

and relationships. The success of the early Hip To Be Square dances provided the mostly- amateur musicians the incentive to get together between gigs to practice tunes. One example is the town of Canmore, where dances sell out in a less than a day, and there's a weekly Sunday night jam. They also showed up in force for a workshop with visiting old-time musicians Greg and Jere Canote.

There are also challenges. One example: At most dances someone will inevitably request we bring Hip To Be Square to his or her private birthday or wedding party. As a caller I began employing smaller bands, under the "Kitchen Party" banner, for paid private events. This is what we hoped for. However, the increasing strength of musicianship in the Kootenay Stringbenders community has meant it is harder to find weekends where the core musicians don't have other gigs and there is an expectation to start paying musicians more than gas and a small stipend.

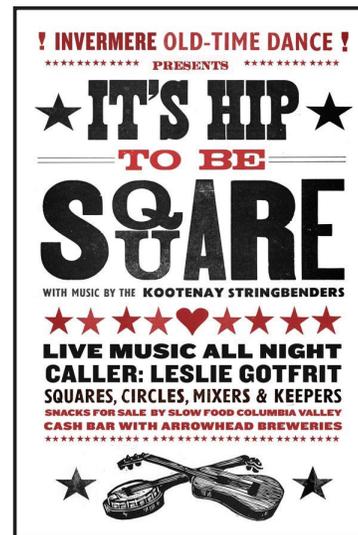
The success of Hip To Be Square empowered me to take the leap this past year and offer a new three-dance series called The Calgary Old-Time Experience. I'm

collaborating with a musician, Greg Monforton, who shared my vision for a regular urban dance that replicated the joy we saw on the dance floors of those small towns.

Far from the dance riches of the East or West Coasts, old-time dance and music are gaining a tiny toehold in little Canadian

mountain communities and one big city. We'll keep at it, spreading the joy one dance at a time.

*Leslie Gotfrit is a dance caller in Calgary, Alberta, who uses Anglo-American traditional dance forms and live music to create joy, fun and community.*



## 1/2 Page Horizontal Ad

7.125" wide x 4.375 high"

Full Color or B/W

Link to your website or Facebook page