

July/August 2007

Rising Stars

The Rising Stars, a plus level club, was formed by Gary & Margy Mahnken. This is a caller run club with Gary being the caller and Margy taking money, making coffee, cleaning up and the many other things that a caller's tax is needed to do.

Gary started giving plus lessons in March 1984 at the Lotawana Sportsmen Club at Lake Lotawana. He again gave plus lessons that fall and they were given at Walnut Gardens Church, and in the fall of 1985 the Rising Stars plus club was formed. Warren & Mary Lugenbeel designed our badges. Plus level was very popular and we had many for lessons.

Our first few dances were held at the Independence Reception and Meeting Hall in the Hub Shopping Center in Independence. In February 1986 we moved to Yellowrock Barn.

On April 6, 1986 the Rising Stars became federated with the Heart of America Federation of Square Dance Clubs. Our sponsoring clubs were the Calico Cutcups, GeM Sets and the Lotawana Sailors. We were happy to be a part of the Federation. Our Fed Delegates were Bill and Grace Ammon. Plus dancing was very popular and we would have at least 12 squares and did have as many as 16 at one time.

The Rising Stars had dues of \$5 per person and the door was \$6 per couple. We had many members for years. There would be at least 40 couples in the club. Dues remained the same for many years and the fall of 1995 dues was raised to \$6 per person and the door was \$7 per couple.

In the fall of 1995 Jim and Evelyn Springs became our Fed Delegates as the Ammons had decided not to be Federation delegates anymore. Then in the fall of 1996 Lee and Betty Buck became our new delegates.

As in all other dancing, membership and attendance is down. The classes are getting smaller because there is not as many new dancers in mainstream. Many dancers take plus lessons but never join a plus club.

Written by Gary & Margy Mahnken February 1997