

Southwestern Ohio/Northern Kentucky Square Dancers Federation

Primer for Federation Representatives

Southwestern Ohio/Northern Kentucky Square Dancers Federation was formed in 1961 to represent the dancers in our area. Previously, the activity was primarily organized by callers. Our dance program increasingly grew and flourished due to enthusiastic support of the member clubs, excellent attendance by the representatives and outstanding leadership. Note: The term “square dancing” includes round dancing, contra, line dancing, and other related arts.

The purposes of SONKSDF are stated in the *By-laws*, but here is an overview:

- Exchanging ideas and stimulating active fellowship among the Greater Cincinnati area dance clubs.
- Fostering interest in dancing by advertising, planning demonstrations and encouraging classes.
- Publishing *Square Notes* and maintaining a Web Site to advertise club events, local news, and other items of interest for the dancer. This includes maintaining a complete listing of clubs with their dance leaders; dance night; dance types and levels; and contact phone numbers.
- Promoting and sponsoring the *Federation Friendship Badge*, which in turn promotes attendance at dances.
- Working together with the clubs and the Greater Cincinnati Callers and Teachers Association in close cooperation to support our mutual interests.

As stated in our *By-laws*, each club is allowed two “trusteeships.” A trusteeship consists of two “representatives.” Therefore, every club should have four representatives and four votes. The names should be given to the Recording Secretary any time there is a new rep or any change. Also, reps should keep the Recording Secretary updated on club Presidents and/or a contact person for each club (name, address, phone number, e-mail). Club representatives are encouraged to attend all meetings where they can promote their club and report back to their dancers about Federation activities and important local events.

Various committees have a roll in carrying out Federation goals. Each representative is encouraged to serve on or head one of the committees. Please volunteer to help in one of the following: Note: An * will denote further clarification later in this document.

- **Demonstrations:** This committee is responsible for setting up dance exhibitions throughout the region in order to keep the community aware of our activity and its fun, friendship and fitness. We have often danced at malls, parades, festivals, schools, fairs and in the past appeared monthly on cable television. This committee must coordinate the event with dancers and callers/cuers.
- **Publicity:** Publicity is a way in which we make the community more aware of square dancing activities. This committee works along with individual clubs, callers & cuers, and the Demonstration Committee to promote our activities and to attract new dancers. Some of the methods used in the past include massive demonstration blitz, bumper stickers, yard signs, place mats, radio ads, fliers, posters, free pass handouts, press releases, phone book listings, Hot Line . . . This committee needs help from all of us. Can you write well, make phone calls, do artwork, contact media persons, put up posters . . .

- **Square Notes:** One of the purposes of Federation is to make information available concerning dance activities in our area. This is done through this by-monthly publication. Please make sure that the information about your club's dances is accurate and up-to-date. Every member club should supply an article for each issue (Deadline dates are inside the front cover). Originally, dancers received *Square Notes* free of charge, but beginning in 2009 subscriptions cost \$15 annually. We are encouraged to promote advertisements and Federation pays any costs above the subscription cost and revenue from ads. Of course, dancers should be encouraged to read each issue for their own benefit. In the past, the *Square Notes Benefit Dance* and the *Glitzy Ball* were annual events to raise money to defray publishing costs.
- **Web Site:** www.sonksdf.com
The Federation Web Site was created for dancers and "visitors" to find up-to-date information about our Federation, Clubs, Classes, Callers/Cuers/Instructors, etc. Currently a new feature, Club Pages, is being added to the Web Site to give each club the opportunity to highlight its own program. Clubs are asked to appoint a Reporter to supply information for their own Club Page, and they will have to remember to send updates to sonkfederation@gmail.com. Representatives should encourage dancers to visit this website regularly for the latest information.
- **State Corp.:** Federation is entitled to have four representatives to the Ohio Corporation of Dance Clubs, Inc. This organization is comprised of Federations/Councils throughout the State working together in support of our activity. The State Corp. meets four times a year – one meeting being at the State Convention. Usually, there is an annual *Ohio Dance Convention* the first full weekend in May. Most recently, SONKSDF hosted the Convention in 1996, 2005 and 2009.
- **Historian:** This committee keeps records of SONKSDF and its member clubs through the years. Every club is encouraged to annually update any information that might have significance. This would include special news, change of location/caller/cuer, new officers, etc. There is a wonderful album in which our history is chronicled. Also, SONKSDF has a beautiful quilt with squares from participating clubs. We proudly display the quilt at festivals and conventions. Make sure that your club is represented on the quilt.
- **USDA Insurance:** An insurance policy is available for your club through Federation's affiliation with USDA*. This policy provides liability insurance for the participating clubs. The chairpersons of this committee will periodically provide information about the insurance so your club can have the opportunity to enroll.
- **Membership:** This committee keeps a listing of all of the SONKSDF clubs and club memberships. An attempt is made to cross reference names in order to maintain accurate records of the actual dancers in our area. It is very important for your club to update its roster and notify the membership chairperson of changes. All local clubs are encouraged to affiliate with SONKSDF for our mutual benefit.
- **Team Hayloft:** (Team Hayloft functions as a committee independent of SONKSDF) This group has helped promote and coordinate usage of the historic, Hayloft Barn in Winton Woods. The Barn was originally located at Rt. 4 and I-275 in Springdale and was owned by Gus and Marian Heissman. When their land was sold, the Barn was carefully dismantled, stored and eventually (with cooperation of SONKSDF and the Hamilton County Park Commission) rebuilt at its present site in Winton Woods. At one time, square dancing filled the Barn almost every night. Special engraved "bricks" can be purchased for the back patio of the Barn. These may display your name or be in memory or honor of someone.
- **Special Dances and Events:** Many of these have become annual events, but we are always looking for ways to update our activities. At this time the Special Events held are the *Honors

Dance and the *Ronald McDonald House Benefit Dance. You may hear of the Friendship Dance or the Square and Round Dance Festival from prior years.

- **Entertainment Book Sales:** SONKSDF promotes sale of these as a fundraiser in the fall. Obviously, we are competing with numerous other organizations, but we are able to have some success.
- **Ronald McDonald Dance and Collection of Aluminum “Tabs”:** Support of the Ronald McDonald House – a place where families can stay while their children are hospitalized in our area – has been one of our favorite charities. We collect aluminum “pop can” tabs for recycling all year. These can be brought to Federation meetings for periodic delivery to the facility. The aluminum in tabs is very high quality, and we have delivered over 2000 pounds (a ton) of tabs through the years. In addition, SONKSDF and GCC&TA* sponsor an annual fundraising dance for the Ronald McDonald House. Even if unable to attend, dancers are encouraged to donate money for this worthwhile cause.
- **Other Charities:** From time to time (often for many years), we have participated in other activities such as *Walk for the Cure – Juvenile Diabetes Walk*, *Warm-up America* (quilt making) and the *Salvation Army Doll Dressing Project*. We are also occasionally called on to support a local dancer, caller, or cuer in crisis or to contribute in the case of a natural disaster.
- **Honors Dance:** This dance will replace the Friendship Dance and will give us an opportunity to recognize some of the following dancers:
 - The present year’s Honor Nominees and *Honor Persons
 - Previous Honor Persons
 - New Class Plus Graduates
 - Recipients of the Friendship Badge
 - Banner Raiders with over 100 Raids

Often you will hear terms used at Federation Meetings that might not be familiar to you. Some of these are as follows:

- **Friendship Badge:** This was designed to encourage visitation to clubs, other than one’s home club, to promote friendship and to increase club attendance. Look for the form in *Square Notes*, on the Web Site or on the flier table. Only one form is needed for a couple, and directions are found at the top of the form. Currently, you need to attend 20 clubs and obtain an officer’s or caller’s signature. Completed forms are turned in to the SONKSDF Vice-President.
- **State Friendship Badge:** The State Corp. also sponsors a Friendship Badge and the system is very similar to that of our local badge. Forms are available locally for collecting signatures from representative clubs from all areas of the state. You can actually order the State Friendship Badge (a pretty, silver, Ohio shaped badge) prior to completing visitations and then work on obtaining additional signatures little by little. As you earn signatures, you can request the colored “stone” for your badge representing each area. You may order your badge and obtain your colored stones from our State Corp. Reps.
- **GCC&TA:** This is the Greater Cincinnati Callers and Teachers Association. SONKSDF works very closely with GCC&TA for the mutual benefit of our activity. We are encouraging callers and cuers to become very involved in their organization and to attend all co-sponsored events. Their participation is a wonderful way for our dancers to become familiar with all local dance leaders and the variety they offer.
- **Legacy:** This is a service-leadership organization that works to develop better communication and education within our activity. Many times Legacy promotes workshop-style activities to help support and improve the square dance activity. It is said the name “Legacy” comes from “LEaders GAthered for Commitment and Yak.”

- **Honor Couple or Person:** Annually, SONKSDF selects an Honor Couple/Person to represent us at the State Convention. The *Guidelines for Nominating an Honor Person and Selection Procedures* were updated in 2000. At present there is a committee reviewing the procedures to make sure that our selection is as fair as possible. We hope to encourage nomination of all qualified individuals, and to look for better ways to give nominees and winners local recognition.
- **USDA:** *The United Square Dancers of America* is a national organization that promotes and supports Square Dancing and its related activities. USDA holds its annual meeting at the National Square Dance Convention. Some of the recent projects of USDA have been a campaign establishing Square Dancing as the “American Folk Dance,” promoting a free discount prescription card, the publication of educational materials for dancers, promotion of a USDA credit card, administration of the USDA insurance program, and the sponsorship of a special, Square Dance Internet Server.