



□ *Editor's note: This is one in a series of feature stories concerning organizations that benefit the Imperial area. Volunteering in a community, through organizations, is a way to pay back for the benefits that the community offers an individual.*

By Carolyn Lee

The Imperial Republican

Current members aren't sure how long the Chase County Stompers have been dancing, but the organization has been in existence at least since 1967, according to current member Alice Clements.

The Stompers are a square dance club, with members from Chase County, Benkelman, Haxtun (Colo.) and Grant. At present there are 30 active dancers.

The first officers were Don and Noni Thiesen, Larry and Betty Sargent and Wendell and Marcy Shalla, according to member Roma Jean Burtis.

The first "graduation class," in 1978, included Larry and Roma Jones, Ray and Bonnie Schultz, Larry and Dianne Radcliffe, Frank and Alice Clements, Al and Joyce Christensen, Kandi Bremer, Jim and Leah Sughroue and Lovell and Phyliss Wheeler.

The group first met at the VFW Hall. At present it meets the second Saturday of each month at 7 p.m. at the 4-H building at the Chase County Fairgrounds.

The late Nate Skeels of Grant was the instructor for years. Round dancing was also included over the years, with Loretta Klatka of Holyoke (Colo.) and Jackie Spellmeyer of Ogallala as teachers.

The regular club caller is Marlon Spellmeyer of Ogallala, with guest callers from Colorado and Nebraska.

The group doesn't just dance for themselves. Members dance as entertainment at the Imperial Manor and Sunrise Heights of Wauneta.

The Stompers sponsor a dance at the Chase County Fair, and usually provide a float for the parade.

Members provide golf cart rides at the fair, and donate food to the Chase County Pantry.

Current officers are Charlie and Mary Lee, presidents; Merlin and Kay Castle, treasurers, and Stan and Janelle Cross, secretaries.

Anyone wanting to take lessons, or to become a member of Chase County Stompers, may contact one of the officers.