

To all SF Branch teachers and class managers,

For 2005, the Valentine Ball will again offer new dancers a discount on ticket prices. As we did in 2004, The Branch committee, at the suggestion of the Valentine Committee chair, has decided to make the discount available to anyone who is competent but has never attended a Valentine's Ball before, not just those who have been dancing less than one year. The intention is to generate interest in the Valentine's Ball and other branch events. We feel that, once they find out what fun they can have, they might begin to attend on a regular basis. To this end, we felt that there just is not a sufficient pool of competent first-year dancers. We are reaching out to those in your classes who might have been attending class for a year or two, but who do not attend balls and monthly parties. Developing the skill required for attending the Valentine's Ball may be an excellent motivator for your students, especially couples.

The 2005 program has a good mix, but many of the dances are challenging. We are asking teachers to honestly assess a dancer's ability to handle a reasonable portion of the program so that the dancer will feel comfortable at the ball. Therefore, discount coupons will only be valid if signed by a current RSCDS teacher. I have enclosed a sheet of coupons for you to use as a reproduction master. Please copy as many as you need for your students. Note that this year's coupon includes branch membership information. This needs to be filled out.

The new "First-timer's Discount" is a flat \$10 discount against the ticket price a person would have to pay normally. Since normal ticket prices depend on branch membership and timing, a few examples might clarify what the discount does for folks:

- If a dancer is a member of any RSCDS Branch, and they submit their application by 1/15/05, they pay \$30 with coupon. A dancer who is not an RSCDS member who submits their application by 1/15/05 pays \$40 with coupon.
- Anyone submitting a late registration, between 1/16/05 and 2/3/05, pays a \$10 late fee in addition to the prices listed above, so members with coupon pay \$40 and non-members with coupon pay \$50.
- Those who submit a very late registration after 2/3/05, pay a \$20 late fee in addition to the prices listed above, so members with coupon pay \$50 and non-members with coupon pay \$60.
- First-time coupons will **NOT** be honored at the door. Tickets at the door will be \$60 for any and all. Also, we will accept checks only at the door: **NO CASH** at the door.

Once again, we have very sound reasons for our pricing structure:

1. This is an RSCDS SF branch event, and branch membership counts. If ticket sales do not cover the cost of the ball, the branch pays the difference out

of member dues. We feel it is just not right to have members subsidize non-members at this event.

2. The difference between branch member and non-member prices matches the ratio of member vs. non-member prices at monthly parties.
3. We have to provide a head-count to the caterer two weeks prior to the event. We pay a surcharge for changes after that date. So folks who register late should absorb the cost of late fees, and not have them distributed amongst all attendees.
4. Selling tickets at the door requires a ball committee member and/or volunteer to miss the opening ceremonies and first few dances. We don't think people who work hard to put on an event should be inconvenienced by people who don't plan ahead. So we have made buying tickets at the door painful to the average Scot's pocketbook. Also, accepting cash at the door may require a ball committee member to be walking about the Oakland Scottish Rite Center late at night carrying a large amount of cash. Committee members do not relish that prospect.

Once again, in order to save printing costs and postage, ball booklets will not be mailed in advance. They will be made available to attendees at the reception table. All attendees will be mailed dance descriptions and pilings prior to the dance.

As usual, all this information, including an on-line copy of the flyer/application, is posted to the RSCDS SF Branch website (<http://rscds-sf.org>).