

# American Callers' Association Viewpoints

By Patrick Demerath

## Optimism and Confidence in 2020

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 Square Dancing for the past 27 years. Today the American Callers' Association continues to work for a healthy recovery for our dance activity by providing effective information relevant to all callers, dancers, and club leadership. ACA's principal interest lies in dance program planning that can contribute to a refreshing recruiting marketing program to attract new dancers. ACA is now and always has been committed to help improve ways square dance clubs attract, teach and retain new dancers.

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 and prosperous 2020. Throughout the past years ACA has continued to grow steadily and quickly and find a respected place in square dancing. The ACA philosophy 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."

This does not mean to return to the 1950s square dancing world. This means to continue to communicate with the square dance market to ask the dancers and callers what they prefer, unlike the past 25 to 30 years where dancer and club feedback was all but non-existent. ACA encourages Callers and Dancers to 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 10% 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 will work along with Callers, Cuers, Dancers and Festival organizations throughout the world of square dancing in order to reverse the steep decline in square dancing.

Square dancing is a local activity that dancers do with their friends and neighbors. Still we to generate public awareness and promote growth and acceptance of contemporary Square Round, and Traditional Folk dancing

What does ACA encourage clubs, callers, and callers and dancers' associations to work for to help square dancing.

- Coordinate with local media to put square dancing in front of the public o market square dancing to the non square dancing public.
- Communicate to the public that square dancing is fun, friendship and fellowship with exceptional health and social benefits.
- Conduct survey marketing research to learn what the dancers prefer and move square dancing in that direction.
- Focus on solution to problems common to all square dancers.
- Limit itself to the aforementioned activities

These objectives are workable if a club works toward them.

ACA is optimistic that in the long run, square dancing can reverse the decline and grow and that square dancing can have an optimistic future.

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](mailto:loulet@aol.com) or Dr. Patrick Demerath at [pdemerath17@gmail.com](mailto:pdemerath17@gmail.com)

Please visit our website and newsletters at [americancallers.net](http://americancallers.net)

A happy and prosperous 2020 to all.