

# UNSUNG HEROES

By

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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 from 2000 to 2017. 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 ACA Viewpoints Article addresses offers an opinion on the importance of encouraging dancers to take more active roles in their square dance associations and clubs. Perhaps there appears to be a very serious decline in the number of people who will serve and / or hold office in clubs and associations. Square dancers may be failing to realize that when they belong to a square dance club or association that they also hold an ownership interest in that organization including the building, land, equipment, good will etc.

Perhaps the problem of the lack of people willing to serve the square dance club is that people who serve are the unsung heroes and get no recognition. It can be argued that many of these unsung heroes are dancers who have done much for square dance groups, and most do not receive or even expect recognition. Today in square dancing people take offices because no one else will, and they do good work. People take the jobs because they get a lot out of dancing and it gives them pleasure to help other people get the same benefit. Let us remember that the problems in square dancing aren't unique to square dancing as many groups nationwide such as the Shrine, American Legion, and Veterans of Foreign Wars etc. are having similar problems because our country has evolving less participative life styles as opposed to the 1960s. Looking at the numbers from the 1970s to the present, square dancing appears to have a steeper and more critical decline in participation than other organizations. To contribute to this steep decline may be that the both the introduction to dancing and the national dance programs need to be shorter with only one program nationally reducing unnecessary stress on the dancers and callers alike. In Addition, the American Callers' Association is relatively neutral on why some people take offices of management in square dancing and others do not as these are personal decisions made by dancers. It may be accurate to associate the rough dancing with two separate elements: boredom with the calls as they are presented in the same methodological repetitions which soon become unconsciously memorized and rough and rowdy dancing surfaces. Perhaps, it might be argued that some callers' feed off of rough and rowdy dancing as "enthusiasm" rather than discouraging it. The second element may be that dancers associations, club officers do not address these problems nor attempt to minimize. These problems of rough dancing contribute to more dancers leaving square dancing. Remember that when dancers quit square dancing, we

not only lose them as dancers but we also lose any new people that they might have recruited. The elimination of rough and rowdy dancing might be best addressed by callers associations and square dancing associations.

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 [pdemerath17@gmail.com](mailto:pdemerath17@gmail.com)

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newsletters @American Callers.com/news. Until next time, happy dancing.