

CONFIDENTIAL
NEWSLETTER
for Members of
CALLERLAB
(wing of A.S.D.S.)

direction



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Our first real working year is half over but the results make it sound as though we've been in operation for a long time. Your letters with ideas, suggestions, etc., convey the same enthusiasm that we felt this past July at our mid-summer work meeting. The group that met to discuss caller training curriculum in the East last May also indicates extreme enthusiasm. So, we are apparently on the right track.

Anyone who says that we are "ten years too late" fails to take into consideration that fact that we have many things going in our favor. CALLERLAB is starting out on a firm foundation and we do have the real strength among the professional callers as a part of this group. Rather than rushing and finding ourselves trapped into a direction that we would rather not be taking, we are treading carefully. A later evaluation of this formation period hopefully will show that we started off on the right foot.

PROGRESS SETS THE THEME FOR TWO INTERIM MEETINGS

This is the second "wrap-up" newsletter. (If you didn't receive the first one last May be sure and let us know right away.) In this issue we will begin to set the format for future issues of "DIRECTION." Remember, in addition to being a communications center for CALLERLAB (reporting on meetings and progress of committees), you suggested at this year's February meeting that we all share any ideas with each other relative to new experimental movements, gimmicks and ideas that have worked well for us and that we would like to pass on to other CALLERLAB members. New lyrics and patterns that may tend to revive or help out an existing singing call as well as thoughts and conversations that you might like to pass on to others will all make a "service" publication, filled with things of interest "for members only."

(Interim) REPORT - CALLERLAB ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE

At the mid-summer work meeting it was pointed out that quite a number of the assignments made at the February CALLERLAB '72 meeting have already been accomplished or were well on the way to being accomplished. Some of these projects tie in closely with American Square Dance Society projects but reflect the encouragement and inspiration of CALLERLAB. It should be noted that any existing groups in a position to help implement CALLERLAB goals - unselfishly - serve to help the entire activity. Square dance archives, springing up in several parts of the country, are a distinct service in this direction. Articles, handbooks and textbooks on all phases of the many square dance programs and records to implement these programs, though independently produced, can be of great assistance. Here are a list of some of the accomplishments to date:

Curriculum Committee Met Last May: Five members of the Curriculum Committee (Al Brundage, Earl Johnston, Frank Lane, Cal Golden, and Jim Mayo) met in Hartford, Connecticut, for a one-day meeting. The purpose of

their session was to start action in making a uniform curriculum for callers' schools around the country. Copies of an interim report from this committee were sent to several members of CALLERLAB. A detailed report from this committee will be presented at the February, 1973 Annual Meeting of CALLERLAB. In the meantime, those wishing a copy of the interim report may write to Jim Mayo (see his address in the first issue of DIRECTION).

You can help this committee by lending your opinion on the definitions of certain terms used in the teaching of callers. You'll find this list as a part of your questionnaire enclosed with this issue.

Incidentally, you might put down in your definition book that when we mention the word "basic" we'll be referring to one of the 75 movements that make up the Basic and Extended Basics Program of American Square Dancing (see our resolutions on Statements One and Two). Any one of the more than 1,400 titles of movements, combinations, bastardizations, etc. we'll lovingly call "experimental movements."

Mid-Summer Work Meeting Held July 22, 23, 24 and 25 at Asilomar: Present at all or part of the four-day meetings were Al Brundage, Bruce Johnson, Arnie Kronenberger, Manning Smith, Lee Helsel, Bob Page, Bob Osgood, Don Armstrong and Bob Van Antwerp. The meeting basically covered all subjects outlined in this issue of DIRECTION. It implemented several of the committee assignments and prepared reports for CALLERLAB '73 meeting in February. A tentative agenda and time block was set up for the February '73 meeting and a questionnaire has been developed to go along with this issue of DIRECTION as a means of including the thinking of all members of this group.

Important - A Questionnaire and a New Approach to CALLERLAB Communications: With virtually every member of CALLERLAB involved not only with home club programs but with recordings, traveling, etc., communication becomes a bit of a problem. However, communication is vital! We need to hear from you, get your thoughts, ideas for the Newsletter, and opinions on the direction this group is taking. Without your opinions blended in with the thoughts and ideas of the others, the group stands to lose. With it we stand a pretty fair chance of achieving wonders.

With this issue of DIRECTION is enclosed our first questionnaire. A portion of it will reflect Bruce Johnson's project on determining rates of pay for callers. The questionnaire affords you an opportunity to help the callers' school curriculum committee decide on the meaning of certain terms. We need your opinion relative to a time for our proposed First International Callers' Convention and your ideas relative to what such a convention should attempt to accomplish. And (most important to all of us) there's a place for you to indicate whether you will be able to attend the February Annual Meeting. (And while we're on the subject) ~~by all means plan to be with us at the Asilomar Conference Grounds on the Monterey Peninsula on February 4, 5 and 6, 1973.~~ You can fly with connections from Los Angeles and San Francisco and with direct surface transportation from the Monterey Airport to Asilomar. We need to know as early as possible whether you will attend in order to reserve space for you. Actual cost for room and board for the two nights and six meals is \$40.00 each (two to a room). Miscellaneous costs are born by CALLERLAB. Please, just as soon as you have finished reading this copy of DIRECTION, haul out the old typewriter, ball point pen or pencil and fill in the blanks. Using the enclosed return addressed envelope let us hear from you as soon as possible.

Incidentally, with so many CALLERLAB members on tour all of the time we're not unaware that occasionally it takes a while for mail to catch up with you. Most

of you have worked out some system with the folks at home to forward mail and we would suggest that you ask whoever does this chore for you to quickly intercept any envelope bearing the CALLERLAB name and somehow see that it reaches you without delay.

The Two Basic Programs of American Square Dancing: Prior to our '72 annual meeting, the Caller/Teacher manuals for the basic and extended basic programs (50 basics and basics 51-75) were completed. Since that meeting, corresponding handbooks for dancer use have been printed. Each of these 24-page handbooks contains the basic definitions as they appear in the Caller/Teacher manuals. In addition, a paragraph with suggestions for styling and comments relative to trouble spots were added. Also included were diagrams or artist drawings and photographs of each of the movements. These booklets are designed and priced to reach the majority of new dancers and indoctrinate them correctly in their foundation material. The suggestion to make these handbooks available as two distinctly different programs was made by CALLERLAB. The CALLERLAB study committees on Statements One and Two met several times prior to the publication of these booklets and agreed unanimously on their contents. The majority of the members of CALLERLAB were earlier involved in the original decision of the basic material included.

Our Group's Newsletter is Off to a Good Start: This copy of DIRECTION, while still not complete concerning its contents suggested at our '72 meeting, is at least a beginning. The first issue was printed by offset lithography. This second edition is a combination of offset and mimeographing. Thanks to Betty and June in our office, you may find this form of reproducing the Newsletter is just as satisfactory. It's certainly a lot less expensive. Tentatively, the next edition is slated for either December or January, in time to reach you prior to the February Annual Meeting. Please let us have your dance material that you think might be of help to other CALLERLAB members by November 15.

You'll make our job a lot easier if you'll contribute to the next and following issues of the DIRECTION Newsletter. We particularly would like to see (1) some useful gimmicks you call, (2) some rewrites on singing calls that make these calls more useable than they originally appeared and (3) we do need those patter calls that illustrate the first fifty basic movements as requested by Marshall Flippo at our recent meeting. All of this would help to make DIRECTION and the activities of CALLERLAB more useful for us all.

Files and Archives Established: Minutes of previous meetings, copies of all correspondence and material relative to CALLERLAB have been filed in the home office of SIOASDS. Eventually we may have sufficient room (and personnel) to handle more extensive archives. So, don't throw away your notes of earlier meetings, copies of callers' school notes, back issues of mimeographed callers publications, books, records, etc. which may be a welcome part of a CALLERLAB Research Library someday.

Attempts at National Organization: As you probably are aware, there have been many attempts in the past twelve years or so to organize the square dance activity. Some of these attempts have been purely "dreams" on the part of those who have done the planning. Others are selfish exploitations hoping for some personal reward at the expense of the entire activity. Most attempts in this direction have been made by dancers or dancer groups, many of whom have proven by their actions to be antagonistic to the caller and his place in the activity. Some attempts at national organization included the Kobrock Program in the late 1950s and the Arvid Olson Plan of approximately 10 years ago. There have been

others but most recently is the Mosier Program coming out of El Paso. Just a year ago these people wrote to a number of dancer associations proposing a national organization to be headquartered in Washington, D. C., with possibilities for national television, coordination with the motion picture industry, etc., etc. Only after a rather amazing percentage of the contacted associations indicated their endorsement of the plan did someone get around to finding out something about the "organizers." It turned out that the couple had been involved in contemporary square dancing only a year or two; square danced only a few times each month with one club; have never held an office in a club; were not aware of most of what was going on in the square dance activity, and so on. Their program has been dropped.

Perhaps you were one to receive a questionnaire and letter from Salt Lake City and a group calling themselves "National Square Dance Association (Provisional Group)." A copy of their questionnaire reached us on August 15. The letter inferred that it had the support of the National Square Dance Convention, however, in checking with Convention Committee representatives we found this not to be the case. Their questionnaire indicated a definite trend toward national organization. It hinted at a "caller's union" governed by callers as an internal part of the National Square Dance Association. It suggested a national square dance magazine provided free to square dancers. It suggested extensive benefits in the form of a pension plan, health and accident insurance, etc. If you don't have a copy of this questionnaire and covering letter and would like one to look over let us know when you return your CALLERLAB questionnaire. We'll be happy to run a photocopy of ours and send it along to you. We'd also like to hear your comments on this project.

Doubtless those individuals coming up with ideas for national organization feel that they are doing something unselfishly for the good of the activity. Those like this latter group feel that the National Convention Executive Committee members are the logical ones to head such an organization. They do not realize, of course, that the precedent of the National Convention is to relegate no responsible positions to callers and no callers are a part of the Executive Committee. As a matter of fact, no callers, in recent years, have held a key chairman position. It's also obvious that the National Convention's tendency to keep "secret" most of the business of the group and all financial matters could only prove to be a problem for any national organization stemming from this group.

The question we have been asking for years is, "What need is there for national organization?" Many of us feel that the activity is over-organized as it is. Here in California, as an example, we have more than 14 associations and now an association of associations. Goodness knows how many people are involved in square dancing only as a semi-professional organizer and we fail to understand how this can possibly be classified as square dancing. On the other hand, if coordination and cooperation is the need then perhaps there is an easier and a more practical way to get the desired effect without organization. Perhaps the move to get Congress' approval on recognizing square dancing as the folk dance of America, the drive for a coordinated Square Dance Week and the continuing project of obtaining a U. S. postage stamp to commemorate square dancing could best be worked out with a cooperative program.

What is LEGACY?: Three members of CALLERLAB (who also happen to be editors of the three major square dance publications: Stan Burdick, American Square Dance; Charlie Baldwin, The New England Caller; and Bob Osgood, Sets in Order Square Dancing magazine) started a project this past year which other members of CALLERLAB should be aware of. At a meeting held in New York in

March it was decided that square dancing, beyond the individual dancer, the individual caller and the club, was divided into a dozen units, all designed primarily to serve the dancer, caller and club. These were the units: 249 square dancer associations, 138 caller associations, 32 round dance teacher associations, 144 square dance area publications, 35 square dance recording companies, and numerous suppliers of public address systems, costumes, badges, etc., the National Square Dance Convention, The American Square Dance Society, the Lloyd Shaw Foundation and one or two others. Each unit or phase plays some part in the activity as a whole. All should be aware of what concerns each of the units. All are in a position to help with legislation and with protecting, promoting and preserving the activity for the future.

With this in mind, Burdick, Baldwin and Osgood (as friendly competitors, working together) devised LEGACY, and selecting one hundred representatives from all of the different categories just listed have arranged a three-day meeting at the Sheraton Inn in Cleveland, Ohio, May 11, 12 and 13, 1973.

What will come of this meeting is difficult to say. Those who are invited are excellent representatives of each of their fields. It is quite possible that rather than any formal organization, an attitude or philosophy may result that will tend to coordinate the various phases of square dancing in the future. CALLERLAB, at the work meeting in July, suggested the appointment of Bob Van Antwerp from the West and a member from the East to represent this group at the May meeting. Finalization of this proposal will take place at the February, 1973 Annual Meeting of CALLERLAB.

CALLERLAB '73 - AGENDA IDEAS FOR FEBRUARY ANNUAL MEETING

With the preliminary work based largely on the eight statements accepted by the charter members and with initial committee reports and projects completed, the next meeting should determine some directions for CALLERLAB for the coming years. In planning an agenda, here are a few of the subjects that undoubtedly will come into focus.

Goals and Projects: "Where do we want to go from here?" "What do we hope to accomplish?" We should begin now to establish some aims and goals and determine our direction. We should project three and four years into the future.

Benefits: This group can tangibly help its member callers through group insurance, retirement, hospitalization programs. There are probably other routes such as information on lower hotel rates and possibly such items as fleet purchase prices on new automobiles that should be considered.

A CALLERLAB-Sponsored Callers Convention: Allowing us sufficient time to plan, we should discuss all aspects of a proposed international callers convention; possible sites, dates, program, budget, staff, goals and follow-up.

A Master Timetable: All committee meetings, annual meetings, conventions and due dates for various projects should be listed on a schedule that will be sent out to all members.

"DIRECTION" Newsletter Project: Format should be discussed and responsibility for assignments made and accepted at the meeting. This Newsletter can be one of the main attractions at least for the present time for membership in CALLERLAB. A budget for this project needs to be set up.

A Caller Promotion and Publicity Program: Through the various square dance magazines in the country and by using direct approaches to all phases of the square dance activity, the role of the caller should be explained and promoted.

Caller-Training: A coordinated program of caller training including an agreed-upon curriculum should be made available to the entire activity. The caller-image needs first to be elevated and then to be promoted.

Future Membership: An analysis should be made of the current membership and new members should be selected.

The National Square Dance Convention: Progress on a cooperative program with the National Square Dance Convention will be discussed. The possibility for inroads in this direction seem to be unlimited.

Inter-Group Communications: For purposes of planning meeting agendas, publishing "DIRECTION" Newsletter and keeping track of the progress of various committees as well as individual thinking, a better program of communication needs to be established. Perhaps there can be some form of communication by letter (speed-form), tape recording or something of this nature.

The Financial Situation: A financial report and a budget for the coming year will be presented. Means for financing the programs of CALLERLAB will be discussed with some implementation expected.

Summary: This solution-oriented Annual Meeting set for Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, February 4, 5 and 6, 1973, will cover these subjects along with others suggested by the membership. Additional agenda topics should be forwarded to us when you return your questionnaire so that they may be included in the program.

Although we're not able to implement everything that we've all decided upon at one time, we appear to be making great headway. This past year many things were accomplished and it's a cinch that before the February '73 Annual Meeting takes place more of the projects will be completed. This is a great group working together for great things. It's hard to be patient but we're still small and growing.

One thing is certain. The first real steps toward a caller program designed for the callers themselves to help other callers with their training, afford miscellaneous benefits and active goals is growing out of the CALLERLAB program. Long overdue perhaps, CALLERLAB is now functioning and is in the best position to provide leadership for the callers of the future.

Al Brundage will be in touch with the Eastern contingent relative to the actions of the mid-summer work meeting at Asilomar.

Don Armstrong, as a representative of CALLERLAB, is being asked to set up the Contra program at the 22nd National Convention in Salt Lake City. This step of having qualified "professional" caller direction of some of the convention activities was brought up at our '72 meeting.

ONE PARTING WORD: You must know how proud I (Bob Osgood) was this past February when CALLERLAB members, at our Annual Meeting, awarded me the recognition of the Square Dance Hall of Fame. I was equally touched, impressed and made speechless by the presentation, at our mid-summer work meeting, of

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the Gene Anthony oil portrait which now hangs with the other Hall of Fame'rs in the Sets in Order Hall in Los Angeles. I do indeed say "Thank You".

- Bob Osgood

