

MINI-FESTIVAL 2016 STAFF



Jack Pladdys (Ohio)

- Began calling in 1982 while serving in US Air Force in Japan
- Calls for two Plus clubs, an Advanced club, and a Challenge 1 group
- Teaches beginner classes every year
- Other activities: Central US Leader for Grand Square International, Inc. (focuses on promotion and preservation of square dancing through caller education); leader of Midwest Caller College; staff coach of National Square Dance Convention GSI caller schools; Callerlab accredited caller-coach
- Panelist for Callerlab and at National Conventions
- Has conducted many caller and club leadership training seminars and clinics
- Has called extensively throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, Japan, Middle East
- Was on staff for World Convention in Austria, Hawaii State Convention, International Singles Convention in Canada, Fontana Resort in North Carolina, English Mountain Resort in Tennessee, and Pride Resort in North Carolina; also weekends, festivals, cruises
- Recording artist with Chicago Country Records, Desert Recordings, Gold Rush Records, Royal Records
- Married to Sherry, with six children and twelve grandchildren
- Day job: purchasing and logistics manager for Pioneer Automotive Technologies

Mark Franks (New Jersey)

- A regional favorite who keeps dancers alert with interesting call combinations
- Started dancing in 1974 and calling in 1980, when Joe Landi asked him to do a singing call for a class graduation and then taught him to call
- Attended Earl Johnston/Al Brundage caller school
- Member of Callerlab, calling through A-2
- Club caller for Ocean Waves 4-H Club in Ocean County from 1982-1985
- Co-teaches Busy Bees class with Joe Landi
- Married to Cheryl, with a son and daughter
- Other interests: soccer referee, golf (when he finds time to play)
- Day job: manager of the Juvenile Probation Supervision Unit in Atlantic City



Dan Koft (Pennsylvania)

- Started dancing in 1977 with Pi R Squares at East Brunswick High School, where Dick Jones was the teacher/caller
- Joined Rutgers Promenaders during college and held several leadership roles; currently co-club caller with Betsy Gotta
- First attended caller school in 1979 through scholarship from Y Squares
- Longtime member and former president of Callers' Council of New Jersey
- Member of Callerlab and its Mainstream and Definitions committees
- Married to Kathy, a round dance cuer; their daughter, Julie, attends Rutgers University
- Master's degree in business administration
- Day job: WellSpan Health in IT support

Mary Pickett (New Jersey)

- Started round dancing in 1985 and teaching in 1995
- Cues and teaches (currently four classes) all phases and rhythms
- Regular club cuer for Reelers and Y Squares, guest cuer at many clubs
- Cuer at festivals in New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, New Hampshire, and more
- Member of Roundalab
- Renowned for precise cuing, thus establishing a following of round dancers at club and other events
- Has two sons, a daughter, and a granddaughter
- Bachelor's degree in mathematics and chemistry; work toward PhD in chemistry
- Day job: private nanny for family with three children

