

A Message from our Chairman.....

In its efforts to fulfill the ARTS Mission the ARTS Governing Board has identified new opportunities to generate public awareness and promote growth and acceptance of contemporary Square, Round and Traditional Folk Dance by encouraging and assisting a coalition of allied dance groups.

Among these opportunities is the release of a movie this summer which will include Square Dancing. "The Astronaut Farmer" starring Billy Bob Thornton, Bruce Willis and others is scheduled to be released in August. The plot of this movie – A NASA astronaut is forced to retire so he could save his family farm. But he cannot give up his dream of space travel and looks to build his own rocket, despite the government's threats to stop him. While on the farm, he is enticed to try Square Dancing.

Dance groups are encouraged to contact theaters in their area showing "The Astronaut Farmer" and offer to put on demonstrations. With the release of this movie scheduled for August the timing is perfect for clubs to promote their upcoming classes. The subtitle for this movie is "one small step for man, one giant leap for farmers." It is hoped that by seizing the opportunity to promote square dancing in conjunction with this movie we can capitalize on the enthusiasm generated and take "one small step for man, one giant leap for dancing."

During the ARTS Summer meeting in San Antonio the Governing Board viewed an interesting presentation on incentive / buzz marketing, involving the awarding of prizes for enticing new dancers into the activity. An informative presentation of the "Friendship Set to Music-The TV Show" developed by the Central East Region of the Square Dance Federation of Minnesota was shown to ARTS.

In addition to these new initiatives, the Alliance of Round, Traditional and Square-Dance (ARTS) continues to advance its current programs: ARTS Add-A-Buck; ARTS Dance Travel; Dance America Benefit Dance (Feb. 29, 2008); Learn to Dance 866-455-ARTS; Demographic Surveys; Square Dancing 101; Grant Applications; and many others.

All Dancers are encouraged to support these programs and lend a hand wherever possible.

Jim Maczko - Chairman of the Governing Board
ALLIANCE OF ROUND TRADITIONAL
AND SQUARE-DANCE, INC.
Chairman@arts-dance.org

ARTS-Dance at 55th NSDC in San Antonio, TX

The updated ARTS Tri-Fold brochure was inserted into the registration packets of convention attendees. There was good attendance as well as participation in the seminar "ARTS - Where Are We Now?" conducted by the ARTS Officers. There was also an impressive display in the Showcase of Ideas with quite a bit of material picked up by the Convention attendees.

The ARTS-DANCE Summer meeting was held the Sunday immediately following the NSDC. We were pleased that a number of dancers who had heard about The ARTS were able to attend as guests to learn more about the organization.

At the Summer Governing Board Meeting, Michael Streby showed a video targeted to help dancers understand ARTS goals, missions and accomplishments. There is still work to be completed on the video before it will be available for distribution.

ARTS DANCERS SURVEY -

Michael Streby reported since the results of all the surveys conducted so far have shown very consistent results, there was no survey conducted at this year's National Square Dance Convention®. But since next year the 56th NSDC will be in the Eastern US in Charlotte, North Carolina, ARTS will request permission to conduct a survey there next June.

ARTS - Learn to Dance - Toll Free Number

It was reported that so far 86 inquiries using the toll free number 1-800-455-ARTS (2787) on the magnetic bumper sticker have been received from 23 states and the District of Columbia in the United States and one from Nova Scotia. 15 calls have come in from California and 10 calls each from North and South Carolina. All have been referred to contacts in their respective areas.

Public Relations Proposal -

The Weber/Shandwick Public Relations proposal included seven items - Sample News Release and How-to Fact Sheet, Media Tips and Tricks, Square Dance Background, PR Marketing Success Stories, Stock photo on Square, Round and Traditional Dancing, Program Recommendations and News Releases on Survey Results. These items will be revisited and discussed at our next meeting.

Visit the ARTS Web Site

www.arts-dance.org

Incentive Marketing Proposal -

Jim and Judy Taylor, Judy Winter and Dan McPeck proposed a marketing strategy called "Incentive Marketing" or sometimes referred to as "Buzz Marketing" - providing incentives to those in the dance activity which are designed to encourage more individual participation in the marketing effort. It is viewed as a start for coordinating efforts of square dancers across the country toward everyone's common goal of increasing the number of dancers and enhancing our image.

They suggest "Buzz Marketing" where anyone can participate. Word of mouth marketing is a very effective way to spread the word. A major component of this proposal is the creation, maintenance and use of the Internet and a web based tracking and reporting system. Volunteering to create such a sample web site was Ken Robinson. After extensive discussion a committee of the persons named above and Jim Weber will further investigate this incentive/Buzz Marketing program and create a proposal and cost estimates for the Fall Meeting in Orlando, FL.

All agreed that an Electronic Mailing Network was the best method to disseminate ARTS information directly to all dancers. Some areas already have set up such systems. An e-mail distribution system can work like a mail tree where the message is sent to individual state or region coordinators, with the coordinators sending the message on to smaller groups. Since more study and investigation was needed a committee was appointed to further investigate this matter and report in October.

Advertising featuring square dance - Aleve, the New York Lottery and Liberty Mutual, Riverside, CA. have all featured the Square Dance activity in recent ads. It was suggested we need to let those producing such commercials know that we appreciate the positive image portrayed. Aleve's website is http://www.aleve.com/contact_from.html. Del Reed, who handles the ASK ARTS question, has already sent out suggestions to those who have asked how to respond to such advertising. Check in your local square dance publications or call 321-633-1306 or e-mail at askarts@arts-dance.org

Teaching Dancing in Schools -

Order forms for Moving and Grooving from Canada and Square Dancing 101 from California, both dealing with teaching square dancing in schools, may be found on the ARTS website.

Work is now under way to create a similar program featuring Contra Dancing. Contact Jeff and Kathy Smith at j-smith04@charter.net for more information.

February 29, 2008 - Dance America - The flyers are available. All ARTS organizations, clubs and individuals are encouraged to sponsor this extra special Day of Dance to benefit The ARTS and help raise money for promotional materials for recruiting.

Plan now to sponsor a Benefit Dance in your area. For more information contact our website: www.ARTS-dance.org

Add-A-Buck Program -

Information packets were mailed out to 48 Reps. There will be a follow up to see if the packet was received and how the recipient plans to use it. If you did not receive one and would like to assist ARTS, please contact the ARTS Secretary ARTSSecretary@aol.com or download at <http://www.arts-dance.org>.

Friendship Set to Music -

The CE region of Minnesota has created 61 hour long new cable TV shows featuring square and round dancing. It is a lively TV series highlighting modern western square dancing. These show are distributed to 70 cable stations in MN, ND, SD, IA, NJ, KS, WI, and HI. The series is available to other clubs and associations who would like to use the shows. The programs are available for a donation of at least \$6.00 each through the CE region of MN. Phone 952-472-0006 or e-mail sqdance@ties2.net or the web www.squaredanceminnesota.com

To get these shows airing on your public-access TV channel, contact your local cable TV station and ask if they will air your show if you bring them tapes or DVD's or if the show is mailed directly to them. If they say "yes", contact Dee for tapes or DVD's. If you have a local college who will help you create your own shows (one is never enough), call Dee Scott for how to go this route.

Public-access cable TV stations serve the local subscriber, either by playing what they request or by airing what they create. Dee described at the ARTS Summer meeting in great detail how this valuable program began in 2004 and has continued. Theirs is truly a not-for-profit effort of promoting our activity. ARTS will help with publicity and promotion of this program. A tri-fold brochure with additional information is also available.

ARTS & YTB TRAVEL -

The ARTS and online YTB Travel site has been activated and ARTS has already received a portion of the travel commissions. Organizations and individuals are encouraged to use the site www.arts-dancetravel.com Please check out and use the travel website that supports dancing. Did your read about it in Ask ARTS #5 reply?

Fall ARTS Meeting -

Sunday, October 1, 2006 in Orlando, FL at the Clarion Hotel near the airport. This meeting is scheduled to start at 9 AM. Guests are always welcome to attend. Please notify ARTS Secretary Jerry Reed - if you plan on attending.

Late Flash - New Auxiliary Board Member: At the last meeting of The National Association of Square and Round Dance Suppliers (NASRDS) the members voted to join ARTS-Dance as an Auxiliary Governing Board Member.