

Minutes of the Federation Meeting March 9, 2013 at The Camellia Festival

In attendance:

Lucy Chang (President)

Loui Tucker (Secretary)

Sabine Zappe (Treasurer)

Adony Beniares (Board member)

Becky Beniares (Board member)

Bill Lidicker (Board member)

Laura Douglass (Board member)

Richard Graham (member)

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 AM. A quorum was not present. Eight Board members are needed for a quorum. Because of the lack of a quorum, there was a suspension of the reading of the minutes.

The primary focus for this meeting was to discuss various items on the agenda. No decisions can be made without a quorum although a consensus can be reached.

Budget Process

Finance Committee Chair Laura Douglass said she did not get full responses to her request for information for the budget. Most committee chairs responded that Laura should just use last year's figures.

- Marion Rose, Membership Chair, did say she will need new envelopes and they have to be printed. Lucy said she would look for some inexpensive printing firms. Marion might need more for postage due to the increase of a penny per stamp.
- Will Gary Anderson need more money for *Let's Dance!* magazine in the future? The April issue is going to 32 pages (up from 24) because he received many requests for advertisements for Federation sponsored events – It Takes Two, Stockton, the Flash Mob, the Maypole, Scholarship and Promotion Fund and for folk dance events in general - Balkan Plus Party, Stockton Camp, Mendocino Camp, Rose Festival, etc. – and there were many members writing about the issue surrounding couple dances. The increase in pages will significantly raise costs because the increased advertisement fees do not cover the cost of the printing.

Couple Dancing and the "It Takes Two" Workshop

The discussion then turned to the up-coming "It Takes Two" workshop on partnering techniques. Laura mentioned her article in the April issue of *Let's Dance!* magazine about couple dancing. Bill Lidicker said he had an article that had not been printed yet, but that it would be printed, hopefully in the April issue. Loui mentioned she also had an article that would be in the April issue.

Lucy mentioned that learning partner techniques is important because you can't follow behind a line to learn partnering techniques. She said that when she asked Richard Powers to teach at the workshop, he eagerly accepted the offer. Todd Wagner and Lucy are mutually supportive of each other's folk dancing goals so he was also willing to teach at the workshop. Todd and Richard will also teach some basics that don't involve a lot of turning.

Several of those present mentioned that when we advertise and talk about and write about the “It Takes Two” Workshop, we need to stress that it is about *learning* techniques, learning to be a good partner, not about learning dances. Learning to be a good partner is an *on-going process*, not something achieved in a single two-hour lesson. Some people work on couple technique (West Coast Swing was mentioned) for decades.

Some additional comments worth noting:

- Couple dancing is not just two people dancing individually next to each other. There are many more layers. It’s all about team work and coordination.
- Two people dancing together have a shared energy that has to be used correctly, which is both the fun and the challenge.
- It’s worth it to work on couple techniques for the occasional magical high when everything falls into place.

There was a short discussion about the concept of rotation and how that process is used in various types of dances. Often when a step is not working with partner A, it works with partner B. Learning how it works with partner B will help understand how to make it work with partner A. Couple dancing is the least ‘selfish’ as dancers need to share or the steps fail. If increasing participation and attendance at folk dance events is our goal and people come to dancing for different reasons, then we need to try many different things, which is why Lucy and Loui felt the Federation needs to promote couple dancing.

Lucy has been perturbed by some of the negative reactions to the “It Takes Two” Workshop, but it was also noted that we still have time to publicize and convince people that it is worth it. The Federation represents couple dancers and fans of Balkan non-partner dances, children as well as adults, specialists as well as generalists. The attendees of this Board meeting agreed that we, the Federation, should be promoting events that will appeal to all groups.

Let’s Dance! magazine as PDF on line

There was a short discussion on the possibility of offering *Let’s Dance!* magazine as a PDF in addition to, or instead of, printing and mailing hard copy. Many of the same points were made as have been made in the past.

- Some of our older members do not have easy access to a computer.
- Many members don’t like reading magazines on a computer screen.
- Libraries are not going to archive PDFs on a computer and it is important to maintain archives.
- You cannot leave a PDF on the table in the doctor’s/dentist’s office (without printing it and it probably will not look as nice as the printed magazine).

Along the same lines, Laura suggested that the minutes of the Board meeting be put on the Federation website. This idea will have to be taken up at the next Board meeting so the full Board can make that decision.

Dancers-On-Call

Lucy talked about what she is calling the Dancers-on-Call Project. Lucy reported that she occasionally gets requests for the Federation to provide dancers to perform at a festival, school program, senior centers, etc. The most recent example is that Sequoia High School is going to have an International Day on Saturday, May 25. They would like a group to perform for 25 minutes on a 24 x 24 foot stage. Lucy is working informally with dancers she knows to put together a group to attend and perform.

Lucy suggested that, in the future, we should develop a spreadsheet/database with the names of dancers who could make themselves available for such events. The spreadsheet/database would include things like what kinds of dances a dancer could do, his/her availability, and her/her contact info. When someone contacts the Federation with a request for a performance, someone who manages the data would put out a call and dancers would respond to the call, and those who were available and willing would assemble and dance.

Once we set up a spreadsheet/database, we could even expand into promoting dance by calling, for example, local churches to see if they would like us to come and perform.

Loui noted that when she gets requests like this, she often suggests that the person contacting her review the list of performance group on the Federation website.

Lucy said she will set up the Dancers-On-Call as her mission as past president of the Federation.

Business cards.

Laura also mentioned that it would be nice to have some type of business cards printed. We have several types - both formal and informal. Lucy gave Laura samples and said Susan and Loui designed another type and a batch was printed. Loui suggested that the website be added to the text on the business cards.

The Federation website's calendar.

Loui mentioned that the Federation website calendar is getting more hits. Loui gets daily reports. When the calendar was first introduced, she would get a few reports per week, with 1 or 2 views reported. Now she gets reports every day, often with 6-7 hits per day. Right before a major dance event such as the Heritage Festival, there are 10-12 hits per day. The total is well over 1200 total hits since she created the website calendar in September of 2011.

Fund-raising ideas.

Loui recalled the tote bags and t-shirts that the Federation produced in the past and gave away as member benefits. She would like the Board to consider reproducing some or all of these items and selling them. The Federation has a seller's license, so why not sell things as fund-raisers? We could also add bumper strips and decals, or pens with a logo or slogan on them.

Adony mentioned we could also market the designs through websites like smugmug or word press. Perhaps people would like to have the logo or slogan on a coffee mug, a pen, or a particular style and color of t-shirt. This needs to be taken up with the Publicity Committee and if funding is needed, and we want to have some of these items for sale at Statewide, we would need to get Board approval at the April meeting.

It was suggested that Loui develop a short paragraph proposal with some backup data and send it out in advance of the April meeting so that Board members could review it prior to the Board meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 PM.