

The Editor's Desk

It is WASCA Festival Time. I want to address this column to you relatively new dancers. As I am sure you are finding out, the Square Dance Community is very welcoming to dancers. If you have taken the opportunity to visit other clubs, you have found that they are very welcoming and, depending on how far away you are from your home club, you may find dancers you already know there. To encourage this dancing camaraderie, new dancers are invited to regular student dances. While these dances provide an opportunity to practice your new skills, they also provide you with a chance to meet other dancers. In addition to other students these dances also will have a number of angels attending so you can get to meet experienced dancers. Please go and introduce yourself to others – if you don't you will be missing half the benefit of going to the dance.

Now for experienced dancers the equivalent of the new dancer dances are festivals and conventions. The spring festival is WASCA's raison d'être. Back in the 1950's there were Atlantic Conventions. In 1960 local dancers formed the Washington Area Squaredance Cooperative Association (WASCA) to carry on the annual festival. Now 64 festivals later we are having our "65 and Staying Alive" Festival. If you have never attended a festival, you are missing a major benefit of dancing – the socialization. Later in this issue is an article on the medical benefits of dancing. The socialization benefits are just as important. Those of us on Medicare are used to the regular loneliness and depression questionnaire. With the dancing community at my back, I have to laugh at the questions – I am neither lonely or depressed – nor do I know any dancers who are. Attendance at regional festivals and conventions provide a circle of friends from all over the region. Attendance at National Conventions extends that circle worldwide.

Come to the Festival, if not as an attendee, at least as an angel for the student dance on Saturday. While there enjoy the non-dancing parts of the festival – the vendors, displays, and Second-hand Rose sale. Also meet and socialize with other attendees, especially those from further away – you will see them again at other festivals.

And that is it for this issue. Until next month

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CALLS 'N' CUES INFORMATION

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Calls 'N'Cues

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For Announcements of New Issues :

Send an email to:

wascaclub+subscribe@googlegroups.com



President's Patter

Steve Cunnion
(WASCA President 2025-2026)

From the Head Square.

It's WASCA Time!

Yes, it that time of the year when you get to do your thing. Square dance. Round dance, Line dance, and now Clogging. Plus you will get to square dance by black light, do hex Squares, progressive squares, and dance in your polyester Disco clothes from the 70s. Yo, John Travolta!

One of the ways WASCA honors outstanding dancers for their passion to square dancing is to present the WASCA Dancer Appreciation Award at each festival. Anyone in WASCA may nominate a person they feel has done outstanding service to our dance community. This year we received a remarkable 13 nominations. The last five winners

were: 2025, Pete & Paula Ropshaw; 2024, Virginia Fromel; 2023, Laura Vykol; 2022, Betty & Lou Mastrobattista; 2019, Jan & Alex Dommerich. (Covid nixed any awards in 2020 and 2021.)

The Delegates voted for 6 WASCA board positions in February: President, Vice-president, Treasurer, Secretary, and two regional board members. The delegates voted to extend the terms of the first four positions and elect two new persons, Joyce Duffy and Amy Clements, as regional board members. We would like to thank the outgoing members, Fran Hernandez and Mike & Carol McNamee, for their time, energy and devotion as members of the board. The new board will commence June 1.

SOLD OUT in 2025

WASCA'S 2026

"65 and Stayin' Alive"

MARCH 26 - 28, 2026

DOUBLE TREE BY WASHINGTON DULLES AIRPORT HOTEL, HERNDON, VA

Register TODAY for 2026!



RDTA President's Message

by
Ken & Berni Ryder

Dear WASCA dancer friends:

Now that we have survived three plus weeks of ice and "snowcrete" challenges that forced numerous dance cancellations, we suspect you all, like Berni and me, are ready for the end of winter and accompanying snowfalls. It's time to get to spring-time and renewed dancing. A great start was the VA State Convention February 19-21 at the Holiday Inn VA Beach/Norfolk Hotel and Convention Center. We were joined by four other RDTA cuers -- Calvin and Barbara Crofford, Christina Eum, Eileen and Chip Hopper, and Jim and Kathie Kline in the round dance hall with Mike McIntyre and Carol Pabst cueing in the 2x2 hall. With 7 teaches and several figure clinics, we had a full schedule of dancing. We all thoroughly enjoyed seeing and dancing with so many of our WASCA, MDSDF and VA area dancers. The dancing was energetic and entertaining as everyone enjoyed Christina Eum's historical round dance program that "backtracked to a throwback".

As we roll into March, we're all looking forward to the 65th WASCA Festival. Some of us may look 65 in the rear view, but we're sure "stayin' alive" and expect the exceptional cuer couples on staff -- the Garzas, Lewis & Baumhardt, and the Worlocks will provide everyone an outstanding dancing event. Amy and Ken Shotting are the program coordinators for the Round Dance Student Invitational at this 2026 WASCA Festival. They are working with the Garzas and Lewis & Baumhardt to assure WASCA round dance students will have a stupendous dancing experience during the Student Invitational on Saturday, March 28 from noon to 2PM in the Potomac 2/3 Ballroom. We also

want to remind round dancers to consider joining two of their favorite local RDTA cuers -- Christina Eum and Eileen and Chip Hopper --who will provide phase II-IV dancing during the RDTA hour on Saturday, March 28 from noon to 1PM in the Potomac 1 Ballroom. Why not take a late lunch and join them for an hour dancing some of your favorite dances that are not already on the current WASCA round dance program.

In addition to these special dances, your local RDTA cuers continue to dance at their Maryland and Virginia round dance and 2x2 clubs. Check the schedules later in this issues for specific times, days and locales. Finally, why not shake off your lethargy and join all those WASCA round dancers having fun dancing with their special partners to great music. Check with your local cuers or the information in this Calls 'n Cues issue for a basic round dance class convenient for you. Make 2026 your time to get down and rumba, cha ,waltz, two step, and jive!!

Stay safe and healthy. We'll look forward to seeing everyone on the dance floor during the rest of 2026.





CHOREO CORNER

with Dick Otis

The New Mainstream Program An Analysis vs SSD & CTM

Everyone is talking about the Callerlab new Mainstream program which becomes effective September 1, 2026. In the Washington DC area (and other areas) many callers have been teaching new classes with Condensed Teach Method (CTM). Elsewhere many clubs, conventions and festivals are using Social Square Dancing (SSD) program. CTM and SSD programs are listed on the Callerlab website under Dance Programs, Other Programs.

So what is the impact on these new CTM and SSD students when the new Mainstream program begins?

Bottom line up front, not much, for either CTM or SSD dancers

The Condensed Teaching Method (CTM) is a 48-call program developed to include the most popular dance actions, integrating some of the more difficult dance actions with the easier ones, and defers less used dance actions and redundancies to shorten the normal teach time.

CTM partially reflects dance steps that have a higher frequency of use. It retains fundamental dance actions and includes more dancer-friendly calls. It omits some actions that are redundant, and others less utilized. The method is meant to illustrate how to provide quality entertainment with less material in a reduced teach time.

Historical note; In the year 2000, the T2000 was another shorter basic/mainstream combination almost exactly like what just took place this year. The organization was split and the convention chairman had the tie vote against the program. This time, the new Mainstream program vote went to the entire Callerlab membership, which voted 75% for and 25% against, hence the new program was accepted.

During the 2011-2013 the then Chairman, Elmer Sheffield, Jr., asked Bill Harrison (my mentor) and

Tim Marriner to develop a new teaching method; the result was the CTM. Four years later, Callerlab also published the similar SSD program.

Fast forward to 2025, and Callerlab again attempted to create a revised Mainstream Program. This time the program was presented and discussed throughout the membership (not just the Executive Committee). The result of course, was the membership approving the New Mainstream 50-call program. I'll note, there was some "slight of hand" where several calls were combined into a Family, which includes several related calls, to meet the 50-call goal.

Because I've been using CTM for my classes, I conducted a comparison between CTM and the new Mainstream to see what else I needed to teach my class. Surprisingly, the answer is "not much".

In the attached figure, I compared the new Mainstream program to CTM and SSD. CTM is missing four calls including: Box the Gnat, California Twirl, Dive Thru, 1st Couple Go Left, the Next Go Right and the Separate Family. In SSD, the only missing call is Spin the Top. Of course neither program had the call "Single Circle" in the Circulate family which was moved down from Plus.

If you consider the fact that Box the Gnat can be called directionally, California Twirl equates to Partner Trade (without the arms), Dive Thru is equivalent to Pass to the Center, and 1st Couple Go Left, the Next Go Right is also called directionally, CTM graduates really just need to learn two new calls, Single Circle and the Separate Family.

In summary, these three individuals, Elmer Sheffield, Jr., Bill Harrison and Tim Marriner were a decade and a half ahead of their time almost perfectly predicting the future direction of Callerlab. While CTM preceded SSD by several years, they are mostly the same calls.

Callerlab has essentially made CTM/SSD the new mainstream. Thirteen calls were eliminated from the current mainstream. Add a couple of calls to CTM and one plus call (Spin the Top) plus the Single Circle family and you have the new Mainstream program.

The only impact of the new Mainstream program that I can see, is on the Callers who will have to be careful what they call to old Mainstream clubs.

Mainstream program to CTM and SSD.

New Mainstream	CTM	SSD	New Mainstream	CTM	SSD
Turn Thru	Yes	Yes	Pass the Ocean	Yes	Yes
Bend the Line	Yes	Yes	Pass Thru	Yes	Yes
BoX the Gnat	NO	Yes	Promenade Family	Yes	Yes
California Twirl (Partner Trade equiv)	*Yes	Yes	Recycle	Yes	Yes
Cast Off 34	Yes	Yes	Right & Left Grand Family	Yes	Yes
Put Centers In	Yes	Yes	Right & Left Thru	Yes	Yes
Circulate Family	Yes	Yes	Run/Cross Run	Yes	Yes
Courtesy Turn	Yes	Yes	Scoot Back	Yes	Yes
Dive Thru (Pass to the Center equiv)	*Yes	Yes	Separate Family	NO	Yes
Dosado	Yes	Yes	Slide Thru	Yes	Yes
Double Pass Thru	Yes	Yes	Spin the Top	Yes	NO
Extend	Yes	Yes	Split Two	NO	Yes
Ferris Wheel	Yes	Yes	Square Thru/Left Square Thru	Yes	Yes
1st Couple Go Left, the NeXt Go Right	NO	Yes	Star Right/Left	Yes	Yes
Flutter Wheel, Reverse Flutter Wheel	Yes	Yes	Sweep 14	Yes	Yes
Fold, Cross Fold	Yes	Yes	Swing	Yes	Yes
Grand Square	Yes	Yes	Swing Thru/Left Swing Thru	Yes	Yes
12 Sashay Family	Yes	Yes	Tag the Line Family	Yes	Yes
12 Sashay	Yes	Yes	Trade Family	Yes	Yes
Roll Away	Yes	Yes	Turn Back Family	Yes	Yes
Girls In Boys Sashay	Yes	Yes	Veer Left/Veer Right	Yes	Yes
Hinge Family	Yes	Yes	Wheel & Deal	Yes	Yes
Ladies Chain Family	Yes	Yes	Wheel Around, Reverse Wheel Around	Yes	Yes
Lead Right/Lead Left	Yes	Yes	Zoom	Yes	Yes
Ocean Wave Family	Yes	Yes			
Step to a Wave	Yes	Yes			
Dosado to a Wave	Yes	Yes			
Single Circle to a Wave (from Plus)	NO	NO			

* Equilant Call Used

Calls Eliminated in new Mainstream
Allemande Left, Allemande THAR
Cloverleaf
Circle to a Line
Dixie Style to a Wave
Do Paso
Eight Chain Thru
Pass to the Center
See Saw
Shoot the Star
Slip the Clutch
Spin-Chain-Thru
Walk & Dodge
Walk Around Your Corner



MEMBERSHIP

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By Tom & Nancy Stafford

Membership & Information Services Director
membership@wascaclubs.com

49 clubs are currently members of WASCA. Charlie's Angels Youth Square Dancing is the latest club to join WASCA clubs. They dance in Catlett VA. Their caller is Charlie Lu and the manager is Caleb Johnson.

The Delegates' meeting was held on February 15, 2026. 30 clubs were represented. The next Delegates' meeting is May 31, 2026. If you are a Delegate, please make a note of this date. All clubs need to attend at least one Delegates' meeting per fiscal year to be in good standing.

We hope you are all getting ready for the 2026 WASCA Festival. Lisa Alfred and her committee are working hard to bring a fun time for all attendees. There will be special dance halls in 2026. Lisa keeps mentioning one hall which will be a Polyester hall. You will have to wear polyester to check this hall out

We attended the Virginia State Convention in Virginia Beach which was held February 19 thru 21 2026. There were several guest callers in attendance this year. Skip Cleland from Alabama, Avery Arnold from Indiana, Doren McBroom from Maryland, Scott Brown from Pennsylvania and Greg Hatmaker from Tennessee. There were also callers from Maryland and Ohio as well as Virginia

who had been on staff before. Check out the Convention Handbook at callsncues.cragg.info. Click on 36th Virginia State Convention Backtrack to a Throwback.

Also, note that all clubs need to pay their Membership dues by May 31, 2026. The fee is \$25.00. You can download the form at www.wascaclubs.org. Click on forms. Then renewal. Here is the link:

<https://wascaclubs.org/forms/WASCA%20Membership%20Renewal%20Form-fillable.pdf>

Delegates and Managers please check your club listing both in this issue of Calls 'n' Cues and on the website (www.wascaclubs.org) and let us know if any changes are needed. If your club's President or Manager, Delegate or Alternate Delegate's name or their contact information changes during the year, please send us the new name with the address, phone number and email address. For insurance to remain valid and to assure delegate meetings' agendas & minutes go to the correct place we need the correct information. We also need any changes in venue and dance schedule.

You can email them to membership@wascaclubs.com or call Nancy's cell at 703-217-1670 or Tom's cell at 703-217-4791 with your changes.

Please send WASCA Club Directory changes to

membership@wascaclubs.com

This Fun Hobby May Reduce Your Dementia Risk By 76 Percent

The following article is an excerpt from a column by Trisha Pasricha, MD in the Washington Post on January 5, 2026.

What Are the Best Ways to Keep My Brain Sharp as I Age?

There are several science-based ways to lower your risk of dementia — but one especially fun option might surprise you: dancing.

Dancing combines some of the best elements known to be associated with longevity: exercise, creativity, balance and social connection. You're investing the same time as walking or other exercise activities but may be getting much more out of it.

In fact, one study found that people who danced frequently (more than once a week) had a 76 percent lower risk of dementia than those who did so rarely.

Physical activity, especially aerobic exercise, in general is wonderful for our brain health. And this isn't intended to knock walking: A small randomized controlled trial of walking versus ballroom dancing among older adults found both activities benefited memory and learning.

But combining physical activity with creativity and cognitive challenges may help protect the brain further. Dancing asks your brain to do several things at once: match a rhythm, remember steps (or quickly improvise some new ones), navigate space and perhaps even respond to a partner.

Dancing May Also Boost Balance and Strength

Besides brain health, there are other great reasons to consider shaking a hip. A 2020 meta-analysis of 29 randomized trials among healthy older adults found that social dance-based activities were associated with a 37 percent reduced risk of falling — as well as improvements in balance and lower body strength.