

News From The
Broken Wheel Squares
Kirtland, OH
(October 2003))

The 35th Anniversary Year of the Broken Wheel Squares came at just the right time. The club was in the doldrums. It had inexperienced leadership, an aging membership and was losing its spark. To many we were just going through the motions. We had good dances, but any excitement was coming from the caller not the membership. We were losing money on about a third of our dances and were surviving by the thinnest of margins.

A 35th Anniversary celebration was proposed at one of the general membership meetings but seemed to fall on deaf ears, but during the next few days many club members came forth and volunteered to help and a committee was formed. It was decided to continue with the regular theme nights (pie night, team night, etc) but also add a separate theme or event to each dance over the next year that had to do with the club's 35th Anniversary. A few of the activities included nostalgia night, a night to recognize past presidents, a display of scrap books, and a trophy, badge, dangle night. Different highlights in the clubs history were presented at dances throughout the year. These activities brought new energy to the club. There was better membership attendance and more visitors came because each dance was special and no one really knew what was going to happen.

As a follow up to the Anniversary year a "stir the bucket" committee was formed. We recognized that the pace from the anniversary year could not be maintained. Going forward there will be fewer theme nights but efforts will be made to make each dance a little different using activities separate from the traditional ones each club uses. None of the dances will ever be considered "regular" club dances. We want fun and excitement, so that there is a reason people want to attend Broken Wheel Squares dances.

Strategies for success employed by Broken Wheel Squares.

Don't ask for volunteers. When you need something done, speak to people directly. Ask someone personally to do a job. If you want a moment of silence at a meeting, just ask for a volunteer.

Communicate. Use every means of communication that is available. Use email messages, write newsletter articles. Talk on the microphone at dances. Call people on the telephone. Make sure that conversations with individuals include the things you want people to know about. By the time someone hears and reads the message a few times it becomes their information as well as yours. Don't rely on a message being remembered if it is only seen one time. Let everyone know what is going on whenever you can.

Be positive. Don't let club members see you being anything but positive, all the time. Even when you wish you had more involvement from the membership, keep mentioning all the good things that are going on. Let everyone think that all the good things they hear are the norm, not the exception. Eventually, perhaps, things will be the way you actually desire them to be.

Work hard. Work as hard as everyone else, if not harder. Lead by example. Be involved with everything that is going on. Delegate the work out to others, but show that you are will to help as much as possible.

Do the right thing. Make sure to thank the members when they do something. Let them know that their efforts have been noticed and are appreciated.

Bring pride to the club. We want to be the club that people think about when they want to go or see square dancing. We want to be the club that others ask for when they have a community festival. We want to be the club that organizers call when they need an activity like ours on their program. We want the public to expect to see us when they are at certain events, and we want to show how much fun we are having and encourage them to have fun as well and join us.

For more information about Broken Wheel Squares contact Mike and Rose Speers at RVROSE@Earthlink.net or 28845 Serenity Lane, Wickliffe, OH 44092.