Mary Ann Ryan-Erdek, *Grand Square* Editor (retired!)

Mary Ann Ryan-Erdek was heavily into all things disco in the 1970s when a friend suggested square dancing clear out of the blue.

"I was essentially dragged kicking and screaming by a co-worker to a Rutgers Promenaders hi-lo event in 1978," remembers the former editor of *Grand Square*. "At the time I was in a heavy disco phase and just did not see anyone in the state of New Jersey doing anything even slightly country in nature."

Once ushered into the world of square dancing, however, Mary Ann became a dedicated dancer.

"One word – exercise!" she says. "While by no means am I a poster child for physical fitness, I do enjoy regular cardio workouts, and this is as good as it gets in terms of that."

She adds, citing her Jersey roots, "I still enjoy disco to this day, though!"

In addition to dancing, Mary Ann enjoys walking, and frequently participates in walkathons for health-related causes.

Born and raised in the Union/Middlesex/Somerset county areas of the Garden State, Mary Ann has worked in office administration for most of her career. She recently began two part-time positions, one as a report specialist and the other as a descriptive analysis panelist.

"A fancy name for a taste tester," she says.

Mary Ann has been married since 1979 to John, and they have one child, Theresa. All three dance Mainstream through Challenge. They are members of Rutgers Promenaders and have enjoyed family dance vacations at Cherry Ridge, Peel the Pumpkin, Independence Squares, National Conventions, and other locations.

In 2011, Mary Ann volunteered her services to the *Grand Square* team as a writer/assistant/proofreader, and was instead offered the position of editor. After three years at the helm, Mary Ann recently decided to return to a more behind-the-scenes role at the publication.

"My name will no longer be showing up on the masthead as the 'head cheese,'" she says. "But I will continue on in support of this fine publication."

Robin Friedman, Kittatinny Rangers