

This newsletter provides promotion and marketing ideas, shines a light on people in our dance community, provides history and general information about our much loved activity, and highlights provincial and national events. If you wish to contribute an article, or see an event, topic, person, or club featured, contact the editor.



## WHY CHANGE? - by Editor Claudia Littlefair

*"If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always gotten." – Jessie Potter*

Times are tough for square dance clubs – two more in my area have closed the doors this fall, yet three of the clubs in our area have almost two or more squares of new dancers. What made the difference? I believe that part of the answer lies in effective advertising and promotion, and part of it lies in the willingness of clubs to make changes before their numbers are so low they don't have the members to support the changes. The good news for all our clubs is that there are ways to succeed, as shown by the next couple of stories.

## A SUCCESS STORY GROWING CLASSES

- by Caller Don Wood, Lacey, Washington

**Much like many other areas, five years ago we were failing.** Our classes were small, if we had enough for a class at all, and clubs were stagnating if not dying. Five years back we decided a change was necessary. Our dancer's organization and callers got together and came up with a modification of another caller's program that was having success in his area. Our success did not happen overnight. It took a couple of years and some tweaking. More importantly, it took cooperation between callers and clubs. Frankly, it was change or die as an activity. Thankfully we chose to change.

I should mention this amount of attendance is not an anomaly, it is fairly typical; at least it has been for the past three years or 18 classes. In any event, I thought you might enjoy seeing a success. We had 9 squares last night. What fun! My colleague (Glenn Raiha) was teaching, and I attended as my Monday class just ended and won't start until February. What a joy it was to see a full hall of happy smiling faces. **I do hope that others will consider what we are doing and be able to take something positive away from this. Please feel free to contact me should anyone want more information.** [Don's email: [dwood196@comcast.net](mailto:dwood196@comcast.net)].

I recently read a posting from a caller proposing a ten week course for square dancing. This would, in that callers' opinion, require the removal of some calls and the addition of others; specifically some Plus calls. This was from an ACA (American Callers Association) member. As you are aware, I am a member of both organizations. What prompted me to write to you is this.

Without respect to the Plus calls, this is close to the program we run in our area. I work with another callers (a CALLERLAB member) and we run a program structured as follows. To begin with, **there are six start dates in our program over a given year. We have class on Monday or Thursday.**

1. In September, a ten week program from 6:30pm to 9:00pm on Thursday; the Basic 51 program is taught.
2. Five weeks after starting the Thursday class, a Monday class begins; the Basic 51 program is taught again.
3. Once the Thursday class has completed the ten week course, another Basic 51 class is started. Basic is taught from 6:30pm to 8:00 pm and Mainstream from 8:00pm to 9:00 pm.
4. Dancers who completed the Basic 51 program can choose to return and "angel" the new Basic 51 class and attend the Mainstream portion.
5. This scenario is duplicated for the Monday night class.

## INDEX

Editor: Why Change? .....	1
A Success - Growing Classes .....	1
New Dancer Promotion Brings ....	2
In Over Two Squares .....	
Tips for Better Dancing .....	3
Lighter Side of Darkness .....	5
Kelly's Korner - New Dancer .....	6
Glimpse the Past-Square .....	7
Square Dancers & Politicians .....	
Two-Headed Monster - .....	8
Recruiting & Retaining .....	
Talking Points for Interviews .....	9
21st Canadian National Festival ...	9
Surrey, B.C. ....	
AB Dance Convention 2020 .....	10

Generally, this structure is working well. It is relatively standard for me to have between five and eight squares attending every Monday or Thursday. **This is our fifth year, and we believe the program is working. Many of the dancers will go thru the program multiple times to get comfortable with the calls. They are actively joining clubs; and in our area, square dancing is growing.**

**About the Author:** *A Washington native, Don has been fortunate to have traveled world-wide calling square dances. He has called in England, Australia, Mexico, Canada, The Caribbean, as well as most of the United States. Recently Don and his wife Marie were awarded the Almond F. Parker award, Washington State's most prestigious award for a caller couple. He attributes this to Marie for her constant support and council. Don calls Mainstream through C1 and is the club caller for several local clubs. He is also co-owner, producer and recording artist for Lou-Mac Records, recording many popular square dance tunes.*



## **NEW DANCER PROMOTION PROGRAM BRINGS IN OVER TWO SQUARES!**

**- by Cuer Bill & Marge Webb, Brecksville Squares, Ohio 2009**

**How do you make a club grow and how do you invigorate a club? By getting new dancers. But how do you do that?** As always, it's by asking people to come to lessons and learn. But we've tried that and we've asked everyone we know and got no takers. So then what?

The last two or three years we've had three or four new dancers in our classes and limited success in keeping them. So I decided we could do better. I talked to some of our more recent graduates and invited them to my house in November (before Marge & I went to Florida for the winter) and tossed around some ideas. **We decided to meet once a month after we got back from Florida to come up with names of people that might be interested. We encouraged all of our club members to get involved and put names into a prospective new member box.** We promised we would draw a name out of this box in July and give the lucky club member a special prize. That was the start.

**Starting in May, we gathered and talked about ways to advertise our club and lessons. General calling cards were made and given to all club members to give to anyone they talked to who had any interest in square dancing.** This was just general information with two contact names, the person who gave out the card and mine. We had a nice article in the local paper and we did a demo at a summer concert on our town square.

**At the end of July we sent out a general letter to all those names we had collected telling about the value of square dancing, our local club, etc. and emphasizing that lessons start only once a year in September at almost all clubs around Cleveland. We made new cards which promoted our "fun night" with finger foods 30 minutes before we started dancing. In August we sent another letter out emphasizing that it now was only two weeks away and be sure they had it on their calendar. Finally, we had the club member who solicited the new dancer, call and get their reaction and interest in coming. This initial mailings had 98 names. We followed this with personal calls and we had about 40 who were interested. The first night we had 29 show up and about 40 angels. It was an exciting beginning.**

The numbers have fallen off to about 15 to 18 showing up each week. I have made a point of calling those who miss to see if everything is alright and encourage them to come back. We have a short 15 minute review before our regular class to catch up anyone who missed. Each week I have come up with a saying on a business size card and a treat for the new dancers to take home. It's corny but they seem to look forward to it. **After nine weeks now, we are very pleased that it looks like we will have almost 20 who should graduate in April.**

**This effort took some time and the committee of seven couples helped keep us all excited about the end goal but no one killed themselves and we had a lot of fun.** The primary effort was to talk to anyone, wherever we were, about our great activity and if they showed any interest, get their name, address, and phone number so that we could follow up. It certainly was worth the effort and we hope we can do it again next year.

## TIPS FOR BETTER DANCING

### - Excerpt from Article by Ed Foote, Caller

The purpose of this article is to enhance your dancing pleasure. Dancers who follow these rules find they dance more, stand less, and in general have a more enjoyable dancing experience.

#### TAKE HANDS WITH THOSE STANDING BESIDE YOU

This should be done immediately after completing any figure, to enable you to see the formation you have (line, wave, etc.) when doing the next call.

1. **Hands should be joined within one-half second after the completion of any call.** Failure to join hands after a call will often result in sloppy lines or waves, which could cause the square to break down before or during the execution of the next call.



2. **Elbows must be bent when hands are joined.** If arms are outstretched when hands are touching, the set is much too large to operate smoothly.

#### HOW TO AVOID BREAKING DOWN



1. **Believe the caller.** Often dancers will stop cold if a caller tells them to do something and they do not understand why. Forget worrying about "why" and just do as the caller says. Refusing to execute a given command will cause the square to break down.

2. **If the caller gives a call you have never heard, do not give up and quit.** In the vast majority of cases the caller will tell you how to do the call after he has said the name, especially if it is not one of the Mainstream or Plus Program calls. Even if you have never heard a call, if it is not complicated, there is no reason for inability to do the call if the caller talks you thru it.

3. **If you want to help someone who is lost, use hand signals.** A very effective method is to point to the spot they should be occupying. If you talk, you could cause yourself and others in the square to miss hearing the caller give the next call.
4. **If you are positive you have done a call correctly, do not let someone who is unsure of the call make you change your position.** This will keep the square going.
5. **Experienced couples should be across from each other when squared up, never adjacent,** if a set consists of two experienced couples and two inexperienced couples. This will give each inexperienced dancer an experienced corner, and will provide each side of the square with experienced dancers when doing calls.
6. **Keep your head raised.** This lets you see what is going on. Many people dance looking down at the floor, and thus are out of touch with the set as a whole.
7. **Keep the set small.** Touching hands immediately after each call is one way to accomplish this. Large sets break down much more often than small ones.
8. **Always have your set lined up with the walls.** Often a set will become slightly offset from being lined up with the walls; now a Cast Off or other turning motion may cause some people to become disoriented. If the caller has the set Promenade and has the heads or sides Wheel Around, it is quite likely the set will not be lined up with the walls. **Solution:** Take it upon yourself to make slight adjustments on the next two or three calls to get the set aligned with the walls. One person can cause the whole set to adjust, so you be this person.



#### IF YOU BECOME COMPLETELY LOST

1. **Do not turn around.** This will make it difficult for someone behind you to help you recover. It is much easier to guide someone into place by guiding them from the back.



2. **Turn your head in all directions to see where you should go.** If someone says to turn around or you see that you should turn around, then do it. Otherwise, retain your facing direction and let someone guide you into place.
3. **Do not wander around.** Stay put until someone either guides you into place or directs you to go to a certain position. Do not be surprised to get this help – expect that you will get it and be ready to respond to it quickly.

### IF YOUR SQUARE BREAKS DOWN, GET TO FACING LINES

Do this by: (1) Squaring your set (go home), and then  
 (2) Have the head couples slide to the right to form normal facing lines of four (each boy with a girl on his right).



Now watch the other squares. Often the caller will get the squares back to facing lines several times before finally getting to a Left Allemande; when he does get them to facing lines, your square can now pick up the next call and you are dancing again. You may not wind up with your original partner or corner, but you are dancing and that is the name of the game.

This will not work every time, as sometimes the caller does not bring people back to facing lines before a Left Allemande; but it works often enough to be worth doing. In fact, many callers will intentionally bring people back to facing lines in order to pick up those who have broken down early. If you do not accept this opportunity to resume dancing, you may have as long stand until the next Left Allemande.

### HOW TO PASS PROPER SHOULDERS

Whenever you Pass Thru with someone, always pass *right* shoulders, *never* pass left shoulders.

### HOW TO LEARN PROPERLY

1. **Try to understand the definition of the call rather than just memorizing a position.** If you understand the definition, you will be able to do the call from any position; but if you have only memorized one position, you will be lost if the call is used from any other position.
2. **Please be quiet while the caller is explaining something.** You may not need the help but others may.
3. **If a caller is walking the floor thru a call, do not get ahead of the caller's prompting even if you know what comes next.** This is inconsiderate of fellow dancers who need this help and could keep them from fully understanding the call, leading to a possible breakdown of the set later on.



### TWO PRIMARY REASONS FOR SQUARES BREAKING DOWN

1. Failure to take hands with adjacent dancers at the completion of every call to form lines or waves.
2. Failure to listen to or believe the caller.



**About the Author:** Ed Foote is considered by many to be one of the foremost authorities on the activity of Modern Western Style Square Dancing. He began his calling career in 1965 and calls all square dance programs thru Challenge. Ed has so many credits to his name in the Square Dance Community that a complete listing here would not be possible. He is seen by many as the "Callers Caller" and has been known to provide dancers with some of the most dynamic and entertaining choreography in the world. Ed is a full time International Caller who makes his home in the Pittsburgh area when he is not traveling.

According to the Alaska Department of Fish & Game, while both male and female reindeer grow antlers in the summer each year, male reindeer drop their antlers at the beginning of winter, usually late November to mid-December. Female reindeer retain their antlers until after they give birth in the spring. Therefore, according to every historical rendition depicting Santa's reindeer, EVERY single one of them, from Rudolph to Blitzen, had to be a girl. We should have known - only women would be able to drag a fat man in a red velvet suit all around the world in one night and not get lost.

## THE LIGHTER SIDE OF DARKNESS - by Dee Jackins

*Dee is an avid square and round dancer, and enjoys writing. She shares the lighter side of some of her experiences, challenges and near disasters as a sight impaired person. See issue #2015-6 for her complete story under "Chatter Close-up".*



*Dee and her husband square danced from 1969 to 1971. In 1975, she lost sight in her left eye, and by 1989 her vision was completely gone. While trying to cope with her blindness, Dee's husband was diagnosed with cancer. He died 10 months later in October, 1991. A friend suggested that she try square dancing again, and in 1995 she joined Calgary's singles club. Dee has been dancing ever since. She dances by visualizing the calls and positions, and with the gentle guidance of dancers' hands for no-hand calls such as weave the ring.*

Sight is one of the five senses taken for granted until something goes awry. It's now been over thirty years since I've lost my vision and reminiscing sure brings back how much one has lost. Back when I was living in a much smaller place where there were no city lights to interfere with the brightly lit sky in the evenings, we would lie back on the grass and watch for all the constellations of stars in the galaxy. What a beautiful sight.

During the day when it was nice and sunny with those big fluffy clouds establishing all sorts of shapes and forms, our minds went wild imagining what creative subjects were going to appear.

Who knows what waits for us in the future? It sure wasn't my intention to retire from work in my mid thirties; this is when I got involved in oil painting. Whenever our family would travel west through the mountains, I would look out the passenger window and imagine that the window frame was a picture frame. In my mind I was transferring that as a painting that could come to life on a canvas when I got home. Some did but not as many as I would have liked. Had I been aware that it would be coming to an end, I would have pursued it a bit more seriously. I managed to complete over three dozen paintings in my ten years of such a delightful hobby. Time just flew by every time I worked on a canvas. Most of my favorite scenes were landscapes, sunrises and sunsets, mainly due to my limited vision. The most beautiful colors explode in these formations and it was a joy to try and capture the perfect shade. What an assortment of colors to choose from! Every morning while making lunches for the family, the blinds were raised immediately so I could take in all the beauty of the sunrise and in the evening the back yard faced west which allowed an excellent view of the sunsets.

Something else that crosses my mind is the many years that have passed without seeing the faces of family and friends. It makes me wonder periodically if I would recognize my son and daughter after so many years. One thing for certain, I only remember them as they were in their early twenties. As far as the grandchildren and great grandchildren go, I can only picture them by the descriptions that were given to me as they grew up. Who knows if it's an accurate image, but in my case they haven't aged much at all.

I have one 'huge' item on my bucket list. If medical research should ever discover that stem cell is the solution to blindness and can restore even partial sight, I'd be first in line. Without informing anyone, I'd love to attend a Square Dance and just sit back and listen to all the different voices, comments, laughter and actions. Then I'd put a name to him/her to find out if I was correct in the images in my mind's eye. That would be an experience above and beyond words! When one makes a wish, might just as well reach for the sky. If you could only see - what I hear...

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas and a Healthy and Happy New Year, "CHEERS!" - Dee

- "There's nothing sadder in this world than to awake Christmas morning and not be a child." *Erma Bombeck*
- The four stages of life: (1) You believe in Santa Claus; (2) You don't believe in Santa Claus; (3) You dress up as Santa Claus; (4) You look like Santa Claus.
- When you stop believing in Santa Claus is when you start getting clothes for Christmas.
- There were two snowmen in a field. One turned to the other and said, "I don't know about you, but I can smell carrots."
- "Cheers to a New Year and another chance for us to get it right." - *Oprah Winfrey*
- "Youth is when you are allowed to stay up late on New Year's Eve. Middle age is when you are forced to." *Bill Vaughn*

## KELLY'S KORNER - by Kelly Thompson

*Kelly started square dancing in 2016 after being coerced by his sister. He admits that he would have never walked into the club on his own. He has since found a whole new way of looking at life, a whack of new friends and personal confidence that didn't exist before.*

### THE NEW DANCER



We are just nicely underway in yet another season of square dance. Efforts in terms of recruiting new faces to the dance floor, perhaps for some of the clubs, are starting to come to fruition, but alas some of our clubs have chosen to close. The advertising and promotion seems to have paid dividends for a few clubs while it seems other clubs haven't had the same success.

I think throughout we have always had two problems as it concerns new dancers, one of which is to get the customer in the door and the second problem is to make the sale. That sounds a bit like a car dealership but ours is to get the public to know we exist and to have what the new dancer wants, or needs, that might convince them that square dancing is the most important activity in their daily routine. For the most part we know the benefits of square dancing but somehow we don't make the sale in spite of knowing our product.

I started square dancing this now my fifth year and instead of moving to the next level I remain at this level to specifically help new dancers. I was almost forced into square dancing with the arm twist of a sister, came back to square dance probably due to the arm twist, but I stayed in square dance for a reason. It took awhile but I had to set my calendar around square dance nights. Even I didn't know in those first few weeks what the reason was that I needed to square dance. As the time went on I found I needed the social aspect of being with people.

I am sure every new dancer has their own unique reason to want to become involved with our system, but I also suspect too, they need to discover the reasons for themselves. We can tell them the basics as far as the program, how our system works, and how great the snack table is, but I wonder if we perhaps try to oversell to some degree. I can't say what the secret might be but I also think we should remember being a new dancer ourselves and why we continued to carry on after those first few weeks. Maybe we need to ask ourselves what it was that sold us on square dancing.

I have met a few new dancers so far this year and likely for the fifty fifth time learned the fine art of the allemande left. It probably takes a bit of patience that many likely wouldn't want to use, but the new dancer is learning something new to them. It does take patience to be a square angel but I think also it is quite important to allow that new dancer time to learn. It could be very intimidating for a new dancer to try to learn a lot of information in a short period of time, especially while not yet feeling comfortable in the surroundings.

I don't know if my approach works or not but, I tell new dancers there are four reasons to square dance.

1. It is an excuse to get out of the house.
2. It's a good way to be with people.
3. The snacks are there to be eaten.
4. If necessary, then learn to square dance.

I have also said to a potential new dancer, even if you can't dance or are in pain, come to square dancing and simply be a spectator. Be out with people, anything is better than sitting at home alone and we don't charge spectators admission. Those are the reasons in the correct order because it takes three years to learn the basic mainstream level and there are several more levels after that.

You can get out of the house all around the world, you can meet people from all over the world, and I'm sure you can have snacks from all over the world, but you will never learn everything there is to know about square dancing. Have patience, have fun, go places, meet people but even better yet; let's all become New Dancers once again.

"I have always thought of Christmas as a good time; a kind, forgiving, generous, pleasant time; a time when men and women seem to open their hearts freely, and so I say, God bless Christmas!" *Charles Dickens.*



## A GLIMPSE OF THE PAST

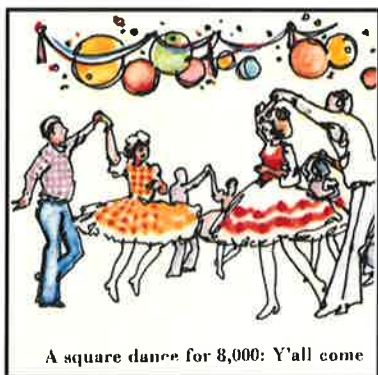
*This column features excerpts from the book "As I See Saw It –Bob Osgood", reprinted with permission from the author and square dance caller, Paul Moore. Jim Mayo, First Chairman of CALLERLAB, states in his review: "This is truly the only book about the whole of Modern Western Square Dance and it is certainly the most complete (and accurate) book that will ever be written about this huge activity." Paul had access to all of the material that crossed Bob Osgood's desk at Sets in Order/American Square Dance Society. For additional information, contact Paul Moore at paulmoore@wildblue.net or look for this 600+ page book on Amazon.ca (\$26).*

### SQUARE DANCERS ENTERTAIN POLITICIANS

. . . there was Sam Queen, Sr., of North Carolina, a colorful figure in square dancing whose life was snuffed out by a prowler in his home. Now Sam's fame as a square dance caller was entirely built around his ability to train some of the finest Appalachian exhibition dancers going. Emphasis was on smoothness and ultra-precision but at a fast tempo – and later he added another element, the clog. There was one especially grand spot in Sam Sr.'s life. **During the Roosevelt administration Eleanor Roosevelt dreamed up a party for the King and Queen of England when they visited the White House.** It was to be an all-American program but one that showed the British Isles background. Sam Queen brought his *Soco Gap Dancers* from Haywood County, N.C., in the Great Smoky Mountains and they danced for the White House party. And, believe it or not, there were some society people who complained loudly about such a rag-a-muffin group being allowed in the White House.



The Soco Gap Square Dancers practicing for the White House performance. 1939.



A square dance for 8,000: Y'all come

**Another time, but the same place: the White House.** The night of January 21, 1977 marked a significant first in our square dance lives. That was the night that the first Presidential Inaugural American Square & Folk Dance was held with more than 6000 dancers from all over America in attendance. The dance took place in the National Visitors' Center, Washington D.C. and provided an opportunity for Square Dancers to salute our new Square Dancing President [Carter] and his Lady. It was truly a "grand night for dancing". The Inaugural Square & Folk Dance evening can be counted as a great success in many ways. **It was a night that saw square dancers overcome less than acceptable sound and some measure of confusion in programming and still have a wonderful time.**

**Not the White House this time, but still an eminent building. Canada's Annual United Nations Ball one year was highlighted by some rousing square dancing,** participated in by notables from many nations. The U.N. delegates proclaimed this one of the best parties of the season. To quote the Ottawa Square Dance Assn. news-sheet: *"The Ball started out with the usual waltz, fox trot and Latin music. Then suddenly, to the astonishment of all, a fellow in square dance attire got up on the stage and started instructing the U.N. diplomats and their lovely ladies in the intricacies of the Canadian square dance. He was Jack Zoubie of the External Affairs Dept., who makes square dancing his hobby when he isn't handling Canada's foreign policies."*

Whether the U.N. people were attired in tuxedos and ball gowns or the national costumes of their countries, Zoubie soon had them dancing to a definite Canadian beat. On the ballroom wall of the Beekman Tower Hotel in New York, a solemn buffalo head gravely watched the proceedings. At the stroke of 12, buffalo burgers were served to all present, along with Canadian cheese, cider and apples.

**Not royalty, but definitely a VIP, was Ted Kennedy.** A local Eastern newspaper reported in the Society Column that Senator Edward Kennedy celebrated his 41<sup>st</sup> birthday in New York at a square dance given by his sister and brother-in-law. It was reported that the hosts moved all the French antiques around in their apartment to make space for a real, country-style hoedown. One guest remarked, *"It's so way out, it must be on its way back in."* Perhaps someone should get the word to this segment of the population concerning square dancing and its popularity and scope.

**FIGHTING THE TWO-HEADED MONSTER - RECRUITING & RETAINING****- Excerpt from CALLERLAB Newsletter "From The Chair", by Ken Ritucci***Editor's Note: CALLERLAB is the International Association of Square Dance Callers.**The annual CALLERLAB Convention is held in different cities across the U.S. A key feature is its educational sessions covering a wide variety of topics for both callers and dancers. An excellent on-line source for information on various topics such as recruiting and marketing can be found at: <http://callerlabknowledge.org/>*

It is the time of year that traditional beginner classes start up. What are your plans this year in regards to lessons? Are you or your club making every effort to recruit and have a class? I bet you are, as it should be. **But when we look back at the past 20 years or so and we see (for the most part) a steady decline of new dancers, do we ever wonder if there is something we can do differently?**

Believe me, that's not an easy question to answer. Countless hours have been spent among clubs and callers all over the world discussing how we can grow the activity. There are no easy answers. We find ourselves in a world vastly different from perhaps when we learned. We cannot go back in time, we cannot capture those days as they were. **But perhaps we can capture a new model of those days.** Typing a letter on a computer accomplishes the same thing as typing a letter on a typewriter. But who wants to use the typewriter anymore?

**Perhaps we are fighting a two headed monster.** One head is the external world of our activity, and the other head is the internal world. We are trying to increase our numbers in a world that stands for convenience, time saving activities where people can entertain themselves without ever leaving their homes.

**Then, when we are fortunate to have new people enter our beloved activity, we fight the other monster by rushing them too soon; to complicating our choreography to a point it leaves people frustrated.** Perhaps our entry program is too long. In some parts of the world, our Basic Program works quite well, but here in the States, we have not fully conquered it in order for it to be a sustainable program. **In many parts of the Country, we get new dancers into the activity, only to lose dancers on the other end.**

**Recruiting dancers is one thing, retaining them is another.** Perhaps we have spent too much time on recruiting, and we have taken our eye off of retaining. **What about sociability?** Where has that gone in our activity? Are we too caught up in teaching a list of calls to make some sort of deadline that we have ignored a key element that originally brought people out of the house in the first place? Sociability has taken a back seat, and we need to bring it up to the forefront again. **Perhaps if we make the activity more social and less structured, we might retain more dancers.**

I hope all of you plan to attend next year's CALLERLAB Convention in Reno, Nevada. **The theme is going to be about sociability.** I would like to encourage you to invite dancers and non-member callers to attend the upcoming 47th annual CALLERLAB Convention. **First time attendees will not only be very impressed, but also nearly overwhelmed with the wealth of educational material and information, entertainment, and fun available at the CALLERLAB Convention.**

Convention session topics include complex technical issues, marketing and recruiting discussions, issues of interest to club as well as association leadership, information for caller partners, topics for dancers, and much, much more. One of the most common comments expressed by first time attendees is, "I wish I had attended long ago."

**Attend the 47th Annual CALLERLAB Convention April 6-8, 2020 at the Nugget Casino and Resort in Sparks (Reno), Nevada.** There's plenty to do and see for those who decide to arrive early or stay a few days following the Convention. The Convention registration fee is \$220 U.S. for callers and \$210 U.S. for non-callers. If you have any questions, please contact us at the Home Office by phone at: 1-785-783-3665 or by e-mail at: [callerlab@aol.com](mailto:callerlab@aol.com).

Two men are sitting at the bar. One starts to insult the other one. He screams, "I slept with your mother!"  
The bar gets quiet as everyone listens to see what the other man will do. The other says,  
"Go home Dad, you're drunk."



## TALKING POINTS FOR INTERVIEWS

- by Eric Henerlau, Caller, Corte Madera, California

**Sometimes square dancers and callers get the opportunity to be interviewed about our activity.** The interviews could be published in a newspaper, radio or TV. They all have something in common: the reporters want to share a story that they think their audience will enjoy. When these interview occasions arise, there is a great opportunity to promote square dancing!

**Many times we have seen interviews and stories that present square dancing in less favorable light.** While there is nothing wrong with this, think about what we COULD say about square dancing that makes it exciting and would want people to check it out! Here are some points to consider when you are asked to talk to a reporter about square dancing:

- 1. Emphasize the FUN that you enjoy in the activity.** Think about the parts of square dancing that make you come back, week after week. Smile and show enthusiasm! The reporters will pick up on it and note it in the article.
- 2. Talk about the friends you have made,** especially if you have found a spouse or long-term partner through square dancing. If appropriate, talk about the various professions of members of your club.
- 3. If your club does other activities outside of dancing, mention those.** People who read/listen to the interview may be looking for all kinds of fun things to do.
- 4. Focus on the newer dancers and the joy they feel.** If you've been dancing for several years, sometimes looking at the beginners can help us remember the initial excitement we felt when we started.
- 5. Look forward to the future.** Don't dwell on the past. We all have stories about how big the dances used to be and how many clubs there were. Someone unfamiliar with our activity might interpret those comments in a negative light and be less willing to try out dancing.
- 6. If the reporter leads with a question that seems the answer wouldn't give square dancing a good image,** think about how you can answer the question truthfully, and then **give follow-up information on how it's better now.**



The above are just suggestions. You certainly can speak freely about anything. But the opportunity to get interviewed is infrequent, and if you share the same passion about the activity we do, you can help everyone!

**About the Author:** *Calling since 1980, Eric has taught **thousands** of beginners to square dance. Currently calling for Plus and Advanced clubs in the San Francisco bay area, Eric emphasizes inclusion for everyone in the activity. A wide variety of music and unusual choreography are cornerstones of his program. Eric is recognized throughout the country as one of the premier Square Dance callers and teachers.*



## 21<sup>ST</sup> CANADIAN NATIONAL SQUARE & ROUND DANCE FESTIVAL

Held at the Sheraton Guildford, Surrey, B.C. , July 29 – August 1, 2010

[Festival2020Registrations@hotmail.com](mailto:Festival2020Registrations@hotmail.com) Trail in Dance: Wednesday, July 29, 2020

Opening Ceremonies - Thursday morning, July 30, 2020

Hosted by Fraser Valley Square & Round Dance Association, Vancouver and District Caller Teacher Association

Sponsored in part by B.C. Square & Round Dance Federation and Canadian Square & Round Dance Society

**Official Colours:** Blue, White & Green: The blue represents the Pacific Ocean and the many rivers and lakes in BC. The white eyelet represents BC's snow-capped mountains, ocean and lake whitecaps and clouds. The green represents BC forests (and possibly golf courses). The fabric and colours should be relatively easy to find. The design has been kept simple so any level of seamstress should be able to achieve success. Men could wear shirts, vests or ties that use the colours.





***DO YOU KNOW THESE MASKERS?  
AT LEAST ONE OF THEM WILL BE ATTENDING THE ALBERTA CONVENTION,  
SEPTEMBER 2020!  
WILL YOU BE ATTENDING? JOIN THE FUN!***

≈

Our 2020 Alberta Convention will feature a Mardi Gras masquerade dance on Saturday night,  
plus entertainment on Sunday night!

Register before April 30, 2020 for the best rates.

≈

Watch the website for pre-event activities on Thursday September 3, 2020.  
Try out a new dance form at free sessions on Saturday: square, ballroom, clogging, line, & contra.

≈

Join us Sept 4th to 7th 2020, Labour Day Weekend!



Fun a'Plenty in  
**2020**

**52<sup>ND</sup> ALBERTA DANCE CONVENTION - EDMONTON**

**Information & Registration  
[www.communitydance.org](http://www.communitydance.org)**