

American Callers' Association Viewpoints

The Future with Optimism and Confidence

By

**Tom Davis
President**

It is with the greatest of enthusiasm and optimism on behalf of the Executive Board of the American Callers Association that I would like to wish all square dancers and callers a very happy, healthy, and prosperous 2018.

ACA was formed over twenty six years ago with a firm belief, supported by statistical data, that square dancers, clubs, associations and callers are under too much stress as they attempt to recruit, teach and dance too many movements with too much teaching. The fun and friendship level was at an all time low as was recruiting new dancers, retaining current dancers and retrieving former dancers. In fact, square dancing is and was in nothing short of a crisis situation. **ACA's answer was and is to simplify the square dancing program.**

The ACA philosophy is and was **“Offering More Fun and Friendship by Reducing Stress on the Dancers.”** Another way it could be said is the anachronism **“KISS” – “Keep it Sweet and Simple.”** KISS means to continue to communicate with the square dance market to ask the dancers and callers what they prefer.

Callers and Dancers Must Stand Side by Side To Find a Way to Save Square Dancing.”

Recent data have shown that the number of square dancers has decreased by 88% since our high periods in the 1970s. In fact, the numbers of square dancers are decreasing by 11% per year. What does this tell us? Square dancing’s continued existence is in nothing short of crisis despite the fact that square dancing can be the most fun-filled and rewarding activity in the country.

The American Callers’ Association is dedicated to reverse the steep decline in square dancing despite changes in social media leisure time consumption

The ACA value was and is to look for ways to halt the decline despite changing life styles of groups like the Baby Boomers and Generations X and Y, rural image of square dancers, and complicated and cumbersome entry programs into square dancing. .

What do we all need to do (2)?

- Work to attract and enhance **the image of square dancing** to one of fun, friendship and fellowship with exceptional health and social benefits.
- Focus on **telling non-square dancers or former square dancers** about the fun and friendship of square dancing.

These two actions are ambitious, critical and difficult to accomplish. All of us can make it happen. ACA is optimistic that in the long run that all of us can effect a reversal in the decline of square dancing and views an optimistic future for square dancing. ACA, through its news letters looks for ways to reverse the decline of square dancing despite societal changes and technology.

Any individual, club, caller, or association who wishes to communicate his/her opinions on this subject or communicate their success stories in recruiting is encouraged to contact the American Callers' Association at Loulet@aol.com or Dr. Patrick Demerath at pdemerath17@gmail.com.

Please visit our website at and newsletters at [American Callers.com/news](http://AmericanCallers.com/news) .

ACA sincerely wishes a happy, healthy, and prosperous 2018 to all.