



A Message from the Board:

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

New Year is a special kind of holiday. We have gone through Thanksgiving, which gave us an opportunity to express gratitude for our blessings. We have gone through Christmas, or Hanukkah, or Kwanzaa (and there are others!) which offer a chance to renew our spiritual (and family) connections. With the New Year we are prompted to think ahead about the coming months and what we would like to do or achieve. We all know that those plans and aspirations are often unfulfilled.

But with square dancing, we have an easy opportunity to:

—Have fun! (and Sandy plans great treats too!)

—Exercise! (is the pace of the calls getting faster?)

—Make friends! (and Ileana mixes up our squares so that we all get to mingle!)

And one of the things we as members of Sets in Step should keep foremost in mind is **how we can expand our circle of friends.**

LET'S GET NEW MEMBERS!

Our experience in getting new people to our introductory dance lessons suggests the two most effective ways are, first, through **word of mouth**—talking to our friends and neighbors and relatives! Talking about the fun, exercise, and socializing square dancing promotes can entice them to try square dancing—and the **first two lessons are free!** Ileana has prepared **flyers** to hand out to people and post in places like churches and meeting venues with the details.

And second, we have found that **our signs** are also getting people's attention. They are bright yellow and enticing! And Ileana has more signs for all of us to put in our yards or other strategic spots to alert people that the fun will start soon!

So, please distribute flyers and let Ileana know if you can help with a sign! It's not too late to do this immediately after our first January dance: Ileana will have flyers and signs.

KEY DATES

Our **first dance** of the New Year: Friday, **JANUARY 2** with Shauna Kaaria calling for us. Dancing starts at our regular time, 7:30 pm, at Knights of Columbus hall.

The start of our **new dance lessons**: Tuesday, **JANUARY 13** at our regular place, Mount Olive Lutheran Church, 3561 Foothill Ave., in La Crescenta, with Dale Hoppers calling, though Phil Farmer will be substituting while Dale recovers from a knee operation. Lessons start at 7:45 pm for new SSD classes

and 7 pm for Angel dancers. It's only \$3 dollars for Mainstream/PLUS lessons. For beginning SSD dancers, the Jan 13th and 20th classes are free; after that it is \$6 for beginners.

And are you an Angel? If you are reading this, you likely are! All you have to do is show up and dance at the SSD lessons starting at 7:45. But a better deal is to come at 7 pm for the PLUS lessons from Dale and then stay to help new dancers learn the SSD steps—and the same \$3 gets you both SSD and PLUS lessons!

VISITATIONS

A good way to start the new year dancing is to go for visitation, especially at dances whose clubs have members who come to our dances.

In January, the Sierra Hillbillies have a dance Sunday, January 4, with Paul Waters calling. The address is Valencia United Methodist Church, 25718 McBean Parkway, Santa Clarita. Al York will be coordinating the visitation, so get in touch with him if you are going.

FALL 2025 SSD CLASS

The fall 2025 dance class was an exciting success. We had four or five squares every class with strong support from our Angels. Dale continued to do his energetic lessons with enthusiasm. Ileana kept things organized and lively and mixed up the squares smartly, ensuring that newbies got the maximum chance to learn to dance.

And the result? We graduated 10 new SSD dancers December 2 ready for our winter Beyond SSD lessons starting January 13 (and we had one possible additional grad plus two other couples close to completing the program).



The new grads got a free dance ticket for them to wade into the regular Sets in Step dance world. And some did! At the December 5 dance, ably called by Rod Shuping, none other than Dale Hoppers (with Kathy) showed up to dance with 5 of our new graduates! It was a hoot! We found out Dale can dance (and not just talk) and so can our new graduates! Please welcome and encourage all our graduates when you see them.

HOLIDAY DANCE

We had a jolly holiday dance! We hope you were there to see Michael Kellogg doing his usual fantastic calling! Welcome attendees included 29 visitors, promoting our buoyant holiday spirits! And all that without an alcoholic drink!

Again we are greatly indebted to Sandy for orchestrating the food array, providing energy to keep things going, and Susan again did decorating magic. We are also indebted to the many other members—as well as some visitors—who contributed decorations and food to the festive success of the dance.

NOTABLE RETIREMENT

Over the years our club has existed there have always been people who come and go. We are sad to see them go, especially when health issues are the cause, and glad to see them return, whatever the reason.

Bill Reardon has officially let us know that he is retiring from dancing. We are hoping to get Bill to an upcoming dance to visit in person so that we can recognize all his years with us, and thank him for his enthusiastic support of our club.

It should be pointed out that Bill is in his 90s (as is Bob Keiter! and we have had other people who danced well into their 90s!) We will not claim that square dancing promoted their long lives. But we would like to think that it enriched them. Exercise and friendships are our key ingredients—just what the doctor ordered!

A FINAL WORD OF APPRECIATION FOR KARYN

As many of you know our club is small but with a big heart (this is a pitch to help get more people dancing with us!). Our president, Karyn Smithson-Hughes, has provided steady and caring guidance for our troop through the past several years and kept us moving forward. This year was no exception—even when facing many of the formidable challenges she and Don encountered.

The latest, occurring not long after Don broke his neck interrupting his treatments for Parkinson's, was Karyn's heart attack. Fortunately she got needed treatment quickly and was able to come home for the holidays. She is recovering nicely and we hope to see her at our dances next year.

Thank you Karen for all you have done!

Happy New Year to All!

From Jay Noell

Sets in Step Publicity Chairperson



2026 Sets in Step club dances:

Date	Caller	Theme (for party dances)	Refreshments (for party dances)
JAN 2	Shauna Kaaria		
JAN 16	Janienne Kellogg	Welcome New Dancers	sweet: Carol salty: Susan fruit: Sandy
FEB 6	Don Schadt		
FEB 20	Mike Seastrom	Sock Hop '50's (decorator: Marie)	sweet: Stam salty: Marie fruit: Connie
MAR 6	Dale Hoppers		
MAR 20	Paul Waters	Spring Fling	sweet: Al salty: Karyn fruit: Don
APR 3	Phil Farmer		
APR 17	Bill Gipson	Hippity Hop	sweet: Gail salty: Jim fruit: Arlene
MAY 1	Janienne Kellogg		
MAY 15	Darren Gallina and the Cross Fire Band	68 th Anniversary Dance!	Sandy will have signups for everyone to bring something.
JUNE 5	Shauna Kaaria		
JUNE 19	Michael Kellogg	Angel Appreciation	sweet: Estela salty: Lakshmi fruit: Jay
JULY 3	Andy Allemao		
JULY 17	Rod Shuping	Novelty T-shirts	sweet: Pat salty: Will fruit: Ileana
AUG 7	Dale Hoppers		
AUG 21	Don Schadt	Aloha Night	sweet: Yukie salty: Gary fruit: Jinger
SEPT 4	Bill Gipson		
SEPT 18	Phil Farmer	Baseball Fever	sweet: Bob salty: Carol fruit: Sandy
OCT 2	Paul Waters		
OCT 16	tbd	Guys N Ghouls	sweet: Susan salty: Stam fruit: Marie

NOV 6	Mike Seastrom		
NOV 20	Mike Haworth	Turkey Trot	sweet: Connie salty: Karyn fruit: Don
DEC 4	Shauna Kaaria		
DEC 18	Michael Kellogg	Holiday Joy	Food will be provided by club members. Our party chair will have signups ahead of time.

The information above is subject to change! Find the latest info on our website:

<https://www.setsinstep.org/schedule-of-dances-and-events.html>

Some memories from our December 19th holiday dance:



Celebrate!!!



January birthday:
Jan. 11th – Al York

and a reminder: Board Meeting 1/7/2026 at 7:00 PM via Zoom... minutes and Zoom info will be emailed ahead of time.