

# Heart of America Singles Square Dance Association



## HASSDA Officers 2008 - 2009

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### FROM THE PRESIDENT – MARILYN’S NOTES:

Wasn't Nashville great!! The National SSDUSA convention over Labor Day was well attended – not sure of the numbers, but it was a wonderful weekend – great callers, great city, great facilities, well-planned convention - and, what helped to make it that way - seeing people you only get to see at major conventions! I just wanted to say thanks to all who put this convention together and add my testimony to the wonderful time all of us from Missouri had in Nashville.

I hope all of you noted the HASSDA display table outside the grand halls in Nashville. HASSDA's thanks go to Gloria Cain of the Kansas City Swingin' Singles

– hosts of the 2009 HASSDA festival in Excelsior Springs, Missouri – for putting this table display together, along with Lee Williams, HASSDA’s Historian. We thought it was pretty special, Gloria; and we thank you for your time and efforts! We understand Gloria and friends will be taking the display to several major dances and/or conventions during the coming months. [There were 17 Swingin’ Singles and the great display table at the recent Missouri State Convention in Jefferson City, MO.]

The HASSDA Board met at the Elms Resort and Spa in Excelsior Springs for our September Board meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup>. Although I had met with the Host Club there to tour the facility before deciding on the final location for the 2009 festival, some other Board members toured the facility for the first time at this meeting. The present facility was built in 1912 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Its Art Deco style architecture sits on 16 acres in the heart of Excelsior Springs. The town founded because of the healing mineral waters discovered in the area in the 1880’s. It has long held the claim of having the world’s greatest collection of mineral waters. The town’s main historic facility, which provides tours, is the Hall of Waters. We believe the city will prove to be a special site for our 2009 Festival!!

We would like to also encourage all of you who have not joined HASSDA to do so. We have included a copy of our new application in this newsletter. It is on the HASSDA web site and can be filled out on-line, but must be printed and mailed to our Treasurer, Kathy Mears. We also encourage you to purchase a HASSDA badge to show your support of the organization!! New members will also receive a HASSDA dangle to place on your club badge, if you have one, to show your support. If you don’t have a regular club badge, then you certainly will want a HASSDA badge!!

In the meantime, until we meet again, hope you enjoy the beautiful fall weather in the Heart of America and that you have a blessed holiday season...

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## **New HASSDA Officers**

As can be seen herein, we have added two new officers since our last newsletter in July. A short bio on the two new ones can be found in this newsletter. We asked for someone in our previous newsletter to serve as HASSDA’s News Editor. Jim Faurote from Platte City, Missouri, stepped up to the plate to take on that responsibility. If any of you have any news you’d like to include in future HASSDA newsletters, please contact Jim. We are very grateful for Jim’s acceptance of this position. He is currently in Belgium on business and still taking on the job, via laptop and internet access, of getting this edition out to you.

Kathy Mears was also gracious enough to take on the responsibility of Treasurer, replacing Karen First, who had just been installed as Treasurer at Nationals in

Wichita. Unfortunately, Karen has had continued difficulty with her knee, undergoing surgery in August, and has had added responsibility with family issues. Hopefully, Karen can return as an officer of HASSDA in the future. In the meantime, we're grateful to Kathy for taking on this responsibility. Below are the bios of our new officers, sharing their square dancing experience with you:

**Kathy Mears, Treasurer**

I originally took square dance lessons in Lawrence in 1982 but quit after a couple of years. I started taking refresher lessons in 2000 and have been at it since, although an irregular work schedule and recent family issues keep me from dancing the two-three times a week that I prefer. Since I love the challenge of learning new things, I've taken some sort of lessons (plus, advanced, or rounds) for most of the time I've been back dancing. The two best things about square dancing: 1) Fun way to make new friends of all ages, and 2) exercise for people who hate to exercise. See you on the dance floor!

**Jim Faurote, Newsletter Editor**

I started square dancing by taking Mainstream lessons in Chicago (yes there IS square dancing in the Windy City) with Chi-Town Squares in 1994. I finished with Plus by that spring and then the following year went to Advanced. My job brought me out to Kansas City in 2002 and since then I have found several clubs to dance with in the region: Show-Me Squares, Greg's Gang, A-Flats, Riverbend Promenaders, DBD/St. Joe Squares, and Gateway Squares. I think the caller is what provides the spark, enthusiasm and energy to the dance; and I have been fortunate to dance with so many outstanding ones over the past 14 years, including several from the six-state HASSDA area. One of the reasons I look forward to returning Stateside from Belgium (climate of Seattle and landscape of Indiana) later this Fall, besides family, friends, cats, and sunshine, is to get back in the regional square dancing routine.

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**Historic Excelsior Springs, Missouri,  
Site of HASSDA 2009**

...by Lee Williams

Since our HASSDA dance will be held at the Elms Hotel in Excelsior Springs, Missouri, next year, I thought maybe you would like a little history of the town itself. Excelsior Springs is a small town just 30 minutes from downtown Kansas City. A lone bubbling spring on the edge of the river was discovered by a farmer named Travis Mellion. He told how his daughter suffering from tuberculosis had been cured by drinking the water and bathing in it. Consequently, the spring became known for its medicinal purposes. Before long, thousands of people poured into the valley to sample the miraculous powers of the spring.

**A visiting pastor by the name of John Van Buren Flack named the spring Excelsior after the Longfellow poem. Rev. Flack built a home and opened the first dry- goods store and established the first church. By the following year more than 200 homes were built. In the late 1880's, entrepreneurs formed the Excelsior Springs Company and created parks, pavilions, and, finally, the Elms hotel. The Elms Resort and Spa has been visited by many notable guests such as President Truman, Jack Dempsey, the New York Giants, and crime figures Al Capone and "Pretty Boy" Floyd.**

**Today, the beautifully restored Elms offers classic guest rooms and stately suites that are uniquely decorated and possess the most modern conveniences. During breaks from dancing you are sure to enjoy The Spa with its revitalizing waters, the European heated lap pool, baths, saunas and much more.**

**For those who will be sharing a room, I advise getting your reservations in early as the number of double-bed units is limited. I hope to see you all there in 2009.**

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## **Nasser Shukayr**

**...by Linda Curran**

**For all those folks who are saying "Nasser who?" - please be sure to come on out and join us for our HASSDA Festival on April 3-5, 2009, at The Elms in Excelsior Springs, MO.**

**"Creative, fun, lively, never a dull moment" are all words to describe a dance called by Nasser. In 2008 alone, he (and his wife, Jeanna) have called in 29 states and 12 countries; so he is widely known in the square dance world.**

**Nasser graduated from college at age eighteen, and at age twenty started Computer Professionals, Inc. He learned to square dance in 1987, and called his first tip while still in new dancers' class. In 1988 he attended Jack Lasry's caller school, and then taught his first class of new dancers. In 1989 he learned to call Progressive Squares. In 1990 he started cueing rounds. Nasser recorded with Rockin' M Records from 1994 thru 1999 and with Lou-Mac Records from 1999 thru 2005. Nasser and Doug Davis became co-owners of Chinook Records in 2006.**

**In 2004 Nasser was named club caller at Fun-N-Sun RV Resort in San Benito, Texas, and in 2008 Nasser and Jeanna were named club callers at Lakewood RV Resort in Harlingen, Texas. Nasser and Jeanna call and teach thirteen sessions per week during the winter season in South Texas. During the rest of the year they enjoy traveling worldwide to call square dances.**

**Don't miss your chance to come dance with Nasser in April 2009, as beginning in November 2008, he and Jeanna are moving to San Antonio to take a full-time job.**

Therefore, his travel schedule will be more limited, and you would hate to miss out on this fun square-dance opportunity!

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## Upcoming Dances

Again, we ask all of you who wish to advertise your special dances in our HASSDA newsletters to please forward to Jim Faroute, Editor, ([jfaur526@hotmail.com](mailto:jfaur526@hotmail.com) or phone at 816-223-5562) two weeks prior to publication date of the Newsletter (Feb. 1, May 1, Aug. 1, Nov. 1) – or give to your area coordinator (listed on the back page herein) for forwarding to us. In the meantime, we wish to thank Diana Wagner for submitting the following for the State of Kansas:

November 7 – Salina Twirlers, 2508 Belmont Blvd., Salina, KS, Jim Hayes, caller; rnds, 7:30; dance, 8:00

November 8 – Top Kan Twirlers, Croco Hall, 6115 SE US Hwy 40, Topeka, KS, Sheldon Lawrence, Bob Tucker, callers – Gospel Dance – 7:30

November 23 – Cap-Teen Squares & Families, Croco Hall, Turkey Dance, Virginia Yerta and Guest callers; dance, 7:00

January 23 - Strato Jets, Croco Hall, 6115 SE US Hwy 40, Topeka, KS, Cerebral Palsy benefit dance, Larry Stock, caller, dance, 7:30

January 31 - KSDA SW SPRING JUBILEE – 1<sup>st</sup> & Walnut, Hoisington, KS, Bob Tucker, Sheldon Lawrence, Jeanne Shane, ( 1:00-3:00, rnds; 3:00-5:30, squares; 6:30-7:15, rnds; 7:30 - 10:00, squares

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### HASSDA AREA COORDINATORS:

Arkansas: Bud Cude, 223 Highway 370, Mena, AR 71953, 479-384-2816

Kansas: Diana Wagner, 3717 SW Cambridge, Topeka, KS 66610,  
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Oklahoma: Delores Chambers, 1051 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Jones, OK 73049

**Jim Faroute**  
**1819 First Street**  
**Platte City, MO 64079**

**First Class**  
**ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED**

**Merry Christmas**  
**& a Blessed New Year!**