



MASARU WADA
MILESTONE 2010

There are some people who pass through a brief period in their life enjoying square dancing and even calling, but there are others who make it a life-long passion. These folks approach every endeavor year after year with whatever it takes to make what they love to do the best it can be. Masaru Wada is one of these special people.

In 1960, Masaru and his date (who later became his bride) were invited to a square dance at a military base. He was only 18 years old at the time and although he didn't speak English, the club members were very kind and encouraged the young couple to continue. They both enjoyed themselves tremendously—so much that the very next year Masaru attended a caller's school at the military base and bought his first square dance records.

In 1961 he joined The Far East Callers' Association that was organized by American military forces, and began to expand square dancing in his own country. The dawn of square dancing in Japan arrived in 1962, and Masaru embraced it whole-heartedly by establishing the Tokyo Callers' Association and his own square dance club.

He and his wife were married in 1964, and dancers from the military base square dance club attended the festivities. That same year, two of CALLERLAB's future "Founding Fathers" and the editor of SETS IN ORDER American Square Dance Magazine came to Japan with a tour group of American square dancers. Masaru was very impressed and

totally amazed that dancers from different countries could share the fun on the same dance floor. He was equally astounded by the professional calling techniques displayed that day.

The Japan Square Dance Callers' Association was established in 1966, and Masaru was a director. He also participated in educating new callers and in American - Japanese jamborees and worked closely with The Far East Callers' Association and The Japan Folk Dance Association.

In 1976, His Imperial Highness, Prince Mikasanomiya, recognized Masaru's service to the square dance activity, and in 1980 he assumed the position of Director of the Organization Committee of The Japan Square Dance Association. As Chairman of the Board of Directors in 1988, he helped to build cooperation between the six branches of The Japan Square Dance Association and was in charge of organizing The All Japan Square Dance Convention in Tokyo that same year. As a result of his efforts, The Japan Square Dance Association grew to 1,100 members in 1975, then to 9,100 members in 2000, and then to over 14,000 members in 2009.

Masaru has traveled throughout Japan conducting caller and dance leader classes, and has distributed free materials concerning how to manage square dance clubs. He joined CALLERLAB in 1989, and promoted it in his country and in his travels around the world. Masaru helped to establish the Overseas Advisory Committee and became its Chairperson in 1999.

In 2003 he was a consultant to the Taiwan International Square Dance Convention Committee for its first convention, and has lead tours of Japanese dancers there almost every year. As a matter of fact, he and his lovely wife have lead tours of dancers to many places in the world over the years, and they will lead another tour to the U.S. this year which will end at the 59th National Convention in Louisville.

2004 was another eventful year for Masaru. His leadership inspired the Tokyo Callers' Association to become a CALLERLAB affiliated association, and he was an honored recipient of CALLERLAB's Small World Award. In 2005 he wrote Square Dance For All under the supervision of The Japan Square Dance Association, which has been a contributing force in increasing the square dance population in Japan.

Before his retirement in 2002, Masaru worked as a sales engineer for the Fuji Film Corporation. Retirement has given him time to call more than 20 sizeable events throughout Japan each year and call for 5 clubs every week. His retirement has also given him time to do some cooking at home, play golf with his wife, and enjoy the company of his daughter and son-in-law. He is currently working as a member of a team that is developing the historical chronology of the Japan Square Dance Association which will be issued at the 50th Japan Square Dance Convention in 2011. In addition, he's organizing another huge anniversary party, the 50th Anniversary of the Tokyo Square Dance Club in 2012.