

**C**ommunity  
**D**ance  
**P**rogram



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## Changes To CDP Voted In By Committee

The following additions for an alternative dance program were made to the Community Dance Program by the CDP Committee in April 1997 and approved by the CALLERLAB BOG on October 23rd 1997.

Numerous leaders in the Community Dance Program have developed techniques for teaching the recommended CDP basics under environments other than a 6-8 week program of instruction. This is often an "open-dance" environment where new dancers learn an initial set of basic movements during a time period just prior to the evening program and then these new dancers are encouraged to dance with the experienced dancers for the rest of the program. Additional new CDP Basics are introduced for everyone during the regular program. The time period for learning all the CDP Basics is spread over a period that exceeds 6-8 sessions.

It was felt that the current committee brief should be updated to acknowledge these alternate curriculums and encourage their use. The following wording has been passed by the CDP Committee and approved by the Executive Committee of the CALLERLAB Board of Governors

**To develop a list of calls, dances and material suitable to be taught in a six (6) to eight (8) session program of instruction or in an open-dance environment or another environment and called the Community Dance Program. To identify or develop suitable squares, couple dances, mixers, solo dances, trios,**

**contra dances, and other dances for inclusion in the CDP. To monitor the CDP and maintain its stability.**

In order to promote the use of the largest variety of dance formats in the CDP, the committee members felt that a core list of terminology needed to be identified, out of the current list of 24 recommended CDP Basics, that are used frequently in all the recommended dance formations and types. This core list of calls would be recommended for use in the open-dance format as the calls to be taught first in a teaching sequence that could cover from one to several dance sessions. The remaining calls on the list would be recommended for intermittent use.

The dances in in the CALLERLAB CDP Manual and the book "Dancing for Busy People" were tabulated for calls used. Where dances were repeated in both documents, only one was tabulated. This represents over 380 dances suitable for the Community Dance Program.

The core set of 12 basics that fit the most dance types are: **Circle L/R, Forward & Back, Swing, Promenade Single File, Arm Turn L/R, Couple Promenade, DoSaDo, Star R/L, Pass Thru, Ladies Chain, Right & Left Thru, and U-Turn Back.**

There is a surprising number of dances that use only this limited subset of CDP Basics. For example, the book "Dancing for Busy People" has the following number of dances that fit within this core set. 121 square dance and singing call routines, 8 quadrilles, 27

contra dances, 12 trios, 8 Sicilian circles, 8 mescolanzas, and 12 mixers. Total = 196 dances from just one source.

Over time, these 12 Basics would be expected to become the core vocabulary for the Community Dance Program under an open-dance environment and should be able to be danced on command by the average CDP dancer. It should be practical for dancers to learn them in 2-4 hours of instruction and have the experience of dancing them in various formations and dance types.

The rest of the CDP basics would be placed in the category of intermittent use. Leaders would be encouraged to teach or walk through each CDP Basic each time it was used the first time in a program.

Allemande Left and Weave the Ring were not included in the core list because they can be called directionally. Bend the Line and Separate are used in contra dancing and square dancing. Separate around one can be used in most of the contra dances that have a Cast Off. Right & Left Grand, Split the Couple/Ring, Roll Away 1/2 Sashay, Lead Right, Circle to a Line, Star Promenade, and Grand Square are only used in square dancing. This leaves Courtesy Turn which is seldom used anywhere.

## Contra Calling & Music

by Paul Moore

In contra dancing, we often say that there is a three way partnership between the dancer, the dance, and the music. But when we talk about having gone to a dance, we always say, "I went to so-and-so's dance." We do measure much of our pleasure in contra dancing, square dancing, and round dancing by who the dance leader is. Some callers or cuers have that something special that makes us really enjoy the dance more.

We must admit, that showmanship is an element. We are in the entertainment business. We also know some callers who draw all of the attention to themselves and their performance; we enjoy them once in a while, but not as a steady diet. There are other callers who do not gyrate, sing beautifully, tell jokes, fool us with tricky choreography, etc., but who draw us back to their dances time and again. Guaranteed, these callers know how to make their music work for them. They know how to select their music for specific moods and crowd reaction, and they know how to use each piece of music for its best effect.

One good place to gain some of this knowledge of music is from contra calling. We must be aware of several elements of music to be effective. Among these elements are: where the downbeats are; where the first beat of the phrase is; what rhythm the music is in; what the tempo is; and what the melodic structure is.

Let me digress for a moment. Most of us remember the song "Achey-Breaky Heart." Do you remember that dance that went to it that became quite the thing? People worked really hard to learn it, even though it was dreadful. But, besides being a catchy tune, the dance had one great thing going for it that made it all worthwhile -- it came out even with the music. At the beginning of each chorus, you started at the top of the dance, and when the music

ended, you finished the last step of the dance. It was great because you got the feedback of having done it right.

The same holds true with good round dances. The dance starts at the beginning of the musical phrase and ends at the end. Contra dances do the same. Good squares do also. When a caller is careful with his choreography and music selection, there is a great lift to come out even at the end. We can all gain more knowledge of how to achieve a dance and music match from working with contra dances.

To begin with, let's look at what rounds and squares have in common with contra. Rounds are set dances as are contra. The patterns have been worked out and written down and set to a particular piece of music which is effective. Rounds are also cued ahead of the beat or phrase so that the dancers move on the beat with the music. Squares, at least the singing calls, have set patterns which we tend to memorize. Most callers know not to put a really busy dance with a smooth piece of music. (By the way, many hoedowns have the same musical structure as singing calls.) In square dance singing calls, we tend to cue ahead for the breaks so the dancers move on the first beat of the phrase. On the figures, we tend to start singing on the first beat so the dancers don't get to move until the 3rd or as late as the 5th beat. Granted, we resolve this on the lyric -- not so much for the dancers' but so we get to sing the last two lines of the song. This pattern builds tension as the dancers chase the phrase of the music, and resolves that tension when they are on phrase with the chorus.

A couple of differences between rounds and contra dances is that contra dances tend to stay with exactly the same sequence of figures throughout the dance and to the same melody. Rounds have the A, B, etc. sequences that shift with the melodic change that

is common to most pieces of music. Square dance singing calls usually use the same tune for all seven choruses, though there are some with a different melody for the breaks than for the figures. There is also a great tendency on singing calls to use four different figures, and even though the sequence of figures counts out properly, it may not fit the music in terms of phrasing and style of dancing.

Several years ago Walt Cole analyzed every singing call record that came out, and he discovered that very few figures had 64 counts of dance to match the 64 counts of music. It ranged from 48 to 80 counts of dance. So dancers had to adjust: if there was not enough dance, they would add some by putting in extra swings and twirls; if there was too much dance, they would run from figure to figure. When we write contra dances, we must be very aware of how many beats each figure takes so the dance comes out with the music. The same should hold true with squares. It is a joy to finish a hoedown at home on the last beat of the music, or to arrive at home just in time to start the next figure in a singing call.

Too much or too little dance for the music would not be tolerated by contra or round dancers. So this is one of the things we can learn from working with contra dances. For square dance callers learning to prompt contra dances will be easier than learning to cue rounds because for the most part we have a common vocabulary. Also, most contra figures are 8 counts whereas rounds rely on more 2 and 4 count figures.

As said earlier, contra dances give the first beat of the musical phrase to the dancers. Therefore, the contra caller must be very aware of where he is in the music. This tendency to listen closely to the music, not just for the downbeat, but for the beginnings and endings of phrases, can help a square dance caller know where he is in his hoedowns as well as singing calls. For

example, someone bumps the table and the needle skips on the record. Now what? Listening closely to the melody, or even more, the chord structure can cue you in and get you and the dancers back on track. Also, by knowing your music very well, you can take advantage of special elements of the music. What if a great hoedown goes to just a rhythm track for part of it? Knowing where that comes in can help you set up something special, such as a grand square or tea cup chain to 32 beats of drums. Or you can use the key change to great effect. Think of the difference between calling Relay the Deucey and half way through the key changes versus calling Relay the Deucey, and the key changes just as the dancers start it. What a lift. You gain this advantage from learning to listen to your music closely, and contra calling can easily improve your listening ability.

As you listen more closely to your music, you'll find yourself calling more with it, and your calling will smooth out. Instead of relying on your dancers for timing, you'll call to the music and allow the right amount of music to do each figure. I get funny responses to my calling. Many people at first think that I call slow because I don't have them rushing. But as the choreography gets a little more complex, they think I call fast because I don't give them the stop start and look around to see where you are timing. I think there are times the dancers dance more difficult choreography easily, because they are all moving together with the music. And I attribute this to my regularly working with contra and rounds.

### Square Dance

Square dancing in the Community Dance Program has to depend on a careful balance between providing material that is interesting, but not really very difficult. The following two routines were picked up from a One Night Stand booklet Carl Brandt published for the Indiana Square Dance Caller's Association.

**First couple Lead Right and Circle four hands around  
Keep them go on to the next and Circle six hands around  
Keep them go on to the next the Circle eight hands around  
Reverse and Circle Right to home  
Swing and Promenade**

**Head couple Promenade 1/2...  
Sides Pass Thru...U-Turn Back...  
All Circle Left (2M-2Ld)...  
Four men Forward & Back...Four men DoSaDo...  
Four ladies Forward & Back...Four ladies DoSaDo...  
Ladies Swing the nearest man...Promenade home**

### Contra Dance

Every once in a while you find a situation where you need a dance that freezes most of the dancers in place. An example is a father-daughter dance where you usually have daughters that are 6-9 years old. In this situation the fathers and daughters need to stay close to each other. You need to use basics that will enable the father to help the daughter thru the routine. Here is an easy contra routine to accomplish this that really needs no name at all.

**Formation:** Contra lines with all the men in a line on the caller's right and all the ladies in a line on the caller's left.

#### Prompts

*Intro - - - - ,Everybody Forward & Back*

**1-8 - - - - , Turn the opposite Right Hand Around  
9-16 - - - - , Turn the opposite Left Hand Around  
17-24 - - - - , Turn the opposite Both Hands Around  
25-32 Make a long tunnel\*, Top couple duck thru the tunnel  
33-40 - - - - , - - - -  
41-48 - - - - , Turn the opposite both hands around  
49-54 - - - - , - - Everybody Forward & Back  
55-64 - - - - , Everybody Forward & Back**

*\*All the remaining dancers in the contra line form two hand arches which then forms a long tunnel for the top couple to walk under to the foot of the set. The top couple then stays at the foot of the set.*

**Line/Solo Dance**

This one was picked up from Bob and Allynn Riggs of Denver, Colorado. The record is a pop western tune and can still be ordered in 45 RPM. The routine also adapts well to other tunes.

**Reggae Cowboy**

**Formation:** Solo

**Record:** LR-10096, Moody Brothers.

**Cues**

- 1-4 **Point., Together, Point, Close**
- 5-8 **Point, Together, Point, Close**
- 9-12 **Heel, Toe, Triple -**
- 13-16 **Heel, Toe, Triple -**
- 17-20 **Vine Right & Kick -**
- 21-24 **Vine Left & Kick -**
- 25-28 **Forward Three (3) & Kick -**
- 29-32 **Back two (2), Turn & Touch**

**Description**

- 1-4 Point right foot to the right, move right foot to touch left, point right foot to the right, step on right foot next to left foot.
- 5-8 Point left foot to the left, move left foot to touch right foot, point left foot to the left, step on left foot next to right foot.
- 9-12 Point right foot forward with the heel down, move right toe to touch next to left foot, take three (3) quick steps forward, (R,L,R).
- 13-16 Point left foot forward with the heel down, move left toe to touch next to right foot, take three (3) quick steps forward, (L,R,L).
- 17-20 Vine to the right with a side, behind, side, and touch left foot next to right foot.
- 21-24 Vine to the left with a side, behind, side, and touch left foot next to right foot.
- 25-28 Walk forward three steps (R,L,R) and swing the left foot forward.
- 29-32 Step straight back two steps (L,R) and turn 1/4 left face on a third step with the left foot and touch the right foot next to the left foot.

**Line/Solo Dance**

The CDP Journal has never published a Mescalanza before. This one was published in "Sharing A Treasure Of Dances" by Les Henkel of Tobis, Kansas.

**ONS Party Mescalanza**

Les Henkel

**Formation:** Lines of four facing lines of four in columns extending the length of the halls. The lines nearest the caller have their backs to the caller.

**Record:** TNT 148 "Merry Oldsmobile"

**Prompts**

- Intro - - - -, All 8 Circle Left
- 1-8 - - - -, - - - -
- 9-16 - - - -, - - Circle Right
- 17-24 - - - -, - - - -
- 25-32 - - - -, With your partner DoSaDo
- 33-40 - - - -, With the opposite couple Star Right
- 41-48 - - - -, Same four Star Left to home
- 49-56 - - - -, Pass Thru 2 lines
- 57-64 - - - -, All 8 Circle Left

**Description**

- 1-16 Facing lines of four join hands and all 8 Circle Left once around.
- 17-32 Circle Right once around.
- 33-40 Face your partner and DoSaDo.
- 41-48 Face the opposite line and Star Right with the opposite couple.
- 49-56 Same four Star Left back to original facing lines of four.
- 57-64 Lines of four Pass Thru 2 facing lines of four and stop facing the 3rd line of four.

*Note: The dance can be done with any combination of men and ladies in each line of four. When the lines reach the head or the foot of the hall, couples Wheel Around and face the opposite direction and the approaching line of four.*