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## Diversions



Photo by Bobbie Lo

# Dos-a-dos

## Callers and dancers abound.

"OK, you Thursday night people, this is a tune you can join in with. It's a waltz called 'Dreams come true,'" says a voice over the sound system in Prairie Hall.

Fifteen couples stand in a large circle waiting for the music to begin. The majority of them are quiet, almost serious looking, that is except for their dress: the women in brightly colored knee-length skirts with multi-layered petticoats and matching blouses; men in simpler, yet colorful western shirts.

The music starts, and the few who were talking stop, waiting to hear Pat McAnelly's cues to lead them through the dance. She tells them what to do and when to do it, though the people who are enrolled in the beginning classes may not be quite up to the more advanced sequences of round dancing.

The dancers are doing a move called round dancing, where the dancers move in dance-like steps in a circle. This is similar to square dancing, where the dancers walk to the music and cues.

There are 17 square and round dance clubs in what is called The Emerald Empire Area (Oakridge, Eugene, Springfield, Sweet Home and Cottage Grove), the majority of which are in Eugene and Springfield.

"It's a social act," Paul McAnelly explains. "People come to these dances to visit friends or make friends; the whole purpose of a dance is to get people together to enjoy each

other's company."

The Single Trees, a square/round dance group for singles, meets the second and fourth Friday each month.

The Single Trees is where the McAnellys met. In fact, it was at Prairie Hall where the couple had their wedding: a square dance wedding.

Four hundred and fifty square dancers attended the wedding. Pat's custom wedding dress was styled with several tiers — drop the bottom two tiers, add a petticoat and it became a square dance dress.

People usually become involved with square dancing after being invited to go dancing by friends who square dance. Members of the immediate family who square dance also get fellow family members square dancing.

"My wife had been interested in square dancing for about 10 years, and one day some friends suggested we try it. My wife sort of shanghaied me into it at first. After a while I was hooked," says Dale Roberson, who began square dancing in 1967 and calling the next year.

Roberson was using the mainstream calls on Friday, Feb. 27 at the Single Trees club, which consists of 125 different calls, each for a different movement. However, there are thousands of possible steps that can result because one call can be incorporated with another to form a certain step.

In addition to being a caller, the person who cues the dancers

is also a choreographer.

"I spend quite a bit of time to pick records for a dance and writing the choreography for it... selecting it to fit the music so it is nice to dance to," Roberson says.

There are two types of dance in square dancing. One is the hoe down, or hash calling. In it the caller coordinates his or her voice to the song but does not sing it. It is not a structured dance, and there are no limits on the calls in that program.

The second type of dance is where the caller sings the calls to the dance, substituting dance calls for certain words in the song. Because of the calls and cues, dancers must learn how to listen.

"They can't dance without listening," Roberson says.

It usually takes about 30 lessons to learn to dance the mainstream program. However, many people have no problem learning the calls and their meanings.

"They usually don't mean much of anything to anyone but the square dancers," Roberson says. The names were invented by choreographers throughout the years who just came up with a movement, giving names such as 'scoop back,' 'walking dog,' 'wheel deal,' 'peel off' or 'recycle.'

The calls used in square dancing are the same throughout the world. For instance, if a person goes to a square dance meeting

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