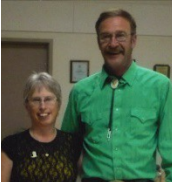


# TWICE-A-WEEK, 12 SESSION PROGRAM

- by Ron & Connie Morgan, RED DEER



## ABOUT THE CLUB

For the 2014-15 square dance season, the Red Deer Square Dance Club decided to try something new and untested for introducing New Dancers to square dancing. Instead of the usual 6-7 month lessons once a week, we wanted to do a 12 week, twice a week approach. Red Deer has always had lessons on a separate night than the regular dances, so our new dancers get more floor time right from the start than most other clubs who teach on their regular dance night.

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

At first, Ron & I were skeptical of the twelve weeks as it seemed like such a short amount of lesson time, but as soon as the lessons started, we realized that the twice a week made all the difference. At the one time a week, there was lots of time spent on review, with the twice a week, very little review was required. Because Red Deer is a Mainstream club, we wanted the New Dancers to be able to dance this year, so Ron used the ABC Program to start the first 3 lessons (the ones that are usually free) so that new people could join for the first week and a half. He then moved on to the Ten Week Program (Fast Track from CALLERLAB). Then he went through the rest of the Mainstream list and figured out what moves would logically follow others to come up with a 12 week teaching list with all Mainstream moves. We ask for the program to be paid for AFTER the first night, so that prospective dancers can experience one class with no obligation. We do not tell them it is FREE.

## ADVANTAGES

- The advantages of a 12 week program are numerous. The main ones are that very little review was needed, memory retention rate was vastly improved over a single time.
- The New Dancers could be integrated into the club sooner.
- The most important advantage is that we could have more than one class a year. In January we started another 12 week session.

## DISADVANTAGES

- Needless to say, there are a few disadvantages using this method, the biggest one being “Angel Burnout”. We do ask that the New Dancers from the first lessons come back to mentor the newest class, which gives them more floor time.
- “Caller Burnout” could be a disadvantage as well, but given the advantages, we will keep going.
- New Dancers must be committed to coming twice a week, so they basically put their lives on hold for 3 months.
- It is also more expensive to have 2 entry points in the year at twice a week – the hall rental & caller fees were the most expensive.
- Those who find it hard to learn, or who cannot come to each class would not be able to keep up, so this is not geared to older or ones with health issues.

## RESULTS & OBSERVATIONS

- Our success rate was awesome. There was no dropout because of the 12 weeks, twice a week.
- We celebrated (are not using the word ‘graduation’ anymore) 7 new dancers in the fall session and 9 new dancers in the winter session. Of those 16, there are 15 very enthusiastic, committed dancers to add to the dancing community.
- Most of the New Dancers said that if the program was 6 months long, they would not either have stayed, or would not continue after lessons. The Red Deer Club is committed to using this type of lesson plan for as long as we have New Dancers willing to learn.