

October 4, 2004

Hi Everyone!

We just had to share -- our first ever "Blast Class" for new dancers was a great success! Instructor Bill Silver did a fabulous job of taking our new dancers through the first 35 calls on the Basic list, which he spent the afternoon "reviewing" for them. Our primary goal was to have dancers ready to attend Harvest Hoedown in Yuba City the end of this month. Then, the first week of November we'll bring them back for Instructor Scot Byars to take them the rest of the way through Mainstream.

There were a total of 11 totally new dancers and a few who had had a few previous lessons, and with help of our wonderful "Angels" we danced four squares most of the day. Our initial plan was to dance from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. with a lunch break. We actually got started at 9:30 a.m. and by 3:00 p.m. it was determined our "newbies" had pretty much absorbed as much as they could. During the afternoon review Bill threw in a couple of full Plus tips to give the Angels a chance to shine and the newbies to see what they could look forward to.

Ages ranged from 5 years to 18, with some of the younger ones "maxing out" by lunchtime, but the older ones hung in until the end.

This day taught us several things -- first, that this was a format that the youth dancers embraced. Second, we needed to cut down the number of hours that we felt we needed to accomplish the task. Third, and most important, the kids seem to really like the format, they learned, and they are excited about telling their friends about it. We're planning a second "Blast Class" after the first of the year to coincide with the Spring festivals, followed by an early Summer class to get a new group ready in time for our own Fun Weekend.

Special thanks to Dick & Arlene Cook for letting us use their Barn, Bill Silver for providing a wonderful day of lessons, Ben, Terri & Emma Jellesed for arranging all the food, Bob Kamuf for coordinating the hall, and for all the wonderful Angels and "Taxi Drivers" who came and shared our day.

We look forward to seeing some of you at Jubilee in San Jose this next weekend, and hopefully lots of you at Harvest Hoedown the end of this month in Yuba City.

Happy Dancing!
Bonnie Abramson, Administrator
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