

## **Ann & Sam Ballinger – Miami Valley Folk Dancers**

The Miami Valley Folk Dancers enthusiastically nominate Ann and Sam Ballinger as the Honor Roll Couple for the Miami Valley Dance Council. They have been active folk, round, square, and contra dancers and have made, on a volunteer basis, exceptional contributions to the promotion of recreational dancing in the Miami Valley through administration, teaching, and public relations.

For over 20 years, Ann and Sam Ballinger have been, administratively, the backbone of the Miami Valley Folk Dancers (MVFD). Not only have they served as the driving force of the group but they have trained others to be leaders as well. Both have actively served as mentors to individuals wishing to promote dancing and understanding of other cultures. They have given responsibility yet provided any necessary support in the training of others to teach and lead workshops and demonstrations. Through Sam's direction the group has been able to maintain \$1.00/ month dues which were initiated over 35 years ago.

Ann's teaching contributions are unequalled. For 15 years, Ann has taught the beginners' class for the group from 7:00-8:00 p.m. every Thursday evening. In addition, she has been very active in the Girl Scout Council and has taught over 2,500 girl scouts and leaders how to dance. The impact of her dedication to teaching extends beyond MVFD, where over 75% of our members learned to dance through her efforts, to much of the Miami Valley. Former members of her class have taught folk dancing at public schools within the Miami Valley and to students at Wright State University, University of Dayton, and Miami University.

They have been responsible for the promotion of dance through public demonstrations and support of the Dayton International Festival. Each year, Miami Valley Folk Dancers present, under Ann and Sam's direction, an average of eight public demonstrations at places such as West Milton, Aullwood, and Wright State University, as well as, many nursing homes and retirement centers. These demonstrations include the Sauerkraut Festival in Waynesville where thousands have been given their first opportunity to view recreational folk dancing. The Ballingers have played a key role in each International Festival held in Dayton. In addition to performing and leading participation dancing, Ann and Sam have coordinated clean up, information, and ticket sale efforts.