

# **ROCKY'S SUCCESS STORY**

## **- by President Doreen Guilloux, March 2016**

**The ROCKY WHIRLWAYS SQUARE AND ROUND DANCE CLUB - an exciting, positive and growing group of dancers.**

Being President of the Rocky Whirlways Square and Round Dance Club is so much fun, and so exciting. The executive we have right now is full of wonderful ideas, enthusiasm and commitment to making the Rocky Whirlways Square and Round Dance Club the very best club possible. Our executive meets and talks often to keep up with the many facets of the club. The bottom line is to keep positive, keep dancing exciting, keep the club growing and keep the dancers coming. Our club saw a huge surge in membership this year, 20 new people joined. Our publicity people consulted with Claudia who has gathered a portfolio of great ideas and worked hard to make sure the advertising was inviting and that it showed that our club is where people want to be.

We are lucky to have a Casino that can support the type of club we have. We are unique – no other club has mainstream square dancing with a rotation of excellent callers, full year square dance lessons with their own caller, and a round dance group that meets regularly with a special caller. Right now, our round dance group is as big as our square dance group!

Other dancers love coming to our club because we are warm, friendly and welcoming and our dances are always fun. This doesn't happen by accident. It takes a wonderful group of people, a lot of planning and a lot of organizing. But it's all worth it. We have the opportunity to be an innovative and leading group for the dancing community and we're proud of that.

This year we have added bus tours with the idea of supporting other clubs and providing a convenient and fun way of getting to other club dances. Not only has this been great for us but the clubs we visit are excited to see such a large group of people walk into their halls. Thankfully, we have two drivers who can share the driving and others who are thinking of getting qualified as well. Our secretary works hard to coordinate buses, drivers and passengers.

We have a rotation of callers at our club. This gives our dancers the best exposure to calling possible. Callers come from all over the province and feel at home at our club and enjoy being here. In fact, we have callers who contact us asking if they can be put on the roster. They are supportive of what we are trying to do and helpful with ideas. We have one person in charge of contracting the callers and setting up our dance schedules and other person contacts the callers each week before they come to let them know what dances we've been working on and what things they, and we, can do to make the next dance a good one. We also arrange for billets for callers who need to stay overnight.

We have one caller who teaches our lessons each week and our Vice-President is in constant communication with him and the dancers to make sure our lessons are the best they can be and that the wishes of the club are adhered to. As the year progressed and the new dancers were exposed to more calls, they joined the mainstream dances every night for at least one tip. They also join the mainstream dancers every night at announcement time and for our friendship circle at the end of the night.

Our Treasurer has taken on a big job and does it so well. She pays the bills including all the callers, does the banking, deals with AGLA, with the casino money and keeps the executive informed about financial matters.

Our secretary helps to keep me organized and keeps track of all the ideas and work lists that the executive comes up with. It's not just a simple job of taking minutes.

We have many people volunteering to open the hall, put on coffee and greet the callers and next year this process will be made easier for the executive because two people have taken on the job to make sure all the dances have someone to be the host and put on the coffee. We also ask our members to take turns being hosts for special theme dances. They come up with decorations, special foods, special dancing and other ideas to make the dances fun.

We recently asked for a round and a square dance representative to attend executive meetings. The idea is for them to be a liaison with club members and to take on some executive tasks.

Another big deal is our plan to open our dance year with a super caller and special dance with the Harvest Hoedown and end the dance year with a bang with our Graduates Ball and special caller. We wanted to make sure there was something exciting at both ends of the year. Next year both these dances will be for the entire club, round and square dancers. We feel it's important to have events that tie the entire club together.

Another innovation this year is the promotion dances. These have been a huge success. We find that promoting the dance at this time of year (March & April) while our present dancers are still dancing and excited is better than waiting until the fall to promote and recruit. Our dancers take invitations and hand them out to friends and relatives inviting them to a special social event. We have social dancing, mixer dances and introduce them to square and round dancing. We make sure they are up on the floor most of the evening and are having a good time. Our decorations are elaborate, our caller excited and exciting and our club welcoming. We offer these guests a special deal to sign up for lessons for the following year. We already have enough dancers signed up to continue with lessons next year for both square and round dancing. A big part of this is this year's dancers are so enthused that they do the advertising for us, they are excited to bring their friends into the group. Your enthused dancers are your best advertising tool.

**But the most important part of any club is the members. Their commitment to the club through coming to every dance they can, volunteering to do all the many tasks, and being so friendly and welcoming to the guests makes our club a special community. The key to all of this is positive-ness. Get rid of the negativity in your club and work hard to get everyone involved in the club, that they feel ownership and that they want the club to succeed. Be open to new ideas. Allow people to wear what they feel comfortable in and welcome singles or couples or two ladies or two gentlemen. Make sure your club members interact with new people and are up dancing when lessons are being given to new dancers.**

Make your physical environment friendly as well. If you have a large dance floor and a small group of dancers, move the chairs in to form a smaller space so there is interaction between the dancers on the floor and those on the sidelines. Don't talk about what you can't achieve as a club, talk about what you can achieve. Make your posters interesting, modern and inviting.

Our club is a wonderful group of people who make us all want to keep on dancing and laughing and having fun. I'm so proud to be given the opportunity to be the President of the Rocky Whirlaways, Square and Round Dance Club.

*(Need more information/questions? Contact Doreen at [jdquil2@cciwireless.ca](mailto:jdquil2@cciwireless.ca).)*