Tech Squares Officers Handbook
a reference manual

revised 15 May 2005
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1 Introduction

In March 1990, when Betsy Kennedy (now Jacobs) was President, she created a small notebook titled “The Tech Squares Officer Handbook!” Here is her introduction:

The purpose of this book is to bring together all useful information needed to operate the club. It is felt that in this way, each year, there can be consistency in operations for basic functions, yet variations and new ideas can easily be added.... It is hoped that the jobs of the officers will be more enjoyable.

Her notebook was used and updated by new officers until sometime after 1997, when it was lost. In the Fall of 2003, it was rediscovered during a major locker clean-out. At that time, it was converted into the form you see it now, however, the purpose remains the same: to provide a reference for the officers so the club runs smoothly and the jobs themselves are easier.

This document contains more than you will ever need to know as an officer. It’s ordered from most commonly used knowledge to least. To find a specific topic, use the table of contents or index. Most sections provide overview information followed by details and advice, and, where relevant, historical background has been included.

If it pleases you, read it all or don’t. But when the time comes and you’re looking for information, pull out this document and turn to the relevant section. And if the section doesn’t exist (or doesn’t help), update the document, so the next set of officers may benefit from your experience, too.

Please feel free to update this document as club’s needs change. Some of this document is current information and some of it is current policy/club opinion; all of it is subject to change.

We hope you find it useful.
2 Basic Officer Knowledge (the Cliff Notes)

- Last minute room troubles? Call 617-253-1500 and ask to speak with the CAC night manager.
- Never leave the cash box unattended unless it is sitting under the caller’s table.
- Always try to get more people involved.
- Always keep the club up-to-date on what the officers are doing.
- Never respond to email when upset.
- When in doubt, email the officers list and ask for opinions.
- Every office has a "how to" document on the club’s web site.
3 Basic Officer Knowledge (the Details)

This section has information the officers should know about running the club. As a new officer, you are encouraged to read this section.

3.1 Weekly Jobs

Every week certain jobs must happen in order for the dance to run smoothly. Our current method for getting weekly jobs done is a monthly sign-up sheet. On the last week of each month, the weekly dance announcements include a reminder that it’s time to sign-up for weekly jobs for the coming month. Announcements are useful reminders, but not effective for actually filling the positions. During the evening, the “Monthly Dance Coordinator” (various people will probably volunteer throughout the year) should walk around with a jobs sign-up sheet and ask people to volunteer to help. You’ll be surprised at how quick and effective walking around and simply asking people can be. The current thought is that people should sign up for a job for at least one week every month or two.

Detailed descriptions of the weekly jobs are on the club web site along with the jobs sign-up sheet.

The officers are expected to recruit people to help with these jobs. Doing them all by yourselves is not acceptable. This is one of your best opportunities to get non-officers actively involving in helping run the club. These helpers form a pool from which you can pull future officers. If you don’t keep this group large enough, everyone will think the club runs itself and will see no need to help out or to run for office. It may sound drastic, but it has happened in this very club and one of your jobs is to ensure it doesn’t ever happen again.

3.2 Cash Box

The club cash box is mostly the responsibility of the Treasurer. However, every officer should know not to leave the cash box unattended on the gate table. If you see the cash box left by itself in the open, you should move it under the caller’s table for safe keeping.

3.3 Club Purchases

Occasionally items will need to be purchased for the club. It might be a piece of sound equipment or drinking cups. The cost will determine how much approval is needed.

The small week-to-week expenses do not need to be approved. For example, someone should just buy cups and submit a receipt to the Treasurer to be reimbursed. The larger expenses, say over $20, should be approved by an officer or, if time permits, the Executive Committee. If the cost is going to exceed $200, it must be brought to a club vote. (Bylaws, Art IV, Sec 5)
3.4 Subscriptions
Subscriptions allow a dancer to pay for the whole semester at once with a small savings, typically about three weeks. Ideally, we collect subscriptions for no more than a month per semester, two weeks before the semester begins to two weeks after.

It simplifies gate most of the year. Most nights we take in very little money, making it easier to balance the books and allowing us to limit the amount of cash we regularly have on hand.

Some history: before 1994, we used to pay the caller a percentage of each evening’s gate.

3.5 Room Troubles
If something goes wrong with one of our reservation at the last minute, the CAC night manager will usually be able to help. We usually try to be accommodating when we can and they usually go out of their way to make it all right for us. They can be reached by calling 617-253-1500 and asking for the CAC Night Manager. It is suggested that the officers store this phone number in their cell phones.

If the temperature is the problem, please call PhysPlant at 617-253-4948 (x3-4948 = xFIXIT). Note that it will take a while for the room temperature to adjust, so you should call them early in the dance, or even before the dance starts, if there is a problem.

3.6 On Paperwork and Art
- Date everything
  Some documents will be found by historians years later who will want to place them in time. And some documents (“Dancing canceled TONIGHT”) will be found next week.
- Keep photocopies of all forms and artwork you submit
  Often few changes are needed from year to year.

3.7 Photography and Video Taping
People always want photos of fun events and these days video taping is also becoming more popular. All we ask is the photographer be sensitive to those members who may not want to be photographed. To that end, if someone wants to videotape an evening we try to notify the club via email at least a week in advance.

If you are uncertain of what to do in a situation, you can check out MIT’s policy on photography and video taping for more guidelines.
3.8 The Secret to not Burning Out – Delegate

Delegating is a skill you should use often as an officer. You are surrounded by competent people who want to help. They just need to be told what needs to be done.

You can always ask for help. There is no shame in saying you can’t do it all alone. Ask your fellow officers, ask other active members. When you can, ask individuals rather than groups or mailing lists. An individual is much more likely to say yes or offer a compromise (“I could do it for half of the time.”) than a group, who will assume someone else will take care of it.

You can also always ask for advice. Even more than helping hands, people are willing to offer ideas and suggestions. Maybe someone will come up with a brilliant way to solve your problem or dilemma. For this, asking groups can be as effective as asking individuals.

You should also remember to prioritize. Keeping the club running takes priority, improving it should be done only when you have time.

4 About Our Club

4.1 Mailing Address

Tech Squares
MIT Student Center Rm W20-437
77 Massachusetts Ave
Cambridge MA 02139-4307

Our mail is actually delivered to W20-401 (the UA office) where someone needs to pick it up during the sometimes erratic UA office hours. We should try to pick it up every couple of weeks so we don’t get behind on our bills.

4.2 Phone and Voicemail

Our phone number is 617-253-7000 (x3-7000 from any campus phone).

The Publicity Coordinator is responsible for picking up our voicemail.

4.3 Athena Locker

Tech Squares has its own Athena locker where most of our useful documents are stored in electronic form. It is named “tech-squares”.

There is a lot of archived material in club-private, especially in club-private/publicity, that officers can reuse.

4.4 Web Site (http://www.mit.edu/activities/tech-squares/)

Our web site serves two primary purposes. It tells about our activities and it provides links to club documents.

The officers should periodically check that our Spotlight Page is up-to-date.
4.4.1 Constitution and Bylaws

These can be found on a link off of the club’s home page. Stephen Gildea is currently our unofficial interpreter of these documents. This means if you are wondering whether a particular issue is addressed, you can ask him. He’ll usually refer you to the relevant article and section.

4.4.2 Class Definitions

Every so often the teaching order changes for the Crash Course, and we need to update the class definitions. This is more complicated than you might realize because the calls often are defined using other calls which must have already been defined. The cross-checking and restructuring has most recently been handled by Sola Grantham.

4.4.3 Officer Job Descriptions

Stephen Gildea has maintained these for many years. In Spring 2005, we updated them and put them on our web site, so they were more accessible to anyone interested in being an officer.

4.4.4 Weekly Job Descriptions

Originally written by V (aka Jen Krishnan) and Heather Wakefield, these documents now exist in our Athena locker and can be modified by anyone with access. They are also accessible from a link on our main web page.

4.4.5 Saturday Job Descriptions

Linda Resnick maintained these for many years. In Spring 2005, we updated them and put them on our web site, so they were more accessible to anyone interested in helping.

4.5 Locker Space

Tech Squares has physical storage space in the Small Activities Office (SAO). The SAO is located in Student Center room 437, in the northwest corner of the fourth floor. The club has both a large, full-height locker and a small, half-height file cabinet.

The locker has a lock to which most of the officers have a key, but the filing cabinet does not. The locker contains most of our supplies and the filing cabinet is used only for storing historical papers with no monetary value. Access to the SAO itself is restricted by a combination lock.

Every two years we must reapply for the SAO space. We will be notified when it is time to reapply in one of the periodic ASA emails sent to the officers mailing list.
4.6 Bulletin Board

Our bulletin board is currently on the Infinite Corridor in Building 4 grouped with the other dance clubs. This location means lots of visitors see our board, so ASA wants the bulletin boards to be kept up-to-date and neat. Having a space where we can advertise our club and, in particularly, our classes, is a good thing and the Publicity Coordinator should take advantage of it by updating the board space regularly.

Sometime in the mid-1990’s we worked very hard to convince MIT we both wanted and deserved a club bulletin board. It took almost five years of waiting to get one, so we should work hard to keep it.

4.7 Financial Accounts

Most of the club money is kept in an MIT account controlled by SAFO (Student Activities Finance Office). We can deposit money into the account but can’t actually write checks. For this, we must fill out a form requesting a check and the SAFO issues a check which we then must pick up from the SAFO office.

We actually have two accounts there. One we use for general funds; it earns no interest and there are no balance restrictions. This is the account we draw funds from to pay our callers and cuers, as well as any other large expense.

The second account is our “reserve” account. This account is interest bearing and has a minimum balance of $5,000. We hope to gradually increase its balance to be able to create an endowment someday. In the meantime, it serves as a way of keeping the officers more aware of our financial health. We hope to never need to draw on this secondary account, but if we do, the officers should consider the club to be on financially shaky ground. The money in that account should hold the club afloat for at least six months with no other income. It should be enough to give the officers time to turn the club around financially. The 2003–4 officers set up this account because they felt this was better than panicking when our balance dropped to $500, as we have done in the past.

4.8 Club Equipment

The club has calling equipment that is used on most Tuesdays and borrowed by club members for other square dance workshops. Any club member wishing to borrow the club equipment for use on the MIT campus should email the officers mailing list.

The club has the following equipment:

- Hilton turntable
- Yak Stak speaker with stand
- variable-speed CD player
- several microphones
- assortment of 45s (mostly round dance tunes)
5 Helpful MIT Organizations

Here are the various organizations at MIT that Tech Squares uses regularly as resources.

5.1 Association of Student Activities (ASA)

All student clubs are affiliated with the ASA. Like most healthy clubs, we have "full recognition" status from the ASA. This status allows us to book MIT rooms as well as access to all sorts of MIT-sponsored publicity. It also provides us with locker space, a bulletin board, and an Athena account.

In return for all these benefits, the ASA expects us to:

- Maintain students as at least 50% of our voting membership
- Keep a constitution that's within their guidelines
- Attend ASA general meetings twice a year
- We need to send a proxy to these meetings with our constitution.
- Keep all our funds with SAFO

Failure to do any of these will result in derecognition, which in turn will probably cause the club to die.

For the most up-to-date information, look at the ASA website at http://web.mit.edu/asa/www/

5.2 Student Activities Finance Office (SAFO)

The Student Activities Finance Office (SAFO) is the organization that controls our club's funds. They are a part of SAO (Student Activities Office) which should not be confused with the location of the club locker. The SAO is, in turn, part of SLP (Student Life Programs). You will hear all these names when it comes to dealing with the club monies.

For the most up-to-date information, look at the SAFO website at: http://web.mit.edu/slp/finances/

5.3 Campus Activities Complex (CAC)

All of the rooms we reserve, except classrooms, are part of the CAC (Campus Activities Complex) Facilities.

For the most up-to-date information, look at the CAC website at: http://web.mit.edu/campus-activities/www/facilities/

5.4 Undergraduate Associations Financial Board (UA Fin-board)

The Undergraduate Associations Financial Board is a group of undergraduates charged by the UA to make budget recommendations for the student group
funding requests that the UA receives. When we need money for a large expenditure, like buying a variable-speed CD player, we can apply for funds.

Note that Finboard focuses on funding undergraduate clubs. Depending on our current membership breakdown (graduates vs. undergraduates), we may not qualify for funding.

For the most up-to-date information, look at the Finboard website at: http://web.mit.edu/finboard/

6 Club Employees

6.1 Caller

Our club caller is Ted Lizotte. His wife, Lisa Remington, is a club member and occasionally dances with the club.

6.2 Cuers

Our club cuer is Phil Gatchell. He and his wife, Sandie, teach early rounds most nights they cue.

Once a month, usually the first week of the month, Veronica McClure cues in place of Phil Gatchell. She also teaches early rounds most nights she’s there.

7 Club Communication

Communicating is the single most important part of being an officer of Tech Squares. You need to keep everyone informed and be available for feedback. This includes not only making sure other officers, especially the President, know what you’re doing, but also making sure the club membership is generally aware of what the officers are doing with the club.

7.1 Ways to Inform the Club

There are many ways that the membership can stay informed of club events and locations. The officers should make sure that the following are always available and up-to-date.

7.1.1 Announcements

The weekly announcements at Tech Squares are a way to get information to those members who attend regularly. Keep them short but informative and most people will listen. This is a good place to thank helpers or encourage people to sign up for weekly jobs.
7.1.2 Phone Line (617-253-7000)

This phone line message should always contain the happenings of the current week and is kept up-to-date by the Publicity Coordinator.

Although we have seen a decline in its usage in recent years, the phone line is still used by some members to locate where we are dancing, especially if someone arrives in the Student Center and we aren’t dancing there. This is also used by our cuers to find the location of Early Rounds.

7.1.3 Spotlight Page

The web site is a resource for both club and class members. It has our current schedules, directions to local clubs, call definitions, and more. Many people turn to it for information, so it’s important that it’s up-to-date.

The spotlight page has a brief schedule of upcoming events and is usually kept up-to-date by the Publicity Coordinator.

7.1.4 Weekly Email

This is a reminder email sent to the club mailing list stating where we are dancing for the next couple of weeks and whom we are dancing to. The Publicity Coordinator typically handles sending this. Nothing other than weekly info and reminders should be put in this email. Although the messages serve as useful reminders, they are routinely not read by the membership at large. This means they are not the place to announce special events or club meetings, although reminders of these events can be included.

7.2 Handling Feedback

It is important to encourage feedback. One way to do this is to respond positively to any feedback you get. This includes: thanking the person, noting the feedback, and whenever possible using the feedback to take positive actions.

Remember each person’s feedback is important. It means they cared enough about the issue and the club to take the time to tell you about it.

7.3 Club Email Lists

The club maintains five separate email lists, four open to the entire club membership and one for the officers.

7.3.1 Club Announcements List

This is the list of the entire Tech Squares membership. It contains everyone from the newest Crash Course grads to those members who never dance with us anymore but still like to know we’re dancing. It is not limited to Tech Squares members, but instead to people who are interested in dancing with Tech Squares.
It is considered a low-volume mailing list, so think before you post. It's nice to occasionally post “News from the Officers” when something especially interesting happens. This includes: club meeting announcements, club meeting results, schedule changes, and the like.

Sometime in 2001 or 2002, we started posting weekly emails to the list. This was to remind people where we were dancing that week and of any upcoming special events. Our members read these often enough for them to be useful reminders, but they ignore them often enough that important announcements should continue to be posted separately.

7.3.2 Club Round Dancing List

This list is for club announcements about rounds and discussions about what to teach during early rounds. It has been primarily used for the officers to post requests for information and update schedules for early rounds.

This list was created in the Fall of 2003.

7.3.3 Club Discussion List

This list was created in May 2000 as a forum for club discussions. At the time, the officers mailing list was fairly large and there was concern that discussions which should have been open to the whole club were being confined to the officers mailing list. Since the club announcements list is a low-volume list and not appropriate for these discussions, a new list was created. At the same time, a concerted effort was made by the officers to keep general club discussions off of the officers mailing list.

Through the years, this list has gotten limited use, mostly when discussing upcoming club proposals. Here’s a good place to get club feedback to potential policy changes as well as a place to report on more of the details of what the officers are doing.

7.3.4 Club Social Announcements List

This mailing list was created in the Fall of 1999 to provide an appropriate list for social announcements. Whereas the other club lists are limited to club business/events, this list is for events not sponsored by Tech Squares. Club sponsored events may be announced on the club announcements list, but party announcements and invitations to other dances (square dancing or not) should be posted only to this list.

7.3.5 Officers’ Mailing List

This mailing list is an important resource list for the officers.

As an officer, if you want to ask questions or post info, this is almost certainly the place to do it. All the officers, both elected and appointed, should be on this list. The elected officers will also want to include a few more people that are interested in the club’s well-being.
If you are looking to invite a group of people to a social event, square dancing or otherwise, do not post to this list. This list is for club business only. Social messages should be posted to club social announcements list.

7.3.6 Club Contact List - squares@mit.edu

This mailing list is our published contact. Anyone who wants questions answered will send email to this list. Because this list is published it receives a high volume of spam. The few, brave volunteers who are on this list are responsible for identifying the real email messages and passing them on to the officers.

7.4 Important Email Tips

Sending email to mailing lists is different from sending to individuals. And sending email as an officer of the club is different from sending it as anyone else. Here’s a list of do’s and don’t’s to check before sending email:

DO use text (NO attachments)
We attempt to limit our lists to plain text. People access their email through a wide variety of readers and plain text is universally easy to read.

Occasionally there is a reason to send an attachment to the officers list, but never to any of the other lists. If you have something that must be sent as an attachment, try to send it in a universally-readable format. Note that several people on the officers list do not have easy access to Microsoft products.

If you can, publish the attachment on the web and include only a link in your email. The above notes on universally-readable formats still apply.

DO spell check
Spell checkers are popular for a reason. Every message you send to a club list should be spell-checked.

DO read the finished message
Spell checkers will not catch all errors. Check not only for grammar, but also for clarity and conciseness.

Check also for general tone. Remember emotions don’t transmit well through email. The use of emoticons (smileys) can often clarify what was meant.

Do NOT respond when angry/upset
As an officer of the club, you represent a voice of responsibility and reason. People have a way of targeting the officers with particularly inflammatory comments and suggestions, so sometimes maintaining your calm can be quite challenging.

It is rare that you must reply to an upsetting email immediately. Go ahead and write your response, but do not send it. Put it away for several hours,
preferably overnight. Then try rereading the original email. Ignore the inflammatory words and instead focus on the point the sender was trying to make. Consider alternate meanings, too. Sometimes people aren’t as clear as they intend to be. Then try to write a new message addressing just the issues.

Regardless of what the original message said, do NOT flame. No matter how deserving someone might seem, do not do it. Don’t even glow. Fight fire with logic, understanding, and a bit of light humor. It will be much more effective. Remember sarcasm is not light humor and is rarely received well over email.

Always work towards building understanding and finding common ground. Use your reply to address the issues/questions raised with as much poise as you can muster, so even if the sender doesn’t agree, others will. If you lose your cool, others are much less likely to support you.

You might also consider a personal email message to look for clarification and/or understanding. A private email conversation is less likely to generate defensive responses since it’s less publicly visible.

If, in the end, you can’t write the email without the hurtful words, do NOT send email. Call the sender or better yet, talk to them in person. You will have better feedback and a forum where neither of you has to worry as much about losing face.

8 Other Communication

8.1 Caller and Cuer

There is a club member (or two) who serves as liaison to both the caller and cuers. Some years it is the President, other years the President will appoint someone. Either way, this liaison acts as the primary point of contact. That doesn’t mean you can’t talk with the caller and cuers. It just means that serious issues should probably go through the liaison, whom we hope has established a good working relationship to help smooth out difficult issues.

You are especially encouraged to compliment the caller or cuer when they play a song you like or call/cue a set particularly well. Everyone likes unlooked-for compliments and we want them to know they are appreciated.

Also remember that our callers and cuers like to dance when they aren’t busy!

8.2 Other Square Dance Clubs

Tech Squares has a reputation of being a club of exceptionally good dancers. That doesn’t mean we should be snobs about it. We try to be welcoming to outside dancers when they visit. As often as not, they are either old members of Tech Squares or challenge dancers in town early for a square dance weekend.

When we get email, the reply should be prompt and be cc’ed to the officers list. Currently, all requests for square dance callers are forwarded to Clark Baker.
who attempts to get the person the information and contact they are looking for.

9 Official Club Events

Here’s a list of events run by the club. The officers are expected to be involved in the planning and running of these events.

9.1 Weekly Dances

These weekly dances are our raison d’être. This is our chance to socialize and dance at our best. We are a Plus-level club, but our Plus is danced by definition (DBD) and all-position (APD). We try to discourage our club callers from using off-list calls, but that doesn’t mean we don’t encourage unusual applications of those calls. What other Plus club can Crossfire from Diamonds?

This is also the time during which the class is taught and club meetings are held.

We currently meet on Tuesdays from 8:00pm to 10:30pm. We dance every week except on holidays or during extreme weather.

Historical note: since we moved from Tuesdays to Thursday nights and back again, it is safer to refer to these as weekly dances rather than calling them Tuesday dances.

9.2 Beginner’s Class

This is what keeps the club alive. All of us recognize that we must teach new dancers to maintain an active membership. We have chosen to teach on our “club nights” in order to ensure a high proportion of angels. This is one of the things that allows us to teach over 100 calls in 13 weeks. (Most square dance clubs take 9–16 months to cover the same material.)

Our Crash Course runs twice a year, once during the fall semester and once during the spring. The class runs 13–14 weeks depending on the MIT academic calendar. It never meets during Spring Break, and we try to have our class start after academic classes begin and end prior to finals. The first 8 weeks or so, we teach Mainstream, the remaining time is devoted to teaching Plus. We pride ourselves on teaching APD (all-position dancing) and DBD (dancing by definition).

Because we offer PE credit for the class, it officially meets for only two hours each week from 8:15pm to 10:15pm.

9.3 Early Rounds

These round dance classes are currently our primary way of getting new and/or more experienced round dancers. The classes are run from 7 to 8pm and are taught by the evening’s cuer.
9.4 Saturday Dances

These special dances feature well-liked callers and cuers, usually not our regular club caller and cuer. There are currently four dances per year and they often attract members who can’t dance with us during the week for work or travel reasons.

The Saturday dance held in October or November is usually advertised as our “homecoming” dance. The club was founded in 1967 and every five years we try to make the homecoming dance extra special. It often attracts club members who haven’t danced with us in a while, so it’s nice to have out old photo albums and decorate the room a bit more than usual.

The “dress code” for Saturday dances has changed over the years. In 1993, dancers were told “women in skirts, men in long sleeves” and many of our dancers wore crinoline and Western wear. In 2003, dancers were encouraged to “dress nicer than you would for a weekly dance.” Many women still wore skirts, but the Western wear and petticoats were virtually non-existent. Saturday dances still remain special and we try to make them feel that way in what we wear.

Historical note, these used to be called “Monthly Dances.” There was a time when they were held once a month, eight months of the year, but times have changed and now there are only four held each year.

9.5 Banner Raids/Retrievals

Several times a year we participate in Banner Raids/Retrievals. These are dances run by other local square dance clubs to which we’ve agreed in advance to bring our dancers. In exchange, the other club sends some of its dancers to one of our Saturday dances.

The Banner Chair schedules these dances with other clubs keeping in mind the schedules of both our club and MIT.

Whether it’s a Banner Raid or Retrieval depends on which club visits the other first. If we visit the other club’s dance first, it’s a Banner Raid because we take their “banner”, usually a piece of cloth with the club’s name and logo. If the other club visits us first and takes our banner, when we visit their dance it’s a Banner Retrieval because we are taking back our club banner.

Our banners are red felt with our logo silk screened on to them. Several of them are usually in our locker at any given time.

9.6 Round Dance Parties

Occasionally, a cuer or two expresses interest in putting on a round dance party for the club. When well-attended, these can be a lot of fun!

The officers and the cuer should decide how much organization will be done by each side. The club always reserves a room on campus and posts an announcement to the club announcements list.
9.7 Amateur Night

Usually held during one of the first three weeks in August, this is the night for our club members to try being on the other side of the mike.

We still hire a caller and cuer for this night. And regular admission is charged. Although there may also be an organizer to create the night’s schedule, the professionals provide advice, set up equipment, help with sound balance, and are always there to fill in in a pinch.

People have trouble keeping the tips short, so plan that the evening may run longer than usual. Although we typically stop dancing at 10:30pm, for Amateur Night we usually dance until 11pm.

9.8 Pool Dance

A wonderful Summer diversion in one of the MIT pools! Unfortunately, it is often both expensive and hard to organize, so it often happens only every two or three years. Ideally, it is self-funding, but the club has been known to offer to subsidize the event.

Typically, the officers appoint a willing organizer for this event. This person is responsible for investigating cost and availability of the MIT pools as well as organizing the dance proper. Usually, we spend most of the time in a shallow pool and finish with a brief tip in the deep end. This is usually called by one of our club members who are callers. Lately, Bill Ackerman has been handling the calling.

The pool dance was last held in 2003 and organized by Sola Grantham.

Note it is never held the same night as the weekly club dance.

A historical note, according to Bill Ackerman, these pool dances were started by Larry Weinstein at Bulldog Squares at Yale.

10 Unofficial Club Events

The following events are run separate from Tech Squares. They receive no official support from the club (financial or otherwise) nor do the officers have any direct control over them.

That is not to say Tech Squares doesn’t condone these events. In fact, we tend to encourage these events and publicize them to our membership. They are just not official Tech Squares events.

10.1 Lake Shore Farm Weekend

This amazing weekend run by Clark Baker is open to all Tech Squares members. Clark often asks for input and help from various Tech Squares members, but it’s really his weekend to do with as he chooses.

He and Linda Sperling (now Resnick) started the weekend in March 1995 and have always kept it officially separate from Tech Squares. Each year, one of them asks for permission to include a write-up for the weekend in the club’s
Fall newsletter. Before all the information was on-line, they used to include a flyer and, in return, pay for part of our mailing costs.

10.2 Advanced/Challenge Workshops

Tech Squares is a Plus-level club, so we don’t officially run higher level workshops. However, often club members will get together to learn higher levels. If you or anyone else is considering joining one of these workshops, please be sure dancers are aware of the oft-quoted line: “If you can dance only once a week, make it Tech Squares’ weekly Plus dance.”

These workshops do not run on any real schedule but rather are formed when there is sufficient interest. The caller may ask the officers for help booking rooms, but beyond that the officers are not officially involved. It is the responsibility of the caller and the people in the class to handle ensuring they have a square and that gate is taken. Usually, all the gate goes directly to the caller and has nothing to do with the club.

Often these are “invitation only” workshops. In these cases, the workshop organizer judges who is ready to learn the level and invites just those people.

Loosely associated with these workshops are a series of email lists. These are used to post not only upcoming workshops, but outings to various dances of the appropriate level.

- A2-class
- A2-dancers
- C1-class
- C1-dancers
- C2-dancers
- C3A-dancers

10.3 Other Workshops

Occasionally other workshops will also be offered. These include round dance workshops, caller workshops, and a Plus workshop that’s affectionately called Plus++.

Again, these are often invitation-only workshops. The organization and gate is handled by the workshop leader or organizer. The only official involvement Tech Squares might have is in booking rooms for the events.

11 Rooms to Reserve

Each Fall our Rooming Director reserves the rooms from the CAC that we know we’ll need starting June of the following year until the May after that. That means Fall 2003, we reserved rooms for June 2004–May 2005. Reservations should be promptly canceled for any rooms we decide not to use.

When events arise throughout the year that need a room, the Rooming Director will handle these on an individual basis. The more advance notice you
give the Rooming Director, the more likely you are to get a reasonable room for your purposes.

11.1 CAC Rooms

Here’s a breakdown of the rooms we typically reserve with some details.

11.1.1 Sala de Puerto Rico

Large room on the second floor of the Student Center with parquet floor. It holds our dances quite comfortably these days. The acoustics are best if you place the stage on one of the short sides of the room. We usually request three folding tables for this room for gate, flyers, and refreshments.

This is our favorite room for dances.

11.1.2 Lobdell Dining Hall

The dining hall on the second floor of the Student Center. Although this room can feel a bit cramped with 10 squares, it has the advantage of having natural areas for socializing, plus a balcony for watching the formations from above. We use the existing tables for gate, flyers, and refreshments.

Moving all the tables and chairs off the floor is usually the job of the CAC employees although they always appreciate a hand if they are running behind. Resetting the tables and chairs is our responsibility and is overseen by the person in charge of breakdown.

Because of the hassle of resetting the tables, this is our second choice for dances, but it is a close second.

11.1.3 Morss Hall

The dining room on the first floor of Walker Memorial. It is far from the Student Center without easy parking for our caller and cuer. It is often too hot in the Summer (ask people to bring fans) and the tables and chairs must be moved and reset by the club.

This location places a distant third choice to Lobdell and the Sala for dances, but sometimes, we just don’t have a choice.

11.1.4 Lobby 13

The lobby in building 13 by the elevators is not as far from the Student Center as Morss Hall, but it has many of the same problems. The temperature is greatly affected by the external weather simply because people are always cutting through the lobby and exiting to the outside. There is no nearby parking for our caller and cuer. At least there are no tables to move.

The real problem with Lobby 13 is the acoustics. The lobby echoes in a way that makes it hard to hear what the caller and cuer are saying. If you have one or two squares, the acoustics can be bearable, but not with more.
We have stopped booking Lobby 13 for dances even during “blackout” periods.

11.1.5 W20-407 and W20-491

These virtually identical rooms are on the fourth floor of the Student Center. We can fit six squares in a pinch, but we are much more comfortable with only four.

These are ideal rooms for our smaller dance workshops (squares or rounds).

11.1.6 PDR 1–3 (Private Dining Rooms)

These are small carpeted rooms located on the third floor of the Student Center between Lobdell and the Coffeehouse.

Since they are carpeted, we are not allowed to dance in them, but they are ideal for meetings of officers and committees.

11.2 Classrooms

These are not booked through the CAC. This means they are available during the standard CAC “blackout” periods.

11.2.1 3-343

This room is air-conditioned and can comfortably hold four squares, five in a pinch.

12 Other Club Knowledge

12.1 Students Come First

We are an MIT student club. That means in everything we do, MIT students come first. When you are discussing any issue, you should always consider: “How will this affect the MIT students?” When you are talking about recruiting someone for a task or as an officer, MIT students always have preference. The more students are involved, the more student perspective and student feel the club has, and the more likely we are to attract more students.

Most of the non-students that dance with us have the experience of dancing with the club for many years, most while they were students. It is helpful that they have no schoolwork to drown in at the end of term and they are often around during Institute holidays rather than traveling to homes far away. However, they too understand that it’s the MIT students that make this club what it is.
12.2 PE Credit for Squares

Starting in the Spring 2000, MIT started offering Tech Squares Crash Crash course as a PhysEd class. And a year later, PE credit was officially offered for the class. The class is limited to two hours, so it officially runs 8:15 to 10:15.

Be aware that the PE classes officially start one week after the rest of MIT classes. This means if Crash Course starts the first week of classes, we will have a group of PE students appear at 8:15 on Week 2 expecting to be taught from scratch.

If students write us about signing up for our PE class, we should tell them to register through the lottery. While in practice we can just take them into the class, to the PE department sign-ups are an indication of demand and it’s in our best interest for the department to know if we’re a popular offering through initial sign-ups.

12.3 Granting Club Membership

Becoming a member of Tech Squares is a privilege not lightly earned. Tech Squares has some of the best Plus dancing on the East Coast and the badge means you are ready for it.

It sounds kind of elitist doesn’t it? Well, it is. This is not your average, petticoat-and-yellow-rock square dancing. This is MIT. Many of the visitors who join us for an evening of dancing are surprised, some pleasantly and some not. Most MIT students are up to the challenge as are most of the others who join us regularly.

Technically, dancers seeking club membership must either go through the class or meet the attendance requirements and dance our club level as outlined in our By-laws. Whenever possible, someone seeking membership should go through the class. It provides us three months to evaluate their dancing and integrate them into our club culture. It also shows a commitment to joining the club. For those who can’t attend the class, the officers must consider each individual situation.

12.4 Problem with Dancers

On rare occasions the officers are alerted that a single dancer is causing several people discomfort while dancing.

Some classic complaints are:

- Asks me to dance several times a night.
- Won’t take “no” for an answer.
- Follows me around.
- Stands too close.
- Asks too many personal questions.
- Looks at my chest, not my face.
- Puts hands in inappropriate places during courtesy turns or swings.
- Repeatedly brushes against me.
Usually these problems can be corrected by simply talking to the dancer and offering concrete corrective suggestions. If you need an MIT resource, you should contact Mary Rowe, Special Assistant to the President.

13 Useful Resources—What, Where, and Whom to Talk To

13.1 Sign-in Sheets and Mailing Lists

The sign-in sheets are divided into three distinct sections. The first section is for those members who regularly attend our weekly dances. The middle section is for those members who dance with the club less regularly, but usually come at least once or twice per year. The final list contains all our other members. Note these sheets make no distinction between voting and non-voting member.

At the end of each semester or two, the names on the list are rearranged based on recent attendance. Every five years or so, the entire list should be culled. To stay on the list, a member must either come and dance with the club at least once every five years or pay dues at least once during the same time period.

As with most lists at Tech Squares, these are alphabetized by first name. Also note that non-members are not listed, but may be written in by hand, if they are noted as “guests”.

The sign-in sheets are currently maintained by Stephen Gildea.

13.2 Email Lists Maintenance

Ron Hoffmann and Stephen Gildea currently maintain our club email lists. Sending a message to the corresponding “request” address should always reach the correct person.

In reality, Ron Hoffmann manages our lists and Stephen Gildea writes our list charters.

If you set the Errors-to field in your message to the “-request” mailing list, you will see fewer of the bounce messages.

13.3 T-Shirt Orders

Rich Courtemanche usually collects orders, and when there are enough, he places the orders plus a bunch of extras. Note that T-shirts are for sale to anyone, not just Tech Squares club members.

13.4 Dance Tickets (for door prizes and split-the-pot)

Ron Hoffmann bought them most recently from Paper&More on Mass Ave. in Arlington. It’s near where he lives, so he’s often willing to get them.
13.5 Past Officers
Past officers are often one of your greatest resources. Many of them are still dancing regularly. They are available to get last-minute jobs done, offer advice, provide background history and more.

See the section at the end for a list of past officers.

14 More Club History
This section contains history of the club, including club lore and things we used to do, but don’t anymore and why.

14.1 Club Founding
Tech Squares was an offshoot of the MIT Outing Club and was founded by Bill Mann, Don Beck, and Veronica McClure in 1967.

For one of the club anniversary dances that was a brochure made of our club history. Several copies can still be found in the club locker.

14.2 Bill Kim and the Bill Kim Dance-a-thon
Back in the late 80’s and early 90’s the club was run primarily by a single, dedicated person. His name was Bill Kim. He handled much of the weekly jobs and still had energy left over to encourage new dancers.

When he was diagnosed with cancer people pulled together from both Tech Squares and the contra dancing community to run a dance-a-thon to help raise money. That dance was held in November 1993 and he passed away a couple years later. His badge was given to the club and remains pinned to our orange club banner in memory of his spirit and dedication to the club.

14.3 Free Admission for Officers
Once upon a time, before the club shrank and started having financial problems (before 1983?), officers got in free to dances. At times in the past, it has been considered a nice incentive when attempting to recruit officers. We should consider reinstating this policy if we think it will actually serve as an incentive.

14.4 Ending at 10:30
Ted Lizotte has a long drive home and asked if we’d be willing to end a half hour early for the Summer of 2002. At the time attendance during the summertime was always low and it seemed like a reasonable adjustment. In Fall 2002, we returned to ending at 11pm. When Summer 2003 came, we again shortened the night to 10:30pm. Sometime during that time, we also started serious discussions with Ted about what we could do to make him happier (so he wouldn’t retire
and stop calling for us). He mentioned that ending at 10:30pm made a big difference. In July of 2003, a proposal to shorten the night to 10:30pm was brought to a club vote. The club approved it, but asked that the board review this decision once a year to be sure that this decision was reverted when the situation no longer warranted the early ending time. Many club members miss the extra half an hour, especially those that arrive later, but the club enjoys Ted so much that they are willing to sacrifice that dancing time to keep him. The officers should seriously consider adding the time back when the situation changes.

15 Past Officers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2004–2005</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Darrel Robertson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Susanne Wieder</td>
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<tr>
<td>(assisted by Ben Wagner)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Matt Carter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pub. Coord.</td>
<td>Anisa Schardl</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Coord.</td>
<td>Marcus Sarofim</td>
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<tr>
<td>Booking Dir.</td>
<td>Courtney Eckhart</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rooming Dir.</td>
<td>Jessica Wong</td>
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<tr>
<td>Banner Dir.</td>
<td>Eddy Karat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Archivist/ Hist.</td>
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<tr>
<td>MaL—Summer</td>
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<td>MaL—Summer</td>
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<td>MaL—Fall</td>
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<td>MaL—Fall</td>
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<td>MaL—Spring</td>
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<td>MaL—Spring</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Caller</td>
<td>Ted Lizotte</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cuers</td>
<td>Phil Gatchell</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Veronica McClure</td>
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Notes:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>2003–2004</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Heather Wakefield</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Ben Wagner</td>
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<tr>
<td>(assisted by Susanne Wieder)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Tammy Finer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pub. Coord.</td>
<td>Lauren Schiff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Coord.</td>
<td>Lisa Greenleaf</td>
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<tr>
<td>Booking Dir.</td>
<td>Linda Resnick</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rooming Dir.</td>
<td>Jessica Wong</td>
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<tr>
<td>Banner Dir.</td>
<td>Leonard Lu</td>
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<tr>
<td>Archivist/ Hist.</td>
<td>Susanne Wieder</td>
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<tr>
<td>MaL—Summer</td>
<td>Dave Glasser</td>
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<tr>
<td>MaL—Summer</td>
<td>Kayla Jacobs</td>
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<tr>
<td>MaL—Fall</td>
<td>Brian Hanechak</td>
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<tr>
<td>MaL—Spring</td>
<td>Anisa Schardl</td>
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<td>Marcus Sarofim</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caller</td>
<td>Ted Lizotte</td>
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<td>Cuers</td>
<td>Phil Gatchell</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Veronica McClure</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Doris T-Bow (Summer 2003)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Doris T-Bow’s retires from cueing for the club
Weekly dances end at 10:30pm year round
Mailing list tech-squares-rounds created (08/2003)
Mailing list tech-squares-officers created (04/2004)
Officer Job descriptions on the web (05/2004)

2002–2003
President Mia Stern
Treasurer Matt Casparius
Secretary Jen Krishnan
Pub. Coord. Ben Wagner
Class Coord. Lisa Greenleaf
Booking Dir. Linda Resnick
Rooming Dir. Jessica Wong
Banner Dir. Leonard Lu
Archivist/His. (unfilled)
Member at Large Courtney Eckhard
Caller Ted Lizotte
Cuers Phil Gatchell
(assisted by Sara Pickett)
(assisted by Bill Ackerman)
Veronica McClure
Doris T-Bow (Summer)

Notes:
Phil Gatchell becomes our club cuer (May 2003)
Weekly dances end at 10:30pm during the Summer

2001–2002
President Jessica Wong
Treasurer Rebecca Rogers
Secretary Sara Pickett
Class Coord. Amy Gresser
Booking Dir. Linda Resnick
Rooming Dir. Ron Hoffmann
Banner Dir. Leonard Lu
Archivist/His. (unfilled)
Member at Large Jaci Conrad
Member at Large Eddy Karat
Caller Ted Lizotte
Cuers Veronica McClure
Veronica McClure
Doris T-Bow (Summer)

Notes:
Changed from dancing Thursday nights to Tuesday nights
Year of the amateur cuers
### 2000–2001
- **President**: Ingrid Ulbrich
- **Treasurer**: Matt Casparius
  - (Marci Gambrell left before taking office)
- **Secretary**: Leonard Lu
- **Pub. Coord.**: Mike Brewer
- **Class Coord.**: James "Kretch" Kretchmar
  - (assisted by Bill Ackerman)
- **Rooming Dir.**: Ron Hoffmann / Darrel Robertson
- **Booking Dir.**: Linda Resnick
- **Banner Dir.**: Ingrid Ulbrich
- **Archivist/ Hist.**: Vieve Sullivan
- **Member at Large**: Jaci Conrad
- **Member at Large**: Henry Own
- **Caller**: Ted Lizotte
- **Cuers**: Doris T-Bow
  - Veronica McClure
  - Hope Belanger

**Notes:**
- Club hosts Jerry Story dance (Aug 17, 2000)

### 1999–2000
- **President**: Tara Holm
- **Treasurer**: Ingrid Ulbrich
- **Secretary**: Mia Stern
- **Pub. Coord.**: Jessica Wong
- **Class Coord.**: Heather Wakefield
  - (assisted by Bill Ackerman)
- **Rooming Dir.**: Ron Hoffmann / Justin Legakis
- **Banner Dir.**: (unfilled)
- **Archivist/ Hist.**: (unfilled)
- **Member at Large**: Eric Mulder
- **Member at Large**: Leonard Lu
- **Caller**: Ted Lizotte
- **Cuers**: Doris T-Bow
  - Veronica McClure

**Notes:**
- Mailing list tech-squares-social created (10/1999)
- Mailing lists tech-squares-discuss created (5/2000)
- Crash Course is offered as a MIT PE class
- Weekly email to tech-squares stopped
- Canceled two monthly dances this year, and two for next
- Only four monthly dances booked for 2001-2002
- New lock gotten for locker
- Sold coffee maker (no longer used at monthly dances)

### 1998–1999
- **President**: Justin Legakis
- **Treasurer**: Tara Holm
- **Secretary**: Jenwa Hsung
- **Pub. Coord.**: Rich Courtemanche
- **Class Coord.**: Brad Backus / Bill Ackerman
- **Booking Dir.**: Linda Resnick / Kari Anne Kjølaas
- **Rooming Dir.**: Ron Hoffmann
- **Banner Dir.**: Joe Foley
- **Archivist/ Hist.**: (unfilled)
- **Member at Large**: (unfilled)
- **Caller**: Ted Lizotte
- **Cuers**: Doris T-Bow
  - Veronica McClure
### 1997–1998
- **President**: Jessica Marder / Joi Nicholson
- **Treasurer**: Justin Legakis
- **Secretary**: “Silvain” Chris Barney
- **Pub. Coord.**: Ron Hoffmann
- **Class Coord.**: Marc Tanner / Joi Nicholson
- **Booking Dir.**: Linda Resnick
- **Rooming Dir.**: Laura Sever
- **Banner Dir.**: Joe Foley
- **Archivist/Hist.**: Laura Sever
- **Member at Large**: (unfilled)

**Callers**
- Don Beck (Fall 1997)
- Ted Lizotte (Spring 1998)

**Cuers**
- Doris T-Bow
- Veronica McClure

**Notes:**
- Don Beck retires as our club caller (Winter 1998)
- Ted Lizotte hired as our club caller
- Weekly dance night changed from Tuesday to Thursday
- Club requests and receives ASA funding for the first time
- Booked only 6 monthly dances for 1999–2000

### 1996–1997
- **President**: Kami Evarts / Wendy Martz
- **Treasurer**: Olga Landa
- **Secretary**: Stephen Gildea
- **Pub. Coord.**: Ron Hoffmann
- **Class Coord.**: Jen Hammock / Marc Tanner
- **Booking Dir.**: Linda Sperling (now Resnick)
- **Rooming Dir.**: Kari Anne Kjolaas
- **Banner Dir.**: Dorothy Stark
- **Archivist/Hist.**: (unfilled)
- **Member at Large**: Jessica Marder
- **Member at Large**: “Silvain” Chris Barney

**Caller**: Don Beck

**Cuers**
- Doris T-Bow
- Phil & Sandie Gatchell
- Veronica McClure

**Notes:** Weekly Jobs started

### 1995–1996
- **President**: Jen Hammock / Linda Sperling (now Resnick)
- **Treasurer**: Fred Jao
- **Secretary**: David Resnick
- **Pub. Coord.**: Judy Johnson
- **Class Coord.**: Matt Githens
- **Booking Dir.**: Linda Sperling (now Resnick)
- **Rooming Dir.**: Arthur Lue
- **Banner Dir.**: Mary Anne Cleary?
- **Archivist/Hist.**: (unfilled)
- **Member at Large**: Heather Wakefield / Rich Courtemanche

**Caller**: Don Beck

**Cuers**
- Doris T-Bow
- Veronica McClure (Winter)
1994–1995
President     Wendy Martz
Treasurer     John LaRoche
Secretary     Michael Fripp
Class Coord.  Becky Spainhower / Linda Sperling (now Resnick)
Booking Dir.  Linda Sperling (now Resnick)
Rooming Dir.  
Banner Dir.   Mary Anne Cleary?
Archivist/Hist. (unfilled)
Member at Large
Caller        Don Beck
Cuer          
Notes:        Veronica McClure retires Summer 1994
              Doris T-Bow fills in as temporary cuer

1993–1994
President     Marc Tanner
Treasurer     Karsten Trulsen
Secretary     Michael Fripp
Class Coord.  J.B. Sweeney, Linda Sperling (now Resnick)/ John LaRoche
Booking Dir.  Linda Sperling (now Resnick)
Rooming Dir.  
Banner Dir.   Mary Anne Cleary?
Archivist/Hist. Steve Zisk
Member at Large
Caller        Don Beck
Cuer          Veronica McClure
Notes:        Semester subscriptions are offered
              Club sponsors the Bill Kim Dance-a-thon (Nov 7, 1993)

1992–1993
President     Bill Kim
Treasurer     
Secretary     Gayle Flaherty
Class Coord.  
Booking Dir.  Bill Kim
Rooming Dir.  
Banner Chair  
Archivist/Hist.  
Member at Large
 Caller        Don Beck
Cuer          Veronica McClure
1991–1992
President
Treasurer
Secretary
Class Coord.
Booking Dir.       Bill Kim
Rooming Dir.
Banner Chair
Archivist/Hist.
Member at Large
Caller   Don Beck
Cuer     Veronica McClure

1990–1991
President
Treasurer
Secretary
Class Coord.
Booking Dir.       Bill Kim
Rooming Dir.
Banner Chair
Archivist/Hist.
Member at Large
Caller   Don Beck
Cuer     Veronica McClure

1989–1990
President   Betsy Kennedy (now Jacobs)
Treasurer
Secretary
Class Coord.
Booking Dir.       Bill Kim
Rooming Dir.
Banner Chair
Archivist/Hist.
Member at Large
Caller   Don Beck
Cuer     Veronica McClure
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