

# **SUGAR ON THE FLOOR BARN DANCE SOCIETY 2005 NEWSLETTER**

## **STATE OF THE DANCE**

Hey Barndancers!

We have not had a barn dance this year and I wanted to share some things with you. First, I am hoping to have a dance when Terrence Smith is around in October. Look for further details to come.

Recently a small group of dance enthusiasts met to discuss a couple of issues that we have struggled with over the years. The first issue is the feasibility of having more frequent dances (perhaps as often as once a month). The other issue is how to balance the fun of having dances that are family oriented and intergenerational with the desire by some to have more advanced and focused dances primarily for adults and/or experienced dancers. Ideally we would like to develop a local dance community which can enjoy dances at multiple levels. Many of our younger dancers are competent to the point of dancing with the best of the experienced dancers and we do not want to exclude them. More frequent dances would allow people to practice the skills they have acquired and continue to grow. I know that we have had people come to dances and leave because the dances were too elementary. I strongly believe that each dance should be progressive so that a person can attend a dance with little or no dance experience and progress through the evening gaining skills and experience with each dance. This in no way means I am not interested in or do not believe in the importance of family oriented dances. I would like to do both. I would like to see people progress through stages to become increasingly skilled regardless of age.

There are a couple of other long term issues that need to be resolved. If there were more frequent dances, we need to address the problems of a place to dance, a caller/teacher and a live band. These issues have not been a big problem in the past with only a few dances a year. We have had dances in a wide variety of venues. So long as there is a wood or tile floor and a space big enough, dances can occur in many places.

We do not have a local caller/teacher. We have some people with the ability to teach and call a few dances, but not one person who would be a regular caller. The last time Terry Simeone was here she graciously gave a brief orientation to calling to 4 or 5 local people. It would be wonderful to have a local caller (or more than one, or even a couple of people would be able to share the calling duties for a dance). I would be willing to try to arrange more opportunities for local people to learn to call and teach dances.

The musicians of the Sugar on the Floor Barn Dance Orchestra have been willing to donate their talents over the years. I have greatly appreciated their interest, musicianship, and dedication. However, if there were frequent dances, I feel strongly that there should be a core of a few musicians committed to playing regularly and they should be paid something. I do not want to limit who can play and the "orchestra" has and will always been open to anyone and everyone willing to learn and play the music.

Of course another issue is money. I would like to have all dances be free and open to everyone. I think we do quite well overall with asking for donations from the participants. One reason we have done well in terms of money is because we have

kept costs to a minimum, using free publicity, partnering with other organizations who have been willing to sponsor the dance and pay for the caller and any dance floor rental. However, with possibly increased costs (for musicians, space rental, caller and other unforeseen things), money may be an issue. I do not have a specific proposal to deal with this issue.

I am sharing all this information with you (and thank you if you have gotten this far in this rather long report) to keep you informed, but also to solicit any thoughts or feedback you might have about our barn dances. Please feel free to email me at [doorbarndance@hotmail.com](mailto:doorbarndance@hotmail.com) or call me at 743-7240. We also are on the Door County Folk Collective website ([dcfolk.com](http://dcfolk.com)) if you would like to check that out.

Our motto is "You can't beat fun for a good time". I think we have achieved that in our 10 year history. I would now like to take the next step, hopefully, to make things "even more funner" in the future. Thanks for all your support over the years.

Cy Rosenthal