

California Square Dance Council, Inc. Youth Advisory Committee Report May 10, 2003

It's been a busy quarter with State Convention, the scholarship program and activities at Silver State in Reno. All have had very positive outcomes, and the word is out that the youth dancers are beginning to come back and be a presence at our festivals.

NEW YOUTH CLUB – RIVER CITY RUGRATZ

The Associated Square Dancers of Superior California gained a new club when the River City Rugratz youth club joined the association on April 13th with 16 youth members and 18 adult members. Since that time 3 additional youth have joined the club. Their next dance will be held on Sunday, June 15th from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Orangevale Grange Hall in Orangevale, CA (near Sacramento). The Fathers' Day event will be a combined dance featuring Scot Byars and BBQ dinner for the whole family. Everyone is invited to participate. So far membership has come from as far away as Graeagle (nearly a three-hour drive away) and Sparks, NV, so that the youth can dance together.

STATE CONVENTION

The youth program at the 2003 State Convention was a huge success, with over three squares of youth dancers participating in the program. Special thanks to all of the callers who shared time in the youth hall, and to all of the people who dropped by to "check things out." Ben & Terri Jellested did a fine job of "frogifying" the room, and it was great to see so many of the youth dancers participating in the Grand March. The only complaint – they want a bigger room for next year!

YOUTH COMPETITION

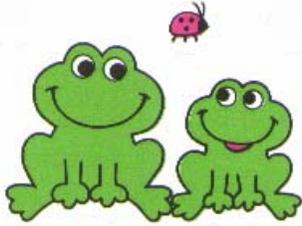
The second annual Youth Square Dance Competition was a complete success with three squares of dancers participating. Please see separate report on the competition.

DOOR PRIZE TICKETS

We met our goal of at least 700 State Convention Grand Prize tickets sold in an effort to support the Youth Scholarship Program. We hope Council will continue to allow the youth to sell Grand Prize tickets as a source of funding for the scholarship program.

SILVER STATE SQUARE AND ROUND DANCE FESTIVAL YOUTH PROGRAM

The Silver State Festival in Reno, NV, last weekend saw over three squares of youth dancers participating in their program. They set aside a special hall on Friday night, Saturday afternoon and Saturday night for the youth dancers. Attendance was low on Friday, with the hall closing down by 8:30 p.m., but the program was well attended on Saturday with Ben Goldberg closing out their program with a 25-minute marathon dance. Ben offered the ongoing challenge ... "so you're gonna let the 'old man' wear you out?" Hardly! The youth danced the last hour of the evening in the main halls before adjourning to Bonnie Abramson's room for an after party. There was a lot of enthusiasm and we gained several new names for our youth mailing list. The festival committee sponsored a pizza party on Saturday night for the youth, which was very much appreciated.



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SURVEY

In the next few weeks we are going to be conducting a survey of all of the festivals around the state asking what your policies are regarding the youth as far as admission prices, age policies, whether or not you have a special hall and/or program for the youth, etc. The purpose of the survey will be two-fold ... first to see if we can establish some average “guidelines” for festivals to get some consistency from event to event, and secondly, to help promote whatever youth activities are available. Discounted admission for youth dancers is very important – if we don’t make it affordable for families to attend then they are going to stay home. We are also looking for some consistency in what age range is considered a youth dancer. We’re hoping that once we conduct this survey on a statewide basis USDA might consider doing a similar survey on a national basis so that we can share information on youth dancing across the country. Please watch for these surveys and encourage your festival chairmen to complete them and return them to us. We have a youth dancer who has volunteered to coordinate the gathering of information.

GOLDEN STATE ROUND-UP, PLEASANTON

Youth dancing and luncheon has been planned for 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, May 24th for Golden State Round-up.

HARVEST HOEDOWN/YOUTH CALLER AFTER PARTY

Several activities are planned for the youth at Harvest Hoedown. The Youth Advisory Committee and youth dancers will be operating one of the concession stands as a fundraiser for the youth promotional fund. In addition, there will be a youth-sponsored after party on Saturday night that will designated a “Green Caller/Open Mike” event for youth callers. Whether they have any experience or not all youth callers or “wanna-be’s” will be welcome to take a turn at the microphone. Scot Byars has offered a series of coaching clinics to assist in selecting music, technique, etc. The first of these will be offered on June 15th from noon to 2:00 p.m., prior to the River City Rugratz dance in Orangevale.

2004 STATE CONVENTION TRAIL END DANCE

The California Youth Dancers will be hosting the trail-end dance for the 2004 State Convention in Sacramento. Calling the event the “Hooterville Hoedown” (appropriately named after the *Petticoat Junction* television show), the dance will be held from 7:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. on Thursday night of the convention at Cal Expo. Scot Byars will serve as MC for the evening, joined by what we hope will be a showcase of former youth callers who are now “all grown up.” Admission will be \$3, with all profits from the evening going towards the youth scholarship and youth promotional funds.

SCHOLARSHIP

And speaking of our scholarship, today marks the presentation of the first ever California Square Dance Council, Inc. Youth Scholarship. This happy occasion was made possible by the faith this Council put in the Youth Advisory Committee to put together a program and raise the money to support the scholarship. The first \$250 scholarship will be presented today, and there are currently sufficient funds in the account to cover three additional future scholarships. If the program continues to grow we might be able to offer multiple scholarships each year. Thank you all for your support.