

**News From  
Square Benders  
Milwaukee, WI  
(April 24, 2003)**

The Square Benders are currently one of the larger clubs in the Milwaukee, WI area with 22 couples and 13 singles. Their 2002-2003 new dancer group has 5 couples and 5 singles. This group of new dancers came from several sources. The club runs an ad in the local paper, beginning in June, with a number to contact for more information. The names are recorded of all those responding for later follow up. One couple invited members from their Bible Study Group and another invited people from their camping club. They lost some this past year due to health reasons, work schedule conflict and snow birds. Each year approximately 35 invitation letters are mailed.

The prospective dancers are invited to a free evening of dance activities in August featuring line dances, circle dances and basic squares. The idea is to get them dancing and having fun immediately. At the activity they are encouraged to join the clubs new dancer session beginning soon.

The camaraderie of lessons, which develops between the angels and the new dancers, is very important. They usually have at least 15 angels helping each week. Every 6 weeks is a review and treat night. Beginning in February the new dancers are invited to attend one club dance a month free and dance the first 3 tips using only the calls they know. They are then invited to stay for the rest of the dance to visit and enjoy refreshments.

Each month a new dancer newsletter is printed. It covers topics such as; US Square Dance history, dance apparel and it's history, etiquette and styling, the structure of square dancing in the state and an introduction to other clubs in the area.

In December all new dancers in the area are invited to a "New Dancer Dance" which includes a chili supper. The Square Benders new dancers are encouraged to attend other dances, sponsored by other callers, for new dancers. All new dancers are encouraged to return in the fall as angels and bring their friends.

The Square Benders are a Mainstream Club welcoming both couples and singles. Some of the experienced dancer women learn the beau part while they angel. Last summer the club had casual attire with about half still choosing to wear regular square dance clothing. The club feels it is important to be warm, friendly and welcoming.

Eric Tangman is the club caller/ teacher.

Information furnished by Ruth Witt