

Friendship Set to Music the TV show

“Friendship Set to Music,” Minnesota’s most visible effort to promote square and round dancing, markets the fun in lots of different ways.

Most obviously, FSTM provides two new shows each month to over 75 public access stations in eleven states. Some even air the show daily so they appreciate having 165 different shows from which to choose.

FSTM to has its own website: www.friendshipsettomusic.com.

Segments from different shows plus some other Minnesota moments are posted on YouTube at www.youtube.com/user/sqdancemn.

News items are often posted on facebook at www.facebook.com/SquareDanceMN.

A very popular spot on the FSTM website is the recipe section. Almost seventy “treats” have been shared by square dancers; these recipes get lots of “hits” each month: www.squaredanceminnesota.com/fstm/recipes.htm.

Another extremely popular FSTM site is the photo gallery. Over 4,000 photos are posted there and have had over 100,000 hits: <http://community.webshots.com/user/bdweb3780>.

The latest addition is www.squaredanceloons.com. The loons were released on the show and will be followed with photos and dialogue on that website.

Behind the scenes there have been some huge changes in the last seven years. Technology changes are probably the most noticeable. When the show began seven years ago, VHS tapes were the medium. Today DVDs are what stations want. Back then the telephone number was important. Today most comments and inquiries come through the website. Phone calls only come from those who want an immediate answer or those who don’t have a computer.

Personnel behind the scenes has also evolved. Ken and Dee Scott are the only dancers who have been at the studio for all 165 shows. Dick Rueter is the only caller who has been on almost every show (only missed six) since FSTM’s inception. Many other callers, cuers, and dancers have regularly participated over the seven years--making a list is too dangerous as a name or two will probably be missed!

As for the list of “who” dances regularly on the show, just ask the viewers. They are quick to tell a neighbor or friend, “Saw you last night on TV” or “Hey, I watched the whole show and you weren’t on there.”