

Community

Dance

Program Journal



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The CDP Committee
of
CALLERLAB

The International Association
of
Square Dance Callers

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The Preconvention Beginner Party Workshop Was A Success

Thirty-two leaders attended the Beginner Party Leader's Seminar including seven staff members who gave presentations. The staff included Gregg Anderson, Cal Campbell, Yona Chock, Gerry Hardy, Jerry Helt, Bob Howell, and Bob Riggs. All staff members donated their services and most brought printed material for distribution.

The leaders came from all across the U.S. and one person attended from France. Most were currently leading beginner parties, but several were novices.

All sessions were video taped, but the small size of the hotel facilities made the quality of the tape somewhat limited. Otto Warteman has edited a 6 hour EP version.

Jim Mayo, the incoming Chairman of the CALLERLAB Board of Governors stopped by the session to thank everyone for attending and made a firm commitment to attempt to provide support for future efforts. His comments were well received.

Thanks to efforts by Jerry Reed in dealing with the hotel room rental, the seminar showed a small profit.

2002 Beginner Party Leader's Seminar Will Be Expanded

Next year, people from recreation departments and teachers will be invited to attend the preconvention Beginner Party Leader's Seminar along with leaders from the square dance community. The CDP Committee is asking for a budget to advertise the event in the Richmond, VA area and will explore possible free ways to expand advertising beyond this geographic area.

The hours of education will be expanded from eight to ten with the first two hours devoted to the basics of calling, prompting and cueing. Individual instruction will be provided to leaders who wish to gain experience in one or more of these skills.

Staff members for the 2002 seminar will include, Gregg Anderson, Cal Campbell, Yona Chock, Gerry Hardy, Jerry Helt, Chuck Jaworski,

Bob Riggs and Stew Shacklette.

Starting with the 2003 CALLERLAB convention, space for a Beginner Party Leader's Seminar will be negotiated by the home office. This will hopefully resolve some problems with unpredictable costs that have been encountered in the past.

We also plan on video taping and audio recording most of the sessions. Suggestions for topics are welcome.

Plans are being made to try and provide Continuing Education (CE) credits for attending the seminar. This will most likely have to wait until the 2003 seminar. We need to work with the recreation and education departments to find out their requirements.

Thoughts From Your CDP

Committee Chairman

By now all of you have received your flash copy of Direction. If you haven't read Jim Mayo's speech, I highly encourage you to do so. His comments directly address concerns vital to our interests. Jim talks about the need for a simpler square dance product that can be marketed to schools, YMCAs, etc.

Over twelve years ago the Community Dance Program was created to meet a perceived need in the dance community. It was based around a limited number of lessons (6-8) and a limited set of basics (24). It has largely failed to attract the number of leaders and dancers we expected for several reasons.

First, no one anticipated how many people would have to attend 6-8 lessons to build a body of dancers that would be sufficient in size to sustain itself. Second, for most potential dancers, even a commitment of 6-8 lessons proved to be more than they would accept. Third, many callers were unwilling to acquire the additional skills to become successful in this field.

There has been some success over the years. Many leaders moved to a modified version of the CDP where new dancers were welcomed every night. They were taught a rudimentary set of basics during the first hour of the program and then joined the more experienced dancers for the remainder of the evening. Under this "open dance" format the

leaders do not have the availability of as many basics, but there is still plenty of variety available.

In his speech Jim asks, "Are we willing to modify our product to make it a better fit for customers of today?" I would add to that a question of whether enough of the current callers are willing to acquire the skills necessary to lead such a program.

I believe successful leaders in such a program will have to be able to lead a much broader blend of dances than is seen in MWSDing today. We will have to go back to the format of including dances in other formations than squares. We will have to use mixers in addition to round dances. Callers will have to pay more attention to choreography that is based around a theme for the entire tip. Why? Because this is the format that will appeal to the largest population of potential new dancers.

Where will we find these leaders? The CDP Journal is sent to several hundred members of CALLERLAB. You people reflect at least an interest in knowing more about alternative dance formats. I am sure there are several hundred more leaders that do not belong to CALLERLAB, but are very active in leading dance groups. These leaders form a core knowledge pool for training new leaders.

The Beginner Party Leaders Seminar held ahead of the last two CALLERLAB conventions has provided a place for leaders to share knowledge. They have been very successful.

Inviting recreation department personnel and teachers to the upcoming seminars could, over time, provide an influx of new leadership specifically trained to meet the needs of a new class of dancers.

Will this threaten the current population of MWSDers and callers? Not likely. The current population of MWSDers is well supplied

with leadership. Most of these callers have all the calling dates they want. Some of the new population of dancers will want to learn this style of dancing. Such a new program will only result in more MWSDers.

The current crop of callers, that have the skills to lead a broad mix of dance formats, will probably find their talents much in demand. As recreation departments, YMCAs, schools, etc. develop programs and leaders they are going to be looking to organizations like CALLERLAB for training and will want talented leaders for dances.

I can envision an eventual mixture of dance groups, all under the umbrella of MWSDing. First is the Beginner Party composed of a mixture of dance types including MWSD style squares using CALLERLAB defined terminology.

Second would be dance clubs organized around either an open dance format or perhaps a series

of only three or four lessons. The dances would use multiple formations and dance types associated with square dancing over the years. They would be based in recreation departments, schools, and churches, and other venues with permanent facilities and staffs.

Third would be the present mixture of square dance levels that are grouped under the CALLERLAB Program Policy Committee. Of course, this stretches from Mainstream on.

Can this be successful? It depends upon being able to interest and train adequate leaders to head such programs. We have part of the training mechanism in place. Now we need the interest from the leaders. That's all of you and anyone else you can convince from recreation departments, schools, churches, etc.

As you can see, the future really lies in our hands. Will we make it work? I hope so. Come join us and recruit, recruit, recruit.

Calvin Campbell
CDP Committee Chairman

Review of Stew's Folly

Stew Shacklette is a well known leader in dancing and has published many dances over the years. *Stew's Folly* is a collection of "186 Contras and other things" written by Stew over a forty year period.

The dances are divided into 13 sections covering all the usual contra formations and several additional formations that intrigued Stew's imagination. These include dances that only require five people, Mescolanzas, Triplets, Tri-Quadrilles, etc. If some of these formations sound unfamiliar to you, they are to most dance leaders. Stew explores several unusual formations he has discovered through his research and some of the formations have no well-accepted name.

Each dance is described in moderate detail. The timing is blocked in groups of eight. Stew assumes the reader has some experience with contra and square dance terminology. The book does have a glossary of Contra Dance terms which also includes many definitions in common with Modern Western Square Dancing.

Some of the dances are in the experimental category which essentially means they have been danced by live dancers, but not necessarily to the degree that they are proven and well-accepted dances.

The book is published by the Kentucky Dance Institute. Information about purchase can be obtained from:

Folk Dancer Record Center
6290 Olin Road
Brandenburg, KY 40108

Square Dance

Do you use singing calls at a beginner party? What is the easiest singing call figure you know? Some callers teach Circle L/R, Forward & Back and Arm Turns, and Promenade Single File in a big circle. Then the dancers are placed into squares and the same four basics are taught introducing the idea of head and side couples. Then they can finish the tip with a singing call such as the following one.

Opener/Break

Circle 8 to the Left (16 steps)

Circle 8 to the Right (16 steps)

Forward & Back (8 steps)

Forward & Back (8 steps)

Promenade Single File
(16 steps)

Figure

Four Ladies Promenade Inside
(8 steps, don't hurry them)

Back home & Turn partner
Right twice around

Four Men Promenade Inside
(8 steps, don't hurry them)

Back home & Turn partner
Right twice around

Turn corner Left

Turn partner Right

Promenade Single File & sing.

Blocking both the opener/break and the figure into 16 and 32 count chunks means the dancers are able to closely relate the actions with the music. The 16 step Single File Promenade gives everyone a chance to sing along on the last 16 beats of the tune. Pick out a tune that is a standard and you will have a winner.

Contra Dance

Sometimes a dance only needs to have one small gimmick to make it unique enough to capture the dancer's attention. In this contra dance from *Stew's Folly*, the two ladies slide across (Sashay) nose to nose while the men turn back to change from a Right to a Left Hand Star. Simple, effective, quick to teach and different.

A Penny Saved

Stew Shacklette

Formation: 1, 3, 5, 7, etc. active and crossed

Suggested Tune: "Honey Harbour Two-Step"

Prompts

Intro - - - -, *Just the Actives DoSaDo*

1-8 - - - -, -- **Actives Swing**

9-16 - - - -, **Face down Four in Line**

17-24 - - - -, **Turn Alone & back to place**

25-32 - - - -, **Bend the Line & Ladies Chain**

33-40 - - - -, **Straight across Right & Left Thru**

41-48 - - - -, **Same four Star Right**

49-56 - - **Ladies slide across, & men turn around Star Left**

57-64 - - - -, **Face in at home, actives DoSaDo**

Description:

1-8 Actives DoSaDo with the facing person.

9-16 Swing this same person and face down the set four in line with the couple below.

17-24 Walk away from the caller six steps and turn around in two steps.

25-32 Walk back to original position and Bend the Line.

33-40 Ladies Chain across to the opposite man.

41-48 Same couples Right & Left Thru.

49-56 Same couples Star Right four steps. Ladies slide across (Sashay) nose to nose as the men turn around to form a four hand Left Hand Star.

57-64 Star Left once around to home position in six steps and face across the set on the final two steps.