



Dan Schweitzer

One square of Timberline Toppers went to the National Square Dance Convention in Wichita Kansas. If you've never been to a National, you might find the numbers below surprising.

Two hundred tips (or about 40 hours of dancing) would have been possible. You can dance 13 hours straight, each day. Right? Still, 200 is just a fraction of the 1,600, or so, tips played.

Three showers daily still wouldn't prevent the ladies from preferring the traditional (no-touch) Do-Sa-Do. Kansas is humid in June. Dah. The occasional hour of Hot Hash soaked me. By contrast, the occasional hour of Dance-by-Definition just fried my brain.

Four to a hotel room isn't bad. You're only there to sleep and shower. Bad is getting a smoking room. And only 3 towels.

Five rooms held Mainstream or Plus tips continuously. Room capacities ranged from huge (50 squares) to intimate (5 squares). Other rooms were dedicated to Advanced, Round, Youth, Contra, Line and Handicap dancing. There were additional rooms for clinics (sewing, club management, and calling). There was a hall with 55 vendors for clothes, jewelry,

music, massagers, and promoters for future conventions).

Six thousand dancers registered, representing all 50 states, and several countries – England, in particular, had a large group.

Seven is my wife's lucky number, which did not help her win the drawing for the sewing machine, quilt, or (her preference among dozens of items) the sunflower dress.

Ate little. Food wasn't bad, nor was it especially good.

Nine or so callers I'd never heard before were great fun (i.e. Ainsworth, Davis, Flipo, Hardy, Kelly, Laudenschlager, Pelnear, Story, Shukayr). We caught the callers we love, but don't hear often enough in Colorado (Byars, Henerlau, Tyl), and our region's great callers (who stack up very well with National callers).

Ten AM to 10 PM were the normal hours of operation. Then came "after hour" parties, hosted by various organizations, and tending to feature particularly good callers. The last one, Washington state's party (Spokane had just been awarded the 2012 convention.), was particularly merciless. I doubt that a single non-achy back, non-tender foot, or non-mush brain could be found in the 20 squares on the floor. But the callers kept going. At 11:30 they finally relented, just as I was about to surrender more than name, rank & serial number.