



# We've Always Done it This Way

By Teresa Berger

*“The most damaging phrase in the language is ‘We’ve always done it this way’.*

*Rear Admiral Grace Murray Hoppe*

2020 was quite a year! The world has changed the way it operates, as 2020 forced us to reconsider how we live and interact during a pandemic. As we approach 2021, I’ve been reminiscing about not only the challenges we faced (and continue to face), but also the positive changes we have experienced in the last year. Social distancing required us, as a square dance community, to engage our critical thinking skills to utilize technology in new and inventive ways with our clubs and organizations. I am constantly encouraged by the virtual dances hosted by callers, dancers and organizations. How cool is it that participants from all over the world are dancing in real time! We have turned our homes, garages, and driveways into dance halls with music, movement and fun! Now it is not uncommon for boards, organizations or clubs to host video meetings that allow members to discuss topics, vote, and take care of business from their homes. What a great time to get involved and have a voice in your local organization! It’s especially refreshing to hear about the increased emphasis on sociability despite staying home. From Zoom meetings and phone calls to socially distanced activities, it is truly amazing how our square dance families stick together during this difficult time of change. The pandemic forced us to think outside the box (or square in our case). Despite the fact that “We’ve always done it this way”, we have mixed it up and learned quite a few new things along the way! I don’t know about you, but it is sure encouraging to me seeing groups adapting and evolving based on the current situation.

The CALLERLAB Home Office has seen its fair share of changes in the last decade. CALLERLAB has been lucky to have Dana Schirmer as the Executive Director since 2009. Dana has been an incredible asset to CALLERLAB and we’re extremely grateful for his leadership, wisdom and commitment. He has certainly made a positive impact, and his care for the organization and for the square dance activity has not gone unnoticed. I have been fortunate to learn from Dana since I started as CALLERLAB’s Assistant Executive Director in 2018. I’m thankful for his investment in my journey as we transition roles. As Dana retires from the Executive Director position, I extend my appreciation on behalf of the organization for the amazing work he has done! Dana will continue working with the Home Office during the transition, so don’t worry—he’s not going anywhere yet!

I am incredibly grateful for the support I’ve received since I started working for the Home Office. Dana, Donna, and Royce have been so welcoming and patient with my many questions! Thank you to the EC members who took a chance on me in this role. I’m thankful for this opportunity to serve an organization I love.

Especially during this unprecedented time for our activity, I appreciate the membership’s support of not only me but of CALLERLAB. Despite the challenges of the last year, I couldn’t be more excited about the future of square dancing and the future of CALLERLAB! Things will look and feel different—there’s no doubt about that! Just because “we’ve always done it that way” doesn’t mean we have to do so. The last year has been a good time to practice adapting to change as we have conquered so many obstacles with creativity and persistence. We have an incredible opportunity to be part of history in the making as square dancing evolves to meet the needs of a changing world. We will get through this bump and come out on the other side, refreshed, reinvigorated and ready to share our passion for square dancing with the world! Stay safe and stay healthy until we can get together again. Please know that I’m cheering for all of you. Be creative, be persistent and most importantly, don’t give up! Change is hard, but we can do it together!

**Live Lively –**



**Square Dance!**