

INTRODUCTION

There are many details that must be considered in planning, promoting, publicizing, conducting and evaluating a Club Special. A Club Special is a festive affair sponsored by a club for the fun and fellowship of the local square dance community. A Club Special may also be financially rewarding to the sponsoring organization, but is considered only as a secondary purpose of the event.

PLANNING A CLUB SPECIAL

Every social event should be planned to meet specific club needs. In planning a Club Special and determining club needs, certain basic questions must be addressed:

WHY? . . . Why are we considering a Club Special? Do we need to sponsor a Special or a club party for the local dancers? Do we need to sponsor a Special to raise operating funds for the club? Do we want to introduce a new or nationally known caller to benefit the local area dancers?

WHAT? . . . What will make this event "Special?" What are the goals for this event? What will attract dancers?

WHO? . . . Who is going to do the planning and work? Who will be the special attraction (caller, cuer)? Who will benefit from this event? Who is going to do the various tasks such as publicity, set up, clean up, etc.?

WHEN? . . . When is the most feasible date? What is the time line or time table for the Special?

WHERE? . . . Where is the Special going to be held? Consider all facets — anticipated attendance; physical arrangements of dance floor, stage, chairs, tables, sound equipment; registration; displays; refreshments; etc.

HOW? . . . How much is everything going to cost - dance facility, caller, cuer, prompter, instructor, travel expenses, lodging, materials, rentals, refreshments, etc.? How many dancers will be needed to break even financially?

PURPOSE OF SPECIALS

The prime reasons for conducting a special are to dance to national know callers and cuers; to sponsor a "square dance party" for the local square dance community and to raise operating funds for the club.

ORGANIZATION

To sponsor a Club Special dictates a need for a special dedicated group to plan and conduct the event. A typical Special Dance organization would include committees for Administration, Decorations, Program, Publicity, Finances, Raffle, Refreshments, Ticket Sales, Welcome and Farewell, After Party, Final Report and a Dance Chairman.



SCHEDULE

Twelve months in advance of the event should find the planning phase well established. Advance planning is the key to a successful dance. Many tasks will require coordination with other committees and early start time. Early publicity and promotion of a Club Special is of primary importance and requires advance thought and planning.

MEETINGS

Several meetings should be scheduled prior to the event to assure that the plans are being followed and all tasks are being accomplished. Chairmen of each committee presents their reports of their actions and status of their functions.

COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Each Committee should have their responsibilities defined from the start of the project. Each Committee Chairman should be well aware of the required tasks, budget, relationships with other Committees and overall plans for the Club Special.

SPECIAL DANCE CHAIRMAN

The Special Dance Chairman is normally appointed by the Club President and is responsible for providing the necessary leadership to assure a successful dance. Although committees do the planning and the work, an experienced leader is necessary. The Dance Chairman guides the committees in their thinking, planning, and carrying out the approved dance plans. The Dance Chairman should not unilaterally "run" the

show but be committee-minded and think in the "WE" mode.

The Dance Chairman should assure the following functions are performed:

1. Dance Background: Obtain as much information as possible about previous Club Specials. Don't make the same mistakes others have made.
2. Dance Date & Location: In coordination with the Club Officers, determine the date and location of the dance and publicize in local square dance media and community.
3. Dance Staff: Contact caller, cuer, MC, etc. to assure availability, confirm fees, and conditions such as transportation, lodging, etc. Document all arrangements and agreements in writing.
4. Dance Budget: Develop a budget for the Club Special.
5. Dance Theme: Establish the theme of the Club Special.
6. Contracts: Execute contracts for facilities, caller, cuer, MC, exhibitions, exhibitors, etc.
7. Committee Chairmen: Select good, enthusiastic, hard-working club members to head up the dance committees. Develop an organization chart of the committee.
8. Committee Meetings: Schedule meetings in advance and promote attendance.

9. Final Report: Document all essential facts and activities of the Special Dance in a Final Report. The report should contain facts, figures, quantities, deposits, disbursements, profits, losses, schedules, problem areas, recommendations and other details that will be of benefit to the next Dance Chairman.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Additional information is in the USDA 40-page Booklet B-028 entitled "*Club Specials*." The booklet contains information and procedures for Special Dances, sample organization chart, sample letters, responsibilities and schedules for the Dance Chairman and Committee Chairs:

For additional information about USDA or any of its programs, please contact:

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CLUB SPECIALS



This information sheet was developed by the Education Committee of the UNITED SQUARE DANCERS OF AMERICA, INC. and will provide a brief discussion of planning and conducting a Club Special Dance. For additional information about Club Specials, see USDA Booklet B-028.

Leadership Education material can also be printed directly from USDA web site at www.usda.org

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