CALL TO CONVENTION

In accordance with the By-Laws, notice is hereby given of the Call to Convention to be held at the Aladdin Hotel in Las Vegas, NV on March 25 - 27, 1991. All members, subscribers, apprentices, associates and Gold Card Holders are cordially invited to attend.

Among the items of business that require action by the general membership is the ratification of a By-Law change voted by the Board of Governors at Orlando, FL last year. The rationale for the change is that when people join an organization, they should be able to join as a full member. If they do not meet the on-going requirements for continued full membership, then their status will be changed to subscriber. Accordingly, the Board voted the following change. (Changes to the appropriate section are underlined.)

Article II Section 1 Classes of Members #5c (revised section to read)

   The Board of Governors or the designated committee shall review each nomination to ascertain if the candidate is a caller actively engaged in the calling profession, or otherwise acceptable, and a credit to the calling profession and square dancing in general. If a majority of the Board of Governors or the designated committee, subject to review and approval by the majority of the Board, considers the candidate acceptable, s/he shall be invited to attend the next meeting of the corporation. If the candidate anticipates attendance at a meeting within four years and tenders his annual dues for the next year and subscribes to the Code of Ethics and standards of the corporation, s/he shall have satisfied the criteria for membership and shall be added to the rolls of members of the corporation. No certificate of membership need be issued.

This change to the By-Laws shall be voted upon at the opening session of the 18th Annual Convention. The membership will be asked to ratify this action which has been in effect since April 1990.

CHANGES IN VOTING PROCEDURES

Because of many concerns expressed both orally and in writing, the Executive Committee drafted a procedure for voting which was approved by the Board of Governors. The net effect of the procedure is that committees will take actions during the year and will present the recommendations of the committee to the
general membership at the annual convention, if deemed appropriate. The membership will be given an opportunity to discuss or ask questions of the committee chairman but no vote will be taken on ANY PROGRAM CHANGE. All actions which change a teaching sequence or content of any program will have the proposed change clearly stated with the rationale of the change along with the pros and cons of the action. All such proposed actions will then be voted upon by mail to all CALLERLAB callers. By acting in this fashion, it is hoped that we will avoid the emotion and pressure for immediate action during the Wednesday morning sessions.

CONVENTION UPDATE - LATE REGISTRATIONS FOR THE CONVENTION

If any of you have not yet registered but plan to attend the convention in Las Vegas, you must get your full deposits (Costs are $330 per couple, $190 per single) in to the office prior to March 19, 1991. After that date, the office staff will have departed for Las Vegas and you may not be able to have an engraved badge for the convention. We will, of course, make every effort to accommodate your needs but we have been very busy here since the first of the year with all of the new memberships resulting from the BMI/ASCAP licensing situation.

Again, we remind you if you have dietary requirements, please submit your requirements to the office in writing since we will take no actions based upon a phone call. The weather in Las Vegas at this time of year will range from balmy to cool. Of course, as most of you know from watching television weather people, the weather can change just to spite whoever made a prediction. Dress accordingly if you plan to go anywhere outside of the hotel or take any touring trips pre or post convention.

As is the normal custom, casual attire is appropriate for all sessions at the convention. Square Dance clothing is not required although some of you may have been requested to have suitable attire for demonstrations etc. The contra committee normally conducts one of their sessions with some dancing.

For the gents, short sleeved shirts, regular western shirts, business shirts with or without ties, sweaters and jackets are all appropriate attire. For the ladies, casual attire during the day with somewhat dressier clothing for the evening banquets. Formal attire is NOT required. Square Dance Attire is NOT required.

Once again, you can expect a very busy program. A full session for the callers' partners is scheduled under the very capable direction of Karen Rippeto. This will include a fashion show on Tuesday afternoon. Most of the partner's sessions will be held in the Bagdad theater but no terrorists will be present nor will Peter Arnett. Many of the room names are based upon the theme of Arabian Nights and thus the tie-in to the current situation in the Persian Gulf.

Yes, there will be another session on Afterparties scheduled with minimal conflicts with other scheduled sessions. All committee chairmen who requested meetings have been scheduled as well as many special interest sessions. Convention Tapes International will again tape many of our sessions and will have these quality tapes available for distribution prior to your departure from the convention. Please note that if you wish to purchase tapes for your association, do so at the convention rather than afterwards since your costs will be less and no postage will be required.

Exhibitors will be present again this year for your convenience. Please support them by visiting with them or by purchasing some appropriate merchandise. They pay for their space and in some cases provide needed items for CALLERLAB at no extra charge.
During one of the Education sessions, Jack Murtha will be presenting his Diamond Program. This is a program designed for use in schools. It has three gradations of skill levels and has detailed instructions and suggested records for use in each of the gradations. If you are interested in this program, we suggest that you attend this session and find out how to go about getting started on teaching in schools. The program is excellent.

Showmanship, Making the Routine Fun, Teaching Techniques, Voice, Female Callers, Keep It Successfully Simple (KISS), Degree of Difficulty are all topics for interest sessions. For everybody, Jon Jones plans to introduce how to teach the Texas Two-Step as one of the Partners' sessions.

We will have four Board of Governor Informal sessions which provide opportunities for members to speak directly with Board members on any subject. There is no formal structure to these sessions and the atmosphere is very informal.

For the first time, we are going to try a similar format for Caller-Coach Informals. These sessions will be staffed by Accredited Caller-Coachses and may be an opportunity for you to ask a question about caller training or about some particular subject that you are concerned about. Some callers who are currently active in caller training may also use this opportunity to discuss how to become accredited as caller-coachses. Again, no formal structure to these sessions.

A general session on convention planning will be conducted for those of you who wonder what is required when dealing with the large numbers needed for planning and operating a CALLERLAB convention.

Last but not least, there will also be a session on BMI and ASCAP to provide the background used for negotiating with these two organizations as well as to answer any of your questions about what is and what is not covered.

**BMI - ASCAP UPDATE**

We have continued our negotiations with both BMI and ASCAP since our last communication with all of you. The fee structure is one which has been firm from the start and one which is available at this rate only through CALLERLAB and ROUND-ALAB. It is true that BMI will negotiate with state organizations but not at the same rate as with CALLERLAB.

Since the last DIRECTION, we have received clarifications on several aspects of the square dance activity. According to verbal reports from both BMI and ASCAP, as long as it is not a STATE or NATIONAL Convention, and as long as all of the staff (ALL CALLERS and CUERS) for the event are licensed, no extra license is required. Weekends are covered as long as all callers and cuers are licensed. Television demonstrations are not covered under this license since each television station has its own license which will cover the caller and/or cuer. Malls are under a similar constraint in that our license does not govern but the license of the mall will cover your performance. Nursing home demonstrations are covered as long as the caller is licensed.

On February 27, 1991, some members of the Executive Committee, Chairman Ernie Kinney, John Marshall, Jim Mayo, George White and John Kaltenthaler had a conference call with BMI to clarify selected items. We offer these to you in hopes that it will further aid in your understanding.

A written synopsis will be forthcoming explaining those items and types of dances which are covered under the license agreement which are not contained in the wording of the contract. Demonstrations used as a recruiting tool when held in shopping centers and or malls are covered. If dancing occurs during trade shows,
the overall license will cover the dancing since our license does not cover this type event. (This is similar to dancing on television.) BMI will negotiate with any individual or group other than CALLERLAB but at rates which are substantially higher. They have stated that they will not offer a discounted agreement to any organization when fewer than 100 licenses are paid for. The agreement which CALLERLAB negotiated is based upon no fewer than 500 callers. The agreement with other caller associations will deal with numbers from 100 to 499 at a rate in excess of the terms reached by CALLERLAB and BMI. Individual callers may obtain a general license agreement with BMI for the standard aerobic dancing agreement cost of $91 per year.

The license for State and National Conventions (the only common dance activities not covered by the use of licensed callers) is not affected by the tax status of the sponsoring group. If any group feels they are eligible for an exemption according to the Copyright laws, they would have to submit their request to BMI and ASCAP in writing stating the reasons and provisions under which they are claiming exemption. (We have been advised that no exemptions have been granted.)

By the time our convention begins, the Board will have discussed this entire matter in great detail. It is anticipated that a formal contract will be signed either at or shortly after the convention. We will keep you apprised of progress.

Some wild rumors are being bandied about and if you hear them, we suggest that you verify through the office rather than repeat them since in most cases, there may be little substance of fact in the rumors.

As a by-product of the BMI/ASCAP licensing, we have gained a very large number of new members, subscribers and apprentices. Even though this was not our purpose for negotiating with BMI and ASCAP, it is nice to know that the professional callers recognize their responsibilities to the activity and support this new requirement to be licensed.

The CALLERLAB agreement is based upon 100% of our US callers obtaining a license similar to our insurance program. There is no possible way which we could administer this program with less than full compliance. This also allows us to provide a service to the square dance community by providing clubs with the names of the CALLERLAB members who are licensed. If a caller is not a member of CALLERLAB, s/he may or may not be licensed and many clubs are now making the licensing a portion of their contracts. We sincerely hope that these additional facts help all of you understand what a fine contract we now have and the opportunity it offers to the square dance community.

CHANGE IN EXECUTIVE SECRETARIES

As most of you know by now, George White will become the Executive Secretary effective on April 1, 1991. He has a staff in place who will be at the convention in Las Vegas - Dar and Georgie Johnson. For those of you who will attend the 18th Convention, please welcome them. As of April 1, the phone will be 507/288-5121. The address is: CALLERLAB, 829 3rd Ave SE, Suite #215, Rochester, MN 55904.

This will be the last opportunity you will have to express your appreciation to Carol and Barbara who have been such terrific workers for these past years. Of course, Betty has also done a tremendous job for CALLERLAB and you could pass your feelings on to Carol or Barbara to relay to Betty.

Lastly, as your out-going Executive Secretary, let me say that I have enjoyed the past 15 years in spite of many trials and tribulations. We have seen CALLERLAB grow from its shaky early beginnings to the present membership in excess of 2800. That is quite an accomplishment for 18 years since our first convention in 1974. I urge you to give George your cooperation and help.

DUES & LICENSE FEES ARE DUE.