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# *Let's Dance*



THE MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS



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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE FOLK DANCE FEDERATION OF CALIFORNIA, INC.

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#### ***Requirements for submitting ads, flyers, & printed information to Editor:***

*Electronic submission should be in Microsoft Word. Material must be on white paper, camera-ready with one-inch margins all around the page. This includes flyers, which should contain location and address information and directions, as well as the name and telephone number of the contact person. All material mailed that does not require retyping must be accurate and mistake-free as it will have to be scanned and therefore cannot be edited. Any material submitted in other forms, i.e., typewritten, handwritten, etc. must be discussed with the Editor prior to submission. Anything not sent in the proper format or discussed previous to mailing will be returned.*

**Opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Federation/North, or of the Editor.**

#### **SUBSCRIPTION RATE**

\$22.50 per year (Associate Member)

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Hayward, CA 94541



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The following is a perfect story for a December issue. It is full of Christmas spirit and joy. And it is a true story! This happened in San Francisco, at Changs International Folk Dancers, where my husband, Sidney, and I regularly dance.

One September Friday night this year, a visitor came to learn about folk dancing. She had had some lessons in ballroom dancing.

"I just know a little bit," she claimed. "Very little." She touched the tip of her index finger to her thumb to emphasize the point. She could not be persuaded to get in Arap, the dance about to start. "I'll just watch for a while." A wise woman, I thought, even though it was an easy dance.

For the next dance, no persuasion was necessary. A simple invitation was all it took and she was up for Ersko Kolo. I was surprised and delighted at her willingness. Her enthusiasm was refreshing.

I explained that it was common for people to dance behind the line as a way to pick up the steps. She was a quick learner. She was also quick to decide which dances she would try. At one point she was practicing alone behind the line during Paraliakos; I could see she was mastering the steps.

"Just go to the end of the line and join in," I suggested. "Or go to the circle like this," and opening out my arms I approached the circle. "The circle will open up to take you in."

She turned to look at me, her face questioning. "Really?" She smiled, silently marvel-

ing at the simplicity of it all. She copied my movements. The clasped hands in front of her opened up and gathered her into the circle. She was part of the group; she was dancing. And she was smiling.

Changs members made sure she had a partner for the couple dances. "Everyone here is so nice," she came up to say. "And the music is so interesting." Her brow furrowed a bit. "It is different, nice, from so many countries. There is a lot to learn. It is all very interesting." A week later the club received a note thanking us for giving her the "opportunity to experience international folk dancing."

"I didn't have to sit on the chair," she wrote, "and wait for a man to come to ask me to dance. People would step in with each other and dance together. You could see people making eye to eye contact, hands holding hands. Everyone was cheerful, people were smiling. I felt so peaceful and pleasant. I will love to dance with you again."

May this winter month bring to all our clubs the joy of even one such delightful beginner and hopes for many more. May this happy season remind us to feel glad we exist and dance. And may we always open our circles and gather others in to share our love of dancing.

*Laila Messer*

Phone: 415-332-1020

e-mail: tspolaris1@aol.com



## December CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Send future upcoming events information to Nadine Mitchell,  
1941 Danvers Way, Sacramento, California 95832-1226, (916) 665-1588,  
e-mail: gregandnadine@lanset.com

Deadline for January 2004 issue is November 5, 2003

**Note:** Information must be received by the above date or it will not be published.

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### Plan ahead! Save these dates for upcoming Federation and other events.

- January 9 & 10, 2004** \*Heritage Festival. Honoring our Irish heritage. Community United Church, Arroyo at Elm Streets, San Carlos. Warm-Up Party on Friday, January 9. Sat. afternoon institute. Folk dancing and exhibitions Sat. evening, Jan. 10.
- January 31, 2004** Sacramento Annual Scholarship Ball, Clunie Club House, Alhambra & F Sts.
- February 9, 2004** Sweetheart Festival, Napa Valley Junior College
- February 29, 2004** \*Festival of the Oaks
- March 13 & 14, 2004** \*Camellia Festival, Sacramento. Saturday program will be held at the Rancho Cordova facility; Sunday program will be held at CSU (see Council Clips section in this issue for more information).
- April 6, 2004** Cherry Blossom Festival, Veterans Bldg., Sonoma
- May, 2004** \*Blossom Festival, San Francisco
- June 8, 2004** Rose Festival, Veterans Bldg., Santa Rosa
- August 17, 2004** Little Festival in the Redwoods, Guerneville
- September 17, 2004** \* Fiesta de Sonoma, Veterans Bldg., Sonoma

### **\*FEDERATION EVENTS**

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### **COUNCIL CLUB PARTIES**

#### Redwood Council

**Napa Valley Folk Dancers Party.** Grandview Mobilehome Park Clubhouse, 4130 Byway East, Napa, 94558. Classes every Tuesday, 10:30 AM-12:00 Noon. Advanced: Thursdays, 10:30 AM-12:00 Noon. Beginners: Friday, 10:30 AM-12:30 PM. Women's Group. Party: Every 4th Saturday, 10:30 AM to 12:30 PM.

**Every Wednesday** **Novato Folk Dancers.** Lynwood School, 1320 Lynwood Drive, Novato, CA. 94947. Time: 8:00-10:00 PM. Contact 415-892-9405.

**December 20** **Petaluma International Folk Dancers Party.** Hermann Sons Hall, 860 Western Avenue, Petaluma, CA. 2:00—6:00 PM. Contact: 707-546-8877.



**Redwood Council (Continued)**

**Santa Rosa Folk Dancers.** Wednesdays—1:45—3:45 PM. Willowside Hall, 5299 Hall Road, Santa Rosa, CA. Contact Frank and Elsa Bacher at 707-546-8877.

**San Francisco Council**

**Changs International Folk Dancers, Inc.** Meets the first four Fridays of each month at the Social Hall, 7th Avenue Presbyterian Church, 1329 7th Avenue, San Francisco. Contact Sidney Messer, 415-332-1020.

**2003 First Two Fridays** of each month. Teaching 8:00 - 9:30 PM.  
Teacher: Craig Blackstone. General Dancing: 9:30 - 10:30 PM.

**2003 Third Friday** of each month. Teaching - 8:00 - 9:30 PM.  
Refreshments and general dancing.

**2003 Fourth Friday** of each month. General dancing: 8:00 - 10:30 PM

**Mandala Folk Dance Center.** Meets every Thursday at St. Paul's Church Hall, 43<sup>rd</sup> & Judah, San Francisco, 7:30-8:15 PM. Request dancing, 8:15-9:00 PM. Intermediate teaching from 9:00 - 9:45 PM. Request dancing from 9:45-11:00 PM. First and last Thursdays are always Party Nights. Contact Edith or Paul at 415-648-8489.

**San Francisco Dance Circle.** Meets every Wednesday, 10:00—11:30 AM at the Harvey Milk Recreation Center, 50 Scott Street, San Francisco. General dancing. Beginners welcome! Free. Contact Mabel Doss at 415-467-9208. Easy parking. Public transportation.

**Peninsula Council**

It was brought to my attention by Al Lisin that I made 3 errors in the Peninsula portion of the October Let's Dance. I apologize for any confusion I may have caused. Thanks for letting me know, Al. Editor

**Dec. 6, 2003 Palomanians Party.** First Methodist Church, Broadway at Brewster, Redwood City. Contact Ron Bueno, 408-3353-9430 or Al Lisin, 408-252-8106.

**Dec. 13, 2003 Menlo Park Folk Dancers.** Menlo Park Recreation Center, 700 Alma at Mielke, Menlo Park. Contact Marcel Vinokur at 650-327-0759.

**Dec. 27, 2003 Docey Doe Folk Dancers.** Community United Church, Arroyo at Elm Streets, San Carlos. Contact Bruce Wyckoff, 650-368-7834.

**Dec. 31, 2003 Council Party. New Year's Eve.** Community United Church, Arroyo at Elm Street, San Carlos. Contact Al Lisin, 408-252-8106.

**Dec. 31, 2003 Menlo Park Folk Dancers. New Year's Eve.** Menlo Park Recreation Center, 700 Alma at Mielke, Menlo Park. Contact Marcel Vinokur, 650-327-0759.

<b>Third Saturdays</b>	<b>BBKM.</b> Mostly-Balkan Party. 8:00—11:00 PM. YLI Hall, 27th & N Streets, Sacramento. Contact Barbara Bevan at 916-923-1555.
<b>Selective Saturdays 2003</b>	<b>Balliamo!</b> Sierra Two Community Center, 24th St. & 4th Ave. Contact Doris Beckert at 916-482-8674.
<b>First Saturdays 2003</b>	<b>Reno Folk Dancers.</b> Studio 214, 214 California Ave., Reno, Nevada. 7:30 PM to 9:30 PM. Contact Penny Ohnstad at 775-358-6762.
<b>December 6</b>	<b>Kolo Koalition.</b> Balkan Party. 8:00 PM—? YLI Hall, 27th & N Sts. Contact Laura Leonelli at 916-739-6014.
<b>First Saturdays</b>	<b>El Dorado Scandinavian.</b> 3100 Ponderosa Road, Shingle Springs. Contact 530-672-2926.
<b>December 13, 2003</b>	<b>Pairs &amp; Spares.</b> Babcock School, 2400 Cormorant Way. 8:00 - 11:00 PM. Contact Chuck Paulsen at 916-428-6992. <b>Jan. 10, 2004—next party date!</b>
<b>December 31, 2003</b>	<b>First &amp; Last Dancers New Year's Eve Dinner Dance Overnighter.</b> Valley Oaks Grange, 5th & D Streets, Galt. 7:00 PM. Reservations: Contact Eda Scheuffele at 916-682-6992. <b>Jan. 31, 2004—next party date!</b>
<b>Third Saturdays 2003</b>	<b>Sacramento Cape Breton Step Dancers.</b> St. Francis School Lunchroom, 2500 K St. Classes first Sunday of the month & third Saturday. Contact Bob Schuldheisz, 209-745-9063.
<b>Saturdays</b>	<b>Sacramento Country Dance Society.</b> Contact 916-739-8906.
<b>Second &amp; Fourth Saturdays, 2003</b>	<b>Royal Scottish Country Dance Society.</b> YWCA, 17th & L Streets. Contact 916-739-8906.
<b>2003</b>	<b>Nevada County Folk Dancers.</b> Methodist Church, 433 Broad St., Nevada City, CA. Selected Fridays. Call for dates. Contact David Unterman, 530-272-2149.
<b><u>Berkeley Folk Dancers</u></b>	All classes are held at Live Oak Park Recreation Center, 1301 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, CA. 7:45 PM—9:45 PM. Contact Naomi Lidicker at 510-524-2871.
<b>December 21</b>	<b>Dance Party.</b> El Cerrito Veterans' Hall, 6401 Stockton Ave., El Cerrito, CA. 7:00 PM—10:00 PM. Contact Ed Malmstrom, 510-525-3030.
<b>December 31</b>	<b>New Year's Eve Party.</b> Live Oak Park Recreation Center, Berkeley. 9:00 PM—Midnight. Refreshments.

<b>Mondays</b>	2nd year	Lone Coleman, 510-527-2491, and Tom Sha, 510-649-8264.
<b>Tuesdays</b>	Beginners	Claire and Al George, 510-841-1205.
<b>Wednesdays</b>	4th year	Louise and Bill Lidicker, 510-528-9168.

**Berkeley Folk Dancers (Continued)**

**Club Weekly Schedules (Continued)**

**Thursdays** 3rd year Henry Koopman, 510-524-0255 & Yaqi Zhang, 510-525-1865.  
**Fridays** Requests 7:45 PM—9:45 PM. Contact Ed Malmstrom, 510-525-33030.

**Fresno Folk Dance Council**

**Where to Dance in Fresno**

**December 31, 2003** **New Year's Party.** Lafayette Social Hall. Contact Fran Ajoian for details.

**Tuesdays** **Fresno Danish Dancers.** Clovis Senior Center. 6:30—9:00 PM. Contact Wilma Anderson, 559-292-3176.

**Central Valley-CAFY,** Lafayette Center, Princeton Street, West of Blackstone. Contact Fran Ajoian, 559-255-4508.

**Wednesdays** **McTeggert Irish Dancers.** Beginners: 5:30 - 6:30 PM. Intermediate and Advanced: 7:00—8:00 PM. Contact Maureen Hall, 559-271-5200.

**Saturdays** **Fresno International Folk Dancers.** Pinedale Senior Center; Contact Kent Peterson, 559-226-5010.

**Modesto Folk Dancers & Village Dancers of Modesto**

**Every Wed. Night** **Modesto Folk Dancers.** Group meets at The Modesto Court Room, 2012 McHenry Blvd., Modesto. Cost: \$3 per person. Contacts: Floyd Davis and Barbara Summers.

**Every Friday Night** **Village Dancers of Modesto.** Group meets at The Modesto Court Room, 2012 McHenry Blvd., Modesto. Cost: \$3 per person. Contacts: Don and Judy Kropp; Floyd Davis and Barbara Summers.

***For information on other Federation activities, call 510-524-2871***

**To become an Associate Member, mail completed application form with check or money order in U.S currency to:**

FOLK DANCE FEDERATION OF CALIFORNIA, INC.

1782 D Street, #89, Hayward CA 94541

Call (415)332-1020 or email: [membership@folkdance.com](mailto:membership@folkdance.com)

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## COUNCIL CLIPS

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Deadline for January 2004 issue: November 5, 2003

### **BERKELEY FOLK DANCERS**

BFD has had a full year. I have such a short memory I can't remember all that happened. The move back to our old home in Live Oak Park overshadowed everything that happened before for me and dominated our late spring and early summer. We've had to make some adjustments such as canceling our traditional Saturday Fun Nights. Our September Fun Night had to be held on a Friday night and we had to forgo decorating the hall. But we had had some lucky breaks. One unusual one was the offer of the El Cerrito Veterans' Hall on the 3rd Sunday. So on December 21 we will have a part with some dances taught plus request program. Admission will be \$5 for everyone. Refreshments will be provided. Please join us.

For our annual New Year's Eve Party we will be back in our Live Oak Park Recreation Center Hall in Berkeley. We will welcome you with a lively, safe and festive evening. Request your favorite dance or two! It is a wonderful way to see the old year out and the New Year in. Donation \$5 members; \$7 for non-members.

On New Year's Day itself, we will be resting. BFD will not be dancing on December 24, December 25 and New Year's Day. But don't forget our Inaugural Ball on the third Saturday, January 17. Save that date. Details will be in the January, 2004 (gulp!) Let's Dance. Watch for them.

*Naomi Lidicker*

### **PENINSULA FOLK DANCE COUNCIL**

An Irish Heritage Folk Dance Festival is to be held on January 9 and 10, 2004, in San Carlos. Events include a warm-up party on Friday evening, and Institute featuring Armenian and

Estonian dances, general dancing, and exciting exhibitions on Saturday. Look for details in the January 2004 issue.

*Al Lisin*

### **SACRAMENTO INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCE & ARTS COUNCIL**

The folk dance council has been busy planning for two dance activities for the coming year. The annual Scholarship Ball is scheduled for January 31, 2004, at the Clunie Club House at Alhambra and F Streets in Sacramento. A potluck, dancing and raffle are planned for that evening from 6:00 to 10:00 PM. The dance is a fund raiser for scholarships to the Stockton Folk Dance Camp offered by the Council.

The Camellia Festival is scheduled for March 13-14, 2004. Due to a scheduling conflict at the University of California—Sacramento, for Saturday March 13, the University is not available for that date. Instead the *Saturday* program will be held at the *Rancho Cordova Community Center*. Atanas Kolarovski and Zetjko Jergan will be the teachers for the Saturday afternoon institutes. A 50-50 party and a Balkan party in separate rooms are planned for Saturday evening.

The Sunday program will be held at the University as was done this year. A concert performed by various folk dance groups is planned for Sunday afternoon followed by beginner level dancing.

More details will be available in subsequent issues of Let's Dance and on the web at :

[folkdance.com/sacramentocouncil](http://folkdance.com/sacramentocouncil).

*Morris Jerome*

## DEMENTIA OR DANCE

By Bill Lidicker

As dancers we know that dancing is good exercise, and we also know that it involves considerable mental or cognitive activity. Both features mean that dancing has got to be good for you, especially as we advance beyond the age of 29. Moreover, I suspect that international folk dance challenges us in both these respects significantly more than other forms of recreational dance. At last the medical profession has made a small, but important, step toward recognizing the benefits of our favorite leisure activity.

At an assembly lecture during the second week of Stockton Folk Dance Camp this past summer, Richard Powers of Stanford University mentioned that a paper had been published recently in the New England Journal of Medicine which claimed that dancing significantly reduced the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia in older adults. Louise and I attended the first week of Stockton Camp so we missed this lecture. But, we soon heard about it, and I thank Naomi Lidicker for providing me with the complete citation for the paper\*. Here then is a brief summary of the article's main results, with emphasis on the role of dance.

The research reported by Joe Verghese and nine co-authors\* was a long-term study of 469 subjects living in The Bronx, New York, and who were 75 to 85 years old when the data were gathered. During the study period, various forms of dementia developed in 124 individuals (26.4%). The subjects were interviewed regarding participation in six cognitive activities (reading, writing, doing crossword puzzles, playing card games or cards, participating in group discussions, and playing musical instruments), and 11 physical activities (tennis or golf, swimming, bicycling, dancing, group exercises, team games, walking for exercise, climbing more than two flights of stairs, housework, and baby sitting). For each activity subjects reported their frequency of participation as: daily, several days per week, once a week, monthly, occasionally, or never. It is important to note that information was not recorded on the intensity of participation or amount of time spent during each activity bout. In other words, a person who climbs 16 flights of stairs each day would receive the same frequency score for this activity as one who climbs only three flights per day. In the case of dancing, the type of dance was not recorded, so we do not know if there were any folk dancers in the sample. These data were then coded and converted into activity scores for each subject so that appropriate statistical analyses could be performed. Within the limited age range of the subjects (75 – 85), individuals of all ages reported similar *frequencies* of participation in both physical and cognitive activities. Perhaps this homogeneity among ages would not have been the case if intensity of participation had been recorded as well as frequency.

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\*Verghese, J., et al., 2003. Leisure activities and the risk of dementia in the elderly. New England Journal of Medicine 3348: 2508-22516.



## DEMENTIA OR DANCE (Continued)

Dementia developed significantly (statistically) more often in subjects who had lower overall cognitive activity scores, were older, had only a high school education or less, and who did more poorly on various memory evaluation tests. In contrast, the overall physical activity score was not correlated with risk of dementia. This is not to say that physical activity is not health-promoting, but only that it is not important in reducing the hazards of dementia. In order to assess each activity separately for its potential to reduce the risks of developing dementia, individuals were classified as "frequent" participants in a given activity (more than once per week) or as "rare" participants (less than once per week). Among cognitive activities, playing board games (or cards), playing a musical instrument, and reading all significantly reduced the hazard of dementia. Among the physical activities, only dancing was significant in this regard. In fact, "frequent" dancing was associated with an amazing reduction of 76% in the number of cases of dementia that developed! The 95% confidence interval for this statement, however, is quite large, namely 1 to 94% reduction in risk. In other words, there is a 5% chance that the real risk-reducing effect of dancing as measured in this study is either miniscule (less than 1%) or huge (greater than 94%).

It is interesting that the authors simply report the beneficial effects of dancing and then drop the subject. Presumably, this is because when all of the physical activity scores for each participant were combined into a single collective score, this number was not correlated with reduced risks of dementia. But, looking at the influence of the various physical activities individually, none of the others even came close to having a statistically significant beneficial effect. So, dancing really stands out among these activities. I suspect that the authors know little about dancing or they likely would have speculated that it is not the physical exercise of dancing that is influential in this respect, but the mental component. That is, for purposes of this study, dancing would have been more appropriately classed as a cognitive activity rather than physical. If this turns out to be the case, we should cherish those folk dances with complex patterns and rhythms, and place them in an honored place in our dance repertoires. Actually, as folk dancers we enjoy such a variety of styles, steps, and music that even a collection of relatively simple dances probably adds up to a potent anti-dementia force.

In the future, wouldn't it be great if the medical profession would become interested in dance as a nearly unique leisure activity that combines physical and mental challenges in a socially appropriate format? Investigators then might design a research program that would distinguish among various types of dance, including international ethnic dance, and explore further the potential health benefits of this activity. Chances seem good that such a study would back up what we already believe, namely, that folk dancing is good for what ails yuh!



## FEDERATION SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT'S EVALUATION

By Barbara Bevan

*Barbara Bevan received a Federation Scholarship for July 2003. She is active instructing the Tuesday Dancers, Calico Dancers, BBKM and Zado Singers. She also dances with several groups including the Vintage Dancers. Here is her evaluation of her dance experience at this year's Stockton Folk Dance Camp.*

This was my 26th year at Stockton Folk Dance Camp, and I still get excited about going each year! I spent several days preparing what to take to Camp. I have developed a list of things to take to Camp which I share with friends who are attending for the first time.

Being at Camp is like being in a world apart. I tend to ignore the news of the outside world and just concentrate on what is going on at Camp. It is a "Never-Never Land" for folk dancers! No housecleaning, no cooking, no chores. The beautiful University of the Pacific campus is a lovely setting. All of our dorm rooms were air conditioned this year. The food in the cafeteria was the best ever!

The very best part of Folk Dance Camp is the international faculty. Each year, the Camp Committee assembles eight or nine of the best teachers. This year they were Jussi Aronen: Estonian; Jerry Helt: American Squares; Larry Lynch: Irish; Kamrin MacKnight: Scottish Ladies' Step Dancing; Lee Otterholt: Balkan; Richard Powers: Vintage; Suzanne Rocca-Butler: Non-Partner Dances from past Camps; Tineke Van Geel: Armenian; and Linnea Mandell, singing (assisted by members of the Camp band 'Chubritza'). Each teacher taught two classes a day.

After lunch, there were cultural assemblies four days a week presented by the teachers. New at the assemblies this year were video

clips from past talent shows presented by the camp videographer, Steve Turner.

In the afternoons, there were special workshops on various topics including classic couple dances, dances for children of all ages, recreational dances, etc. Some chose to nap or go to the pool.

In the evening we had 'Once Over Lightly' where each teacher would briefly review one or two of the dances they taught that day interspersed with other dances. The outstanding camp band 'Chubritza' played for many of the dances. At the 'After Party', there was all-request dancing until 1:00 or 2:00 AM, often with some live music and some surprises!

On Wednesday, the teachers reviewed the dances taught on Monday and Tuesday. In the evening, there was a banquet dinner. The theme varies each year. This year, it was 'Celtic Ceilidh'. After dinner was the auction of donated costumes and other items. The proceeds go toward the Camp scholarship fund. This was followed by the evening party and the after-party.

On Saturday, the teachers reviewed the dances taught on Thursday and Friday. In the afternoon, there was a talent show. In the evening, there was a banquet and party with a specific theme. The first week, the theme was an 'American Hoedown', and honored Jerry Helt for 50 years of teaching square dancing at Camp. The second week's theme was an "Armenian Wedding".

Other special events during Camp were Picture Day on Tuesday when campers were encouraged to wear ethnic costumes, the

## **SCHOLARSHIP EVALUATION**

(By Barbara Bevan—Continued)

Silent Auction on Thursday night, and the Rummage Sale on Friday night.

I must comment, also, about the people who attend Camp. Many are people I only see once a year at Camp. Many come from foreign countries. It is a rare joy to be surrounded by wonderful people who share the love of folk dance.

Campers receive a very accurate syllabus of all the dances taught. A daily newsletter called "Footnotes" provides additional information. A video of all the dances taught is also available.

Stockton Folk Dance Camp is a highlight of my year. I encourage everyone who loves folk dancing to try it! I'll be back next year.

Barbara Bevan

Phone: 916-023-1555

e-mail: [dancesong@earthlink.net](mailto:dancesong@earthlink.net)

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**THE DANCE RESEARCH  
COMMITTEE DID NOT SUB-  
MIT ANY DANCE ARTICLES  
FOR THIS ISSUE OF LET'S  
DANCE MAGAZINE.**

## **FOLK DANCE SCENE**

This (almost) monthly publication has folk dance events in California and elsewhere, folklore articles, recipes and lots of good reading.

To get a copy, just write to:

**Gerda L. Ben-Zeev  
2010 Parnell Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90025**

Wesley Takara wishes  
you a Merry Christmas





## FEDERATION SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT'S EVALUATION

By Elbert C. "Vick" Vickland

*Elbert C. "Vick" Vickland received a Federation Scholarship for July 2003. Vick served as the Sacramento Folk Dance Council's President for two years and currently is Secretary of the Folk Dance Federation of California and on the publicity committee of the Sacramento Council. He dances regularly with the Vintage Dancers, the Tuesday Dancers, and BBKM. Here is the evaluation of his folk dance experience at this year's Stockton Folk Dance Camp.*

I want to express my appreciation for the scholarship to this year's Stockton Folk Dance Camp.

This was my fifth year at Camp and I think it was the first time I attended both weeks. I am not sure of the reason, but I got much more out of it this year. I was able to retain the dances from the time of the class to the evening review, which had been difficult in past years. It may have been that I am more familiar with the usual dances, so I did not have to learn every dance for the first time. It may have been that the excellent teachers taught dances that were less complicated, or that they were an exceptional group of teachers. It may have been that there was less pressure to retain each dance, knowing that I would have a second chance to get them. Whatever the reason, I thoroughly enjoyed this year's camp.

I particularly enjoyed Lee Otterholt's teaching, excellent dancing and pleasant humor. Loui Tucker was a great choice for a substitute, and proved herself well as an excellent instructor. Her dances were presented very clearly, and they are dances that will probably

continue to be used locally. Tineki van Geel, being very graceful herself, developed grace in her students' dancing. Juha-Matti Aronen's dances were interesting, but most of them will probably not take hold locally. Being involved in vintage dancing, I enjoyed Richard Powers' material, but I am not sure 50's dances qualify as folk dances. I know there are opinions on both sides of this issue. Jerry Helt was his usual fun self.

The highlights of the week for me was Chubritza, the excellent band. It was not just their fine music, but also their spirit, participating above and beyond the call of duty. I enjoyed their singing class in my second week, and as a result, may be singing with the Zado "auxiliary."

I fully support the Federation's sponsorship of scholarships to Folk Dance Camp, even for those who are not necessarily going to teach. It helps promote the folk dance spirit. Thanks again to the Federation for sponsoring me for this year's camp.

Elbert C "Vick" Vickland  
Phone: 916-921-0955  
email: ecvickland@msn.com



## GOT IDEAS? By Vick Vickland

As reported in *Let's Dance* (October 2003), the Sacramento Council developed a "Got Ideas?" brainstorming committee, which developed and innovated a number of useful ideas to promote folk dancing. The easy ones have been implemented, but there have been a number of suggestions that need further development. If there is sufficient interest, I would like to use this article on a monthly basis to disseminate some ideas that have been successful, tried, or just thought of in other clubs of the Federation, including yours. Here are two ideas"

*I advertised in the local newspaper (duh) but I used the term "Social Dance" which many folks took to mean "ballroom". "Do you teach ballroom?" was the question they'd ask when they called me. I said, "Yes, we do all kinds of dancing, ballroom included. Most of our dances have ballroom steps incorporated into them, so not only do you learn the basic ballroom steps, but have some patterns to use if you go out dancing." Well, they seemed interested, but when 18 new people showed up, I was flabbergasted, and moreover, they have all continued for weeks. We're still working on waltzing, fox-trotting, swing and such, but they are enjoying our regular folk dances so much, I think they forget what they came for.*

*Joan*

*"If we could emphasize 'folk dance for fitness' or 'folk dance for wellness' we might be able to get more people interested...)* Actually) *this concept has already been developed in Sacramento, with the noontime dance group in State buildings...and it may still be happening, for all I know. But I am not aware of it being promoted on a wider basis.)*

*Linda Cain*

Please submit your ideas/suggestions to me at [ecvickland@msn.com](mailto:ecvickland@msn.com), or by mail to 1604 Wayland Avenue, Sacramento, CA 95825-4025.

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### EDITOR'S COMMENT:

Thanks to Vick for this suggested monthly article. I, of course, hope our readers find the idea challenging and will send Vick their thoughts. Thanks, Vick.

# THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT ALIVE AND WELL? By Nadine Mitchell

The stores come alive long before Halloween and Thanksgiving offering their sparkling wares to everyone. We don't have time to enjoy Indian Summer, Thanksgiving and autumn activities before Christmas hits us square in the face. I, along with others, I'm sure, have long resented the rush to Christmas. But wait, it might be nice to rush to Christmas if that meant we rushed to the true meaning of Christmas and not the commercial end of it. So, let's take a look at a few things Christmas and see what happens. Let's stop and consider the true meaning of this holiday for a little while.

We, in international folk dancing, bring a varied and interesting background on what Christmas may mean to all of us. We can read of customs of the various countries regarding Christmas. We can talk to our friends about how they celebrate. We all share our experiences.

Those of us who enjoy folk dancing also enjoy the multi-cultural aspect of it. We all come together to observe and learn dances from around the world. We welcome the knowledge of others. We are happy to share what we know with them. We are eager to learn and teach. We are giving and receiving! How like Christmas that is! Perhaps it IS the spirit of Christmas that is alive and well not only during the month of December!

We become so very pleased and excited when young people take an interest in our activities. We want to teach them, share with them, make them aware of all of the good things folk dance has to offer. We want them to receive our gift of enjoying folk dancing.

We dearly appreciate the older members of our folk dance community who give of their knowledge and invaluable experience. Listen to their memories of festivals past. Learn from them.

I am grateful for the good friends I have made over the past 50 or so years. Folk dancers are the best people, bar none, and I am grateful that I have been able to folk dance most of those 50 years.

I am grateful for the appreciation and patience given to me during difficult times.

Most of all, I give thanks for the Christmas spirit that abides among us all year long and gets us through difficulties and binds us together as a folk dance family.

Thanks for being wonderful people. The Christmas spirit IS ALIVE AND WELL, IN FOLK DANCING, ANYWAY, and definitely all year long.

Nadine Mitchell

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