The Editor's Desk

!! Good News !!

These past couple of months have had the best news I have heard in a long while - two new clubs

The first of these clubs is the Riderwood Square Dance Club. It has applied for and been admitted to WASCA. It is located in Riderwood Senior Living, Silver Spring. They dance from 10:15-11:45 am Wednesday Mornings. They were a small social club/class of 1-2 squares with Kenny Farris calling. Several years ago Henry and his wife Lynn took Village Swinger lessons from Eva Murray. They subsequently moved into Riderwood and joined the local group there. Eventually Henry became the spark plug for the group. With his in-Riderwood advertising and word of mouth the group has grown to five plus squares. Due to limited dance floor space, and Riderwood rules about non-residents, Only a very limited number of outsiders can ever attend. However they are providing dancers to other clubs such a Sunday Dancers, Village Swingers, and Sunday Dancers.

The second club is a youth club known as Charlie's Angles. They meet in the Catlett - Gainesville - Warrenton area southwest of the DC area. Their members dance regularly with WASCA clubs such as the Merry Notes and Rivermont Ramblers. They also have a promising young caller, Grant Moser (see the article in this issue). They have applied for WASCA membership.

All in all this is good news for WASCA Dancers

Finally on a personal note, (and taking advantage of my being editor) This year I will have my 80th birthday. I am going to hold an open, free birthday square dance on Wednesday 8 April in conjunction with the Gerrymanders weekly Wednesday evening dance. It will be a 2x2 dance called by Kenny Harris and Ken Ryder. As a birthday present I would like for 7 other good dancers to come and join me in dancing "Fisherman's Luck". I enjoy that dance but since I last danced it I have had a new hip, a new knee and a triple bypass. I want to see if I can still dance it (after 80).

And that is it for this issue – until next issue

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For Announcements of New Issues :
Send an email to:
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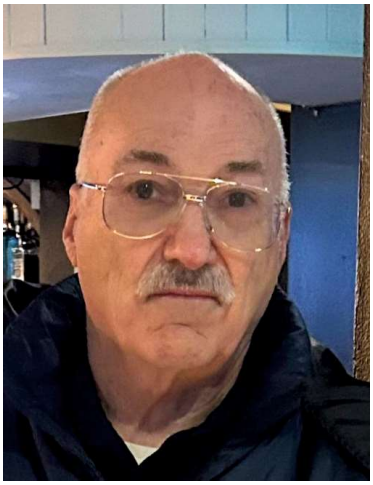


President's Patter

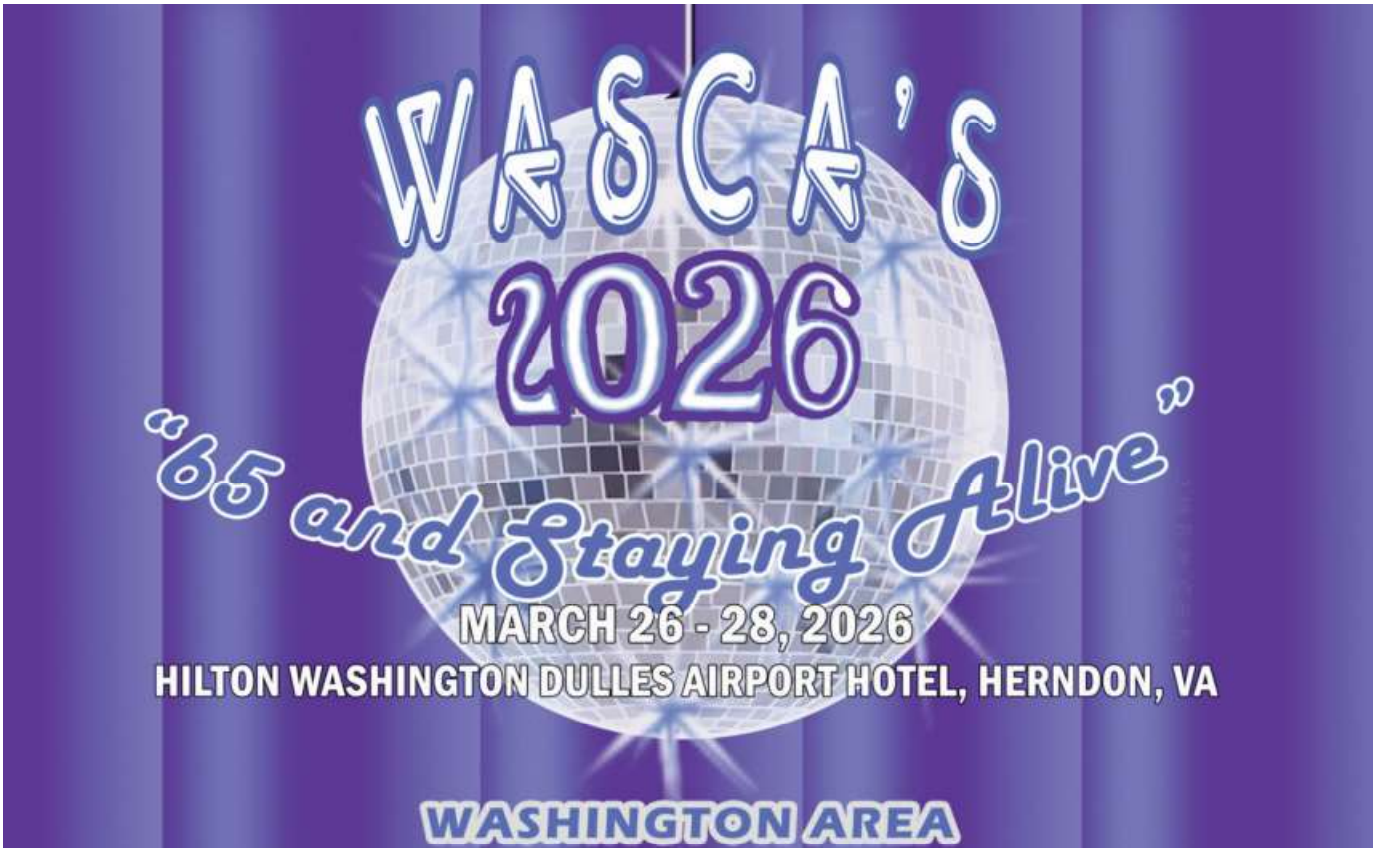
Steve Cunnion
(WASCA President 2025-2026)

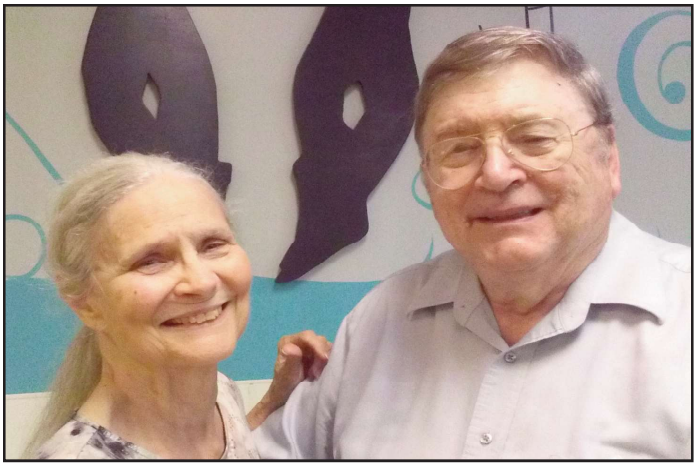
Make your neighbor smile.

Happy New Year! It's time again to make those resolutions that only last through January. Here is one that is easy to complete through out the year. Just bring a friend to your next square dance. Not just to an open house or lessons (although that would be even better) but to jwatch you smile and laugh as you dance. That's why you square dance, isn't it? Why shouldn't your friends and neighbors have a chance? The only other dancers that smile are Olympic competitors that are trained to smile during their performances.

Have a neighbor or friend that is bored, lonely, unhappy? Get them out of their houses and take them where people are socializing, eating and just having fun. Did I just describe your club? Think of it as "follow your neighbor" in reverse. Have your neighbor follow you.

If your friends or neighbors don't have a hobby or don't get much exercise, you can change that with square dancing. Be the preventive health officer of your neighborhood! It is hard to find a hobby with exercise that is cheaper than square dancing. Now pickleball is a cheap hobby, but just about every player I know has been injured on the court including me.





RDTA President's Message

by

Ken & Berni Ryder

Dear WASCA dancer friends:

As we enter 2026 and the nation's 250th birthday year, we look back in fondness to the many wonderful dancing events in 2025 and forward in anticipation of another year of warm friendship and fun with our many dancing friends and dancing opportunities in the coming year 2026. We really enjoyed seeing and dancing with many of our WASCA dance friends at the 50th annual Toys for Tots dance on Sunday, December 7. This was a very special dance at the Glenmont United Methodist Church in Silver Spring MD, dedicated to the memory of long-time caller and Toys for Tots supporter -- Virgil Forbes. Round dancers thoroughly enjoyed dancing to many of their favorite "seasonal" tunes cued by Christine Eum and Ken Ryder.

We know that many of you enjoyed the special Christmas and New Years Eve party dances at various WASCA clubs during this Holiday season. Berni and I sorely missed dancing into the New Year 2026 with Barbara and Wayne Blackford at the "barn" in Columbia SC, but thoroughly enjoyed dancing at a special New Years Day Celebratory Ball with 10 other couples and Christina Eum in Annandale VA.

As we move into 2026, there are a number of special round dancing events coming up over the next couple of months where we will look forward to seeing and dancing with many of you. Mark your calendars first for the Virginia State Convention at the Holiday Inn Hotel & Conference Center in Virginia Beach on February 19 - 21 2026. Christina Eum is preparing the round dance program featuring a full range of phase II-V dances popular during the 60's, 70's and 80's for both the round dance and 2x2 halls. See the flyer later in this issue and come on down and "backtrack to a throwback " in Virginia Beach in February.

The second special dance event you won't want to miss is RDTA's annual Snowflake Ball . While we haven't yet completed our planning, we expect this dance will be on a Sunday from 3-5:30 PM in late February or early March. Once a specific date and locale are determined, we will send flyers to our WASCA and MDSDF round dancers via the WASCA and MDSDF google and list serve portals. Come join us to dance with your favorite RDTA cuers in one of our two halls -- a phase II-IV and a phase IV-VI hall. There will also be special goodies to enjoy and tasty liquid refreshments to help make this a very special dance afternoon.

Finally, we will look forward to seeing and dancing with all our WASCA dance friends at the 65th annual WASCA festival-- "65 and Stayin' Alive"-- March 26-28 at the Hilton Washing Dulles Airport Hotel in Herndon Virginia. [see the flyer in this issue]. Round dancers will enjoy dancing with three national cueing couples, Rey and Sherry Garza, Randy Lewis and Kathy Baumhardt, and Curt and Tammy Worlock. Amy and Ken Shotting will be organizing the round dance student invitational on Saturday, March 28, from noon to 2PM and promise an exciting time for all our round dance students. We'll have more on this very special festival in the March/April Calls 'n Cues issue.

Stay safe and healthy and we'll enjoy seeing and dancing with everyone on the dance floor in 2026.

CHOREO CORNER

with Dick Otis

Website: www.DickOtis.com Email: dick.otis@me.com

Happy New Year everyone! 2026 will be the 11th year I've been writing Choreo Corner.

It's extremely hard to come up with topics to discuss. The last issue, 2025 November/December, might have been my best one yet, but topics like a new mainstream and new plus programs don't come along very often.

To be honest, I have no idea how many callers and/or dancers read Choreo Corner. It's not like my youtube channel, youtube.com/squaredancers, where I can see 1366 subscribers with 5725 views in the last 28 days (not a lot, but not insignificant either).

The last issue took an analytic approach to discussing the new Mainstream Program versus the old Mainstream program, and various 50 call programs: including the "Club 50", the "50 call Condensed Teaching Method (CTM)", and the Callerlab Social Square Dance (SSD) program. And the year 2000, T2000 program - another shorter basic/mainstream combination that failed to pass by one vote. These lists all have 50 calls (mostly the same ones) in common. In other words, a 50 call program idea has been around for at least 25 years, an idea that wasn't going to die.

The new Mainstream program becomes official in September 1, 2026. The new Plus program will follow. (Note: I've joined both the Callerlab Plus and Advance committees to see where they are going, and perhaps steer them a bit).

What brings me to the topic of teaching both Standard and Extended applications to new dancers early in their training? Once a new dancer understands, is comfortable with and can dance a call by it's standard definition, then they need to experience some extended application of that call. This ensures the dancer truly understands the definition of the call rather than just going through the motions by rote.

To understand Extended Applications you must first understand the term Standard Applications. The Callerlab Standard Basic and Mainstream Applications Supplemental Document (which I'm drawing on for material in this column) says that Standard Applications means "those calls from which a caller may reasonably expect close to 100% dancer success." Variations not listed are considered Extended Applications.

Some people disagree with this approach and only want new students to learn the standard applications. They want new dancers to progress through their lessons as quickly as possible so they can move on to a "club" environment. Many times that means moving on to the Plus program as soon as possible so the dancers can join a Plus Club. The problem with this approach, is that a dance environment is a difficult place in which to learn.

At a dance if you hear a new call, or are in a different position than you are used to, two things can happen. You can break down the square, scramble to recover and continue the tip. Or, you can be pulled through it by the other dancers and not know what happened. In either case, by the end of the tip you may, or may not, even remember what the call or your position was, and you may not experience the call the rest of the evening. In a class environment, they will stop, explain and repeat as necessary.

According to Callerlab, in addition to proper training, dancer success with a call usually depends upon two factors:

(1) Experience – dancers will succeed with if they have sufficient previous experience dancing the call. Comfort and confidence improves with repetition. Hence the formation and arrangements callers' use most often become defined as "Standard".

Example: From a quarter tag formation in a right-hand wave in the middle and couples on the outside facing in, every Plus dancer (hopefully) will be successful doing a Ping Pong Circulate – because that's how they learned the call. However, if the center wave is Left Handed, then the probably of success drops off significantly unless the dancers have been taught, and have practiced the call from this arrangement.

(2) Familiar Feeling – dancers will succeed if they sense a familiar feeling, even though the situation is new. So even if a call is NOT standard, i.e. not called regularly, if it FEELS familiar they will be successful.

Example: From right hand, parallel ocean waves with girls in the center, every dancer past their first few lessons will be successful doing a Swing Thru – which of course is defined as: Those who can turn 1/2 by the right; then those who can turn 1/2 by the left. Chances are most dancers would also be successful if they were in a Left-Hand Wave, and the caller said, "Start with your right hand and Swing Thru". Once the dancers are reminded to start with their right hand, the remainder of the call is familiar, and so the dancers will be successful

Ask your caller to call some of the below calls Left-Handed.

Ping Pong Circulate

Coordinate

Spin Chain The Gears

Track Two

Follow Your Neighbor

Reverse Single Circle To A Left Hand Wave

Left 3/4 Tag The Line

Left Spin Chain & Exchange the Gears

and my favorite…

Relay The Deucey

If you are successful with these calls from a left hand perspective, then you are truly on your way to square dance excellence.

MEMBERSHIP

-

By Tom & Nancy Stafford

Membership & Information Services Director

membership@wascaclubs.com

48 clubs are currently members of WASCA. Riderwood Square Dance was admitted to WASCA in December 2025. The club has 70 members and dances every Wednesday at the Riderwood Village Senior Community. The club dances at the Basic level. Click on this link to see the club's promotional video.

https://youtu.be/4WkFXfJNeCs?si=KLosf67xpRwmsX_N

The next Delegates' meeting will be February 15, 2026. February 15, 2026 will be the annual meeting where the Delegates will elect the Executive Committee of the WASCA Board and some Directors. This meeting will be on Zoom at 7:00 P.M. Delegates and Managers will be notified by Bill Houston, WASCA Secretary.

Have you ever searched Why Square Dance? I thought it would be fun to see what AI said. This is the AI Overview:

> *People square dance for fun, fitness, and community, connecting with tradition and each other through rhythmic, caller-led movements; it offers physical exercise, social bonding, and cultural preservation, with roots in European folk dances evolving in America and popularized by figures like Henry Ford for its perceived moral and health benefits.*

I thought well that describes square dancing to me. I am pretty sure Round Dancing and Clogging would also fit this description.

If you need a copy of the insurance certificate for your venue, please email: certificates@blueridgeriskpartners.com

Please send email of club name and contact address and state the certificate holder (Washington Area Square and Round Dance Association) with request. Include the name of your venue. The new account manager is Colby Posey. Email Colby at colby.posey@blueridgeriskpartners.com if you have questions about the insurance.

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

Mic in Hand, Future in Motion: The Remarkable Rise of a Teen Caller

By: Sarah Moser

In the timeless swirl of square dancing, where most callers spend a decade or more earning their stripes, a teenager from Virginia is quietly rewriting the timeline. That momentum comes from serious dedication. Through relentless self-study, attending caller schools, weekly mentorship, and every guest-tip opportunity he can grab, the homeschooled 16-year-old has already built a reputation for crisp timing, clear commands, and the kind of calm authority that makes dancers forget he's still in high school.

Square dance calling looks effortless from the floor, but it's a whirlwind of split-second decisions. A caller is part musician, part air-traffic controller, part comedian—keeping four couples in perfect sync while reading the room, adjusting difficulty on the fly, and adding just enough personality to keep the hall buzzing. Most callers need years to blend those skills into something seamless. Teenagers, though, come wired for rapid learning and with the advantage of less demanding schedules. When one of them pours hundreds of hours into deliberate practice, the results can be startling, and Grant Moser is a clear example of just how quickly hard work and dedication can produce results. At the Merry Notes Club, seasoned caller and square dance instructor, Dick Otis, watched him lead the tips with quiet admiration.

Otis later remarked, "Calling both Mainstream and Plus, he moves the dancers around with smooth flow, excellent timing and great mike technique. I started calling at age 60. It took me many years to get the level Grant has achieved in only one year of calling. Ah, the blessings of youth."

Grant's journey toward that moment began just a few years ago. His enthusiasm for square dancing began at 14, when he and a group of homeschool friends learned the Basic, Mainstream, and Plus programs. Less than a year later, something deeper took hold at the WASCA Spring Festival. For two days he danced from morning until long after dark, swept up in ballrooms humming with hundreds of dancers energized by world-class callers. Watching

Above: *Grant Moser in his element, keeps the floor moving at Tuckahoe Square Dance Club.* ***Below:*** *Homeschool students make the wave Swing Thru at Merry Notes Square Dance Club.*

pure joy ripple across the floor and feeling the current that connected everyone, he felt something shift. He didn't just want to dance—Grant wanted to be the voice that created those moments of shared connection. He wanted to be the one behind the mic.

Attending Crewe Caller School accelerated the shift. Emerging from an intensive week, Grant dove headlong into self-study, devouring choreography videos, CALLERLAB materials, and YouTube festival and club reels like a starved artist. His family quickly grew accustomed to the constant soundtrack of patter and singing calls drifting through the house and car. He began visiting Virginia clubs not only to dance, but to study how seasoned callers managed the floor.

It was during this stretch of focused growth that Mike Sikorsky offered an early professional assessment of Grant's potential, saying, "I am very proud of Grant and very happy I can be helpful in his progress. His commitment to the craft of square dance calling is commendable. His natural abilities and his raw determination pursuing excellence are perfect for his progress towards becoming one of the top square dance callers in the world. He has a winning personality and he is a pleasure to coach."

That self-fueled momentum soon caught the attention of the wider calling community. He was awarded the Cowboy Showers Scholarship and a CALLERLAB Foundation grant to support attending caller schools. He's become a regular presence at regional workshops and festival sessions, learning structured choreography from one veteran caller and dynamic, wind in the face flow from another, weaving those influences into a style that's distinctly his own. Zoom sessions connect him with callers who challenge, mentor, and help refine his developing voice. After a recent weekend workshop, Steve Kopman summed up the impression Grant leaves behind: "No question Grant made a great impression on me at the clinic in D.C. And I'm not just talking age."

But theory only takes you so far—Grant tests everything in the fire of real dancers. Over the past year, he's had opportunities to call guest tips at local clubs, steadily absorbing feedback. At home, the living room furniture gets pushed aside once a week so he can call to a square of friends, sharpening his timing and floor management. He also teaches brand-new dancers and calls student-level dances, experiences that build clarity, patience, adaptability, and confidence.

Above: *Grant Moser and a fellow caller tune into the art of sound and mixers with Mike Sikorsky at Crewe Caller School in Crewe, Virginia.* ***Below:*** *Grant Moser and Dick Otis turn Plus calls into a fun challenge during a caller mentoring session.*

All of it—solo study, scholarships, workshops, and tough-love mentorship—isn't just about collecting knowledge. It's deliberate construction. With every hour, Grant is shaping the kind of caller he hopes to become: clear, confident, adaptable, and able to make any floor light up, no matter who's standing on it. And those who have shared the floor with him are already seeing the results.

When asked about Grant's performance at Tuckahoe Square Dance Club, Patty Mason, co-president of the club, didn't hesitate. "Grant exceeded our expectations," she said. "I thoroughly enjoyed dancing to Grant and can't wait until he can find time to come back and call for our club. I received such positive and encouraging feedback from our club members."

CJ, who danced that evening, offered a similar take: "With five squares on the floor, Grant called like a seasoned professional… He was warm and enthusiastic from start to finish and his timing kept us all moving smoothly to the music."

Looking ahead, Grant's ambitions are as clear as his commands: more club dates, teaching new generations, starting a club of his own, and eventually earning spots on stages of festivals and conventions. He's not in a hurry—he's simply progressing faster than anyone expected. His story is still unfolding, but one thing is already evident: his skill and charisma are drawing attention, and he's well on his way to becoming a standout voice in the square dance community. In an activity that sometimes worries about its future, Grant Moser is living proof that the next wave is already here. Clubs searching for a caller who's dependable, engaging across all ages, and remarkably polished need look no further. The mic is warm, the floor is waiting, and a teenage voice with an old soul is ready to lead the dance. □

More information about Grant Moser can be found at DanceWithGrant.com. Those interested in contacting him can email Grant@DanceWithGrant.com.

Above: *A quick quip from Grant Moser sparks a laugh from Mike McIntyre at the SVCC Roundup Dance in Waynesboro, Virginia.* ***Below:*** *Grant Moser dancing "belle" in a square of angels at Crewe Caller School.*