

August 5, 2011

I have been involved in the Square Dance activity for 35 years; I have called fulltime for 30 years. I have watched the National Square Dance convention go from 40, 000 dancers in attendance to 3700 attending this past convention. Whether we want to accept it or not, if we don't do something about this wonderful activity it is going to vanish.

The internet is a wonderful thing, sometimes it takes us a while to figure out how to use it, but once we do, it is fabulous. We have a free tool at our fingertips called YouTube.

www.youtube.com

During the months of April thru October each year I travel some 40, 000 miles calling square dances. Over the past few months I have been taking videos of several of my dances and uploading them to YouTube, to date over 200 videos.

It is quite simple; I place an inexpensive camera on an inexpensive tripod on or near the table where I have set up my equipment and video 3 or 4 tips a night, usually singing calls. I normally try to video upbeat songs, if there are young people at the dance I try and get them in the picture, and I always try to get dancers laughing and acting like they are having a good time. My goal first is to get the viewers interested in the music that is playing, when they see how much fun we are having, hopefully they will inquire about square dancing, which they can do so thru my web sites that are listed in the description. I always make a disclaimer over the microphone just in case someone has an issue and they would prefer I not post the videos.

All of my videos are titled the same way. When we search thru a search engine we use nouns, my noun is "Square Dancing" even though it is a verb, then I list the city, then my name. In the description, I put the town and date and sometimes the name of the club.

I can't tell you how many times I have heard people say to me that they cannot find a place to take lessons, hopefully this will remedy that situation. Now all they need to do is go to their search engine, put in "Square Dancing in ANYTOWN and ANYSTATE", and if I have called in that town, large or small, they will find the video.

Every dance we callers call we should be videoing. We need to post as many as possible to YouTube so that non dancers can see what a wonderful activity this is and why we square dancers love and enjoy it so much. I am so afraid that the activity is dying a slow death; I would like to try and do my part to keep that from happening.

You may visit my YouTube channel anytime, www.YouTube.com/user/callertom , feel free to view, download, and/or share any or all of them, hopefully this will give others an idea of what I am doing.