

Meri Squares Newsletter

February 2026

Hello Dancers:

We are already half way through February and I am only just now able to reach out and let you know what is happening and what is ahead. My apologies as various priorities got in the way of communicating.

Welcome to our newest dancers!

Meri Squares is thrilled at how many new dancers have joined us in January. We look forward to getting to know you all better. Questions? Concerns? Do not hesitate to ask Wendy, your caller, or Lamar, your President, or any other member. We are all here to share our love of square dancing and make sure you too have a good time.

THE FUN STUFF

February 7, EOSARDA Frosty Fling

A number of Meri Squares members attended this fun, beach-themed event. It was a great time and nice to think of sunshine and warmth in the middle of February. I would have loved to have seen more of our full SSD dancers in attendance. You should never hesitate to go to these dances. You have a great caller and lots of angels who want you to succeed. You are ready! It is always fun to get to know others at your level of dancing and to experience what different callers have to offer.

Please take a look at the EOSARDA calendar and consider attending the Mississippi Squares Anniversary dance and other dances in the region. You will not regret it!

February 12 and February 17 – Valentine's Parties

By the time you get this, the Plus group will have celebrated Valentine's Day in style. February 17 is the SSD dancers' turn on Tuesday night. Wear your red and maple leaves. Have fun!

February 23 – Ottawa Dates Squares visit

Meri Squares Plus dancers are encouraged to attend the Ottawa Dates Squares' regular Plus dance night. This is an opportunity to get in an extra evening of practice before the Meri Mingle. Parking downtown can be a challenge so consider carpooling. Dancing is 6:30 to 8:30 pm at the Jack Purcel Community Centre, 320 Jack Purcell Lane. There is a nightly fee. And you can count it toward our Dance Dangle.

February 28, Meri Squares Meri Mingle

On February 28, from 2:00 to 4:30 pm, Meri Squares will host the Meri Mingle Plus Dance at St. Marks Church, 1606 Fisher Avenue in Ottawa. Thank you to everyone who has volunteered to help with set up, refreshments and registration. This is our club's effort to provide a venue for Plus dancers to just have fun and enjoy a full afternoon of dancing Plus.

This year both Meri Squares and Ottawa Date Squares have a brand new group of Plus dancers. The Meri Mingle will be their first chance to test their newly-acquired skills. John Charman is calling and he is excellent at reading a room and making sure dancers are doing well and having fun – not overwhelmed. But to keep it fun for even experienced Plus dancers, John will be teaching MIX, an advanced move. So come join your fellow Plus dancers and enjoy an afternoon of great music and fellowship. \$15 at the door.

EOSARDA Calendar and club visits

Wondering what is coming up for dancing? Can't remember everything that was said during announcements? Check the table where paper copies of dance flyers are available every night or go to the EOSARDA calendar at: <https://eodance.ca/calendar.php>. Other pages of the EOSARDA website list every dance club and the nights and levels they dance. You are always welcome to attend a different club to dance. You just need to pay the nightly fee and have fun!

If you do visit another club, or you attend a special dance, make sure to fill out your EOSARDA Dangle form. At the end of the dance season, you may qualify for a special dance dangle. In the meantime, you have met lots of other dancers, danced to different callers and enjoyed new friends. The Dance Dangle program info can be found at: https://eodance.ca/dancer_page.php or speak to Michelle Gravelle or Lamar.

THE MORE SERIOUS STUFF

Meri Squares directory

Everyone should have received the club directory electronically a week or so ago. If you did not, please speak to Colleen McEwan. Paper copies were provided to those not on email.

Sustainability

Meri Squares is a dancer-run club. That means a group of your fellow dancers steps forward to organize, administer and ensure the continuity of Meri Squares. These individuals are elected by you, the members, at the Annual General Meeting held in April. Over the years, Meri Squares has been very fortunate to have always had members volunteer for the key positions of President and Vice-President and to offer leadership. Equally dedicated members have given their time for other positions on the Executive.

Recently, it has been increasingly difficult to find persons willing to step into the Vice-President and President positions. As stated in our Constitution, historically, the Vice-President assumes the position for two years and then moves to the position of President for two years. This approach ensures continuity of leadership while allowing individuals to gain an understanding of the club's culture and how it operates before taking full leadership. But there is a whole team of people supporting the VP and President. A tremendous team, from my experience.

As we look to the next dance year and our AGM, Meri Squares needs interested persons to come forward for the key position of Vice-President. Of course, all of the other Exec positions are also open, even if there are current incumbents, but the VP position was vacant again this year and that is NOT a sustainable situation if Meri Squares is to remain vibrant.

The description of the duties for all Executive positions can be found at <https://merisquares.ca/wp/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/MS-Constitution-2024-April-AGM.pdf> Please consider this contribution to your club. Do not hesitate to speak to any member of the Executive team if you have questions. We would be happy to chat without pressure.

Thank you

As most of you know, I am currently out of the country. You may not have even noticed. That's because the wonderful team on our Meri Squares Executive have stepped in to fill any gaps while I am away. I want to say a huge thank you to everyone you is taking on extra responsibilities both for the nightly dancing and for the hosting of the Meri Mingle. The club is very lucky to have all of you!

Lamar Mason
President
lamarmason4@gmail.com