

New Dancers From the Home Schooling Community

Silver City Squares, Silverton Oregon,

A few years ago a few of the youth in our club invited some of their friends who were home schooled. My job was to show them a good time and teach them well. They had a blast and the next year invited a ton of their friends. Then the last 2 years we became connected with the home schooling network and they added us to their news letter and things exploded.

Last year we ran two full mainstream classes and graduated 48 new dancers. This year we have 56 in our September class. The home schoolers can also use square dancing as PE. The nice thing is after the parents starting seeing how much fun the youth were having they are coming now as well and we have full big families doing a family activity together. This is the way square dancing was originally intended.

We dance 12 squares on class night and 8 squares on dance night. I'm not sure what we will do when we graduate, because 12 squares pretty much fills up our little community center.

The other thing we have introduced is line dancing after the dance or class. The youth will stay for well over an hour after the 2 to 3 hour dance is over to socialize, line dance and round dance. None of them want to go home.

This group also won first in most categories at [Pacific Northwest Teen Square Dance Festival](#) this year. The parents are planning on bringing in the media to show what we have done and their desire is to reproduce this success throughout Oregon.

I would love to take credit for this success, but I can't. I will say I work my butt off weekly to show them a good time, provide new things for them to learn, provide music they will like and make sure they are learning, but they did the leg work.

For some more information on the Silver City Squares:

The club dances mainstream with 2 plus tips twice a month. Some years we teach one class others we teach two with one class starting in September and another the beginning of February and classes run 16-20 weeks, but we continue after graduation working on extended application and positions year round. Most years we also run a plus class on a differing night.

The club is NOT just a teen club, we are now about 1/3 adults. The youth are mostly homeschool kids but not all of them, I don't know the percentage. My understanding is all they need to qualify for PE credits is for the president of the club or me as the teacher to sign off. They take the same class as everyone else takes.

We do 4 parades a year, but our promotion is primarily word of mouth, with the homeschool newsletter. The dancers simply love the dancing, all forms, which is why we also do line and other forms after every dance or class. This is also why we get large angel participation. We make every time they meet feel kind of like a party with refreshments as well.

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So far we have allowed any of the youth that want to participate go to Teen Festival. That requires them to commit to coming to Saturday morning intense training as well as competition weekend. We do fundraising so they don't have to pay. I also try to keep my classes at a pretty high level. Dances are a little easier, but still upbeat. We also had 4 Callers compete and do well and 3 cuers.

Here are some pics and videos:

Jamboree this year:

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/723156702665308>

PNWTSDF 2023:

Participants:

<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=1700161543833436&set=a.149733922209547>

Top Junior caller:

<https://www.facebook.com/Ian4682/posts/pfbid02eeUp25DHqBb66UQ9zcXKgrujK9uRxMT3xjrRwjrY1vgZezPeatbwr4oiGcdGHKtMI>

Top Mainstream final square:

<https://www.facebook.com/Ian4682/posts/pfbid0JGieAE8DNq9tryd1FD3CZE5dkjbCn1cx7j56cqvh8wefCTu2VnEf93162eqDSbjBl>

Top Intermediate Round Dance:

<https://www.facebook.com/Ian4682/posts/pfbid07biSzGeXYCv1Fv9qyFHcNNXuLbYBrPRTXiFRQZqitgreA1ZUKnNnwEipUzb2U9pZl>

I hope and pray others can have the success we have had.

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