PROMOTIONAL IDEAS FROM JOHNNY APPLESEED CLUB
Mansfield, Ohio   April, 2015   www.appleseedsquares.com

1. **BUY-IN FROM CLUB MEMBERS:** The officers got a commitment in writing from club members about what, if anything, they would be willing to do to help their club thrive. They gave them a checklist with a number of things on it from passing out business cards, distributing flyers, putting up/taking down signs, posting to social media, making phones calls, sending reminder postcards, putting notices in papers/bulletins, cooking chili (for first night), angel-ing, etc. Nearly EVERYONE in the club got involved. This was not a "let Harry put up a flyer in Krogers" thing. **It worked because EVERYONE WORKED**.

2. **TIMING:** The club started advertising in AUGUST for the January class and then kept in touch with reminders so people didn't forget or lose interest. Different types of advertising were passed out at different times - signs, business cards, flyers. It was done in stages.

3. **MATERIALS, GRAPHICS, FLYERS:** The materials they used to advertise were attractive and professional looking with bright colors to get attention. No black and white stuff printed at home. The flyers were permanent ink on nice glossy paper, the business cards were laminated (no date - just time and place), and the signs were yellow and black with the president's phone number on them. In other words, it looked professional and not cheap. But the coordinators shopped around and bought smart. The graphics on the flyers and cards did NOT have out-of-date, old fashioned, country stereotypes. They were modern and very attractive and professional. Club business card design should be SIMPLE AND BRIEF. Club name, email address, telephone number. Designs can be distracting.

4. **YARD SIGNS:** About one month prior to lessons, the club distributes 'yard signs' to advertise. (Black and gold colors are the best from a PR & marketing viewpoint.) CAUTION: Check with all municipalities regarding where the signs can be legally placed. road medians, street corners, between the sidewalks and curb (parkway). The signs should be BRIEF AND SIMPLE – "LEARN TO SQUARE DANCE" & TELEPHONE NUMBER. People have a few seconds to read the sign as they drive by. REMEMBER: collect the signs and put into storage one week after lessons begin.

5. **PROGRESS REPORTS:** Progress reports were given to members weekly to let everyone know their efforts were paying off. This kept people excited about what they were doing.

6. **CLUB INVOLVEMENT:** We actually handed everyone a number of business cards (I gave everyone 5 at class one night) and asked them to find creative ways to pass them out - leave with a tip, hang on bulletin board, put by register, put in Christmas cards, etc. People may not pick them up if you just announce it. They can't ignore you when you put them in their hands.

7. **ENCOURAGEMENT:** We had good people who organized it and kept people motivated. Barry & Peggy Carney and Cyndi & Dale Bennett.

8. **GROUP EFFORT: We can't emphasize this enough. It worked because everyone got involved.** Barry & Peggy have promoted in the past without these results. So have Dale & Cyndi. They never had these results. We got these results because everyone pitched in.

9. **INTEGRATING NEW DANCERS INTO THE CLUB DANCES:** All club dances beginning in January are structured as 'hi-low'. The tips alternate between mainstream & plus during each dance. That gets the students from the fall session into active dancing and encourages: (a) membership; (b) improving dancing skills; (c) improving confidence; (d) getting acquainted with all the club members; and (e) learning etiquette and structure of dances.

10. **OTHER'S SUCCESS STORIES:** Robin Ragen's efforts with the Fairfield Iowa Square Dancers--In the past 2 years, they went from 4 dancers in a garage to adding nearly 200 dancers to the activity. We believed if THEY could do it, so could we. That club was my initial inspiration. I also spoke with Nasser Shukayr about the multi-cycle classes that he did which had similar results.