

Our Side of the Mic

An article sponsored by the Denver Area Callers & Cuers Association

Bob Riggs ... Spring 2022

The last couple of years have been very difficult for most of us. As we look forward to this year, we must rebuild our optimism and our trust in the safety of the environment in which we live. We must find a way to feel safe again! We must regain the joy we experience through music and dance. To do that we must make the choice to trust our friends, family, and the social groups with which our lives are intertwined. For some of us this is easier than for others. But if we cannot trust, we will be lost in our own fear. We all know the JOY to be gained through the music, the dance, and the fellowship we have and will experience. So, if you are fearful, be brave and get out with a group of friends that you trust and build the confidence to enjoy life again.

With the start of a new year, we look forward to the joy and celebrate the contributions that some of our members have made to music and dance during their lives. I know that we have lost many contributors to our organization over the last few years. In this message I would like to highlight one of our own.

Calvin Campbell passed away in October of 2021 after his wife Judy died in 2019. Calvin or Cal as many of us knew him, was excited about square and round dancing from his youth to the day he died. He had a great love and knowledge of the history and foundations of community and traditional dance. His contributions to our dance repertoire can be seen through his various publications: "Dancing For Busy People", which he co-authored with Bob Howell and Ken Kernen; "Teaching New Dancers"; and many articles that he wrote for his website and blog. His leadership of the Colorado Dancers performance group which he and Judy started in 1998, now provides a rich wealth of videos documenting a wide variety of dance forms. We will miss his knowledge and experience.

On another note: Cal Campbell contributed in 2004 an article to the 53rd National Convention booklet entitled "Lloyd "Pappy" Shaw and Here We Are Today". In that article is a quote by Dr. Shaw published in the November 1963 edition of Square Dance Magazine, that exhibits some of Dr. Shaw's philosophy.

"Rhythm is the essence of all true dancing! Without rhythm, you are not dancing! And with poor uncertain rhythm you are dancing very poorly indeed. It doesn't matter quite as much with beginners. But with experienced dancers you should become more experienced with rhythm with each step you take. This silent seeking for perfect rhythm will keep you dancing all your lives, and still seeking the truths that lie beyond it. But ignore the rhythm, make it secondary, seek for the outward forms of style only, and you will soon tire of the game and quit forever."

This emphasizes my belief that we must learn to dance to the rhythm of the music we enjoy. Only by dancing to the beat, enjoying the melody and feeling the rhythm of the music can we fully experience the joy of life's rhythm.

Make plans for your summer to include dancing. Include the State Festival June 10-11, 2022 (in Greeley) ... Hi Country Weekend, August 5-7, 2022 (Westcliff, CO ... USA West Square Dance Convention (San Diego, CA)