

# AROUND THE SQUARE



*An International Magazine for dancers,  
callers and cuers*

**DECEMBER 2019**

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**DATES to REMEMBER**

09 Apr 2020	Special Trails End Dance with RANDY DOUGHERTY (USA) – Blackheath Community Centre
10-14 Apr 2020	Australia National Square Dance Convention – Wentworth Falls NSW

# WHAT'S INSIDE THIS MONTH

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# *On the Inside Track*

**WELCOME** to the second Edition of “**AROUND THE SQUARE**”; a magazine for square dancers round dancers, cloggers and anyone else that has an interest in aspects of our great activity. Our aim is for each issue to present to you, articles, ideas, commentary, and much more, providing Information, Education, Entertainment, and even Enlightenment.

Many thanks to all who contacted me with ideas, suggestions, articles and comments on our first issue in October.

This month we have a wide range of articles from Ed Foote (Tips for Advanced dancers), Skip Brown (the importance of touching hands to establish the square formation), Tony Instone (neat article on weights and measures), Roy Gotta (looking at what we need to do to sell our activity to our friends), Bill Peters (a tongue-in-cheek history lesson), plus ideas on keeping committees fresh and positive, the importance of Angels to assist in learning groups, another column from Dr. Allemander, an informative article on the concept of DBD dancing, as well as some great poetry from my good mate Kevin Kelly (from Perth over there beyond the black stump in W.A.)

## **OUR TRAVELS: SINGAPORE**

October saw Sue and I, along with daughters Alessa (and husband Chris), Amerie (and partner Brendan), and grandson Ronon, head off to Singapore for a 10-day family vacation. We have wanted to get everyone together for a family holiday for some time, but time and work commitments had been against us. This time everything worked out well. We had a fabulous 10 days in Singapore. Our British Airways flights landed us mid-evening, and we were able to get to our hotel for a good night's sleep prior to starting out fresh the next day.

We stayed on Sentosa Island at the Village Resort Hotel. Super location, just a couple of minutes' walk from Imbiah Monorail station. There are 4 stations on the monorail route on Sentosa, Beach, Imbiah, Resort World and Vivo City. Everything is close to one of these stations and use is free for everyone. Mind you it is only about a 5-6-minute walk between



the first 3 stations. Vivo City is a huge shopping complex located on the mainland of Singapore itself, and is the entry to the island, which is a gigantic pleasure resort. Within a five minute walking radius you have Universal Studios, S.E.A. Aquarium (largest in the world), the Maritime Experiential Museum, huge Water Park, tall ship 'Royal Albatross', casino, Madame Tussauds (museum display, boat ride, live show and 4D theatre), VR experience with 10 choices, Trick Eye Museum, huge skyway from Sentosa to mainland, and Mt Faber to Siloso Beach, indoor skydiving, luge, segways, beaches, 4D movies, 3D movies, Fort Siloso and much more. It never stopped. This time we had season passes for Universal Studios which allowed us to come and go at our leisure over the 10 days. There was no rushing to try and see everything in one day! The rollercoasters there are among the best in the world, and each is presented within a complex that truly fits the individual theme. For the

“Mummy Coaster”, you walk thru 50-foot-high statues of Egyptian gods and right in the heart of the temples in Luxor. The Battlestar Galactica ride has two duelling rollercoasters – one Human and the other Cylon for those of you that know the show, with the latter having 5 loops. Again, it was well themed with buildings. Next you are right in the centre of the action on the Transformers ride, which is not a coaster, but one of the best Simulator rides anywhere. Most flight simulators put you in some form of transport in front of a huge screen. In this one, the transport moves rapidly thru 12 screens. I have always loved good rides and attractions, and even though Universal at Singapore is smaller than its counterparts in USA and Japan, it packs a huge amount into that area. This time I rode ‘The Mummy’ 4 times, Transformers 7, Cylon 2 and Human 2. I also managed to get totally drenched on Jurassic Park Ride -- there is always one who cops more water than anyone else – and it seems to always be me!

Universal Studios also had a special attraction from Thursday thru Sunday nights in October -- “Halloween Horror Nights”. Chris, Alessa, Brendan and I went one night. This is a special ticket and the park opens at 8pm thru 2am. There were 5 haunted houses to walk thru, as well as the regular rides. I think the way they do this in Singapore is quite unique. After being in a queue for an hour we got to the first house. It consisted of about 15 rooms, all in very dim light. Actors were dressed up (full make-up, clothes, the works) and hidden behind panels, secret doors, etc., and would jump out at the most unexpected times. Lots of screaming in every room. I could not imagine anything like this happening here in Australia. There would likely be too many concerns about heart attacks, getting sued, etc.



were available including McDonalds, Subway, Starbucks, Hard Rock café, etc. One of our favourites for non-Asian fare was Slappy Cakes, a neat pancake restaurant where you buy the batter mix and create your own pancakes on a plate

This was the same type of arrangement in each of the 5 houses; one with dolls, one with clowns, a snake house (shudder), haunted house, and a zombie house. As well as those specific horror houses, there were numerous other places where actors would jump out at you. The queues for each of the houses was at least an hour long and there were people everywhere. I felt really old that night. I do not think I saw a person over 30 except for Brendan! It was great fun though!

Food is available everywhere in the same areas, from local street food, to 2-star Michelin restaurants. In addition, all things in between



embedded in your table. They provide regular batter, buttermilk, chocolate, pandan (green colour) which can all be used to create pancakes of a wild (and sometimes embarrassing) designs.

Singapore itself is just an amazing place to visit, and home to one of the best Zoos in the World, and a heritage listed excellent Botanical Garden, the magnificent “Gardens By The Bay”. The Gardens has two incredible domes, a magnificent light and sound show in the park, great aerial walkway, the gardens themselves as well as all the other unique areas. Beside the zoo are two other amazing attractions. They are the River Safari and the Night Safari. Both are simply amazing attractions.



Sue and I also had the opportunity for a sunset dinner cruise on the tall ship ‘Royal Albatross’. It was a terrific 3-hour cruise with great food (although they need lessons on how to cook lamb). We did not go in for the



optional mast climb though! Sue loved the cocktails!

We were lucky with the weather during the trip. It was always warm (between 29 and 31 degrees C). Humidity was no real problem and there was only one day when it was uncomfortable, which was after some rain.

That was the day when Chris and Alessa joined Sue and I for a tour inside the Merlion (Singapore’s emblem – half lion, half fish), an 80-foot statue just near Imbiah station. We could see it from our hotel window.

When we went up the first level, there were no problems as we were in an air-conditioned lift. Then we had to climb. It was hot, humid, sticky, and as we climbed, it got hotter, more humid and even stickier; but it was worth it for a fantastic view.



Sue and I had a week in Singapore last year, and we had no problems going back again for a week as there is just so much to see and do. I am always amazed at aspects of life that are noticeable there, but we never really notice here.

There is no litter anywhere, no smart alec kids swearing continuously, no drunks, no chewing gum, and no problems with kids and alcohol although alcohol is freely available even at the 7-11 and other shops (in Universal Studios street vendors!). Courtesy is shown everywhere and there were no “bag ladies”.

## OUR TRAVELS: BALI

After the family trip to Singapore in October, November was just the two of us, and we managed to take another week off; but this time we headed to Bali for a special week of sunshine, good food, sightseeing and relaxation.

We had not been to Bali previously, but had heard many tales with many different observations. We know people that go their every year. In my mind's eye I always saw it as a haven for the younger set filled with beaches, bars, booze!

What we found was not what we expected at all. Initially, the traffic took us by surprise. I have never seen so many cars, bikes, scooters on the road before; in fact, I don't think that I could ever imagine such chaos. The only other place where I have encountered hug traffic congestion was in Cairo; but I think Bali has it over Egypt. It seemed to us that of every motor bike and motor scooter ever manufactured in the world over the last 80 years, 90% of those were on the roads in Bali. We saw not just bikes with a driver and passenger, but motor scooters with up to 5 onboard! When we were in a taxi, we had hundreds of bikes pass us on the right, as well as on the left. There were even on the footpaths (when there were footpaths). Small shopping lanes that had no footpaths, would also have a large pedestrian traffic, plus two-way traffic for cars, trucks, motorbikes. This was all on a small road that here in Australia would barely qualify as a single lane, one-way street.

The most amazing thing about it was that it worked. Given the incredible traffic there were no accidents (we only saw one car with a dent the whole time), no road rage...the key element seemed to be, **"no worries --That's the way it is so just accept it"**!

Our hotel was the Hard Rock Hotel in Kuta, right across the road from the main beach. Mind you crossing the road was an experience all by itself! There were no pedestrian crossings and literally continuous traffic. When we finally did manage to cross, we were confronted by a really beautiful surfing beach, crowded with hundreds and hundreds of people, cabanas, hawkers, etc. We decided that any swimming we would do would be at the fantastic pool in our hotel.



We had been advised to look for a good driver for our sightseeing jaunts. We managed to find a great guy named Putu, who we spent two days with, visiting sights away from Kuta in Ubud and Nusa Dua. Cost for each day for being driven to see the sights (left 8.30 am, returned 6.30pm) was AUS \$60. The traffic was unsurprisingly, a nightmare. What would normally take us a half hour return to drive in

Australia, took nearly 2 hours, each way. But it was worth it.

The temples we visited were very different from each other. One was by the sea on a small island that is only accessible at low tide. Another was in a forest complete with monkeys everywhere. We also managed to have a few hours at the elephant park. This park is run by an Aussie expat who has created a unique park by rescuing elephants from a nearby island where they were just let loose after a logging business closed. The park now has 32 elephants. Is it a perfect life for them? No; but it sure is better than the alternative they were facing. Sue and I thought the whole area was beautiful and really worth the time spent on getting there.

We also managed to get to see the gigantic statue of Vishnu (WISNU), which just opened in 2018. The GWK Park is an amazing feat overall, with the statue a majestic sight at 122 (397 feet) Metres tall. It took 28 years from its original inception to complete this statue, (although the project was put aside for many years). We were impressed by the overall park area (about 60 hectares). The set-up is by no means completed as there is lots of building works in progress.



Breakfast was supplied each day with a huge array of food at the buffet. We only had to look for lunches and dinners. We found a really neat Balinese restaurant called “Café Tree” just a few minutes’ walk from our hotel. We ate there several times; excellent meals, western style but with an Indonesian flavour. The first time I had a tuna steak, chips, salad and a beautiful Balinese fruit drink that we had discovered, and it cost just over AUS \$7 for food and drink. We only ate at one ‘regular’ restaurant. We tried “Jamie Oliver’s Italian” as it was right beside the Hard Rock Hotel. We were both surprised as the prices were equivalent to a good meal at a nice restaurant here (\$22 - \$25 each). I love good old spaghetti Bolognese and tried it there. It was a very large meal and absolutely delicious as well.

We were impressed with Bali and can see why people keep on going back regularly. We plan on joining in, as we are looking at another week there next year!

### **CONCERT NIGHT OUT**

Our only other excursion from home in November was a weekend away to take in the concert “*Young Stars Of Country: The Reunion – 20 Years On*”. This concert reunited 4 great Australian icons of country music – Beccy Cole, Adam Harvey, Darren Coggan and Felicity Urquhart. We took in the show at ‘The Cube’ in Campbelltown which is only a 45-minute drive, but anytime we see a concert there we book a package at Rydges’ Hotel right next door.

The show was truly amazing and one of the absolute best concerts Sue and I have ever seen -- and we have seen quite a lot over the years.

We last saw Beccy Cole at a local RSL Club about 12 or 14 years ago. She was superb then, and the years have only improved on her then outstanding talent.

Adam Harvey’s music was not new to us, but never having seen him perform live, we were uncertain as to what to expect. His many recordings always sound great. He has a very mature ‘country’ voice (to us in a George Strait style). Live, he was again outstanding and a great sense of humour to go with a great vocal delivery style.

We both like Felicity Urquhart and have most of her recordings on CD and really enjoy them. She has lots of variety in her musical style, from traditional country to warm ballads, and all delivered with a beautifully sweet, yet powerful voice. We talked with all the artists while getting some CD's signed. Felicity had her 2 small daughters with her. I noted to her that we also had 2 daughters and to enjoy hers while she can because -- as when they get to around 11-12, changes occur, and the "Princess Bitchface Syndrome" sets in! But they do become human again ..... around 25 or so.

Darren was a complete surprise to us. We knew his name and had one CD but did not realise just how talented he is. We saw him last year when he was at a John Williamson concert in Thirroul (a Wollongong suburb). Like the others, he is at home with songs he has penned as well as covers of many great artists. He is currently also touring with 3 other separate shows: one a Glen Campbell tribute, one a Lennon & McCartney tribute plus a Cat Stevens tribute show. He really throws himself into the songs and is very active on stage – it is always great to see an entertainer that really loves what he is doing.



Together, all 4 created some superbly tight harmonies. Incredible vocals on 'Raining On The Rock' (John Williamson would be proud), 'Elvira', (Adam can sure reach way down for those low notes) and 'Do I Ever Cross Your Mind'. The entire concert really showcased each artist, without detracting from the others. They all followed the

golden rule when working with others – **TEAMWORK: It Pays Dividends**. As callers, we all know what it is like to work with other callers on stage. Most of the time it is really great, but occasionally we get someone who wants to be a star, and just tries to out-do anyone else.

These 4 singer/songwriters are touring together for some time yet. If you ever get a chance, check to see where they are performing. Believe me if you get the opportunity to see this concert, jump right in and get some tickets -- you will not be disappointed.

Well, that was our traveling done for 2019. 2020 will be a quieter year!! Mind you, we do have a reasonably full schedule mapped out so far: In January we are booked in to see a local production of the musical "Legally Blonde". April is a big one for us with the ACF Callers Conference, followed by our 61<sup>st</sup> National Australian Square Dance Convention in the magnificent Blue Mountains of NSW. In July, Sue and I are off again for an overseas jaunt, this time to **CHINA** for an 11-day tour. August and November has us booked in for two concerts with John Williamson – one of our favourite singers. We also are planning another week in Bali, but have to work out a date!

Please feel free to send this magazine to anyone who you think would be interested.

Cheers for a wonderful Holiday season...watch out for Christmas calories!

Barry

## ***MURPHY'S LAW for Square Dancers and Callers***

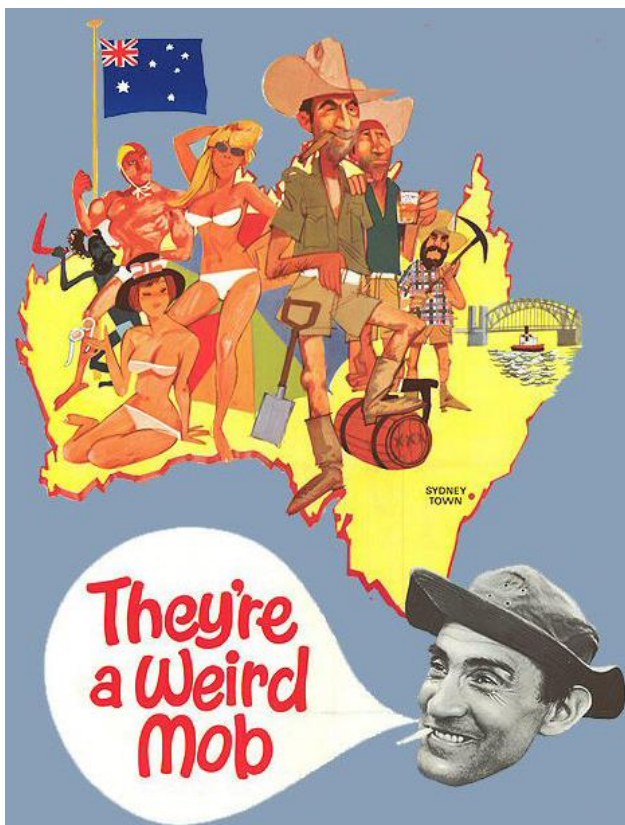
- The night you will have a total blank when it comes to remembering your key couples, is the same night when other callers drop in for a visit.
- 
- Ice cold water is only available in the cooler in the winter months.
- Perfect squares are doomed to fail when they are right in front of the caller.
- The caller will only call "Yellow Rock" when you have been eating onions and/or garlic.
- On the hottest nights, there will be no ice for the drinks

### ***WORDS to Live By:***

Those who can: DO

Those who can't: TEACH

Those who can't teach: TEACH 'HOW TO TEACH'



# ALL THINGS CONSIDERED..... by Ed Foote

## HOW TO SQUARE UP WHEN THE CALLER MAKES A MISTAKE

If the caller gets you to the wrong partner at the end of a sequence, what do you do? Most people promenade home, keep the "wrong" partner, and wait for the caller to proceed with the next sequence. But is this the best way to go?

Technically, it is ok to keep the "wrong" partner. The caller did this to you, so you go with it. But is this best for you?

Let's look at how most caller call a dance today. They use "sight calling" to resolve the square to your original corner and back to your original partner for a Right & Left Grand. To do this, callers memorize two adjacent couples in a square prior to the start of a tip. Ideally, they do this for 3 squares, but some callers cannot remember this many people.

If the caller gets everyone to the "wrong" partner by mistake, or if some dancers make a mistake and finish with the "wrong" partner, and if in either case the dancers keep this partner - the caller is in trouble. All memorization of who goes with whom is out the window, and there is no time to do new memorization. So, the caller becomes very nervous about how to call the rest of the tip and get everyone to their "new" partner.

The result is the caller will generally call unbelievably easy, using simple memorized sequences, anything to get people back to their "new" partner. In other words, the caller is likely to call nothing for the rest of the tip in an effort to survive, and this can affect your enjoyment of what is called.

However, if everyone adjusts at home to get their original partner back, now the caller has no problem. Not only have you done the caller a favor, but you have benefited the entire floor, because now the caller can continue with his/her normal dance. Upon seeing you adjusting to get to your original partner back, the caller will wait for you to do this.

**So, remember: It benefits the entire floor if you get your original partner back when you are home and before the caller begins the next sequence.**

Note: Occasionally a caller may say: "Don't fix it - I intentionally got you to a different partner." If this happens more than once, don't believe it. The square dance game is played by having the caller get everyone back to their "original" partner at the end of each sequence. Callers who say it doesn't matter if you get your original partner back are really saying they are not able to do it, but they don't want you to realize this.



*This month we feature some classic pieces from Australia's Clown Prince – Caller Kevin Kelly from, Perth, Western Australia.*

## ON TEXTING

I no that u won't like this. And u'll probably b Cross,  
But i'm texting while i'm driving. Just 2 let u no who's Boss;  
Ya said i'm not 2 ring ya. And ya said that that's a Rule.  
So I figure if I txt ya. That should b kinda Cool;  
Now i'm really good at txting. And at driving i'm pretty Flash,  
But doing the 2 together. Well that's when i'm gunna Crash;  
Now I don't like it when yor always Right. It maker me feel quite Grumpy,  
But somethings wrong & I don't Remember. This stretch of road being so Bumpy;  
Strewth, this isn't the road i'm supposed 2 b on. I'm on a gravel track,  
On a road I shouldn't be on. with no way of getting Back;  
Perhaps I should hav listened. And not been txting bhind the Wheel,  
But it sure makes the trip more Interesting. Sideways drivings no big Deal.

## ON THE DERBY RACES

I've traveled this great Country.  
Been to lots of Places,  
But there's nothing that compares with.  
A day at the Derby Races;  
I've been to Royal Ascot.  
And enjoyed that one day in November,  
But a day at the Kimberly Cup.  
Is really something to Remember;  
The committee work their bums off.  
To make the races a special Show,  
But no one's working harder than my  
mate Kelly.  
And his missus, her name's Jo;  
The work starts weeks beforehand.  
Things to paint & mow & Clear,  
And it really doesn't Finish.  
Until the crowd starts to Appear;  
The girls all wear their Finery.

The blokes are lookin' Flash,  
The bookies & the two Up.  
Lots of ways to make some Cash;  
Then when you think it's Over.  
And the evening starts to Fall,  
That's when they crank the band Up.  
And we really have a Ball;  
Derby is a special Place.  
With good old Kimberly Class,  
So put it on your bucket List.  
This is not a day to Pass,  
You can travel the whole world Over.  
And visit lots of Places;  
But there's nothing that can Compare  
With a day at the Derby Races!!

## ON MY FILLIE

Well here we are it's Saturday.  
I'm trying to find a winner or two,  
Seems kinda silly really.  
I know the biggest winner I've found is  
You;  
You're a city class Performer.  
In a field of maiden Hacks,  
You should be racing at Flemington.  
While the others race at country Tracks;  
You have real Group 1 Qualities.  
Great fetlocks & great heart,  
I'd like 2 have you in my Stable.  
And look forward 2 your every Star;

I'd whack you in my Quadie. I know you'd  
beat the Rest,  
And even if you didn't Win. I know you'd  
give your very Best;  
And when your racing days are Done.  
And you can no longer Run,  
I'll keep you for a brood Mare. And  
we'd still have lots of Fun;  
So what do reckon Angel.  
Shall I mix you up your Feeds,  
Cos your that special kind of Fillie.  
The kind that every stable Needs.

## ON CALLING IN MT GAMBIA

The phone rang rather Loudly.  
I answered with a pleasant Hello,  
A voice said we want you here in Mt  
Gambia.  
To Call at our Square Dance Show;  
I rushed straight away to my Atlas.  
To see where can this Mt Gambia Be,  
I found it between Adelaide & Melbourne  
& Thought.  
That looks like a good place to Me;  
Straight away I rang me Darlin.  
And said Deb pack ya bags & let's Went,  
Cos we've been invited to a place called  
Mt Gambia.  
To Call at  
their birthday Event;  
We left home early one morning.  
Took a taxi and then caught a Plane,  
A Short stop in Adelaide Airport.  
Then bugger me we were boarding Again;  
This time the plane was Tiny.  
Deb said how small can this plane Be,  
There's hardly enough room for my  
Luggage,

The pilot, for you & for Me;  
But we managed to squeeze everything  
on There.  
With more than a little trouble & Strife,  
Then of we shot for Mt Gambia.  
For what turned out to be the ride of our  
Life;  
When we left Adelaide, the wind was a  
blowin'.  
And the rain was fair pouring Down,  
But that's bugger all in comparison to  
what Happened,  
When we landed at Mt Gambia Town;  
Ya see we landed in the midst of a  
Cyclone.  
As scary as it could Be,  
That little plane hit the runway at 2.12 &  
2.20,  
Then eventually landed at 2.23;  
Now I've done shows all Over,  
Some good & some only Fair,  
But never I have done one Before,  
That has started with so much of a Scare.

## ON MY MATE IN TASSIE

I've got a Mate in Tassie.  
A really crackerjack bloke,  
Always keen for a cuppa.  
And even keener on a joke;  
Although he's got a few miles on the clock.  
His mind is as sharp as a tack,  
A bloody sight better than some of the other bits,  
Like his elbows his knees & his back;  
His use of the old English language,  
Is a joy and I'm here to say,

He speaks with a special kind of eloquence.  
That would be lost on the youth of today;  
Did I tell you he's a farrier for humans?  
Now how about that for a job,  
Apparently, he goes alright at it.  
Cos, he tells me he's worth a few bob;  
I don't care that he's old & he's bugged.  
And may no longer be a go getter,  
Because Old Jim is a real good mate of mine.  
And as mates go. You won't find one much Better.

*I wrote this one, one night while sitting in my car outside my club waiting for the round dance mob to turn up with the key to open the hall so I could set the gear up for them. They were late I was getting cranky and then I remembered they were in Japan for a Convention that week. Bloody Idiot I Am!!*

## ON USING THE ALPHABET

Can't believe it's effin Friday.  
And I'm in my effin Car.  
Drivin to effin Dancin.  
Wonderin where the effin hell you Are.  
I don't like all this effin effin.  
And what's comin out me Gob.  
Cos, I know it'll make a difference.  
When I apply for my brand-new Job.  
I'm puttin in for Pope ya Know.  
And I reckon I'm in with a real effin Chance.  
And if I get that effin Job.  
I'll be teachin all those Catholics how to Square Dance.

Now the Pope don't do much effin.  
or so the wise men Say.  
So, I suppose I better stop all my effin effin.  
and concentrate a little more on learning how to Pray.  
And if I get that Papel Position.  
There'll be changes from the very first Day.  
There'll be no more Mass on Saturday Nights.  
Just Mainstream. Plus & A.





# A CALLER'S VIEW: HOLDING HANDS

By Skip Brown (from *Northeast Square Dance Magazine*, February 1988)

Valentine's Day is only a couple of months away, all those little "Valentine Cupids" will be flitting about, shooting arrows into unsuspecting hearts and causing a yearning for a little physical contact with persons of the opposite gender. Aren't we fortunate to be Square Dancers, for as such, we have "Valentine's Day" every time we dance? Just think of how much physical contact there is in Square Dancing. We get to hold hands with our partner; we get to hold hands with our corner; we get to hold hands with our opposite dancer; we get to have forearm holds; we get to hold another dancer in our arms when we swing *each other*; and sometimes we even get a full nose to nose hug when our caller is in a "Yellow Rockin" mood. Some of us dancers miss a lot of physical contact in dancing - some by short-cutting, and some is missed because we have become just a bit complacent.

**A look at short-cutting.** When we are all home with our partner, and the heads or sides are asked to Square Thru, we get a lot of handholding while doing this movement. If, however, we short-cut, by merely stepping forward then turning to face our corners, we have missed all that physical contact - that hand shaking and turning in and brushing shoulders as we pull each other by. We have also spoiled the rhythm of the dance. When four ladies are asked to Chain across, there is a Courtesy Turn involved, in which we get to hold each other's left hands in front of the lady and our right hands behind her as the man's arm goes

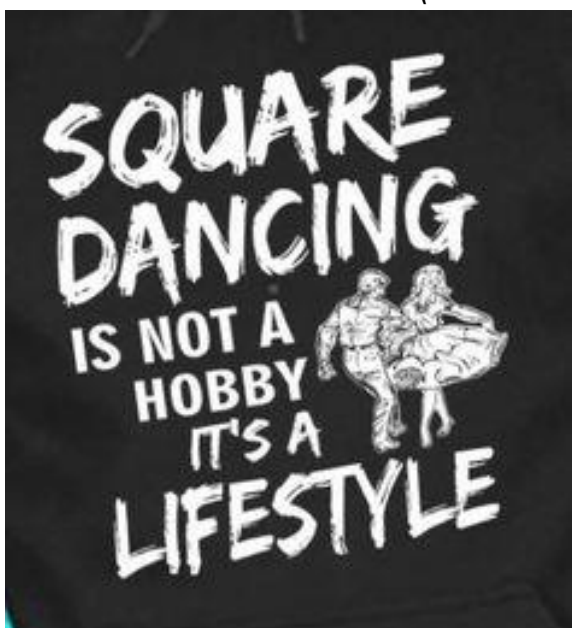
around the lady's waist as we finish with that sweeping, flowing turn to face in. But if we are short-cutting, we eliminate that Courtesy Turn and just do a star thru type action. Ends up the same way, but again, we have spoiled the rhythm of the dance.

To be complacent can mean to be "self-satisfied". I suppose a "self-satisfied" dancer doesn't really need to join hands after a Pass Thru because the caller just might call a "Tag The Line", and the "self-satisfied" dancers would have to immediately let go - so why waste the time joining hands? Well, one reason for joining hands is that the caller may call a "Wheel & Deal", and if we have a hand hold with our partner, we can properly dance a Wheel & Deal; another reason for joining all hands (and I do mean *all hands*) is that the caller may call a "Bend The Line". That's where the centre dancers back away to face each other, while the ends walk forward to face each other. If all hands are joined and you have no unjoined hands, then you are a centre. If you have one hand free then you are an end: if your right hand is free then you walk forward turning *left* to face the other end dancer; while if your left hand is free, then you walk forward turning *right* to face the other end dancer. Think about it - how many times have you gentlemen, while dancing a "Pass Thru" followed by a "Bend The Line", reached out to hold the lady's hand, only to find she had already bent the line and your hand was in the middle of her back? Conversely, how many of

you ladies have danced the same moves, reached out to join hands, and found yourself looking at the side of the gentleman's head because he has already "Bent the Line"? How many times have you danced a "Bend the Line" movement after a "Pass Thru" and turned the wrong way just because you didn't join hands? Next time your

caller calls an "Eight Chain" movement, watch whether the two dancers coming to the outside wait for each other for the "Courtesy Turn", or whether your "Eight Chain" movement dissolves into an oval shaped Right & Left Grand! Remember, Keep making contact.

*(There are still many callers that do not stress the importance of touching hands...this establishes contact, shows who our temporary partner is, shows who is centre and who is on the ends of lines and establishes a specific formation, and also gives a feeling of confidence to the dancers (I am not alone). By touching hands to establish a formation,*



*there is far less chance and opportunity for error for the dancers. Of course, a problem can occur when we have the dancer who has little confidence, and then hangs on for grim death ...we have all seen it happen, as well as suffered the consequences to our fingers. It is important to stress that we are just looking at establishing contact; touching hands. No-one likes a death grip. This is our job as callers...it is part of the teaching process. Many elements come together in any given call - the footwork we will be doing, the amount of turning our body will be executing, and the hand positions as we go through the motions to end in a specific spot to end up in, touching hands with the person beside you. We want dancer success - we need to look at every single aspect of what we are calling in order for the*

*dancers to gain that feeling of achievement. That achievement is not just in getting to the correct spot at the end of the call, it is also how we get there...the "dance" aspect. This comes from smooth, flowing motion of the entire body...and the position of the hands is just as important as the footwork. By ending up in the correct position within the correct time frame, and by looking to establish that set-up by touching a hand (even momentarily) we set ourselves up for success for what is to follow) Barry*



# HOW TO LOSE FRIENDS AND ALIENATE PEOPLE ON THE DANCE FLOOR.....



Run like a gazelle....



Pounce on the corner....



Flap like a swan....



Over-react to calls....



Hop like a rabbit....



Help the caller....



Concentrate too much....



Not concentrate enough....



Swing like thunder....



Forget to be careful....



Be a grandstand kibitzer....



Be a know-it-all....



Be a show-off....



Be out-of-tune with your group....



# FOR THOSE WHO CAN REMEMBER POUNDS & OUNCES

Here are the weights in question.

For question 1, what is heavier, an ounce of feathers or an ounce of gold.

One Ounce of Feathers	28.349 gm
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One Ounce of Gold	31.104 gm
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The Gold is heavier.

For question 2, what is heavier, a pound of feathers or a pound of gun powder.

One Pound of Feathers,	453.59 gm
------------------------	-----------

One Pound of Gun Powder	373.24 gm
-------------------------	-----------

Clearly, the feathers are heavier.

Did I hear someone say nonsense?

The answer lies in the system of units used for the different items.

Generally, the Avoirdupois System was used, and is the system everyone was familiar with sometime last century.

However, for precious metals (Being Gold, Silver Palladium and Platinum) and for some reason, Gunpowder, the Troy system is used.

One Avoirdupois Ounce = 28.349 gm

One Troy Ounce = 31.104 gm

(I have no idea why Gun Powder comes under Troy. It may be because of the availability of the very sensitive scales used for measuring small amounts of gold.)

But this is not the end. As we know, there are 16 oz in a pound, but this is true only in the Avoirdupois system. In the Troy system there are only 12 oz. Hence the rather odd answers above.

Ok, that is interesting useless information, but is it relevant today.

The answer to this is: - very relevant (to some)

Nearly all countries have long dropped the Avoirdupois System. It is only backward third world countries like the USA which still use it. However, ALL countries currently use the Troy system, and will continue to do so for a very very long time. All pricing of the precious metals uses the Troy System.

Many people like to diversify their investment portfolio and include precious metals. Gold is often sold as one oz coins, but silver is often sold as 1 kg bars (Just look on various on-line sites). To know the value of a bar, you must convert from kg to oz. If you use the wrong system, you will get a wrong result. There is a lot of scope for sharp dealing for the unwary.

Let's look at what we would have to pay if we got it wrong.

We buy 1 kg of silver off Trademe from a shady dealer.

1Kg = 35.275 oz (Avoirdupois)

1Kg = 32.150 oz (Troy)

At today's price for silver of AUD 20.24 / oz (Troy), if a seller tried to sell it using the Avoirdupois conversion, we would be out of pocket by \$63.25

# Angeling for Tech Squares

*Barry's Note: The concept of having 'angels' assist with new classes are a common element throughout the entire square dance world. While much has been written, both informally and formally, the following guide written for Tech Squares is a well written document, well worthwhile a read. It takes all the elements and creates a set of guidelines that can be applied to any level of dancing.*

Experienced dancers who dance the class tips are commonly referred to as angels. In many clubs, "angeling" the class is considered an unpleasant burden. At Tech Squares, the class, and the angels, are our lifeblood.

One important factor in our ability to run a successful 13-week class is having a lot of angels. All Tech Squares members are encouraged to dance with the class.

You don't have to be a perfect dancer to be an angel; you just need to be friendly to those in the class and to be supportive of the caller. Here are some guidelines.

## Be friendly and welcoming

- Talk to students during breaks.
- Be sympathetic when they make mistakes or don't get everything immediately. (Odds are, you didn't either when you were first learning.)

## Squaring up

- Square up promptly. As soon as rounds finish or the caller starts his music, find a partner and find a square.
- Ask a class member to dance. We try to have all class members paired with a club member. Also, class members can be shy and inexperienced at asking someone to dance, so be proactive and ask them. However, if you are feeling weak or unsure of the material for that week, pair with another club member.
- Make squares with at most 4 class members.
- Make balanced squares. For example, if you're dancing with a weaker class member, join a square that looks strong, or start another square. The Class Coordinator or Assistants (or caller) may rebalance squares as needed, but it's better if they don't have to move people too much.
- Introduce yourself to your partner, if they don't know you.
- If you're in a square without very many class members, you may be asked to let a class member cut you out.

## Be a good influence

- Be calm and positive, even if your square is having trouble. Taking frustration out on the rest of your square is not acceptable.
- Do your part of calls well
- Dance your part correctly -- no shortcuts and no flourishes the class hasn't learned.
- Use (the correct) handholds to establish formations

## Give class members a chance to learn

- Give class members a chance to see formations and remember calls before you do the next part or call or give them help.
- If class members are lost, need help, or look confused, give gentle help at the last possible moment.
- **Appropriate help includes:**
  - Hand signals (holding your hand out to them, a tap on the shoulder, signaling to turn around)
  - Short quiet cues ("trade with me", "turn around", "you're on the end", "all eight")
  - Easy fixes that you're sure of (if you know you're switched with the person next to you, saying "we got switched" and trading with them)
- **Appropriate help does NOT include:**
  - Loud or shouted cues
  - Talking over the caller
  - Dragging, pushing, or grabbing
  - Explaining a call in the middle of a sequence
  - Cueing every call
  - Orchestrating large switches to get people back to their right places (even if you know you're right) These can be disruptive to learning, rude to class members, and may break down the square further.
- Be reassuring. Smiling, whispering "you're fine", and taking hands within formations can all help class members know that they're in the right place and keep them from second guessing themselves.
- Be sympathetic about mistakes, and don't make a big deal out of them. Square dancing takes time to learn, and new dancers can be self-conscious about mistakes.
- Don't drag the class through calls, give them a chance to remember what to do. (At this point you may notice that this particular item is stressed repeatedly in one form or another)
- If you do need to help the class through a call, tell them what they're doing so they'll learn
- Keep formations precise so class members can see them
- Use handholds to establish formations (Hmmm repeated again – must be important).
- Minimize talking. Class members should be listening to the caller.
- Keep the square dancing if possible.

## Be available

- If you choose to angel a tip, ask a class member to dance, then square up as quickly as possible. Class members can be shy and inexperienced at finding partners, so it's important to ask them to dance.
- Try to have at most 4 class members in each square. Having at least half angels helps the caller and class.

- If a class member didn't get into a square, and your square has 3 or fewer class, offer the student a spot.
- Don't be afraid to start a new square, especially if other squares are mostly full and you're dancing with a weak class member.
- If you get to squares early, consider coming to walk-thrus to dance with the class then.

### **Know your own abilities**

- If you haven't danced in a while or are concerned you might not remember the calls being taught, square up with another club member and not a class member.
- Don't explain calls if you're not sure about them yourself.

### **During breaks**

- Be a good example in getting out of the way of round dancers.
- Be friendly and talk to class members. Some class members already have friends at squares, but others may not know anyone.
- If class members ask you about a call, either review it for them if you're confident, or direct them to someone who can help them.
- If you have concerns about class members (for example if they're holding on too long), tell the Class Coordinator, so they know and can talk to them. If you feel up to it, you can also gently explain what they're doing wrong.

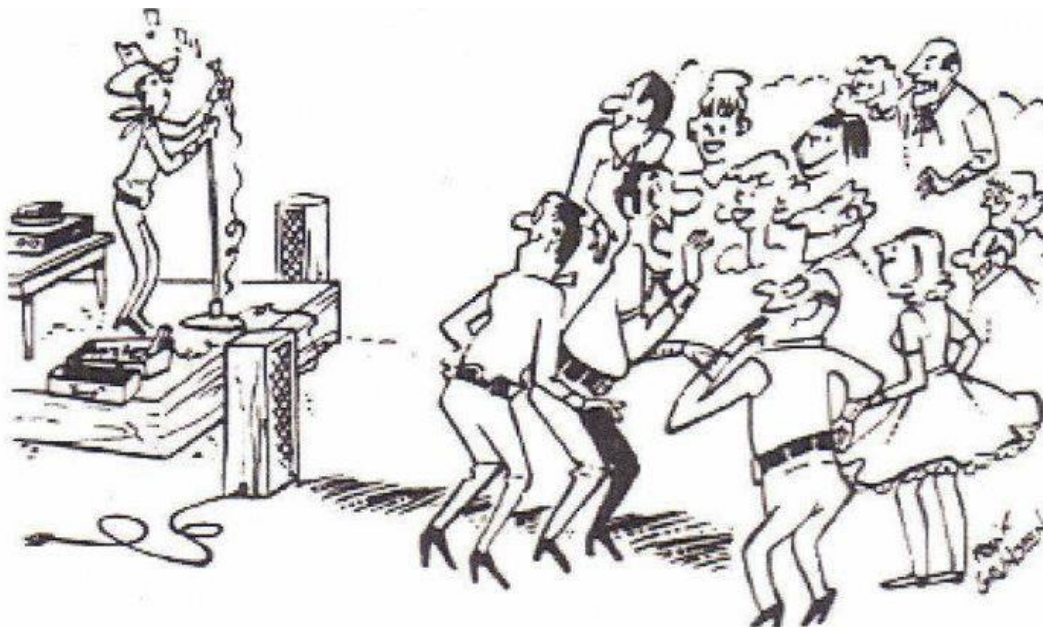
### **Let the Class Coordinator do their job**

- The Class Coordinator will get to know the Class well, so you should generally let them do what they want
- If the Class Coordinator asks for another square, and you're willing to dance, go join the square. Even if all the class are in squares, another square may be needed so that squares can be rebalanced.
- If you have concerns about your square being too weak or having too many learners, politely let the Class Coordinator know. They may rebalance, or they may decide that getting people dancing sooner is more important.
- The Class Coordinator may move couples or individuals between squares, or ask you to step out so a class member can have your place. Cooperate with this if possible.
- Tell the class coordinator if you have concerns about class members

### **Let the Caller do their job**

- Let the Caller teach. Class members should learn to listen to the caller, not to the club members around them.
- If you can easily correct a class member; (i.e. "you're with me" or "turn around") go ahead, but if the square has larger problems, let the caller deal with it.
- Avoid muttering/crosstalk while the caller is calling or teaching

**Note:** You will notice in this article that several themes are repeated in different areas. This is not an accidental redundancy. The repetition of themes, like Handholds, Formations, Don't Drag, Let Them Remember etc. are critical to the learning process. Micro-managing a square from within helps no-one, especially not new dancers. As a side note, there is reference here often to the "class coordinator". Some clubs have specific coordinators or a specific "head angel" to assist in this role. Let them do their job. If you are unsure about this, talk to your caller about who does what – but do it away from the dancers.



**" Let's really confuse him tonight.  
...We'll dance what he calls."**

# ***KEEPING YOUR ORGANIZING COMMITTEE FRESH***

## ***Spotting the need for change***

Even a committee or board that functions effectively in the beginning can become stale or lose its focus. It can become necessary to recharge the batteries. This can involve seeking new members, up-skilling and inspiring existing members, or looking again at the goals and structures of the organization.

Many situations can bring about a need for such a review. The environment may have changed around you, presenting new challenges that create the need for new attitudes and new reactions. There may be personal disputes among members of the committee, and these relationships may lead the group down unproductive avenues. The organization itself may have changed and may need to expand or shrink.

In all these circumstances you will need a committee that reflects the needs and interests of its members, that offers the necessary skills and expertise to navigate the surrounding terrain, and that can adapt productively to change.

## **How to identify the need to revitalize a committee**

The organizing committee is the most important part of a community group, setting its directions and ensuring it stays on track is vital. If a committee is dysfunctional, the community group it serves will also be in danger. And an ineffective committee that cannot even get the basics right has little chance of fulfilling all its legal and financial responsibilities, meaning the group as well as the individual committee members may be heading towards trouble.

If your organizing committee can no longer provide leadership or fresh ideas, the group appears to be stagnating or money is becoming an issue, it may be time to spice things up.

Indicators that might suggest the need for change include:

- The group has lost its way and appears to be stagnating. Membership is dropping and enthusiasm among remaining members is waning.
- The committee seems satisfied to coast. There is little future planning and no new ideas are being generated.
- There is an imbalance in workload between committee members.
- The committee no longer has the support of the group's members.
- The committee has not demonstrated a willingness to change with emerging trends that are impacting on the organization.
- Fundraising activities are no longer working as they used to, or as they should.
- The size of the community group has changed, and the committee does not have the expertise to deal with the increased responsibility.
- The group or the committee always seems to be in turmoil.
- Several committee members are retiring.
- The organizing committee has been in place for a long time, but new members keep signing up, meaning the changing membership base and priorities of the group are no longer reflected at the top.

- The organizing committee and other members regularly lock horns, with each party exhibiting hostility and resistance towards the other.

## **Do you need a change?**

Change for change's sake is not necessarily a good thing. The old rule "If it ain't broke, don't fix it" has not been repealed.

Stable committees with long serving, committed members will have the advantage of a thorough knowledge of the organization and its mission. One could argue that if a member is long serving, they have a lot more than a passing interest in the overall group and its ongoing success. They know the history of the group and know what works – if the group is still functioning well.

It is important, however, that the committee represents and reflects the interests of the group and its members. Complaints are still heard that some people sit on committees until they die rather than retire graciously, although in recent times many groups have established fixed terms and guidelines that prohibit existing or past committee members from serving beyond one or two terms.

Of course, a certain amount of change within an organization can also have far-reaching positive effects – even the smallest changes can stimulate or revitalize a group.

## **Why and how?**

If you have decided that change is necessary for your board, it is important to then work out why you want change and what result you want to achieve. Merely replacing 90 per cent of your board without a clear strategy in place will do little to improve the situation – in fact, it is likely to have highly damaging effects on your group's morale and stability.

The point is to be clear of your objectives.

- Does the organization still play a role in the community – if not, why not?
- Is the group's mission still being achieved?
- If fundraising is dwindling, why is it dwindling?
- Have you reviewed your organization's guidelines? Does everyone and every formal body have a clear position description?
- Do members want change at the top? If so, what changes do they want?

Once you have worked out why you want to change, you need to think about the best method for achieving the kind of improvements your committee needs. Consider whether the problem is with organizational structures or whether the problem is with the people who fill the positions (it may, of course, be both). Consider:

- Do you need to make only slight operational changes?
- Does the committee need to take a more strategic approach to the way it recruits new members?
- Does the committee need to communicate better with community group members and other stakeholders?
- Is there a need for new policies and/or procedures to provide greater guidance for the committee?
- Is there a need for better committee-member relations?
- What will happen if you change the committee meeting structures? Less/more meetings? Shorter/longer meetings? Change locations of meetings?

## ***Making the change***

Now it's time for the hard part. The first and most important task is to get the committee to the point where it can bring about its own regeneration. It is a good idea to draw up a plan to involve all members in the process of change – that way, they are more likely to feel ownership of the process and less likely to resist any changes that need to be made. The process of change can be slow or sudden, cosmetic or extensive – the approach taken will depend on how dire the situation is and how much resistance is encountered.

If the committee cannot be led to acknowledge the problem, then the only way to bring about reform is to use the election procedures to change personnel. This can be damaging to organizational cohesion and morale and should be undertaken only as a last resort.

Some less painful methods of achieving regeneration include:

- Asking existing committee members and community group members to identify what changes they would like to see occur.
- Reviewing the organization's goals and strategies to ensure they reflect the current and future priorities of the community group.
- Reviewing all policies and procedures, including meeting rules and structures, to remove irritations and inflexibilities.
- Making sure that the induction of new committee members directs their attention to the real requirements of the role; there is no use having new members if they are simply co-opted by the old members to carry on in the old ways.
- Ensuring material prepared to support the committee in its decision-making process is timely and relevant.
- Improving communication channels, both between committee members and between the committee and the rest of the organization. This could involve opening meetings to the broader group membership, developing a small newsletter to explain committee decisions or providing opportunities for group members to speak with committee members.

Obviously, the approach you take and the regeneration methods you use will depend on the type of change required and the particular culture of your organization and its organizing committee.

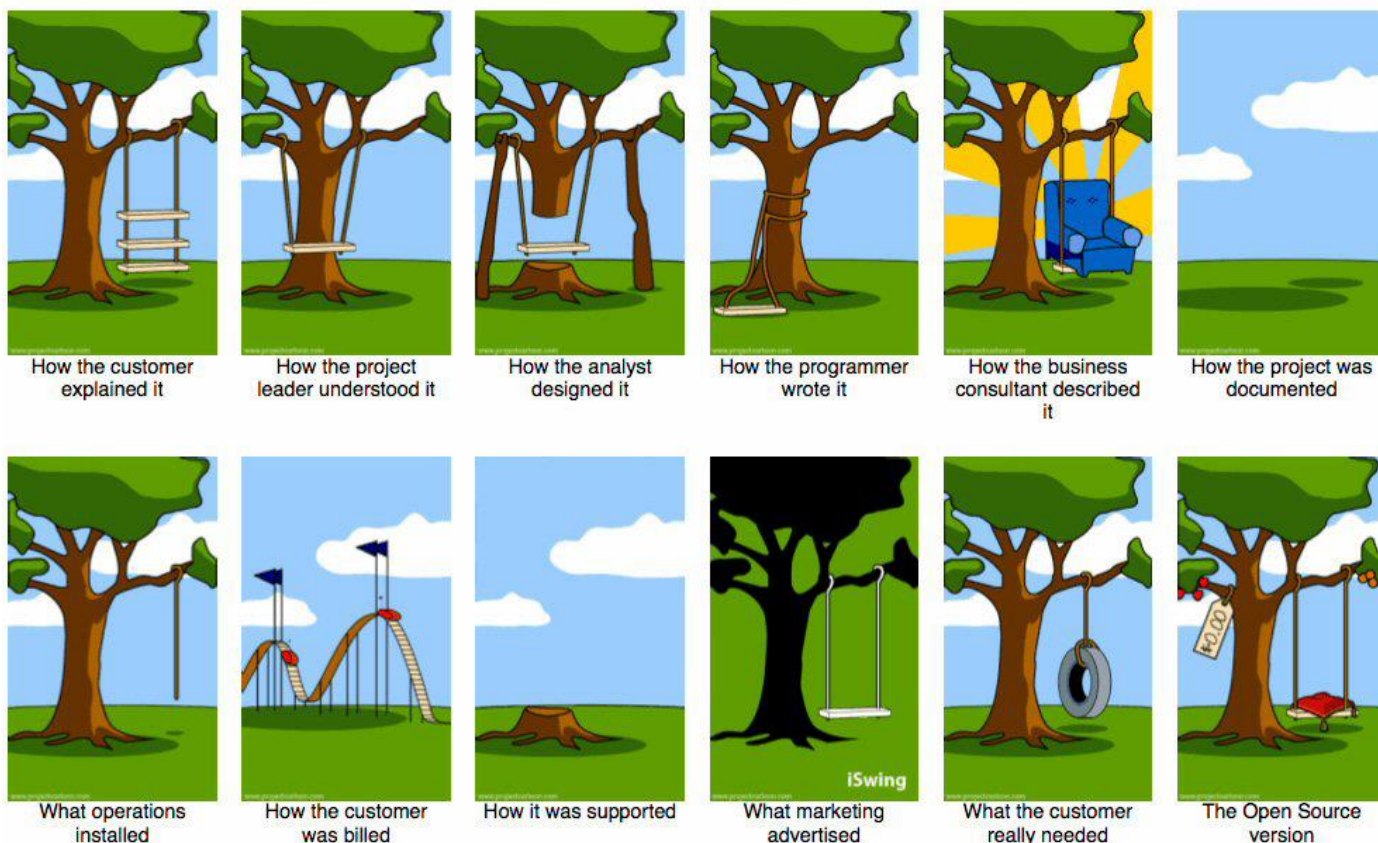
## **How to ensure your committee stays energized**

If you pay close attention to board appointments you are halfway to having a healthy, vital board. Naturally, maintaining excellence takes a lot of hard work and commitment.

## **Tips for maintaining an enthusiastic organizing committee:**

- Be sure that roles within the committee are clearly defined, and that each member is absolutely clear about the organization's goals, mission and ethics.
- Ensure meeting procedures are effective and efficient. If they don't suit those on the committee, change them.
- Take plenty of time to recruit committee members. The right people ensure a strong and effective committee.
- Be committed to a diverse and representative committee.
- Pay attention to the needs and morale of committee members: are they satisfied? If not, try job sharing or swap some responsibilities with other committee members.

- Expect a high standard and hold people accountable.
- Make full use of your committee members' skills and expertise.
- Ensure that the workload of all committee members is comparable: lack of involvement leads to boredom; overwork leads to burnout.
- Let the committee know of progress in the organization or excellence among members. Keep the committee informed about and interested in the organization.
- Determine an appropriate length of service for your committee members (and look to new members rather than simply re-appointing the old).
- Recognize committee decisions that are successful. People tend to look to the committee in a time of crisis, but do not necessarily give it credit in the good times.
- Recognize committee decisions that do not work out as planned as a learning process. Recognize mistakes for what they are...as another means of improvement within the overall structure of the organization.
- Keep the organization informed of committee decisions and make the committee accessible so a great divide does not occur between members/volunteers/workers and the committee.
- Keep the general membership informed of decisions that are planned. Ask for input as it is the general membership that will benefit from popular and sensible decisions.
- Promote transparency within the decision-making process. Secret decisions or decisions made without the full backing of the general membership can only lead to disaster for the organization.
- Implement a mechanism to allow members to have their say or to suggest ideas for the organization.
- Recognize committee decisions that do not work out as planned as a learning process.



# Ask Dr. Allemander

by Glenn Ickler with some additions by Barry Wonson

**Dear Dr. Allemander:** About this time of year in the northern hemisphere, the winter seems to be really long, and, with all the rain and snow, I feel like I'll never see my flower garden again. Are there any square dance calls that can help keep my spirits up while I wait for the chance to get out and smell the flowers?

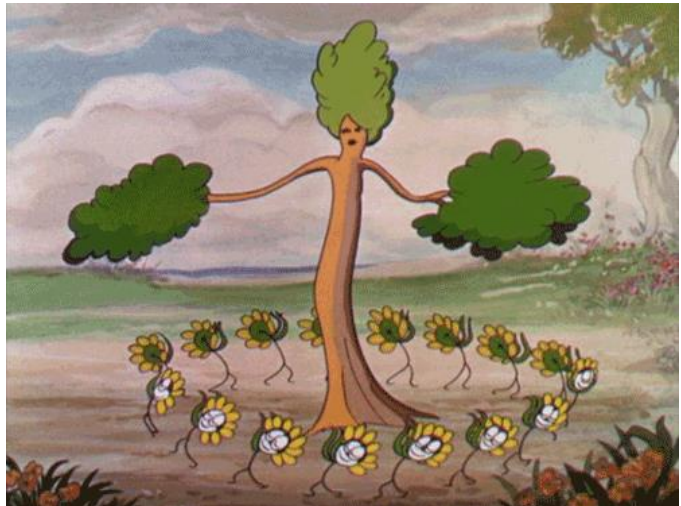
Little Buttercup,  
Pinafore, Vic.

## DEAR LITTLE:

Since square dance callers are budding geniuses, they have devised many flowery figures that will have you rooting for more.

For example, there is "heads to the middle for a daisy chain". Or there is the commonly used "Bend the Vine". And of course, the ever-popular "wheel and dahlia". Here is a list of others you can listen for as the gardening season draws near:

- ❖ "All eight spin the crop"
- ❖ "Fan the topsoil"
- ❖ "Follow your neighbour and spread the fertilizer"
- ❖ "Re-cyclamen"
- ❖ "Sides lead right and circle to a dandelion"
- ❖ "Go up to the meadow and back"
- ❖ "Load the bluet"
- ❖ And finally, Dr. Allemander's favourite "Relay the posey".



*Dr Allemander PhD, Gard Enthus., gives advice to the dancelorn in this space on a regular basis. He says, 'don't be a blooming idiot; get out there and dance'.*

*Glenn Ickler created these humorous sections for the New England Square Dancer Magazine in the 1970's.*

# TALKING UP SQUARE DANCING

An address by ROY GOTTA

## When talking to friends or colleagues:

First of all, if anyone asks you why you square dance so much, your first response should be *“because it’s fun and I enjoy it. I get some exercise and I get together with friends without having to set up an event. I can just show up at a dance.”*

Stop talking about the “Good Old Days”, when there were 40 clubs and attendance was typically 6-10 squares, with some clubs having 15 to 20 squares. Nobody wants to hear how good it used to be; they want to be involved with something that is good right now. When talking about your club, don’t say, *“Oh, we get 2 to 3 squares.”* Instead, enthusiastically say, *“We usually get 20 to 30 dancers and sometimes as many as 40 or 45 with guests.”* It’s the same thing, but with a positive spin.

When talking about square dancing, ask what type of music they like. Whatever their answer, be prepared to say that callers these days use some of that, in fact on any given night you might hear country, oldies, modern pop & hip-hop, standards, or even classical.

Talk about how it is a great way to meet and interact with people from all walks of life in an inclusive, non-threatening atmosphere.

Here’s a question you can put to them. *Many people exercise, and many people socialize, but how many do both at the same time? Square dancers do it all the time.*

Sometimes you can get them asking questions. You mention that you are going square dancing tomorrow night. They say “Oh, I remember that from grade school.” You reply, *“You should drop in for a little while and see how it has evolved into an interactive dance form. You can have some refreshments while you are there.”* If they ask you to elaborate, you can then explain how modern square-dancing works.

If they come to watch and express an interest in joining, don’t talk about weeks of “lessons” or “classes.” Instead, invite them to the next open house or introductory dance and explain that, after that, there will be a series of “introductory dances” that will teach them the vocabulary that will allow them to square dance all over the world. If they say, “all over the world?” you can answer with *“the vocabulary is universal and you can dance in Japan, Europe, and even Saudi Arabia.”*

**Elevator Pitch** (This section is taken, with permission, from the CALLERLAB Square Dance Marketing Manual)

An elevator pitch is a brief and succinct statement that is used to spark interest in square dancing. It should be short, taking approximately 20 to 30 seconds to state. When someone asks you about square dancing, what do you say? Here are a few examples:

*“I love square dancing! I’ve met so many of my friends at square dances. It’s a lively, fun hobby. It’s easy to learn, and we dance to all kinds of music today. I love that I get to dance with so many different people, have fun, and get some great exercise while I’m doing it. You should try it.”*

*“Square dancing is an art and a sport combined into one. We know all the calls, but don’t know what will be called next, so we have to pay attention. It’s fun working with the other dancers in the square to get through all the calls successfully. So, it’s good exercise both mentally and physically. Mostly though, it’s just a lot of fun. You should try it.”*

This tactic is a one-to-one tactic that you would usually use in a conversation with someone individually. Ending the statement with “You should try it” almost always generates a response. If the response is a

follow up question like “Where or when do you dance?” you can talk more about the activity. Be sure to answer their question. It could be a positive statement like “Maybe I should” giving you the opportunity to provide them with more information. It could also be an objection like “I can’t dance”, giving you the opportunity to explain more about how easy it is. Regardless of the response, you’ve now engaged the individual in a conversation about the activity and had the chance to invite them to participate.

### **What to say if you are interviewed for a piece in a local publication:**

Most important, always be positive and upbeat. Here are a few things you should try to get included.

Talk about the interaction of people from all walks of life. Mention that your club and surrounding clubs have had doctors, engineers, truck drivers, factory workers, teachers, students, and others working together towards a common goal; having their square succeed.

If the reporter is interviewing multiple people, make sure they include the dancer’s occupation and the town they live in. This often makes a connection with the reader.

Never talk about how many clubs there used to be, or how big your club used to be. Instead, say something like *“We’ve been going strong for 15 years, and some clubs have been dancing for over 50 years. There have been many forms of dance come and go, like disco for instance, but square dancing has kept going.”*

If the interviewer makes a comment about it seems to be more of a senior activity, put a positive spin on that. You can say things like *“That’s true, but part of the reason is that many of the current dancers have been dancing for 20 or 30 years. They say it keeps them young. Another reason is that we attract many empty nesters looking for something they can do on a regular basis, now that the kids are gone. That’s not to say we don’t have*

*our share of younger people. Part of the beauty of square dancing is that there are no age boundaries.”*

If the interviewer questions whether it’s a couple’s activity, you can reply with *“Traditionally it was a couple’s activity, but over the years clubs have evolved to the point of welcoming singles and finding ways to accommodate them. Single dancers find it a way to meet people in a non-threatening, non-dating, atmosphere. You get to dance with a number of people, get to know them, and sometimes meet one that leads to a new relationship.”*

Be sure to mention the exercise element to square dancing. At an average square dance, depending on how many sets you participate in, you will walk 2 to 3 miles, and it’s a lot more fun than a treadmill at a gym.

Try to mention the various conventions, weekends and special events like fundraisers. When talking about the National Square Dance Convention. Don’t say things like *“We used to get 15 to 20 thousand dancers at the national.”* Instead, say, *“It’s held in a different city each year and about 4 to 6 thousand dancers from all over the world.”* To the general public, that’s a really big number of people at a dance.

### **How and when to speak up:**

With friends and acquaintances, you can sometimes initiate the conversation, but don’t constantly hammer them. That’s a total turn off. Personal conversations usually center around what each other has been doing or is planning on doing. When you mention your activity in the square dance world, you can use a line such as *“You guys ought to try it. Give it a shot. You might find that you like it. If not, hey you gave it a shot.”*

With strangers, they need to initiate the conversation. For example, in an elevator at a weekend event a stranger asks if you are with the square dancers, don’t go right into the elevator pitch. Answer with something like *“Yes, there’s about 200 of us here for the*

*weekend. You're welcome to come in and watch."* If they continue the conversation, then you are prepared with some of the lines from above. If you are at an out of town event, and someone asks you what you're in town for, you answer; *"I'm here for a weekend of square dancing over at the Crowne Plaza. You're welcome to stop in and take a look."* Depending on their response, or lack thereof, you can go into your elevator pitch, or not.

All the above suggestions/guidelines are just that, suggestions/guidelines. You need to be genuine and sincere with your comments. I know that I would not use either of the "elevator pitches" exactly as written, but I am now prepared with how to frame my answer. So, go back and read the suggestions and ask yourself how you would respond. The key is to be prepared, be genuine, and be sincere.

Thanks for listening,  
Roy Gotta

## QUOTABLE QUOTES (well, sort of)

Some words of wisdom that have been attributed to some of our well-known callers (these all come from extremely reliable sources whose honesty and integrity is above reproach).

"In Square Dancing Today, we are confronted with insurmountable opportunities" - **Jaden Frigo**

"One of the keys to happiness is a bad memory" – **Tony Oxendine**

"I'm always relieved when someone is delivery a eulogy and I realize I'm listening to it" – **Don Beck**

"A man who correctly guesses a woman's age may be smart, but he's not very bright" - **Buddy Weaver**

"You know that you're getting old when you've got money to burn, but the fire's gone out" - **Wade Driver**

"Age is not important unless you're a cheese" - **Kevin Kelly**

"If evolution really works, then how come mothers only have two hands?" – **Shauna Kaaria**

"My first wife knew a lot about housekeeping...when we separated, she kept the house" - **I hear this one so often, I can't remember who said it first!**

"If God did not intend us to eat animals, then why did he make them out of meat?" – **Ken Bower**

"The cost of living is going up and the chance of living is going down" – **Barry Wonson**

"It only takes one drink to get me fully loaded, only trouble is that I can't remember whether it's the fourteenth or the fifteenth – **Jerry Story**

"The clever woman is the one who knows how to give a man her own way" – **Betsy Gotta**

"Every time you make ends meet; someone moves the ends" – **Ken Ritucci**

"The hardness of the butter is always in direct proportion to the softness of the bread roll" – **Bill Harrison**

## **ONCE UPON A TIME....by Bill Peters**

*The following article is an edited version of a keynote address given by Bill Peters in the early 90's to the 8th Annual Washington State Leadership Seminar. It was published, in this edited form, in the Washington magazine "Footnotes". It is as relevant today as it was then.*

Once upon a time, back in the days of the caveman, there was no such thing as dancing. That's because there was no such thing as recreation. The caveman had no time for recreation, because all his time, his total existence, was devoted to the simple need to survive. Staying alive was his primary concern, because, while there no such things as dancing and recreation, there were such things as saber-toothed tigers, dinosaurs, woolly haired mammoths, and a whole bunch of other unmentionable things that made loud noises went 'bump' in the night.

One fine day, however,.....correction, one rainy day, when the caveman was in his cave feeling pretty good about the way things were (it was after-all, raining outside, but he was high and dry, the fire was going and he was warm, and the saber-toothed tigers were all in their caves because they didn't like rain much either), it suddenly occurred to him that he was bored. He had nothing to do. He didn't have to worry about tigers or dinosaurs or woolly haired mammoths, and time weighed heavily on his hands. It just wasn't any fun hanging around in his cave waiting for the rain to stop. He found himself wishing desperately for something to do. And, as he paced nervously back and forth, he accidentally happened to bang his stick (the one he used to protect himself against the saber-toothed tigers) against a hollow log. And it made a pleasant sound. It went boom! He hit it again. Again, it went boom! He hit it some more.... boom, boom, boom! Hey, this was fun! He found that by hitting that log, in different ways and controlling the way he hit that log, the sounds he made took on a kind of order. They developed a sort of personality. And man listened to the sounds he made and

said "those sounds are good. I like those sounds. I will call these sounds rhythm".

And so it happened that whenever man found himself with a little time on his hands, on rainy days (and sometimes even when the sun was shining and no-one else was looking), he would take that stick and hit that hollow log in a rhythmic manner. He found that this refreshed him. It made him feel good and charged up his batteries. It suddenly occurred to him that if it felt so good to hit that log with one stick, it would probably feel twice as good with two sticks. So, he quickly got another stick, held it in his other hand, and now he could beat that log with a vengeance...*Boom, boom, boom!*

He was right! It did make him feel twice as good. In fact, it made him feel so good he almost couldn't stand it. As he beat that old log, he would hop first on one leg, then on the other, then back to the first one. And without even thinking about it, he found that he was hopping in time to the rhythm (hop, 2,3,4, hop, 2,3,4). This was fantastic! This was fun! This was incredible! This felt so good that he could not keep it to himself. He just had to tell someone. He simply had to share this with everyone. He quickly gathered his neighbours, his family and his friends all around him to show them what he had discovered. This was probably the first time in the history of mankind that someone was able to say, "Look Ma, I'm dancing!".

The rhythm was so infectious, - and man was having such a good time as he hopped and danced in time to the beating of the sticks against the hollow log, that it wasn't very long before others began to join in, and soon everyone was yelling

and dancing. And, most importantly - everyone was enjoying it. Dancing was FUN!

But after a while, some of the dancers began to get the feeling that dancing wasn't as much fun as it used to be. Just going hop,2,3,4, hop,2,3,4, every time it rained, got to be kind of a drag. They worried about and they thought about it. Suddenly one of the cave men said "Hey, I got an idea. How would it be if instead of going hop,2,3,4, we go 1,2,3, ,hop? That's a little bit different isn't it? Maybe that would not be so boring". They tried it and sure enough, dancing was fun again.

But alas, only for a little while. Soon 1,2,3, hop got boring too, for some of the dancers, at least, and they had to invent new ways to dance. They had to discover new steps and new hops and new twists and new turns and new shuffles. Soon, some of the dancers found that the only way they could dancing was to constantly learn new steps - by constantly inventing new dance maneuvers, by learning how to dance them, and then inventing more new steps and learning how to dance them. And, while for some of the dancers this was no problem, for others, it was. They didn't have time to learn new steps, hops, shuffles, - maybe they found that some of these new steps were not that much fun to dance - or maybe they were just plain never got bored of going hop,2,3,4, hop,2,3,4 all the time. They didn't need more than that to make them enjoy dancing and consequently that was all they wanted to do.

A very strange thing happened. For some strange and mysterious reason, it was discovered that some of the dancers who enjoyed dancing the old ways were annoyed at those who enjoyed dancing the new steps. "These new steps are ruining our recreation" they cried. "Every time I go dancing someone wants to teach me a new step. It used to be that I could learn one or two new steps and that was

all I needed to enjoy dancing. Now I have to learn two to six steps, and I have even heard of some places where the dancers have to learn as many as nine or ten! Where will it all end?'

As you might expect, those who enjoyed doing the new steps soon began to look down their noses at those who still enjoyed the old dances. "How can you still enjoy those old-fashioned routines? Doing the same thing over and over again? Isn't that silly? Isn't that boring? You are stick-in-the-muds, and if you keep on doing what you are doing, you're going to ruin dancing for everyone! I know it's part of our history and part of our tradition, but the world doesn't stand still and neither does the way people enjoy dancing. You gotta move with the times, man, you gotta move with the times!"

Sometimes, the arguments between the die-hard old-timers and the die-hard advanced dancers got to be very intense. Each side would constantly accuse the other of ruining dancing for everyone. There were many others who felt that while dancing was fun, it wasn't worth the hassle. They didn't want to argue all the time. They just wanted to be left alone so that they could dance in peace without getting involved in arguments all the time. It looked as though the controversy on both sides would indeed ruin dancing for everyone, until it was discovered that the die-hards on both sides were only a small minority of all the dancers, and while they were the loudest, and made the most noise, the overwhelming majority at all the dancers ignored the arguments and followed the kind of dancing they happened to enjoy.

There were those who were dance leaders back in those days, and they soon recognized that while the extremists on both sides were often guilty of causing most problems, there was also a lot to be said in their favour. The old-timers served the valuable purpose of keeping alive the

history and heritage of their activity, of reminding the dancers of how their movement really began and of showing everyone how the changes occurred and where they all came from.

The advanced dancers also served a valuable purpose. They encouraged the creativity and the originality and the inventive spark out of which the whole idea of dancing sprang in the first place. When changes became inevitable, as they must in any activity, it was the advanced group who were able to show the way. They were the ones who did the experimentation and the investigation, and who provided the leaders with experience who judges the good from the bad, and the harmful from the beneficial.

After a time, it was also recognized that the "mainstream" dancers were actually aided and assisted by both the traditionalist and the experimenters. Both groups supported and provided guidelines for the mainstreamers. Each group, in other words, derived strength and sustenance from the other, and rather than ruin the activity, they made it healthier, and caused it to grow and prosper and ultimately evolve into a bigger and better program.

So it was that the people of those golden days began to enjoy dancing all the more, and their form of dancing grew and prospered, and they did indeed, live happily ever after.

So ends my story. There are a good many conclusions that can be drawn from the little fairy tale that I have just recited to you. But they are obvious, and I'll let you draw them for yourselves.

While I am certainly aware that my tongue was stuck firmly out in my cheek as I told

the story, and while I recognize that the obvious parallels between olden times and the way things are today in the world of square dancing were based more on imagination than history, I do happen to believe that the moral of my story can be applied very realistically to our present situation. I myself do not doubt for one minute that throughout the entire history of square dancing, you will find that the old-time dancers are constantly at war with the advanced dancers, that the traditionalists are always at odds with the ones who enjoy new material, and I am sure that the extremists in either camp actually have very little effect on the activity as a whole. They make the noise, but square dancing is a "tough old girl" - she survives in spite of it. She goes on her merry way and changes do occur, but the point is that the arguments have been around for years and years, for all kinds of dancing.

I am sure that if we did go back in history, even way back to the 13th century, we'll find that the old-time Morris dancers were very annoyed when their very ritualistic and highly structured Morris Dance slowly began to evolve into a somewhat less formal activity that we now identify as the English Country Dance.. I am equally sure that those who enjoyed the very pompous and formal French quadrilles were aghast at what happened when their stately dances moved across the Atlantic and evolved into Appalachian Mountain dances, rowdy Kentucky Running Sets and New England contras. I am equally convinced that those old-timers would be shocked out of their skins to realize that their memorized dance routines that they enjoyed, in which every dance was done exactly the same way each and every time, changed gradually into what we now identify as the Modern Western Square Dance.

# PUZZLE TIME

To complete this quiz, you need to answer with a word that is common to square dancing.

1. Baseball field \_\_\_\_\_
2. Surfer's medium \_\_\_\_\_
3. Butter, e.g. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Measures time \_\_\_\_\_
5. Conservationists credo \_\_\_\_\_
6. Lengthen \_\_\_\_\_
7. In the playground \_\_\_\_\_
8. On the Hollywood Walk of Fame \_\_\_\_\_
9. Crease \_\_\_\_\_
10. Use a loom \_\_\_\_\_
11. London Eye, e.g. \_\_\_\_\_
12. Good luck charm \_\_\_\_\_
13. Exchange \_\_\_\_\_
14. One of the 5 senses \_\_\_\_\_
15. Door's pivot \_\_\_\_\_

Answers can be found further on in this issue. Good luck!



# THE LEARNERS CLASS

A new class has begun,  
By introducing everyone,  
The caller knows the score,  
Taught many dancers before.

A few will drop out in a week or two,  
"Too hard to learn something new",  
Others eager to give it a try,  
These are the apple of the caller's eye.

Callers are a special breed,  
Know how to meet their need,  
With patience, loves to teach,  
Thru their mistakes, he does not preach.

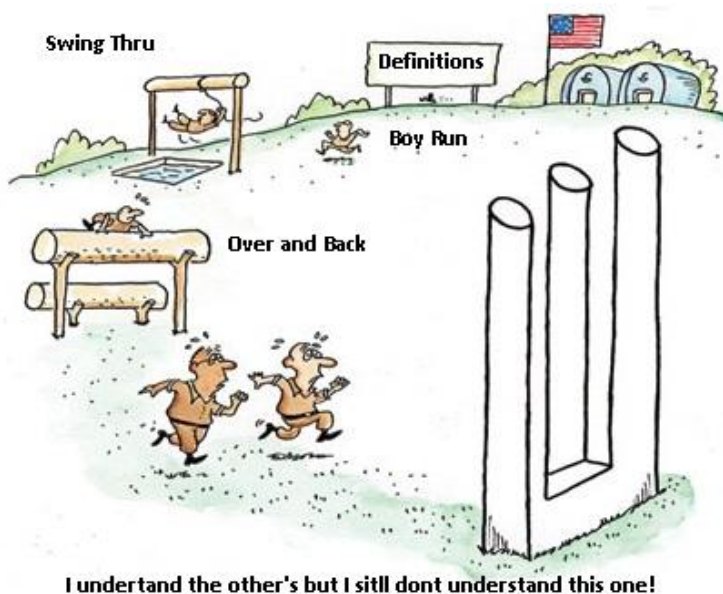
Over and over he will repeat,  
"Don't rush - dance to the beat",  
Each lesson, they improve,  
Now they are getting into the groove.

The caller looks with pride,  
As they dance side by side,  
Another job well done,  
They are all having FUN.

**by HELEN BANIA**  
*Jannings, MO, USA*  
1992

## IMPORTANT ADVICE FOR GETTING THE MOST OUT OF LIFE

- 1) Remember, no matter where you go, there you are.
- 2) Meditation is far better than just sitting around doing nothing.
- 3) Always remember that no-one else knows what they are doing, either.



- 4) Learn from yesterday. Live for Today. Hope for a big lottery win tomorrow.
- 5) All life's important lessons can be learned by watching Star Trek.
- 6) Wives are always right; husbands are always wrong.
- 7) Daughters develop the "Princess Bitchface" syndrome around 11-12 years of age. They become human again sometime after 25.

# ***FOR NEW DANCERS: THE FINAL EXAM***

*To all new dancers who have completed their Mainstream Basics course: the following written examination is a short questionnaire which will give caller and class member an understanding of just how far all have progressed in the Learners Class. It consists of a series of simple questions relating to what you have been taught throughout the Learner Class.*

1. Write your name at the top of the page.
2. Read all instructions and questions thoroughly before proceeding.
3. In one sentence, please tell why you enjoy Square Dancing  
.....
4. The most important thing in Square Dancing Is:  
.....
5. What call is most frequently called after an Allemande Left?  
.....
6. How many beats are there in a Grand Square?  
(a) 12    (b) 16    (c) 22    (d) 24    (e) 32    (f) who knows    (g) who cares
7. If you know how to do a Zoom, stand up and yell "zoom".
8. Select four things a graduate dancer should know:
  - a. Complain about the caller
  - b. Dance for fun
  - c. Greet & welcome visiting dancers
  - d. Make mistakes in a square
  - e. Stomp on your partner's foot if he/she makes a mistake
  - f. Blame other dancers for mistakes
9. Square Dancers should memorize singing calls so that they do not have to depend on the caller  
TRUE.....FALSE.....
10. Select three of the following which are most offensive to square dancers-
  - a. Drinking before or during a dance
  - b. Body Odor
  - c. Men wearing short sleeved shirts
  - d. After Party drinking
  - e. After Parties with no alcohol
  - f. Pushing and pulling in a square
  - g. Men wearing shorts
11. In a square, your partner is always on your right - TRUE.....FALSE....
12. If your square breaks down, you should always (select three) -
  - a. Keep moving
  - b. Blame the caller

- c. Blame other dancers
- d. Blame the sound
- e. Apologize as it is probably your fault
- f. Don't be embarrassed as everyone makes mistakes

13. Square dancers should always anticipate the next call. TRUE....FALSE...

14. If you think that you deserve a diploma, signify by standing up, and then run around in a circle shouting "me, me, me".

15. Square dancers should always run to be first on the floor. TRUE...FALSE...

16. It is most important that if you know that you are dancing in a caller's pilot square, that you should break down on purpose. TRUE.....FALSE.....

17. Always squeeze the hand tightly of anyone that you see making a mistake, and advise them straight away that it was their fault. TRUE.....FALSE.....

18. After you have finished reading all the questions in this examination paper, please only follow the instructions in Question #1; then turn your paper over and sit quietly while others

19. complete their papers.

### **PUZZLE PAGE ANSWERS:**

- |                                  |                       |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Baseball field                | <b>diamond</b>        |
| 2. Surfer's medium               | <b>wave</b>           |
| 3. Butter, e.g.                  | spread                |
| 4. Measures time                 | hourglass             |
| 5. Conservationists credo        | recycle               |
| 6. Lengthen                      | extend                |
| 7. In the playground             | swing, slide, see saw |
| 8. On the Hollywood Walk of Fame | star                  |
| 9. Crease                        | fold, bend            |
| 10. Use a loom                   | weave                 |
| 11. London Eye, e.g.             | ferris wheel          |
| 12. Good luck charm              | clover leaf           |
| 13. Exchange                     | trade                 |
| 14. One of the 5 senses          | touch                 |
| 15. Door's pivot                 | hinge                 |

# *Dancing by Definition*

Edited from a document by Joe Pryluck and Unconventional Squares

## What is DBD?

DBD stands for "Dance by Definition".

It includes all square dance movements and calls from circle left to whatever the last move on the challenge program -- and from every, and any, LEGAL or PROPER formation.

However the term DBD has been taken to mean a lot more. In general terms, it includes, but goes a bit beyond "Extended Applications" and APD ("All Position Dancing").

Please do not confuse APD or all position Dancing with DBD. All position dancing may or may not be DBD. What it means is essentially that you will be dancing your position as either a lady or a man. Dancing in all positions.

- A lady dancing a man's part is all position dancing - I.e. she dances as a man and for gender specific calls like California twirl, courtesy turn movements, star thru etc., she dances the movement as a man
- A man dancing a lady's part is all position dancing - I.e. he dances as a lady and for gender specific calls like California twirl, courtesy turn movements, star thru etc., she dances the movement as a man
- Please note that Belles and Beaus is NOT APD – it is a concept of who is doing the right-hand side and who is doing the left-hand side. - In a couple, the dancer on the left is the "beau" and the dancer on the right is the "belle. The naming convention becomes applicable as part of the convention of who does what applicable to the movement.
  - For example at basic, calling from BGGB lines right and left thru and who turns who would be considered all position dancing although improper due to the formation restrictions.....at advanced saying as belles and beaux right and left thru, would be considered dancing the movement by the definition and using the advanced concept of positional naming convention.

In DBD as the context it normally applies today, the caller uses the standard definition of the call, as defined by Callerlab. But the starting formations and each dancer's position may be decidedly different.

Perhaps the best description we've heard of DBD is "Extreme Applications." Callerlab has defined two sets of "Applications" for the basic calls:

- "**Standard Applications**" are those positions that a caller can be quite sure will be successfully completed by the vast majority of dancers. In general, these are the positions that are taught in New Dancer programs.
- "**Extended Applications**" are positions that may give the average dance floor some trouble, and may need some extra cues or a walk-through for dancers to succeed.
- "**Extreme Applications**" **are not defined by Callerlab or anyone else.** These are the products of the caller's imagination and may need experienced dancers, caller help, or both in order to succeed. They may include unusual formations or fractions of calls.

- Please note that “extreme applications” still must fit into definition category on the use of the movement without forcing the dancers into a position with a sledgehammer.

To better understand the differences of these three types of applications for definitions let's put it into a practical example using an actual movement. For example, using the movement scoot back:

- The "**Standard Application**" for Scootback is parallel right-handed waves with all the same gender facing in.
- An "**Extended Application**" might be left-handed waves with opposite genders facing in.
- An "**Extreme Application**" could include a Quarter-Tag starting formation (Heads Pass the Ocean from a squared set.) It might also be Scoot back once and a half.

There is a fourth category of application that unfortunately exists. It is called the **Technically Stupid Application**. This happens when an example of extreme application is pushed, and the caller does not use the concept of DBD properly. **It is not DBD, and it is poor judgement.**

Unfortunately, there are callers who actually believe that bending the rules and giving directional prompts to compensate for bad dancer flow and improper use, they can technically bastardise a movement- force it to be used successfully and call it DBD. This is that example also using Scootback

- From facing standard lines. “Boys will go in and girls will fold left everybody - scoot back”. That is not extreme application it is just poor judgement and bad calling.

## **DBD IS FOR DANCERS AND NOT FOR CALLERS**

If ever there was a controversial statement it is that one. However; the statement is true, not in use or delivery but in attitude. To understand the statement, you must understand what DBD is not.

**DBD is specifically NOT "Take No Prisoners."** The goals are entirely different. In DBD, the goal is success, with thinking required. If the dancers have trouble, the caller will get the floor moving again and work the trouble spot.

We have all heard of callers that boast and take pride in the claim that they can break down a floor in less than 10 movements. That is take no prisoners calling and is just plain wrong. In "Take No Prisoners", the goal is to give the dancers trouble. When the dancers have trouble, it's up to them to get things moving again, without the caller's help. Callers may use DBD choreography to do this, but as just one of the tools rather than the focus. The caller is feeding his/her ego and not giving the dancers what they need. The focus is on the caller thinking “look at me – I am better than you”.

- Here is a hint, if dancers cannot do what you have taught them to do, that is not a sign of being a good caller – it is a sign of being an ineffective teacher.

**DBD is not "Arky" dancing**, although dancing DBD can help your Arky dancing. Arky is dancing the opposite gender. Unlike Arky, DBD dancers retain their original gender, regardless of position. In DBD, for the few moves that are defined as "men / women", the men always do the man's part and the women do the woman's part. So, the men don't have to learn how the lady does "slide thru." However, most definitions aren't sex-specific, so learning to do those moves from other positions will help

## **WHAT'S A DBD DANCE LIKE?**

DBD is square dancing so first, foremost and most importantly, you can expect the same as at every square dance! -- Good People Having FUN!

Beyond that, as with every dance, the experience varies with the particular caller and that day's "floor". (this means the dancers that show up for the dance, and everything else that comes with them and all the factors that influence the dance such as sound, weather etc. – sound familiar?)

One caller may emphasize left-handed formations; another may put the men where the ladies normally are; yet another may concentrate on unusual formations or concepts. In some cases it may be a DBD tip or sequence, it may be a DBD workshop where everything is expected to be looked at, or it may be an entire evening of DBD programmed or even as in some cases, a DBD club where DBD is considered the norm and is called regularly and without warning. For those groups, it is normal dancing. The one thing that is 100% consistent in DBD is that it is very rarely the same from one dance to the next.

Most clubs that dance DBD either regularly or periodically tend to be smaller in size but often have much better success in longevity and recruitment. The dancers have better success overall, and the practiced DBD caller is often more able to keep an eye on every dancer and provide the help everyone needs.

Most practiced and professional DBD callers are more than willing to explain or walk through difficult or particularly troublesome or nuanced choreography during the breaks, but usually there is little need for more than a preliminary walk through on the floor when introducing a new concept or application. More often than not it is just a quick prompt and maybe a short slower pause talk through/walk through; after that the dancer are dancing it and the caller is calling it. The good thing about DBD dancers and callers that are practiced and professional is that if there is a need for help, all they have to do is ask and the caller will provide. The proper and professional caller is all about dancer success and pleasure which is not just about DBD but about all square dancing.

## **HOW DO I GET STARTED IN DBD?**

You may be doing it already and not even know it. It depends on who your caller is. For some dancers what may be considered Extreme application DBD (example recycle from a left hand BGBG wave, may be considered DBD and very rare where you are while the club in the next town may consider it normal everyday dancing because that is how they were taught. Nevertheless, it is not so common anymore to find any clubs that venture far from the “standard applications” particularly with the pseudo restrictions and time constraints that many feel are warranted.

If you are interested, have a look in your area during the after season break where many workshops are conducted. If you go to a festival or a convention, have a look to see if the agenda has an Introduction to DBD at the level you are dancing. If all else fails, ask your local callers about it. I am sure there is one or two that would be quite happy to get a DBD group started in your area.

Just remember, DBD is not that difficult. It is more of a mind barrier and memory habit that restricts most dancers and callers. Simply put you were dancing DBD on the first day you started dancing. It is just a matter of knowing your definitions and dancing your part properly from different set ups. If you are a “hands contact recycler” you will have to learn to dance recycle properly. If you are a ladies left touch a quarter pass the ocean person, then you will have to learn that there is no ladies part and review the definition.

It sounds difficult and many avoid it primarily because of pride. How many “experienced plus and advanced dancers out there are 24 beat grand square dancers, or girls turn back wheel and deal recyclers? Telling a good and happy advance dancer with 10 years’ experience that they may need to learn the definitions is sometimes a blow to the ego. In reality however, if they are happy dancing standard applications and that is what is provided in their area, then why change. The market is there so the supply will meet it.

However, there is a large number of dancers that want more, and need more, but do not want to be rushed up the levels. They want to dance, be challenged, be successful and most of all have fun with friends.

DBD is a great platform for younger enthusiastic dancer learning and retention but also a great dancing platform for experienced standard application dancers that are looking for a challenge without going up to challenge.

Anyone can dance DBD and it is not too late to learn if you remember these simple things:

- It's not too late. You already dance over 80 percent of the DBD program. You can just start from where you are at whatever level you dance.
- DBD is not like learning a new level such as moving from mainstream to plus. There is no separate defined list for DBD.
- You already know (or should know) all the moves. It's simply a matter of using them in new ways.
- DBD groups effectively operate as workshops, and welcome solid level appropriate dancers.
- DBD tips and workshops however welcome everybody and help you progress and become a better dancer.
- Most DBD callers come to the dance with choreography in mind; ready, willing, even anxious to explain and demonstrate the things that cause the dancers difficulty. It is normally a prepared and practiced performance with a specific focus

## **I DON'T WANT TO BREAK down the SQUARE**

The first thing to remember is that DBD, like all square dancing, should be about having fun while learning. DBD is always focused (or should be) on dancer success. One key difference is that most DBD dancers and callers work hard to succeed, BUT we actually look forward to the square breaking down at some point during the night. DBD dancers and callers have learned to recognize early that important lesson that most square dance clubs and classes seem to have forgotten to teach. “Breaking down is a learning opportunity”. DBD dancers and Callers understand that they aren't stretching and growing if we can complete everything with no difficulty. IN addition, there is a greater rapport between caller and dancers so that feedback and critique both good and bad is both is welcomed and expected. It is how they get better

Everybody makes mistakes, regardless of experience and skill. Everybody breaks down a square from time to time. It's the reaction time through use and practice to those flubs that makes the difference. DBD dancers accept that these things happen; and that they can learn something from it. They are also dancing with their eyes and ears open and are more able to help around them – usually by being in the right position themselves and a quick gesture or look to help. That's the path to accomplishment in DBD and it is the path

that is encouraged at DBD specific clubs such as at the Unconventional Squares in Lancaster Pennsylvania USA and many other DBD specific clubs.

### **DBD Dancers don't smile much on the floor, do they?**

DBD is called the stone face, which is a term that is usually applied to challenge dancers. The reason is however, not a lack of enjoyment, entertainment or fun. To understand that just watch what happens when a square breaks down. They all begin to laugh and groan like a teenager being subjected to her dad's bad puns in front of her new boyfriend. The difference is there is no embarrassment just a good old-fashioned laugh at themselves and accepting their "oops" to get ready to start again.

DBD dancing does take a bit more thinking than the average dance. Many people simply don't smile when they're thinking. They usually have a look of concentration because they know that practiced muscle memory has to often be overridden to do the movements properly and effectively to successfully meet the challenge of caller.

Let me assure you, it is rare that a DBD dancer is not having fun at a square dance. If they were, they wouldn't be coming back nor would their longevity in the activity be as extensive as it is – even without rushing up to the next level. Many Mainstream and Plus DBD dancers do not want to learn plus, advanced or challenge because they are still having fun and being challenged at mainstream and plus respectively. They are simply having too much fun to worry about the status of a thing called a LEVEL.

### **THE MISCONCEPTION - I dance Advanced or Challenge so obviously I can dance DBD.**

Well, the fact that you are dancing advance and Challenge probably means that you have the ability to learn and have a good attitude towards dancing BUT, even though you know a lot, it will probably take a lot of practice to do DBD. DBD is not another level. **DBD is a thought process.** Higher levels are simply another list of calls. The Level has no bearing on the dancing ability, challenge, or quality, only the quantity of movements known.

It is important to remember that dancing at a higher level does not generally give a lot of practice for the levels below. Many people at higher levels (unfortunately including many callers) feel that the "interesting" choreography is generally reserved for the higher level and lower level moves are used simply to set up the formation.

Rest assured that this is not the case. It is a fallacy, and it is completely wrong. Unfortunately the rush over the last decades to Plus and higher levels have so simplified both caller and dancer ability into the realm of standard position that today, a Plus DBD club means that you will be dancing predominately basic and mainstream from all the positions and formations that were not taught to you when you learned the program.

What I found interesting in that research and borne out in many discussions I have had with callers around the world, is that most but not all recognize that the level of dancing capability has dropped, and Standard position is the new "Normal". In all the sequences noted above, which was "DBD for Solid level plus and advance dancers", there were only 6 plus movements – Grand Swing thru, Chase Right, Fan the Top, Follow your Neighbour, Relay the Deucey, and Crossfire. Those movements were not used as extreme applications but only from extended applications and formations. The DBD for the most part was basic and mainstream and, in some cases,, what is considered entire sequences of plus and advanced level DBD was all basic.

That said, dancers who dance at higher levels will often have a distinct advantage when learning DBD. Many of the basic and mainstream sequences that you learn as DBD you

will recognize as higher-level movements which are just being called directionally. An example would be the mainstream DBD of from facing lines boys Scootback, Girls Dodge ("Scoot and Dodge" at Advanced). Another advantage, particularly for advanced dancers is that they may recognize, understand, and have experience with some of the concepts that the caller might be using as basic and mainstream DBD from extreme application formations.

## HOW DO I KNOW IF DBD IS FOR ME?

There's no simple answer to this question. Each club, each caller and each dancer are different. If you've just graduated from a new dancer program at mainstream in a place where the caller took an entire year or two to teach the program and dance it with you from a myriad of set ups and uses, then you are likely already dancing DBD better than most.

If you are a new graduate that started dancing in September and graduated into your local plus club in December, then DBD is probably not for you.

As with any subjective thing such as judging your capabilities, if you are not sure ask your caller/teacher. Remember, although there are exceptions to everything, it usually takes some time for you to become comfortable dancing -- even with standard positioning. If you're an experienced dancer, the following self-evaluation tool may give you some idea.

In each row, pick the statement you most agree with. Few people will select all from column B's, but the more from column B's that you choose, the more of the DBD mindset you already have. You may already be dancing that undefined "soft" DBD and Solid Plus and Advanced and not even recognize it.

By the way, this doesn't grade you as a dancer. It's just a tool. We know that DBD isn't everyone's cup of tea. We know many very good dancers who would pick mostly A's.

A	B
I go to a dance mostly to socialize. I don't want to have to think too much.	I go to a dance mostly for the dancing. It's kind of boring if I don't have to do some thinking.
At a festival, I never make it to the morning workshops. The after-parties run too late at night.	At a festival, I always make it to the morning workshops, even if it means skipping some of the evening dance.
I dance maybe once a month and only with our club's caller.	I dance several times a week, with as many different callers as I can.
When I'm looking for a dance, I always choose the easiest dance and the one closest to home	When I'm looking for a dance, I look for a caller who'll give me a bit of a challenge, even if it does mean some driving.
I'll never be interested in the next level. Too much work.	I'm thinking seriously about taking lessons for the next level (or: I already dance at a higher level).

I make it through a tip, usually with some help from my friends.	I make it through almost every tip, sometimes helping other dancers.
I can hold my own at my home club, but I'm less successful when I visit other clubs.	I generally do pretty well, regardless of who's calling or which club I'm dancing with.
I try to get in a square with (pick a name) because he/she will pull me through.	I find people saying they're happy to be in my square so I can pull them through.
When a caller starts talking about choreography, my eyes glaze over and my mind wanders off.	When a caller talks about formations like "inverted lines", "quarter tag", "eight chain thru", I can visualize the setup and follow the discussion.
After a tip, I just head for the refreshments. The next tip will be better.	After a tip, I find myself talking to the caller, asking "How did that work?" or "Why was it that way?"

Well that's it. I would especially like to thank and acknowledge Joe Pryluck and the Unconventional Squares of Lancaster Pennsylvania. The foundation document and the majority of the information in this document came from the ideas and the evaluation concept posted on their website. For more information about the unconventional squares, visit their website at: <http://www.psrdf.org/svsrda/unconventional/>

**IF IT'S THE WRONG PLACE  
AND THE WRONG TIME...  
I'LL BE THERE.**



## ***The 61<sup>st</sup> ANSDC – 10-14 Apr 2020***

Autumn is one of the most beautiful times in the Blue Mountains, and we are lucky enough to be holding our 61<sup>st</sup> Australian National Square Dance Convention in this World Heritage National Park from 10-14<sup>th</sup> April 2020. The 8.43 million people who visited this area last year can't be wrong? Did you know it was voted as the most popular National Park in NSW?

The Blue Mountains is a magical place. People from all over the world come to see the famous Three Sisters in Katoomba or ride the Scenic Railway, the steepest incline railway in the world. Scenic World also offers epic panoramas of wilderness, waterfalls and Jurassic-era temperate rainforest. Enjoy walking in the footsteps of Charles Darwin starting at Wentworth Falls, following Jamison Creek into the National Park. There is so much to see and do whether you are a thrill seeker or enjoy the quieter things in life.



Fresh air builds an appetite and the Blue Mountains offer a comprehensive range of dining options from fine restaurants, beautiful brunch spots and delectable delis to casual cafes. Actually, it's not just the air that makes the food taste better and the wine taste sweeter. It's the legion of highly trained local and international chefs and the fresh produce from nearby farms, orchards, rivers and streams.

The 61<sup>st</sup> Australian National Square Dance Convention is being held at the Blue Mountains Grammar School at Wentworth Falls. Set in a large expanse of rolling grasslands, the school shows all the beauty of a bygone era. A perfect match for the theme of this Convention. The school's main hall will be used as the Convention's secondary hall.



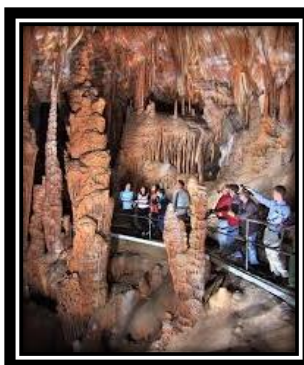
The convention main hall will be in the school's sports building. A large multi-storey building with twin basketball courts. There is also a large mezzanine level where the stalls will fit nicely giving the suppliers and shoppers a great view of the dancers.

Our theme is "Puttin' on the Ritz". So, join the fun as we relive the glamour of the 1920's when the Blue Mountains became one of Australia's first tourist destination.

Come and join the 431 dancers who have already registered for this event! You will be entertained by some of the best callers/cuers in Australia as well as cuers from New Zealand and the United Kingdom and callers from Germany and the United States.



Don't forget to register for the 61<sup>st</sup> Australian National Square Dance Convention in April 2020 - Check out our website <https://www.2020sdconvention.com> or join our Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/434857693607535/> to keep up to date with what is happening.



### Central West Post Convention Tour

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Cheers Susanne Horvat

Publicity Manager

Feel free to give me a bell on 0425 394 002 or email  
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## *Editor's Final Words.... At Least For Now*

Well, that brings us to the end of this second issue. I hope that you have found something worthwhile or at least interesting and entertaining in this maiden edition.

In the first issue I gave a bit of a resume on just who I am and what I do. As we have a lot of new subscribers, I thought that I would repeat it for them.

The question you may ask is “**who is this Barry Wonson bloke anyway?**” That is me on the right (*I think that I was wondering what the heck I was doing that night! Look a bit like a stunned mackerel!*). I am a club caller and have been for nearly 51 years now. I live with my wife Sue, in Wollongong, NSW, Australia.



As a caller, I have had the opportunity to travel the world, and have been featured in many festivals, weekends, specials, conventions in such areas as USA, Canada, New Zealand, England, the Channel Islands, France, Germany, Belgium, Switzerland, Holland, Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark Sweden, Norway and Italy. From 1977 thru 2001, I travelled to the USA more than 20 times and also had 17 calling trips to Europe thru 2011 (after which I made the decision to not accept any more overseas engagements overseas as I wanted to spend more time with our family).

Due to a stroke in 2017, I had to give up any weekend engagements, but still call for our own Red Barons Square Dance Clubs 3 times each week.

I am an avid reader, a collector of movies (over 6000 Blu-ray and DVDs), a lover of music (over 6500 CDs), a keen player of strategy board games (over 1200 games in our collection as well). We also have lots of other collectable items in our rambling house.

My wife Sue and I met at a Square dance some 44 years ago. We have two daughters (Amerie and Alessa), one son-in-law (Christopher) and one grandson (Ronon).

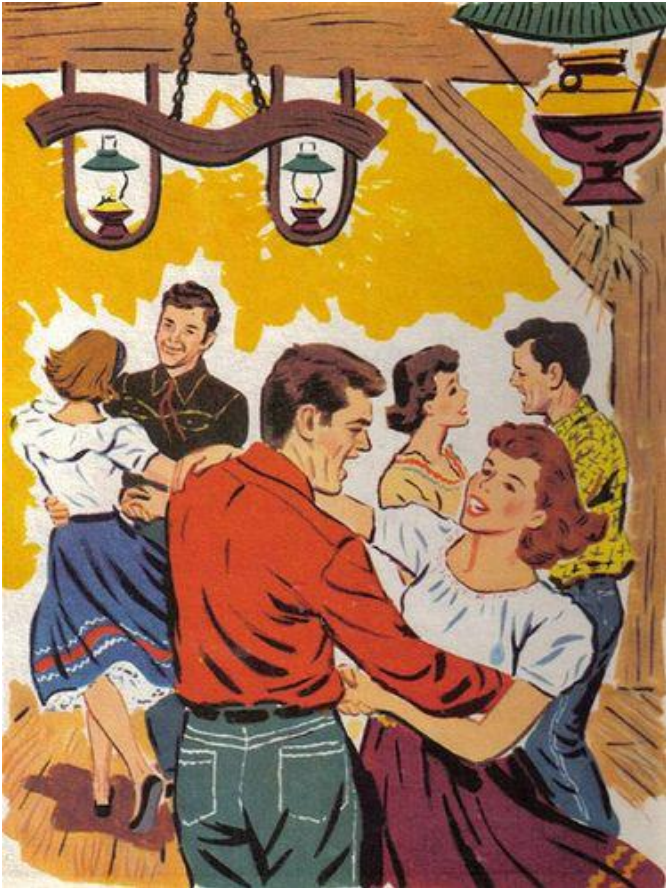
A couple of months ago our local newspaper, the Illawarra Mercury featured an article on people involved in various forms of ‘collecting’. I have always had a wide variety of interests. Check out what your publisher does in his spare time:

<https://www.illawarramercury.com.au/story/5914103/three-illawarra-collectors-share-their-quirky-obsessions/>

I should note here again that all editorial ideas and comments are mine alone, (unless otherwise indicated) and don't necessarily reflect the view held by any “normal people”. (I am a Square Dance Caller after all.) I am always happy to include comments that may be different to mine. Please just email me at [bjwonson@gmail.com](mailto:bjwonson@gmail.com).

*Have a Very merry Christmas and Joyous New Year (Barry, Mel, Jaden and all the others who have assisted with articles, information, ideas and comments.*

*Barry*



1970's – check out my wild shorts