

Where in the World Have Our Dancers Been? Memorable Dance Moments Submitted by *Grand Square Readers*

(Submissions included chronologically – most recent at the top)

61.2 (September 2019)

Kaleidoscope Tip: John and I recently had the opportunity to dance in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, while visiting our daughter and her family. Delavan and Shirley Whitenight, presidents of Friendship Squares and the Central Pennsylvania Square and Round Dance Association, graciously welcomed us to their club. It was wonderful to see their granddaughters enjoying an evening out dancing with their parents and grandparents.

Delavan and Shirley then invited us to join them at a special dance hosted by Country Twirlers with Buddy Weaver from California, who called unique patterns and singers along with a kaleidoscope tip – a first for us. What a blast! (Photo: Whitenight family and Buddy Weaver with Lacey and John)



Eight squares became two kaleidoscope squares. Buddy merged four squares, with all number one couples lined up behind one another, radiating out from the first and continuing the sequence with couples two through four. He asked all number one and three couples to California twirl, and then moved all 16 couples in and around a kaleidoscope rotation, returning home without a hitch or breakdown.

You can see John and me on YouTube dancing across the screen a time or two during this fabulous tip: https://youtu.be/mFJU3WZw_sw.
Lacey Hill (B&B, Circle Eights, CTS, Motiv8ors, RRT, WW/H&C)

National Square Dance Convention: Mark and I were among the 56 registered New Jersey dancers at the 2019 convention in Atlanta, Georgia, joining with about 4,000 other people to enjoy four fabulous days. As always, the callers and cuers were outstanding. The convention center and adjoining hotel provided easy walking among the many halls offering various types and levels of dancing. Mark especially enjoyed the fast squares, I liked the round dancing, and we both had fun in tips with teenagers. For me, one exciting aspect of being in Georgia was reconnecting with members of three clubs where I had danced while teaching English to refugees at Jubilee Partners in 2013, including a 96-year-young round dance cuer.

We also took the opportunity for some non-dance activities: afternoon swims, a very moving afternoon at Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park, a hike up Stone Mountain and viewing the phenomenal carvings on its face, and a hike on the East Palisades Trail along the Chattahoochee River.

Lise Greene (Reelers, Kittatinny Rangers)

Alaska Travel Escapades: So dancers, do you like to travel? How about to faraway places with friends? In case you didn't know, there are many square dance cruises that are lots of fun. I just came back from my third one, in the company of a New Jersey square: Pat and Tom Duemig, Charyl Greenberg, Lacey Hill, and Debbie and Jose Obarrio (see Pat's photo below). Debbie's mother, Rosemarie, and her friend Suzanne also joined us.

We flew to Vancouver and spent a few days in that lovely city. Then we boarded the *Norwegian Jewel* for a seven-day cruise, followed by a five-day inland tour. The grand finale was the Alaska State Square and Round Dance Festival in Fairbanks, hosted by Santa's Swingers, the northernmost domestic dance club. Although the festival was small, the people were very gracious and hospitable. We enjoyed the fantastic calling team of Jerry Story, Bob Asp, Curt Braffet, and Ted Kennedy at the festival as well as on our cruise.



We learned about glaciers, mushing dogs at Trail Breaker Kennels (one of my favorite stops), Alaska history (great tour guides), gold mining, Alaska pipeline, mountains, and the indomitable spirit of people living in the state. We stayed at beautiful places, ate delicious meals, and had perfect weather with record warm temperatures. There was lots of daylight; it didn't get dark until 11:30 at night, which contributes greatly to the luxuriant flowers found abundantly throughout Alaska.



If you like to travel *and* dance, keep your eyes open for future opportunities. Next year, we'll be off on a Hawaiian cruise.
Carol Casale (Belles & Beaux, Hunterdon Flutterwheels, Reelers)

Dancing Out West: In June, we traveled to Colorado to sightsee and visit family. We went to Red Rocks Park, took in a ballgame at Coors Field in Denver, explored the Rocky Mountain National Park area, and saw the pretty cities of Loveland and Boulder. We also enjoyed square dancing with the Rollin' Wheels in Denver to Nebraska caller Lanny Weakland (who also cued the round dancing).

Then we went to New Mexico. After visiting Taos and Santa Fe, we danced at the beautiful Albuquerque Square Dance Center with the ABQ Sun Dancers to caller Jerry Gilbreath. Both clubs were very friendly and inviting. We look forward to dancing in other states during future travels.



Tony Milito and Maureen Moynihan (Rutgers Promenaders, Y Squares)

61.1 (May 2019)

Active Adults: While vacationing in Hilton Head, South Carolina, we attended a dance in Sun City, a large “active adult” retirement community (about 16,000 residents and still building). After attuning our ears to the caller’s southern drawl and learning their variation on computer squares, we enjoyed dancing and talking with the diverse people. Most of them had retired from other places, including many from the northeast. It was interesting to hear their various views of life in the community. After the dance, most hopped into their golf carts to head home.

Irene and Hal Stoller (Reelers)



Brownies: Southern hospitality was on display over Martin Luther King weekend, when Kian Kho and I attended Promenade Down Peachtree: Flip Back to the '60s. The fly-in was hosted by Hotlanta Squares, the gay club in Atlanta, Georgia. Tie-dye, love beads, and bell bottoms ... it was like an acid flashback. My favorite part, however, was Friday night’s dessert table, where club members provided no fewer than eight types of brownies. EIGHT!

Warren Livesley (Times Squares)

Summer Magic: After years of seeing ads for the Summer Magic weekend in Cornwall, Canada, we finally experienced the magic for ourselves last August – great square dance callers, round dancing, delicious meals, and a beautiful location right on the St. Lawrence River. We enjoyed dancing with several NNJSDA friends, including Carol and Anthony Casale. Following the final yellow rocks, we drove north to explore Québec city and the surrounding mountains, while the Casales headed off to vacation in another part of Canada. None of us knew that it was the last time we would ever dance with Anthony. I am so grateful for square dance friendships ... and precious memories.

Lise Greene (Reelers, Kittatinny Rangers)



California Dreamin’: I visited my son and his wife in California for a month from December to January. We also went to Las Vegas over the Christmas holiday to visit my grandchildren. Carol Casale joined me in California from January 16-26 for touring and dancing. We enjoyed the wonderful southern California weather and had the pleasure of dancing with the Valley Trailers in Sherman Oaks.

Valley Trailers alternates Plus and Mainstream with rounds and one Advanced tip. It’s a very friendly club; their president, Don, welcomed us with open arms and we received Rover badges for dancing more than 2,000 miles from home. We enjoyed the calling of Lanny Weakland from Omaha, Nebraska.

Arlene Remington (Belles & Beaux, Western Wheelers/Hix & Chix)

60.2 (September 2018)

Pass the Ocean, Hon! Chesapeake Squares in Baltimore includes gay, straight, coupled, and single members who dance at various levels. Each spring, the club sponsors a “fly-in” weekend with more than 100 dancers. There are always three challenging callers. This year, two Chicago callers, Sandie Bryant and Michael

Maltenfort, joined Dayle Hodge, the club caller, in offering concurrent Mainstream, Plus, Advanced, and Challenge sessions. The event has been held at the Atlantic Sands Hotel on the Rehoboth Beach boardwalk for several years. Dancing, lodging, and fun in the sun are all in one place.



There are workshops on Saturday morning; Plus hot hash, DBD, and other offerings in the afternoon; and a banner dance at night with alternating programs. Participants have plenty of opportunities to enjoy or enhance their dancing and reconnect with friends they've made over the years.

I have attended Pass the Ocean, Hon! for seven years. I always leave energized and looking forward to the next year's event. Here are some of the participants in 2018: callers Dayle Hodge, Michael Maltenfort, Sandie Bryant; dancers Alice De Lancey, Maureen Moynihan, Tony Milito, Betsy Gotta, Roy Gotta. We all enjoyed great dancing and weather at this annual event. *Alice De Lancey (Cross Trail Squ*

Horsing Around in Texas: When I spent time at my sister's horse ranch in Texas in the spring, I went square dancing on eight different nights at three clubs (Wheel-N-Deals in San Marcos, FunDancers in Schertz, and NB Plus in New Braunfels) and the Austin Square and Round Dance Association spring dance. I also volunteered to angel with two of the clubs that held classes prior to their dances. I was welcomed with open arms and recognized the last night as "Jersey Bob" with a round of applause! It's surprising what doors a club badge will open. I met great people and had a wonderful time. The callers were terrific, and I even learned a new call, Grand Teacup Chain! I look forward to dancing again with Mike Sikorsky when he calls in New Jersey this fall. So when you travel, pack your club badge – it's small, but opens big doors.

Bob Turner (Reelers, Cross Trail Squares)



Friendly Faces: In May, Rich and I attended the Virginia Square and Round Dance Convention in Hampton. Upon arriving, we looked for familiar faces and finally found Len and Connie Houle, the general chairs of the 2015 National Convention in Springfield, Massachusetts. Although they were the only ones we knew, everyone we danced with was friendly. We both had a wonderful time and recommend this weekend to all. Next year's convention is in Virginia Beach.

Georgi Flandera (Western Wheelers/Hix & Chix)

Wild West Adventures: Hiking in Mt. Rainier and Olympic National Parks in Washington State for six days was just a warm-up before my husband, Louis, and I attended the IAGSDC convention in Seattle. Finally, we were able to put on the miles on level ground! This gay organization-sponsored event welcomes everyone, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

The convention, titled Circle Back to Seattle, drew 900 dancers from all over the world with dancing from Mainstream through Challenge 4 and great national callers. For us, one of the highlights was the Honky Tonk Queen Contest. The unabashed revelry, enthusiasm, and laughter were contagious. The photo shows Motiv8ors members George Voorhis (left) and Warren Livesley (right).

Next year's convention, titled Belles Run, is in Philadelphia from July 4-7. With the event in our own backyard, you can't go wrong!

Jan Thompson (Motiv8ors)



Two Annual Dance Festivals: Our summer adventures included two square dance weekends. From June 15-17, we danced at the 21st annual International June Jamboree in Watkins Glen, New York. This was the first time that Bill and I danced to callers Gary Shoemake (Tennessee) and Ken Bower (California). We met people from all over the United States who come to this festival year after year because it is so much fun. The floor was excellent – it was actually a roller rink! We hope to attend this weekend again next year. For information, visit kenbower.net/Ken%20Bower%202015A.html.

From July 19-21, we attended a favorite event, the 55th Star Spangled Banner Festival in Hunt Valley, Maryland. One highlight was dancing in the swimming pool, where “Ocean Wave” takes on a whole new meaning! The festival always has excellent callers and cuers as well as special activities for singles. New this year were two opportunities to dance hexagon squares, where there are six couples in a set. We attended both sessions! For information, visit marylandsquaredancing.com/MDSDF7a.asp. *Holly and Bill Smythe (Bee Sharps)*

60.1 (May 2018)

A Flurry of Dances and Music: When was the last time you went to a regional dance festival that drew 5,000 people? The annual Flurry in Saratoga Springs, New York, is a wonderful festival celebrating all kinds of traditional music and dance styles. I went to the 31st Flurry in February, and had a ball!

There were New England style (traditional) squares, many with progressive grids, and contra dances almost every hour. I also enjoyed other styles such as Cajun, zydeco, Irish step dancing, waltz, Charleston, and even African dance. There were introductory sessions for all styles. In addition, I attended several ukulele workshops. If you play any instrument, bring it along for the jam sessions. There is something for everyone at the Flurry.

I can't wait for the next Flurry (February 15-17, 2019). It is such a well-run festival. For information, visit danceflurry.org.

Helen Jacobson (Reelers)

Flip the Flamingo: Three RocklandRockytops members reprised their previous participation in the Suncoast Squares February dance festival at the pavilion on Fort De Soto Beach, Florida. Pictured left to right: David Gurowsky, Cathy and Don Schlesinger.



WASCA: New Jersey dancers were well represented at the annual festival in March hosted by the Washington Area Square Dancers Cooperative Association in Alexandria, Virginia (just outside Washington, DC). Many NNJSDA dancers enjoyed the eight great callers (Mainstream through Challenge), four round dance cuers, line dancing, special interest seminars, delicious food, sightseeing, and camaraderie. There were intro sessions for those who wanted to learn

something new and opportunities for solo dancers to find partners at most events. It was impossible to get a picture of all Garden Staters, but here are a few of us!

Francine Leshnower (Kittatinny Rangers)

59.2 (September 2017)

Dancing on the Big Ships: Did you know that many excellent callers host square dances on cruise ships? We joined a Mediterranean square dance cruise in March, with Don Bachelder and Ralph Peacock as our calling hosts. Among the three dozen dancers were about 20 from New Jersey (mostly Garden State Square Dance Campers, along with other club affiliations). My husband, Anthony, did some singers, so now he's an international caller (wink).



I like cruising. It provides an opportunity to see different places with a minimum of effort. And, of course, there is all the food – you know square dancers love to eat! Square dance cruises give you something else to do on the ship, a chance to travel with your buddies and get to know them better, and an opportunity to meet people outside your normal dancing circle. You dance with them on the ship, eat with them most nights, and see them on the excursions. It was nice sharing adventures together – fun!

We saw great ports, mostly in Spain and Italy, as well as Monte Carlo and Malta. We also explored Barcelona and Venice for several days each. With the daily dancing and excursions, it was definitely a delightful and memorable vacation. I'm keeping my eyes open for more square dance cruises.
Carol Casale (Belles & Beaux, Hunterdon Flutterwheels, Reelers)

Texas Angel: On a visit to my sister in April, I danced with the Wheel-n-Deals Square Dance Club in San Marcos, Texas. I found the club online and walked in, wearing my Reelers badge, to a very friendly group, which made me feel at home. Mainstream lessons were held prior to the start of the dance, so I became an instant angel. The evening consisted of seven tips, alternating Mainstream and Plus. The ladies asked me to fill in their dance cards (literally!), so I had a different partner for every tip. Line dancing was taught and danced between the tips. The members were very nice and asked when I planned to return, which will be this fall. *Bob Turner (Reelers)*



Happy Feet: Three members of AleMo Squares joined former president Kathy Colucci to share a weekend of fun-filled dancing in Lakeland, Florida, this past March. Shown in the photo, left to right, are Kathy Colucci, Norma Cangiano, Kathy Shorr, and Eddie Shorr. They participated in the Florida State Convention, whose theme was “Dance to the Beat with Happy Feet.”*Connie Schiavone (AleMo Squares)*

Guinness Record Square Dance: Bill and I, along with other New Jersey square dancers, participated in the Guinness World Record dance at the 66th National Square Dance Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio. The previous record for most square dancers in one location in the United States was 1,040. On June 24, 2017, there were about 1,650! (The official count was not finalized at the time of publication.) More than 50 spotters ensured that all Guinness policies and procedures were followed.



We danced to one patter and two singing calls. The photo is a screen shot showing Bill and me in a video of the second singing call, “Swanee”: m.youtube.com/watch?v=IDHFN6bhp8I. *Holly Smythe (Bee Sharps)*



New Jersey State Folk Dance: On May 20, 2017, many dancers enjoyed a tip at the State House in Trenton. The following NNJSDA clubs are represented in the photo below: Belles & Beaux, Circle Eights, Cross Trail Squares, Kittatinny Rangers, Lakeland Squares, Middletown Ramblers, Motiv8ors, Reelers, and RocklandRockytops.

Vicky Proskey (Belles & Beaux)

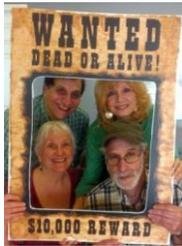
59.1 (May 2017)

Honor Your Partner in Germany: Last September, I enjoyed a terrific two-week square dance tour of southern Germany with 80 other dancers. Our callers were Tony Oxendine, Jerry Story, and Tom Crisp.

What a time we had! Home base was the charming Bavarian village of Grassau. During the day, my adventures included the Munich Oktoberfest, a Mozart concert in nearby Salzburg, Austria, schnapps tasting, Oberammergau, the Berchtesgaden salt mines, and a sobering visit to Dachau, the former concentration camp. I loved shopping in Munich and the local farmers' markets. My partner, Bob, enjoyed hiking in the Alps on pleasant days.

Most evenings were spent with local Mainstream and Plus clubs. They were terrific dancers, all decked out in western attire, and loved fast dancing. Since all calling was in English, it was easy to understand. Their clubs had good names: Flying Dandelions, Zugspitz Promenaders, and Tamata Twirlers!

To learn more about this smoothly run travel experience, contact Tom and Gina Crisp at crisptours.com or 800-901-8044.
Helen Jacobson (Reelers)



Florida Festival: Four members of the Hunterdon Flutterwheels shared an exceptionally exuberant weekend of fun, friendship, and square dancing at the wonderful Suncoast Squares annual February "fly-in" weekend near St. Petersburg, Florida. The theme was Sashay thru the Wild Wild West, and the warm welcome from club members was a delight!

Donna and Ralph Serio, Carol and Anthony Casale (Hunterdon Flutterwheels)

Tumbling Leaves Festival: Bennington, Vermont, was not just for dancing and leaf peaking last October. We danced on Friday evening and explored on Saturday morning and afternoon. First we drove through three covered bridges close to the college where the festival was held. Next was the Bennington Battle Monument, with an elevator up to enjoy spectacular views of Vermont, Massachusetts, and New York: absolutely breathtaking! Then we saw the Old First Congregational Church and Robert Frost's tombstone, followed by a 24-mile drive to Manchester. We cannot begin to describe how beautiful the scenery was with the massive mountains and array of colors. Manchester has adorable shops and fabulous eateries. After lunch, we drove a few miles to Hildene, the Georgian Revival mansion home of Abraham Lincoln's son, Robert Todd Lincoln. Upon returning to Bennington, we toured a Victorian mansion, Park-McCullough House. Our last stop was the Bennington Museum, where we visited the Grandma Moses Gallery and her old schoolhouse. Yes, this was a lot to cover in one day, but so worth it. And yes, by 8:00 PM, we were in a square and ready to dance again to five fabulous callers!

Matty and Bernie Sharkey (Kittatinny Rangers, Middletown Ramblers)

58.3 (September 2016)

(No submissions.)

58.2 (May 2016)

Dancing in Canada: While attending a wedding, my partner and I went to a Scottish-themed square dance sponsored by the Chuckwagon 8s in Burnaby, British Columbia. (That explained why the caller was wearing a kilt, the walls were draped with tartans, and the dancers were clad in plaid.)

When one of the dancers asked me if I liked haggis, I thought he was testing my knowledge of Scottish customs. I know it's made with ground-up sheep heart, liver, and lungs, wrapped in the stomach and cooked somehow. I had also heard that it's absolutely repulsive to those who haven't grown up eating it.



At the midpoint in the dance, we all lined up for a Grand March. The procession was led by a bagpiper who “piped in” ... a haggis, carried on a platter by two men.

When the haggis was set on a table at the front of the hall, someone read (in Scottish dialect) Robert Burns’s poem Address to a Haggis. In plain English, the gist of the poem is a gushing tribute to the “great chieftain of the sausage race.” As a guest, I saw no way around at least trying the delicacy. Aside from being a little dry, it wasn’t bad at all. Coffee, tea, and assorted goodies rounded out the offerings.

This group has its hospitality down pat. We received guest badges to identify us, and the rest period in the middle of the dance was a time to socialize while recharging our batteries. We were even given a door-to-door ride back to our hotel!
Warren Livesley (Times Squares)

Cacapon Weekend: A full square of NNJSDA dancers attended the Lehigh Valley B&B square and round dance club’s annual Presidents Day weekend in February: Lise Greene and Mark Bippes, Barbara and George Kuhne, Jan and Paul Sanderson, and Donna Poyer and Mike Szekula. It was held in a cozy lodge in Cacapon Resort State Park in West Virginia. We enjoyed the energetic calling of Howard Williamson and Denny Steiner and the enthusiastic cuing of Tim Eum. The entire weekend took place in the lodge, including delicious buffet meals. The B&Bs provided after-party snacks, games, and prizes. There was no need to venture into the frigid outdoors; however, our more adventurous members (Lise, Mark, and Paul) did go out for a hike. We also enjoyed a visit from our son, daughter-in-law, and four grandchildren. This is a lovely winter weekend that we would highly recommend.
Barbara and George Kuhne (Y Squares)

Flip the Flamingo: For the second winter in a row, we visited our friends and fellow club members, Miriam and David Gurowsky, in Florida. We enjoyed dancing and a barbecue on the beach at Fort De Soto Park in St. Petersburg during the annual Flip the Flamingo “fly-in” sponsored by Suncoast Squares.



In the photo, left to right: David, Miriam, Cathy, Don.
Cathy and Don Schlesinger (RocklandRockytops)

58.1 (September 2015)

Florida Escape: We were fortunate enough to spend a few weeks in Florida last winter – escaping some of the New Jersey snow! We enjoyed playing golf, swimming, and dancing with several clubs: Heel and Toe in St. Cloud, Whirl and Twirl in Orlando, Hoedowners in Casselberry, and Temple Twirlers in Tampa. We had visited the first three clubs during the previous winter, and were pleasantly surprised at how many people remembered us and welcomed us back like old friends.

In the photo, we’re on the left along with other “first-timers” at Temple Twirlers, where we were all introduced and presented with visitor dangles.

Pat and Tom Duemig (Circle Eights, Western Wheelers/Hix & Chix)



Fancy Meeting You Here: My husband, Rick, and I were vacationing in the Berkshires this summer. On a tour of the Clark Museum in Williamstown, Massachusetts, we were reminded what a small world it is. We ran into Irene and Harold Stoller of Reelers, who were visiting with Irene’s college roommate. We enjoyed the opportunity to share square dance and vacation stories.

Gerry Beatty Savino (Circle Eights)

National Convention 2015 in Springfield, Massachusetts: Way to go, New Jersey dancers! We had the third highest representation of any state, with a sea of green flowing proudly in the Parade of States.

Some of the huge contingent of Garden State dancers is shown in the photo. Thanks to Joanne Ingis for the photo.



57.3 (May 2015)

Flip the Flamingo: Over the long holiday weekend of February 13-16, Suncoast Squares hosted the annual Flip the Flamingo Fly-In at two locations in the St. Petersburg, Florida, area. Club members David and Miriam Gurowsky, who are also members of RocklandRockytops, danced Friday and Saturday in Pinellas Park at the Bayou Club, and again on Monday in St. Pete on the beach at Fort De Soto Park. They were joined on Saturday evening and Monday afternoon by Don and Cathy Schlesinger, Rockytops members who were vacationing at the Gurowskys' timeshare in Sarasota. Two more New Jersey friends of the Gurowskys, Ralph and Donna Serio of Hunterdon Flutterwheels, also danced on Saturday evening.



A delicious buffet dinner was served on Saturday, and a sumptuous barbecue lunch on Monday afternoon. The dancing was superb, and the callers (Todd Fellego, Chris Phillips, and Michael Cox) were all first-rate.

Cathy Schlesinger (RocklandRockytops)

Photo: The Schlesingers and Gurowskys on the beach at Fort De Soto Park, with the Sunshine Skyway Bridge in the background

One Month, Three Festivals: My boyfriend and I enjoyed three dance festivals in the space of one month last fall! First, we went to Tumbling Leaves in Vermont. Tim Marriner and the other callers were wonderful, and I loved their harmony together. The music was great and very up tempo, making everyone lively and in high spirits.

This inspired us to motivate a group to go to the Harvest Moon Classic in New Jersey. Again, we enjoyed the harmonies and energy of the callers, and the dancers were delightful, as always.

We also attended the one-day Hudson Valley Council dance, which was closer to my home in New York. In addition to not having to travel far, we appreciated that there was less expense, food and lemonade were served, there was a talented caller, and the dancing was excellent. The pleasant environment created a fun and happy mood.

Mary Ann Gazivoda (Friendly Squares)



Strawberry Square: In mid-January, on a vacation in Florida, Perry Didriksen and I danced in Plant City at Strawberry Square, a hall dedicated to square dancing. It has a beautiful "floating" wood floor and is located at the edge of a mobile home community, from which a number of the dancers can walk or bike to an event. We were delighted to find that the caller for the evening was the ubiquitous Todd Fellego.

I first danced at Strawberry Square in 1991 with my then-partner, John Occhipinti. He later retired to Florida. This year, Perry and I danced with John at his club, Temple Twirlers in Tampa.



The photos show me with John (left) and Perry (right) at Strawberry Square. More than 20 years later, I am wearing the same dress!

Joan Schierlitz (RocklandRockytops)

57.2 (January 2015)

Six square dance adventurers from New Jersey promenaded down to the 40th Tennessee Square Dance Convention last August. We had met some very nice people while on a square dance cruise in February, and they invited us to visit. So Carol and Anthony Casale, Debbie and José Obarrio, Nancy Jacobs, and Mark Parent decided to check out the amazing town of Gatlinburg, Tennessee. (Photo L-R: Carol and Anthony Casale, Mark Parent, Nancy Jacobs, Debbie and José Obarrio)



The convention center, which is in the middle of town, is a great venue with easy access to all the sights and sounds. The streets were teeming with people (it was like walking in New York City) and lined with shops and restaurants for blocks on end. We had some really good meals. And then there were the beautiful mountains in the background. Of course, the dancing was great. Everyone was very friendly (aren't all square dancers?), and we had a wonderful time. There were some really creative callers doing some very unusual calls, which made it a lot of fun. I think that's part of the excitement of square dancing: You get to travel to many places, some near and some far, and meet very nice people. Up next, the Florida Winter Festival in February!

Carol Casale (Belles & Beaux and Hunterdon Flutterwheels)

While attending the National Square Dance Convention in Spokane a few years ago, Vic and I had the opportunity to meet Don Casper, a cuer from Mannheim, Germany, where we had lived for three and a half years while Vic was in the Army. Having planned a visit back to Germany for some time, we resolved, basically, to build our trip around the chance to dance at Don's round dance club ... which we did!

We rented a car and toured Germany, Czech Republic, and Austria. Driving the autobahn again was an experience – good for Vic, bad for me! We revisited Berlin, where it was very moving to follow the markers showing the previous location of the Wall and reflect on so many who died trying to gain freedom. We also had three wonderful days in Prague, then went to Vienna, and finally proceeded to Bavaria, where we saw several of the castles we knew from years ago.

From researching dosado.com and other websites, I located a number of square and round dance clubs in the



cities we were visiting. Unfortunately, we were not there when those clubs danced ... with one notable exception. We did end up in Mannheim on the Tuesday before we returned home, and danced with Don's club. At left is a picture of the happy group. We look forward to seeing Don (tall guy with glasses) and his partner, Heike Beck (lady in the blue blouse in the front row), at the National Convention this June; they come every year!

Nancy Ammons (Bee Sharps)

57.1 (September 2014)

When I lived on Ærø, a small island in Denmark, I danced with a local club. Although the caller did not speak English, he used the standard English calls, albeit with a Danish accent. The club members were fully accustomed to his pronunciation, and I usually understood him, too. However, during one tip, I heard him call: "Right and Left Thru, and Cover Your Face." I started the Right and Left Thru, and then, stumped by the next part of the call, stopped abruptly – as it happened, right in front of the caller. He stopped calling and stared as the entire square came to a halt behind me. I whispered: "Cover my face?" He enunciated a bit more clearly: "*Wit' de cuppa you face.*" With the couple you face! Then I really did cover my face with my hands to hide the redness of embarrassment as the other dancers roared with amusement over the American who didn't understand English.

Lise Greene (Reelers, Kittatinny Rangers)

We followed a family tradition by taking lessons with the Middletown Ramblers in 2013. Lori's parents, aunt, and uncle were dancers, and the latter two enjoyed visiting clubs when they traveled. So last April, before completing Mainstream, we looked for dances during our southwest vacation. Lori checked links to clubs' websites, maps, event calendars, and contact information. Good starting sites were wheresthedance.com and dosado.com/clubsorgs/default.htm, which lists clubs in all 50 states and worldwide.

In the Las Vegas area, only one club potentially meshed with our availability on a Sunday night, when they hold classes. Even though it happened to be Easter, the club held a lesson, and we served as angels for the first time. Score one! More good luck followed with a club in Utah having a special dance with Mike Sikorsky calling. The club is far from callers' travel circuits, so it was a treat for them to dance to a live caller. It was no surprise that both clubs were hospitable, but the fun extended beyond dancing. Dancers shared pointers on restaurants and even retirement planning.

We received our very first dangles from one of the clubs, and learned that the USDA's Traveler Program (usda.org/traveler.htm) offers awards for visiting and dancing in a certain number of states. Given our positive travel-and-dance experience, we are eager to continue exploring square dancing in the good ol' USA and beyond. No question about it: Square dancing is "friendship set to music." *Lori and Eric Beck (Middletown Ramblers)*

My husband, Louis, and I attended our fifth annual IAGSDC (gay) convention this summer. We appreciate gay square dance weekends as a complement to straight events. In addition to the fun, upbeat dancing and the friendly, welcoming community, we value the *choices*: for either of us to dance the "boy" or "girl" part; to dance with a different partner each tip (or not); to dress casually (T-shirts are popular), or in traditional square dance attire, or any place in between – in other words, to do what contributes to our enjoyment the most. For one tip, I was in a square with seven men, and I was dancing the "boy" part! I totally enjoyed the challenge.

Closer to home, there are gay events in Washington (Lambda Squares: ACDC), Delaware (Independence Squares: Fly-in and Chesapeake Squares: Pass the Ocean, Hon!), Pennsylvania (Lambda Squares: Harvest Festival Hoedown), and New Jersey (Times Squares: Peel the Pumpkin). For an invigorating dance experience, try an LGBT square dance event. We'll see you there! *Jan Thompson (Motiv8ors)*

56.3 (May 2014)

Many years ago, Jim and I were attending a summer square dance in Rapid City, South Dakota. We were in a long, low building with about a dozen squares when a bat flew through one of the open doors into the hall. The sound system must have interfered with his sonar, because he was flying around near the ceiling, bumping into the rafters and bouncing up and down. All the dancers kept right on dancing – no one missed a step. When the tip ended, the bat finally managed to fly out one of the doors. No one acted like anything strange had happened.

Su White (Rutgers Promenaders)



Who says square dancing is just for landlubbers? There's square dancing aboard cruise ships, too! Indeed, it gives a whole new meaning to "Load the Boat." Several NNJSDA dancing friends recently went on a western Caribbean cruise aboard the Norwegian Dawn.

There were more than 100 square dancers, including NNJSDA's Carol and Anthony Casale, Barbara and Norman Kanter, Debbie and Jose Obarrio, and Iris and Harvey Schachter. [The Casales and Obarrios

are pictured above in Roatan.] It was a lovely reprieve from the New Jersey snowstorms, with great food (and lots of it), interesting ports of call (Roatan, Belize, Costa Maya, and Cozumel), and, of course, daily square dancing with some wonderful people. We danced only a few hours a day, but it was really nice meeting fellow square dancers from around the country. The coordinator did a great job, as did the callers: Tony Oxendine, Jack Pladdys, and John Saunders. We enjoyed dinner together as a group in the dining room every evening, and I had great fun playing trivia. (I even won a pen and T-shirt when I was on “Team Norman.”) We also got some information on Tennessee’s upcoming 40th convention in Gatlinburg this summer (July 31 through August 2). It’s expected to be one of their best conventions ever and sounds like a lot of fun, so we are planning to go.

Carol Casale (Belles & Beaux, Hunterdon Flutterwheels)

56.2 (January 2014)

We attended our first “Summer Magic” weekend festival last August in Ontario, Canada, and had a wonderful time. We met three other couples from NNJSDA clubs; it was nice to see some familiar faces. It was our first time dancing out of the country, so that was a new experience for us. There was a great crowd of dancers with four fantastic and entertaining callers: Don Moger, Tony Oxendine, Mike Seastrom, and Jerry Story. Many folks there commented about how much energy there was in the Plus room – Don Moger had us all laughing hysterically on the floor. The organizers of the weekend thought of everything. The accommodations were great, especially since you never had to leave the premises. All of the dancing was “in house.” All meals were included and the restaurant prepared delicious food. We certainly recommend this weekend to anyone looking to try somewhere new.

Kathy Randall and Tony Milito (Rutgers Promenaders)

Barbara and I enjoyed the National Convention in Oklahoma City, seeing friends from other states whom we met at past conventions. We use the convention as a starting point for experiencing our beautiful country, having now visited the 48 contiguous states and taken a cruise to Alaska. Last year, we concentrated on the Louisiana Bayou and southeastern Texas. One drawback at the last few conventions was the seeming absence of many national callers from the halls. In contrast, at the Tumbling Leaves festival in Vermont, it was a pleasure dancing to six top callers for the entire weekend: Red Bates, Bill Harrison, Tim Marriner, John Marshall, Don Moger, and Ken Ritucci. One of the two callers was Steve Bradt. Although this festival is on a much smaller scale, it was far superior to the National Convention in actual dancing. It offers Mainstream through Challenge and has two round dance teaches at a lower level. If you cannot get to the National Convention and are looking for a new dance experience, we recommend trying weekends offering your preferred dance programs. Others we enjoy are WASCA, Harvest Moon, and Lehigh Valley B&Bs.

George Kuhne (Y Squares)

WASCA is a terrific long weekend of square and round dancing held outside of Washington, DC, every March. We have been attending this event for many years, and look forward to it all winter. It feels like the kickoff to the spring and summer dance season. The callers and callers are top-notch, the dancers are friendly and fun to be with, and the hotel facilities are excellent. What more can you want for a great weekend of dancing and socializing? We have made friends there over the years and look forward to catching up with them each year (sometimes in the bar after dancing). The schedule includes a full-time DBD Plus hall (Carl’s favorite) – and you can’t miss Tommy Miller calling DBD Plus! Also, for the round dancers, there is a full-time round dance hall (actually more than one), teaches in the morning and afternoon, and 2x2 in the Plus hall. We even tried our feet at an introductory clogging session, and that was a giggle or two. We fill our days with square dancing, round dancing, a little shopping at the vendors, and chatting with friends – all in all, a great weekend. Consider adding this event to your square dance calendar – you won’t be disappointed!

Chariss Smith and Carl Luhrs (Motiv8ors)

56.1 (September 2013)

In October, I am bringing a group of home-schooled teens to Puerto Rico on a short-term mission trip. My son, Stephen, and I went there for a weekend in June for a site survey. I used Google to find San Juan Squares, and they invited us to call a father/son dance. This club dances to recordings and rarely sees a flesh and blood caller. We were careful to stick to the Mainstream list and not use many filler words because of the language barrier. After we returned home, the organizer sent a nice email: “I keep receiving feedback from the dancers on how much they enjoyed this activity. Rhythms were varied and fun. We all especially liked the Mickey Mouse Club song! Thanks again to Paul and Stephen for offering to visit and call for us. It was certainly a special

experience not to be forgotten. You are always welcome!" Here's a link to photos and videos: [youtube.com/watch?v=qnT4ZbHjw_8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qnT4ZbHjw_8).

Paul Ingis (Belles & Beaux)

We were on vacation in Hawaii with other square dancers from New Jersey. At a dance, while introducing ourselves to the others in our square, one of the couples announced that they wintered in Hawaii and summered in Alaska. Who could beat that for a lifestyle?

Georgi Flandera (Western Wheelers/Hix & Chix)

We remember hearing about the National Convention and thinking it sounded neat. A Belles & Beaux member said: "It doesn't matter which one you go to; you just have to go!" Another year slipped by, more members from our club were attending the convention, and we felt we were missing out on a great time. Ed wanted to attend the convention in the state of Washington, because it's so beautiful. I wanted to first learn Plus so that we could dance as much as possible. Reelers, here we come! Well, after Plus lessons followed by workshops and four years of Mainstream/Plus dancing, we did attend the National Convention in Washington and it was just wonderful! Now we tell people: "It doesn't matter which one you go to; you just have to experience the energy. It's a lot of fun!"

Vicky and Ed Proskey (Belles & Beaux, Reelers)

One of our favorite memories is traveling to a Summer Magic weekend festival in Ontario, Canada, with the Elk Mountaineers from Pennsylvania. Lucille Ims, our wonderful caller, rented a bus. We had lots of fun dancing to great callers such as Don Moger, Steve Kopman, Lee Kopman, and Johnny Preston. Our cuers were Jerry and Bonnie Callen. On the way home, we stopped at the St. Lawrence River and took a cruise, admiring the beautiful homes on the islands. The Mountaineers made sure that the bus trip was interesting; Ed Ims played his guitar while we sang, and the dancers took turns telling jokes. This made the trip seem a lot shorter. We have stayed in touch with some of our new friends from Canada.

Dianne and Don Madden (Y Squares)

After dancing for just a few years, I drove with my daughter to her college in Michigan, bringing along the National Square Dance Directory and an outfit. I called a couple in the area, who picked me up and took me to a dance. The greeters at the door gave everyone a hug, and I was treated as a special out-of-state visitor. I had a grand time and was driven back to the college after the dance. It was such a nice introduction to dancing with new people I didn't know, but who made me feel welcome as a member of the square dance family.

Linda Millian (Belles & Beaux)