

State and National Conventions

Square dances are the icing on the cake of life. Your daily life may be hectic or relaxed, but evenings and sometimes whole weekends offer the ultimate escape from reality: a square dance. For about three hours, you have the chance to visit with new and old friends, to get great mental and physical exercise, to lower your blood pressure, and to enjoy an inexpensive evening out that even includes a treat table. In one word, square dancing is FUN!

To keep this enjoyable pastime thriving, you need to support the dances by attending as many as possible throughout the year. When special dances are offered, you need to attend. As you plan your upcoming vacations, hopefully the opportunity to square dance is an important factor.

Club dances, special weekends and conventions provide lots of extraordinary dancing experiences and need your support. Costs rise daily; the number of dancers in attendance needs to rise accordingly.

In June, the Federation will host the 2015 MN state convention in Rochester, June 12, 13, 14. Flyers are available at most dances. Get your reservations in now for both the dance and your lodging. The 2016 convention is in Grand Forks; the 2017 is in Rochester.

National conventions also need your support; they provide lots of dance floors for every level of dancing. Some have already registered for the 64th National Convention, June 24-27, 2015, in **Springfield**, Massachusetts. 2016 is in **Des Moines**, Iowa, and 2017 is in **Cincinnati**, Ohio.

What's most awesome about square dance conventions is that they are created and worked by volunteers! No one is paid to plan or execute a convention! Incredible! The square dancers who bid for a national convention are pledging four years of their lives to be primarily devoted to making that convention happen if they win the bid! Every dancer needs to be there so these efforts are appreciated and enjoyed. The folks who volunteer to host a convention, be it state or national, have lots of out-of-pocket expenses--there is no huge budget anywhere in square dancing that pays their expenses.

Being located in the upper midwest, Minnesotans also have lots of neighboring conventions to attend: April 10-11, 2015 @ Prairie Meadows Convention Center, **Altoona**, IA 50009; 63rd North Dakota Square and Round Dance Convention – **Bismarck**, ND – April 24-25, 2015; Wisconsin's 56th will be in **North Fond du Lac**, WI 54937, August 7-9, 2015.

Other special weekends also require lots of work and planning by “volunteer” square dancers so try to attend as many of those as your schedule allows. If regular square dances, special weekends, and conventions are to be around in the future, they need dancers there now to keep their sponsors (clubs, regions, states, and nationals) solvent.