

A Dance for Des

32 bar reel for 3 couples in a four-couple longwise set

Bars	Description
1 - 4	1st couple, joining nearer hands, dance down the middle through third couple and cast up to second place on own sides. 2nd couple step up on bars 3-4.
5 - 8	2nd, 1st, and 3rd couples, giving right hands, turn partners once round, and flow into -
9 - 16	2nd, 1st, and 3rd couples dance six hands round and back.
17 - 20	2nd and 1st couples dance right hands across. 1st man finishes facing out his own side, and 1st couple flows into -
21 - 24	1st and 3rd couples dance left hands across. 1st man finishes facing out and up, and 1st woman finishes facing in and up. 1st and 3rd couples dance continuously into -
25 - 32	2nd, 1st, and 3rd couples dance parallel reels of three on own sides, beginning with 1st and 2nd men, and also 1st and 2nd women, passing right shoulders to begin. Repeat, having passed a couple.

Devised by Sara Gratiot, San Francisco Branch, in honor of Desiree Stuart-Alexander, Santa Cruz Class, RSCDS - San Francisco Branch, August 2013.

Suggested music: "Walking on the Moon" — Addie Harper, "Rising Moon Reel" — Dougie Pincock

Bars 1 - 8 represent golf, a retirement passion for Des - speeding down the fairway, and the ball rolling around into the cup.

Bars 9 - 16 represent the moon. Des created the lunar maps used by NASA in the moon landing, which she watched from Houston, and she was the first person to map the far side of the moon.

Bars 17 - 24 represent propellers, as Des is a commercial-licensed pilot who flew her own Cessna for Flying Samaritans, a group that flies doctors and dentists to free clinics in remote Indian villages.

Bars 25 - 32 represent Scottish Country Dancing, her other retirement entertainment, or perhaps the infinity sign, because Des just keeps on being active, giving, learning, and being an inspiration.

Des has been breaking ground throughout her career and life. She was the only woman in her advanced courses while earning her master's and doctoral degrees at Stanford, and the first to do independent field work and study lunar rocks. She worked as a lunar geologist for the U.S. Geological Survey for 23 years and was the first female branch chief in its history. Part of that time Des was detailed to NASA. She was the only woman selected by the USGS to be on the Lunar Sample Preliminary Team for Apollo 16 and Apollo 17. She also participated in astronaut training and did extensive studies of Mars. Des also studied the earth's oil and mineral deposits, fault lines, dams and earthquakes. She taught geology at the university level in Ethiopia for two years. She has published more than 50 scientific articles, participated in international symposiums, and received numerous awards. Beyond her career, Des has participated in civic projects, installing emergency response systems in homes, raising money for the symphony, and working on Northern California Golf Association tournaments. She has also been a member of the California Aviation Safety Council.