

EVENT PLANNING

Moderator: Dottie Welch

**Panelists: Walt Burr
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We will be covering the following items:

Planning a Large Event

Organizing a Large Event

Selection of Volunteers

Leadership

Promotion

Registration

In order to plan for an Event larger than the normal square dance evening/day, you need to start with selecting a Leader for this Event. If you are asked/or volunteer for a Leadership position, you need to do the following:

1) Evaluate your strengths and weaknesses.

a. Do you possess the ability and people skills necessary to interact with many others?

b. Do you possess the leadership skills that would inspire subordinates to accept and support decisions that you make? If you have difficulty in doing this self-analysis, seek an outside evaluation. This should not necessarily be an evaluation by a close friend unless they have always been brutally honest in their previous evaluations of you. This evaluation may be from someone other than a close friend, but someone whose opinions you have always respected and/or admired.

c. Do you have the ability and history of being able to judge the merits of others? This item is critical when selecting subordinates. You definitely do not want to surround yourself with "Yes" people, but you do want to select those who are willing to present their side of a discussion and yet when the decision is made, and it does not meet with their opinions, they are able to provide you with 100% support of the decision.

d. If you identify a weakness, add someone to your “Team” who has a strength in that area. We all know that not everyone can possess all of the attributes necessary to be an effective leader. However, if you have someone on your team who does possess some of those attributes where you see a weakness in yourself, it works much as a marriage between Husband and Wife. The necessary attributes merge between the event leader and the staff member. This results in a very productive product.

2) Select your “core” staff and include them in the planning stage of this event.

a. Allow all of the “core” staff to contribute their ideas for the successful conclusion of the Event being planned.

b. However, when planning a large Event it is not always possible to operate in a Democratic system. All of the “core” staff must buy into the conclusion that the leader will listen to all ideas, but the final decision rests with the leader.

3) Selecting and Recruiting Volunteers.

a. We all know that some of the decline of our activity may be the result of dancers not willing to step up and take on a leadership role. However, when you accept that leadership role, you need to evaluate the needs of the Event in terms of the number and skills of volunteers. Once that evaluation is processed, seek volunteers to fill those positions. You may not know every dancer in the area. You will undoubtedly need to rely on the assessment of some of your “core” staff. Between all the members of the “core” staff, you should be able to identify dancers to fill all the needs.

b. Once a dancer/dancers have been identified to possess that talent/ability required for a position, it is up to the leader to have face-to-face contact with those individuals and to convince them of the need for their services and the benefits they will derive from their participation. It is amazing what the feeling of “A Job Well Done” does for an active participant.

4) Organizing a large Event requires the ability to multi-task and to let personal feelings toward a person or situation not affect the results desired.

a. The selection of your “core” staff must include loyalty; the ability to trust the individual; the ability to depend on the staff for the successful completion of a project and to remain friends upon completion of the Event. Having organized a National Square Dance Convention®, we have often told our volunteers that if you were to lose one friend through the process of conducting this Event, it is not worth it.

b. When organizing a large Event, it is necessary for the Leader to be able to visualize the “Large Picture” of the entire Event. You will have staff members responsible for one area and they will concentrate on that area. But it is extremely important that the Leader be able to see all of the areas equally.

5) Promotion. When you are hosting a large Event, you naturally want to entertain as many dancers as you can encourage to attend your Event. This requires travel and expenses. Be prepared when you assume a position to travel and promote this Event as much as possible. This can result in many miles of travel and can be a financial investment as well. If you are doubtful that you can spend the time necessary or incur the financial obligation, be up front and say so. No one will “look down” on you because you can’t do that. It is just the opposite as they will admire the fact that you were forthcoming in what you could not do and they will find someone else to do those things.

6) Selling Registrations is a huge item. In planning a large “Event” such as a National Square Dance Convention® or State Festival/Convention, you need to start the process of selling Registrations as soon as possible. Be prepared that you will hear many excuses of why the dancers cannot purchase the Registration at this time. They run the gamut from “I don’t know if I will even be alive at that time” to “You know I will be there, but I am not ready to purchase a Registration at this time.” We can tell you that when we were promoting the 54th National Square Dance Convention®, when we received the “I don’t know whether I will even be alive then”, our answer was if you aren’t, wouldn’t that be a great donation to Square Dancing?” Sometimes it worked and sometimes it didn’t.

7) BMI-ASCAP Fees for a large Event.

a) BMI Licensing fee for the use of music is based on the number of attendees. The rate for 2015 is \$.07 per attendee. You may deduct from the attendance figures the number of “workers” you have participating in this event. The minimum amount charged is \$155.00 per year.

b) ASCAP licensing fees for the use of music are based on the attendance, but is a flat fee as follows:

1. Less than 1,500 attendees	\$ 123.00
2) 1,501 – 3,000	\$ 431.00
3) 3,001 – 5,000	\$ 719.00
4) 5,001 – 10,000	\$1,335.00
5) 10,001 – 20,000	\$2,463.00
6) 20,001 – 50,000	\$4,927.00
7) 50,001 – 100,000	\$7,390.00
8) More than 100,000	\$9,752.00

Again, you may deduct from the attendance count the number of “workers” you have participating in your event.

