

# **:Dancing Together - Views from a New Dancer**

**by**

**Patrick Demerath**

The **AMERICAN CALLERS' ASSOCIATION** in its attempt to be of service to all callers, dancers, and associations has provided current, timely, and effective information on new dancer recruitment, winning ways to retain club dancers, and pitfalls that drive square dancers away. ACA continues to receive positive communications and appreciates these positive, encouragement to continue, and contributions from callers and dancers all over North America and abroad to continue these initiatives. ACA will continue to provide information that will help the square dance community recruit, retain and retrieve square dancers as well as encourage the dancers to speak out on the cumbersome and segregationist dance programs.

This month's ACA Viewpoint continues the subject of the value “**DANCING TOGETHER**” from last month's **American Callers' Association Viewpoints**. The idea of “**DANCING TOGETHER**” continues to grow and is acceptable as an alternative to the “separatist” and “stressful” dance programs that are prevalent and practiced in the square dance community. ACA received an email from Tom Waymire in Colorado. Tom and his wife are new dancers dancing less than a year. Tom read and appreciated the **American Callers' Association the Viewpoint** in the July issue of American Square Dance magazine. Tom points out that the modern emphasis in square dancing on precision drills rather than on dancing to good music is a real negative motivator. He states that he realizes that dancers don't break down with their local (Colorado) callers, but national callers (just had one in Lyons, Colorado) like to emphasize "Creative Choreography" as was illustrated in the Square Dance magazine on pages 23-25. In looking at that article, Tom didn't find "Heads Zero Lines" "Peel Off" or "Grand Swing Thru" on any Mainstream or Plus dance listing

Tom narrates that variety may be the spice of life for these the national callers but therein lies the reason for the DEMISE of square dancing.

People learn Mainstream. People learn Plus. People learn the "Creative Choreography" of national callers. People learn Dancing by Definition. Then they die or quit along the way.

Tom continues and states that at the last "big" dance he attended in Lyons that there were NO younger dancers and NO newer dancers. Virtually everyone (except us) danced Plus. Tom's result is that he and many others have learned not to attend dances with national callers, until they can dance very much better.

Tom suggests that he knows that there is "easy" Mainstream (not Beginner) and "advanced" Mainstream calling. Hew further suggests that callers would serve the dancers better by announcing the level of the next tip. Then people can actually dance and enjoy the music rather than feel like they are marching a drill.

The **American Callers' Association** would like to thank Tom for his letter. DANCING TOGETHER is all about SQUARE DANCING where everyone can dance and enjoy a One Floor One Level, and One People all dancing together not one hall for Mainstream, one hall for Plus or A1 A2 C1 C2 C3 C4. If we are ever to see square dancing grow again we must have one floor called SQUARE DANCING where EVERYONE CAN DANCE together.

Maybe the time is approaching for the dancers to take back square dancing.

Any individual, club, caller, or association who wishes to communicate his/her opinions on this subject is encouraged to contact the American Callers' Association [mac@americancallers.com](mailto:mac@americancallers.com) or Dr.

Patrick Demerath at [pdemerath@uwa.edu](mailto:pdemerath@uwa.edu). ***WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM NEW DANCERS OR THOSE WHO COMPLETED LESSONS AND DROPPED OUT OF DANCING.***

Please visit our website and newsletters @American Callers.com/news.

Until next time, happy dancing.