since 1983. In the 1990's, he wrote a column called "My Turn Now", which was published in *The Prompter*, a local square dance magazine based in San Jose, CA.

Currently, the Guru mostly chimes in on the challenge-sd mailing list, with occasional contributions to the sd-callers list.

Both of these mailing lists are maintained by [Rich Reel](http://www.all8.com/rich.htm). Subscribe by contacting Rich via <http://www.all8.com/rich.htm>

When contacted regarding the contents of this chapter, Stewart said: *Remember, it's good luck to have the Square Dance Guru rub your tummy. ("If it brings you good luck, or if you get lucky, tell all your friends, especially if they're cute.")*



Stewart Kramer, The Square Dance Guru

Who is “Frank” and why do people keep telling him to shut up?

“Frank” is “Frank Yellin”, a dancer from the San Francisco Bay Area. Rather than trying to explain how this sound effect came about, it seemed easiest to let Frank tell you about this Rich IAGSDC Tradition himself. Besides, as you’ll soon read, it’s all his own fault, anyway.

“Shut up, Frank” is one of those rare sound effects that can be used for several different, unrelated calls. While most commonly heard after any *Interlocked Scoot And ...* [C1 and up] call, it can also be used for *Chain Reaction* [A2] and for the call *Straight Fire* [C4].

Historically, this sound effect was first used in *Chain Reaction*. Dancers are usually taught that this is a four-part call. At some dance, I just blurted the phrase *Hinge, Fold, Pass, Peel** when the caller called *Chain Reaction*. I don’t know why.

The reaction was astounding. The new A2 dancers were thankful that I had reminded them of the definition, before realizing with horror that I was reciting the definition for the wrong four-part call.

Eventually, I would say this mantra most times that *Chain Reaction* was called. Any time that Carla Turpin was in the square, she would reply: “Shut up, Frank.” ... but in a clearly fun and teasing tone.

A few years later at a tape group, we were listening to Steve Kopman call C3. Apparently this tip was his “interlocked” tip, because almost every other call was *Interlocked* this, *Interlocked* that. On this particular tape, Steve always pronounced the word as “IIINNN-terlocked,” with the first syllable extra, extra long. Paul Asente picked up on this, and was soon repeating “IIINNN-terlocked” every time Steve called it.

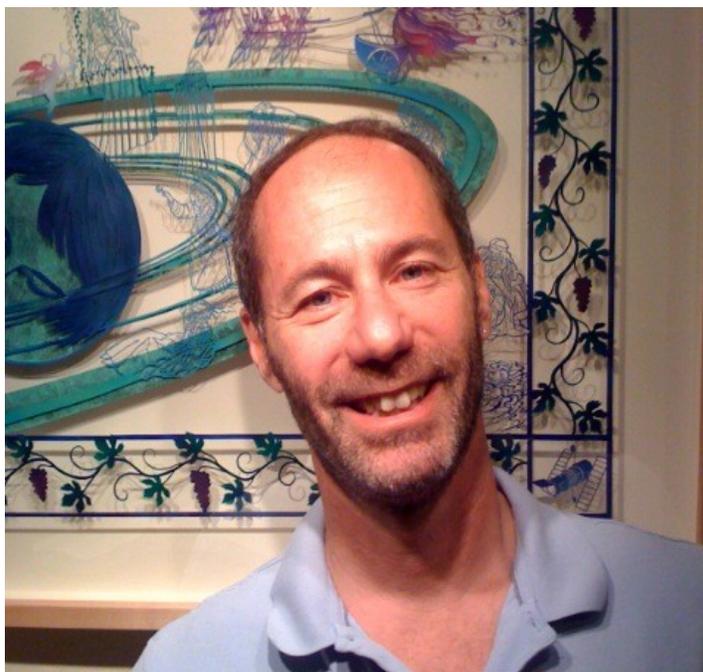
Well, I flattered Paul by imitating his sound effect in my C4 tape group. Any time any caller used an *Interlocked* call, I would respond “IIINNN-terlocked...” Of course if Carla were there, she would respond “Shut up, Frank.”

Making things even more difficult, any time the [C4] call *Straight Fire* came up, I’d I’d respond “I can’t do that call.”

Some dancers apparently believed that I honestly didn’t know the call, rather than that I was making fun of the name of the call. And when Carla was there...”Shut up, Frank.”

Carla goes to many more out-of-town dances than I do, and for these calls, she continued to say “Shut up, Frank” even though I was nowhere to be found.

Its use for *Chain Reaction* has mostly died, except as a private joke between Carla and me. But it continues to thrive for the other calls. And sometimes people just say it at random. But, hey – it’s made me part of LGBT square dance history!



Frank Yellin

*Editor’s Note: Which happens to be the sound effect and mini-definition of “Linear Cycle”. The [Square Dance Guru](http://www.stanford.edu/~zbear/guru.html#linear-sigh) points out that Linear Cycle is very explicitly defined as a 3-part call, and always has been. “Fold” and “Pass” together are considered Part 2. See <http://www.stanford.edu/~zbear/guru.html#linear-sigh> for the gory details.

Remembering people who aren't here anymore.

There are Convention traditions intended to comfort those who have lost square dancing friends and family. The first is a "Memorial Quilt", which is transported from Convention to Convention. The second is a "Memorial Tip" in which people are encouraged to use square dancing to remember loved ones.

Memorial Quilt Panels: The IAGSDC® maintains a set of memorial quilt panels, which are displayed at every Convention. This provides both a sense of community history, and a means for our community to honor family and friends who are no longer with us.

Freeman Stamper first envisioned the Memorial Panels in 1994, and the first panel appeared that year at the "Stars & Squares Forever" IAGSDC® convention, held in Washington, DC. Two more panels joined the first, along with special display frames, over the following couple of years. Gene Boemer painted the panels, and George Fox designed and constructed the frames.

As you pass by the quilt, you may see groups of people from different clubs holding memorial services. During these services, they pin onto the quilt the name badges of those members who have died over the past year. (If a dancer's name badge isn't available, sometimes a new badge will be crafted just to pin onto the quilt.)

If you hear someone referring to a "quilt" or "pinning" ceremony at Convention, this is probably what they're talking about.

In 2001, thanks to the efforts of Brian Smith and John McKinstry, a database was created of every name on all three panels. Since then, a notebook is provided near the quilt, which contains a list of all of the names on the panels.

If you pin a badge to the quilt, please write down that person's information in the Quilt Database Notebook. The database book is our community's "backup copy" in case anything happens to any of the IAGSDC® quilt panels.



The IAGSDC Memorial Panels at the 2006 Convention.

Sometimes, additional memorials or exhibits will be placed adjacent to the Memorial Panels to commemorate the recent passing of specific dancers.



Cameron Robb's memorial at the 2006 Convention. He contributed many of the suggestions in the first half-dozen versions of the Guide.

Memorial Tips: Usually scheduled during the final dance session of each Convention. Some years these appear on the schedule as "Final Tip". (Occasionally the Memorial Tip is danced during Opening Ceremonies.) This is a special tip called to allow us to mourn those whom our community has lost in the past year.

The Memorial Tip is generally danced at Mainstream level, and is usually one or two singing calls with music appropriate to the occasion.

It is absolutely OK for dancers, callers, and/or onlookers to weep or cry during and/or after Memorial Tips, and when visiting the Memorial Quilt Panels.

Note: Convention committees may schedule the Memorial Tip to take place at the beginning of the weekend, during opening ceremonies or just after the Grand March. It's a little different every year.

What are “The Petersen Fund” and “All Join Hands”?

The **Petersen Fund** of the IAGSDC was established in 1996 with funds from the estate of Joe Petersen of Denver. Joe was a member of the Rocky Mountain Rainbeaus in Denver, and was instrumental in creating and coordinating the Rainbeau’s “drag performance contingent,” the Rocky Mountain Rainbelles.

In his will, Joe created the Rainbow Trust to provide income for this fund. At the fund's creation, the Executive Board voted to name the fund in Joe's honor. The purpose of this fund was to:

- Promote club growth and development through education, recruitment, and promotion.
- Assist in the establishment of new clubs.
- Promote and advance Gay & Lesbian square dancing and by doing so, advancing the whole activity of square dancing.
- Inform non-dancers of the activity and its benefits.
- Preserve our Gay and Lesbian square dancing heritage as part of the long history of folk dance.

More information on the Petersen Fund can be found at:

http://www.iagsdc.org/petersen_main.html

In 2003, it was announced that the Petersen Fund assets were dwindling, and the Fund would probably run out soon.

To solve this problem, a new charitable institution was created, called the “All Join Hands Foundation,” whose sole purpose is to preserve and promote LGBT square dancing.

All Join Hands is a 501(C)(3) charitable foundation, which means **donations to AJH are tax deductible.**

For more information on the All Join Hands Foundation, or to make a donation, please refer to their website at:

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



Is it over already?

The last few tips of a Convention are usually called a “Trail Out” dance. (Because we’re all “hitting the trail” to head out.) Tips at a Trail Out dance are usually danced at Mainstream level, and it seems to have been a tradition to have each of the staff callers take a turn at calling a dance sequence to the floor.

During the Trail Out dance, there often is a special ceremony, in which **a set of hideously ugly, beat-up suitcases is passed from the current convention committee to the next year’s committee**. These suitcases are used to tote convention banners and other materials.

In some years, this has been a formal hand-off. Other years have seen lighthearted ceremonies such as magic acts or specially choreographed “pass the suitcase” tips.

Each year’s committee puts its own special spin on transferring these much-derided, much-maligned, but widely-recognized symbols of future Conventions to the next year’s committee.

For example ... in 2006, Paul Waters presented a new symbolic gift to be passed from committee to committee: a toy “Tinky Winky” Teletubby to replace the toy originally given to Paul (and subsequently lost) at the 1999 Convention by [Morris Kight](#), a gay rights pioneer.

All too soon, however ... the last tip has been called, and it’s time to pack up and go home.



Picking up and packing up the floor from the 2005 Convention.

Finding people after convention.

What if you meet someone at convention who you want to contact again, but you lose his or her contact information? What if you see someone at convention with whom you'd like to become acquainted?

Use the Bradley Bell directory and the IAGSDC® Website!

What's a "Bradley Bell"? The Bradley Bell is a directory of IAGSDC® square dancers, which is assembled and maintained by volunteers. The Bradley Bell is an affiliate organization of the IAGSDC®. Participation in the directory is voluntary.

The directory – which began annual publishing with its Inaugural Edition in 1986 - contains listings of dancers by location, club, and first name. Recent editions have also included a cross referenced list of email address. There are both print and electronic versions of the Bradley Bell. The print edition is usually published around the end of August.

At Convention each year, you can subscribe to the Bradley Bell directory, which is usually published shortly after each Convention.

As of this writing, it costs \$7.00/year to subscribe, which includes both publishing your information in the directory, and receiving a copy of the printed directory.

The 2006 Convention Committee elected to provide free copies of the Bradley Bell to all attendees. This was a decision made by that year's committee, and is not typical of most Conventions. Check with the Bradley Bell folks when you attend Convention to discover the current policy and pricing.

The Bradley Bell table is usually in the vendor area at Convention (and often shares a table with the Medallion Project).

The original "mother" of the Bradley Bell is Freeman Stamper. The current (non-wicked) "stepmother" of the Bradley Bell is Gordon Macaw, from Desert Valley Squares in Phoenix.

The online version of the Bradley Bell is currently free, and does not contain the same information as the printed version of the directory. As with the print edition, participation in the online edition is voluntary.

Freeman Stamper has this to say about the origins of the Bradley Bell: "Bradley Bell is named after the gay square dance Bradley Family of friends who took their inspiration from the Bradley family of the old TV show "Petticoat Junction." Square dance crinolines and petticoats are natural synonyms. Bradley National Holiday has been declared by the square dance Bradley Family to be September 24, 1963 - the date Petticoat Junction first aired. We frequently just call ourselves (as to others) The Bradleys. We are not, however, the "Bradley Belles". The "Belles" are from Denver, are not Bradleys, never will be, and that's all there is to be said."

Find the Bradley Bell online at <http://www.bradleybell.org> or email them at stepmother@bradleybell.org

Bradley Bell

What's the IAGSDC® Website? The official website of the IAGSDC® has free registration of dancer profiles ... and in future years, having a registration online will allow online registration for conventions and fly-ins. Very handy, very neat, and you'll only have to enter your information once.

Find the official IAGSDC® Website at <http://www.iagsdc.org>

How do I find out about upcoming Conventions and local fly-ins?

The IAGSDC® maintains a website, located at:

<http://www.iagsdc.org>

This website contains many helpful pieces of information, including links to the next few conventions, the IAGSDC® Event Calendar (a listing of announced fly-ins and related events), and a complete listing of IAGSDC® clubs worldwide.



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Red Rocks & Purple Mountains

Annual IAGSDC Convention
May 25 - 28, 2007
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Welcome to the world of Gay and Lesbian Square Dance!

The IAGSDC supports gay and lesbian Modern Western Square Dance (MWSD) clubs worldwide, including the United States, Canada and Japan. Our organization was formed by and for lesbians and gay men and for their friends. Gay square dancing is high energy dancing. Many gay and lesbian dancers can dance both the man's and woman's parts - you do not have to dance just one part.

Gay and lesbian clubs require no special dress code, and do not require you to bring a partner. For a close-up look at the fun of MWSD, click any of the images on the right!

Membership in IAGSDC clubs is open to all square dancers, regardless of age, race, gender, religion, ethnic background, or sexual orientation. All IAGSDC clubs dance the Callerlab specified levels of MWSD.

Creating a Profile

Some sections of the site require you to log in to view them. To access these areas, you will be required to create a personal profile. Creating your profile is free. Click on the **My Profile** link above to get started. Member profiles can be searched from the Member tab, but you can choose how much (or how little) of your information can be seen by others.

The resources section, club listings and the events calendar can be accessed without a profile.

I'm going to another city for vacation; is there a square dance club there?

For many years, an unofficial publication called the "Square Dance Travel Guide" was available to help dancers locate IAGSDC and associate clubs when traveling to other cities. Originally conceived by Freeman Stamper in 1984, the Square Dance Travel Guide was maintained for many years by Paul Asente. The Guide, which was updated on an ongoing basis, contained information on clubs all over the world that welcome dancers from IAGSDC® clubs. The guide was formerly available online at: <http://www.asente.com/travelguide/>

Since the revamping of the IAGSDC website in 2005, the Square Dance Travel Guide has been decommissioned, and the IAGSDC's "Clubs" page now provides that function at <http://www.iagsdc.org/main/clubs/page/listclubs.php/> (Or just go to the main IAGSDC page, and select "Clubs" from the green toolbar, as shown below.)

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GAY SQUARE DANCE CLUBS®
A Lesbian and Gay Organization

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Clubs

Click on a blue column heading to sort that column. Click on a club name to go to the club's website. For U.S. clubs, Locale is the state; for other countries, Locale is the state, county or region.

Membership Symbols: ●=Full, ●=Associate, ●=Affiliate, ●=Unaffiliated.

Country	Locale	City	Club	Members	Fast Facts	Email
● Canada	BC	Vancouver	Squares Across The Border	Members	Fast Facts	Email
● Canada	Ontario	Ottawa	Ottawa Date Squares	Members	Fast Facts	Email
● Canada	Ontario	Toronto	Triangle Squares	Members	Fast Facts	Email
● Denmark	Taastrup	Copenhagen	Mermaid City Squares	Members	Fast Facts	Email
● Japan	Shinjuku-ku	Tokyo	Edo 8s	Members	Fast Facts	Email
● USA			Anywhere Squares	Members	Fast Facts	Email
● USA	AZ	Phoenix	Bradley Bell	Members	Fast Facts	Email
● USA	AZ	Phoenix	Desert Valley Squares	Members	Fast Facts	Email
● USA	AZ	Tucson	T Squares	Members	Fast Facts	Email
● USA	CA	Long Beach	Shoreline Squares	Members	Fast Facts	Email
● USA	CA	Los Olivos	Mission Squares	Members	Fast Facts	Email
● USA	CA	Mountain View	El Camino Reelers	Members	Fast Facts	Email
● USA	CA	Oakland	Oaktown 8's	Members	Fast Facts	Email
● USA	CA	Palm Springs	Boots In Squares	Members	Fast Facts	Email
● USA	CA	Riverside	Empire Squares	Members	Fast Facts	Email
● USA	CA	Sacramento	Capital City Squares	Members	Fast Facts	Email
● USA	CA	Sacramento	Prime 8s	Members	Fast Facts	Email
● USA	CA	San Diego	Finest City Squares	Members	Fast Facts	Email
● USA	CA	San Diego	Ocean Squares	Members	Fast Facts	Email
● USA	CA	San Francisco	Foggy City Dancers	Members	Fast Facts	Email
● USA	CA	San Francisco	Midnight Squares	Members	Fast Facts	Email
● USA	CA	San Francisco	Western Star Dancers	Members	Fast Facts	Email
● USA	CA	San Luis Obispo	Cuesta Squares	Members	Fast Facts	Email

How do I make electronic contact with other IAGSDC® dancers?

There is an electronic mailing list called “Igcwsd”, which stands for “Lesbian/Gay Country Western & Square Dancing”. The list is open to anyone who wishes to join. (Membership on the list is not an indication of sexual preference.)

The Igcwsd mailing list is hosted by Rich Reel at all8.com. Because of problems with spam, subscription information is no longer provided online or here in the Guide.

Instead, to subscribe, please contact Rich Reel by going to the following page. He'll send subscription instructions:

<http://www.all8.com/rich.htm>

The Igcwsd list exists primarily to communicate among IAGSDC® clubs and interested others, but it is not sponsored by the IAGSDC®. Anything sent to the list's address will be distributed immediately. There is no moderator controlling or approving the content of posts.

The mailing list server will allow you to remove yourself for vacations and add yourself back as you wish. Administrative mail for Igcwsd should go to Rich Reel, the list owner.



Los Angeles, 1999: "Barbie" (caller Deborah Carroll-Jones) sings in the HTQ Contest. This is funnier when you realize that Deborah really was a Rose Bowl Queen competitor many years ago.

Was this document helpful?

Please send comments and suggestions for the next revision, to: allanhurst@gmail.com

About the Author.

Born in Chicago in 1960, Allan Hurst lives in Sunnyvale, California, dancing and calling all over the San Francisco Bay Area. He ostensibly dances C2, and calls Basic through C1. He is a member of both the GCA and CALLERLAB.

Allan is a member of Midnight Squares (of which is he one of the administrators), El Camino Reelers, Foggy City Dancers, Squares Across the Border, Chi-Town Squares, and Salt Lake City's Temple Squares. In his copious spare time, he edits a quarterly, entitled *The Call Sheet: Professional Journal of the Gay Callers Association*, and he updates *The Guide to IAGSDC Convention* each year.

His frequent regular attendance at multiple fly-ins have earned him the self-imposed title of "Diva Of The West Coast Fly-In Circuit [Which Has Been Arbitrarily Redefined to Include Chicago]."

Professionally, Allan is a partner in a technology services company located in Fremont, California, and runs a technical user group in Oakland, California. If the Silicon Valley location didn't tip you off ... he's a big old computer network geek.

In 2003, in Vancouver, British Columbia, Allan became legally married to Randy Hensley (also of the El Camino Reelers) at a weekend fly-in hosted by Squares Across The Border. The full story of their wedding (with pictures) can be found at <http://www.danceinfo.org/articles/wedding.html> Their marriage is valid in Canada, Spain, England, and any IKEA.

Allan has written many square dance articles, which are available online & free of charge at <http://www.danceinfo.org>



<http://www.danceinfo.org> ARTICLES page

<http://www.danceinfo.org> MAIN page.