

# EUROPEAN NEWSLETTER

Volume 17 Number 1

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## Editorial

Hello dance friends

Approaching Christmas and Sylvester as never before is what comes to my mind.

In this 17th issue you will find a lot about COVID 19. I really would like to swap this for the old "square dance fever". Luckily most articles are positive about the future.

The recent news about the various vaccines are hopeful. Personally I think we have to hope for the new dance season to start up again. I do not mind if I am proven wrong and we can dance earlier.

Both Corry and I ( as I think most of you )lost our activities in the spring and had to find out what else to do. There comes an end to all cleaning up work at home. By doing this I found a box with Hi 8 and DV video tapes that I made some 20 years ago. At that time I did much filming, but mostly I was not happy with the result and left it. Now I thought are you going to make it better or throw it away?

After finding out again how the computer program worked I had films nice enough to show on our TV.

Watching this brought back not only over 20 dances, but also seeing old friends from that time. This made me feel happy. Friends that we did not see for a very long time because they stopped dancing or were living too far away.

Remember that couple ? Or, what was his name? How about the Pader Rodeo of 1993 with Jerry Story, Tony Oxendine, Robert Bjork and Thorsten Geppert ! 'There are so many happy memories

Corry and I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a fine 2021 and above all "stay save".

May my usual ending soon be back:  
Happy dancing.

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**BAASDC**

British Association American Square of Dance  
Clubs 2020

**Breaking News:**

Dateline: Monday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020 Winslow  
Buckinghamshire

As I sit at home on a damp dreary November afternoon writing this report, I am thrilled to hear on the radio, the news that Pfizer and BioNtech has produced a Vaccine for Coronavirus that is 90% effective. Could that mean that in the not too distant future Square and Round dancing can resume? That fills me with hope. At last there is light at the end of this interminable tunnel.

Hallelujah !

The opening line of Charles Dickens's novel *A Tale of Two Cities* is 'It was the best of times, it was the worst of times' and that is exactly how I would describe the past year. It's definitely been a year of two halves. Sadly Square and Round Dancing have been victims of this unprecedented pandemic. Since my last report in November 2019 life until March 2020 was normal (remember normal)? I remember making plans to attend lots of Round and Square Dances and dance weekends and holidays both in England and abroad: my new diary for 2020 was filling up quickly. Sadly events including the European Convention in Sigtuna Sweden, the Pader Rodeo in Germany and two weeks dancing in Gran Canaria all had to be cancelled. I'm sure it was the same for lots of you too. However since March 2020 life changed and there has been no sustained dancing since in the United Kingdom.

I vividly remember my last Saturday night dance on 14<sup>th</sup> March. I went to celebrate Viking Squares 36<sup>th</sup> Birthday. It was a great event with Squares called by Neil Whiston and Rounds by Matt Baldry. There was even a lovely supper provided by the Club. We were aware of the virus and took extra care with hand washing but there was no mention of Social Distancing and we knew nothing about Lockdown. The following day I travelled to Kensworth to dance at Kevin Lovell's Club All Square at Zero. We were blissfully unaware that a week later we would be in Lockdown and being told of the need for Social Distancing whatever that was. We all know, only too well now, don't we?

In June with the country in Lockdown the British Association took the decision not to collect in Annual fees from the Clubs. This money had been used in the past to pay for the Insurance and to publish and distribute the Let's Square Dance Magazine. When our newly-appointed Treasurer pointed out that the magazine was costing £750 a month to publish and distribute, we took the decision to email the magazine instead. At £750 a month from September to December would have cost us £3000 and if we extended this into next year, well you can do the maths, it would run into thousands of pounds and seriously deplete our funds. We had a viable alternative and took the

decision to continue distributing the magazine by email only for the foreseeable future. This way everyone can receive the Magazine for free. Also it was felt that although there was no 'real' dancing to report, the magazine is a wonderful way for dancers Callers and Cuers to keep in touch. Peter Wright, our Editor even suggested that we produce a magazine for July and August two months when he usually has a rest.

We were aware that the Subscribers, nearly 300 of them would not be receiving copies by post for the months September to November for which they had paid £4.50. They were all contacted by email or letter and offered a refund. I am happy to report that only 6 people asked for it. With no revenue coming in it is essential we spend as little as possible so that our funds can be more sensibly used to support Clubs when dancing resumes.

I am proud to lead a very hard-working Council. At times we have had to make some difficult decisions and choices, but rest assured, all of us have only been thinking of what is best for the future of Square and Round dancing

I am so pleased that many Clubs are making the effort to keep in touch with their dancers. This takes many forms, I have heard of quizzes picnics, I myself attended one in the summer, newsletters and Zoom meetings. Of course special mention should be made of the Virtual Dance sessions with Di Green, Terry McCann and Kevin Lovell offering weekly Square Dance sessions. Many of our dancers are joining up with others from all over the world, dancing at all times of the day and night. Great stuff!

Judi Read of Scarlett Ribbons Round Dance Club has been very busy during Lockdown creating a Website. This gives couples and individuals an opportunity to learn Round dancing in the comfort of their own homes, in their own time, and at their own speed.

Included on the Website are video clips, written and verbal instructions and practise dance modules. If anyone is interested Judi's details are on our Website: "uksquaredancing.com"

Already, they have had lots of interest from dancers in England and enquiries from dancers in the U.S.A. the Philippines and China. They're going global ! The Lockdown took us all by surprise and there is no knowing how long it will be before we can 'Hold Hands' 'Square Up' or 'Take a Hold' or even risk a 'Yellow Rock'. I, like many of you, can't wait to get back to some real dancing.

As I started my report with a quote from Charles Dickens I will conclude with another this time from his novel *Nicholas Nickleby*. 'The Pain of Parting is nothing to the Joy of Meeting Again'.

Susan Ellis  
President BAASDC

## DAASDC

Greetings from Denmark.

Where is Square Dancing in Denmark today? Gone or forgotten?

This has been a weird year where all of our Square Dancing was shut down, canceled, deleted. Just to relate to our own little World of Square Dancing. Could it really be true that we could not dance for a few months? Alas, and more, it turned out.

Everyone in Denmark was told to "crawl into hiding," stay at home, and in general behave responsibly and practice community spirit so everyone meeting could cope with this crisis. Many people had planned for Square Dance events domestic as well as foreign. But as time went by, all Conventions, Festivals and Dance Events were canceled. All club activities were stopped dance halls and training facilities were closed, like almost all other social activities in the community.

Denmark was shut down and many people even became a little scared of the "unknown" and of others - even with the close family.

After a period of shut down in Denmark things began to look a little brighter. Cultural activities were slightly reopened but now with restrictions. How lovely! But could we dance now? No not with requirements of keeping 1 – 2 meters distance. And moreover most of the clubs' training facilities were still closed. DAASDC sent letters to several authorities and ministries, to other organizations and associations to get some guidelines related to our dance. But all responded that Square Dancing and other quadrille dances were not yet allowed to resume their activities. However, we were lucky to get an answer from one of Denmark's leading virologists: "DANCE, but wear a face mask or visor, spray your hands often with a disinfectant, ventilate the room, stay in the SAME square throughout the dance and generally follow the "normal" guidelines, etc." He also said: "Even though we have a pandemic, we must still remember to live our life as normal and meaningful as possible showing appropriate responsibility."

Following this announcement some clubs resumed the dancing activity under the guidelines given. Other clubs chose to postpone the start-up until 2021 and even other clubs found other ways of meeting and preserve the dancers' relations to clubs connected to the club and one another. Each club in cooperation with their dancers has found their own solution.

Right now in Denmark we are only allowed to gather 10 people in the same place, so the opportunity to form one square is present. What will that question. But we are hoping to be able to return happen in the time to come? None of us can answer to a life of Square Dancing and other social

activities. However, I believe that in the future we will also reduce "yellow rocking", keep more focus on hand hygiene and avoid attending Square Dancing if we have caught a cold or feeling ill in other ways

It is obvious that we do not see nearly as many illnesses like colds and usual flu in these times where we have to keep social distance. This is the positive thing.

When we come out on the other side of the pandemic, we must decide for ourselves whether we want to be proactive in the task of getting involved and making Square Dancing visible and thereby creating a breeding ground for continuing and – in the future – to be able to attract new dancers, or whether we want not to care, be selfish and just want to resume our own previous dance level.

We can all ask ourselves these questions: "How do we get started again?" "Do we get started again?" "Will everyone help to pull up Square Dance in the right direction?" or "Should we let Square Dance die?" One thing is for sure: If not all of us, clubs, callers and dancers do something together the Square Dance in Denmark will die with us, which we in DAASDC think will be a sad future to look forward to.

NOW not everything shall be so dark! After all we must rejoice in the opportunities we still have to gather and I think we all hope that the summer of 2021 will be the time where we can gradually begin to live a more normal life and meet again in Square Dancing. I know of several people – including myself - who have practiced too much "Corona exercise" - between the couch and the fridge - who needs to dance away some of the accumulated fat. I hope we will be able to meet for festival dances and Conventions in 2021.

Even though we are all in the middle of the pandemic, I send the best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Take care and stay safe!

Lotte Vangsgaard  
President, DAASDC

## NVSD

(Dutch Association of Square Dancers)

Dear dance friends,

This year was strange. We started well with several parties. But then suddenly in March it was over. Completely over. Covid-19 was our problem. Under the conditions of our government we had to keep at least 1.5 meter distance. So we decided not to dance till September but the virus is still everywhere so we will now not dance at all this year.

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Hopefully we will dance next year again. For the moment all our parties are cancelled.

Please look at our website [Squaredance.nl](http://Squaredance.nl) for info for the upcoming parties.

On behalf of all Dutch dancers, I wish you all a Merry Christmas, a Happy New Year and stay safe and healthy.

Loet Polak  
President of the NVSD

**TAIWAN**

Dear fellow dancers,

In this unprecedented and challenging time, I hope this newsletter finds you safe and well. We are very happy to let you know that we Taiwanese square dancers have been coping well with the pandemic hardship on the other side of the world.

Although the outbreak of COVID-19 hit us by surprise in late January, Taiwan's authorities had taken prompt and appropriate measures to prevent the spread of the viruses since then. However, like in other countries, we have been recommended to maintain social distancing, wear masks, and refrain from engaging in "unnecessary" activities. As a result, we had to cancel our annual New Year Festival Party in March, and were literally unable to meet our square dance families in five months!

Soon after closing of the borders, Taiwan's COVID-19 spread rates dropped dramatically and cases have been sporadic and imported since then. We started square dance practicing gradually and subtly after May. Although SDAROC could not host any all-member party in this situation, individual clubs could. Different clubs have different attitudes toward the pandemic. Some are bold and dashing, while others are cautious and conservative. For the bold and dashing ones, the Clover Fun Squares celebrated their 5th anniversary on 30, May, hosted by Murphy Chang, in a dance party for members and affiliates. Murphy also co-hosted a party with Antsquares later in August. In June, Andrea Cheng even tried to shoot a video to recruit contingent dancers to a local community college. One of our old sayings has it that to squat is to jump higher. For the conservative and cautious ones, it is the best timing to enhance and polish what we have learned so far and become better square dancers and teams in the future.



Fig 1. Murphy Chang and participants of the 5th anniversary party of the Clover Fun Squares.

Luckily we overcame the inconvenience and called for a general assembly in July. Ms. Beral Shen was elected as the chairperson of the SDAROC. Further board meetings have reluctantly reached a conclusion that the 10th Taiwan Biannual Int'l Square Dance Convention, originally planned to be held in March, 2021, will be rescheduled to March or April, 2022. We hope the travel restrictions will be lifted at that time, and our programs will continue to attract your interest to come and dance with us again.



Fig 2. Andrea Cheng tries to shoot a video to recruit contingent dancers to a local community college.

Compensatory consumption is not necessarily an evil, especially when we feel weary about when the pandemic will fade out. Borders lockdown has boosted domestic tourism. Andrea Cheng and Beral Shen have amazingly arranged two two-day getaway trips outside Taipei

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The trips were exciting, but the outcomes were soothing. Usually some of us enjoy dancing with friends from different countries at foreign conventions. These are great opportunities for us to relax and to recharge at the same time. With almost all the conventions being cancelled this year, domestic outings could only be a small compensation to our great disappointments.



Fig 3. Mr. and Mrs. Hubert Ho join one of Andrea Cheng (left) compensatory outings, wearing smiles not masks on their faces. .



Fig 4. Dancers of the Ding How Square Dance Club wear masks to send Happy New Year wishes to our European friends afar.

It is anticipated that the coronaviruses will go “viral” during the winter. Forza! We hope all of us can overcome the difficulties. Faisons de notre mieux! We know we certainly will do our best to make it. Please stay happy, healthy and resilient, on and off the dance floor. Let’s cross our fingers and hope we shall jump higher in 2021! Alles Gute!

Chin-Yin Hwang  
International Liaison,  
SDAROC

**EAASDC**Article for the European Newsletter 2020

I just read my article from last year’s Newsletter and all the hampering legal aspects in our hobby, which bothered me then. How easy to solve and overcome these “problems” in comparison to what our world has experienced this year and probably will for the coming year: COVID has changed our live drastic!

59 Mio cases worldwide and 1.3 Mio dead with the numbers growing daily. Yes, there are still other reasons why people get sick and die, too, but that doesn’t mean we have to ignore COVID and therefore my comment: let’s follow the protective measures to save other peoples live.

For handling this pandemic each European country has its own instructions and in addition to this, in Germany every state, region, and almost even every city, has its own interpretation of the COVID Regulations issued by the respective state. This is partly due to so-called “should-clauses” that allow for interpretation, and partly to the local infection development.

The differ situation makes it very difficult to help our clubs, but we’re happy to provide tips, where we can. However, we can’t provide an individually tailored, detailed and area specific measure for each of our member clubs. All we can communicate is generally valid information, as well as examples from one state or actions taken in one region. Due to the overall diversity I do not know the detailed situation of all our European clubs, but here are some figures about the development of dance activities in Germany and so far no news have reached me, that dancers got infected in this and I keep my fingers crossed for us all that this remains so:

- Lock down on March 9<sup>th</sup> lead to the cancellation of our Spring Jamboree (planned one week later with 1.800 expected dancers) as well as a general stop of all club dance activities all over Germany
- end of June, in some areas and following the official instructions, a few clubs started their club evenings again
- in September 160 (out of 530) member clubs danced at their club evenings again, including the dance forms Clogging, Round, Square and Contra/Traditional
- no specials have taken place since beginning of March
- November 1<sup>st</sup> another lock down lead to a general stop of all dance activities again

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Today it looks as if we will have no more dance activities together this year. Moreover, I don't expect this to change with the beginning of the new year, even if the first people will be vaccinated by then. There will also be no Spring Jamboree 2021, nor does a membership meeting in presence seem imaginable at this point.

I do expect that by middle of next year the first dance activities will start again and hopefully this will be the beginning of "back to normal dancing" and we soon will meet all our friends worldwide again. A great possibility for this will be the European Convention 2022 in Vienna, which our member club The WorkShoppers and its helpers are presently preparing. Please announce this event to all your dancers and pass on the link <https://www.european-convention2022.eu/> where all actual info will be published. Let's hope, the world wide COVID development will allow this event and we will meet all there again.

Christmas is coming and we have hope that we will be able to celebrate in small circles with our friends and families. Just as we have hope, that the vaccines will work and that humankind will overcome not only this crisis. And of course we have hope that we soon will be able to dance together again, for how do they say: Hope dies last!

Talking about hope, here is a little story about hope, which I like to share with you:

Four candles were burning and it was quiet. So quiet that you could hear how the four candles started talking to each other.

The first candle sighed and said: "My name is PEACE. My light gives security, but in the world, there are so many wars. The people don't want me anymore." Its light grew smaller and smaller and finally, it went out.

The second candle flickered and said: "My name is FAITH, but I feel useless. The people don't believe in anything anymore. What difference does it make, whether I burn or not?" A whiff of air went through the room and the second candle went out.

Softly and shyly now the third candle spoke up: "My name is LOVE. I don't have the strength to keep burning. Egotism, ignorance and hate are ruling the world. The people are only concerned about themselves and are not willing to treat each other lovingly, friendly and considerately and to make each other happy." And with a final flicker this light as well was gone.

A child came in. With astonishment, he looked at the candles and said: "Why are you not burning? You can't have died! I need you!" Sadly, he glanced at

the three burnt out candles and tears ran down his cheeks.

At this moment, the fourth candle spoke and said: "Don't be sad, child. My name is HOPE. As long as I am burning, we can always relight the other candles."

With a small piece of wood the child took light from this candle and brought PEACE, FAITH and LOVE back to life.

.....

I wish you all a harmonious and peaceful Christmas along with the hope for a better New Year.

Stay healthy and

Grüße

(Greetings)

Wolfgang "Wuffi" Daiss

President EAASDC e.V.

**CSCTA**

What is going on in Czech and Solvak Square **Dance** and Round Dance ?

Well, nothing. Due to the CoViD-related restrictions, there was no dancing here from March till June this year (with a few exceptions). Most clubs took their usual summer break after that, planning to start dancing in September again. They were happy to enjoy several club-nights in September eventually but before they could get really active again and start running classes, the second round of lockdown came and there has been no dancing since. There have been no weekend dances or workshops since March and the situation remains the same hitherto because no one can predict when the restrictions will be lifted again. Even the biggest Czech weekend dance that takes place in January every year has been cancelled for 2021. Though, we still hope that the Majovka dance, combined with the CSCTA Convention, will take place at the beginning of May in 2021 (according to the original plans, it should have taken place this year).

I am not aware of any virtual dancing going on anywhere in my area because people are not allowed to meet in numbers sufficient for forming a square. We cannot but hope that we will be able to meet again face-to-face soon and enjoy our beautiful hobby as much as before.

I think the situation is similar in other countries. I wish you all peaceful Christmas and all the best for the New Year – especially good health and good mood. Take care and stay safe!

Tomas "Doug" Machalik

CSCTA President

### SAASDC

A Report from the President of Swedish Association of American Square Dance Clubs for the European Newsletter 2020.

This is the time of year when you usually look back at the past year and what events have been held and at the same time look ahead to what is to come. Right now you can summarize both of these in a single word. Canceled! This year there would have been a European Convention in Sigtuna. Something that we all had looked forward to and that the organizing club worked with for several years. Everything was pretty much ready, the registrations came in steadily but then it came...the pandemic. But surely this would be over by the summer ?! It could not be that dangerous after all, or...? Time passed, we in the board of SAASDC had many and long discussions, both internally and together with the organizing club. Do we dare to continue planning or do we have to cancel, how long can we wait? At the beginning of April, we finally had to make the difficult decision to cancel the European Convention. It was a tough decision to be forced to make, that for the first time ever it would be a year without a square dance convention. So in retrospect, we know that it was the only right thing to do and there was nothing else we could have done, but just then when the uncertainty still prevailed, it was hard. Not to mention how sad it was for the club to put their heart and soul into this, and then...nothing (but a lot of expenses).

Since a convention is also the time for our annual meeting, this time we got to have it completely digital. It worked very well thanks to a solid effort from some extra technical people that we have in our circle. At this meeting, I was elected the new president of SAASDC. It feels a little strange since after this I have not met any dancers at all, more than through the computer. Almost all square dancing has been canceled in Sweden since mid-March, but there is a persistent little group that has shown us new ways to go; digital square dance! It occurs, of course, in many countries, but they have formed a Facebook group in Swedish for SAASDC-dancers, and they arrange digital dances with different callers at least twice a week, from Basic to C3A. There is great interest in this and the group now has over 500 members. We are grateful that these enthusiasts exist and that they keep the square dance alive as most of the world seems to stand still. We also know that many clubs run the business in other ways, for example by having a picnic or quiz for their members. Everything to keep in touch with each other. Because we all miss the fellowship in the dance and we sincerely hope that life will soon return to normal so we can meet and dance again!

Annika Myhrberg  
President of SAASDC



**Förbundsstyrelsen önskar er  
en God Jul & ett Gott Nytt År!**

### JAPAN

Report from Japan

Wow, we are approaching another end of the year after we lived in the new environment with the COVID-19. We became to know, from the article in the March issue of the EAASDC's Bulletin, that the organization held the Spring Jamboree in Hochheim on March 13 thru 15, and, luckily enough, there were no reports on the case of infection.

The COVID-19 attacked us in February, and most of the clubs cancelled their planned events and stopped their weekly dances. Since then, we had been watching TV for good news on any lower figures of the infected, staying home for three to four months, observing all the must's lectured by the WHO and the government. Beside the distancing, the masks, and ventilation, they included to avoid close contacts due to talking and body touch with each other. No square dance events at all since then!!

This was the moment when we realized how much we square dancers enjoyed our lives for long time just because of the exciting dances! After having stayed home for months, we became concerned about the possibility of losing our friends because of no dancing, no seeing, and no talking with each other. President Kazusuke Okiyoshi's message to the JSDA members said, first exchange information with all the club members is important. Several clubs in the relatively less densely populated areas started their weekly dances in June-July observing the guideline. "No hand touch dances" were proposed wearing the masks, with all other "musts", using no hands, or using the sticks or the paddles.

There was an argument at that time on whether or not, we should wait until the dancing with the normal dance style using hand touch become safe.

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The Technical Committee put a condition for starting the normal dance (traditional dance style using the hands correctly): that was, after each dance tip of less than 10 minutes duration, the dancers should apply the perfect disinfection procedure.

In any ways, approximately 35 % of the clubs started their weekly dances as of end of August, some in the normal dance style and others without hand touch.

The alert level at the less densely populated areas seemed relatively low, so that when the readers receive this issue of the Newsletter, I hope half the clubs may have started dancing, though no one knows what would be the result of the business backup policy by government for the better economy which would involve a lot of travels and out-eating. Let us celebrate some countries like Australia and the New Zealand (I hope I am correct!) for their success of controlling the virus which allowed our friends there to continue dancing. We in the North Hemisphere are heading for Winter so we cannot be optimistic until the vaccine becomes available.

We would like to share with everyone the nicest message to the square dancers worldwide written by Patty Kennedy Greene, then chairwoman of the CALLERLAB.

See Page 14 of the USDA News:

[http://www.usda.org/USDA\\_News/2020/04-April-June.pdf](http://www.usda.org/USDA_News/2020/04-April-June.pdf)



Lastly, here is a sad report from us on the passing of our Honorary President Mr. Tatsuzo Takase in November at his age of 91, who served as President of JSDA for 29 years retiring in 2014

He received CALLERLAB's Milestone Award in 2012. He was very enthusiastic about promoting of square dance and contributed to the development of square dance in Japan as a lifelong work.



Photo: "Milestone Award to Mr. Tatsuzo Takase from Mr. Elmer Sheffield (those times chairman of ( CALLERLAB ))"

3 April, 2012 Nashville Tennessee US

Masaharu Hiraga

Member of International Communication Committee,  
Member of Japan Square Dance Association (JSDA)

**CSRDS****Canadian Square and Round Dance Society**

Greetings from across the pond

Sadly, there has been little Square Dance activity to report from the Canadian dance scene. Since mid-March, thanks to the Covid-19 pandemic and the attendant social distancing requirements, we find ourselves in a situation where Square Dance has been literally devastated. We hope, however, for a brighter future.

**21<sup>st</sup> Canadian National****Convention/Festival (CSRDS 21st SRDC)**

The pandemic has forced us to impose a one-year delay on our 21<sup>st</sup> National Festival from the scheduled date of July of 2020 to July of 2021 in Burnaby, BC. The recent introduction of Covid-19 vaccines gives the Festival Committee some cause to hope for a positive outcome. However, going forward with Festival 2021 depends on early approval and distribution of the vaccine. The Festival Committee will decide, in early 2021, if the event will be held.

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For information concerning all aspects of the CSRDS 21<sup>st</sup> Convention please visit:

<https://squaredance.bc.ca/festival-2021/>

Canadian dancers, and leaders, are a resilient lot. Several Callers, Cuers, and Leaders across Canada remain undaunted by Covid-19 and have offered virtual Square, Round, Clogging, and Contra dances and lessons, via Zoom, to any Society members who wish to take part. For many of our senior members who have found themselves in total isolation this has proven to be a valuable social outlet. All dancers in the Canadian Society offer a great vote of thanks to those worthy leaders. Undoubtedly, their efforts go a long way toward keeping dance alive in Canada. Also, CSRDS has made an effort to carry on with "Business as usual" despite the pandemic. Thanks to Zoom, we have been able to continue with virtual Board of Directors' meetings and a successful 'hybrid' Annual General Meeting in November.



### **22<sup>nd</sup> Canadian National Convention (CSRDS 22nd SRDC)**

The Federation of Dance Clubs of New Brunswick (FDCNB) is determined that Square Dance in Canada will not be beaten by the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, they have taken on the task of presenting the 22<sup>nd</sup> Canadian National Square and Round Dance Convention, in Fredericton, New Brunswick July 20-23, 2022. Despite the impossibility of meeting in person, plans are progressing very well with virtual meetings. It is worth noting that the first 222 registrants to this Convention are offered a special VIP deal. What a great way to get Square Dance back on the road again.

Please visit the website for details:

<http://squaredancenb.ca/convention-2022/>

Please have a healthy dance year,  
Yours in Dancing,

Eric McCormack, President, CSRDS  
ericpmcc@gmail.com

### **CHINA**

Square dance in Beijing in the Special year 2020

It is a real special time to the world in the year 2020. Since the outbreak of COVID-19 and spread in January 2020, the Virus, fight covid-19, overcome difficulties together are the key words in the year. Same as this year for all the dancers in the world, not only all of the national conventions had been cancelled, but also the European convention and dance parties. All of our dancers in Beijing had to stay at home for about one more month to avoid any effect. All clubs had to be shut down and stopped almost all of social activities. As the situation has been controlled by our government step by step, we can go outside to go shopping but wearing masks always and keeping a social distance more than one meter to each other. But we had to cancel various gatherings and square dance clubs were also suspended until March with a turnaround. The internet is a magical world and Wechat brings us a lot of fans about square dance. Now the situation is under control and we are into normalization the epidemic in China, the club activities offline are gradually resuming. We firmly believe that as long as we live, there will be hope tomorrow. As long as we are united, the world will have a bright future.



Picture 1. Beijing Smile Club collected with the caller Dashang and Muyuki from Japan. When we are looking back into the year pasted as a point of square dancer's view, there were a lot of stories and interesting things stored in our mind. Here I want to just take some things from the Beijing Smile International SQD Club which is one of the most active clubs in Beijing.

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Picture 1-1 Open ceremony of the Dance Party on 17 January, 2020



Picture 1-3 Active dancers

**1. A successful Spring Dance Party held in January, 2020.**

As we recall the reminiscence of our Spring Festival Dance Party held on 17-19, January, 2020, we all will say that we were so lucky. Please look at our schedule. We had invited Mr. Dashang Ogamitoru, one of the famous callers from Japan and his wife Miyuki, a Round dance teacher to Beijing as the guest callers. The dance party attracted about 300 dancers in total from different Beijing clubs. We were dancing and staying in a training center nearby Beijing for the period of January 17 to 19, 2020. All dancers were elated to join the party and we danced together, ate together and lived together for 3 days as a big family. We were happy and enjoyed every day. As soon as the party finished, the Chairwoman Mrs. Xiaoping Wang, Vice Chairwoman Mrs. Xiaoshan Duan and me accompanied Miyuki to visit the Great Wall on 20 January. We had a wonderful time at the Great wall. Then the couple returned to Japan and I left Beijing to Hainan for the festival of my family reunion on 21 January. On 23 January our government made an announcement that all of countrymen must stay at home to fight the epidemic. So it was just two days later after we had a successful dance party. God bless us.



Picture 2: We climbed in the Great Wall

**2. Square dance in China in the special situation**



**\* A “Reading Group for Square Dance” has been established**

Since English is not our mother language and most of dancers can not understand English, so you can image how difficult it is for our dancers with a full English calling. Our dancers have established a “Reading group for Square Dance” and more than 30 people have been involved through Wechat communication. In the most serious epidemic period, we had been studying for 100 days since February 2, 2020. So we can say we had a great time in the special period of COVID-19.

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The Dance Definitions, which is an English language title, was the latest issue provided for us by Dana, the executive Chairman of CallerLab International SQD Organization. We have finished 603 audio recordings, including five SQD levels and 10 detail classes such as Basic, Mainstream, Plus, A1, A2, C1, C2, C3a, C3b and part of C4. Both Mr.Joachim Rühbeck from Germany and Mr.Brian Hotchkiss from Australia are our very strong backing up for our studying. There are 27 dancers coming from Beijing, Tianjin and Shenzhen, actually they are local people but they had to stay outside for the stand still during the special period. We were relatively far apart geographically, but we met each other on line everyday through circle of friends on WeChat. Vicky is the Chief Supervision and 27 dancers taken turns on duty every week to push every reader and dancer to complete at least one audio

recording per week. We were studying together and helped each other in the atmosphere of joy of learning, learning in happiness. Finally Vicky made a summary of the 100 days and the audio collections have been compiled on Himalaya, the largest audio application in the country. You are welcome to download and listen.

The world is changing very fast. Enjoy English, Enjoy Square dance and Enjoy your life is our target, let us broaden the horizon. The COVID-19 closed a door for us to keep far from each other, but it opens a window to the world which give us a chance to see the world in a different way. There were quite a lot of innovations made within our dancers during the epidemic period, such as Mr.Zhang takes Tencent Video and EVA takes live streaming to promote square dance for publication, Weiyue had made 11 courses for different square dance levels, Strawberry has forward the magazines "Behind The Mike" and "Around The Dancers" from Australian to our dancers, etc. The Club has made it's own Official Accounts "斯美尔四方舞俱乐部" and you are welcome to register to get more information about us.

#### \* Based on practice and Participated virtual dances

During the worst three months of the epidemic, we conducted online teaching and studying. Mr.Xu led the teaching of board games from Plus to C1. In addition, many dancers learn English by reading with recording, calling dictation, calling definition, listening exercise and so on which lays a good foundation for dancing practice after epidemic.



Our dancers joined the "Remote Dancing" and "One Square at a time" organized by relevant clubs in the United States and the Triangle club from Germany.

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There were about over 100 persons-a time joining the virtual dances at home for one person or one couple dance, in the garden or some open area. It will be honest to say that it is difficult and less funny to have a remote dance.

**4. Donation to our friend and caller Mike Sikorsky**

“A benefit on-line dance for our friend and colleague Mike Sikorsky” activity was organized by 2020 Riverside Jamboree, USA on Saturday August 15, 2020. Mike is one of our old friends and he has been invited to China as a guest caller for a few times and his last visit was in October, 2019 for the 2019 Autumn SQD party in Beijing. Most of our dancers like his calling style and we had a good time with him. Mike had bilateral pneumonia as well as MRSA which is a bacterial infection that affects the blood, lungs and skin since 25 Jun., 2020 and he stayed in the ICU unit for about 3 weeks. As soon as we got the information through face book, we are not only sending positive thoughts, prayers, but also sent the donations to him in a total amount of 3,136 USD donated from 134 dancers. Right now Mike is getting better every day and we do hope he can get recover and return to his caller’s position soon.

**5. Square dance has got back through some small groups in Beijing**

With the drastic reduction in COVID-19 transmissions, it would seem possible to travel next year, at least within China. Now and we are more able to travel within China (except for those in current hotspots or some cases existed in those cities). We must show our health code and test temperature when we are traveling and go to any public places, specify your travel path within 14 days to make sure you are not coming from hotspots or catch fever.

- The Small Club Dance Party held on 27 November, 2020

As the situation has been controlled stabilized in the middle of the year, our dancers could not stay at home more and wanted to have dance together. But we have to follow the regulation of no big gathering and keeping the social distance. Now there are 13 groups dancing once or twice every week and there are about 10 more people within each group with different dance level. All dancers will put on masks to protect themselves.



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The winter is coming and the COVID-19 is still existed, we could not release our vigilance by a wearing mask and washing hands carefully everyday. Spring must be come and Square dance will have a bright spring.



Author: Editor and Strawberry Feng(left) and Mrs.Xiaoping Wang, the Chairwoman of the Smile club

We wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy (and healthier) New Year

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30 November 2020 in Beijing

## Calendar of Conventions & Jamborees

### 2021

April/May	30 -- 2	CSCTA	3 <sup>rd</sup> Convention	Bratislava	Slovakia
May	14 – 16	ECTA	Round Dance festival	tba	Germany
June	4 -- 6	DAASDC	30 <sup>st</sup> Convention	Ishøj	Danmark
June	11 –13	SAASDC	39 <sup>th</sup> Convention	Halmstad	Sweden
June	23 –26	NSDC	70 <sup>th</sup> Convention	Jackson MS	USA
July	8 - 10	CSRDS	21 <sup>st</sup> Convention	Surrey BC	Canada
August	29 –31	JSDA	59 <sup>th</sup> Convention	Sapporo	Japan
September	3 -- 5	EAASDC	Fall Round Up	tba	Germany

### 2022

March	11 – 13	EAASDC	Spring Jamboree	Wiesbaden ?	Germany
April	21—25	NSDSA	62 <sup>nd</sup> Convention	Goulburn NSW	Australia
May	27 – 29	ECTA	Round Dance Festival	tba	Germany
June	22 - 25	NSDC	71 <sup>st</sup> Convention	Evansville IN	USA
July	8 - 10	EAASDC	11 <sup>th</sup> Eur. Convention	Vienna	Austria
July	20 --23	CSRDS	22 <sup>nd</sup> Convention	Fredericton NB	Canada

### 2023

June	21- 24	NSDC	72 <sup>nd</sup> Convention	Mobile AL	USA
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### 2024

June	26 - 29	NSDC	73 <sup>rd</sup> Convention	Milwaukee WI	USA
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