

AMERICAN CALLERS' ASSOCIATION VIEWPOINTS

By

Patrick J. Demerath

Get in the Swing and Get Fit with Square Dancing

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 really appreciates the positive comments, 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 dance programs.

This month's ACA Viewpoint is from a dancer's viewpoint highlights what is RIGHT about square dancing. Like last month's article, it is again from Ms. Pat Latta in New York State. She points out the benefits and blessings of square dancing. Pat published her Get In the Swing in Mature Life magazine which has distribution in 12 counties in New York State. She offers this to all of the readers to be used in your recruiting of new dancers, retaining present dancers and retrieving former dancer to square dancing. ACA advocates that square dancing has the potential to be of interest to all dancers.

Square dance benefits include such things as physical and mental health. Does your doctor tell you to get more exercise? Pat's answer: Square Dancing. Do you not

have much to do on the weekends or week nights? Pat's answer: Square Dancing. Have you lost touch with old friends or want to make new friends? Pat's answer: Square Dancing. Are you young, old, married, single, or divorced and want new excitement? Pat's answer: square dancing. Pat hits the nail right on the head relating to peoples' needs.

Pat continues that today's modern square dancing is dancing to a specified set of directions that are called to modern music. Dances are usually held in fire house halls, schools, churches or community centers where refreshments minus alcoholic are served. Square dance calls are in English and are standard throughout the world in Europe, Asia and Australia as well as in all 50 states and Canada.

Pat explains that there are many active clubs throughout the country. Through square dancing men and women have found the secret of keeping mentally and physically healthy and alert while having fun. You can dance with different people throughout each evening of dancing and can dance most every night of the week. Pat explains that square dancing is: "exercise to music" and is an integral part of a weight loss plan and can keep muscles and joints moving, which is a great way to dance away the pounds and soreness. People can square dance regardless of their health. People with hip and knee replacements, with heart problems and those missing a limb can still square dance.

Pat also believes that square dancing increases mental alertness because dancers never know the order of the calls and must listen as the caller sings his commands. It is a case of eight people working together and having fun to keep the square going. Pat adds that square dancing is fun type diversion from concentrating on the stress of a job or family. Square dancing is for all ages.

Square dancers travel throughout the country in their RV's, take square dance cruises, attend weekend camping dances and entertain residents of assisted living and rest homes. Lastly, square dancing is very inexpensive with the average price of a dance to be around \$5.00 including no cost refreshments. Square dancers often carpool to save gas. Pat's final comments are "square dancing is fun. Go ahead and get square dancing for the music exercise, friendship economy and travel but most of all for the fun of it!"

The American Caller's Association is again very grateful to Ms. Pat Latta for presenting her viewpoints to be communicated and discussed. Her willingness and desire to revitalize square dancing is praise-worthy. ACA thanks her for taking the time to communicate to us. Pat can be reached at PATLATTAI@USADATANET.NET

Any individual, club, caller, or association who wishes to communicate his/her opinions on this subject is encouraged to contact the American Callers' Association at Loulet@aol.com or Dr. Patrick Demerath at pdemerath@troy.edu. Please visit our website and newsletters @American Callers.com/news.

Until next time, happy dancing, see you in a square.