



Wade Driver
Milestone 2004

Wade Driver was born and raised in Atlanta, Georgia. After finishing high school Wade was accepted into the United States Naval Academy, where he became the lead singer for a rock band. While home on leave, he began his calling training with his dad, Doc Driver. After graduation from Annapolis Wade returned to Atlanta where he began square dancing again and with the help of his Dad began his calling career. Wade relocated to Houston, where he called for local clubs and traveled on weekends while maintaining his position with an oil industry company.

In 1974, he formed a record company that had a large impact on square dancing and the production of square dance music. Although there was good music before, it was pretty much all arranged very much the same. Each record company at the time had their own unique sound and gave little consideration to what the caller was actually calling. Many singing calls lacked a melody line for the callers.

Wade brought the concepts of modern recorded music to square dancing. He still laid a basic rhythm track, but then arranged other instruments so one instrument would shine or play the melody line during each figure. This in itself was somewhat revolutionary, but he wanted to go further. He was the first producer to make dramatic use of "chases" and "fills." Suddenly the "holes" or places where the music would previously die out disappeared. Now when the caller finished calling, the music would swell for the dancers. Each sequence featured a different lead instrument playing the melody and now there was a second, and sometimes a third instrument filling the gaps. This was a sound rarely heard in square dance music.

He featured instruments very seldom used in our music such as steel guitars, harmonicas, mandolins, dobros, and even used drums as lead instruments to excite the dancers. His philosophy is that "an instrument is sweeter to the dancer's ear, than the sound of a caller's voice and the music should stand out for the dancer." He calls these extra "chases" and fills, "candy" for the dancer's ears and feet.

His music philosophy was one of the contributing factors in the change of calling which occurred from the 1960's to the 1980's. Callers no longer needed to put a word to each beat, to fill the holes in the music, and help the dancers keep time with their feet. Using a good piece of music encouraged callers to "prompt" more and let the music play so the dancers could dance with just the sound of their feet and the music. One only needs to listen to almost any of today's square dance music to hear this influence. Wade shared the knowledge he had acquired, on how to improve the square dance music with other producers at many CALLERLAB music sessions

Wade joined CALLERLAB in 1976 and has served on the Board of Governors and the Executive Committee. He has presented countless caller and dancer seminars all over the world and has organized and been on staff at many caller schools over the years. Wade has displayed true leadership and professionalism in our activity, and, has had a large influence in the square dance record producing business and on our activity