

# DANCERgram

January 2024



... for the latest news in the square and round dance community.

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## Consider this...

By Penny Green

### Random Thoughts about Flyers

- **What should be included on a flyer?**
  - The full address of the dance location.
  - The start and end time of the dance.
  - If there will be Early Rounds or Pre-Dance Rounds, state that and provide the start and end time of the Early Rounds. Some dances have 30 minutes of early Rounds and some have an hour.
  - Is casual attire appropriate?
  - What will the Square and Round dance levels be?
  - Do you have hearing enhancement?
  - Who can they contact for additional information or directions? It is good to include a phone number and an email address.
  - All flyers (especially for classes) should be written for even non-dancers to understand. Avoid using square dance terminology that a new dancer wouldn't understand.
  - Avoid too much copy<sup>1</sup>. You should be succinct and precise with what you say. If you have too much information, people won't be interested in reading it.
  - We are trying to change the image of square dancing. When you say “square dancing” people think country, hillbilly, or cowboy hats and boots. We want them to know square dancing is for everyone and every walk of life, so why do we continue to use

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<sup>1</sup> text especially of an advertisement

images and clip art that give us a negative image? We need images of people dancing in casual clothes, different types of footwear, etc.

- Please, please have someone proof your flyers before distributing them. It is better to have it right the first time than to keep sending out revised copies; then people don't know which version is the current and correct one.
- If you're looking for new dancers, just putting flyers on the flyer table at your dance isn't going to do it. You need to get your flyers out in your community i.e. library, church, community clubhouses, schools, etc.
- **“Only couples allowed”, “You must have a partner”**. All of these are very negative comments; how can you make them sound positive?
  - “Partners are nice but not necessary”
- **“All ages welcome”** This can be a negative statement when they arrive for class. If a young child arrives expecting to dance, but they can't follow instructions, this will be a big let-down.
  - “All ages welcome (as long as they can dance and follow instructions).” This eliminates young children that aren't old enough to follow instructions and could also apply to some seniors! Some ten year olds can learn square dancing and yet there might be pre-teens that can't do it yet. You can't say “must be 12 years old”. It's different for everyone.
- **“If you can walk briskly, you can square dance”**. I'm not sure where this phrase came from, but I have seen it twice now. What's with “briskly”? We have several current dancers that can't dance briskly!
  - How about “if you can walk and follow instructions, you can square dance”?
- **“Square dance attire required” or “traditional square dance attire required”**. We all know this is so outdated! This is a sure thing to turn dancers away from your event. A lot of dancers (new and seasoned) won't come just because of this “requirement”.
  - How about “Square dance attire admired but not required”. People can wear square dance attire if they want, if they don't they can come casual.
- **“Wear comfortable clothes and shoes”**. This can open a lot of doors that we don't want opened. Comfortable clothes; this can mean short shorts, halter tops, even bathing suits (LOL). Comfortable shoes; this can mean flip flops, slide on shoes, and high heels.

- “For safety reasons, please don’t wear Flip flops, open toed, open heels, and high heels.” Toes can be stepped on; a shoe or boo can come down the back of a heel; flip flops can fall off the foot; and ankles can be twisted in high heels.
- Many people are offended by the exposure of too much skin.
- If someone gets hurt at a dance, there can be insurance claims, law suits, or negative publicity.
- **Why do we list several Round Dance levels but say Phase (singular)?**  
It should be Phases 2, 3, 4 or 2-4.
- **Incomplete address.** How many times have you seen flyers on your table from out of town? Always include the complete address of the dance location (including the city and state). Many dancers will pick up flyers at one dance and take them to other dances out of the area. You never know who is going to be looking at them.

#### Inspirational Quotes from Ed Foote

“Pressure is a privilege.” ...Billie Jean King, former tennis pro

“Peace will come whenever it is sincerely invited” ...Alice Walker, writer

“Heaven is a place where dreams come true.” ...John Kinsella, character in Field of Dreams movie

“How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.” ...Anne Frank

“If you get a thousand positive compliments and then one slightly negative comment, it’s ridiculous to only remember the last one. Dwell on the positive.” ...Ben Stein, television commentator and former presidential advisor

Reprint from *American Square Dance*, November 2023

“When you have an intense contact of love with nature or another human being, like a spark, then you understand that there is no time and that everything is eternal.” ...Paulo Coelho, Brazilian novelist

“Compassion is not complete if it does not include oneself.” ...Allan Lokus, author and teacher

“Rivers know this: there is no hurry. We shall get there some day.” ...A.A. Milne, author of Winnie-the-Pooh

“Listening is the beginning of all progress.” ...Bryant McGill, writer

“Be more concerned with your character than your reputation, because your character is who you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are.” ...John Wooden, basketball coach

Reprint from *American Square Dance*, December 2023

## Mike Hogan on Marketing

In my last article, I told the story of the success the Northeast Oklahoma Square Dance Association's recruitment campaign resulting in a profit from their beginner class and ten squares of new dancers. WOW. I also promised the story of a club that tried a radio campaign patterned after Oklahoma's that failed, along with my 32-year marketing professional's opinion of why it failed.

The Colorado rocky Mountain Dancer's Association purchased a radio campaign on KWBL-FM, a Mainstream Country format radio station in Denver. The schedule included six :30 second commercials per day between 6am and 7pm for 13 consecutive days, ending the day of their first night of beginner class; Monday, July 24<sup>th</sup>. The commercials said almost exactly what the Oklahoma commercials said. Their campaign generated 13 new students.

The campaign reached 68,500 listeners of which only 154 took the action of visiting the website the commercials directed them to: 2/10<sup>ths</sup> of 1%. Assuming some of the attendees didn't visit the site, it's likely about 5% of those that visited the site did attend. Most campaigns could expect twice the number of site visits and two to three times the show up rate from those that visited. The math tells me attendance should have been around 75. The smaller than usual site visits means the messages were not compelling enough to drive site visits (consideration), and the smaller than expected show up from those visits means there were other circumstances that made them choose not to attend.

We don't get to ask the 95% of site visitors that didn't show up, why not. A few other facts may have been Tulsa's class on Friday night; Denver's was Monday night. Tulsa's was held in a privately owned building; Denver's was in a Grange Hall. The Monday of Denver's event was the hottest day of the summer. Tulsa's class was on Friday nights; Denver's was two nights per week; Monday and Thursday. Ravel time in rush-hour across Denver is longer than across Tulsa. Just a few possibilities.

Starworks research told us "Square dancing has an image problem in the general public. The target population sees square dancing as out of date, country oriented, for hicks and hillbillies, using old-fashioned music and patronized by senior citizens in fluffy dresses with big hair, big belts, and RVs" and "Modern western square dancing does not have a high profile, even in cities where there is an active dance community. Non-dancers in these cities

claimed that square dancing was a rural activity – not done in an urban environment where people have many alternatives for entertainment.”

If you’ve been following my discussions on the Marketing Funnel, you’ll know awareness of our activity and a positive image are critical for non-dancers to have before they will choose to participate in it. I can’t speak to the awareness and image of square dancing in the public specifically in Tulsa and Denver, but in both cases, the attempt with the commercials was to build awareness and interest while also driving action two weeks. That is a very difficult task. This combined with other factors like the day, time, location, implied commitment to a two-night per week class, etc. makes it easier for me to explain why the Denver campaign failed than why the Tulsa campaign succeeded.

In both cases, the message delivery absolutely played a role in increasing the awareness that the activity exists in those communities, and explained some reasons why someone would choose to participate in it. What these individuals saw when visiting club’s websites, Facebook pages, and googling the activity could also impact their image of square dancing, positively or negatively. Changing our brand takes time. Overall, we need more of this, not less.

Reprint from *American Square Dance*, November 2023

## **The Big Picture by Buddy Weaver**

What’s the difference between SSD (social Square Dancing) and Mainstream and all the other levels? In the round dance world, what’s the difference between a Phase II dance and a Phase III or even higher phases? Inspired by an article written by Walt and Louise Cole, a few years back, here is an up-to-date comparison.

SSD, also known as Social Square Dancing. Developed this century as an answer to the large number of dancers who either don’t make it through beginner’s class or finish but drop out soon after. It is the only CALLERLAB program where the size of the program – the number of calls in the program – was created to teach tie of not less than 24 hours. There are about 51 calls in the Social Square Dance program.

SSD does not come from a CALLERLAB program nor does it continue into one. It is an entry and at the same time, it is the destination. In SSD, dancers listen to the music and step on each beat. Most of the movements use either four or

eight steps; one step per beat of the musical phrase. The emphasis is placed on dancing the calls smoothly from one to the next. Since the complexity of the calls is reduced, there are fewer “break downs” thus fewer times when dancers have to wait for someone to get back dancing.

MAINSTREAM. Introduced to the dance world in 1976 as a program that would cover all dance calls 1-68 that were considered popular. Today’s Mainstream program is to be taught in not less than 59 hours. While there seems to be only 30% more calls more than the SSD program, the difficulty of many of those calls is considerably greater, as Barry Johnson wrote in American Square Dance publication in November 2022, “Sin the Top”, for example, involves dancers doing a “circulate” (or “promenade”) action to a spot on the floor where no dancer had previously been standing – and often adds the additional work of “square breathing”: expanding the square to make room for a new tidal wave. When you include this increased difficult in the calls themselves, Mainstream become more like **50% harder**.

MAINSTREAM is part of the “escalator” of programs in that it comes from the Basics Program and goes to the Plus Program. A few people have lamented that Basics would be a suitable, existing program instead of SSD, but the reality is that since Basics, as a program, was created in 1975, it has not gained or sustained popularity with the dancing public. After thirty-nine years of having he Basics Program, you would be hard pressed to find any Basic Program Club.

PLUS, a program that has the destination for many beginner classes – before the pandemic shutdown of 2020. There are 29 additional calls making the total number of calls from “zero (non-dancer) to Plus”, NINETY-SEVEN. Plus movements are a bit more complicated. Fewer movements are related to the musical measure or phrase, More difficult choreography requires additional beats allowed for dancers to catch up which also means some dancers will stop and wait. There are more calls that sound alike, for example. Spin the Top, Fan the Top, and Peel the Top. There are calls that move dancers along a radius, again performing an action to a spot on the floor where no dancer had previously been standing (i.e. Relay the Ducey).

PLUS requires not less than an additional 38 hours of learning which means that a beginner class going from zero to Plus would take ninety-seven hours which simply is not realistic. Experience has shown us that if a class ran for two-hours each session it would take forty-nine weeks to go from zero to Plus, but absolutely not class has ever gone forty-nine weeks without a break for holidays furthermore, there are very few students who have attended forty-nine

sessions without missing one. Even though it was embraced by many clubs (pre-pandemic), the downward trend of class graduates, club members, and number of clubs shows Plus, as an entry level, to be lacking in sustainability.

ADVANCED. Movements demand more mental concentration and the desire to conquer more difficult situations. More movement unrelated to musical structure and more “stop-and-go-dancing” to successfully execute the movement.

There are eighty-seven calls in the A-1 and A-2 program which does not take in consideration, concepts - modifier to an existing call. An example of concept at Advanced would be “As Couples” where a call normally intended for two to four dancers would now be danced by four to eight as each couple would act as a single unit. “As Couples walk and Dodge” would have two couples doing the walk action and two couples doing the “dodge” action.

CHALLENGE, the real chess game of square dancing. Choreographic sequence almost unrelated to musical structure; often extra beats are given for dancers to realize their new formation and arrangement on the dance floor. There are dozens of calls (if not hundreds) arranged in at least four sub-sets, like C-1, C-, C-3a. More of a niche’ dancer exists at higher levels.

## ROUND DANCING.

Here the escalator of levels is denoted by “phase” with most dancers climbing the levels.

PHASE II is the introductory phase. Originally, a Phase I was created by ROUNDALAB in the eighties as the entry point, the de facto entry level is now PHASE II. Rhythms at PHASE II are two-step and waltz. There are roughly sixty-two dance actions for two-step and thirty-six dance actions for waltz. This does not include the dance positions

Listen to the music and step on the beat. Learning that cues will come ahead of the measure so that you can dance to the first beat of music (how square is supposed to be) and each movement is done with the musical phrase. Styling is introduced.

PHASE II teaches the following rhythms and dance actions:

- Bolero – approximately sixteen dance actions
- Cha Cha – about twenty-six dance actions
- Foxtrot – around thirty dance actions



- Jive – at least twenty-eight dance actions
- Mambo – no less than ten dance actions
- Merenge – has eight dance actions
- Quick Step – about twelve dance actions
- Quick Step – about twelve dance actions
- Rumba – approximately thirty-three dance actions
- Single Swing – around twelve dance actions
- Slow Two-Step – a least ten dance actions
- Tango – at least nine dance actions
- Two-Step – adds nine more dance actions to what is in Phase II
- Waltz – adds twenty-eight more dance actions on top of Phase II

Additional rhythms and movement will increase difficulty but danced with the music. Proper styling is expected.

Phase IV is where rhythmic variety and complexity of movements increase. Dancing is body movement coordinated with the music and styling is automatic. Additional rhythms taught are Paso Doble, Samba, West Coast Swing.

PHASE V & VI are almost international ballroom dancing. Movements are more complex, but choreography to music relationship becomes an additional challenge. Much like the CHALLENGE variation of square dancing, the higher the level, the more of a niche' dancer is found.

To learn more about square and round dance levels, visit the website of the professional organizations that maintains the programs.

CALLERLAB – [callerlab.org](http://callerlab.org)

ROUNDALAB – [roundalab.org](http://roundalab.org)

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## Smooth Dancing

### Dance Etiquette

Every form of recreation has its code of conduct. In the modern square dance activity, there are varied forms of this code most with elements that date back several generations. This article seeks to bring together some of the most

important, yet sometimes overlooked standards of behavior that we should ask of everyone who comes in the door.

### **Before the dance:**

- Please don't drink alcohol or take any mind altering substance, Not only will you need a "clear head" but the happiness you experience while square dancing will alter your mood in a positive way much more than anything else.
- Please dress cleanly and practice good personal hygiene. Square dancing is a team activity so your attention to "not offending" is appreciated. Also try to avoid strong perfumes or scents for the same reasons

### **At the dance, squaring up:**

- Square up promptly. If you square up after the caller has started please avoid disturbing the other square with loud talk.
- Square dancing should be an inclusive experience so if you must set-up squares with your friends, do it on the first and last tip only so the rest of the dance may include visitors, new dancers, etc.
- Once you are in a square, please stay with that square until the end of the tip. Please join the nearest available squares rather than passing through or passing by a square in need of a couple.
- Please welcome everyone to your square rather than "holding" a position. Turning a couple away from your square, regardless of the reason, shows bad manner and causes hurt feelings
- If time permits, introduce yourself to others in the square. They are your "team mates" for the net tip so get to know them.

### **At the dance, while dancing:**

- Do your best to know your part of every square dance call. If you do not understand material ask for help on a break. Understand that expecting someone in the square to pull, push, or tell you where to go is not an acceptable form of square dancing. Make the effort to learn the call as your square depends on you.
- There is no place of roughness in square dancing. Rough talk (cursing, scolding, yelling, pushing, pulling, squeezing onto hands are all inappropriate behavior. Sometimes the folks who exhibit this behavior don't realize they are doing something wrong so a gentle conversation on how to avoid roughness may be all that is necessary

- When your square reads down, remain calm and quietly, quickly move into a recoverable square formation. The easiest way to get back dancing is to create line of four facing lines of four where the man is on the left/woman on the right of every couple, wait for the caller to say something like "lines go up and back" then rejoin the action.

### **At the dance, as the tip ends:**

- Take a moment to thank everyone in your square at the end of the tip. They contributed to your enjoyment and your kind appreciation will lift others.

Over the years, we have seen clubs/groups that have no dance etiquette, fail, mostly the dancers will quietly drift away from rude or rough individuals. Even those in a clique will leave. Whereas, health club/groups will quickly address offending parties with the single goal of changing behavior to ensure a positive and fulfilling experience for everyone.

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## **Mike Hogan on Marketing**

As I'm writing this article, I'm also preparing for a Zoom presentation I'm making to members of ROUNDALAB in a few weeks, and I've been thinking a lot about the parallels between the state of square dancing and round dancing. Their number of participants is down, their cost for revenues is higher, and the awareness of round dancing in the public is less than square dancing's.

A few years back, Bob Riggs, a very accomplished square dance caller friend of mine from the Denver area, and I were visiting about the business of square dancing, specifically what our customer base looked like, which caused me to do some research. Here is what I learned.

Most businesses, regardless of the product or service they provide, have customers that fall into one of three categories: infrequent customers, frequent customers, and super users. Think of an equilateral triangle. The bottom third of the triangle would represent the quantity of infrequent users, the middle third represents the quantity of frequent users, and the top third represents the quantity of super users I'll spare you the math, but that figures to be 54% infrequent customers, 38% frequent customers and 8% super users. A healthy business is always working to fill the bottom of the triangle with new and infrequent customers, provide quality products or services to that base, and

remarket to them, to move them from infrequent to frequent customers, and of those some will become super users.

Olive Garden uses a variety of marketing tactics to grow and maintain the awareness of their 900 restaurants. Those messages usually include specials on certain seasonal dishes with limited time availability. They build brand while including a call-to-action message of “come in NOW to get this limited time menu item.” When you pay your bill, they ask you to go online and fill out a customer satisfaction survey. When you do that, they now have your name, address, and email address and can re-market to you through direct mail, email offers, and so on, moving you from an infrequent to a frequent customer

Every gas station I go to asks when I get my coffee if I am a rewards member. A rewards member gets discounts by being a member; free cup of coffee once a month, ten cent off per gallon of gas once you’ve met the minimum spending level or frequency of visits required. There are benefits to becoming a rewards member be they great or small. In the process, they’ve gathered data on me; name, what station I go to, where I live, and my email address; hence my email fills up with rewards member only offers. All this to move me from an infrequent customer to a frequent customer.

In Olive Garden, and most other restaurant cases, 60 to 70 percent of their customers eat dinner there once per year; infrequent 20 to 25% have dinner there four to 1 times per year; frequent. And only 5 to 10 percent eat there monthly or more; upper users.

So, what does square dancing’s customer base look like? I would define infrequent customers as folks who participate in square dancing less than once per month; frequent customers as folks who dance once a month to once per week, and super users as folks who dance more than once per week. Use your imagination our customer base is a marquis diamond; tall and thin, with the bottom quarter representing infrequent dancers, the middle half representing frequent dancers, and the top quarter represent super users. Our customer base should tell us we do not have a healthy business model.

The dance programs we have are built to support a strong customer base. CALLERLAB has the community dance program, Basic I, Basic II and SSD programs, all designed to offer customers the opportunity to participate in square dancing without the needs to dance weekly. The community dance program is specifically built to support customers who only want to dance a few times a year. Dancers who choose to earn more and more calls move from

SSD to Mainstream or Plus and become frequent customers. Some of those become super users.

Our infrequent customer base is tiny, and our super user customer base is becoming smaller as well. To correct this, we must focus our efforts on offering more opportunities for the public to participate in square dancing without requiring them to become frequent customers. This means many more beginner events, and an entry program that is simpler, requiring less time to learn a la SSD. In the process, we need to recruit younger dancers. Many of those younger dancers will become frequent customers, and due to their age, agility, and passion for the activity, a larger percentage of them will become super users.

As for the parallel between square dancing and round dancing, it's my belief that most round dancers come to round dancing by joining square dancing first, so a dramatic drop in square dance population would result in a dramatic drop in round dancer population. I also know round dancing has programs; phase I, II III, IV V and VI, and that most leaders in the round dance world focus their cueing and dancing on the III-V programs. I wonder if they, too, have lost their focus on their most important customer, the infrequent dancer?

Reprint from *American Square Dance*, December 2023

## **Helping Hands by Buddy Weaver**

### **Square Dancing and FACEBOOK**

Let's talk about social media and focus on the most popular platform in the square dance world – FACEBOOK. This is a social media app that allows people with similar interest to share information and network with each other. Users can post text, photos and video which are shared with other users they have “friended” or anyone in the general public, depending on your setting preferences. Many callers, club and associations use FACEBOOK to share information about their up-coming dances, weekends, or group trips. Dancers and callers alike will often post pictures and video from recent dances, some will even live stream a dance, which is broadcasting what you are seeing and hearing to the whole world – LIVE. Technology can be so cool.

FACEBOOK offers the opportunity to create groups or collections of FACEBOOK users with a shared special interest. For example, you can find a group for square dance fliers where members can post any square dance related

flier to FACEBOOK. There are quae dance related groups for music, understanding calls, teaching tips, and more.

For the non-user who is looking to join the FACEBOOK world, it is a simple process and having an account costs nothing. It is not uncommon for new users to do nothing more than collect “friends” so they can read what others have to say. Whether you are active or just watching others post and interact on FACEBOOK, **every user should include their picture and minimal personal information**, like t the city and state in which they reside. From an active user’s viewpoint, the lack of a photo or relevant information on a profile from someone asking to be a FACEBOOK “friend” is a red-flag warning of an imposter or a non-serious user.

The following tips are included for new and experienced FACEBOOK user to help you navigate this social media platform.

1. Be clear in your purpose for creating a FACEBOOK presence. If you’re building a social media page for your square dance club or association, be sure you are doing so with permission of the board. Your page SHOULD have home city, state website, and the group’s logo. Be sure to write down the username and password information so it can be passed to the next person in charge of the club/association website.
2. When posting information for the general public to view, MAKE SURE IT’S ACCURATE. Be certain of the dance time, location, level, caller, etc. Remember, many people use social media to get the most up-to-date information that may include last-minute changes. There can be no excuse for having incorrect information on a FACEBOOK page.
3. Make sure the information that you post is written for an audience far outside your neighborhood. Include city and state. When talking about an upcoming dance be sure to include dates that include the year, dance level, caller/cuer, secret directions to parking, etc. Be accurate and be generus with information on your FACEBOOK posts.
4. Try to include pictures in your post. Convert your dance fliers to a jpg format for inclusion on your FACBOOK page. FACEBOOK was created for pictures, so, if you are not able to include photos then this may not be the right platform for you.
5. When sharing your information to a group, try not to “cross post” the same write-up. This means that if you have posted a picture of your club’s flier on “square news group”, then don’t put the same thing on “square dance events”. You’ll find may users participate in many groups,

so repeating the same thing or cross posting on multiple groups is overkill.

6. When deciding what to write on FACEBOOK, imagine you are giving an announcement at a dance. Would you state your view of politics or religion at this time? The answer should be no. Well, posting on FACEBOOK is like getting the mic at a really big dance, except it is MEMORIALIZED ON THE INTERNET FOREVER. Keep your messaging positive and on-point.
7. In the FACEBOOK world, as in the real world, you will find some who may reply to your post by stating a contradicting opinion or attempting to change the topic to promote their event. Increasingly, there are “FACEBOOK USERS” WHO COMMENT ON YOUR POST WITH NOTHING HAVING TO DO WITH YOUR TOPIC. In most cases, you are able to delete these comments and maybe lock habitual offenders from posting on your FACEBOOK page. Finally, content is KING! FACEBOOK thrives on frequent posts so it is helpful to plan your future write-ups and execute them on schedule. For example your club’s FACEBOOK page would be well served with a post about an upcoming dance including a jpg. of the flier maybe a few months in advance. The following week, (no later) post about the incredible caller and cuer team for the dance. Another week is a post about how great the dance hall is along with directions on how to access the parking lot. Posts about how many were at the last dance along with pictures showing smiling faces, loaded food tables all help to ‘sell’ your dance on social media. Put pictures of your callers on FACEBOOK and website information. Keep in mind, if you don’t have content then you are missing the boat when it comes to social media. This is all about being current, topical, accurate, and frequent.
8. Finally, content is KING! FACEBOOK thrives on frequent posts so it is helpful to plan your future write-ups and execute them on schedule. For example, your club’s FACEBOOK page would be well served with a post about an upcoming dance including a jpg. of the flier maybe a few months in advance. The following week, (no later) post about the incredible caller and cuer team for the dance. Another week, is a post about how great the dance hall is along with direction on how to access the parking lot. Post about how many were at the last dance along with pictures showing smiling faces, loaded food tables all help to ‘sell’ your dance on social media. Put pictures of your callers on FACEBOOK and website information. Keep in mind, if don’t have content then you are

missing the boat when it comes to social media. This is all about being current, topical, accurate, and frequent.

9. If your FACEBOOK page is full of outdated information, then take it down. If the club has folded, take down the FACEBOOK page. In the world we live in today, the only thing worse than no information is bad information. If you are new to the job of club FACEBOOK postings, but can't gain access to your group page, simply reach out to FACEBOOK customer service to change access or remove the page.
10. FACEBOOK is an excellent tool to promote square dance classes. It is easy to ask club members to "share" a post on the club page advertising up-coming classes. There are examples of club members, already active on FACEBOOK, who have used the platform in promoting classes and have found great success. Two instances come to mind, one club member set out a well thought out plan to promote an upcoming class and her efforts were rewarded with dozens of new people, while in another city, a club member did the exact same thing, only to have a divergent club copy the campaign holding their class in the same hall on a different night with different pricing, this led to many comments from non-square dancers that detracted from the positive messaging. It caused bad feeling between the dance groups and both campaigns failed.

Here is the FACEBOOK page for Buddy Weaver and Buddy Weaver music as an introduction to the social media platform.

<https://www.faceook.com/buddyweaver.caller/>

<https://www.facebook.com/buddyweavermusic>

Reprint from *American Square Dance*, December 2023

## **All Things Considered by Ed Foote**

### **RE-CONNECTING AT CHRISTMAS**

A YEAR AGO I PHONED A LONG-TIME SQUARE DANCER WHO HAD BEEN OUT OF DANCING FOR OVER 15 YEARS. He was overjoyed to talk with someone from the past, and we had a wonderful time reminiscing about friends and experiences from long ago.



This got me to thinking that the Christmas season is a time of re-connecting with people, not just with family but with others who have been meaningful in our lives. Why not reach out this year to dancers and callers from the past for whom you have special memories?

Consider the dancers with whom you danced for many years but who had to drop out because of illness. They would love to get a phone call.

Likewise, callers who have retired often feel alone, because no one calls. They would love to receive a phone call to discuss memories of past dances and festivals.

A Christmas card alone doesn't do it. These cards have become almost an obligation for many, and thus do not often convey the feeling desired, likewise, an e-mail usually feels rather impersonal. A handwritten note is better, but a phone call is best. This demonstrates a true personal touch.

How about a goal of five phone calls? If everyone reading this would make five phone calls to former dancers and callers over the holiday season think how much happiness would be created. Something to consider.

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## Caller of the Month

Meet **ED FOOTE**. One of the most published writers of Modern Western Square Dancing with over forty years of monthly contributions in various periodicals. A proponent of the Challenge program years before CALLERLAB even existed; Ed published the first list of Challenge Dancing Basic Calls. He and his wife Marilyn started the National Advanced and Challenge Convention in 1968. They successfully managed it for thirty five years.

When the CALLERLAB Accredited Caller Coach program was developed, Ed Foote was one of the first to receive accreditation. Over the years he has been featured and called in thirty-eight states, three provinces, and seven countries outside of North America.

He is the recipient of the CALLERLAB Milestone award for outstanding achievement and lasting contributions to the square dance activity.

Reprint from *American Square Dance*, December 2023

# CALLERLAB Viewpoints by Mike Seastrom

## MILESTONE AWARD PRESENTED TO TIM MARRINER

*Note: The Milestone Award is the highest award presented by CALLERLAB. At this year's Convention, Dana Schirmer presented a Milestone Award to the late Tim Marriner's wife, Donna, in recognition of his accomplishments during his many years as a caller, CALLERLAB Accredited Caller-Coach, and extraordinary leader. The following is Dana's presentation.*

Tonight, I will be presenting the CALLERLAB Milestone Award. I am very excited to do so for several reasons. First, it is the CALLERLAB Milestone Award. Second, I knew the recipient, and feel honored to make this presentation. Third, I finally get to make this presentation. This award was unanimously approved by the Executive Committee in the fall of 2019, and was to be presented at the 2020 CALLERLAB Convention at this location. Due to the pandemic, the 2020 CALLERLAB Convention was canceled. It was rescheduled to be presented in 2021 but again, that Convention was canceled. It was considered for presentation at the 2022 Convention, but after talking to the recipient's spouse it was noted that Reno was a special location for them, and we decided to defer the presentation until this year.

As most know, the CALLERLAB Milestone is the highest award presented by CALLERLAB. Due to time restraints, I will not read the requirements, and will simply continue with the presentation. But first, I would like to recognize those individuals in the audience tonight who have previously received this high honor and ask that they stand as I read their names, and remain standing until I have finished reading all the names, Please hold your applause unit then.

Milestone Recipients attending this Convention are: Vic & Debbie Ceder; Barry & Pam Clasper; Wade Drive: Ed Foote; Betsy & Ray Gotta; Jon Jones; Deborah Carroll-Jones Melton Luttrell; Tony Oxendine; Mike Seastrom; and Dottie Welch.

On a dare, our recipient started calling in November 1973. The club he was dancing with conducted an amateur night, and members persuaded him into a slot. After that evening, he was hooked; records couldn't be made quick enough for him to learn. He started conducting "Dance Parties" for local organizations, and soon thereafter obtained his first club, another step into the world of square dance calling.

In October of 1987, he devoted all his energy toward square dance calling on a full-time basis, touring extensively across the United States and into Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, England, Finland, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Norway and Sweden.

He was on the staff of various resorts, dance festivals, and was a CALLERLAB Accredited Caller-Coach. He served on the staff of many caller schools and caller training seminars. There was more to it than just calling dances a lot of professional training and education was needed to maintain his calling abilities, which ranged from Basic through C-1.

He shared his talents with many other callers and dance groups. He was a true visionary who presented innovative and passionate leaders to CALLERLAB and the square dance activity. This gentleman was a showman of many talents, and his unique style of entertaining is still emulated by many other callers today. Having performed in several jazz choirs in college, our recipient was a trained musician and developed many twists to his singing routines. His enthusiasm was overflowing!

He served 18 years on the board of Governors, 11 years on the Executive Committee and 3 terms as chairman of the board. He was instrumental in the creation of the CALLERLAB Foundation by assisting in preparing the business structure and 501—3 tax exemption status. He was also instrumental in promoting the CALLERLAB Foundation, serving 4 years as vice chairman and 3 years as chairman of the CALLERLAB Foundation Fund Raising committee. During this time, he helped coordinate fund raising events that contributed more than \$100,000 to the CALLERLAB Foundation.

He attended 31 CALLERLAB Conventions and was a presenter at most all of them. His “Mainstream and Plus Teaching Hints” documents, that he co-authored 20 years ago are still utilized today. He was co-author of the Condensed Tech Method. He was always willing to share any information he had with any caller that would ask. He published many square dance articles and documents on his website that were available to callers and dancers without cost. These documents have now been donated to CALLERLAB and appear on our website.

On August 29, 2016, CALLERLAB lost a dedicated leader, square dancers lost a remarkable talent, and many of us lost a dear friend.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is my great honor and privilege to present e CALLERLAB Milestone Award to **Tim Marriner**, We are happy to have Tm's wife, Donna, with us tonight who will be accepting the award.

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The DANCERgram magazines are written and published by a square and round dancer concerned about preserving our dance activity. The magazines include *Planner* (weekly), *This & That* (monthly), *Joys, Concerns, & Sympathies* (as needed), and *Directory* (as needed). All of the magazines are under the DANCERgram banner. In the event of new information between publication dates, notification is sent via the *Flash*. The Editor reserves the right to edit, condense, or rewrite any submission to the DANCERgram magazines. Opinions expressed in any DANCERgram magazine or on this website are not necessarily that of the Editor. All new information (since the previous issue) in these magazines is highlighted in yellow. Distribution of the DANCERgram magazines is encouraged via forwarding or hard copies. All of the Magazines, as well as additional content, can be found at [www.dancergram.com](http://www.dancergram.com). If you would like to receive the DANCERgram Magazines via email or you would like to submit information to any of the magazines, please contact the Editor at [sqdnxfan@gmail.com](mailto:sqdnxfan@gmail.com) or 863-224-3393.

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**Joys, Concerns, & Sympathies** (as needed)

**Directory** (as needed) • WC Key Contacts • WC Dances • SCCA • Links

**This and That** (monthly) • Reprint of articles • New Articles

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