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The Committee for Community Dance of CALLERLAB

The International Association
of
Square Dance Callers

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Close to 50 Attend BDPLS

The 2004 Beginner Dance Party Leader's Seminar was a huge success. Counting staff, about 50 dance leader's and partners attended the day and a half event.

The video taping had varied success. We had some cameras that did not perform as expected. Hopefully we will still have enough good footage. We had the use of three MiniDV cameras and one Digital8 camera. With the large number of video tapes taken, it is going to take quite some time before they are edited and available for distribution.

Stew Shacklette's presentation included both a booklet and a CD donated by the Kentucky Dance Foundation (KDF). Additional copies can be obtained from KDF 6290 Olin Rd., Brandenburg, KY 40168.

CCD Meeting

Over 20 people attended the meeting of the Committee for Community Dance. Most of the discussion revolved around the CD Journal and the BDPLS.

Over the next year, the responsibility for editing and publishing the CD Journal will be transferred to Kit Galvin and Dottie Welch. This will free up more time for Cal to edit video tapes.

The Beginner Dance Party Leader's Seminar became a permanent event of the CALLERLAB Convention as of this year. Chairman Mike Jacobs said that it has become one of the "Crown Jewels" of the convention. This is cer-

tainly due the efforts of many people who both work on the staff and behind the scenes. However, it also means a lot more year around planning.

During the next year we need to outline an extensive list of topics associated with Beginner Parties. Each of you are encouraged to search your experience and suggest topics. They can either be one hour presentations by one person or perhaps a combination of two or more leaders.

Once we have a definitive list of subjects, then we can proceed to set up a curriculum that will cover multiple conventions with different topics and different people presenting topics each year. The best of these will be edited, by subject, and will eventually become DVDs that will be sold by CALLERLAB. The goal is to have a library of DVDs available for teachers and new leaders.

CCD Sunday Dance

This year this event was very difficult to find in a very large building. None the less, a continual stream of people came through the hall and many of them stayed to dance.

Bob Riggs acted as MC and extends his heart felt appreciation to all the leaders who performed. The event is audio tape recorded every year and is available from Convention Tapes International, 1698 N NE 183rd St, Miami, FL 33179.

Where Have All The Dancers Gone

by Ron Counts

As more and more square dance clubs quit operations, members age, move away, experience declining health and die, the dwindling number of people attending dances has for a few years started to get the attention of dance leaders, callers and organizations. The prevailing attitude appears to be that if we just continue to offer Mainstream and Plus classes more frequently and with new twists that dancers will return, will recruit their friends and our dance halls will once again be filled with happy dancers. There are examples of success toward that goal reported from various areas of the country but the efforts in these areas have not been tested long enough to portend a new wave of success.

If one critically examines some recent CALLERLAB policy events that effect the structure of dance programs a clue to the difficulty might surface. There once was a Basic Program that consisted of about 50 calls included in the call list for the Mainstream Program. The Basic Program was eliminated as an entry level program about 2000. I voted for that proposal and continue to believe it was a proper action. Many do not realize that dances can be conducted with fewer than the full Mainstream list of calls.

At that point the Mainstream Program moved up as the entry level program for much of the square dance world. Some areas use Plus as the

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Dance Movement Workshop

by Cal Campbell

I recently had the pleasure of conducting a five hour Dance Movement Workshop for the Colorado Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance. (CAPHERD) The material was designed for grades four through high school. The workshop was held in Colorado Springs, CO and attended by fifteen physical education and five music teachers.

The process of getting the workshop set up was more lengthy than complicated. I contacted CAPHERD and they sent me a bunch of paperwork fill out. Then I was assigned a mentor who was to take care of most of the details of setting up time, place, advertising, etc. Finding the right mentor proved to take the most time. Mentors became ill, changed jobs, professions and similar tales for more than a year of wasted effort. Once the right person was found it all came together in about 3 months.

As part of planning this workshop, I had contacted several teachers to find out what they wanted to dance and do. What sort of dances would be useful for them to learn. The most useful comment came from a friend who said, "Cal, I need to be able to sit down the night before and pick out very simple dances that I have never danced before and then be able to teach them the next day." That's a pretty tall order.

As a result of her comments and similar comments from other teachers, I planned the first four hours of the program around six square dance basics. **Circle L/R, Forward & Back, Arm Turns, Promenade Single File, Star R/L and Sashay.** I also used the idea of an Arch which is really a formation and not a basic.

The first hour we just danced. My goal was to show everyone how little formal instructions were needed to get people dancing. During this hour we danced in a big circle, contra lines,

trios, Scillian circle and a square. I also did a very simple line dance. I used the same dances that I routinely use at typical beginner parties for young people and/or adults.

Of the fifteen students, 12 were female and 3 were males. I used the gimmick of designating Red for right hand person (female position) in the couple and Green for the left hand person (male position) in the pair. It worked fine. With young children, I often use Rabbits for right and Squirrels for left.

I presented a wide selection of musical sounds and arrangements. Jigs, reels, and the typical MWSD hoe-downs. The line dance was Amos Moses.

The second hour I played several more music types and we talked a little about calling, prompting and cueing. Mostly about the idea that the dancers need to learn dance routines that fit 8 beat phrases. I didn't get into a lot of details. The purpose was to try and show them that you didn't have to be an expert to teach the children a dance routine and let them dance.

The rest of the time was spent giving them the opportunity to dance and to teach a dance. Any dance. The last hour was spent showing a few additional dances.

I was quite concerned about the physical ability of people to dance for several hours. So I provided plenty of opportunity for some people to sit while some other people danced.

It was a fascinating day. Most of the teachers had never taken any kind of a dance class. Only one or two had any prior contact with square dancing. None were Modern Western Square Dancers.

Almost all were willing to call or prompt if they were part of a group exercise. A few teachers were willing to take the mic in their hands and try to teach a dance. Some were willing to pick out and demonstrate a simple

dance. Quite a large number were unwilling to perform in front of their peers at all. A couple of them confided to me that they wanted to teach dancing, but were terrified of the prospect.

At the end of the workshop, most of the teachers felt they had gotten what they wanted. They were very pleased about the variety of dances I had picked. I was very surprised to find that they thought some of the dances I had taught would be too complex for their students. I had one teacher who felt overwhelmed and said that too much material had been provided.

I was very glad I had not planned a more ambitious program. The requirements for Continuing Education Credit mandated five hours of instruction, practice, etc. In my opinion, by the fourth hour, everyone was fatigued to the point where little could be expected to be retained. Retention would have been much better with the same material presented over several 1-2 hour sessions.

I did provide a CD-ROM with music from the Lloyd Shaw Foundation (LSF) collection. It was very welcome. I used mostly dances from Dancing for Busy People.

If some of you are considering a similar effort, it will be well worth your time. I encourage you to keep the dances extremely simple and very limited in goals. The six basics I used are all they really need to get started. It's all they need to teach a class that is fun for the students. It is, frankly, all that most of them will ever attempt.

You need to provide them with very complete written instructions of the dances. Tell them what to say and how to say it. You need to provide a source of music and play the tunes for them so they know which ones they like. That's why I went to the LSF. They were willing to produce such a CD.

Finally, Keep it Simple, Keep it Fun. We are building from scratch. Don't scare them away.

Square Dance

Jim Mayo presented a very interesting session on Singing Calls for Non-Dancers. The following is a quotation from his printed handout.

“My usual starting point with people who have not square danced before is to get everyone in a big circle with partners. (Boys with girls is nice but any partner pairing will work.) If there are man/woman couples I ask that the men go on the left side and the women on the right side of the couple. If you need to identify, call them blues and greens.) In that circle I teach, usually with very little interruption of both music and movement, the actions Circle Left & Right, Forward and Back, Partner Identification, Dos a Dos Partner, Corner Identification, Dos a Dos Corner and Promenade.

I then break the group into squares, reinforce the corner identification and dance them with patter music through some of the routines on this first page without partner changes. I find that partner changes add an unnecessary degree of difficulty. I also prefer to avoid the Swing action. In any of these routines the change of partners can easily be eliminated. Where the routine says TAKE CORNER or SWING CORNER just substitute PARTNER for CORNER.

That very first square dancing experience will include a singing call. I prefer to include a singing call in every tip. Sometimes I find it helps to walk the dancers through the routine before I try it with music. The routines presented below can be used with any standard (64 beat) singing call music. I have found these are successful with most groups, even with high school students.”

Here are examples of the dance routines Jim presented. Please notice how few basics are needed to create an interesting and varied program

**HEAD MEN DOSADO
SIDE MEN DOSADO
HEAD LADIES DOSADO
SIDE LADIES DOSADO
ALL DOSADO CORNER
ALL DOSADO PARTNER
PROMENADE HOME**

**HEADS GO FORWARD AND BACK
HEADS PROMENADE 1/2
SIDES GO FORWARD AND BACK
SIDES PROMENADE 1/2
CIRCLE LEFT TO HOME
SWING CORNER (OR DOS A DOS PTR)
PROMENADE**

**HEADS DOSADO OPPOSITE
HEAD COUPLES PROMENADE 2
SIDES DOSADO OPPOSITE
SIDE COUPLES PROMENADE 1/2
ALL CIRCLE LEFT 1/2
ALL WITH PARTNER DOSADO
ALL PROMENADE BACK HOME**

**HEAD COUPLES DOSADO
SIDE COUPLES PROMENADE 1/2
SIDE COUPLES DOSADO
HEAD COUPLES PROMENADE 1/2
ALL JOIN HANDS AND CIRCLE LEFT
ALLEMANDE LEFT (OR SWING)
PROMENADE BACK HOME**

**JOIN HANDS CIRCLE LEFT 1/2
CIRCLE BACK TO THE RIGHT 1/2
HEADS GO FORWARD & BACK
SIDES GO FORWARD & BACK
FACE CORNER DOSADO
SWING (OR DOS A DOS) PARTNER
PROMENADE (PARTNER OR CORNER)**

**OPENERS, BREAKS, CLOSERS
(These involve no Heads or Sides action)**

**ALLEMANDE LEFT WITH CORNER
TURN PARTNER RIGHT HAND
FOUR MEN GO FORWARD
AND COME BACK
TURN PARTNER LEFT HAND
FOUR LADIES GO FORWARD
AND COME BACK
ALLEMANDE LEFT WITH CORNER
PROMENADE BACK HOME**

**ALL GO FORWARD AND COME BACK
FOUR MEN PROMENADE INSIDE
DOSADO PARTNER
FOUR WOMEN PROMENADE INSIDE
DOSADO PARTNER
ALLEMANDE LEFT WITH CORNER
DOSADO PARTNER
TAKE CORNER AND PROMENADE**

**ALL CIRCLE LEFT FULL AROUND
ALL GO FORWARD AND COME BACK
ALL CIRCLE RIGHT FULL AROUND
ALL GO FORWARD AND COME BACK
ALL PROMENADE HOME**

Beginner Dance Party Leaders Seminar

March 19 & 20, 2005

Galt House

Louisville, Ky

Cost \$25.00 per person

Learn to teach and lead
parties for people of all
ages who have never
danced before.

Easy
Square Dances
Contra Dances
Line Dances
Mixers & More

For More Information

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Registration Fees should be
sent to:

CALLERLAB

467 Forrest Ave, Suite 118

Cocoa, Fl 32822

Spouses attending with a caller
do not pay, but still need to reg-
ister.

Where Have All the Dancers Gone Cont.

entry level program.

Just for one brief moment, think of having a leaky roof and your desire to fix it as a "Do-It-Yourself Project". When you pull your ladder out of the garage, you discover that the first two rungs are missing. Now ask yourself "How easy will my roof repair job be when I must take a first step of almost three feet just to get started"? Compare that to the difficulty being experienced in drawing new dancers. We have built a program design flaw into our quest for dancers. We need to replace the two bottom rungs on our ladder in order to fix our roof. We need to have an easier entry Program for our future dancers. It is within our capacity to fix what is so obviously broken, but doing the repair job the hard way will discourage all but the most dedicated Handyman.

Potential dancers are in every community; we just need to find them and offer fun that is quickly and easily learned. In Colorado Springs we do it by conducting Hoedowns. At our Hoedowns we teach only the 5 to 7 easy calls needed for the dance. This is done from a Big Circle and allows the new dancers to quickly and easily start dancing and they have a wonderful experience. At our Hoedowns we introduce dancers to the fun of easy Squares, the Big Circle, the Sicilian Circle, Trios, Lines, Circle Mixers, Contras, and couple dances such as the Cotton-Eyed Joe, Cowboy Cha-Cha, Country Waltz, and the Texas Two-Step.

Is it worth it to you to learn how to present these dances if you can draw 40 to 150 new dancers at each of your dances? We know that it is worth it to us and especially to the people who attend our dances. At a recent Hoedown on a stormy night in tiny Wray, Colorado we had more than 70 new dancers with an age span from 6 to 80 years and they had a fantastic time dancing to a variety of dances that were new to them. The would-be dancers are among us, we need to find them and package and present a program they can quickly learn & dance.

Solo Dance

"Baby Likes to Rock It" Line Dance

By Kit Galvin

Formation: Solo. No Partners necessary. All begin the dance facing the front of the hall.

Music: Baby Likes To Rock It - ESP- 197

Description

- 1-4 Walk forward 3 steps (R,L,R), extend Left heel forward on 4th beat while tilting body backward. Keep the Left leg, torso and head in a straight line as if you were in an erect position.
- 5-8 Walk backward 3 steps (L,R,L), extend Right toe back on 4th beat while tilting body forward. Keep the right leg, torso and head in a straight line as if you were in an erect position.
- 9-12 Repeat 1-4.
- 13-16 Repeat 5-8.
- 17-20 Rock onto Right foot, touch Left toe to Right instep. Rock onto Left foot, touch Right toe to Left instep.
- 21-24 Wiggle hips (R,L,R,L)
- 25-28 Vine Right.
- 29-32 Vine Left, turning 1/4 Left on 3rd step and touching Right toe to Left instep on 4th beat.