

Cornhusker Sweetheart Classic
Jim and Carol Tucker, Host Clinicians
National Carousels #250/Rainbow Rounds

The Cornhusker Sweetheart Classic is a phase 2-4+ round dance weekend held at the Midtown Holiday Inn in Grand Island, Nebraska. It is held on the weekend of, or just prior to, Valentines day; hence the name. This event was begun by Carol and I in 1994 (we are a relatively young weekend as weekends go but we are becoming more established each year!) as a way to introduce those round dancers in Nebraska and the surrounding states, who have not attended one before, to the world of round dance weekends. We targeted dancers who, for whatever their reasons, were "afraid" they would not be accepted or, who felt a round dance weekend was all hard work and no fun, or who felt they could not participate in such an event because of their own "perceived" dancing ability. We have enjoyed some degree of success, at least we feel so, at accomplishing this. Many couples who said to us "We could never dance at a round dance weekend" have become regulars at the Classic. We emphasize to our clinicians to get the crowd engaged. This group just LOVES to have fun during the teaches. They love to laugh as well as learn. Our most successful clinicians have had our group laughing the whole time, never mind they were learning some pretty intricate things.

We try to program the weekend so that approximately 50 percent of the rounds are phase 2 to 2+2, 35 percent phase 3 to 3+2, and the remaining percentage of programmed rounds for the pre-rounds and dances are phase 4 to 4+2. After the Friday night dance we have our version of the "Die Hard". We call it the "For Those Who Dare" dance and these rounds are for the phase IV to VERY SOFT phase V dancer. We dance from the end of the regular dance for about another hour (usually 13-15 rounds) of which we try to program at least one dance of as many rhythms as possible. Depending on the crowd that stays sometime the dances are changed "on the fly" but the level remains phase IV to soft phase V. We may include here a phase III such as Tango D'Ideas or a phase II such as Kon Tiki as per an occasional request.

On Friday evening we have a "get acquainted" dance during which we have the clinicians present a phase 2 to phase 2+2 teach. This allows all present to get familiar with the clinician's teaching style and allows the clinicians the opportunity to see the dancers they are going to be working with. On Saturday morning we have at least one teach of phase 4 to 4+2. It is possible that a phase 3 to 3+2 teach may also be presented on Saturday Morning. On Saturday afternoon there are several teaches presented. At least 2 phase 2 to 2+2, and two or three phase 3 to 3+2's will be taught. There may be more of each phase if time allows. We like our clinicians to stress good body mechanics during the teaches without using the dreaded word styling. This word seems to scare some people so we just avoid using it. On Saturday evening everyone has the opportunity attend the "Sweetheart Dinner" and afterward we present the "Sweetheart Ball". On Sunday morning the clinicians will either present another dance, phase 4 to very soft phase 5 at their discretion, or do a review of Saturday's work.

Our past clinicians have been: Debbie and Tim Vogt (Las Vegas, NV started us off in 1994); Darrell and Sharon Beck (Sioux City, IA in 1995); Bob and Joanne Coffeen (Leawood, KS in 1996); Larry and Cathy Wacker (Wichita, KS in 1997); and Jim and Bonnie Bahr (Denver, CO in 1998).

Future Clinicians already under contract are: John and Karen Herr (Larkspur, CO in 1999); Phil and Jane Robertson (Carterville, ILL in 2000); George and Pamela Hurd (Gillen, Texas in 2001); Rod and Susan Anderson (Overland Park, KS in 2002); Debby and Tim Vogt (Las Vegas, NV in 2003); Jim and Bonnie Bahr (Denver, CO in 2004); Kristine and Bruce Nelson (Napierville, ILL/Yuma, AZ in 2005); and Al and Carol Lillifield (Mooresville, IN in 2006). With this lineup what a great way to continue on into the new millennium!!