

# AROUND THE SQUARE



***An International Magazine for dancers,  
callers and cuers***

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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 third 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.

While I had hoped to have this first 2020 edition out at the beginning of February, life, as usual, just got in the way of plans.

In April New South Wales is hosting the 61<sup>st</sup> Australian Square Dance Convention in the magnificent Blue Mountains region. Conventions are always a big job for anyone involved in the organisation...my role up until recently has been a fairly easy one with the creation of the session timetable and program. In January, the major part of my role took over with the programming of callers for all the sessions. This always involves many, many hours of work to get the program to a point where all involved can be satisfied with the end result. The prime concern for any programmer is to ensure that the dancers attending have the best possible entertainment that can be provided. This year we again have a terrific line-up of callers and cuers, with every state in Australia represented, as well as USA, Germany, England, and New Zealand. We have dancers from all over Australia and a number of other countries (USA, United Kingdom, Germany, Japan).

This is the third Convention where I have been Program Manager and will definitely be my last one!

This month we have a wide range of articles from Ed Foote (Tips for dancers), Ken Ritucci, another column from Dr. Allemander, an informative article on the concept of DBD dancing, as well as some interesting articles and comments from numerous sources.

I hope that you enjoy this issue...as usual all comments, ideas, articles, etc., are most welcome.

Best wishes,  
Barry



- What do you get when you cross poison ivy with a four-leaf clover? A rash of good luck.
- Why don't you iron 4-Leaf clovers? Because you don't want to press your luck.
- What's Irish and stays out all night? Paddy O'furniture!
- How is a best friend like a 4-leaf clover? Because they are hard to find and lucky to have.
- What do you get when you cross a pillowcase with a stone? A sham rock
- Why do people wear shamrocks on St. Patrick's Day? Regular rocks are too heavy.
- What happens when a leprechaun falls into a river? He gets wet!
- Drink green beer on St Patrick's Day! It counts as a vegetable!

# HOW TO BE A WELL-KNOWN SQUARE DANCER (AND CALLER)

Dancer notes by George Pollock, Edmonds, Washington (from Washington State SD Magazine in the 1980's) - Caller notes by Barry Wonson (2017)

The following guide will assist you to become a well-known and frequently discussed Square Dancer (or Caller):

**BE A PERFECTIONIST** When you respond to the call, don't tolerate the slightest mistake by anyone in your square, including your partner. And be sure to draw attention to the culprit in a loud voice, otherwise he, or she, may repeat the error. Overlook your own mistakes, of course.

*FOR CALLERS: When you are calling, and the square breaks down, make sure that you point out to everyone whose fault it was.*

**PULL AND PUSH THE DANCERS** There are times when dancers respond slowly to calls because they do not hear the commands clearly, misunderstand, or are inexperienced. Don't be misled by such flimsy reasons - pull and push the offender(s) into line, making certain that you frown sufficiently to show your displeasure. By all means, be certain that others in the square know exactly who it is. If the inept dancer who did not hear the call because you were talking; ignore this reason completely.

*FOR CALLERS: Take no notice of the speed of your delivery. If they break down because you are calling at a speed you like, then it is up to them to catch up to you. Remember it is their problem, not yours.*

**HELP THE CALLER INSTRUCT** Although the caller may be fully experienced and capable in his own right, don't trust him. He explains his instructions to the other dancers in your square. For greater effectiveness, explain what the caller really means while he is talking. This helps drown him out and reduces the amount of instruction that the dancers receive; after all, all they really have to do is listen to you. Your success in helping the caller will be amply demonstrated when no-one in your square (except yourself) is able to follow the actions. Now, simply revert to being a perfectionist and clearly condemn those who screw it all up.

*FOR CALLERS: Do not allow any questions from the floor in any form whatsoever. Should anyone say a word during your calling, immediately stop your calling and tell them in no uncertain terms to be quiet. The words "shut-up" in a strong clear voice may be very handy in these circumstances.*

**BE ALOOF AND UNFRIENDLY** A top-rated dancer never undermines his superiority by meaningless friendly chit-chat in the square. Being friendly with less proficient dancers only encourages them to make mistakes. Do not let them forget that square dancing is entirely a matter of skill and never smile under any circumstances. Discourage the tendency of newer dancers to get the impression that square dancing is about having fun. If anyone in your square has fun, then you have failed.

*FOR CALLERS: Most importantly, do not have contact with the dancers, as they are beneath you. Most of them are fairly dumb, as they are just too stupid to dance to your outstanding and challenging, rapid-delivery choreography. Remember, you must always win, and they must always lose.*

**EXECUTE FANCY TWIRLS** There is always the possibility that dancers in your square may not recognize your superb dancing skills. When this happens, commence high-level twirling - you can quickly spin your partner in reverse, and then adroitly snap her back into position. Invariably other dancers are impressed with the motion you have created. Ignore the unmistakable crunching of the vertebrae. Drawing attention to it only diverts other dancers and leads your partner to believe that they can fall back on this excuse when they collapse. So will everyone. You will be so remembered and well known that other dancers will avoid you. But such success does not come easily - you must work at it and follow the guide. When your partner deserts you, you'll know that you have made it big

*FOR CALLERS: The choreography is there to be used. Body flow and timing have nothing to do with being a well-known and remembered caller. Use combinations that you know the dancers will be surprised to hear such as Centres In, Wheel AND Deal, and similar combinations. Show the dancers that you are creative.*

**BE SELECTIVE** Some dancers are more experienced and more capable than others - in fact, there may be some out there who are almost as good as you. Dance only with these dancers and be on guard when forming squares, otherwise, an inexperienced couple may infiltrate. By remaining vigilant, you maintain your high standards and high dancing level, and keep the new dancers together, where they belong - in that part of the hall where the sound is not as good, thus providing them with an excellent opportunity to learn from each other and continue their mistakes. Avoid helping new dancers lest you encourage them to continue square dancing and destroy what you have built up.

*FOR CALLERS: You are the best at what you do. Other callers are obviously inferior, because no-one would obviously be able to reach your elevated position and knowledge. Do not encourage any new callers. When you come across one, advise them that they do not have what it takes and tell them to give it up entirely. You do not want anyone who cannot attain the heights you have reached. Of course, no-one can; therefore, they are just wasting everyone's time.*

**EXPOSE NEW CALLERS** From time to time you will encounter inexperienced callers. If you let these callers get away with anything, you are doing square dancing a disservice. Protest loudly when one errs, and make sure that the entire floor hears you. A caller, especially a new one, should not be allowed to become over-confident. By pointing out his or her shortcomings you will keep him or her at an acceptable humility level. Should such a caller eventually become a top performer, you can always remind them how you helped and encouraged them along the way. But chances are, they are going to remember you anyway.

*FOR CALLERS: Remember that dancers are there for your benefit. You must use them to show other, inferior callers, just what you can do. You are not only the best caller, but also the best teacher. Demonstrate superior knowledge by using calls and combinations that you know will break the floor down. This shows the dancers how good you are, but also shows other callers how bad they are. When challenged by other callers, divert fault to the*

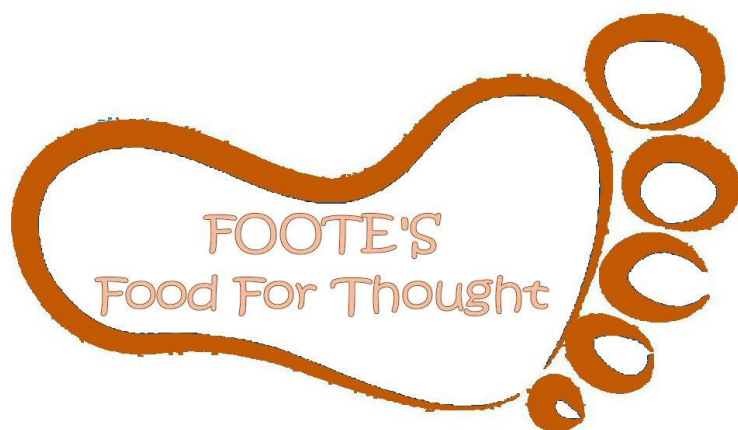
*complainant by explaining that “your club” dancers have no problem with this material (after all, you went over it specifically with them...many many times so they could get it right). After all, if you can teach it, then everyone else should as well. Do not give in to the temptation to actually hint, talk, prompt or cue the dancers thru any tricky concepts. You must resist this urge at all costs. It is the dancer’s job to know EVERY single aspect and possibility of all calls in the program. Similarly, other caller’s jobs are to teach the dancers EVERY single aspect of EVERY single call. There should be exams for the dancers and callers on this subject. Call moves like “Transfer the Column” from a starting Double Pass Thru formation without any warning or helper words. They should know the definitions and technical applications by heart. If they do not, then they should not be dancing. It is your job in life to weed out sub-par dancers and eliminate them from the activity. It is also your job to expose callers who just try to give the dancers a fun night of dancing, instead of loading them up with tricky, over-the-top, challenge material, for what they really are -- INFERIOR.*

If callers and dancers follow the guidelines above, we will have a very harmonious activity, with just one caller and one dancer.

## THOUGHTS ON COMMITTEES

- \* A group of the unwilling, chosen by the unfit, to do the unnecessary.
- \* A vehicle with six steering wheels and the engine that has just quit.
- \* If Columbus had an advisory committee, he would probably still be at the dock
- \* To kill time, a committee is the perfect weapon.
- \* If computers get too powerful, we can organize them into a committee. That will do them in.
- \* A committee is a thing which takes a week to do what one good man could do in an hour.
- \* A committee is a cul-de-sac down which ideas are lured and then quietly strangled
- \* People who enjoy meetings should never be put in charge of anything





# WHAT DOES GRADUATION MEAN?

By ED FOOTE

A common statement for years has been: "Anyone can learn to square dance."

Is this statement true? **No!**

My observation is that about 3% of all those who try Square Dancing cannot make it. This is not because of any physical impairment. It is just that mentally they cannot combine the call name with putting their body in the correct place.

What do we do with this 3%? We graduate them. What does "graduation" mean? Graduation in any activity means one has achieved a minimum level of skill required to perform the activity. So, we are saying to these 3% that they have achieved the minimum skill needed to square dance.

Whether because we say "everyone can square dance" and therefore it is socially unacceptable not to graduate someone, or because with the decline in square dancing clubs are so desperate for bodies that they will take anyone no matter how bad they are, the result is that people who have no idea what is going on are being told they "belong" and that it is proper for them to be on the dance floor.

## EXAMPLES OF THIS.

On a recent calling trip, I witnessed a new graduate square up in the #3 position and then ask someone: "Is this the head position?" This couple had been dancing 7 months and they don't even know where the heads are? You can imagine how this couple did with the calls - it was a disaster.

I have seen people who have been dancing for 9 months and have been given a diploma have no idea how to do a Square Thru from the standard position, have no idea how to Circulate from waves, break down on Right & Left Thru, and have no idea what hand to put up for a Star Thru. These people just wander around the square with a blank look and wait to for someone to put them in place, which is necessary on almost every call. Of course, they are also moving very slow, so this impacts everyone in the square - even those who are not helping them at the particular moment.

I heard a great description of these people: they are like liquid cement, because you never know where they are going to set up.

## Part 2

We have noted that a small percentage of people are not able to learn to square dance, but they become graduated dancers anyway, because clubs are desperate for bodies, and some people consider it socially unacceptable not to graduate every person who takes lessons. How do clubs justify this behavior?

CLUB MINDSET. The biggest club rationalization is: "No one minds helping people." Therefore, clubs graduate people who cannot dance, because it is felt that club members will pull these people thru for the next year or more, and that these members will have great joy in doing so. Is this true? **Not necessarily.**

I have had experienced dancers say to me: "We are tired of pulling thru new graduates who don't know the calls. We've done it for years, we've paid our dues, and now we just want to dance. If we are expected to keep pulling people thru every year, there is a good chance we will just stop dancing."

So, in their desperation to bring in more people, clubs risk losing experienced dancers. But because it is socially unacceptable to complain about helping new dancers, people who are going to drop out will not tell anyone - they will just cut back on how many times they attend until eventually they do not attend at all. In other words, these people just gradually ease themselves out of dancing because they are frustrated, and the club will have no idea why they stopped attending.

One club president actually told me last spring: "*If you see new graduates break down, stop the dance and square everyone backs up.*" The president actually wanted me to sacrifice the squares that were successful in mid-stream, without letting them achieve the success of a Left Allemande.

Another reason that clubs graduate everyone is that they think the class teacher will be offended if anyone in the class is not graduated, no matter how poor a dancer that person may be. The club believes the class teacher will take it as a personal affront to their teaching ability if anyone is denied graduation. Obviously, this hurts the club. The solution is for the club and class teacher to discuss beforehand the fact that not everyone may have the ability to graduate, that if someone graduates who cannot dance it will hurt the club, and that if someone is not graduated, it is not a reflection on the abilities of the teacher.

## Part 3

We have looked at the mindset of the club regarding new dancers. Now we will look at how new dancers think.

CLASS MINDSET. Dancers in class know they must learn the calls. At least they know this deep inside. But on the surface, they get no reinforcement for this, because club members convey the attitude of: "*Don't worry about mistakes - we'll pull you thru.*" This tells the class members that they don't have to think much about call definitions. If they remember how to do a call, fine, but if they don't, so what? Usually class members are never told to review



what they have learned during the week because the club thinks this will feel like "work", which would then cause people to drop out of class.

There is also a major component lacking in the minds of class members: **PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY**. I would be devastated if I knew that my lack of knowledge was the cause of 7 other dancers breaking down. But this doesn't seem to bother many of today's class members. They just don't seem to care that their lack of knowledge is reducing the fun of other dancers. Perhaps they have never thought about this.

## **WHAT SHOULD BE DONE?**

There are several things that clubs can do to improve the situation.

1. **DO NOT AUTOMATICALLY GRADUATE EVERYONE.** Clubs must be willing to not graduate those who cannot meet minimum standards of proficiency. Clubs need to recognize that graduating everyone, no matter how poor a dancer they are, hurts the club by causing long-time members to drift away out of frustration. It can also reduce the number of guests.
2. **CLUB OFFICERS AND THE CLASS TEACHER MUST AGREE.** The decision to not graduate everyone must be discussed with the class teacher BEFORE class ever begins, so that everyone is on the same page at graduation time. The minimum standards of proficiency must be agreed upon.
3. **CLASS MEMBERS MUST BE TOLD AT THE BEGINNING THAT SOME MAY NOT GRADUATE.** Explain that there are minimum standards, and that some people take longer than others to understand the calls. Explain how graduating people who don't know the calls would hurt the club, and that they will be invited to take the class again. This eliminates the surprise factor. If someone is told to take the class over, they can be reminded of the discussion about this which was held at the start of class. This presentation at the start of class should be made by someone who has good people skills and good command of words, so that at the end of the discussion all the new class members are in agreement that this is a good idea.
4. **CLASS MEMBERS MUST BE TOLD TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY.** They should be encouraged to review what they have previously learned prior to the latest lesson. Class members need to be reminded that if they break down, they are causing other people to break down also, thereby reducing the fun for everyone. If this is presented correctly with the right words, all the class members will see the wisdom in this.

## **SUMMARY.**

The practice of graduating everyone, no matter how poorly they dance, because "we need their money", or because "it is socially unacceptable not to graduate them", just hurts everyone. It causes frustration in long-time dancers who will simply drift away from the activity. It also causes frustration among class members who work hard to learn the calls only to see the caller and club members cater to those who have not put forth any effort.

The square dance activity needs to stop graduating every person who comes in the door regardless of whether they learn anything. This is simply hurting our activity more than it helps.

# THINKING SKILLS

(yes, even dancers and callers must do it occasionally)

## *Proactive vs reactive thinking: How to be proactive*

A proactive approach focuses on eliminating problems before they have a chance to appear and a reactive approach is based on responding to events after they have happened. The difference between these two approaches is the perspective each one provides in assessing actions and events.



What does it mean to be "proactive", as opposed to "reactive"? And how can we do it? This is what this article is about.

The word "reactive" implies that you don't have the initiative. You let the events set the agenda. You're tossed and turned, so to speak, by the tides of life. If you were a swimmer, then each new wave catches you by surprise. Huffing and puffing, you scramble to react to it in order to just stay afloat.

In contrast, the image we associate with "proactivity" is one of grace under stress. To stay with the previous analogy, let's say you're a swimmer in choppy waters. Now, you look more at ease. It's not just that you anticipate the waves. You're in tune with them. You're not desperately trying to escape them; you're dancing with them.

It would be great to dance with the rhythm of life, using the ebb and flow of events as a source of energy. But is this only possible to those people who are endowed with a proactive attitude (or, maybe, a “proactive gene”)?

I believe that being proactive is not a mysterious quality that we have, or don't have. It is a way of dealing with things that we can develop and strengthen.

What, then, is this skill?

In a nutshell, being proactive is the same thing as being reactive. The only difference is you do the reacting ahead of time.

Let's go back to the example of the two swimmers on the choppy seas. The difference between them is:



- the proactive swimmer anticipates that there will be waves, whereas
- the reactive one is painfully surprised by each wave.

The difference is one of perspective. The

proactive swimmer sees the big picture: each wave is not an isolated incident but is part of a pattern. While there is stress in dealing with difficult circumstances, there is a consistency and logic to the environment. There's a degree of predictability.



With this bigger picture in mind, the proactive swimmer is able to adapt to the ups and downs. As he does so, he “learns” the patterns of the waves from inside out, so that his reactions become more and more spontaneous, more and more in tune with the rhythm of the waves.

So, being proactive means being able to anticipate what the future will be and to react accordingly before it actually happens.

What is it that prevents the reactive swimmer from doing so? It could be lack of information. There are plenty of events in life that we simply cannot predict. It could also be lack of intelligence: some people are better than others at thinking in terms of patterns.

But let's assume, for the moment, that our two swimmers have both the same levels of information and intelligence. Then, the difference between them would simply be that the proactive swimmer has enough energy to take in the available information and adapt to it. In contrast, the reactive swimmer is exhausted and overwhelmed (*“Somebody get me out of here, please!”*).

What does this metaphor have to do with understanding how you can be more proactive in your life? Three things:

1. To be proactive, what you have to do is ask yourself what is likely to happen and react to it before it happens.
2. It takes energy to rise above the difficulties of the moment, to see the big picture and to make the changes you need to make.
3. Sometimes, you may not have that energy. At such times, it serves no purpose to berate yourself for being weak. Think of your “reactivity” as a symptom instead of a failure. You need a break. Take it.

Let’s imagine that our exhausted swimmer finds a raft. From this stable vantage point, wouldn’t he be better able to see the big picture? After some rest, wouldn’t he be better able to deal with the pattern of the waves?

Sometimes, the most proactive thing you can do is take a break. Use this “Time Out” to refocus on what you’re doing and how you’re doing it.



*Proactive change is change that is initiated by an organisation because it is desirable to do so. Reactive change is change initiated in an organisation because it is made necessary by outside forces. For instance, introduction of a new employee benefit scheme is proactive as the management strongly believes that it enhances the satisfaction and motivation of employees. The change would be reactive if the benefit plan was introduced because of demands made by the employees.*

**Success hinges on your willingness to create a proactive strategy rather than one that is reactive. Preparing for and embracing change keep organizations thriving. You’ve got to have vision for the future.**

### **ED FOOTE'S SECRET HINTS FOR DANCING**

*Over the years Ed has been quite prolific in writing many articles as well as presenting his general observations in many different magazines (ASD, New England Dancer, etc.) His series of ‘hints for dancers’ began many years ago and we are pleased to be able to reprint these on a regular basis, starting this month with -*

## **LOAD THE BOAT**

If Load the Boat is going to break down, it will be due to the centers. The reason is that the initial Pass Thru in the center is too big. This happens because the dancers take two full steps after passing shoulders in the Pass Thru.

The result is the center box is now so big that people lose their orientation, which causes the square to break down. Or, if the square does not break down, it takes too long to finish the call, which means the square is now behind the other squares on the floor.

**SECRET HINT.** The centers Pass Thru must be VERY SHORT. In other words, after the centers pass right shoulders in doing the initial Pass Thru, they must IMMEDIATELY turn their back on the flagpole center of the square.

As a caller, how do I get them to do this? By painting a visual picture of what should happen. I say these specific words: "You must stay very close to the person with whom you are doing the Pass Thru. This means the material on your sleeve should be in constant contact with the material on the other person's sleeve - during the 'turn out' part and also during the Partner Trade."

I also tell them that they are too far apart if any daylight can be seen between their shoulder and the other person's shoulder during the "turn out" and the Partner Trade."

Then, as a joke, but also to paint the visual picture, I say: "Think of it as a no-hands Yellow Rock." Dancers will often treat this as a fun thing and start bumping each other intentionally, but it means they have gotten the idea,

I have found that these 3 visual pictures: material on the sleeves, no daylight and the Yellow Rock get the job done.

If you are a dancer helping out a Plus class, and the caller does not emphasize this idea of being very close in the center, be sure and tell people what has been mentioned here. You will be helping them a great deal.

**NOTE:** Sometimes the centers, after the initial Pass Thru, will face in (instead of out) and then slide sideways. This puts them in the correct position, but they have made 2 mistakes to get there. I have seen this done by people who have been dancing for years.

For some reason, it is always the girls who do this, never the boys. Perhaps it is a psychological thing that girls do not want to turn their back on someone.

If a person is doing this, they need to be corrected right away, because if they keep doing this for a long time it will be very difficult for them to break the habit later. If they encounter a caller at a workshop who starts fractionalizing the center part, they will break down the square. It also means that anyone seeing them dance this way will think they are a poor dancer.

If you are a dancer helping out at a Plus class, and you see someone doing this, be sure to say something to that person during the break. The action is so subtle that the caller may miss seeing it while calling.

**WHAT TO TELL THE OUTSIDES.** They have the easy part - just pass 3 people and face in. The only thing they may do wrong is go too slow. If this happens, tell them to speed up.



# SQUARE RECOVERY by Tim Marriner

*(Tim passed away a few years ago, but has left a great legacy in the enjoyment he gave dancers and the many articles he wrote for callers)*

New dancers often question how callers keep track of everyone on the dance floor while calling. Describing what happens from the vantage point of a caller, an analogy to a flock of birds or a school of fish is the best description. They both follow the currents flowing effortlessly left and right. If one goes in a different direction it attracts an eye.

Callers usually see the flow of the entire room and when someone goes away it is



**STAY  
STRONG  
BECAUSE  
RECOVERY  
IS POSSIBLE**

noticeable. The trick is evaluating what action needs to be taken to maintain the square. Square recovery is really a two-way street; dancers need to figure things out to keep dancing, and callers need to be aware of issues on the floor to determine what actions need to be taken to assist dancers in repairing the square.

On the dancer side of the street, there are several steps that can be taken to help maintain the square. First and foremost, dancers need to take hands, wherever possible, with the dancers beside them.

Maintaining contact keeps the square small and allows formations to become visible in order to apply the next dance action. That means dancers need to be looking up and forward as most dance actions happen in the line of

vision. If a dancer becomes confused or unsure of where they should go, one of the worst things they could do is stop listening to the caller.

Usually if a caller is doing something strange, they apply extra verbiage to get the dancers through the tough combinations known as helper words. Dancers need to listen intently to these clues. Any distraction at this point could lead to a breakdown. The first instinct of a dancer when faced with unfamiliar calls or combinations is to look down trying to think their way through the material. This usually ends up with one missing the next call as the action of looking down prohibits the ability to see things transform right in front of them.

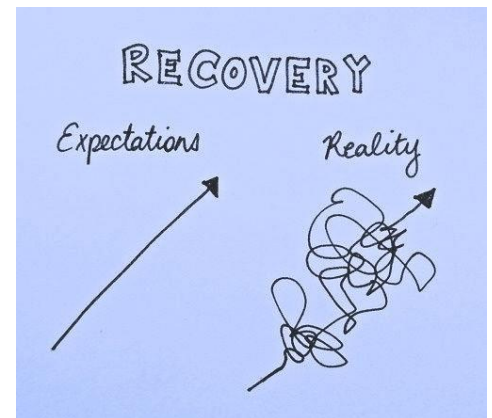
Keeping hands in the ready dance position helps others ability to lead without pulling, pushing, or physically turning one in the proper direction or possibly walking past the end point of the action. If a dancer is turned around, others can provide direction by pointing or gesturing the dancer to change their direction. Simply moving a free hand up and down can remind the ones next to you to take hold in order to maintain the formation.

Talking is disruptive, creating a bad habit of reacting to the verbiage within the square rather than listening to the caller, often prohibiting others nearby from hearing the next calls



Newer dancers need to be aware their reaction time usually is not as fast as others, so a loose hand hold is necessary in order to quickly let go to apply the necessary hand work for the actions. More experienced dancers should not over anticipate actions nor move too fast past less proficient dancers before they have determined what to do. Nobody should take short cuts nor add extra flourishes to calls as this can add to further confusion for newer dancers.

Another good habit is moving to the beat of the music which is the beauty of the dance. Square dancing is not a race nor is it a walk. Small gliding dance strides are much preferred over a full walking gate. Little bitty steps make little bitty mistakes. If one is unsure, don't stop; move forward with smaller steps extending a right hand observing if someone is reaching out, then move to that spot.



Usually the square should have symmetry; lost dancers should find the balance and fill in the missing space. If a dancer becomes lost, they should also look within the square to assure everyone has somebody. They should also observe other squares to figure a way for the sets to look like the others. These are all ways to check for correctness. Dancers can also track their opposite dancer to mimic what they are dancing on one's side of the set. In this same regard, there are dancers in a nearby set that should be dancing exactly what is being danced on the entire floor.

Dancers can track where they should be relative to their own square by observing another set.

It takes the teamwork of all eight dancers in a square to keep moving sometimes.

Occasionally, one couple is out of position. Dancers need to be familiar with the normal couple arrangement, apply that to the rest of the square to keep dancing. Sometimes two couples are out of position resulting in the set not looking uniform to the rest of the room or to the rest of the square. Often a quick couple rotation is all that is needed to continue the dance. If at the end of the sequence couples and/or partners are out of position, dancers should let go if necessary and repair to a squared set as quickly as possible.

If all things break down, dancers should not mill around or stand still looking at what is going on. Rather, they should find their way back to their original home spot as quickly as possible to prepare to make lines at the sides of the hall or be ready for the start of the next sequence as the caller works the floor. Talking or standing still looking for an answer usually prohibits the square from dancing even the next sequence.

Dancers need to keep smiling, as nobody is perfect. All dancers have lapse of memory or get distracted from time to time. Shake it off. Dancers should not waste time trying to figure out who went wrong. Let it go and focus attention on the next sequence. As mentioned before, **square recovery is a two-way street between dancers and callers.**

Dancers need to know how to help without hindering others, and callers need to observe what is necessary to allow a repair to happen or call actions that will neutralize the possible breakdown.

Callers first should instill all the above good habits upon new dancers and remind current dancers as necessary to aid in their ability to keep dancing. Proper training usually leads to a better dancing experience.

Next, a caller needs to be able to view all of the dancers they are calling for. Staring at one square or helping one set does not mean the remaining dancers are having success. A good caller always surveys the dance floor while calling, searching for problems that may occur. Good caller judgment is vital to maintain a high success rate on the dance floor. There are ways a caller can improve dancer success by evaluating what is happening on the floor after an action is called, then adapting what to call next in order to provide better success for those having difficulty without hindering the other sets.

### **Helpful hints to sticky situations:**

- If a caller notices, for example, one person out of position while calling, it would do the square a disservice by calling an action that requires all four couples as the whole set would probably breakdown. Instead, calls like Forward and Back, or Partner Trade, can sometimes reverse an individual into finding themselves.
- If one couple is out of formation, often a Bend the Line and/or Forward and Back can turn compromised dancers in the right direction.
- If one couple is looking out in lines, a caller could call “those looking out Partner Trade” to assist those caught looking the wrong direction.
- If one person is sashayed, facing lines can be asked to Pass Thru then have the Boys or Girls Fold or ask the Ends to Fold followed by a Slide Thru, centres Trade, and Bend the Line which can temporarily repair the problem in order for all to keep dancing.
- If, however, the square is not repaired upon completion of the sequence, at the very least the square is still moving. Dancers should then be reminded to return to their original home position. A comment like, “everybody sneak home” works very well.

When two couples are out of position, it does no good for the caller to use four couple material until the rest of the square can be repaired.

- Using lines as a reference point, a caller might continue to call two couple actions that could result in the out of position couples to realize they are out of position and do something to correct the problem.
- Flutter Wheel or Reverse Flutter Wheel along with Sweep  $\frac{1}{4}$  to form lines can sometimes cause dancers to either correct themselves or perform the action wrong again to momentarily repair the situation. An old mantra exists that often refers to this situation as, “When in trouble, do it double!”
- Other factors can exist, such as one half of the square being in waves while the other is in two faced lines. A caller can use a gimmick like “if you can, Recycle, if not, Wheel and Deal,” which can usually keep all squares moving.

Unintentionally, more than two of the same sex could wind up on the same side of the square. Actions equivalent to an Acey Deucey (ends circulate and centres trade) or

Quarter Thru (single hinge and the centres trade) can sometimes resolve the issue or various combinations of Boys Trade, Girls Trade, Boys Run, Partner Trade, and/or Bend the Line may also be necessary to split the same sexes in order for lines to be formed.

**Be extra careful that what is necessary to help repair a set does not negatively affect remaining squares.**

There are several other strange possibilities that dancers could find themselves arranged improperly. A creative caller can often figure quick ways of repairing the situations. A word of warning; don't sacrifice the whole floor by being over fixated on repairing one square. The remaining dancers paid to dance too. Callers need to use good judgment as to how much work that should be diverted when trying to assist a fumbling square.

**Lastly, if a square totally breaks down:**

A caller needs to shorten the sequence to resolve or get everyone into normal lines at the sides of the room announcing to everyone there are

**“Lines at the Sides, all move Forward and Back.”**

This is the squares cue to slide right to form lines to carry on with the dancing pattern. A caller should not ignore standing squares; it only discourages them. Callers should observe that set to determine if a weaker dancer is hindering or if there is a physical issue with a dancer in the square. Keeping the material straight forward can often regain confidence for the set to improve for the next sequences.

Sometimes it is necessary to mix the dancers, if possible, to another set by progressing them into other squares. Observing the possible scenarios of newer dancers or less proficient dancers gathered in the same set, a caller could also deliver calls that keep the less proficient dancers apart. If this is not an alternative, a caller can choose to simply shorten the patter portion of the tip.

**Dancers are customers that need to be provided a quality fun filled entertaining dancing experience.**



Constant breakdowns are embarrassing for dancers and frustrating for the rest of the square. Callers need to do what is best to limit this stress. Callers need to learn and develop the methods to keep squares moving without disrupting the flow of the floor. From a dancer's perspective this will look like a magic trick. The dancers will be baffled how they managed to get through the material unscathed despite their inability to keep up. As part of the entertainment, callers with high choreographic skills like to move dancers near the edge of a breakdown, sometimes even look over the edge, only to pull them back at the last minute; saving the square with a surprise get out. This is an acquired art that can be learned through observation and lots of practice.

# LOOKING AT THE BASICS

This will be a regular section where we just get to look at a basic from the popular programs.

## **MOVEMENT #62 (SECOND PART) CROSS FOLD**

**Starting formation** - line, two-faced line, or wave.

The directed (active) dancers who must either both be centres or both be ends, fold toward the farthest inactive dancer by walking in a semicircle to end facing toward that same dancer.

When the active dancers are both facing the same direction, they move forward in a semicircle, pass each other and fold toward the inactive dancer. **(Comment: this part is often ignored)**

**STYLING:** Hand position depends on starting formation, i.e., hands up from a wave, couple handhold from a line or circulate. Using appropriate hand position, the inactive dancer should exert slight pressure to adjacent dancer and assist in initiating folding action. **(Comment: this means a gentle leading action for the active dancer to in a certain direction – always forward and to end facing the far end or middle of your line/wave depending where you start.)**

**TIMING:** **CROSS FOLD**, 4 steps.

That ends the definition part of this article.

Please note the starting formation. Any line, two faced line or wave, where the centres work together or the ends work together. There is nothing fancy or difficult. A line facing in, a line facing out, an inverted line, a three in one line

**(Comment: remember must be ends or centres only working together – not gender roles as it may be a BGBG line – that is what trades are for)** or any two-faced line, or any wave.

What is not stated is that this arrangement is limited to a line or wave of 4 people only – as the movement does not work with lines/waves of 6, and lines or waves of 8 works in their own groups of 4.

### **THREE VERY IMPORTANT FACTS**

- 1. DIXIE STYLE IS NOT ALWAYS NEEDED FOR A CROSS FOLD**
- 2. CROSS FOLD CAN BE DONE BY EITHER GENDER (B/G)**
- 3. CROSS FOLD CAN BE DONE BY CENTRES OR ENDS FROM ANY LINE OR WAVE OF FOUR FORMATION**



CROSS FOLD is a really neat movement that can be used by callers to add variety to a program, without adding difficulty. It is not a 'challenging' concept for dancers to understand...the name of the movement really says it all!

This little movement can give such a different feel to the floor. It can change right hand set ups to left hands and vice versa so effectively that dancers generally get keyed up and interested without having to really do anything difficult – yet they will feel as if the choreography was tough and they succeeded to meet the challenge.

The ancillary bonus of using this movement correctly is that when dancers are ready to move up to plus (say after one or two years post mainstream graduation because they are still having too much fun with the challenges at mainstream), they will not have to be re-taught the basics all over again. Less frustration and better success all around.



I HAVEN'T LOST MY MIND.  
HALF OF IT JUST WANDERED  
OFF AND THE OTHER HALF  
WENT LOOKING FOR IT.

## ***Wit AND Wisdom***

*from the Right Honourable JEFFREY GARBUTT, Esquire.*

Well known as a wit, philosopher, raconteur, sociologist, literary giant, alchemist and public minded citizen, Jeff's words have given inspiration to countless thousands of people from all walks of life. Here are some of his truly amazing and remarkable insights into the human condition:

- "Personally – whenever I'm offered two options – I go for the third one. For instance – the classic 2 option scenario of whether the glass is half full or half empty – one should not forget that the glass is probably twice as big as it really needs to be"
- "There is no such thing as a tough child.... if you parboil them first for seven hours, they always come out tender"
- "What is more enchanting than the voices of young people when you can no longer hear what they say"
- "I hate family reunions. Family reunions are those times when you realize that some branches of your family tree need to be cut"
- "What you see is what you get - except in pre-packaged strawberries"
- "My father always told me that 'honesty was the best policy' and 'money isn't everything' - he was wrong about other things as well"





### **BEGINNER SQUARE DANCE CLASS (Helen Bania,1980's)**

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

A few will drop 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're getting in the groove.

The Caller looks with pride, As they dance side by side,  
Another job well done, they are all having fun.

### **SQUARE DANCE – (Original author unknown)**

**From the November 1997 issue of The Modern Square, Arkansas' square and round dance publication of the ASSDF**

Gather up four couples...face them in a square.  
Then listen to the caller...who will move you here to there.

Four hands around and Grand Square...Make a Right Hand Star.  
Yellowrock, Promenade...What's an Allemande Thar??

What's it mean to Wheel and Deal...Or do a Do-Si-Do;  
Bend The Line, or Load The Boat...Which way am I to go??

Flutterwheel, Ferris Wheel, Do the Tea Cup Chain;  
Spin The Top, Box The Gnat, These all sound insane!!

I'm just a humble beginner...These terms are all brand new.  
Will I ever get to know, How to do a Spin Chain Through??

They say it will get easier...On that I must depend;  
Meanwhile, I'll keep trying...And enjoy my new found friends.



# THE SQUARE DANCER'S CLOSET

By Clifford Schartzer, Michigan (circa 1970's)

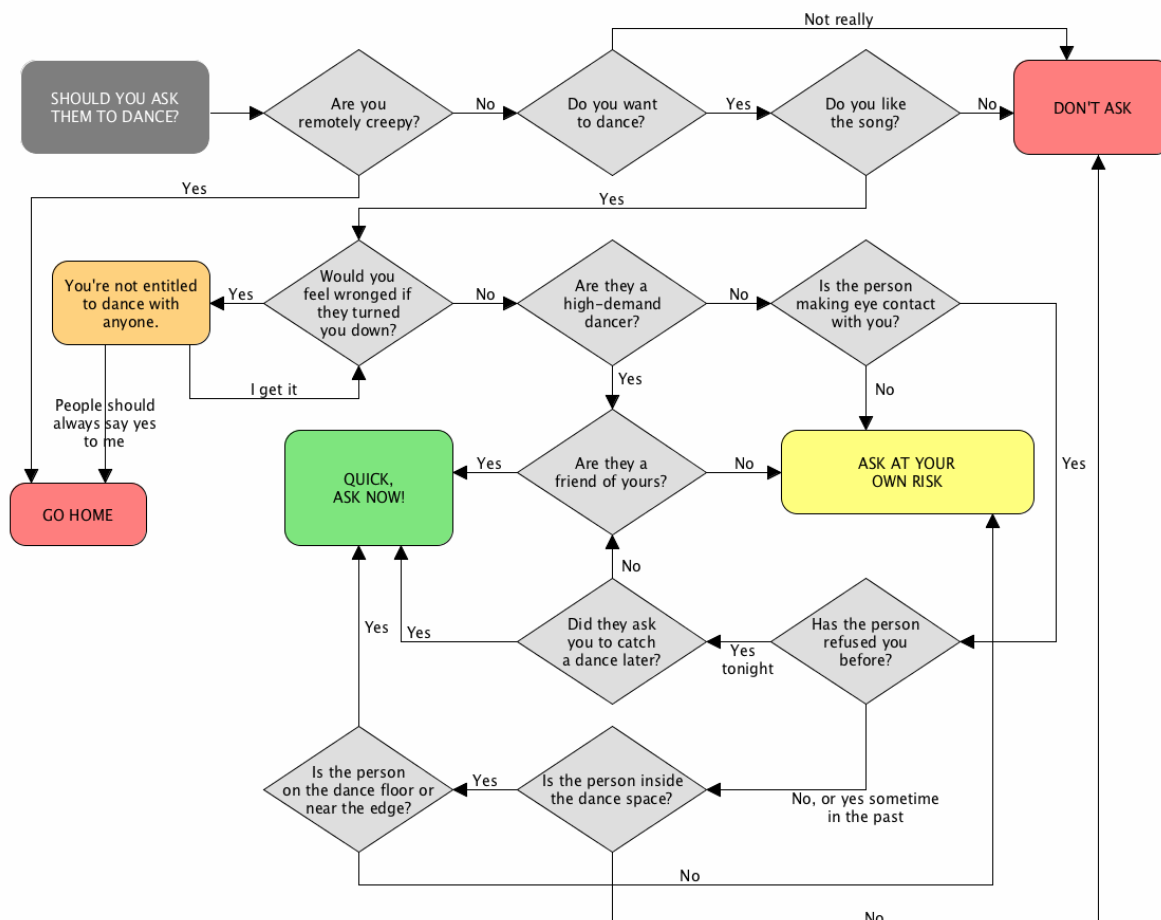
Many times I have heard these words, "I have nothing to wear".  
But our house is full of clothes, All placed with loving care.  
Here it is a yearly thing, To build more closet space  
My wife's clothes have taken over 'Til there's no room in this place.

Closets in our living room 'Til it's nothing but a hall,  
And now our great big house, Is really getting small.  
I don't have to make decisions, With my lone pair of underwear,  
I just gotta wear what I have on, Or leave my rear end bear.

I have one pair of faded jeans, And I think it is unfair,  
That I have to listen to, "I have nothing to wear!".  
Each time we go a=dancing, It's always the same routine,  
Should she wear the blue or brown, Or should she wear the green?

Or how about the pretty red? Could yellow be too bright?  
After trying on three dozen, She finally wears the white.

Our house is one big closet, To Find sitting room is rare,  
But the words I hear most often, "I Have nothing to wear!."



# ***ROUND DANCING - WE PROTEST!!!***

## **YES, WE PROTEST THAT:**

- **Round Dancing** makes a conventional dance seem boring.
- **Round Dancing** Makes it impossible to keep your feet still when you hear one of your own numbers played on the radio.
- **Round Dancing** Makes you venture out on a night that you wouldn't even send a dog out on.
- **Round Dancing** Makes you attend an all-day Square & Round Dance session, and then drag your weary feet out on the very next night because you hate to miss the new dances at club.
- **Round Dancing** Gives you not a minute's rest on Square Dance Club night - after all, who wants to sit out a "round"?

## **YES, WE PROTEST THAT IF WE HADN'T GOTTEN INVOLVED IN ALL THIS, WE'D HAVE NEVER:**

- Had so much fun
- Made so many good friends
- Gotten around so much
- Kept ourselves active
- And added that 'spice of life' that everyone talks about.
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## **THINK BIG: STEP SMALL**

### **(from Nebraska Reporter)**

Many new Round Dancers have difficulty doing a routine because they take steps that are way too big. Always take small steps when Round Dancing and you will find the dancing more relaxing and smoother as well. Dance erect, and on the balls of your feet. On any point or kick, be sure the toe of your foot is pointed down and not up.

You will start Turning Two-Steps to the side, but Waltzes either straight back or straight forward or straight ahead. When ladies back up and men go forward in closed position, the man should step straight ahead and not straddle step (you don't want to step on her foot).

Now these tips are generalizations; you could find exceptions to all of them. For example, there may be certain dances that will have a large step, or waltz balance when you step to the side, but generally speaking, these tips will help.

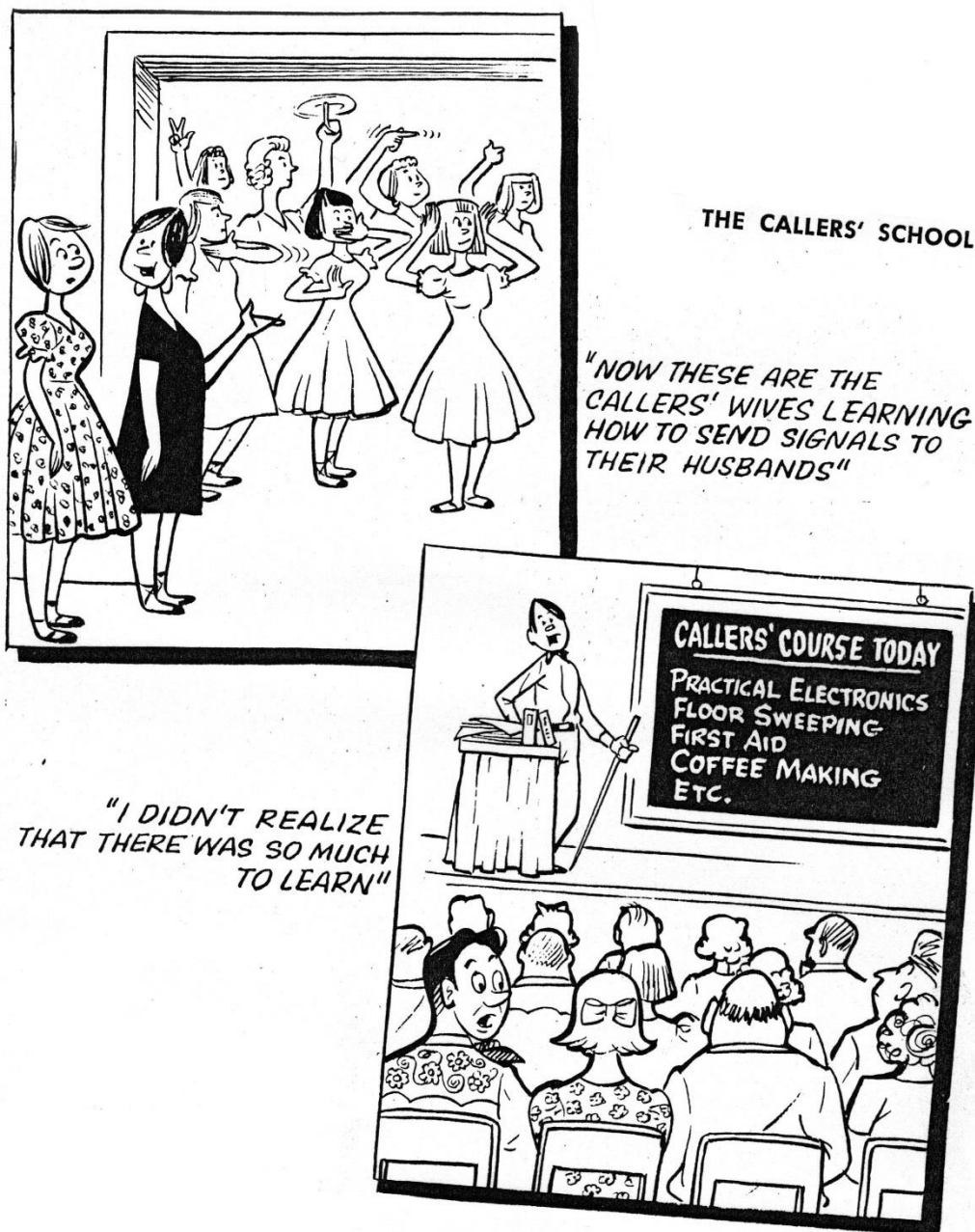
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# THINGS ARE CHANGING

Have you noticed; everything is further away than it used to be - it is twice as far to the corner and they have added a hill? I have given up running for the bus - it leaves faster than it used to. They also seem to be making steps steeper than in the old days. And have you noticed the smaller print they use in newspapers?

There is also no point in asking anyone to read aloud: everyone speaks in such a low voice that I can hardly hear them. Movies are the same...they whisper.

Even people are changing - they are so much younger than they used to be when I was that age. Mind you, people my own age are so much older than I am. I ran into an old friend the other day and he had aged so much that he did not even recognize me! I got to think about the poor old guy when I was combing my hair this morning, and in doing so I looked in the mirror, and confound it, they don't even make good mirrors like they used to!!!



# PUZZLE TIME: FIND THE CALLS



ALAMO STYLE  
 ALLEMANDE THAR  
 BEND THE LINE  
 BOX THE GNAT  
 CALIFORNIA TWIRL  
 CHAIN DOWN THE LINE  
 CIRCLE LEFT  
 CIRCULATE  
 CLOVERLEAF  
 CORNER  
 COURTESY TURN  
 CROSS RUN  
 DIVE THRU  
 DOPASO  
 DOSADO  
 EXTEND

FERRIS WHEEL  
 FOLD  
 GRAND SQUARE  
 HALF SASHAY  
 HALF TAG  
 LADIES CHAIN  
 LEFT ALLEMANDE  
 OCEAN WAVE  
 PARTNER  
 PASS THE OCEAN  
 PASS THRU  
 PROMENADE  
 RECYCLE  
 RUN  
 SCOOT BACK  
 SEE SAW

SHOOT THE STAR  
 SLIP THE CLUTCH  
 SQUARE THRU  
 SWING  
 SWING THRU  
 TAG THE LINE  
 TRADE BY  
 TURN THRU  
 U TURN BACK  
 VEER LEFT  
 WALK AND DODGE  
 WEAVE  
 WHEEL AND DEAL  
 WHEEL AROUND  
 ZOOM

# Ask Dr. Allemander

by Glenn Ickler with some additions by Barry Wonson

**Dear Dr. Al,**

*My wife and I are currently attending a Learners Class in our hometown. Our caller keeps on saying "Whatever you do, don't back up - unless the callers says, 'back up'." We want to know what would really happen if we backed up when the caller did not say 'back up'?*

*Jack & Jill  
Up-The-Hill, NSW.*

**Dear Jack & Jill,**

You ask what would happen if you destroyed the exquisite symmetry of an artistic caller's classic choreography by backing up when six other people in the square are going forward? Well, of course the answer is that nothing serious would happen. Oh, life on earth as we know it might come to an abrupt end at that very moment in time, but I suppose that's nothing of great concern to a pair of clods who would ask such an insensitive question.

So, if you two are prepared to accept the responsibility for the end of the world, the universe, and existence in general, or at the very least here in Australia; just go right ahead and "back up" when the caller doesn't say "back up".

*Dr. Al, Ph.D. SD, gives advice in this column on a regular basis. He says that Square Dancing is much easier if dancers look where they are going, not where they have been, and follow the caller's instructions.*

**Dear Dr. Al,**

*I am in a quandary (shaped slightly different to a square) and need your assistance. I have been square dancing for so many years that I am afraid that I may have used up my quota of a number of calls. Please tell me, what does a dancer do when he only has one Allemande Left?*

*I.B.Good  
Central Coast, NSW*

**Dear I.B.**

You want to be a star, right? Getting down to your last Allemande is a very serious problem, especially if you are just starting a singing call. This is similar to the caller saying "Touch a Quarter" when there's only a dime in your pocket. Or having him call "boys trade" only to find the stock market closed. Or hearing him say "Spin Chain the Gears" when your car is in for a lube job.

Never fear, Dr. Allemander has even helped a dancer who, on the call "Load The Boat", discovered that he had left his ferry ticket at home on the table. As you know, Dr. Allemander does not go in for crass commercialism; however, if you will send him \$100 today, he will send you a certificate entitling you to 10 years' worth of Allemandes.

Dr. A.L. (Lefty) Allemander, PhD., gives advice to the dancelorn on a regular basis in this column. He advises that when you are out of everything else, look for a yellow rock.

**Editor's Note:** *The Ask Dr. Allemander columns were originally published in the New England Dancer magazine from the 1970's. Many were penned by Glenn Ickler. I have taken some liberties with many of his original versions, updating them where necessary.*



# ***Which Came First?***

**By Ken Ritucci**

You all know about the chicken and the egg, which came first? It is a tough question; let me know when you have the answer. In Square dancing, we are faced with a similar question. I like to call it "The dancer or the program, which came first?"

By this I mean, "Do we, as an activity, really put the interests of the dancer first, or do we care more about the program in which our club dances?" On the surface, it would appear most people would say, "Why, of course, the dancer always comes first." But I don't believe that to always be the case. I call literally all over the world, so I have the opportunity to see firsthand what other countries and different parts of the United States are doing in regard to placement of the program or the dancer.

There are parts of the world that actually put both first, by this I mean that they have established a set program, i.e. Basic, Mainstream etc., and the dancers are taught in a manner where they can actually dance the established program from more than one position. It is not a secret that for the most part, European dancers are stronger dancers at the Basic and Mainstream Programs than those in the US. Why is this?

Let's consider the Basic program, for which there is none in the U.S.

## **Basic is a standalone program within our activity.**

Unfortunately, for the United States' dancer, it is virtually non-existent. There are many reasons for this. Among those is the fact that here in the US, we place little if any emphasis on the Basic Program. It is a means to an end. That end is to graduate dancers at the Mainstream Program. So, those teaching new dancers just plow through the Basic Program as if it doesn't exist. We ignore the stop signs.



Whether this is right or wrong, I am not sure. The U.S. is a different country from our European friends, so a different country = a different culture. Callers and Clubs can share the blame (if there is any to be shared) as to why we don't stop new dancers at Basic and have them dance there for a year or so. Most of the reasons I always hear are "Its too boring, not enough calls to use." "I want to dance Mainstream," or "I want to dance Plus." To be honest, most callers in the U.S. cannot do a good job of calling a well-balanced and entertaining Basic Dance.

Callers tend to be lazy. They don't want to do the work necessary to actually learn their craft.

To call very good Basic takes time and effort, and in this day and age, those two components are in short supply. Clubs here in the US also contribute to the problem.



- Do you know of any Basic Clubs?
- Been to one lately?

I bet not. They do not exist because the mentality of the clubs is that Mainstream, and ultimately, Plus is where most dancers need to be at. Why stop at Basic when there is more to learn and besides; the club dances Mainstream and Plus, so we need to forge ahead -- our beginners' class is on a time schedule and nothing can stop it.

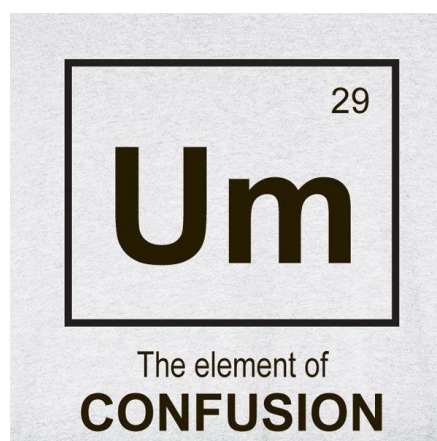
If you think we ignore the stop signs for Basic, we really speed through the stop signs for Mainstream. Plus is where it's at, and if you're not dancing Plus after the first year of entering the activity, you are probably missing out on a whole lot. If I had a dollar for every time I saw dancers break down on Basic and Mainstream calls, but can Relay the Deucey with the best of them, I would be running for President against Donald Trump.

So, when I see dancers break down on fundamentals they should know, but square up for the Plus tips, I ask myself, "Which came first, the dancer or the program?" Many feel our priorities are backwards when it comes to teaching square dancing. Many give lip service, but their heart isn't really in it. It's like when people are asked, "Do you think your town needs a hospital?" "Oh yes, they say, it is important to have a hospital in our town, just don't put it in my neighborhood."

Clubs and callers will always try to say the right things to sound "concerned," but there are a great deal of callers and clubs who make money conducting Plus Workshops for new graduates. Do you think they are truly concerned about the dancer or the program? Which one are they putting first? Like the question about the chicken or the egg, it is not as easy as it might appear on the surface. We need to recognize our priorities and create a plan we can live with.

If the dancer is truly to be put first, then restraint would have to be practiced. Dancers need to be provided the time to master the level of dance they just learned. They should be offered dances at their program level. We all know how people feel about change. But if we take the path least traveled, perhaps more will then follow, and then the dancer might come before the program.

Happy Dancing!



# DEFINITIONS

*The definitions listed below are all well-known statements related to the Business world. All are fact based and fit the reality of most given situations. The authors are unknown, probably on purpose.*

- **ability**: The virtue you are forced to use if your boss has no daughter.
- **adminisphere**: The levels of management where big, impractical, and counterproductive decisions are made.
- **advertising**: The art of convincing people to spend money they don't have for something they don't need.
- **all new**: Not compatible with earlier versions.
- **ambiguity**: The lack of clarity in speech, or something like that.
- **applying**: The act of submitting applications.
- **argument**: An exchange of words between people with diametrically opposed views, all of whom know that they are right.
- **blamestorming**: A method of collectively finding one to blame for a mistake no one is willing to confess to. Often occurs in the form of a meeting of colleagues at work, gathered to decide who is to blame for a problem.
- **boss**: Someone who is early when you are late and late when you are early.
- **cell phone**: An electronic device for one-to-one communication and one-to-many irritation.
- **circular reasoning**: See reasoning, circular.
- **civil servant**: Someone who isn't civil and doesn't serve.
- **class action**: A stylish deed.
- **clicklexia**: A disorder often suffered by novice computer users in which they have a tendency to double-click on items which only require one click, often resulting in two items opening instead of just one.
- **committee**: An entity that keeps minutes and loses hours.
- **comprehension**: Something that one has to get in order to get it.
- **compromise**: The art of dividing a cake in such a way that everybody believes he got the biggest piece.

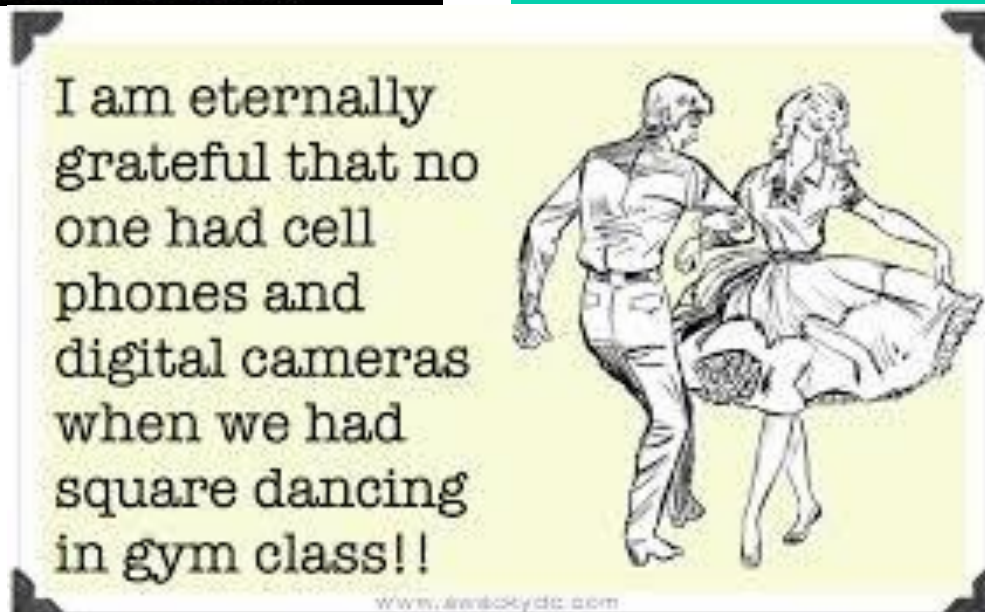
- **computer:** An electronic time-saving device that is commonly used for time-wasting activities.
- **computer expert:** Someone who has not read the instructions, but who will nevertheless feel qualified to install a program and, when it does not function correctly, pronounce it incompatible with the operating system. (Priscilla Mann)
- **cooperate:** Used of oneself, to enter into a constructive collaboration with another person. Used of someone else, to do exactly as one is told.
- **corporation:** An ingenious device for obtaining individual profit without individual responsibility.
- **design:** What you later regret not doing.
- **dictionary:** The only place where success comes before work.
- **DIY:** Damage-It-Yourself

A bus station is where a  
bus stops

A train station is where  
a train stops

On my desk, I have a  
work station

I'm going to  
stand outside.  
So if anyone asks,  
I'm outstanding.



# PROPER PRESSING PROCEDURES

by Karen Reichardt

For the 'custom couture look' a project must be pressed every step of the way. Pressing is as important as stitching to shape the fabric. Many stitchers think they can just keep sewing and then press 'really good' at the end. This is a big factor in making a garment look shoddy and cheap. When the sewing machine is turned on the iron should be on.

How old is your iron anyhow? As with any other piece of equipment that produces heat, the thermostat can fail. Is the iron burping 'rust' on the project? That isn't rust, it is burnt mineral deposits from the water. When a steam iron is heated, without water in it, the minerals in the water are baked on to the tank. When new water is added the minerals are loosened and come out the vents.

Doing quality work requires quality tools. Get a new iron with more steam vents to make pressing easier. Do NOT get the lightest one you can find. Pressing requires pressure. You are going to have to push down harder with a light iron. Professional tailor's irons can weigh sixteen pounds. Do NOT get one with an automatic shut off. This 'safety feature' is a frustration feature. Plug the iron and a lamp into a power strip. Turn the iron and the lamp on using the switch on the power strip. When the lamp is on the iron is on.

Read the instructions that come with the iron. Mine has bold lettering in several places DO NOT use distilled water. Others may require distilled water. Clean the boiler occasionally with white vinegar. When the iron will not be used for a couple of days, fill it with white vinegar and let it sit. Then dump out the vinegar, rinse a couple of times, fill and use. Start ironing on a rag to clear the vents. There may be some residual vinegar smell, but it will fade.

To clean the soleplate the best thing I have found is ceramic cooktop cleaner. There are several brands. There is no need to heat the iron and there are no fumes. Just grab a wet rag and scrub. Take it to the sink and rinse to clean the vents.

After sewing a seam, the first pressing step is melding. This means to press the seam flat. The same way it went under the presser foot. This shrinks the thread and pushes it into the fabric, making the seam stronger. Test this idea for yourself. Sew a seam and run your finger down the stitching. Then take a seam ripper and remove part of the seam. Sew an identical seam and meld it. Run your finger down the stitching. It will be a lot flatter. Removing part of the seam will be more difficult because the thread has bonded with the fabric.

After the seam is melded, press it open or to the side, whichever the construction requires. Hold the seam right in front of the iron with a skinny spatula, the type used to ice cakes. Never cross one seam with another until both of them have been melded and pressed.

The seam should be almost invisible on the right side of the garment. The fabric should lay flat. Whenever pressing on the right side of the garment it is best to use a pressing cloth. This keeps the iron from causing a shine on the fabric. A pressing cloth can be anything from a piece of sheer



organza to a piece of wool coating fabric, depending on what is being pressed. If the fabric has texture like wool coating, then a piece of the same wool used as a pressing cloth will prevent damage to the surface. A piece of plain muslin, slightly damp, is the right pressing cloth for cotton fabrics.

There are several different ironing sprays available and some DIY recipes. The homemade ones clog and can get mouldy. I prefer the pump spray bottles of Niagara or Faultless. (They are the same company.) The finish adds a bit of crispness that stays with the fabric better than water alone. It also helps to repel dirt. The bottles are heavy, so I pour it into a smaller spray bottle. I would rather refill that lift weights.

Stopping sewing to properly press slows down the construction, but quality is better than speed. Enjoy being creative, relaxed and know the finished product will be perfect.

Karen writes a regular column on Sewing for ASD magazine and is also the Vice Chairman of the sewing committee for the 2020 USA National Convention. She hails from Spokane in Washington state. You can find her at:

<mailto:SquareDanceSewing@icloud.com>



I remember when stores like this were everywhere in USA. Sue and I used to look forward to checking each one (Conrad's in Las Vegas was a favourite).

In areas such as Orange County in California, there used to be at least four (one was a specific SD shop – only a few blocks from Disneyland)) – there was even a great western wear store right in front of Knotts Berry farm.

The world really has moved on...now we all do our shopping online at Sheplers!!



# 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).

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

- ✓ "Success is just a matter of luck, just ask any failure!!" – **Jon Jones**
- ✓ "My favourite animal is steak" - **Ken Ritucci**
- ✓ "I would like to find a curried dish that will give me heartburn immediately, instead of at three o'clock in the morning" – **Elmer Sheffield Jr**
- ✓ "I've been on a diet for two weeks and all I've lost is two weeks" – **Ken Bower**
- ✓ "'Escargot' is a French word that can be translated to English as *fat crawling bag of phlegm*" – **Wade Driver**
- ✓ "Eating rice cakes is like chewing on a foam coffee cup, only less tasty and less filling" - **Kevin Kelly**
- ✓ "Not all chemicals are bad. Without chemicals such as hydrogen and water, for example, there would be no way to make water, which is a vital ingredient in beer" - **Jeff Seidel**
- ✓ "There are three rules for calling the perfect dance. Unfortunately, no-one knows what they are" – **Jerry Story**
- ✓ "What's another word for 'thesaurus'?" – **Steve Turner**
- ✓ "If callers were good businessmen, they would have too much sense to be callers" – **Tony Oxendine**
- ✓ "My best advice to everyone: don't skate on thin ice as it can get you into hot water" – **Al Stevens**
- ✓ "When your friends begin to flatter you by telling you how young that you look, then it's a sure sign that you're getting old" – **Dave Preskitt**
- ✓ "When you get there, there isn't any there there" – **Jerry Junck**

- ✓ "A woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle" – **Betsy Gotta**
- ✓ "Housework can't kill you, but then why take a chance" – **Deborah Carroll-Jones**
- ✓ "The rule I live by: Accept that one day you are the pigeon and one day you are the statue" – **Jim Mayo**
- ✓ "It's pretty hard to tell what actually does bring happiness - poverty and wealth have both failed." – **Ed Foote**
- "It isn't necessary to be rich and famous to be happy. It's only necessary to be rich" – **Mark Clausing**
- "Gossip is when you hear something you like about someone you don't" – **Patty Greene**
- "some callers enjoy the comfort of opinion without the discomfort of thought" – **Dave Viera**
- "someone once said that there are no stupid questions. If that is correct, then what type of questions do stupid people ask? Do they get smart just in time to ask questions?" - **Jeffrey Garbutt**
- "Any man who says he can see through a woman is missing a lot" – **Buddy Weaver**
- "Behind every successful man is a woman. Behind her is his wife" - **Kevin Kelly**
- "It is always better to keep your mouth shut and appear stupid, than to open it and remove all doubt" – **Arden Hopkin**
- "Any fool can condemn, criticize and complain, and most do" - **David Cox**
- "One man by himself can be pretty dumb sometimes, but for sheer stupidity nothing beats teamwork" - **Barry Wonson**
- "Getting caught is the mother of invention" - **Jaden Frigo**
- "I really like long walks, especially when they are taken by people who annoy me" - **Shauna Kaaria**
- "Indecision may, or may not be, one of my problems" – **Allen Kerr**
- "You probably would not worry what people think of you, if you knew how seldom they do" – **Mike Seastrom**
- "Egotists have one major positive aspect - they don't talk about other people" – **Paul Bristow**
- "If you shoot at a mime, should you use a silencer?"- **Mike Sikorski**



## Square dance in Beijing in the year 2019

Square Dancing is a great activity that been a beneficial not only as an “activity”, but also as a developing exchange of culture and sharing with the International Square Dance Community in China, and around the world.

There are more than 10 Square Dance Clubs in Beijing, and most

of them have regular activities to practice Square Dance at different levels within their own clubs. The clubs are located in several different Districts of Beijing. In this article, I would like to introduce you to the two most active clubs in the year 2019. They are

- the Beijing Smile Square Dance Club (The Smile Club) and
- Beijing Great Wall Square Dance Club (Great Wall Club).

**The Smile Club** is one of the pioneers of Square Dance in Beijing and was established 13 years ago. Some dancers have extended their own clubs from Smile to start other groups as new “seed clubs” in Beijing over the last several years. Over the last year, the Smile Club has been establishing and perfecting the organization of the club. This has included making adjustments to the class levels, appointing team leaders, and teachers and numerous other changes.

Currently there are about 6 new learner classes starting Square Dancing, which represents an increase of about 50 new dancers to the club. The Smile Club has made a regulation to have a “Club Dance Party” every month. The purpose is to ensure that all the club members dancing at different levels and different locations all get together to share the dancing experience and share in the fun and friendship of the activity.

The Smile Club had its 13<sup>th</sup> anniversary which was celebrated with great ceremony from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 22<sup>nd</sup> of October, 2019. There were hundreds of dancers from different clubs in Beijing who all got together to dance at this anniversary convention, and to just have fun and compare notes about square dancing. The club invited Mr. Michael Sikorsky, a famous American Caller, as the guest caller to join the convention. The convention was filled with joyful and beautiful music, the whole celebration was filled with a warm atmosphere of joy and happiness.

**The Great Wall Club** was established in 2014 and it has been developing very fast. Starting with 8 dancers and a new club idea, it has now grown to 130 people. The club has a regular dance with different levels (Callerlab Programs). Currently the Club dances from Basic to C3, with each group having a fixed time to dance and practice, every day of every week.

The club has also trained a team of “core teacher” taking them through teaching square dance and the levels step by step. All the teachers are working hard both keeping the teaching skills sharp and practicing teaching and training in the teaching development programs.

Most of the dancers have also made the progress in their dancing from basic through every level they choose to progress. More importantly, they have a lot of fun, experience healthy exercise, learn and collect new skills, and experience sharing and enjoy happiness in the recreation. Everyone now has more friends in the different dance parties that are regularly hosted by the Club.

The great wall club was very enthusiastic and active in the year 2019. The club continues to grow up in strength, ability and with more active members to spread the friendship further and step into the happy and healthy life of Square Dancing.

The Club held a successful Celebration Party its 5<sup>th</sup> birthday and they invited Sandie (Bryant?), one of the famous American caller and Mrs. Shuying Chen from Taiwan as the guest callers to the

Party. There were more than 200 dancers that joined the party including the dancers from Japan and Taiwan.

The club also organized the “Mid-Autumn Festival Party” and joined the dance party with other clubs to celebrate the traditional Chinese holiday.

To promote square dance in China, we are using two different avenues of approach:

- One is to travel abroad to attend different dance conventions around the world; and
- The other is to invite Callers from around the world to come to China and help us.

Here just some examples below about our teams went outside.

- Mrs. Yu, the Chairwoman of the Club led about 30 people to Taiwan to attend the 9<sup>th</sup> Square Dance Convention in March of 2019.
- Five dancers from Smile Club attended the 68<sup>th</sup> National Convention in Atlanta, USA in July of 2019.
- There were about 10 dances from both the Smile and the Great wall Clubs joined the 14<sup>th</sup> IPAC in July of 2019 in Germany.
- Very recently the Great Wall club had 10 dancers travel to Japan to attend the JANCC Convention in November of 2019. For them, this was the third time going to JANCC.

Square Dance continues to grow in popularity in Beijing because it is good, not only for the body but also for the brain. The Beijing clubs also conduct a lot of public activities and conduct a lot of public welfare activities such as joining the Local Communities Activities, presenting at the Literature art festival held by Enterprises for the National 70<sup>th</sup> year Celebration, as well as demonstrations and even a promotional video that is played in Beijing at the Wangfujiang Department Store.

This year is the year of many “collect parties” (recruitment dances and other activities) to promote the activity and the “Square Dance Family”. All of the clubs support each other and attend the relative parties in order to show the “style of square dance”, and to promote the activity linked to “The Art and Movement OF Square Dance”.

2019 has been a year for the for the big square dance family in China to gather, with many people participating in the union and the friendship of club activities, and to collectively show the elegant



demeanour of Square Dance to the entire community that is Beijing. **“Friendship first and the Happiness is the basic”**. The spirit of the square dance encourages us to try our best to go further, face to the world, and hug the dancers from the world.

Here I am on behalf of all the local dancers in China. I sincerely invite all of you, especially callers, to come to Beijing, China and we can enjoy square dancing together.

The Happy Garden SQD Club with Mike Sikorsky

Mike got the Manual made by the students of Beijing Caller School





Some more photos with Mike Sikorsky.





2019年3月份，北京长城俱乐部在会长于其可女士的带领下，组团30余人，参加了在台湾举办的第九届国际方块舞大会。

7月份，俱乐部10位舞友参加了在德国举办的第14th IPAC 方块舞大会。

6月份，值长城俱乐部成立五周年之际，我们成功举办了大型庆典舞会，并邀请了美国著名方块舞口令员SANDIE 和台湾方块舞协会会长陈淑英女士前来舞会现场喊唱口令，参加舞会人员来自日本，宝岛台湾及北京各友好俱乐部200余人，得到了与会者们的一致好评。

9月份我们与友好俱乐部成功举办了2次迎中秋庆十一联欢舞会，俱乐部也经常不定期举办各级别的舞会，大大提高了大家对方块舞的兴趣

在中国国内，源于方块舞的影响力逐年扩大，以及人们对方块舞健身健脑意义的了解，长城俱乐部应邀参加了为北京王府井百货大楼拍摄宣传片的的活动。

为庆祝新中国成立70周年，长城方块舞俱乐部参加了同心集团在星光大道举办的文艺盛典活动，并表演了方块舞，获得好评和荣誉证书。

2019年是方块舞友谊大家庭聚会多多的一年。长城方块舞俱乐部多次积极参加联盟和各友好俱乐部举办的舞会，并在北京各个城市社区举办的活动中展示方块舞的风采，旨在将这项艺术与运动相结合的活动推广开来，传承“友谊第一 快乐为本”的精神。

我们还将继续努力，面向世界，走出国门，拥抱全世界的方块舞舞者！

#### **Contacts:**

Beijing Smile Square Dance Club

Activity time: Every day in the morning

Address: No.216 Huizhongbeili, Chaoyang District, Beijing, China

Contact: Mrs.Xiaoping Wang and Mrs.Jainping Min

Mailbox: 690675610@qq.com

Beijing Great Square Dance Club

Activity Time: Every Morning from Monday to Saturday (Full day on Monday, Wednesday and Sunday)

Address: Andingmen Street Cultural Activity Center, Beijing

Contact: Mrs. Qike Yu and Mr.Chenjun Yuan

E-Mail: [lrina888@126.com](mailto:lrina888@126.com)

#### **The author:**

Strawberry Feng

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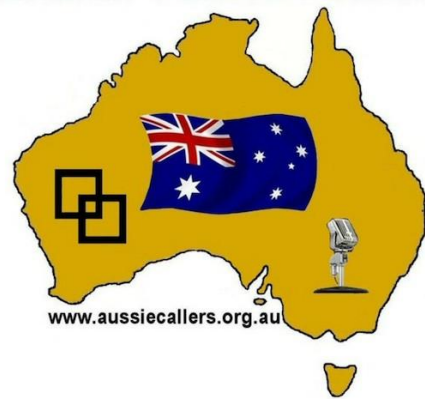
E-Mail: [jr\\_feng@sina.com](mailto:jr_feng@sina.com)

Drafted on 30 November, 2019 in Beijing, China





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## *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.

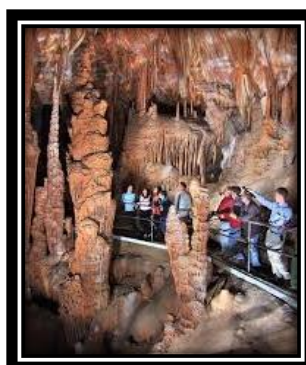


Our theme is "Puttin' on the Ritz". So, join the fun as we relive the glamour of the 1920's when the Blue Mountains became one of Australia's first tourist destination.

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.



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Cheers Susanne Horvat

Publicity Manager

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## *Editor's Final Words.... At Least For Now*

Well, that brings us to the end of this first issue for 2020. I hope that you have found something worthwhile or at least interesting and entertaining in this edition.

As I mentioned in the introductory comments, we are all getting ready here in Australia for our 61<sup>st</sup> National SD Convention in April.

This is a very special one for me as it will be the third one that I have been involved with as a committee member.

Many people do not realize the time and effort that goes into the organization of such an event. The preparation for this one began before the 2017 National. 4 years is a long time, but it really does fly when we are all busy with various aspects. Some elements need so much time.... decorations are a good example, not just the building of all the necessary pieces, but the very design process itself. Our decorations team (Maree & Ron Huffadine assisted by Owen & Barbara Doust on building) have been flat out for ages on creating a stage setting for both halls that will reflect our theme of 'the 20's'. Every aspect has been meticulously planned and crafted...from the smallest detail! All this effort for just 5 days of the Convention...but sure is worth it at the end.

I am looking forward to catching up with many dancers and callers over Easter for our convention in the magnificent Blue Mountains setting.

Barry





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If you are a dance leader please circle all that apply: Caller Cues Contra Clogging C/W Lines

Convention Badges required for entrance to all Convention Activities.

Dressy casual attire allowed until 6:00 pm. Proper square dance attire is required after 6:00 pm for all dancers.

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